

## Growing Up with Emmetsburg

Near the turn of the century, sixty-three years ago, I started the practice of law in Emmetsburg. It was the year of 1904, still the horse and buggy days, but the automobile was just striving to enter the picture. It goes without saying that momentous events have taken place during this span of time. But at that I was only coming back to my hometown where I started twenty-six years before.

As I look back over those early years, I realize that from boyhood I had been steeped in the traditions of the law. I had gazed with awe at the long shelves of calfbound law books in my father's library and had a consuming curiosity as to what those clients were doing when they went into his private office and he closed the door. Whenever the occasion offered I would go up to the courthouse to hear my father and the other lawyers try their cases.

As a boy, I knew every nook and cranny of the courthouse. My boy friends and I used to wander through the corridors, up and down stairs, and into offices in search of excitement. Sometimes we would get permission to go up to the cupola-like tower. The trip up the long winding

wooden stairs was great fun. In the tower room with its four big windows, we had a magnificent view of the town, the surrounding country, and the lake stretching away to the northeast. Often we imagined that we were on an enclosed magic carpet high in the sky, watching the pygmies walking around far below us and the tiny teams of horses tied to the hitching posts on the square.

### *The County Jail*

The jail was an especially fascinating place. It was a dingy dungeon in the basement of the courthouse. We boys would peer into the small barred windows until a prisoner yelled at us and then we would run. The windows were on the ground level but were surrounded by a deep trench about two feet wide which was called the "moat." We wondered why it was not filled with water like those around old feudal castles.

One day the sheriff invited me to see the jail from the inside. He opened the big iron door with an iron key that looked as large as a hammer, and then locked it behind us. A creepy feeling came over me as I saw about a dozen men, some in their cells and others in the "bull pen." There was only one room in the jail, with the cells made of iron bars riveted together into heavy grating along one side. It was a dark, gloomy place, but it seemed as though the prisoners were trying to keep it and themselves clean. They were shaved and their hair neatly combed.

The sheriff introduced me: "This is Lawyer McCarty's boy. He's going to be a lawyer, so if you get into trouble he will get you out." The men joked with the sheriff and tried to be friendly with me, but I was too timid. When the sheriff suggested that I stay awhile and started towards the door as if to lock me in, I was scared stiff. I can hear the guffaws of those men yet. Never in my whole life was I so glad to get into the open air again. The same feeling came to me years later when interviewing a prisoner I was to defend, the sheriff forgot all about me and left me locked in the cell for several hours.

Many legends grew up about one big, burly, good-natured fellow, a notorious character named "Jack." He seldom worked as he seemed to have a more lucrative business elsewhere. He could not resist petty thievery and was often in trouble locally. He was a star boarder of the sheriff.

The story is told how one day Jack decided to call on the sheriff, who ran the St. James Hotel across the street from the courthouse. He rounded up all his fellow prisoners, marched them across the street to the hotel, and in a neat speech told the sheriff how much they appreciated his courteous treatment and that they had come to pay their respects. The sheriff knew that the joke was on him, so he gave them a good hotel dinner. Then, Jack marched the prisoners back to the jail and locked them in without the loss of a single

man. The sheriff never did find out how Jack got them out.

### *The Old Courtroom*

How I loved to spend hours listening to my father or some of the other lawyers try their law suits. The big courtroom was always packed, with standing room only at a premium, when there was a jury trial in progress. The sheriff would boost me up on the window sill of one of the high windows, and from this vantage point I followed the proceedings with intense interest. The twelve jurors sat in the jury box looking solemn and important. The judge was a small man with a silky black beard, wearing a little black skull cap, and his sharp eyes watching what went on before him. My father said he was a good judge.

The courtroom was the meeting place of the town, especially for political rallies and conventions. It was a large room with a gallery across the east side. Jonathan P. Dolliver, the congressman from our district before he became senator, was considered one of the foremost debaters of that time. The room was always packed to overflowing when he spoke. He never failed to thrill the crowd with his oratory, unanswerable logic, and the way he settled the hecklers who ventured to argue with him. Robert G. Cousins was another Iowa congressman I admired very much. He was a gifted orator and always a popular speaker at political rallies.

It is hard for me to realize that I was two years old when that courthouse was built in 1880.

#### *Political Rallies*

Torchlight processions and big political rallies were the main interests in the campaigns of those days. I once remonstrated with my father when the Democrats stretched a big Cleveland banner across the street with one of the posts right in front of his office. He only laughed and said it was the votes that counted. He was quite right as in the presidential elections the result was very close each time, with Cleveland winning first, then losing to Harrison, and then winning again. I could not understand why a sedate lawyer like my father would march in the Republican parade, wearing a bright campaign cap, with a gaily-colored oilcloth cape over his shoulders, and carrying a burning kerosene torch over his head. But it was a big parade and I soon realized that practically all of the Republicans were in it.

#### *Family Background*

No individual can claim sole credit for what he is. Heredity as well as environment has a hand in molding one's personality. My father, George B. McCarty, was born in Melrose, Pike County, Pennsylvania. Alexander McCarty, my grandfather, was of Scotch-Irish descent, a devout Presbyterian, and a successful farmer and businessman. My grandmother, Jane Hulse McCarty, was of Pennsylvania Dutch parentage. She

was an immaculate housekeeper, very straight and prim in her manner, and although the cookie jar was always handy for the grandchildren, she never tolerated any foolishness.

My great grandfather, Frederick McCarty, was a wheelwright and built boats and ships. It is a tradition in our family that he furnished some of the boats that General Washington used in crossing the Delaware River in his famous Christmas night attack and defeat of the British at Trenton. This seems to be borne out by his old cane still in his family's possession. It has the date 1772 etched in the yellowed ivory head.

Father was admitted to the bar in 1868 and started practice the next year in Emmetsburg, then only a small settlement on the Des Moines River in Palo Alto County, Iowa. That part of the state was a vast unbroken prairie with only a few scattered settlers who had built their cabins in the timber along the lakes and streams. The tall, lush grass in Palo Alto County intrigued him as it indicated a fertile soil and abundant rainfall. The Milwaukee Railroad was also building westward in that direction.

My mother, Maria Blair, was born in Darien, Wisconsin. Her father, Gaylord Blair, was a typical big-bearded Scot squire. Her mother was Esther Wallingford, whose parents were aristocratic English and prominent in the railway industry in Chicago.

In the spring of 1874, Miss Maria Blair came to this frontier town of Emmetsburg to visit her sister, Mrs. Harrison. She liked it so well that she decided to stay. She secured a first class teacher's certificate and taught the public school in the old town until the removal of the town to the new site. She was well educated, talented, and soon procured a position as deputy superintendent of schools. When the Superintendent, Mr. Day, left for the east she was acting superintendent for the rest of the year.

Her second "Teacher's First Class Certificate," which was issued by the county superintendent of schools at Emmetsburg, April 1, 1875, has been preserved among our family papers. It shows that in each of eight subjects she had a grade of 100% and a grade of 95% in arithmetic and orthography. The date of that certificate is worthy of note, as it was three years later to a day that her first child was born. That April first date seems destined to be a memorable one in the McCarty family chronicle.

#### *Romance on the Lake*

Mother, in a reminiscent mood one day, told us about her first meeting with father. A number of young people started out for a picnic on Third Island in 1875. They sailed up the lake in McCarty and Brown's sailboat but were becalmed and kept out in the hot sun for several hours. Miss Blair and George B. McCarty were in the party.

Most of the men did nothing to relieve the situation, but George kept paddling away until he got the boat near shore and then jumped into the water and pulled it to land so that all could disembark safely without getting wet. This courageous conduct contrasted so strongly with the ineptitude of the other men that romance blossomed. They were married December 14, 1875, at the Harrison home, the white house on the hill in the northwest part of the present city. That house was occupied by the Appleby family at 307 State Street until recently but now has been torn down to make way for a new dwelling. The Wallingford family in Chicago sent mother, as a wedding present, a fine grand piano, the first piano in the county. It is still treasured as an heirloom.

Mother was very religious and took an active part in church and Sunday School activities. After her death, we found several diaries which she had kept as a girl. While away at school at the Girl's Seminary at Janesville, Wisconsin, at the age of 17, her diary contained many entries regarding her life there. On Saturday, April 15, 1865, she made this memorable entry: "The sad news came this morning that President Lincoln was assassinated."

#### *"The Old Town"*

Emmetsburg grew to be quite a settlement with the business buildings straggling along the street from Pond's Mill on the river to the higher ground



to the east. This was the Old Town of Emmetsburg. In the fall of 1874, Old Town was moved bodily up to the new site on the hill near the lake, the location of the present city, to await the coming of the railroad.

Father, as I knew him over the years, had a very agreeable disposition and made friends easily, but he was stern and unyielding in matters of principle. He had a keen mind and was methodical and conscientious in his work. Although he tried many cases in court he preferred the office practice. His advice was widely sought.

It is evident that my father had acquired some distinction as a lawyer throughout northwest Iowa as he was elected district attorney in 1876. In those days the district attorney traveled the circuit of twenty northwest Iowa counties with the judge, trying the criminal cases of the district. My father and mother moved from Emmetsburg to Sioux City, upon his election, in order to be nearer the heavy work of the very large district. Train connections were most unsatisfactory and often occasioned long delays and overnight stops. Many times it was necessary to drive over rough ungraded roads in a hired "rig" to keep court appointments.

In spite of the hardships of those early days, my mother often traveled with him. The story is told that on one of these occasions a mob of men broke into the county jail, dragged the prisoner

out, put a rope around his neck, and was about to hang him to a nearby tree when my mother marched out. She took the rope away from the astonished men and lectured them soundly for their lawlessness. They turned the prisoner back to the sheriff and dispersed. When I asked mother about this occurrence she changed the subject and when I questioned father as to the authenticity of the story, he smiled and said nothing. So to this day I do not know whether it is the truth or a legend. At any rate it was typical of my mother who, though very religious and modest, was fearless.

Father diligently prepared his cases, kept his appointments, and faithfully prosecuted the indictments when they came to trial. The long drawn out trials of the present day were unheard of then. When the accused pleaded guilty, the entry in my father's diary was, "My fee \$5.00." When the case was tried the entry was, "My fee \$20.00." Rather small pickings according to modern standards, but he received a salary in addition to the fees.

A dollar went much further then, as indicated by his expense entries: Haircut and shave 35¢, three dozen eggs 30¢, meat 20¢, hotel bill \$1.00, supper at Storm Lake 50¢, steak 20¢, sack of flour \$1.25, suit of clothes and other things \$23.30.

As a prosecutor he was very successful. There were very few acquittals. Strangely enough one of these "not guilty" verdicts was rendered in a

criminal case on the very day of my birth — April 1st — and was dutifully chronicled on the same page. It is putting it mildly to say that he was trying that case under difficulties that day. All I rated was a laconic entry in his diary, "A boy at our house at 9½ this evening."

Mother wanted me named "Dwight" after Dwight L. Moody, who was then at the height of his fame as an evangelist, and insisted that my middle name should be that good old Scotch name "Gaylord" after her father, Gaylord Blair. Father took down the big family Bible and wrote in a firm round hand in ink, "Dwight Gaylord McCarty born at Sioux City, Iowa, April 1, 1878." That settled the record for all time.

A few years later when the First Congregational Church was built in Emmetsburg and a regular minister called, I was baptized by that name. My relatives have retold the incident so often that the story has been long accepted as true, that as the minister passed down the baptismal line, when he came to me, I piped up, "Now me."

Both of my parents wanted to settle down to a normal mode of living and a general law practice. So father sent his resignation to the Governor before the end of his term of office. We moved back to Emmetsburg on October 5, 1878. I was just a few days over six months old.

#### *My Early Days*

It is not my lot to be able to brag that I was

born in a log cabin, but I am proud of the rugged pioneer life that my father and mother endured in order to build a home in that frontier community. The return to Emmetsburg was going back home for my parents, and I arrived with them to start life's great adventure in what was destined to be my home for the rest of my life.

Memory plays many tricks and often rides side by side with imagination. It is difficult to retrace the years and view one's boyhood with objectivity. But there are some events and activities that in retrospect indicate the kind of environment provided in the town during the early days of youthful development.

As a youngster I would often trudge along Broadway in Emmetsburg contentedly scuffing my bare feet in the soft dust of the street. It was a wide street with plenty of room even with teams tied to the hitching posts along both sides. We did not walk on the board sidewalks because there were too many slivers for our bare feet.

The dust was so bad that a few years later the merchants chipped in, raised a fund, and hired Pat Galleger to sprinkle the streets. It was different when it rained as the streets then became a quagmire of mud, giving rise to all sorts of problems.

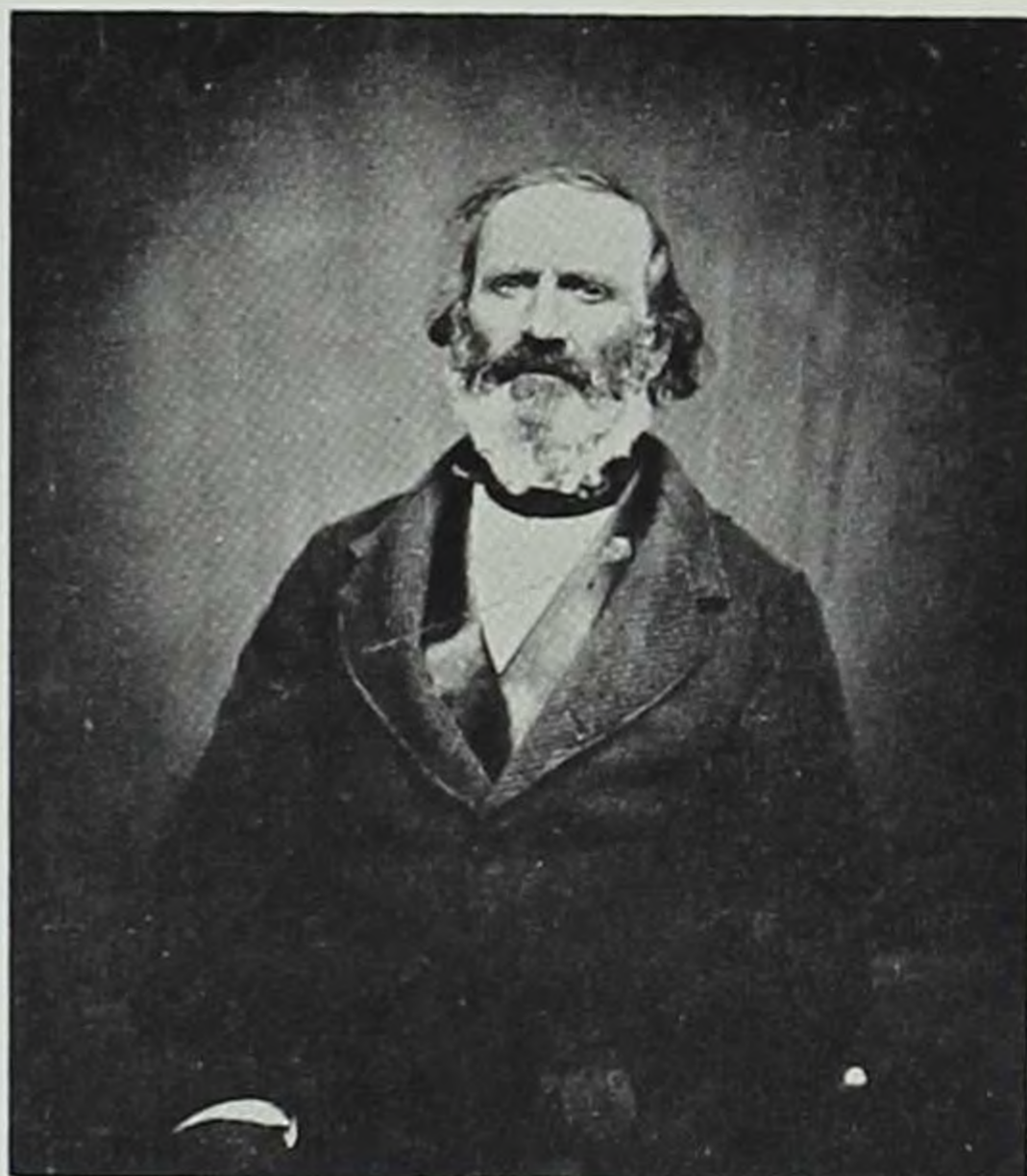
A big trough in front of the courthouse was the watering place for thirsty horses, but it was leaky and unsightly. The people put on a drive and purchased a big ornate iron one. With the advent of

the automobile and the disappearance of the horse, it was moved to 12th Street in front of the old standpipe and was kept full of water for the rare horse or team that came to town. Finally, it lost all of its former prestige and was broken up for scrap iron.

Although I was an inquisitive little fellow there were some things that I could not understand. The man who came to court our hired girl always brought a little sack of candy for me. I thought he meant for me to give it to her, but when I did she seemed embarrassed. I liked him and wanted to stay around where they were, but they always seemed to want me to go somewhere else.

I heard a man swearing one day and he used words I did not know what they meant, so I asked grandmother. She was so shocked that she would not tell me. I wondered how a boy is to learn if folks will not tell him anything.

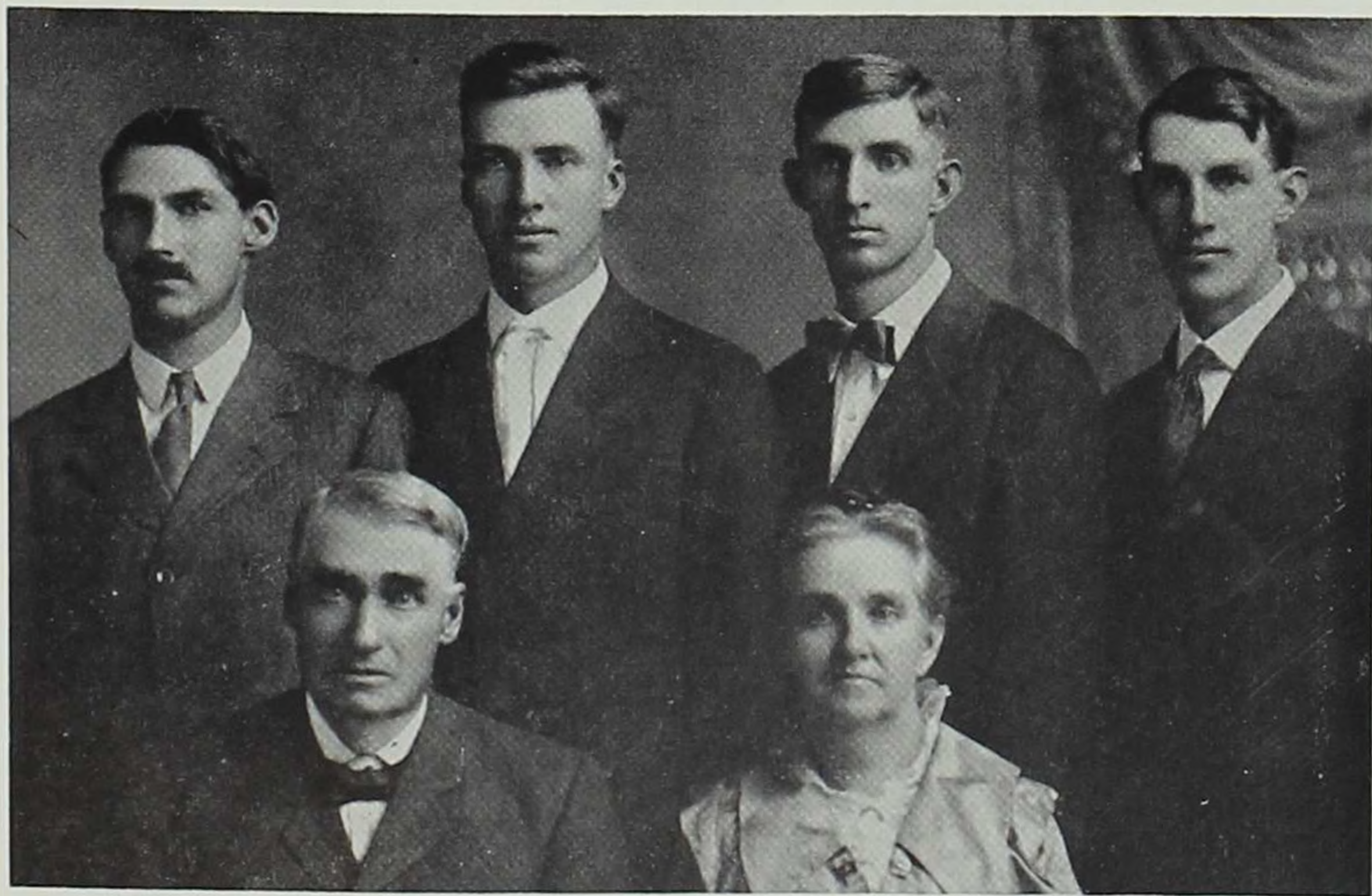
Father built the white frame house in which we lived upon our return from Sioux City in 1878. Most of the lumber was hauled across the prairie from Fort Dodge some seventy miles away, although some came by freight on the Milwaukee Railroad. It was in the block east of the courthouse square, with a white picket fence in front. Later a big mountain ash tree was planted on each side of the front gate. I have reason to remember those trees because I got one of the berries up my nose and the doctor had to be called to get it out.



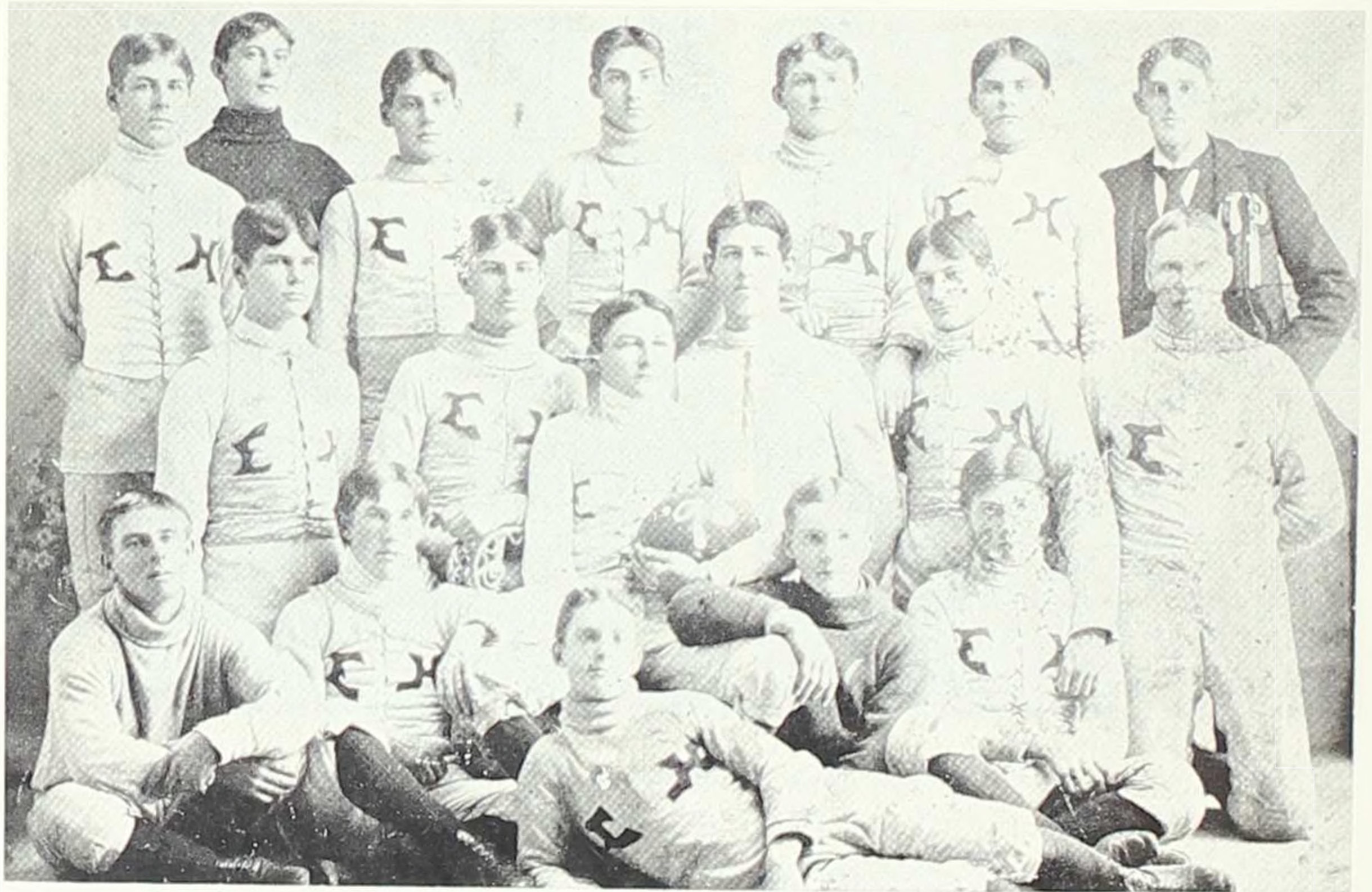
ESTHER BLAIR

GAYLORD BLAIR

Parents of Maria Blair McCarty



Mr. and Mrs. George B. McCarty and their sons, left to right:  
Dwight, Willis, Fred, and Ray.



The Emmetsburg High School football team in 1895. Dwight McCarty, fourth from the left, back row, was a member of this first team.



(Left) Dwight G. McCarty steps out as a freshman at Grinnell College. (Right) McCarty displays the garb worn for Emmetsburg's centennial celebration in July of 1958.

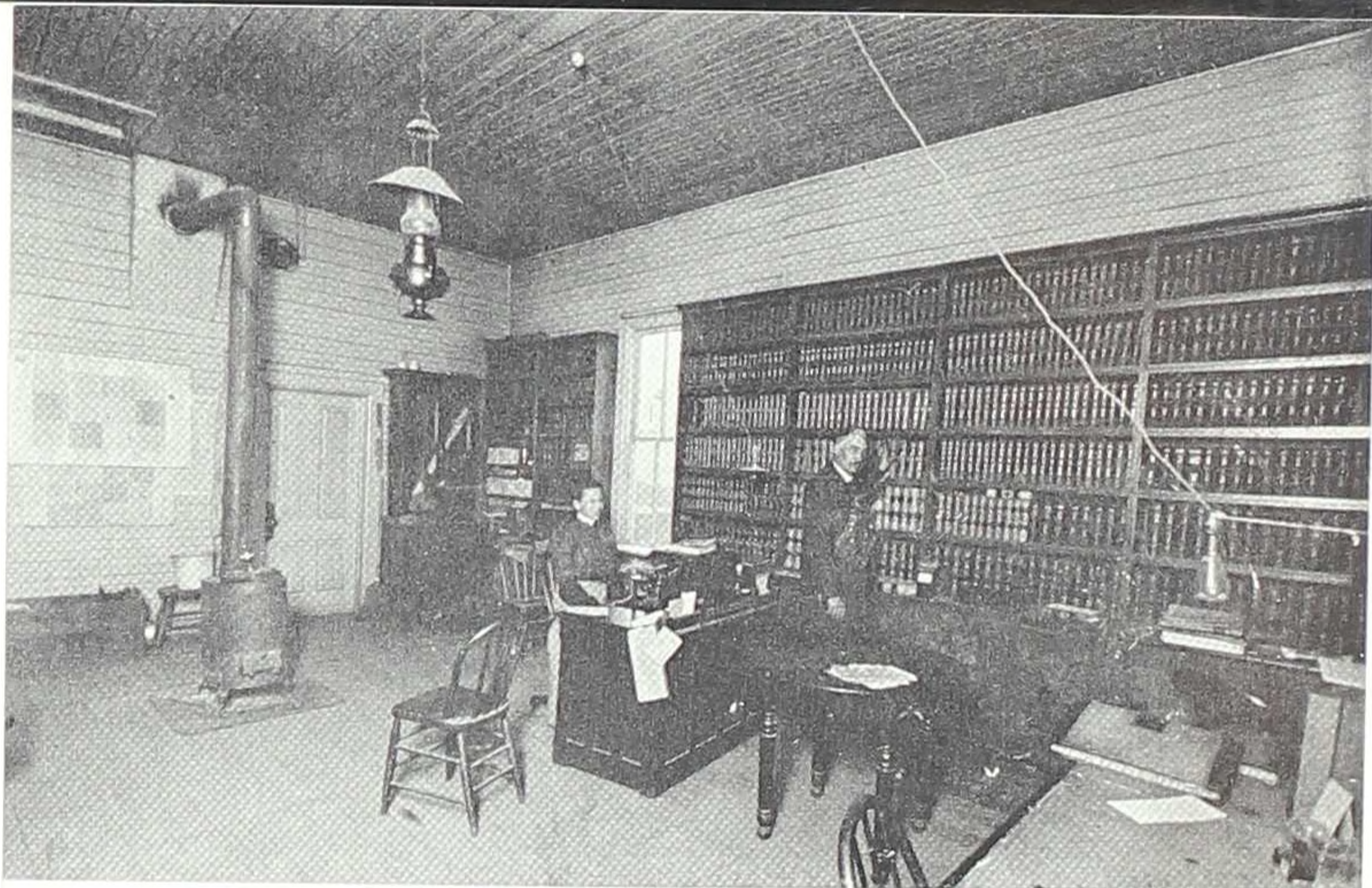


Dwight McCarty, left, without hat, speaking at an Old Settlers picnic, Lost Island.

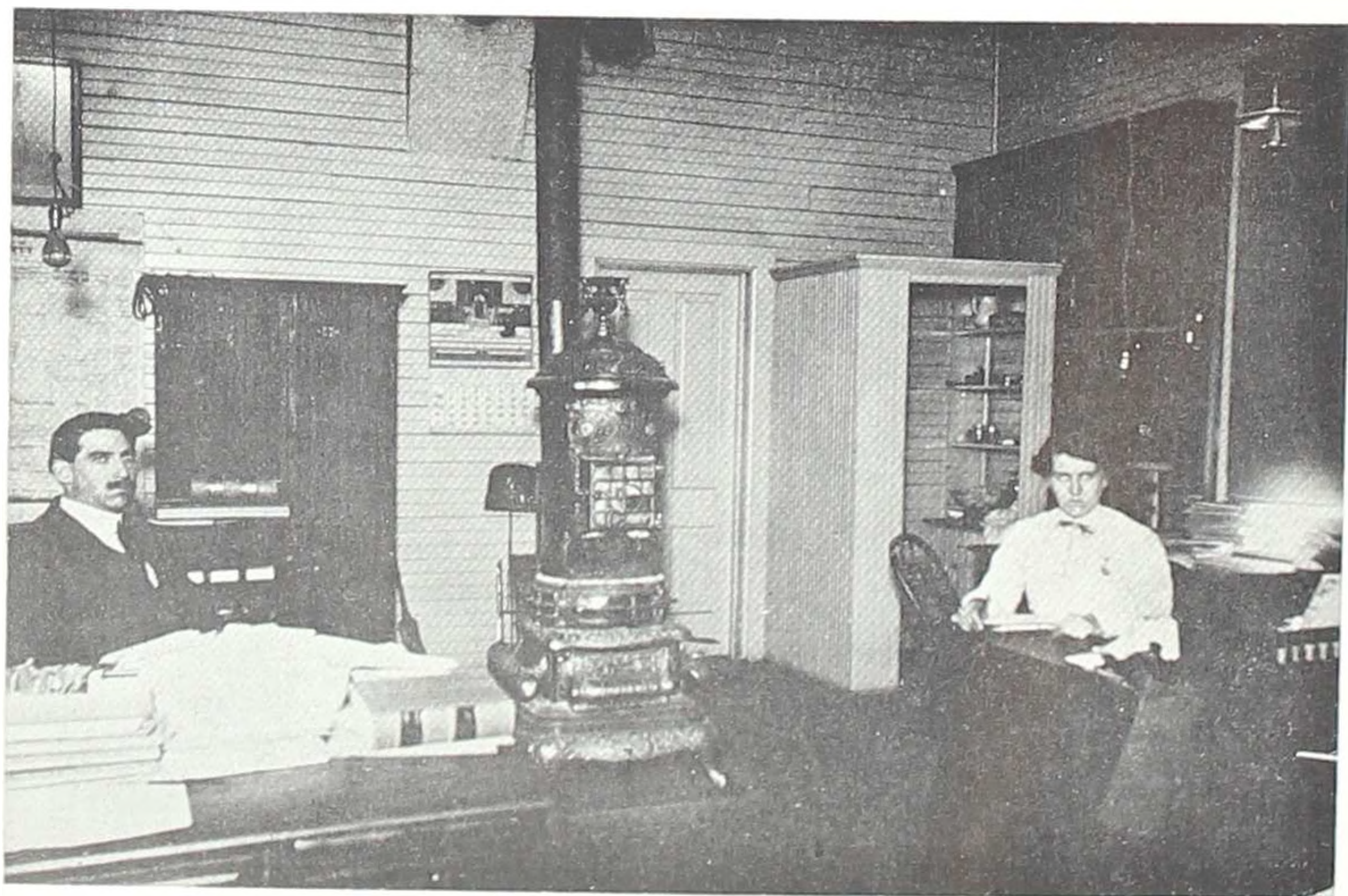
The Dwight G. McCarty family is pictured in 1945. Left to right: Gordon, Guinevere, Martha Jane, Dwight, Virginia, Marjorie and Gaylord. The girls are the daughters of Marjorie and Gaylord McCarty.



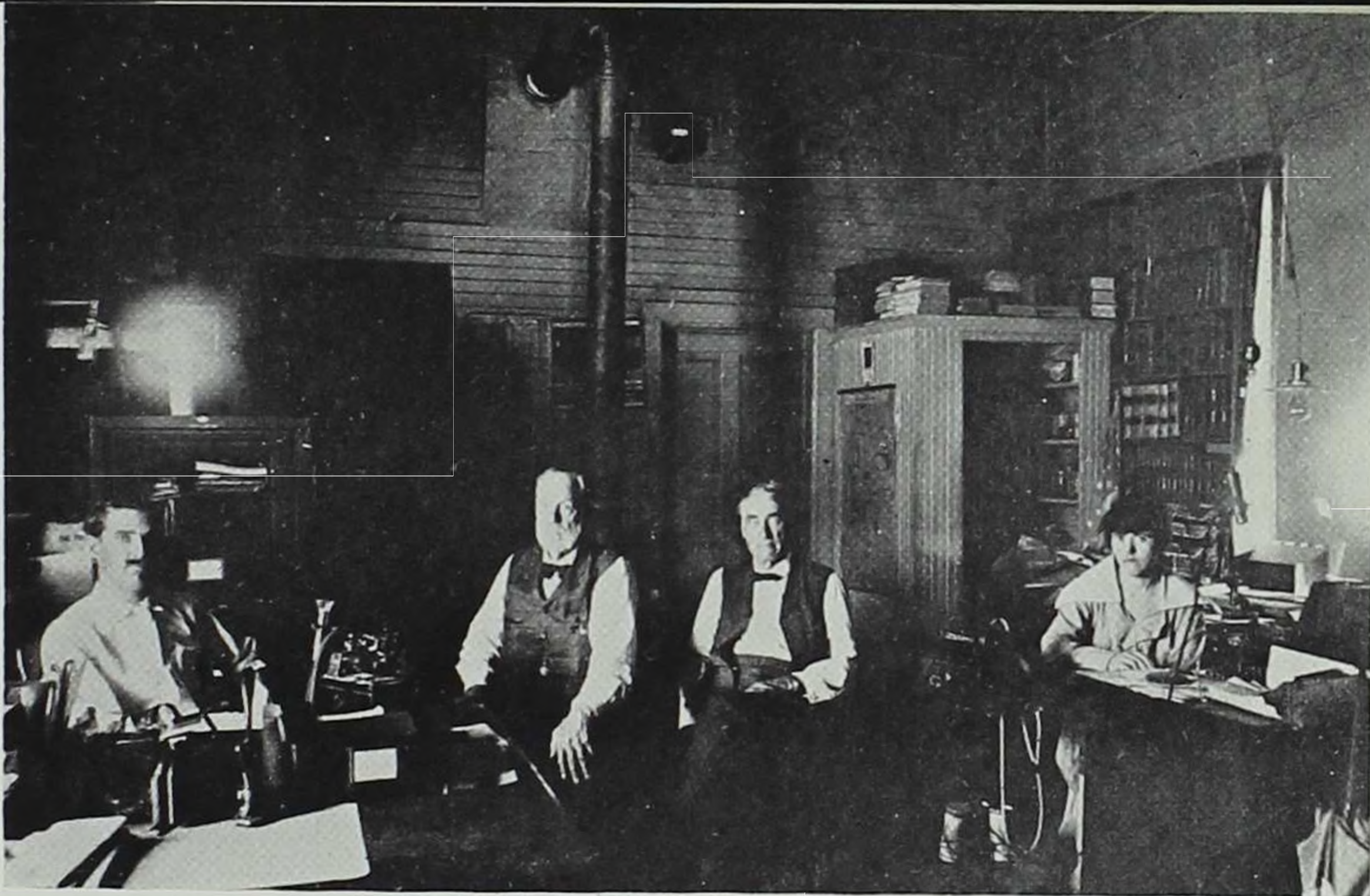




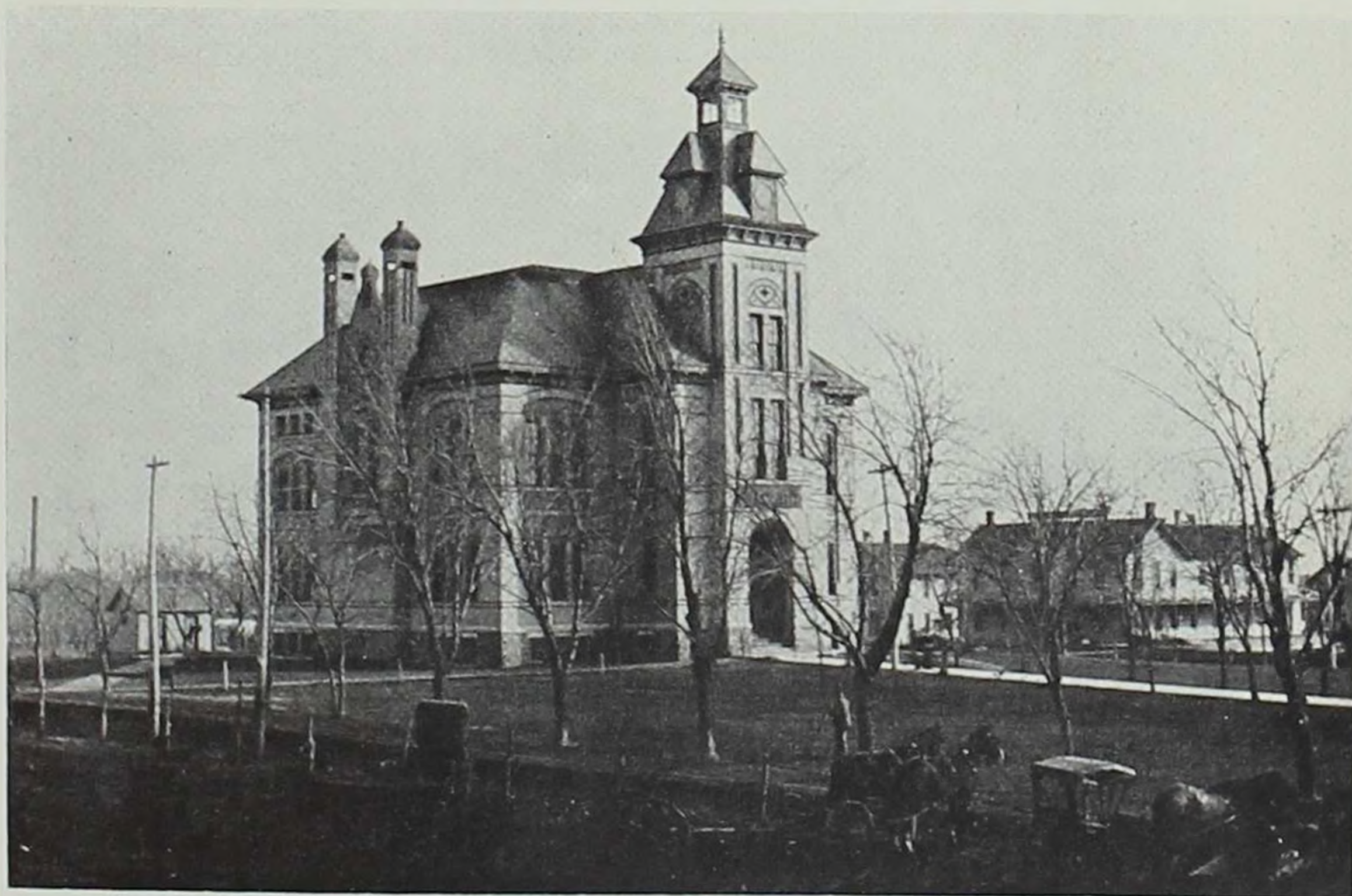
George B. McCarty in his law office in 1902. Alta Turner was the stenographer. The kerosene lamp was used when the electricity failed. The wood stove was used only in the spring and fall.



Dwight G. McCarty in his law office in 1907. Mabel Grainger served as stenographer. The hard coal stove was used each winter.



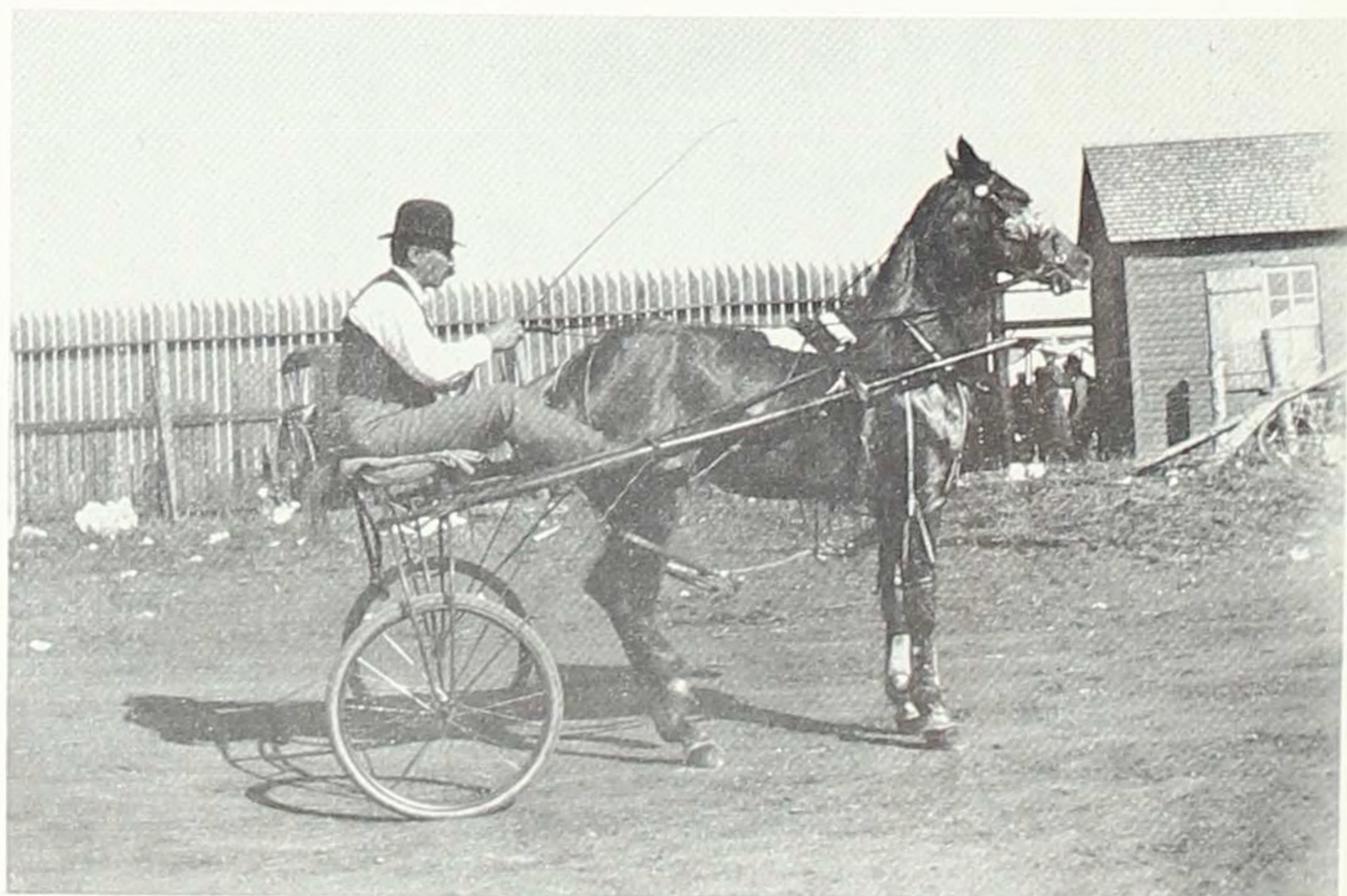
Dwight G. McCarty at his desk in 1917. Note the new Dictaphone at his left. Others pictured are a client, George B. McCarty, senior member of the law firm, and Mayme Sullivan, stenographer.



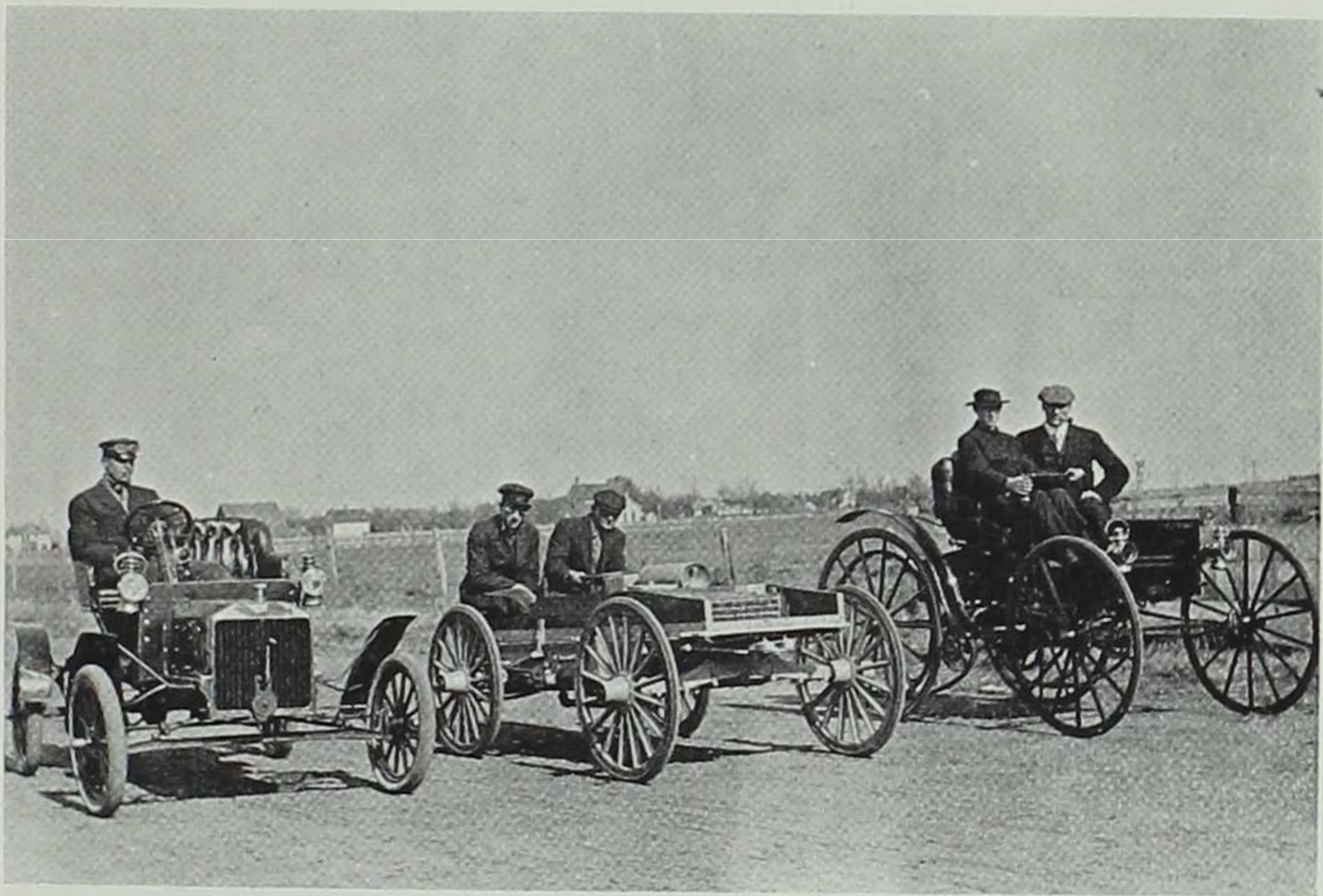
Palo Alto County Court House about 1900. The old St. James Hotel, now torn down, is to the right. Note teams tied to hitching posts.



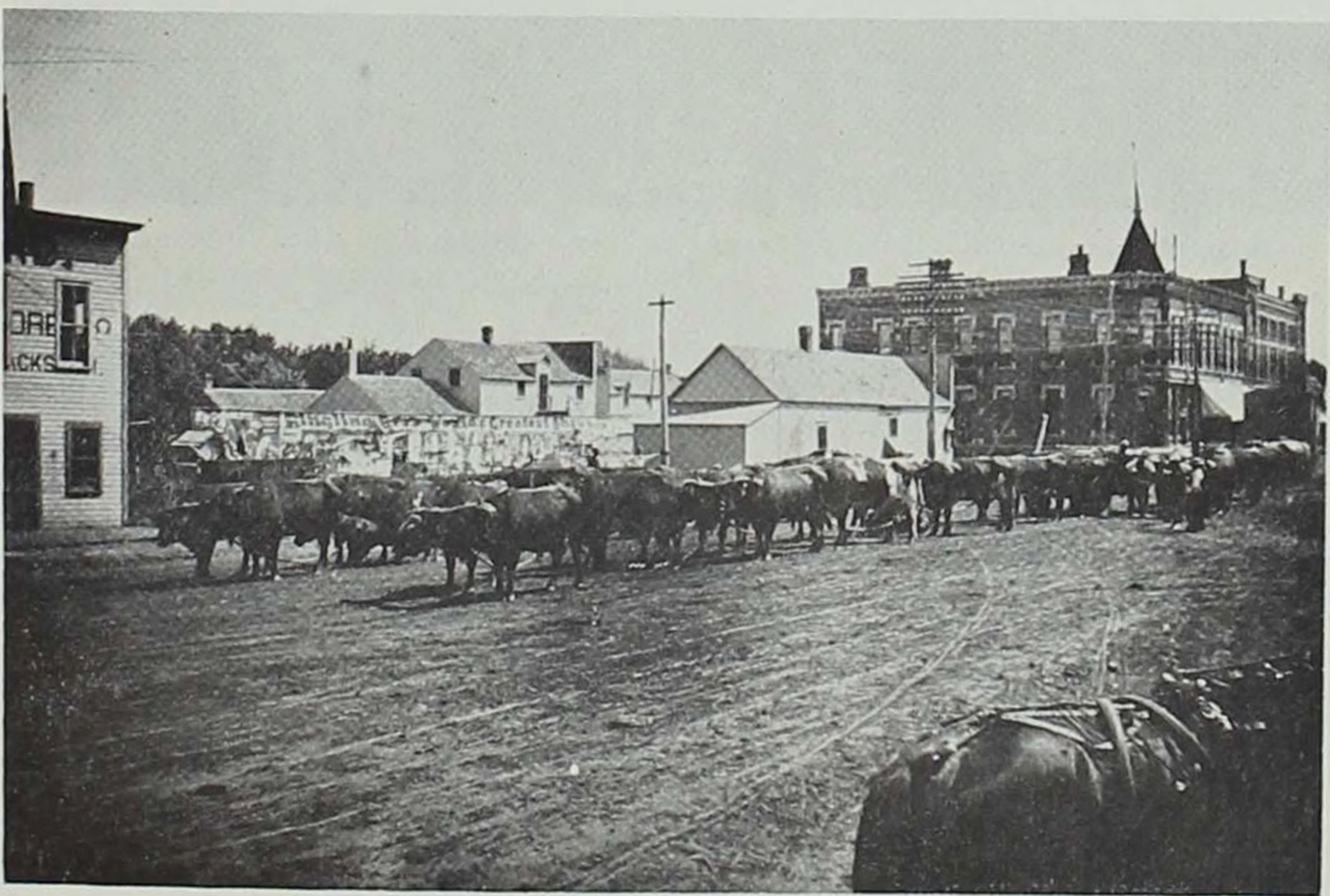
Race horse and old style high wheel sulky in front of a livery stable with Ed Rogers as the driver.



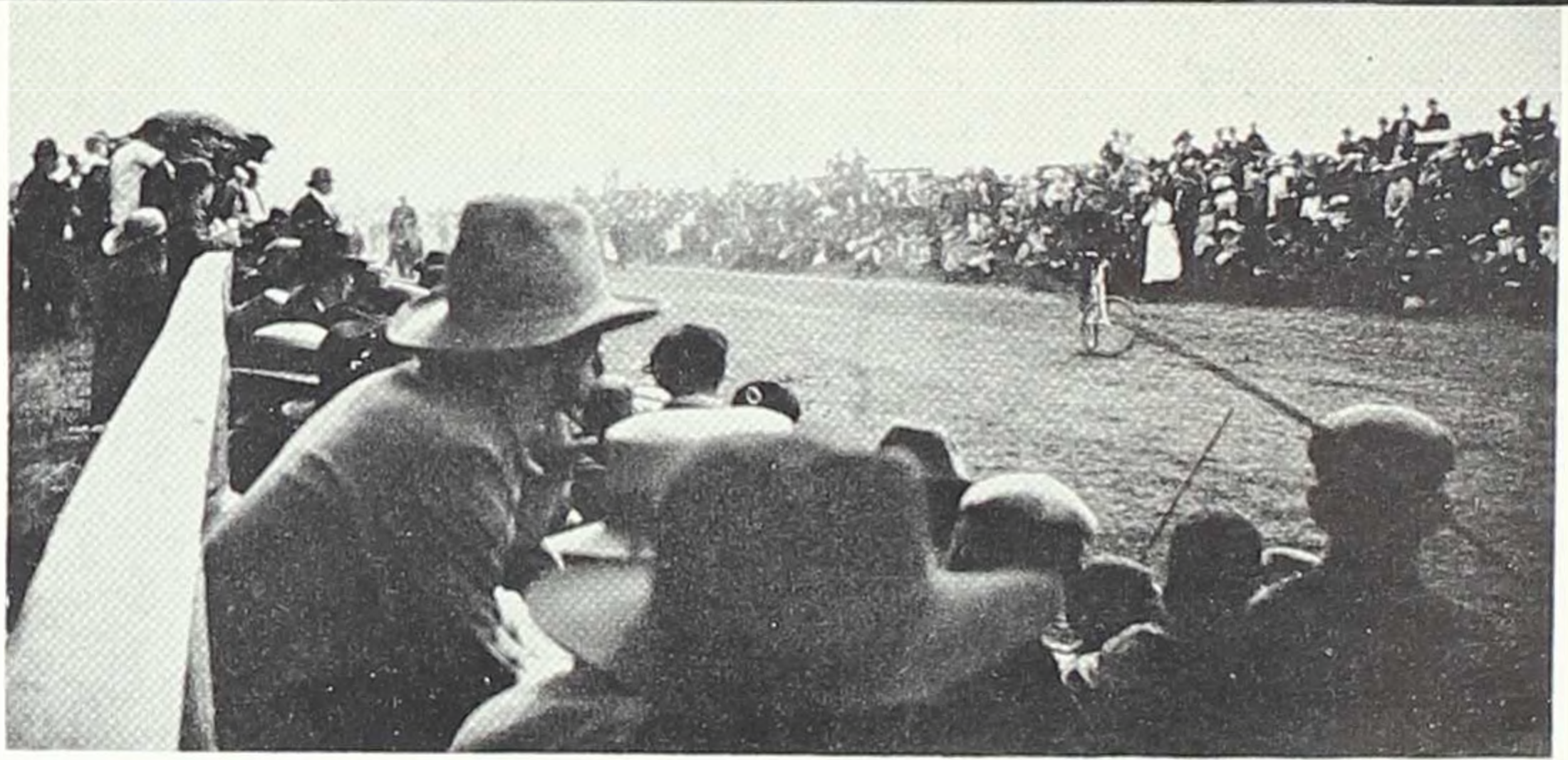
Mart Coonan drives the famous pacer, "Frank Potts," in the first modern low wheel sulky to reach Emmetsburg.



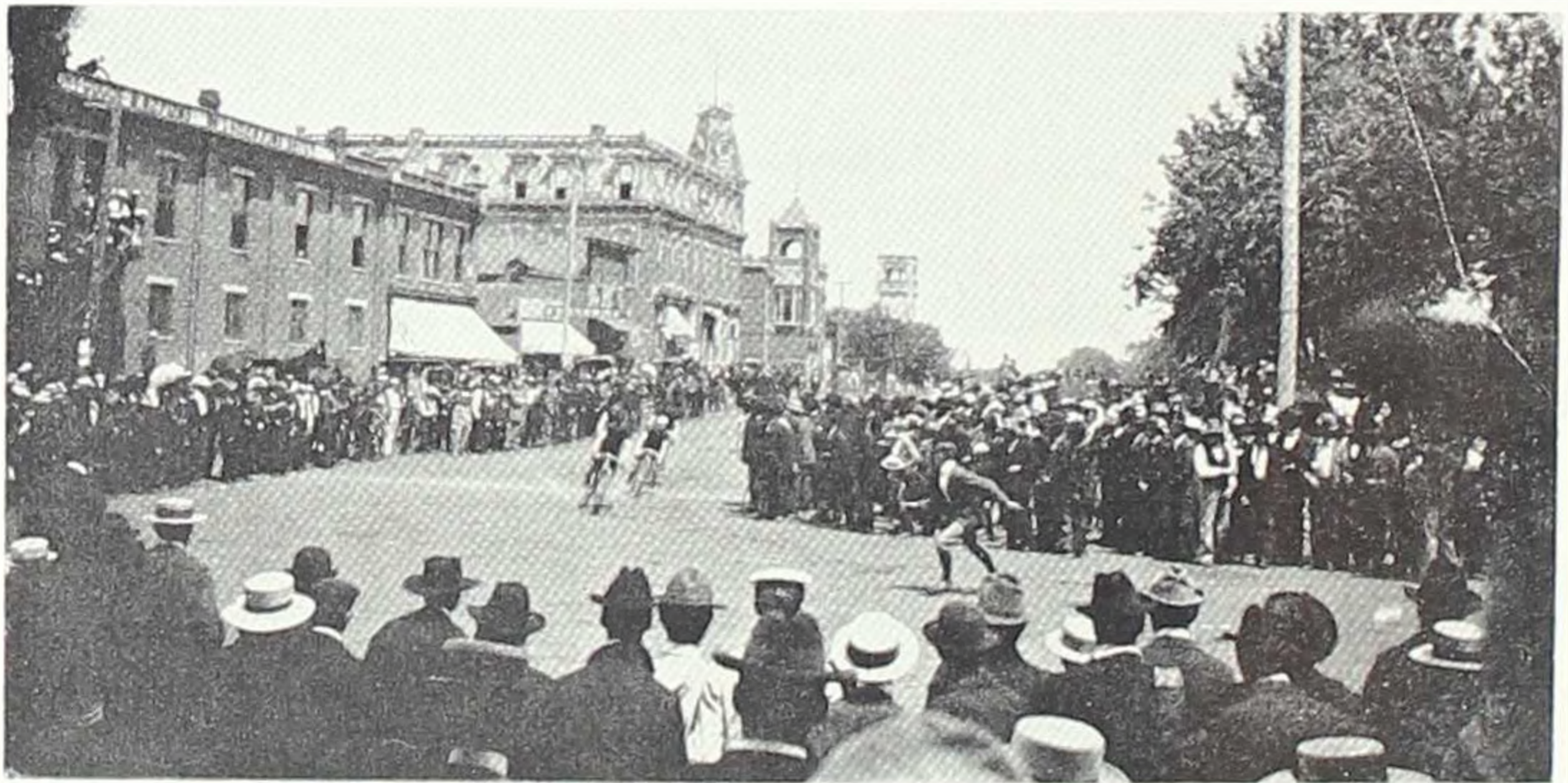
Lined up for a race at the fairgrounds in 1912. Ford Roadster, left, has Willis McCarty as the driver. Chris Schroeder, center, drives his home-built racer with Fred McCarty as his passenger. Right, Asa Brown drives a Holsman with Paul Brown as passenger. History apparently failed to record the winner.



Oxen, used by a highway grading crew, are herded west on Main Street through Emmetsburg about 1900 on the way to a new location between LeMars and Sioux City where a new road was under construction.



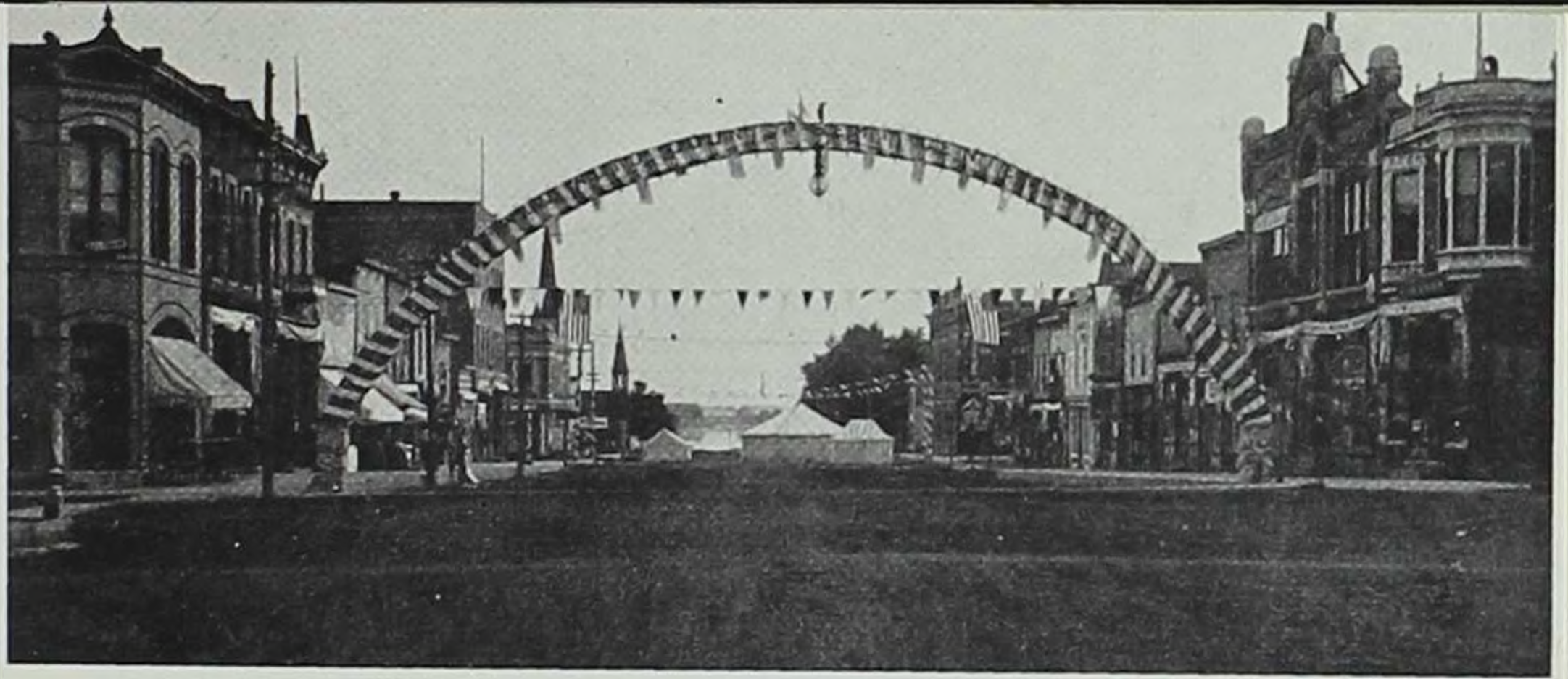
Trick bicyclist entertains at county fair.



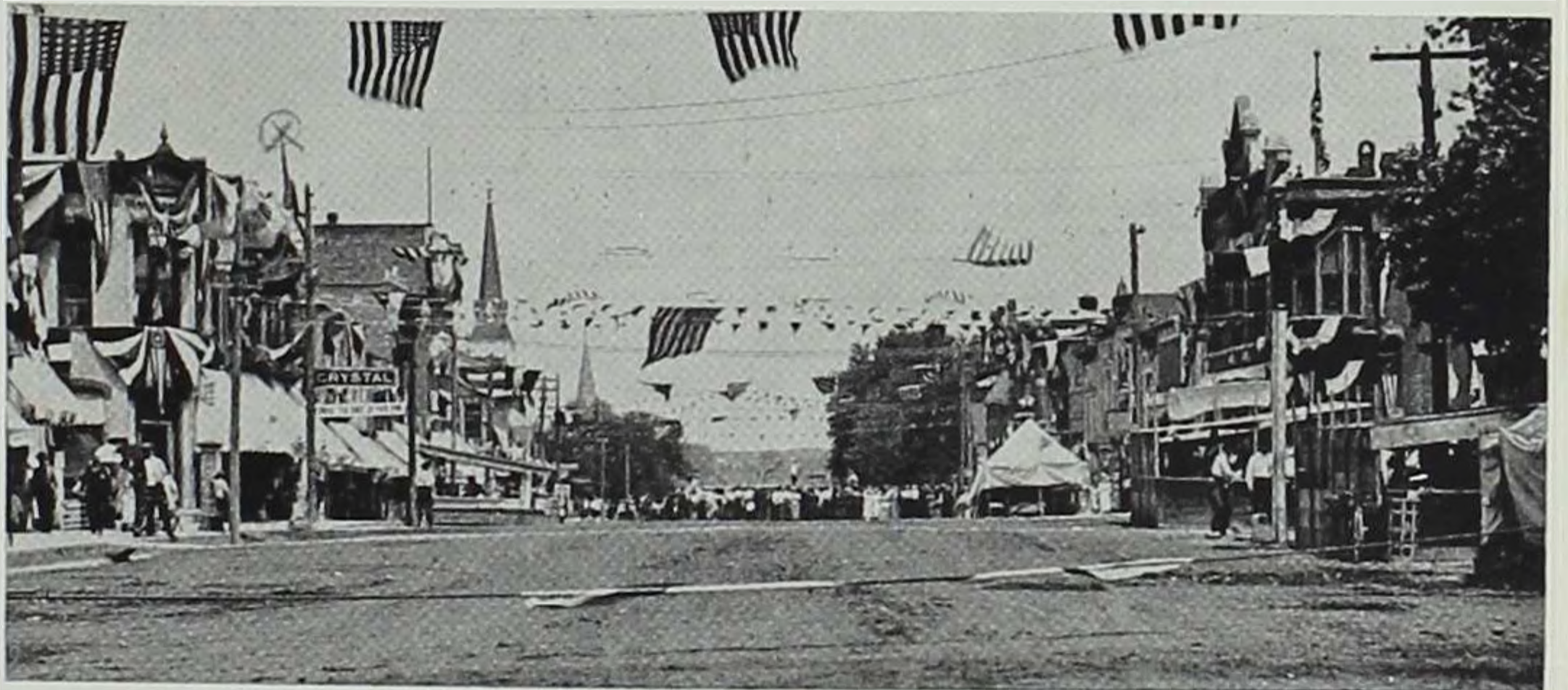
Bicycle race around courthouse square at semi-centennial in 1906. Towers are atop the Waverly Hotel, City Hall, and Congregational Church.



An early day attraction. Traveling itinerant entertainer and dancing bear.



Looking north on Broadway at the time of the Emmetsburg semi-centennial, 1906.



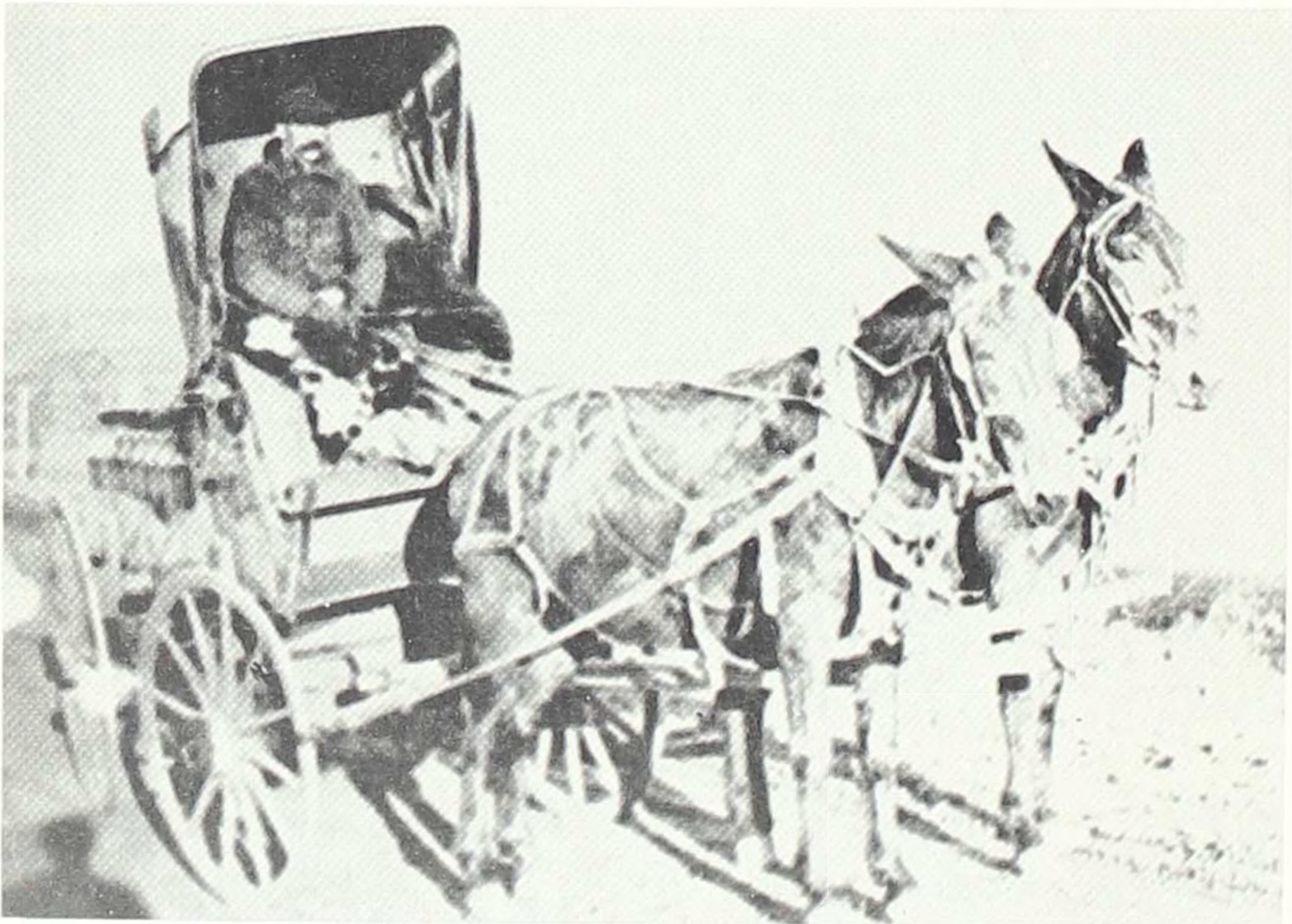
Fourth of July celebration in Emmetsburg, 1913.

Parade held during Emmetsburg's centennial celebration rounds Broadway into Main Street, 1958. Note the buffalo tied to covered wagon.



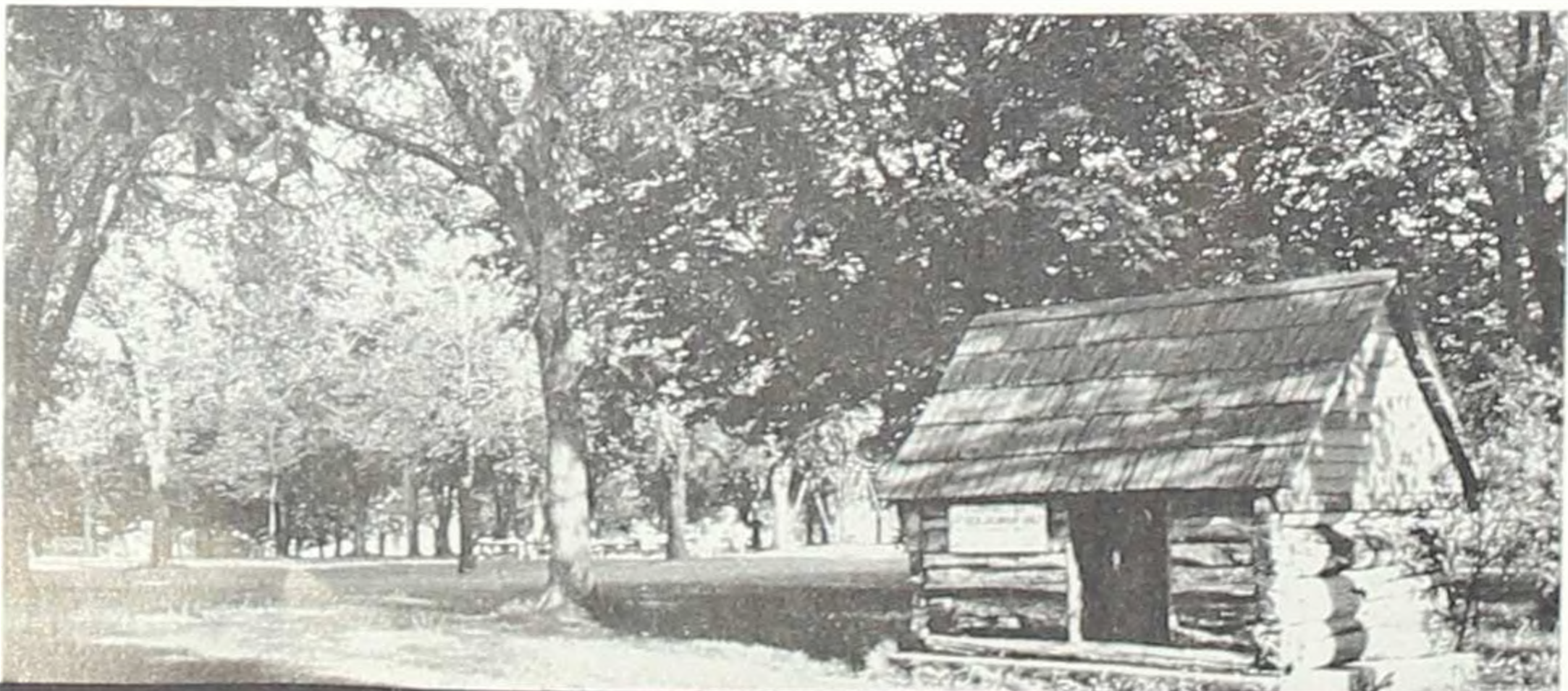


Another view of the July 4 celebration at Emmetsburg in 1913.



An early day mailman in Emmetsburg.

The Patrick Jackman Pioneer Log Cabin built in 1867. Now located in Harrison Park, Emmetsburg.





Lake celebration and water carnival, 1933.

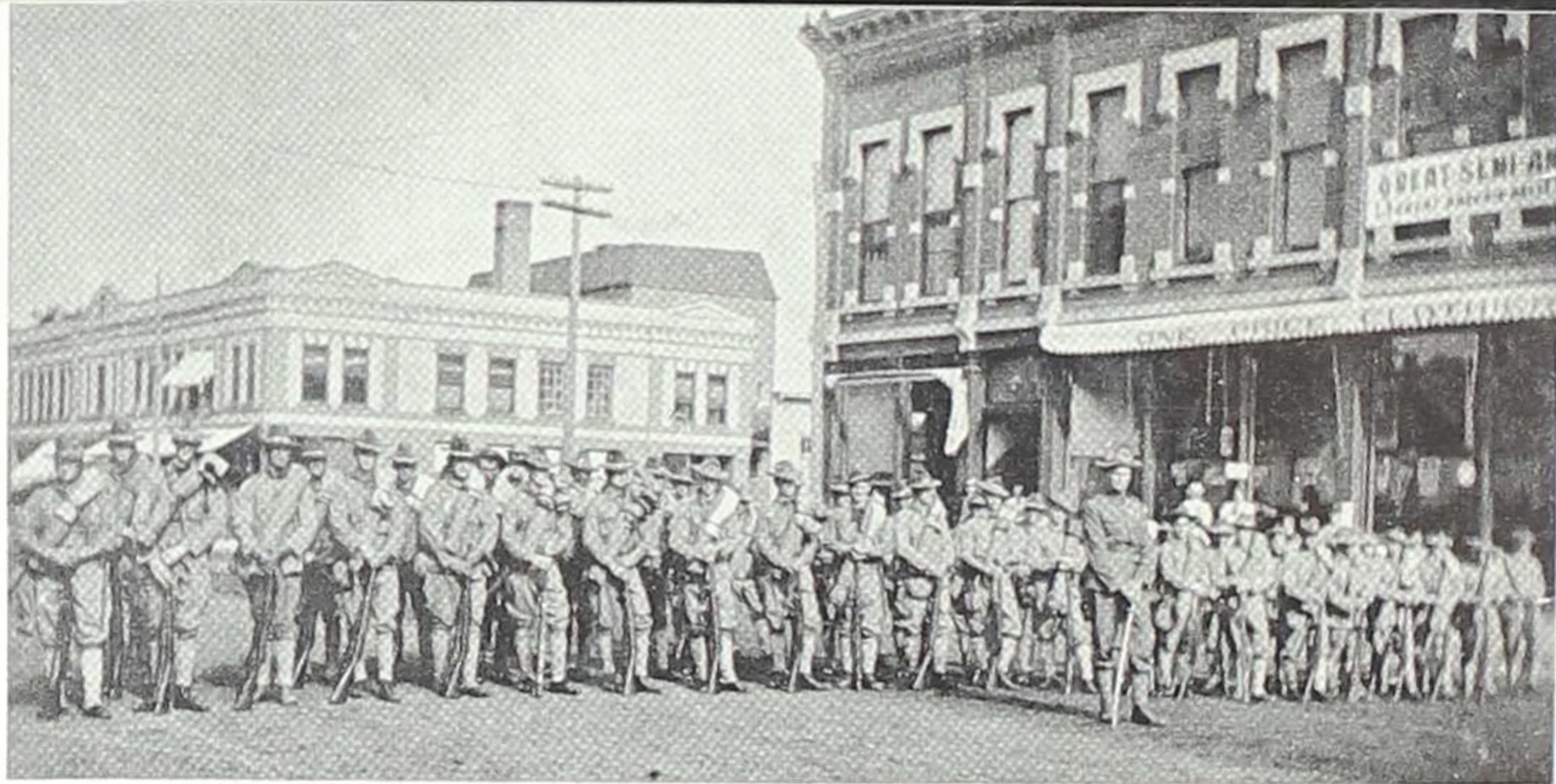


Jim Grier and a catch of fish weighing 153 pounds. Caught in Medium Lake, 1909 (now Five Island Lake).

Skating on Five Island Lake, with a hockey game in progress in the background. Modern homes now line Lake Shore Drive.





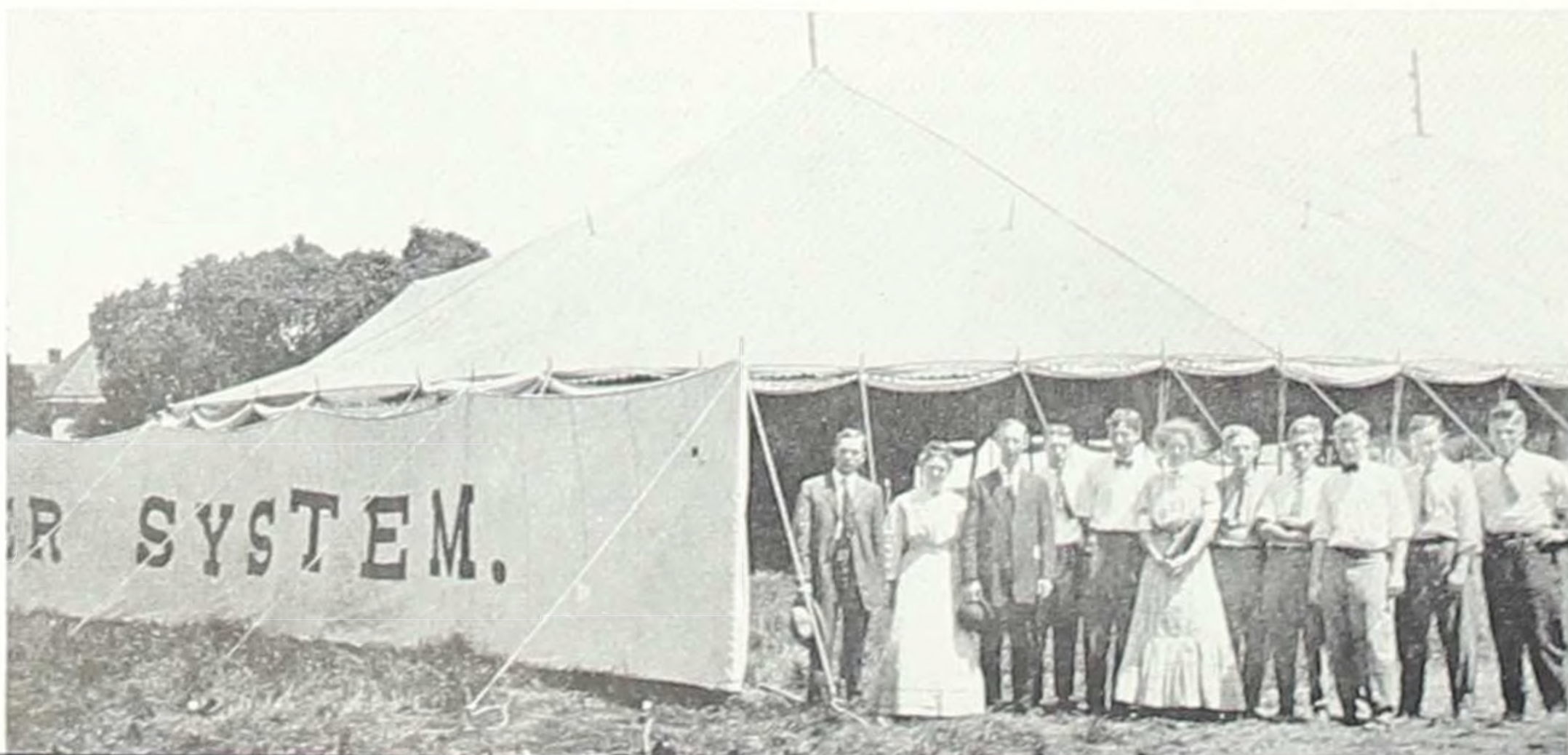


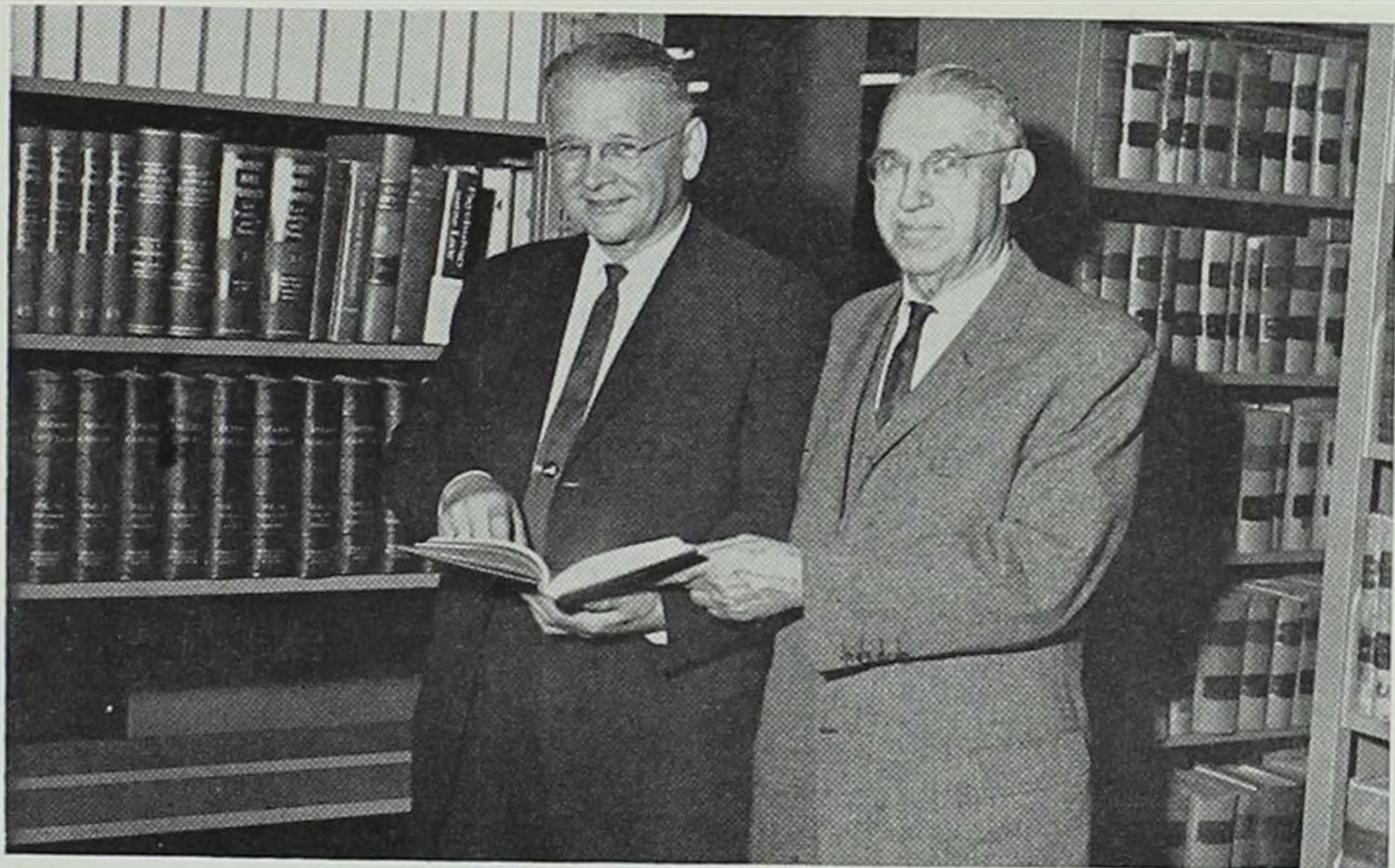
Company K, 56th Infantry, Iowa National Guard, Emmetsburg, about 1915.



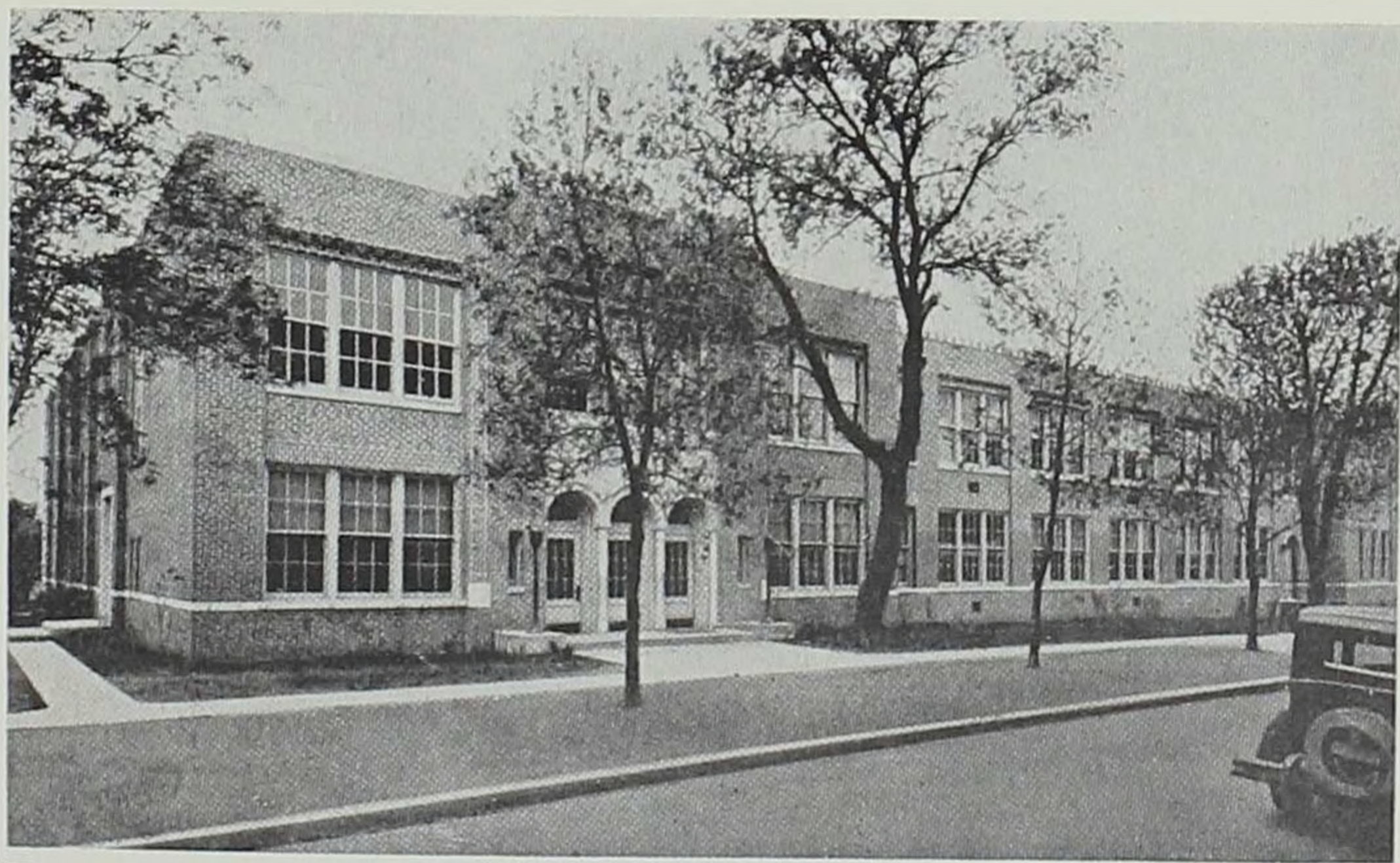
Company K, 56th Infantry, Iowa National Guard basketball squad.

A touring company on the Chautauqua circuit.





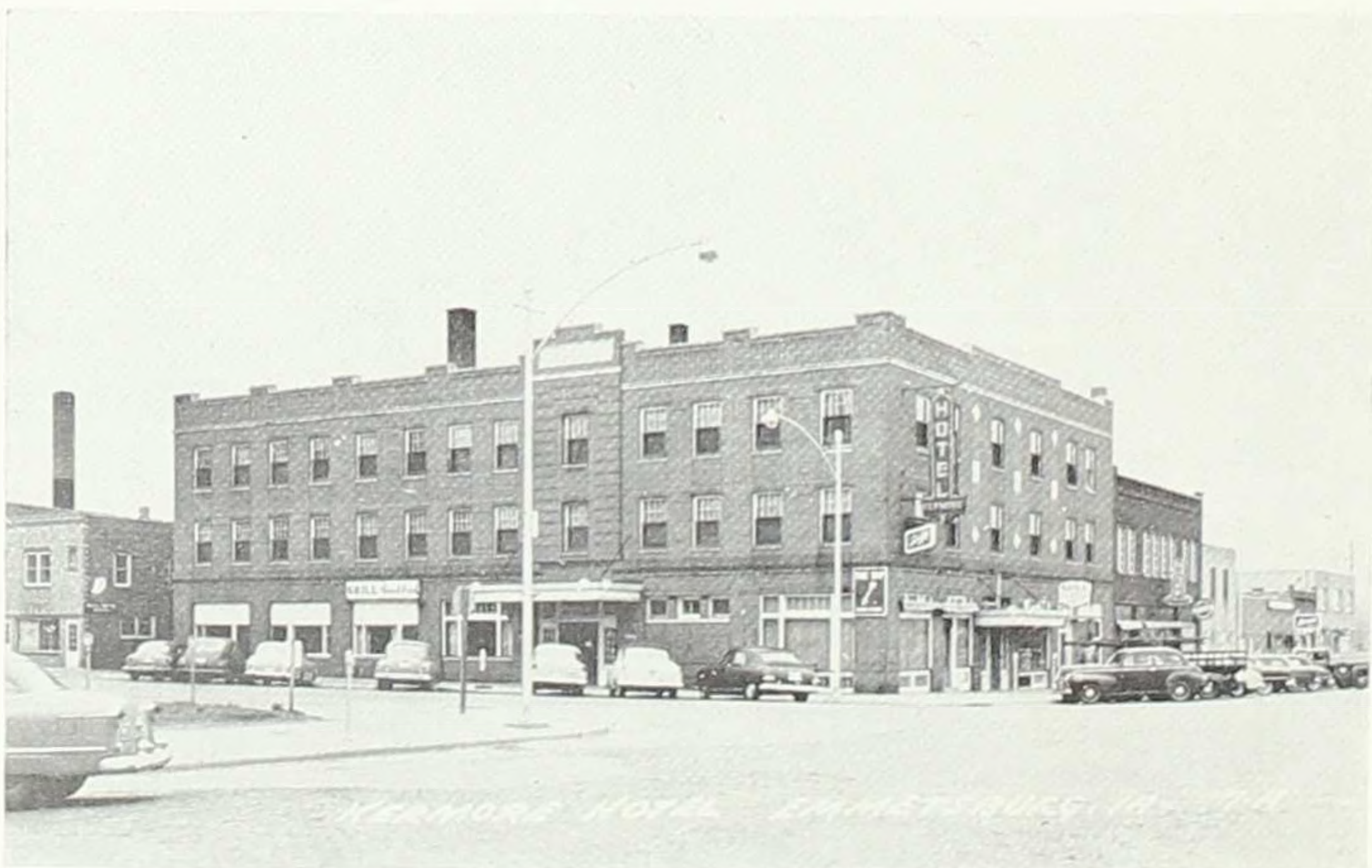
Dwight G. McCarty, right, a Life Member of the State Historical Society of Iowa, presents a complete set of his writings to the Society. The books fill a complete shelf in the Library.



The present Emmetsburg Public High School building will be occupied by the Community College when the new million and a half dollar high school building is erected. The new school was made possible by a bond issue passed in the spring of 1967. It will occupy a new 40-acre location.



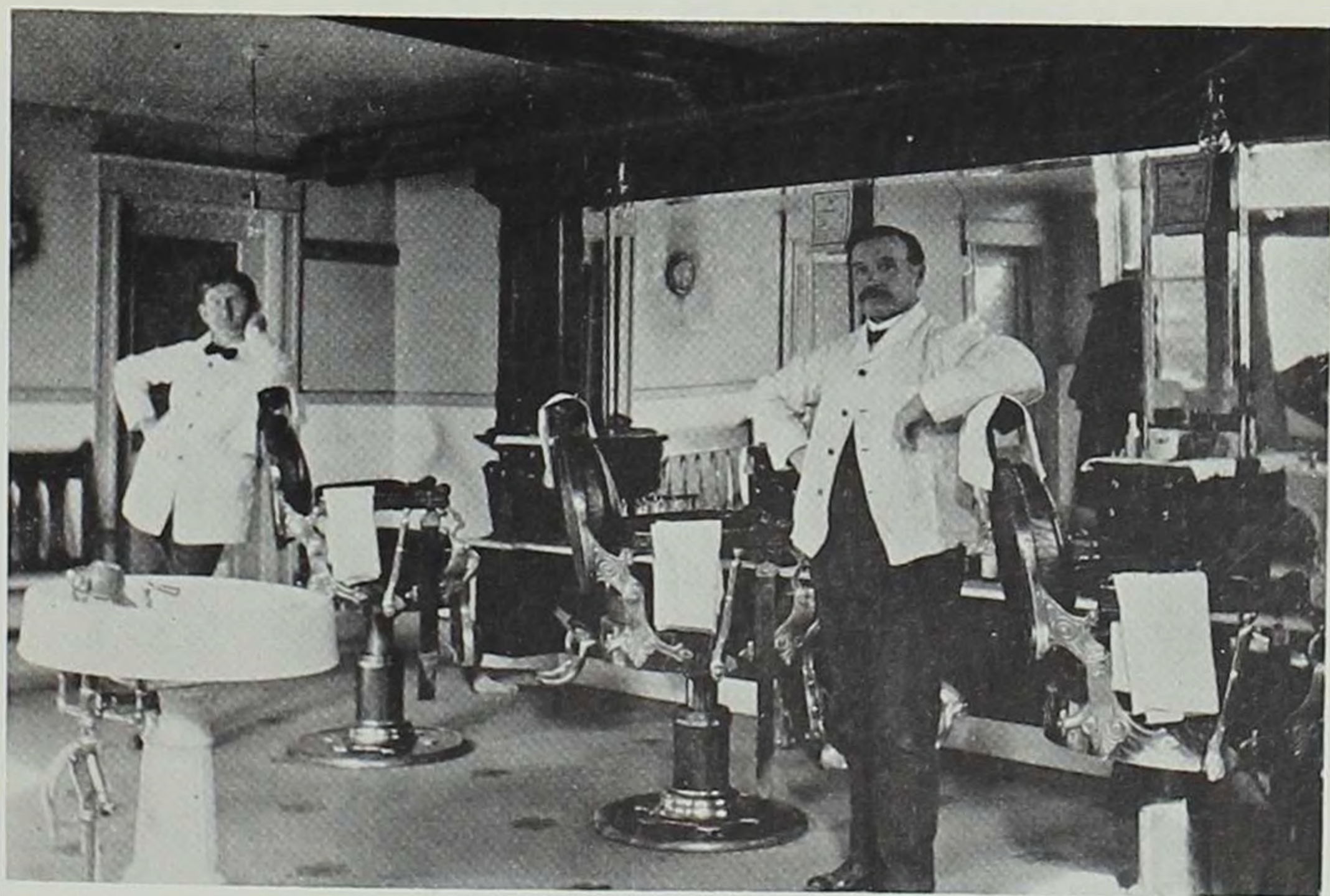
An early view of the Waverly Hotel — before it was remodeled and the tower removed some years ago. It was razed this spring to make way for an office building.



The Kermore Hotel was built in 1926 by the citizens of Emmetsburg and resold in 1946 for a profit. The hotel is now locally-owned and operated by Papadakes Bros.



The Charles Papadakes Candy Kitchen and restaurant in 1919.



The Peter McMahon Barber Shop about 1905. Pete is on the right. John Warnke is the other barber.



Steam dredge at work in 1913. Silt was pumped from the bottom of Medium Lake and forced through pipes onto the low ground lower right. Land was thus reclaimed for a park, boulevards, streets, and shoreline improvements.

A view of Emmetsburg from the lake. Broadway at center stretches through the business district and far to the south.



The woodshed in the back yard of our home was a frame building about 12 x 16 with a gable roof and a lean-to for coal. An entry in my father's diary, September 9, 1878, tells the origin of this building. "Shacklin commenced work at noon today on my woodshed — let the job to build shed and privy for \$12." A woodshed has very poignant memories for many boys, but I do not recall that I was ever led out there for bodily chastisement. My father was able to keep discipline without the aid of the rod, and I do not admit that I was thereby spoiled.

#### *School Days*

I attended public school in the big, two-story, barn-like, wooden building in the west part of town, nearly a mile from our home. How vividly I remember one cold, winter day, when mother wrapped me in a big, knitted scarf, six feet long and a foot wide, leaving just enough room for me to see out. The north wind was icy cold as I trudged block after block. Finally, I arrived late and exhausted with my breath frozen in icicles inside the scarf. The teacher had to unwrap me and thaw me out. My parents were not the kind to coddle us youngsters. We came home at noon for lunch. The children of today with their heated buses and school lunches can hardly appreciate the primitive hardships of those days of long ago.

In school I was meek and quiet. One day I raised my hand to leave the room, but the teacher,

who had been annoyed by some of the boys chasing out doors too often, refused my request. I was in distress, but it never occurred to me not to obey. When the teacher saw the puddle under my desk and my wet clothes, she got very red in the face and murmured, "I'm sorry, I didn't realize." I had no trouble having my requests granted after that.

### *Taming A Bully*

There was a gang of tough boys from south of the track who were always up to some deviltry and kept the smaller lads in a constant state of terror. They were always fighting or taking things away from the other boys.

My timidity, which seemed to be growing more pronounced, did not auger well as a build-up for a future career at the law. Then an unexpected occurrence blasted me out of the limbo of meekness into a sudden aura of self confidence. One afternoon the bully, who had been annoying me for a long time without even a mild comeback, started to pick on me again. Although he was somewhat larger I stood up to him. He doubled up his fist to strike me, but I struck him so unexpectedly with all my might, that it knocked him down. He got up and charged at me, bellowing with rage, but I charged at him flailing away with both fists and the fight was on. We were finally parted by some of the older boys.

When I reached home all bloody and with my

clothes torn and dirty, I proudly told my mother that the other fellow looked as bad as I did. The fight must have been a draw as not a single one of the witnesses was able to give a very coherent account of the battle when we were called into the superintendent's office the next morning. At any rate the bully left me alone after that.

Jim Grier had a restaurant on the east side of North Broadway. It was a favorite place for the kids of my acquaintance. When still a youngster, I went into his store to buy some candy on a hot July day. It was so hot that the chocolate drops had all run together, and he sold me a great big gob of this mess for five cents. I was delighted with my bargain, but I ate so much that for years thereafter I could not look a chocolate drop in the face. There was no such thing as refrigeration and candy was sold from bulk (usually dished out by hand) and put in little paper sacks.

As we grew older, we saved our pennies to buy postage stamps from Mr. Kendall who was the town's famous collector and dealer. We prized the bright colored issues that made up attractive album pages for us.

As the years went by the family increased and a new bedroom was built over the old one-story kitchen. My only sister died in infancy of whooping cough, so that left four boys of which I was the oldest. Willis, Fred, and Ray were sturdy lads and there was plenty of activity around the



place. Life was never dull during our boyhood.

*The Old County Fair*

The county fair, which was organized in the late 1870's, was held south of town on a twenty acre tract just north of the cemetery. It had a half mile dirt race track but not much room for anything else. There was a great deal of interest in horse racing and there were a number of famous horsemen with their horses in Emmetsburg. The fair was finally abandoned. Later the tract became a part of Evergreen Cemetery.

At the fair, it was fascinating to watch the shell game as the little pea bobbed around under the shells by the skillful manipulation of the operator. The crowd pressed around and many of them tried to bet under which shell the pea would rest. One bettor was reaching into his pocket for his money when the operator shifted the shells around. I cried out a warning that the shells had been shifted. The gambler glared at me but I resolutely said: "I'll bet I know where the pea is." He continued to glare at me for a minute and then said, "It's time to close now, will be back in fifteen minutes." He put his shells back in his satchel. The crowd laughed as though I was the boy wonder who had bluffed the gambler. The nimble-fingered gent was afraid the sharp-eyed boy knew that the pea was hidden between his fingers instead of under one of the shells. He did not dare to give the game away. The man who broke the

Casino at Monte Carlo got away with a fortune, but when I "broke" the shell game I did not make a cent.

*Bryan Campaign*

In the 1896 campaign, William Jennings Bryan was running for president on the 16 to 1 monetary issue. I was a senior in high school and, of course, was interested in the campaign. On the street a big, pompous, professional man, who had always been a Republican but had fallen for the alluring free silver idea, was giving his views to a group of citizens. I was listening when he contradicted himself, so I spoke up and pointed out his error. He turned around, glared at me, and said, "Young man, do you know about the demonetization of silver?" "No," I replied. "Well," he retorted angrily, "you will have to know about it before you argue with me." He turned on his heels and marched off down the street. The crowd laughed and one man patted me on the back and said, "Nice work, son, you routed him in a hurry." It made me feel quite important. For a boy who had been as shy and diffident as I had been, such experiences were like a tonic in developing courage and self-confidence, attributes which were sorely needed in later years in life's battles in the legal arena.

*Fire! Fire!*

The town fire bell had an eerie sound as it clanged out its alarm, especially on a cold, frosty

night. Like most youngsters I had hoped and dreamed of some day discovering a fire and ringing the bell. I was quite a lad before that wish was gratified. Just as I was coming out of my father's office, I saw a man running up the street, waving his arms, and hollering, "Fire, Fire!" I ran over to the courthouse square where the fire bell hung, took down the handles on the ropes attached to the clapper, and rang the bell. The people started running, and the firemen came dashing out of the firehouse, pulling the hand pumper engine and the hook and ladder cart. It was a thrilling moment. However, it was not much of a fire, and the firemen soon came back. But I had the distinction of having given the alarm. A few years later the bell was put in the City Hall tower where it still remains. It was a victim of progress, but the wailing siren of its successor still fails to stir the emotions as did the clanging bell of old.

*Jim Green*

One of the characters I recall as a boy was genial old Jim Green, who worked as a porter at the Waverly Hotel and drove the bus to meet all the trains. He was born a slave in Tennessee and was the only Negro in town. He was dependable in his work and had a happy disposition. He was popular with the traveling men and well-liked by everyone. When he died in 1894, the obituary in the local paper said: "Happy, genial, unassuming Jim Green will greet our citizens no more. His

years are spent and his deeds done." A committee of prominent citizens arranged a big funeral in the Methodist Church. Traveling men served as pallbearers and rode in the hotel bus in the long procession — 94 rigs. The large attendance was a tribute to work well done by one in lowly station and without a thought of racial prejudice.

#### *Saloons and Liquor*

In the early days, there were several saloons in Emmetsburg. Legislative prohibition went into effect in Iowa on July 4, 1884, but the liquor traffic had become so entrenched in my home town that it continued to flourish openly. Reverend O. P. Champlin, our Congregational Church pastor, led the fight against this condition, and a mayor who was pledged to enforce the law was finally elected in 1886.

The saloon interests became enraged and threatened to boycott and ruin the business of every person opposing them. They even threatened Reverend Champlin's life and finally one thug assaulted him. The cowardly attack aroused the people and strengthened the hand of the mayor. The thug was arrested and fined, and a guard was provided for Reverend Champlin.

Feeling ran high as the saloon interests began a campaign of terrorism. The marshal, in enforcing the law, killed a man in self defense, and then gave himself up. He had to be defended with rifles against a mob that stormed the jail. The

marshal was acquitted, and when detectives procured the necessary evidence, the saloons were closed as nuisances. Thus, the self-respecting and law-abiding citizens succeeded in cleaning up the town.

This first era of prohibition was later superseded by the Iowa Mulct law which allowed saloons to open when they secured consent from the nearby business places and paid certain taxes. Soon there were five saloons in active operation in Emmetsburg.

As a boy going to school, I remember very well how disgusted I was when the proprietor came out and sprinkled beer on the sidewalk so as to get us accustomed to the smell of the beverage. But I never could quite tell which smelled the worse, the stale beer or the horse manure odor that still lingered around the old barn that had been made into a saloon. However, the toppers did not seem to mind it in the least. Later, the number of saloons was reduced to three, then to one, and that one was finally forced to close when Iowa became a prohibition state.

#### *"Iowa Juvenile Band"*

In the early Nineties our "Iowa Juvenile Band" attained considerable popularity. It was composed of boys under fifteen years of age under the leadership of "Professor" Floyd. When first organized all the boys were clamoring for cornets, but a band of only cornettists would be as bad as an

army of only generals. Professor Floyd handled the boys cleverly in getting the right distribution of instrumentation. For example he pointed out to me that my front teeth were too large to play a horn successfully and so I was assigned a clarinet. When it arrived it was a yellow basswood E<sup>b</sup> instrument. Mother made me a brown cloth carrying case. It was a trying time for the neighborhood as I shrilled and squawked my way through the scales and practice pieces.

The clarinet gave me a lot of trouble at first and I soon realized that my E<sup>b</sup>, shrill and on an unusual key, did not fit in musically anywhere outside the band and was not of much importance there. The others all had the solo or special parts. So my father finally bought me a fine new Conn all metal B<sup>b</sup> clarinet. Those gleaming instruments were something new then and I was as proud as punch. I finally mastered the intricacies enough to play with the band, although I never was any great shakes as a musician.

The band wore smart uniforms and made a hit whenever it paraded on public occasions. It gave a series of concerts at the Iowa State Fair at Des Moines and had a one week stand at the Corn Palace at Mitchell, South Dakota. It was in demand for other celebrations. On one occasion we played for a phonograph recording machine, which was a decided innovation at that time. When the music was played back for us, the larg-

er boys grabbed the earphones, while we little fellows stood around expectantly. When it was played the second time, the same big boys still hogged the earphones, and much to my disappointment I never did hear how our music sounded. I was too timid to push forward or ask that it be replayed for us.

#### *Promoting Land Sales*

During the early days of my father's practice, the buying and selling of land was the most important and lucrative part of his business. He had a big sign "Land Office" painted on the side of the building which could be seen for several blocks.

In addition to all his other work, my father edited and published a monthly paper called *The Land Owner*. It described the investment possibilities in Palo Alto and adjoining counties and gave lists of land and town lots for sale. The first issue was dated March 1888. As shown by papers of that time, land was selling from \$10 to \$14 an acre for unimproved prairie land and from \$15 to \$22 an acre for improved farms. Good Emetsburg lots were listed at from \$50 to \$200.

Father knew the country well and could locate any tract, even on the open prairie. He sometimes took me along when he drove out in the country to inspect a certain piece of land. First, he located an established government corner, a mound of earth with a stake in the center. Then he tied a handkerchief around the buggy wheel and drove

off in a certain direction guided by a compass, counting the wheel revolutions until he had the required distance. Then he got out and located the other corner. In this way he located the corners and found the land for which he was looking.

It was my job to help father get out the issues of *The Land Owner* by folding the papers and getting them ready for mailing. For that purpose father would pull out a round-topped walnut table in the office. Originally that table had small shelves around the sides just under the top. One day somebody told him that it was a poker table and that those shelves were made for the poker chips. Father said nothing but a few days later a carpenter appeared and the shelves were removed. Thereafter, it was just an orthodox round table.

A few years later my father and Mr. Linderman kept a team, carriage, and a driver to drive land buyers to the farms for sale.

### *Hunting*

Game of all kinds was plentiful. The lake was often black with geese, ducks, and other wild fowl. My brother, Willis, was the duck hunter but my father and I preferred hunting prairie chickens. At first I went along for the fun or to hold the team. Prairie chickens were plentiful. The hunters picked out the difficult angle flights otherwise they would have all they could carry in too short a time. As I grew older I was able to hold my own with the other hunters. My brother,



Fred, was the fisherman of the family and still is tops.

### *The Livery Stable*

One of the basic business establishments in the early days was the livery stable. Emmetsburg had several from time to time. The horse and buggy or the team and wagon were the accepted means of travel. The livery stables always had horses of all kinds on hand, and various rigs for any occasion to supply the needs of their customers. Two livery stables were important enough to be located in a single block south of the courthouse square and no one ever objected. We have gone a long way in sanitation since those times.

Some of the townspeople had their own outfits. Alex Peddie (he was generally known as "Lord Peddie") had a beautiful team and a fine carriage with a coachman to drive the family from the Peddie 40-acre estate home, "Rutland Park," on the lake near the edge of town (now Kearny State Park) to the office or stores.

### *Barbers and Barber Shops*

The barber shops in the early days were a sort of news bureau and community gathering place for the men. Pictures of prize fighters on the walls and the *Police Gazette* on the table provided the most important topics of conversation. I remember the big mug rack on the wall. In each of its compartments reposed an open shaving mug with a brush in it, and the name of each customer paint-

ed on his individual mug in fancy or plain script. Having individual mugs was the sole concession to sanitary requirements, if indeed that was even thought of. They were open to dust which was washed out when used. It is more likely the nice lettered names were an appeal to the vanity and importance of the customers. The barber chairs were stationary and not adjustable, and a handy "spittoon" (later designated as a cuspidor) was at the side of each chair.

Shaving was considered more of an art than haircuts and prices were cheap. I saw in a newspaper of that period where shaves were 10 cents and haircuts from 15 cents to 25 cents. In another source, the *Iowa State Gazetteer*, one of our barbers, Peter Metz, boasted he was a "Tonsorial Artist" who "guaranteed" excellent work. Barbers worked long hours those days as they opened early to get businessmen prepared before the stores opened in the morning, and they worked late, especially Saturday night, when the stores were open and country people came to town.

#### *Boyhood Chores*

Our first home was located on a whole block of fertile ground just east of the courthouse square. The east part was planted with plum, cherry and apple trees, berry bushes, and grapevines. The west half of the block contained a large vegetable garden, a big strawberry bed, and raspberry patch. Father was an ardent gardener

and took delight in raising fruit and vegetables. In the early days he also had several hives of bees, and he would go among the hives wearing a screened bonnet and heavy gloves. He used a bellows affair that blew smoke around to protect him. My brothers and I learned to give the bees a wide berth after we had been stung a few times.

Two blocks east we had another block of ground which father planted in apple trees. He also maintained a garden there for vegetables for which there was not room on the home block. With two blocks of garden to keep in order there was plenty to do. Father did most of the work, but by constant prodding he did manage to get some help from the four boys. We detested the drudgery of trying to keep ahead of the weeds and had little liking for the labor of harvesting the crops. There were always the allurements of the swimming hole down at the river, the boating and fishing on the lake, and the hare-and-hound races with the other boys across the countryside.

We made considerable money selling strawberries, raspberries, and apples. One year we sold over four hundred bushels of apples. We bought our own buckboard buggy and harness with the money we earned. The family owned a genuine "surrey with the fringe on top," but we preferred our own sport model contraption. Owning our own fine rig was about like owning a Cadillac convertible in this generation.

When our old home, even when enlarged, became too crowded and inconvenient, a large modern home was built in the east block. The biggest thrill of all was when we moved into the big new house in the early 1890's. There were ten rooms, most of them unusually large, besides numerous pantries, closets, a bathroom, a full basement, and a huge, high-timbered attic. It featured a fireplace, outside doors with heavy-leaded plate glass, a large stained glass window at the stair landing, and most wonderful of all, a wooden zinc-lined bathtub with hot and cold cistern water. What a chore it was to work the hand pump every Saturday night pumping water from the cistern up to the tank in the attic to give us the needed supply of water for our weekly baths.

There was a large barn on that same block where we kept the horses and a pasture lot to the south. So, as it was inevitable, we acquired a cow. It soon became my job to do the milking. It did not appeal to me, but I kept at it until the chance came to shift it to one of the younger boys.

It is indeed strange how some of these simple boyhood memories stand out so clear today as though they were but yesterday. These are but some of the experiences, selected at random for their characteristics rather than for their novelty.

#### *The First Football Team*

In the fall of 1895, my junior year, we organized a high school football team. It was the first

eleven in the history of the school and we were a pretty green outfit. Mr. Potts, a local clothing salesman, was our coach, although he did not know very much about the game either. Our mothers made us canvas pants and tight-laced jackets. Our first game was at Spencer, which we lost. We had our revenge in the return game a few weeks later on the home pasture field east of town, when we won 26 to 6.

There were two literary societies in high school, the "Franklin" and the "Lincoln" which met every Friday afternoon. There were debates, essays, and other compositions on the program. I wrote and delivered three orations in my senior year besides being in several debates.

I completed high school, graduating with the class of 1897 well up towards the top and only missed being valedictorian by a few points. I was nosed out by one who, I secretly believed, deserved the honor.

That fall I entered Grinnell College and in 1901 graduated with a Bachelor's degree with honors and with Phi Beta Kappa. I received a Master's degree in 1904 from Grinnell.

It was my good fortune to be able to enter the Harvard Law School, and I graduated there in June 1904. That same month I married my college sweetheart — Guinevere Craven.

Just before graduation I received a letter from Professor Johnson of Grinnell College: "Just a

brief note to convey to you our very hearty congratulations on the happiness that is and is to be yours. To become a Master of Arts, a Bachelor of Law and to cease to be a benedict, all in the same month, is to make history rapidly."

DWIGHT G. McCARTY