

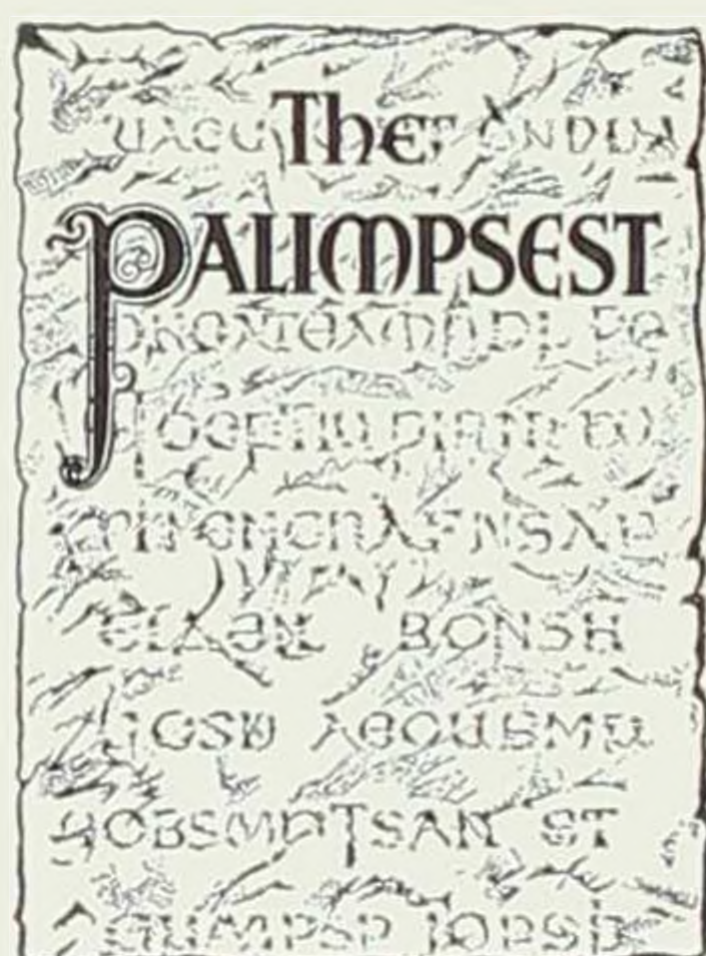
The PALIMPSEST



EDITOR RALPH SHANNON of the *Journal*

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The Meaning of Palimpsest

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

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the 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.

Contents

RALPH SHANNON OF THE JOURNAL

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----|
| Ralph Shannon | William J. Petersen | 97 |
| Editorials & Purely | | |
| Personal | William J. Petersen | 103 |
| "Quips" | Ralph Shannon | 125 |
| "Bob" | Ralph Shannon | 131 |
| Washington's Newspapers | Robert Rutland | 135 |

Cover

Front — Editor Ralph Shannon, still at the desk after forty years with the *Journal*.

Back — The front pages of earlier Washington newspapers which have contributed to the community's rich journalistic heritage.

Inside — First copy of the *Daily Hustler*, which later became the *Journal*.

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THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

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Ralph Shannon

"If you're fond of ham and eggs, take Saturday night baths, follow the baseball scores, and belong to at least a dozen organizations, you are an American," wrote Ralph Shannon in the *Washington Evening Journal* of June 6, 1947. This description does not fall far short of Shannon's own personality, except that one can add a lot more to it by reading his daily editorials, his "Quips," and his "Purely Personal" column, which collectively afford a constant source of delight to readers of one of Iowa's leading small town dailies.

In analyzing Shannon's writings one gathers that he places great store in those pioneer qualities — enterprise, resourcefulness, integrity, courage, and self-reliance. He adores little children, has genuine compassion for the unfortunate, believes wholeheartedly in private enterprise and the American way of life, and detests the profligate squanderer. He loves nature and wild life, has a nodding acquaintance with gardening, and believes implicitly that men should strive to make

their home town the finest place in which to live this side of Heaven. It is the special responsibility of a newspaper editor to see that the latter objective is achieved in his community.

Throughout his life Shannon has worked hard — for himself, his community, his state, his profession, and indeed for all humanity. He hates war (he lost his son "Bob" in World War II) and he hopes and prays for peace. But he is not willing to truckle to dictators for peace at any price. He detests false friends — both at home and abroad. And yet, although possessing a well-balanced international outlook, Shannon is as Iowan as the tall corn that surrounds his community on every hand.

Born on a farm in Washington County on February 1, 1888, Shannon attended the public schools, enrolled in the old Washington Academy in 1906, studied at the University of Chicago during 1908-1909, and worked for a Texas colonization company before becoming permanently identified with the *Washington Journal* in 1913.

He previously (1906-1908) had worked for the *Morning Gazette* and the *Evening Journal*. His love for journalism, coupled with his dislike for traveling in his real estate work, led Shannon to welcome J. Orville Elder's telegram which brought him back to Washington on August 15, 1913, to be co-owner of the *Evening Journal*. Shannon had married Fannie Harwood of Wash-

ington in 1912, and the arrival of a brand new baby was no small factor in determining his future career.

Ralph Shannon believed that many of the simple events of childhood were important in shaping the future destiny of men. To properly record one such event, Shannon instituted his "Purely Personal" column on August 30, 1950. His column touched on the death of an old friend and neighbor, John Sullivan, who had given eleven-year-old Shannon his first job during corn-shucking at 75 cents a day, board and room included.

I never could understand how John Sullivan could afford to pay me 75 cents a day. He probably couldn't either. But I did manage to bring in from 30 to 40 bushels each day (my own estimate), and the kindly praise I got from my employer meant much more to me than the pay — 75 cents a day, however, wasn't to be sneezed at. I can still feel the weight of that silver money in my overalls pocket. It weighed heavily on my suspenders and gave me a sense of independence I haven't had since.

In all of these heavy negotiations my respect for John Sullivan was kept high. And it went even higher as I came to realize the kindly, tolerant attitude he had toward a skinny little kid who was probably more bother around the place than he was worth. He treated me as an equal, never as a boy. And in the long stretch of years since that time I have always remembered it. Funny thing how impressions linger. It isn't too important what you think of that small boy in your neighborhood. The big question is, what does HE think of you?

Shannon became advertising manager when he

joined the *Washington Journal* in 1913. He encouraged ads with a personal touch and they got good results. As long as Orville Elder lived he did the editing but the two men always worked close together. Shannon always considered Elder the finest man he ever knew — bar none.

Shannon's unusual grasp of advertising led the two men to start an advertising promotion service sold all over the nation. It has offices on the second floor of the *Journal* building. The almost fabulous capacity of Shannon was demonstrated when Elder died in 1940 and Shannon took over the editing. Few editors are more widely quoted in Iowa than Ralph Shannon, and few more widely enjoyed by their readers.

Ralph Shannon was a Sigma Nu at Chicago. His son Bill was a Sigma Nu at Missouri, while Bob was a Sigma Nu at the University of Iowa. His daughter, Virginia, is now Mrs. Robert West of Adel. Ralph Shannon has four grandchildren, all of whom he cheerfully admits have played their part in making him a wiser man.

Many professional honors have been won by Shannon. He was elected to membership in Sigma Delta Chi at the State University of Iowa in 1944. He received the "Excellent Writing" Award of the *Des Moines Register* in 1947. He was named Master-Editor by the Iowa Press Association in 1949. That same year the *Washington Evening Journal* received the Sigma Delta Chi's "Distin-

guished Achievement Award for Typographical Excellence." He has served on the board of the Inland Daily Press Association, was president of the Iowa Daily Press Association two years, and in 1953 was serving as president of the Iowa Press Association.

Such are the honors that have been heaped on Ralph Shannon. But his greatest satisfaction comes from his love of the old home town — Washington. And the citizens of Washington reciprocate his deep affection for the community. Local citizens have left over \$1,000,000 for parks, YMCA, a library, a colorama fountain, and a band shell. They raise \$25,000 annually for their Community Chest, and are now promoting a retirement home. Shannon, like Elder, has always said: "A good town will have a good newspaper. . . . A newspaper belongs to the town, and whoever happens to run it is a public servant."

Indeed Shannon himself typifies in large measure the unique spirit of the Washington community. The veteran newspaperman is a strong advocate of community unity. He is ever-willing to share in civic responsibilities, hold offices of trust, and lend his support to all worthy projects that have been introduced for the good of the community at large. And yet he is mild of manner, rather than loud and aggressive. In his quiet way, however, he gets far more done than the noisy fist-pounding editor who too frequently typi-

fies the average layman's concept of a newspaperman.

The people of Washington firmly believe that Shannon and the *Journal* have both served their community faithfully and with distinction. Little wonder that Ralph Shannon should love Washington — just as Washington loves its favorite editor.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

Editorials -- Purely Personal

[This issue of THE PALIMPSEST is one of a series projected on journalism in Iowa. Credit for originally suggesting Ralph Shannon and the *Washington Journal* goes to Richard Stephens and Robert Buck of Ainsworth. The Editorials, Purely Personals, and "Quips" were gleaned from the *Journal* by Mrs. Robert Day, Mrs. Merle Eckels, and Mrs. Henry C. Hull; they were typed by Mrs. Russell Goodin. Out of this vast collection the Editor has selected representative items in each category to illustrate the thoughts of a typical Iowa editor.]

During the past quarter century the writer has come to know personally scores of Iowa editors — men who were highly respected by their fellow citizens. This feeling is understandable, for able editors invariably take the lead in all things pertaining to the community good. For years before he met him, the writer had heard the editorials of Ralph Shannon praised by readers of the *Washington Journal* as well as by editors throughout the state. A study of Shannon's editorials and a few visits with him quickly revealed why he had risen to such high stature.

Since Washington is a typical Iowa county seat town and since Ralph Shannon is a typical editor, it might be well to present some of the nuggets that have won such wide acclaim. During his lifetime the Washington community has left an indel-

ible impression on Shannon's personality and character; in turn Shannon has deftly molded the lives of individuals and communities — although he himself would be the last to admit it. The following "Purely Personal" comment sums up his own opinion of his influence.

The little calendar on my desk tells me I have been whittling out copy for this department for twelve years. At least you must say I've been persistent. During all that time the public has been kind and forbearing — and I might add, forgiving. . . .

Twelve years is a long time. If all that copy were cut out and pasted in one long strip it would reach beyond the county line, and you would have a heck of a time with it in a high wind. . . . If I were suddenly required to prove the value of this department, I would be deeply embarrassed, and the search for proof most likely would be humiliating.

Why do it then? . . . Editorials are something of a tradition in the newspaper world. They're like the buttons on the sleeve of your coat — they serve no particular purpose but for some reason they are supposed to be there. The presence of an editorial column, convention speakers say, gives the newspaper a certain tone and prestige, which may be true, but it's hard to put one's finger on the values. Such claims must be accepted in blind faith and sublime hope.

Writing a column once a week would be a snap, but doing it once a day is a never-ending chore. It's like milking the cows. When you finish the job today you know you have to do it again tomorrow.

And because it is a daily chore, it often reads like it. The job is not in the writing, it's in deciding what to write about, and that's where the stuff narrows down to the

good old generalities, like law violation and high taxes. When there isn't any other material at hand, taxation is always good for a paragraph, and political corruption another. They're the old dependables, and always a certain sign that ideas are short today in the editorial department.

The easy — and maybe the best — way to do an editorial column is to buy the stuff already written . . . by top-flight writers who . . . have crashed the syndicates. You would thus read better editorials and know what the bigger minds are thinking about, but there is one thing those fellows can't provide — that's the local angle, the home-town atmosphere. If the *Washington Evening Journal* is to live and move and have its being at the grass-roots, we think it should try to express that viewpoint.

And so we keep pecking away at the job, day after day, month after month, year after year. I am encouraged to believe sometimes that people do follow our meanderings sympathetically, then again I know positively they don't. . . . All of which sounds as though I'm taking this chore very seriously. Actually, I don't. I doubt if I have ever changed any opinions or molded public thought in any measurable degree. The real purpose is merely to throw the topics open for discussion, whatever they are, and out of the discussions may come improvement and progress. I don't know how well the idea works, but it's a good theory anyway.

And if, in this little personal breeze today, I have imparted the idea that this job is heavy and distasteful, you have me all wrong, for it isn't that way at all. I look upon it as a little daily visit in which I have all the advantage and you have none. I do all the talking.

But it's a real treat when you talk back. Letters from readers are a joy, whether in agreement or not. For out of such letters and your personal comments come the only

assurance I have that suitable obsequies are not in order. I can still do gardening.

Few Iowa editors have been more concerned over domestic and international affairs than Ralph Shannon. In his "Quips" and editorials, Shannon constantly revealed his concern over corruption in government, unbridled spending, a balanced budget, and faithless, blood-sucking allies. An apostle of honesty, self-reliance, and resourcefulness, Shannon believed wholeheartedly in the American way of life. The outbreak of war in Korea and the difficulties facing the United States in Europe were matters of real concern to him.

Reason for all the confusion in world affairs is, no doubt, that the problems are so big and complex that nobody can know or understand what goes on. Even the experts guess at it, thereby adding their opinions to the confusion. But out here at the so-called local level a lot of people look at it this way: We're in another war, the third in 33 years. What have we got to show for all that military effort? Some of our best manhood killed or wounded. Tremendous debt. Uncontrolled inflation. Fewer friends among our neighboring nations, even those we have helped most. Since World War II we have sent more than 45 billion dollars to some 80 countries, and the signs of rehabilitation in some of those countries are still hard to find. Are we expected then to see in our foreign policy a great achievement on the grand plan? Should we applaud and shout "Bravo"? The plain and obvious fact is that we're not doing so hot under the present program. What should be done? We don't know the formula and apparently, neither does anybody else. But at least we can begin thinking of our own survival first, instead of try-

ing to save everybody else — including some who don't want to be saved. Those are the points which account for so much hostility toward the present American foreign policy, and those up front can't seem to understand why.

For almost a decade the State Department has endeavored to placate the Russian Bear and find some mutually acceptable solution for peace. Apparently no such solution can be found. It did not take Ralph Shannon long to probe the machinations of Stalin and the Russian objectives. Writing of Communism, Shannon declared:

Most of us who rate as plain ordinary citizens probably give more importance to communism than it deserves. We are too much inclined to believe that this is a war between capitalism and communism. In reality we are bracing our feet against Russian imperialism — the Soviet effort to push out and take over. . . . Those boys are out for power and control. Communism just happens to be in their sales kit, a tool which they have learned how to use quite effectively. So far as the philosophy is concerned, let the Russians have their communism. Let them prove to the world that the collective doctrine can build a better civilization, but let them do it within their own borders and leave the rest of the world alone. If communism is all the Russians say it is, then the rest of us will adopt it in due time. The plain fact is that we have little to fear from the doctrine of communism. It has been tried time and again, and found wanting on every test. But when a country goes all out to build its military strength while other nations ask only for peace, you may be mighty sure it is out to conquer and exploit. And the only thing left for the other nations to do is to prepare to defend themselves.

Most editors are generally considered to be very

serious souls, weighed down as they are with national and world problems. Although Ralph Shannon has always been fully aware (and perplexed) by these problems he was perfectly capable of seeing the more humorous side of life. On November 2, 1950, he wrote a thoughtful editorial entitled "Hole in Pants" that penetrated to the very heart of things.

In the years we have been operating this corner of Washington County's largest daily, we have noted that readers respond much more to the affairs of daily living than to controversial matters. A heavy article taken right out of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* doesn't seem to click, but simpler items of life often bring surprising comment. So today when this department should be devoted entirely to the loftier affairs of state, we suddenly discover — of all things — a hole in our trousers. We can't imagine how it happened. It's neither a rip nor a tear. Evidently it's just plain worn out, the result of hard usage, and it comes at a most inconvenient time as we're heading into another winter. The hole is just north of the 38th parallel, about midway between Huchang and Hamjong. By sheer good luck, however, we have another pair. They have descended from a suit we owned before we owned this one, a bit shiny perhaps in certain areas but good for at least two more seasons. Beyond that we have no plans. All of which, the text books say, should have no place in dignified journalism. But to us, at the moment, it is more important than the pending negotiations between Afghanistan and Pakistan — if they have any negotiations pending. If you have ever suffered a similar catastrophe we believe you'll agree.

The small town editor is generally considered a

veritable fountain of wisdom. Readers frequently write in to him for special information, sometimes of a highly technical nature. Personal experience accordingly is often helpful to the average Iowa editor. On May 20, 1950, Ralph Shannon clearly disclosed that even such an intricate subject as "Folding Chairs" held no qualms for him. A "constant" reader of the *Journal* received the following suggestions for handling a folding chair that "lays down and won't get up."

Lift the chair from its reclining position and hold it in front of you with both hands. Examine it carefully. You will see that there is a top part and a bottom part. To say definitely which is which, however, calls for a little experimentation. But you must make a guess. The bottom part probably is the top part, if you get what we mean, and you should start with that assumption. Now, with your right hand grasp the top part and shake it vigorously. This won't do any good, but something might happen. You never know. Next, with your left hand see if you can't swing the bottom part up over the top part, or vice versa. If this fails, try putting your right foot on the middle section and then pulling outwardly on both the top and bottom parts simultaneously, which is a remarkable trick if you can do it. By this time you are getting too close to the edge of the porch. You can get a bad fall that way. Better get back to your original position and start over again, this time beginning with the top part, which you thought at first was the bottom part. Try to be calm. There's no sense in getting all riled up over a folding chair. Study the danged thing once more. Remember that the chair is intended to conform to your general anatomical contour, and this might give you a clue. Try to

imagine if you can what the manufacturer had in mind when he designed the contraption. Hold the chair by each corner — a corner at a time — and swing it gently to and fro. If this doesn't start the parts unraveling, then kick the tangle viciously, and go into the house and lie down on the davenport for a while. An hour or so of rest should bring your blood pressure back to normal. Then tomorrow buy a new chair — one that will neither fold nor unfold.

World affairs might perplex him, an unbalanced budget appall him, or an innocent query stump him, but one thing was always crystal clear — the need for people to cherish their home town, their state, and their nation. And by cherishing their heritage, Shannon did not mean mere lip service — let the other fellow do the work. In his "Purely Personal" column of October 14, 1950, Shannon paid the following tribute to the Hawkeye State.

In Iowa you should take a foliage trip each autumn. It feeds your aesthetic side, if you have one, and serves to sooth the soul. Here in Iowa we haven't any Catskills or Adirondacks but we have the bluffs along the Mississippi. In any season they are beautiful and interesting. Just now they're gorgeous. . . .

As a sort of missionary for the Iowa Press Association I have been making territory, as the salesman says, in eastern Iowa. It has been strictly for business purposes, but there is nothing in the assignment that says we can't look at the scenery as we drive along. The "we" includes the Missus. Area covered this week — east and north of Washington.

Iowa is a marvelous state, which is about as trite a com-

ment as anybody could make. If you have seen it from the air — say, about 5,280 feet up — you have witnessed a vast checkerboard of irregular geometric designs, sketched in yellows, greens and browns. The yellows are the fields of small grain, the greens are corn and pasture land, and the browns are freshly cultivated soil. Streams are bordered by fringes of timberland, and the whole map is streaked by a network of highways. That's how it looks from the air.

But you get a more intimate touch on the ground. Down here is where the people live. The houses and barns and fences and machinery bespeak of life as we live it in Iowa, and the panorama along the highway somehow gives you a sense of comfort and security. And it's not the social-security type of thing, either. It spells out self reliance and independence. A native, dyed-in-the-wool Iowan can't fail to catch a thrill from a well-kept herd of dairy cows browsing on the hillside, or a car load of fat steers stuffing themselves at the feed bunk. The aroma from the feed lot isn't exactly lily-of-the-valley but in its pungency there is promise of sizzling steaks this winter — if you can raise the dough to buy 'em. To me, however, the most interesting sight of all is a swarm of little pigs pulling at the buttons on their mother's vest. That's a picture that ought to be included on the Great Seal of Iowa. It would be much more appropriate than the bald eagle, or whatever it is they use for the stamp of officiality.

There are scads of little towns in Iowa — communities with populations under 1,000. And they all run to about the same pattern. There's the main street, the bank on the corner, the elevator down by the depot, the restaurant, a tavern or two, and down at the end of the street the newspaper office. There you'll find the editor, publisher and printer. Not three persons, as you would gather, but one man — the busiest man in town. Often his wife helps out,

and after school hours you'll sometimes find a boy in the back shop feeding the press. In one place we found a girl standing up there on the cylinder press, shooting the sheets through one by one.

There's loyalty, peace and patriotism in these smaller towns. The people live on a plane of intimate, friendly relationships. The one half always knows what the other half is doing, which possibly makes for better behavior and bigger church attendance. When I asked an old man on a bench in front of the restaurant where I might find the local editor he was happy to give me all the information he could. "I just saw him go by here in his car. He had his mother with him, and while I ain't sayin' for sure, I think he's takin' her out to her place east o' town a couple o' miles. In that case he ought to be back here in thirty minutes." And sure enough he was.

That bench in front of the restaurant or tavern is always occupied on sunshiny days. Usually there are two benches, that is, if the main street runs north and south. One is on the east side of the street, the other on the west. Thus the Sons of Rest can enjoy the morning shade on the east side and the afternoon shade on the west side. In the group you'll always find an Uncle Charley. He moved into town a few years ago and his boy is running the place now. He is friendly and jovial. And he knows everybody in town, old and young, big or little.

In many of the smaller towns the ghost of depression days still stalks Main Street. You'll see its presence in the bank front — the building with the columns and high windows in front, now occupied by a drug or hardware store. Beneath those stately columns somebody's hopes and aspirations, you just know, ran into bitter disappointment. If you had time to dig into the history you would find, no doubt, some sad chapters. Local enterprise took a beating. Life savings went down the flume. Hearts were broken.

But business goes on, and in the hey-day of inflation, things look rosy and bank accounts bulge. I hope history is not in the process of repeating itself, but the lesson of the thirties is too fresh to be forgotten completely. One bank in eastern Iowa had a sublime faith in the future. It had engraved on its cornerstone the rate of interest it paid on savings. It may have been 3 per cent or 4 per cent, I don't know. But whatever it was, it has been chiseled out of the lettering, leaving an unsightly spot in an otherwise neatly engraved granite sign. No bank can stand committed now to such interest rates as prevailed in 1930. These rates have long since been chiseled off the records.

If you are looking for beauty, drive to Davenport and take the river road north. But better hurry. The leaves are falling fast.

Ralph Shannon has always been fond of small Iowa towns, and especially those in Washington County. On January 30, 1950, he outlined the following advantages for small towns.

A quarter of a century ago it was pretty freely predicted that the small towns were losing out to paved roads and motor transportation. But the prediction apparently wasn't well-founded. The small towns in this area are definitely holding their own, some doing even better than that. The parking problem, undoubtedly, has its influence. The smaller towns have no such problems, and live merchants have been quick to see this advantage. Another thing you will note — the tendency of large business concerns to seek locations away from the busy trade centers. Frequently you will see big new retail buildings along the main highways. Customers, they say, prefer to drive several miles rather than walk a few blocks and fight traffic. Besides, the taxes out along the highway are less.

Shannon could always count friends and ad-

mirers in Ainsworth by the score. On November 4, 1950, he recorded with deep satisfaction the "come back" of this bustling little community.

A few years back they were saying that the small town was on its way out, that paved highways had spelled its doom. But "they" didn't know about that mysterious thing called community spirit. Take our neighboring town of Ainsworth as a shining example. Just a few years ago Ainsworth was showing unmistakable signs of community discouragement. Then somebody re-sparked the generator. A bank was established. Vacant store rooms became occupied. New homes began to appear. And a community club emerged which includes not only the business interests of the town but the whole trade area. And Ainsworth now has a parking problem. On busy days and evenings visiting cars have to be driven off the main drag to find space. And all because a group of energetic men and women, with determination and vision, are working together in a common cause — the most important cause in the world when you stop to analyze it. It's the cause of higher living standards, improved schools and churches, better neighbors, and greater prosperity.

The rebirth of such towns as Ainsworth was not a mere happen-stance. It took a lot of individual effort and sacrifice as well as a rekindling of the community spirit. Time and again, in his editorials and "Quips," Shannon emphasized the need for individual push and joint cooperation. As early as January 18, 1945, Shannon had written:

The difference between a live town and a dead town is largely a matter of organizational activity. A live town has lots of such activity, a dead town usually has very little. Any city that hasn't energy and interest enough to

maintain an active Chamber of Commerce isn't much of a city, if you'll take the time to investigate. An energetic Chamber is a certain sign of progress. If the organization does nothing more than express that spirit of progress, it has justified itself. . . . Of course there have been always the few who have chosen not to participate. It is ever thus. But even those nonparticipants will agree that they live in a "live town," and they are inordinately proud of that fact. Investment in a Chamber of Commerce membership card doesn't always provide a very thrilling ride on the community band wagon but it does help to keep the steam up. And after all it's the steam that counts.

Shannon received innumerable ideas for his editorials from fellow citizens. The need of encouraging youth was ever uppermost in his mind and heart. But when a self-made Washington citizen expressed the hope his children would not have to undergo his own hardships Shannon penned an editorial on "Self-Reliance," concluding as follows:

Thus he would deny them a valuable heritage. The very experiences that made this man sturdy and self-reliant and successful are the experiences he would withhold from his children. Strong men and women are not made by being shielded from hardships. And self-reliance is not taught in the school of social security.

It should be emphasized that the genial editor of the *Washington Journal* was not inclined to scold his readers continually. The futility of such "scolding" was aptly expressed on December 11, 1951:

It doesn't do much good for the preacher to scold his

congregation for a lack of spiritual interest. The ones who need the scolding most are not there to listen. It's the same way with editorial warnings about our communistic trends. Many of those who are helping to create these trends don't read the arguments, pro or con. They are interested only in how much they can get from the government.

Some women, especially if they are young, do not look forward with pleasure to becoming grandmothers. Most women, happily, are delighted with this role, taking as deep an interest in their grandchildren as they did in their own children. Few men have assumed the role of grandfather more happily than Ralph Shannon, whose editorials and quips on children have brought many a chuckle to *Journal* readers. On March 5, 1942, Shannon wrote:

There is a small baby visiting at our house this week, a modern version of the ones who used to live there. The fundamentals, we believe, have not changed to any great extent so far as our observation goes. The laundry department goes into high gear, same as in the olden days, and household activities are spaced in between feeding times. That's old stuff, of course, and accepted as standard practice. But there are some innovations. There is the matter, for instance, of fitting on that highly essential undergarment. The style of this garment, as we recall, was formerly designed in the form of an equilateral triangle, the corners of which were brought forward and pinned securely in front. One good safety pin was sufficient, and the whole operation was quick and handy. True, we occasionally ran into difficulties. There were times when one corner failed to get itself pinned and the resulting effect

was neither neat nor efficient, but that was the fault of the technique, not of the garment. Now, that's all changed. The modern design is a four-sided arrangement, in the approximate proportions of a landing field, and it requires two pins instead of one, hence a natural loss of time and effort. We don't like it so well. Another modern development which we think is just one more of "them hifalutin" ideas hatched by the medical profession is the practice of "burping" the baby. Immediately after the feeding you are supposed to lop him over your shoulder and pat him gently on the back. Pretty soon, BURP. And what he doesn't do to your shoulder sometimes is a matter for you and the dry cleaner to discuss in private. Stripped of these problems of management, however, a baby still holds the reins of civilization. He is the center of the universe. For him we subjugate all personal plans and make any sacrifice. 'Twas ever thus. Take from civilization that inborn love for children and we'd have nothing worthwhile left.

In addition to getting out a newspaper at a profit and offering free advice to the subscribers, an editor was frequently confronted with serious personal problems. On November 13, 1945, Shannon editorialized on "Granddaughter and Snow Suits."

Sunday this writer was assigned the task of shoving a nine-months old granddaughter into a snow suit — one of those garments with legs and arms in it and buttons all the way down the front. The job calls for skill and experience, and we were pretty tired before we got the little lady all buttoned up. She didn't cooperate. She simply relaxed on our lap and permitted us to do all the work. Pushing a completely relaxed leg into the right compartment while its owner tries to pull the clasp off your necktie is something of an ordeal under the most auspicious cir-

cumstances. But when you get the leg into what proves to be a sleeve and it sticks there, and the little lady gets fed up with the proceedings and begins to stiffen, and when the buttons take position up the back instead of the front, and the room is warm and stuffy, and the baby's hood gets screwgeed down over one eye, and a very limp arm gets itself doubled in the sleeve and has to be taken out again — brother, you're in trouble. Who invented these new-fangled garments, anyway? Why not wrap the baby in a blanket and be done with it?

Having become an expert on diapers and snow suits old grandpa Shannon could editorialize with considerable feeling on Father's Day. On June 22, 1942, he wrote:

Father's Day grows more and more delightful each year. Dad hardly knows what to do with a day devoted exclusively to him, and he finds himself a bit uneasy and uncomfortable. As one local father said about the occasion last year, "It wasn't as much fun as I expected. I kept wondering what they were going to ask me for later." We don't know who invented the idea. We suspect it was a necktie manufacturer. Or it may have been that after Mother's Day was so well established somebody happened to notice Dad hanging disconsolately around the place, so they fixed him up a day, too. And it's perhaps fittin' and proper. . . . There's no tragedy in life quite equal to a father who has been deserted by his own children. The only thing that surpasses such a spectacle in tragic consequences is when the kids walk out on Mother. The love and respect of children for their parents is one of the important keystones in the arch of civilization, and it's a good thing to have a Mother's Day and a Father's Day for that reason.

Shannon loved all forms of animal life and fre-

quently wrote about them. One can draw lessons from his comments on rabbits, owls, and quail. His editorial on the ants who had the effrontery to attempt to stake out a claim in his own back yard is thoroughly delightful and his conclusions illuminating.

I suspect that the colony is communistic. If I am any judge at all, the organization is under a stern dictatorship. They're all for the state, and the individual doesn't amount to a tinker's darn so far as importance and influence is concerned. One member who evidently was on guard duty away out at the edge of town, started to explore the inside of my pants leg, and I gave him a hefty blow from the outside. Then I recovered his battered body and put him back among his comrades, fully expecting there would be general bereavement and maybe a little memorial meeting in his honor. He wasn't even noticed. One or two ants stopped a moment to twitch an antenna, then went on about their work without so much as a shrug of their shoulders. If the guy was careless enough to crawl up a man's pants leg it was his own lookout, and he couldn't expect any sympathy at home.

Building an ant hill is accomplished by cheap labor and mass production. The workers own their own tools — a set of strong legs and a pair of heavy snippers in front — and in return for their collectivized effort they get their room and board. I don't pretend to know the rules or the psychology which account for the ant's activities, but I would guess that life in an ant hill doesn't call for much imagination. . . . Like the bees, each colony is presided over by a queen, and she looks after all the egg laying and the more important matters about the house. The workers have long hours and don't belong to the union.

So — King Solomon to the contrary notwithstanding —

I am forced to the conclusion that there is not much wisdom in the ant. I will concede one point, however, and I'm inclined to think it is what Solomon had in mind. That is the lesson of industry and diligence. No ant quits the job. If he does he more than likely winds up before the board of review and has his license taken away from him. Which no doubt would mean the end of him, because he couldn't get a job anywhere else save in his own colony.

The ant is not an individualist. He buries his identity in the job he has to do and has no ambitions beyond that. This is Joe Stalin's idea, too. The Russians didn't invent it, as they may claim. The ant beat them to it.

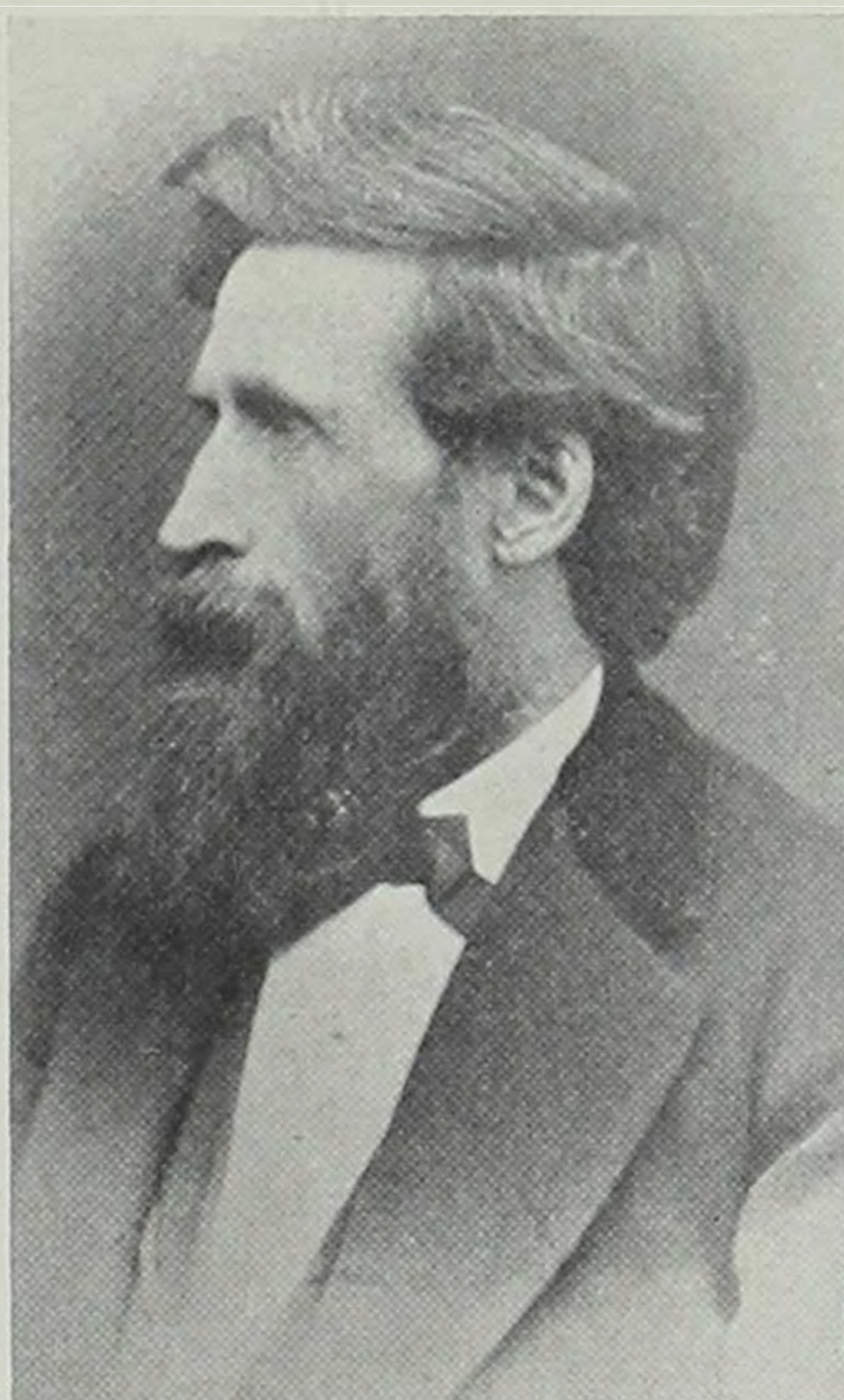
What Iowan has not had his nocturnal slumber broken by the mellifluous caterwauling of a congregation of cats? Shannon recorded a typical feline convention beneath his window sill:

There was a meeting of the feline committee down on our street Thursday night. It was a called meeting, evidently, to consider such business as might come before it. The proceedings began shortly after midnight just outside my bedroom window. Minutes of the last meeting were read and approved, after which a motion for adjournment was offered but failed to pass. An amendment to the original motion also failed. The meeting was then thrown open for general discussion and it became clear that the sentiment was completely divided. The matter was argued pro and con until 2 a.m. then a recess was called and the meeting was moved to new quarters across the street. Other motions were made but voted down. At times the arguments became loud and blasphemous. At 3 a.m. somebody along staid old West Main Street raised a window and yelled "Scat," but after a momentary silence business was resumed. At 4:15 a.m. there was a sound of rifle fire — just one shot — and the meeting adjourned sine die. It

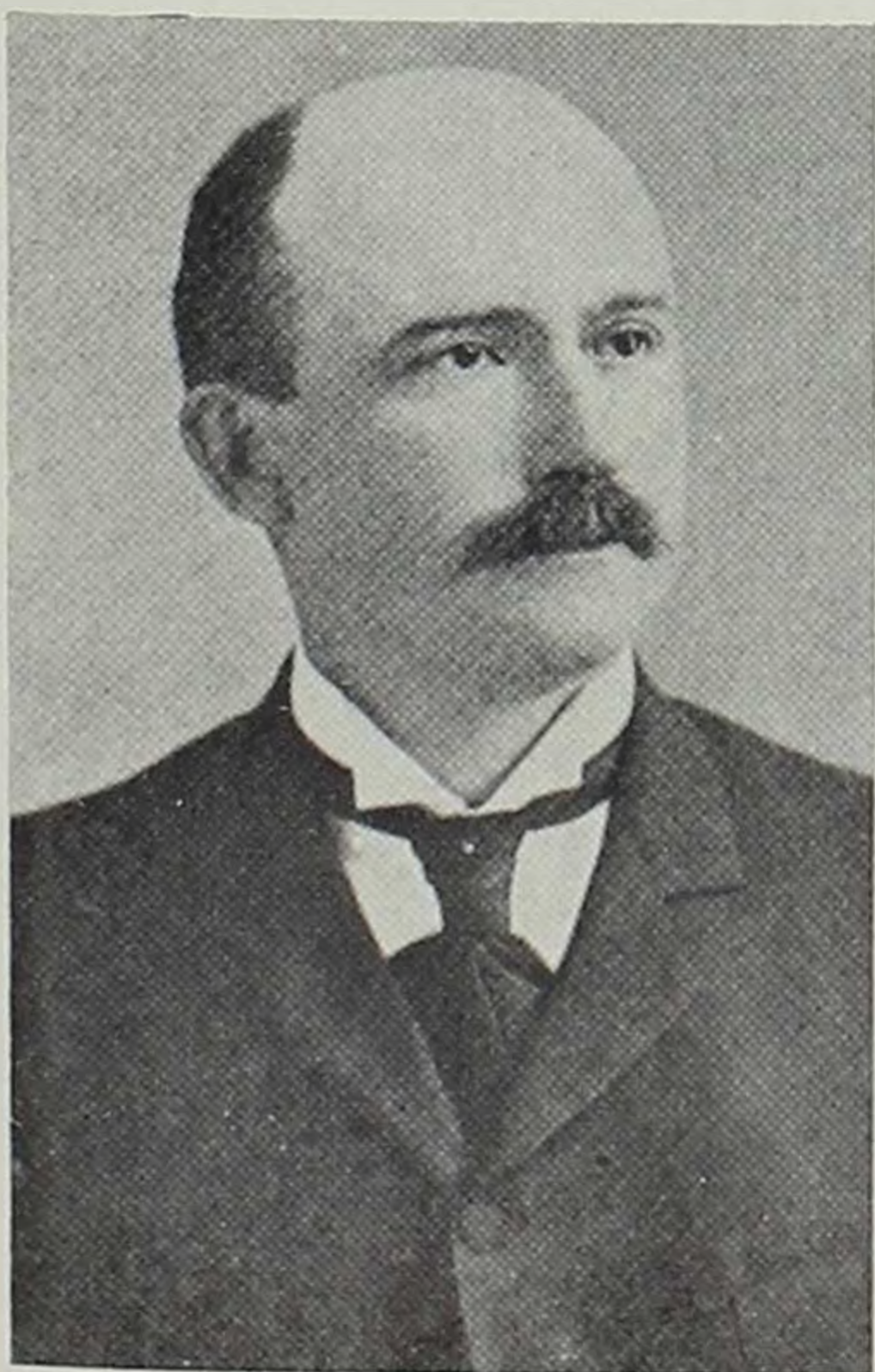
WASHINGTON'S NEWSPAPER PIONEERS



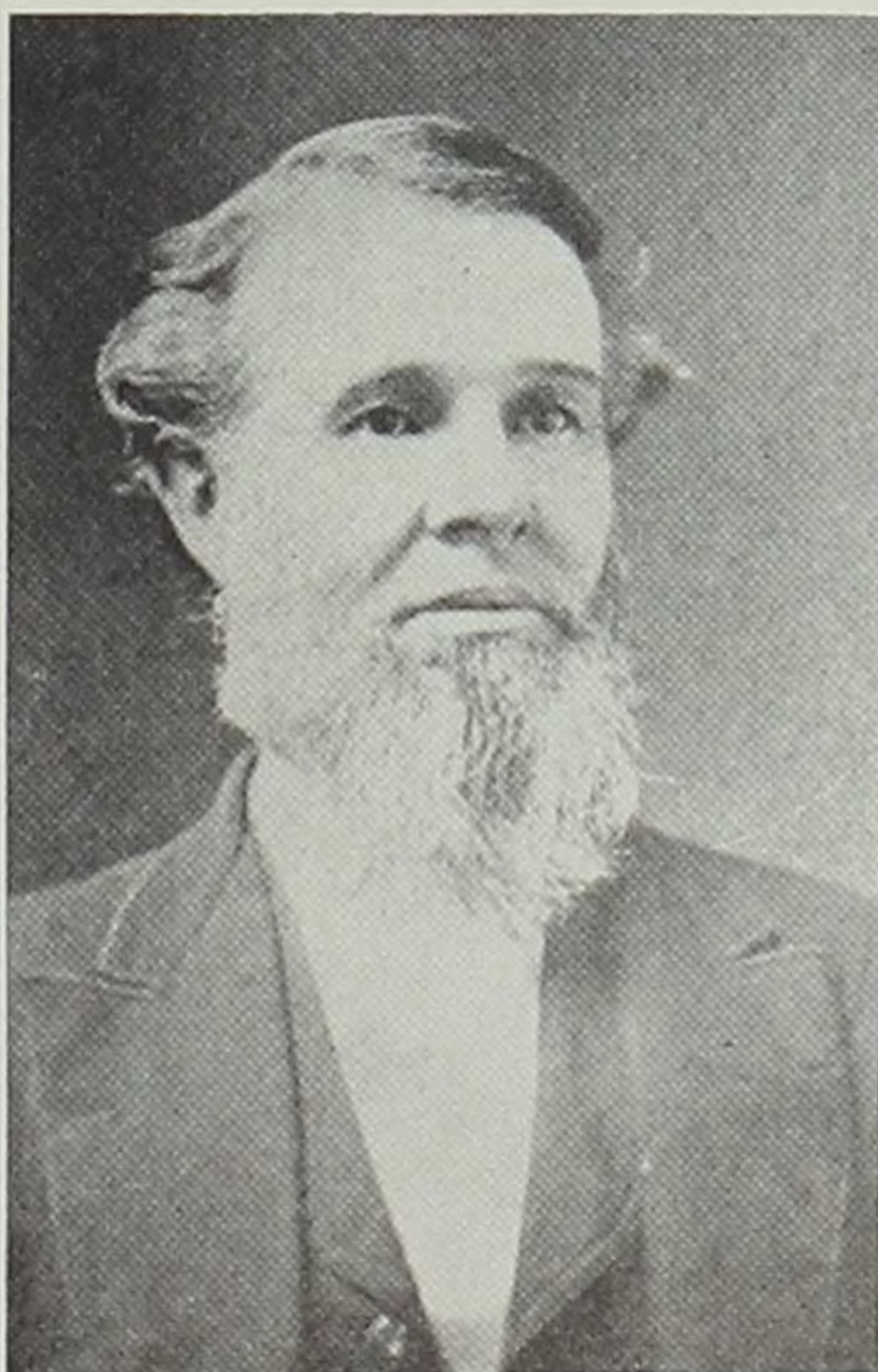
JOHN WISEMAN



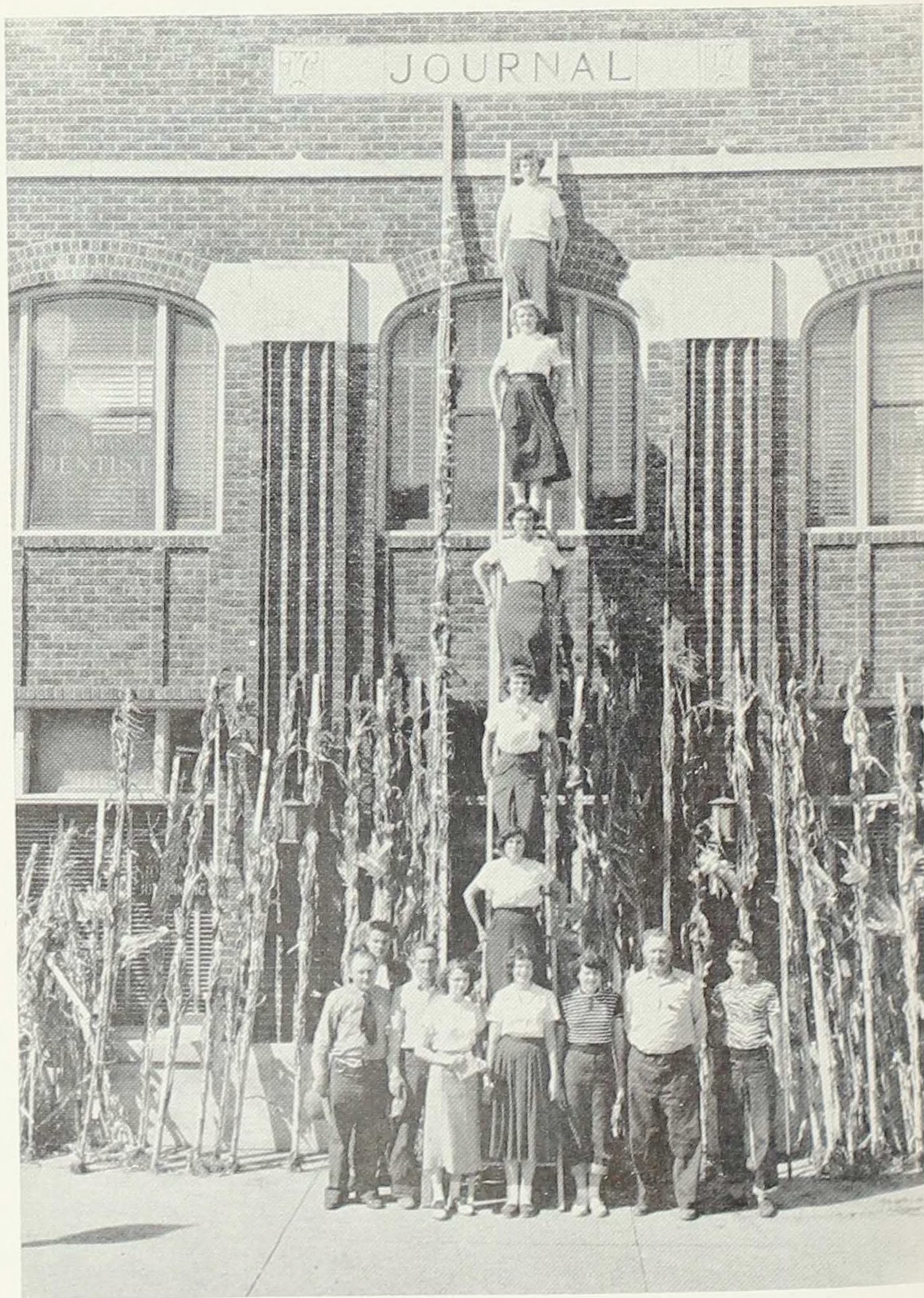
A. S. BAILEY



W. N. HOOD



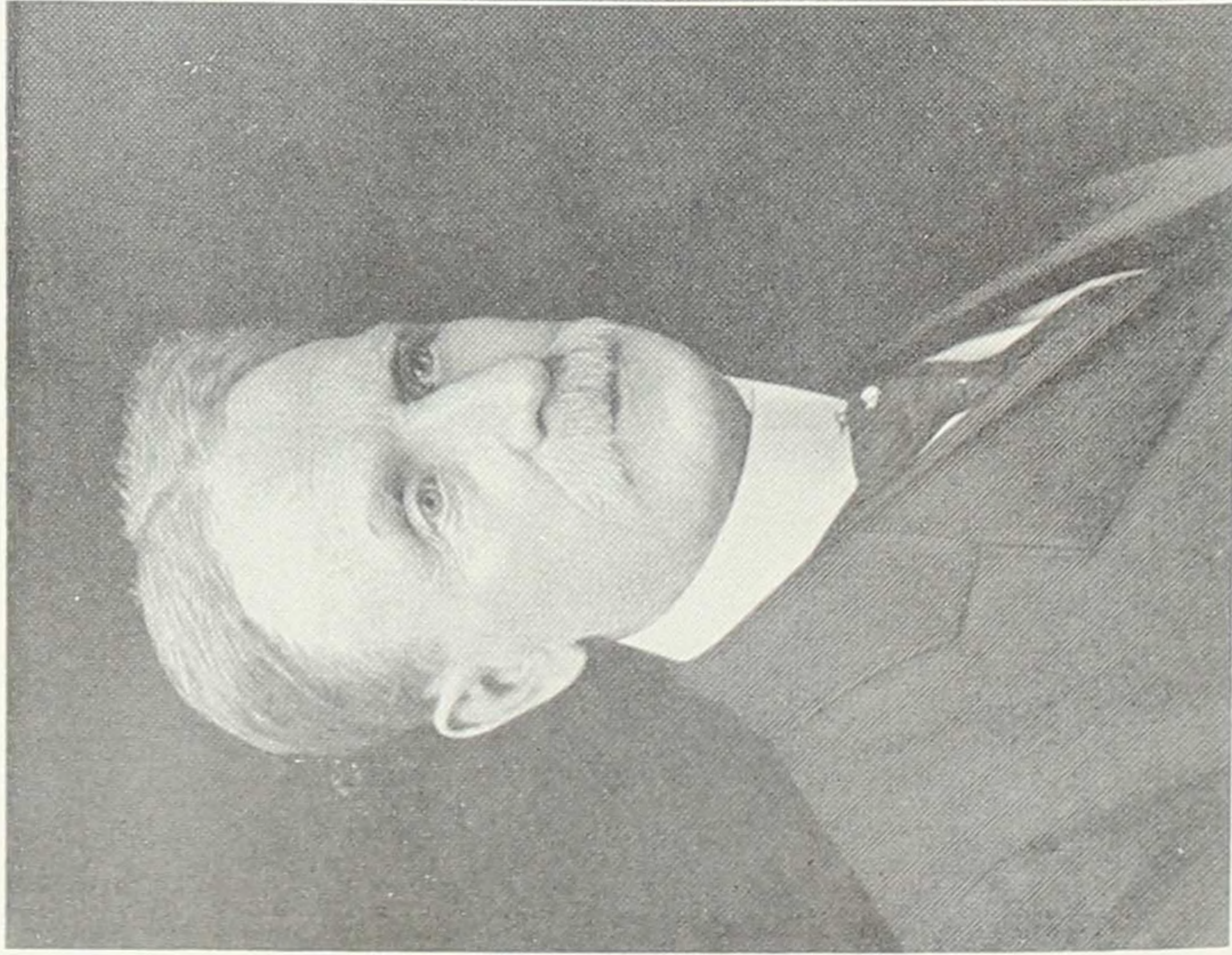
A. R. WICKERSHAM



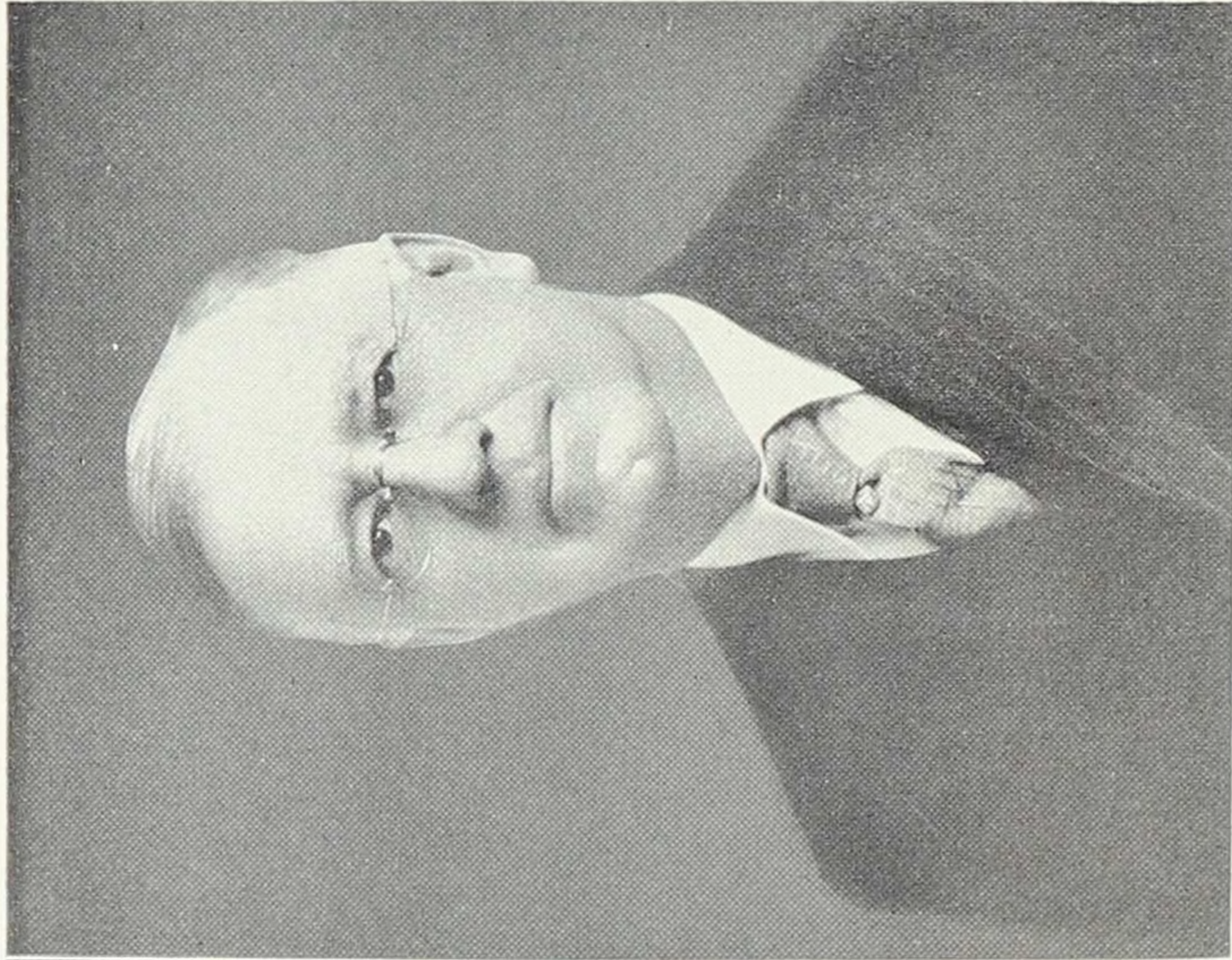
Don Radda (second from right) with Winning Entry in *Journal's*
1952 "Tall Corn" Contest



Children Viewing Washington's Colorama Fountain
Symbol of Civic Enterprise



HOWARD A. BURRELL
Editor of the *Press* from 1866 to 1903



ORVILLE ELDER
Editor of the *Journal* from 1900 to 1940

was daylight by then and too late to go back to sleep. These business meetings that run late and deal with technicalities are very tiring, aren't they?

In contrast to the above is his description of the meeting of two belligerent dogs in 1943.

Two dogs met on a street corner yesterday. One was a big black dog. The other was medium sized, with a four-inch chest expansion. They were mad at each other. You could tell by the expressions on their faces. Plainly there was mutual dislike and distrust. They walked stiff-legged and approached each other with great caution. One showed his teeth a little and growled. Each assumed a belligerent stance and looked afar off into space as though daring the other to knock the chip off his shoulder. For a full minute they stood there in a stiff, menacing attitude. It began to get tiresome. The middle-sized dog tried to relax a bit and move off about his business, but that seemed to be interpreted as cowardice. Instantly the big dog went into action and there was a furious melee that sounded like great damage was being done. But it ended quickly with the two dogs assuming the same stiff-legged stance and the belligerent attitude. Again they looked afar off beyond the horizon and breathed blasphemous threats, and we came away convinced that neither one of them wanted to fight very badly and that four-fifths of the show was bluff. People often act the same way. So do nations.

On October 5, 1951, Shannon saluted the half million newspaper boys in the United States — with special emphasis on the home town carriers. Since tens of thousands of Iowa boys have carried papers (the writer delivered the Dubuque *Telegraph-Herald* for five years) there is a universality

to this experience that is shared by parents as well as carriers.

I have been pretty closely associated with *Journal* carriers for more than 40 years. I have attended their annual parties, listened to their choice line of repartee, and watched them put away lots of food. I have seen the wide-eyed excitement of those who won prizes. I have also seen the expressions of disappointment in the faces of those who didn't. But I've always had the impression when the party was over that here is a grand group of kids.

In fact, if I had a dozen sons I would want each one to take the paper-carrier course. Again I speak from experience. I carried *Journals* many years ago when subscribers were scattered and there were no bicycles to ride. Cement sidewalks in my area hadn't been introduced. Then the two boys at our house came along and in due time each took a *Journal* route. I was much prouder than they when each eventually copped the big prize — a gold watch — because I knew by then what this business of paper carrying really means to a boy's education.

Perhaps 500 boys have carried *Journals* during this paper's existence, some serving for two or three years, which is about the limit, others for shorter terms. We've made a great blunder at the *Journal* because we didn't keep a complete record, down through the years, of those who carried. If we could produce those names now we could show you a list of splendid citizens, most of whom would testify, I'm sure, that what may have seemed a hardship during those *Journal*-carrying days, now is a source of real pride.

Come to think of it, I don't believe I have ever known a good, competent carrier who ever failed to become a good, competent citizen. Our local school men have told us many times that good carriers are usually good students, and the responsibilities which go with a *Journal* route have a way

of reflecting themselves favorably on the school report card. Here the parents have a tremendous influence. Some fathers and mothers — if I may be allowed to say so — let their natural sympathies clash head-on with the best interests of the boy. It isn't easy to see Junior sloshing out in a pouring rain or slogging into the swirling drifts of a blizzard, to deliver his papers. But of such experiences strong men are made.

You — the route customer — can also be very helpful to your carrier. A word of commendation now and then, as the opportunity presents itself, is usually loaded with encouragement. Maybe he did miss your porch the other night, but how about the 311 other evenings during the year when your paper landed — thump — just where you wanted it? Which are you most likely to mention?

In any case, you can help tremendously to make your carrier feel that he is an important cog in your daily routine — which he is — and that you have full confidence in him. That's one of the lessons he'll be remembering when he moves on up into the bigger job ahead. He'll know from his *Journal*-carrying days that there are a lot of fine people in this world.

And he will have another choice possession in his later years. No boy who contributes his own self-support through a useful job can miss it. It's the lesson of self-reliance.

Golly, how we're going to need men like that in the years just ahead.

Shannon's contributions run the whole gamut of human life from the value of the family doctor's services to the art of stemming gooseberries, building a robin's nest, or a profound discussion of the human race. Whatever he wrote, his followers read avidly. On his 65th birthday he opined:

I was 65 the other day. That makes me eligible for retirement, social security, an extra tax exemption, and all the other glories which go with serene senility.

There is another privilege, too. I now have the right, in due fatherly fashion, to talk down to youngsters of 40 and 50. From now on out advice will be my middle name, my stock and trade. Let there be none among you who would heed not the words of the prophet! . . .

Statistics say 10.4 percent of Iowa's population has reached the age of retirement. It's an exclusive group. They represent the rule of life, the law of the jungle. It is known as "the survival of the fittest."

Anyway, that's what you'll be thinking and saying when you're 65.

It is worth noting that members of the press of Iowa were not slow in heeding the words of wisdom of their latest member to enter the role of patriarch at 65.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

"Quips"

[One of the most widely read Shannon features is his "Quips" which appear daily in the *Washington Journal*. Over the years he has inserted thousands of these barbs, a few of which are included herewith. THE EDITOR.]

POLITICS

If you would hold public office, prepare for criticism.

Better learn now to speak to everybody on the street, then when you run for political office people won't notice the change.

A good rule for legislators to remember: Don't tax all the people in order to benefit a few.

Death and taxes are both certain, but death doesn't get worse every time the legislature meets.

Wouldn't things be just dandy if we could have our 1951 income, our 1930 cost of production, and our 1910 income tax rate?

We ought to be kind and patient with our political leaders because they don't know what to do either.

We Americans should thank our lucky stars that we got our Constitution and the Bill of Rights when we did. Who could push a proposition like that through Congress now?

Political parties remain in power until they accumulate too many mistakes. Then comes the landslide.

Nothing can disturb one's belief in private enterprise like a government check.

Every day we see new evidence that it's easier to win a war than build a peace.

BUSINESS

An efficiency expert is a fellow who is smart enough to tell you how to run your business and too smart to start one of his own.

Yep, we're pretty sharp financially. We know exactly how a millionaire should spend his money, and we never had a million in our life.

The man who retired ten years ago to live on his income is going back to work to make more income.

No nation has ever been taxed into prosperity. But a lot of our leaders refuse to be discouraged.

A dollar may have gone further in pre-war days but it didn't go so fast.

Lots of men who don't know a Hampshire from an Angus think they could make a big success on a farm.

CHILDREN

The symbol of America's strength: A bunch of kids trudging to school with books under their arms.

You can expect your grown-up friends to speak to you on the street. But when a small boy or girl does it, you can count it one of life's finest compliments.

Trouble is that most parents now look upon the automobile as a necessity and children as a luxury.

In former times, when little Junior was naughty, the parents warmed his little britches and sent him to bed. Now they have him psychoanalyzed.

The average boy will never know how much he vexes his parents until he grows up and has a boy who vexes him.

SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

It's a great blessing to be poor. Trouble is, people don't discover this until they become rich.

You can't standardize generosity: We are urged to give until it hurts, but some people are more easily hurt than others.

Another thing that's wrong with this country, too many are looking for positions instead of jobs.

A high school education doesn't hurt you if you are willing to learn something afterwards.

The man who has patches on the seat of his pants seldom has ulcers of the stomach.

Every American wants freedom and liberty. But too often he is thinking only of *his* freedom and *his* liberty.

The American system is all washed up, you say? All right, just where would you like to locate?

Most opportunities come dressed in work clothing.

We Americans have more time-saving devices and less time than any other people in the world.

The trouble with the average American is that he expects a profit on every business venture, and is ready to raise Ned if he has to take a loss.

If you stopped to answer everybody who criticizes you, there would be little time left for constructive activity.

It's funny that the fellow who doesn't need friends usually has lots of them.

CHURCH — RELIGION

Next to the pulpit and the choir loft, the most important thing in a modern church is the kitchen.

A man's value to his community may not always be measured by the number of people who attend his funeral, but it's a clue.

When we see a car Sunday morning with bamboo poles at the side, you may be reasonably sure the occupants are not going to church.

THE CHANGING SCENE

Look closely at the steam locomotive. Very soon now you may have to go to a museum to see one.

Civilization is a great idea. We ought to try it sometime.

You can learn a lot through your own experience, but the smart ones get it second hand.

Progress seems to be a matter of swapping our old troubles for new and bigger ones.

Our pioneer ancestors used to take the bumps in wagons that had no springs. Now we complain when we hit a little hole in the pavement.

LAW

A law that cannot be enforced is worse than no law at all.

Strange as it may seem, a thing can be legal and still not be right.

In this country the murderer is always considered innocent until he has been proved insane.

THE HUMAN SIDE

It's a good thing to have adversity occasionally. That's how you find out how many friends you have.

After all the prayers for daily bread, it is disheartening to know that the stuff is fattening.

Most of us can look over life's trail and see places where our judgment was worth considerably less than a plugged nickle.

If you want to find out how big a man is, watch how he takes a little criticism.

The young man enjoys life and liberty. But he must have an automobile in which to pursue his happiness.

What a cow is worth depends upon whether she was run over by a train or is being listed with the assessor.

WOMEN

You may be a good, industrious, law-abiding citizen. But somewhere in your neighborhood there are women who feel sorry for your wife.

Elderly ladies yearn for a school girl complexion, while

elderly men long for a school boy digestion.

In some sections of the world the ladies still cover their faces in public. But they use veils for the purpose. In this country the girls smear it on.

A local man boasts that his wife is "an open book" to him. The reason may be that he can't shut her up.

Look into the bride's wardrobe. If she has more kitchen aprons than lounging robes you can wager the marriage will be a success.

It is no accident that most of our educators are women. All married men discover this.

Better think twice, young man. It's not easy to support the government and a wife on one income.

How terrible conditions must have been before the women got the vote and purified our politics.

About the only time a wife gives her husband undivided attention is when he talks in his sleep.

PRESS

The power of the press has weakened, you say? Well, just try making a gift to an RFC official now and see how far you get.

In the newspaper business about the only way you know that people scan your product is when delivery is late or somebody makes a mistake.

Most stories, most sermons, most editorials would be much more interesting if shortened about 75 per cent.

MISCELLANEOUS

Even the fellow who has a cold can tell you exactly how to cure it.

It isn't the seasoning that makes food taste so good. It's your appetite.

So long as the seed catalog is preferred reading, faith is not dead.

Whenever we see a Jennie Wren busy-bodying around

PUBLIC SPEAKERS

If you want to accomplish something in an organized way, don't throw the matter open for debate in a general meeting.

A banquet is described as a place where somebody talks about something he doesn't know anything about to people who don't want to hear him.

If you would appraise a speech, don't watch the speaker. Watch the audience.

VACATIONS AND HOME

Vacation is what you come home from wishing you'd spent the money for new drapes in the living room.

Every home should have at least one room to store things that have no use but are too "valuable" to throw away.

If your work is fun you don't need many vacations.

"Bob"

[The loss of his son, Captain Robert Shannon, over Iceland during World War II brought forth the following tribute to "Bob" from a bereaved father. The editorial has been described as one of the most eloquent expressions of a father's love for a son to appear in the annals of American journalism. It has been compared to the classic editorial by the late William Allen White on his daughter, "Mary." It is hoped it will bring a measure of comfort and understanding to other Iowans who have suffered similar losses. THE EDITOR.]

Bob was so much a part of this community that a few personal words are perhaps justified. The avalanche of friendly expressions, the sympathy, the kindnesses — all point to the fact that his old home town was deeply and sincerely interested in him. I know that his friends and neighbors share the shock and the sorrow of his death, just as they seemed to share our pride in him.

I still think of him as a little boy. That is probably a common parental experience. We don't like to see these children grow up, and we mentally resist the processes of time which bring them to manhood and womanhood. Little memory pictures of Bob's childhood days crowd in now in panoramic fashion. The little blue middy suit he wore to school. His peculiar, springy walk. The time he disturbed the bumblebees' nest and got stung on the leg. They are

endless and precious. He had in his make-up an infinitely tender streak. I think of him as he sat on the basement steps holding in his arms a chicken which we had marked for immediate execution. He was crying copiously at the thought and his tears were trickling down upon the prospective victim. Somehow we didn't seem to care for the meat course next day.

In the home he was a constant source of entertainment. He early acquired a fine sense of humor and he often worked it to the point of exasperation. He carried that trait to school with him and his monthly report cards sometimes made us shudder. He was so full of mischief that we knew instinctively, when devilment was afoot in the neighborhood, that Bob was in it somewhere. We scolded, of course, but secretly we were amused. One thing he dreaded above everything else — the thought that somebody might decide he was a "sissy." It is reasonably certain that nobody did. There is evidence to believe, in fact, that he was the despair of his teachers, but in spite of it they all seemed to like him; and to him this was more important than good grades.

From that rather irresponsible period of his life there emerged gradually an engaging personality, a fine character, a love of people, a kindly attitude. Little children in the neighborhood said "Hi, Bob" whenever they met him on the street, thereby paying him high compliment. Old people liked him, too, and they pleased his parents tremendously by reporting over and over again how kind and considerate he was. This characteristic became a habit. He found joy and pleasure in kindness. In the home he never forgot a birth-date or an occasion which might call for a gift. Three hours before the tragic message reached us from the War Department there was a Mother's Day telegram at the house, cabled from England. He wrote constantly from his various bases in the war theaters and

we wondered how he found the time. But we knew he was simply practicing an art he had developed to a high degree — the art of being kind.

Into all his letters he breathed a deep appreciation for his friends back home, his family, his opportunities. We got from him only the pleasant, delightful things, none of the bad. If he mentioned hardships at all he made us think he was enjoying them to the fullest and he probably was.

In aviation he apparently found the niche for which he was intended. He made an enviable record, and reached the rank of Captain in what we understand to be a remarkably short time. His citations and decorations were mentioned only casually in his letters and his last decoration, an Oak Leaf Cluster, wasn't mentioned at all. When this fact was called to his attention he replied in a letter received Monday night: "I didn't mention this last award to you because I didn't feel it was important enough. I haven't done a thing in this war but go out and come home. We did have a good record all the way through my combat experience, but it was routine flying and there were no heroics. Please make this plain to my friends. I don't want anyone to have the wrong impression about this." I quote the above because it seems to be his wish. That attitude was typical of Bob.

He would not complain, I am sure, of his fate on that foggy Icelandic shore last Monday. He was where he wanted to be. He had flown nearly 100,000 miles over three continents. He had participated in the greatest adventure of all time. He had played an important part in that adventure and had enjoyed himself to the fullest while doing it. In his twenty-seven years he was given a lifetime of thrills and experiences. He had lived dangerously, excitingly and, we believe, usefully. He would not have asked for more than that.

For his family and friends there are heartaches, of course. But down through the ages mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters and friends have suffered those same heartaches. When the world goes on a mad and bloody war spree, sorrow inevitably trails in its wake. There are millions of fathers and mothers in the world today who have learned that fact, and there probably will be millions more before the so-called human race finally decides that wars are futile, unnecessary, and not worth the price we pay for them. Until that day dawns those of us who have boys in the service must expect to take our turns at grief.

If Bob's contribution has any influence at all in the direction of a permanent peace we shall take a measure of comfort from that thought.

But just now our own little insignificant world seems pretty drab.

In common with other parents we probably have been centering our thought and hopes too much upon a glorious occasion — the day "when Bob comes home."

Washington's Newspapers

According to Ralph Shannon, a good newspaper and a good town go together; and it is hard to have one and not have the other. This philosophy was formed out of Ralph Shannon's own experience in Washington, of course, but the idea has special significance there. For there were many newspapers competing for the favor of Washington subscribers long before Ralph Shannon joined the old Washington *Morning Gazette* back in 1906. Three generations were to pass before the economic law best expressed as "the survival of the fittest" permitted the town to settle down with one solidly-supported newspaper in 1931.

Newspapers in early Iowa were often ephemeral in character, meager in resources, and generally suffering from "circulatory ailments." Editors needed only a box of type, a makeshift press, and a small quantity of paper to launch their enterprise. Subscription and advertising rates were low, sometimes paid in cash but more often "in kind" — with eggs, poultry, or even a haircut. Political campaigns saw the birth of many newspapers, while the closing of the polls on election day also signaled the demise of the struggling experiment in journalism.

Similar circumstances probably existed in Washington in 1854 when Lewis F. Waldin and J. S. Rice put their money and energy into the town's first newspaper, the *Washington Argus*. Editor Rice espoused the cause of the Democratic party in this weekly at a time when the whole nation was embroiled in the Kansas-Nebraska Act quarrel. Old party loyalties dissolved under the strain of growing tensions. After two years of attempts to coax readers into paying one dollar for a subscription, Waldin and Rice sold their assets — good will and a rather short list of subscribers — to A. R. Wickersham.

Wickersham promptly dropped the old name, re-christened the newspaper, and enlisted in the cause of the new Republican party. From April, 1856, until October, 1918, the *Washington Press* reached readers despite changes in ownership, hard times, and stiff competition. A. S. Bailey joined Wickersham briefly in 1857, then retired in favor of T. H. Stanton. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Stanton left the editor's chair for the battlefield, leaving an opening which Bailey returned to fill until 1866. Howard A. Burrell, a young graduate of Oberlin College who had been serving as city editor of the Cleveland, Ohio, *Daily Leader*, moved to Washington and bought the *Press* in 1866.

Before Wickersham sold the *Press* he had been confronted with sporadic but noticeable local op-

position from the Washington *Democrat*, founded by E. B. Bolens shortly after Lincoln's triumph in the 1860 election. "Republicanism or the Union, one or the other must be abandoned by our people," Editor Bolens declared in his first issue. Bolens was a loyal Union man, although his opponents called him a "Secessionist" and "Copperhead" until his October 11, 1862, issue noted: "No paper next week." The lapse proved permanent, consigning the *Democrat* to journalism's graveyard for the time, leaving Washington with only the *Press*.

For over six years Burrell published the *Press* without local competition. Then, in December, 1868, John Wiseman started the Washington *Gazette*. Wiseman was a lawyer who liked to throw a dash of political ginger into his newspaper brew despite his claim that the *Gazette* was an independent journal. Republican Burrell later recalled that Wiseman's words "felt like a sliver in a finger." L. H. Gowdy and the Rev. Alexander Story bought the paper in 1877, but three years later D. H. Logan took over Story's interest. S. Wake Neal then became Logan's partner. The two men published the *Gazette* for over a generation; they bought out competition and eventually converted the newspaper into a daily in 1904.

Shortly after Wiseman left the *Gazette*, a local printer, Joseph Biles, revived the name and politics of the Washington *Democrat*. Captain J. J. Kel-

logg joined Biles as a partner in November, 1878; but a few months later they sold the *Democrat* to P. S. Kell and George L. McCracken. Kell and McCracken soon disposed of their newspaper by interesting Lobana Waters and William N. Hood in the enterprise. Waters and Hood purchased the *Democrat*; when Waters died in 1881 George Rodman bought his share and assisted Hood until a postmastership beckoned him. This opening permitted Alex R. Miller to become Hood's partner in 1893. One of Miller's competitors admitted the lawyer-journalist's ability to give the *Democrat* an "individual flavor like horse-radish, and makes a lively, racy, readable paper. . . ." Miller also carried on a popular lecture course, spoke at Chautauqua meetings, and still found time to take over the *Democrat's* management completely when Hood died.

Meanwhile, Howard Burrell had been laboring with his *Press* for thirty-seven years in a relatively calm atmosphere ruffled only by the infrequent apostasy of enough party faithfuls to permit the election of Grover Cleveland as President. Burrell finally sold his interest to Ralph L. Livingston in 1903 after he decided to "quit lying," as he put it, and retire "to lead an honest life." Livingston soon bought the weekly subscription list of the *Gazette*, then sold the *Press* to Charles K. Needham of the *Sigourney News*. Needham installed a new linotype machine, bought other new equip-

ment, and apparently was giving competitors stiff bucking when he sold the paper in 1911.

At about the same time that Alex Miller began his venture in journalism, Washington got its first daily newspaper. The *Daily Hustler* made its debut on February 15, 1893, on a small sheet of newsprint measuring 11 by 14 inches. The editor, Harry Keister, told his readers it was "better to start small and grow larger, than to start in an overgrown manner." William McCausland helped Keister along until 1894, when Narris "Nate" Black and William Fitzwilliams joined the editor-in-chief. They changed the name to the Washington *Evening Journal* immediately, but were unable to stay solvent; within a year's time the newspaper was in receivership. It was sold to G. Logan Payne, who hired Ida Roberts and Hugh H. McCleery as assistants, and somehow managed to publish the *Journal* even though the subscription list was alarmingly small.

The really modern era of journalism in Washington began when Orville Elder, Illinois-born and somewhat inexperienced in the ways of the newspaper world, became owner of the *Journal*. A resident of Washington County since 1884, Elder was in his early thirties when he decided to tackle the unenviable job of making the *Journal* a paying success. Hugh McCleery stated in his short history of Washington newspapers that Elder had less than 300 subscribers when he took

over, but he gradually built up the circulation to 2,000 after the advent of rural free delivery.

Elder traveled the country roads seeking subscribers, edited copy, and improved equipment in the *Journal* plant, which was located near the present city library. From the start, Elder's philosophy was that a community newspaper was a public trust. He avoided partisanship, stood aloof of petty quarrels, and never indulged in the personal journalism which was slowly fading away.

Although Washington was a town of less than 4,000 population in 1904, five newspapers made their bid for public support before the year ended. In addition to the *Journal*, *Gazette*, *Press*, and *Democrat*, the *Morning Herald* appeared briefly under the aegis of Hugh McCleery. Logan of the *Gazette* approached McCleery after financial trouble threatened several of the other newspapers. He convinced McCleery the field was overcrowded, then offered to buy the subscription list of the *Herald* if its editor would "cease and desist" from further journalistic ventures in Washington. McCleery accepted, and Logan and Neal began publishing the *Gazette* as a daily.

In 1906 Ralph Shannon, who had broken into the newspaper game as a correspondent for the Washington public schools, joined the *Morning Gazette* as a newsman. From 1904 to 1906 the *Gazette* managed to stay alive, while Elder continued to "plow back" his profits on the *Journal*

into better equipment. For a time Elder hired the *Press* to set up part of his paper on the town's only linotype machine, but in 1907 Elder ended the days of handset type on the *Journal* by purchasing his own typesetter. Meanwhile, Elder made an acceptable offer to the *Gazette's* owners which ended the fight for daily circulation. In purchasing the competitor, Elder also offered to take along part of the staff. This move brought Ralph Shannon to the *Journal* for the first time in 1906. Shannon stayed with the *Journal* until 1908, when he resigned to enter the University of Chicago.

Editor Elder and Bruce Cowden, who had been working around the *Journal* since 1902, found themselves shorthanded in 1913. One result of their success was an offer, telegraphed to Shannon (who was now living at Corpus Christi, Texas), which brought young Shannon back to his hometown as co-owner of the newspaper. For the next twenty-seven years Elder, Cowden, and Shannon published the *Journal* under a triple alliance that was broken only by the death of Elder early in 1940.

While the *Journal* was constantly expanding, Washington readers also continued to support the *Press* and *Democrat*. Charles Needham had sold the *Press* to Smith W. Brookhart, James L. Brookhart, A. J. Dawson, and Anna Dawson in 1911. The Brookharts purchased Dawson's interest later and installed H. W. Walter as managing

editor until Anna Dawson was moved to that position. The Brookharts were politicians and lawyers as well as newspapermen. Smith was elected to the United States Senate in 1922, while James served Washington and Henry counties in the Iowa Senate during the same period. Long before this happened, however, the Brookharts had sold the *Press* to Elder and Shannon on the eve of the World War I armistice in 1918. The *Democrat* had by this time passed into the hands of Frank B. Appleby, who sold his interest to Don Ross and J. Ellitt Grayson in 1924. The name was changed to the Washington *Democrat-Independent*, and it was published until the summer of 1931, when Karl Melcher ended a brief career as its editor by selling out to the *Journal*.

Before the *Journal* absorbed the last of its competitors in the depression-ridden year of 1931, the newspaper had moved into its present quarters. On October 1, 1930, the two-story buff brick Journal Building was dedicated. Max Marble joined Cowden, Elder, and Shannon as a stockholder in the firm, now known as Elder, Shannon and Company. The stock market had already tumbled, farm prices were low, cash was scarce. But somehow the firm managed to "lick the depression," as the saying went, and became a symbol of community progress and stability. The entire county was saddened by the death of Orville Elder early in 1940, and hardness of the blow

was softened only by the realization that Ralph Shannon would succeed the grand old man of Washington journalism.

Elder's editorial policy continued in the front office, while the spirit of friendliness and cooperation was maintained in the press room. Although many newspapers have been plagued with labor disputes in their press rooms, the *Journal's* experience in labor relations has been enviable. Annual bonuses based on longevity, the hands-off policy of the management concerning a union or non-union printing force, and the permanent character of employment are evidence of an unusual relationship between the "boss" and his fellow workers. Added to this are the little but meaningful extras — the passed hat in time of an emergency medical bill or devastating fire, matched by the management — or the communal box of apples furnished by every worker on his or her birthday. There is no talk of the "labor problem" around the *Journal*, because such a problem can not exist in an enterprise where there is an atmosphere of mutual respect between the employer and the employees.

Since 1940 Washington has seen another war and the community has continued its remarkable program of civic building and planning. The *Journal* has had a hand in all these activities, has promoted the famous "Tall Corn" contests, and has lived up to the goal Orville Elder staked out

in 1900. No longer can an ambitious editor start a newspaper with a box of type and a fair vocabulary. Modern journalism demands far more, but it gives more to those who succeed. The era of journalistic penury has been replaced by an age of newspaper responsibility. If every newspaper editor shared this sense of responsibility as Elder and Shannon did, there would be fewer critics of the American press today.

Orville Elder's goal — a good newspaper for a good town — was shared by his partner, Ralph Shannon. Their goal has been achieved in its fullest sense. The *Journal* is a monument to them, as it is to all the Washington men and women who struggled to keep alive there that most vital asset a small city can possess — a good newspaper.

ROBERT RUTLAND

DAILY HUSTLER.

VOL. 1.

WASHINGTON, IOWA, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1893.

No. 1.

WIN. SMOUSE,

Real Estate, Loan, Merchandise and Exchange Agent.

My list of desirable Bargains in City Houses, Lots, Farms and Acre Property is large and embraces the very best bargains to be had in all parts of the city and county. By coming to my office, I can in five minutes, direct you to the very best bargains that are to be had. Better bargains than you will find by hunting yourself for weeks. If you want to buy Town Property or a farm, come direct to my office and see if it is not true, if I do not show you better bargains than you have been able to find yourself.

Everything points to and indicates an active and prosperous year and an early activity in Real Estate and if you would make a good investment, buy early. It is impossible to describe the many desirable bargains in Houses and Farms and Lots in this space.

HIGHLAND PARK

AND

EAST SIDE.

Everyone concedes that our beautiful city is sure to have a large increase in population and become an important city and that it is sure to build north and east, thus making those two fine additions valuable property. Money invested in these additions or any good Washington property will prove to be a profitable investment, better by far than Chicago, California and other outside investments.

I have listed with me several very desirable stocks of goods, good established business, for sale cheap, or will take property in part pay. Also have some applications for money on good first mortgages on farms better than U. S. bonds, want it March 1st.

WIN. SMOUSE.

The United States.

A party of Americans assembled one Fourth of July at a dinner in Paris. During the post-prandial exercises a gentleman arose and offered the following toast: "Here's to the United States—bounded on the north by British America; bounded on the south by the gulf of Mexico; bounded on the east by the Atlantic, and bounded on the west by the Pacific ocean." The applause was loud and long. When it subsided another gentleman arose and said: "I want to go one better than that: 'Here's to the United States—bounded on the north by the north pole; bounded on the south by the south pole; bounded on the east by the continent of Europe, and bounded on the west by Asia.'" This sentiment cheered to the echo, was immediately followed by a toast uttered by a gentleman who announced himself as always having been known as a moderate man. He said: "Here's to the United States—bounded on the north by the aurora borealis; bounded on the south by the vernal equinoxes; bounded on the east by the rising sun, and bounded on the west by the day of judgment." It would, perhaps, be unnecessary to add that this toast took the palm.—Saber.

Col. Weissert, commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, wants to be re-elected. Weissert, if there is no objection.

TO OUR FRIENDS AND FOES.

In beginning the publication of the DAILY HUSTLER, we do so believing that Washington has reached that period in its history when its increasing business demands, and its wide-awake inhabitants will cheerfully support a clean, well filled daily paper. The outlook for Washington for the present year is one of the brightest in its history, and it is well known that the one just past has seen more and better business done here than any former year, notwithstanding the discouraging outset of the spring of 1892.

Washington is unquestionably the best city of its size in the state; has better citizens, more churches, better schools, better improvements and better natural resources. With the prospective improvements for 1893 completed it will rank second to no other city of double its size in the state.

As to the size of the sheet we have no apology to make, believing it is better to start small and grow larger, than to start in an overgrown manner. We know it is common to pay eight or ten dollars a year for a large daily and then not read a quarter of it. Our object is to make quality and not quantity the paramount idea. If news gatherers would write better things and less of them the world would be better and wiser.

As to politics and the running of the national government and other little matters of like nature, the HUSTLER will freely leave that in the care of the older and long established "moulders of public opinion." Washington, its welfare and prosperity are what concern us most, and to that our attention shall be given, but we shall feel free to speak our mind on other questions as well.

One feature to which we call your attention more particularly, is our Society column. In it we shall aim to give a complete report of all Washington's social events. This is a feature which we feel sure will be pleasing to our patrons.

Though we are not old experienced newspaper men, yet should any one who reads these words be suffering from an insatiable hunger for a paper that aims at elegance of diction, high-toned logic and pink cambric sentiment, at a moderate price, he will do well to call at this office and look over our goods. Samples will be sent free on application to any part of the world. Address,

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DISCOVERER OF THE STEAM ENGINE.

Solomon Caus Was Shut Up In a Madhouse Because of a Great Idea.

There lived in Normandy, where he was born in 1576, a man named Solomon Caus. He was an engineer and architect, and had held several important positions. He wrote a great many scientific works and papers, of which, however, no one took much notice during his life, and finally he seized with an idea which made his friends and relatives fear that he was mad. After pestering the king and the cardinal at Paris, he was ordered to be taken to Bicetre—the madhouse—and there shut up. This was done. They had just one way with mad people in those days. They shut them in iron cages and fed them through the bars like wild beasts. They did this to Solomon Caus.

For a long time he stood behind those bars all day and called to those who would listen, and to them repeated the story he had told the cardinal. He became the jest of the place. Some of them even gave him wrong materials, and thus added the misery of his surroundings. He wrote down his ideas and amused his jailers so much the more. However, it could not be long before such a life, such surroundings, would shatter any brain. In time Solomon Caus was as mad as every one believed him.

It was in 1624 that an English nobleman, Lord Worcester, went to Paris and visited Bicetre. As he was passing through the great court accompanied by the keeper a hideous face with matted beard and hair appeared at the grating and a voice shrieked wildly: "Stop! stop! I am not mad. I am shut up here most unjustly. I have made an invention which would enrich a country that adopted it." "What does he speak of?" the marquis asked his guide. "Oh, that is his madness," said the guide, laughing. "That is a man called Solomon Caus; he is from Normandy. He believes that by the use of the steam of boiling water he can make ships go over the ocean and carriages travel by land—in fact, do all sorts of wonderful things. He has even written a book about it, which I can show you." Lord Worcester asked for the book, glanced over it, and desired to be conducted to the cell of the writer. When he returned he had been weeping. "The poor man is certainly mad now," he said, "but when you imprisoned him he was the greatest genius of the age. He has certainly made a very great discovery."

After this Lord Worcester made many efforts to procure the liberation of the man,

who doubtless would have been restored to reason by freedom and ordinary surroundings, but in vain; the cardinal was against him, and his English friends began to fancy that he himself had lost his senses, for one wrote to another: "My lord is remarkable for never being satisfied with any explanations which are given him, but always wanting to know for himself, although he seems to place to the very center of a speaker's thoughts with his big blue eyes that never leave theirs. At a visit to Bicetre he thought he had discovered a genius in a madman who declares he would travel the world over with a kettle of boiling water. He desired to carry him away to London that he might listen to his extravagances from morning till night, and would, I think, if he maniac had not been actually raving and chained to the wall."

Thus in Bicetre died the man to whom, after his works were published, many people gave the credit of being the discoverer of steam power, and it is said that from the manuscript written in his prison Lord Worcester gathered the idea of a machine spoken of as a "water commanding engine," which he afterward invented. Historians have denied that Caus died in prison, but there exists a letter written by Marion de Lorme, who was with Lord Worcester at the time of his interview with Caus, which establishes the fact beyond doubt.—London Invention.

Animal Expression.

If animals are able to express every idea they have, why not allow them a language? To be sure, a very undeveloped language, yet relatively no farther from civilization than that of Pesherah, which in European ears, sounds like animal screams and yells. Bechstein has noted that the chaffinch expresses a joyous emotion by a single sharp "Fink," and anger by "Fink—fink—fink!" sorrow and sympathy by "Trif—trif." Houzeau has found that the common hen has at least 10 distinct sounds, well understood by the chickens. Rengger observed that the longtailed cecus of South America expressed astonishment by a sound between whistling and screeching, impatience by repeating "Hu! hu!" and that he had a peculiar scream for pain or fear.

Darwin thought he observed 10 distinct sounds in the same ape, all of which called forth corresponding states of mind in other apes. Brehm says the same. However, why quote the learned? We have all in everyday life observed something similar. Dr. Garner's experiments in the simian language are also known.—Copenhagen Family Journal.

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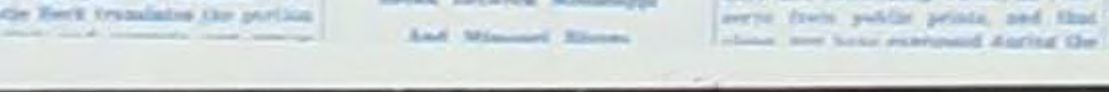
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and Wisconsin Rivers

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Bar: I come to you this morning as one of the undersigned bearers of the state of California, one of those, you know, with whom you have been sympathizing the last few days and recovering whom, as I observe, from yellow prints, and that whom you have patronized during the