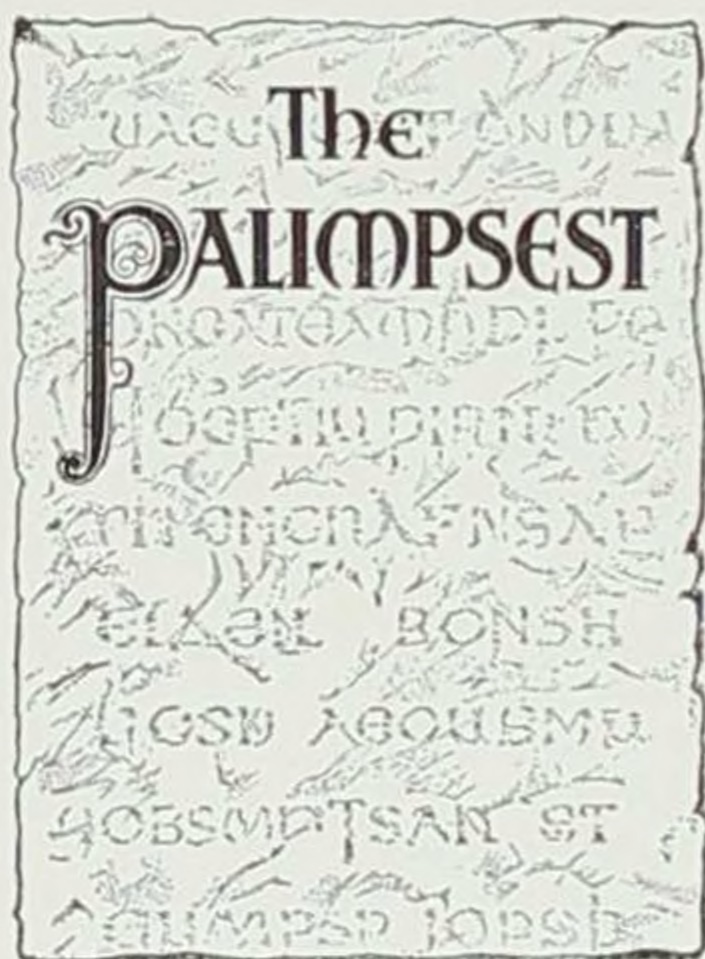


The
PALIMPSEST



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AUGUST 1950



The Meaning of Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the records of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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PARSONS COLLEGE

KENNETH F. MILLSAP

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Center — Library (1907)

Bottom — Ballard Hall (1901)

Back — Outside:

Top — Parsons Choir

Bottom — Barhydt Chapel (1911) and Parsons Hall (1915)

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THE PALIMPSEST

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A College Is Born

As Lewis Baldwin Parsons, a successful merchant from New York State, rode over the rolling prairies of Iowa, the almost limitless expanse of rich land made an indelible impression on his mind. Parsons had been visiting his son in Keokuk when he suddenly determined to make a horseback trip through Iowa. Impressed with the possibilities for the growth and development of the newborn state, he invested heavily in land in Cerro Gordo, Hancock, Jasper, Polk, and Worth counties at \$1.50 per acre.

Lewis Baldwin Parsons was born of Puritan ancestry at Williamstown, Massachusetts, on April 30, 1793. While yet a young man he had worked as a clerk for several business firms and eventually established his own concern, moving in 1829 to Gouverneur and later to Buffalo. While working at Homer, New York, he met Miss Lucina Hoar to whom he was married in 1814. Four sons and four daughters were born to them.

Always interested in education, Parsons fore-

saw the need of a "Christian College" in Iowa. Just before his death in 1855, he made a will providing for the establishment of such a school, or for endowing one already in existence. He directed that the school should be under the control of "Trustees, Presbytery or Synod" connected with the New School Branch of the Presbyterian Church until a reunion of the two sections — Old and New School — could be accomplished. Three sons — Lewis B., Jr., Charles (who lived in Keokuk), and George — were named as executors of his estate. The panic of 1857 and the financial uncertainties arising out of the Civil War prevented a disposal of this property except at a great loss, but finally enough land was sold to create a \$4,000 fund.

Not long after the death of Lewis Baldwin Parsons, the Presbyterians in Iowa began to survey their educational facilities. Two Presbyterian Synods existed at this time. The North Synod sponsored Lenox College at Hopkinton, but the South Synod had no similar institution.

In 1869 the Parsons executors visited Iowa to select a site for the proposed school. They chose as their advisory committee three ministers — S. G. Spees of Dubuque, John Armstrong of Muscatine, and Willis G. Craig of Keokuk. When this became known, the South Synod promptly sought the aid of the Parsons Trust. An institution organized as Parsons Seminary was actually

incorporated at Cedar Rapids in hopes of securing the fund. While Cedar Rapids, Marshalltown, and Des Moines were considered as possible locations for the college, none of these towns was able to meet the conditions set forth by the executors, and no action was taken for two years.

At a meeting of the South Synod of Iowa, held at Council Bluffs in 1871, the problem of establishing a college was again raised by the appointment of a committee to confer with the Parsons executors. Several proposals were considered by the Synod committee and the Parsons family, but no decision was reached that year. In 1872 the North Synod proposed to establish a college at Cedar Rapids by joint action with the South Synod, but this suggestion did not materialize either. At last, in 1874, definite action was taken when the South Synod, meeting in Des Moines, agreed to establish an institution of learning and appointed a committee to select a site and procure any available endowment. In addition, the Synod recommended that the Reverend John Armstrong of Muscatine, already a member of the Parsons executors advisory committee, be named as chairman. Later Willis G. Craig and Carson Reed, both Presbyterian ministers, were named to serve with Armstrong.

Fairfield was not considered as a site for the proposed school until November, 1874. James F. Wilson, the Reverend Carson Reed, and Judge

Charles Negus aroused interest within that town for the procuring of the college by holding public meetings. Subsequently the location committee of the Synod was invited to come to Fairfield to consider that town's claim. The meeting, presided over by William Elliott, was opened with prayer, a fact which made a deep impression upon Lewis B. Parsons, Jr., as it was the only place where the committee's deliberations were opened in that manner.

The location committee, on December 11, 1874, proposed to locate the school at Fairfield if \$27,000 in bona fide subscriptions could be raised locally. Since Fairfield at that time had a population of only 2,343, and no major industries, the task of raising such a large sum appeared almost insurmountable. Encouragement was received when it became known that William Elliott and Robert McElhinny had each contributed \$1,000. Other gifts soon followed and the stipulated sum was raised in the specified time. The senior executor, Lewis B. Parsons, Jr., then issued a call for thirty men to meet in Fairfield on February 24, 1875, to become trustees of "Parsons College." Twenty-five of the thirty invited appeared to sign and adopt the articles of association. After the oath of office had been administered to all the trustees, the following permanent officers of the board were elected: Lewis B. Parsons, Jr., president; the Reverend Carson Reed, secretary; and Wil-

liam Elliott, treasurer. When Parsons later resigned, the Reverend Willis G. Craig was elected president of the board, a post which he held continuously for thirty-three years.

Citizens of Fairfield and Jefferson County delivered to the trustees the sum of \$27,516.25, consisting of 604 notes amounting to \$26,947, a number of pledges totaling \$475, and \$94.25 in cash. From other sources, 166 acres of land with an estimated value of \$1,725 were donated, in addition to stone in the quarry worth \$275. The Parsons Estate turned over \$4,016.65 in money and securities and approximately 3,560 acres of land.

The Board of Trustees purchased a twenty-acre tract just north of the city for \$13,300. This land, known as the "Jordan Property," had once been owned by Bernhart Henn, who had built a brick residence there in 1857 at a cost of approximately \$30,000. This building, which housed the first classes, is today known as Ewing Hall.

At its first official meeting in February of 1875 the Board took the necessary action to prepare Parsons College for its official opening in the fall. After expressing its gratification to the Parsons family and the citizens of the Fairfield community for their aid in establishing the school, the Board appointed a "Committee on Curriculum" to prepare "an academical or preparatory course of study. . . ." The committee for the selection of faculty members was charged with nominating to

the Board at least two instructors, and a third one if necessary, with individual salaries not to exceed \$1,500 per year.

The executive committee of the Board was authorized to construct a chapel and to improve the "present building and grounds" at a cost not in excess of \$6,000. The Board, announcing its aversion to debt, stated that "no obligation shall be incurred or expenditure made beyond funds within control or clearly in view." At this same session, John Armstrong accepted the position of financial agent of Parsons College on the condition that he be furnished a "suitable" residence and that all of his expenses incurred on college business be defrayed by the institution.

Committee reports presented at the next meeting of the Board on June 15 indicated that progress was being made in readying the college for its opening ceremonies. A contract had been made for the construction of a chapel to cost \$6,500, and building activity had already begun. Many Board members believed that it was significant that the first building should be a chapel, since it indicated that "God was to occupy the place of pre-eminence."

At this June meeting the faculty committee nominated the Reverend Alexander G. Wilson for the position of "Rector of the Academical Department" and professor of languages. In addition to his salary of \$1,500, Wilson was given the "use of

such rooms as may be vacant in the old building, together with a garden and dooryard." The Reverend John Armstrong, who was serving already as financial agent of the school, was nominated for professor of history, literature, and moral science, while the Reverend Albert McCalla was recommended for professor of mathematics at a salary of \$1,000. The course of study to be adopted was referred to the executive committee, the instructors, and W. W. Jamieson, with the direction that it be published by July 1, 1875.

Several significant facts appear in the nominations made by the committee on faculty. First, while the institution was to be known as a college, its head was to be the "Rector of the Academy." Second, clergymen composed the entire faculty, which was perhaps a natural thing since Parsons was to be a church-related school. Third, Parsons was to serve as a liberal arts school, but no mention was made of science and no instructor provided. Fourth, the department of history, literature, and moral science was to be headed by the business agent of the school, either task normally being considered full-time duty.

The executive committee of the Board was instructed at the June, 1875, meeting to make any necessary repairs to the "Mansion" and to complete and furnish the new building by providing seats for 250 people in the chapel and to improve the appearance of the front of the structure at a

cost not to exceed \$10,000. With the selection of the third Wednesday in June as the commencement date, the official action on the part of the Board of Trustees for the opening of Parsons College was completed.

The college at last had become a reality. The Reverend Willis E. Parsons, grandson of the founder and president of the school, was later to write: "Parsons College entered upon its career, not as a creature of impulse, but after mature deliberation and careful investigation. Its modest endowment was not the surplus from great wealth, but the life-long savings of a consecrated Christian man and woman who desired to honor their Maker and benefit their race. There seems to have been no thought of posthumous fame coming to the Founder in the way of exalting his name, but a sincere desire to serve. In this lies the choicest heritage of this institution."

The First Quarter Century

The first structure on the Parsons campus, the stately two-story brick home of Bernhart Henn, was known for many years as the "Mansion." In this building Parsons College was officially opened on September 8, 1875. The two east rooms served both as a chapel and as study and recitation rooms. The ceremonies were opened with prayer and the reading of Scripture, followed by a few brief addresses. The three members of the faculty — the Reverend Alexander G. Wilson, the Reverend Albert McCalla, and the Reverend John Armstrong — were present, and the Board of Trustees was represented by the Reverend Willis G. Craig, William Elliott, and Judge Charles Negus, the latter administering the oath of office to the faculty. This was followed by an examination of prospective students.

The enrollment at the end of the first day was thirty-four; by the end of the first week it had increased to forty-three; eventually it totaled sixty-three for the year. Of the thirty-four students present on the first day, five were to become Parsons College alumni. R. B. Loudon was the first student to pay tuition.

Parsons College consisted of two divisions in

1875 — a three-year preparatory or academical department, and a four-year collegiate department. Of the thirty-four students who applied for admission to the school on the opening day, all but one were assigned to the preparatory department.

In the college department students had a choice of two regular courses of study — classical or scientific. An A. B. degree was to be granted in the classical section, an S. B. degree in the scientific. The only difference between the two courses, however, was that Greek was the language required for the classical section while German was stipulated for those in the scientific division.

All students were required to take courses in Biblical instruction, English, mathematics, Latin, natural science, physics, political science, and mental science, the latter including philosophy and psychology. Students could also enroll within the collegiate department for "Partial Courses," taking only those subjects for which they were prepared. After passing the required examinations, these students were entitled to a certificate for the courses taken, but not a diploma. The college authorities stated that students must take sufficient courses to "prevent idleness" and must attend religious exercises. A normal course was also provided, but instruction in the "Theory and Practice of Teaching" was given only to seniors.

Electives for juniors and seniors were not offered until 1878. In the classical course, the elec-

tives consisted of additional work in Latin, Greek, French, and German; later, Hebrew and special laboratory work in science were provided. The first electives in the scientific course consisted of studies in Latin, French, and mineralogy, with English and special laboratory work added later.

In 1879 the Board of Trustees provided for a chair of Greek language, a lecturer in the history of philosophy, and an instructor in logic. In September of the same year a department of music was opened. The chair of physics and natural science was divided in 1882: the physics section consisting of natural philosophy, chemistry, astronomy, and allied sciences; while the chair of natural science offered courses in physiology, geology, botany, zoology, and related sciences. It was not until 1883 that biology was offered in the science curriculum at Parsons. In the 1884-1885 catalogue, the natural sciences included biology, physical geography, botany, zoology, and geology. The physical sciences offered courses in astronomy, elementary philosophy, chemistry, physics, and qualitative analysis.

These courses were taught by a faculty consisting of college men who devoted their entire efforts to the school in order to make the first year of Parsons College a successful one. The Reverend Alexander G. Wilson, Rector of the Academical Department, was a graduate of Jefferson College (now Washington and Jefferson) at Washington,

Pennsylvania, and the Theological Seminary of the Northwest at Chicago. Not only had Wilson won distinction as a minister, but he was recognized as a capable educator.

The Reverend Albert McCalla, a graduate of Monmouth College and Union Theological Seminary, taught all of the science courses. If McCalla had a weakness, it was that his teaching methods did not fit into the accepted pattern of that time. He was so imbued with his subject material that he could not stay within the confines of the textbook.

Professor John Armstrong taught the Bible courses, English, and Biblical history. While perhaps not of the most scholarly turn of mind, he exhibited an interest in the students and as a result stimulated hard work on their part. Armstrong, who possessed independent sources of income, was not paid any regular salary and accepted an instructorship only because the teaching had to be performed and money was not readily available to employ an additional professor.

These three men continued to represent the entire faculty until 1876 when it became apparent that the teaching staff would have to be enlarged. At the June meeting, the Board of Trustees decided to employ C. L. Stevens as a "tutor" in natural science at a salary of \$850 a year. Stevens, who was to graduate from Lafayette College as an analytical chemist, taught not only natural science classes, but also any other studies the faculty

might decide were necessary. Although the course of study at Parsons was originally almost wholly classical, within the first year the faculty realized that courses in science were necessary. The employment of Stevens was the first indication that science was to be considered essential in college training. Provision was also made to employ a student, Henri G. Behoteguy, as tutor in French, and Dr. R. J. Mohr, a local physician, as a lecturer in physiology.

Administrative problems also confronted the new school. The question of having a president at the head of the college was raised in 1877. Since it did not appear quite proper to have the Rector of the Preparatory Department serving in that capacity, Professor John Armstrong was selected as the first president, but the Board asked Rector Wilson to preside at all faculty meetings and to take charge of the college in the absence of the president. When Armstrong accepted the appointment, Wilson presented his resignation but magnanimously consented to remain for a short period of time, staying on for two years.

Meanwhile, Parsons was experiencing financial difficulties. The college deficit reached \$2,000 in 1878, and the Board decided that either salaries or the staff would have to be reduced. The latter course was adopted, and C. L. Stevens of the natural science division was released. President Armstrong regretted the loss of Stevens, since he

had been a valuable addition to the teaching staff. However, either course of action outlined by the Board could invite educational disaster, since the reducing of salaries would compel instructors to leave, while releasing a competent man would undermine the stability of the entire faculty. In June, 1879, the Board, in attempting to make amends for its action of the previous year, commended the faculty which "with a decreased teaching force has conducted an increased number of classes and recitations." At the same meeting, the Board recommended the Reverend J. Rogers Wilson of Erie, Pennsylvania, for the new chair of Greek, at a salary of \$1,000 per year. In addition, James Young, of Keokuk, was appointed a lecturer on the history of philosophy, and the Reverend J. M. Howell, of Fairfield, was to give instruction in logic.

After serving only two years as president of Parsons College, Armstrong died on August 12, 1879, and was buried on the campus. A fortnight later the Reverend Erastus Judd Gillett was named president for a one-year term. Gillett, then living in retirement at Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, had served as a member of the faculty and later as Dean of the Medical College at Keokuk. He accepted the one-year appointment without salary and proved to be a highly satisfactory educational administrator.

The committee to nominate a new president pre-

sented the name of the Reverend Thomas D. Ewing. A graduate of Washington and Jefferson College and the Western Seminary, Ewing had been pastor of a Presbyterian Church in Pennsylvania for sixteen years, and was destined to serve as president of Parsons and as pastor of the Fairfield Presbyterian Church for the next five years. It then became necessary for Dr. Ewing to give all of his time to the administrative duties of Parsons College.

The first formal inauguration of a president of Parsons College was that of Dr. Ewing on September 14, 1880. Under Ewing's presidency, Parsons College was to witness the issuing of the first number of the student publication, *The Portfolio*, the beginning of the Young Men's Christian Association, the building of an addition on the west side of the chapel, and the division of the department of physics and natural science.

In 1883 Parsons College decided to conform with the practice of other colleges by offering a Master of Arts or a Master of Science degree. These degrees were offered, upon application, to graduates of three years standing who were engaged in "literary, scientific, or professional pursuits" and who were deemed worthy by the faculty. It soon became evident that this system of granting advanced degrees was being abused. Diplomas could be procured at a minimum of cost and effort to the recipient. In 1895 the conditions

under which such degrees were granted were changed by limiting the number to be conferred and by requiring additional reading and study under the direction of the faculty, some of which had to be done in residence by the student. This system continued until 1906 when the conferring of advanced degrees was eliminated.

After nine years of association with Parsons College, President Ewing resigned in June of 1889 and became pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Corning, Iowa. The Reverend Ambrose C. Smith, fifth president of Parsons, was the fourth successive president to study at Washington and Jefferson College, graduating in 1861. He served as pastor of the South Presbyterian Church of Galena from 1866 to 1889, when he was called to Parsons. In his inaugural address, Smith declared the threefold aim of Parsons College was "To give scholarship; to give broad, practical training; to give Christian culture." Under his administration Ankeny Hall was completed, and Alumni Field readied for athletic engagements.

In 1896 President Smith resigned because of ill health. His successor, the Reverend Daniel Edward Jenkins, was but thirty years old when selected president of Parsons in July, 1896. Born in Wales, Jenkins had spent his boyhood and youth in America. He received his A. B. degree from the University of Melbourne, Australia, and studied theology in Melbourne and at Princeton Seminary,

where he graduated in 1891. His first and only pastorate was at New London, Pennsylvania.

President Jenkins' administration at Parsons (1896-1900) marks a period of transition during which old methods and philosophies were giving way to the new. A curriculum committee of 1897 suggested eight changes, all originally proposed by the faculty, and each designed to bring the college closer to the accepted educational policy of the day. More elective courses were introduced in most departments and sociology was added and first taught by President Jenkins in addition to a long list of other subjects. The Board also allowed the employment of a special instructor in English and history for subjects formerly not taught by a trained specialist. As a result of these changes, friction increased and in 1900 President Jenkins resigned, subsequently to become president of the new University of Omaha. Parsons entered the new century under a new president.

Growth and Development

The turn of the century ushered in not only a new administration for Parsons College but a new era of development and growth. The Reverend Frederick W. Hinitt of Ottumwa, for many years a member of the Board of Trustees, was selected to succeed President Jenkins in 1900. Although Dr. Hinitt was a native of England, he had received his education in the United States, graduating from Westminster College and McCormick Theological Seminary. Hinitt assumed the presidency of Parsons College at a time when many Presbyterians were concerned with the problem of whether or not there were too many Presbyterian colleges in Iowa. In 1900 there were four, each leading a rather precarious financial existence. It was President Hinitt's task to balance the Parsons budget and yet to keep the physical equipment in good condition.

There was also a need to expand the physical plant. A dormitory for girls had been frequently recommended and approved, providing funds could be secured. As early as 1883 the Board announced that a \$10,000 dormitory would be constructed immediately, and William Bradley of Centerville promised the first \$1,000. This project

failed to materialize, however, and it was not until 1900, when Parsons received \$6,000 from the will of Calvin Ballard of Winterset, that construction began on a girls' dormitory. The cornerstone of Ballard Hall was laid on April 8, 1901, and the building was opened for occupancy the next fall, at a total cost of \$17,603.

With the erection of Ballard Hall, the prospects for a successful school year seemed assured. Suddenly disaster struck the Parsons campus. On August 19, 1902, a fire destroyed Ankeny Hall; only a typewriter from the president's office was salvaged. Although the fire occurred three weeks before the opening of the fall session, the school opened only one week late. Partitions were removed from the new dormitory in order to provide classrooms, and books for the library and equipment for the laboratory were secured. When school opened, there were only about ten students less than the number originally anticipated.

The destruction of Ankeny Hall disheartened many Parsons supporters. Some even proposed that the college should be moved from Fairfield. Cedar Rapids and Mount Pleasant each suggested the consolidation of Parsons with the colleges already located in those towns. Mount Pleasant conducted a particularly vigorous campaign for uniting Parsons with Iowa Wesleyan by offering \$100,000 in cash and a twenty-acre site. But to President Hinitt the disaster provided a

challenge and an opportunity. To him the future of Parsons College depended upon the school possessing a group of suitable buildings with modern equipment. At a minimum, Hinitt believed that there should be a general recitation hall, a science building, a library, a chapel, a gymnasium, and a central heating plant. The cost of such a program was estimated at approximately \$125,000.

In 1902 the Board of Trustees appointed a committee to formulate plans for the future development of the school. This group recommended a canvass to secure the necessary money, and a Chicago architect, H. K. Holsman, was employed to prepare the plans for such a building program.

A contribution of \$25,000 from Thomas Dove Foster of Ottumwa, vice-president of the Board, provided the first impetus for the new building program. This gift came at a crucial period in the history of Parsons College. The citizens of Fairfield and Jefferson County had raised \$26,428.74. By combining the insurance from the loss of Ankeny Hall, the Foster gift, and the Fairfield community donation, it was possible to start work on three structures — a science building to be known as Foster Hall; a classroom building to be called Fairfield Hall in recognition of the support of the local community; and a central heating plant. Construction began immediately and the three buildings were in use within a year after the letting of the contracts.

Only the library, chapel, and gymnasium remained to complete the building scheme envisioned by President Hinitt and the Board of Trustees. At this juncture, Dr. Hinitt and Dr. Willis G. Craig, president of the Board, sought the aid of Andrew Carnegie for the building of a library. Carnegie, who had attended Dr. Craig's church while working in Keokuk as a young man, promised to give \$15,000 if the college would raise an equal amount for endowment and upkeep. Because of a lack of funds, however, the proposal had to be dropped at that time.

In the midst of rebuilding the Parsons physical plant, Dr. Hinitt was offered the presidency of Centre College at Danville, Kentucky. Believing that the position presented a greater opportunity for service, Hinitt resigned from Parsons in 1904 at the conclusion of four very productive years. Not only had three new buildings been constructed, but the enrollment had increased and the academic curriculum had been broadened.

To succeed President Hinitt, the Board of Trustees elected the Reverend Willis Edwards Parsons, a grandson of the founder of the school. Born at Keokuk, Reverend Parsons had spent his early life in Michigan, graduating from Olivet College in 1881 and from Princeton Seminary in 1884. He had held pastorates in Michigan and Illinois before coming to Fairfield, and had served on the Parsons College Board since 1902.

When Willis E. Parsons assumed the presidency in September, 1904, his administration was faced with several problems. The library, which had been destroyed in the fire of 1902, had been rebuilt to a collection of only 600 volumes. Furthermore, there was no office staff, and no record of donors or friends of the college remained. Not even a list of prospective students was available. Despite the addition of Foster Hall and Fairfield Hall, the college had an enrollment of only 126 students. Finally, no attempt was made to segregate college and academy students, since the same instructors taught both groups.

Faced with these many problems, the Board of Trustees and the President took immediate steps. The Board decided to provide faculty housing on the campus. Each house was to cost not over \$3,500, of which \$750 was to be contributed by the faculty member. Only two such homes were completed. Next, in the summer of 1905, Andrew Carnegie made an unconditional offer of \$15,000 for a library building. T. D. Foster, who had crossed the Atlantic with Carnegie that year, aided in securing this gift, and added \$2,000 himself to the library fund. Building commenced immediately upon the receipt of the Carnegie and Foster grants, and the structure was formally dedicated on June 5, 1907.

During the next five years three new buildings were added. In June, 1906, the Board accepted

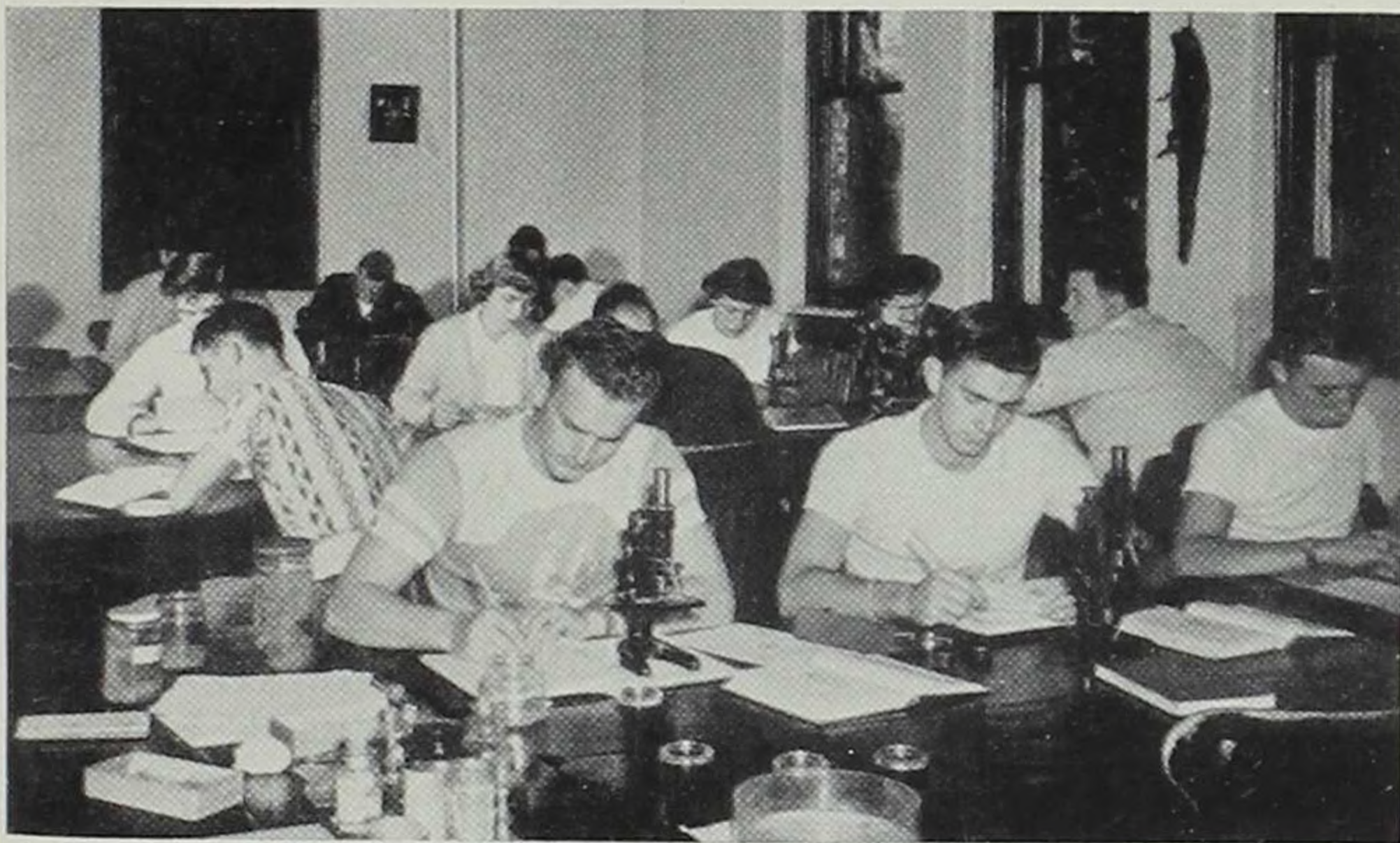
T. D. Foster's offer of \$10,000 toward the construction of a \$20,000 gymnasium, which was completed in time for the 1909 commencement exercises. In 1908 Theodore W. Barhydt of Burlington, a college trustee, proposed to erect a chapel. Work on the Gothic stone structure began in 1910 and was rushed to completion in time for the 1911 commencement. Barhydt Memorial Chapel was formally dedicated on October 18, 1911. Later a large pipe organ was installed in the chapel by Barhydt to complete his gift to the school. In 1911 President Parsons erected his own house, "Broadview," on a twenty-acre tract adjoining the campus on the north. This released the "Mansion," and it was renamed "Ewing Hall" in 1912 and housed the Conservatory of Music. Later "Broadview" was purchased as a home for future presidents of Parsons College.

Changes were also made in the curriculum. In February, 1905, James P. Moorhead was named director of the reorganized department of music. Under his guidance the department became one of the best conservatories of music in Iowa. Formerly the president of Parsons had taught mental and moral science. Philosophy was now to be offered in its place by Harry M. Gage, a young instructor who had just received his master's degree from Columbia University. Gage remained at Parsons for seven years and later became one of Coe College's most distinguished presidents. The college

also received \$80,000 from the estate of Colonel Charles Parsons in 1907, and, in accordance with a stipulation in the will, the Martha Pettus Parsons Chair of Biblical Literature and Evidences was established. This sum brought the total of the gifts to the school from Colonel Parsons to over \$140,000.

In 1913, after an administration of nine years, President Parsons resigned. He was succeeded by Dr. Lowell M. McAfee, who had served as an instructor and later president of Park College, Missouri. Under McAfee's administration Parsons continued to expand. One of his first acts was to centralize all business activities of the school in the college president's office. The following year the Board of Trustees established the Lewis B. Parsons, Jr., School of English Bible and Christian Service. Miss Julia E. Parsons and her brother, Charles L. Parsons, erected a building adjacent to the chapel to house the new school and connected the two by means of a cloister. On October 13, 1915, the structure was dedicated and became a part of the college plant. Dr. Parsons was selected as Dean of the new school, serving until 1927.

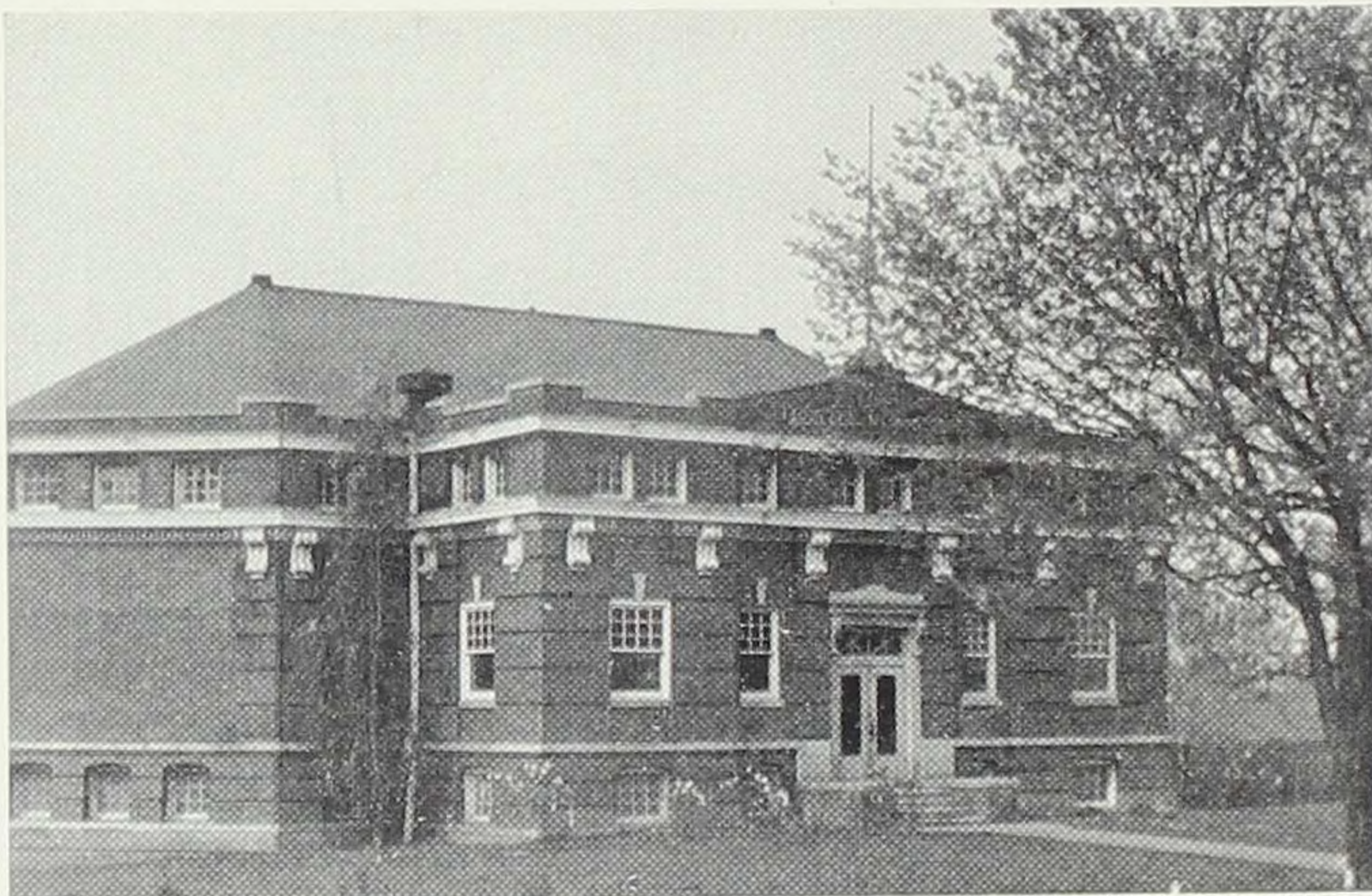
In 1915 Parsons College offered its first summer session. The principal purpose was to provide training for teachers who were not fully prepared for their work. Approximately ninety-five people enrolled, and the project was considered such a



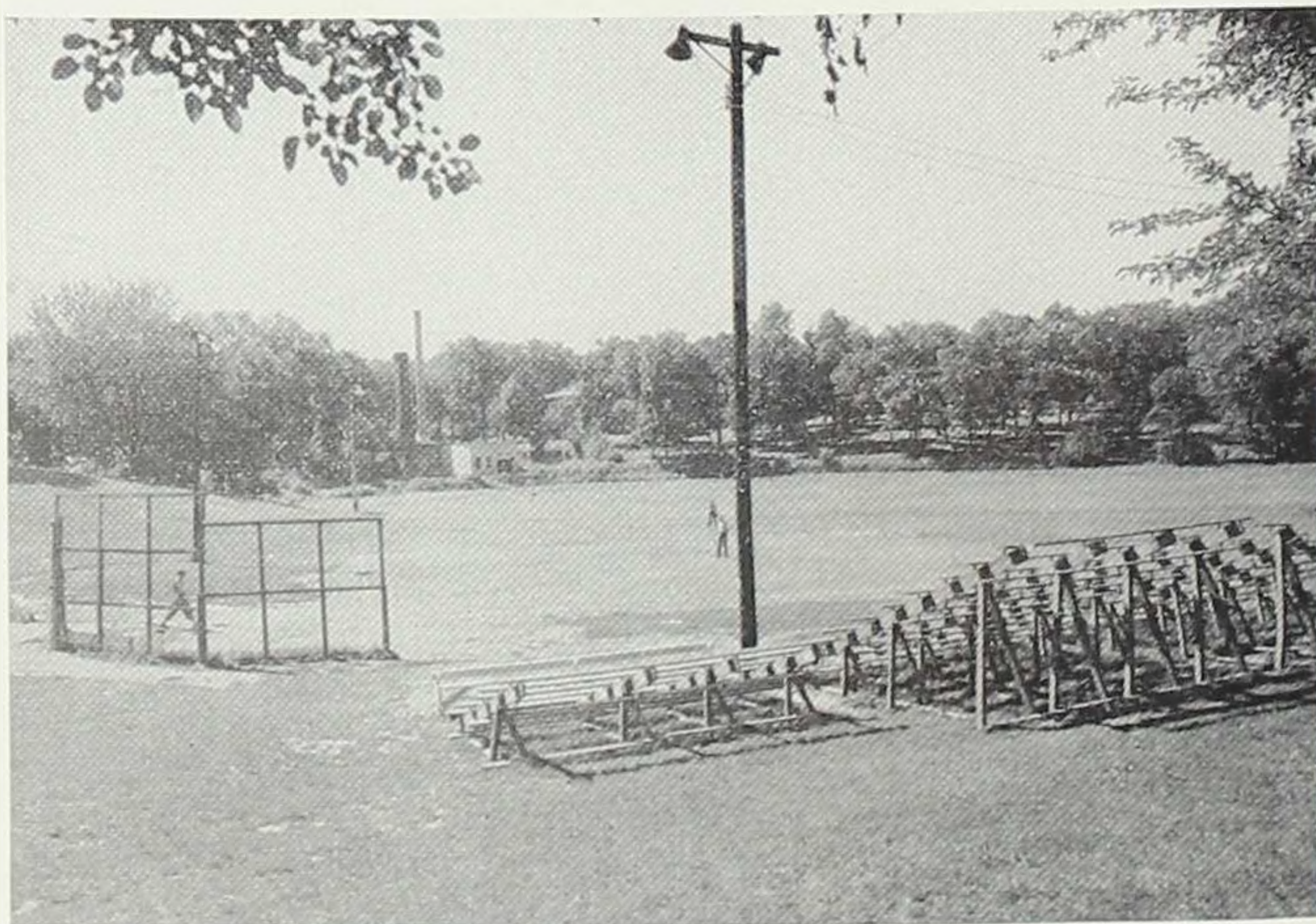
BIOLOGY LABORATORY



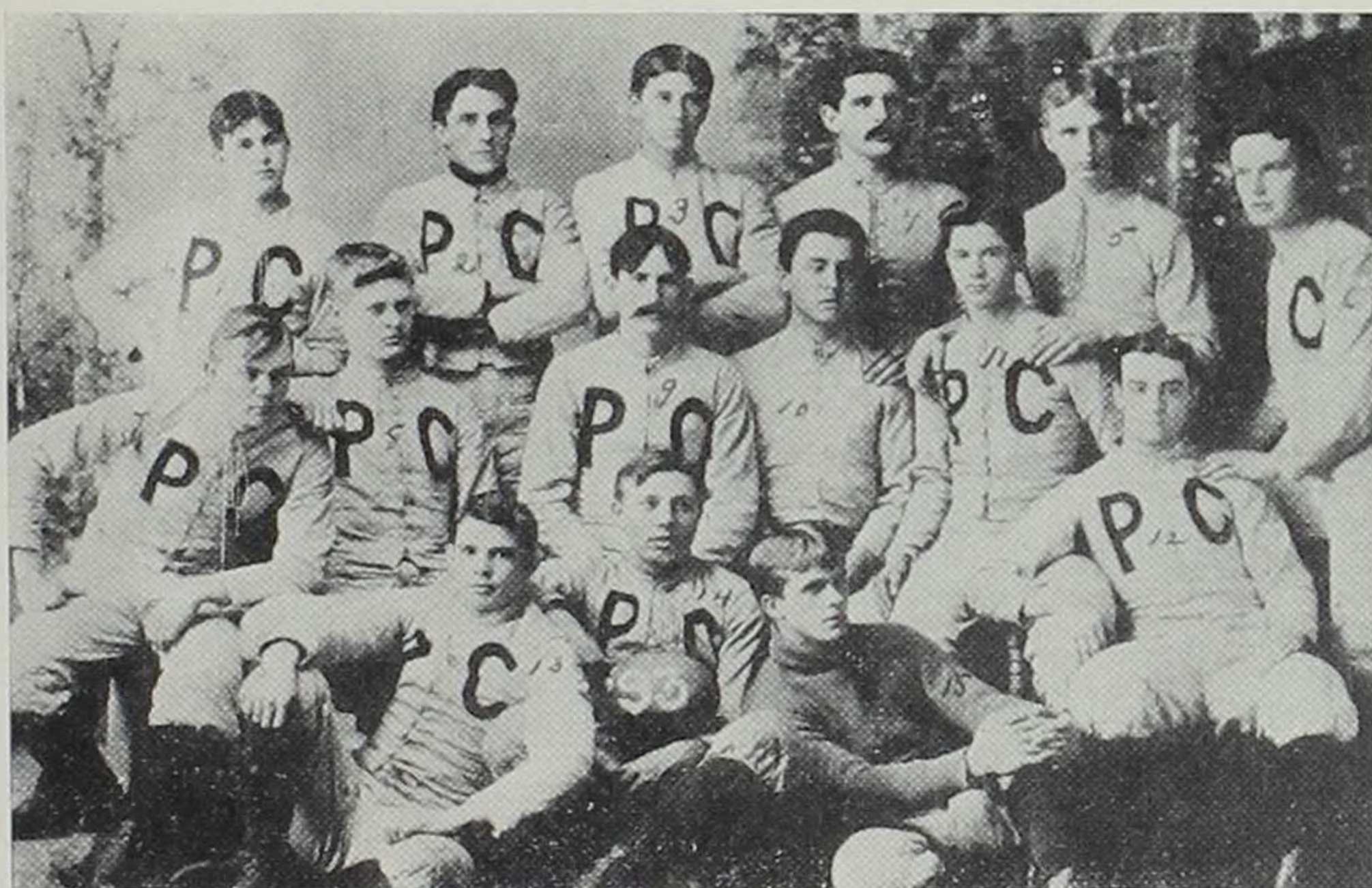
ROOM IN BALLARD HALL



TRUSTEE GYMNASIUM



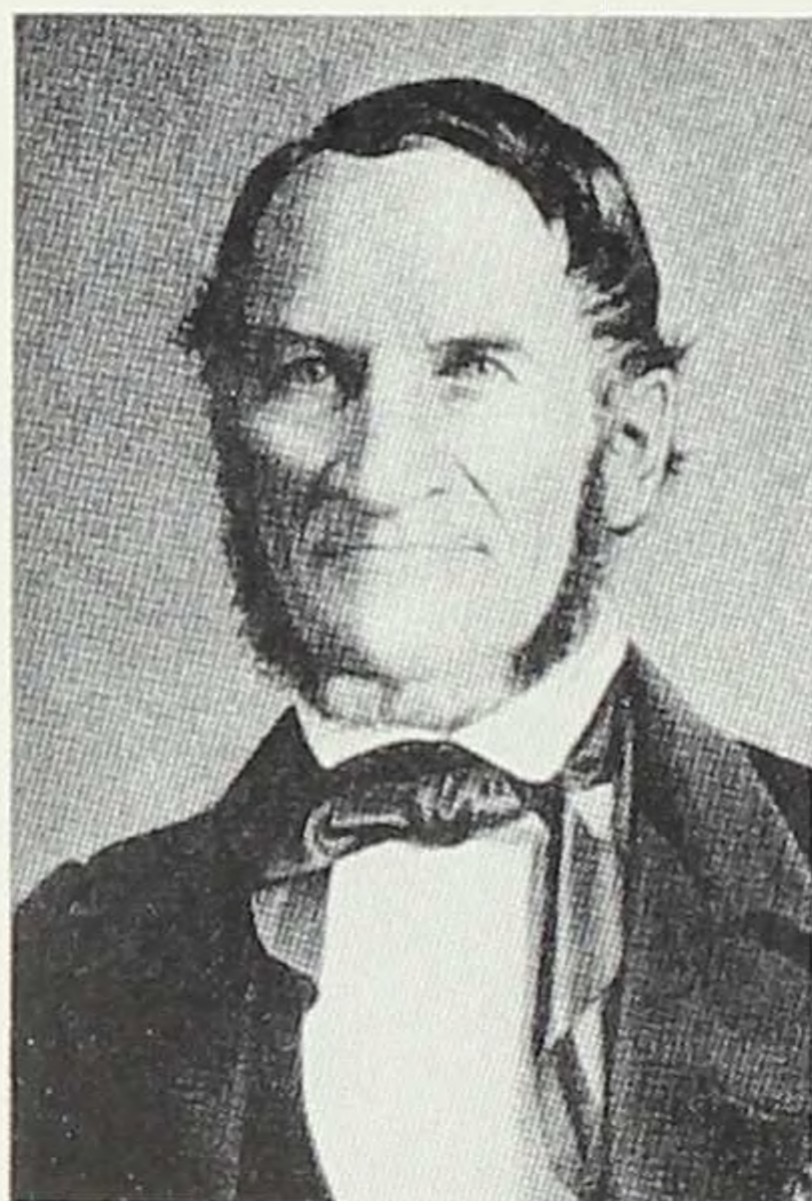
JOHNSON FIELD



FOOTBALL TEAM — 1893



BASKETBALL TEAM — 1949-1950



LEWIS BALDWIN PARSONS
Founder

FOUNDER'S THOUGHT

"Having long been of the opinion that for the usefulness, prosperity and happiness of children, a good moral and intellectual or business education, with moderate means, was far better than large unlimited wealth . . . and having long been convinced that the future welfare of our country, the permanence of its institutions, the progress of our divine religion, and an enlightened Christianity, greatly depended upon the general diffusion of education under correct moral and religious influence, and having during my lifetime

used, to some small extent, the means given me by my Creator in accordance with these convictions, and being desirous of still endowing objects so worthy as far as in my power lies, I do therefore . . . give and bequeath the residue of my estate . . . to my said executors and the survivors or survivor of them, in trust, to be by them used and expended in forwarding and endowing an institution of learning in the State of Iowa." — LEWIS B. PARSONS

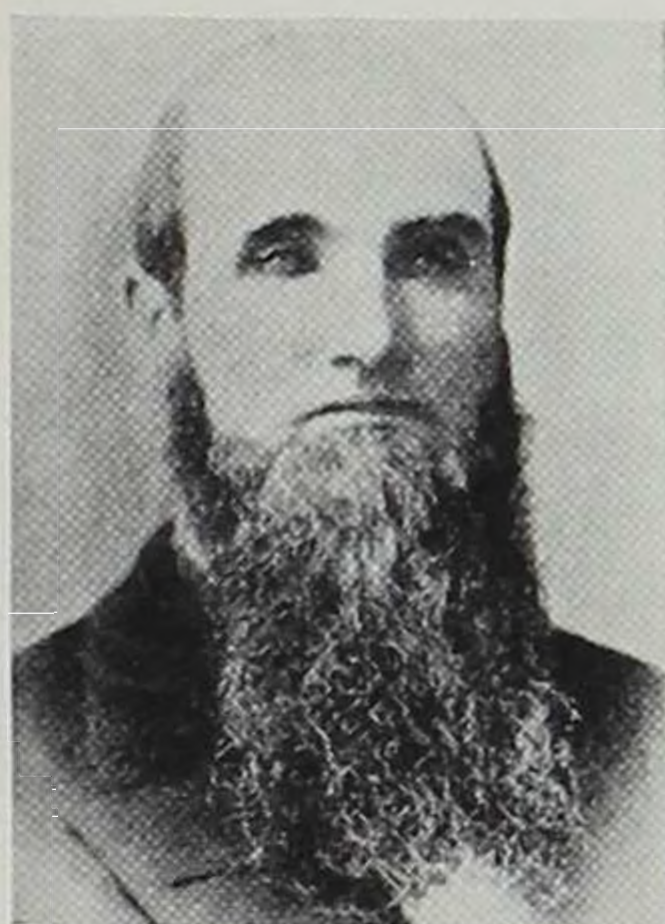


TOM E. SHEARER
President, 1948–

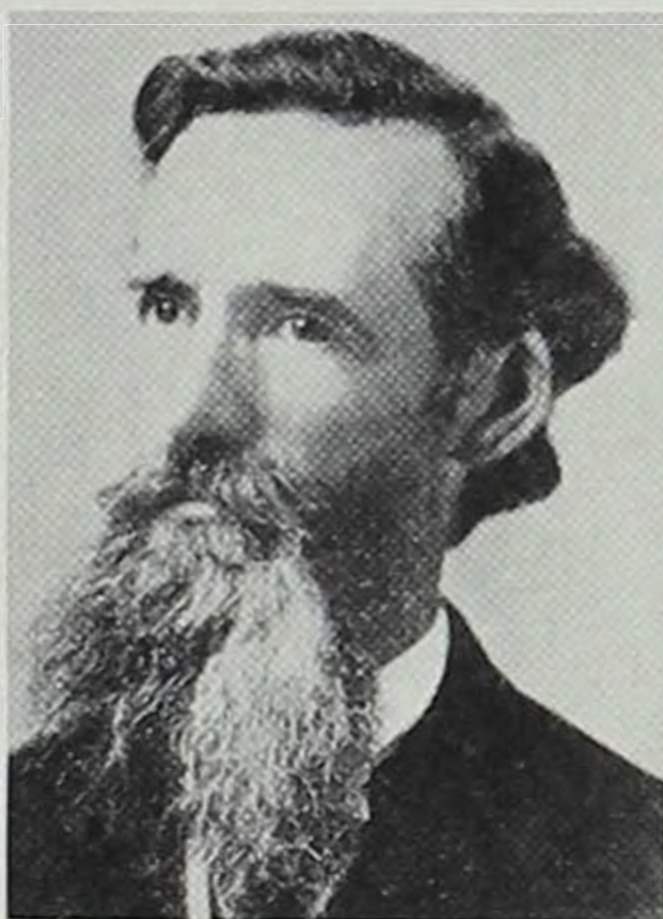


ALEXANDER G. WILSON
Rector, 1875–1877

SOME PAST PRESIDENTS OF PARSONS COLLEGE



John Armstrong
1877-1879



Thomas D. Ewing
1880-1889



Ambrose C. Smith
1889-1896



Daniel E. Jenkins
1896-1900



Frederick W. Hinitt
1900-1904



Willis E. Parsons
1904-1913



Howard McDonald
1922-1927



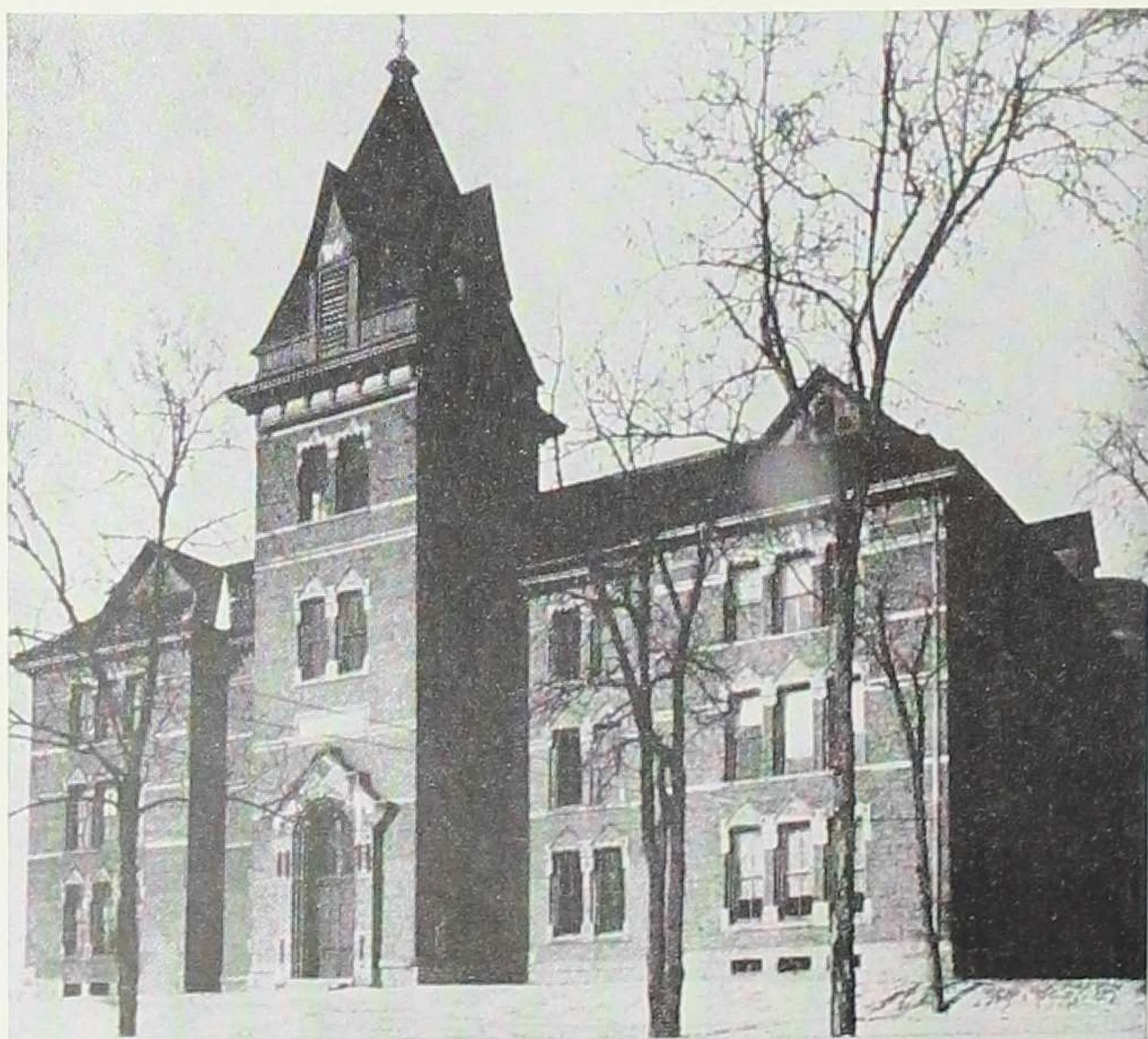
Clarence W. Greene
1928-1938



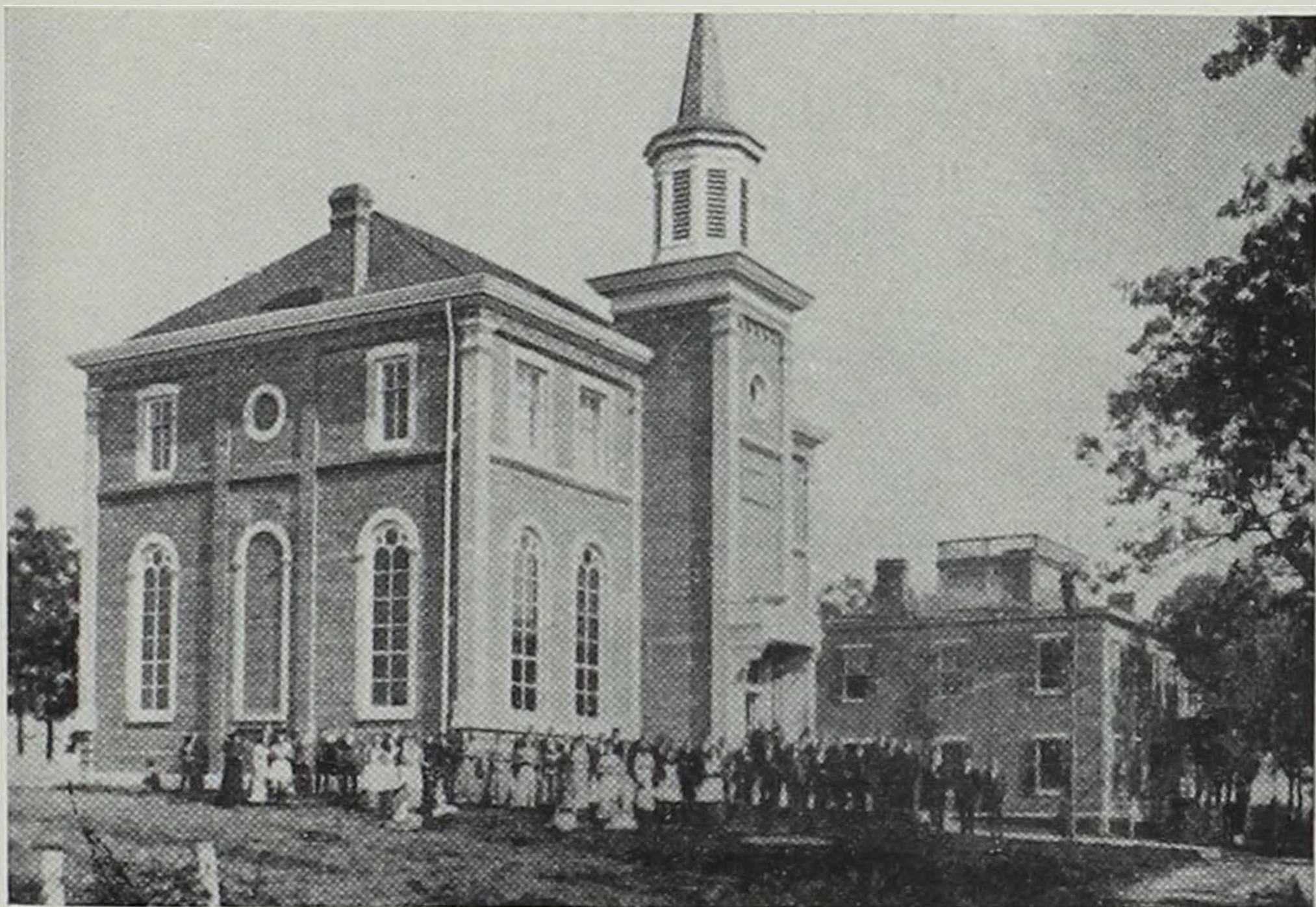
Herbert C. Mayer
1941-1947



EWING HALL



ANKENY HALL



PARSONS COLLEGE — 1876



TRAILER CAMP — 1946



STUDENT UNION



PARSONS MEMORIAL ROOM IN PARSONS HALL

success that it was continued the next summer. However, with another change in administration, a summer session was not offered in 1917, but a summer quarter was again inaugurated in 1919.

During 1914 and 1915 negotiations were begun between Parsons and Lenox College at Hopkinton, contemplating a consolidation of the two schools. Proposals were also advanced by Wesleyan and Simpson colleges to create with Parsons a school to be known as "Iowa Union College," but on March 7, 1916, the Board of Trustees announced the dismissal of any such consolidation proposals.

After three years of service President McAfee resigned in June, 1916. The administration of the college was then placed for one year in the hands of a committee composed of three capable faculty members — Dean William A. Wirtz, chairman, Dr. W. E. Parsons, and Professor Charles Carter. During this period two important events occurred. On September 12, 1916, a committee which had been appointed to formulate a statement of the purpose of Parsons College reported in detail. The following March the Board discontinued the academy since its purposes were being performed by the public high schools.

After operating one year without a president, the Board chose the Reverend R. Ames Montgomery of St. Louis. Dr. Montgomery, a trustee of the school, was an alumnus of Miami University, Ox-

ford, Ohio, and McCormick Theological Seminary. The nation had just been plunged into war and Dr. Montgomery began a vigorous campaign, in spite of unfavorable circumstances, to increase the endowment and to secure additional students. Although World War I took its share of students and financial support away from Parsons, the college was aided by the establishment of a Student Army Training Camp on the campus in 1918. Both Fairfield Hall and Ewing Hall were used for barracks, mess hall, and hospital. Foster Hall was utilized for classrooms and quarters for the officers.

In 1922 President Montgomery resigned to accept a similar position at Centre College, Danville, Kentucky. During his administration, the student body had grown from 348 to 563. In addition, a department of oratory and public speaking had been established in 1919; a two-year normal course was added in 1920; and student government was adopted in 1921, the same year that a budget was used for the first time to handle the finances of the college.

At a called meeting of the Board of Trustees on August 7, 1922, Dr. Howard McDonald, who had served four years as Dean of Parsons, was elected President of the college. McDonald received a B. A. from Princeton in 1902, a Ph. D. from the University of Michigan in 1914. He achieved the presidency at a favorable time since, in 1923, the

Presbyterian Church in Iowa started a drive to secure two million dollars for educational purposes. This sum was to be divided among the three Presbyterian affiliated colleges in the state and the student centers at Cedar Falls, Iowa City, and Ames. Parsons was to receive approximately \$500,000. The campaign, unfortunately, was not as successful as anticipated and Parsons received only \$250,000. The Fairfield community responded to this drive by raising \$150,000 although originally asked to subscribe only \$100,000.

The physical plant of the college was enlarged during President McDonald's administration. In the fall of 1923 Parsons students suggested the purchase of "Broadview," which was eventually accomplished. In addition, the Grove residence and nine and one-half acres of land were acquired and later occupied by the Empyrean Sorority.

The semi-centennial services commemorating the founding of Parsons College were held on June 9, 1925, in Barhydt Memorial Chapel. Dr. Willis E. Parsons was chairman of the committee appointed by the Board of Trustees to arrange for the exercises and Dr. William Chalmers Covert, Secretary of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church, gave the main address.

Through Depression and War

The students, alumni, and friends of Parsons College who observed the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of their school in 1925 could look back with pride to a half century of real accomplishment against almost insuperable odds. Surely the next quarter century (1925-1950) would find progress smoother. A note of optimism and good will prevailed throughout the anniversary services.

Unfortunately the third quarter century of Parsons' history was equally difficult. The sudden death of President McDonald on July 9, 1927, ended a very successful administration. Not only had the physical plant been enlarged but a number of separate departments had been added — education, history, social science, chemistry, philosophy, physics, and business administration. McDonald's successor, Dr. Clarence W. Greene, became president in June, 1929, on the eve of the most withering depression in American history. With income from endowment shrinking to the vanishing point and student enrollment plummeting from 512 in 1925 to 287 a decade later, the plight of Parsons was indeed desperate.

President Greene met these financial problems with courage and success. Furthermore, while

many colleges were losing their accredited rating, the academic standards at Parsons were maintained. The key to his success may be found in the high objectives outlined in his inaugural address — every member of the faculty had to be a mature scholar and a master teacher; each teacher had to be active in the practice of Christianity; the student body must be earnest and purposeful; and the patrons of the school must provide full support. After ten years of service, a tenure longer than any of his predecessors, President Greene submitted his resignation to the Board on March 14, 1938.

Dr. Fred J. Hinkhouse, Dean of the College from 1935 until March, 1941, also provided important contributions in maintaining the strength of Parsons' academic program. A graduate of the college in 1916, Dr. Hinkhouse was professor of history from 1924 until his resignation in 1946.

Dr. Donald L. Hibbard, a businessman and insurance executive, succeeded Greene as president. During his two-year tenure only minor changes occurred. One major disaster took place, however, when a fire swept Ballard Hall in December, 1939, gutting the building. By the spring of 1940 loyal friends were renovating and refurnishing Ballard Hall.

Dr. Herbert C. Mayer succeeded Dr. Hibbard as president of Parsons College in February, 1941. A native of Chicago, Mayer had been educated at

Oberlin College, Boston University, and Harvard. From 1920 to 1929 he had taught education at Boston University, but had been employed previously as a personnel training director for Curtis Wright Flying Service, developing the first standard training course for civilian pilots and mechanics. Mayer resigned as educational executive of the Council for Democracy in order to come to Parsons.

The induction of the thirteenth president of Parsons College occurred on October 13, 1941, in Barhydt Chapel. In his inaugural, Mayer discussed the problem of educating free men and the adjustments that should be made in the liberal arts college program. The "Parsons Progress Fund," the objective of which was to insure the future growth and development of the school, was officially launched at Mayer's inauguration. John E. Hunt of Fairfield spearheaded the drive which sought to raise \$100,000 — \$50,000 for library purposes, \$25,000 for repair and improvement of dormitories, and \$25,000 for a scholarship fund.

Although Parsons did not have any military or naval training units stationed on the campus during World War II, the college introduced courses to prepare students for service with the armed forces. Military photography, radio communications, meteorology, and additional courses in mathematics, business, and administration were added for the men. Courses included for the

women were: introduction to nursing, hospital aid, and essentials of home economics. In addition, Parsons adopted a six-day week so that better work programs could be arranged by students employed on part-time defense jobs or on farms. The 1942 spring vacation was eliminated so that men who had enlisted in the Naval Reserve Corps could report for the next training school on May 22. The college also cooperated with the Navy Department in working out details of the V-1 plan by which freshmen and sophomores were prepared for officer training. By 1943 Parsons College had adopted three steps urged by the military — a year-round schedule; streamlined courses to fit service needs; and the admission of qualified high school students for college work before graduation. As a result of this accelerated program, the first mid-year graduation in the history of the school occurred on January 27, 1943.

To cover special financial demands created by World War II, a "President's Emergency Fund" was authorized by the Board of Trustees and a \$25,000 gift was received from Hubert E. Howard to start the fund.

The details of a "Six-Year Plan" for Parsons were presented at the Founder's Day dinner held on the Fairfield campus in 1944. The plan contemplated a student body of 500, to be admitted on a territorial basis. The curriculum was to be revised so that elementary and secondary teachers

could be trained. The program also proposed the enlargement of the faculty and the adoption of a tenure and retirement system. The plan called for an addition to the library, a student center, new dormitories, a college infirmary, a field house, a new social science building, and the restoration of Ewing Hall. An increase of the endowment fund to \$1,500,000 was visualized and the Parsons National Alumni Council was formed.

One month before the announcement of the Six-Year Plan the Board of Trustees elected Professor Edward H. Bonsall, Jr., to the newly created post of vice-president. Bonsall, who had served for three years as Dean of Student Personnel, was placed in charge of student admissions and public relations. Later, in 1945, Franklin R. Hoff was appointed to the post of assistant to the president to help coordinate all college contacts with the public. Both these positions it was felt would promote the Six-Year Plan.

With the death of Dean Charles Carter in 1944, the students, faculty, alumni, and friends of the college established the Carter Memorial Fund for a Student Union. No concerted financial drive was inaugurated, but contributions from alumni and friends totaled more than \$12,000 by 1950. The Fund is being held intact pending the further consideration of a plan for its use in the establishment of a suitable memorial.

The return of many veterans and their wives to

the campus in 1945 and 1946 created an acute housing shortage at Parsons. In December, 1945, the college applied to the Federal Housing Authority for temporary housing, and fifty prefabricated family units and fifteen standard trailers were allotted. Later, dormitory housing for twenty-four single men was provided. During the winter of 1945-1946 the college purchased the Bradshaw property on Kirkwood Street and remodeled it to accommodate thirty men and one faculty family. The Parsons College Auxiliary aided by locating rooms for sixty-eight students in private homes.

Despite the hardships imposed by World War II, academic standards were improved and the curriculum was strengthened so that there was a full acceptance of credits by the State Board of Educational Examiners. An important addition to the curriculum was made in the spring of 1946: the Board set up the Parsons College Small Business Bureau. Dr. Tom E. Shearer was named director of the new bureau which aimed to coordinate college training with actual business operations. The fiscal affairs of the college operated within a budget which facilitated the retirement of loans and the prompt payment of accounts and salaries. During the period from 1941 to 1947 approximately \$250,000 in gifts was secured.

President Herbert C. Mayer resigned on December 3, 1946. Two weeks later the Trustees

appointed Dr. Tom E. Shearer executive vice-president of the school. Shearer was named acting president in 1947 and president of Parsons in 1948.

Dr. Shearer continued to develop the Six-Year Plan. In his Founder's Day report on February 24, 1948, he noted that Ballard Hall lounge had been completely redecorated and refurnished by the College Auxiliary of Fairfield. The library also had been remodeled and the number of volumes increased. The Presbyterian Restoration Fund provided for the repainting of Foster Hall and the remodeling of Fairfield Hall to provide more office space. The McKenzie Memorial Library, a new science library named in honor of Professor R. Monroe McKenzie, who taught physics and chemistry from 1903 to 1942, had been provided in Foster Hall. Three temporary men's dormitories were built during the summer of 1947 to house seventy-five men. The Board of Trustees had retired some of the outstanding bonds and the 1947 Fairfield Fund brought the college approximately \$17,000. In concluding his report, President Shearer called for higher faculty salaries, a new heating plant, and construction of the Carter Memorial Student Center.

During 1948 progress was made in expanding the physical plant by the construction of a new \$60,000 heating plant. The school's finances were also strengthened. Hubert E. Howard, a gradu-

ate of Parsons in 1909 and a former member of the Board of Trustees, had suggested in 1944 that more outside support would be received if the Fairfield community would actively assist the college. Subsequently, business firms contributed money or real estate yearly to the "Fairfield Fund." In 1948, as the fund approached \$15,000, Howard proposed to match whatever sum was raised, which eventually totaled \$25,060. In addition, Mrs. Emma A. Davies of Fairfield gave the college her interest in a farm, the sale of which added \$15,000 more to the fund. Mrs. Edith Foster Chamberlin offered to donate \$4,000 to the college library in 1948 if the New York Alumni chapter would raise an additional \$1,000. This condition was met within twenty-four hours. Mrs. Chamberlin's offer was repeated in 1949, and again the condition was met and the gift completed.

In spite of the progress made in developing the Six-Year Plan, Parsons was dropped from the North Central Association accredited list July 1, 1948. First accredited by the Association in 1913, Parsons had remained in good standing until 1943 when, on the basis of a low standing in the 1939-1940 Finance Study, a special report on finances was requested. In addition, another special report on the library was desired. A survey was ordered in 1946 and as a result Parsons was dropped from the accredited list.

Immediately following the Association's action in 1948, President Shearer and the Board of Trustees developed a special two-year rehabilitation plan, involving an expenditure of more than \$300,000 beyond the regular operating budget. A drive for "reaccreditation" funds was launched to cover these expenditures. Once again Hubert E. Howard helped the school by giving \$50,000 in 1950, bringing his total contributions to Parsons to more than \$135,000 since 1942.

Examiners from the North Central Association visited the campus in January, 1950. They found the school finances had been strengthened; a new heating plant constructed; the library remodeled and many volumes added. Furthermore, housing units for faculty and students had been improved; classrooms and laboratories were rebuilt; a student health program had been provided; a new student personnel plan instituted; and a modernized curriculum was in process of being formulated. In spite of a favorable recommendation by the examiners, the board of review failed to reinstate Parsons. The college filed an appeal, and oral arguments were presented by President Shearer and Walter E. Williams of the Board of Trustees. Additional briefs were submitted in June, 1950, and the board of review finally recommended that Parsons be restored to the accredited list on July 1, 1950. This action represented a personal victory for President Shearer, the members of the

Board of Trustees, and the loyal alumni of the school who had contributed heavily to improve the finances of the institution.

As Parsons College enters its 76th year in 1950 a new era of service looms before it. The physical equipment will be enlarged in 1950 by the construction of a new swimming pool adjoining Trustee Gymnasium. The land has been deeded by the college to the city of Fairfield which will build and operate a \$60,000 pool as a municipal enterprise. The location of the pool on the campus marks the first step in a long-range program to make the college area a community-college recreation center.

The fall of 1950 will see Parsons College instituting a new curriculum that will strengthen its academic program. As a result, work toward a degree can be carried on in four divisions: humanities, practical arts, science, and social science. Every student must complete a minimum number of hours in each division regardless of his major field of interest. New students enrolling at Parsons can now major in one of the following fields: music, business administration, physical education, English, social science, science, and foreign languages.

There is much in the past history of Parsons to justify its continued growth in the future. Great progress has been made since 1875 when thirty-odd students gathered in one building to open the new school. While 1950 marks the end of the Six-

Year Plan, much construction is still anticipated. In reporting to the Board of Trustees in June, 1950, President Shearer declared: "Probably at no time since the founding of the college has the future held more promise, or the problems loomed larger. . . . Parsons College, on her 75th anniversary, stands at the beginning of a period of great promise. The need for this college and the educational opportunities she offers is very great indeed. But, if the college is to fulfill her true destiny, she must be strong financially and academically." All Iowans join the students, alumni, and friends of Parsons in wishing the school pleasant sailing during the next quarter century.

Student Life at Parsons

A good administrator, a strong faculty, and a well-balanced library are essential to any well-rounded college or university. It is the student body, however, that forms the heart of any institution.

The first students at Parsons enjoyed few of the attractive features associated with modern college life. Most of them had never seen a college before. They had no precedents to guide them, no traditions to follow, no loyalties to bind them together, no literary, social, or academic organizations to join.

Parsons College evidently became a coeducational school by accident. The will of the founder and all the records of the Board of Trustees fail to give any positive statement on the admission of women. The Board of Trustees at its second meeting, in June, 1876, stated that the "Committee to whom the manuscript of the first catalogue was referred was directed to leave out of the catalogue the invitation to both sexes," but presumably these instructions were not followed. Seven girls applied for admission on the first day, and the administration could do nothing but accept these determined young feminists. Although women were

not encouraged to attend Parsons, they continued to come and the coeducational status of the college was established.

Campus housing was not provided until the construction of Ballard Hall for women and the provision for sorority and fraternity houses. Dormitories for the "independent" men were not supplied until 1947. For many years students lived in private homes throughout the city. This was the result largely of the ban on secret societies, such as sororities and fraternities. Even an assembly of students without the permission of the faculty was prohibited.

Fraternities did not appear on the Parsons campus until 1922. With the return of World War I veterans to the campus, the housing problem became acute and the organization of local fraternities for "eating and sleeping purposes" was permitted. In February, 1922, fourteen men organized the Alpha Kappa Chi fraternity. The same spring another group formed the "Iron Key Club," and when the faculty relaxed its ruling this group became the Zeta Theta Gamma fraternity. Both groups, as organized in 1922, were active on the campus in 1950.

Literary societies were established the first year the school opened. These groups flourished and became the "rallying centers" for students. Even as recently as 1917, Parsons had six different literary clubs. The major part of their programs

consisted of formal debates followed by discussion from the floor.

The first literary society for women at Parsons was organized on October 5, 1875. It was known as the Alethean Society. This group was active for the first year and then did not meet again until October, 1879. Later, in 1883, ten members withdrew and formed the Elzevir Sorority, so named because "Elzevir" was a synonym for "careful, elegant literary work." This organization is still active on the Parsons campus as one of the two sororities. Eventually the Alethean Literary Society disbanded and the Empyrean Sorority took its place in 1903.

Ten days after the formation of the Alethean Society, the men organized the Aldine Literary Society, named after the historic Aldine printing press of Venice. This group promoted forensic and literary activities and also provided a wholesome social life not only for its own members but for the entire student body. Another literary organization known as the Orio Society was founded in the fall of 1879 by former members of the Aldine Society who withdrew because of the imposition of certain fines. For two years this group was prominent on the campus and then was discontinued for a term, only to become active again in 1882.

One major objective of Parsons College was the providing of a "Christian education" for its

students. Each student was expected to attend church regularly in Fairfield. Daily attendance of chapel was compulsory. In addition, religious services were held every Sunday afternoon in the chapel, at which time a sermon was preached by a faculty member. Chapel attendance is still compulsory at Parsons, but the exercises are held only once a week.

The original religious organization for the students — the "Society of Religious Inquiry" — was merged in 1881 with the Young Men's Christian Association. The first membership of twenty-six included both men and women, but in 1883 the women organized their own association. At the present time the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. work is carried on jointly by the two organizations through the Student Christian Association. This group, holding meetings semi-monthly, sponsors a number of all-college parties each year, is active in supplying nearby churches with speakers, and arranges for the Religion in Life week.

The social and personal habits of the students were strictly regulated by the college authorities. The playing of cards, billiards, and pool was absolutely forbidden. Only with the return of World War II veterans was the "no smoking on the campus" restriction lifted. Students in the early days of the school were not allowed to leave the city without securing the proper permission. Study hours were strictly regulated.

Athletics did not play an important part in student life before 1890. The first football team was organized in 1893 when an alumnus at Princeton wrote Wilson Reed of Fairfield that some former Parsons students then at Princeton believed their Alma Mater should have a football team. Harry Turner of Corning, then a member of the Princeton squad and a former student at Parsons, said that he would stop in Fairfield for a week and coach the team. Turner continued to help the team by writing letters containing diagrams of plays. Funds were raised to secure the fairgrounds and to level a field and erect goal posts. The Iowa Wesleyan-Parsons game was initiated in 1893.

The present athletic field was a marsh until an alumni committee in 1894 drained and leveled it. The first game was played on this new field in the fall of 1894: Parsons defeated the Elliott Business College of Burlington 70 to 0. In the winter of 1904 President Parsons suggested that the trustees purchase property lying south of the campus between Main and Third streets. Students under the supervision of Professor Job E. Johnson rebuilt the field and erected a fence in 1906. In recognition of this service, "Alumni Field" was rededicated as "Johnson Field" in 1947.

Basketball has been a major sport at Parsons since 1905. In 1950, the "Kelly Greens" were the champions of the Southern Division of the Iowa Conference, their first title trophy in twenty-four

years. Baseball, track, and golf are other sports offered in the men's athletic department. The Letter Club, an honorary organization composed of all athletes who have won a letter in any of the major sports and have successfully passed twelve hours of academic work, is active on the campus. This group is in charge of many of the activities connected with Homecoming Day and sponsors the annual Homecoming Dance.

A girls' basketball team is the main attraction of the women's physical education section, playing other college teams, high school squads, and business and professional college teams. Each year the Parsons girls' varsity squad plays a benefit game with the faculty members to raise money for the World Student Service Fund. This contest is inevitably won by the more powerful feminine string. In 1947, the Women's Athletic Association was formed. This group sponsors intramural girls' games in basketball, volleyball, kittenball, and hockey.

An excellent music department plays an important role in student life. The Parsons College Philharmonic Choir participates in the regular Tuesday chapel, the Sunday vespers, special Christmas programs, and several radio broadcasts. Each spring the choir makes a tour of many Iowa towns, presenting programs before high school assemblies and church groups. In 1950 concerts were presented in thirteen Iowa cities. In addi-

tion, a college ensemble and a band have been organized.

As in all colleges, the student publications are important since they record student life on the campus. *The Portfolio*, which appeared in December, 1881, was the first student publication at Parsons. Originally planned as a monthly literary magazine, it later assumed its present newspaper form. Not until 1909 did the first Parsons annual, the *Peira*, make its appearance.

The need for a building other than the gymnasium in which to hold the all-college parties has long been recognized by the administration. Soon after Dr. Shearer assumed his position as executive vice-president, a student canteen, known as "The Hut," was opened in a surplus government warehouse. While not a large building, there was space for a snack bar and room for card playing and dancing. The walls, decorated by the art classes, portrayed aspects of student life on the campus. Although originally sponsored by the Student Christian Association, a board composed of the co-presidents of that organization, the college treasurer, and a faculty member was named to supervise the new student center. In 1949 "Broadview," the former residence of the presidents, was set aside as a student union until it would be possible to build the Carter Memorial Student Union.

Student government was established at Parsons

in 1921. The nomination and election of members of the student council has taken on all the aspects of a modern political party system, particularly since the return of World War II veterans. A caucus-convention is held in the chapel where nominating speeches are made and slates of candidates presented. Parades are organized and handbills are distributed over the campus.

Another important feature of student life consists of the days set aside for special observances. Among these is the Pan American Day celebration which was first held on the Parsons campus in 1944 and since has become an annual event under the supervision of Professor W. Jefferson Dennis. The Fairfield Rotary Club cooperated with the college in holding the first two-day event, which included art and education exhibits, music by a Spanish chorus, and lectures by Professor Dennis and Forrest W. Seymour of the Des Moines *Register*. The 1950 observance presented Mexican folk dances by native artists.

"Campus Day" usually occurs in April. Classes are dismissed and students and faculty members are supplied with rakes and shovels with which to clean the campus. At noon a picnic dinner is served to the workers. One day during the winter is designated for the "Snow Carnival." The activities of this event include ice skating, coasting on Gym Hill, a "Fun Chapel" in the afternoon, and a carnival dance in the evening at the union.

The academic side of college life is emphasized by the selection of students to membership in Phi Kappa Phi, an honorary scholastic fraternity. In addition, several students are honored each year by being listed in "Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges." The members are nominated by the vote of the entire student body and elected by the faculty.

Parsons students have always taken a great interest in speech and dramatic activities. A forensic club was organized in 1917, but long before that date representatives from the school had been entered in many state oratorical contests. In 1919 the club affiliated with Pi Kappa Delta, the national honorary forensic fraternity. The group sent from Parsons in 1924 to the national convention of Pi Kappa Delta was listed as "the outstanding delegation" at the meeting. A dramatic club was organized at Parsons in 1916, and each year produces at least two major plays. In 1918, the school secured the first Iowa chapter of Theta Alpha Phi, national honorary dramatic fraternity.

The origin of the college colors, Old Rose and Gold, is not known but is believed to have been suggested by a campus committee. The source of the old college yell is also a mystery. *The Portfolio* on June 6, 1896, stated that thereafter the college yell would be "Hi yi, Hi yi, Hi yi, Hippikanoori, Ki yi, Parsons." To increase the school spirit, two college songs have been used by the

student body. The first song was composed by Charles Sanger of the Class of 1917, with the music provided by Professor C. W. Mountain of the Parsons Conservatory of Music. The other song, entitled "Alma Mater," was written by Susan Fulton (Mrs. Carl Welty), a daughter of C. J. Fulton of the Class of 1883.

A great change has occurred in the student life at Parsons since 1875 when the chapel and the literary societies provided most of the campus activities. Today, clubs and associations are organized for every aspect of student activity. Many college parties are now enjoyed. Among these are the annual Homecoming Dance, the "Flunkers' Bawl" between semesters, the Emerald Ball on the eve of St. Patrick's Day, and the spring formal dances of the sororities and fraternities. Still a part of the old tradition is the wearing of the green cap by the freshmen. Gone is the austerity associated with the early days of Parsons: present student life on the campus is much like that of any denominational college.

