

Growth and Spread

In 1853 Henry Washington Lee was thirty-eight years of age. His name smacks of Virginia, but he had no connection with that state. Born in Connecticut and reared in Massachusetts, he had been consecrated by the venerable Bishop Alexander V. Griswold. After serving briefly in Springfield, Massachusetts, where he built a mission into a parish, he went to St. Luke's Church in Rochester, New York. By 1853, Henry Washington Lee was widely known as an able administrator, a zealous supporter of missions, and an eloquent preacher.

His family had been prominent and well-to-do if not wealthy. He had excellent connections both social and financial. He was generous in money matters and fortunately able to exercise that generosity. Politically he was of the group that were successively Whigs, Free Soilers, and Republicans. In Churchmanship, he was a moderate Evangelical, though he tended to become more rigid as he grew older. Though he had received honorary degrees from Hobart and Rochester and was to receive a third from Cambridge near the end of his life, he was not noteworthy as a scholar. Nor was he keen to understand or ready to sym-

pathize with views other than his own. Physically he was impressive, a giant of a man. And he was possessed of great driving energy.

In addition to this physical strength and earnest zeal, Bishop Lee brought to Iowa an endowment fund estimated at \$30,000. The middle 1850's were boom times, and money came easily. But Bishop Lee, thanks to the hold he had in the East, found money even in bad times. Though the Panic of 1857 dissipated the endowment, unwisely invested in land, and though he committed himself to several harmful and costly experiments, his diocese fared well financially during the greater part of his administration.

For some twenty years, 1854-1874, he drove himself and by precept and example urged his clergy to make Iowa the great exemplar of an Evangelical diocese that the Western Society had envisaged. On the surface, he succeeded. When he took active charge, Iowa had thirteen parishes and but twelve clergy. There may have been four hundred communicants. When he died, a disturbed, aging man in 1874, the parishes numbered fifty-seven and the clergy forty-five. The official report counted 2,436 communicants. The giving of his parishes was just short of \$60,000 annually.

In the course of that time Bishop Lee had carried the diocese past the Panic of 1857 and the Civil War into the bad times of the early seventies. And in doing so he had also broken his own

health and, one fears, his own spirit, and felt himself betrayed in the house of his friends.

For by 1874 Bishop Lee had come to realize that his success was neither as complete nor as sound as the figures seemed to indicate. Grave weaknesses, apparent from the first to any who looked closely, had grown graver with the years. The interest of the laity in the Church apart from their parishes had been feeble. In no year after 1856 had one-half the parishes chosen delegates to the diocesan convention, and in no year had one-third actually had men on hand. A high proportion of the clergy had no cure of souls, though a majority of the parishes were without resident priests. Most of the clergy were on missionary status. Some were in bad repute. Griswold College at Davenport and the "Bishop's Church," renamed the "Cathedral," were made possible by money from outside the diocese. The college had no hold on Episcopalians, who sent their children elsewhere. The "Bishop's Church" was resented in many parishes. The conventions, hitherto harmonious, grew quarrelsome in the 1870's.

A detailed examination of the reasons back of this mixture of failure and success is neither necessary nor pleasant here. All that need be done is to suggest how the frame of mind in which the bishop and his supporters worked gave reason for both the rapid growth and the insecure results. For the Evangelicals had labored as men who felt

that they and they only could meet a desperate need by achieving an immediate success.

The Evangelicals, whom Bishop Lee and the more zealous of his clergy represented so well, believed fervently that the life of Christianity, which they equated with Protestantism, depended on a devotion to two great principles: first, justification by faith, which they believed must result from a definite conversion; second, sanctification, for which the ministrations of the Church were essential. The proper balance of these principles only Evangelical Episcopalians understood. Anglo-Catholics and Ritualists were fast forgetting the first principle; Protestants other than Episcopalians had a most imperfect grasp of the second. The Evangelical party had laid on its shoulders the duty to preserve a sound faith.

The Evangelical party, through the Western Society, had elected to fight a significant battle for Christianity in Iowa. Those sent to wage a spiritual warfare there had the duty of showing to all Christians, through the Evangelical party, the meaning of true faith. Hence the consecrated interest in the work, and the fierce anxiety to present immediate results with too little concern about their permanence.

At this period in the history of the United States, a type of thought about Christianity was current to which for a time the teaching of the Evangelicals was quite acceptable. Some of the

success in Iowa came because of that thinking. A change in thought helped in the failure.

In the later fifties and the early sixties, many men, moved largely perhaps by the grave political and economic conditions, pondered most deeply on eternal values. The result was a "quiet revival" marked by little of the fanfare of earlier movements. For men of serious temperament, and such men were often greatly moved, the appeal of Evangelical Episcopalians was most effective. All churches gained members, but perhaps no other single group received any more useful additions than did this body. Its combination of order and earnestness was singularly satisfying.

These men, living in a time when sharp decisions were demanded, readily accepted the doctrine of the vital single choice. Perhaps the doctrine of the Church as a means of grace was not so clearly endorsed in their experience, but it was not repugnant to them and it was easy for most of them to interpret the ministrations of the Church in terms of good taste, decency, and consideration for the feelings of a humane man.

In the Episcopal Church men of this stamp, both clerical and lay, became hospitable to a new view of a closer cooperation between churches then becoming popular. The spread of this view among Episcopalians was to have an important effect on the Church in general, and an especially important effect on the Diocese of Iowa and on Bishop

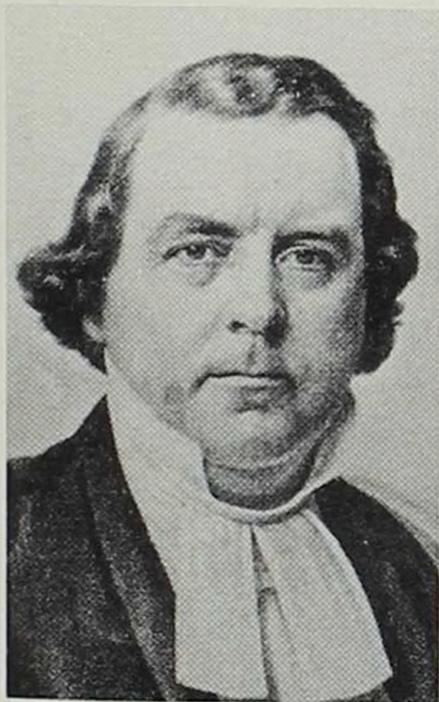
Lee. For Bishop Lee was not hostile to such views; he would welcome them, within proper bounds.

Those anxious to resume a united front with other Protestants played their cards poorly. They elected to join battle on an issue where the tide of thought was turning against traditional Protestantism. The conviction that a decisive choice by a mature person was necessary to conversion and salvation had already made infant baptism a "quaint practice" in the minds of most Protestants. With this point of view the collaborationists among the Episcopalians sympathized. Some of them omitted the word "regenerate" in performing infant baptism. For this they were disciplined by their bishops, who had no choice. General Convention in 1871 permitted an explaining away of the word, but not its deletion.

So, in December, 1873, a group headed by the Rev. George D. Cummins, Assistant Bishop of Kentucky, seceded to found the Reformed Episcopal Church. For that church, all special claims made for the Episcopal Church, by Evangelicals as well as by High Churchmen, were renounced.

Bishop Lee, who had preached the sermon at the consecration of Bishop Cummins, was deeply hurt. His diocese was hurt even worse than he realized. In the hard times still prevailing many small parishes in Iowa were making scant headway in towns where stronger Protestant congregations

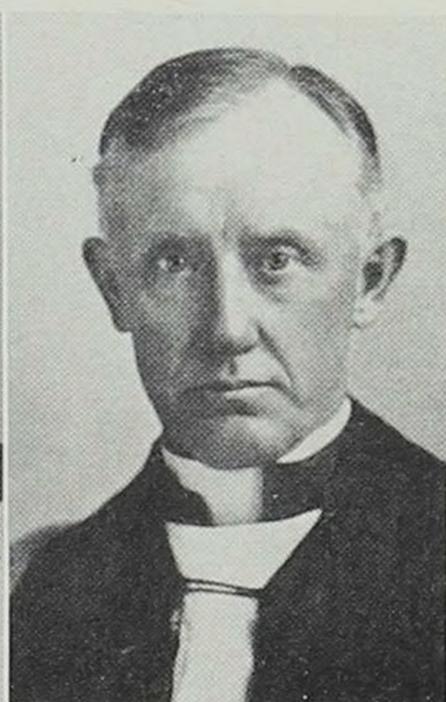
EPISCOPAL BISHOPS OF IOWA



HENRY W. LEE
1854-1874



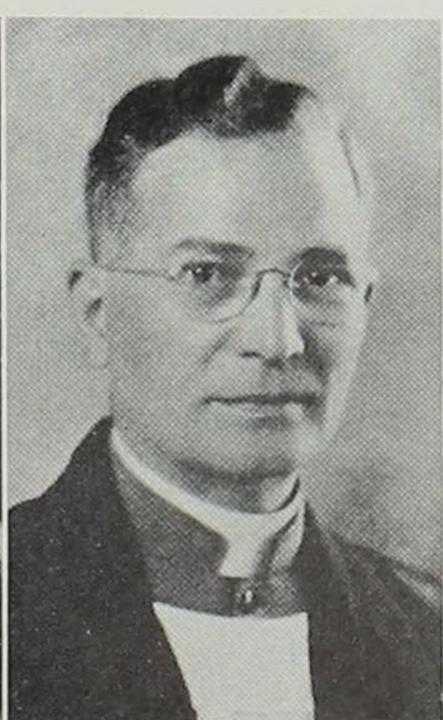
WILLIAM S. PERRY
1876-1898



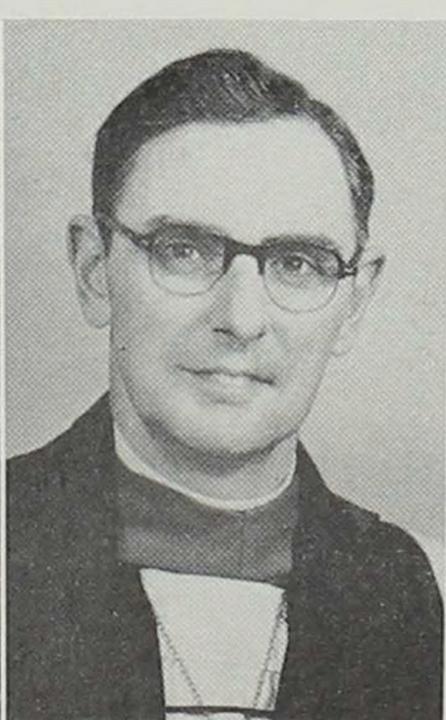
THEODORE N. MORRISON
1899-1929



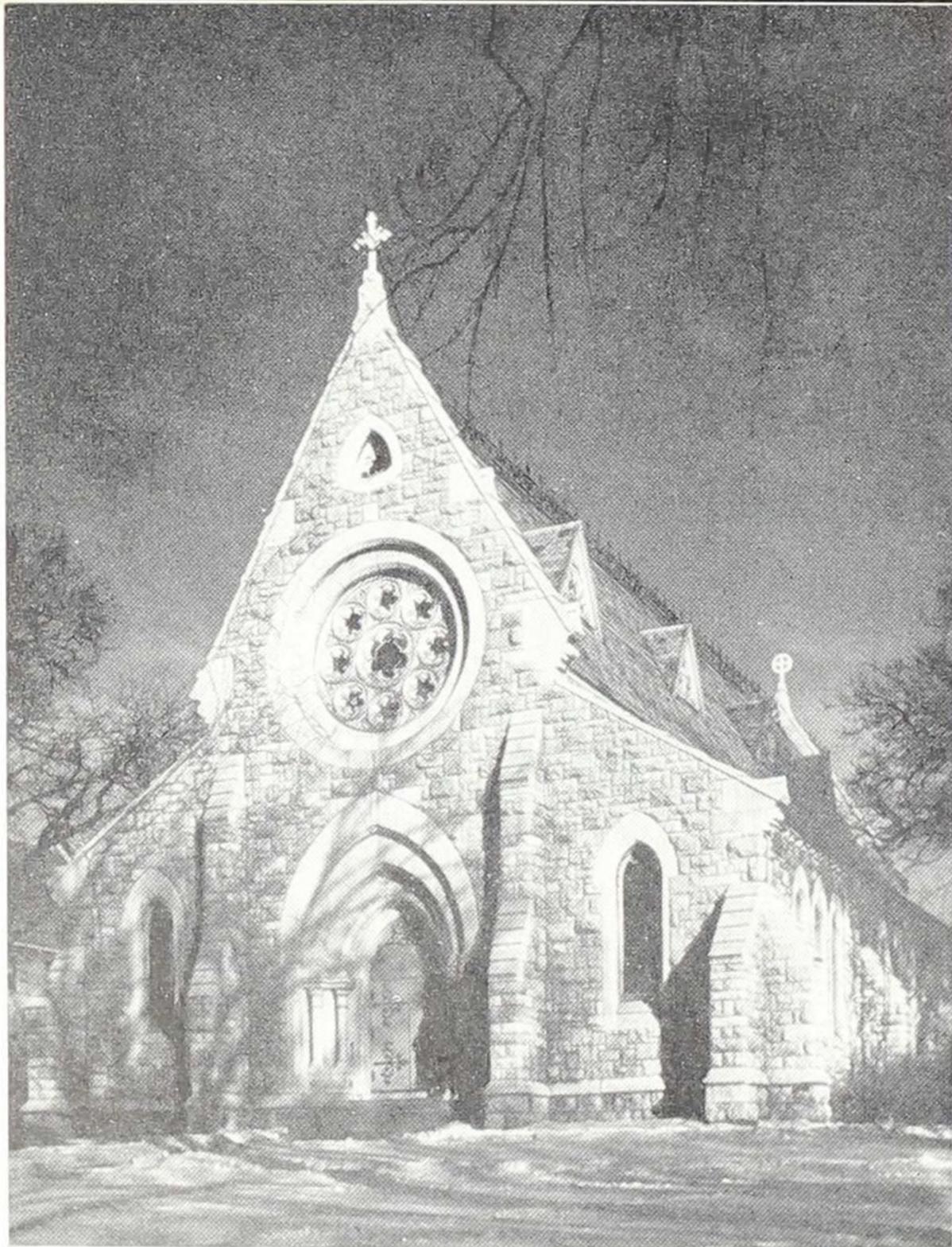
HARRY S. LONGLEY
1912-1943



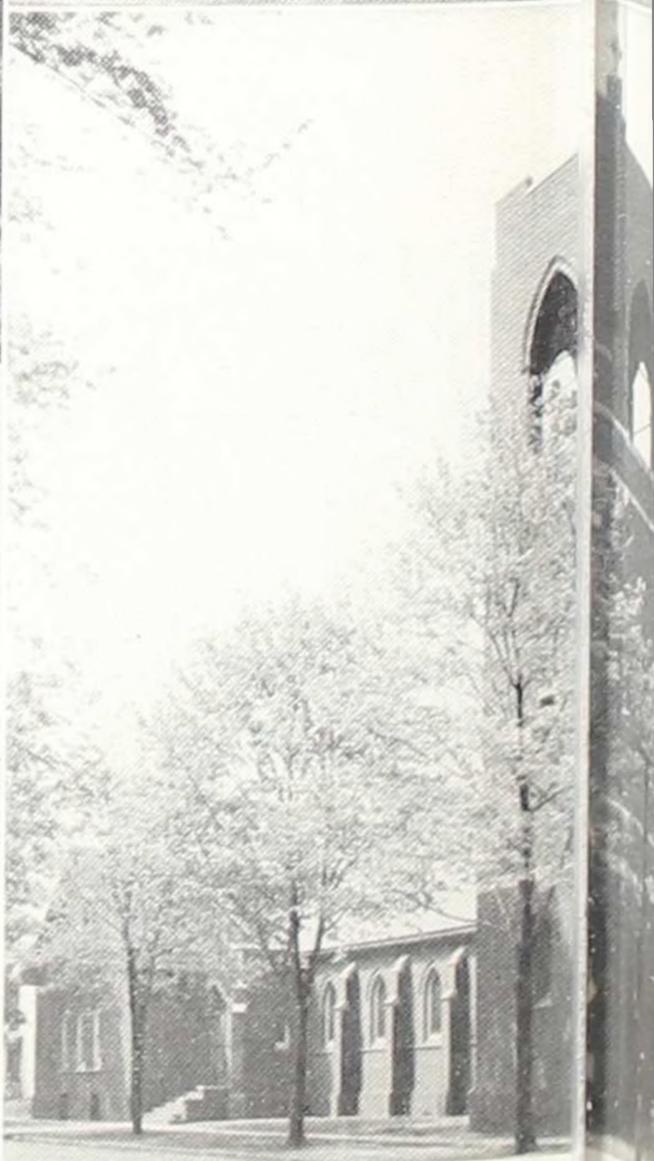
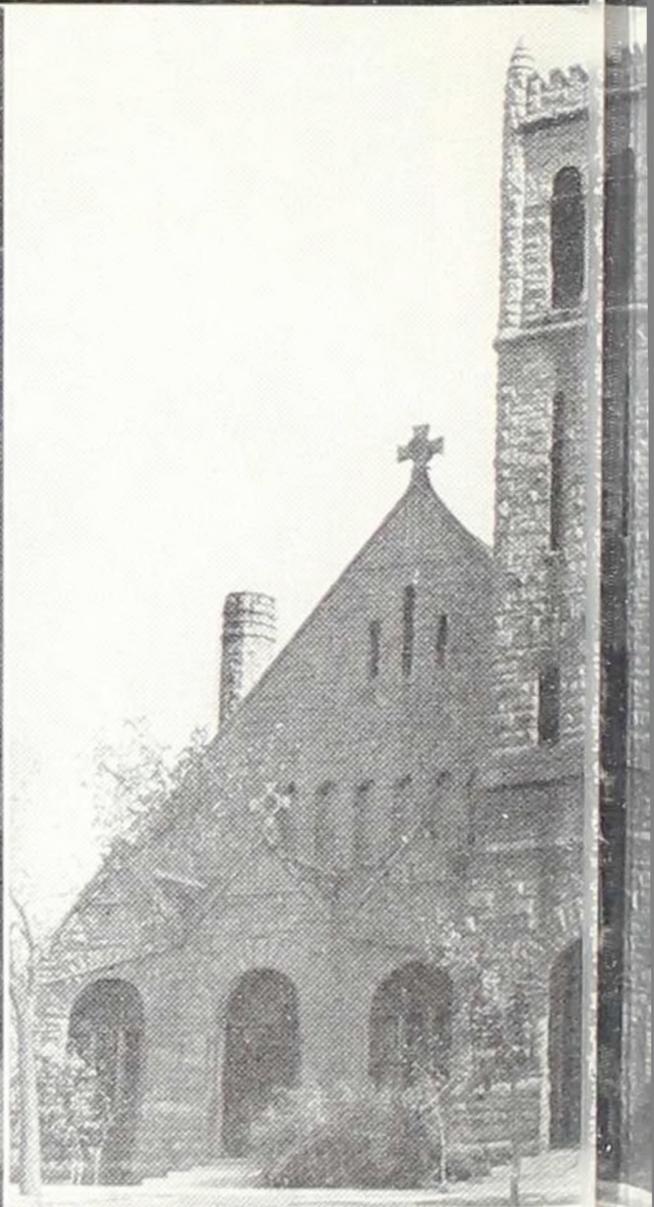
ELWOOD L. HAINES
1944-1949



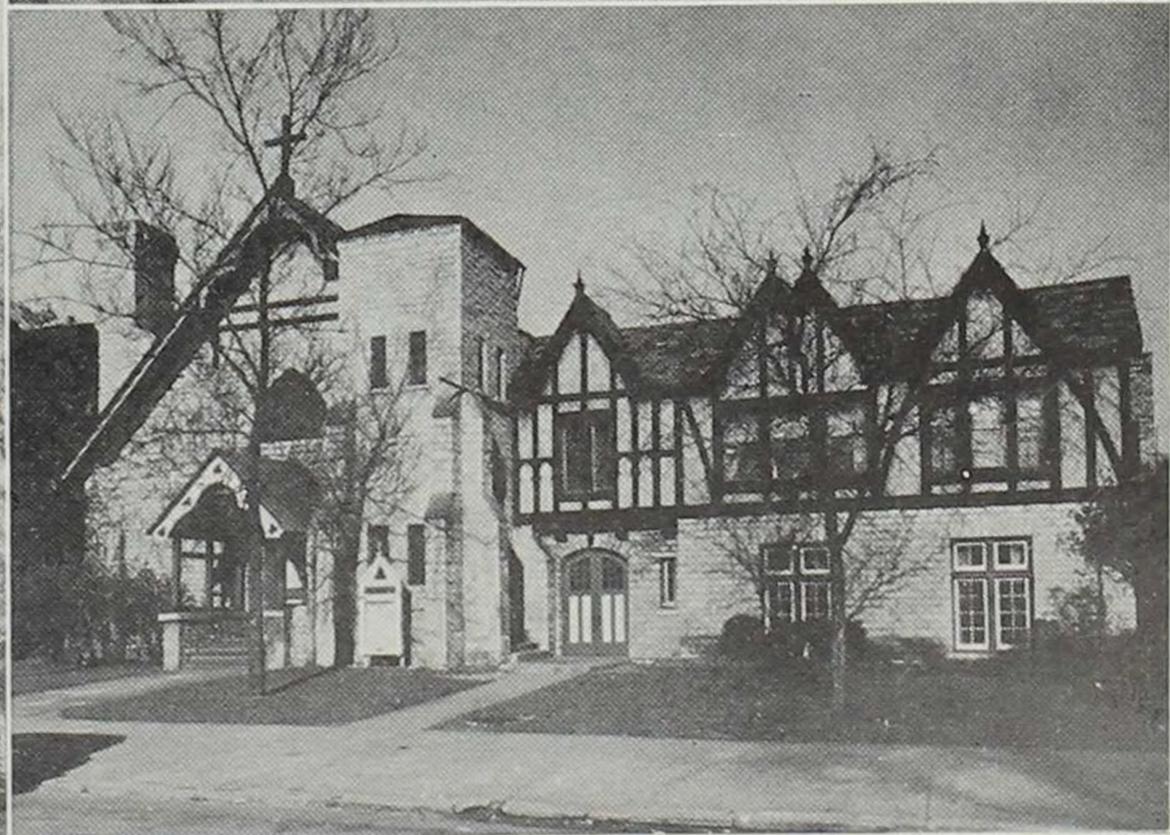
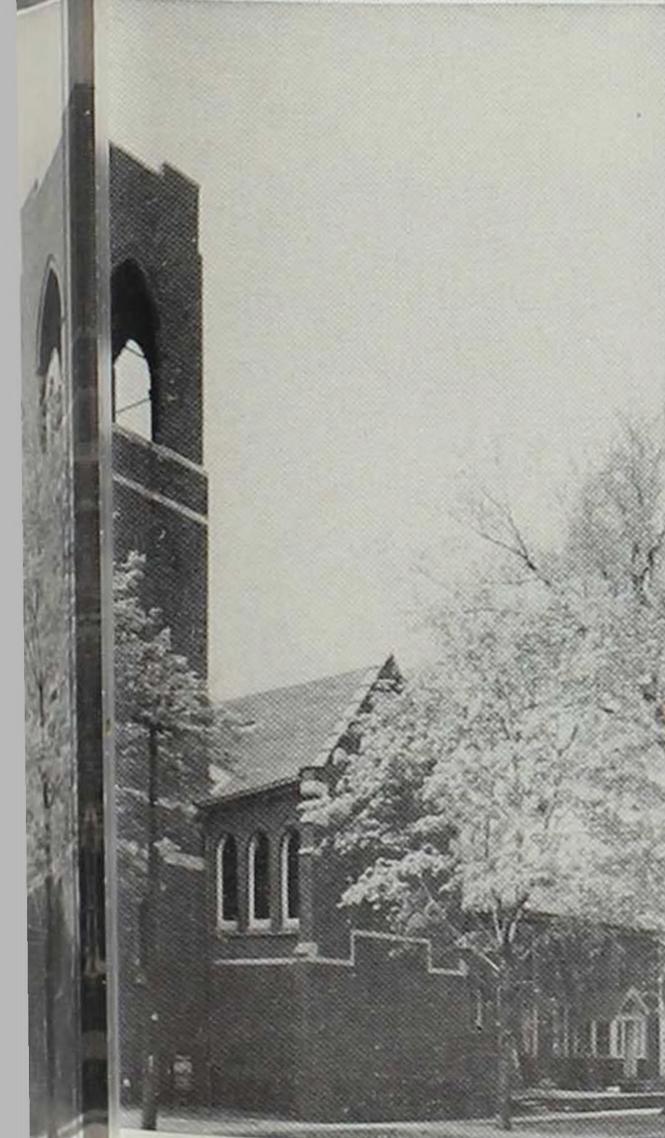
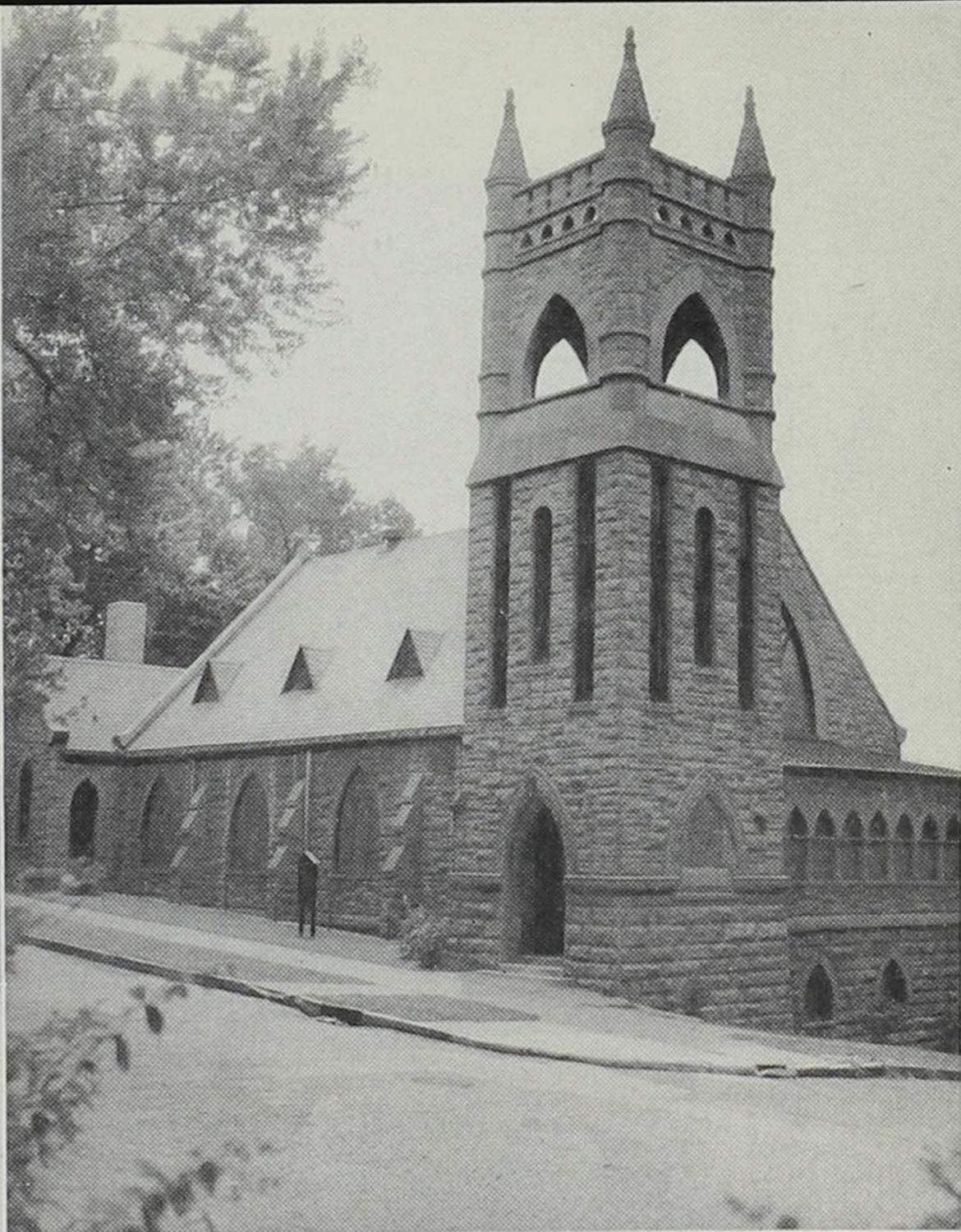
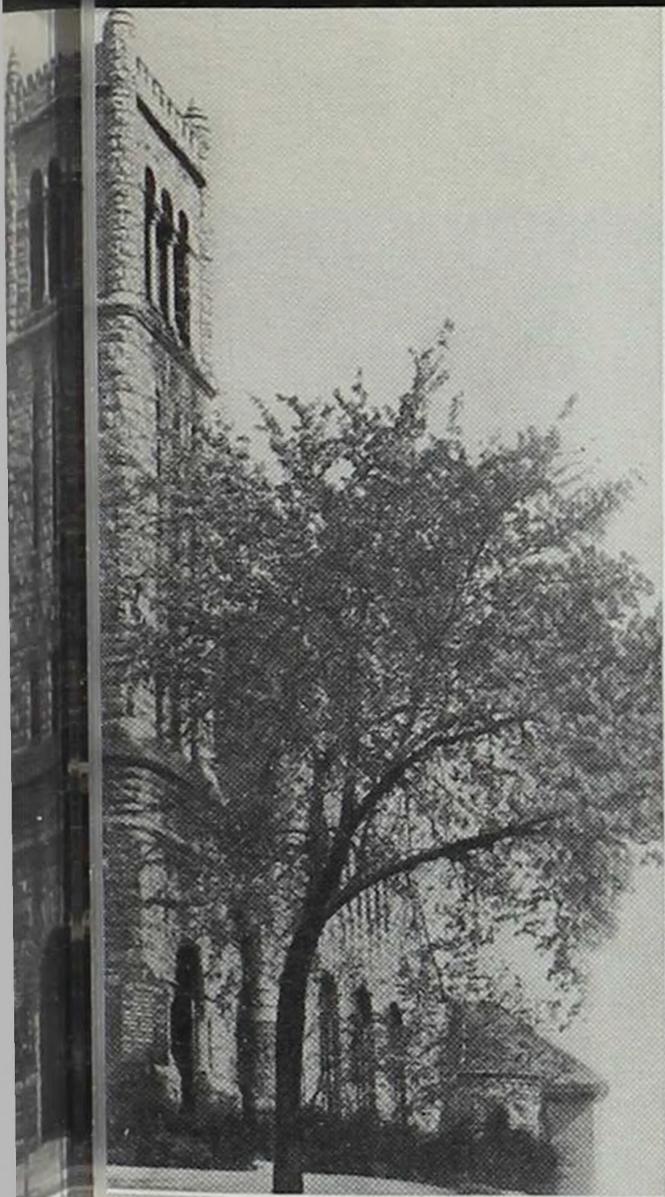
GORDON V. SMITH
1950-



Trinity Cathedral, Davenport
Trinity Church, Muscatine

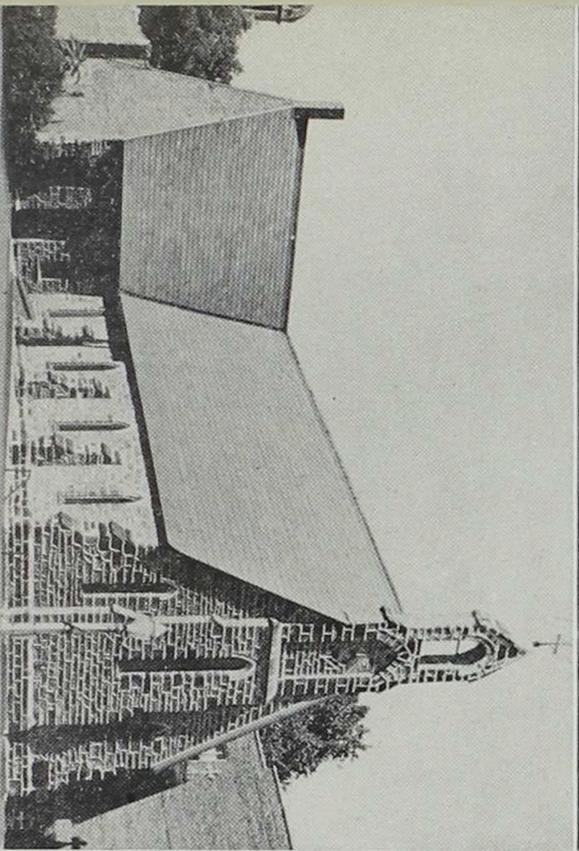
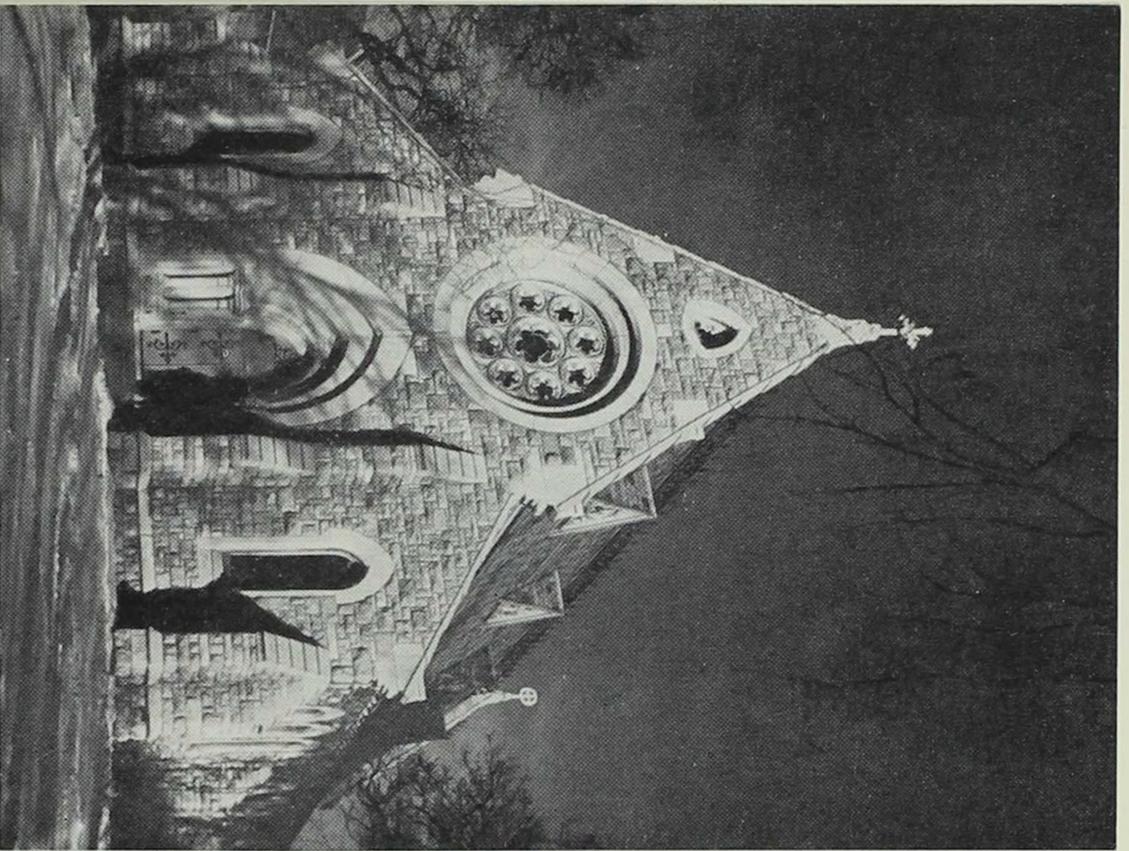


SOME EPISCOPAL CHURCHES
St. Thomas Church, Huron, Iowa
St. James Church, Oskaloosa, Iowa

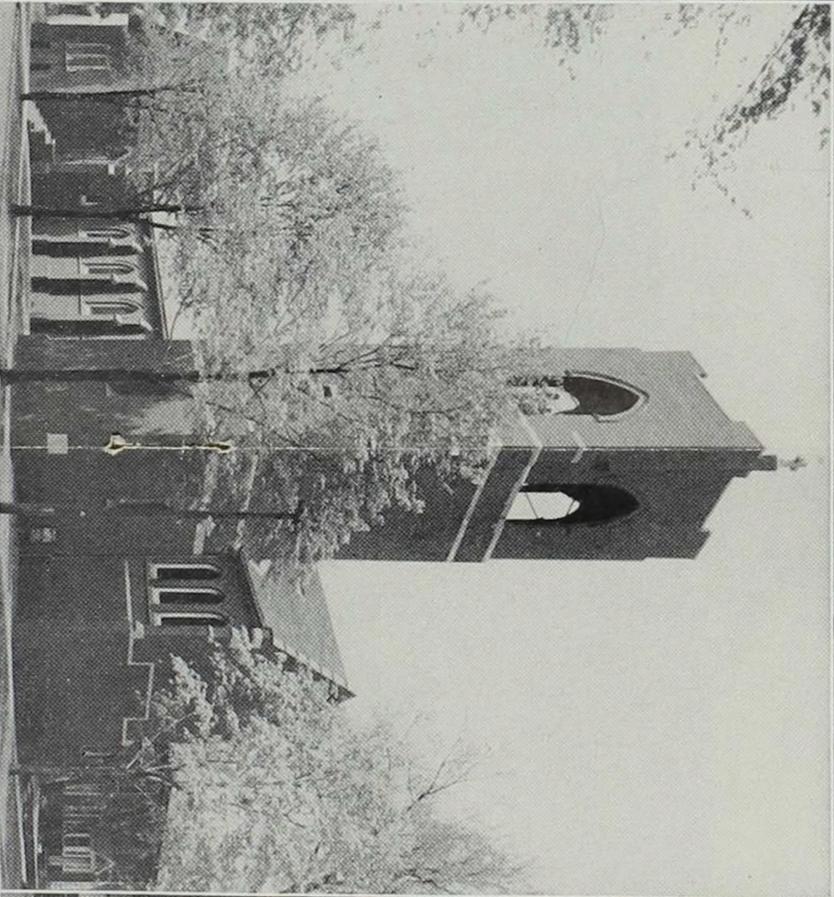
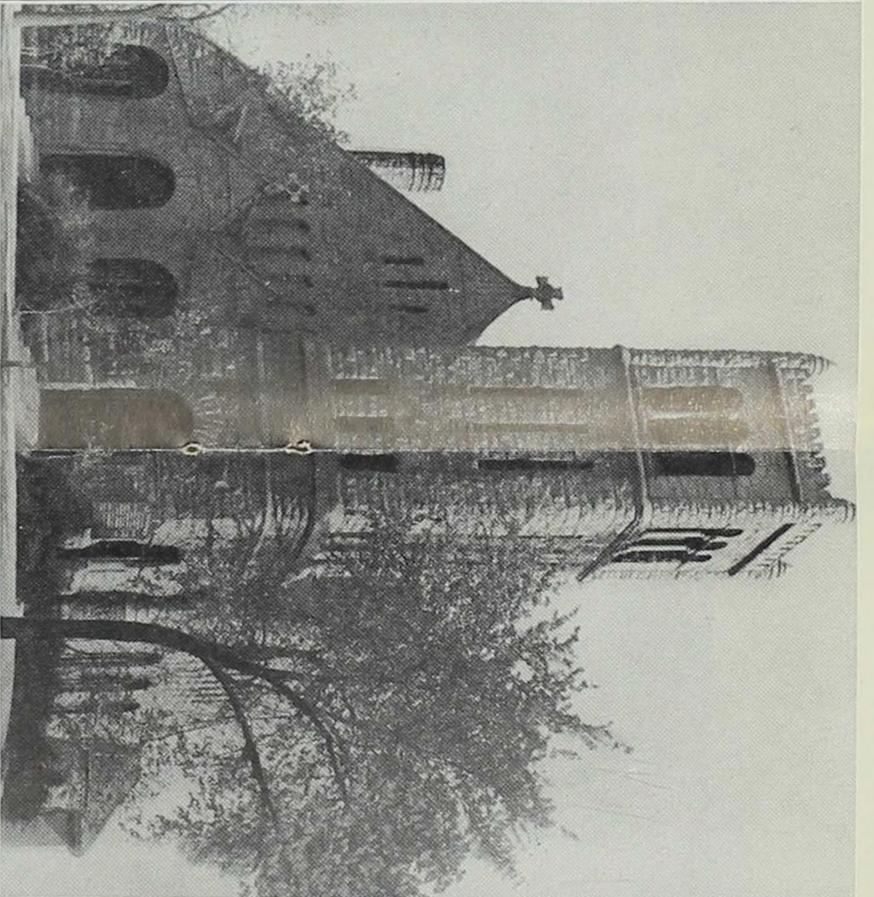


OPAL
mas' Ch
nes' Ch
IRCHES IN IOWA
h, Sioux City
, Oskaloosa

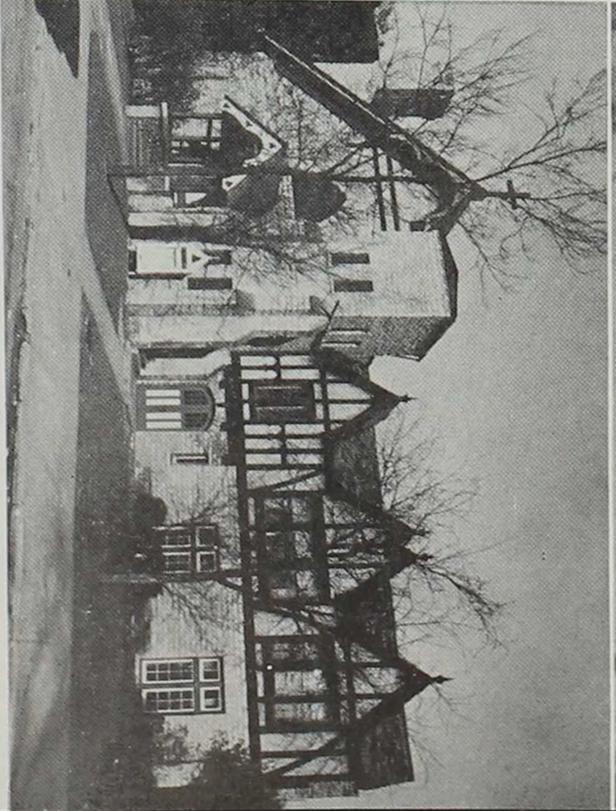
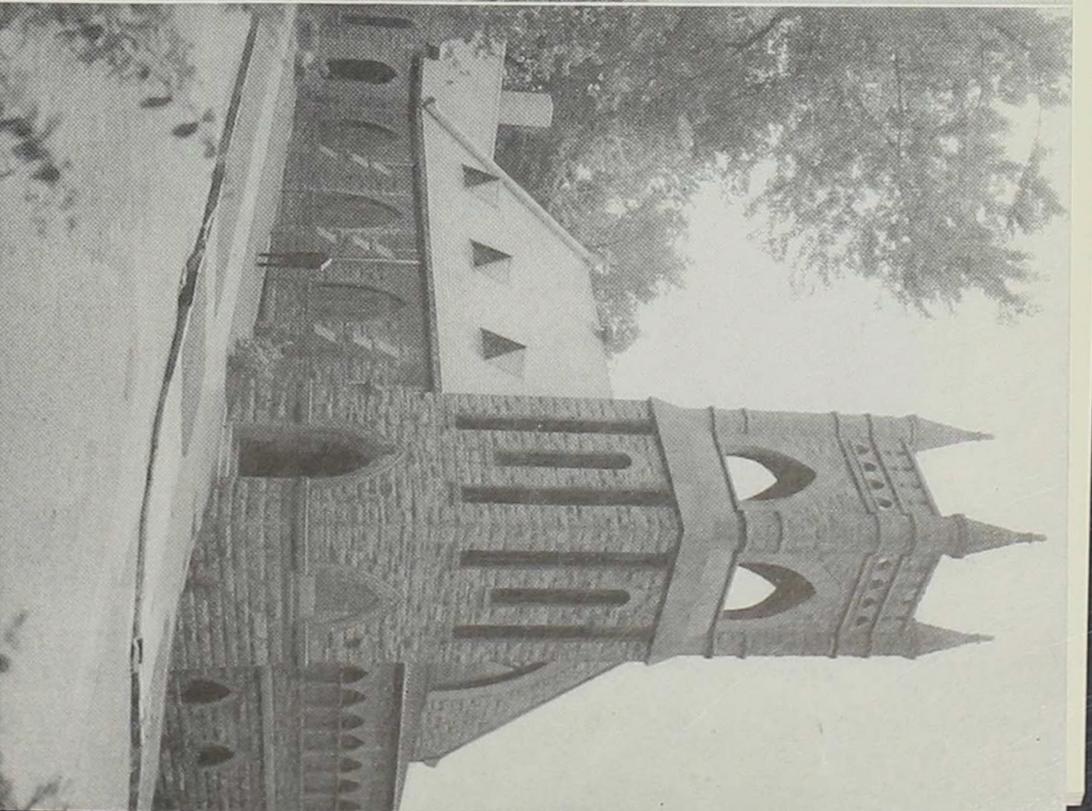
Trinity Church, Ottumwa
Christ Church, Waterloo



Trinity Cathedral, Davenport
Trinity Church, Muscatine

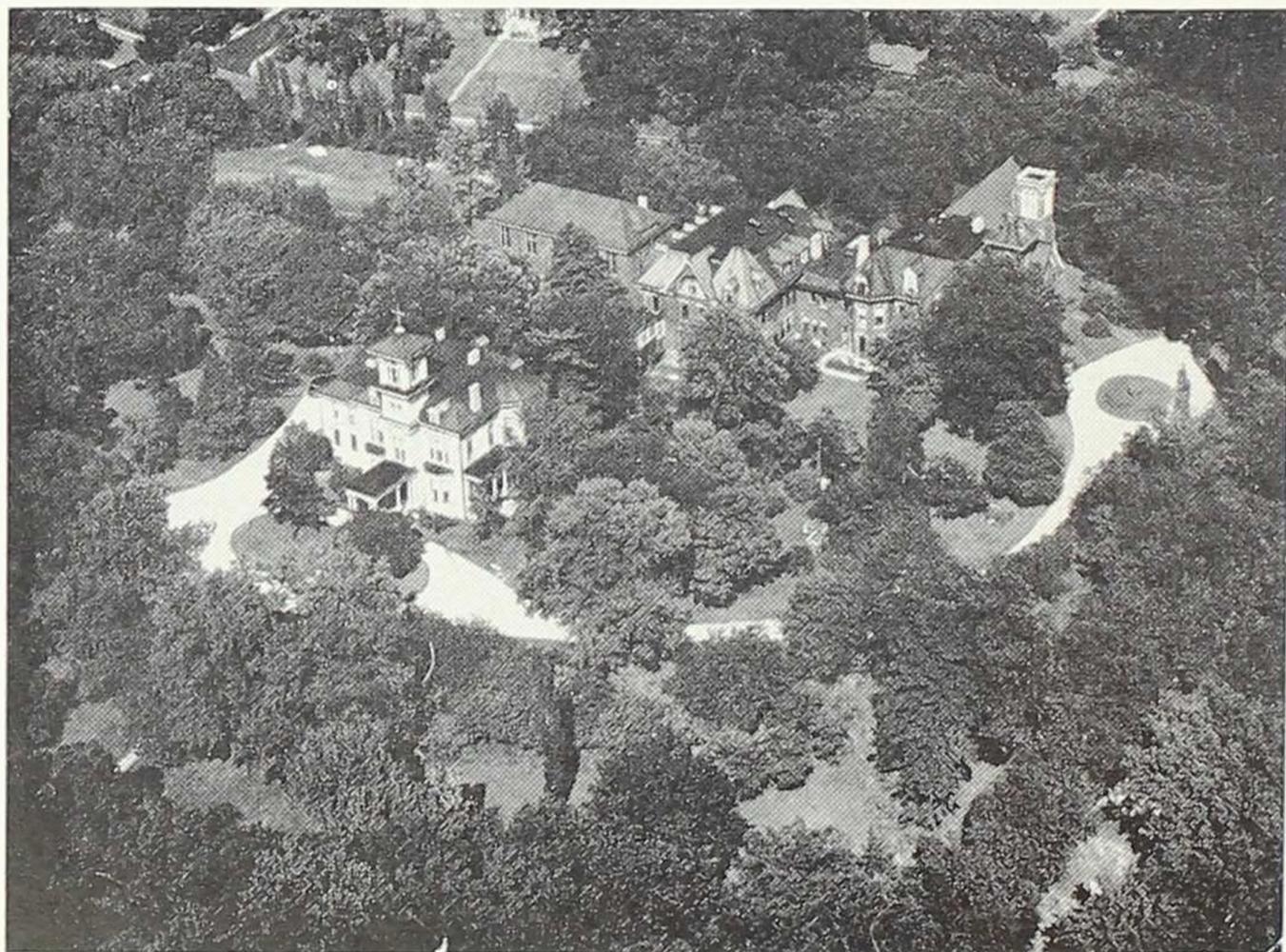


SOME EPISCOPAL CHURCHES IN IOWA
St. Thomas' Church, Sioux City
St. James' Church, Oskaloosa

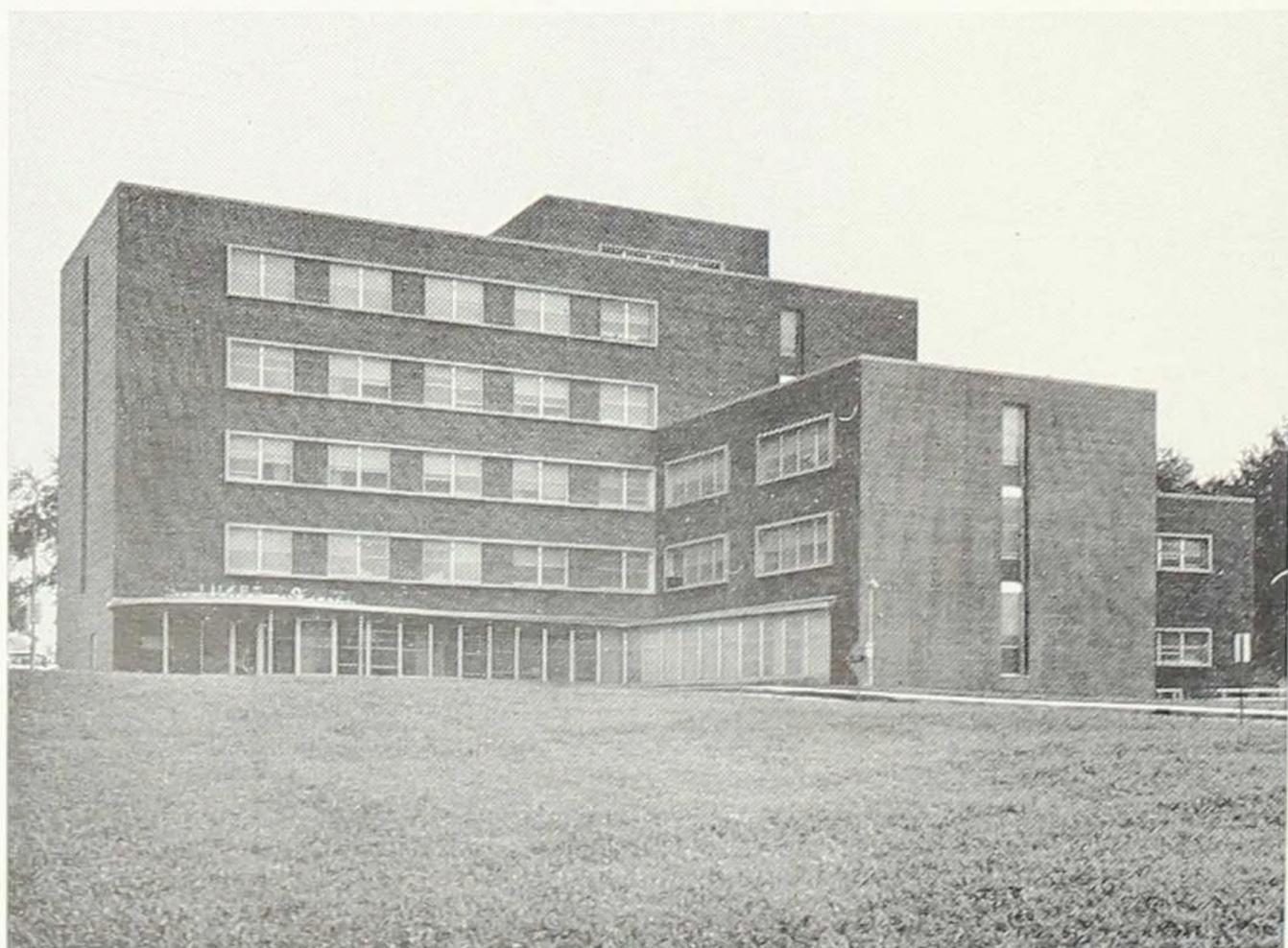


Trinity Church, Ottumwa
Christ Church, Waterloo

EPISCOPAL INSTITUTIONS IN IOWA



St. Katherine's School, Davenport



St. Luke's Hospital, Davenport

gations existed. The statement of a friend of their bishop that the Episcopal Church was not unique weakened every such parish.

In his Addresses of 1871, 1872, 1873, and 1874 to his diocesan convention Bishop Lee, saddened by death and defection of friends in the episcopate, seems increasingly defensive and even apologetic. On September 26, 1874, on the eve of his departure for General Convention, he tragically but unromantically died from the effects of a fall in his home.

M. F. CARPENTER