The PALIMPSEST

IOWA'S POPULAR HISTORY MAGAZINE

VOLUME 61 NUMBER 5 SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1980

IOWA STATE HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT
DIVISION OF THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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PRICE—Free to members. Single Issue $1.00
MEMBERSHIP—By application. Annual dues—$5.00
LIFE MEMBERSHIP—$150
HUSBAND AND WIFE JOINT LIFE MEMBERSHIP—$200
ADDRESS INQUIRIES TO: State Historical Society,
402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa 52240
USISSN 0031—0360

THE PALIMPSEST is published bi-monthly by the State Historical Society in Iowa City. It is printed in Waverly and distributed free to Society members, depositories, and exchanges. This is the September/October 1980 issue and is Number 5 of Volume 61. Second class postage paid at Iowa City, Iowa and at additional mailing offices. Editorial assistance for this issue provided by Julie Vorman, William Maddix, and Backroom Graphics, Inc. of Iowa City; copy photography by Mary Bennett.

The

PALIMPSEST

Peter T. Harstad, Director

VOLUME 61 NUMBER 5 SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1980

William Silag, Editor

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Cover: *The Merchant's Block in Cedar Rapids as it appeared in A.T. Andreas'* Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa, 1875. *Cedar Rapids was one of many stops for English visitor James Lonsdale Broderick when he toured the United States in 1876 and 1877. Selections from Broderick's travel journal, edited by Loren N. Horton, begin on page 130.*

The Meaning of the Palimpsest

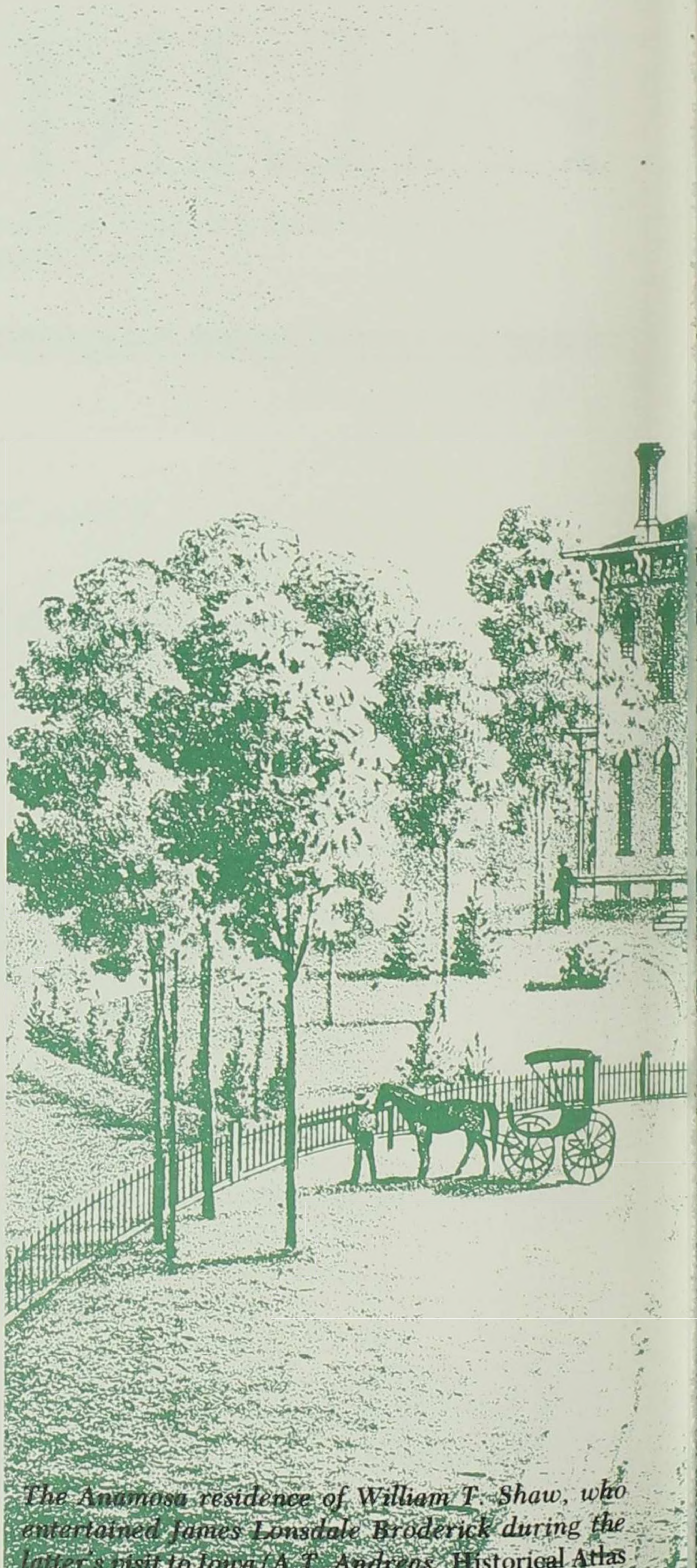
In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete, and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the 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 record 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.

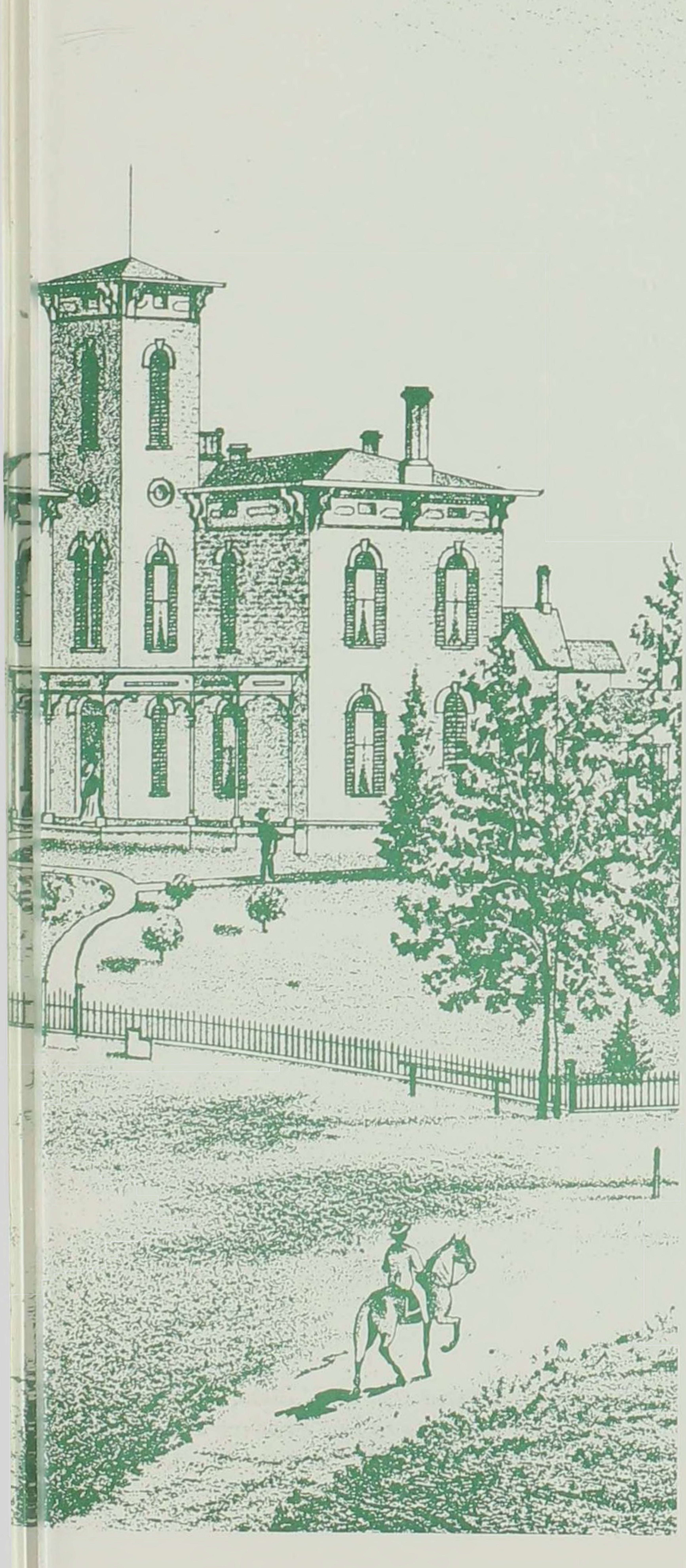
THE CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRY

Edited By Loren N. Horton

In the fall of 1876, British land agent James Lonsdale Broderick travelled to Dubuque to visit friends and relatives who had emigrated from England to northeastern Iowa in previous years. The 35-year-old Broderick made his home in Swaledale, in northern England, where his family had been prominent for many generations. The transplanted Englishmen who entertained him in Dubuque felt a strong sense of ethnic cohesiveness in their new country, particularly in their distinctive dialect and maintenance of extended family ties. Broderick's travel journal, published by the Society in 1976 under the title ***The Character of the Country****, describes in detail the progress of these English emigrants and much more besides. The journal includes observations of American manners, frontier enterprise, and local personalities which provide a refreshingly candid view of nineteenth-century life in Iowa. The excerpts from* ***The Character of the Country*** *reprinted here cover some of Broderick's activities in Iowa during the winter and early spring of 1876-1877. Original spelling and punctuation have been retained throughout.*



The Anamosa residence of William T. Shaw, who entertained James Lonsdale Broderick during the latter's visit to Iowa (A. T. Andreas, Historical Atlas of Iowa*)*

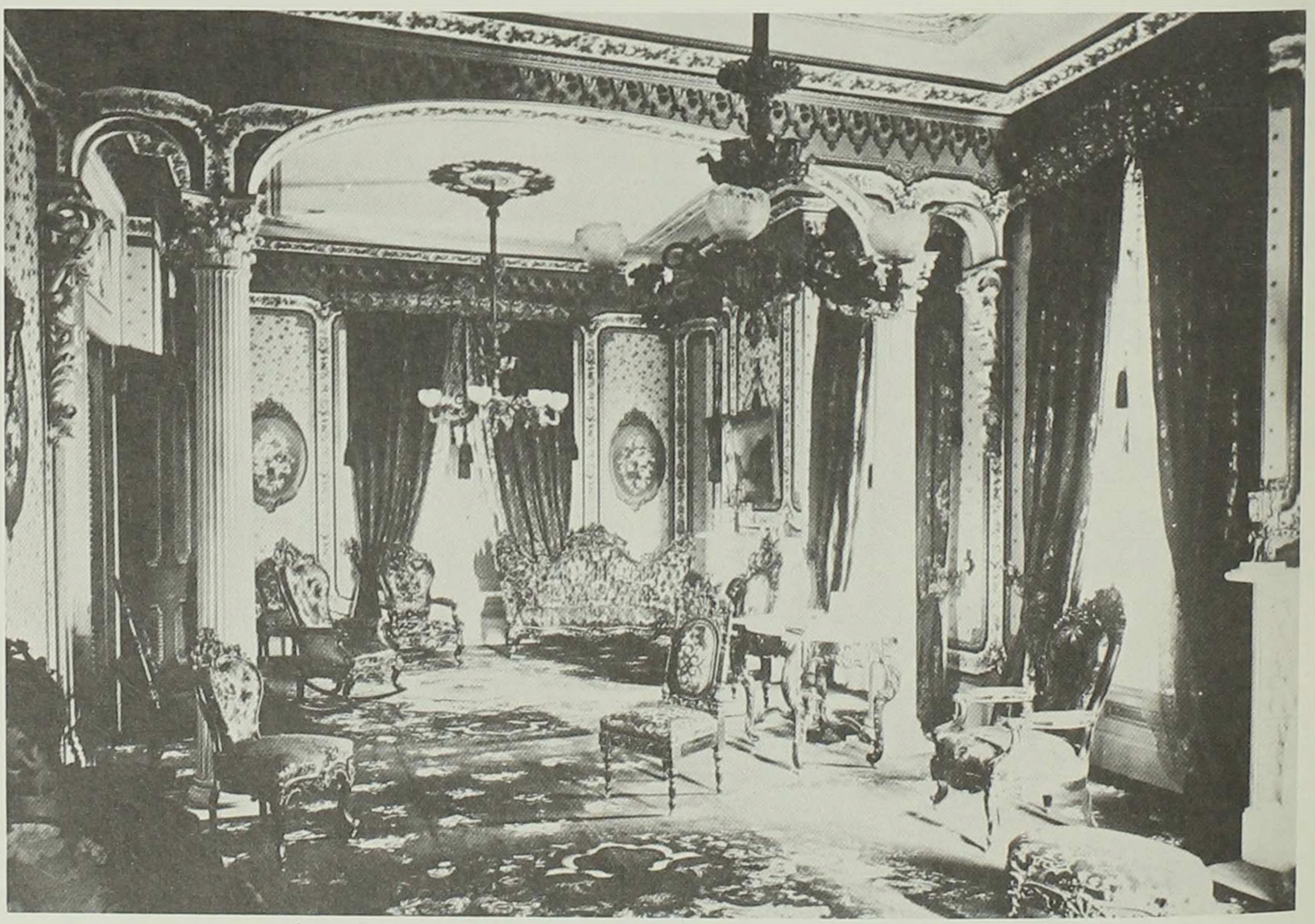


SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9. The thermometer at 11 o'clock this morning was 10° below Zero and in the morning the paper states as low as 21 below Zero. We took a walk in the afternoon across the ice on the Mississippi to Dunleith, a small town opposite to Dubuque, where there were about 350 hogs standing shivering, waiting till a road of ashes was made across the ice, across which they were to be driven to be slaughtered. I am told that a pig on slippery ice once down lies perfectly helpess, and there is an ironical saying here, viz "as independent as a hog on ice." Wagons and horses were crossing, and the Ferry boat was frozen in for the Winter. The river is about ¾ of a mile wide, the ice in some places very smooth, in others very rough, especially on the margins of each night's freezing where heaps of floating ice have been frozen together. We went to the top of the Dunleith bluffs in order to get a good view of Dubuque, &c. Dubuque looks very fine from this point. It occupies a sort of semicircle by the side of the river worn out by the water at some former period, and the cliffs behind are more than half covered with buildings, &c. At the south end of the town lies the Irish quarter, and there are some poor little shanties in it and nothing fine in its best parts. The business part of the town lies in the middle. The stores are mostly 3 stories high with a cellar underneath; the usual frontage of each store 22½ feet and 113 through to the alley behind. A block of buildings is about 270 ft. front by 113. The western portion of the town is nearly all German. Their houses are better by far than those of the Irish, but not so good as those of the Americans and English which are principally situated on the cliffs and slopes behind.

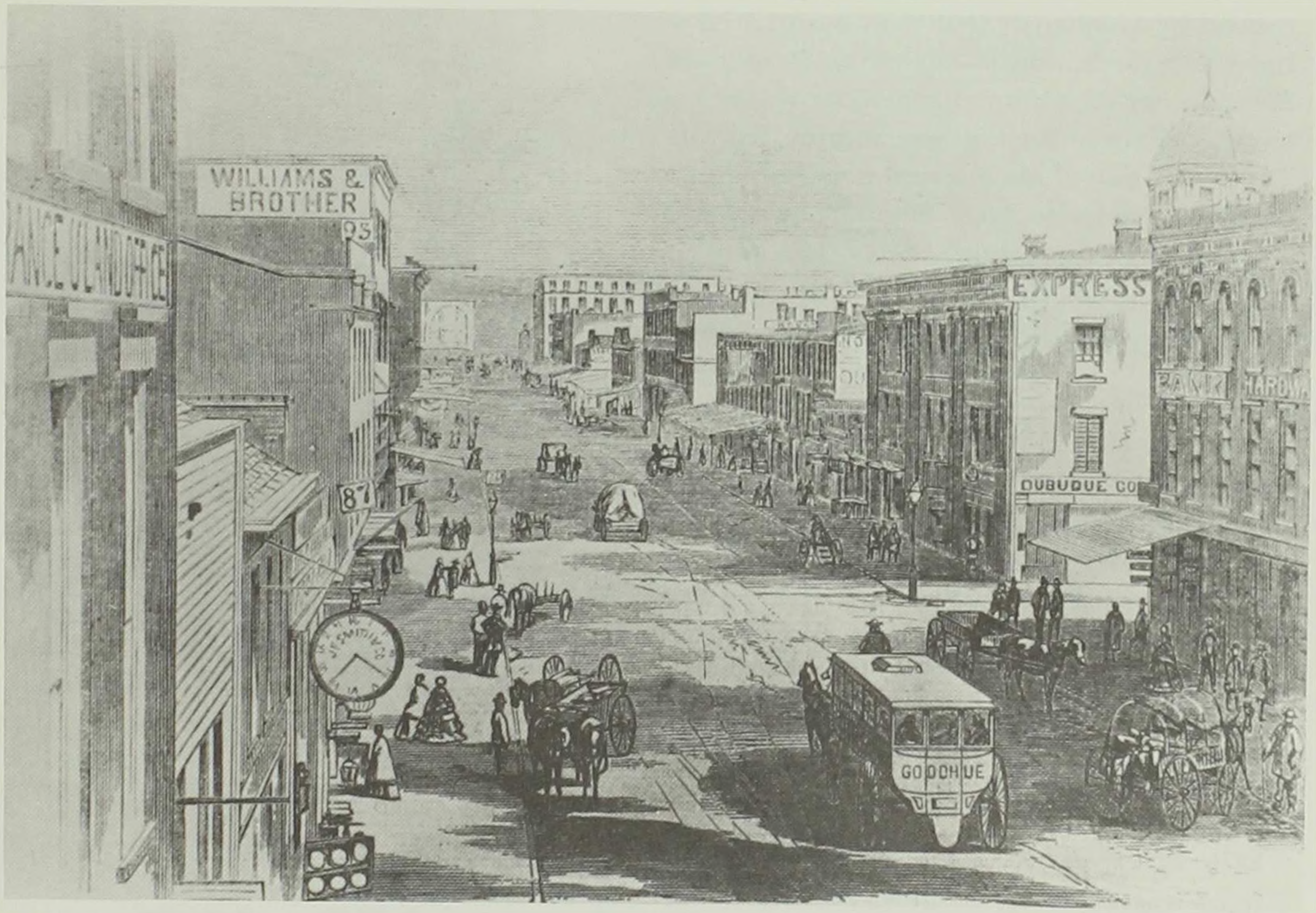
The Mississippi bends like an S seen from behind, thus including to the left looking North and also to the left looking south. Mr. W. [James Woodward, Broderick's travelling companion] forgot his overshoes, and consequently his feet became cold, mine remaining quite warm. My breath falling on my beard made it quite white and icy, through freezing on, and there was no means of getting it off except by the heat from a stove; some young ladies smiled as I passed them, and I remarked afterward that I was in danger of being frozen in.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22. At nine in the morning I met Mr. Herod at the nearest School, opposite Mrs. Marsh's house, and he introduced me to the teachers. He had brought his sleigh, so we drove from School to School till we had finished them all, ten in number, and I was introduced to all the teachers mostly young ladies, about 60 altogether. Mr. Herod did not forget to tell them that I was a bachelor from Yorkshire, on a visit to this country. Several of the young ladies were very handsome, and on an average taller than those in England. They were all very polite, asking me to take a seat, how I liked the country, glad to make my acquaintance, hoping to see me again, &c. The schools are large, having a master as principal, the remainder being Ladies. The poor little negroes have a school for themselves. There was only nine of them taught by a lady; they sang for us, keeping good time and well in tune.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15. We went down town as usual and got tickets for the Evening lecture by the escaped nun, whom we went to hear relate her experience in Convent life. Her name is Miss Edith O'Gorman, who was 6 years in a Convent in Jersey City, and was very unkindly treated there and most miserably deceived in her expectations. Having given up all her wealth and becoming a Sister of Charity,



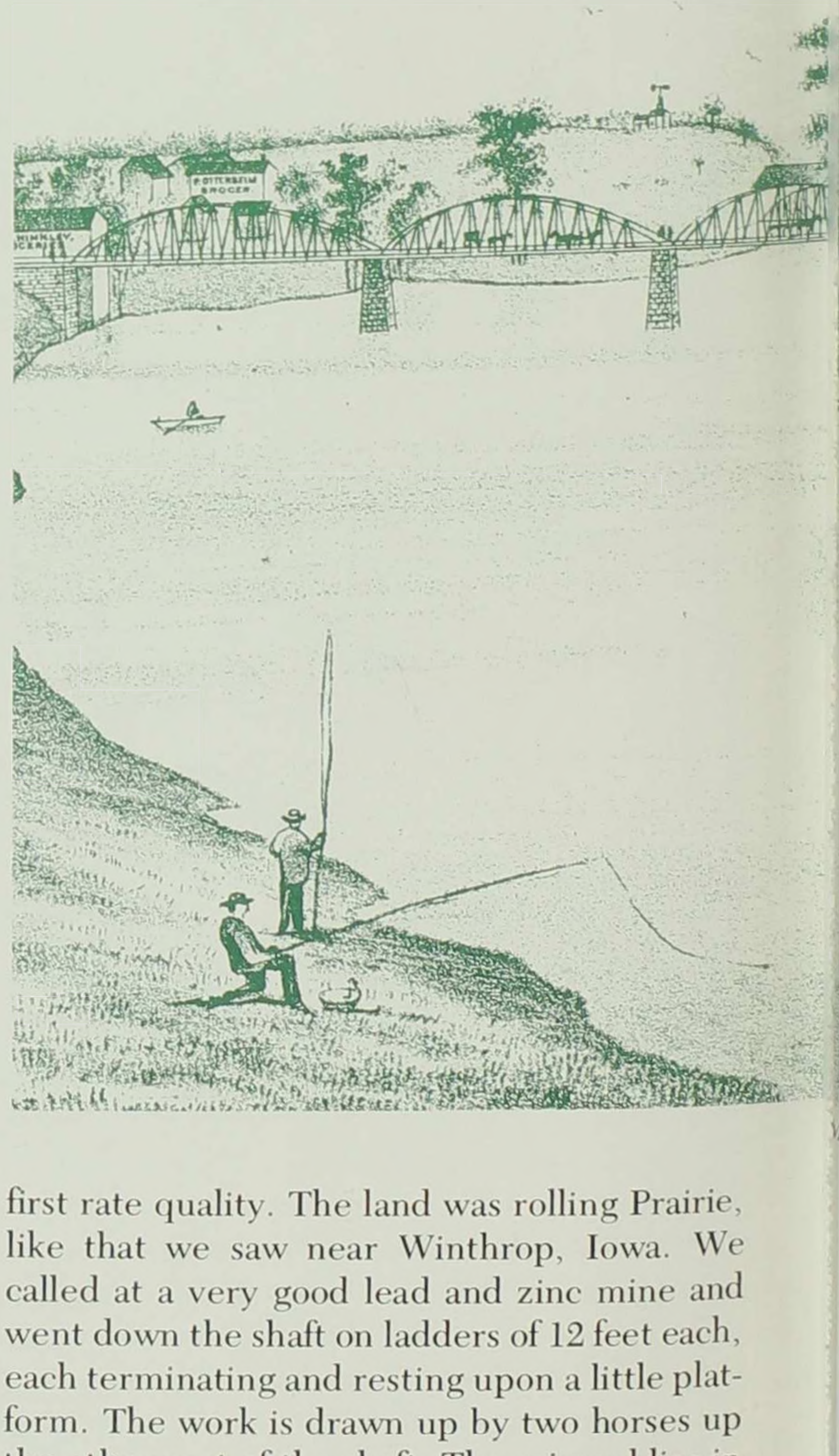
The sitting room of Mrs. Anna Marsh's house in Dubuque, where Broderick stayed during his visit (courtesy Dubuque County Historical Society)



Dubuque's Main Street in the Civil War era (SHSI)

found that she was merely a slave to the caprice of her Superioress and the priests. She had known as may as six nuns in love with the priest at one time, and he the ugliest man imaginable. It was to save her honour that she fled the convent. At night it appears that the vow of obedience must be obeyed no matter how absurd or humiliating the consequences may be. The sin, they are told, if there is any, rests with those in authority. She told us what the commands of the Church are, and principle of which seems to be obedience, to break which is eternal damnation. She spoke remarkably well. During the Lecture a cry of "fire" was raised by some one in the Gallery, and many of the audience were very much alarmed. However most of them kept their seats. Miss O'Gorman bade them sit down, saying that it was not the first time that this cry had been raised to prevent her speaking. One man called out "it's only a Catholic fire" which had the best effect possible in allaying the alarm. She says she runs the risk of losing her life every time she stands before the public and that she has been fired at, a bullet having passed through her hair. She is a good looking young woman of about 30 and is now a Protestant. She will give another lecture tomorrow, to Ladies only, in which she will still further reveal the immorality of the priests and nuns.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18. We went to the Wesleyan Church in the morning and heard Mr. Rhea preach. He attributes the mortality of man to the fall of Adam who he supposes was the first man and thinks that mankind might have all gone to Heaven like Elijah. He does not appear to know that it can be distinctly proved by Geologists that man has existed on the Earth for hundreds of thousands of years. After dinner we went to Centre Grove and had tea with George Reynoldson and his 3rd wife. There was one of his married daughters there and Thos. Metcalfe. Geo. Reynoldson says that both his grandfathers used to say for "shut the door" "spear that dewr"; this is a word I never heard used. The roads were dry in some places and in others very muddy. Thos. Metcalfe was talking about the grass hoppers-"Locusts"-which he saw when he was working for John Clarkson at Marcus. They eat up every thing, even clothing and come in clouds; they deposited their eggs about an inch deep in the ground. They were so numerous on the rails that the wheels of the engine turned round upon the rails, and the train was stopped by them. They will bite sometimes and are very strong and muscular and about the size of a "tengalether" [dragon fly].

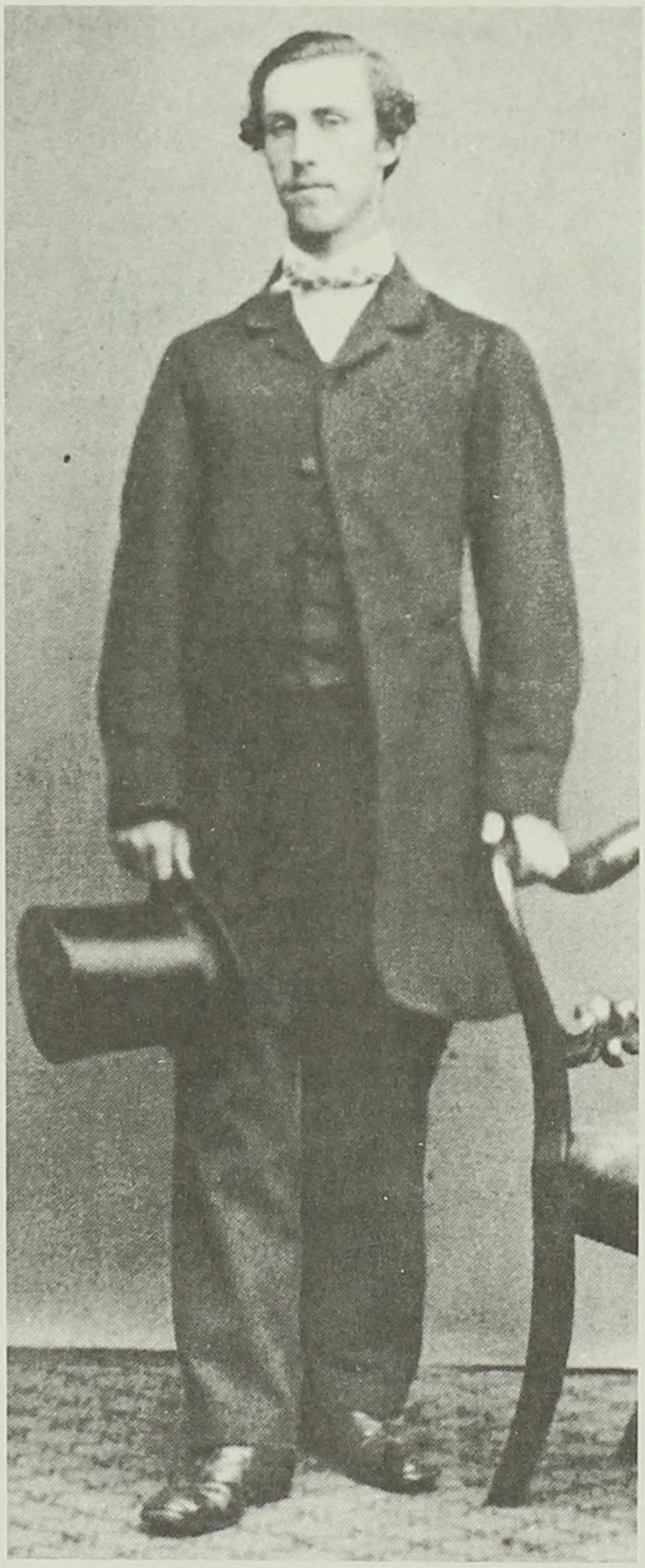


WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4. Mr. Spensley hitched up a light wagon with two horses, early in the morning, and drove us out to see Matthew Willis and his farm. The roads were excessively muddy all the way. In some of the "meanest" places we were almost up to the hub in it and apparently in danger of throwing over. Mr. Willis has a very fine farm of 470 acres, besides some 40 or 80 acres of timber at a distance. His land looks well-tilled and clean, but his house and outbuildings are nothing more than an old rookery. In fact when Mr. Spensley stopped the team at the house, it is a fact, I had not the slightest idea that it was a dwelling. I thought it was an out-building of some kind. It was raining fast, so we got inside as soon as possible. The old gentleman and his sons and daughters made us very welcome. They took us into the parlour and cooked us a good dinner. The Young Willis that was in Wensleydale two or three years ago did not remember having seen me before, though I met him three times before. We passed several other good farms of first rate quality. The land was rolling Prairie, like that we saw near Winthrop, Iowa. We called at a very good lead and zinc mine and went down the shaft on ladders of 12 feet each, each terminating and resting upon a little platform. The work is drawn up by two horses up the other part of the shaft. The mineral lies in two beds, like coal, one at the top of about 7 feet of limestone the other at the bottom. The upper seam is all lead ore, the other lead and zinc. They blast all this 7 feet of rock clean out and cast it away behind, the width taken out being about 40 or 50 yards. It is astonishing how the roof keeps up. They bore for blasting

ay Island and the Iron Bridge over the Cedar River in Cedar Rapids (A.T. Andreas, Historical Atlas of Iowa)

("blowing") with a machine driven by compressed air, forced from a distance outside in iron pipes by a steam engine. They fire all the holes at once by electricity. We saw them boring and should have heard the blast, but there was something wrong with the battery or something and it did not fire the holes. In returning we met two ladies driving a team through the mud like ourselves; although the ladies in the country are poor walkers, yet they deserve great credit for the dashing manner in which they can handle a team.

THURSDAY, APRIL 12. The whole of this wild land is so even and has such a gentle slope that we could safely drive at a trot over any part of it except where there is an occasional boulder or swampy hollow. I noticed one large granite block, covering as much ground as the bottom of a hay stack, which was split in the middle, the upper half being slid considerably off towards the south but still resting partly on the under half, though the fracture had not nearly sufficient slope to warrant the supposition that it could have slid off without great force being used, probably the pressure of a glacier. Taken all together this is a very fine tract of land and well situated; from the highest parts there is a

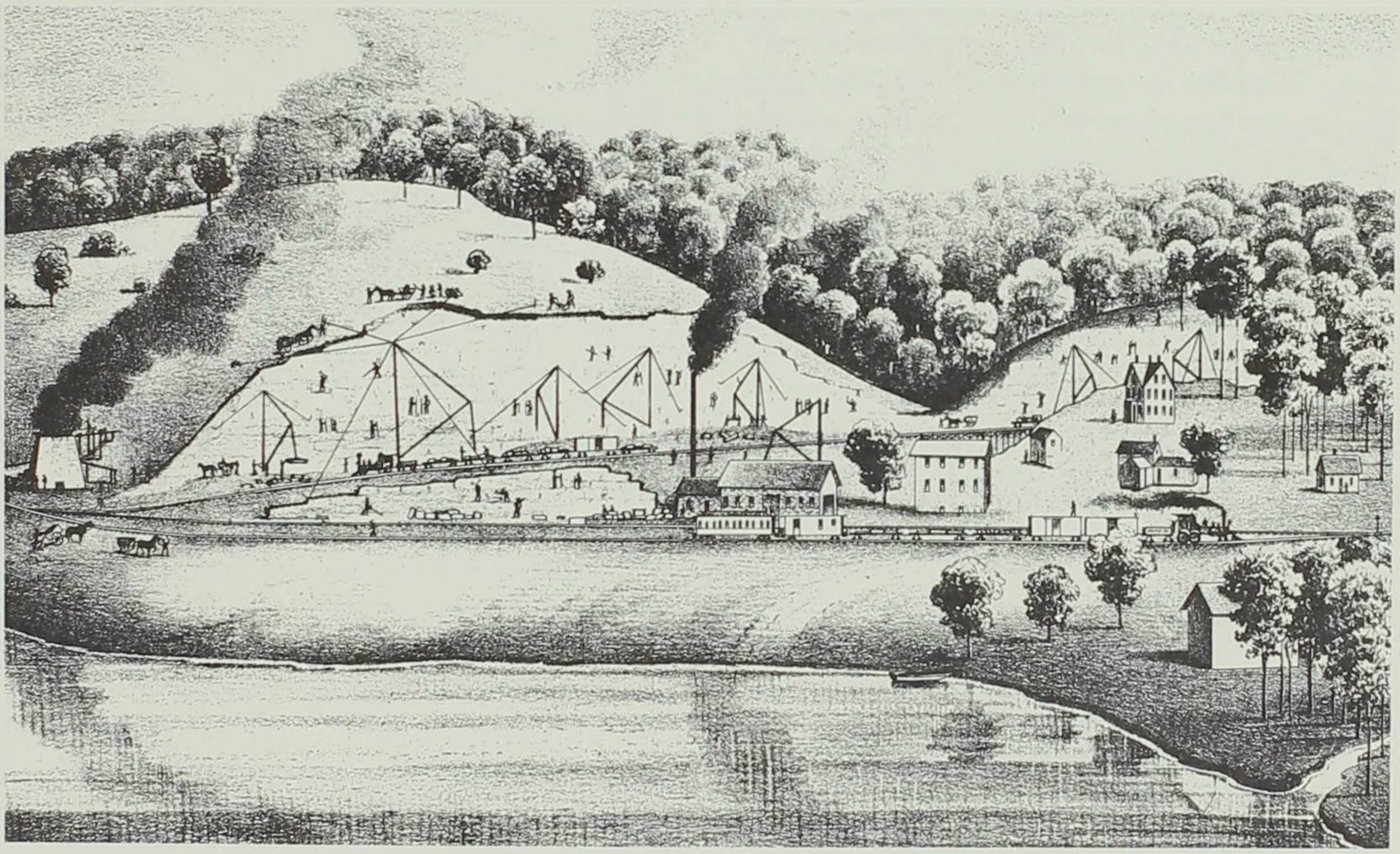


James Lonsdale Broderick (SHSI)

very wide view in every direction as far as the eye can reach, and the landscape is far from being unpleasant. At from $8 to $10 per acre this land would be a very good bargain I think.

We returned in time to catch the freight cars and went forward to Waterloo, a thriving town further west. We had prairie all the way nearly. The frogs which have just come out were making an awful noise near Independence in the sloughs. Beside the river the soil is mostly of a sooty-looking black. We saw numbers of prairie fires all of limited extent on account of most of the land being under cultivation. We rode in the upper seats of the conductor's car and could see over the top of the train. Some "Bummers" were busily engaged playing cards and chewing tobacco. They seemed to enjoy themselves immensely. A "Bummer" is what is called in England a "Traveller." We had a fine sunset. It was darkening fast when we got to Waterloo, where we had supper and stayed all night. We saw the town by gas-light. It seems to be a thriving place with good waterpower in the Cedar River. Two Corn Mills and a factory were at work.

FRIDAY, APRIL 13. We got up in the morning at about 1 o'clock and took the cars for Cedar Rapids. As we approached this place, the scenery was pretty along the banks of the river which are rather low. Cedar Rapids is a very fine country town, on the Cedar River, with good water power. I noticed no less than 5 bridges across the river, one or two of them being Railway bridges. One bridge crosses over an island in the river; there were two houses and quite a number of trees on the island. The river is between 3 & 400 yards wide. The houses are many of them very good, and streets being very wide. One of the main streets was 100 feet across. None of them were macadamised, the soil being composed of sand. Several railroads terminate or cross here. The flood plain of the river is very fine land, level and broad; behind are low hills and woodland and further back lies the prairie lands, all settled and worth from 28 to 35 dollars per acre, we were told. Quite a large number of fine trees were left growing in the streets; there was

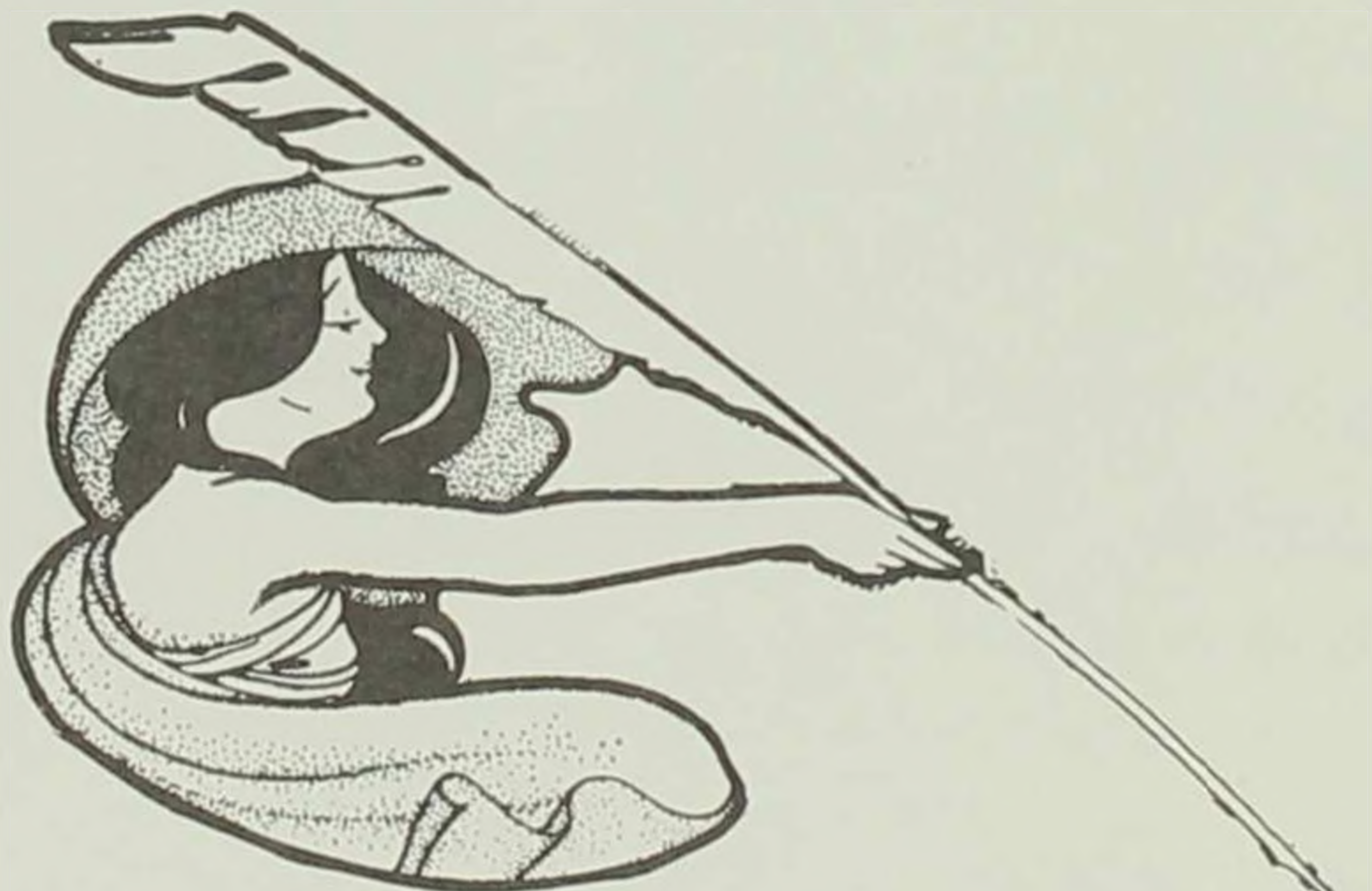


A Jones County stone quarry (A.T. Andreas, Historical Atlas of Iowa*)*

a large public square and several fine churches, and several new buildings were being erected. Some of the side walks were of stone. We saw some boys fishing and went to see what they had caught. They had some "suckers" which weighed from 1 to 3 pounds each. We inquired how many kinds of fish there were in the river. One of them said we have salmon, bass, pike, suckers, catfish, eels, &c. Mr. Woodward asked if there were any codfish; they said "No!" but one of them rather less than the other, said, "There are plenty of whales." I asked, "Don't they sometimes knock the boat over?" "Sometimes they do," he said. The weather is very fine, quite hot in the middle of the day but cold in the morning, with no feeling of damp but dry and sharp. Awhile after dinner we again took tickets for Dubuque. We passed the quarries of Anamosa where they have a jail and work the convicts, who are all dressed, conspicuously and alike. Quite a number were at work; three sentinels stood off at a distance with rifles ready to shoot, in case of mutiny or attempt to escape. The stone they get is a light buff-colored limestone, with fine cleavage and is taken up in large sizes and of varying thicknesses. There are other quarries which are not wrought by convicts. Two of Nanny Watters' sons live at Anamosa, which is a growing town. After passing here we left the valleys and got on the prairie. We had supper at the junction at Farley, travelling from Farley to Dubuque on the line we came out upon.

Later in April 1877, Broderick travelled to Ohio to visit relatives living there. The following month he returned to England and resumed his responsibilities as an estate manager in Swaledale. In December 1886—at the age of 45—he died at his home in Hawes and was buried on Birk Hill, overlooking the family seat at Spring End. □

THE PENMAN BUILDS AN EMPIRE



by Robert E. Belding

For generations the Palmer Method of penmanship challenged the skill and patience of students in American grammar schools and business colleges. But Austin Norman Palmer devised his method—"legible, rapid, easy, and enduring"—as a modern alternative to the drudgery of traditional copy-book instruction. In the process, the Cedar Rapids educator earned a million dollars.

On the foundation of his innovative penmanship techniques, known as the Palmer Method, Austin Norman Palmer succeeded in building a nationally acclaimed chain of three business colleges based in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. All of Palmer's highly touted and lucrative educational techniques—and all of his many products—grew out of a distinctive, handsome, and relaxed method of inscription that Palmer developed himself while still in his teens. Ultimately, Palmer owned, ran, and taught in three business schools, administered numerous correspondence courses and summer sessions, and established a bookstore that specialized in his Palmer-method pens, papers, and textbooks. His own publishing company held sole rights to *Palmer's Guide to Muscular Movement Writing*, which went through so many editions and was disseminated so widely that publishing firms bearing his name were established on the Pacific Coast and in New York City. The production of Palmer's handsomely ornamented penmanship diploma became almost a success unto itself, for he charged a special fee for the hand-decorated certificate.

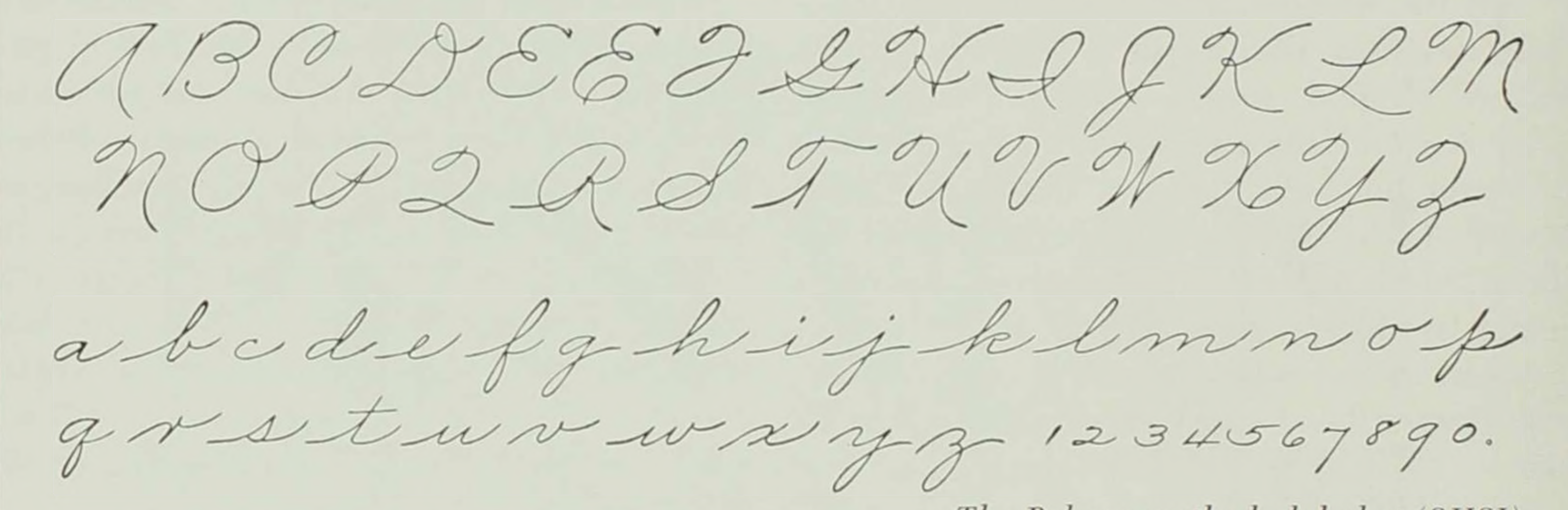
The agonies and rewards of learning the Palmer Method are vividly recalled by ex-pupils throughout the country. Fat ovals and gently leaning push-pulls were repeated by the clock or calendar as scholars rotated their arms in a circular motion which, some declared, wore raw the muscles below the elbow. Through it all, Palmer or his specially trained tutors soothed possible qualms by proclaiming that his free-flowing style, using the prescribed arm muscles, would never tire the hand. Palmer invented his unusual system in the early 1880s; it was nationally known and adopted by the turn of the century and proved highly contagious in public and in Roman Catholic schools across the nation in the decade from 1915 to 1925.

The Catholic parochial schools, almost as an entity, adopted the Palmer Method of penmanship earlier than did most tax-supported systems and then retained it longer. Palmer travelled extensively, helping the teaching sisters to guide their young charges' hands into muscle-supported scrolls and swoops. One middle-aged woman recalls, "How many thousand times did I write 'This is a specimen of my handwriting' before the sisters decided it was good enough to submit for a flowered certificate from Professor Palmer!"

Teachers conscientiously patrolled classroom aisles checking how the Palmer-produced pen was held, how Palmer's paper was levelled on the school desk, and even how the child was sitting—bent on combining circles with slanted strokes. The exercise was punctuated with staccato commands to "use your arm!" Nor could the teacher herself, who had inevitably been through Palmer's own inscriptions course, feel comfortable or even decently garbed without a framed certificate on the classroom wall and a current subscription to Palmer's *American Penmanship* on her desk.

Far from being only a slick entrepreneur out to cull as many fast bucks as there were suckers, Palmer was a man of integrity who taught more than a penmanship method at his Cedar Rapids school. He worked countless hours to develop his academy and its well-deserved reputation for producing versatile office workers, whose tailored combinations of study prepared them for immediate employment.

Like almost every teacher of business in the state, Palmer had come from the East. He was born in 1857 in New York State and studied in the local schools a system of Spencerian handwriting characterized by a slanting style. Even while learning this he declared that it was wearing out his hand under a tiring method of inscription. With his writing hand still in that



The Palmer-method alphabet (SHSI)

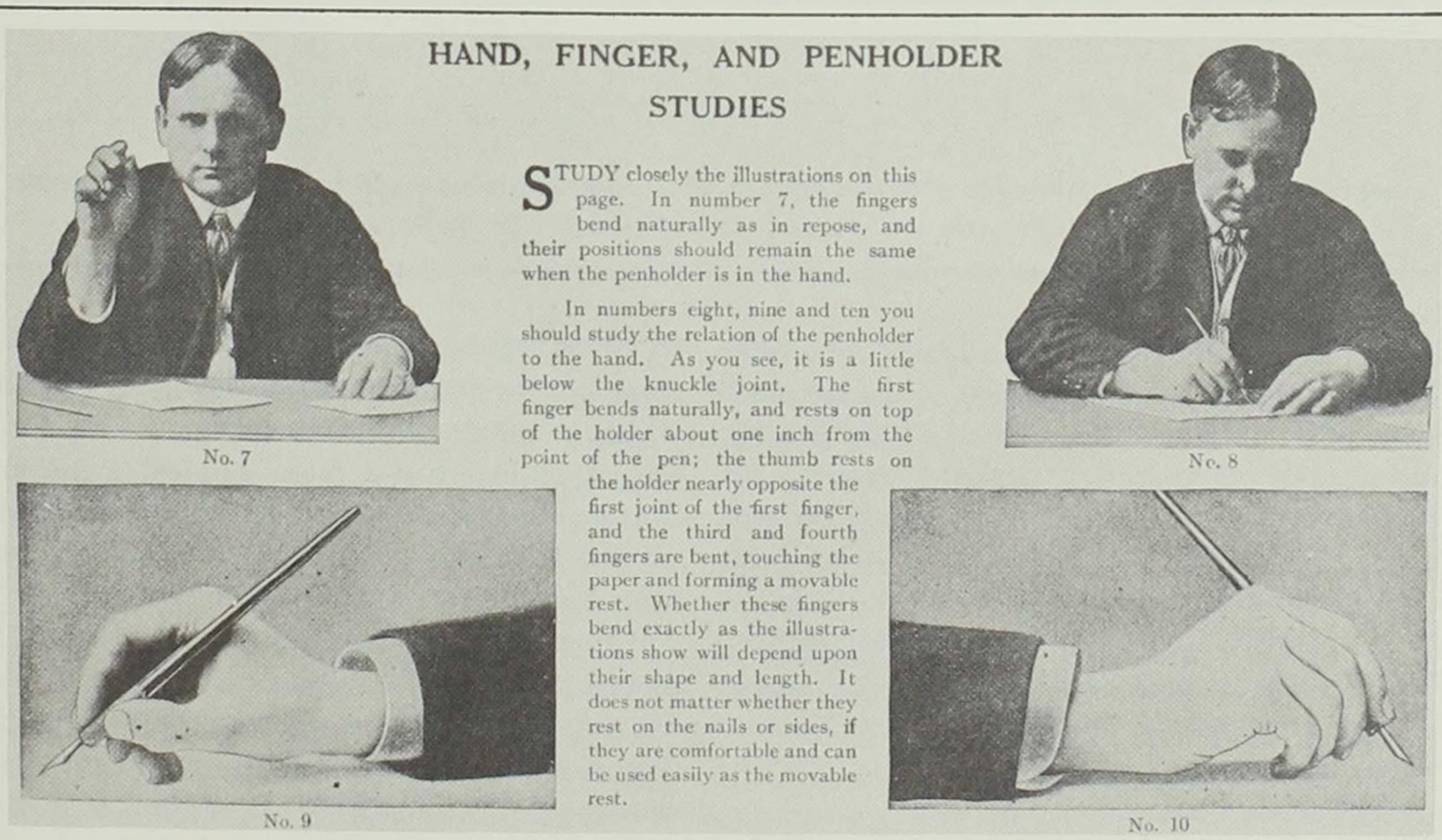
debilitated condition, he drifted into Cedar Rapids at the age of thirteen and became an insurance policy writer, using his free-flowing pen to inscribe and illuminate each policy. In 1884 he started teaching in the local business college which he was shortly to purchase. Although his downtown school experienced the same uncertain days of early development which characterized so many of Iowa's private schools, by 1892 Palmer had built up his institution into such an excellent one that he was able to form a company and purchase a business "university" in Saint Joseph, Missouri. With the other hand he tucked the Creston (Iowa) Business College under his corporate wing. Until his death in 1927, he remained principal owner of this three-campused corporation, which he called the Cedar Rapids Business College Company. He was most unusual in that he remained active in academic teaching and administration for a period of 43 years. Because of his many related involvements—especially in the area of business education—Palmer became not only the country's best known academy educator, but also its most successful. In 1927 he was buried in Cedar Rapids, leaving an estate of well over one million dollars.

Thanks to his school's thorough tutelage, stenographers were also taught to compose and type good business letters before leaving the school with diploma in hand. Palmer was aware that few clerical jobs were so narrow as to require only a single set of skills, so his stenographers, in particular, became invaluable because they also learned to keep office accounts. The combination typist and shorthander was especially attractive to employers. In addition, it was never assumed that those entering his portals were already competent in basic English skills. Professor Palmer, knowing some had been through spelling and grammar without motivation, required that those who needed it should undergo the Common English Course in his school. Such an essentials course not only proved valuable to youths in his school, but also to many adults entering his institution.

A second package of courses offered by the Cedar Rapids school was perhaps unique to his institution and was essential to A.N. Palmer's dedication in spreading his distinctive gospel of flowing penmanship. This course he called the Normal Commercial. It offered training in penmanship and overall inscriptional techniques for all those aspiring to teach. In this sequence, either beginning or experienced teachers could learn how to chalk "both delicately and attractively" on the blackboard. The professor's view was that his human teaching products—whether they were to enter the ranks of parochial or public secondary schools, elementary-level institutions, or even business colleges or other forms of private schools—had to be versatile individuals with an armament of "complete" packages: courses in bookkeeping, office business practice, inter-communication, and secretarial training. Also offered to those found deficient in various areas were business law, commercial arithmetic, rapid addition, business correspondence, "normal" penmanship (followed by "ornamental" writing), flourishing, and an elective called "pen art." All these contained courses incorporating instruction in how to get the subject across to students, and a general methods course applicable to all business teaching was also offered.

This "normal" or teacher training course provided a portion of Palmer's national reputation. Not only was it unique in covering so many areas of business education, it also provided summer courses for mature teachers. Roman Catholic parishes in particular sent their teachers to Cedar Rapids to pespire through the summer programs. As many as two hundred teachers arrived each summer from 1913 to 1925, and Palmer's welcoming words to all became famous: "You cannot teach what you do not know." The master teacher's own on-the-spot research conducted during his non-stop penmanship lecture circuits yielded proof that the properly trained business teacher could command better pay and enjoy a variety of job offers that other aspiring teachers did not share. For adolescents of both sexes he advertised: "Here is a very attractive opportunity for ambitious young people." His correspondence courses garnered a half-million customers from across the country. Palmer's own bookstore operated as part of his Cedar Rapids enterprise and held a monopoly on all equipment required for his courses.

Another publicized attraction of the Cedar Rapids Business College and its affiliates was the array of jobs that students held while undertaking the courses. Each college had part-time positions in the school's banks where tellers, cashiers, and bookkeepers were em-



HAND, FINGER, AND PENHOLDER STUDIES

STUDY closely the illustrations on this page. In number 7, the fingers bend naturally as in repose, and their positions should remain the same when the penholder is in the hand.

In numbers eight, nine and ten you should study the relation of the penholder to the hand. As you see, it is a little below the knuckle joint. The first finger bends naturally, and rests on top of the holder about one inch from the point of the pen; the thumb rests on the holder nearly opposite the first joint of the first finger, and the third and fourth fingers are bent, touching the paper and forming a movable rest. Whether these fingers bend exactly as the illustrations show will depend upon their shape and length. It does not matter whether they rest on the nails or sides, if they are comfortable and can be used easily as the movable rest.

No. 7

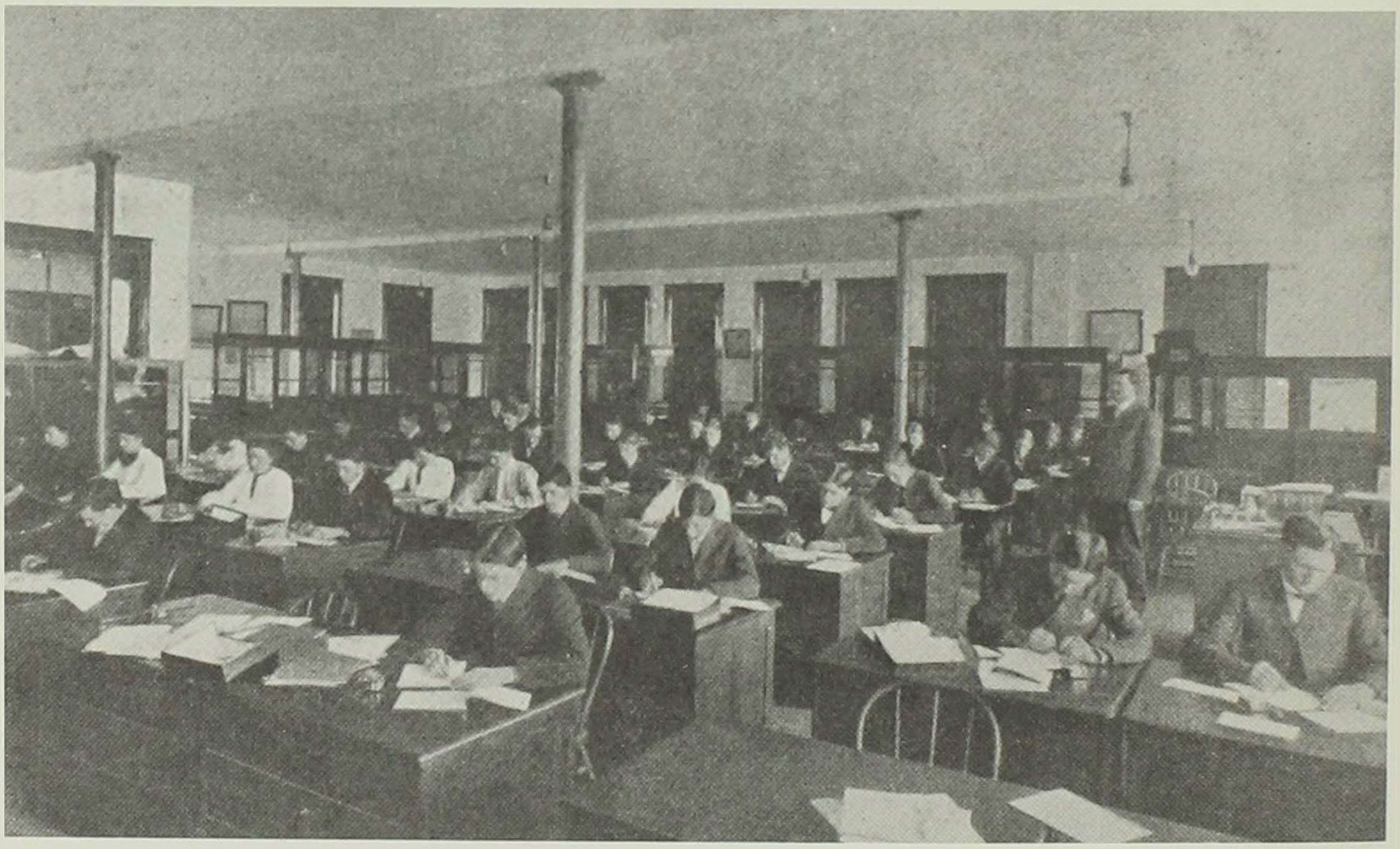
No. 8

No. 9

No. 10

The Penman: Austin Norman Palmer demonstrates the proper technique (SHSI)

It is not so much the amount of practice as the kind of practice that counts.

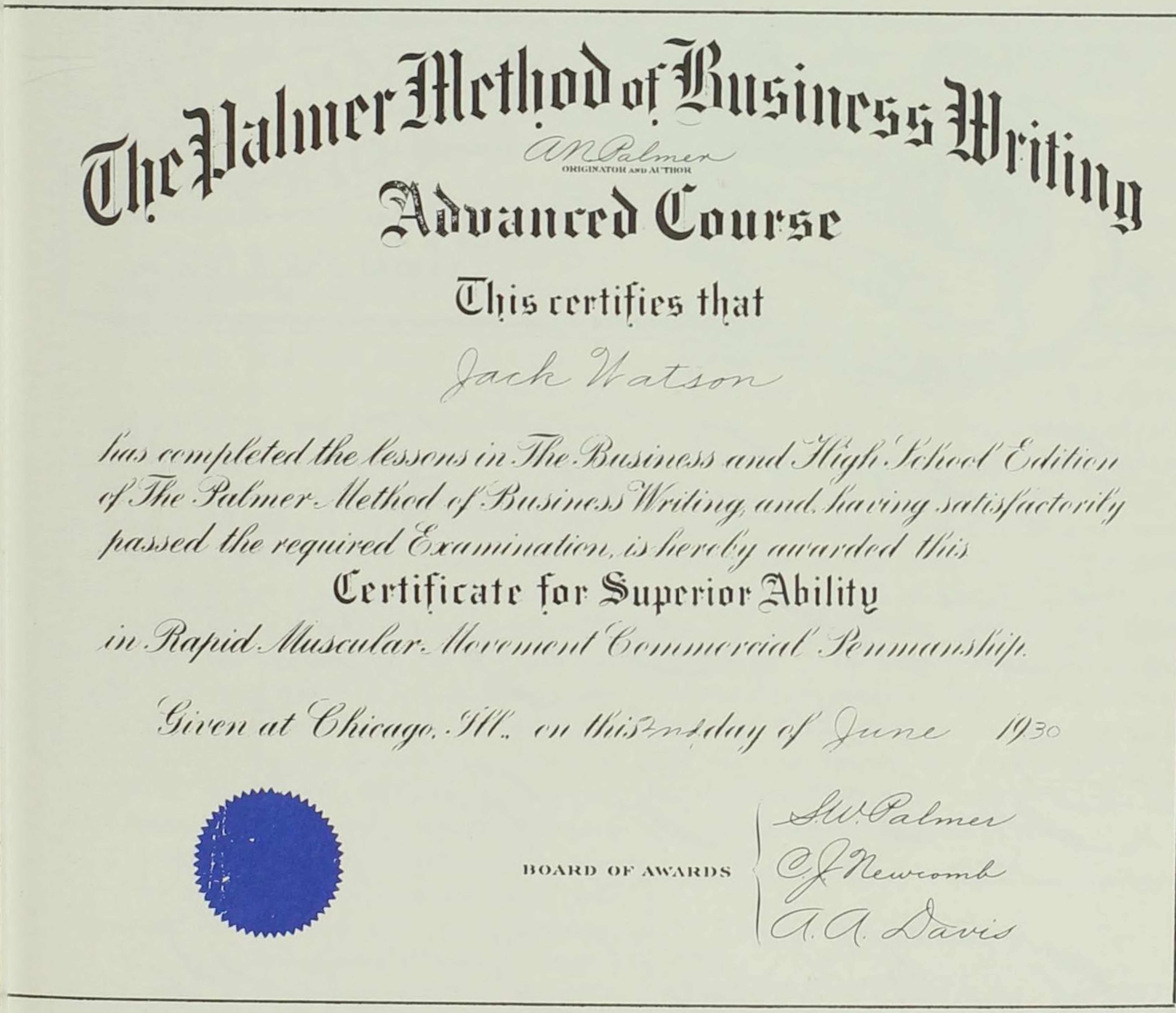


It is the constant effort to acquire precision that leads to success in writing.

Learning by doing: penmanship drill in a Palmer classroom. The master often reminded his students, "A few minutes in the right way are worth hours of practice in the wrong way."

ployed, or in the institution's bookstore, handling all Palmer products for over-the-counter sales and for the vast number of mail-order requests from correspondence students. All these positions were held exclusively by students attending the college. In addition, each of the three communities where the schools were established maintained independent business offices to give students experiences in wholesale accounts, in real estate and insurance, in commission computations, and in freight office books.

An unusual and successful aspect of the Cedar Rapids Business College Company was its close link to its two cousin schools. Palmer established an intercommunication plan by which students would gain experience at one school while carrying on a "wholesale commission and banking" business with students in his other two schools. To complement this, each school featured "telegraph employment" by which students trained at one school might be placed in the geographic area of another school. Managers of the operation proudly pointed out that Palmer graduates of the comprehensive shorthand course readily found jobs, and most alumni had a wide selection of attractive employment opportunities to choose from.



The Palmer Method of Business Writing

A N Palmer
ORIGINATOR AND AUTHOR

Advanced Course

This certifies that

Jack Watson

has completed the lessons in The Business and High School Edition of The Palmer Method of Business Writing, and having satisfactorily passed the required Examination, is hereby awarded this

Certificate for Superior Ability

in Rapid Muscular Movement Commercial Penmanship.

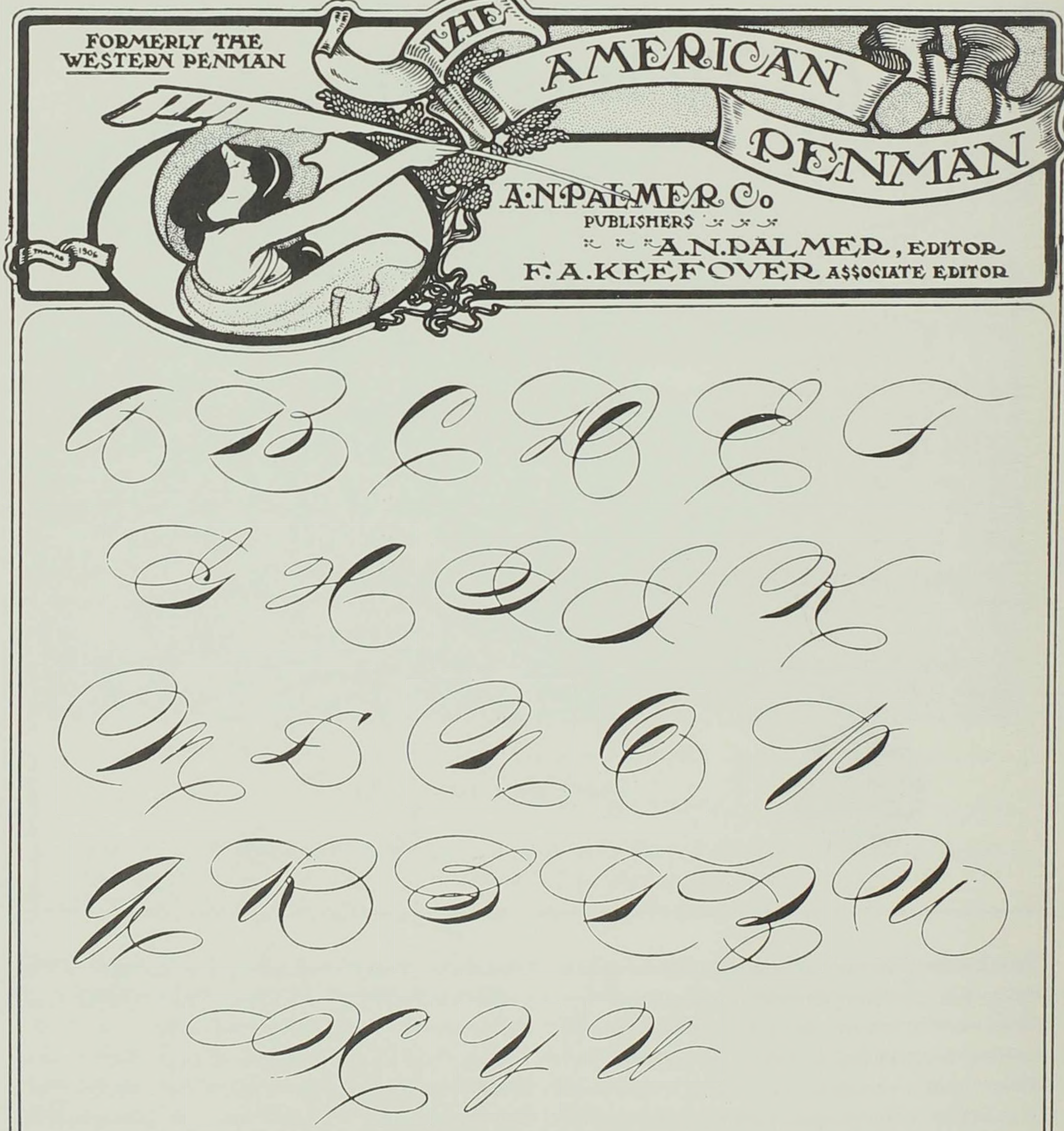
Given at Chicago, Ill., on this 2nd day of June 1930

BOARD OF AWARDS

S.W. Palmer
C.J. Newcomb
A.A. Davis

The modest chain of schools maintained equal pride in the personal supervision accorded each student. In a day when public education and academies were forced into becoming mass enterprises, Palmer's teachers made sure that the program fitted each student and that the speed of progress was neither too accelerated nor too slow for the individual. This sensitive pacing for each student was reflected in the "scholarship" statement of the school's *Prospectus*. Palmer's own words indicate that no lump scholarships were awarded because some students got the best from a single term of attendance while others needed an entire academic year to achieve a comparable goal. Under such varied conditions Palmer felt it was unfair to offer continuing subsidies.

The word "scholarships" actually had an unusual meaning; students could benefit by paying their own "scholarships." If the student prepaid a package sum at the start, embracing all tuition, board and room, book rentals, supply purchases, and fuel for the room, he or she obtained a lower rate of "scholarship fee." Should a student be compelled to interrupt studies, he or she could re-enter the school on the prepaid scholarship without paying any increased cost or re-entry fee.



The American Penman, *Palmer's monthly magazine, not only propounded correct business style but also covered current developments in calligraphy. Shown here is an alphabet contributed to the magazine in 1907 by F.B. Courtney (SHSI)*

Rates for attendance in any of the three schools were almost identical. It was made clear that fees were for a full month of attendance rather than for four weeks. The initial three months of tuition cost $10 per month; this was reduced to $8 for the second three, and to $7 for each month thereafter. If a block of three months was paid in advance, further package savings of approximately 25 percent would accrue.

All students paid their board and room—if needed—through the school office, yet dormitories were never a part of the school. Instead, the administration ferreted out "respectable families" willing to take youthful boarders and roomers at the school's established fee. Thirteen weeks of board could be had for $25 and rooms were assigned in comparable homes for $2.50 per month. Fuel for rented rooms cost $9 per winter. The bundled rate for all books and supplies was established at $10, including personal stationery for writing home, but all had to be purchased at the Palmer-run store. The final fee was for the school's diploma; its margins alone were worth the dollar charge, for here was a "natural" adornment of birds and flowers.

Palmer himself advised students to get into wise business habits by conserving personal income. "Start your prudence here at school," he exhorted. Well-worn phrases from Palmer's lips that were often repeated by students were: "Save rather than speculate!" "Spend for intellectual and physical development, not for luxury and amusement!" "Do not carry loose change, but deposit it in the school and withdraw it when needed!"

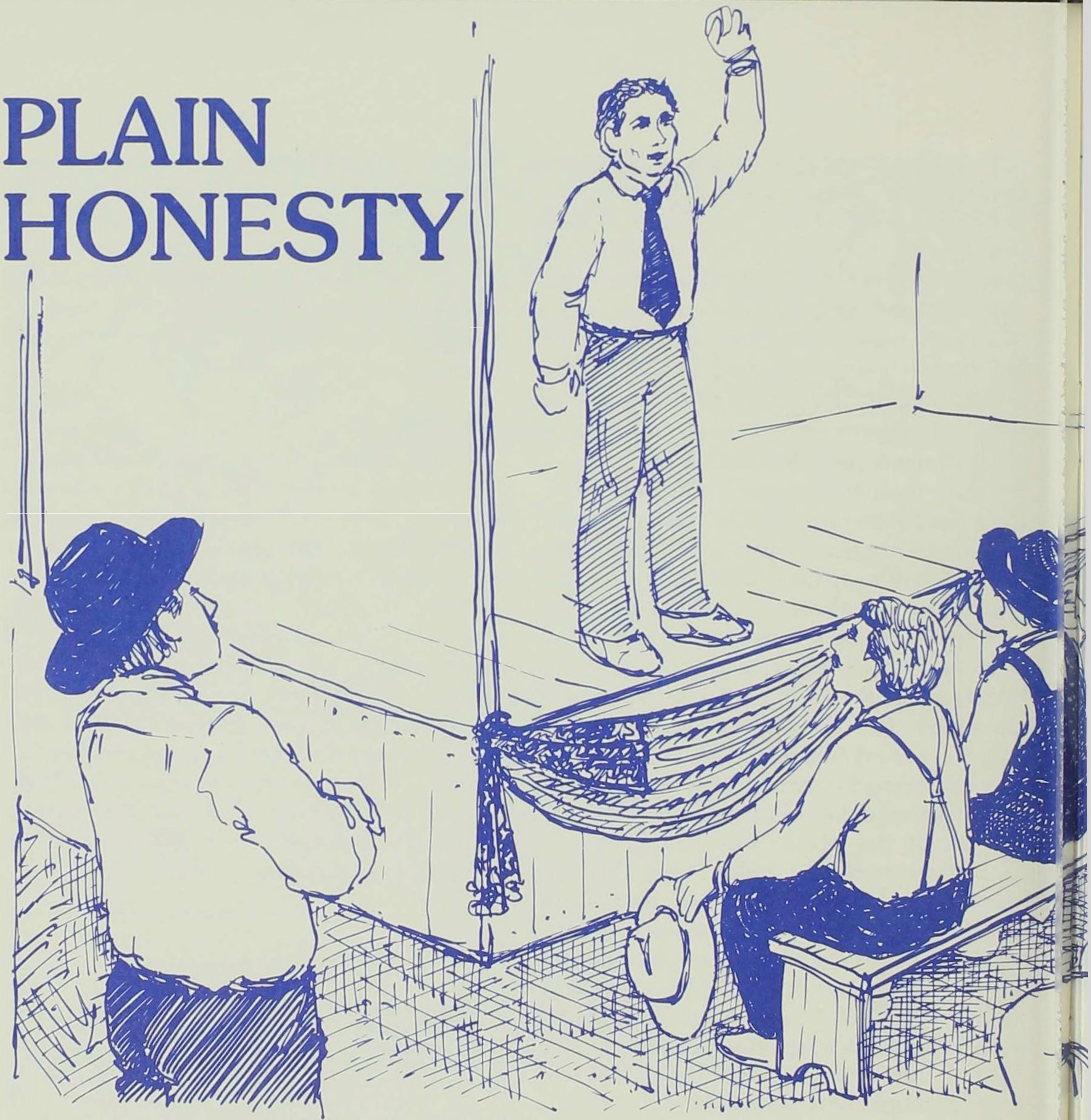
Other anticipated or actual idiosyncrasies of the school's operation were reflected in its policy. It is apparent that all three colleges encountered problems in getting students to enter in early September, the start of the academic year. The common *Prospectus* advised that those who appeared the first week in September would receive their initial two weeks of tuition free. Further verbal encouragement came at this point: "The first week in September will be the most excellent time to begin a course in any of our schools."

An energetic, effective teacher and administrator, Palmer built a small empire of business colleges with all operations centered in Cedar Rapids. Penmanship, the initial spark for his school, was ignited and spread across the country, through most public and private schools. His overall influence was two-fold: a national name built on his penmanship operation and its publishing facilities and national acclaim for his business college operation and its network of correspondence and summer instruction. Little wonder his business college was the best known and one of the longest lasting private secondary schools in Iowa. Here was useful education at its best. □

Note on Sources

Sources with helpful information about Palmer and his business schools include J. Shrock, "Rise and Progress of Business Education in Iowa," *Annals of Iowa*, VII (July 1869), 296; Joseph S. Taylor, "A.N. Palmer: An Appreciation," *Educational Review*, LXXVI (June 1928), 15-20; and *Prospectus and Calendar, Cedar Rapids Business College* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: The College, 1892), 5. William Duffy, "Push and Pull, Push and Pull, Hit the Line Every Time," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, March 27, 1965, provides details about Palmer's penmanship techniques. See also: Frances Craig, "Oh, Oh Kids, the Palmer Method is Back," *Des Moines Register*, March 12, 1967, and A.N. Palmer, "Business Schools Owned and Managed by the Western Business College Company," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, August 18, 1892.

PLAIN HONESTY



WALLACE SHORT AND TH

The United States did not enter World War I with the whole-hearted support of all elements of the citizenry. In fact, the turmoil of early twentieth-century America, newly urbanized, full of recent immigrants, and seething with new social theories and political philosophies, sharpened to outright conflict time and time again, in Montana as well as Pittsburgh, in Iowa as well as New York. Everywhere, super-patriots turned wrathfully against anyone whose loyalty they questioned: speakers of German, labor organizers, newly arrived Jews and Italians.

At the center of one such storm was Wallace

HE I.W.W. by William H. Cumberland

M. Short, the mayor of Sioux City, who received state and national attention by defending the free speech rights of the Industrial Workers of the World, commonly known as the Wobblies. He was subject to continual personal attacks in the Sioux City and regional press, and was forced, in June 1919, to submit to a recall election.

Mayor Short came from the small town of College Springs, near the Iowa-Missouri border. His father, James Black Short, had been an opponent of slavery, a supporter of Abraham Lincoln, and a Civil War veteran. Born in 1866, Wallace Short labored on the family farm until he was twenty-one, attending a local academy known as Amity College. In 1889, he left for

Beloit College and four years later graduated as class valedictorian. Intent upon becoming a minister, he pursued his studies at Yale Seminary. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa in 1896.

During his first pastorate in Evansville, Wisconsin, Short grew interested in the social gospel theology of Washington Gladden, and he was also caught up in the progressive movement led by Wisconsin politician Robert M. La Follette. These influences were to remain paramount, sustaining Short's dedication to the cause of social justice and the problems of the working-man and the farmer in particular. In Kansas City, Missouri, he was the chaplain of the local trades and labor assembly, and an honorary member of the bartender's union. After serving the Beacon Hill parish in Kansas City for seven years, he accepted the pastorate of Sioux City's First Congregational Church in May 1910.

During this period, prohibition was gaining widespread support and the Anti-Saloon League developing into a powerful national lobbying group. Short's disapproval of the methods employed by the League and other prohibitionists was evident by the time he left his Evansville pastorate in 1903 and quite pronounced when he arrived in Sioux City. His opposition to prohibition enforced by law eventually created a stir in the Sioux City congregation. When, in May 1914, he refused to support the prohibitionist drive in Sioux City and had the audacity to sign the consent petition for a saloon, Short aroused the opposition of the local clergy as well as that of influential members of his First Church congregation—and soon lost his pastorate. Ultimately, he was ousted from the Sioux City Ministerial Association.

If his enemies thought he would leave town, they were mistaken, for in September 1914 Wallace M. Short established Central Church as an independent congregation. Services were held first in the Grand Theater and later in the Plaza. Some of his loyal parishioners followed him from First Church, while others seeking a liberal message also found a home in the doctrinally free Central Church. About 300 gathered to hear his inaugural sermon on September 6, 1914. From the new pulpit, Short expounded not only his views on the temperance question but upon issues which he felt contained the real substance of religious faith. The church was able to survive financially, meet all its obligations, and still pay the minister's salary. Short optimistically wrote his brother that he was suffering no economic loss as a result of having lost his pastorate at First Church.

The independent organization of Central Church allowed him to focus his concern on social justice. On Christmas Eve 1914, he visited the city's relief agencies hoping to console the poor. His itinerary took him to Socialist Hall where he found 125 men "waiting for the stew that was to be their dinner." A conversation with one of them—a member of the Industrial Workers of the World—gave Short the impression that this man knew more than anyone else in the city about what "hungry men are getting to eat."

The Industrial Workers of the World, popularly known as the Wobblies, represented the radical left wing of the American labor movement during the Progressive Era. Organized in 1905 among western miners, lumberjacks, and other laborers, the I.W.W.'s alleged influence always exceeded its actual power. Nationwide, its membership never amounted to more than a hundred thousand workers, but the fiery pronouncements of the Wobblies' leaders, such as William "Big Bill" Haywood, inspired fear among the captains of American industry. And no wonder: the Wobblies proposed the violent takeover of industry by workers' unions. However, most Wobblies considered themselves Anarcho-Syndicalists, not Bolshevists or communists.

In the fall of 1914, an influx of I.W.W. members into Sioux City created near-panic by increasing the already large number of unemployed, coming in from the harvest fields of the West hoping to find piecework and odd jobs during the winter months. Because the I.W.W. represented an extremist position within the labor movement, their presence was resented by union labor as well as by the business community. Recent studies have shown the non-violent nature of the Wobblies, but their vigorous anti-capitalist rhetoric and migratory habits convinced many communities that they were a threat to law and order. In spite of Sioux City's welcome to the organization—a ban on meetings and speeches, arrests and threats of jail or prison terms—the town served as a temporary haven for the I.W.W. The local jail was soon filled with Wobblies, who called attention to their plight and the conditions of the jail by refusing to break rock or eat and by burning their vermin-infested clothing.

Short, now the independent pastor of Central Church, wrote an article about Sioux City's experience with the I.W.W. that was published in the October 1915 issue of *Survey* magazine, in which he advocated tolerance in dealing with the I.W.W. intruders. He noted that when Sioux City authorities stopped the arrests and released the prisoners, the Wobblies soon filtered out of town.

Short's fascination with the I.W.W. persisted, and on November 25, 1917, he invited members of the organization to attend services at Central Church, where the sermon topic was to be "What Is and What Ought to Be." Anonymous threats against the theater where services were held led to the cancellation of church that Sunday. Undaunted by this, Short reissued the invitation the following week and this time preached the sermon with a number of Wobblies present in the congregation. Wartime fear of radicals was already much in evidence, and Short remarked that he did not suppose his sermon would "render vigilante committees unnecessary," but if Christianity and Democracy were really the ruling motives in America, "no one would ever dream of naming fear as the ruler of our destiny when our day of testing is at hand." He hoped everyone now knew that the minister of Central Church "will go freely to any soul."

Wallace Short (courtesy Mrs. Robert Hunter)

There was already discussion in labor circles that Short would make a desirable candidate for mayor. Encouraged by such overtures, Short announced on January 3, 1918 that he would enter the campaign. He assailed Sioux City's "invisible government" and pledged an administration of plain honesty. The Sioux City *Journal* predicted correctly that union men would endorse Short when their convention met the following week.

Labor's endorsement of Wallace Short sent tremors through the ranks of Sioux City's traditional governing elite. The labor platform pledged open government, a beautification program beneficial to all, economy, honesty, justice and "the golden rule for every man, woman, and child whether he be worth a dollar or a million." Short's decision to enter municipal politics was influenced by progressives like Sam Jones of Toledo and Tom Johnson of Cleveland and by the social gospel message of his idol, Washington Gladden. He was supported by a large working-class population.

Short's opponents fought back with a Citizen's Ticket which they claimed had the support of the business community and the "better elements." Short, whose sermons had once been printed by the daily press, now found himself heading a political ticket labeled "demogogues and adventurers parading as representatives of the labor cause." Short, said the *Journal*, was neither laborer nor businessman. He was merely an unsuccessful minister. Incumbent Mayor R.J. Andrews could not believe that the people of Sioux City would be willing to turn city hall over to the Wobblies and "American Bolshevists." Mayor Andrews charged that when Short preached before the I.W.W. on November 25, he delivered a different sermon than the one originally prepared. Had Short given his original sermon, the mayor claimed, he "would now be in the custody of the United States government." A victory for Short would put a friend of the I.W.W. "on the throne in Sioux City." The mayor felt the people of Sioux City knew the "true feelings of this impractical, dreaming demagogue." Andrews made every effort to capitalize upon his opponent's alleged sympathies for the I.W.W., his lack of political experience, and the need for the continuation in office of a competent business administration.

The Sioux City *Journal*, the *Tribune*, and the regional press attacked Short's candidacy without mercy. John Kelly, editor of the *Tribune* and once a member of Short's First Church congregation, was frenetic in his opposition, declaring that the candidate's sole labor affiliation was with the bartenders' union, and that he openly sympathized with the I.W.W. Short was contemptuously called the "archangel of booze" who had the same principles as the Kaiser. Short's successor at the First Congregation Church, the Rev. Mr. C.E. Tower, proclaimed that Jesus Christ "contradicts the labor candidate in principles, in ideals, and in purpose." Tower found his predecessor to be an "inexperienced and dangerous leader." Most of the clergy, however, simply urged their parishioners to vote. The vehemence of the opposition could not prevent a labor victory, and Short along with three other members of the labor ticket breezed through the primaries and the final election in March 1918.

The tragic collapse of Sioux City's Ruff Building on June 29—resulting in the death of forty people—exposed difficulties in the new administration almost immediately. Short was charged with having appointed an unqualified building inspector, E.J. O'Connor, in order to pay a political debt. O'Connor, a local labor leader, had been unable to satisfy the full city council of his qualifications, but was serving as inspector until the issue could be settled. In addition, the Commissioner of Public Safety, W.R. Hamilton, voted in on the same ticket as Short, came under a cloud and was removed from office for drunkenness, maladministration, and corruption in office. Although Short had threatened to remove Hamilton almost a month before the tragedy, Hamilton's antics tainted the mayor's administration, especially in the eyes of the Sioux City *Journal*.

Downtown Sioux City in the 1910s (SHSI)

His counter-charges that the city's fire-traps benefited only their owners did little to counter-balance the insinuations of his enemies.

During the same period, the mayor went to Chicago where he testified on behalf of more than one hundred Wobblies charged with violation of the government's Espionage Act. Reports circulated back to Sioux City claiming that Mayor Short described the Wobblies as good citizens of the "highest character." The cross examination of Short was conducted by Claude R. Porter, a Centerville Democrat, who hoped to become governor of Iowa. Short's testimony concerned the free speech fight of the I.W.W. in Sioux City during 1914-1915. Mayor Short pointed out that Sioux City had no ordinance against street speaking and that the Wobblies had not advocated violence or "otherwise conducted themselves in a manner not in accord with his sense of decency and good citizenship." Short blamed the Chamber of Commerce for the trouble with the I.W.W. in Sioux City because the chamber "used chicanery to oust the I.W.W. from the hall they had leased." Short testified that in spite of the efforts of his political opponents to connect him with the I.W.W., he had won the mayoralty by a large margin.

That the mayor had gone to Chicago to testify on behalf of the Wobblies inspired a large outcry in Sioux City. The worst possible interpretation was placed on this action by his political enemies. The commissioner of public safety, already under fire for misconduct, proclaimed that Short's testimony might bring an influx of Wobblies into the city. If so, Hamilton announced he would be "out in the street with

[his] hat and coat off and ready to fight."

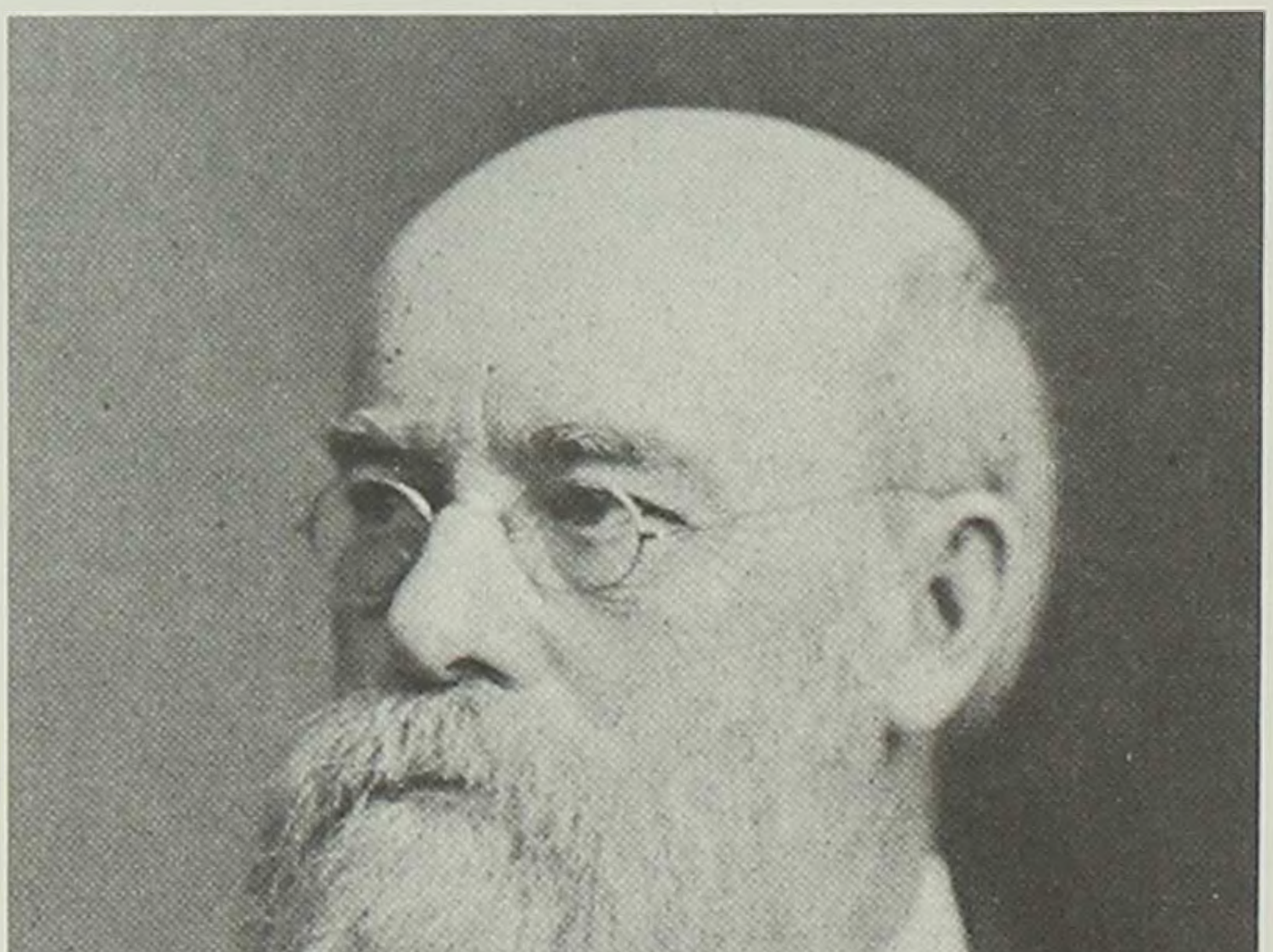
The pastor of the First Presbyterian Church characterized Short's performance as another illustration of the mayor's "crooked thinking." The Trades and Labor Assembly appeared ready to change its views about the mayor, and Councilman Henry Michelstetter, a long-time labor leader and valued friend, was quick to point out that union labor and the I.W.W. had nothing in common.

Under these circumstances, a recall committee was organized in the fall of 1918. The committee made an effort to woo union labor away from its support of the mayor and to secure the necessary number of signatures for a recall election. Many of the newspapers in the surrounding communities joined in the growing chorus calling for repudiation of the controversial mayor. The Manson *Democrat* believed it would be hard for Sioux City "to hold up her head with such a fine speciman of Bolsheviki for the head of municipal affairs." The Odebolt *Chronicle* called Short a sensationalist who loved to play to the grandstand, and the Storm Lake *Pilot-Tribune* thought Sioux City was already "reaping some of the inevitable harvest" caused by electing such a man as mayor. However, the Carroll *Herald* felt Short was giving Sioux City an honest and capable administration and that he had been fighting the "emissaries of evil throughout his career."

When Mayor Short returned from Chicago on July 18, he moved quickly to stem the rebellion against his administration, charging that he had been misjudged and misinterpreted. In an address at Riverside Park, Short in-

Born in Pennsylvania in 1836, Congregational minister Washington Gladden was a leading exponent of the "social gospel." In books and sermons, Gladden advocated the Christianization of society through direct application of the basic Christian teaching, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." He urged fellow clergymen to join him in the quest for social justice and in the active pursuit of improved economic security for America's working men and women. Gladden wasn't a socialist, but he did favor some types of government ownership. He also championed the idea of cooperation between businessmen and laborers, and believed that workers had a right to organize unions.

Pastor of the First Congregation Church of Columbus, Ohio for nearly forty years, Gladden frequently lectured to university audiences and wrote dozens of books on a variety of religious and social topics. He died in Columbus in 1918. (photo courtesy Mrs. Robert Hunter)



Washington Gladden

sisted that he had never defended the I. W. W. or their doctrines where they were subversive of good order. Rather, he had struggled to bring the organization into harmony with the "just practice and theory of good government." He felt he had been elected mayor because the people had believed him sincere in his profession of human brotherhood. He told his audience that "prejudice and bigotry are only augmented when opposed by prejudice and bigotry," but they may be assuaged or eradicated in the "presence of a fair and just spirit." Those in prison for a just cause "are still human and have a right to be treated as humans." The true patriot would keep before him the true spirit of democracy which, the mayor proclaimed, "is nothing more than the true spirit of brotherhood."

The ultimate refusal of the Trades and Labor Assembly to support the recall petition, the effectiveness of the mayor's defense, and the influenza outbreak which hit Sioux City in late September weakened the recall effort. Although there was an attempt to link the high incidence of flu and mortality in the city with the alleged incompetence of the mayor, newspaper accounts of the epidemic, Board of Health reports, and insurance mortality figures indicate that Sioux City's mortality rate was no greater than that of other urban areas in the state.

A renewal of the recall effort came in April 1919, when Mayor Short once again got involved with the I. W. W. Agricultural Workers Union #400 announced that its spring convention would be held in Sioux City during April. The coming of the I. W. W. convention created a new wave of hysteria among many Sioux Citians, who were opposed to any event which was likely to bring a large number of Wobblies into the city. When use of the city auditorium was denied them, the I. W. W. decided to hold their public meetings on the street and use the I. W. W. hall at Fourth and Jennings Street for their convention.

Disregarding the advice of labor unions, city, county, and federal officials and businessmen, Mayor Short accepted an invitation to address the convention, extended by James Kelly, local secretary of the I. W. W. The Sioux City *Journal* protested that the "city does not welcome this aggregation of tramps, criminals and near criminals against which the United States government is waging a war of repression. . . . If possible, the mayor should be stopped from bringing further disgrace and ignominy upon the community." Should he persist in sullying the city's reputation, the *Journal* advocated separation from his office "if that course is possible."

County Sheriff W. H. Jones was appalled by the mayor's actions and annoyed that some people in the community believed that he was himself in accord with the mayor. Jones asserted that the I. W. W. supported devastation of property, private sabotage, murder, and lesser crimes. He added, however, that the I. W. W. would be unable to run Sioux City "even with the mayor's support." The city council and the labor unions were also shocked by the mayor's decision to address the convention, but Short maintained that he was addressing the I. W. W. just as he might address the Knights of Pythias and he could not understand why he was the object of so much criticism. His critics pointed out that as mayor he spoke for the city and could not separate himself from his official position. The mayor's determination to appear before the convention gave his opponents the *cause célèbre* they had been waiting for.

Years later, Short recalled that on the day of the convention he walked to the hall accompanied by a single policeman. It seemed to him that he had not a friend in the world and that the people of Sioux City were watching to see "whether I would stand without faltering." A business meeting was in progress in the

The Speech the Daily Press Would Not Print

(Both papers had in their office the first half of the speech in manuscript, and had their reporters present to take the second half which was spoken without manuscript, but was taken down by a stenographer.)

SPEECH OF WALLACE M. SHORT

(Mayor of Sioux City, Iowa.)

At the I. W. W. Hall, April 21, 1919.

Gentlemen: The next day after your secretary suggested to me that I would be welcome here for a talk this morning, I dictated and had written out a couple of pages which I hold in my hand. I am going to read this, and then after I have read it I shall perhaps say a few words offhand.

(HERE FOLLOWS WHAT WAS READ FROM MANUSCRIPT.)

I speak to you today simply as an American citizen, and as one who has always felt a keen and sympathetic interest in every sort of human problem.

Sioux City is the center of a great agricultural region. During the last three and one-half weeks the United States employment agent at the City Building has had requests for 692 farm hands, and has actually placed 252 men in farm jobs. He tells me that the demands from now on during

America is a democracy in the making. It is as yet a very imperfect democracy. But it has gone so much farther in the line of democracy than any other of the great nations of the earth, that the vast majority of the American people believe we are going forward by orderly and constitutional methods toward a yet more perfect democracy.

I believe there are certain fundamental principles that are established in the minds of the American people, so firmly established that order and progress in America are more secure than anywhere else on the face of the earth.

I believe that the true American holds that the highest achievement of true Americanism is a happy home and family supported by the products of honest toil. I am just an average American, with a little plot of ground 6 by 9 rods where vegetables and flowers and trees grow and birds sing and children laugh and play and where the house

of righteousness. There are other men who need it.

In my department at the city hall there is the pure food administration. Now I believe that if there is any duty that organized society owes to its members, it is to see to it that the man who would reap unrighteous profit by adulterating and poisoning the food you and I must eat, and that our children must live upon, is restrained. And yet I know that when we catch a man poisoning the food our families must eat, if he is a large advertiser in the papers we cannot get a line in the papers to advertise his crime. And he does not care much for a hundred dollars fine we levy upon him. But the little sinner is sure to get plenty of publicity.

I just mention these things to show you I know these things. I might stand here for a day and a night and tell things like that.

Well, what is a man to do? Am I to start down the street and beat up somebody, and let the mat-

THE FIGHT IS ON

ADDRESS BY WALLACE M. SHORT

at Labor Mass Meeting, April 28, 1919

The fight is on. It is going to be a good fight. We are ready for it.

A year ago a certain coterie of men, who have always in Sioux City been of the rule-or-ruin sort, fought the candidates of the people by every method in their power, except that of honest discussion. Then they boasted they would never allow the mayor on the winning ticket to serve out his term of office.

So they have watched for every opportunity to kindle prejudice and passion and division among the supporters of the administration, hoping at some moment before next election to catch the people off their guard long enough to pull off a recall.

The greater part of the time during the last year, these men have kept the rumors of recall flying from mouth to mouth and in the press. **At both the Liberty Loans that have occurred within the last twelve months they have had the superlative impudence to press up to the doors of the polling places, on the days consecrated by the federal government exclusively to patriotic purposes, and thrust their recall petitions in people's faces as the subscribers have entered and departed from the booths.**

But they have not yet had the courage to try out their strength in a recall petition. We now challenge them to the issue. All they have to do is to throw down the gauntlet by filing a legally sufficient recall petition. It must be an honest petition. That is all we shall ask.

day my mail brings words of confidence from men in every part of America, and reminders that I must stand firm for the sake of millions who of themselves can do nothing unless men here and there are willing to take the brunt of the battle for fair play and a square deal. For their sakes I must accept my part in the good fight. And I know I am not alone. I know the people are with me. And that fact warms a man's heart and nerves his arm.

Even the Tribune admits occasionally that I have some education, but laments the uses to which I put it.

I confess that I am a member of the Phi Beta Kappa society. But this honor was not purchased with money. It is bestowed only for scholarship of the first rank in college and university. After finishing the high school I spent eight consecutive years in study at Beloit College and Yale University. The scholarship rank which I obtained was won while paying my own way in college by the work of my own hands and head.

We are constantly told that college and university education is for the sake of citizenship. If my college and university training are of any value, what is that value? Is it merely that I may disport myself comfortably in some exclusive club or set? Most any man who wears a Phi Beta Kappa key can do that if he chooses to.

Or is that training, with whatever value it may hold, a possession that belongs not only to myself but to my fellow men, for the service of

really important processes, and the occasional emergency surgery is comparatively an incidental matter.

In other words, we must conduct our affairs in such way as to create in the minds of the vast part of our American public a sense of social and political health and confidence. If we do not, though we set the iron heel of prohibition upon the neck of radicalism, at the same time that we are frantically seeking to stem the rising power of revolution it will grow big, as it has done in every country where autocratic selfishness has been the method pursued.

Therefore, in dealing with the I. W. W. in Sioux City the Mayor made it perfectly clear in every utterance, public and private, that violence or the threat of violence would not be tolerated for a moment. He said this to the members of the I. W. W. in every possible way both directly and indirectly. His speech to the members of the I. W. W. on April 21st is printed complete from the written manuscript and the stenographic report and may be had by anyone for the asking. In that speech the Mayor told the members of the I. W. W. that a certain revolutionary paper entitled, "The Rebel Worker" could not be circulated in Sioux City. Two days later some individual was found on the street selling copies of it. That individual is lying over in the Sioux City jail.

But at the same time that members of the I. W. W. were prohibited from circulating incendiary literature, and a government stenogra-

Handbills carried Mayor Short's speeches to Sioux Citians unable to hear them in person (SHSI)

I.W.W. hall when the mayor arrived and he waited outside until called. The *Journal* reported that no applause greeted his entrance and that "no word was said as he walked the length of the room and mounted the platform with a manuscript in his hand."

Including government agents and reporters there were fewer than sixty people who heard the mayor's speech. And there was nothing inflammatory in the speech. Though sympathetic and conciliatory, it contained stern warnings that violence would not be tolerated in Sioux City. Short refused to permit the circulation of an I.W.W. pamphlet, "The Rebel Worker," which he considered incendiary, and urged the delegates to rid themselves of the "idea of violence," and endeavor to "rid the public of the idea that you are trying to take the world by violence." Even so, while upholding America as a democracy, he acknowledged that it was an imperfect democracy, and told the delegates that if they were the only sinners in society, "I might possibly throw a stone at you and nothing else." Still disapproving, however, the *Des Moines Register* reported that the mayor's address mildly reproached the I.W.W. for their "Bolshevistic principles" and then launched into a "tirade against the enemies of the I.W.W."

That Mayor Short had spoken before the I.W.W. convention gave his opponents a potent new basis for renewal of their recall effort. One contemporary of Short's in Sioux City recalls that the "higher-ups felt Short was a Red." Charges of radicalism were to remain with him the rest of his life. Many people in Sioux City genuinely feared the I.W.W. and felt their mayor had invited hordes of organized bums into the city. They did not feel that it was an issue involving civil rights.

The mayor's appearance before the convention unleashed a new storm of journalistic rage. The Marshalltown *Times-Republican* referred to the notoriety of the "unfrocked preacher" and hoped that other communities might profit from Sioux City's calamity. John Kelly, editor of the *Tribune* and one of Short's bitterest enemies, was satisfied that labor would support the recall, which it saw as a way to redeem the city. The press as well as the leaders of the business community would shun Sioux City and locate elsewhere. It appeared to the *Journal* that the actions of the mayor were harmful to union labor which had "just reached the point (where) it could stand shoulder to shoulder with capital." Somehow, the good name of the city—its businesses, its workers, its people—had been vilified by a mayor who, one critic asserted, was the "prime minister of the I.W.W."

Mayor Short was mistaken if he believed his appearance before the convention would enhance community tolerance of the organization. Sheriff W.H. Jones ignored the mayor's wishes and, assisted by 150 deputy sheriffs, raided Wobbly headquarters at Fourth and Jennings, padlocked the door, and closed the hall. Less than a score of Wobblies were present and the raiders—armed in expectation—encountered no trouble. United States Marshall Milton Perry Smith seized the records of the convention and confiscated whatever literature was in the hall. Sheriff Jones maintained that his actions were prompted by fear of mob violence, and the I.W.W. leaders were told that if their meeting was held, several hundred vigilantes would storm the hall. Although the I.W.W. men boasted they would hold their meetings in spite of the warnings, they soon began to make their exodus from Sioux City. Mayor Short acknowledged that his effort to uphold what he considered the constitutional rights of the dissidents had failed. He advised I.W.W. leader James Kelly that there was "nothing to be gained for Sioux City nor for any person in Sioux City by aggravating the state of public feeling that now exists." The mayor's conclusion appears to have been that the state of public passion had reached such a point that the convention would not peacefully continue.

Confrontation between the I.W.W. and irate local citizens was a possibility, but the rapid departure of the I.W.W. during the next few days was further indication that the organization did not seek to achieve its revolutionary goals by violent means.

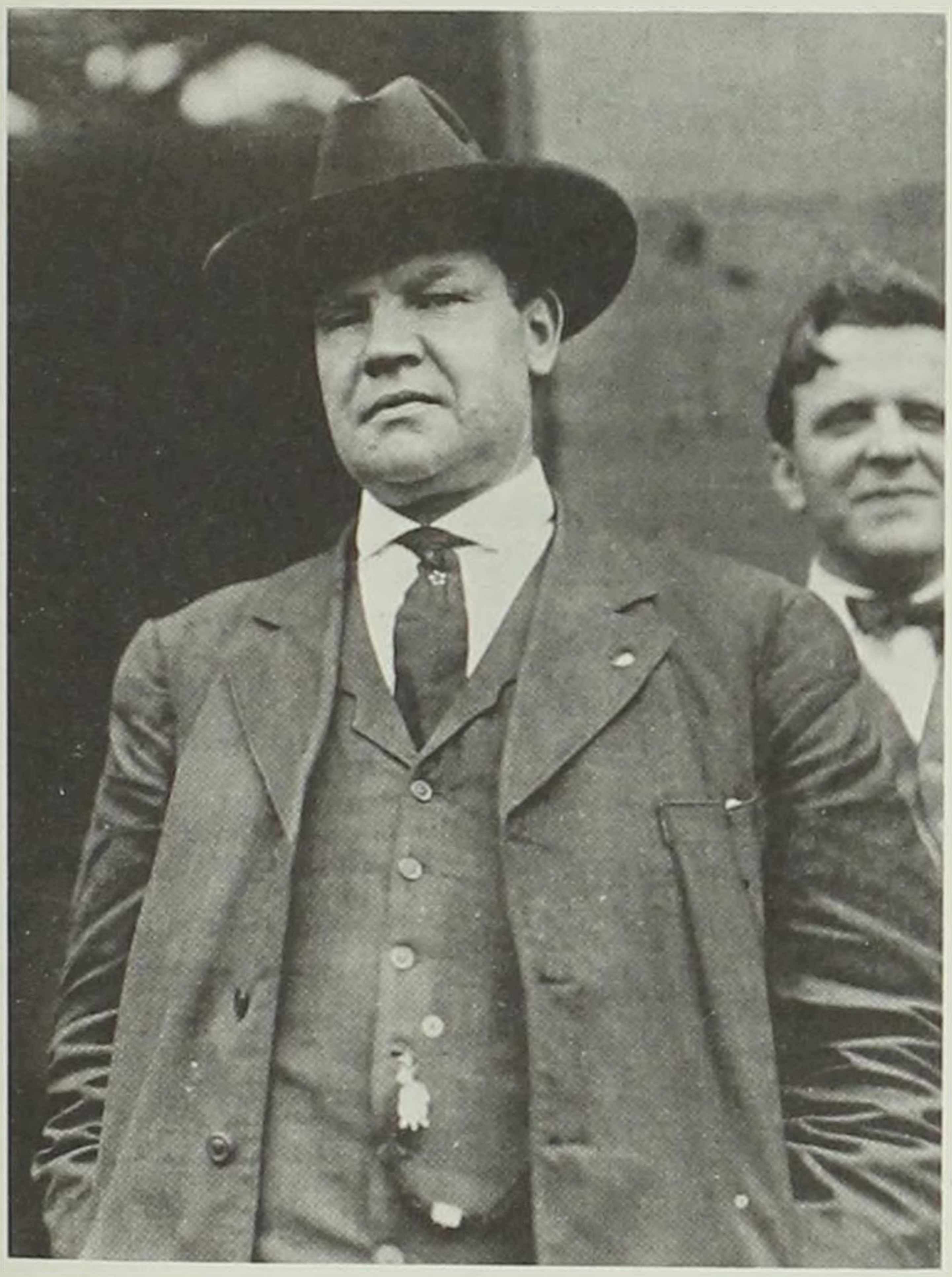
Short was hardly upholding the cause of revolution. He thought that the authorities should make it clear that "revolutionary violence and the threat of violence are un-American and undemocratic and will be suppressed promptly wherever they show their head." He acknowledged, however, that the laws and principles of democracy must be administered fairly. When an American Legion commander protested the mayor's permissive attitude, Short asked him whether he had taken an oath to obey the constitution. When the commander answered in the affirmative, Short asserted that the constitution binds everyone "to protect even small minorities in their rights of freedom of speech and assembly." Short's position was that Wobblies should have the same rights of freedom of speech and assembly as others as long as they obeyed the law. There must be assurance "that there is one law for rich and poor, wise and ignorant—that what we send James Kelly, secretary of the I.W.W. to hail for, John Kelly, editor of the *Tribune*, shall not be allowed to do with impunity. . . ."

Short's stand was a call for reason and justice, and a courageous position at a time when war-stirred emotions demanded the suppression and sometimes brutal treatment of dissenters. He knew that if the I.W.W. was treated in a rational manner it would pose no threat to the tranquility of Sioux City—that tolerance was the best safety valve the city could have. The public hysteria that resulted from the meetings of the Wobblies had been fanned by the press and by opposition forces hostile to the mayor's liberal approach in matters of municipal government.

Attacks quickly focused on the mayor. E.J. Stason, who headed the city council's planning committee, organized a recall committee at the West Hotel the day after the convention address. C.F. Lytle and Andy Jackson, businessmen, John Kelly, editor of the *Tribune*, and Carleton Toy, banker, also appear to have been active in the recall movement. Sioux City's clergy supported the movement, and one of the most vocal was Rev. Mr. Charles E. Tower, Short's successor at First Congregational Church. The pastor of the Russian Orthodox Church claimed that workers on the East Side had been subjected to Bolshevik propaganda and that many had quit their jobs in anticipation of the revolution which they believed would give them everything they wanted. E.J. Stason accused Short of trying to create a class war and urged the city to unite to drive out the Bolsheviks and the I.W.W.

Ironically, the text of the mayor's speech was only sketchily reported and did not appear in full detail until June 1919, when it was printed and circulated by his supporters. The *Journal* then printed the text of the speech on June 6. Meanwhile, the mayor received numerous threats, one menacing, stating that he ought to be tarred and feathered, painted yellow, and thrown in the Missouri River unless he left town.

The recall committee sought the support of labor leaders as well as that of business and professional people. Every effort was made to get union labor to repudiate the mayor. The mayor's enemies claimed that a bitter fight was transpiring in labor circles over Short's radical activities. E.J. Stason found that packinghouse employees in the stockyards were falling in line better than anticipated. Petitions for Short's removal were presented to people during the victory bond drive—so close to where the bonds were being sold that the chairman of the bond drive, though stating he favored the recall, felt it necessary to force the petitioners to withdraw. By April 29, the recall committee



William Dudley Haywood's turbulent career as a labor organizer took him from the silver mines of Idaho to the inner sanctum of the Kremlin. A strapping six-footer, "Big Bill" was born in Salt Lake City in 1869 and went to work in the western mines at age fifteen. News of Chicago's Haymarket riot of 1886 aroused his interest in the labor question; a dozen years later he had risen to the executive board of the Western Federation of Miners. An aggressive, outspoken advocate of industrial unionism—as opposed to the more conservative trade unionism of Samuel Gompers' AFL—Haywood presided at the organizing convention of the I.W.W., held in Chicago in 1905.

In many ways, Haywood personified the Wobblies: rough-cast, dedicated to workers' rights, and constantly harassed by government agencies, he spent the years 1906-1921 in and out of courtrooms. Convicted of sedition in 1918, Haywood and 94 other Wobblies received sentences of twenty years. Haywood applied for a new trial, posted bond, and upon his release quietly left the United States. He arrived in Moscow to a warm reception from the new Bolshevik government, whose leaders welcomed him as a fellow revolutionary. For the next seven years, Haywood worked on his memoirs and gave occasional speeches. He died in Russia in 1928. (Culver Pictures)

Big Bill Haywood

claimed it had 4,437 signatures.

Mayor Short fought back on April 28 with a stirring speech before the Sioux City Trades and Labor Assembly in which he vigorously defended himself and attacked "those little coteries of men who are determined to rule their town or ruin it, determined to control for selfish ends their country or destroy it." On May Day, a meeting with delegates from 37 unions was held at the Trades and Labor Assembly and the mayor received a unanimous endorsement. Still the recall committee had obtained sufficient signatures to force an election. The mayor announced that he "welcomed the fight." He challenged E.J. Stason to meet him in a joint debate, asserting he had a right to know the accusations and to meet his accusers face to face.

The recall committee not only disdained facing the mayor in debate, but had difficulty finding an opponent to face him in the election. Desiring the support of union labor they settled upon a railroad engineer, Hugh T. Carney, as their candidate. A committee was established to help Carney conduct the campaign, and the *Journal* described the engineer as "the most popular man in Sioux City." Carney was no match for the sharp, urbane mayor, who had been a champion debater during his college days and who was far more used to public speaking than was his inarticulate opponent. During the early days of the campaign it appears that Carney seldom gave public addresses, preferring private meetings among small groups of voters. Ten days before the election Carney did begin to give public addresses, though, in which he admitted his lack of eloquence. But then, said Carney, oratory "was often used for purposes of deception."

Short summed up his convictions on May 20, when he addressed the state convention of the Iowa Federation of Labor at the Sioux City auditorium. The mayor told his audience that the nation's capitalists were "working night and day to incite the spirit of hysteria and mob violence." He denounced the tactics of Mayor Ole Hanson of Seattle, who had made himself a national hero by demanding the suppression of the I.W.W. Selfish interests, Short asserted, would have us believe that "revolution lurks on every street corner." There was not enough revolutionary spirit in Sioux City, Short told the convention, to "create even a respectable symptom of danger." The real danger came from the selfish interests which had played upon the "imagination and kindled the fears of men and women through false reports and lying journalism." True patriotism, Short said, was found in the honest men and women who "respected the rights of others."

During the heated recall campaign the mayor was castigated for signing the saloon consent petition while pastor of the First Congregation Church, for an alleged lack of true Americanism, and for his defense of the I.W.W. both in Chicago and in Sioux City. The *Journal* felt that Wallace Short had given Sioux City the national reputation of an I.W.W. town. The real issue of the campaign was that Short had made it appear that the I.W.W. was welcome in Sioux City. What he said at the convention—and the *Journal* acknowledged that he had said nothing particularly offensive—was not important. The point was that the mayor of the city had addressed the I.W.W. Indeed, the *Journal* insisted, under such circumstances the Sermon on the Mount would have been as objectionable to the people of Sioux City. Now the people of Sioux City had the opportunity to decide "if they want to be further misrepresented in the mayor's office by Mr. Short."

Short's victory on election day was a shock and disappointment to his enemies. The mayor's attack on his opposition and his presentation of the campaign as a battle of the few against the common people carried the day. Labor was solidly behind the mayor and he outdistanced Carney in the voting 5,709 to 3,747. Carney was able to carry only four of fifteen voting precincts; his weakness as a candidate contributed to the mayor's margin of victory. Smarting from his defeat, Carney said the real issues of the campaign, patriotism and the American form of government, were lost admidst the personal abuse heaped upon certain individuals. "I gave Sioux City the opportunity it seemed to want," Carney said, "and it failed to take advantage of it." A *Journal* editorial said the issue had been clear and unequivocal, and there could be no dodging the consequences. The election showed that a "majority

Note on Sources

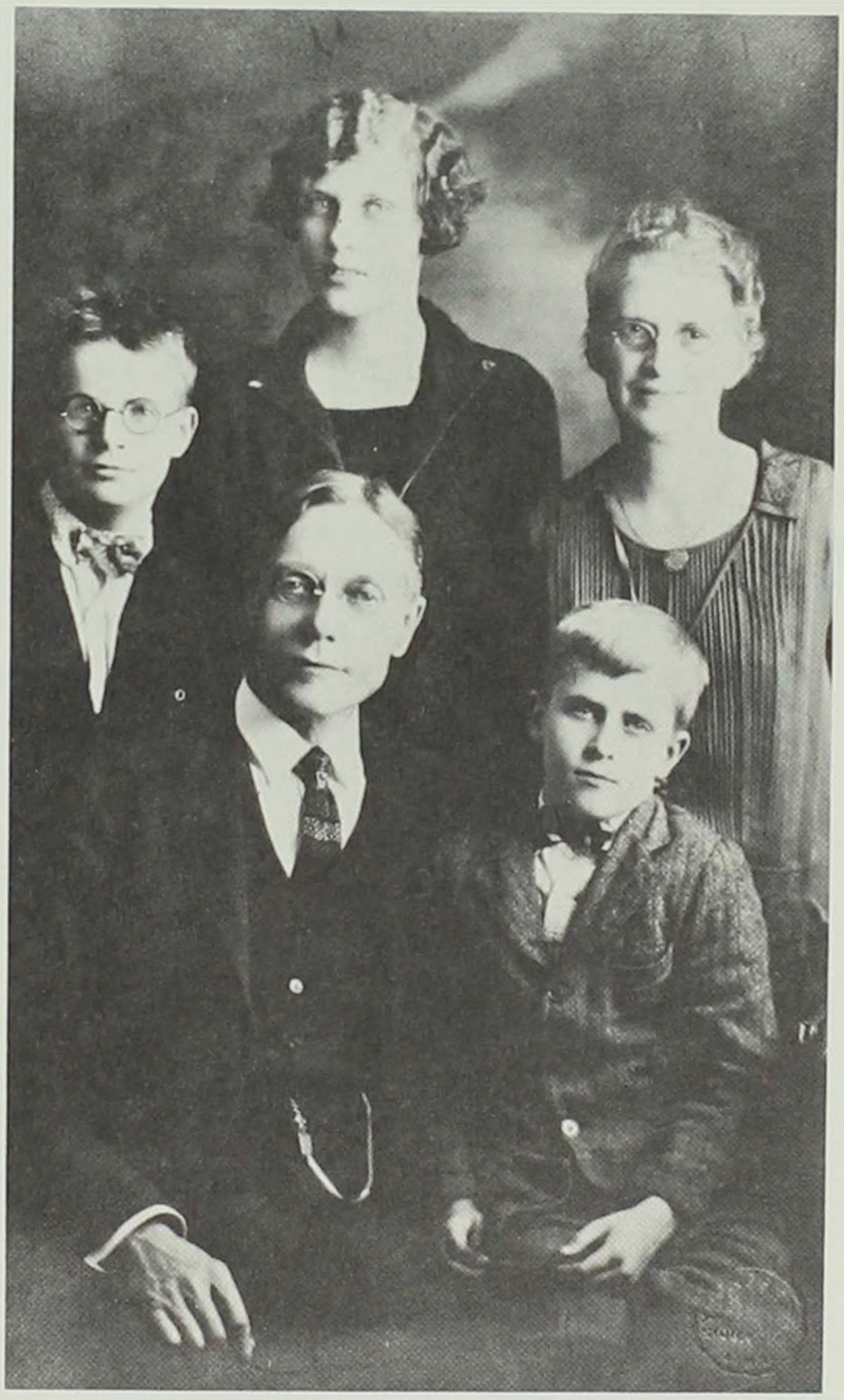
Materials used in preparation of this article include Philip Taft, "Mayor Short and the I.W.W. Agricultural Workers," *Labor History* (Spring 1966), 173; Avery L. Carlson, "The Recall of Sioux City Iowa," *National Municipal Review*, November, 1920, 669; and Wallace Short's own "How One Town Learned a Lesson in Free Speech," *Survey*, October 30, 1915, 107. Issues of the *Sioux City Journal* and *Des Moines Register* were examined as were Mrs. Wallace Short's *Just One American* (privately published, 1943) and Harrison George's *Mass Violence in America, The I.W.W. Trial* (New York: Arno Press, 1969). Also helpful were resources at the Sioux City Public Library; material loaned to the author by Mrs. Robert Hunter, daughter of Wallace Short; and copies of Short's speeches. Oral interviews and correspondence with Ralph Sturgeon, Tom McHale, and Dr. E.H. Sibley provided further information about Short.

An annotated version of this article is on file at the State Historical Society of Iowa.

of the people are in favor of the municipal regime that has brought upon the city the stigma of sympathy for the I.W.W." Meanwhile, Mayor Short thanked his supporters and informed Sioux City that he had "no wounds to nurse and no revenge to wreak."

The cause of the antagonism toward Mayor Short went beyond his speech before the I.W.W. convention. Some irritations undoubtedly lingered from his opposition to prohibition while at First Church, an issue still alive since the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1919. In addition, a social gospel minister without business training seemed unlikely to provide the hard-headed business administration which merchants and professionals in Sioux City desired. A reformist "golden rule" ticket was not universally popular in what some felt to have been a wide-open town. A faction in Sioux City also opposed the commission form of government which Short favored. As the labor candidate, Short had been able to provide his followers with effective leadership and wide appeal, but to Sioux City's business and professional classes in a turbulent and unsettled period, he represented the unknown. Support of union influence and the championing of labor's bargaining rights still seemed radical. Mayor Short appointed representatives of labor and other groups to the city's industrial planning committee, which he felt had been dominated by special interests, and many middle and upper middle class Sioux Citians felt such tactics were disruptive and contributed to class divisions.

While the cries of radicals were shrill, most people realized that Short was more of an idealist who sought to extend social justice than a radical who wanted to change the form of American society. Sioux City had a large labor population, and was an ethnically diverse city of Scandinavian, German, and Irish elements with a small but visible black community. In 1915 the foreign-born population consisted of 12,536 of the city's 62,000 inhabitants. Eighteen thousand more were of foreign or mixed parentage. To these people Mayor Short made a difference, and they carried him to victory in four elections between 1918 and 1924. It is interesting to note that the mayor's opponents, who resorted to strident cries of un-Americanism, who charged the mayor with betraying union labor, and who sought to split labor ranks with a union labor candidate of their own, were unable to dent the ranks of the labor movement in Sioux City. A majority of Sioux Citians could tolerate the I.W.W. without resorting to the extreme measures of com-



Wallace Short with his wife and family, including sons Burton and John and daughter Emily (courtesy Mrs. Robert Hunter) munities on the West Coast. Union laborers in Sioux City were hostile to the I.W.W. and questioned Short's tolerant attitude, especially his willingness to address the Wobbly convention, but they recognized that he was trying to change the I.W.W.—not the structure of American society—and that as a champion of the rights of labor, he was their best hope for political leadership in the community.

Wallace Short was a combative man and his six years as mayor of Sioux City were turbulent ones. It was a period of nationwide labor unrest, from which Sioux City was not exempt—a packinghouse strike in 1921 would pose a new challenge to Mayor Short's leadership. When the Ku Klux Klan emerged in Sioux City politics (as it did in other Iowa communities), Short opposed the secrecy and the bigotry of that organization. His administration endeavored to combat unemployment, promote public works, and encourage civic improvement. Afterward, Short never ceased being proud of his years as mayor, and regarded his labor administration as the most constructive in the city's history.

His career did not end with the completion of his third term in 1924 and his subsequent defeat in an attempt to win the Republican nomination for Congress later that year. He campaigned on behalf of Robert La Follette's presidential bid in 1924, tried unsuccessfully to regain the mayoralty in 1926, served a term in the Iowa legislature of 1930-32, was closely associated with Milo Reno's Farm Holiday movement during the 1930s, was one of the founders of Iowa's small Farmer-Labor Party, and edited a labor paper—*The Unionist and Public Forum*—which he founded in 1927.

Still, no aspect of Short's career overshadows his championing the rights of free speech and assembly for a small group of radicals whom the mob passions of the day would have circumscribed. His counsel of moderation and reason and his willingness to defend the civil rights of a hated minority stand in stark contrast to those of many of his contemporaries. □

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