

Religion and Education

The little log cabin schoolhouse of yesteryear was an historic relic on Iowa's prairies in 1952. Gone, too, was the hewn log church which had once symbolized the state's religious institutions. Both had gradually given way to more modern structures of stone and brick, glass and steel. As cities and towns grew, their requirements in classrooms and church auditoriums multiplied apace. But even though the outward signs of religious and educational strength had changed, the sustaining spirit of the two forces in Iowa was essentially unaltered.

Iowa's increasing population was reflected during 1952 in both church and school attendance gains. The public school enrollment of 494,542 pupils was a rise of some 20,000 over the figures for a decade earlier. In Keokuk, for instance, 430 youngsters enrolled in kindergarten, while only 425 pupils were registered in the entire three grades of senior high school. These figures presaged a triple enrollment in the high school within ten years' time in normal circumstances, without allowing for an increase of the city's population. Significantly, the new school construction in Iowa seemed to be particularly noticeable for elementary

schools. Among the efforts made by various Iowa communities to solve the problem of consolidation and overcrowded classrooms was the \$460,000 elementary school at Audubon, and a \$528,000 structure at Ankeny which replaced two rural school buildings. In Iowa colleges enrollment was down slightly from the 1951 total, but 29,132 students still trod campuses.

The increase in church membership was encouraging to ministers who had been alarmed by the 1950 census reports of widespread indifference toward organized religious movements. One of the fast-growing denominations in 1952 was the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, which added 2,881 Iowans as new members to its church rolls, bringing the total membership to 90,434.

Equally important were the religious views expressed in Iowa during the year. Seventh-day Adventist campers at Nevada were told that "present events and conditions constitute a positive evidence that the coming of Christ to establish His eternal kingdom is imminent." At their annual convention held in Boone, the Iowa Baptists adopted a resolution urging pastors and churches to lower segregation bars in local churches, state associations, and national conventions. The Iowa Unitarian Association condemned the controversial loyalty oaths as "a canopy of protection for the disloyal to whom perjury is no

deterrent." The Ottumwa Ministerial Association asked newsdealers to remove voluntarily from shelves books and magazines that they themselves "would be ashamed to be seen reading." The State University school of religion celebrated its silver jubilee in May. F. C. Waples, president of the school's trustees, attributed its success to acceptance of the idea that all religious groups can cooperate "on their common meeting grounds."

Varying philosophies of education were voiced in Iowa during 1952. Dr. Samuel N. Stevens, president of Grinnell College, declared that so-called progressive education "in the elementary, intermediate and secondary levels has done more harm than any other single idea ever perpetrated in the body-politic of education." John Dewey, said Stevens, had never intended that his ideas on education should be so perverted as to make "baton twirling, because an individual is interested in it, as important as the study of Latin."

W. F. Johnson of Spencer, president of the Iowa State Education Association, defended progressive education by saying that the public schools still spent most of their time on the three R's. "Ours is a great profession and I hope that the current wave of criticism that engulfs the schools does not weaken your sense of values," Johnson told the state teachers' convention. He urged them to face critics "with the calm that comes from knowing that, while we do not for a

minute presume to be perfect or beyond any criticism, we do know there is much that is right in American education. . . ."

The impact of science on education reached Iowa through various media, the most obvious of which was television. Iowa's third television outlet was being constructed at Sioux City after the Federal Communications Commission ended the "freeze" on television station construction and assigned 59 channels to 38 cities and towns in the Hawkeye State. While there was scattered agitation for the development of a state-supported TV educational network, school officials at Boxholm actually began an in-school viewing program for pupils in the third, fourth, and eleventh grades.

Church and college building continued at a noteworthy pace in Iowa throughout 1952. Members of the St. Paul's Lutheran Church at Volga aided their building program in a unique way by planting and harvesting eighty acres of corn. The St. Luke's Lutheran congregation at Ricketts solved their housing problem by moving a vacant church from Schleswig, fifteen miles away, and adding a new chancel and pastor's study. Eighteen independent colleges and universities organized during the spring and launched the Iowa College Foundation, to gather funds for "non-tax supported four-year liberal arts colleges of Iowa." The University of Dubuque reported on its cen-

ennial year that \$1,268,027 had been raised in its development fund drive. Parsons College at Fairfield had raised \$285,000 toward a \$360,000 development fund goal, and Drake University's \$1,600,000 drive had brought in \$1,153,000 by September. Iowa State College built a new agronomy building, and the University of Iowa campus was enriched with the addition of the Danforth Memorial Chapel.

College campuses provided their usual variety of news items. Ralph Neppel, a double amputee veteran who wore the Congressional Medal of Honor, walked to the commencement at Buena Vista College for his degree. Sixty members of the University of Iowa famous Highlander band went to Europe on a good-will tour that ended in Scotland, where the coeds were received with enthusiasm. Several hundred male students at the State University held a "panty raid" on a girls' dormitory seeking lingerie souvenirs. Fourteen of the students were placed on probation, and the Des Moines *Register* commented: "Just wait until they settle down to married life and find the towel racks, bathtub, medicine cabinet, and every other available spot in their bathrooms *loaded* with panties, stockings, brassieres, slips — and goodness knows what else!"

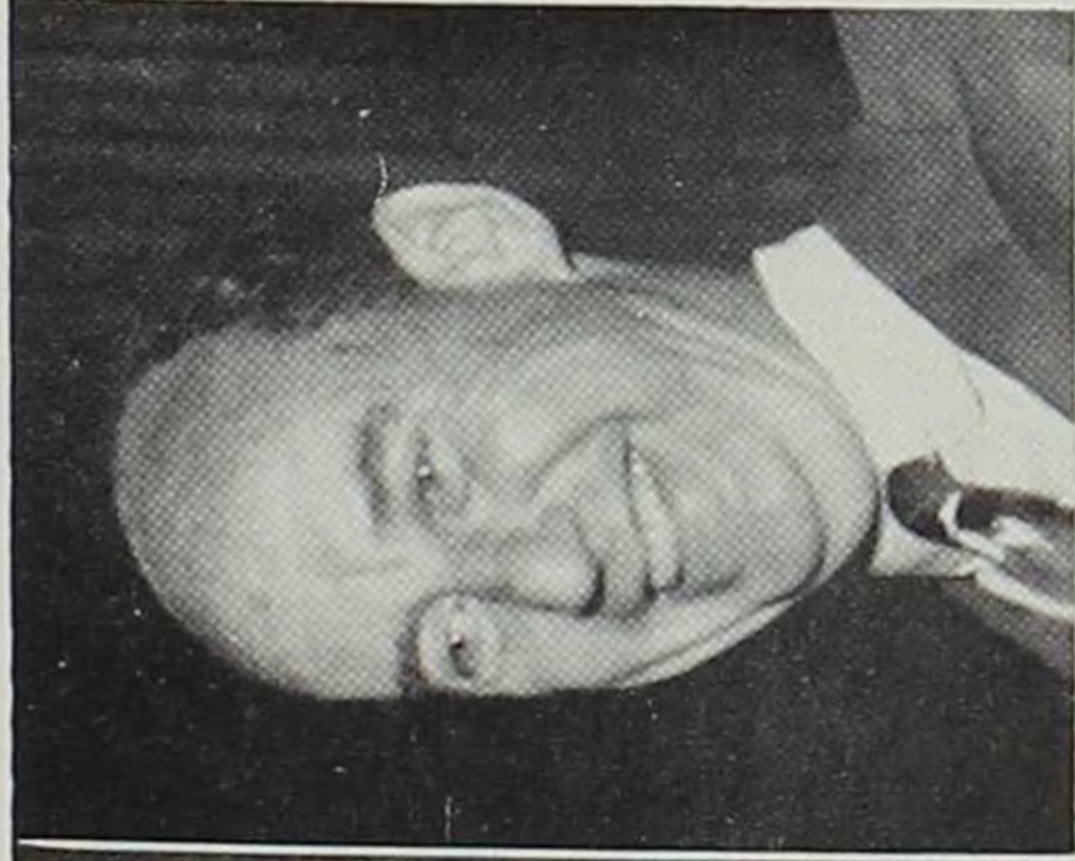
More purposeful was the rocket research project at the State University, which sent twelve-foot missiles forty miles into the skies over Greenland

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

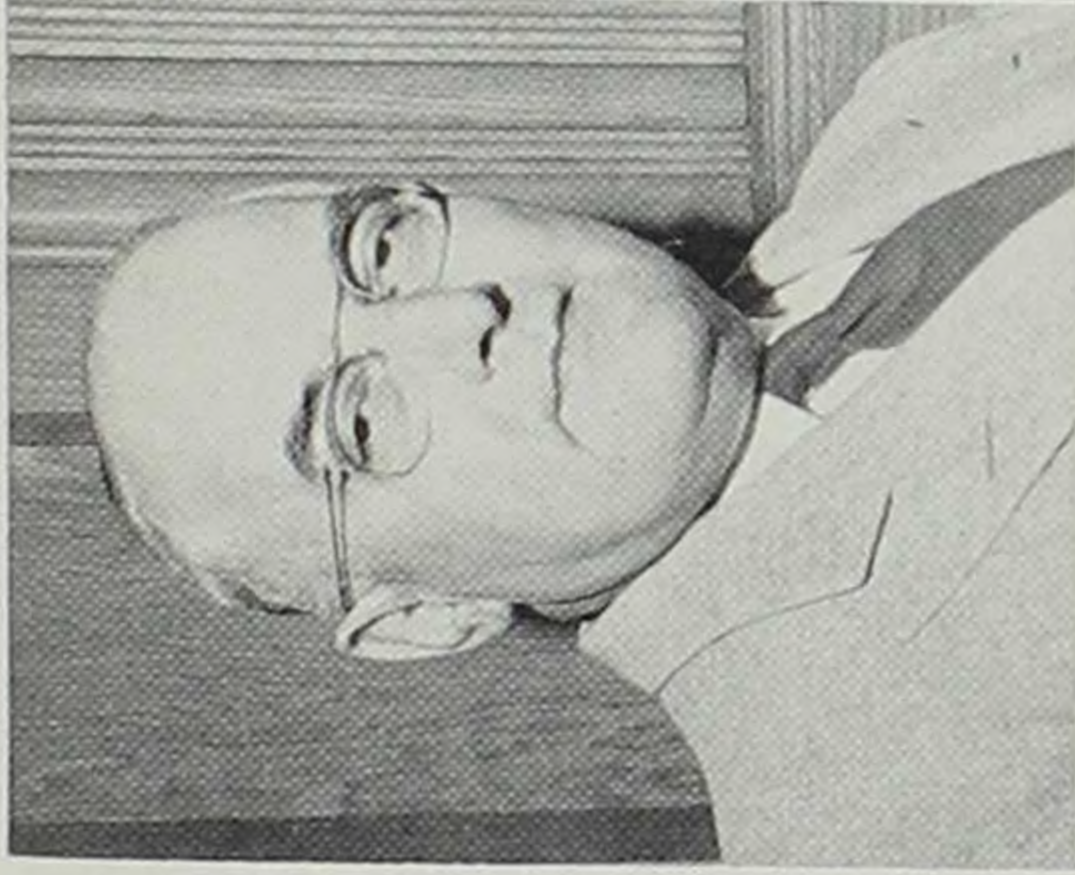
GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES



Republican
DWIGHT EISENHOWER



Democrat
ADLAI STEVENSON



Republican
WILLIAM S. BEARDSLEY



Democrat
HERSCHEL LOVELESS

REPUBLICAN CAMPAIGNERS

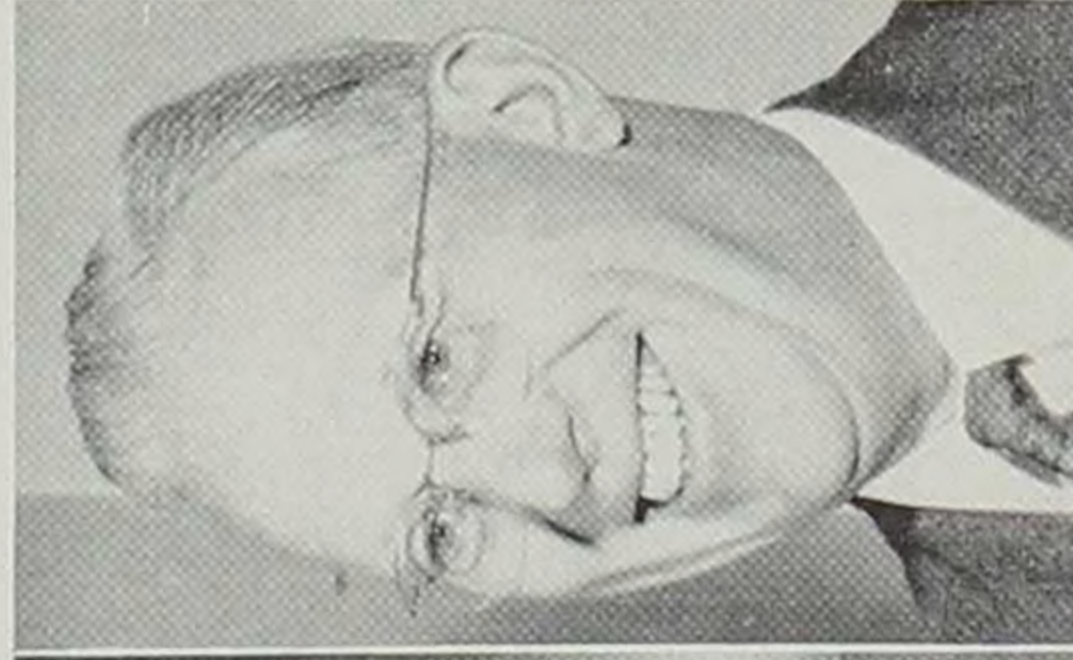
DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGNERS



RICHARD NIXON



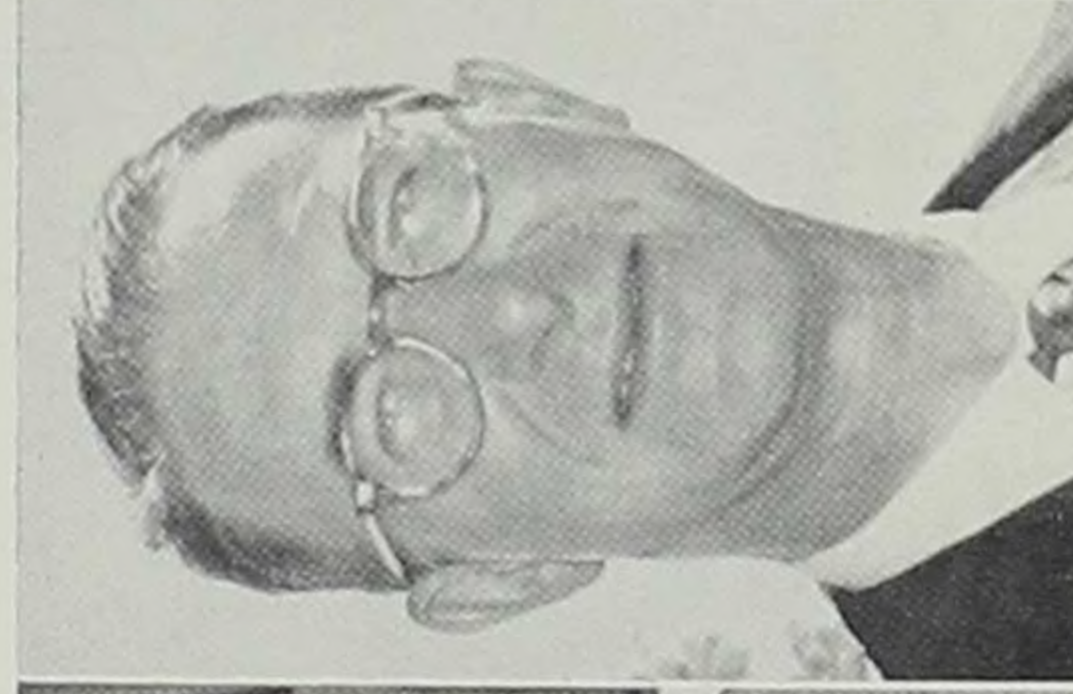
ROBERT TAFT



EARL WARREN



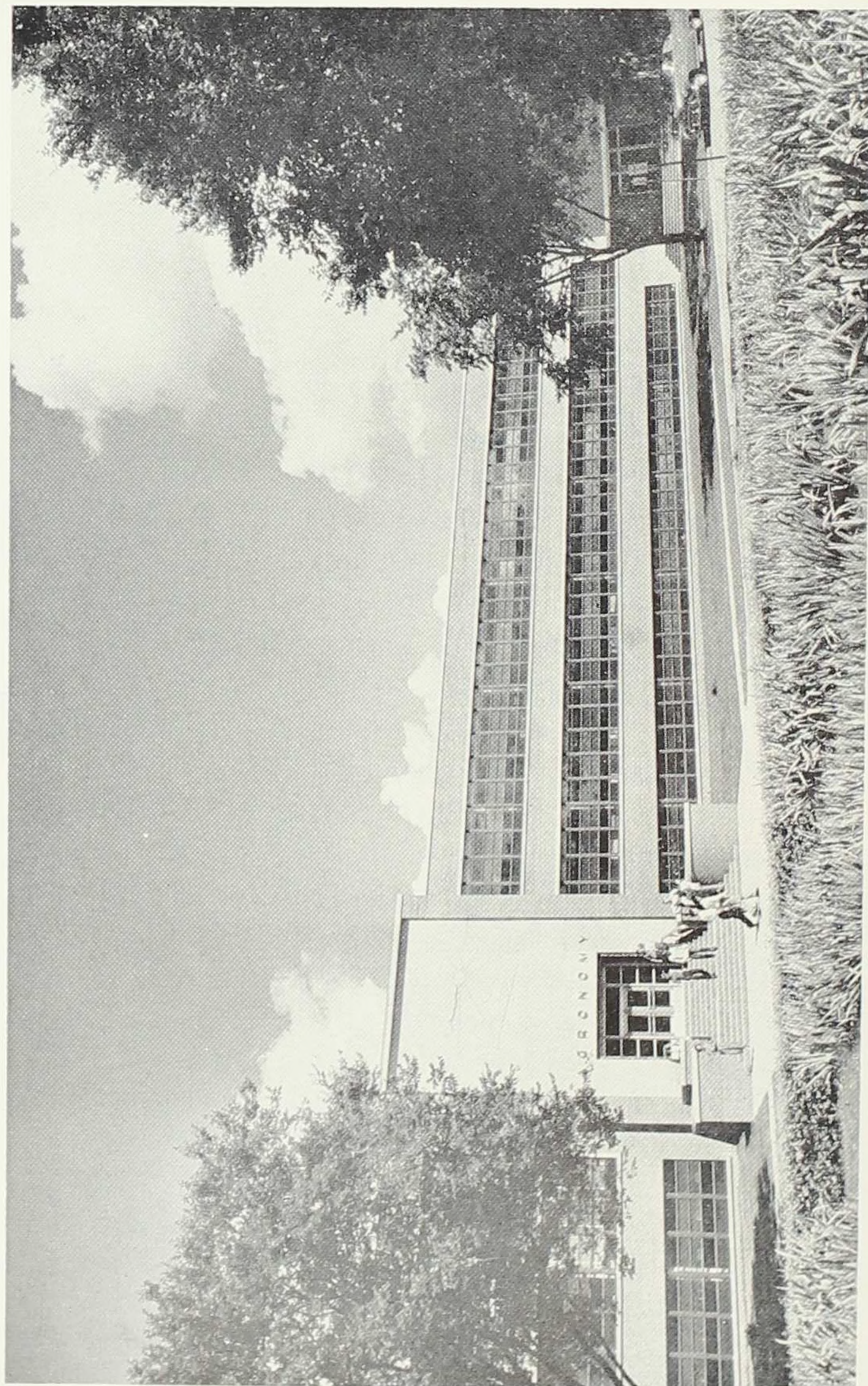
HARRY TRUMAN



ESTES KEFAUVER



AVERELL HARRIMAN



THE NEW AGRONOMY BUILDING AT IOWA STATE COLLEGE

on a navy-sponsored cosmic ray study program. At Iowa State College, a research program was aimed at the reclamation of idle strip coal lands, in the southern part of the state.

Three new college presidents and a bishop were named in Iowa during 1952. Dr. James H. Hilton was chosen to succeed Dr. Charles E. Friley at Iowa State College; Dr. Eugene Garbee was inaugurated as president of Upper Iowa University; and Dr. William E. Kerstetter became president of Simpson College. Bishop F. Gerald Ensley succeeded Methodist Bishop Charles Brashares.

Late in September the Rev. F. L. Hanscom, pastor at Nashua's "Little Brown Church" for over twelve years, retired after having united nearly 10,000 couples in marriage. At Council Bluffs the ministerial association criticized the county board of supervisors for permitting the use of courthouse office space for civil marriage ceremonies, and hinted that some solicitation of business had been involved. Justice of the Peace Frank Larsen said he had married over 3,000 couples during his fourteen years in office, but added that he had never sought any business from would-be brides and grooms. Patrick Norton, sixty-nine years old and the father of fourteen children, was a long way from his Dubuque newsstand when he was ordained a priest of the Roman Catholic Church in Rome. Earl G. Johnson, a Harlan businessman for twenty years, entered the Episcopalian ministry.

Interdenominational services were held throughout Iowa in the fall to celebrate publication of the revised standard version of the Bible. Guttenberg used a local postal cachet to share some of the glory shed when the post office department issued a stamp commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Bible printed by Johann Gutenberg.

Interest in Iowa's public libraries did not lag in 1952. At Keota construction work was scheduled on a memorial library made possible by a bequest from the late R. O. Wilson. Two Washington citizens left money to construct handsome \$100,000 wings on the city library. The American Library Association's public libraries division chose the works of two Iowans for its "Notable Books of 1952." The selections were volumes 2 and 3 of Herbert Hoover's *Memoirs*, and Joseph Kinsey Howard's *Strange Empire*. The Drake Library at Centerville celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in November, and the Des Moines public library found its first bookmobile so popular that a second traveling branch was placed in operation.

No single incident occurring in Iowa in 1952 could be pointed out as the most important event in either religion or education. But typical of the spirit of 1952 Iowa was the dispatch of 200 Iowa pigs in an air transport bound for Korea. The animals, all registered breeding stock, were to be used in improving the quality of swine in the war-torn Asiatic republic. They were purchased by

the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Christian Rural Overseas Program — CROP — an interdenominational organization. The gift symbolized a prayer that was in the hearts of many Iowans: a thankfulness for the abundant blessings of this land, and a desire to share these God-given benefits with other men.

ROBERT RUTLAND