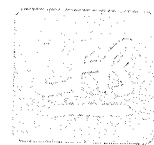


A COMMEMORATIVE HISTORY
OF
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS
1833 - 1983

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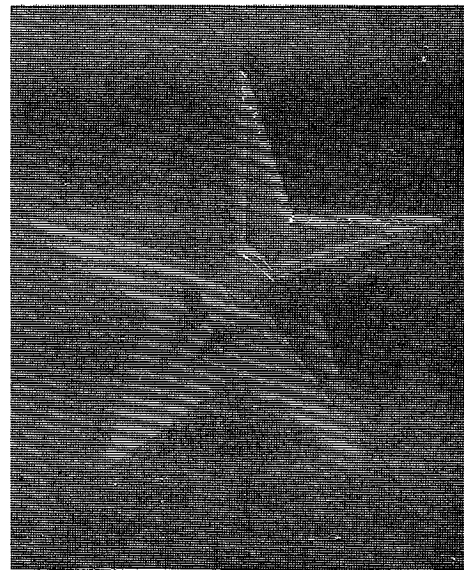
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A COMMEMORATIVE HISTORY OF CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS:

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A COMMEMORATIVE HISTORY
OF
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS: 1833 - 1983

A SESQUICENTENNIAL EDITION

Published in observance of the 150th anniversary
of Champaign County, Illinois, 1833 - 1983

Willis C. Baker

WILLIS C. BAKER
PATRICIA L. MILLER *Patricia L. Miller*

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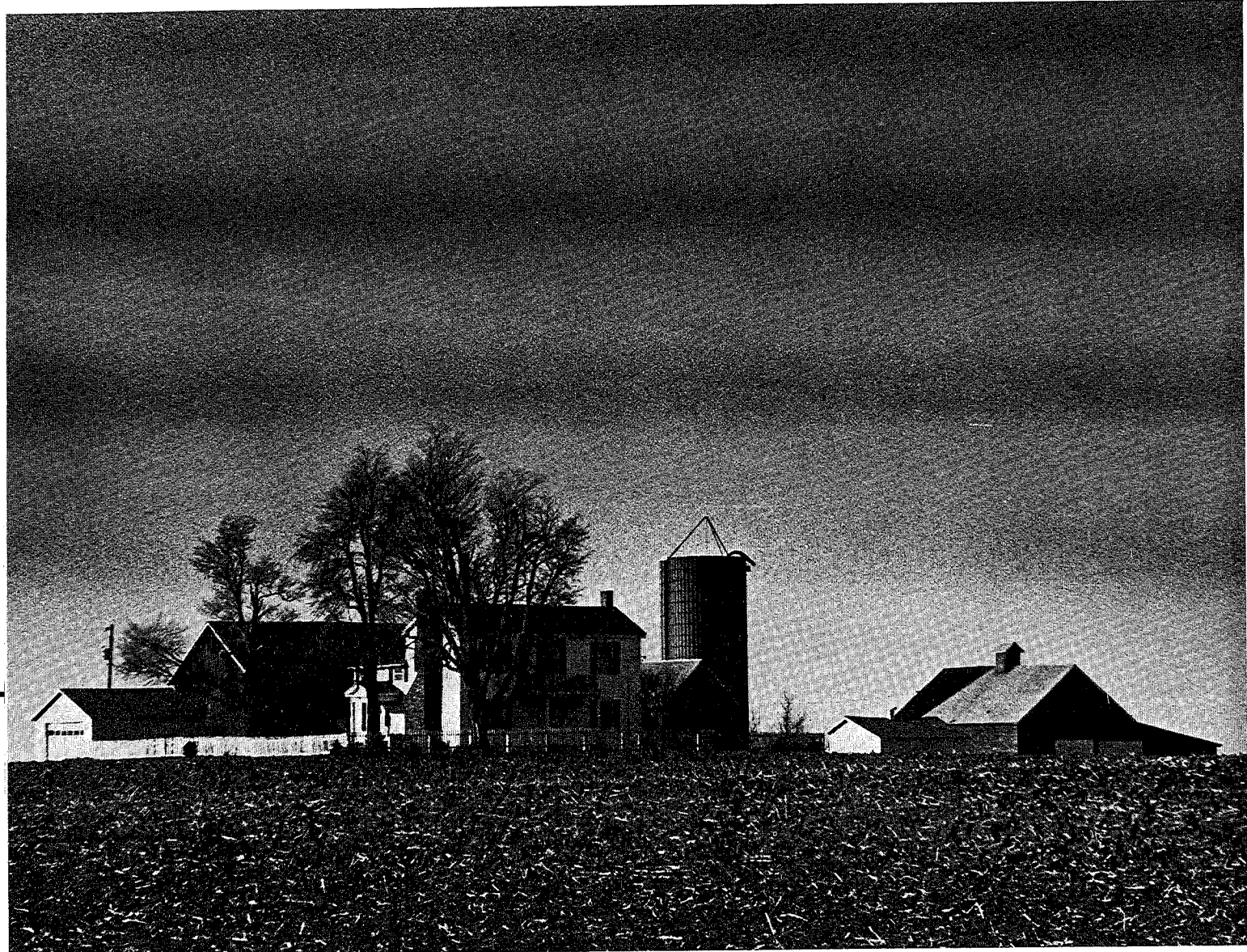
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Printed in the United States of America

This book is dedicated to those who, in the course of 150 years, have grasped the opportunities provided by the richness of our natural environment and our man-made institutions, and who in turn have shared their harvest to enrich the lives of others in Champaign County, the state of Illinois, the nation, and the world.

G/PA



*Rapp Farmhouse
Original Portion, 1837, Addition, 1850
Ridge Road, Section 33, Hensley Township*

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PREFACE

This historical account gives a chronological overview of the people, institutions, and events which have shaped the development of Champaign County over the last 150 years. This development was, of course, affected by external influences — events taking place concurrently in the burgeoning Midwest and beyond. We have emphasized interrelationships between the county and these outside forces, although the adoption of this perspective has made it necessary to carefully choose only a small portion of the information available for inclusion in this book. To outline the character of Champaign County as it emerged since 1833, we have selected representative examples from the contributions of individuals, organizations, institutions, and communities.

We have consulted not only the standard general historical accounts of Illinois and of Champaign County, but have also utilized many other sources, including community histories, church histories, local biographies, dedications, local ordinances, planning documents, newspapers, and personal interviews. We have integrated this material with the results of new research and interpretation of the historical record of Champaign County, and have made a special effort to include many photographs and documents, some of which have never before been published.

We recognize that we cannot escape the bias of our own time and ask that our readers pardon any shortcomings they may perceive. We leave it to later writers to expand, alter, or present different interpretations of the continuing history of Champaign County.

Willis C. Baker
Patricia L. Miller



*Looking East, 500 Block,
West Main Street, Urbana*

This West Main Street neighborhood in Urbana still retains elements of its ambiance at the turn-of-the-century. The large homes are typical symbols of the success enjoyed by those families involved in the exceptional growth of Champaign County during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The undertaking of this publication during the Sesquicentennial year of Champaign County would not have been possible without the contributions of many people, for which we are very grateful. Barbara Austin Baker assisted with page layouts and provided original art work and maps where needed. Carol Bolton Betts contributed many hours of editorial review and made valuable suggestions for the final text. Margie Dayton assisted in the preparation of the manuscript, and in coordinating the logistics of producing this publication. And Julie Meyer typed the final copy of the manuscript.

Appreciation is extended to staff publication assistants Autumn Bates, Irene Solinger, and Barbara Wilson for their efforts in assuring the broadest possible distribution of the book. We are also indebted to Olive Foster, who supplied a thoughtful introduction to the book, and to Robert Johannsen and H. George Friedman, who reviewed passages. Many others provided special facts, information, photographs, and services which contributed to the accuracy of the publication. They include Wendy Atkinson, O. F. Bartholow, Milton Bell, Opal Gray Chumbley, Miriam Knowlton Corrie, Mercedes Coyle, Lois Crider, Carol Davis, C. C. DeLong, Laretta Irle, August C. Meyer, Sr., Matilda Plotner, Katie Podagrosi, Annie Laurie Sanderford, Hazel Strom, Helen Tanner, Taylor Thomas, and Lorraine Trebilcock.

We also extend thanks for the technical services provided by several agencies and for the cooperation of their personnel, especially: Dennis Riggs of the Champaign County Farm Bureau; Donald O. Weckhorst, Chanute Air Force Base Historian; Ken Westerfield of the Illinois Department of Transportation; Michael Kaplan of the Newberry Library; Curt Beamer, Vonda Bidwell, and Susan Miller of the *Champaign-Urbana News-Gazette*; Renee Hough and William Maher of the University of Illinois Archives; and Joanne England, Chuck Mercer, and Margaret Oakes of the University of Illinois Photographic Services Laboratory.

To all of these people and to the many others who made this book possible, we are deeply indebted.



South side of Main Street, Champaign

INTRODUCTION

John Russell Stewart described Champaign County in a county history which he had edited in 1918 as "representative of all that is best in American life. To the state and the country at large it is chiefly known for its extraordinary agricultural capacity and for the great University which has been planted in its midst, and which has drawn to its territory thousands of able and inspiring men and women. Many have remained to become a part of its higher life, both in intellectual and moral endeavors. Those who know Champaign County more intimately, natives or old-time residents, also appreciate the solidity of its material wealth and the sturdy fiber of its sons and daughters. There is no county in the United States which has been more faithfully cultivated and the richness of whose soil has been conserved in a more intelligent and scientific manner. The grains, the fruits and the livestock of the county, the artificial drainage, and the various auxiliaries to wholesome and prosperous living, are of the same high grade as its men and women."


Sixty-five years later his words still ring true. Champaign County still serves as the center of the corn belt. And its great University still draws thousands of young men and women eager to learn about the past in order to enhance their own future and that of others.

The record of the past that you will find in the pages that follow helps once again to prove that local history — in addition to all the values of general history — has many values that are peculiarly its own. In other words, local history supplies illustrative material for every phase of American history that touches your locality. In this way the national generalization can often be illustrated with a local specific. Local history can also supply a healthy scepticism about glib generalizations because some local specifics can disprove the national generalization. Localized history makes us see and understand the process of democracy in action — the secrets of the success of the American experiment. It also fits into the normal learning pattern for assimilating facts — going from the known to the unknown. The study of local history also gives people both old and young a sense of belonging, of being a part of a common background.

These values of local history were picturesquely summed up by President Woodrow Wilson when he said, "A spot of local history is like an inn upon a highway; it is a place national history has passed through. There mankind has stopped and lodged by the way."

It is hoped that the fascinating record of Champaign County's progress over one hundred and fifty years will encourage you — the readers of this book — to preserve your local history since it is local history that brings history directly into all our lives.

Olive S. Foster, State Historian
Director, Illinois State Historical Library
Executive Director, Illinois State Historical Society



Corn Shocks
Edwin A. Plotner Farm, c. 1930

PROLOGUE

PREHISTORY TO 1832

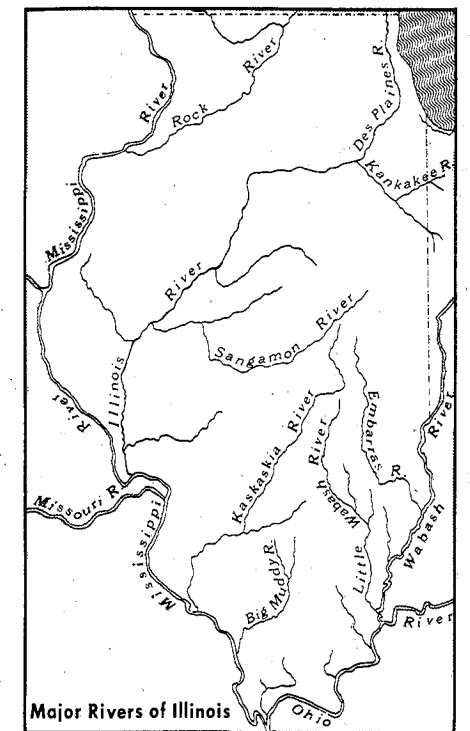
The old theory that the world is perfectly flat could well have originated with the first inhabitants of the East Central Illinois area. A seemingly endless expanse of land stretching to the horizon was typical of the Grand Prairie which covered the central part of the state and extended northward to what is now the Wisconsin border.

This prairie landscape was formed by four massive glacial movements as huge sheets of ice, many thousands of feet thick, pushed their way southward from the Arctic regions, then slowly receded. The final glacial period ended perhaps fifteen thousand years ago. As the great mass of ice melted, pulverized and water-worn composites of rock were distributed over the land. On top of this material, a rich layer of topsoil known as loess was wind-blown from glacial-age mud flats and deposited over much of what is now Illinois.

The earliest human inhabitants during the post-glacial age were the Paleo-Indians, who appeared in North America about ten thousand years ago. These stone-age hunters were an essentially nomadic people who followed the paths of great beasts such as the mastadon. The remains of many of their stone tools have been found in Illinois.

During the succeeding thousands of years, several different Indian cultures evolved and disappeared in this part of the world. The last of these, the Mississippians, developed great trade and population centers; they had contacts as far away as Pre-Columbian Mexico. The most spectacular of their centers, dating from about 1000 A.D., is Monk's Mound at present Cahokia. It is over one hundred feet tall and is the largest man-made earthwork on the North American continent. Like the earlier cultures, the civilization which supported this center disappeared about 1400 A.D. from causes still undetermined, but not before its influence had spread up the Illinois River. It is unlikely, however, that this influence reached as far as East Central Illinois due to the lack of waterways.

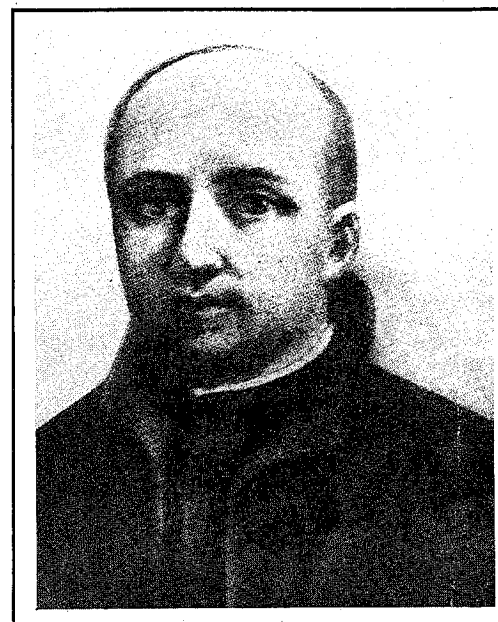
The Indians encountered by the first Europeans in this part of the country were not the direct descendents of the mound-builders, but rather were a part of the Illinois or Illiniwek, a confederation of five tribes (actually a part of the



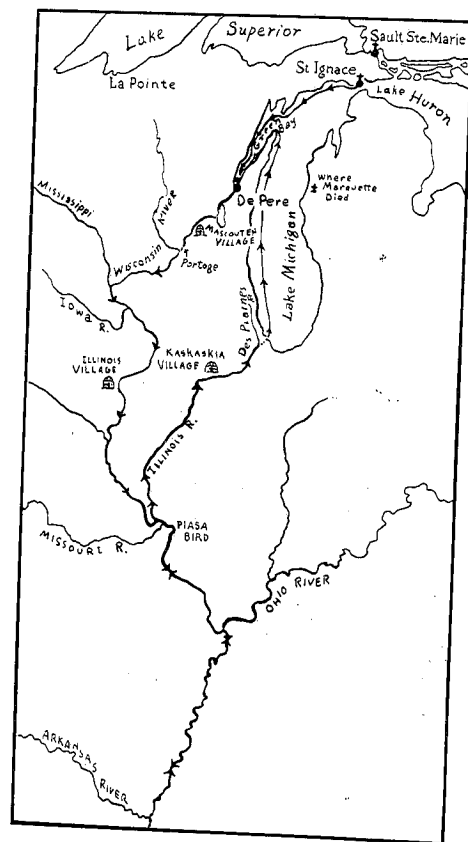
Illinois Rivers



Louis Jolliet



Father Jacques Marquette



Map of Jolliet and Marquette Route

larger Algonquin tribal group). Although the Illiniwek at one time controlled most of the Illinois country, their dominance gradually waned. During the mid-17th century, these war-like tribes engaged in repeated but losing struggles with invading Iroquois Indians and others; these conflicts gradually eliminated all but a few of the Illinois.

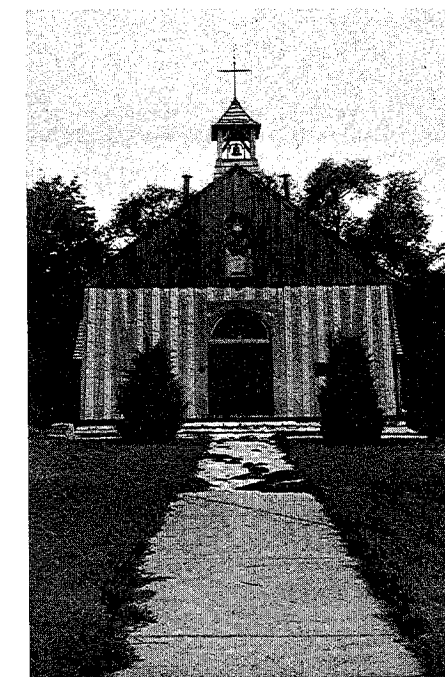
The first Europeans to explore the Illinois country were the French, who were searching for a route to the Western Ocean. In May, 1673, an expedition led by Louis Jolliet and Father Jacques Marquette departed from the region of Lake Superior where Mackinac now stands. They proceeded to the Wisconsin River, which flowed into the fabled Mississippi, the great river which had been described to the French by the Chippawa Indians at Sault Ste. Marie. Travelling south, they passed the points where the Illinois River, the Missouri River, and then the Ohio River converged with the Mississippi.

Near the mouth of the Arkansas River, they determined that the Mississippi led to the Gulf of Mexico, not to the Pacific coast, nor to the Atlantic Ocean by way of the territory of Virginia. This realization, as well as the increasing threat of danger from hostile Spaniards, led the expedition to turn northward and proceed up the Mississippi. As they approached the mouth of the Illinois River, they were told by the Indians that its current was less swift than that of the Mississippi and that this route would be shorter. Therefore, they followed the Illinois River, stopping at Crèvecoeur, near present Peoria, and

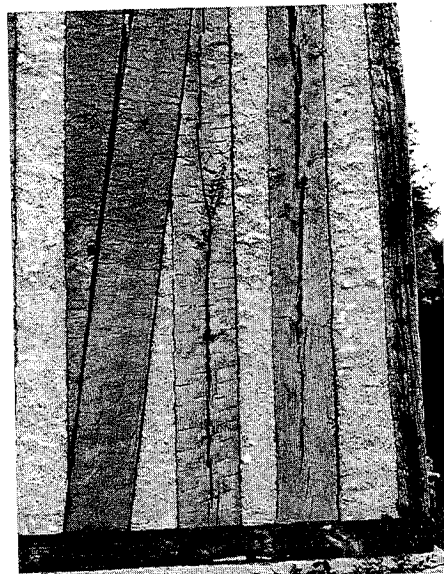
at a settlement of the Kaskaskia Indians near what is now Utica. They portaged to the Chicago River and eventually reached Lake Michigan. Finally, they arrived at the mission in Green Bay in September, 1673. Unfortunately, most of Jolliet's notes and maps were destroyed in the following year when, on his return to Canada, his canoe containing many journals and charts was capsized.

During the last quarter of the 17th century, the French made several attempts to establish themselves in the Illinois country. In 1675, a seriously ill Père Marquette camped for two winter months at the site of present-day Chicago, then continued to the Kaskaskia village near Starved Rock where he founded a mission. Robert Cavalier, Sieur de la Salle, and his Italian companion, Henri de Tonti, built forts at Crèvecoeur in 1680 and at Starved Rock in 1682-83. In 1696, a Jesuit mission was established near Marquette's Chicago campsite, but it was abandoned four years later.

The first permanent settlement in the Illinois country was founded by French Seminarian priests in 1699 at Cahokia. It was followed by the founding of nearby Kaskaskia in 1703 by the Jesuits. In addition, Fort de Chartres was established in 1720 as the seat of military and civil government; and the tiny settlement of Prairie du Rocher was founded about 1723. This nucleus of French culture flourished in the American Bottom for over fifty years as a center of trade and export based on hides, furs, and the production of flour.



Church of the Holy Family, Cahokia



French construction technique

The French method of erecting log structures differed from the horizontal stacking followed by others. Instead, the logs were placed upright and the spaces filled with clay or stone (later limestone). In some cases, the ends of the logs were placed directly in the ground, but more permanent buildings were placed on a foundation. Examples such as the Church of the Holy Family are still in existence today in the Cahokia area.

Although French customs of town planning, farming, and architectural style were distinctive, they had little lasting influence on subsequent developments, and only a few isolated traces remain today as reminders of this period of the state's history. One reason for this is that the Treaty of Paris, signed in 1763 at the end of the French and Indian War, ceded all French properties east of the Mississippi River to the British. Many of the French families who had settled in the American Bottom moved across the river, settling in Ste. Genevieve, or in the newly established town of St. Louis. There the French religious and cultural influence dominated the communities' development, and is still prominent today.

Meanwhile, the British encountered many difficulties in developing trade and had to contend with hostile Indians in the Illinois country, factors which inhibited emigration. Also, they were slow to take possession of newly acquired properties, such as Fort de Chartres. They finally took command there in 1765 and Fort de Chartres became the seat of British military government for the Illinois territory. However, following a disastrous flood in 1772 the Fort was virtually abandoned as a military post. Increasing difficulties with the seaboard colonies required the British to turn their attention toward the east coast, and by the time of the outbreak of the Revolutionary War in 1775, only a weak British force remained in Illinois.

During the Revolutionary Period, the seat of colonial government was Williamsburg, Virginia. In 1777, George Rogers Clark, a native of Virginia who had moved to Kentucky, appealed to the Virginia Governor, Patrick Henry, for aid to the Kentucky settlers, who were being subjected to continual Indian raids. Clark believed that the British forces in Detroit, Vincennes and Kaskaskia were encouraging these attacks.

Under secret orders from Patrick Henry, George Rogers Clark was authorized to organize a military force for the purpose of taking the British post at Kaskaskia. This was accomplished in short order by Clark, who took the fort on July 4, 1778, without firing a shot. Since a Treaty of Alliance had recently been signed between France and the colonies, Clark easily obtained an oath of allegiance to Virginia from the French citizens of Kaskaskia. Under British direction, they had made up the garrison at the Fort. Clark then enlisted their support in securing the entire area for the Revolutionary forces.

As a result of Clark's military expedition, the Illinois country was designated as a part of Illinois County by the legislature of Virginia in 1778. This vast territory included portions of present Illinois, and its indefinite boundaries extended east to the Ohio River and northward to Detroit. But Clark's mission was not yet completed. British maneuvers aimed at strengthening their forces at Vincennes demanded quick action by Clark and his men. In a surprise move, they marched overland in the dead of winter and succeeded in securing Fort Sackville at Vincennes in February, 1779.

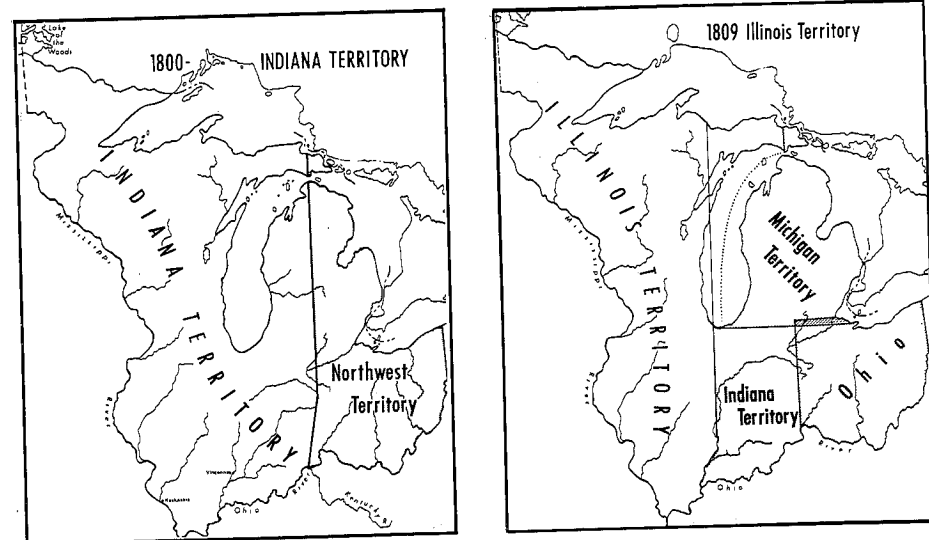
Clark's victories were instrumental in preventing the establishment of a British military stronghold in the Illinois country during the Revolutionary War. These campaigns opened the area to increased settlement by English-speaking people who had begun to live there even before the Revolutionary War was over.

*George Rogers Clark Expedition,
Painting by George I. Parrish, Jr.*



George I. Parrish, Jr.

Indiana Territory, 1800
Illinois Territory, 1809



A period of confusion and civil strife followed during the next several years, and the government in Virginia soon realized it could not administer Illinois County efficiently. At the end of the Revolutionary War, Virginia ceded Illinois County to the newly formed government of the United States. In 1787, the County was designated by the federal government as a part of the Northwest Territory, and a new system of governmental order was established. Thus began a succession of boundary changes which led to the formation of the state of Illinois in 1818.

The Northwest Territory was divided in 1800, and the Western portion, designated as the Indiana Territory, included the Illinois country. By an act of Congress, Illinois was declared a Territory in 1809 and was separated from the Indiana Territory; Kaskaskia was established as the seat of government. The granting of government lands to veterans of the War of 1812 resulted in an increase in emigration to the Illinois Territory from the Eastern states.

As the area became more settled, especially in the American Bottom, there was a growing demand for Illinois to become a state, and a proposal for this was made. One of the requirements for statehood was a population of 40,000. To meet this requirement, Nathaniel Pope, the delegate from the Illinois Territory to the U. S. Congress, amended the original proposal by extending the northern boundary of the territory to include part of the Lake Michigan shoreline. This not only increased the population, but also gave Illinois access to the Great Lakes and, ultimately, resulted in the inclusion of Chicago in the state of Illinois rather than in Wisconsin.

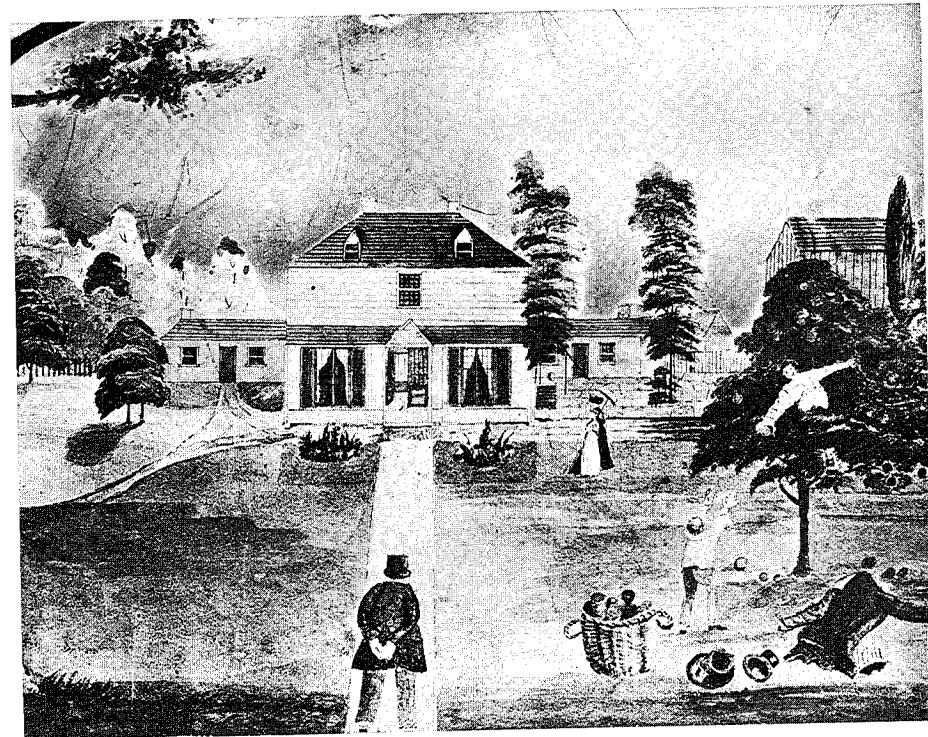


Nathaniel Pope

Pope proposed a separate amendment which provided for a portion of the proceeds from the sale of public lands to be reserved for educational purposes, a unique and far-sighted move which helped shape the character of the future state.

A second important requirement for statehood was the adoption of a constitution. A major issue was whether Illinois would be a slave state or a free state. This was resolved by a compromise that allowed slave holders already residing in the state to retain their slaves, while barring any further introduction of slaves. This compromise protected the interests of Illinoisans sympathetic to slavery, such as the French, while at the same time making it more likely that the petition for statehood would be accepted by Congress, where antislavery sentiment was strong.

The legislation admitting Illinois as the 21st state was adopted by Congress on December 3, 1818, and signed by President James Monroe.



Rear View of Park House, Albion
Watercolor by George Flower, ca. 1820-30

The achievement of statehood was a stimulus to increased immigration and settlement, due in large part to the determination that Illinois was to be a free state. But immigration did not originate solely in the Eastern States. Disastrous economic conditions and political repression in Great Britain at this period prompted some men of means to look to America for their future.

An Englishman, Morris Birkbeck, and his companion, George Flower, a Scotsman, two outspoken opponents of slavery, established settlements in the Boltenhouse prairie in Edwards County. This area of Southeastern Illinois came to be known as the English Prairie. Ultimately, it was the migration of English-speaking people northward which was the dominant cultural influence in the early settlement of East Central Illinois.

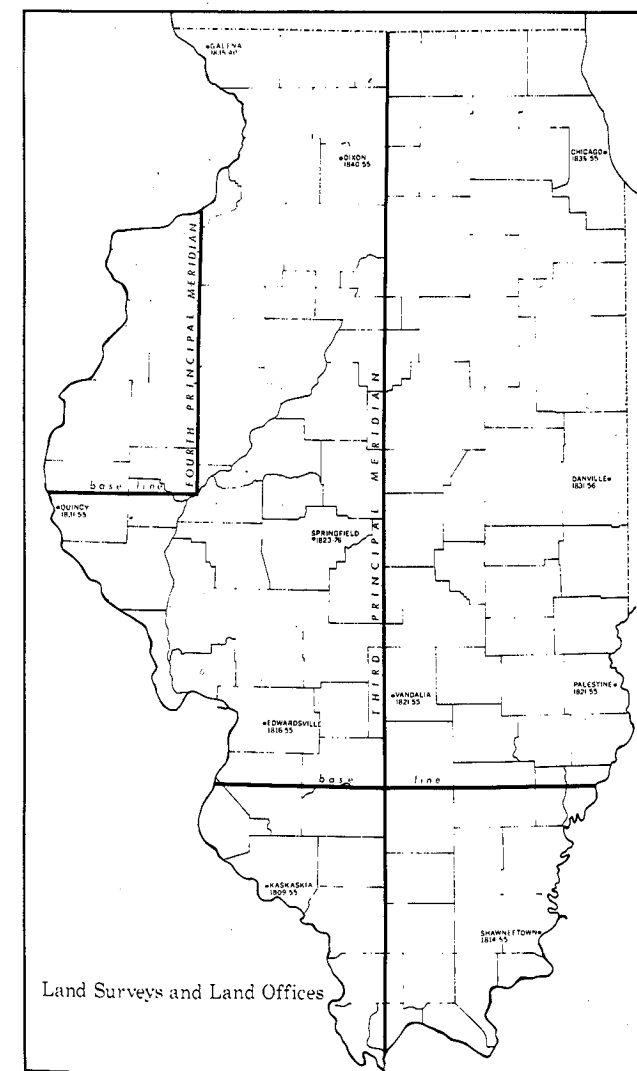
Although the vast natural resources concealed beneath the prairie grasses in Illinois were not recognized by most early travelers and settlers, Birkbeck and Flower encouraged others, by their extensive writings and practical example of scientific farming, to break and farm the prairie. But outside of the English Prairie, the movement was slow to catch on.

Many Southern-born settlers clung to the belief that soil which could not support trees could not be productive for crops and livestock. According to William V. Pooley, in his book,

The Settlement of Illinois from 1830 to 1850, "Settlements in 1830 were entirely within the timbered tracts; by 1840 the frontier had moved farther to the north, but still the settlers clung to the timber. Not until after 1850 was the settlement of the open prairies really accomplished."

Of more importance than Birkbeck's and Flower's advocacy for farming the prairie were other factors which prompted the northward spread of settlement. These included the move of the state capital in 1820 from Kaskaskia to Vandalia. At that time, land offices were established at Vandalia and Palestine. By 1823, it was necessary to open a land office in Springfield to handle the influx of settlers in the Sangamon area.

A further impetus for emmigration from the Eastern states was provided in 1824 when Illinois voters rejected a proposal to legalize slavery.



Map, Land Offices in Illinois

The western migration was marked by the progression of people who homesteaded for varying periods of time. This pattern was true in East Central Illinois, as it was in other places. However, there were some who became permanent residents and whose descendants still reside in Champaign County today.

Matthew Eldridge Busey, the first of the Buseys to come to this area, settled with his wife, Sarah, and eight children on the south side of Big Grove in 1829. In that year, there were five families living in the Big Grove vicinity, with a few others scattered in nearby timbered areas.

Sarah Fibel Busey

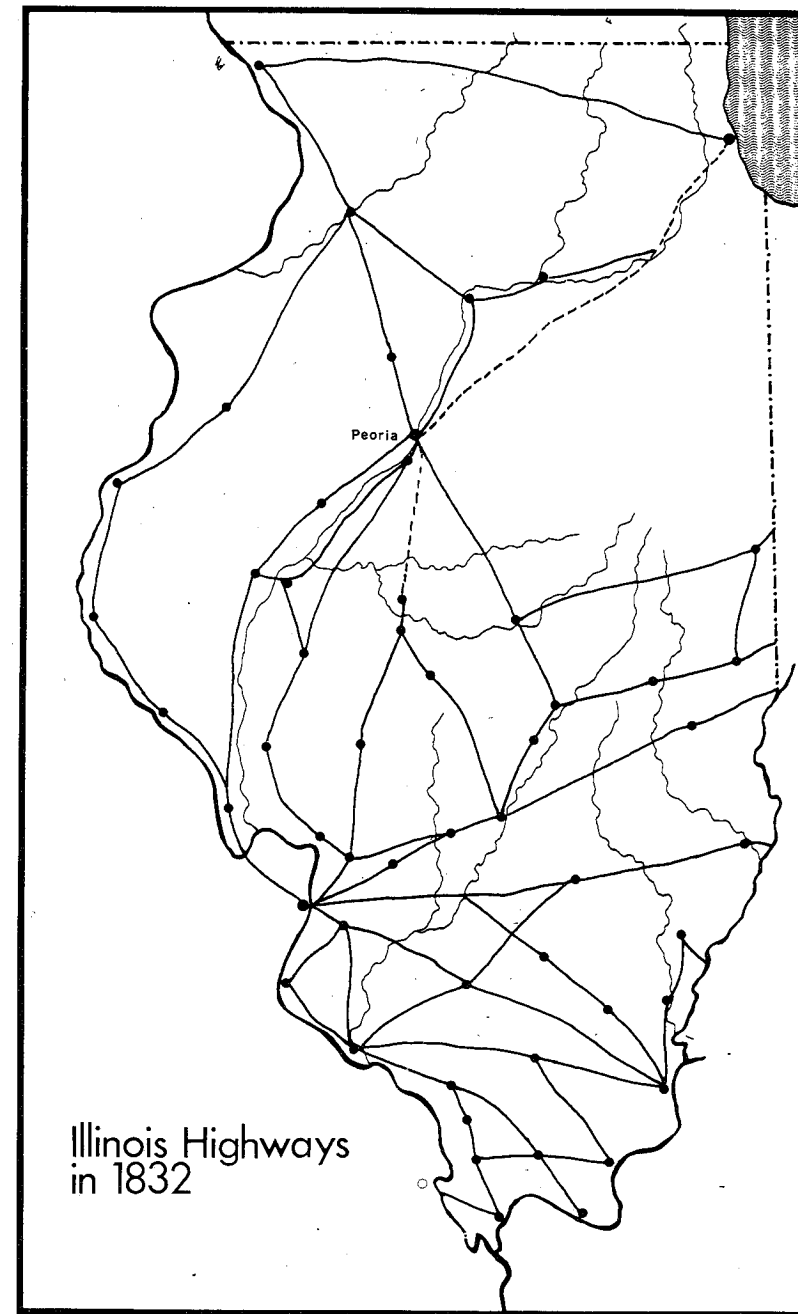


Sarah Fibel Busey survived pioneer hardships, bore eleven children and lived to be ninety-six years old, dying in Champaign County in 1887.

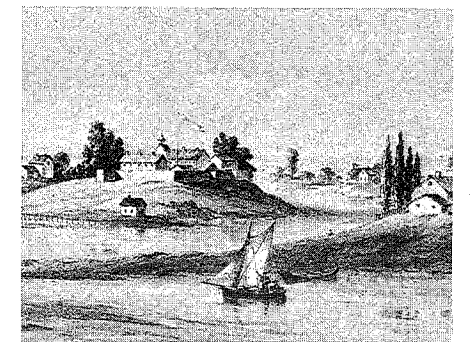
During this period, government surveyors were the first white men to view the prairie in what was to become Champaign County. Their records, dating from as early as 1821, indicated in minute detail the location of every timber grove, hazel brush, stream and pond of any size. These were the features sought by the early settlers.

After the surveyors, came the "squatters," some remaining but a short time, others staying in the area long enough to be considered permanent residents. The first of these was Runnel Fielder, who, in 1822, built his cabin in Big Grove, about four miles northeast of present downtown Urbana. Six years later, Fielder became the first person in the Big Grove neighborhood to enter a tract of land. This eighty acre parcel was located to the east of his original home place. Fielder remained in the area approximately nine years, then moved to Tazewell County.

The first person to settle in the future county seat, what is now downtown Urbana, was William Tompkins. On February 5, 1830, he entered the eighty acre tract where he lived. Nine months later, he entered another eighty acres which adjoined to the south. It is likely that the Tompkins family "squatted" on the land for a number of years before filing their claim. It was common practice to select a site, build a cabin and make improvements to the land, then, after a period of time, to travel to the district U. S. Government land office to register a claim and pay the required fee. At this time, government-owned land in Illinois sold at \$1.25 an acre, and the minimum one could purchase was eighty acres.



Soon other settlers established homesteads. While the majority favored Big Grove, there were also isolated settlers in most of the other timber groves. It was necessary for these earliest settlers in the area to travel to the district land offices in either Vandalia or in Palestine to register a claim for land; but increased settlement in East Central Illinois prompted the establishment of a land office at the Vermilion county seat in Danville in 1831. As the population in Big Grove and the surrounding timber areas approached 800, a seat of local government became a major goal for the residents. In 1832, plans to introduce legislation forming a new county were initiated.



Chicago, 1831

At this time, Chicago was little more than a trading post. When incorporated as a town in 1833, it had a population of about three hundred and fifty.

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY: THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS

1833 to 1883

During the first fifteen years after Illinois became a state in 1818, forty-five new counties were created through the grassroots efforts of proponents of local government. The pioneer spirit was marked by self-reliance, independence, and the desire to control one's destiny; these characteristics were reflected in the establishment of county governmental seats. The settlers' enlightened self-interest led them to recognize opportunities to advance their own ambitions in concert with community benefits.

On February 20, 1833, Champaign County was established by an act of the Illinois State Legislature, bringing the total number of counties at that time to sixty. State Senator John Vance of Vermilion County guided the passage of the act and specified that the new county was to be Champaign and that the county seat was to be called Urbana. In so doing, Senator Vance paid tribute to his birthplace at Urbana in Champaign County, Ohio.

Illinois's Champaign County was created by detaching the western portion of existing Vermilion County. At the time of statehood in 1818, most of the fifteen counties which had already been established were small in size and were in the lower third of the state. However, the counties of Madison, Bond, and Crawford each encompassed huge tracts of land which covered the northern two-thirds of the state in vertical strips. As settlement spread northward and the population increased, portions of these large counties were successively detached and new counties were created from them. From Crawford County came Clark County in 1819. Edgar County was created from Clark in 1823, Vermilion County from Edgar in 1826, and Champaign County from Vermilion in 1833.

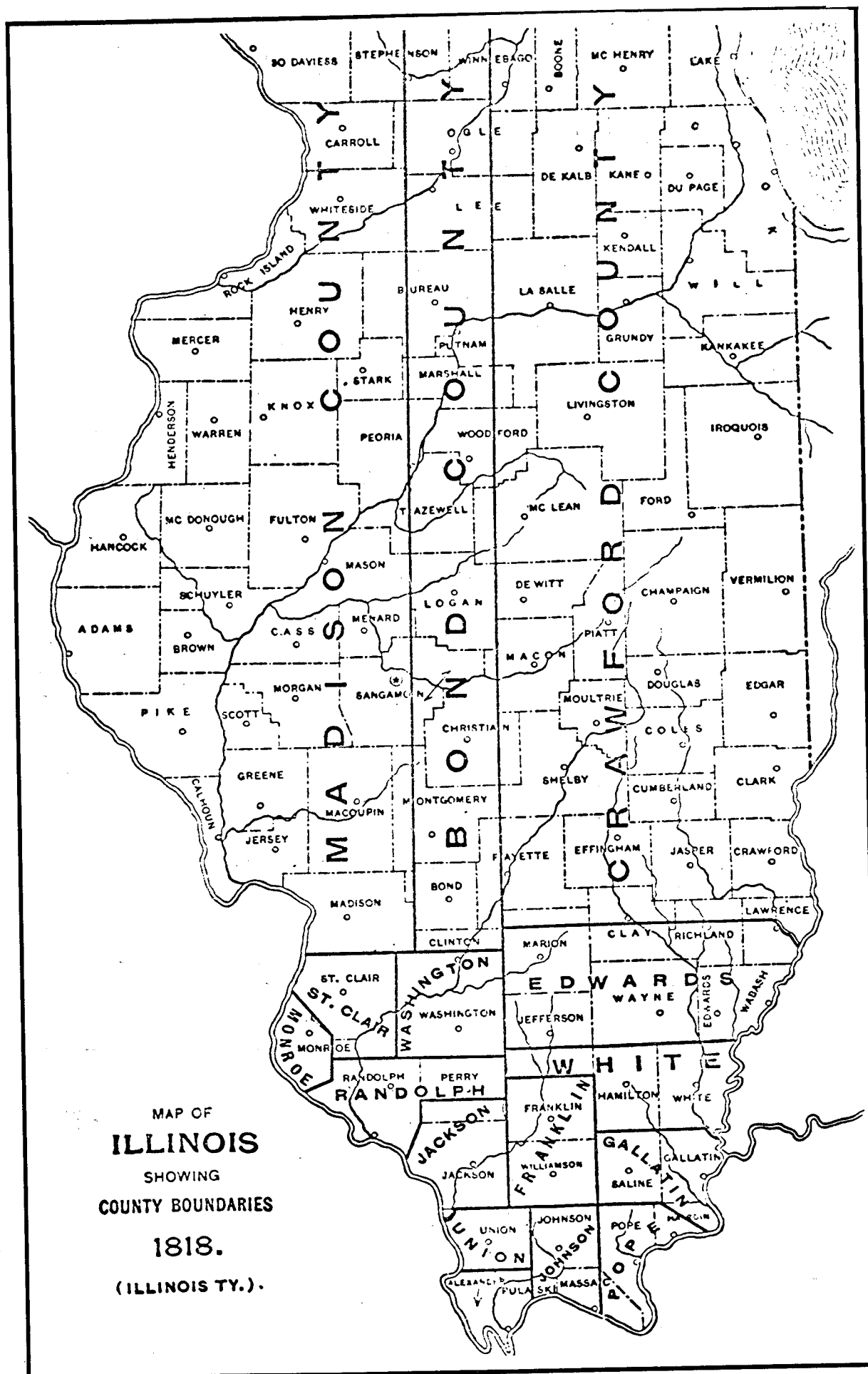
The legislative act creating Champaign County required an election to be held in April of 1833 to select a sheriff, a coroner, and three County Commissioners. At this election, John Salisbury became sheriff, and Isaac Busey, Jacob Bartley, and George Akers were chosen the first County Commissioners. Records do not indicate that a coroner was selected at this time. On May 6, the Commissioners met and appointed Thomson Rhodes Webber, Clerk of the Board.

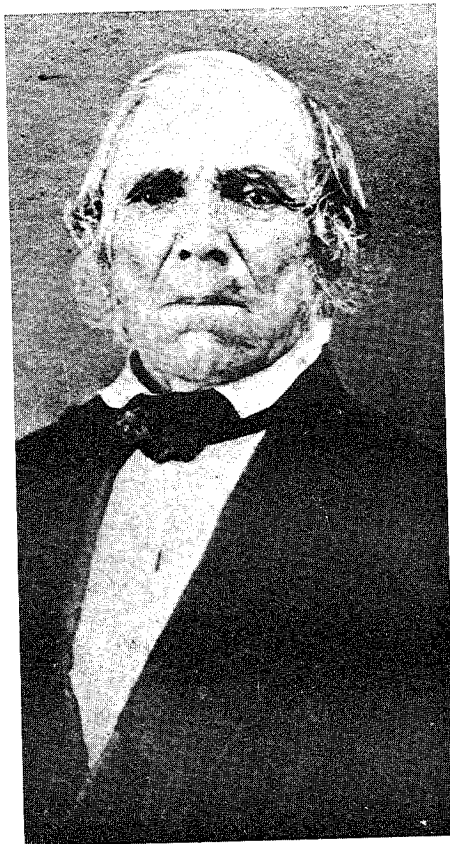
Senator Vance was well-known and highly regarded throughout East Central Illinois. He leased and operated the state-owned "Salt Works" located about four miles west of Danville and owned land in the portion of Vermilion County which was detached to create Champaign County. Before taking his seat in the state Senate and sponsoring the bill to establish Champaign County, he divested himself of his land there.



Thomson Rhodes Webber

Opposite page:
Map of Illinois Counties in 1818





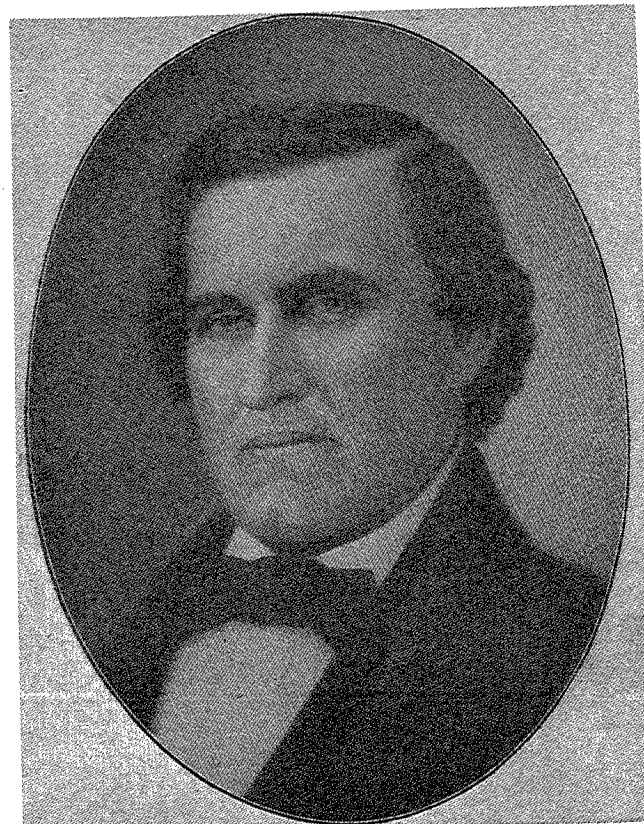
Mathias Rinehart

The act establishing the county also appointed three Locating Commissioners, one from Clark County, one from Edgar County, and one from Coles County, who were directed to select the best location for the county seat.

Although sites on the Sangamon River and on the Salt Fork were possible choices, Big Grove was the logical place for the county seat, since it was the geographical center of the county and had the largest and oldest settlement. The north side of the Grove was the site of the only governmental office in the county (the Van Buren Post Office), and the area was also close to the Fort Clark Road, the only public road through the county. The residents of the north side of Big Grove, including Phillip Stanford, John Brownfield, Mathias Rinehart (the postmaster), John Light, Thomas Rowland, John Whitaker, and others, encouraged the Commissioners to select this location.

The south side of the Grove, although less populated and offering none of the advantages of the north side, was strongly championed by its residents, who included Jacob Smith, Isaac Busey and his brother, Matthew E., and Thomson R. Webber. The selection of this site was also encouraged by Col. Matthew W. Busey (nephew of the Busey brothers), who owned much land there, but who at this time resided in Indiana, and by

Col. Matthew Wales Busey

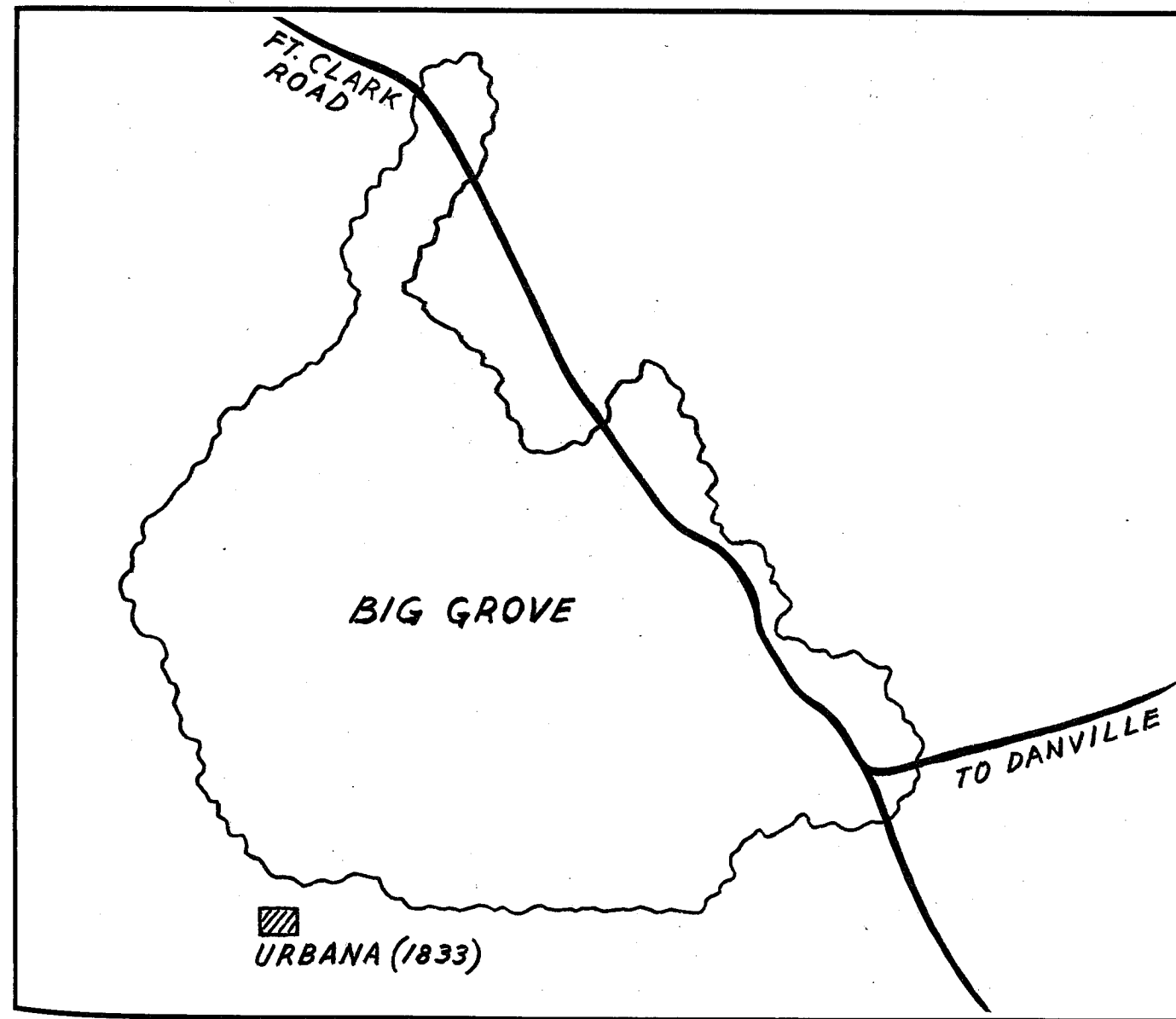


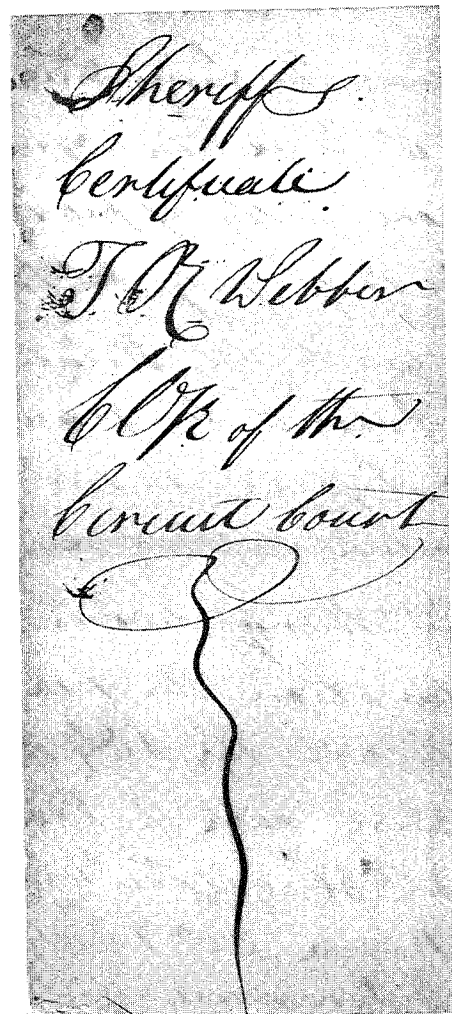
Evidently, only two of the three Locating Commissioners appointed by Governor John Reynolds participated in locating Urbana as the county seat. John F. Richardson (Clark County) and S. B. Shelledy (Edgar County) were paid sixteen dollars each for eight days employment. There is no record to show that the third commissioner, James P. Jones (Coles County), served.

William T. Webber (father of Thomson) another owner of considerable land on the south side of Big Grove, who lived in Kentucky.

Accounts indicate that the Locating Commissioners, having met at the home of Phillip Stanford, left there giving assurances that the north side site met all requirements for the county seat. However, at the invitation of Isaac Busey, the Commissioners accepted his hospitality overnight. The next morning, a stake identifying the site of the county seat was placed on the south side of Big Grove, near Isaac Busey's house. On June 21, the Locating Commissioners met and filed a report officially fixing the location of Urbana.

Map of Big Grove





1840 Document signed by Thomson R. Webber

Until 1848, official court records and documents were entrusted to the personal care of T. R. Webber; they were kept at his home or in the store of Isaac Alexander, which Mr. Webber operated.

The County Commissioners proceeded to create a stable and orderly system of government. One of their first actions was to set forth a taxing system to operate the new county. They determined the items to be taxed and made assessments on one hundred and eleven taxpayers then residing within the county. A total of \$61.61 was paid, based on ownership of horses, cows, clocks, watches and pleasure carriages.

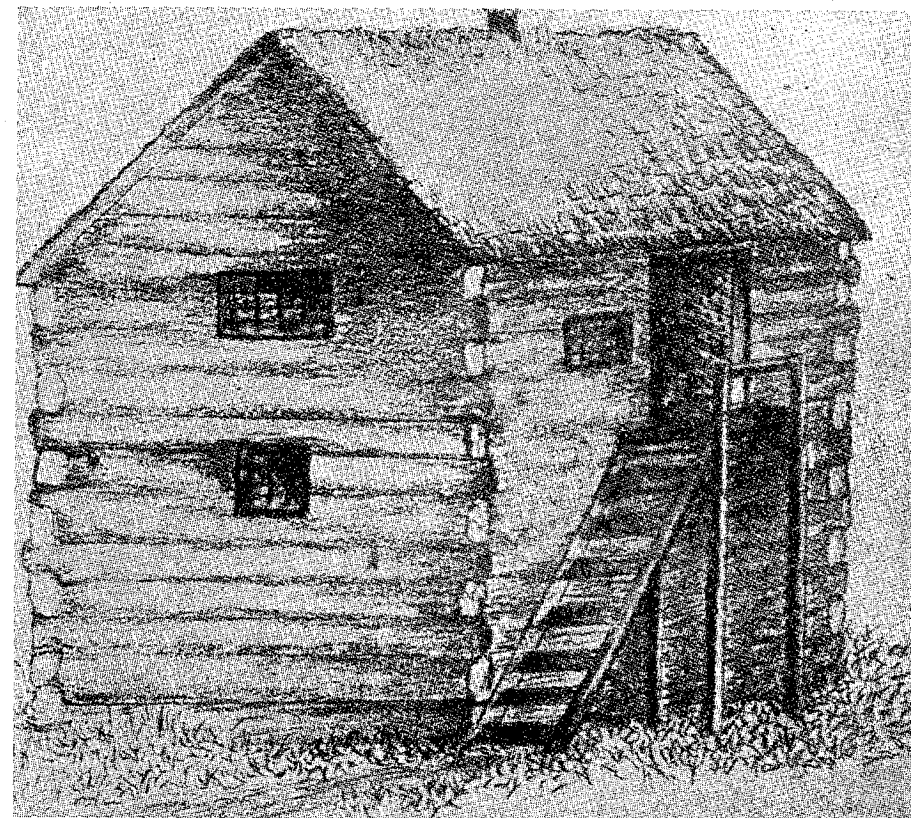
Tax records would seem to indicate that Isaac Busey was the wealthiest citizen at the time, having paid \$2.30 on a valuation of \$460. Mijamin Byers was runner-up with a valuation of \$410. The low end of the taxpayer scale was shared by John W. Leird and Abraham Peters. Each owned a single cow, valued at \$8.00 for which each was assessed \$.04. Two women were among the first taxpayers; Nancy Cook paid \$.20 and Sarah Coe, \$.28. The total property valuation in the county was \$12,322.

The first business license was granted on November 7, 1833; Isaac H. Alexander paid a \$5.00 fee, was granted a license to sell "goods, wares, and merchandise," and thus became Urbana's first retailer.

The following year, on March 3rd, the county was divided into road districts, and road supervisors were appointed. At the same time, the first grand and petit jurors were appointed. Since there were only twenty recorded grand jury indictments during the next ten years, it would appear that the grand jury had little business to transact. Undoubtedly there was reluctance to prosecute certain cases due to the small population and the close relationships between the residents. For example, the first criminal indictment was brought against John H. Busey on a charge of disturbing the peace; but the jury, whose foreman was Matthew W. Busey, quashed the indictment.

The erection of the first county courthouse was ordered in 1836; this temporary building, however, was never satisfactorily completed and most court sessions continued to be held in private homes for several years, then in another temporary frame structure. Not until 1848 did the county have a permanent brick building in which to conduct business and to store official documents.

This building was described by noted local historian J. O. Cunningham as being built of brick and wood, thirty by forty feet, and two stories high, with a bell tower. It was built by E. O. Smith of Decatur for \$2,744. This courthouse was



adequate to meet the needs of the county for only ten years, after which it was replaced by an impressive structure of brick, iron, and stone which cost \$30,000.

The county's first jail, an eighteen foot square log structure, was erected in 1838/39. Col. Matthew Wales Busey constructed the building for \$870. It was a crude, unheated structure; an outside stair led to the upper floor and prisoners were deposited on the lower level via a ladder placed through a trap door in the floor. Fortunately, it was not considered necessary to imprison those charged with minor offenses. Few criminals were incarcerated and some of them were able to escape by using augers and saws. The jail was replaced in 1857 by a structure of brick and iron.

For Champaign County residents, the next decades were ones of survival. Indians, however, were not a major factor in this struggle, and the few small bands who roamed across the prairie and occasionally camped here were friendly and often helpful to the early settlers. During the Black Hawk War of 1832, Indians had caused the settlers some apprehension, but did not pose any real threat to the residents. By the end of 1832, most of the Indians had moved farther west and were no longer a common sight in the area.

One of the Indians, known as "Old Soldier," claimed to have been born behind the site of William Tompkins's cabin near the Boneyard Creek; he was approximately seventy-five years old when forced to depart with the other Indians. Later historical accounts sometimes referred to him as "Chief Shemauger."



"He took the Ague badly,
And it shook him, shook him sorely;
Shook his boots off, and his toe-nails;
Shook his teeth out, and his hair off;
Shook his coat into tatters,
And his shirt all into ribbons;
Shirtless, coatless, hairless, toothless,
Minus boots and minus toe-nails,
Still it shook him, shook him till it
Made him yellow, gaunt and bony;
Shook him till he reached his death-bed;
Shook him till it shuffled for him
Off his mortal coil, and then, it
Having made him cold as could be,
Shook the earth still down upon him,
And he lies beneath his grave-stone,
Ever shaking, shaking, shaking."

This poem about ague was quoted in J. O. Cunningham's history of Champaign County as a vivid description of the suffering which the disease caused. The author is unknown.

The lives of many of the area's early settlers were claimed by illness and disease. The first recorded death was Isham Cook in 1830. Sarah Busey, the wife of Isaac Busey, died in 1834. Other early settlers who succumbed to the rigors of pioneer life included Isaac Busey, his son John and grandson Isaac, William T. Webber, father of Thomson and W. H., James Brownfield, Isaiah Corray, William Boyd, and numerous others.

Some of the hardy pioneers, however, lived to an advanced age. Thomas L. Butler, popularly known as "Uncle Tommy," was a veteran of the Blackhawk War who resided in Champaign County for many years. He died at the age of eighty-six as a result of a train accident.

The natural elements presented far more dangers to the pioneers than the Indians had. Illness and death from disease were common occurrences each fall. Malaria, spread by millions of mosquitoes in the swampy undrained prairie lands, came to be expected. Ague, a form of malarial disease characterized by high fever and recurring chills, caused fits of shivering and often incapacitated entire families. Sometimes settlements were left to the care of a few well people until the illness season had passed.

Another difficulty facing the early settlers was isolation — from each other and from markets where they could sell livestock and grain to obtain necessary supplies. Travel was extremely difficult; sometimes the roads were completely impassable for prolonged periods. Besides the poor roads, travelers had to contend with packs of wolves which often threatened livestock, and with "green-head" flies, a particular scourge in the tall prairie grasses. These insects attacked in swarms and would drive their victims into a frenzy.

In spite of these difficulties, it was necessary for the settlers to make several trips a year to markets as far away as Indiana or Chicago. These ventures required the cooperation of several people and were usually undertaken by a small group of relatives and neighbors. It was common to haul grain and chickens in ox-drawn wagons and to drive hogs and cattle to markets. These farm products were sold in order to buy flour, meal, coffee, sugar, and other supplies not available in Champaign County.

By the 1830's several small mills had been established in the county, beginning with manual operations, next using animal power, and then water. But these first efforts were still rudimentary attempts to produce sufficient amounts of meal and flour for the area's residents. It was not until 1849, when steam power was introduced into Urbana at Park's Mill, that production could adequately supply the population. This was the first use of an engine in Champaign County, and was later compared in importance to the coming of the railroad.

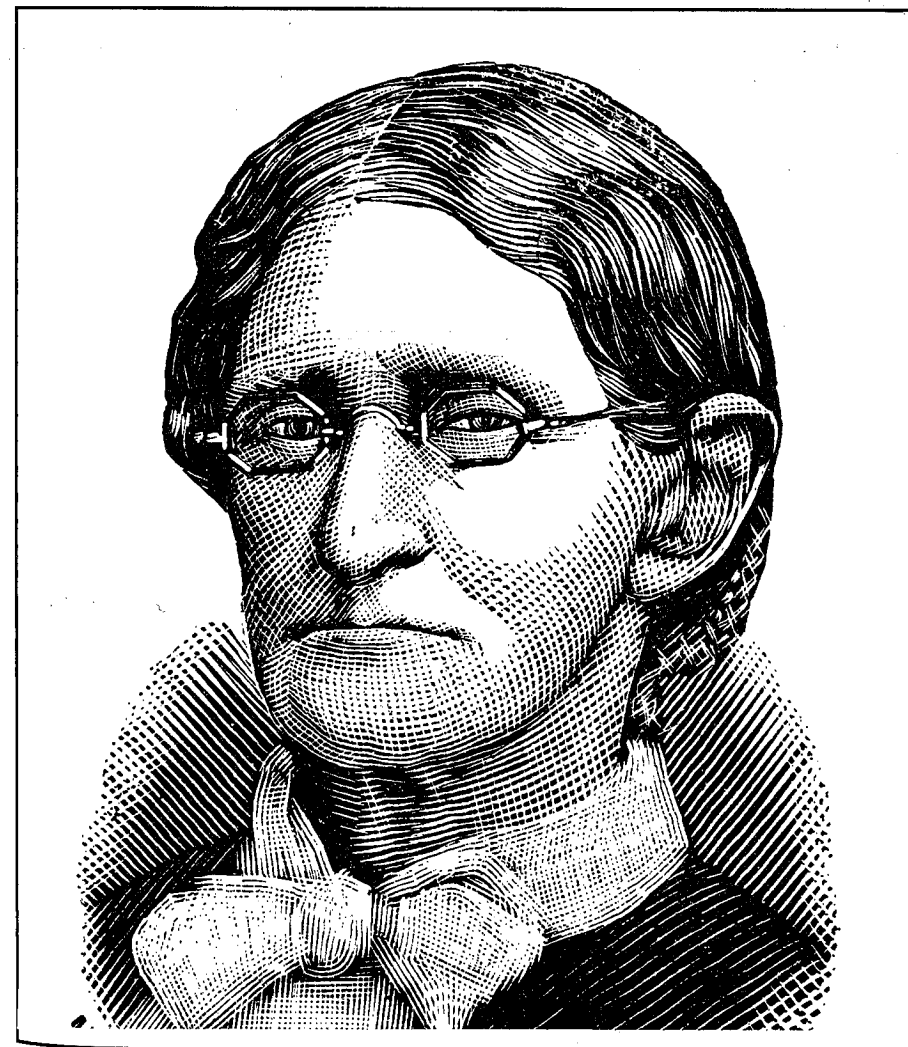
Opportunities for entertainment on the prairie were few and were usually combined with some constructive activity. Raising houses or barns required cooperative efforts, sometimes spread over several days. Corn huskings and quilting bees were other opportunities for sharing work and companionship. At these affairs, dancing and whiskey-drinking were enjoyed by the adults; contests of skill in target shoots, foot races, and

wrestling matches were activities for the men and boys. Women and girls were kept busy preparing and serving large quantities of food, which included johnny-cake, wild game, pot-pies, pumpkins, beans, squash, wild grapes, and plums. Foods were sweetened with honey or maple sugar.

Other opportunities for socializing were provided by religious activities. Meetings were held by Baptists, Methodists, and others, first in the homes of settlers, later in school houses. Some groups were served by itinerant or circuit-riding preachers, others by resident lay ministers.

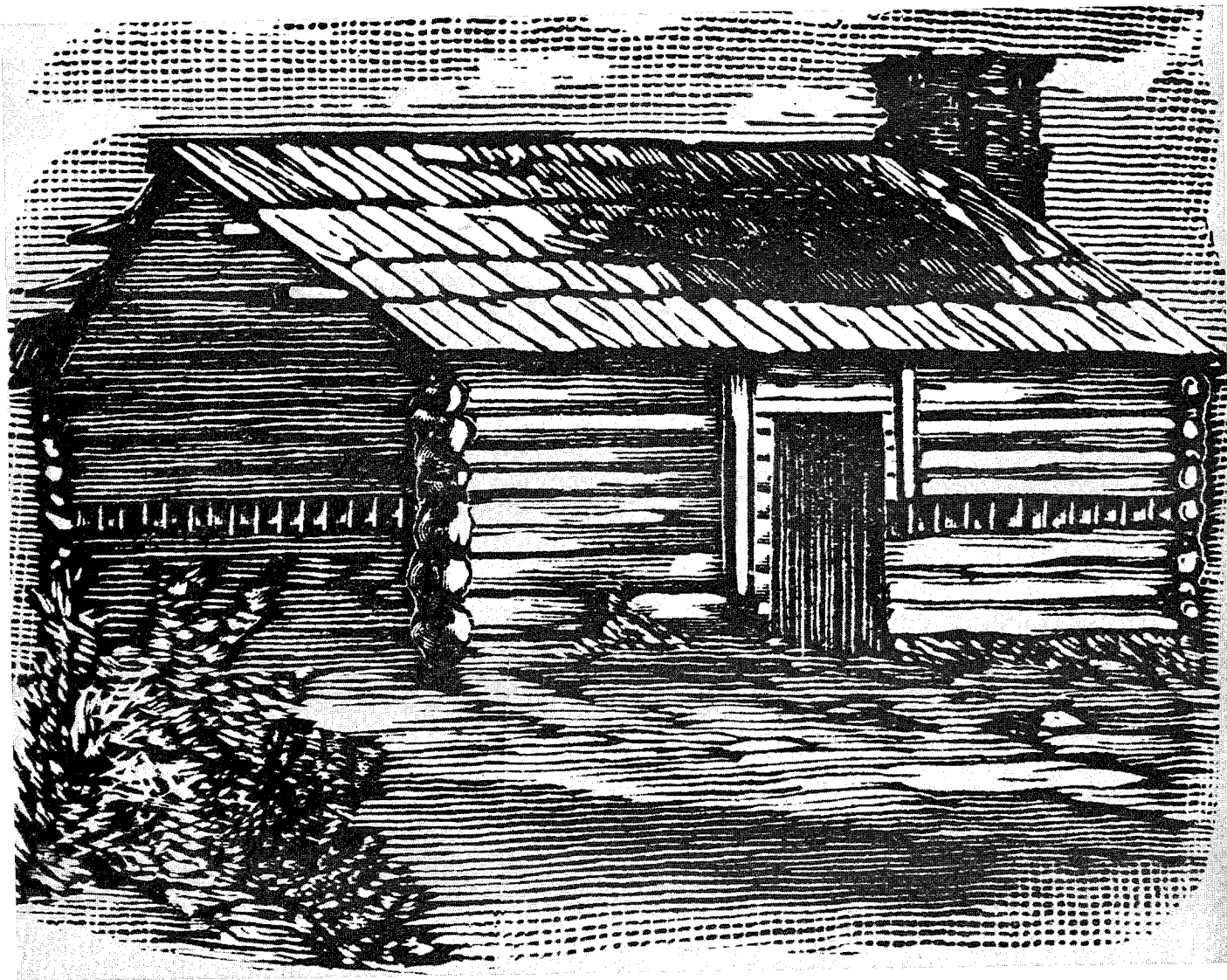
The fact that these small religious gatherings were sufficient to serve a local population of several hundred people for a number of years indicates that many of the early settlers in this area were not associated with a church. However, while few persons in the early days of Champaign County may have had formal religious affiliation,

A large log "double" barn, 30 by 60 feet, was raised for Henry Sadorus in 1832. Participants in this major social event were invited from the other groves and from as far away as Eugene, Indiana, where Mr. Sadorus traded. The men accomplished their work in three days and still had energy to dance late into each night. Malinda Busey of the Big Grove helped with quilting two bed quilts for Mrs. Sadorus and joined in the evening's feasting and fun.



Malinda Busey Bryan,
in her later years

At the age of nineteen, Malinda Busey came to Big Grove with her parents, Isaac and Sarah Busey. She was the first bride in Champaign County. On July 25, 1833, she was married to John Bryan by J. B. Thomas of Homer.



1832 School-house

the church's influence was undoubtedly a strong factor in establishing community standards of behavior. This was common in other parts of the state at the time; as Richard J. Jensen notes in his book, *Illinois: A Bicentennial History*, "Although churches enrolled only a minority of the populations, they set the tone of morality on the frontier."

The establishment of schools by the early settlers was limited by a number of factors. In spite of state legislation authorizing tax revenues, inadequate income and population made it necessary to support schools through individual subscription, which many families were unable to afford. The normal subscription fee was \$2.00 to \$2.50 per term. The school year lasted only four to six months; rigorous farm life required children to work, not only in planting and harvesting, but in necessary daily chores. Just getting to and from school was difficult and time consuming; and some parents, themselves unlettered, discouraged education for their children.

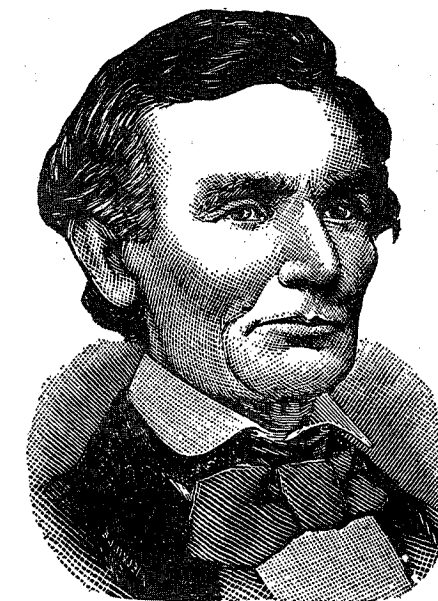
However, opportunities for schooling were provided for small groups of children in the homes of the earliest settlers. Probably as early as 1827/28, Charles Fielder taught in the home of his father, Runnel. William Tompkins's son, Claude, also taught in their home in 1832, and other schools were scattered throughout the county during the thirties. In 1837, James Outen was hired by Mr. Sadorus to teach in Sadorus Grove. Mr. Sadorus later claimed that it was cheaper to hire his own teacher than to send his sons away to school.

One of the earliest teachers was Asahel Bruer; in 1832 he taught in the Brumley neighborhood two miles east of the future Urbana. His Christmas treats of apples and whiskey were eagerly anticipated by the children. Although many of the early teachers moved to other places, Mr. Bruer remained in Champaign County and lived to an advanced age. He passed along many stories of the early school days.

During the late 1830's and early 1840's, some permanent school houses were erected, and classes moved from private homes and structures such as abandoned cabins, corn cribs, and smokehouses to buildings better equipped for educational purposes. It was to be many years, however, before opportunities for formal education were available beyond the elementary level in Champaign County. Young men who aspired to enter the fields of law or medicine could sometimes find a practitioner who would tutor them in their profession. William D. Somers, for instance, the first resident lawyer in Champaign County, had studied medicine in North Carolina. He practiced medicine in Urbana from 1840 to 1846, when he decided to enter the field of law. After he read law with Judge David Davis of Bloomington for several months, he was licensed to practice in November, 1846.

At this time, Champaign County was one of the fifteen counties in the Eighth Judicial Circuit, which extended across a large section of central Illinois. Judge Samuel Treat was assigned to this circuit until 1848, when he was succeeded by Judge Davis. One of the attorneys who rode the Eighth Judicial Circuit was Abraham Lincoln. In 1845, Lincoln was one of two lawyers appointed by the court to defend the first accused murderer in Champaign County. Lincoln and his colleague, Asahel Gridley, lost the case. The murderer, William Weaver, was sentenced to be hung, but escaped from the two-story log jail and fled to Wisconsin. This case was one of the first in a series of associations Lincoln was to have with the people of Champaign County. His law practice in the Eighth Judicial

During the Blackhawk War, it was especially difficult to find teachers. Because of this shortage, James S. Wright and Joseph Landor organized a night school in the winter of 1833 for about twenty-five students in the Salt Fork area (near present Homer).



Abraham Lincoln

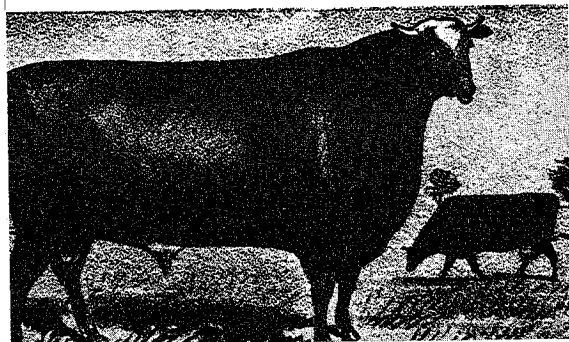
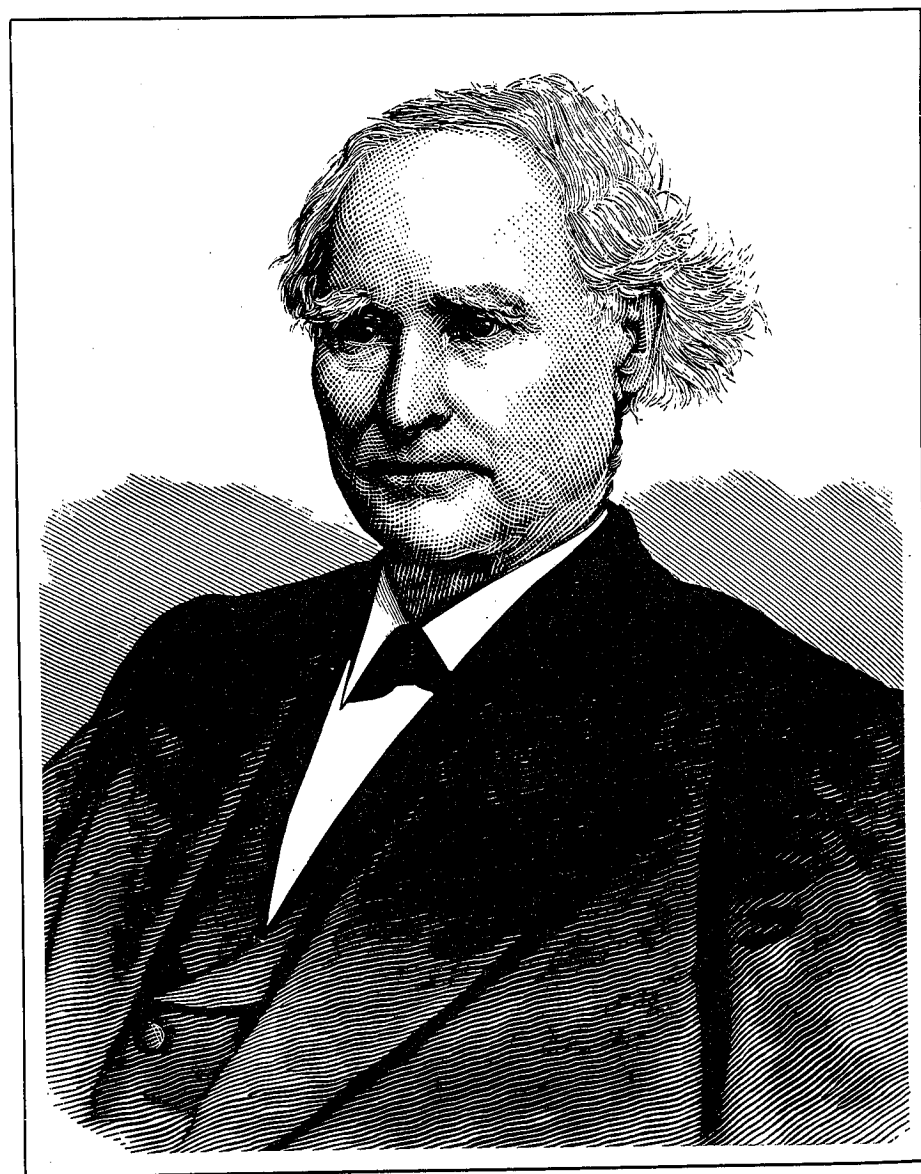


Early Urbana Hotel

Circuit established lasting relations among the legal and political leaders in the area.

The Urbana House, a hotel converted from the original temporary courthouse, often provided lodging for Lincoln and other attorneys of the circuit court. It was operated by Asahel Bruer. Lincoln also stayed in other local hotels and in private homes in the area. One of his hosts was Benjamin Franklin Harris, a large cattle raiser in the Mahomet vicinity. B. F. Harris came to Champaign County in the mid-1830's and soon became one of the largest cattlemen in the nation. His cattle were driven overland to markets in Pennsylvania, New York City and Boston. Mr. Harris gained international fame for his cattle; they were paraded down State Street in Chicago and were described in the *New York Tribune* in 1853 as the finest lot of common blooded cattle on exhibit at the World's Fair.

Benjamin Franklin Harris



Cattle-raising was the primary purpose of Michael L. Sullivant who reigned over nearly twenty-seven thousand acres of land in the south part of Champaign County between 1852 and 1866. He named his estate "Broad Lands" and opened an area of almost seven square miles of prairie to agricultural use — an unbelievable venture.

The extensive cattle business of B. F. Harris and others made improved accessibility to markets absolutely essential. This need had long been recognized in Champaign County as well as elsewhere in the state. As early as the 1830's, there were efforts to establish a railroad system throughout Illinois. The failure of the proposed Northern Cross Railroad which was to be built from Quincy on the west to the state line at Danville disappointed many Champaign and Vermilion County speculators who viewed the project as a boon to local settlement and commerce. In spite of this failure, influential businessmen and politicians throughout the state continued to seek new ways to develop a state railway system.

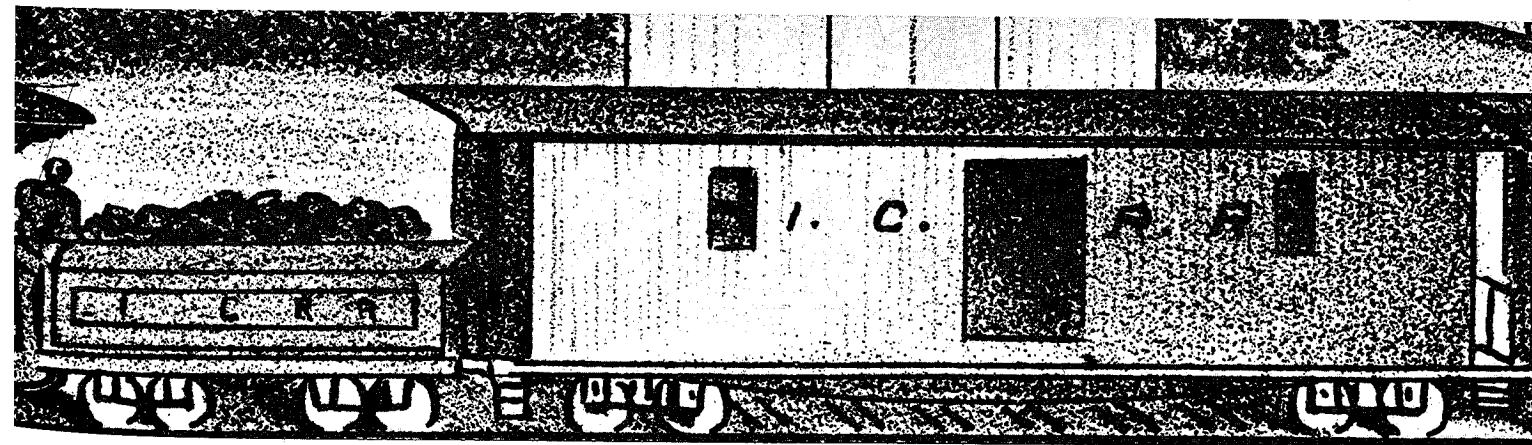
In 1848, Stephen A. Douglas introduced a bill in the U. S. Senate requesting a grant of federal lands to Illinois to build a central railroad extending the length of the state. This measure passed in the Senate, but failed in the House. Undaunted, Douglas re-introduced substantially the same bill in the following session in Congress, in 1849/50. Realizing that support was necessary from a broader constituency, Douglas incorporated provisions extending the land grant to Alabama and Mississippi, and made concessions to tariff bills affecting foreign trade issues which were beneficial to the eastern states. These maneuvers led to the successful passage of the bill, and on September 20, 1850, President Millard Fillmore signed the first land grant act allocating lands for the building of a railroad. This action dramatically affected the future of the entire state of Illinois and was a major influence on the development of Champaign County.

On February 10, 1851, a charter to build the new railroad was granted by the Illinois State Legislature to Robert Rantoul, Jr., of Massachusetts, and to the corporation which he represented, the Illinois Central Railroad Company.

Senator Henry Clay, in a speech supporting Douglas's bill, said: . . . "There is nobody who knows anything of that Grand Prairie who does not know that the land is utterly worthless for any present purpose — not because it is not fertile, but for want of wood and water and from the fact that it is inaccessible, wanting all facilities for reaching a market or for transporting timber, so that nobody will go there and settle while it is so destitute of all advantages of society and the conveniences which arise from a social state. And now, by constructing this road through the center of Illinois, you bring millions of acres of land immediately into the market which will otherwise remain for years and years entirely unsalable."

Senator King of Alabama, referring to objections that the proposed grant included an immense quantity of land, said: ". . . (the lands) are of no value and can never be of any value unless some direct communication by railroad or some other way is made. That will give the land value."

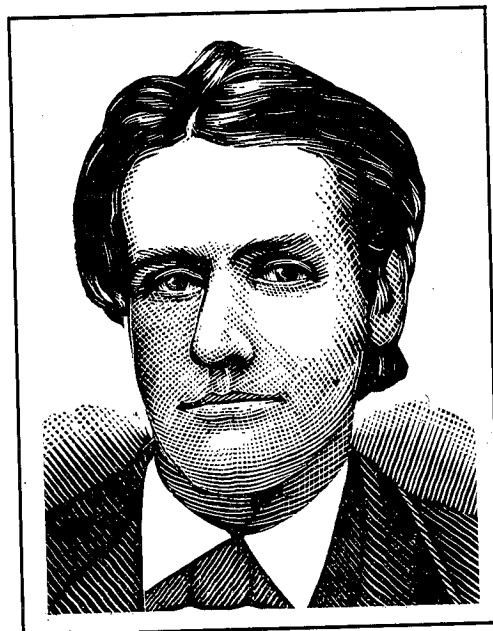
Illinois Central Railroad train



The first section of the railroad was opened from Kensington (now Calumet City) to Chicago in 1852. On July 24, 1854, the section between Ludlow and a site two miles west of Urbana was opened and the first passenger train arrived from Chicago. In addition to Ludlow and the newly designated "West Urbana," other towns which sprang up along the Illinois Central line were Rantoul, Thomasboro, Savoy, Tolono, and Pesotum. Thus began the transformation of Champaign County from isolated settlements to bustling communities and agricultural centers.

According to Lothrop's Champaign County Directory of 1870-71, Ludlow was named for J. D. Ludlow, an agent of Michael L. Sullivant who surveyed and purchased lands for him in 1853 for the establishment of Broadlands. In 1855, he purchased land for himself in the Ludlow area and settled there the following year. J. D. Ludlow is credited with donating land for two of the village's churches.

James S. Gere



James Gere and his brother, John, purchased a timbered area near Urbana and furnished 200,000 ties and 15,000 cords of wood for the Illinois Central Railroad.

The name of Thomasboro resulted from efforts by an enterprising young English farmer, John Thomas, who around 1855 settled just to the west of where the I.C.R.R. had established a railroad station. He had a town of five streets laid out and lots platted; on October 22, 1863, he christened the town, Thomasboro.

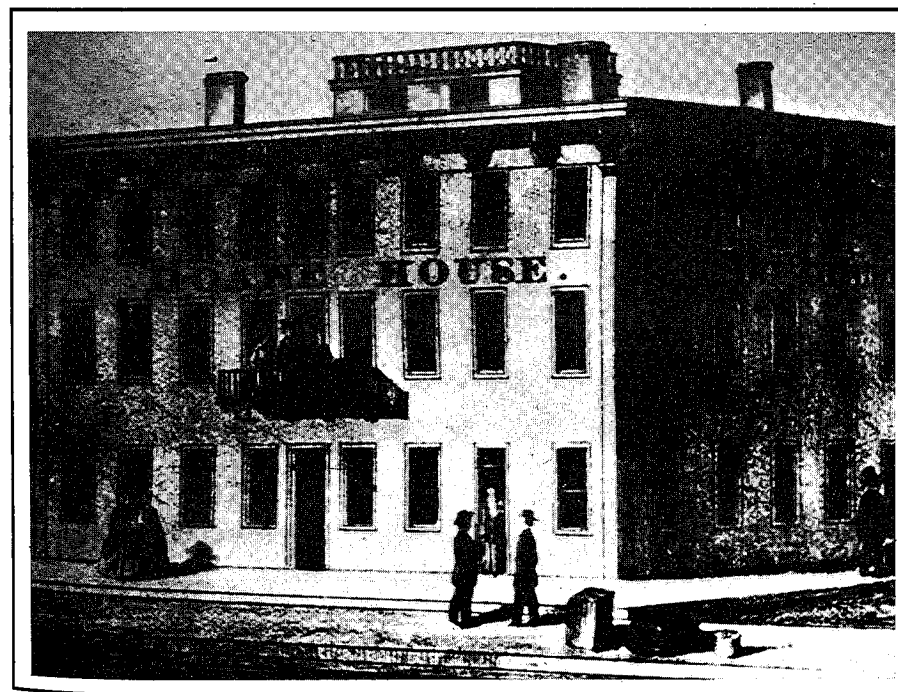
Several factors determined the route selected for the I.C.R.R. Access to timber for railroad ties and for fuel for wood-burning engines was desirable. Another consideration was the character

of the terrain; it was logical to avoid low swampy ground, rivers and streams, or areas where extensive grading was necessary.

In addition, the financial success of the Illinois Central depended on selling land along the railroad right-of-way. This often placed stations in unsettled areas rather than in established communities.

There were several possible locations for the station near the county seat of Urbana. The three in the Urbana vicinity were all owned by Col. Matthew Wales Busey. According to J. O. Cunningham's account, Col. Busey offered the railroad the "right of way for either line and twenty acres of land for depot purposes whichever they might choose." The route selected, two miles west of Urbana, was determined by engineering considerations; it was the most economical choice, as it did not require cutting through moraines or crossing rivers such as the Salt Fork or the Embarras.

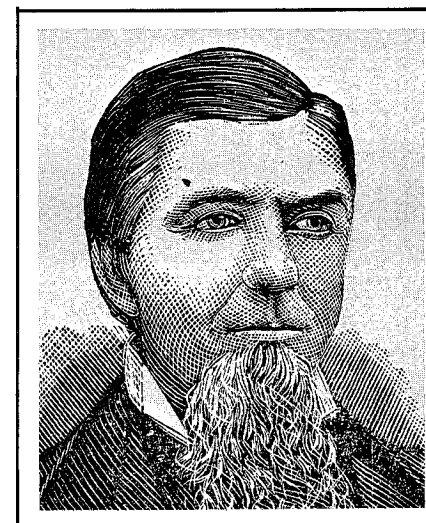
Even before the railroad arrived, a building boom began in the vicinity of the future depot. The area from the station to Neil Street was platted by the Illinois Central in 1853. "West Urbana's" depot also provided accommodations for travelers; Archa Campbell was the proprietor. Within a short time, Mr. Campbell constructed a more elaborate building and moved the ticket office there. This building, the Doane House, also served as a hotel and was the scene of many social events during the next several decades.



Archa Campbell

Engineers first considered a route through Champaign County that would have passed near the town of Homer, then the second largest community in the county. This would have required expensive bridging of the Salt Fork River.

Surveyors for the I.C.R.R. began their work in the summer of 1851 and completed the entire route by September of that year. Unfortunately, Urbana's Col. Matthew Busey, whose death occurred in 1852, did not live to see the completion of the railroad and its subsequent impact on the development of Champaign County.



In 1855, Urbana was chartered as a city by the state legislature; on June 2, Archa Campbell was elected the first mayor of Urbana.

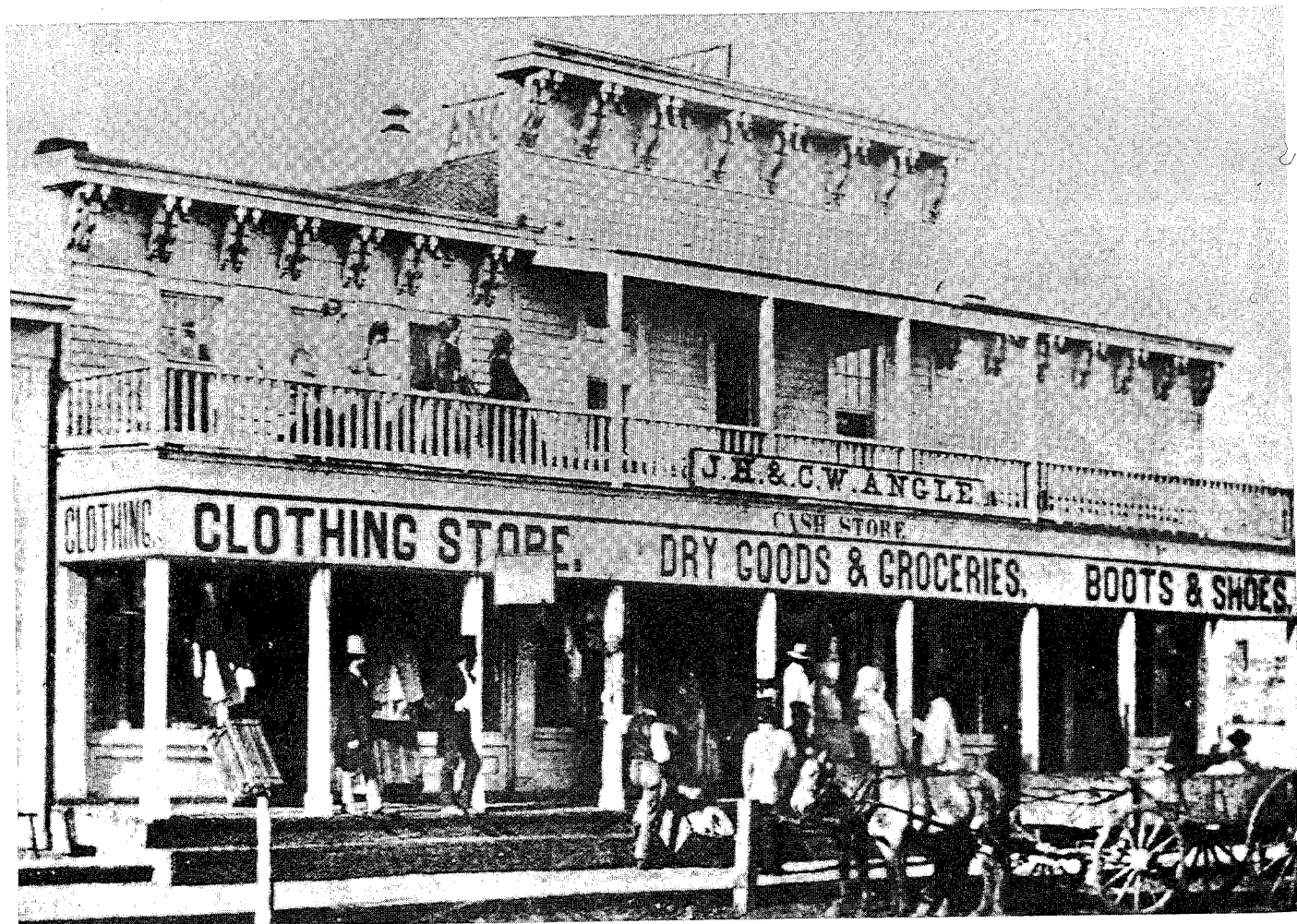
Doane House

The site of Goose Pond Church was a swampy lowland where migrating geese often landed. The "land" donated for use of the church by the I.C.R.R. created problems with the stability of structures erected there which have continued to this day.

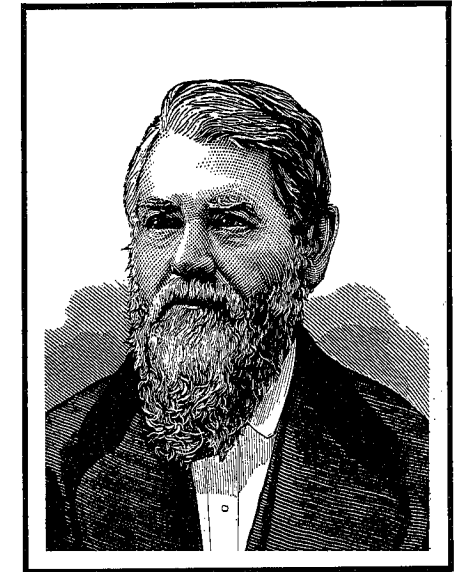
In 1854, the area north of Springfield Avenue was platted by Thomson R. Webber for the estate of Col. Busey and lots were sold. Very soon, a small community developed around the depot. The First Congregational Church, popularly known as Goose Pond Church, was built in 1855; the "little brick school" was built the same year; and the Cattle Bank, a branch of the Grand Prairie Bank, was begun in late August, 1857. The designation "Cattle Bank" reflected the clientele which the bank wished to serve — the wealthy cattlemen of the area.

The vicinity west of the depot also underwent rapid development. John P. White and two silent partners, I.C.R.R. employees Jeffrey A. Farnam and Nathan M. Clark, platted the Neil Street area and included a large park designated as White Park. This was the first park in Champaign County. Within a year of the arrival of the railroad, several hundred commercial buildings had been erected and over one hundred houses built in "West Urbana." By 1855, this area's population was over four hundred, and by the end of the following year it was over twelve hundred. On April 17, 1857, West Urbana was organized as a village.

Angle Block, West Urbana, c. 1858



Map, I.C.R.R. Route



Mathias L. Dunlap

The next stop on the Illinois Central after West Urbana was Savoy. It was established in 1858 to accommodate the extensive shipping of trees and produce from the nursery and orchards of Mathias L. Dunlap.

When the I.C.R.R. came to Tolono, the railway agent there, J. R. Swift, opened a land office at the station and erected an office building nearby. But financial setbacks and an unsuccessful attempt by Swift to establish a second railroad line from Tolono to St. Louis soon caused him to abandon his efforts and leave the area. Pesotum, the southernmost I.C.R.R. station in Champaign County, was established in 1854.

As a young man, M. L. Dunlap surveyed the west half of Cook County and most of DuPage County. He resided in Cook County for many years, and during that time he was elected to the state legislature. He established his nursery business in Champaign County in 1856 and resided in Savoy until his death in 1875. Mr. Dunlap also was an agricultural journalist whose writings were widely read and influential. He served as the agricultural editor of the Chicago Tribune for twenty-two years, and was the editor of the Illinois Farmer from 1860-65.

Construction of an east-west railroad line crossing the southern part of the county nearly coincided with the opening of routes north and south on the Illinois Central. This new line was the Great Western (later the Wabash). Like the Illinois Central, this railroad had a dramatic impact on several communities.

The path of the Great Western originally by-passed the village of Homer, so the entire community was moved a mile and a half south to adjoin the railroad. The move was initiated by a proposal made by M. D. Coffeen. Since the route of the Great Western passed through his property, he exchanged his lots in equal number with lots in the old town. Almost everyone in Old Homer accepted his plan; the houses were placed on skids and moved across the snow-covered tract during the winter of 1854/55. By spring, only one house and the mill remained at the old site. The houses in "New Homer" were quickly supplemented by business buildings: M. D. Coffeen's dry goods store, Judge John B. Thomas's drugstore, and others. In the summer of 1855, a steam mill began producing lumber for Homer and railroad ties for the Great Western.

Sidney Depot



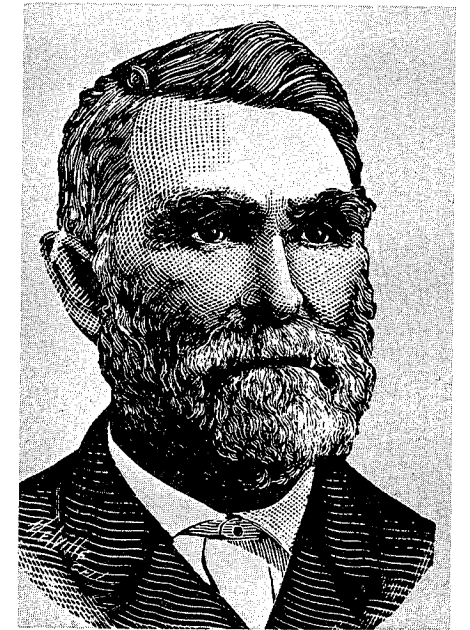
The village of Sidney also was affected by the coming of the Great Western. Joseph Davis and Dr. James H. Lyon had platted the town in 1836, expecting the proposed Northern Cross railroad to come through. The failure of that railroad project caused the financial ruin of Dr. Lyon, who departed for Texas. It was to be twenty years before the Great Western railroad arrived. The new railroad affected not only the community's development, but even its name. The village had been named Sydney after a daughter of Joseph Davis. The growth stimulated by the new railroad necessitated plating new additions to the town; the clerk recording the Thomas addition misspelled the village name and the town has been known as Sidney ever since.

The villages of Philo and Sadorus were created by the establishment of new railroad depots along the Great Western Route. The potential of the Philo area had been recognized by Philo Hale who entered land in 1837, also anticipating the coming of the Northern Cross. He concluded that it would pass near a local landmark, the "Towhead," a large clump of trees on a rise which could be seen from a great distance. Like other speculators of the 1830's, Philo Hale was to be disappointed; but twenty-one years later, his heirs succeeded in promoting the establishment of a railroad stop between Sidney and Tolono, and in 1858 the village of Philo finally became a reality.

In the same year, William Sadorus, son of one of the county's earliest settlers, deeded the right of way for Great Western tracks through his land and donated lots for schools and public purposes in the future village of Sadorus.

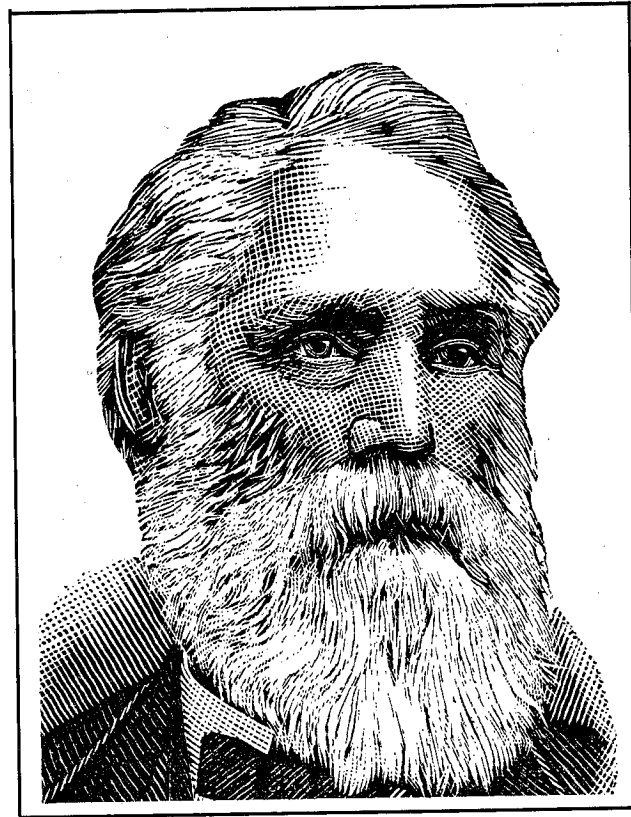
The years between 1850 and 1860 saw a tremendous growth in county population and agricultural development. Carlton Corliss states in his book, *Main Line of Mid-America*, that during this period the number of improved acres in Champaign County increased from 23,000 to 170,000, and the total value of the land increased from under one-half million dollars to over five million dollars. It was a time of prosperity for those who already lived in Champaign County as well as for the new residents who flocked to the area.

The people who came to Champaign County at this time represented new and diverse backgrounds. Some emigrated from northern and eastern states. Guy D. and John Penfield, who platted the town of Rantoul in 1856, came from Michigan. A colony of settlers from northern Ohio was also established in the neighborhood of Rantoul.



William A. Conkey

According to Dr. Conkey of Homer, who provided medical care for the few residents of Sidney after Dr. Lyon left town, there were only seventeen families living in the village in 1842. There was virtually no growth in the community until the coming of the Great Western in 1856.



John W. Dodge

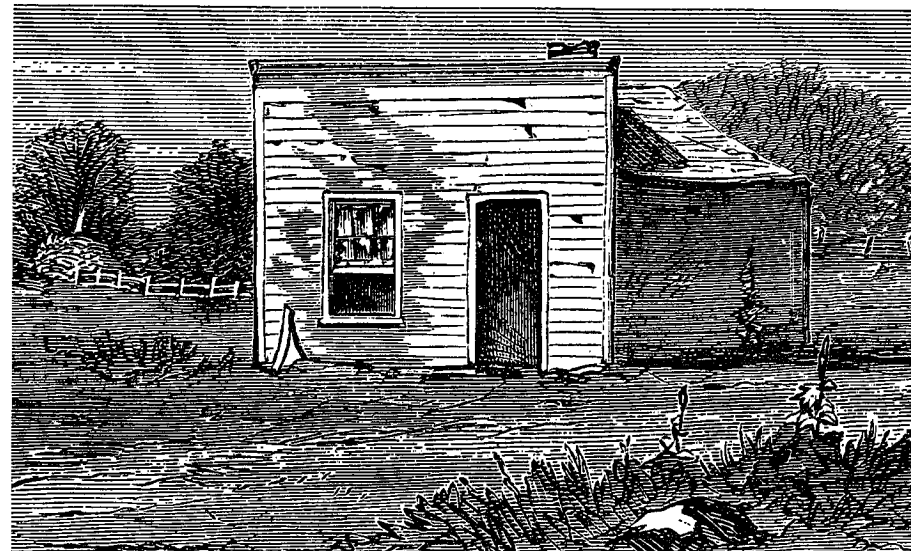
Preparations for this settlement were made by John Dodge, who arrived from Twinsburg, Ohio, in 1855 to pre-empt land for his fellow Ohioans. Dodge erected eighteen preemption shanties that year, and in the following year purchased 3,000 acres at \$3.00 an acre.

Construction of the Illinois Central Railroad brought Irish Catholic workers into Champaign County. Here, as in other parts of Illinois, they were the dominant ethnic group among railroad laborers. When the work was completed, many remained and became permanent residents. In 1854, Father Thomas Ryan was appointed missionary priest and St. Mary's parish was founded to serve the growing Catholic community.

In the 1850's, German settlers also began arriving in Champaign County. Extensive promotion by the Illinois Central Railroad encouraged settlement, describing plentiful, inexpensive farmlands and a healthy climate. Cholera epidemics and a shortage of land in Germany prompted these settlers to seek new opportunities. Some became farmers; others assisted in constructing the new railroad lines.

No longer isolated from the outside world and rapidly becoming a populated center of trade and commerce,

Glowing advertisements by the I.C.R.R. disregarded the hardships still to be endured by settlers. In addition, the coming of the railroad reintroduced cholera. In 1854, an epidemic caused alarm from Chicago southward along the Illinois Central route.

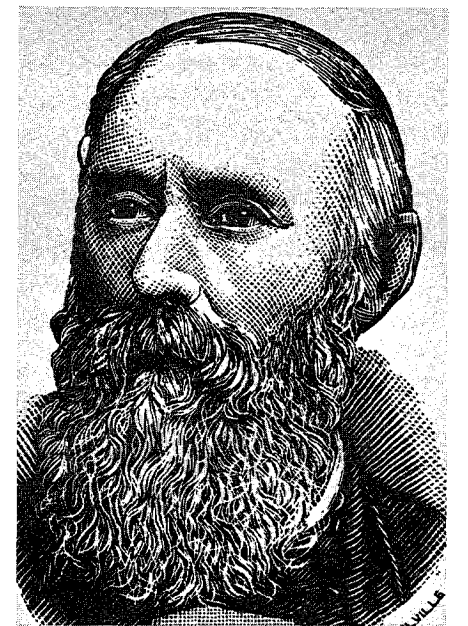


*First School in "West Urbana"
A subscription school, 1854/55, taught by Dr. Shoemaker's wife in their home, east side of the railroad.*

Champaign County residents soon realized the need to prepare themselves to function in a new environment. Although school was still conducted in some private homes, the recognition of the need for education was soon reflected in a spurt of new and improved school houses built in the expanding areas of settlement.

This activity corresponded with actions affecting education state-wide. The state legislature responded to demands for a better educational system brought about by increased settlement in Illinois. In 1854, Ninian Edwards, Jr., of Springfield, whose father was territorial governor, 1809-18, was appointed to a newly created position of State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The following year his proposal for free public schools in Illinois was enacted into law.

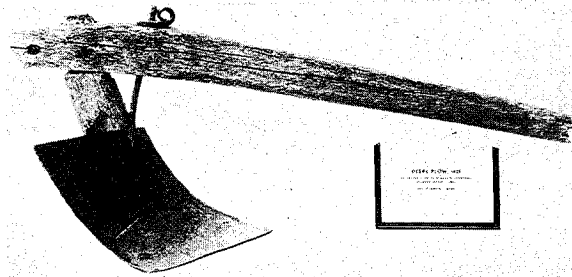
This important legislation was immediately taken advantage of in Champaign County. Mrs. M. A. Fletcher taught the first free school in the newly-constructed Goose Pond Church in "West Urbana" during the winter of 1855-56. The Yankee Ridge school house in the Philo area and the Nelson school near Pesotum were both erected in 1857. Other populated sections of the county built school houses and the county commissioners appointed Thomas R. Leal as school commissioner. His able leadership over the next sixteen years was an important element in the history of Champaign County. There were forty-six school houses in existence when Dr. Leal took office in 1857; when he retired to farm near Sidney in 1873 there were over two hundred school houses serving an area of roughly one thousand square miles within county boundaries.



Thomas R. Leal

John Deere Plow, 1837

The steel plow invented by John Deere had little effect on cultivating Champaign County prairie. Production was slow and the Deere plow was expensive and not constructed to cut the tough prairie sod.



James Harvey Lee is credited with initiating farming of the prairie in the Sadorus area in 1853. His example was soon followed by others who hired persons using heavy sod-buster plows made by local blacksmiths.

The original fifteen townships in Champaign County were East Bend, Hale, Middlefork, Middletown, Newcomb, Pera, Pleasant Hill, Urbana, Rantoul, Sadorus, Sidney, South Homer, St. Joseph, Tolono, and West Urbana.

Within the next dozen years a number of name changes occurred and boundaries were altered to create additional townships. Names changed were: Hale to Philo, 1861; Middlefork to Kerr, 1861; Pleasant Hill to Somer, 1861; Pera to Ludlow, 1868; West Urbana to Champaign, 1870; and Middletown to Mahomet. 1871.

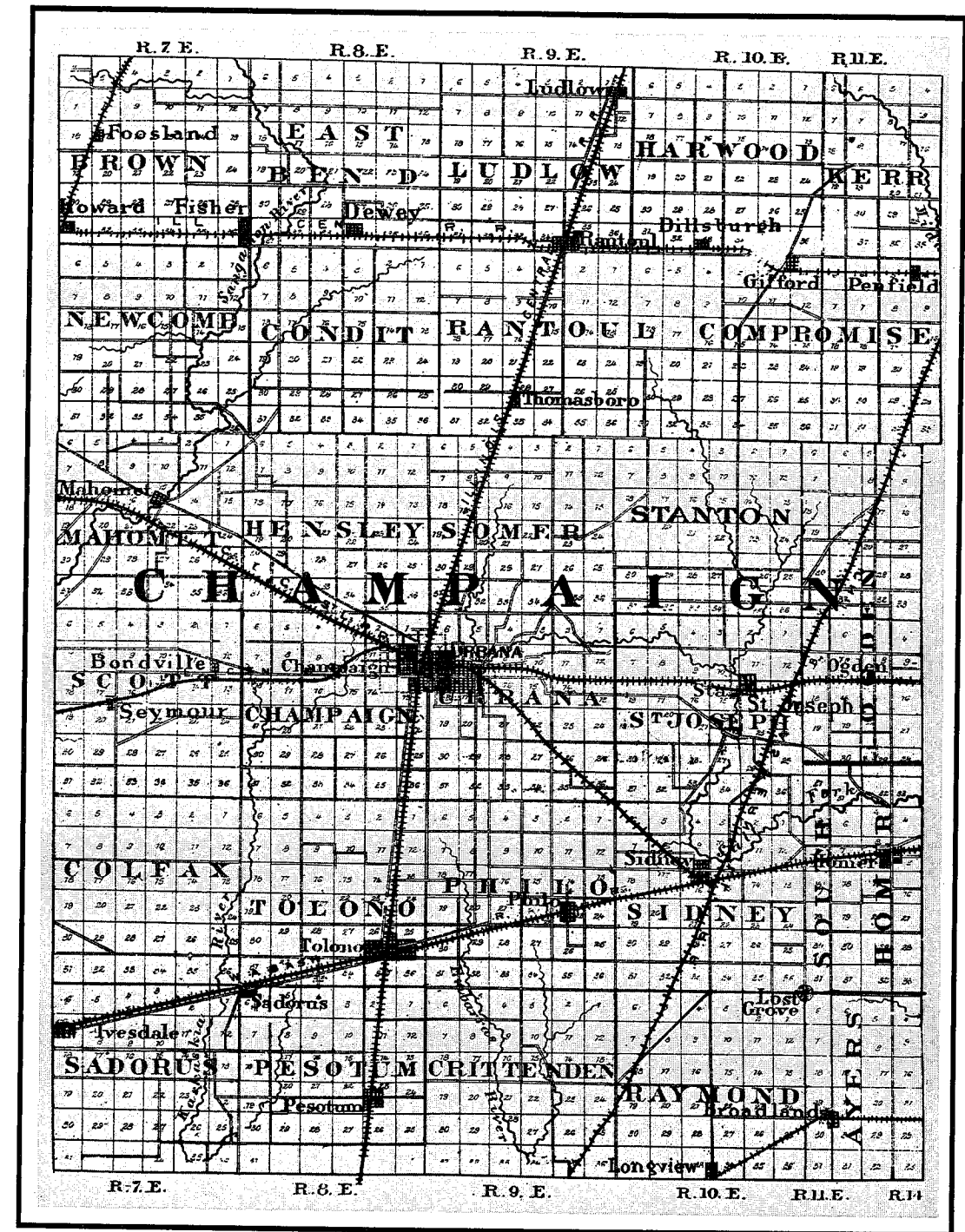
Boundary changes created Scott Township from Middletown, 1862; Stanton from St. Joseph, 1862; Crittenden from Philo, 1863; Pesotum from Sadorus, 1864; Condit from Newcomb, 1867; Hensley from West Urbana, 1867; Raymond from Sidney, 1867; Colfax from Tolono, 1868; Compromise from parts of Rantoul and Kerr, 1868; Brown from East Bend, 1869; and Harwood from Ludlow, 1869. In 1885, Ayers Township was formed from South Homer. These boundaries remained until the growing cities of Champaign (in 1920) and Urbana (in 1928) required separate townships, Urbana's being designated as Cunningham Township.

A review of many names in school teaching records reveals that the era of the 1850's was a time of marked increase in the hiring of women teachers. This was probably a result of the immigration into the county of women from non-rural backgrounds who had received the benefits of formal education in the east. Also, growth and prosperity which came with the railroads opened more lucrative employment opportunities for men who otherwise would have applied themselves to the teaching profession.

The growth of free public schools and other public services was related to a major development in the governmental structure of Champaign County. In 1860, the county adopted the township form of government. Just as large counties were divided to form smaller governmental units, so were townships formed. Increased settlement combined with improved agricultural machinery and soil practices had by this time opened many acres of prairie.

Originally, fifteen townships were designated and their geographical areas defined. These township boundaries were later revised and additional townships were formed. Township government provided for the election of both school and road commissioners and for a township supervisor who represented his area in county political decisions. The county was no longer governed by the County Court, but rather by the Board of Supervisors elected from the various townships. This system brought about increased political participation and effective methods of funding public improvements in Champaign County for many years.

When the people in Champaign County voted to institute township government, the law required that township boundaries be established to conform with the original county survey lines as closely as was practical. As a result, the area between present Champaign's First Street and Wright Street was detached from Urbana Township and made a part of West Urbana Township. The citizens of the village of West Urbana found this an appropriate time to establish a stronger governmental base for themselves; on April 20th, 1860, a



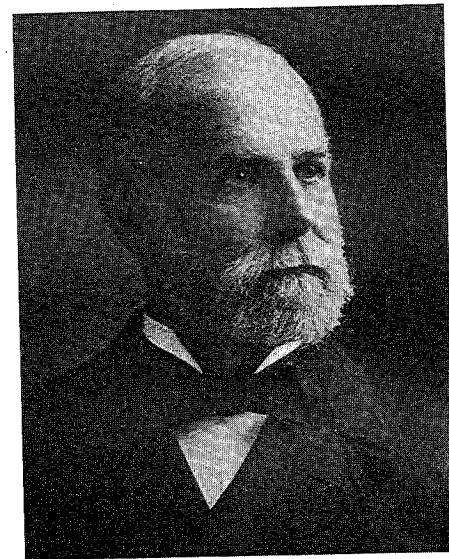
Map of Champaign County

proposition to form a city was decisively approved. Nearly two hundred votes were cast out of a village population of 1,727, and the citizens chose to name the new city Champaign rather than West Urbana.

Ten years later the name of West Urbana Township was changed to Champaign Township, thus ending the active life of a name never fully accepted nor appropriate to the area it encompassed.

Anthony Coyle and his horse "Crusher"

Anthony Coyle served for three years in Company I, Second Regiment of the Illinois Calvary. He participated in several major campaigns and was wounded five times. Both he and his horse survived the war and spent their last years at the Coyle farm near Penfield.



Major George Kennard

Major George Kennard served over four years in the war and attained hero status, having commanded the steamer "Horizon" which successfully ran the Vicksburg batteries. Later, at the Ft. Donelson battle he survived a bullet that passed completely through his neck. Before the war, he operated the "Boston Store" at the corner of Main and Neil Streets in Champaign. Major Kennard was elected County Treasurer in 1855 and again in 1867.

The rate of growth in the new city of Champaign as well as the rest of the county was slowed as a result of the war between the states. When the call for support of the Union was issued to the northern states, Illinois contributed 259,092 troops to the war, of which 2,276 came from Champaign County.

It is probable that the personal regard for President Lincoln was one of the reasons for enlistments in excess of the quotas established. In the first enrollment, Champaign County provided an extra fifty-four men and never failed to exceed a quota for troops even as the war lagged on.

In 1863, Illinois Governor Yates authorized Negro men to serve; Dennis Jackson, William Kelly, Jerry Penny, and James Walker entered the army from Champaign County. These men were assigned to the 29th U.S. Colored Infantry Regiment, which fought in the famed Petersburg Crater Battle of 1864.

Battle sites familiar in Civil War history were often mentioned in Champaign County death notices. Robert Grogan, Michael Rafferty, Wesley Chambers, William Rosenbaum, M. D. Schlorff, Thomas Burkshire, James Elsberry, Robert O. Brown, Wilson Eldert, Eli Moore, Collins Reynolds, and John Frey all died at Vicksburg. Members of Champaign County families were also lost at Stone River, Chickamauga, Kenesaw Mountain, Natchez, and in other battles throughout the war. Approximately 9% of those who went to war from Champaign County did not survive. The fact that the state of Illinois lost an even greater proportion — 16.5% of its total force — was little consolation to the friends and families of the two hundred Champaign County soldiers who gave their lives for the Union cause.



Charles Beneulyn Johnson

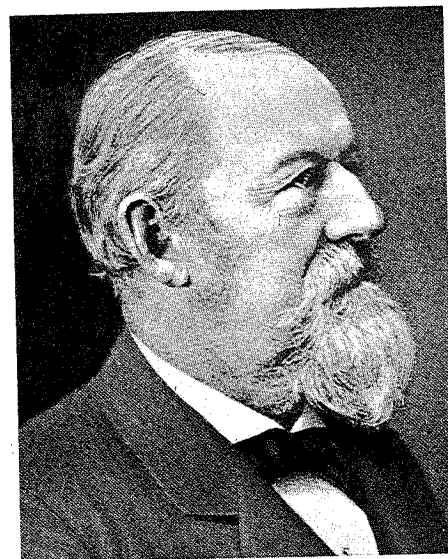
Charles Beneulyn Johnson, pictured at age 21, was a native of Bond County, Illinois. He served in the Civil War as a Hospital Steward. In 1871, he came to Champaign County where he became a leading physician and was for many years the Secretary of the Champaign County Medical Society. Dr. Johnson was the author of the books, *Muskets and Medicine* and *Illinois in the Fifties*.

Distinguished leadership in the Civil War came from such Champaign County officers as Colonels Daniel Bradley, Richard H. Nodine, Samuel T. Busey, James W. Langley, John S. Wolfe, and William N. Coler. Col. Busey was later promoted to Brigadier General.



Right: William N. Coler
Far Right: Col. Samuel T. Busey

William N. Coler began the county's first newspaper, the *Urbana Union*, in 1852, and opened the county's first bank, the *Grand Prairie*, in 1856.



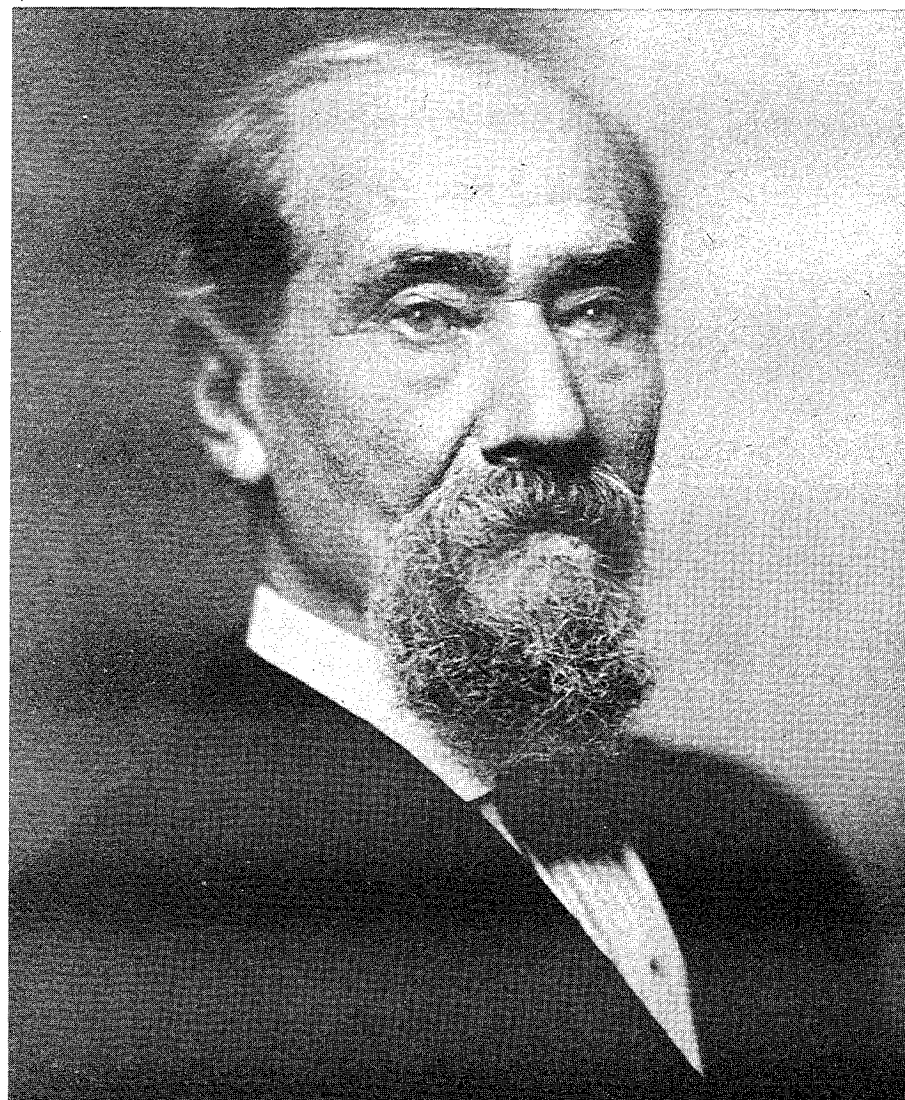
Joseph Oscar Cunningham

J. O. Cunningham purchased the *Urbana Union* from William Coler in 1853, and with a series of partners described as "practical printers" edited the newspaper until 1858. Under his leadership, the newspaper departed from its original Democratic support to become a strong champion of Republican causes.

After the Civil War, the demand for farm products lessened and farmers who had expanded by borrowing to buy more land and machinery found it difficult to repay their debts. Large scale farming at "Broad Lands," the huge grain and cattle estate established by Michael Sullivant, failed and eventually the land was sold in small tracts by August Ayers. Recognizing the opportunity for new ventures, B. F. Harris turned his attention from his five thousand acre cattle farm in the western part of the county to the financial world of the city. He was a principal founder of the First National Bank of Champaign in 1865, and was followed by his son, Henry H. Harris, and his grandson, B. F. Harris, Jr., in the banking professions.

Col. Samuel T. Busey returned from the war and in 1868, with his brother, the Honorable Simeon H. Busey, organized the Busey Brothers Bank, which remained under the successful management of members of the Busey family for several generations. In 1869, the Bank of Tolono was begun by an attorney, Robert A. Bower. He served as the bank's president for nearly half a century.

Although many farmers were hard-pressed to maintain their standard of living, the growing wealth in the cities was an indication of the changing nature of life in Champaign County. Land investors from the eastern states poured money into Champaign County; consequently, not only the banking, but also the legal, manufacturing, and retail business professions experienced post-war growth. Lawyers such as James B. McKinley, Albert C. Burnham, William N. Coler, and J. O. Cunningham were leading legal counselors within the county, and all amassed individual fortunes.



Joseph Kuhn, a German immigrant who had gone to live with his sister in Mississippi, by fate served for a period in the Confederate Army. Subsequently, he deserted and took an oath of allegiance to the Union.

Joseph Kuhn

Soon, new business firms developed in the cities and in the rural communities to serve an increasing and further diversified population. In 1861, Abe Stern established a retail store at 23 Main Street in Champaign. That same year, Morris Lowenstern began operation of a dry goods store in Urbana, which became a major department store at the corner of Main and Race. Joseph Kuhn opened a retail store in Champaign in 1865 which later came to be known as one of the state's leading clothing stores. C. C. Robinson, a dry goods merchant, built the first store building in Sidney in 1865, which started David Street on its way to becoming the major business street in town.

In Rantoul, business boomed at the hardware store established by O. R. Williams in 1862. Four generations of the Williams family continued operations of the business until ownership passed to John Litchfield some eighty-three years later.



Main Street, Champaign

The horse was just as essential to economic growth during this period as the railroad had been. Census figures show the county horse population trebled from approximately five thousand to fifteen thousand within the 1860's.

The manufacture of wagons and carriages became a lucrative business. Skilled workmen were employed at the John N. Crannell factory on Champaign's South Neil Street, where each year approximately fifty carriages were built. Blacksmiths, harness-makers, and wheelwrights were busy in Rantoul, Homer, Sidney, Mahomet, and Urbana.

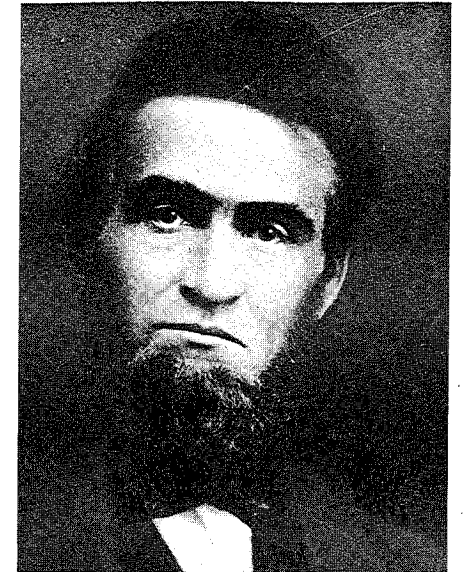
The decade of the 1860's saw a dramatic increase in the county's population — from roughly 14,000 to over 32,000, with the greatest increase (10,000) coming in the second half of the decade. But what was to become the single most important factor in Champaign County's growth, the state university, made almost no impact on the population figures in the 1860's. In March, 1868, the first class to enter the new Illinois Industrial University in Urbana had only seventy-seven students, and forty-five of them were residents of Champaign County.

The establishment of an Industrial University had been urged for many years by a state-wide organization called the Industrial League of the State of Illinois. Under the leadership of Jonathan Baldwin Turner of Jacksonville, a proposal developed on June 8, 1852, during the group's convention in Springfield was sent to the governor and the state legislature asking the State of Illinois to appeal to Congress for an appropriation of public lands to fund industrial education. It further recommended that only one school be established, a University of Illinois, rather than dispersing the funds among several institutions.

Ten years later, the persistent efforts of Turner and others were rewarded when, on July 2, 1862, the United States Congress passed the land grant act known as the Morrill Bill. This legislation allocated each state 30,000 acres for each senator or representative authorized in Congress. Illinois, with sixteen Congressmen, eventually obtained 480,000 acres of land. The proceeds from this land were to be used primarily for teaching subjects related to agriculture and the mechanical arts in at least one state college.

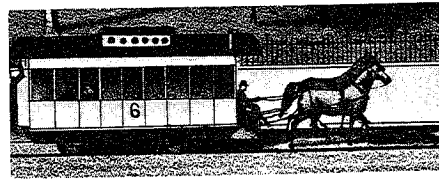
Champaign County residents had little participation in the long struggle to obtain support for industrial education. They were, however, prompt to recognize the potential advantages of having an institution of higher learning within the county boundaries. In January, 1859, the Reverend Jonathan C. Stoughton, a Methodist minister from Freeport, had come to Champaign County to propose a scheme to erect a seminary midway between the city of Urbana and the bustling new town of West Urbana. He proposed that he and his investors would erect a fine building equal to the Clark Seminary which they had built in Aurora, Illinois.

Local promoters, in an unusual procedure, formed a joint committee with three representatives appointed from each community. Members of this committee were Carter F. Columbia, William Park, William R. Romine, Joseph W. Sim, John H. Thomas, and James S. Wright. Acting for the local investors who by the end of June, 1860, had pledged forty thousand dollars towards the seminary project, the committee purchased 193.9 acres of land lying between what is now Lincoln Avenue and Wright Streets and between Springfield Avenue and Church Street, the northern limits of Urbana. Records show a total price of \$19,298.79 was paid for this parcel to William H. Romine, James S. Wright, and the heirs of Col. Matthew W. Busey.



Jonathan Baldwin Turner

The term seminary was often used as a name for a school of higher education rather than a theological school. Reverend Stoughton and his investors in the Urbana-Champaign Institute neither proposed nor imposed any particular course of instruction. The basic motive for their involvement was the same as that of the local investors — profit.



Horse-Car Railway

By 1859, the need to transport goods between the courthouse in Urbana and the Illinois Central depot prompted the formation of a railroad company, first known as the Urbana Railroad Company and later as the Urbana and Champaign Horse Railway Company.

When the horse-car railway was undertaken in 1859, there was a considerable area of unsettled land between Urbana and West Urbana. Their separation was more than geographical. Concern about the increasing antagonism between the two communities was one of the motivations for locating the new seminary so that it would bridge the gap between them.

Service on the horse-car railway for passengers and baggage began August 31, 1863. Although both freight and baggage service were discontinued in the 1870's, passengers continued to be transported by horse or mule-drawn cars until 1890. Plans to reroute and electrify the railway were undertaken that year in Champaign and were completed in Urbana in 1891.

Ten years after the tracks were laid for the Great Western Railroad, Ivesdale was established as the county's westernmost station. W. H. Johnson platted the town of Norrie in 1864, but the name was soon changed to Ivesdale in honor of R. H. Ives, a major land owner in the area.

The project progressed smoothly during the summer, and during the fall of 1860 a contract was signed with the Reverend Stoughton and his outside investors allocating them eight acres of land and forty thousand dollars to aid in erecting the Seminary. For each one hundred dollars subscribed, local investors were to be issued a share in the seminary; for every two shares held investors could select a town lot from within the remaining 185.9 acres. Attractive terms were helpful in obtaining subscribers. Upon payment of 15 percent and the signing of a promissory note, a lot or lots could be selected; when the balance was paid, a deed was to be issued.

No specific educational plans had been considered for the seminary building after its completion. Dr. C. A. Hunt of Urbana suggested that the building and grounds be offered to the state to house an agricultural college. In January, 1861, Dr. Hunt headed a group of leading citizens of Champaign County in appealing to the Illinois legislature to establish such a college. The committee extolled the virtues of the county and pointed out that no other state institution was located here. In addition, they offered to donate to the state the seminary grounds and the building under construction.

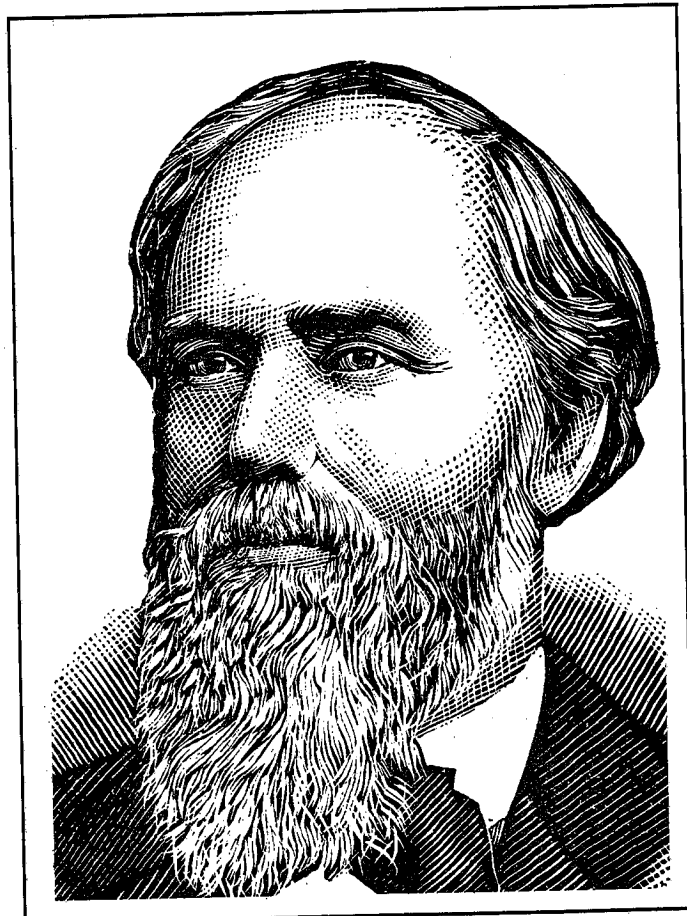
The legislature took no action except to refer the offer to its committee on education. However, on February 21, 1861, the legislature did grant a charter, but no funds, to the Urbana-Champaign Institute for a seminary. On August 6, the cornerstone was laid and ceremonies held. But by the end of August, unstable financial conditions created by the outbreak of the Civil War brought the project to a halt. Local investors reneged on their pledges and by the end of September construction was suspended.

With the passage of the Morrill Bill in 1862, new hope was given to the project, and again Dr. Hunt initiated a drive to establish a state agricultural and mechanical arts college in the uncompleted seminary. Other counties in central Illinois, notably Morgan, Logan, and McLean, organized groups and formed strong proposals to gain the school for their respective communities of Jacksonville, Lincoln, and Bloomington. Champaign County efforts intensified and a crucial action was taken on September 12, 1866, when the County Board of Supervisors, after their customary lengthy discussion, decided to ask the voters for approval to issue one hundred thousand dollars in county bonds to bid for the new school.

Champaign County voters approved bonds for the "Agricultural College" on October 10, 1866. Although discontent among minority voters lingered and legal challenges were made from citizens in several Champaign County townships, these efforts proved unsuccessful. The bonds were pledged to purchase the Urbana-Champaign Institute, to acquire a farm for the use of the new Industrial University, and to meet other expenses involved in bringing the university to Champaign County.

The "Elephant"
Originally erected to house the seminary, this became the first building of the Illinois Industrial University.





Clark Robinson Griggs

One of the most amiable and admired men of Champaign County was called upon to lead county forces against the competition from other counties. Clark Robinson Griggs was best known for his successful ventures in farming, land speculation, and in supplying goods to the Union troops during the Civil War. He was not, however, without experience in public service and had served on a school board in Massachusetts prior to coming to Illinois. Urbana citizens elected him mayor in 1866. Local political forces were wise in electing Griggs to the state legislature in 1867, and he pledged to do all in his power to obtain the university for Champaign County. Once elected, he immediately went to work throughout the state lining up support and expounding the wonderful benefits of having the university in Champaign County.

By the time the legislature convened, Griggs had made many friends among his elected colleagues, and several members of the press took up his cause in their newspapers. Although he lacked legislative seniority, his influence and political skill enabled him to obtain the chairmanship of the Agriculture and Mechanical Arts Committee which considered all bills pertaining to the location of the university.

Local appraisal of property and services included in bids for the new university were inclined to become inflated. A joint Senate and House of Representatives committee visited the four main contending counties and placed a cash value on their bids. The committee reported Champaign's bid as \$285,000, Logan's \$385,000, McLean's \$470,000, and Morgan's \$491,000. Morgan County's bid included all of Illinois College in Jacksonville, its laboratory, library, building, grounds, and a \$90,000 college endowment fund, for a cash value of \$176,000.

Griggs delayed consideration of all proposals until he was assured of a favorable vote by the legislature for the Champaign County site. During this time, a contingent of Champaign County citizens was on hand at the Leland Hotel in Springfield, entertaining newspapermen, politicians and legislators with the best food and spirits available. This was widely denounced as "appalling" conduct by Jacksonville's Jonathan Baldwin Turner and other opponents of Champaign County.

On February 29, 1867, when Griggs was confident that his lobbying committee had obtained the necessary vote commitment to assure success, he maneuvered the bill through the House of Representatives. The vote was 77 to 10 in favor of Champaign County. The next day the bill was sent to the Senate and after undergoing attacks for several days to amend the location, it was approved by a margin of 18 to 7. Governor Richard J. Oglesby signed the bill on February 28, and Champaign County citizens rejoiced in their victory. Equally pleased were members of the County Board of Supervisors who by now had allocated more than \$200,000 of county taxpayers' money towards obtaining the new land grant university. No one shed a tear over the fact that Reverend Stoughton's "white elephant" now passed to state ownership.

Upon learning of the selection of Champaign County for the site of the new university, an exasperated Jonathan Baldwin Turner exclaimed that it was the first time he had ever seen such a prize knocked down to the lowest bidder.

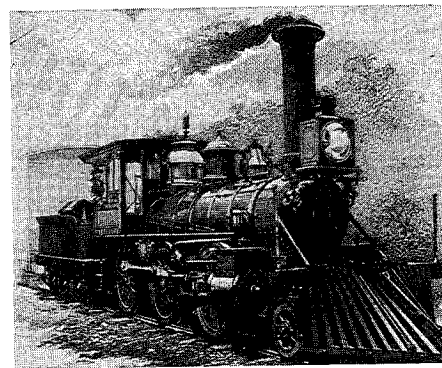
The bitterness of Turner over the location of the university was so strongly expressed as to cast a lingering cloud over the integrity of Champaign-Urbana and Clark R. Griggs. Time and historical investigation have proved early accusations to be basically unfounded; no evidence of illegal action was ever documented.

The facts are that the "Champaign Ring," as Turner called them, worked hard, did a lot of "horse trading," and were justified in bringing the university to an area that, unlike the other contenders, had no state institution.

Illinois Industrial University Buildings



The first Board of Trustees at the state university was appointed by Governor Richard J. Oglesby on March 1, 1867. Among the twenty-nine members of the board were three men from Champaign County; attorney J. O. Cunningham, nurseryman M. L. Dunlap, and physician John W. Scroggs. The following year Dr. Scroggs was elected to the state legislature where he was instrumental in obtaining the first appropriation of funds for the operation of the university. Clark R. Griggs was appointed as Scroggs's replacement on the Board of Trustees. Having secured the land grant university for Urbana, Griggs had returned to private life. While in the legislature, he also had managed to obtain a charter for the Danville, Urbana, Bloomington, and Pekin, a new railroad which was to further reshape life in much of Champaign County.



I.B. and W. train

The I.B. and W. built its rail car repair shops at Urbana in 1871 and thus became a major employer in the city.

The promise of a new railroad had undoubtedly been a bargaining factor in obtaining Danville's strong support for locating the university in Champaign County. It was Danville's Senator John L. Tincher who successfully guided the Griggs bill through the state senate.

Plans for a railroad were made by Griggs in 1866, and in the spirit of cooperation being promoted at the time, a joint Champaign and Urbana committee was formed to assist in the endeavor. Private investments were obtained, but townships and cities along the route were to be responsible for financing part of the venture. This was the first major project in Champaign County in which public funds were invested in a privately owned business. The incorporators of the Danville, Urbana, Bloomington, and Pekin line negotiated a merger with another railroad between Indianapolis, Indiana, and Danville, then renamed the line the Indianapolis, Bloomington, and Western Railroad.

When the I.B. and W. crossed Champaign County, new communities were created along its route. John Ogden sold land for a right-of-way through his property and the Ogden railroad station was established. John Leney laid out the town of Ogden in 1870, and immediately a number of residences and business houses were constructed.

"Old" St. Joseph, a settlement at Prathers Ford on the Salt Fork River, moved to the route of the railroad. New St. Joseph was begun in 1870, and lots were platted on land first entered by Catherine Hoss in 1839. Within two years, St. Joseph became a thriving agricultural center adjacent to the I.B. and W. tracks. Clark R. Griggs saw the town's potential and



participated in developing a plat of land which is known as the Griggs Addition to St. Joseph. Mayview Station was made a train stop four miles west of St. Joseph to accommodate farm shipments in the area. In due time, a simple but effective business and service center including a grain elevator, general store, blacksmith shop, and post office grew around the train station.

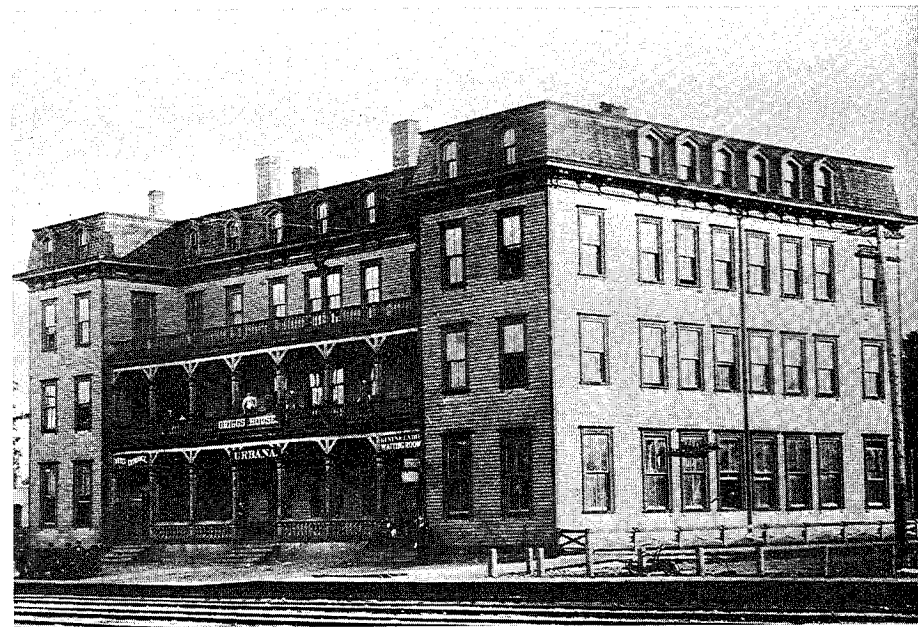
Indianapolis, Bloomington Western Railway Company Stock Certificate

The importance to Urbana of the I.B. and W. lay primarily in its allowing the city to become a stable and independent trade center. No longer was it necessary to transport shipments over the street car railroad to the I.C. depot in Champaign. Being on a direct rail route enabled Urbana merchants to become more competitive. Within one decade, Urbana had achieved an enviable position among Illinois towns: it had a new county courthouse which in effect preserved the seat of government within its city limits; it had been awarded the location of the state university; and it had become a center from which much of the business of the I.B. and W. Railroad was conducted. Without the railroad, Urbana would probably not have remained economically competitive with the neighboring city of Champaign.

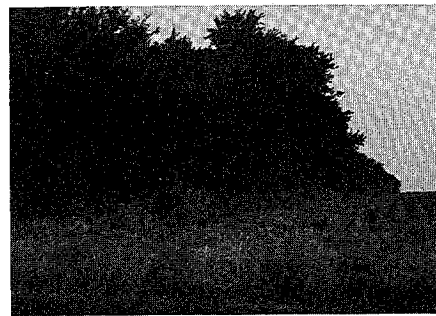
Townships such as St. Joseph, which bought \$25,000 in I.B. and W. bonds, and Middletown, which purchased \$50,000 worth, were eventually to realize benefits far in excess of their investments.

The Griggs House, Urbana

Urbana's Griggs House was erected in 1870. It served as both a hotel and a station for the I.B. and W. The proprietor was E. Ater.



The I.B. and W. was welcomed by the citizens of Champaign and by the Illinois Central Railroad as an intersecting line which would convey freight to the I.C.'s north-south route. When the I.B. and W. came to Middletown in 1869, the community changed its name to Mahomet and established its role as the major town in the western part of Champaign County.



Osage Hedge, South of Seymour

Supplies of wood in prairie areas were scarce and insufficient to provide necessary barriers to confine stock. Several solutions were tried, but until the advent of barbed wire, the most popular was the planting of hedge rows, especially the osage orange hedge.

The osage hedge was enthusiastically promoted by Jacksonville's Jonathan Baldwin Turner and others and was widely distributed through nurseries in the midwest, such as M. L. Dunlap's at Savoy.

In 1866, Abel Harwood planted eleven miles of hedges in Newcomb Township to replace "unsightly and falling fences."

Within two years, Griggs promoted a branch of the I.B. and W. which was to run to Havana, Illinois. And, once again, small communities were formed around the train stations. One of the railroad investors, L. J. Bond, gave his name to the new community of Bondville; a post office opened there in 1872. Richard Seymour was a large land owner in the area which was to take on his name; before the coming of the railroad, the settlement was known as the "Hedge" after a large planting of osage orange trees nearby.

The northern part of the county was without an east-west railroad until a Rantoul lawyer named Benjamin Gifford gathered a group of investors and built the Havana, Rantoul and Eastern Railroad. Although chartered in 1873, it was two years before construction began. By 1879, trains were running over a seventy-five mile track from the Indiana border to an abbreviated western terminus point at LeRoy, Illinois.

Simeon Busey of Urbana purchased land from Caleb Everton in 1875 and speculated on lot sales in the newly created village of Penfield. Busey had Thomas B. Kyle survey thirty-six lots

which were offered for sale at \$1.00 each. By 1877, it was necessary to develop an addition to the growing community.

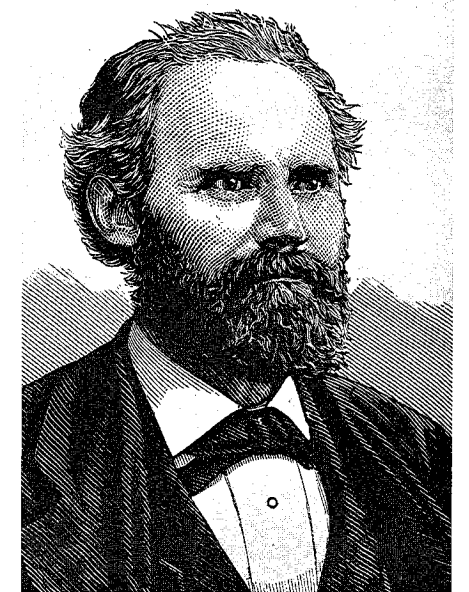
Benjamin Gifford and Harvey Bullock had the original town of Gifford platted in November of 1875. A few miles west of Rantoul, the Dewey station was established and further along the line the thriving village of Fisher came into existence. It seems remarkable that these particular communities survived and prospered throughout the county's history while other stations along the line never developed into more than grain shipping points. Undoubtedly, the names of the successful towns encouraged investment and settlement. Officers of the Havana, Rantoul and Eastern Railroad were Benjamin Gifford, President; Robert Fisher, Vice President; Guy D. Penfield, Secretary; and Milo Dewey, Treasurer.

The Indianapolis, Bloomington and Western was successful in getting government dollars from the sale of stock to cities and townships, but the Havana, Rantoul and Eastern was chartered too late to take advantage of public financial support — the new state constitution of 1870 prohibited municipalities from buying stock in any railroad or private corporation. Both railroad companies failed within a few years after their founding. They were taken over by new owners and their routes remained a strong influence on life in Champaign County.

The north-south Illinois Central Railroad opened Champaign County land to increased settlement, and the three east-west railroads which crossed the I.C. at Rantoul, Champaign, and Tolono resulted in the development of commerce throughout the county.

Although the population of Champaign County grew by eight thousand during the decade of the 1870's, the dramatic growth stimulated by the county's first railroad in 1854 had begun to recede. As the growth in population stabilized, so did life in the county. Most towns had at least one resident doctor, and in every town there were schools and churches.

Dr. Hartwell C. Howard, who practiced medicine in Champaign for over a half a century, was one of the most prominent and respected physicians in the county. He participated in the founding of the Champaign County Medical Society in 1859, and later the first "fireproof" school was named in his honor.



Dr. Hartwell C. Howard



Mrs. Calista Larned

Mrs. Calista Larned was elected county Superintendent of Schools in 1877; she served until 1881 when she resigned. Also in 1877, the Rantoul voters elected Etta L. Gifford its first woman member to the three member school board of directors. Both elections were significant since it was not until 1891 that the Illinois legislature granted the right of suffrage in school elections to women.



First Presbyterian Church, Urbana

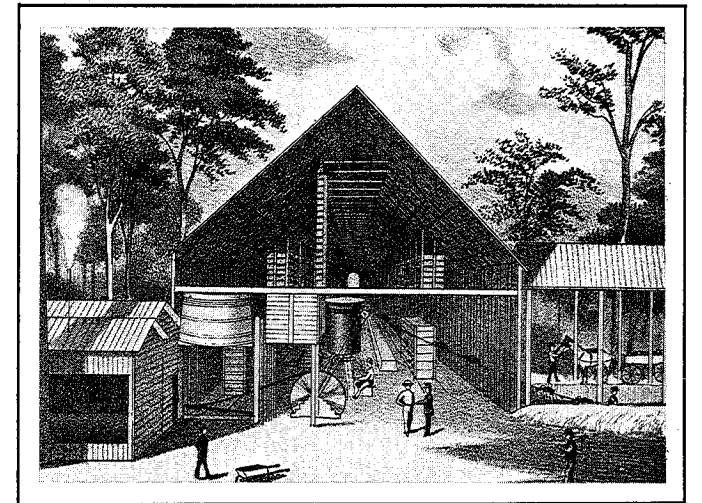
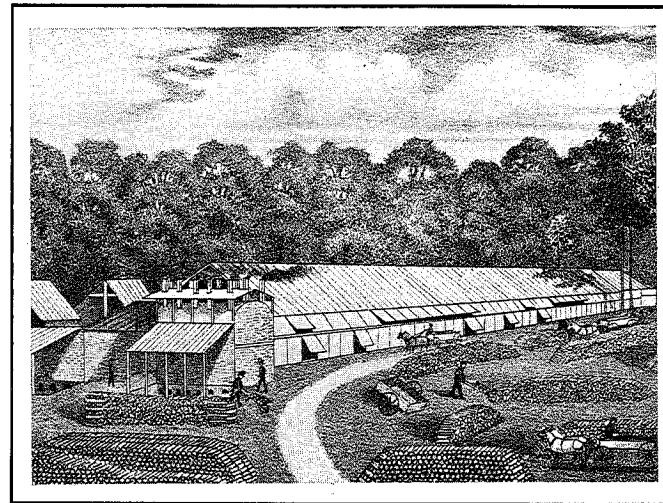
The First Presbyterian Church in Urbana was organized in December, 1856. The frame church pictured above was erected in 1867 at a cost of \$5,429.

In 1855, the first church bell in Champaign County was hung in the belfry of the newly constructed First Baptist Church of Urbana. Purchase of the bell was made possible by the ladies of the church through their fund-raising efforts. Home-baked bread, pies, cakes, and cookies have purchased a number of pianos and organs, as well as bells, throughout the history of this and other midwestern farm counties.

The Mahomet Baptist Church, which erected its first house of worship in 1852, built a permanent brick building in 1867 which still stands today. In 1855, the First Presbyterian Church in West Urbana (Champaign) moved its place of worship from the Illinois Central depot to its first building at State and Hill Streets on the west side of town. This site was retained when construction of the new church building began in 1867. The building was completed in 1869 and services have been held there continuously except for two periods of interruption caused by fires.

The historic Goose Pond Church, built by the Congregationalists in 1855 at the intersection of First Street and present University Avenue in Champaign, hosted gatherings in which Abraham Lincoln gave public addresses. He spoke there on June 17 and again on June 30, 1856. Ten years later, the First Congregational Church erected its second church building on West Park Street, but it was destroyed by fire in 1873.

These churches and other fine buildings erected in this era clearly required skilled craftsmen supplied with high quality materials. Although many building supplies were shipped by rail, a number of brick yards and saw mills were operated within the county and provided most of the materials needed.



*A.O. Howell Tile Factory
North of Urbana*

The census of 1870 showed construction materials as the largest dollar volume industry in the county. Eight sawmills employed thirty-nine men, and six brick factories had sixty-five employees. These 104 employees received wages totaling \$25,690.

Brick manufacture was a major industry for many years and local clay from several sites around the county was used. The route of present Cunningham Avenue in Urbana marks the former location of one of the city's busiest brick makers. Sidney's brick and tile factory provided employment for a number of workers who produced most of the clay-based products in the southern part of the county. In the county's northern sector the Patton Brick and Tile Factory supplied clay products to builders and farmers. The factory was located near the site of the present Rantoul High School. Rantoul's Belle Avenue was named for Belle Patton, who helped her parents run the brick and tile business.

The greatest demand for building products obviously came from the growth in population and subsequent needs for homes, stores, grain warehouses, churches, and schools. In addition, the reconstruction of buildings seemed almost constant due to the frequency of fires. A major portion of the Champaign business district was destroyed by fire July 4, 1868. Other fires of 1866, 1867, 1869, and 1870 razed entire blocks of buildings. Urbana shares with Chicago two significant events. Both cities were created in 1833 and both were ablaze on October 8 and 9 of 1871, as devastating fires destroyed the major portions of their business districts. In 1872, fire consumed the Mahomet business district. Merchants there lost little time in rebuilding the business district to the west of the site of the fire on Main Street.

The need for people with specialized skills in the areas of transportation, building construction, retailing, and food processing operations was combined with the demand for increasing numbers of persons engaged in the fields of medicine, law, education, and religious service.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, COUNTY COLLECTOR'S OFFICE, Urbana, Ill. *April 19th 1884.*

No. *369* CHAMPAIGN COUNTY. Received of *Joseph N. Bell* the sum of *Eighteen* DOLLARS, in full of State, County, Town, Road and Bridge, District School, and other Taxes, for the year 1883, on the following described Real Estate, to-wit:

SUBDIVISION	Sec. or Sub-Loz.	Town or Loc.	Range of Block	Acres	Val. by State Bd.	State Tax.	County Tax.	Town Tax.	R. & B. Tax.	Dis. School Tax.	City or Village Tax.	Registe'd Bond Tax.	Dis. Road Tax.	Back Tax.	Total Tax Due.
<i>N-1/2 NW</i>	<i>232</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>106</i>	<i>225</i>	<i>539</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>366</i>	<i>569</i>						<i>1841</i> <i>28</i> <i>1866</i>

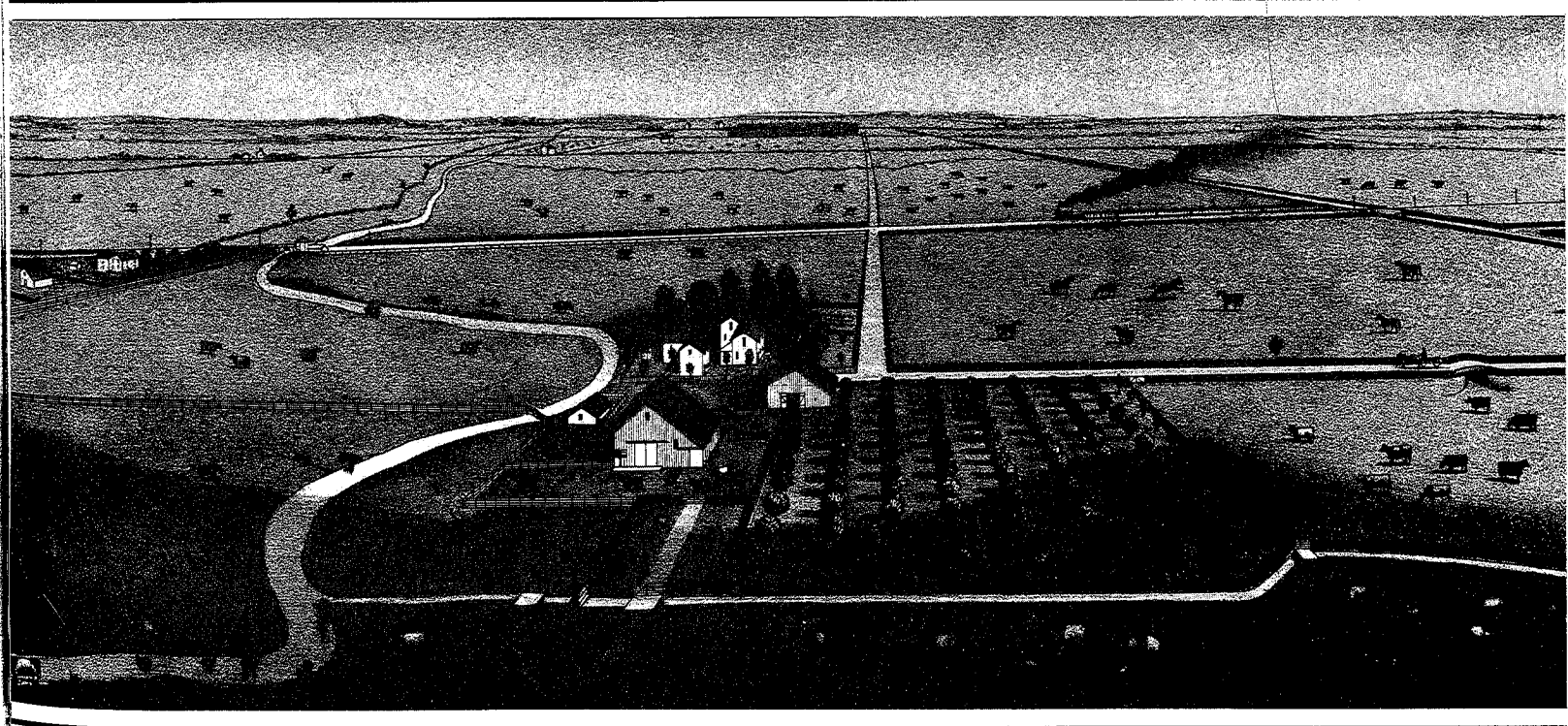
J. A. Lewis County Collector.

The completion of Champaign County's first fifty years was celebrated at an Old Settlers' Picnic held in Union Park at Crystal Lake. The picnic was only one part of the day's activities which were planned by the committee to commemorate the Golden Anniversary of the county. J. W. Wallick, the proprietor of Union Park and Crystal Lake, worked for weeks to prepare for the celebration. Simeon H. Busey was chairman of the grounds committee and Judge Joseph O. Cunningham was in charge of entertainment; Nat Cohen, W. Malesby, and E. Eaton, who was secretary of the Old Settlers, served on the music committee.

The scheduled speaker, Congressman M. D. White from Crawfordsville, was unable to attend, so Milton W. Matthews, publisher of the *Champaign County Herald*, and Judge J. O. Cunningham replaced him on the program and gave stirring reviews of the county's history. The program also called for an exhibition of water throwing by the fire companies of the twin cities, a parade of Sunday School classes and societies from throughout the county, a drill team performance by Company D, and a special presentation by the Champaign County Glee Club under the direction of Nat Cohen.

Evening activities included a fireworks display in the park, followed by a Grand Ball at Busey's Hall under the sponsorship of the Owls Dancing Club. So concluded Champaign County's first fifty years.

Glendale, Jesse Meharry farm, Philo Twp.



Champaign County Tax Bill, 1884

The increase in taxes levied between the establishment of the county and its golden anniversary was substantial and not well appreciated by most farmers. The taxes of Joseph N. Bell for the year 1883 were equal to approximately 30 percent of the total \$61.61 collected by Clerk Thomson R. Webber in the entire 1833 county assessment. On his eighty acres, Bell paid \$18.41 in taxes, about 30 percent of which went to support public education.

Champaign County life styles current towards the end of the county's first fifty years can best be understood in context: it was a time of stratification of local society. Fraternal organizations, literary societies, and women's clubs offered new outlets for socialization; people sought out others of similar cultural and economic backgrounds. All of this was in contrast to the lives of the early settlers which were marked by an attitude of equality based on mutual dependence in their struggle for survival.

Increased settlement in the 1870's was not confined to the towns and cities. One of the last large parcels of land in Champaign County was purchased in 1871 by a colony of German farmers from Adams County, Illinois. Approximately 150 families whose roots were in the lowlands of northwestern Germany, along the North Sea, settled in the swampy area of Compromise Township. Their skilled knowledge about drainage enabled these late settlers to transform a wasteland swamp into some of the most productive land in the world. Later they established a post office and a town appropriately named Flatville. By 1882, some of these industrious German settlers had moved from Compromise into Stanton and Ogden Townships where they established a small community, including a store, blacksmith shop, and, most important, the St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church. Four years later, a post office was opened; the community took the name of Royal and in 1886 acquired the distinction of being the last town to be established in Champaign County.

THE SECOND FIFTY YEARS

1883 to 1933

The beginning of the second half century in the history of Champaign County saw population growth slowed. Development of the land and improvements of the various communities along the railroad became the primary concerns of local leaders. Emphasis was on making life more pleasant in the towns and on encouraging more commerce based on the steadily increasing crop harvest.

Agricultural interests were advanced by the Farm Drainage Act of the 1879 state legislature. Champaign County farmers first organized the Beaver Lake Drainage District in 1880; it ultimately became the largest such district in the county, serving an area of over fifty-five square miles north of Urbana. Other districts caused thousands of acres to become productive, and crop yields were increased.

Drainage projects were to continue indefinitely and have provided one of the most important economic benefits for Champaign County residents. These benefits extended beyond the farm and were a source of considerable income to the tile manufacturers, road and bridge builders, waterway ditchers, and laborers.

Improvements within the twin cities of Champaign and Urbana in the 1880's and 1890's were to pave the way to truly modern living. The first utility company in the county, The Champaign and Urbana Gas and Light Company, had been organized in 1867 by Clark R. Griggs, the post-Civil War entrepreneur who had made so many other contributions to the community.

In 1884, when a coal exploration shaft was being built, a stroke of bad luck became a blessing. The shaft hit so much water at 160 feet below ground level that it was impossible to continue drilling. But Henry Trevett and William Day resourcefully organized a water company and were providing service by 1885. The new water company had found an inexhaustible source of water from the underlying glacial drift. Although limited water service had been available since 1871, the new Champaign and Urbana Water Company made many businesses, homes, and industries much more functional and pleasant.

The accidental discovery of water while drilling for coal in 1884 had a great influence on the growth and development of the Twin Cities. It was fortuitous that while seeking one natural resource, coal, the community found a more lasting and necessary resource, high quality water.

Opposite: Champaign and Urbana Water Company, c. 1906.

One of the most important effects of having a plentiful water source was the expansion of the use of modern bathrooms with toilets. Therefore, it became necessary for communities to provide for adequate waste disposal. The city of Urbana was one of the first cities in Illinois to develop a sanitary sewer system utilizing a septic tank. The Urbana system was built in 1893, and Champaign followed by laying its own sanitary sewer lines in 1896-97.



F. K. Robeson

*F. K. Robeson House, c. 1906
Southeast corner, University Avenue and
Randolph Street, Champaign*

The Western Electric Light Company went into operation during the fall of 1885 under the direction of William B. McKinley. One of the foremost leaders in Champaign County history, McKinley organized the United Manufacturing Company in 1899, which eventually obtained and consolidated the water, electric, gas, and street-car railway service in Champaign and Urbana.

The dominance of Champaign as a retail center was secured by the development of several large department and clothing stores prior to the turn of the century. The well-known Robeson's Store, founded in 1874, became accepted as the "farmers store" and provided a selection to meet almost every need. "Josh" Kuhn's was established as a community retail institution as was the W. Lewis Co., G. C. Willis Store, and Joseph Kaufman Clothiers. No community of comparable size could equal Champaign's retail offerings.

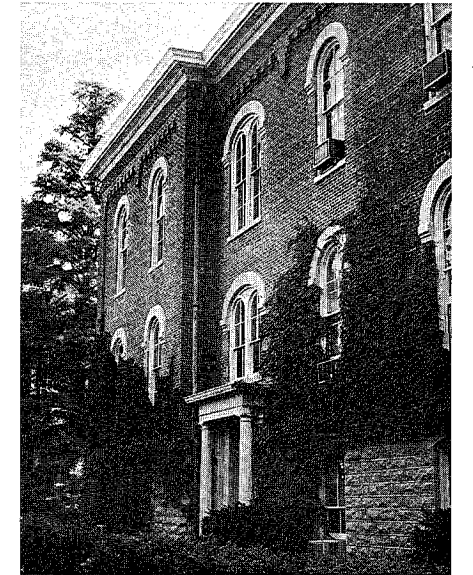


The major development in rural Champaign County in the 1880's was new railroad service in Raymond and Ayers Townships in the southeastern part of the county. The Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad established a station in 1882 which assumed the name of Broadlands, the large estate previously owned by Michael Sullivant. The community soon prospered and within five years several businesses were established there, including the Bank of Broadlands which was opened by A. M. Kenny and D. P. McIntyre. This bank was much needed and was well received by the numerous small farm owners who had purchased land upon the breaking up of the multi-thousand acre Sullivant estate.

The C. and E. I. route curved south across Raymond Township and there the village of Longview came into existence. Citizens of the small community of Orizaba, located just north of the tracks, moved several houses and the post office to the new town of Longview and the older town disappeared. Longview became an important grain shipping station in the southern part of the county and attracted several new business investors. In 1887, John W. Churchill and Ben Catton were the first to capitalize on the railroad by opening a grain brokerage business without a grain elevator; they purchased grain and shoveled it by hand from the farmers' wagons directly into the railroad cars. By 1880, George W. Helm and other investors had built a permanent elevator at Longview which was to enjoy a long and successful business life.

One of the most significant events to occur in Champaign County in 1885 was the change in name of the Illinois Industrial University. Many felt the school's name was hampering its growth and prestige, since the word "Industrial" was often used to signify institutions of a charitable nature which cared for dependent children, or which, in some cases, were associated with penal or manual labor facilities. The Alumni Association started a movement to give dignity to their alma mater by changing its name to the University of Illinois. Regent Selim Hobart Peabody successfully represented the 442 alumni who had graduated between 1872 and 1885, and the legislative act to change the name was approved on June 19, 1885.

Regardless of its title, the university struggled through the decade of the 1880's with meager financial support from the state legislature. Enrollment over this ten year period averaged 371 students a year; the number of faculty members fluctuated between twenty-four and thirty.



Harker Hall

Harker Hall is the oldest classroom building on the University of Illinois campus. It was built in 1878 as a chemistry building and later was used for law classes.

Direct railway loading of livestock and grain was common practice for many years at the Foolsland station in Brown Township where a small section of the Chicago branch of the Wabash railroad cut through the northwest corner of the Township. It was not until 1888 that William Sniff built the first elevator in Foolsland.

Carlos Montezuma earned part of his university expenses by lecturing on his early Yavapai Indian childhood. During a summer evening in 1883, despite torrents of rain, crowds filled the Methodist Church of Fisher to hear about his capture at age six by enemy Pima Indians. For thirty dollars, the Pima sold him to a wandering white photographer who took him east to live in the white world of Chicago and New York City. Carlos's foster father later sent him to live in Urbana with the Reverend and Mrs. William H. Steadman of the First Baptist Church.

Clark R. McCullough, who lived across the road, was a frequent hunting companion of Carlos, and being several years younger, found it difficult to keep up with his Indian friend. Few of Carlos's older friends could match his remarkable skills, whether in sports, oratory, or chemistry. Although Montezuma was generally unrecognized in local historical writings, his life and contributions to society have placed him as one of North America's most outstanding Indian leaders.

Although local folklore has memorialized the name "Chief Shemauger" (variously spelled) as the area's most renowned Indian, there is little basis in fact for this title. The Pottowotomie had no political system of chiefs, only village heads or leaders. "Old Soldier," a more appropriate name given this Indian who claimed Champaign County as his birthplace, establishes his probable leadership of Soldier's Village at Kankakee.

Historical references to his signing treaties "Chief Shemauger" are probably inaccurate. To seal a treaty, Indians customarily touched the pen, or made an "x" or pictorial sign.



One of the graduates from the final class of the Illinois Industrial University in 1884 was a distinguished student from Urbana. Carlos Montezuma, a native American Indian, entered the university in 1880 and was popular with both his classmates and the faculty. After graduating cum laude, he went to Chicago Medical School. Upon completing studies there in 1889, he was employed as a physician for the United States Indian Bureau. He was assigned to an Indian reservation in North Dakota and later was made head surgeon at the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania.

Dr. Montezuma began writing and publishing a series of pamphlets entitled *The Indian Question*. In it he strongly criticized the Indian Bureau and demanded it be discontinued, along with such things as Indian schools and Indian shows, which he saw as prejudicial to the Indian people. *The Indian Question* was a source of embarrassment to the Indian Bureau, but the thought-provoking messages it contained were endorsed by many of its readers. Dr. Montezuma left government service and returned to Illinois to practice medicine in Chicago. He soon developed a high reputation as a gastroenterologist among the elite society women of the city. Financially secure, he started publication of a monthly magazine called *Wassaja*, a title taken from his Indian name, meaning "Signaling." Carlos Montezuma campaigned for Indian rights until his death from tuberculosis on January 21, 1923.

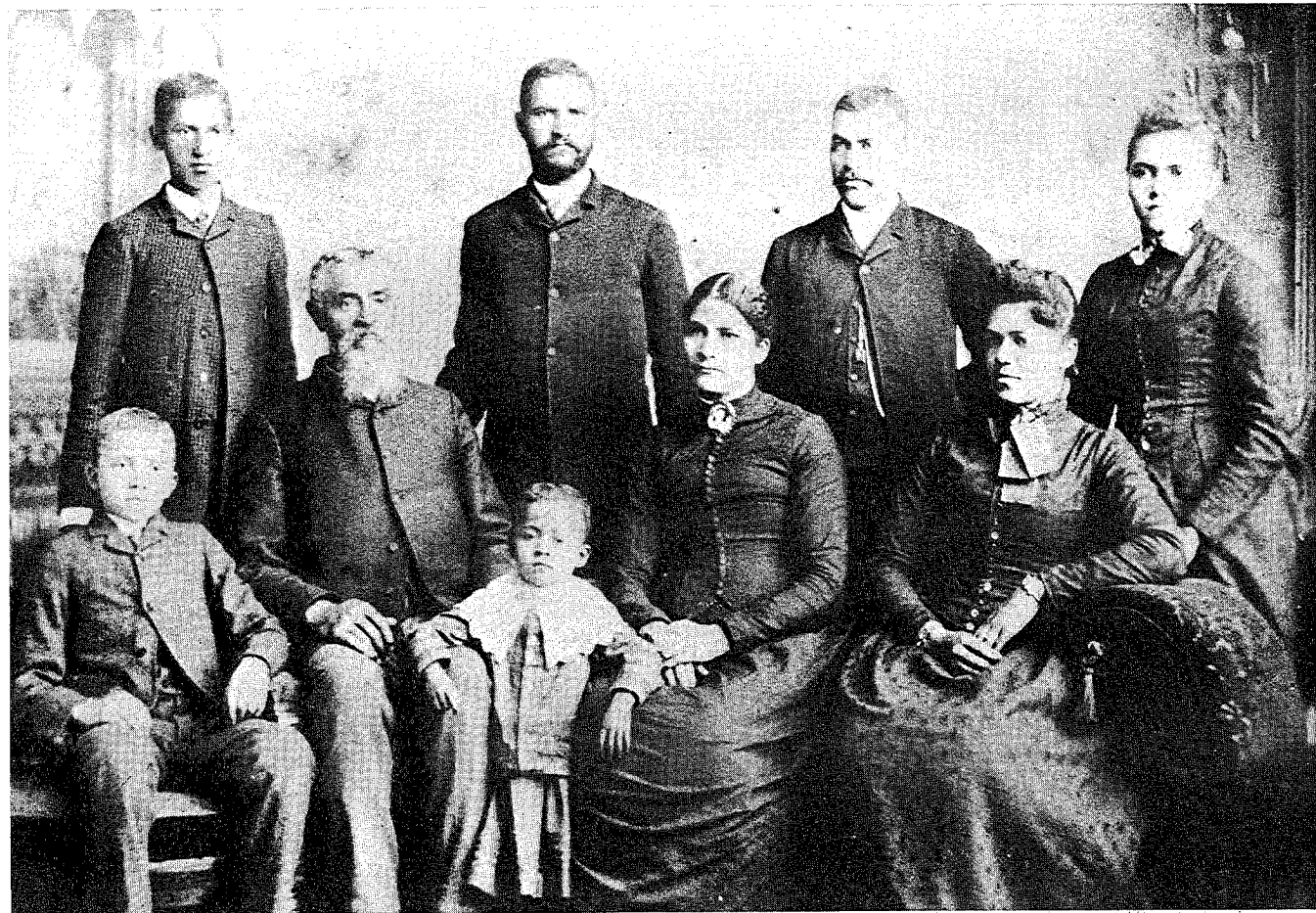
The encouragement of civil rights for black people in Champaign County started on an institutional level in 1895 when the University of Illinois hired Albert R. Lee as the school's first black employee. Initially, he served as a messenger, but as he matured, he became known as the "Dean of 'colored' students." Although there was no official title for the position, Mr. Lee became the person to whom black students looked for assistance in matters of housing, transportation, recreation and classroom problems.

The emancipation of blacks after the Civil War, coupled with Champaign County's location along major railroad routes, resulted in increased migration of blacks into the area prior to the turn of the century. Before the war, there had been fewer than fifty black persons in the county. The census of 1880 recorded a black population of 462. Many of these people settled on farms or in towns in the southern and eastern part of the county, along the route of the Great Western Railroad. Several black families lived in Sidney Township, including John Allen and his wife, who together cleared forty acres of land on their small farm and raised ten children. By 1880, the town of Homer was served by two barber shops owned and operated by black men who competed with each other for customers.



Albert R. Lee

Albert R. Lee was a member of the University of Illinois staff for fifty-two years, from 1895 to 1947. He served throughout seven university administrations and retired as Chief Clerk in the office of the university president, George D. Stoddard. No other person did more to encourage and help young black students through stressful and sometimes hostile times when their quest for higher education was made difficult by discrimination in housing, recreation, transportation, and food service.



*George W. Smith family, c. 1887
(John M. Smith, center, front row)*

George W. Smith was an ex-slave who escaped from servitude in Tennessee in 1862 and joined the Union Army as a scout for General John A. Logan. In the fall of 1863, Smith arrived in Springfield, Illinois, with General John A. McClelland. He married and lived there for thirteen years following the war before coming to Champaign County. The land he acquired here was later farmed by his son, John M. Smith, and has remained in the family since 1876.

On July 25, 1983, George Smith's granddaughter, Rosetta Williams, accepted a Centennial Farm plaque on behalf of the heirs of John M. Smith. Illinois Director of Agriculture, Larry Werries, presented the plaque during ceremonies honoring Centennial Farms at the Champaign County Fair.

One of the most notable black farmers in Champaign County was George W. Smith, who arrived in Raymond Township in 1876 and soon purchased eighty acres. In a few years, he doubled his acreage and became one of the area's most successful crop producers.

Within the larger cities of Champaign and Urbana, blacks, who arrived primarily by way of the Illinois Central Railroad, were employed as domestics, janitors, and stable hands. Coming out of slavery, most blacks were poorly schooled and a large percentage were illiterate. This educational handicap, along with the prejudice of many whites against equality for the races, prevented the majority of southern black immigrants from attaining more than a subsistence standard of living.

Those black citizens who developed farms and businesses tended to locate in townships where earlier settlers had come from the northern and New England states or from foreign countries. Communities in the western part of the county were settled predominately by white southerners who discouraged blacks from locating in those areas.

Overall, Champaign County was receptive to black immigration and offered more opportunities for a better life than were available in the South or in the major cities of the North. Part of this welcoming attitude was due to the influence of religious institutions and to a genuine feeling of brotherhood on the part of a small minority of the white population. But the majority of the whites saw the new arrivals as a source of cheap and easily directed labor to meet the needs of an advancing white society.



Champaign or Urbana restaurant, 1909

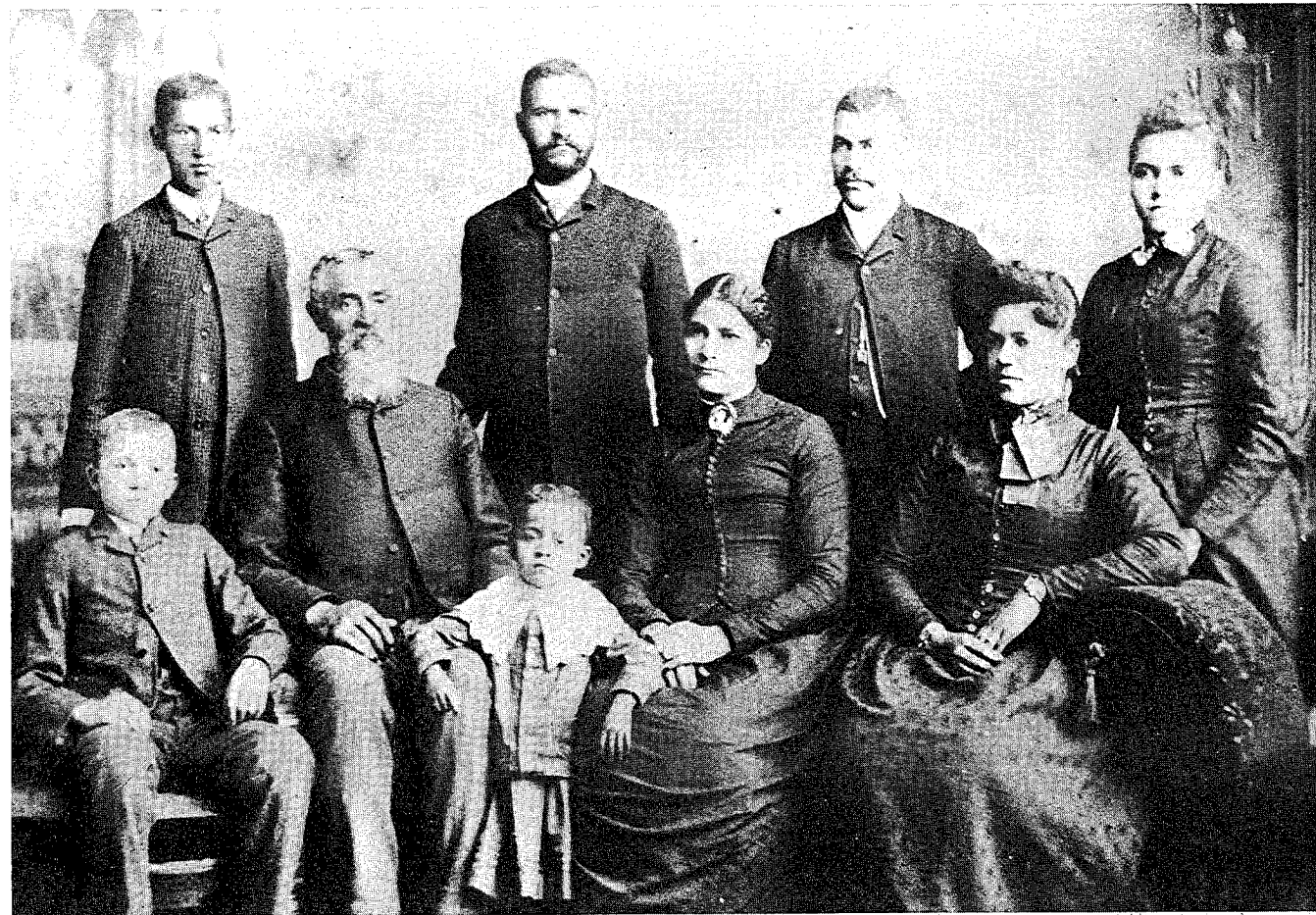


*Clerk, Plumbing Establishment
Champaign-Urbana, 1909*

The turn of the century presented new employment opportunities for women. What was generally viewed as social and economic progress in this era was attributable in part to the contributions of the working woman. Jobs were available in the growing number of retail establishments, restaurants, banks, and especially in the offices of new telephone companies rapidly coming into operation throughout the country.

In many instances, large farm families had more daughters than were required to maintain the family home. Economic necessity dictated that the girls not needed at home should seek jobs in the bustling towns.

Women frequently found employment as waitresses, clerks, and cashiers. The standard attire of the working woman was a white shirtwaist and a dark skirt.



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Fortunately, the state of Illinois had passed the Compulsory Education Act of 1883, and by 1900 an employer could be fairly certain that any seventeen-year-old job applicant would have obtained at least a basic education. Racial prejudice aside, the main difference in employment opportunities between women and blacks was that the jobs requiring a higher level of education were usually filled by women. Generally, blacks and women were able to enter the job market because they met a demand for a source of cheap labor, and by custom were usually obedient workers.

Although blacks found prospects for employment advancement very limited, for white women of exceptional and unusual abilities there were opportunities in newly developing careers. At this time, the University of Illinois broadened its curriculum to better equip women entering professions. During the next decades, opportunities for women to undertake professional careers were greatly expanded, especially in the field of home economics. This was largely due to the leadership of one of the University of Illinois's most outstanding administrators.



Isabel Bevier

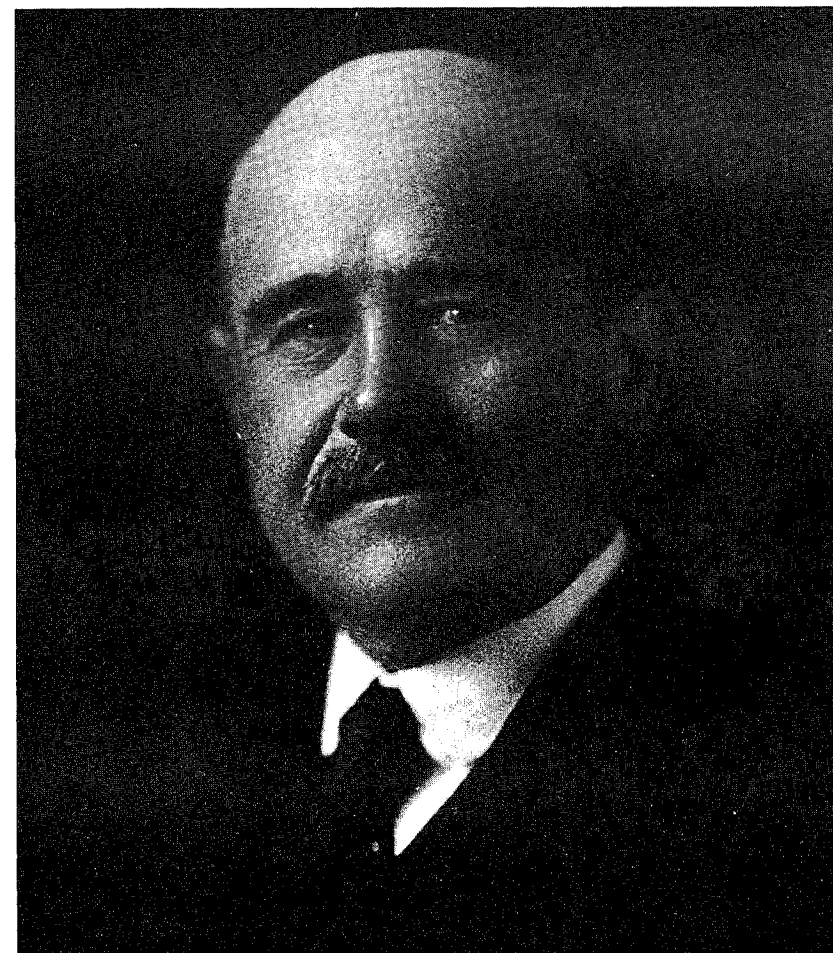
The present English Building on the University of Illinois campus (originally the Women's Building) was renamed Bevier Hall in 1947. When a new home economics building was completed in 1956, the name Bevier Hall was transferred to it, and the older building was renamed the English Building.

Isabel Bevier, who came to the University in 1900 to fill the newly created professorship of household science, became the Head of the Department of Household Science (Home Economics), a position which she held for twenty years. She was an outstanding chemist and nutritionist. Isabel Bevier was responsible for establishing the study of home economics at the University of Illinois as a scientific pursuit which was nationally recognized.

As the non-farm work force grew larger, local passenger transportation needs increased greatly. Utilities magnate William B. McKinley electrified the old horse-drawn street railway in 1891. The following year, he sold the business to Benjamin F. Harris, Jr. The new owner, although only twenty-five years old at the time he bought the company, successfully managed and expanded services of the Urbana and Champaign Railway until 1898. At that time, McKinley repurchased the company, and also acquired the local gas and electric utilities in the Twin Cities. In 1900, he negotiated ownership of the Danville Street Railway, and expanded its system to serve the outlying towns of Catlin and Westville. By masterful planning he had formed the nucleus of an electric railroad called the Danville, Urbana, and Champaign Railway Company. In 1901, the route of this new passenger train was a subject of great interest; when finally revealed, it was cause for celebration in communities which would benefit from improved transportation. Mayview, Ogden, and St. Joseph were included along the route to Danville. A branch line was built from Ogden to Homer in 1904, which was to enhance the economic interests of both communities.



Street Railway Conductor or Motorman (Possibly G. Viles), c. 1905-1910, Urbana and Champaign Railway



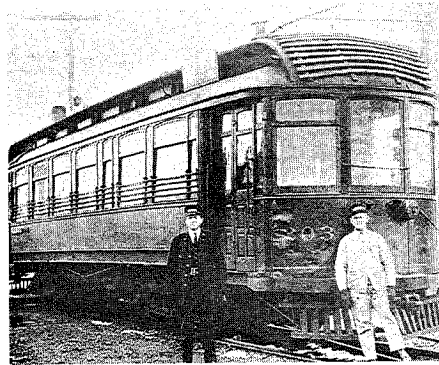
William B. McKinley

The West End Amusement Park was created by Benjamin F. Harris, Jr., on West Church Street at what was then the western city limit of Champaign. (Although he was the grandson of B. F. Harris, Sr., in contemporary accounts, Harris was referred to as Jr.). The park was an inducement to riders on the Urbana and Champaign Railway streetcars. Highlights of the park facilities were a shooting gallery, a six-hundred seat summer theater, and a roller coaster type of ride.

Starting in 1894 and continuing for a number of years, big Fourth of July celebrations were held there with entertainment, picnics, and impressive fireworks displays. The park is now named Eisner Park in honor of the Eisner family of Champaign. The building currently used as a senior citizens center by the Champaign Park District was the #7 Eisner grocery store for many years.

Homer Park opened in 1905 under the management of Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Burkhart; it was the most popular commercial recreation area in East Central Illinois until it closed in 1930. A major attraction was the zoo and its bear.

While a youngster, Glen Hiltbrand worked at the park for about a year until Mr. Burkhart introduced snakes to the zoo's collection. Not caring for snakes, young Glen quit his job and joined his boyhood chums in their favorite pastime of hopping a ride on the steps of the interurban train for a free trip to Ogden.



Conductor and Motorman on Illinois Traction Company

The Village of Sidney never capitalized fully on being served by railroads. Instead, the community leadership of times past chose to depend on a purely agricultural base for its survival.

Although Sidney was not chosen to be on McKinley's electric railway interurban line, the town had had both passenger and freight service direct to Champaign for twenty years. A branch of the Wabash, a successor to the Great Western, had been built between the two towns in 1881-82.

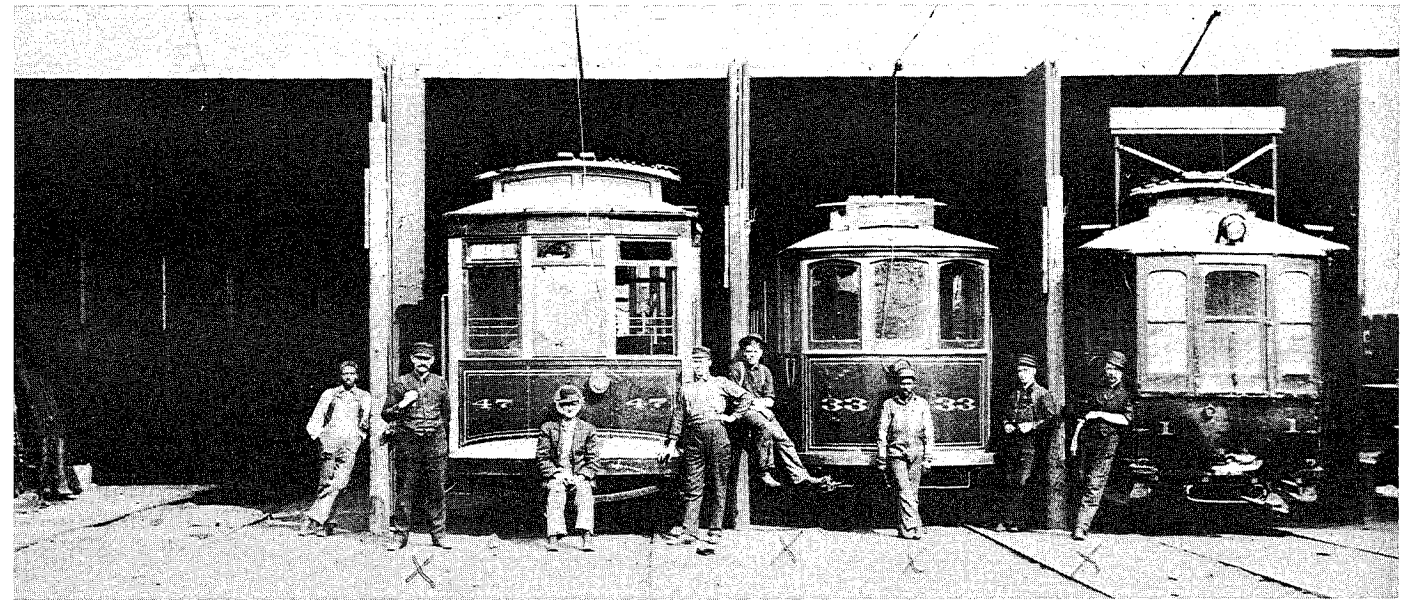
McKinley's plan included encouraging recreational travel by developing an amusement park along his interurban route. Despite the availability of some excellent sites along the Salt Fork River at St. Joseph which were commonly used as leisure parks, McKinley acquired approximately thirty acres near the end of the Homer route and established Homer Park. The park site proved to be a wise selection, since it attracted Danville area patrons without losing any of the Twin City customers. Each season, many thousands of visitors who came to the park via the interurban were a major source of fares for McKinley.

The growth of the Interurban was phenomenal. By the end of the decade, the consolidated companies of McKinley, under the title Illinois Traction Company, had extended service from Danville, through Decatur and Springfield, to the McKinley Bridge across the Mississippi River at St. Louis, Missouri.

Sidney residents had unsuccessfully vied for service on the original interurban line. Although disappointed when the route through St. Joseph and Ogden to Danville was announced, they were afforded direct passenger and freight service between Chicago and St. Louis when the C. and E. I. built a track running a half-mile east of the town and opened the Rutherford station.

Tracks running north from Sidney in 1903 passed east of St. Joseph and onward across the flatlands toward the vicinity of Royal. Henry T. Osterbur sold land about 1½ miles south of town to the C. and E. I. for the railroad right of way. A depot was erected in 1904 and the new town of Royal started moving thirteen houses and a store from the original 1882 settlement to the new town site. Even before the town move started, two elevators and a blacksmith shop had been established along the tracks.

Osterbur's original intention was to gain an elevator siding near his property, but he soon recognized the potential for selling town lots. He laid out the present town of Royal, and his neighbor, I. J. Duitsman, Sr., added on to the east side of town to accommodate the influx of new businesses and homes. Before the year 1904 was over, Royal had acquired, in addition to those structures already moved, a doctor's office, lumberyard, bank, and several new residences. As a consequence of the railroad, Royal was assured a degree of permanency as a strong agricultural service community.

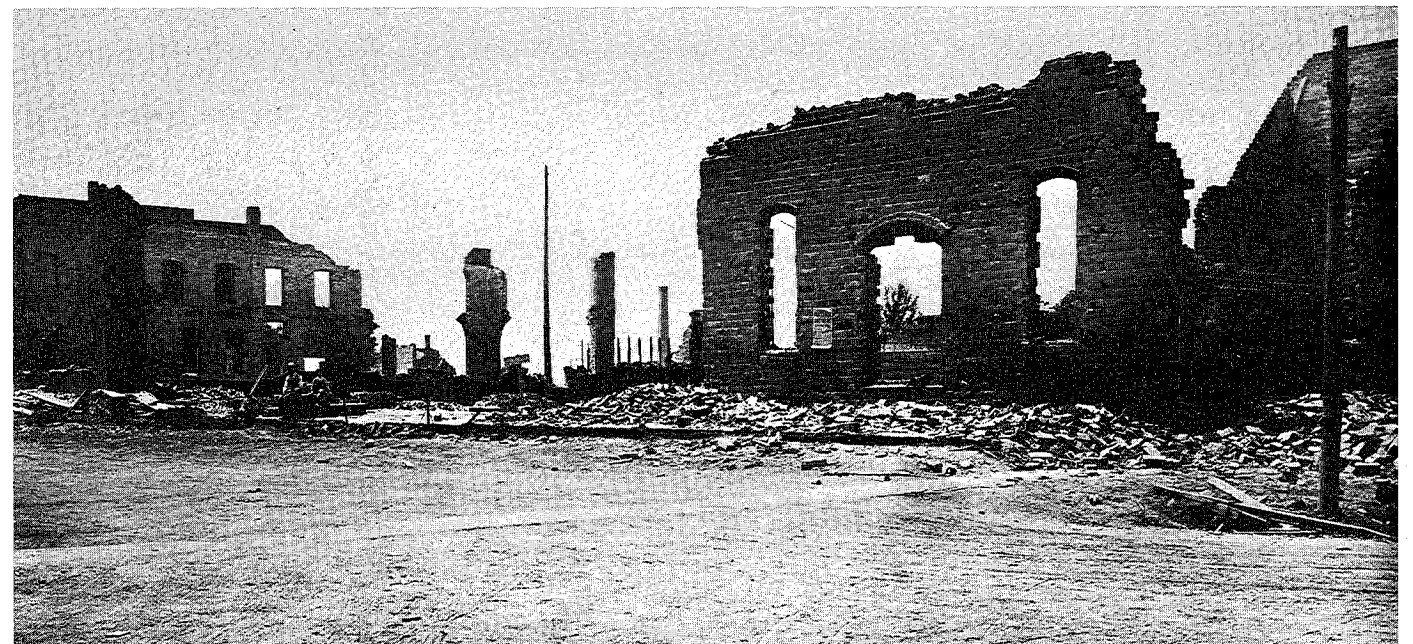


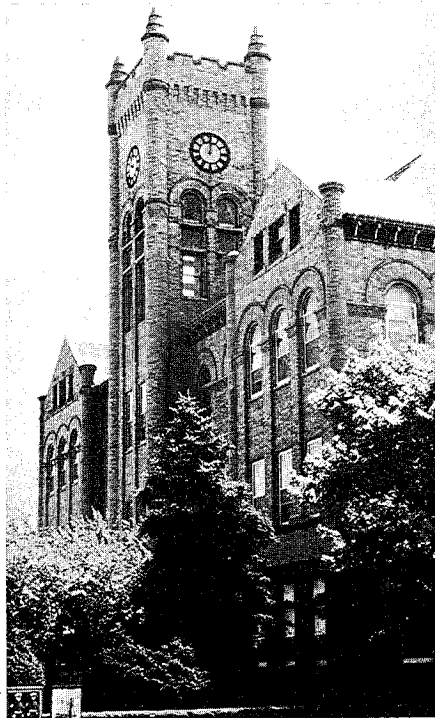
Interurban cars
No. 47 (c. 1909-1918); No. 33 (c. 1900);
No. 1 (1890's)

Persons identified by an "x," left to right: John Key, Ora Patterson, Walter Hall, Charley Bartley

Railroad development at the turn of the century brought about more progress in several Champaign towns. But Rantoul was to suffer its most serious setback from its proximity to the railroad. Sparks from a fast moving Illinois Central train going through town on August 9, 1901, ignited the Goff and Yates elevator; fire swept throughout the business district and beyond to destroy some fifty-four business and professional offices, the Baptist Church, the Catholic Church, and several homes. Within two months Rantoul had cleared the debris from the fire and had more than four hundred workmen busy erecting thirty-five new two-story brick buildings in the downtown area.

Rantoul, after the fire, 1901



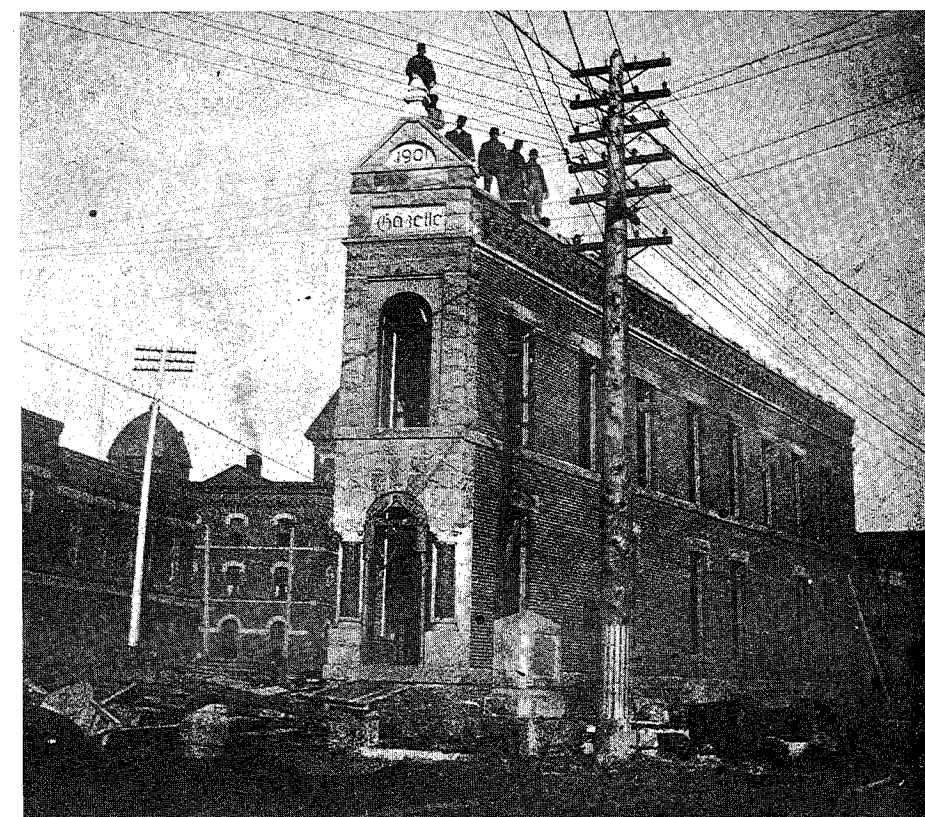


1901 Champaign County Courthouse

The courthouse was dedicated on August 22, 1901, with Circuit Court Judge Francis W. Wright presiding as Master of Ceremonies. Those in attendance had the opportunity to hear as many as fifteen speakers in the day-long program. In addition to eloquent words delivered by such notables as attorney John J. Rea, Superintendent of Schools George R. Shawhan, and Judge J. O. Cunningham, the crowd was treated to music by the St. Joseph Band. Quartets from Mahomet and from Urbana also provided a break in the courthouse oratory marathon.

A violin solo by 10-year-old "Sollie" Cohen engaged the attention of everyone. This same young violin soloist later became Champaign County's premier representative to the world of music. Sol Cohen has enjoyed an international career of more than seventy-five years as a composer, performer, and teacher of music.

Gazette Building, 1901



Bricklayers and other tradesmen were very much in demand in the county during 1901. Just prior to the Rantoul fire, the new county courthouse had been completed in Urbana, which provided many craftsmen with jobs for the nearly two years it was under construction. The contract was let in September 1899 to V. Jobst and Sons of Peoria, Illinois, for what was termed a "remodeling" of the courthouse. The so-called remodeling authorized by the Board of Supervisors was actually a legal subterfuge to circumvent the state law which required voter approval of new courthouse construction. At the time of completion in 1901, the building was in fact a new and elaborate courthouse. Its large size, substantial architectural materials, and high-quality construction assured Urbana of the county seat of government for at least another century. However, the disgust of voters with the Board of Supervisors for their bold, politically insensitive action lingered for many years.

In Champaign meanwhile, a major building was going up to house the *Gazette* newspaper. Its commanding presence at the fork of North Neil and Hickory Streets provided a prominent landmark for downtown Champaign. Also in 1901, the University of Illinois was erecting a new chemistry building to replace the one partially destroyed by lightning five years earlier.

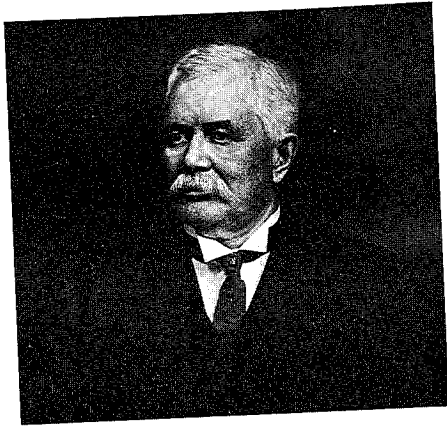
Workers erected these and other buildings in record time, but pride in their craftsmanship was evident throughout the high quality structures of the era.

In spite of the sense of accomplishment of trained craftsmen, the long and arduous hours required of construction workers and others caused sporadic outbreaks of unrest. At the beginning of the century, workers were not yet organized in strong labor unions. However, strikes were held by railroad workers, hod carriers went on strike for higher wages during the rebuilding of Rantoul in 1901, and railroad track layers complained about the food in Royal during their period of employment there. The Twin City Federation of Labor, which included barbers, blacksmiths, boilermakers, painters, printers, machinists, horseshoers, and cigarmakers, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor in 1908, establishing organized union representation for large numbers of workers.

In 1892, the first Labor Day celebration was held in Champaign County with great success and enthusiastic participation by workers.

Labor Day Parade, 1914.





Andrew Sloan Draper

Andrew Sloan Draper insisted his title be changed from Regent to President before accepting appointment to the position. Although an educator and attorney by independent study and practice, he had never received any kind of academic degree. His background caused some faculty members to question his competency, but his administrative ability and creative mind enabled him to become an outstanding university president.

During his ten years of service, between 1894 and 1904, the university built thirteen major buildings, had an enrollment increase of from 663 to 3,335 students, and saw the faculty rise from eighty to 351 members. Draper also established six new schools or colleges in music, pharmacy, medicine, dentistry, and law. Though Draper was a somewhat reluctant supporter of agricultural education, during his tenure the College of Agriculture was firmly established on the road to greatness.

Eugene Davenport

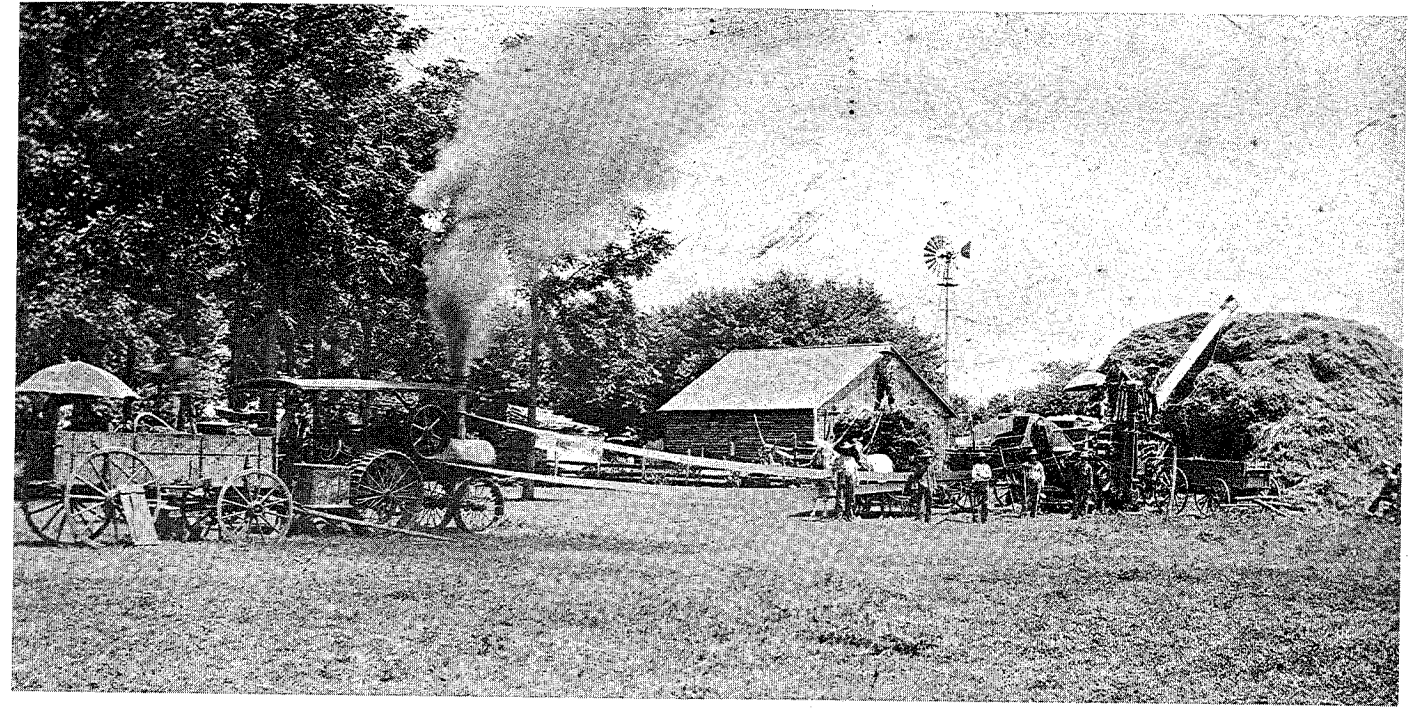
"I am the only college professor in captivity who spent ten years after graduation in actual, everyday farm work."

Increasing student enrollment at the University of Illinois also required additional building construction. The university enrollment for the school year 1899-1900 was 1,531 students — 379 more than the previous year and the largest increase ever experienced. A major factor in the increasing number of students was that finally the College of Agriculture was growing to fulfill its original purpose of serving the agricultural interests of the state.

Credited for this new impetus were the aggressive and dedicated actions of Dean Eugene Davenport who had been appointed by President Andrew Draper in 1895. Dean Davenport successfully went outside of normal university channels to secure both political and financial support for the College of Agriculture. His efforts led to the construction of the Women's building and a new Agriculture building. The Women's building was needed to accommodate the Department of Household Science, which Isabel Bevier had been hired to revitalize.



Dean Davenport's effective lobby support from the Illinois Farmers' Institute enabled him to obtain appropriations for many new buildings for the College of Agriculture. During his tenure, twelve agricultural specialty buildings were erected and an additional twelve hundred acres of land were acquired by the university.



Threshing, c. 1920
Elijah Plotner farm, Philo Township

Champaign County farmers enjoyed close relations with the university and were well informed about current movements in the field of agriculture. In an effort to strengthen rural economic life and the political influence of farmers, an organization called the Champaign Soil and Crop Improvement Association was formed in 1912. The name was changed to the Champaign County Farm Bureau in 1915 to better express the many facets of concern to its membership. Within five years, membership grew to almost twenty-three hundred farmers.

During the war years of the late teens, the federal government undertook several programs to combat a food shortage at home and abroad. Federal funds in the amount of fifteen hundred dollars were offered to any county that would begin instructional programs for homemakers in which gardening, canning, and nutrition were to be included.

In 1917, Farm Bureau wives approached the Champaign County Board of Supervisors for financial help in starting a County Home Improvement Association. The Board met and briefly considered two factors; one was the availability of federal funds to be used, in part, to pay the salary of a home improvement extension advisor, and the other was the sure disfavor of almost every woman in the rural townships if favorable action were not taken. After less than fifteen minutes of discussion, the Board voted an appropriation of five hundred dollars to the women and the Home Improvement Association was formed. It was the second such organization in the state of Illinois.

The County Home Improvement Association first met on January 2, 1918. At their second meeting on February 2, it was reported that five hundred women had already joined. The first officers were: President, Mrs. Henry M. Dunlap, Savoy; Vice President, Mrs. W. P. Jones, Champaign; 2nd Vice President, Mrs. J. H. Singleton, Dewey; Secretary, Mrs. F. H. Rankin, Urbana; and Treasurer, Mrs. C. H. Oathout, Urbana.

A large segment of Champaign County's German and Irish population was inclined to support Germany during the early years of its war against England and her allies. This attitude changed radically when a German submarine sank the liner Lusitania off the coast of Ireland on May 7, 1915. The death of 1,153 innocent men, women, and children, of whom 114 were United States citizens, changed public sentiment regarding Germany in Champaign County and throughout America.



Edmund Janes James

Dr. James resigned as head of Northwestern University to become President of the University of Illinois in 1904. He was a personal friend of many national leaders, including President William Howard Taft. His efforts in Washington, D.C., were instrumental in having Chanute Field located in Champaign County.

University trustees refused his resignation in 1918 when he wanted to leave for National War Office work, but ill health forced his retirement in 1920. During his tenure, the university attained international recognition for its scholarly achievements, and he was hailed by colleagues as the greatest university president of his time.

The United States had taken a neutral position upon the outbreak of war in Europe in 1914. However, American food supplies were shipped to England, France, and Russia in support of war efforts there against Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Italy. Congress prepared for war by passage of the National Defense Act in 1916, which increased the size of the Army and the National Guard.

In January, 1917, the German government created a war zone along the Atlantic coast of Europe and bordering the Mediterranean Sea. It was announced that all ships in those waters, neutral or otherwise, would be sunk on sight by the German submarine force. In late March, three merchant marine ships were sunk, and President Woodrow Wilson called Congress into session. War was declared against Germany on April 6, 1917.

Shortly after the declaration of war, the federal government looked to the University of Illinois for assistance in the war effort. University President Edmund Janes James organized a University War Committee to coordinate a number of programs designed to serve the government and the university. One of his first acts was to establish a ground school of aviation; a squadron of student soldiers arrived on campus on May 21, 1917.

Earlier in that month, three army officers from Washington, D.C., had appeared in the office of the Dean of the Graduate College, David Kinley, who was chairman of the University War Committee. The officers were seeking information on a suitable site for a flying field where aviators could be trained. A rainy day and impassable muddy roads prohibited their personal inspection of the countryside, so the delegation departed by noon on the same day they had arrived, leaving Dean Kinley detailed instructions on the site requirements of the military. President James was out of town and had delegated operation of the campus to Dean Kinley, who immediately established a committee of faculty and businessmen to work on the project.

The university already had on file information on all the land within a seventy mile radius. One week later, Professor James M. White, head of the physical plant and supervising architect of the university, had prepared a complete packet of materials on two suitable sites. Kinley sent Professor White to personally present the report to the War Department in Washington. One site near Bondville and another at Rantoul met all criteria for the development of the air field.

Proposals were submitted by proponents of each site and Rantoul was selected. Rantoul, with a population of fourteen hundred, was a far superior site, as land was available adjacent to its city limits and close to public utilities. The Illinois Central's direct route to Chicago and to the south, intersecting with many other railroads, made Rantoul even more desirable to the planners. When Dean Kinley learned that the War Department planned to hire a nationally prominent construction firm to build the new field, he wrote a personal note to his friend, Secretary of War Newton W. Baker, introducing a competent Champaign contractor who was permitted to submit a bid proposal. Champaign County's William B. McKinley had been elected to the Senate and helped to convince the War Department that local resources were available to construct the field.

On May 22, 1917, a contract was awarded to English Brothers Construction Company of Champaign to build Chanute Field. Completion was called for within sixty days. English Brothers hired every available carpenter within one hundred miles and put three steam shovels and several tractors to work on the job. Farmers with teams of horses and wagons were engaged in pulling stumps, leveling the land, and hauling materials. As many as two thousand men and two hundred teams of horses were working at the peak of construction. Special trains ran daily between Champaign and Rantoul to transport workers and "sidewalk superintendents." On one Sunday, ten thousand visitors came to town to see the construction project. As the field neared completion and planes began arriving, the anticipation of the area residents mounted.

Chanute Field took its name from Octave Chanute, a French immigrant who came to this country with his family when he was six. He became an outstanding engineer and, in 1905, was the first person to be awarded an honorary doctorate in engineering from the University of Illinois. He worked most of his adult life in Chicago where he designed the first elevated train system and the Chicago Stockyards complex.

Chanute gained wealth by developing the creosote and tar process for preserving wooden railroad ties against deterioration. In 1896, at age sixty-four, he began testing airplane gliders and developed basic knowledge which benefitted later flight experiments.

2131 Aviation Section, Chanute Field





*Capt. Roy S. Brown
Capt. Brown was in charge of flying at
Chanute, summer of 1917.*

The celebration of the 16th Aero Squadron's arrival on July 9 was marred by two mishaps. One of the Squadron's planes was late in coming, as the pilot had landed in Paxton to refuel and suffered a severe bump to the head when he fell into the propeller while trying to restart the aircraft. Another scheduled plane never did arrive; its pilot got lost twice enroute and finally wrecked the aircraft on landing near Logansport, Indiana.

The county's last full-fledged railroad, the Kankakee and Urbana Traction Company, was constructed in 1912. In 1917, prompted by the building of Chanute, the company ran track east from its main line at Rantoul to serve its new customers.

A lone military plane landed at Chanute on July 4 to highlight Rantoul's Independence Day celebration. The next day, a 150-man National Guard unit arrived from Springfield to guard the field from potential spies and saboteurs. On July 7, a 150-member support squadron arrived amid the cheers of Rantoul citizens. For many, the most memorable day was July 9 when twenty-one planes from the 16th Aero Squadron flew in from Chicago.

The government's urgent need for Chanute was evident when military men and equipment were moved in as soon as some buildings were completed. Actual flight training began on July 18, 1917. Despite a loss of nine days work due to rain, English Brothers had fulfilled their agreement and completed the field in sixty days.

The government formally accepted the field on July 31. The last construction equipment was removed on August 18, leaving behind an air field with fifty new buildings on 640 acres of land; Rantoul and other Champaign County communities embarked on a long cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship with the United States government.

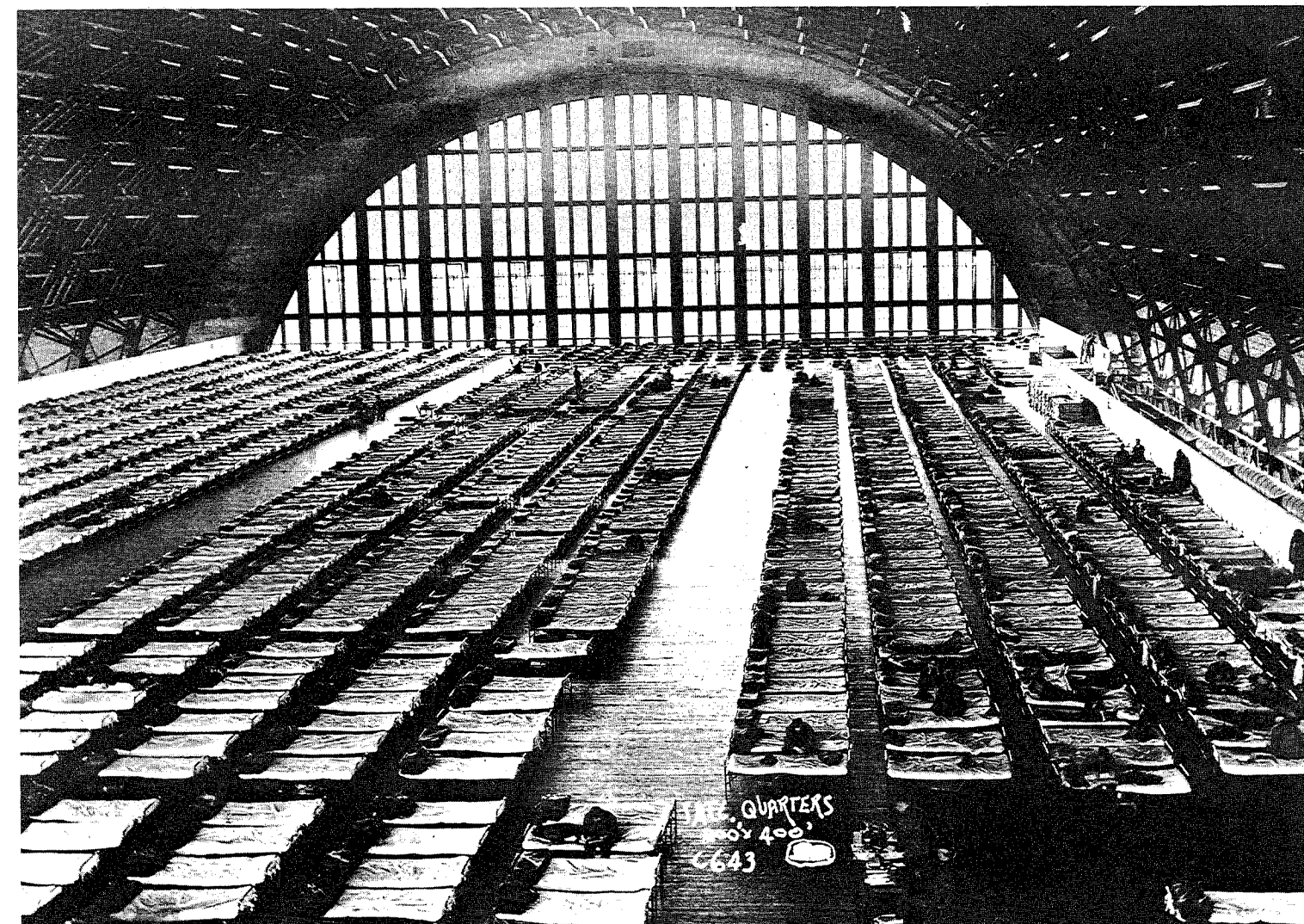
Champaign County's two selective service boards were busy between June 5, 1917, and September 12, 1919. A total of 12,715 men were registered for the draft, of which 1,316 were actually called to serve in the armed forces.

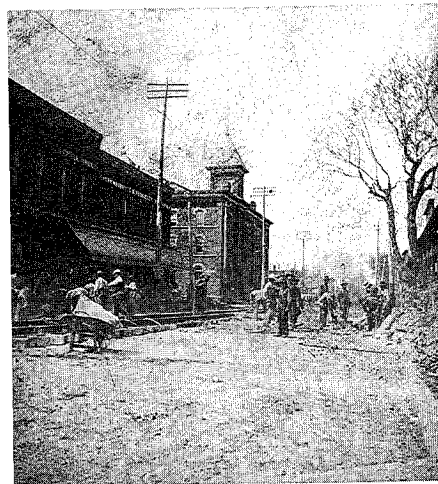
Financial support for the war effort through purchase of government Liberty bonds exceeded quotas for the county by 20 percent, and patriotism was also evident in local organizations such as the Red Cross and various service clubs. The Red Cross enrolled over ten thousand members who raised almost \$125,000 for Red Cross services to the troops.

The United War Work campaign was more successful in Champaign County than in any other county in Illinois. An effort to meet a quota of slightly less than \$66,000 brought a response of \$122,000 in contributions. The signing of the Armistice on November 11, 1919, brought an end to the war era in Champaign County's development.

The University of Illinois had completed its giant new Armory in 1916, just in time to accommodate the government-assigned aviation ground school and the new Reserve Officers Training Corps, created by an act of Congress. Compulsory R.O.T.C. became a major course for more than two thousand male students during the war. All pilot training candidates were taken from college ground schools, and many graduates were assigned to Chanute for flight training. The 400' x 300' Armory, though designed as a drill hall, was better utilized during the war years as a dormitory for over two thousand soldiers; most training was held outdoors.

*University of Illinois Armory
Fourth Street and Armory Avenue,
Champaign*





Laying Tracks
North Neil Street, Champaign

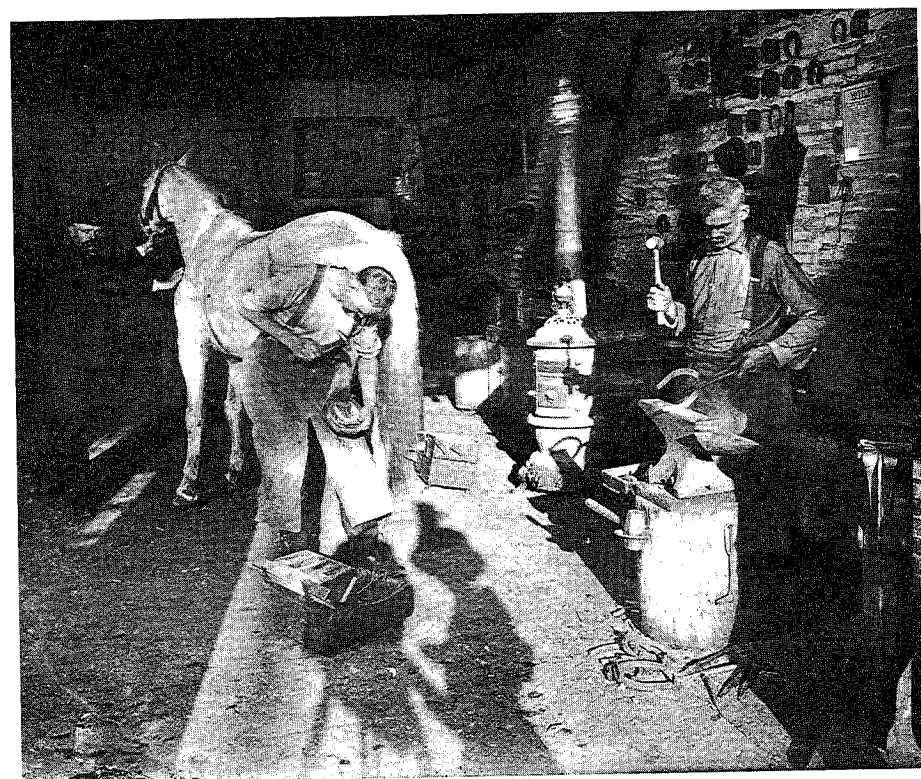
When tracks were laid in the 1890's for the interurban system, brick paving was also laid in some Champaign streets.

By the end of the war, automobiles, trucks, and tractors were becoming more numerous as well as reliable, which created an increased demand for better roads. Even though some of the larger communities such as Champaign, Urbana, and Rantoul had a few brick paved streets several years before the turn of the century, most rural areas had only simple dirt roads. The county first attempted to improve major roads in 1915 by oiling over 120 miles of dirt roads. A demand for improved inter-city roads prompted the State of Illinois to propose a highway system of hard roads. In 1918 a state referendum was approved authorizing 60 million dollars in bonds for highway improvement. The paving of Route 10 in the western part of Champaign County was started in 1919 and marked the beginning of a period during the 1920's when several new highways were constructed.

The highway project between Champaign and Danville was cause for a big celebration at St. Joseph when the road was formally opened on September 29, 1922. More than five hundred people gathered to observe the highway dedication and watch the parade of automobiles. The twin cities and Mahomet were linked by the paving of Route 39, later designated Route 150. With the opening of this road in 1925, the same communities that had benefitted from the railroad development of Clark R. Griggs some fifty-five years earlier were now fully exposed to the age of the automobile.

Blacksmith's Shop, Champaign, 1909
(While the photographer's identity is unknown, the shadow in the foreground is of a woman with a camera.)

The proliferation of automobiles and the advent of hard roads during the first quarter of the twentieth century drastically reduced the need for blacksmith shops, except for agricultural uses.



Route 25, later called Route 45, ran parallel to the Illinois Central, south from Kankakee through Champaign County; it was funded by the state bond issue of 1918. In the late 1920's, a new 100 million dollar state road bond issue, supplemented by federal aid appropriations, led to further highway development in the county. Route 119 (later 136) followed the east-west route of Benjamin Gifford's early railroad through the northern communities; Route 49 was built along the county's eastern edge; and Route 47 came from the Wisconsin State border through the western section, ending at Route 10 near the town of Seymour.

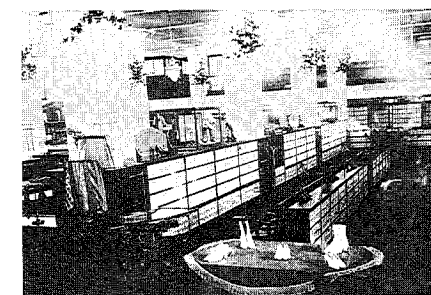
During this era there were still prolonged periods when muddy, impassable roads prevented farmers from getting into town to shop. This situation sometimes panicked the merchants and frequently resulted in spectacularly advertised sales promotions designed to clear inventories and regain operating costs.

The Champaign Chamber of Commerce formed a Good Roads Committee, which grew to include representation from other towns throughout the county and soon became known as the Champaign County Road Improvement Committee. The committee assisted the County Board of Supervisors in passing a \$2,500,000 bond issue which the voters approved on February 27, 1923. The following year new hard roads were constructed from Sidney south through Block Station to Longview, and from the Philo Road east through Sidney to Homer. The road from Ogden to Royal was paved in 1925, and by 1927 the state had started construction of Route 49 from Ogden to the community of Allerton at the southeastern extremity of the county.



Fire, Downtown Champaign, March 15, 1915

Fires continued to plague business districts in Champaign County communities during the early twentieth century. Several businesses were destroyed in Champaign's 1915 blaze. In 1924, the entire south side of the business district of Royal was lost by fire.

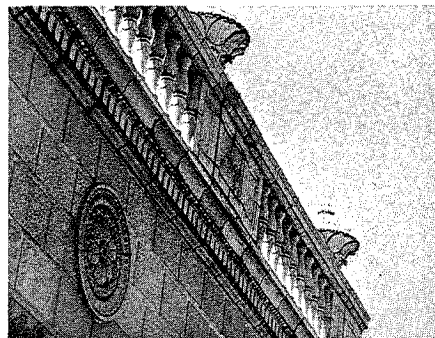


Interior, Lewis's Department Store,
115 North Neil Street, Champaign
(ready for re-opening after the 1915 fire)

As roads improved, Champaign's department stores such as Lewis's, Robeson's, Willis's, Kuhn's, and Kaufman's drew increased business from the surrounding communities.

The larger communities were keeping pace with rural paving projects and almost every town gave funding priority to street and sidewalk improvement projects. Champaign set an example for other towns and by 1924 had paved over fifty miles of streets.

South Neil Street, Champaign, 1916



Detail, Virginia Theater, Champaign

C. Howard Crane and Kenneth Franzheim, internationally known theater architects, designed the Virginia Theater. Both the interior and exterior were enhanced with decorative terra cotta.

Growth in the 1920's, following the World War, recalled but far exceeded that of the post-Civil War period. Major construction projects were undertaken throughout the decade by private enterprise and by government institutions, and during this time the Champaign business area gained two of its most attractive and serviceable structures. Builder A. W. Stoolman and supervisory architect George Ramey constructed the Virginia Theater at the southwest corner of Park and Randolph Streets. And a new train station at East University Avenue and North Chestnut Street was built by the Illinois Central in 1924. Its Beaux Arts style of architecture and its spacious accommodations made it one of the most outstanding passenger facilities along the entire I.C. route from Chicago to New Orleans.

At the university, a ten-year development program brought about unprecedented growth. This remarkable expansion was partially a result of the post-war boom of the 1920's. However, primary credit was due to the effective planning of University President Edmund James and his successor, David Kinley.



David Kinley

Kinley had already served on the faculty for over a quarter of a century when he assumed the presidency, and he was well respected for his administrative ability and dedication to the university. The enrollment in 1921 exceeded ten thousand students and placed the University of Illinois as the third largest university in the nation. Locally, it became known as a "third city" in relation to the twin cities of Champaign and Urbana.

Between 1920 and 1930, during Kinley's administration, the "third city" erected twenty-two new buildings and constructed nine additions to already existing buildings. Among the many major structures built in this decade were University High School, McKinley Hospital, Davenport Hall, the Library building, the Commerce Building, the Architecture Building, and the stadium.

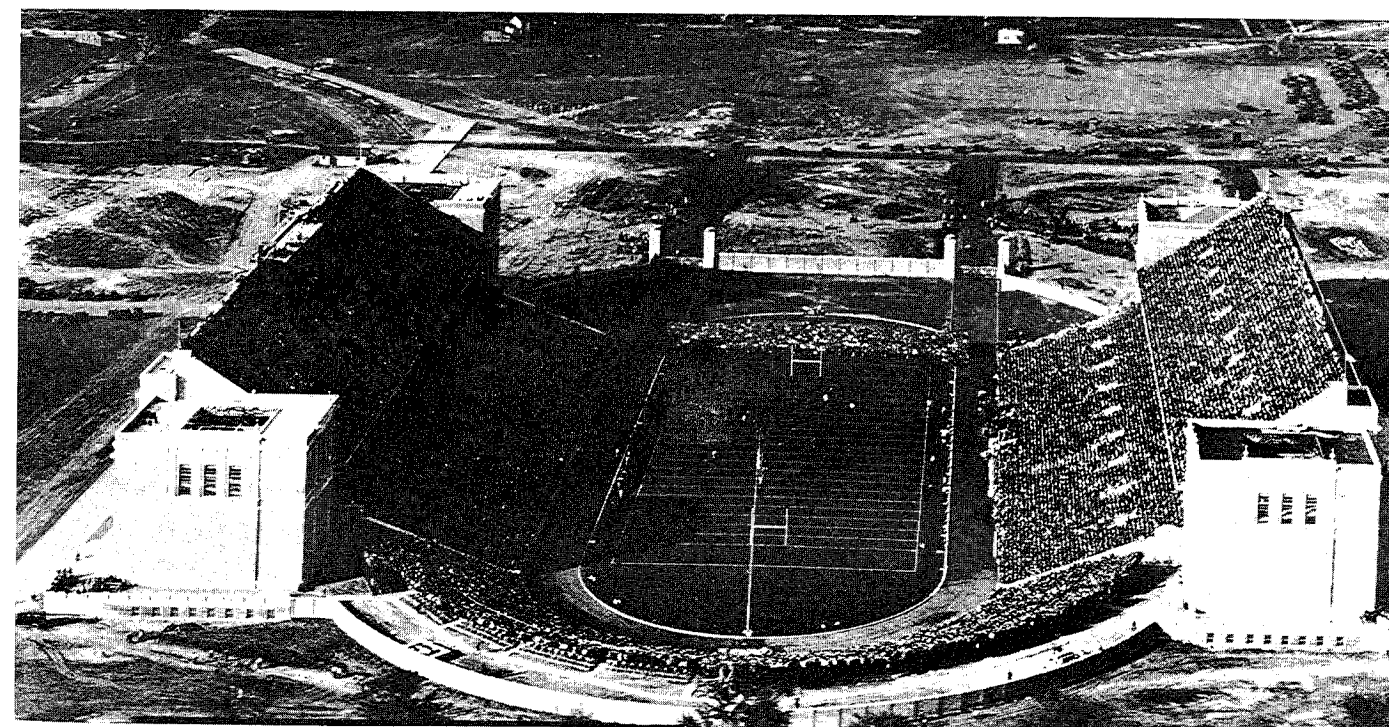
The stadium was designed by the world-renowned Chicago architectural firm of Holabird and Root, constructed by Champaign's English Brothers, and funded from donations raised by alumni and the student body. The stadium was built as a World War memorial. The design included a large Roman Doric column for each of the 182 men and one woman Illini who lost their lives during the war. The original design also called for a magnificent fountain and court at the entrance, but this elegant feature was subsequently deleted from the plans.

Although not yet completed, the stadium was dedicated on October 18, 1924, and that day the Illini defeated the Michigan football team by a score of 39 to 14. Harold "Red" Grange, an outstanding Illini runner, scored four touchdowns during the first 12 minutes of play as more than sixty thousand fans cheered their support. Coach Robert Zuppke predicted that as soon as the State of Illinois completed its new hard road program there would be more than a hundred thousand people driving to the stadium for future games.

Merle J. Trees, '07, was president of the Alumni Association, and Walter Elmer Ekblaw, '10, a Rantoul native, was appointed chairman of the stadium fund drive in 1921.

Coach Robert Zuppke chaired the stadium Executive Council and accompanied Athletic Director George Huff across the country to visit Illini Clubs to gain financial support for the stadium. One of the first contributors to the fund was Avery Brundage from the class of 1909, who gave one thousand dollars toward the project. Though estimated at \$1,700,000, by the time of completion the cost of the stadium had risen to \$2,118,000.

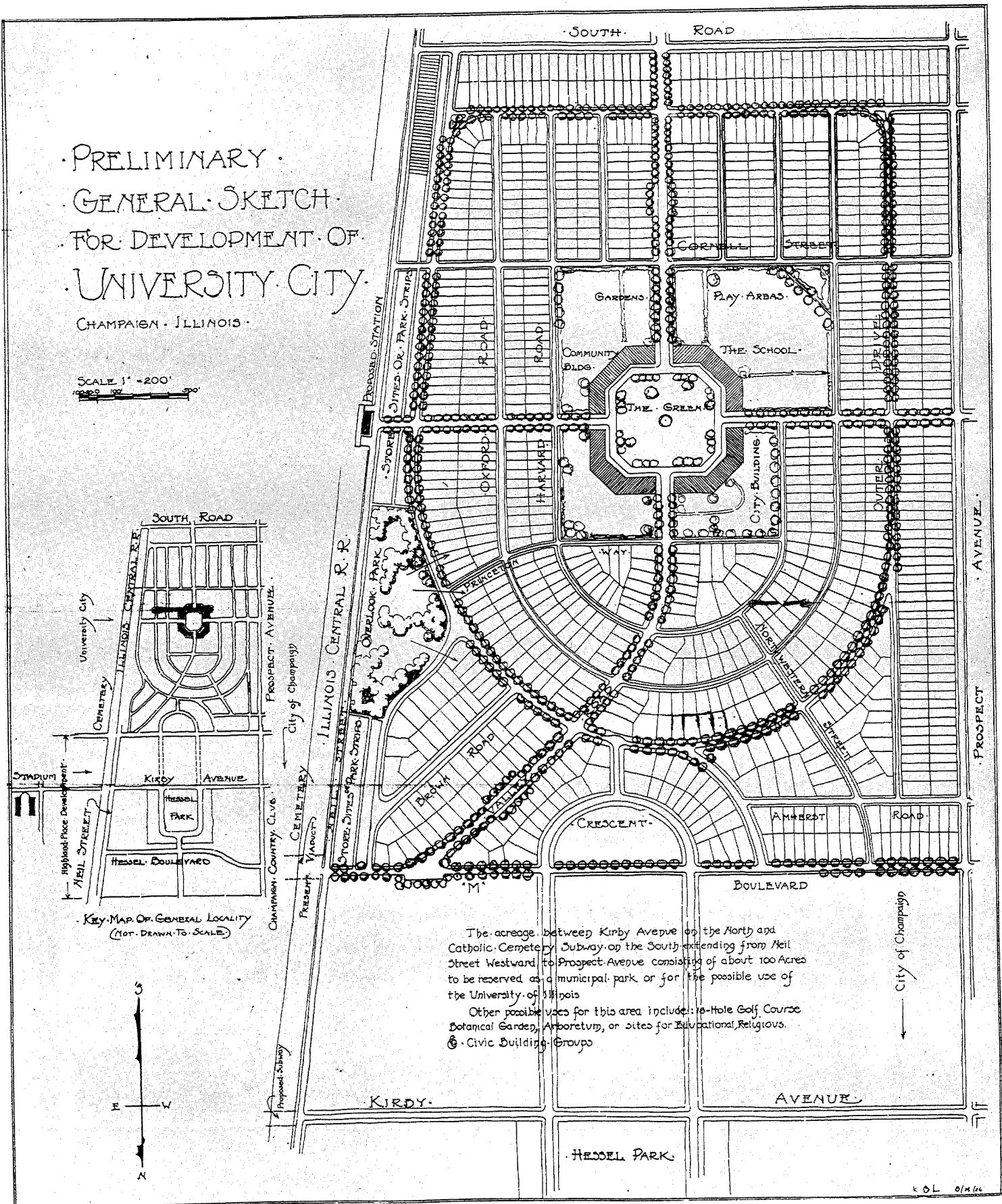
University of Illinois Stadium, 1924



PRELIMINARY
GENERAL SKETCH
FOR DEVELOPMENT OF
UNIVERSITY CITY

CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS

SCALE 1" = 200'



The term "third city" was perceived as more than a catch phrase by J. T. Hessel. In 1926, Hessel proposed that a new University City be developed in Champaign, south of Kirby Avenue between Neil Street on the east and Prospect Avenue on the west. This area was an extension of a previous plan, undertaken by Hessel ten years earlier, to bring university development west of the Illinois Central tracks.

Hessel was a strong and successful advocate for raising the tracks and building underpasses at Kirby Avenue and other streets along the I. C. route through town. The importance of open green space and parks was characteristic of Hessel's development proposals, and Hessel Park became one of the park facilities most utilized by both townspeople and university students. But his plan for wide, free-flowing streets was limited to the building of Haines and Hessel Boulevards.

Originally, Hessel Boulevard was proposed as the site for a Fraternity Row where the developer envisioned a street lined by grand structures, but Hessel's dream was not shared by Champaign's governing officials and his plan was not encouraged. In the age of raccoon coats and preposterous pranks, local fraternity and sorority development made the University of Illinois the greek letter organization capital of the world. During the 1920's there were ninety-two fraternities and thirty-three sororities on campus and many did build grand houses. In 1927 and 1928 alone, twenty-five large and expensive greek letter houses were constructed, but not on Hessel Boulevard. The majority of these organizations chose to build in Champaign in close proximity to the new university library, Huff Gymnasium, and the stadium, all of which were completed between 1924 and 1926.

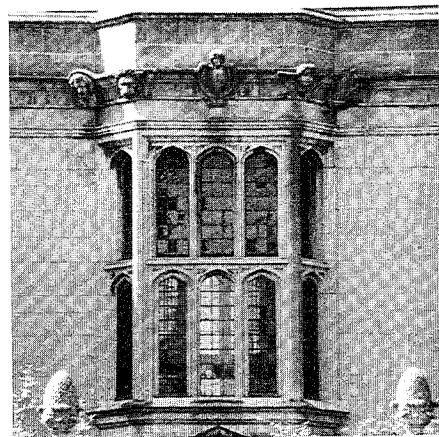
The future planned development of university buildings was undoubtedly influenced by the concentration of fraternity and sorority houses in Champaign during the 1920's. Faculty members preferred Urbana as a residential area close to the university with a more sedate environment conducive to scholarly pursuits.

When space was required for additional university buildings, Urbana was the source of less expensive and more easily acquired property which could be cleared to make way for modern university buildings and parking needs. Much of the business character of the twin cities was determined by the concentration of student housing west of Wright Street. Champaign's "Campustown" business district thus developed as a center for retail services.

Beta Theta Pi Fraternity
202 E. Daniel, Champaign

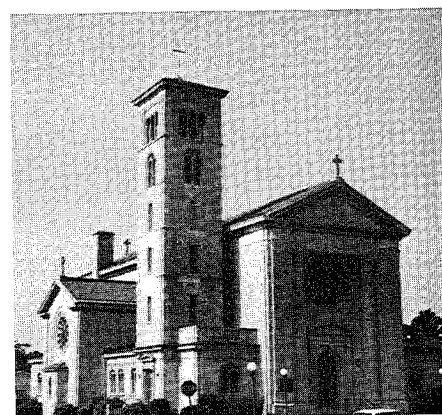


Opposite Page:
Plan for University City



Detail, Wesley Foundation
1203 West Green Street, Urbana

The Wesley Foundation was the first building erected as a student religious foundation at a state university. It is embellished with ornaments which symbolize learning and religious faith.



Holy Cross Church
409 West Clark Street, Champaign

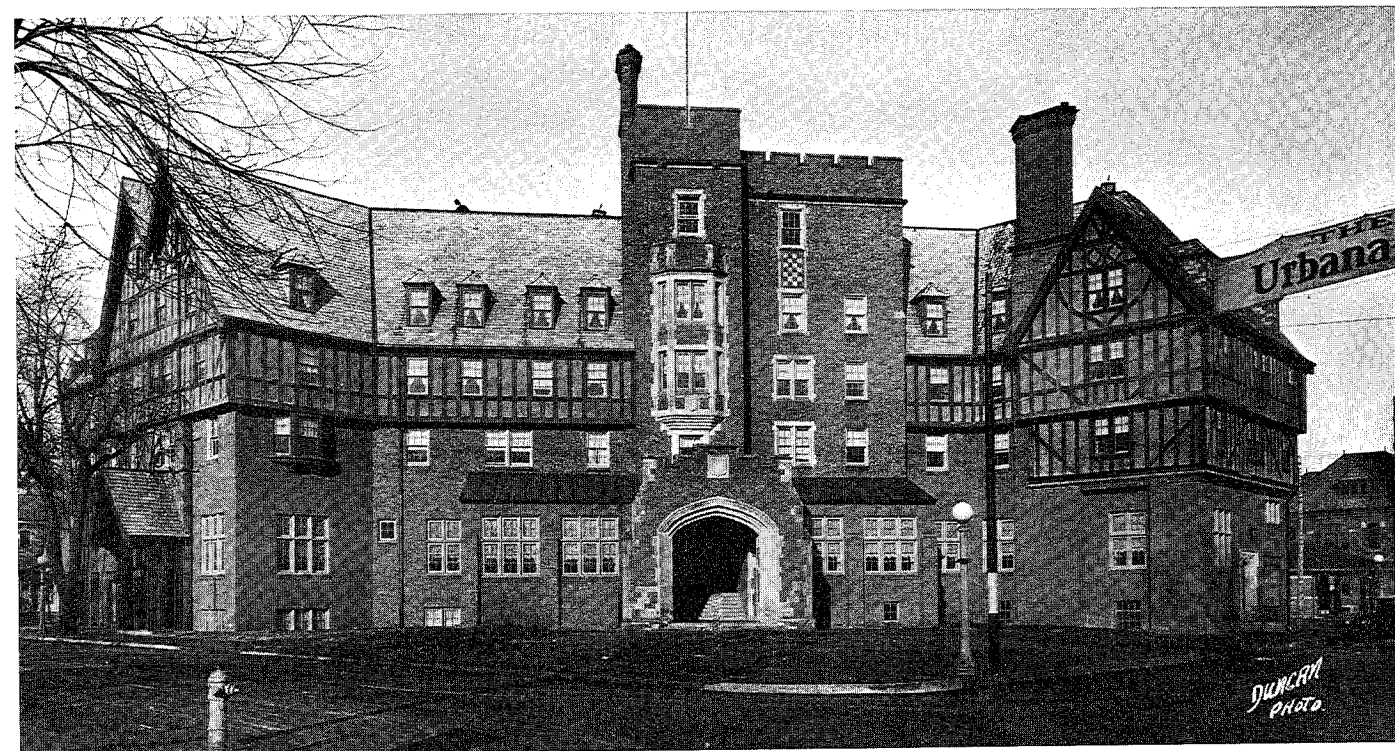
Holy Cross Church was built in 1922 to serve the growing numbers of Catholic families in Champaign.

First United Church of Urbana
(Methodist Episcopal Church)
Southeast Corner, Race and Green Streets

In 1919 the university trustees had authorized course credit for religious instruction given by approved religious foundations outside the university. Although the primary purpose of the foundations was to be religious education, some opponents of such foundations suggested they would become centers of radicalism rather than religion.

The Methodist Conference of Illinois built Wesley Foundation at West Green and South Goodwin streets in Urbana in 1921 according to the plans of architects Holabird and Roche of Chicago. Other faiths soon followed by starting their own foundations. The Catholics began Newman Foundation, the Presbyterians started McKinley Foundation, and the B'nai B'rith established Hillel Foundation. These foundations and others became major influences on student life.

Also in this period, the long-established Methodist Episcopal congregation in Urbana decided to build a new and larger building to serve their expanding religious programs. William C. F. Kuhne Company of Rantoul was selected to construct the new church at the southeast corner of Race and Green streets adjacent to the business district. The Gothic Revival style of architecture was determined by William W. Maxwell, a local architect and a member of the church. Dedication of the church was held over a period of several days, beginning on September 11, 1927, and concluding the following Sunday evening with members of the First Baptist Church as guests. This last dedication service was in appreciation for the Baptists who had welcomed the Methodists to worship with them at evening services during the period of construction.



Urbana Lincoln Hotel, 1924
Northwest corner, Broadway and Green
Streets, Urbana

The Urbana Lincoln Hotel, across Green Street from the new church, had been built only three years before, and the two structures greatly enhanced downtown Urbana. The area was made even more attractive and further dignified by the placement of Lorado Taft's statue of Abraham Lincoln at the entrance to the hotel in 1927.



Lorado Taft's Lincoln Statue
Race Street, opposite Urbana High School

The purchase of the Lincoln statue was made possible by a ten thousand dollar gift to the city of Urbana by Judge and Mrs. Joseph Oscar Cunningham and was the work of the renowned sculptor Lorado Taft. Custody of the statue was later assumed by the Urbana Park District and it was moved to the east entrance of Carle Park.

A second important work by Taft was erected in 1929 on the south side of the Auditorium Building on the university campus. The inspiring bronze sculptural group, The Alma Mater, was originally planned to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the university in 1918. The eventual completion of the project was made possible by gifts from the classes between 1923 and 1929, by an endowment fund established by the Alumni Association, and by a gift from the sculptor.

*Alma Mater Statue
Southeast corner, Wright and Green
Streets, Urbana*

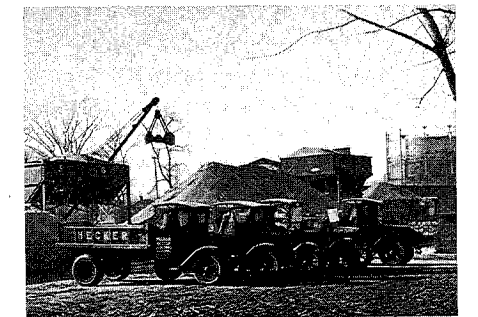


The relation of Champaign County residents to education took on a unique character with the founding of the Collegiate Cap and Gown Manufacturing Company in 1926. The company located its factory on North Market Street in Champaign and employed several hundred persons to make attire for high school and college graduation exercises. The Collegiate Cap and Gown Company was one of several important industrial firms to begin operation in Champaign County during the boom years of the 1920's. Other major factories established were the Clifford Jacobs Forging Company, which developed rapidly after first starting operations in 1919, and the C. S. Johnson Company, manufacturers of concrete mixing plants, founded in 1921. The old Eagle Machine Shop started by Forrest C. Vance before the turn of the century became the Universal Bleacher Company in 1926, and in 1929 the Illinois Glove Manufacturing Company located adjacent to the bleacher firm at the south east corner of Neil and Green Streets in Champaign.



Hecker Building Material Company Truck

These firms were to form the major industrial base of Champaign County for many years, and they reflected the desires of community leadership of the era to diversify employment opportunities. Never before had construction and growth been so spectacular as during the 1920's. Building supply firms, lumber yards, plumbing, heating, lighting, roofing, and glaziers' businesses were pressed to meet the expansion of the larger cities and towns in the county. The Stipes-Hecker Building Material Company, which had been formed in 1911 by the partnership of J. W. Stipes and Morris L. Hecker, Sr., in the 1920's increased their capacity to become a major supplier to the construction industry.



*Hecker Building Material Company Yard
217 South Water Street, Champaign*



*Alexander Lumber Company, 1909
368 North Walnut Street, Champaign*

During the productive 1920's, other Alexander yards were located at Penfield, Royal, and Rantoul.

The building boom of the 1920's proved to be a good time to start construction-related businesses. Many firms that began during this period continued successful operations for decades and several firms are still participating in the growth of the county today.

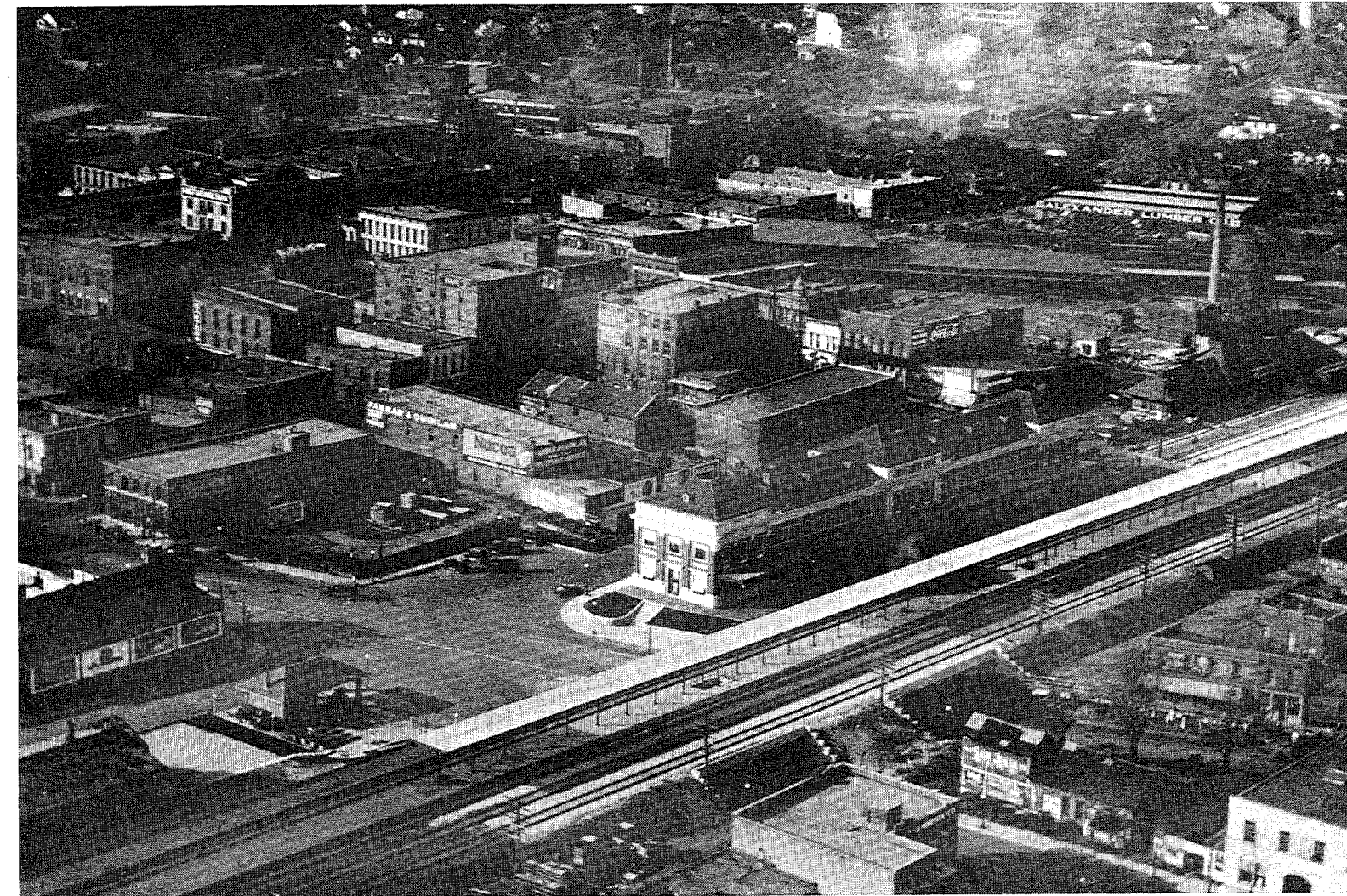
Bash Roofing Company was established in 1924 and Hughes-Krabbe Electrical Contractors began in 1925. The primary residential firm of Ozier-Weller Homes began in 1927 and is credited with having built thousands of houses in Champaign County.

Harlan E. Moore, a pioneer in insulation products, started in 1929 from the old Swannell building at Neil and Main Streets in Champaign.

In 1925 the Builders Supply Company began its successful business venture on East John Street near the Illinois Central tracks. Many other companies related to the building trades had their beginnings in the 1920's and survived all the pitfalls of business by delivering outstanding service and products. English Brothers of Champaign and the William C. F. Kuhne Construction Company of Rantoul were firmly established as capable of any building project regardless of size, complexity, or architectural design.

The prosperity generated by major industry and by organizational and governmental building programs filtered down to the craftsmen, tradesmen, and workers in the county. These people were frequently rewarded for their hard work with incomes large enough to acquire homes of substantial size, equipped with modern comforts of heat, light, and water.

Faculty size and salaries increased at the university, and business and industrial concerns were hiring several thousand men and women in factories, stores, and offices throughout several towns and villages in the county. Farmers began using tractors and other machinery to expand their operations, and agricultural products brought fair prices on the market.

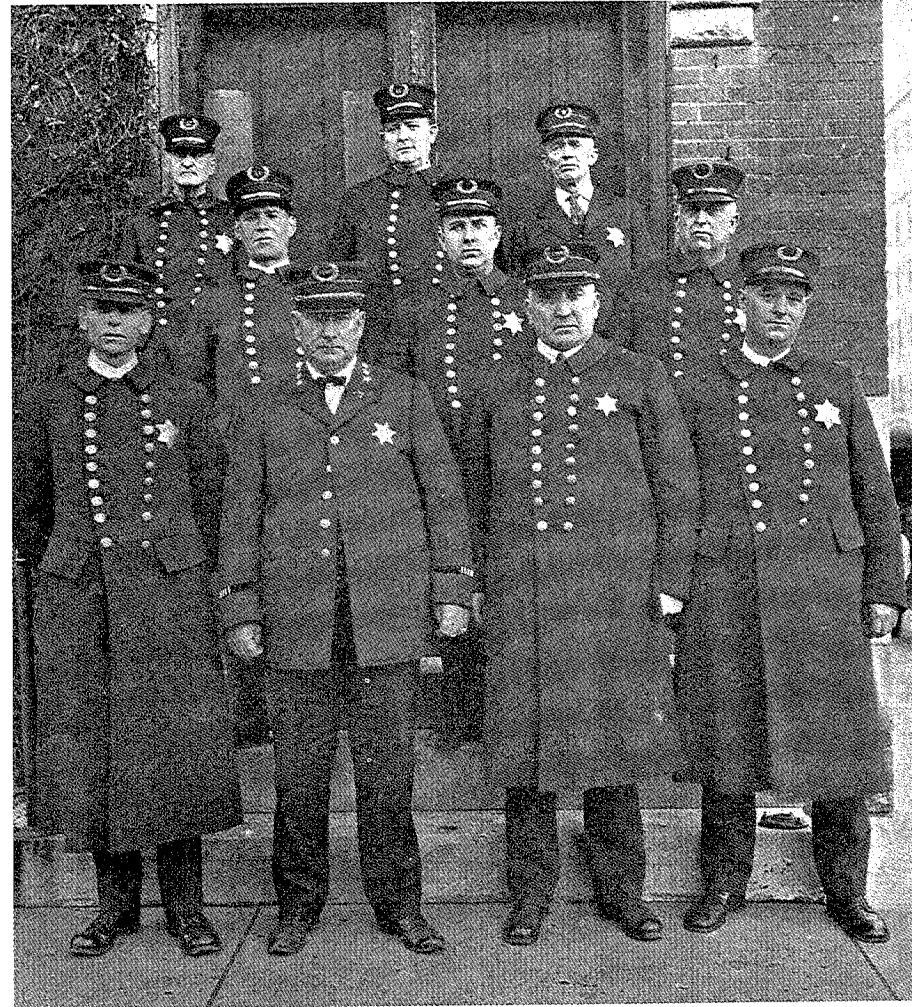


Aerial View, Champaign, 1924

Economic conditions favored almost all segments of life in Champaign County. Yet blacks were limited by a resurgent movement of the Ku Klux Klan which intimidated not only those citizens but also sympathetic whites and many prospective employers. Just as the Klan had frightened southern blacks from the polls after the Civil War, it succeeded in intimidating them away from jobs and opportunities in Champaign County almost a half-century later.

During the summer of 1924, Ku Klux Klan programs were major attractions of the season for some Champaign County residents. Large meetings were held at various places throughout the county, including Witts Park at Sidney, the Sloan Timber located south of Mahomet, and Rantoul. At Urbana, a KKK picnic at Crystal Lake Park attracted several thousand people from east central Illinois and west central Indiana, and hundreds of Klansmen were initiated into the organization. Afterwards, there were fireworks displays and an evening parade through the twin cities.

Champaign Police Department, 1924
 Top row: John Garrett, Thomas Beckett,
 James Cochrane; middle row: Mike Wagner,
 Leo Hanley, Clarence Dobyms; bottom row:
 Roy Argo, Chief A. U. Keller, Capt. C. A.
 Richards, Lewis Garms.



The News-Gazette reported a meeting of the Ku Klux Klan in Champaign on July 25, 1924, at which about three thousand people heard an Illinois Klan leader, S. Glen Young, speak.

The speaker was referred to as one of the leading prohibition agents in the state. He talked about his work in "rounding up law violators" in Champaign; he praised the Urbana Police Department for their cooperation with him, but said, "I don't know if I should mention the Champaign Police or not." The reporter stated that the crowd hissed, but it was not clear whether they were hissing the speaker or the Champaign Police.

The Klan activities were well organized throughout the state; by presenting entertainment such as bands, choral groups, horse races, fireworks, and parades, as well as merry-go-round rides for children, they were able to lure huge crowds to hear their speakers. Area Klansmen cleverly linked the prohibition issue to their usual theme of white Protestant purity, thereby attracting more people to rallies. But after having ample opportunity to examine the KKK of the 1920's, most Champaign County residents rejected its philosophy and methods. Support dwindled, but an undercurrent of fear of the Klan remained throughout the decade and beyond.

Ethnic customs, family ties, and concern for their safety were factors that caused blacks to cluster in residential areas in northeast Champaign and in northwest Urbana. Through industry and thrift, several black families were able to build or purchase large and comfortable homes. Many other properties of lesser quality were erected in the neighborhoods by non-resident owners and were rented to both whites and blacks with lower incomes.

The end of the prosperous 1920's came officially on October 29, 1929, when 35 million shares of stock were sold within a few hours on the United States exchanges. The financial panic that followed resulted in banks closing, credit tightening, construction coming to a standstill, and thousands of fortunes, large and small, being lost overnight.



Lyman E. Hazen

Lyman E. Hazen was associated with the Philo Exchange Bank for almost a half century. He served as president of the bank between 1915 and 1952 and successfully guided the bank through the depression years of the 1930's.

By the time Champaign County approached its 100th birthday in 1933, the Great Depression was at its very worst. Champaign County leaders showed little interest in celebrating the centennial year and but for one man, Paul G. Busey, the occasion might have passed unrecognized. In January, 1933, he spoke to the Urbana Exchange Club on the history of the county seat of government at Urbana, and told the audience a number of historical anecdotes.

The Urbana Rotary Club recognized the 100th anniversary of its city with a luncheon held in June at the Urbana Golf and Country Club. Paul G. Busey was chairman of the committee on arrangements for that event and presented a program by four long-time county residents: Mrs. Mary Webber, then age 88; Samuel Hedges, a 90-year-old Civil War veteran; J. J. Rea, age 80; and Senator Henry M. Dunlap, age 76. All spoke on their reminiscences of the county. Looking back was not as painful as looking ahead. For thousands of Champaign County families without jobs, money, or adequate food, the future looked bleak as the first century of the county's life drew to an end.

Republican Rally

ASSEMBLY HALL

(Company B Armory) University and First Streets

Champaign, Illinois

Nov. 1, 1932, 8:30 p. m.

Hear

MRS. GRACE KNIGHTEN

One of the most distinguished orators
of the colored race

TRAVELER PUBLIC SPEAKER
TEACHER OF INDIANS

Music and Entertainment. Everyone Invited



THE THIRD FIFTY YEARS

1933 - 1983

The election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt to the United States presidency in 1932 was an expression of the desire among the American people for new national policies towards the lingering depression. The Roosevelt administration established several federal assistance programs which provided jobs to millions of unemployed workers throughout the nation. In Champaign County federal funds were used for a number of public improvement programs. The County Board of Supervisors' agenda was primarily concerned with requests for fund allocations for township road improvements.

Reverend Father Perkins appealed to the supervisors for a paved road from Bondville south to the St. Boniface Church, citing the potential moral ruin of the unemployed as reason to put men to work on the roads. The concrete slab between Sidney and St. Joseph was finally completed in 1933 after weeks of delay caused by spring rains. Extensive flooding in May, 1933, had washed out six county bridges in one week alone. R. F. Fisher, superintendent of the county highway department, estimated an additional twenty-five thousand dollars would be needed to repair the bridges. Superintendent Fisher was also in charge of the most extensive road-widening projects ever undertaken in the county.

Many miles of rural roads were broadened from eight feet to sixteen feet during the 1930's and provided thousands of hours of work for otherwise unemployed men. Wages were forty cents per hour for unskilled workers and fifty cents for those with special skills. The state hard roads project begun in the late 1920's was delayed by the depression but finally ended in Champaign County during the early 1930's with the paving of the last section of Route 47 between Mahomet and Route 10 near Seymour.

Some indications that the economy was on an upward trend appeared by 1933. The F. K. Robeson Store started advertising "Pre-Inflation Sales" that predicted price increases of up to 50 percent within ninety days. The banks at Seymour and Pesotum reopened, wheat rose to sixty cents a bushel, and Champaign Township reduced its paupers' relief budget by ten thousand dollars compared to the previous year.

Opposite page:
Republican Rally Poster

Despite an intensive effort by the Champaign County Republican Party during the presidential campaign of 1932, voters gave Franklin Delano Roosevelt 16,410 votes to 13,845 for incumbent President Herbert Hoover. Republican Party loyalty diminished in light of Roosevelt's promise to end the economic depression.

The County Board of Supervisors of the 1930's seemed to respond to township requests for paved roads without having a long range plan. Nevertheless the system of county paved roads did much to improve rural life and benefit many business interests in the smaller communities.

In 1932 the board hired the F. A. Somers Company of Champaign to grade a five-mile stretch of highway from a point north of Dewey, extending toward the town. At Ludlow a three-mile concrete road was paved starting one mile west of town and continuing two miles east. Philo residents proposed a nine foot wide pavement to link their community with Tolono at Route 25 (later Route 45). These latter two towns were the last in the county without connections, following completion of the St. Joseph to Sidney road in 1933.

An unusual financial arrangement enabled the Leverett community to get its 1½ mile pavement east to Route 25. The county had been granted a \$17,807.01 rebate for aid in the earlier paving of the road from Urbana to Philo. Before the rebate was received, it was allocated by the Board of Supervisors to the Leverett project.

University construction programs were practically non-existent except for completion of buildings begun under President Kinley's ten-year plan in the 1920's. This was partly due to bad publicity generated by controversy over alleged extravagancies in the construction of a new house for the university president. State Representative Devine from Dixon, Illinois, blasted the project cost, which undoubtedly damaged relations between the legislature and the university administration of President Harry Woodburn Chase. Several of Devine's fellow legislators agreed with his objections to spending \$17,557.79 for architects' fees when the university had its own School of Architecture and employed its own full-time staff architect.

The legislative uproar over construction of the university president's house resulted in significant changes in fiscal accounting policy. The university lost much of its independent status in financial management. Income funds, such as those used for the president's house, became subject to legislative appropriation. The legislature also discontinued the practice of lump sum payment of appropriations to the university and established a voucher system for payment of bills by the state auditor and state treasurer.

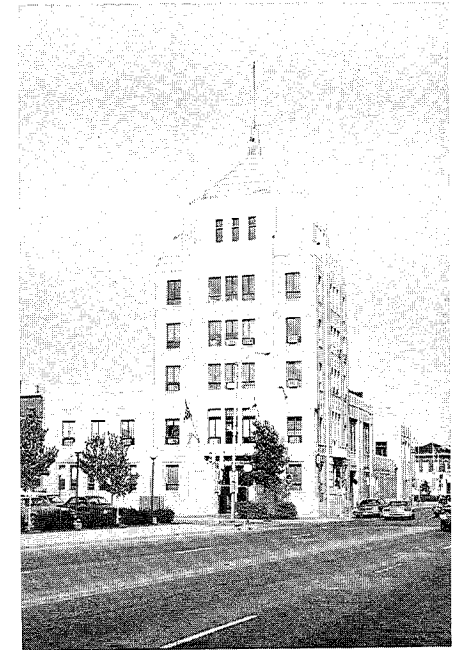
Probably the most damaging and well-founded objection was to one expenditure of \$22.50 for the purchase of a single wastebasket. The university replied to the objection saying that the total project cost of \$207,238.79 was being paid from several previous appropriations' surplus which had been placed in a contingency fund. Neither the legislature nor the general public fully accepted this explanation in an era when many citizens were unable to earn \$22.50 in an entire month's time. President Chase lived in the new house but a short time. The end of his service at Illinois came after three years, when he resigned in 1933 to become chancellor of New York University.

*University President's Home
711 West Florida Avenue, Urbana*

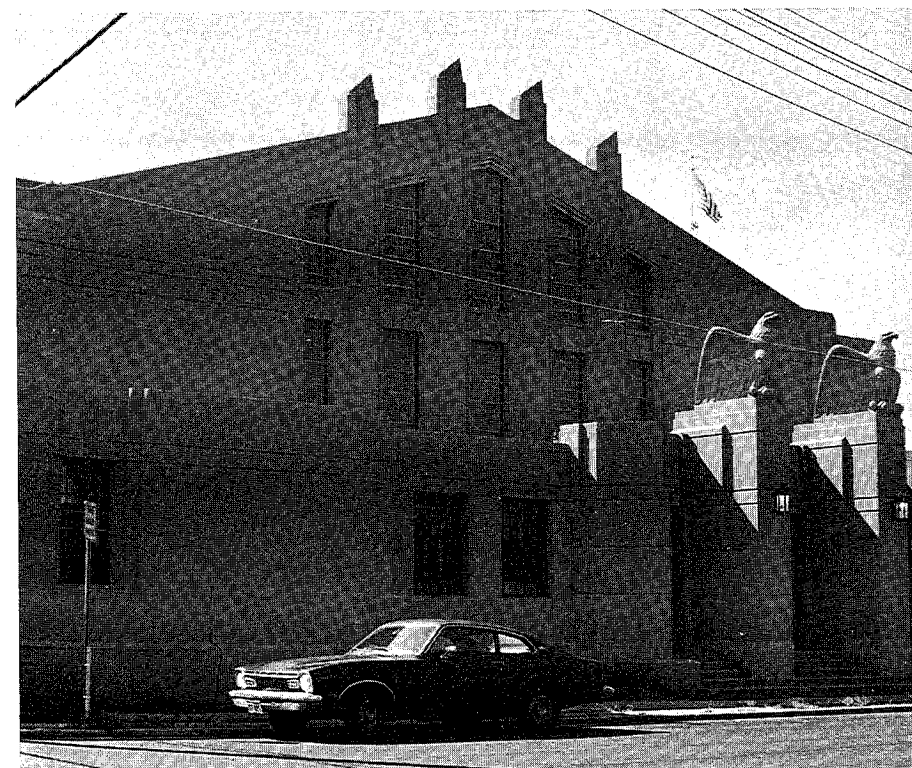


Other major buildings erected during the depression basically fell within two categories of use: recreational or public service. Government funds were made available to the city of Champaign to construct a new city building at the northeast corner of Neil Street and University Avenue. The cornerstone was laid in 1935 and when the structure was completed in 1937 it became the dominant landmark in Champaign's central business area.

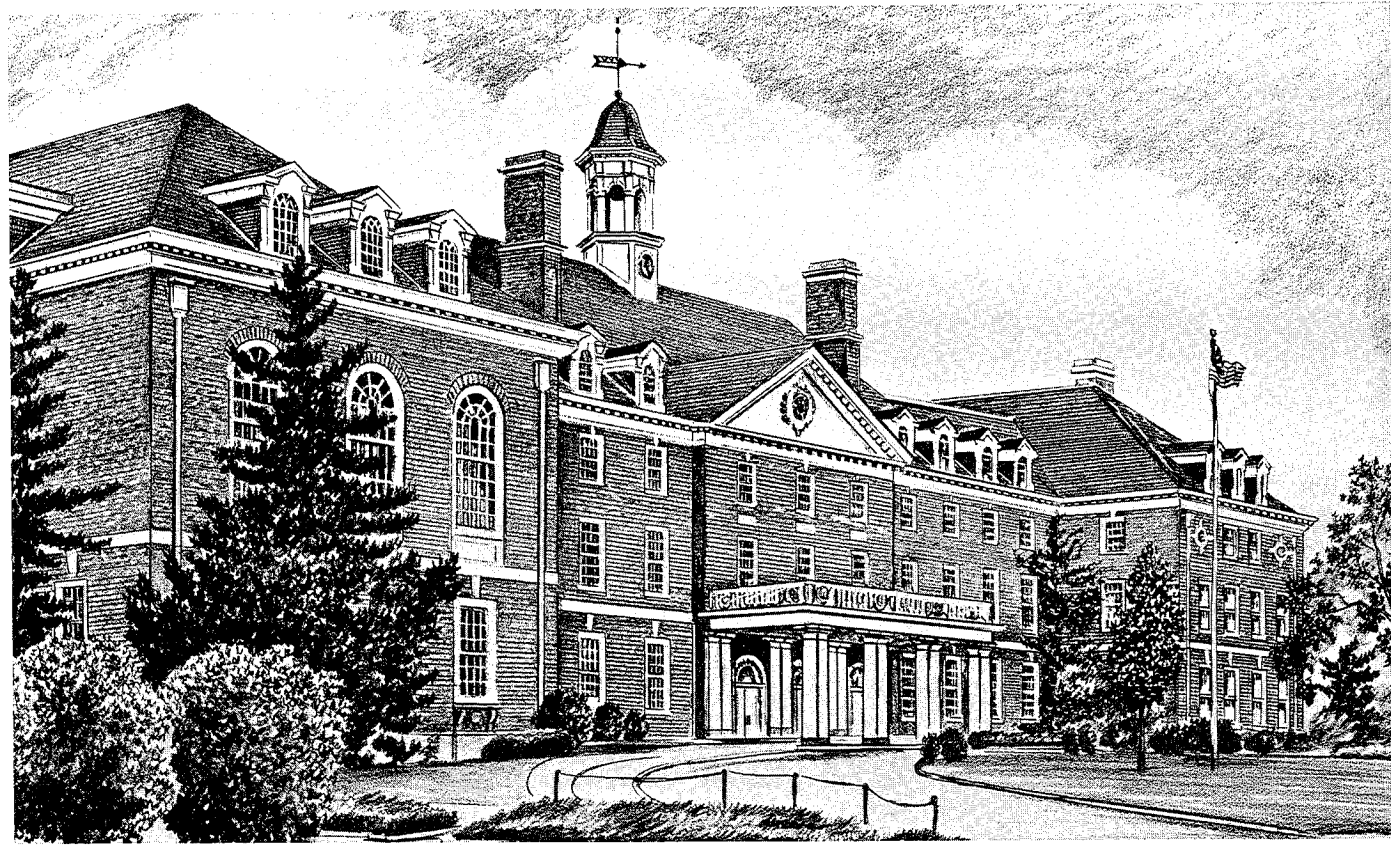
New National Guard armories were popular projects for state governments' use of federal assistance money, and both Champaign and Urbana were awarded funds for armory construction. The Champaign Armory was built in 1933 at the southwest corner of East Park and Second Streets. Champaign erected a new junior high school in 1935 on the site of the old West Side School House at Elm Street and West University Avenue. In 1937, Urbana chose to use a portion of its federal assistance funds to build an imposing elementary school which was named after the county's early educator, Thomas R. Leal. As more money became available, the Urbana Armory was constructed in 1938 on the north side of East University Avenue, just east of Cunningham Avenue. All five of these major buildings constructed in the twin cities during the depression using federal funds were designed in the forward-looking "modernistic" architectural style of the time.



*Champaign City Building
102 North Neil Street*



*Champaign National Guard Armory
109 East Park Street*



*Illini Union
1401 West Green Street, Urbana*

Federal construction funds were used to build major additions to both the Urbana and Champaign Post Offices during the 1930's. Urbana's post office received a seventy-two thousand dollar allocation on June 22, 1933, and workers completed the job almost a year later. The Champaign Post Office's original architectural design of 1905 had been altered by an addition in 1929. This addition was removed in 1936 and a new 67 foot by 111 foot addition was added to match the building's original design features. This difficult construction project was completed by contractor William Weber.

A quite different appearance was chosen by architects Howard Lovewell Cheney and John Calvin Leavell for the new Illini Union building on the university campus. The Georgian Revival style of the Union building was based on the impressive buildings reconstructed in the early 1930's at Williamsburg, Virginia, under the guidance of John D. Rockefeller. To many, that style represented a return to an ideal of beauty, simplicity, and dignity. The architects' proposal was heartily approved by university president Arthur Cutts Willard and the building committee he had appointed when he took office in 1934.

The federal government's Public Works Administration provided \$544,000 towards construction costs, and a loan of \$656,000 was negotiated which was to be repaid by a student fee assessment. The University of Illinois Foundation, which was formed in 1935, undertook the responsibility of obtaining gifts from alumni and others to furnish the new building. This was the first major fund-raising campaign of the Foundation and its executive director, Glen M. Hobbs. Despite the economic conditions which existed in 1937, the Foundation raised \$107,000 in the last eight months of that year, projecting an optimistic attitude and determination that the Union would be built. Construction began in 1939, and on February 8, 1941, the Union opened its doors.

During the stressful depression era, recreation facilities and programs were recognized as essential to stabilize the moral, physical, and social elements of life. Typical of the will and resolve to continue rural traditions of fellowship and recreation was the announcement of the Newcomb Township Homecoming to be held at the Shiloh Church southwest of Fisher in September, 1931. J. A. Blair, William Leischner, Archie Suttle, and Harry Lusk were in charge of the celebration and stated the object of the Homecoming was for general improvement of the agricultural, social, and moral life of the community and for the development of the spirit of cooperation and helpfulness.

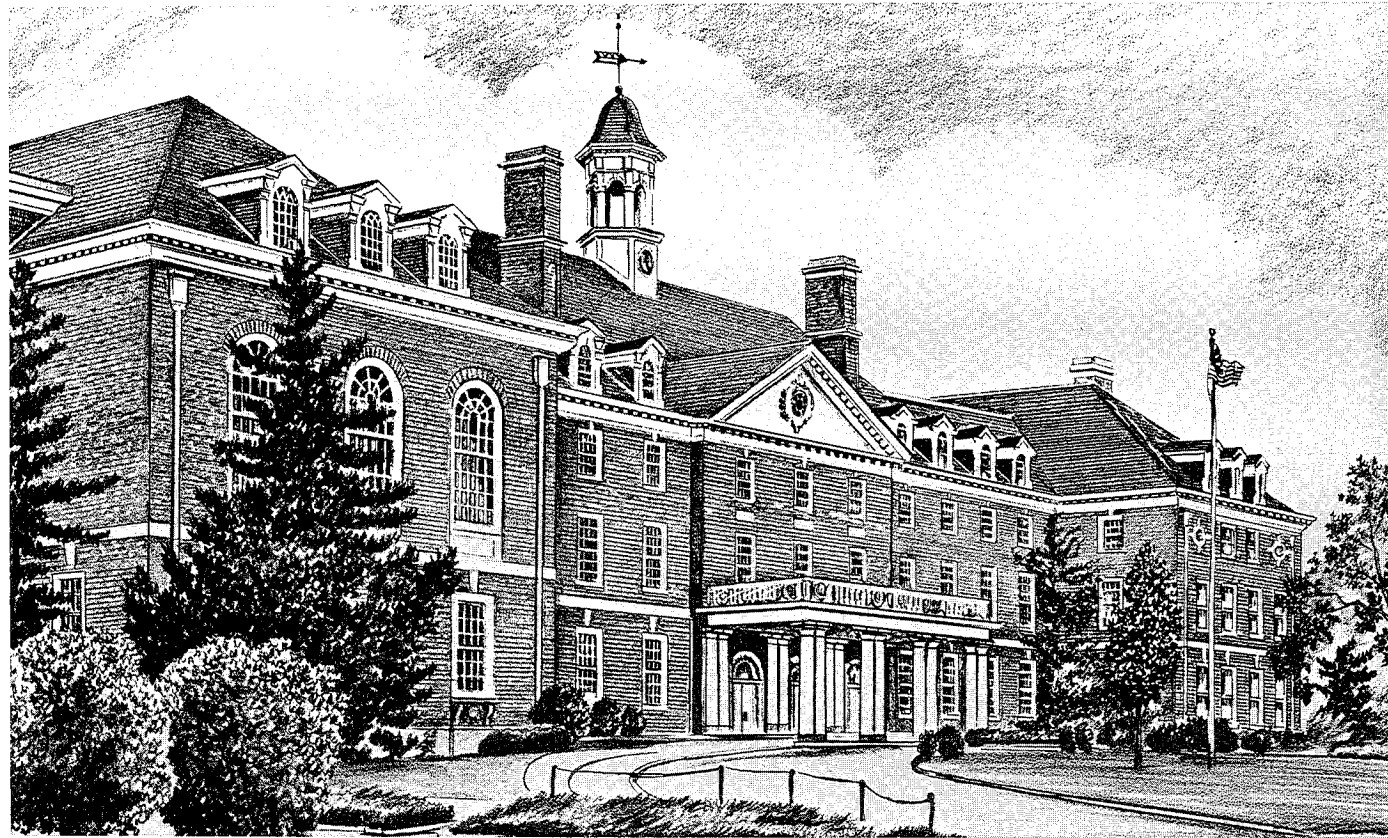
In the six-year period prior to the outbreak of World War II, W. P. A. labor had been used in Champaign County to build fourteen public buildings, improve nine other buildings, refurbish nine acres of park land, improve a swimming pool, construct a six acre athletic field, and build eight tennis courts.



Hensley Township Kitchen Band

On May 3, 1933, plans were announced for a new Young Men's Christian Association building in Champaign. The Y.M.C.A. board accepted a gift of \$100,000 from the estate of Senator William B. McKinley, and newly elected board president Charles V. Holmes was given the task of raising another \$100,000 to complete the project. The University Young Men's Christian Association, after eight years of planning and fund raising, was finally able to start construction on their new building in 1937.

Ladies of Hensley Township provided enjoyment during the 1930's with inexpensive musical instruments. Farmers temporarily forgot about economic concerns when these ladies entertained at Farm Bureau meetings.



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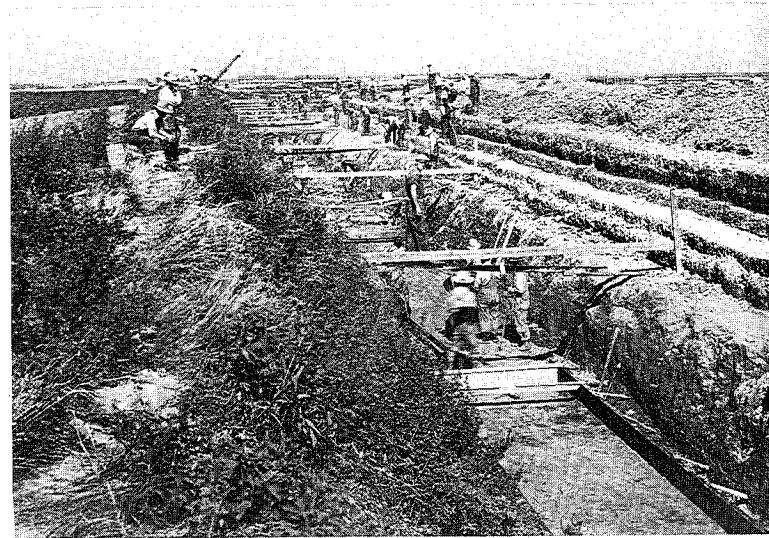
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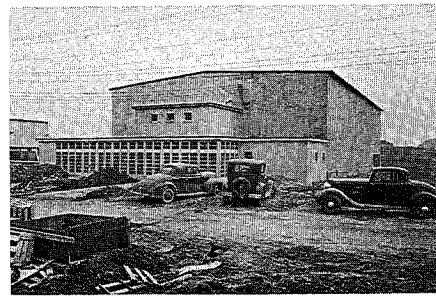
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Constructing Sewers, Chanute Field



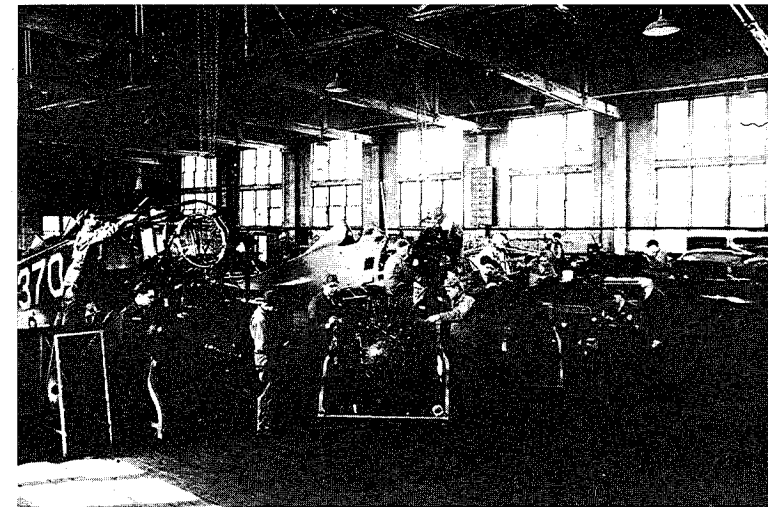
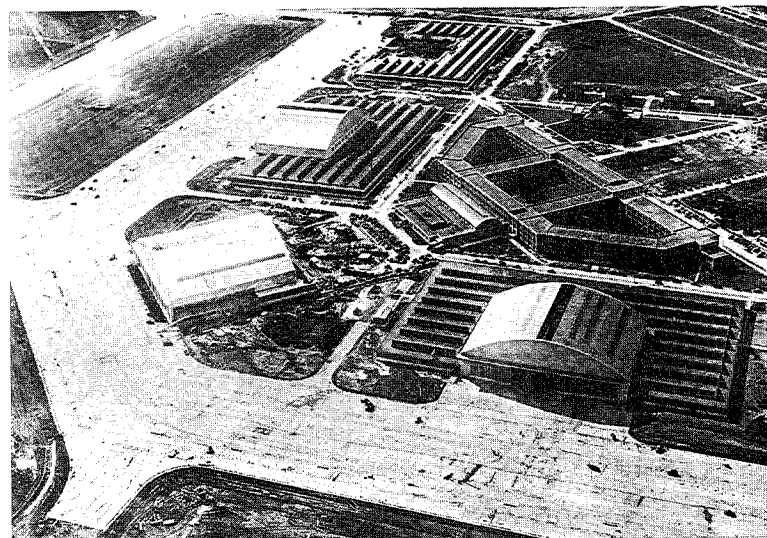
Theater, Chanute Field

Champaign County's role in national and international affairs was advanced considerably by an announcement in July, 1938, of a major federal grant to Chanute Field. The Public Works Administration authorized funding of an \$8,460,000 construction program and work began on Chanute's own sewage, water, and heating systems. Several permanent brick buildings were erected, and Chanute took on the character of a self-sufficient and long-term military community.

The clouds of war which hung over Europe and Asia were a signal to President Franklin D. Roosevelt to prepare United States national defense forces. By 1939, he had ordered fifty thousand new airplanes and the training of pilots to fly them. Chanute Field was designated to train aircraft maintenance mechanics, and men began arriving from activated National Guard units and through direct enlistment due to a stepped-up military recruitment program.

In 1936 the Army had announced that Chanute Field would be closed as a government economy measure. Closing was recommended by the War Department, the Army Air Force, and the Rules Committee of the House of Representatives. Congressman D. C. Dobbins of Champaign took the issue to the floor of the House and convinced his fellow representatives to keep Chanute Field open. The vote was 206 to 84. In 1937, Chanute was designated as a permanent U. S. Army Installation.

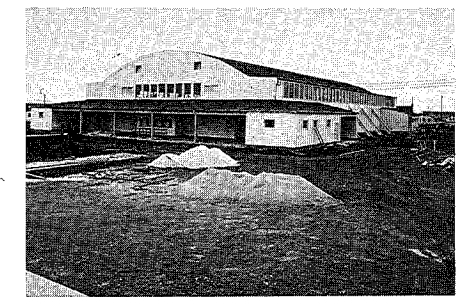
Aerial View, Chanute Field, 1940



Aircraft Mechanics, Chanute Field

The federal Selective Service System was reactivated in 1940 and local draft boards like those of 1917 were once again established. The first men from Illinois were registered on October 16 and the first quota was established on November 18, 1940. Chanute Field's population increased from fourteen hundred to twenty thousand within the next few months, and additional temporary barracks were hurriedly constructed to house fifteen thousand men. Champaign County residents and other Americans began to shift their attention away from the national depression and started to address the need for national defense preparations.

On November 30, 1941, Champaign County's Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to pay one-half the cost for right of way acquisition to make Route 45 a four lane pavement between Urbana and Rantoul. The federal government paid the rest of the project cost and Champaign County received its first four lane pavement, which was proudly announced as available for civil or military use.

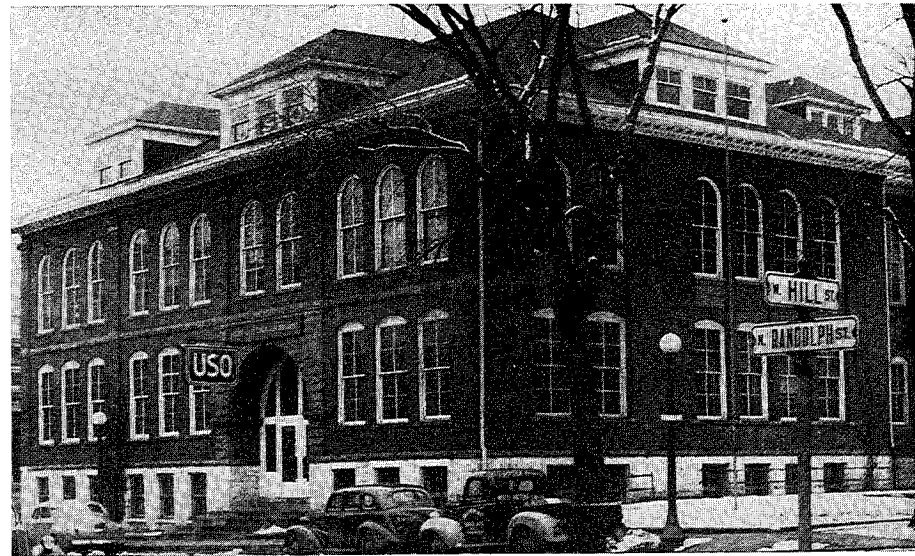


Sports Arena, Chanute Field



On November 25, 1944, Chanute Field workmen finished pouring concrete for two new runways at a cost of forty-five thousand dollars. Enough concrete was used on the Chanute runways to pave a highway twenty feet wide from Rantoul to Urbana.

Temporary Barracks, Chanute Field



Champaign USO

On November 8, 1941, D. I. Huxtable, chairman of the Champaign School Board's building and grounds committee, and Chanute officials presided at ceremonies using crowbars rather than the customary shovels to signify the start of work to remodel the vacant Central School for use as a servicemen's center.

The rapid growth of Chanute Field and the influx of thousands of troops prompted the establishment of USO facilities in Champaign and Rantoul in 1941. Dr. J. C. Dallenbach, representing the Champaign School Board, arranged a dollar per year lease of the old Central School Building at the southwest corner of Randolph and Hill Streets to the United Services Organization. The chairman of the Champaign USO management committee, Royal A. Stipes, Jr., established a twenty-five thousand dollar operating budget. Plans were made to open both the Champaign and Rantoul USO's within sixty days, and workmen demonstrated exceptional speed in getting the buildings ready for use.



Rantoul USO

On December 21, 1941, both buildings were opened with flag ceremonies. The workmen who built the Rantoul USO presented a flag as did the Rantoul American Legion Post, and both flags were flown over the building. At the same time, men working on the Champaign USO donated a flag to be displayed inside that building and the Champaign American Legion Post 24 presented a flag for the exterior of the center. The formal dedication of the buildings had been scheduled for January 9, 1942, but compelling need and events dictated an earlier opening.

The Japanese attack on the United States Naval Base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941, was the culmination of a series of war threats to the country. On December 8, 1941, the United States Congress declared war on Japan. The Senate voted 82 to 0 and the House voted 388 to 1 for the declaration. The lone dissenter was Representative Jeanette Rankin, Republican from Montana, whose colleagues responded to her vote with hisses and boos. Students at the University of Illinois responded to the declaration of war by demonstrating their support at a mass meeting in front of the president's house. Sunday night, December 8, 1941, three thousand students chanted "Beat Japan," and after President Willard spoke to them, they all sang the Star Spangled Banner. Soon after war was declared, university officials started planning for an enrollment decrease of twenty-five hundred in anticipation of students joining the armed forces. News of Champaign County's first war casualty arrived on December 10, 1941, in a war department notification that twenty-one year old Private Leo Surrells had been killed during the Japanese attack at Hickam Field, Honolulu, Hawaii. Private Surrells was a Champaign High School graduate and had enlisted at Chanute Field eleven months before his death.

The months and years ahead until peace came in 1945 were filled with patriotic actions by Champaign County citizens. Young men by the hundreds went to enlist at Chanute Field. During the first week of war, Navy recruitment centers were open twenty-four hours a day. Hundreds of civic leaders joined in a combined organizational effort through the local Civilian Defense Council, and every civic club directed its focus toward helping in the war effort. A second USO facility was opened at Rantoul and another at Urbana. The Urbana Woman's Club put containers out in each of Urbana's seven wards to collect grease for the war effort which would be recycled to produce soap and a by-product of glycerin used in the production of high explosives.

On the evening of December 7, 1941, while waiting in a Washington, D. C., hotel for Congress to convene, Congressman W. H. Wheat of Rantoul stated, "I'm not in favor of war, but when war is forced upon you the only thing you can do is fight like hell to end it as soon as possible."

Champaign County operated three draft boards during World War II. The Champaign-Urbana Draft Board was located at 11½ East University Avenue, Champaign. County Draft Board I was at 110 South Race Street, Urbana. County Draft Board II, located at Tolono, handled all of the registration for the southern part of the county. All draft board members served without pay.

Illinois state records indicate that 16,963 men were registered for the draft in Champaign County and that 4,232 men were furnished by the selective service system to the armed forces.

Racial segregation was practiced throughout the United States by the federal selective service system during World War II. On February 2, 1943, Champaign County Draft Board I announced that a large group of "colored" men would be called for induction. Those who were ordered to report were Robert Banks, George Bigham, Jesse D. Britt, Pete Hall, Marvin Jack Oliver, Arthur Alexander Owens, Ira Franklin Sayles, Marvin Earl Starks, Anthony Sykes, Donald Peter Wade, and Robie Lee Williams.



Harriet Franks

Harriet Franks served as Chief Clerk of Tolono's County Draft Board II, and processed the classification of 2,908 men during the period from 1940 to 1947.

Julius J. Hirshfeld headed a Catholic parish house hospitality organization which invited an estimated 4,500 Catholic Chanute soldiers to spend Sundays in one of the 1,500 Catholic homes within the St. Mary's, St. Patrick's, Holy Cross, and St. Malachy's parishes. Thousands of books were donated in a Victory book drive throughout the libraries of the county for use of military personnel. The Champaign County Chapter of the American Red Cross led in the war effort through a number of programs in the schools, clubs, organizations, and churches in the county. The Red Cross established headquarters in the Plaza Hotel in Urbana and became a major center of activity for civilian service. Elsie Mattis served as surgical dressing chairman and organized a large group of women to prepare much-needed dressings for wounded troops.

The dime coin became a symbol of giving and Red Cross fund drives went into the schools with requests for donations. A system of selling ten-cent war savings stamps redeemable for war bonds was employed throughout the business communities. Newspaper boys sold stamps to their customers each week and thousands of dollars were raised in this manner to help finance the war. The Campus Business Men's Association acted as a distribution agency for war savings stamps in Campustown and encouraged college students to participate in the program. The Chamber of Commerce in Champaign and the Association of Commerce in Urbana joined with the university in organizing a "share a ride" program, since bus service in the twin cities was reduced by fifty percent because of the scarcity of fuel and tires.

Federal bureaucratic procedures were formally introduced in Champaign County by the war-time rationing program. Ration Chairman Enos Phillips of Urbana, following national policies, named E. R. Dillavou as tire rationing director and appointed twenty-seven tire inspectors. The War Ration Board received its first assignment for tire rationing in January, 1942. Champaign County was allocated a total of 221 tires and 185 tubes for the entire month. Only 62 tires and 52 tubes were available for passenger cars and the remainder were for trucks and buses. Before the rationing board could issue a permit to purchase a tire, one of the tire inspectors was to certify that the applicant actually needed the tire. As the war lengthened, more products were added to the ration lists, including canned goods, sugar, gasoline, and even shoes. Although war-time regulations demanded sacrifices, they were accepted by patriotic citizens as necessary to the hastening of peace.



County Ration Chairman Enos Phillips and Urbana businessman Manie Tepper examine a book of ration stamps.

During World War II, county industries filled several government contracts. The Illinois Glove Company made gloves for the U. S. Navy, and the Collegiate Cap and Gown manufactured nurses' capes of heavy blue woolen cloth. With an artillery red lining, the capes were the same type of garment shown in thousands of patriotic posters depicting Red Cross nurses in war time service.

An indication of future United States invasion plans was made public in 1944 when government contracts were let which called for the production of twenty thousand more landing craft boats. The C. S. Johnson Company was a sub-contractor and made the stern landing treads for the boats.

Champaign County farmers worked long and hard hours with inadequately-trained help and with a severe shortage of equipment. Many farmers took second jobs in defense industries during off-season farming times, some driving as far as Kankakee to work in an army munitions plant. Local industries filled military contracts with speed and quality production, and thousands of women joined the work force as replacements for men in service. Following the hiring of the first married women teachers in Champaign schools, the School Board announced on January 22, 1943, that others would be hired if single women were not available. A majority of the male faculty had been called to the military or to defense industry service, thereby creating a shortage of teachers.

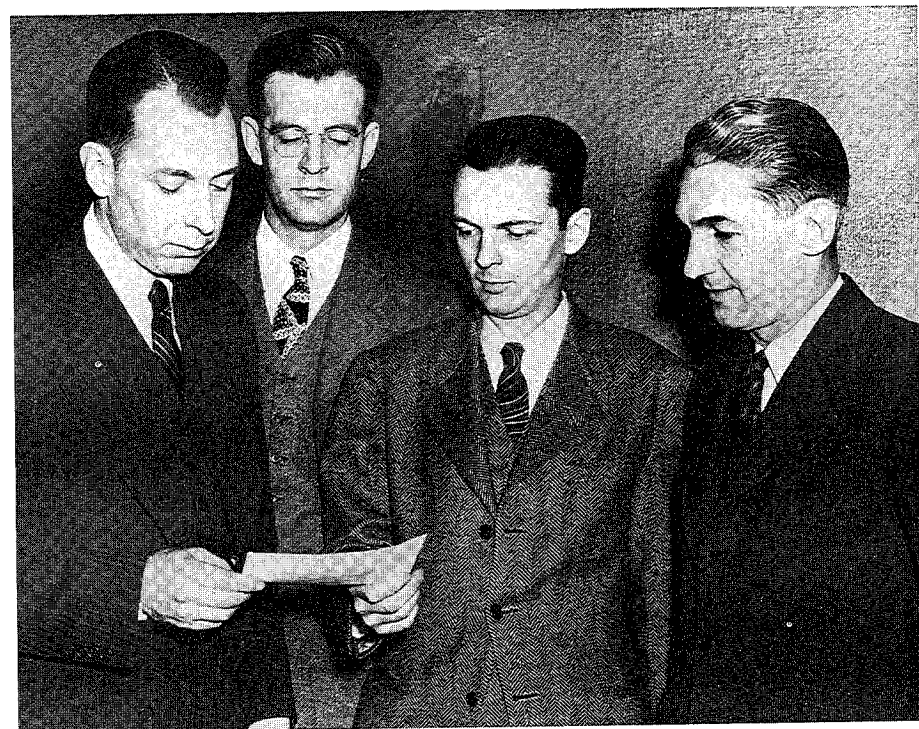


Beth Fowler Vitoux and Audra Burke were the first married women hired to teach in the Champaign schools. Mrs. Vitoux taught Spanish and Introduction to Foreign Language at Champaign Junior High School. Her starting salary was \$1,150 per year, plus \$50 extra for being the "Retro" year-book and school newspaper sponsor. When the war ended two and one half years later, she stopped teaching; at that time, she was being paid \$1,400 per year, one-third the amount paid to male teachers.

Mrs. Burke taught mathematics at Champaign Junior High School and was selected class sponsor for the "class of 1945."

Left: Beth Fowler Vitoux
Right: Audra Burke

State Treasurer William G. Stratton visited the twin cities on February 2, 1944, to present a check for three hundred thousand dollars to the 4th War Bond Drive Committee. The check was the amount allocated to Champaign County's credit from war securities investments of the state of Illinois.



Left to right: Chairman of allocations, H. Cullen Kariher; publicity director, R. F. Colwell; State Treasurer William G. Stratton; and general chairman, H. R. Bresee.

Almost every man, woman, and schoolchild supported the war financially by responding to war bond drive appeals. One of the most successful bond drives was held in 1944 under the direction of Champaign businessman H. R. Bresee. Champaign County's goal in the 4th War Bond Drive was set at \$3,432,400. On the last day of the drive, Chairman Bresee announced that the goal had been exceeded by over a million dollars and additional pledges still had not been recorded.

Royal A. Stipes, Jr.

Community business leader R. A. Stipes, Jr., portrayed a street cleaner for the 5th War Bond Drive. His services were up for bid at a "slave auction" held at the Virginia Theater, July 10, 1944.



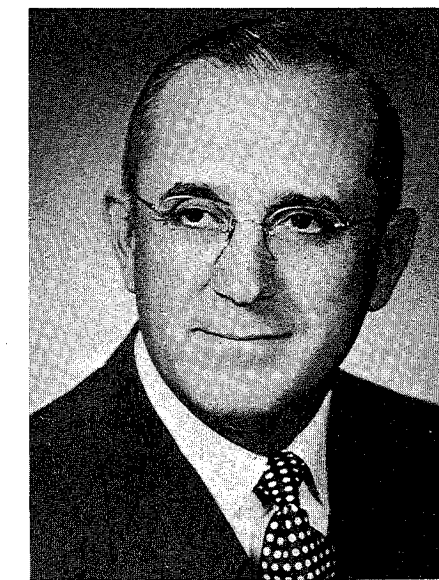
Confidence in America's ability to win the war and an awareness of future needs for Champaign County prompted community leaders to initiate plans which would not only serve the war effort, but also would build important, lasting institutions for future years. During World War II, as aviation gained wide acceptance as a mode of transportation, opportunities were presented for enterprising communities to establish airports. Attorney August C. Meyer presided at a luncheon on January 3, 1942, in the Tilden Hall hotel in Champaign to which more than thirty community leaders had been invited by the *Champaign News-Gazette*. Illinois Aeronautics Commission Chairman Ben Regan addressed the gathering and explained how federal funds were authorized for airport development and civilian pilot training. Such programs would help provide aviators desperately needed for the war effort.

Immediately, a plan was set in motion to establish an airport for Champaign County. One of those in attendance at the luncheon was university president Arthur Cutts Willard, and three weeks later on January 24, 1942, he asked approval from the Board of Trustees for the university to participate in the proposed airport project. The trustees agreed to accept responsibility for the airport and its aviation training program if funding could be obtained. August C. Meyer was joined by several other proponents and began efforts in Washington, D. C., and in the state capital to obtain appropriations for a University of Illinois airport.

Among several key people who assisted Meyer were: *Champaign News-Gazette* publisher Helen Stevick and newspapermen Harold Holmes and Ed Borman; Campus Businessmen's Association leader, Shelby Himes; President of the Twin City Federation of Labor, C. J. Walker; University of Illinois President Willard; State Senator Everett R. Peters of St. Joseph; and other community leaders.

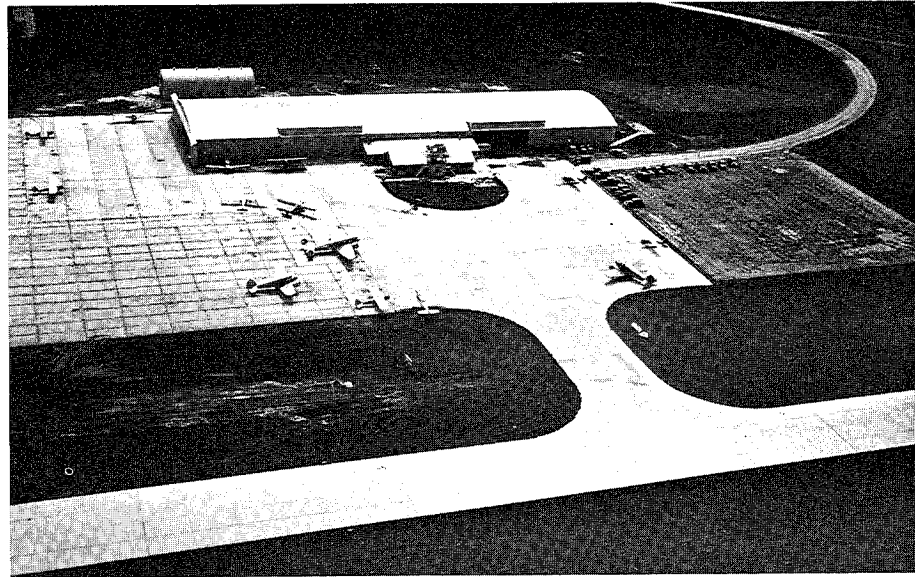
Senator Peters undertook political actions reminiscent of those by Clark R. Griggs more than seventy-five years earlier by maneuvering into a position of state legislative committee power. Illinois Lt. Governor Hugh Cross was prevailed upon for support and on January 23, 1943, he named Senator Peters Chairman of the Senate Committee on Aeronautics and Military Affairs. Peters arranged for university appropriation bills to be expedited through the Senate. House Representatives Charles W. Clabaugh of Champaign and Ora Dillavou and Tom W. Gorman of Urbana explained the benefits of the proposal to their colleagues and obtained a unanimous House vote for initial funding of the program.

Park Livingston, President, and Chet Davis, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the University of Illinois Board of Trustees, were strong proponents for establishing a University of Illinois airport. Their leadership encouraged the Board of Trustees to make the policy decision which entered the university into the new era of aviation research as well as placing it in the unique position of being a state institution of higher learning operating an airport for public use.



Roy H. Chumbley

Roy H. Chumbley was chairman of the Champaign Chamber of Commerce Air Service Committee during efforts to establish the University Airport. Mr. Chumbley served as a major in the Civil Air Patrol during World War II.



University of Illinois Airport

The initial cost of the university airport was \$2,250,000, of which \$750,000 in State of Illinois funds were matched two for one by the United States Civil Aeronautics Administration. The airport project was the first post-depression construction project in Champaign County in which federal funds were allocated for a non-federally owned property.

August C. Meyer, acting as the personal representative of Illinois Governor Dwight H. Green, negotiated with the federal Civil Aeronautics Administration for funds and assistance in developing the University of Illinois Airport. Meyer made approximately twenty-five trips from Champaign to Washington, D. C., at his own expense on behalf of the airport project. The discomfort of travel aboard crowded trains during the World War II years provided him with an additional incentive to obtain facilities for airline passenger service for Champaign area travelers.

Construction of the airport was begun on May 31, 1944, under the supervision of James J. Doland, professor of civil engineering at the university. The airport was built on 762 acres of land in Tolono Township with a total paved area of 338,000 square yards — enough concrete to pave twenty-nine miles of highway twenty feet wide. The first building was an old hangar which was moved in from an airport in Arkansas. When the war-time materials shortage ended in 1945, work was begun on the administration building which was to house the control tower, weather station, ticket office, and other passenger services facilities.

Dedication of the University of Illinois Airport, held on October 26, 1945, was a major event of the year in Champaign County. University President Willard compared United States airport facilities of 1945 as being at the level of automobile highways of 1920, when there were fairly good cars but few paved highways. He predicted the university would make contributions to the training of personnel and to the development of air transportation comparable to those previously made by the university to railway and highway transportation. The exemplary cooperative effort by many public-spirited Champaign County citizens, the university administration, and local, state, and federal governments, led to the development of the largest university airport in the world.

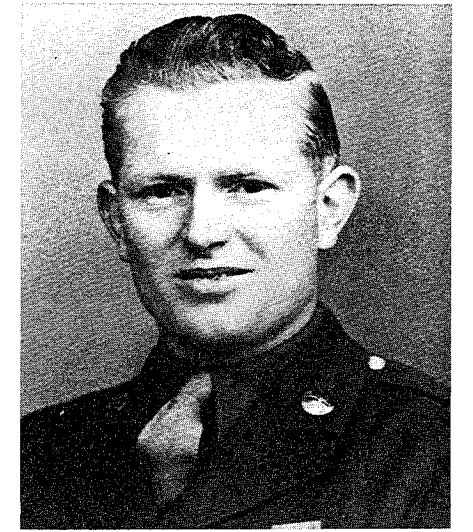
After having conquered the Axis forces in Europe, the United States brought about the end of fighting by dropping on Japan the world's first atom bomb in August of 1945. At the time the devastation brought on the Japanese was seen by most as an appropriate measure in view of that country's deadly 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. Formal surrender ceremonies were held September 2, 1945, and peace temporarily returned to the world.

Champaign County had offered its resources and people as fully as any county in the state. The totality of involvement in the war was particularly felt by those who contributed more than one family member to the world's battlefields. Mr. and Mrs. Francis Buck of Penfield were stricken by the loss of two sons. Sergeant Donald A. Buck was killed in action in France on August 22, 1944; his younger brother, nineteen-year-old Thomas E. Buck, was killed on April 15, 1945, in the Philippines. Mrs. Christina Vriner of Champaign mourned the loss of her son William Vriner, who was killed in action November 10, 1944, in Germany. On the opposite side of the world, another son, Sam "Tyke" Vriner, was wounded while serving in the South Pacific theater of action.

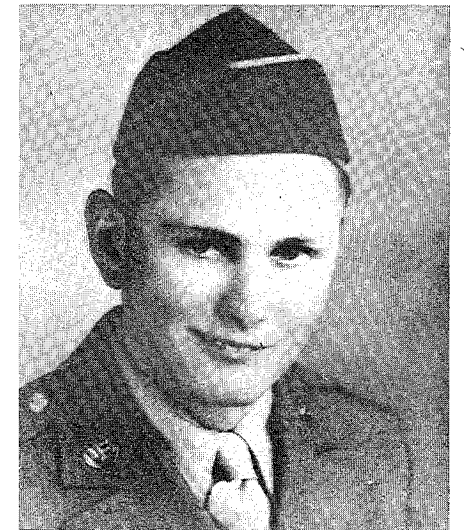
More fortunate were Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Pope, who welcomed their two sons back to their home at 808 North Poplar Street in Champaign. Lieutenant Cecil A. Pope, Jr., had been called from his studies at the University of Illinois and survived eighteen months of combat duty in North Africa and Italy. His brother, George Pope, served in England, France, and Italy.

More than twenty-two thousand military personnel from Illinois lost their lives in the war and thousands of others returned home disabled. The needs of returning veterans became an immediate priority of governmental and social service agencies. Organizations such as the Disabled American Veterans, Am Vets, and Veterans of Foreign Wars were formed in Champaign County, and several new American Legion Posts were chartered to assist those who had survived the war as well as to aid families who had lost loved ones and providers.

The University of Illinois initiated a policy of providing handicap access to classrooms, and under the direction of Timothy Nugent the program soon gained international recognition for assimilating wheelchair-bound students and staff into conventional university activities.



Donald A. Buck



Thomas E. Buck

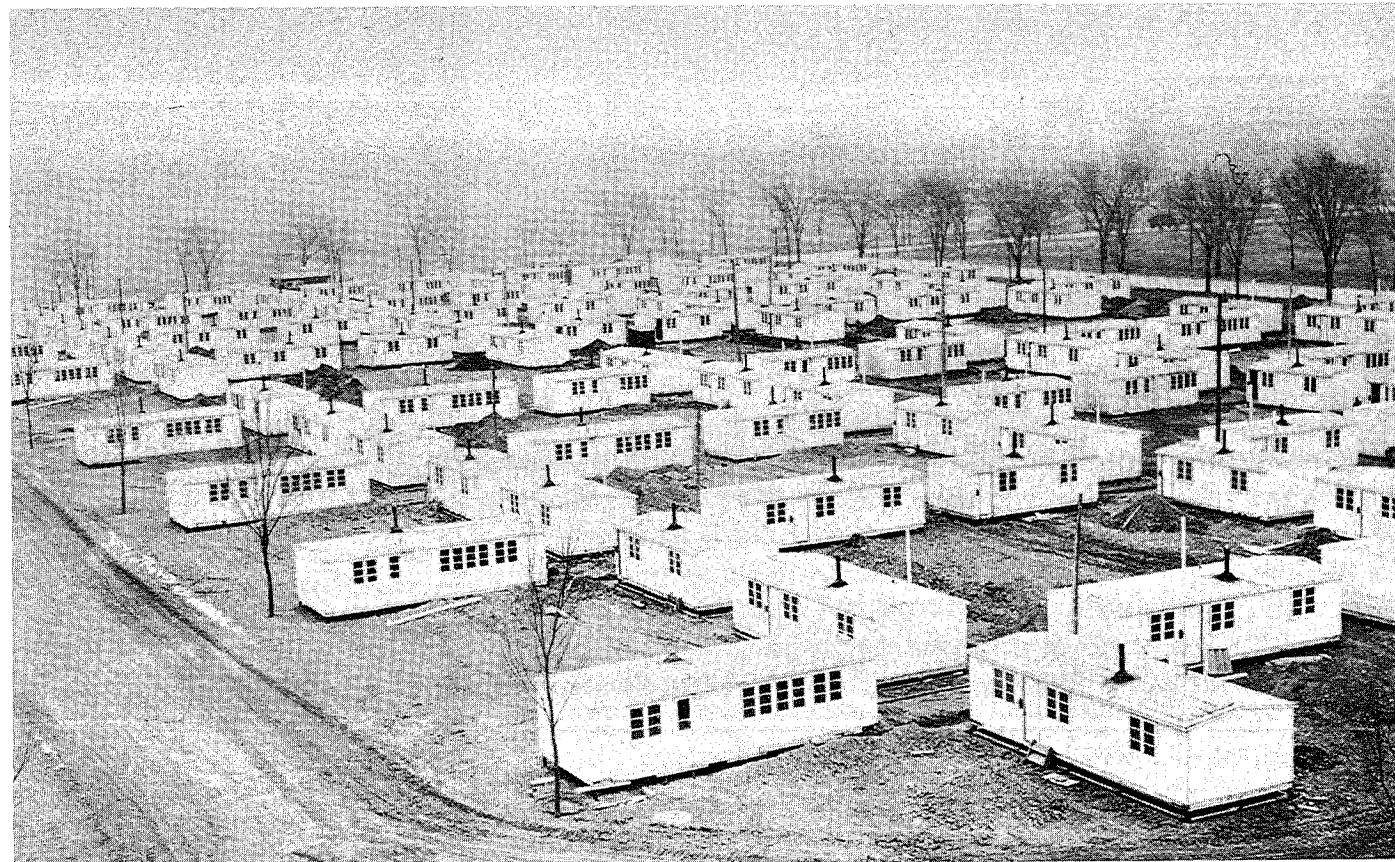
Urbana American Legion Post No. 71 increased its membership to over three hundred when seventy-eight new Legionnaires were inducted by January, 1946. Louis D'Urso, Dr. C. C. Gianturco, S. Gail Renner, and Robert Frame were among returning veterans who reaffirmed their faith in "God and Country" by Legion membership.

Black veterans, including Arnold Lavon Yarber, Cecil B. Bridgewater, Jonnie Cleo Johnson, and Hiram Cook were among a group of veterans of World War II to be admitted to the William F. Earnest Post 559 in Champaign.

The rush of veterans returning to the university caused an overwhelming shortage of student housing, and in the fall semester of 1945 it was necessary to limit enrollment for the first time in the university's history. This was done by curtailing entrance permits to out-of-state women. By January of 1946, there were fourteen hundred veterans on campus and the male student population had increased by 50 percent over the previous year. Students' emergency housing needs were met by bunk beds set up in crowded make-shift dormitories wherever multiple shower and toilet facilities were available. The Ice Rink, directly north of the Armory, became one such dormitory, while three hundred more men were housed in the west hall of the stadium. Another three hundred were tightly quartered in the Men's Old Gym Annex at Springfield Avenue and Romine Street.

Temporary frame dormitories and small family dwellings were set up on land that had been used as a military student parade ground. The temporary dormitory structures provided housing for 1,312 men and, eventually, several hundred families. The city of Champaign granted permission to erect these temporary demountable houses with the provision that when no longer required by the university, they would not be relocated elsewhere within the city limits.

Stadium Terrace, 1946



The Frank A. Somers Co. of Champaign was awarded the initial contract to move approximately 275 of these government surplus houses (which measured only twelve by twenty-five and one half feet) from Charleston, Indiana, to an area bounded by South First Street, Gregory Drive, and South Oak Street. After the houses arrived, the Kuhne-Simmons Company of Rantoul nailed them onto foundation posts which had been set into the ground. Heated by small coal stoves and poorly winterized, the houses rented for thirty dollars a month for a one bedroom unit or thirty-five dollars for two bedrooms.

These "shacks" became highly sought-after homes, and during the winter of 1946 over nine hundred applications for the 270 units available were received by the university housing officials. Dubbed "Stadium Terrace," the housing sounded far more like an exclusive subdivision than the drab and depressing area it truly was to many young post-war brides of veterans arriving in Champaign. Additional houses were erected in Urbana at an equally prestigious-sounding "Illini Village" just east of Mt. Hope cemetery between Pennsylvania and Florida Avenues.

Better student housing was a high priority of university president George Dinsmore Stoddard, who assumed his position in the summer of 1946. Construction of the Lincoln Avenue Women's Residence Hall had been started in May of that year. The first phase of construction cost \$1,515,000 and provided housing facilities for 450 men. Later expansion would permit housing for 900 women students, but only after the influx of male veterans could be adequately accommodated elsewhere. At the beginning of 1947, the university revealed a two million dollar housing project consisting of two, six-story buildings for graduate students and married student families. The site selected for the first of these permanent structures was at the southeast corner of Green Street and Goodwin Avenue in Urbana. Rents were set at between \$32.50 and \$62.50 per month, depending on apartment size. The 212 apartments were filled immediately. The future direction of the university as a provider of housing was well established.

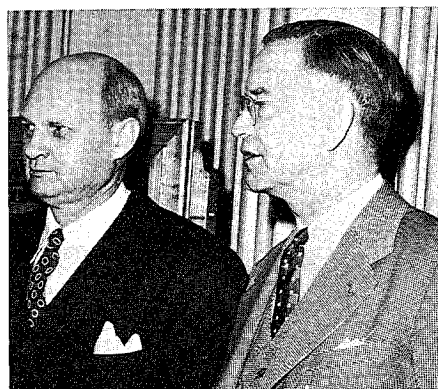
The post-war construction boom was not confined to the university; however, it was basically centered in the major population centers of Rantoul, Urbana, and Champaign. Residential housing-project plans were being implemented by the Cecil Ozier Company which erected forty houses in 1948 at Rantoul. In January, 1947, Chanute Field obtained a \$1,310,800 appropriation to build seventy permanent housing units for married personnel, which further established its position as a permanent military installation.



Student Wife, Stadium Terrace, 1947

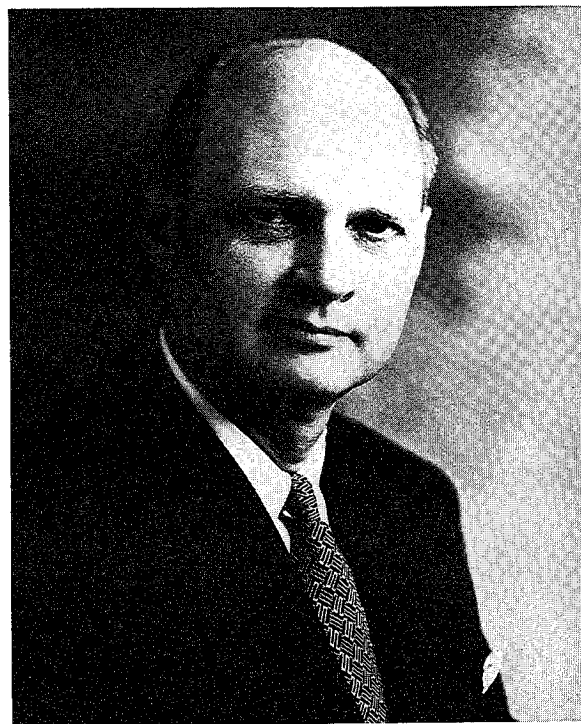
Congress created an independent U. S. Air Force from the Army Air Forces with the passage of the National Security Act of 1947. A U. S. Air Force order dated January 13, 1948, changed the name of Chanute Field to Chanute Air Force Base.

Joseph R. McCarthy, a U. S. Senator from Wisconsin from 1946 until his death in 1957, was the country's most vocal foe of communism. During the Korean War era, Senator McCarthy gained millions of followers throughout the United States despite his tactics of making accusations of disloyalty or subversive actions against numerous persons and institutions without any substantial evidence.



University President George D. Stoddard and State Representative Charles Clabaugh, shown in the Illini Union before a luncheon, January 7, 1949, to discuss the university's financial needs.

The biennial legislative appropriation to the University of Illinois for 1949-51 was \$86,253,954, a nearly \$70 million increase over that of ten years previous. Continuing to receive the favor of the state legislature was a major concern to the thousands of people in Champaign County whose future was directly linked to university growth. However, in 1949, state representative Charles W. Clabaugh warned the university of impending problems with state appropriations, citing as an example the campaign platform of one southern Illinois legislator up for re-election as "being against Stalin, Truman, and Stoddard." Clabaugh was later elected to the Illinois senate where his long years of service in the legislature were marked by his dedication to supporting public education and the University of Illinois.



The early 1950's represented a period of reduced construction activity in the twin cities and most of the rest of the county. Two factors which contributed to the lack of development locally were the outbreak of the Korean War in June, 1950, and the public controversy surrounding the administration of university president George D. Stoddard. Severely strained relations had developed between the university and the state legislature which led to uncertainty about the financial support needed for continued growth of the university. Upon his appointment on July 1, 1946, Dr. Stoddard had introduced liberal educational policies at the university. Several of his faculty appointments were viewed as unacceptable by a number of faculty members, and internal dissent became publicly expressed as strife increased.

To compound matters, the wave of "McCarthyism" began to sweep the country in 1950 and quite predictably charges of "communism" were leveled against the Stoddard administration and the university. Area state representatives Charles W. Clabaugh and Ora Dillavou and state senator Everett Peters were placed in the politically difficult position of being unable to fully champion appropriations for the university in an extremely hostile state legislature. The Board of Trustees heeded the warnings of the state legislature and on July 24, 1953, by a vote of six to three, passed a vote of "no confidence" in Dr. Stoddard. He immediately resigned and was replaced by Dr. Lloyd Morey, who served first as acting president and later as president until 1955.

Unlike the twin cities, Rantoul experienced a major growth period during the Korean War era. This was due largely to an \$8 million federal appropriation to Chanute Air Force Base in January, 1953. The base was enlarged by the addition of 110 acres at its southeastern border on which fifty-six engine test cells were constructed of reinforced concrete. This construction project alone cost \$7 million and was the single most costly expansion of training facilities in Chanute's history.

Following the signing of an armistice on July 27, 1953, ending the Korean War, American soldiers who had served in the United Nations Forces' conflict against North Korea and Communist China returned home. The Korean War claimed the lives of 33,729 American servicemen and, as in all previous conflicts, young men from Champaign County served their country by making the supreme sacrifice. Among the Champaign casualties were Corporal John V. McKinney, Jr. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. John V. McKinney, Sr., resided at 1006 North Champaign Street, and his wife, Sara Jean Olinger McKinney, lived at 1001 North Walnut Street. On November 2, 1952, two days after McKinney's death, fatal artillery fire hit the aircraft on which Lt. Walter W. Winkler, Jr., was serving as a forward observer. Lt. Winkler was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter W. Winkler, Sr., and the husband of Roberta Bumpus Winkler of 112 E. Garwood in Champaign. The entire neighborhood of North Champaign was saddened by the tragic loss of the two young friends who had played together in childhood. Several other Champaign County families felt the painful loss of family members in the war. Fortunately, Walter Roessler, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Roessler of the Gifford area, returned to them on Labor Day, 1951, after having been released from a communist prisoner of war camp. Gifford citizens welcomed him with a parade, street banners, and posters. Thirteen men from the Sidney community served in the Korean conflict and all of them returned home safe.

They and other returning veterans found a significant environmental change in Champaign County. In 1952, the Dutch Elm disease had attacked many of the elm trees which had graced the parks, streets, and roads of the county, as well as the yards of almost every older dwelling and farmstead. Within the next few years, it was necessary to remove thousands of dead or dying elms. The loss of this much-cherished shade tree radically changed the character of streetscapes throughout the county. This misfortune, however, did have one profound positive effect. It brought about a broader public concern for the preservation of the environment on the part of many citizens and public officials.



Lucy Goff, Ken Person, and Chanute Personnel

In 1951, during the Korean War, Mrs. Lucy Goff became Program Director at the Rantoul USO. She served thousands of youthful Air Force personnel as friend and counselor for almost a quarter of a century until her retirement in 1975. Ken Person, shown in the photograph above, served as the USO Executive Director from 1946 to 1966.

The G.I. Bill for educational benefits was extended to veterans of the Korean War and thus enabled several thousand more veterans to enroll in the University of Illinois over the next ten years.



Removal of "Mawanda" elm South side of Illini Union, 1958



August C. Meyer, Sr.

At 7:00 p.m. on December 7, 1954, WCIA, Channel 3, presented its first colorcast program, the Red Skelton Show. Color T.V. was proclaimed a great success by the owner of Dillavou's Appliance Store in downtown Champaign. Dillavou reported that over five hundred people visited the store on December 9 for a demonstration of color television on a 16" screen.



WCIA Channel 3,
509 South Neil Street, Champaign

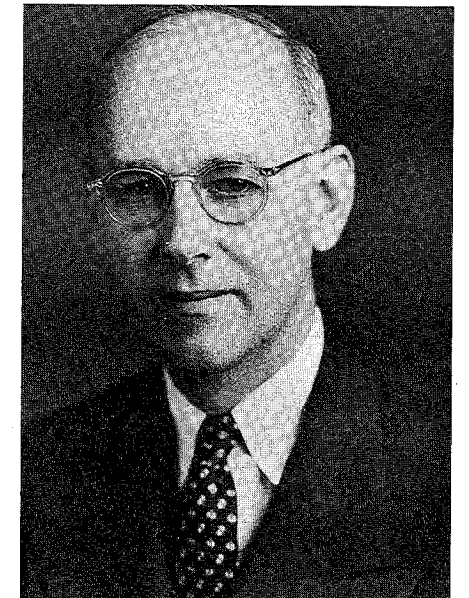
The era of the 1950's was marked by many other changes; these events were expertly reported by area newspapers and the county's two radio stations, WDWS and WILL. A new communications medium was introduced locally when attorney August C. Meyer obtained Federal Communications Commission television rights to Channel 3. Meyer became interested in the expanding new area of broadcast communications while vacationing with friends in Florida, among them two radio executives who viewed the future of television with enthusiasm. Channel 3 had been designated by the FCC for location at Centralia, Illinois, but was not being used. After rights to Channel 3 were obtained and a market area was determined, the new station was affiliated with both NBC and CBS networks. One of the CBS network executives designated the new station by the call letters WCIA which indicated it would serve the east central Illinois area.

WCIA, Channel 3, went on the air at 10:30 a.m., November 14, 1953. Following two network shows, Channel 3 presented its first production of the news. The first people on camera were newscaster Fred Sorenson and weatherman Wyndham Roberts. "Mr. Roberts" became a household personality to thousands of viewers and his name has been synonymous with weather reporting for more than thirty years.

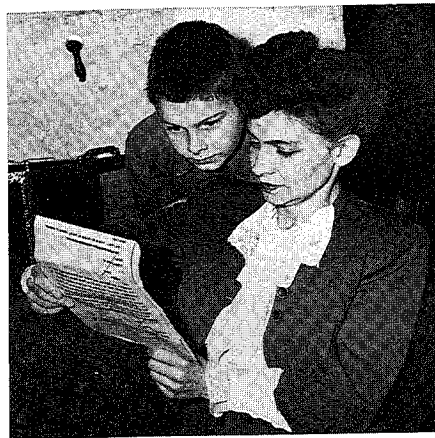
During the same period of time, educational television was undergoing experimentation at the University of Illinois under the direction of Professor Frank E. Schooley, Director of Broadcasting. Professor Schooley had a tower erected on top of the Stadium and set up studio rooms located in the southwest corner of the Stadium. Dr. Ludwig Zirner directed the first television production in the studio on January 1, 1954. The production was a ten minute film of a scene from a Mozart opera. After a year and a half, during which time new equipment was installed and production techniques were refined, the university entered the public television field. University of Illinois television station WILL, Channel 12, went on the air August 1, 1955, with Professor Schooley on camera to dedicate the station to the interest of public service and progress in the field of communications at the university.

The Illinois Broadcasters Association (I.B.A.), however, took the position that Channel 12 was in competition to their members' private interests. Prohibited by law from engaging directly in a lawsuit, the I.B.A. supported two individual citizens who challenged the right of the university to engage in the operation of a television station. After months of litigation and testimony by Professor Schooley, university comptroller Herbert O. Farber, and others, Judge Dewitt Crow of the Sangamon County Circuit Court ruled that the university did possess the power to operate its television broadcasting station WILL, Channel 12. Judge Crow's decision was upheld by the Illinois Supreme Court and was hailed as an extremely important legal victory by the university legal counsel, Ralph S. Lesemann, and law school professors Russell N. Sullivan and Rubin G. Cohn. These attorneys later expressed the view that the litigation was the most significant of any in which the university had ever been involved. The ruling rejected the plaintiff's contention that the university was largely limited to those powers expressly conferred by Illinois statute and could not engage in new activity without obtaining authority from the state legislature. The autonomy of institutions of high learning was greatly enhanced by this legal decision.

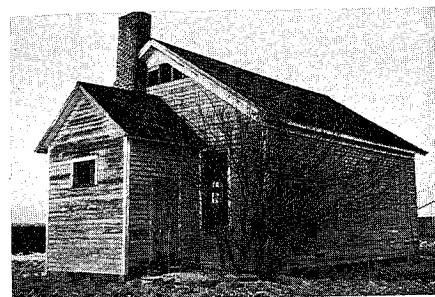
The most important legal case ever to be initiated from within Champaign County was McCollum vs. the Board of Education of School District 71, Champaign, Illinois, filed June 11, 1945. The case stemmed from a program of religious education adopted in the public schools by the Champaign School Board in 1940. Children whose parents gave written permission were provided such instruction during school hours in the public school class room.



Frank E. Schooley



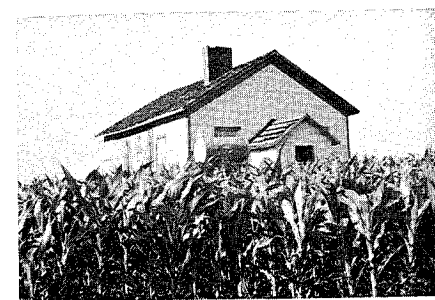
James Terry McCollum and Vashti McCollum



Yankee Ridge School

Experiences shared by many pupils in closely knit one-room schools often bound friends and family for a lifetime. Mounts School in Condit Township closed in 1958 and Champaign County saw the end of the traditional one-room school after 125 years.

Yankee Ridge School, which stood five miles west of Urbana near Philo road, was built in 1875 by Yankee settlers. It was demolished in 1976 and the land reclaimed for cultivation. The few remaining abandoned one-room schools are fast disappearing from the landscape. The 1983 survivor shown below serves as a reminder of a bygone era.



Abandoned School, Philo Township County Road, 700 North, 1400 East

Children such as James Terry McCollum, whose parents, John and Vashti Cromwell McCollum, objected to the religious instruction program, were seated in the hallways, offices, restroom anterooms, and other areas segregated from the religious teaching programs. Set apart and isolated from their classmates, these children were subject to suspicion, ridicule, and humiliation from fellow students and some faculty.

Failing to obtain relief from the school administration, Vashti McCollum ultimately brought suit against the Champaign School Board. After a three year legal struggle, the McCollum case was resolved by the United States Supreme Court on March 8, 1948. An eight-to-one decision reversed the Sixth Illinois Circuit Court's and the Illinois State Supreme Court's decisions and ruled that the Champaign schools' religious program violated the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and the Fourteenth Amendment as applied to the states.

McCollum was aided in her legal battle by Rev. Phil Schug, minister of the Urbana Unitarian Church, who obtained legal counsel and financial assistance from the Chicago Action Council, a group of businessmen banded together to promote liberal causes. The favorable ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court in the McCollum case established direction for every school board in the country regarding the absolute separation of state and religion in the American public school system.

A significant court case of local importance involved the question of whether twin city residents would be allowed to vote on a proposed merger of Champaign and Urbana. Attorney H. I. Green argued before the Illinois Supreme Court as part of his clients' position that a vote should not be allowed because the proposed boundaries would leave Roselawn and Mount Hope cemeteries and a part of the university farms in a no man's land surrounded by Champaign-Urbana. Proponents of the merger were represented by attorneys W. Lee Summers and Don D. Richmond, who interjected an element of humor into their brief filed with the court. They pointed out that all the land involved in attorney Green's reputed no man's land was tax-exempt land, and that "with all due respect, it may positively be stated that all those in the cemetery are quite dead and those who are taken there in the future will be." The vote on merger took place on October 6, 1953, and voters decided to retain separate governments.

Elections were held throughout the county with increasing frequency during the 1950's. The era of change that followed World War II encompassed all areas of government. The demands for more and better schools caused communities to re-evaluate old governmental operating structures and methods. School district consolidations brought about the complete demise of the one-room school in Champaign County. Rural area school consolidation under the twelve-grade system began in 1948 when the Mahomet-Bondville-Seymour Consolidated School District Unit Three was approved by voters in the western area of the county.

Bondville later voted to become a part of Champaign Unit Four School District as it was geographically closer to the Champaign schools. Before the end of 1948, consolidated School District One was formed in the Fisher area and District Seven came into existence to administer the combined schools of the Sidney, Philo, Tolono, Sadorus, and Pesotum areas.

Other communities responded to the increased demands for education facilities by consolidation, and the 233 individual districts that existed prior to 1948 were drastically reduced.

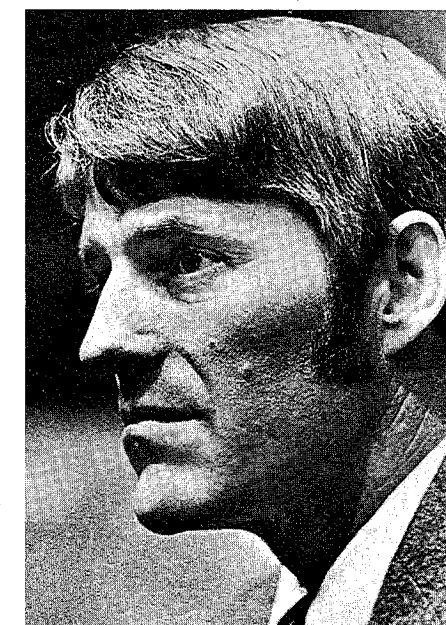
A predicted post-World War II "baby boom" became a reality; by the end of the mid-fifties several new schools were under construction throughout the county and new school buildings were the first priority of voters. Rantoul obtained federal funds for school construction based on the community's responsibility to provide educational programs for the growing number of military families at Chanute Air Force Base. Construction of Rantoul Junior High School and Maplewood Grade School was made possible by expenditure of two hundred thousand dollars of local funds and \$2 million in federal allocations. Further evidence of support for local schools came in March, 1955, when Urbana voters approved by 1089 to 508 a six hundred and fifty thousand dollar bond issue to build an addition to Urbana High School. One month earlier, Unit Four School District voters in Champaign had approved by a four-to-one vote a bond issue for additions to Westview and Washington schools and the building of a new elementary school.

Other important elections held in the same year were to decide significant issues in the twin cities. Voters in Champaign passed a municipal forestry tax on March 1, 1955, by a 156-vote margin, 1,971 for and 1,815 against. The next month, Urbana residents voted April 5 not to levy a forestry tax by an equally close margin of 117 votes, 1,284 for and 1,167 against.

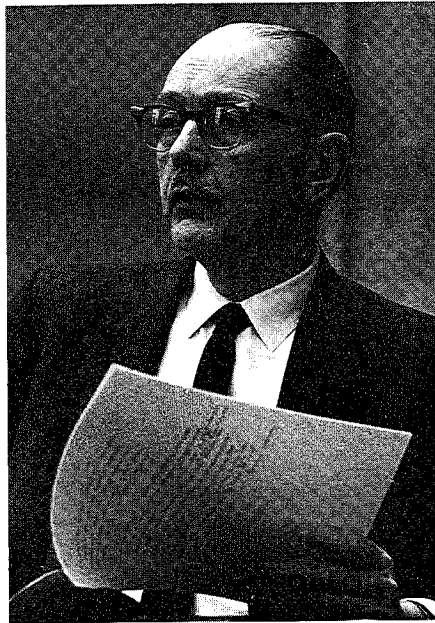
Champaign voters attracted state-wide interest with a local issue on the ballot of April 19, 1955. Governor Adlai E. Stevenson had signed a bill on July 9, 1951, enabling municipalities of five hundred thousand or less to adopt a city manager form of government by referendum. The concept of relinquishing elected citizen power and authority to an appointed administrator caused heated debate. Proponents believed the problems of the rapidly growing community of Champaign needed professional management which would be more efficient in delivering municipal services. Concern for orderly growth was probably the strongest motivation among those advocating the (appointed) manager - (elected) council concept. A Comprehensive Development Plan for Champaign-Urbana had been presented in 1950, and was the first indication that community leaders did not intend to let the community simply grow without direction or control. When the votes were counted on April 19, 1955, the city manager-council form of government was approved by a narrow 342 vote margin, 4,661 for and 4,319 against.

City of Champaign municipal government has for the most part been one of the state's most progressive. From 1860 until 1917 the city was under the aldermanic system. The commission form was established by an election held on February 20, 1917. This proposition carried due to a large favorable vote by the women of Champaign. While 719 men voted for and 786 voted against the change, the women's vote was overwhelmingly in favor of the commission form of government, showing 589 votes for and only 237 against. Although women's votes were not counted separately in 1955, the strong backing of the League of Women Voters for the city manager form of government was undoubtedly a factor in its passage that year.

Three different city managers have served Champaign city councils over a period of twenty-five years. Robert Oldland began his duties as Champaign's first city manager in March, 1958. He was succeeded by Warren Browning in 1962, and in 1974, Eugene Miller was hired as the city's chief administrator.



Eugene Miller



David Dodds Henry

Shortly before the 1956 student housing building policy was adopted by the university Board of Trustees, an innovative private enterprise project for university housing was undertaken by Clarence Thompson of Champaign. Thompson was a principal owner of the Thompson Lumber Company whose firm organized the Northwood Incorporated Development Company. Northwood leased land owned by Mr. and Mrs. William Julian on the north side of Gregory Drive across from the P.G.U. housing area. Thompson's new development firm then built three-story apartment buildings to house 420 women students. The structures were leased to the University of Illinois Foundation which in turn leased them to the University of Illinois Board of Trustees. Consequently, there was no cost to the university as all financial obligations were self-liquidating from rental income.

The year 1955 marked the beginning of other important changes in the character of Champaign County. A whole new era began which was to see the removal of thousands of acres of prime farm land from production. Growth and development were stimulated by a number of factors which seemed to be beneficial to all segments of the county except perhaps the agriculturalist. During the late fall of 1955, corn prices on the local market dropped to one dollar a bushel and hogs were selling at \$12.25 per hundred weight. These prices were the lowest for farm products of any time in the previous fourteen-year period following recovery in 1941 from the Great Depression.

From 1954 to 1959, two hundred family farms disappeared from the county. Major new uses for farmland were housing subdivisions, factory sites, school buildings, parks, and highway construction. Land prices were at a record high, averaging over five hundred dollars an acre; in some instances, choice acreage for development brought as much as three thousand dollars an acre. Low farm-market prices coupled with high farmland values caused many farmers to "sell out" and seek security in more financially rewarding occupations in the building trades, government civil service, and factories.

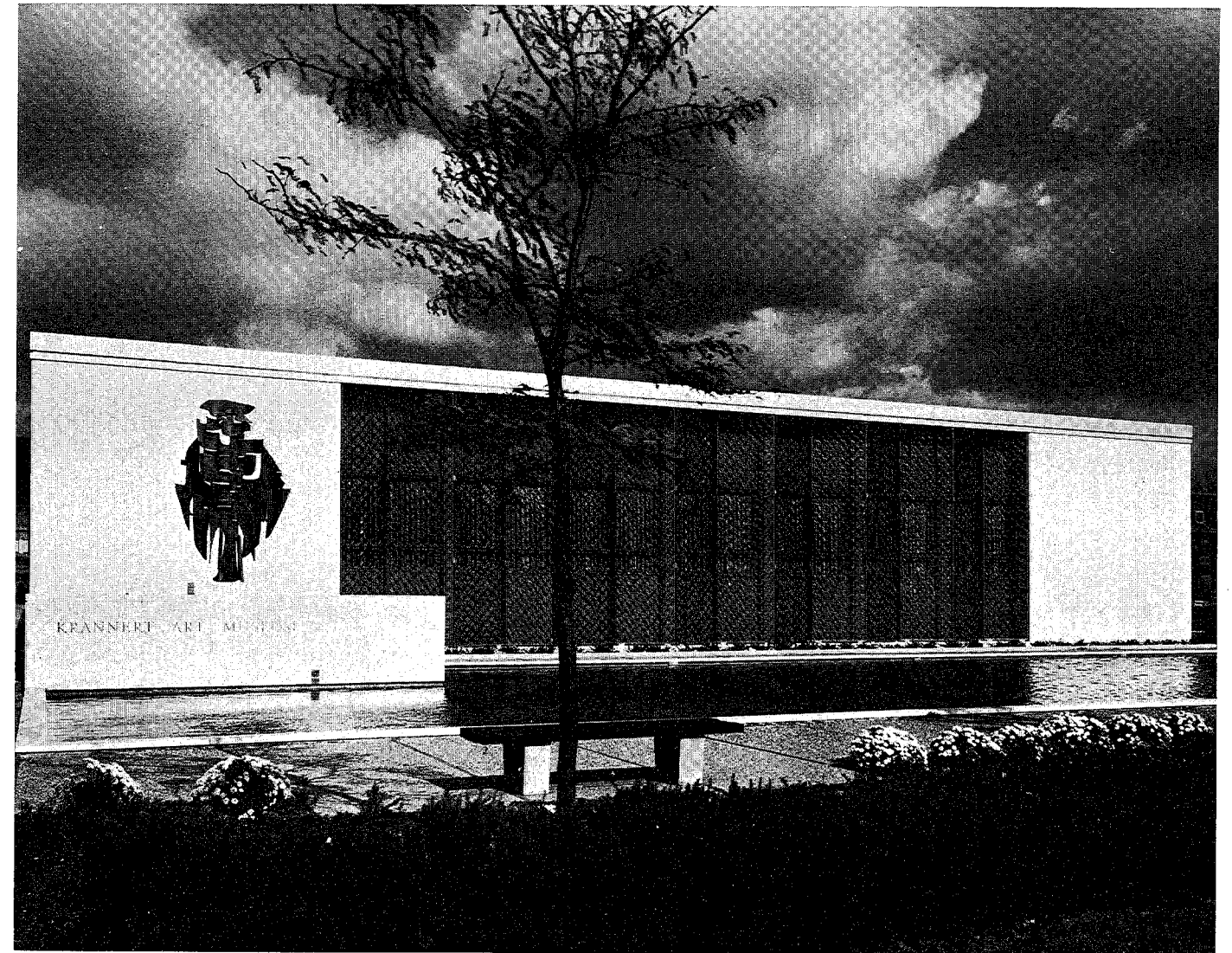
The stage was set for growth south of Champaign by a major subdivision begun on eighty acres of farmland lying southwest of Prospect and Kirby Avenues. Developers Robert and George Shapland and attorney J. Michael O'Byrne created Lincolnshire Subdivision in 1956 and platted seventy lots in the first of a three-part development plan. On the northwest edge of Champaign another family-owned construction company was already expanding the Garden Hills subdivision along the south side of highway route 150. Cecil Ozier and his two sons, Darrell and Mervyn, found willing buyers for their modest two- and three-bedroom houses which sold for about twelve thousand dollars, with no money down and four percent, thirty year mortgages available.

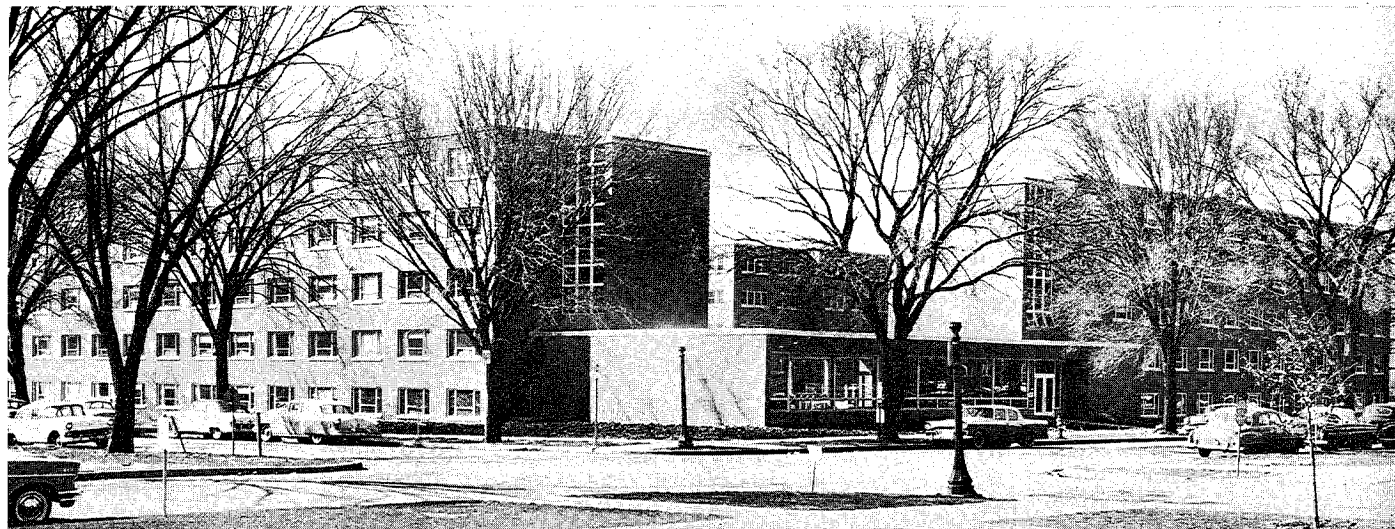
Growth in the twin cities at this time was directly related to the skill of the University of Illinois administration in devising ways to provide student housing to accommodate the steadily increasing enrollment on the Urbana-Champaign campus. Dr. David Dodds Henry assumed the presidency of the university on September 1, 1955, and within a few months presented a seven-year student housing plan which called for building 8,662 housing units at a cost of \$36,800,000. On January 29, 1956, the university Board of Trustees approved the plan, which stipulated that the university provide facilities for students while leaving the housing needs of a rapidly increasing faculty and staff as a task of private enterprise.

President Henry's administration was able to enhance the university's position with the state legislature, and under this favorable financial climate a \$32 million diversified building program for the university was announced for bids in 1958. Included in the program was a new \$2 million Physics Building on the northeast corner of Green Street and Goodwin Avenue in Urbana. Directly south across Green Street, a new residence hall for unmarried graduate students was already under construction in the summer of 1958. Another \$1,080,000 was allocated for construction of the Orchard Street Housing Project on the southern edge of Urbana. Construction funds for the Urbana side of campus totaled approximately \$10 million with the remaining \$22 million going to the Champaign area. New buildings projected in the Champaign sector were the Student Services Building on the northeast corner of Sixth and John Streets and a much-needed Fine and Applied Arts Building on Peabody Drive.

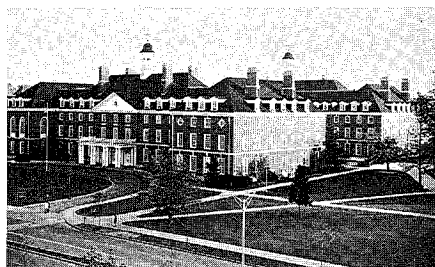
Through the generosity of 1912 university graduate Herman Krannert and his wife, Ellnora, funds were also provided for an art museum adjacent to the fine and applied arts building. When Krannert Art Museum opened in 1961, a large collection of paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts from all over the world was assembled under one roof, enabling university students, area residents, and visitors to enjoy important examples of much of the history of art. The museum included facilities for permanent and temporary exhibitions and an auditorium which also served as a lecture hall for university classes.

Krannert Art Museum
500 Peabody Drive, Champaign





Taft and Van Doren Residence Halls, Northwest Corner, Fourth Street and Peabody Drive, Champaign



Illini Union

The old Parade Ground Unit (P.G.U.) area was selected as the site for three new men's residence halls to be erected at a cost of \$7,250,000. Two major recreational facilities, one in Urbana and one in Champaign, were also scheduled for large sums of construction money. The Illini Union was allocated \$5 million for an addition and \$7,500,000 was set aside for a multi-purpose Assembly Hall building on university farmland south of Florida Avenue. Champaign County had become a mecca of employment for building trades craftsmen.

Additional jobs were created by the opening of two new factories in 1958. Magnavox located its facility on the east edge of Urbana on Main Street and began production of electronic components used by the federal government in national defense missile systems. An important element in the Magnavox decision to locate in Urbana was the availability of professionally-trained engineers through the prestigious University of Illinois Engineering College. The new missile age demanded increased production schedules and Magnavox had seventy employees working on government contracts even before the factory officially opened.

The company planned eventually to employ between one thousand and two thousand persons, of which two to three hundred would be engineers. Urbana had gained an environmentally clean and high payroll industry which boosted the local economy to new levels. For the next several years Magnavox was the largest private employer within the county.

The Humko Foods Company was the second major national industry to seek a factory site in Champaign County. Humko purchased 123 acres of land on North Mattis Avenue in 1956 and built a \$7,500,000 plant to convert soybean oil into shortening and to produce vegetable food oils.

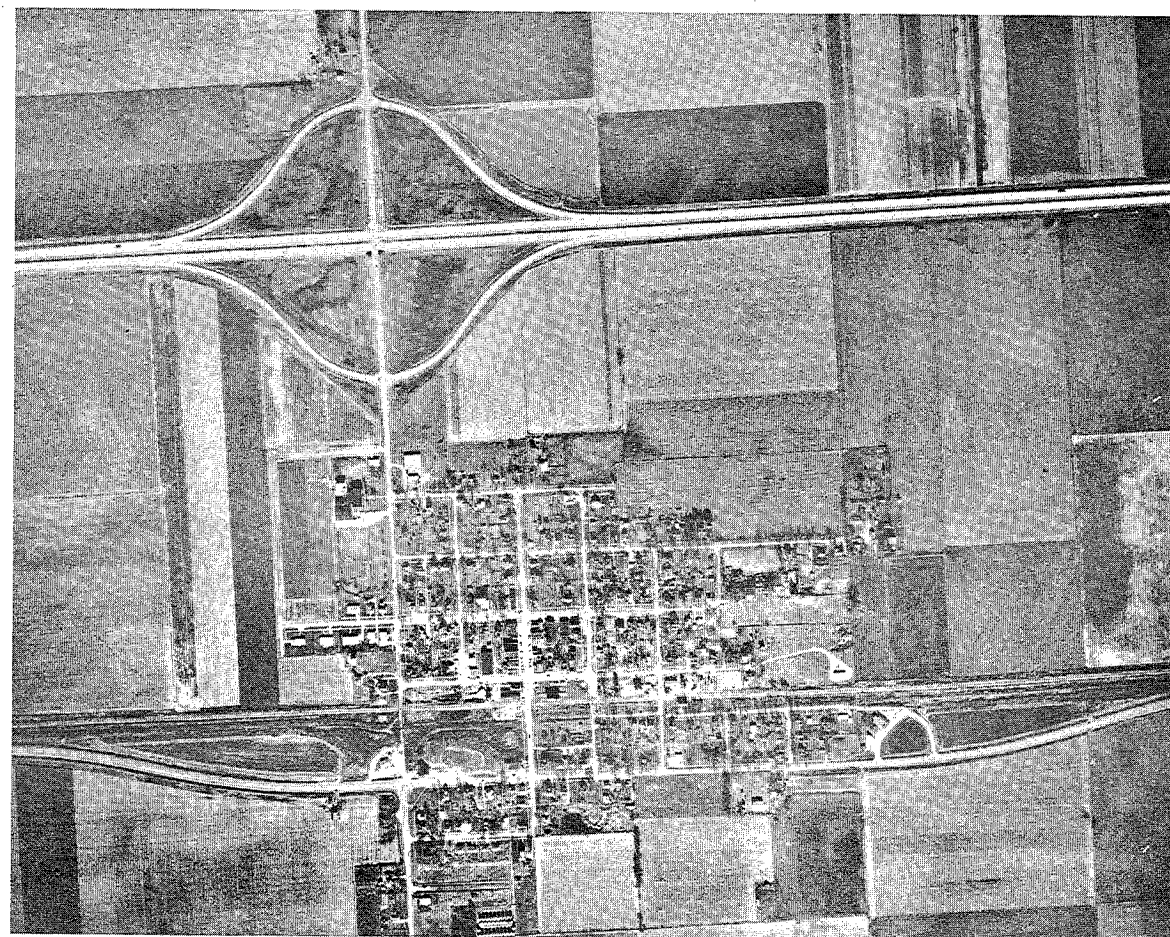
After conducting experimental operations for several weeks, the factory opened early in 1958 and began hiring a two hundred-person work force. The large numbers of employment opportunities created by Magnavox and Humko enabled several hundred women to enter the work force and join the ranks of wage-earners. Significantly, many of these new workers were drawn from the rural communities and thus began a modern era link-up between rural Champaign County and the twin cities as a commuter's employment center.

Thousands of commuters were soon the beneficiaries of an extensive highway construction program which further revolutionized the character of Champaign County. In the summer of 1954, United States President Dwight D. Eisenhower had proposed a federal interstate highway system that would initially criss-cross forty-one thousand miles across the country. Congress adopted the Eisenhower program in 1956 and the state of Illinois scheduled work to begin that year. One of the first sections begun in Illinois was between the twin cities of Champaign-Urbana and Danville. Priority was given this geographical area due to the deteriorated and unsafe condition of U.S. highway 150, which the new highway was to parallel.

Ogden was a beneficiary on an interchange of I-74 and retained its vitality as an agriculture trade center. The interstate also increased Ogden's appeal as a commuter community due to its accessibility to the twin cities and also to the industrial community of Danville, a short distance east in Vermilion county.

Between 1959 and 1967 there were forty new homes built in Ogden's two new subdivisions. Evidence of the community's business stability was typified by the 1967 erection of a new, modern bank building in the business district by the first National Bank of Ogden.

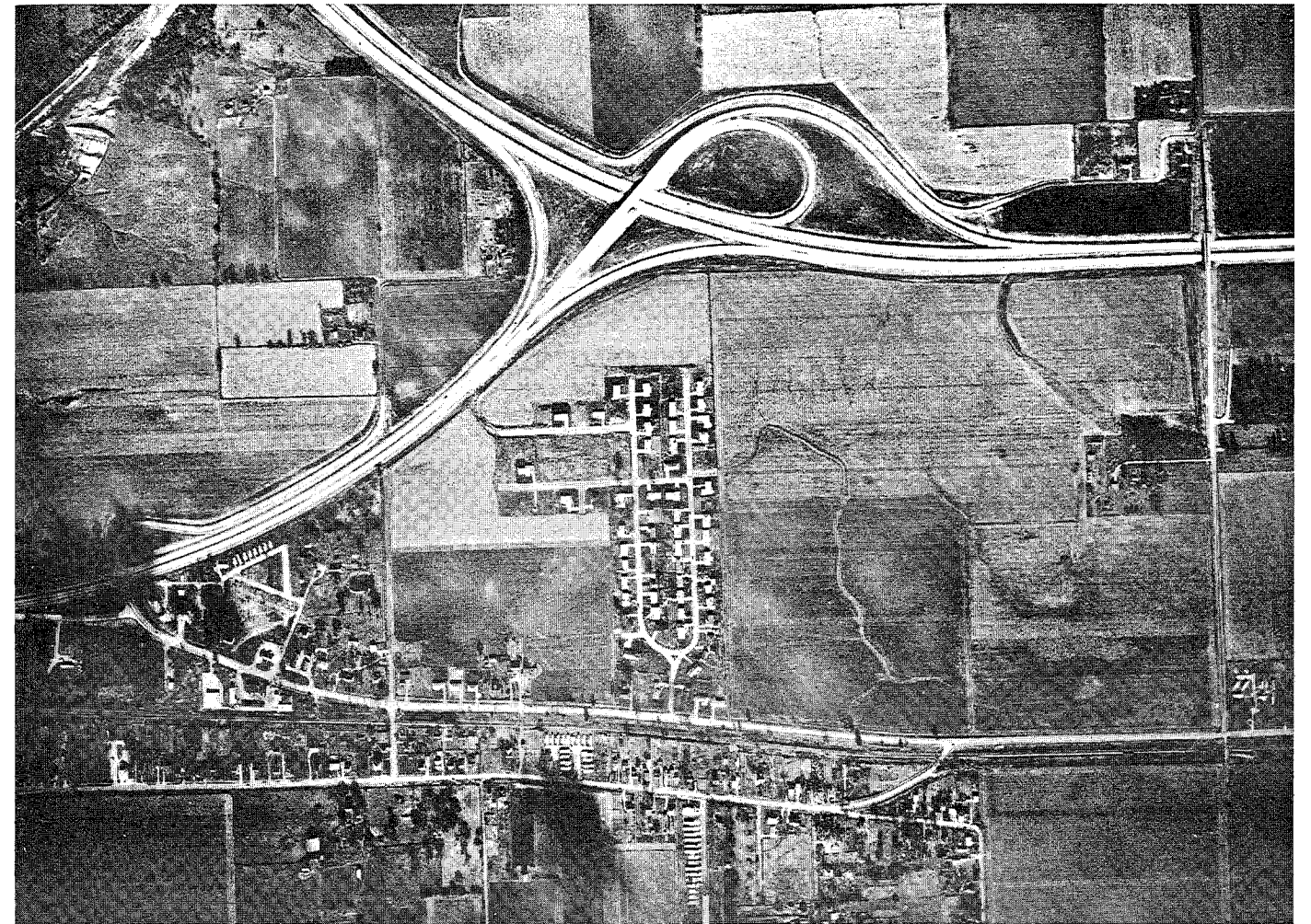
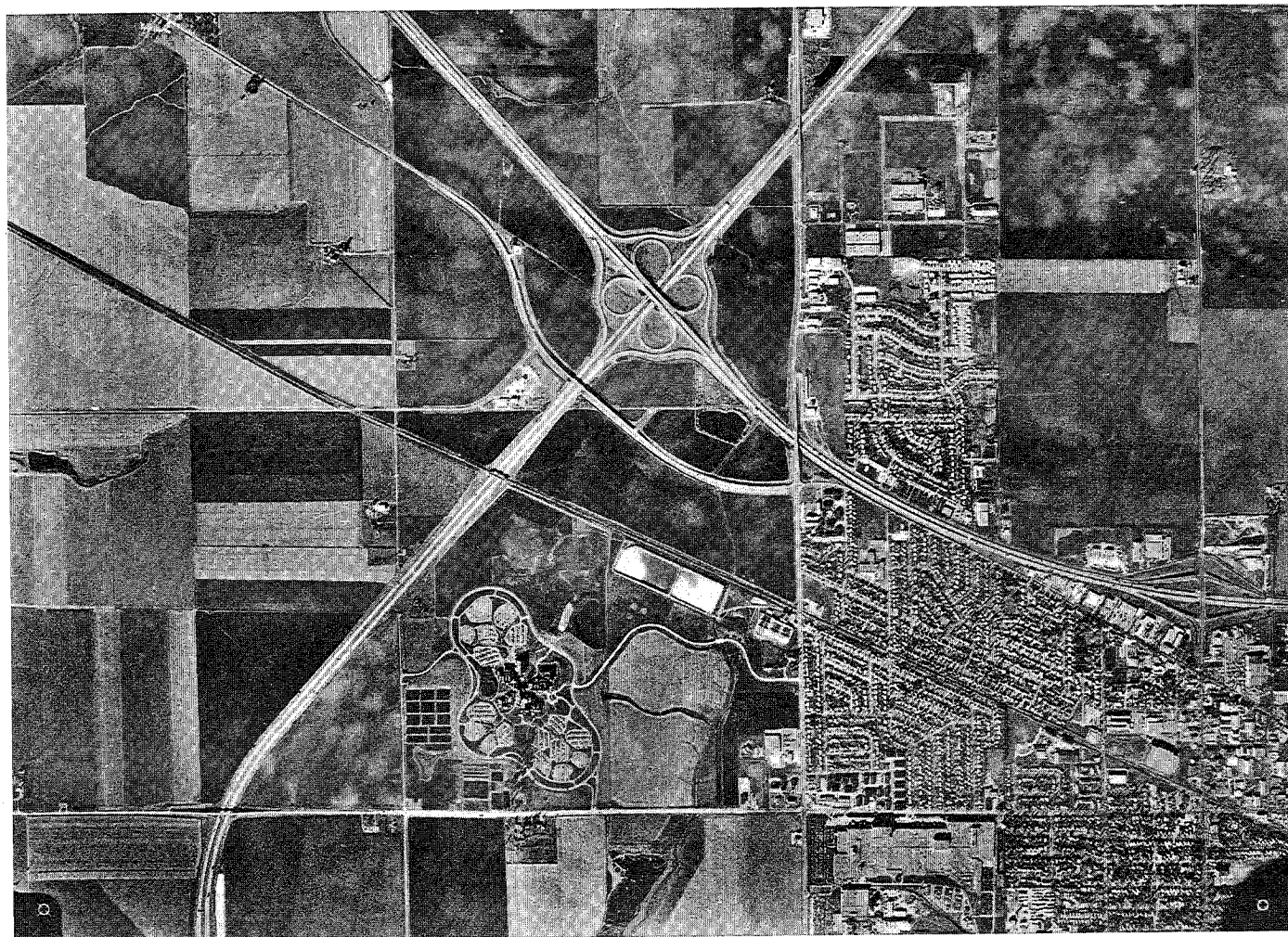
I-74 Interchange at Ogden



When Federal Aid Interstate 5, later designated Interstate 74, was completed between Champaign-Urbana and Danville, October 4, 1960, it was the first intercity stretch of road in the state to be opened under the new federal highway program. Seventy-five percent of local traffic on Route 150 shifted to I-74 and additional interstate traffic was siphoned from other east-west routes through the county.

Work on FAI 4, later designated I-57, was begun in 1962. In repetition of the Illinois Central Railroad's decision more than a century earlier to follow a route through Champaign County west of the major population centers, Illinois Highway Division engineers chose a highway route west of the twin cities. The state highway engineers' recommendations prevailed over strong objections by the Urbana Association of Commerce who preferred that the new highway follow a route along the eastern edge of Urbana. The route selected provided an extra measure of economic benefits and growth for Champaign; however, both Urbana and Champaign were enhanced by being at a major crossroads on the interstate highway system.

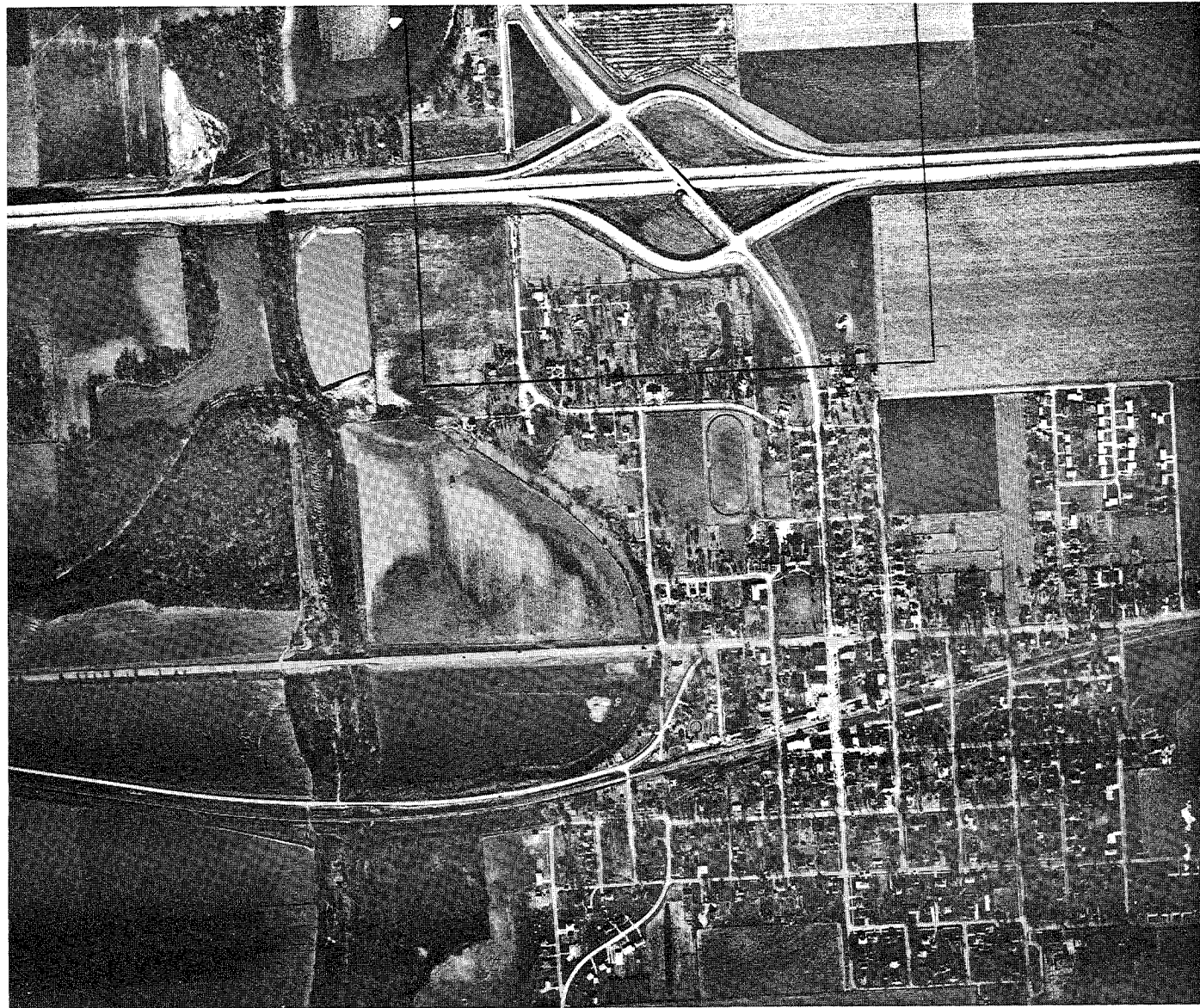
Intersection of I-57 and I-74, northwest of Champaign. Parkland College is located lower left center and the Kraft Food plant is in the bottom right center.



I-74 Interchange, East of Urbana. Richardson Estates Subdivision is in the lower center.

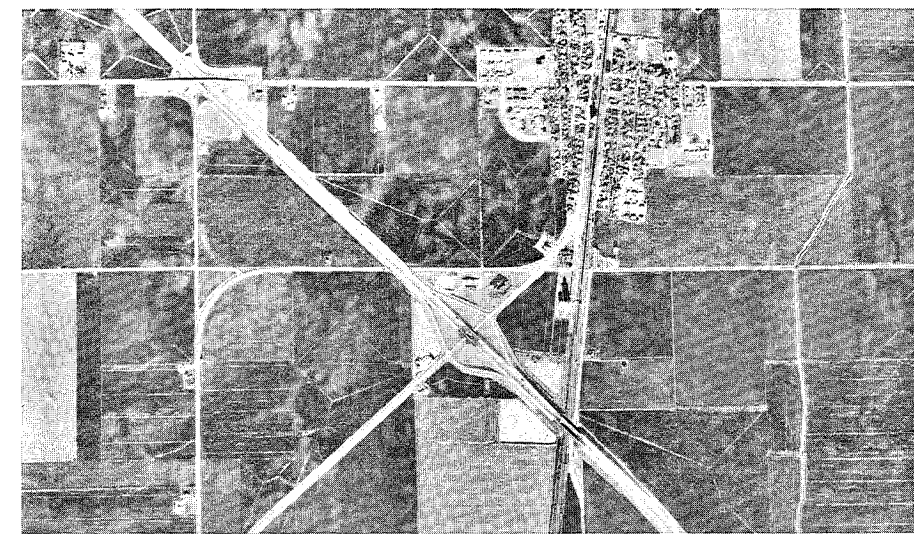
Radical changes in the landscape were created by extensive alterations in the elevations of the highway route, in effect creating real environmental and psychological barriers to residential growth patterns. As a result of these western and northern barriers, new projects in the twin cities were primarily directed to the east of Urbana, to undeveloped land lying between Champaign's western city limits and I-57, and to the south on both sides of the area known as the university south farms.

Growth south of the twin cities had been anticipated by some local business leaders in the 1940's. The new university airport then under construction was viewed as a magnet for such development. An important element in the anticipated growth plan was a belt line road which would connect the twin cities from the south. When community efforts failed to fully promote the potential of commercial aviation, the belt line plan was quietly set aside for future consideration. Those who would benefit from development of land south of the twin cities had to wait for impetus provided by the interstate highway building program nearly a generation later.



I-74 Interchange at St. Joseph

For a number of reasons, the villages of St. Joseph and Mahomet soon became perceived as highly desirable suburban residential centers. The pleasant tree-filled environment afforded by the Salt Fork River at St. Joseph and the Sangamon River at Mahomet were major considerations for home buyers. Also, real estate taxes were much lower there than in the twin cities since fewer tax-supported services were required in the smaller towns. Adverse reactions to new civil rights legislation requiring school integration in Champaign-Urbana was another reason given by several families. However, the biggest factor in the development of St. Joseph and Mahomet as bedroom commuter towns was the ease of access to more tranquil surroundings provided by the new "super highway". Meanwhile, towns such as Pesotum, Tolono, Savoy, Thomasboro, and Ludlow lost most business income from through travelers as traffic shifted from U.S. Route 45 to Interstate 57.



I-57 Interchange, southwest of Pesotum

Rantoul was able to adjust to the presence of I-57 as a large part of its residential and business growth gravitated west towards the new highway. Rantoul still derived considerable benefits from having U. S. Highway 45 as a local access road for business transactions with residents of nearby communities.

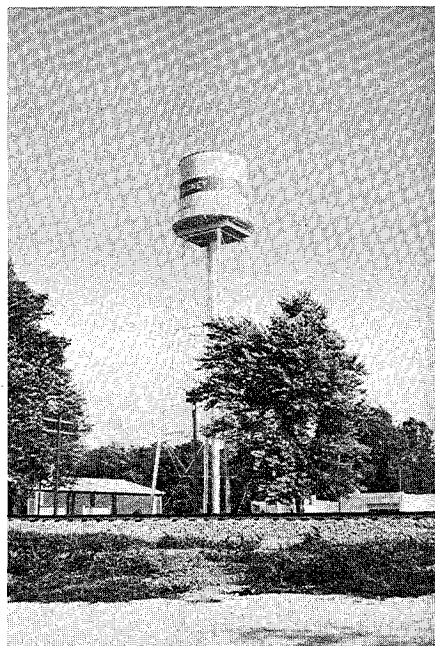


*I-57 Interchange, east of Rantoul.
Chanute Air Force Base is on the lower right
on the east side of Route 45.*



Tolono Water Tower

The Tolono water tower was built by the Fairbanks Morse Company of Chicago in 1895. Residents of Sidney were provided with a modern water system in 1940.



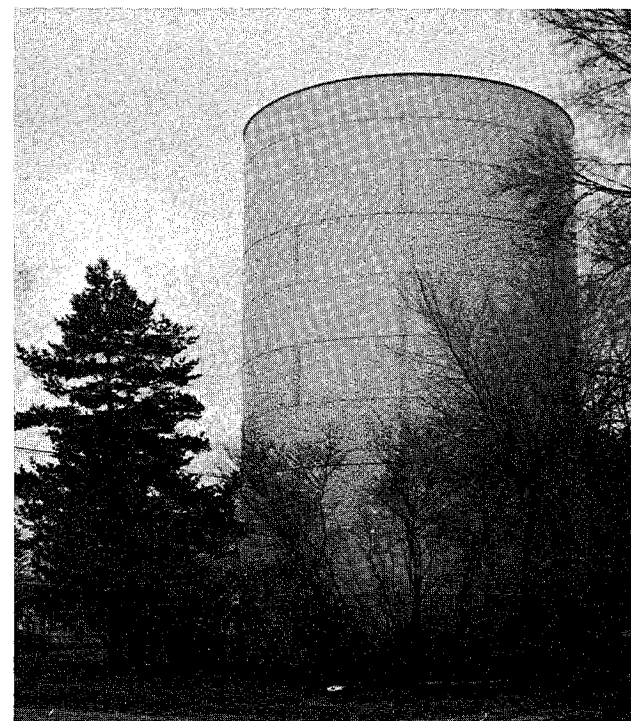
Sidney Water Tower

Southwest Champaign Water Storage Tank

The twin cities' new role as a "metropolitan center" in the 1960's was reflected in part by public service companies' adjustments in operations. James L. Capel, Sr., head of the Champaign County Telephone Company, announced in 1963 that his company would start providing toll-free service among Champaign, Urbana, and seventeen other area towns. Capel recognized that an increasing number of people lived in communities other than those in which they were employed or transacted business and that toll charges were barriers to communication.

Illinois Bell Telephone Company began the decade with a \$2 million improvement, housed in a structure built by English Brothers Construction Company. The telephone company required an addition to their exchange building at 201 South Neil Street in Champaign in order to house the direct dial equipment needed to serve the rapidly growing population of the twin cities. By January, 1962, the Illinois Bell system put into effect an all-number system which eliminated the use of the old two-letter, five-number method of dialing.

An additional barometer of twin city growth was embodied in the expansion of the Northern Illinois Water Corporation's facilities and operation. The company, under manager Edward R. Healy, added a 2 million gallon storage tank to serve growth in southwest Champaign. During 1963, over eight hundred new water meters were installed in the twin cities. One year later, new water services had increased to approximately one thousand more housing units, businesses, and public buildings.

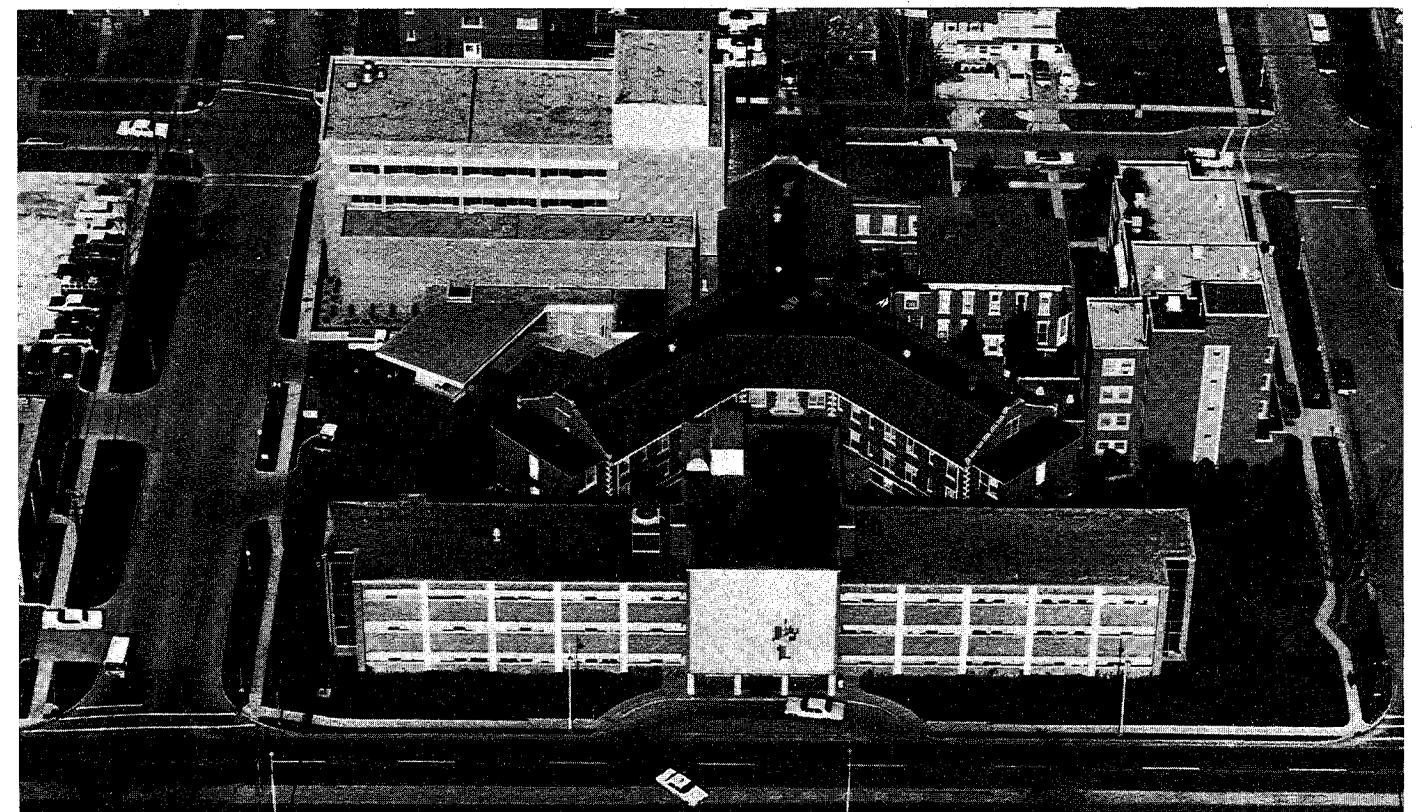


Residential growth continued to extend into the countryside as developers regularly opened new subdivisions. The 1960's brought higher land costs for development within the twin cities and there were few vacant land spaces available on which to build. This situation resulted in a movement to utilize land space by developing multi-story buildings. Consequently, the twin cities soon displayed a new skyline as a number of high-rise structures were erected.

Early in 1961, Mercy Hospital broke ground for a new five-floor addition on West Park Street in Urbana. Carle Foundation Hospital started construction in the spring of 1966 on a new four-story addition that cost \$2.5 million. When dedicated on December 10, 1967, the building was named the Rogers Surgical Building in honor of Dr. J.C.T. Rogers, who, with Dr. Hugh L. Davidson, founded the hospital. A federal subsidy under the Hill-Burton Act provided \$476,000 towards the cost of the Rogers Surgical Building.

Housing for the elderly was initiated under federal subsidies in January, 1965, when the Champaign County Housing Authority chose a site for its new eight-story apartment building east of Second Street between White and Stoughton Streets in Champaign. The "tall" building was later named Skelton Place in honor of Maurice Skelton, a well-known and respected campustown druggist.

Aerial view, Carle Clinic

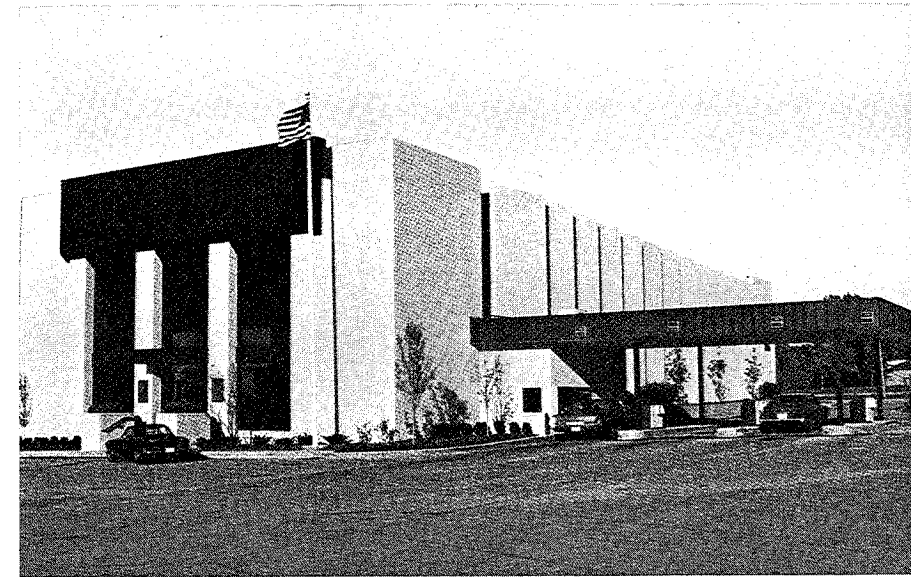


In January, 1966, Robert Simon, Champaign County Housing Authority architect, awarded a bid of \$243,000 to Shapland Construction Company of Champaign to build five, one-story buildings, each with four units, for the Rantoul housing project for the elderly. Unlike Champaign, lower land costs in Rantoul made it economical to build more home-like one-story structures.

Bromley Hall



In January, 1962, university trustees ordered \$112,000 worth of room furnishings for the 1,055 women students who would soon be moving into the new Pennsylvania Avenue Residence Hall. In 1964, the University of Illinois built its twelve-story Illinois Street Residence Halls in Urbana, which accommodated the housing needs of another twelve hundred students. The Florida Avenue Residence Halls were completed in 1966, marking an end of a ten-year period of university construction. Champaign's campus skyline changed radically in 1966 when a privately developed thirteen-story luxury dormitory, Bromley Hall, opened at 910 South Third Street. Nearby, at Fifth and Chalmers Streets, the sixteen-story Illini Towers rose above all other twin city buildings.



American National Bank
Country Fair Shopping Center, Champaign

The era of the 1960's was particularly significant in the history of retail business in Champaign County. Retail business operations changed dramatically with the introduction of shopping centers, discount stores, and shopping malls. Just prior to the start of the decade, in 1958, the first of these new retail centers opened at the northwest corner of West Springfield and South Mattis Avenue in Champaign. Country Fair Shopping Center was built by Abner Mesirov on farmland owned by Stanley L. Kaufman. Kaufman, who owned a major clothing emporium at 16-18 Main Street in downtown Champaign, opened another clothing store in the new shopping center and continued successful retail operations until his retirement.

Mesirov was effective in encouraging tenants to contract for space in Country Fair, and by 1964 a U.S. Post Office sub-station was located in the center. Further evidence of commercial growth in this area was the establishment of the American National Bank by Gerald and Richard O'Neill. The O'Neill brothers' new bank was the first local banking institution in the county to be opened outside a downtown location.

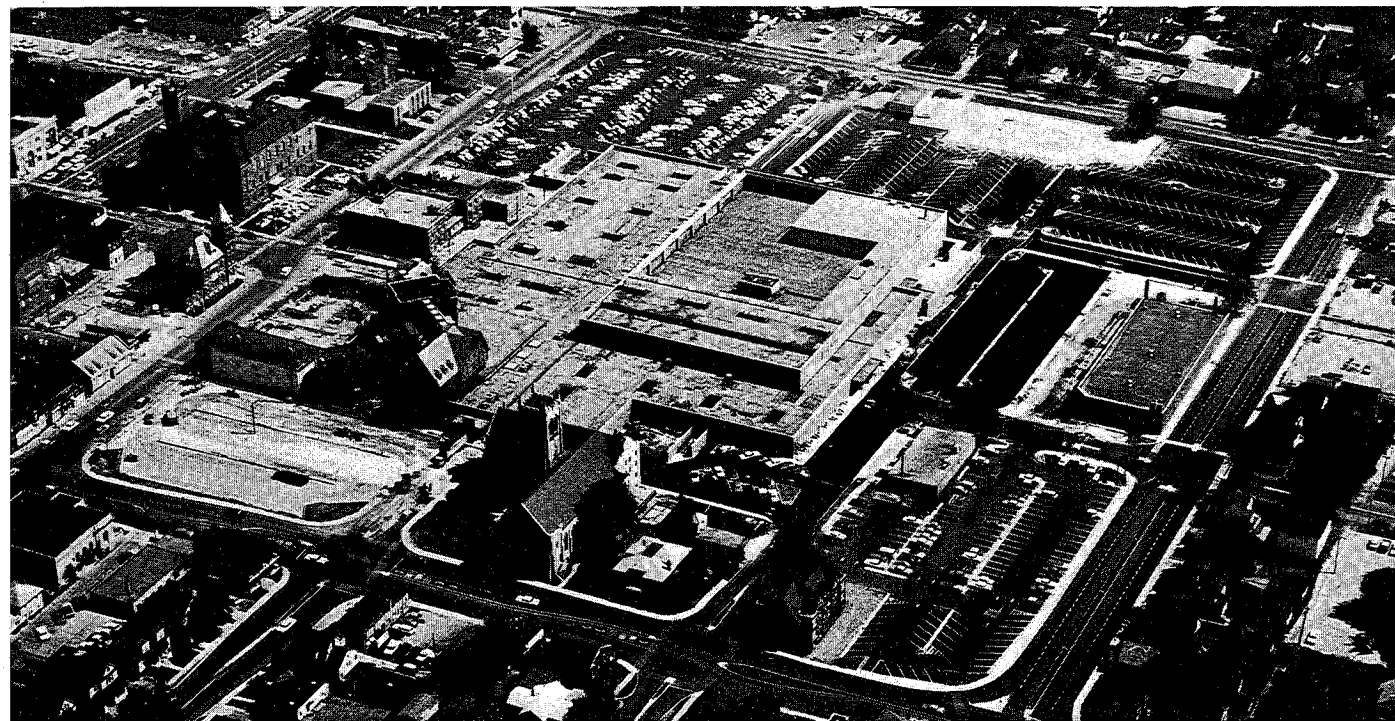
On March, 7, 1963, a K Mart store opened at the intersection of North Prospect Avenue and Bloomington Road. This was Champaign County's first national chain discount store. The new 108,000 square foot store with one thousand free parking spaces became so successful that within a few years it was blamed for having driven out of business the dime stores in downtown Champaign and at Country Fair. Ironically, these general merchandise stores, which had met local shoppers' needs for inexpensive goods for many years, were owned by K Mart's parent company, the S. S. Kresge Co.

Originally built to house the Fox Movie Theatre, this structure was remodeled as the main bank facility of the American National Bank in Country Fair Shopping Center.

K Mart brought to Champaign County a new concept of retailing which included extended shopping hours, seven days a week. Immediately upon K Mart's opening, the merchants in Country Fair Shopping Center announced they, too, would expand their hours and open on Sundays. Patterns of Champaign County shopping were thus drastically altered. Most established merchants in downtown Urbana, Champaign, Rantoul, and other area towns continued on a conventional schedule of six days a week, extending evening hours until nine o'clock on Friday nights.

Urbana residents expressed mixed feelings of delight and outrage at an announcement in 1961 by the Chicago-based firm of Carson, Pirie, Scott and Company. The company, one of the nation's most prestigious department store operations, revealed they had negotiated with Urbana civic leaders and property owners Manie Tepper, Gordon Kamerer, and Charles A. Webber to construct an enclosed shopping mall on twenty acres of land at the south edge of Urbana's business district. The project incorporated the landmark Urbana Lincoln Hotel into its complex and provided retail and office space on three levels for more than twenty commercial firms in addition to the major footage occupied by the Carson, Pirie, Scott and Company department store. The mall project obstructed through-traffic on South Broadway and Green Streets, which brought protests from the public, as did their concern for economic survival of property owners and merchants located along Urbana's historic Main Street.

Lincoln Square Shopping Center, Urbana



From a purely economic perspective, the new Lincoln Square soon proved its value to the city of Urbana. During its first full year of operation after opening in 1964, sales tax records in Urbana had risen by almost ten million dollars. The successful Lincoln Square development marked the beginning of modernization of the county's oldest established business community.

The Urbana community's first shopping center outside the central city came in 1969 when Sunnycrest Shopping Center began on South Philo Road. Sunnycrest investors hoped to attract shoppers from the rural southern townships and the expanding residential areas near Urbana's south boundaries.

The intense business competition generated by these new developments of the 1960's was to ultimately lead to the demise of many small retail businesses in every town in the county. In Seymour, for instance, Main Street was transformed into a bleak scene of inactivity. The Karr brothers, Otis, Fred, and L. J., phased out their extensive business enterprises — a lumber yard, hardware store, insurance agency, auto dealership, and garage — after several decades of operation. By the end of the 1960's only Ralph Blaudo's Standard Station, with two gas pumps and a coffee shop, remained open on Main Street. A Mobil gas station operated by Herb and Millie Smith had long marked the entrance to Seymour along Route 10, but the anticipated loss of local business traffic caused by Interstate 72 prompted the Smiths to close their business and return to their farm.

To varying degrees, this kind of change in small business operations was repeated throughout the county. By the end of the decade, the decline of the long-established downtown retail centers of Champaign and Urbana had also begun. Private downtown development groups were formed and a search for ways to save the downtowns became a high priority of the Chamber of Commerce leadership and municipal government officials.

Short-term relief to businesses located in downtown Champaign occurred in 1967 when Parkland College opened temporary office and learning facilities at 2 East Main Street. The unoccupied S. S. Kresge Building became alive with student activity, and each day hundreds of students appeared on downtown streets.

In June, 1965, the Illinois State legislature had approved a master plan for establishing a state junior college system. An East Central Illinois Steering Committee was established to develop a junior college for the area. Attorney Henry I. Green of Urbana, chairman of the steering committee, announced on January 5, 1966, that an election would be held on March 22 throughout twenty-six local school districts from parts of twelve counties in the East Central Illinois area to decide the question of establishing a tax supported junior college. Voters approved the proposition and a more appropriately named community college was established as District 505.

Architect T. J. Strong lived with his family for thirty-five years on a farm at the south edge of Urbana. During the 1960's, Strong developed the land as Sunnycrest Subdivision in which three hundred houses were built. In 1969, John P. Harrington, president of a new corporation, Sunnycrest Shopping Center Incorporated, and Strong announced plans for a shopping complex adjoining the subdivision. English Brothers built Sunnycrest Shopping Center and University Asphalt Company constructed a parking lot to provide free parking for three hundred cars.



*S. S. Kresge Building
2 Main Street, Champaign*

The S. S. Kresge Building was the site of Champaign's first Kresge five-and-dime store.

The Kresge Building temporarily housed the initial Parkland College administrative offices while the college was under construction. It currently is the location of the only drugstore in downtown Champaign.



Parkland College
2400 West Bradley Avenue, Champaign

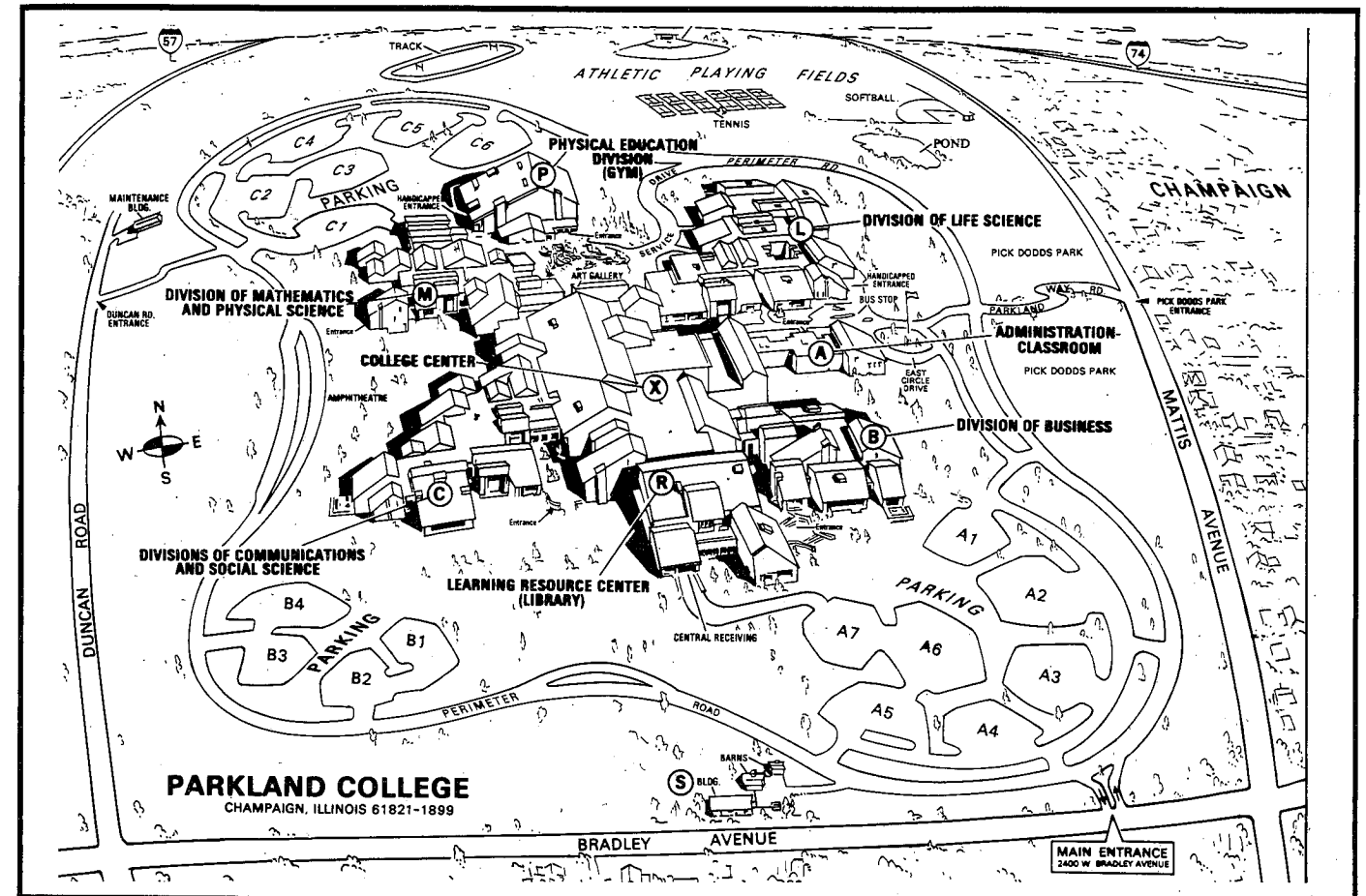
The architectural design for the Parkland College campus was unique to the area — a cluster of connecting structures which allowed compatible expansion as enrollment increased.



William M. Staerkel

Temporary classrooms were established in several vacant elementary school buildings, churches, offices, and former retail businesses, and Parkland College opened September 22, 1967, with an enrollment of 1,388 students. William M. Staerkel was named as president of the new college by the Parkland Board of Trustees and given the task of creating an institution that would meet the educational needs of a rapidly changing adult society. President Staerkel assumed responsibility for determining the best way to meet those needs, developing the curriculum, obtaining faculty and staff, and interpreting the new college to students.

In addition to accomplishing those demanding tasks, President Staerkel and the board of trustees moved promptly to build a permanent campus for Parkland College. On December 2, 1967, the trustees approved a three-phase building plan presented by architect Earnest J. Kump of Palo Alto, California. A 233-acre campus site was chosen on farmland northwest of Champaign, and ground was broken on July 17, 1970, for construction of Phase I. Pressing needs for more space were reflected by enrollment figures which had already doubled the 1967 registration.



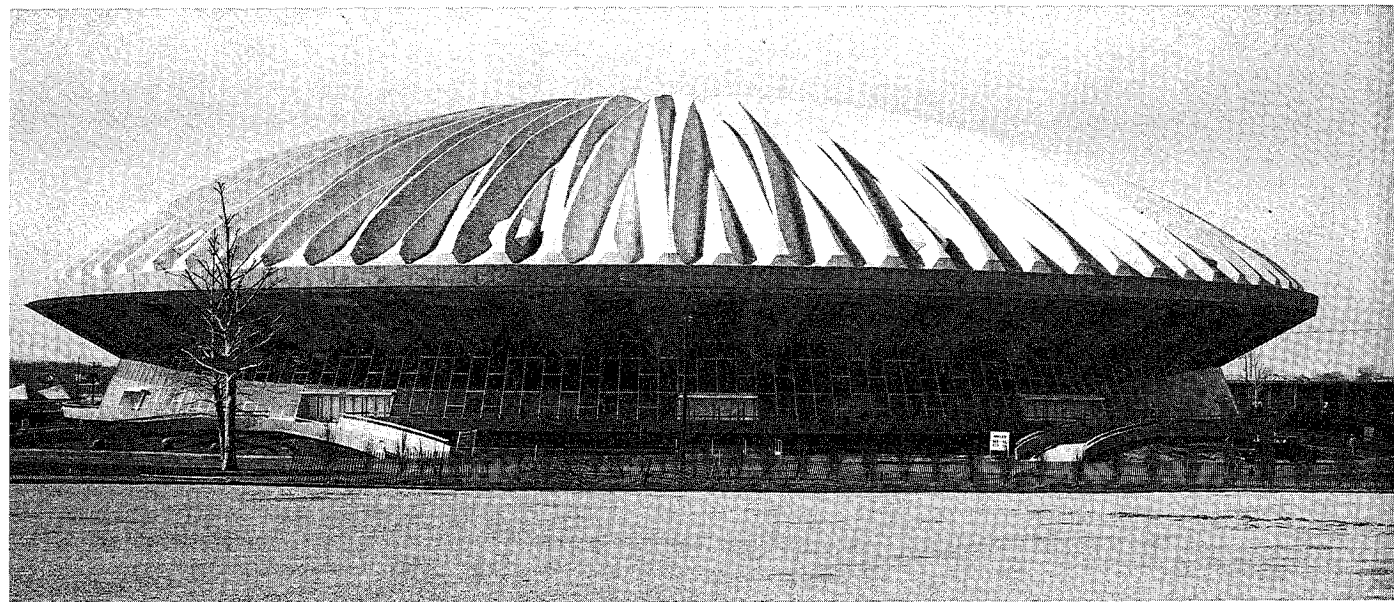
Map of Parkland College.

The concept of the new school as a "commuter college" was emphasized by Phase I construction of parking facilities for 2,500 cars and educational facilities for 2,500 students. Phase II called for growth to accommodate 3,500 students, and Phase III anticipated an enrollment of 7,500.

The remarkable success and growth of Parkland College by 1970 prompted its president to predict an enrollment of 15,000 by the year 2000. The influence of the community college on Champaign County residents was substantial. Thousands of adults were given access to learning experiences which otherwise would not have been possible. Parkland College, from its very beginning, was responsive to the needs of its students in academic and vocational training. It also created further opportunities for social and cultural enlightenment through its many programs in the arts and humanities.

Part of Parkland's success has been attributed to the architectural design of its campus. The total environment of the building complex emphasized a practical interaction between students, faculty, and staff which created a unified feeling of community.

Parkland College trustees responded to the growth of the institution and entered into a Phase IV development. Ground was broken in November, 1982, to add a connecting wing on the east side of the building cluster which would contain seven new classrooms and three office areas. The new wing was completed at the end of 1983. In addition to classes held on the Parkland campus, courses were taught at 37 area learning centers. Total enrollment for the fall of 1983 was 9,552 students.



Assembly Hall
Fourth Street and Florida Avenue,
Champaign

The most architecturally exciting modern structure in Champaign County was designed by a 1929 University of Illinois graduate. Max Abramovitz, of the New York firm of Harrison and Abramovitz, created a giant "mushroom on the prairie" to be used as an assembly hall. Ground was broken in 1959 and the building was finally opened to the public on March 2, 1963. The stark white concrete structure was the largest of its kind in the world and was given international recognition for its huge inverted saucer-shaped design. During the period of construction, the professional architects association of Poland cited the Assembly Hall as one of the five greatest buildings under construction in the world. The dome spanned four hundred feet without internal support, yet most of the concrete was only 3½" thick. Strength of materials was attained by winding 614 miles of 1/5" thick steel wire under tension around the dome and encasing it in corrugated concrete. Ben W. Maxwell, associate architect of the University of Illinois, served as the university's project director. The difficult building project was undertaken by the Felmley-Dickerson Construction Company of Champaign.

The first official viewing of the huge new multi-purpose building was planned by university officials and the Assembly Hall Director, Thomas P. Parkinson. An open house was held on March 2, 1963, which 39,317 attended despite a heavy snow which blanketed the area. Parkinson's work force was confronted with the first of its many multi-faceted tasks: clearing snow from thousands of parking spaces. Of course, the highlight of the open house was the building itself and its overwhelming impact on the visitors.

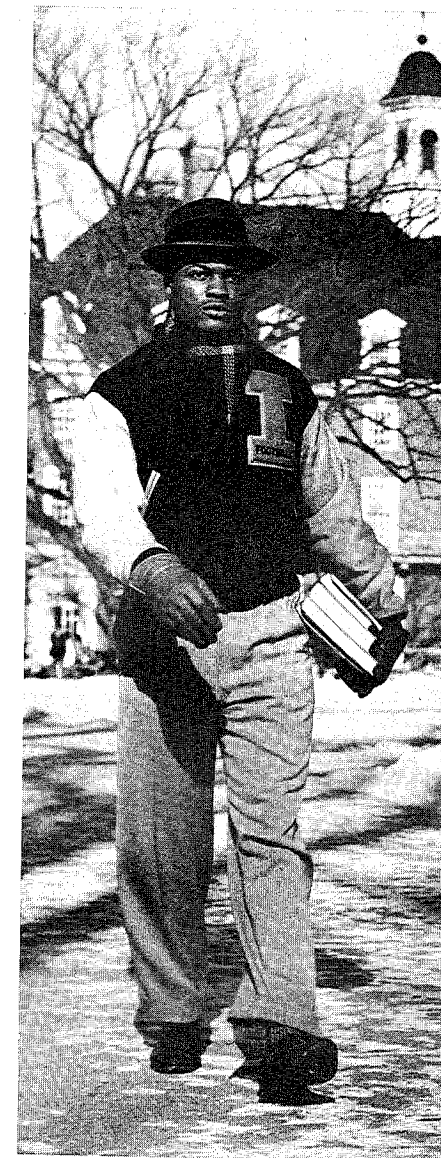
Other attractions planned for the day's activities were performances by the University Concert Band under its director, Mark Hindsley, and by the University of Illinois Glee Club with Professor Harold Decker directing. John Garvey presented his University Jazz Band, to the delight of thousands of listeners, and the musical extravaganza culminated in an evening performance by the nationally acclaimed vocal duo of Les Paul and Mary Ford.

Each musical director pronounced the Assembly Hall as an excellent facility for musical performances. Previously expressed doubts about the suitability of the structure to serve as anything other than a "basketball sports palace" were promptly dispelled at the open house program. Two days later the Assembly Hall was first used for a sporting event when Illini coach Harry Combes's basketball team met and defeated the Northwestern University team by a score of 79 to 73. The team was aided by 16,137 cheering fans seated in a building without a single support column blocking their view of the action far below on a portable basketball court.

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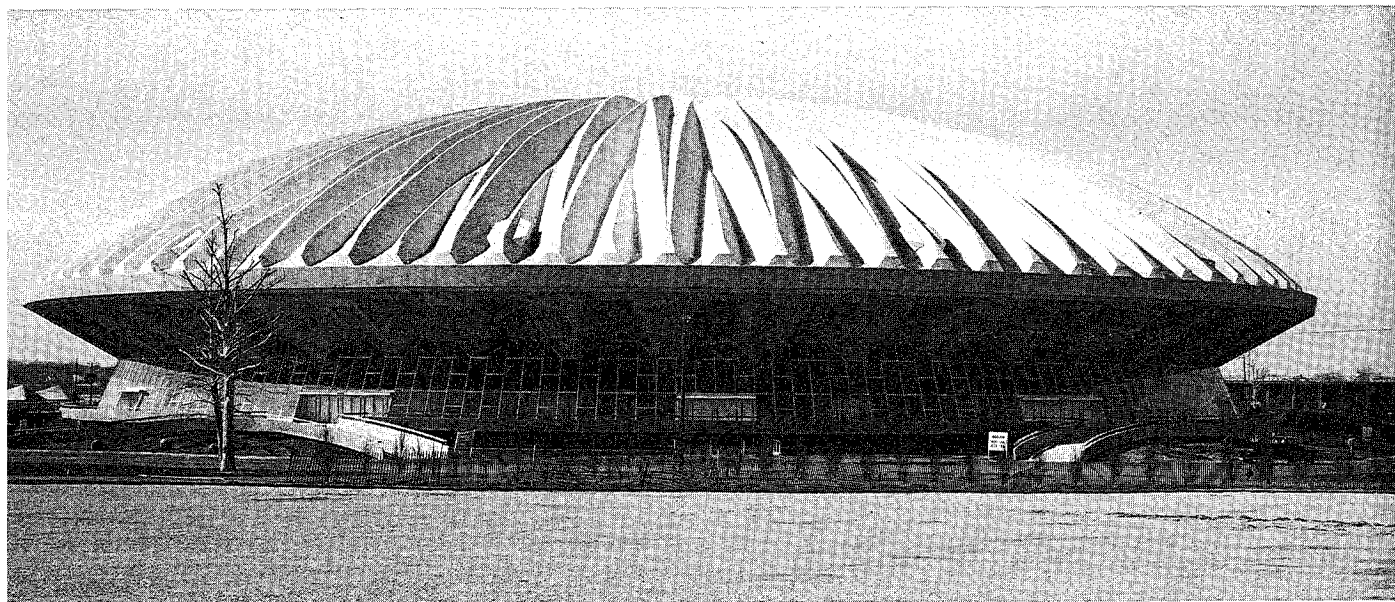
Men and women who have resided in Champaign County have given great athletic performances in a variety of sports. The accomplishments of these athletes brought them individual fame and recognition, but credit and prestige also went to their communities. Football players such as Lou Levanti, Stanley Wallace, and J. C. Caroline all had outstanding careers at the University of Illinois, and all enjoyed contracts with professional football teams during the 1950's. In track and field events, the county has produced three Olympic medal winners whose numerous awards and records have given them permanent status of greatness in their sport. Harold Osborn won two gold medals in the 1924 Olympic Games in France, placing first in the high jump and first in the grueling ten-event decathlon. Although his winning jump in Paris was recorded as 6'6", he had set a world record at Illini Field in the previously held Olympic trials, jumping at 6'8".

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J. C. Caroline was an Illini football player who, in 1953, attained collegiate "All-American" status. His career included playing professional football for eleven years, ten of those years with the Chicago Bears. After retirement from playing, he returned to the twin cities and joined the Illini coaching staff. He later served as head football coach at Urbana High School and is currently on the teaching faculty there.



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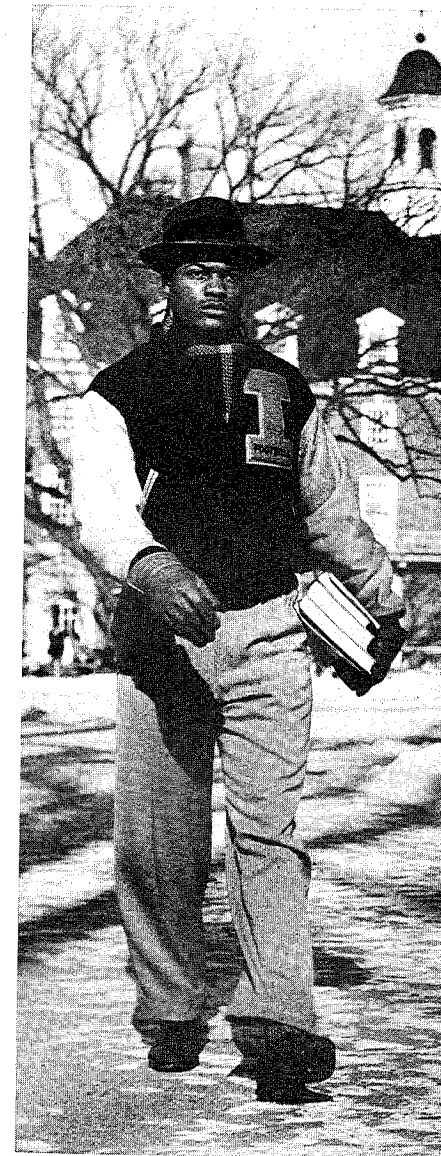
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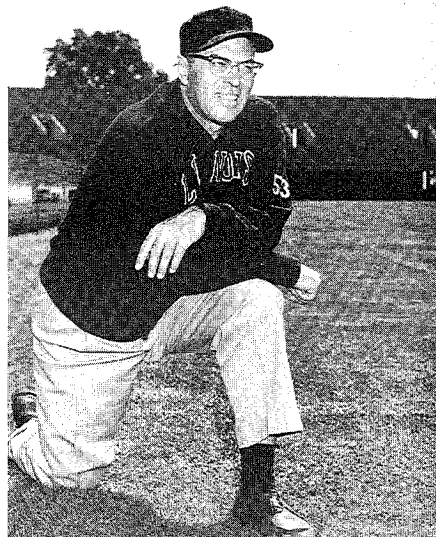
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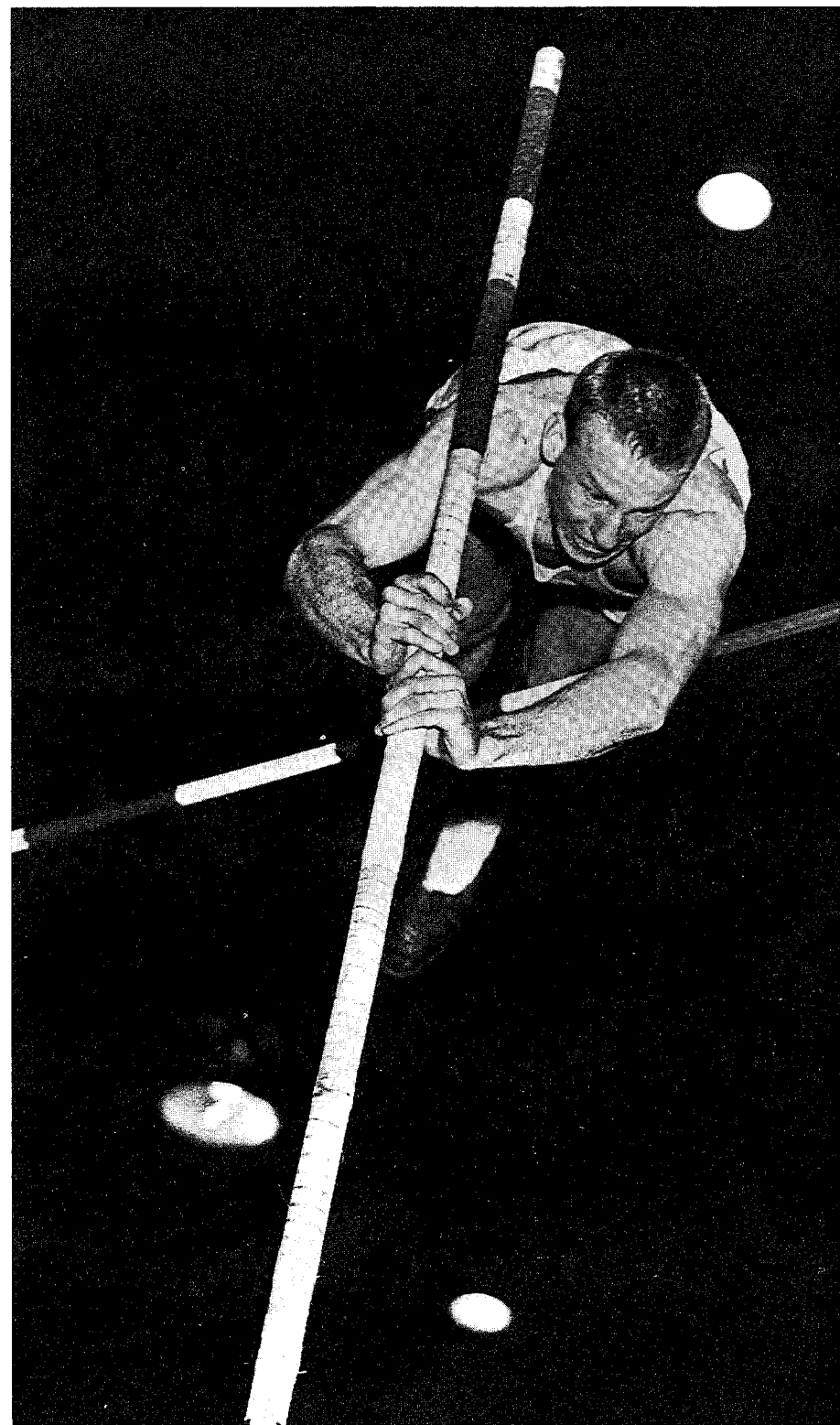
Ray Eliot

Ray Eliot, head football coach at the University of Illinois from 1942 to 1959, guided his teams to three Big Ten conference championships and two Rose Bowl victories. His legendary inspirational speeches motivated players to superior performances and infused all Illini with pride in their state university. Following his active coaching career, he was named Associate Director for the University of Illinois Athletic Association.

International speed skating competitor Erik Henriksen of Champaign was a former Parkland Community College student. Henriksen was American sprint champion, winning both the 500 meter and 1,000 meter races in two consecutive national meets. In 1983 he also captured the United States title in the 1,500 meter race. Henriksen was an alternate to the 1980 Olympics at Lake Placid, New York.

Urbana's talented Charles W. "Tyke" Peacock won the high-jump silver medal at the World Championships held in Helsinki, Finland, on August 13, 1983. Four days later at Berlin, he set the American record of 7'7 3/4". As a basketball player at Modesto, California, he was named to the junior college All-American team.

Donald R. Laz



The silver medal for pole vaulting at the 1952 Olympics was won by Don Laz, later a prominent architect in Champaign-Urbana. Bill Mulliken of Champaign brought home a gold medal for winning the 1960 Olympics 200-meter breast stroke swimming event. Thus, for three consecutive Olympics, Champaign County participants were medal winners.

Trapshooting has been represented by two outstanding marksmen from Champaign County, Mark Arie of rural Thomasboro and Henry Austin of Champaign. Both men were honored for their accomplishments by inclusion in the Illinois Trapshooting Hall of Fame. Arie won the gold medal at the 1920 Olympics in Antwerp, Belgium, and dominated state and national tournament competition for many years. For Austin, trapshooting competition spanned a period of more than thirty years during which he shot at more than half a million targets. His numerous championships resulted in his being named to All-State and All-American Trapshooting teams for several consecutive years.

A number of other outstanding sports accomplishments by county residents include those of Al Sapura, who won the National Wrestling championship at 128 lbs. in 1938. Seventeen-year-old Don Frazier of Rantoul won the 1934 national outboard motor boat racing championship, in spite of living in an area with few waterways suitable for boating. Like champions in other sports, Champaign's Roger Capen may not have developed the speed-skating skill that won him a 1964 Olympic berth, had he not had access to the sports facilities at the University of Illinois.



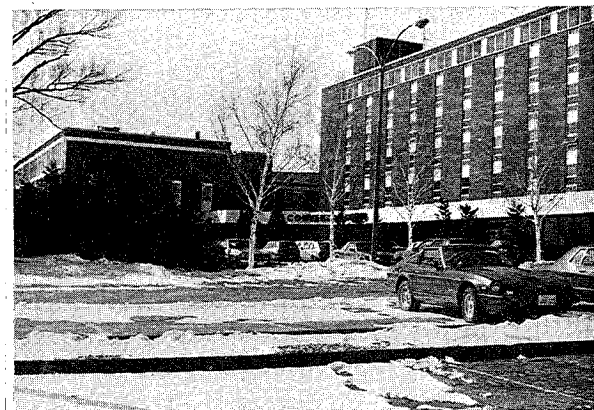
Henry M. Austin



Nancy Thies Marshall

Champaign County has been honored by the accomplishments of three outstanding women athletes. Marianne Dickerson of St. Joseph won a silver medal in the women's marathon at the World Track Championship held in Helsinki, Finland, during August, 1983. Bonnie Blair of Champaign set a women's world indoor speed skating record for 800 meters at Kobe, Japan. She also set the American record in the 500 meter race.

Nancy Thies of Urbana was the youngest gymnast to be a member of the United States Olympic team. At fourteen, she participated in the 1972 Munich Olympics where the U. S. team finished in fourth place. Her later accomplishments as a gymnast at the University of Illinois included winning the Big Ten all-around championship and being named to the All-American gymnastics team.



Ramada Inn
1505 South Neil Street, Champaign

A \$3 million convention center was added to the Ramada Inn in 1971. Franchised motels established during the 1960's met the needs of modern travelers more efficiently than had the longer established hotels in the twin cities, and only the Urbana-Lincoln Hotel survived their challenge. The Inman Hotel and the Tilden Hall Hotel in downtown Champaign closed after long years of prestigious service to visitors to the community. Their closing was another step in the declining vitality of the Champaign central business area.

Sports and entertainment events hosted at the University of Illinois have been responsible for pumping millions of dollars of revenue each year into the university and the major business communities of the county. In response to the need for facilities to accommodate these sports fans and other visitors to the area, several major new motels opened during the 1960's. The Ramada Inn opened in 1965 at the corner of South Neil Street and Kirby Avenue, a few blocks west of the Assembly Hall. Owners Edward Campbell and Durwood Judy later expanded into a full-scale convention operation. Also in 1965, a \$3 million Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge was under construction at the junction of Interstate 74 and Route 45 north of Urbana.

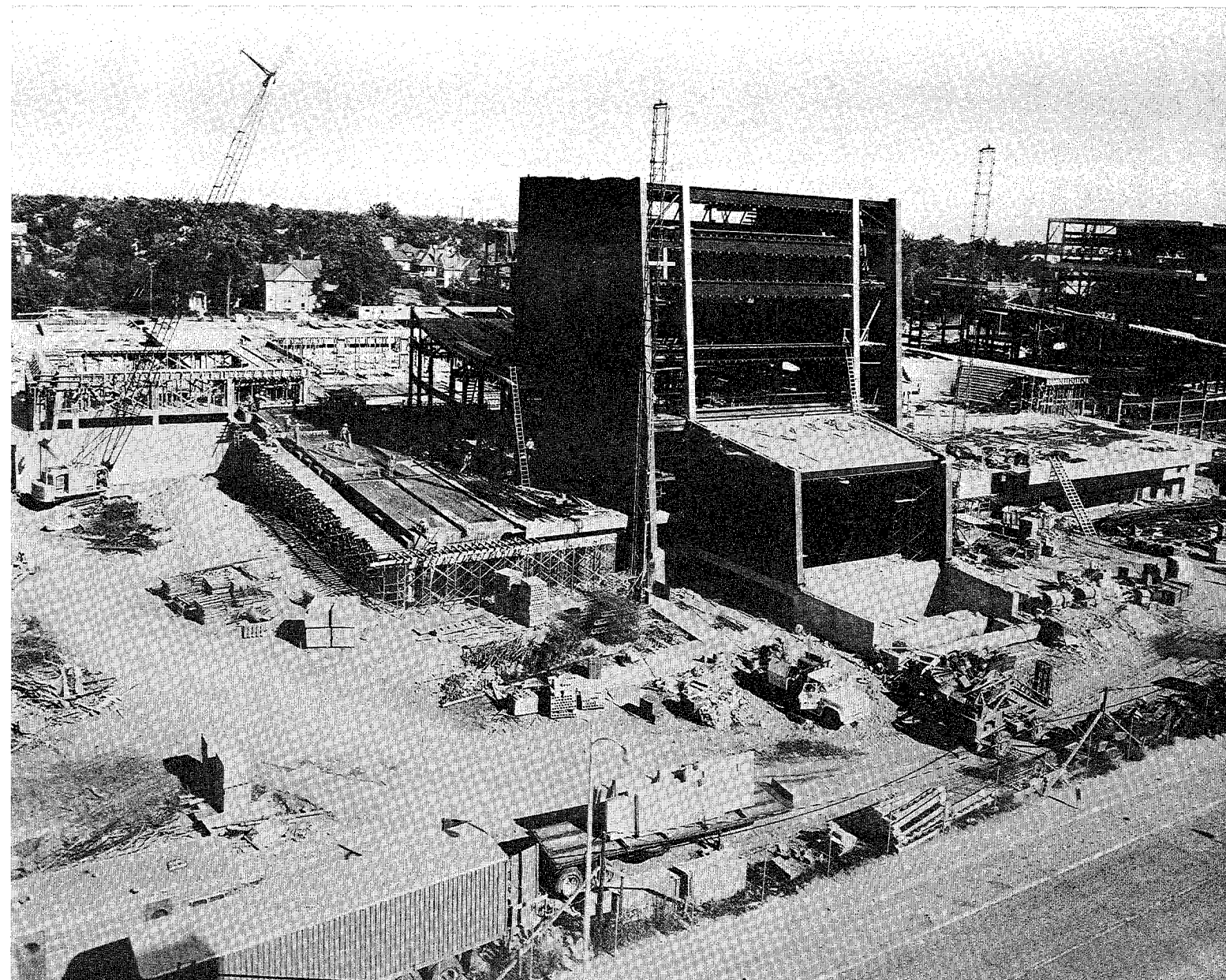
Outside of Cook County, with its rich cultural arts organizations in Chicago, no other county in Illinois exceeded Champaign County in providing people with opportunities to be involved in the cultural arts. This position was solidified on April 19, 1969, when the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts celebrated its formal opening. While still receiving accolades for his architectural design of the Assembly Hall, Max Abramovitz had been selected as the architect for the Krannert Center. Construction, which had begun in 1966, was made possible by a \$13 million gift from Herman and Ellnora Krannert. The total cost of the project eventually exceeded \$21 million, making this the most expensive building project undertaken to date in the county. Much of this cost was attributed to the unique materials required to ensure the highest possible quality, acoustics, and sight lines in the four theaters of the building complex. Other major expenses came in the construction of a six hundred car underground garage for the convenience of concert and theatergoers.

John Burrell was the first director of Krannert Center for the Performing Arts and he arranged the program for the Center's formal opening. All tickets for the opening performances were sold out for the weekend of April 19 and 20, 1969. The Great Hall Theater opened with a concert by the University Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Bernard Goodman, after which the orchestra accompanied a performance by the University of Illinois Oratorical Society Boys Choir directed by Harold A. Decker before an enthusiastic audience of 2,200 people. The first performance in the Studio Theater was a Japanese dance recital directed by Shozo Sato, an internationally known authority on Kabuki theater.

On Sunday, April 20, Dean Allen S. Weller of the College of Fine and Applied Arts presided over a dedicatory luncheon in the Illini Union for 500 invited guests, including Mr. and Mrs. Herman Krannert.



Director John Burrell, Krannert Center Lobby



Krannert Center for the Performing Arts,
500 South Goodwin, Urbana.

The site selected for the Krannert Center surprised many twin city residents. The university acquired all property on two square residential blocks in an area of faculty homes on the west side of Urbana. Dozens of large homes, many of which were built in the late nineteenth century, were leveled to clear the land required for this major project.

Sensitivity to historical elements of the community was almost never considered by builders or public officials as community construction progressed throughout the 1960's. Faced with a shortage of skilled craftsmen, frequent labor strikes, and constant pressure for project completion, construction timetables often became more important than building costs, workmanship, or quality of materials.

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts was described by its architect as a "Prairie Acropolis". Max Abramovitz also designed the renowned Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York City. The Krannert Center is two-thirds the size of Lincoln Center but has three acres of usable space at stage level. It was designed as a learning facility for music, theater, and dance students.

Early attempts by black citizens to gain a political voice in local affairs began after World War II. In 1947, Taylor L. Thomas was the first black person to be nominated in the primary election for one of eight Commissioner's seats; however, he was defeated in the general election. Army veteran and University of Illinois graduate Calvin Pollard ran unsuccessfully for the Urbana School Board in 1954 and then in 1961 failed to be elected to a seat on the City Council.

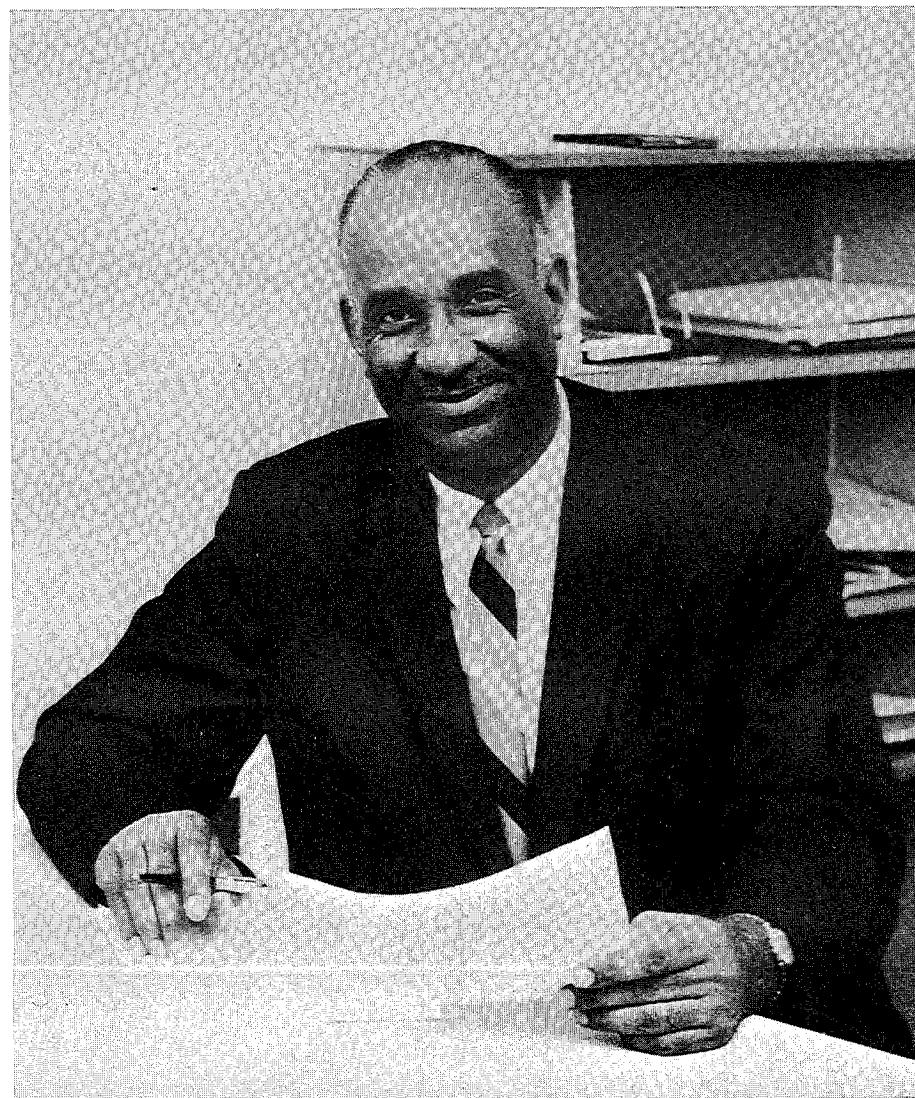
These defeats did, however, bring to the attention of twin city residents the lack of political representation by the black community. In 1962, educator Kenneth Stratton became the first elected black member of the Champaign City Council, and four years later black businessman Paul Hursey was elected to the Urbana City Council.

Assistant Superintendent of Urbana School District Taylor L. Thomas retired in 1977, concluding a career of twenty-nine years as an educator. In 1956, he was appointed the first black teacher in Urbana schools; in 1968, he was named assistant principal of Urbana High School, becoming the first black person to hold an administrative position there.

Taylor L. Thomas

The economic boom of the 1960's was partially responsible for creating a climate for social change in Champaign County. This era of unprecedented growth produced a shortage of the qualified personnel needed to fill the requirements of the rapidly increasing number of local employers. But a survey taken throughout Champaign in 1960 indicated not a single black person held a managerial or professional position with a private employer within the city. Furthermore, blacks were employed in only .05 percent of the clerical jobs and in less than .03 percent in sales positions. These statistics revealed the need for programs which would provide equal employment opportunities for black citizens.

Spurred on by the efforts of twin city community leaders such as Taylor Thomas, Kenneth Stratton, Calvin Pollard, Paul Hursey, and others, the city council responded by establishing human relations commissions which would deal with discrimination complaints and would develop non-discriminatory policies for city employment.



The Equal Opportunities Council and the Opportunities Industrialization Council were formed and progress was made towards their goals. The E.O.C. and the O.I.C. worked to open jobs to blacks in the construction industry, and by the end of the decade a special committee of the Building Trades Council, represented by Hans Selin, and the Contractors Association of Champaign County, represented by William Kuhne, had developed an apprentice craftsman recruitment program for black workers. This action was one of the most significant towards enhancing job opportunities and was doubly valued as it emanated from local cooperative efforts.

Race relations between blacks and whites in the twin cities became highly volatile during the later 1960's and early 1970's. Students at the university rallied in the Illini Union on September 10, 1968, and responded to their leaders' exhortations to action against racial discrimination by destroying furniture and defacing the interior of the Union. All of the 222 students present were enrolled in the university under "Project 500", a federally-funded higher education program for disadvantaged black youth.

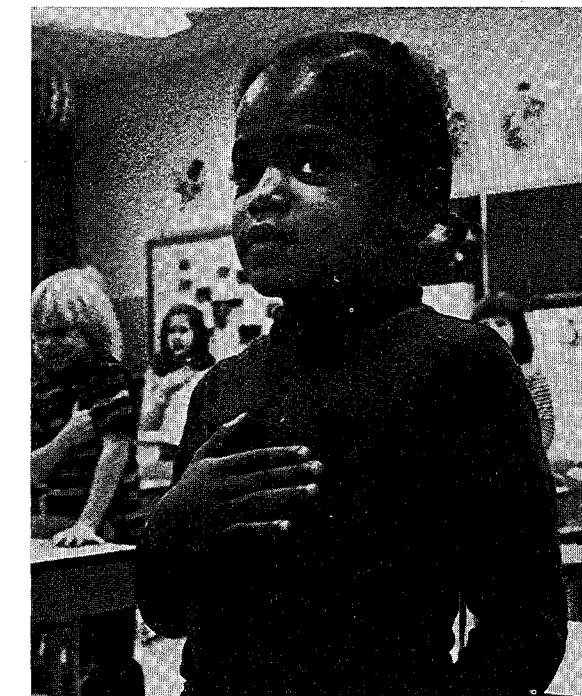
Integration of the public schools in the twin cities brought about a number of confrontations. Busing of students to obtain racial balance in the Urbana school system began in 1967 and Champaign started its busing program in the fall of 1968. Elementary school children were integrated with a minimum of racial problems; however, black and white students in the higher grades were not able to adjust readily to conditions in their newly integrated schools.

Tension and fear were common in the corridors and restrooms of the schools, and groups of students banded together within their races for a feeling of security. White students at Champaign Centennial High School attacked a bus load of black students as they arrived at school on April 19, 1971, and set off a race riot at the school. Police and school administrators suppressed the rioting students and school was closed for three days. Forty students were suspended from classes.

Probably the strongest influence in the easing of racial tensions during the period of school integration came from the many churches and the synagogues of the county where the theme of brotherhood was strongly proclaimed, even though by custom most of them were not integrated.

Gradually conditions improved as parents, students, and school officials began to bring the educational system into compliance with state and national law regarding school integration.

Selected statistics from the 1970 Bureau of Census Tracts indicate major advancements over the previous decade in employment levels by Champaign County black citizens. Among the total employed, there were 472 in professional or technical positions, of whom 216 were women. Managerial and administrative positions were filled by 81 blacks, of whom 40 were women. Other areas of black employment were sales, 83 (40 women); clerical, 599 (464 women); non-household service workers, 933 (602 women), equipment operators, 360 (141 women). There were 291 black men working as craftsmen, 71 as transport operators, and 262 laborers. Black women filled 245 of the 256 household jobs reported. Overall, women filled 50 percent of the total jobs held by blacks.



Terron Lyons, First Grade, 1981

Integration and busing continued to be community problems into the 1980's. A highly controversial school reorganization program proposed by the Champaign Unit Four District in 1981 rekindled strong feelings. Retention of neighborhood schools was a primary concern of many parents, both black and white.

Organized labor was highly influential in the 1960's and aggressively sought to gain increased wages and benefits for its growing membership. The most effective tool utilized by union leadership was the strike, and Champaign County was frequently the scene of picketing by workers. Numerous building projects were delayed by striking construction tradesmen. The Assembly Hall project alone was slowed by 40 weeks of strikes.

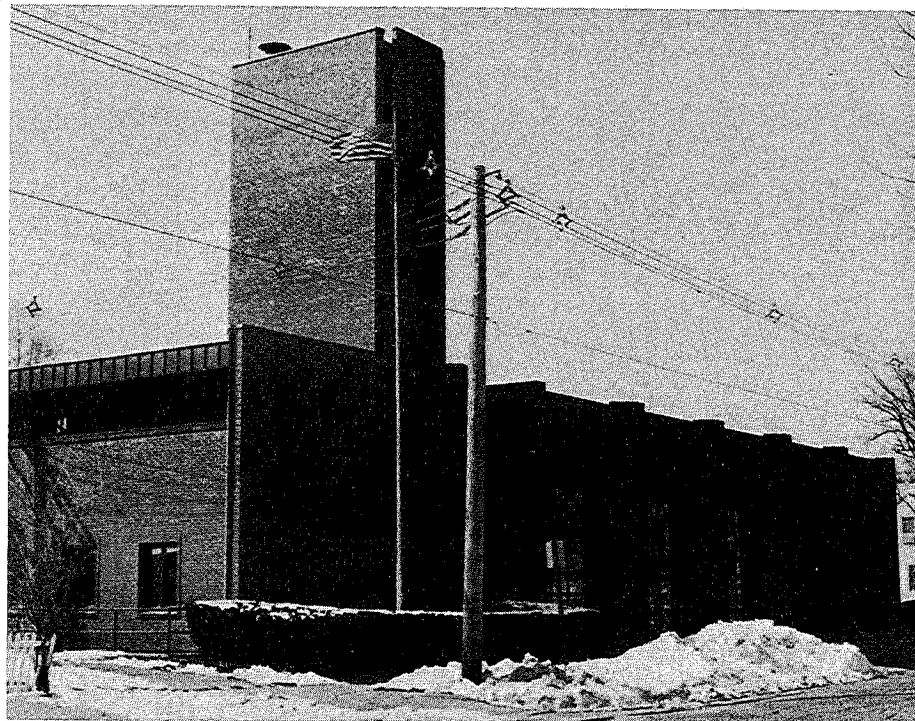
In 1966 the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1601 walked out and set up a picket line at the Kraft Foods factory. Their members demanded a wage of \$4.30 an hour, considerably more than the 35 cents per hour increase to \$3.35 offered by Kraft's management. Negotiators finally agreed to settle for \$3.50 as the hourly wage rate.

The first strike in the University of Illinois's 99-year history occurred in March of 1966. Janitors, members of the Building Service Employees International Union Local 119, went on a 60-hour strike which caused such disarray and confusion in the heavily-used classrooms, laboratories, and other facilities that a court injunction was obtained to force the janitors back on the job.

Unionization extended beyond the factory workers, laborers, and tradespeople into the professions during the 1960's and 1970's. Teachers, firemen, policemen, nurses, and others who serve the public welfare were organized to build effective representation in matters that affected their careers.

Champaign Central Fire Station
207 West White Street

Working conditions were improved in May, 1967, for Champaign firemen by a move from crowded quarters in the City Building to a new modern Central Fire Station.

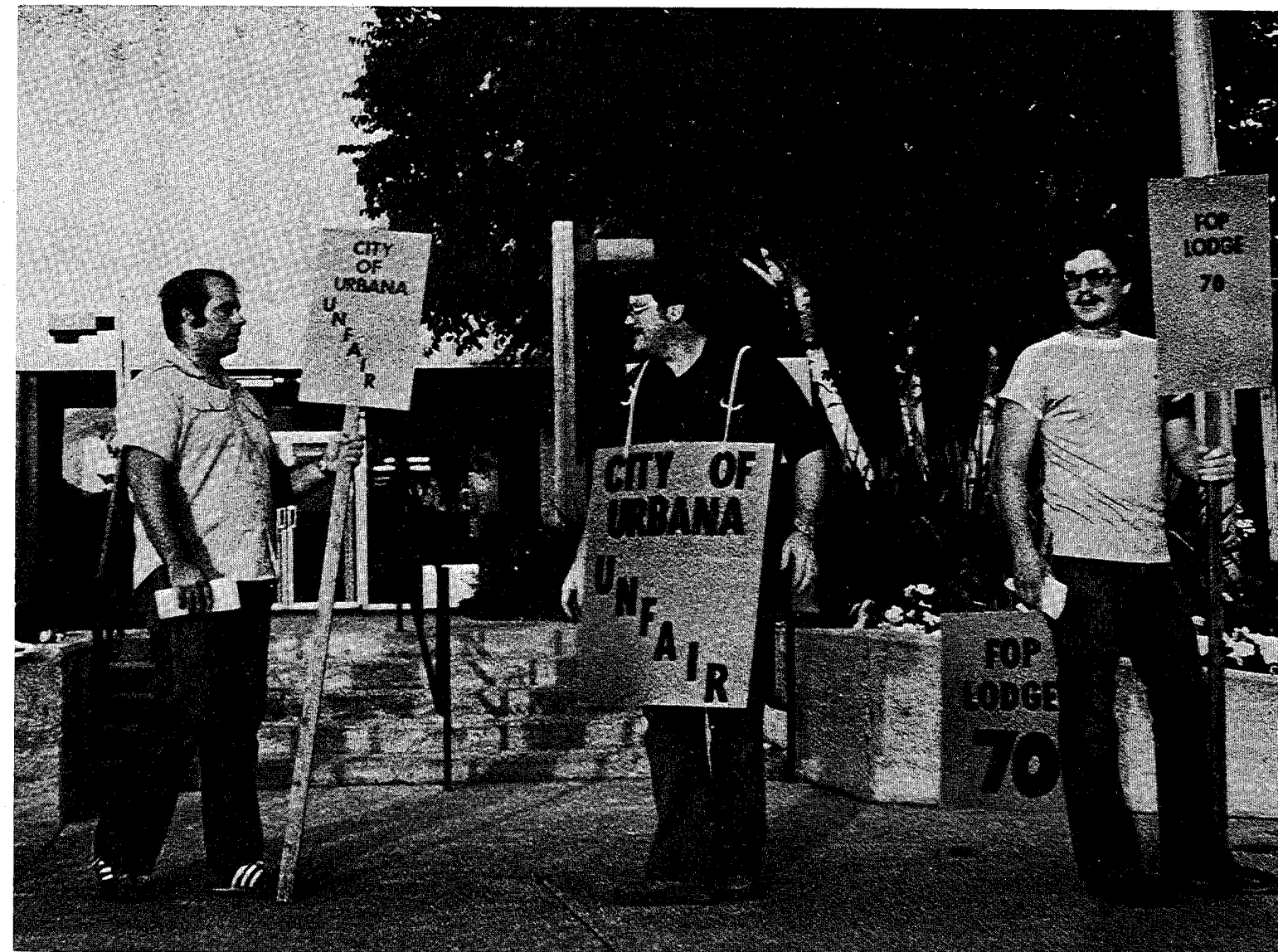


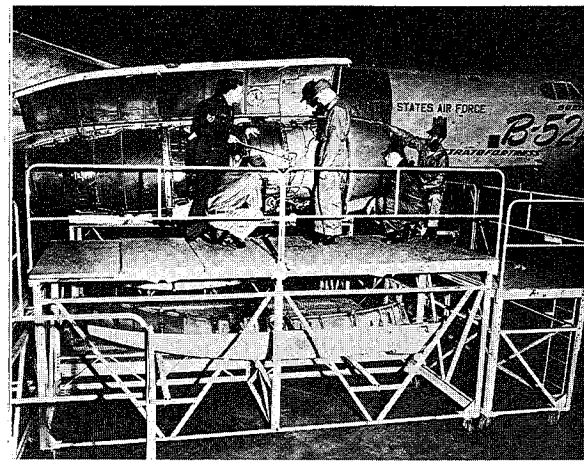
Wages and retirement benefits were primary concerns of professional employees. However, other factors involving working conditions which would enable them to more responsibly fulfill their duties were often of equal issue in labor-management negotiations.

In 1970, Urbana experienced the first teachers' strike in that community's school history when the Urbana Education Association members refused to work and the opening of school was postponed for a week. Also in 1970, one of the few strikes by nurses ever to occur in the State of Illinois saw ninety nurses walk off their jobs at Champaign's Burnham Hospital. This action shocked the entire community and brought about deep concerns for improved employee-management relations in occupations involving critical services. Of the ninety nurses fired by the hospital administration in retaliation for their strike action, seventy-five were eventually rehired and work conditions steadily improved.

The "informational picket line" (not involving work stoppage) became an effective tool for gaining public support for professional workers, especially in areas concerning health and safety.

Off-duty Urbana Policemen
Members of Fraternal Order Police Lodge
70, conducting an informational picket in
front of the Urbana Municipal Building in
1982.





*Jet Engine Mechanics Class
All USAF jet engine mechanics receive their training at Chanute Air Force Base.*

The USAF B-52 jet bomber was used extensively against the North Vietnamese. For eleven straight days at the end of 1972, B-52 bombers struck the North Vietnamese capital of Hanoi. These devastating attacks forced Hanoi to resume stalled negotiations for a cease fire. In January, 1973, fighting stopped and the United States agreed to end involvement in the affairs of South Vietnam.



*USAF F-102 Fighter
This type of aircraft was used from 1950 to 1972 during the Korean and Vietnam Wars.*

For many, the 1960's and early 1970's will primarily be remembered as a time of strife, sorrow, and confusion locally and nationally. In January, 1960, the United States became actively involved in fighting in Vietnam when a few American servicemen were ordered to accompany South Vietnamese soldiers on combat missions. A massive build-up of American forces began in 1965, and by 1966 there were more than 400,000 Americans in Vietnam. The intensified fighting against North Vietnamese communists took a heavy toll of lives on both sides. Youthful servicemen from Champaign County were among these many casualties.

PFC Richard E. Nutt, son of Mrs. Helen Nutt of 312 West Avondale Avenue, Champaign, died of wounds received in battle on March 5, 1966. Mr. and Mrs. David Gensemer of 1906 West William Street, Champaign, lost their 23-year-old son, Army Specialist 5 David D. Gesemer, when he was killed while trying to help a wounded comrade to safety. Another 23-year-old Champaign soldier, Wayne Dawson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harvey E. Dawson of 312 Ellis Avenue, met his death in action just six days before Christmas. A helicopter crash caused the death of Sgt. Maynard J. Humes of rural Urbana, and Army Lt. Charles Getman, the 24-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Getman, 65 Greencroft, Champaign, was killed in July of 1966 when his airplane crashed in Vietnam.

Hundreds of Champaign County men fought in the long Vietnam conflict. There were seventy-five alone from the community of Sidney, two of whom, Glenn David McElroy and Jackie McElwee, did not survive. McElroy was a pilot whose aircraft was shot down while flying reconnaissance over enemy territory. Marine Corporal McElwee, who was killed in action January 13, 1968, is buried at Sidney's Mt. Hope Cemetery. He was nineteen years old.

Among many Americans, from Congress down to individual families, there was dissent over U. S. involvement in Vietnam. Peaceful anti-war protest marches, quiet prayer vigils, and violent mob action were a part of the American scene during these years. Unlike other wars, in this conflict the U.S. government had no ultimate military objective and the civilian population was never united in a common cause.

No previous situation challenged university authorities more than the actions of students demonstrating against the Vietnam War. What began as peaceful protests on the university campus later became violent and destructive mob actions. On October 15, 1969, an estimated eight thousand students and some faculty members marched in protest from the campus to West Side Park in downtown Champaign, accompanied by a police escort.



National Guardsmen Dispersing Protesting University of Illinois Students on Lawn of Illini Union

Frightened, angry, and confused over the United States government's policies toward the lingering Vietnam conflict, students rioted during the spring of 1970. Hundreds of windows in university and campustown business buildings were shattered, and police officers attempting to control the crowds were attacked with rocks and other thrown objects. In an attempt to restore law and order, the Illinois National Guard was ordered on campus for four days in March, and a 10:30 p.m. curfew was put into effect. Police arrested 147 persons for curfew violations and university officials suspended nine students.

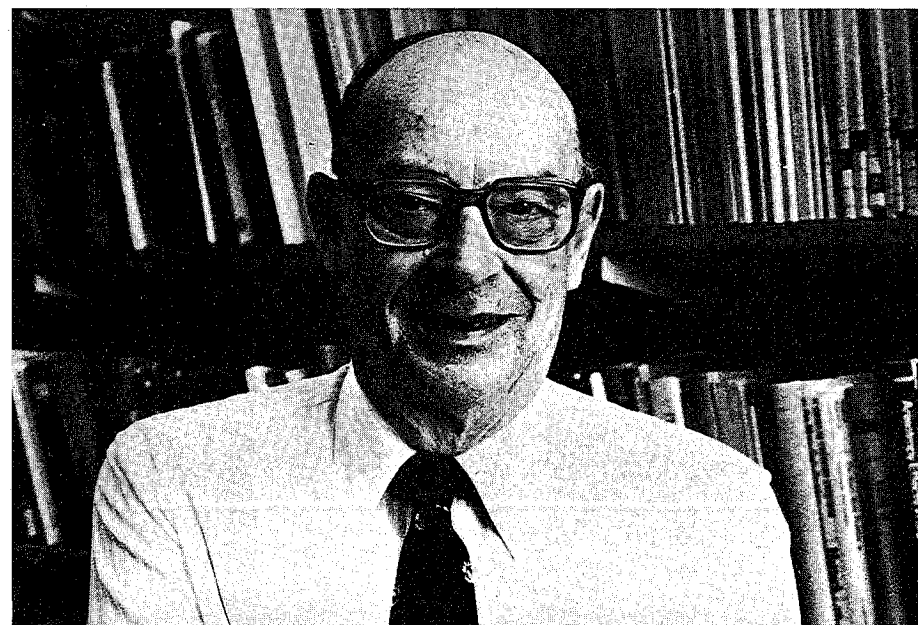
Infuriated over the tragic shooting deaths of two students at a protest on the Kent State University campus in Ohio, thousands of Illinois students gathered in the streets of campustown on May 10, 1970. Again guardsmen were called to Champaign and another 105 arrests were made. Protests continued during the next two years. Finally, after twelve years of fighting, during which over two and a half million Americans were sent to Vietnam, the United States withdrew its military forces in 1973.

Meanwhile, in August 1971, after serving 16 years as president of the University of Illinois, Dr. David Dodds Henry had retired. He was succeeded by Dr. John E. Corbally of Syracuse University. The unprecedented growth of the university physical plant which occurred under Dr. Henry's tenure was dramatically slowed throughout the 1970's. The decade, marked by war, recession, inflation, an energy shortage, and general economic upheaval across the globe, was not conducive to major expansion of the university.

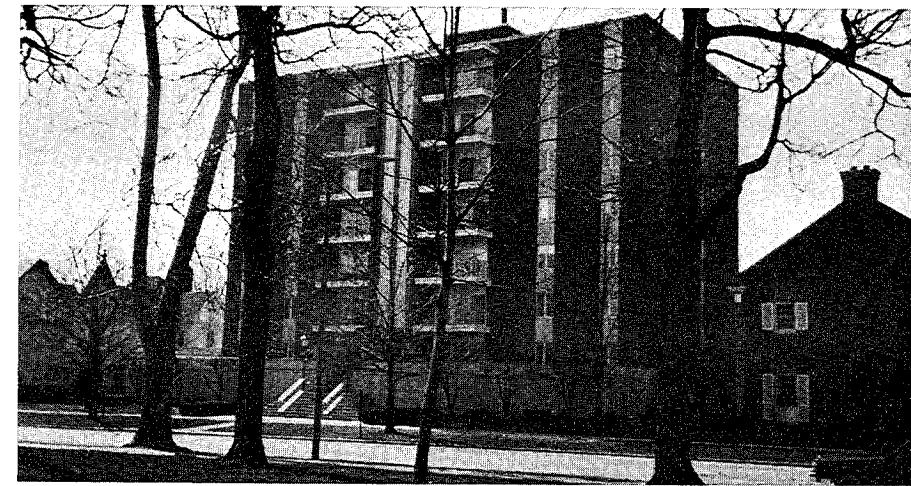
The administration of Dr. Corbally was faced with the overwhelming task of retaining high-quality teaching and research faculty over a long and trying period of political and economic stress. Faculty morale steadily eroded as salary increases failed to keep pace with the national rate of inflation. Legislative appropriations reflected a reluctance on the part of legislators to support salary increases for faculty who, in many of their constituents' views, had participated in riots or had allowed students to destroy university property during the protests of the early 1970's. The fact that state revenues were down dramatically during the national recession of 1974 was a more rational justification for limiting the faculty salary raises sought that year by the university president.

In 1974, President Corbally asked the state legislature for a 12% salary increase for his faculty. The request was refused and so he lowered the amount to 10%. Finally the legislature agreed to 7%, barely enough to counteract the rate of inflation. In fact, the raise represented no real increase in faculty purchasing power.

In spite of the difficulties encountered in maintaining competitive salaries for faculty members during the 1970's, the university continued to retain outstanding scholars and teachers. John Bardeen, a University of Illinois physics professor, exemplified the quality of the university's faculty. In 1972, Professor Bardeen became the first person ever to be awarded the Nobel Prize on two separate occasions. His first Nobel award was granted in 1956 for the transistor invented while he was a scientist at Bell Laboratories. The 1972 Nobel Award was given to Bardeen and two of his former students in recognition of their development of the theory of superconductivity.



John Bardeen

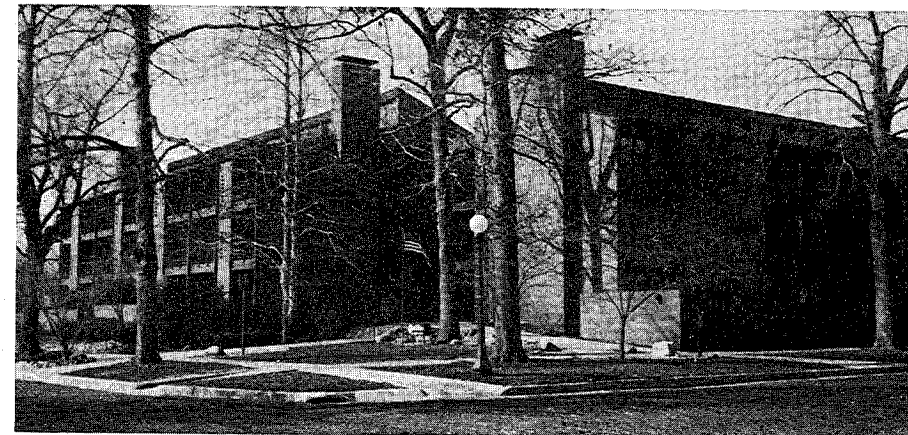


The Oaks
405 West University Avenue, Champaign

Beginning in the 1960's, several luxury apartments and condominiums were constructed in Champaign and Urbana. These included: the Oaks, which was built by the Felmley-Dickerson Construction Company and opened in Champaign in 1966; Urbana's Regency East, developed by Arthur Lewis and built by contractor Harold Highland in 1967/68 at Harding Drive and Cottage Grove Avenue; and Park Place, designed by Laz, Edwards and Dankert, which opened in 1974 by Champaign's West Side Park.

Despite an unstable national economic climate and the university's difficulties, much of Champaign County was able to make remarkable progress throughout the era of the 1970's. Private real estate development shifted away from single family homes towards multiple unit apartment buildings and condominiums. Although university housing construction had virtually ceased, private enterprise met a steadily increasing need for student housing.

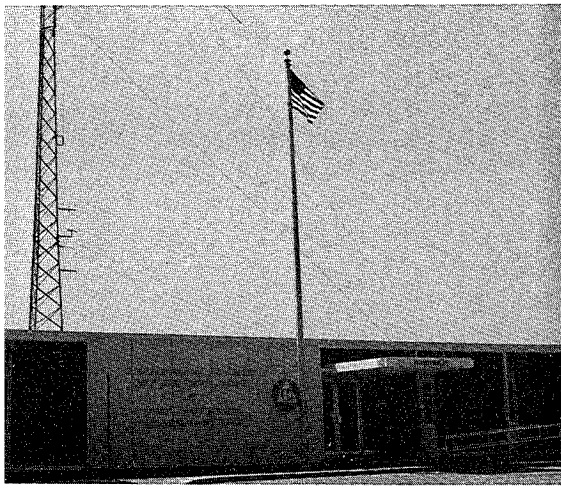
These spacious apartments included features such as underground parking, elevators, internal security systems, and "fireproof" steel and poured concrete structural systems. In contrast, the multi-unit apartments constructed during this period in the campus area were designed for the maximum permissible occupancy of students per square foot.



Park Place
107 North Elm Street, Champaign

However, efforts by professional planners and local government leaders to contain growth within the twin cities were only partially successful. Development continued to extend further south of the city limits. The village of Savoy extended its boundaries northward toward Champaign and incorporated the land which was desired by investors for development along the west side of Highway 45. Savoy's population jumped from 592 in 1970 to 2,126 in 1980. The Urbana-Champaign Sanitary Sewer District contributed to Savoy's growth by extending its lines to the village in 1978. The inadequate Savoy sewage treatment plant was then closed and service was provided by the more efficient U-C Sanitary District.

*Champaign County Office Building
1905 East Main Street, Urbana
Opened in 1966, it housed the County Board
Meeting Room and offices for the Highway
Department, County Veterinarian, Superin-
tendent of Schools, County Nurse, Animal
Control, and Civil Defense.*



Three Urbana residents were instrumental in enacting the new Illinois State Constitution of 1970. Attorney Henry I. Green was elected by voters from the 47th legislative district as a member of the Constitutional Convention. Dr. Joseph Piscotte served as the Convention Executive Director, and Dr. Richard Murphy was the Convention Parliamentarian. The 1970 constitution was the fourth one adopted by voters in Illinois, replacing the one hundred-year-old constitution of 1870. (William B. Webber of Urbana had been a representative to the Constitution Convention of 1848 which revised the original 1818 document.)

On November 29, 1973, the City of Champaign completed an extensive \$900,000 storm water drainage project along several blocks of South Neil Street north of the Stadium Drive railroad viaduct. The area was dubbed "Lake Neil" for its invariable flooding during rainstorms. Prior to the drainage project, "Lake Neil" often claimed stalled automobiles and provided a lucrative source of fees for tow truck operators.

Several important changes in local government took place in the 1970's. Some of these changes were dictated or influenced from outside the county. Illinois voters adopted a new state constitution on December 15, 1970, which enabled the city of Champaign to create its system of home-rule government. The United States Supreme Court by a 5-to-4 vote upheld the Voting Rights Act, which lowered to 18 years the eligible voting age in any election held on or after January 1, 1971, and thousands of University of Illinois students registered to vote. Many of them were encouraged to register in Champaign County and their votes influenced the outcome of local elections.

The Champaign County Board of Supervisors, consisting of fifty members elected from the thirty townships of the county, was forced to vote itself out of existence. The one-man, one-vote concept mandated by a United States Supreme Court ruling was made a part of state law, and the result was a shift in power within county government from the less populated rural townships to the urban centers. After considerable negotiation, County Board of Supervisors Chairman Wesley Schwengel was able to get approval to create a twenty-seven member County Board by forming nine geographical districts from which three members each were to be elected. The plan was approved on December 1, 1970, and took effect in April, 1972.

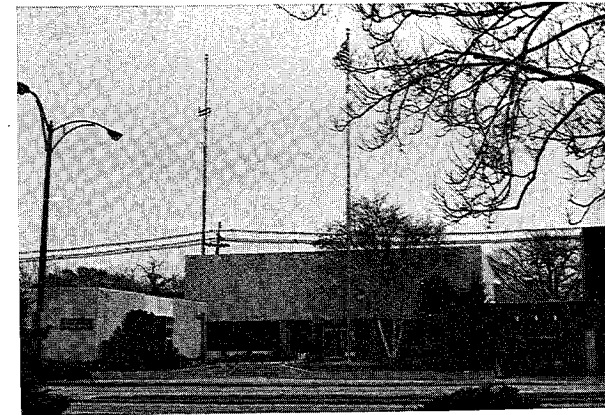
In November, 1972, Champaign voters approved a reorganization of the procedures for electing Champaign City Council members. The council was increased from six to eight members and was no longer selected entirely by city-wide balloting. In response to a perceived need for representation from geographically designated areas of the city, a system was created calling for the election of council members from each of five districts. Three more council members and the mayor were elected at-large by city-wide ballot. The procedure was initiated in the elections of April, 1973. The effect of the new system was viewed by many as a democratization of Champaign's governing body, which had been primarily composed of members from the business and professional life of the community. The combined district and at-large election procedure virtually assured election of serious black and student candidates from the two districts predominately occupied by their respective constituencies. Social and environmental issues were increasingly injected into council discussions. But solutions to problems of housing stock blight, center city business deterioration, and solid waste removal were still left until later when more money and better expertise could be found. Funding priorities for municipal improvements in Champaign continued to center on the construction of new buildings, improved street lighting, and storm water drainage.

Change in Urbana's municipal governmental structure was initiated by Mayor Charles Zipprodt in 1972 when he appointed a five-member municipal reform commission to study and recommend changes, including the possible adoption of a city manager-council form of government.

On April 3, 1979, Urbana citizens decided their city could be governed more efficiently by slashing in half the number of elected city council members. Voters approved a referendum which reduced the size of the Urbana City Council from fourteen to seven members. The new structure enabled each of the city's seven wards to elect one council member; only a mayor and city clerk would be chosen by city-wide balloting. The new system was effected two years later in the April, 1981, election, thus ending nearly a decade of study and discussion regarding municipal reform of Urbana government.

Ironically, all of Urbana's efforts would have been negated had voters in both Champaign and Urbana passed another referendum held November 4, 1980, which called for the merger of the twin cities. Voters rejected this latest attempt for merger just as they had in 1911 and again in 1953. The defeated proposition had called for the separate cities to be united into a single municipality with the managerial form of government under the name Champaign-Urbana. If the merger had passed, a twenty-member city council was to be chosen from ten districts. The primary question of merger was not so much debated as was the method of government under which a united Champaign-Urbana would be administered. One key factor in the defeat of the merger was the organized opposition by a large segment of the Urbana business and professional community. Urbana had successfully weathered the economic distress of the 1970's and entered the decade of the 80's with many reasons for an optimistic outlook on the future as a separate governmental entity.

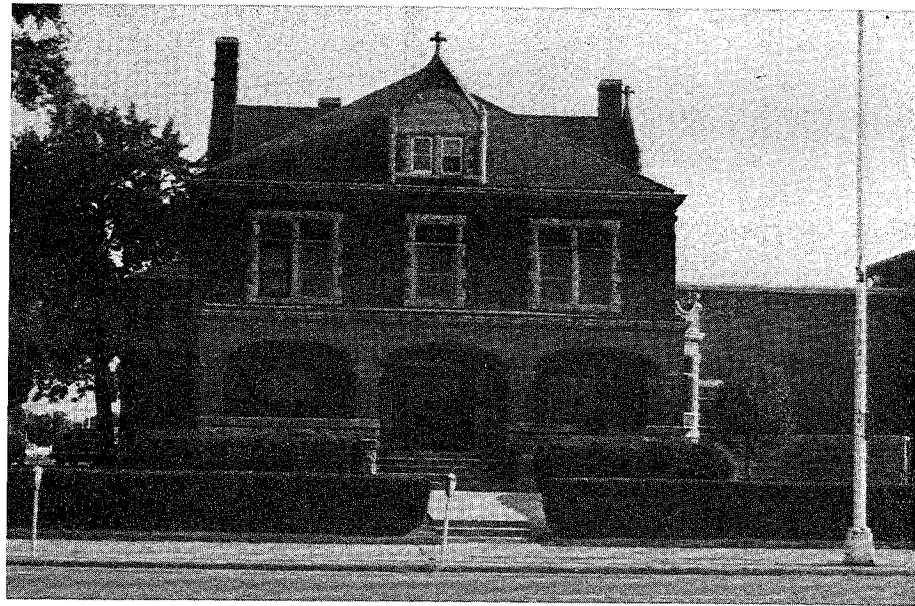
However, the loss of two major retailers along Urbana's Main Street during the 1970's was to severely affect the downtown area. The national chain store of the Montgomery Ward Company closed its only area store, and the locally-owned Tepper Hardware Store went out of business. On July 15, 1975, the fifty-two-year-old landmark Urbana Lincoln Hotel closed. Hundreds of sentimental people attended a liquidation sale in August in hopes of obtaining a memento of the old hotel. Within a year, the vacant hotel was sold by Carson, Pirie, Scott and Company to the Jumer Corporation. Extensive remodeling was begun and the hotel reopened in the fall of 1977.



*Urbana Municipal Building
400 South Vine Street, Urbana*

A new governmental taxing body was created by the establishment of the C-U Mass Transit District. Voters approved formation of the MTD in 1970 and their bus service began operation on August 1, 1971. Within ten years the fleet of buses doubled from twenty-five to fifty and ridership increased from 642,000 to approximately three million passengers annually. In November, 1975, the district headquarters moved from rented space to a new garage at 801 E. University Avenue, Urbana. The new building cost \$950,000 and was erected by the Kuhne-Simmons Company.

The first five members of the MTD Board of Trustees were appointed by the Circuit Court and included Karl Tauber, Warren Burgard, Helen Smith, Lachlan Blair, and James Benefiel.



*Sheriff's Residence, Old County Jail
201 East Main Street, Urbana*

The Sheriff's residence and county jail, constructed in 1895, remained a landmark on the courthouse square after its discontinued use as a jail facility.

Urbana was also threatened with the loss of the Champaign County Courthouse, an issue which became of great concern to the townspeople. County voters had rejected a \$12 million bond issue to build a new courthouse and jail, yet in the end the outmoded jail was replaced by a new building. Faced with pressure from state correctional officials, the county board exercised its legal prerogative and passed a \$5,300,000 construction bond issue for the new facility. Many Champaign County citizens were irritated by the procedure followed to finance the jail, which seemed to disregard the previously expressed wishes of the majority of county taxpayers. However, hardly anyone in Urbana disagreed with the choice of the new structure's location on the north side of Main Street opposite the old jail building and courthouse square.



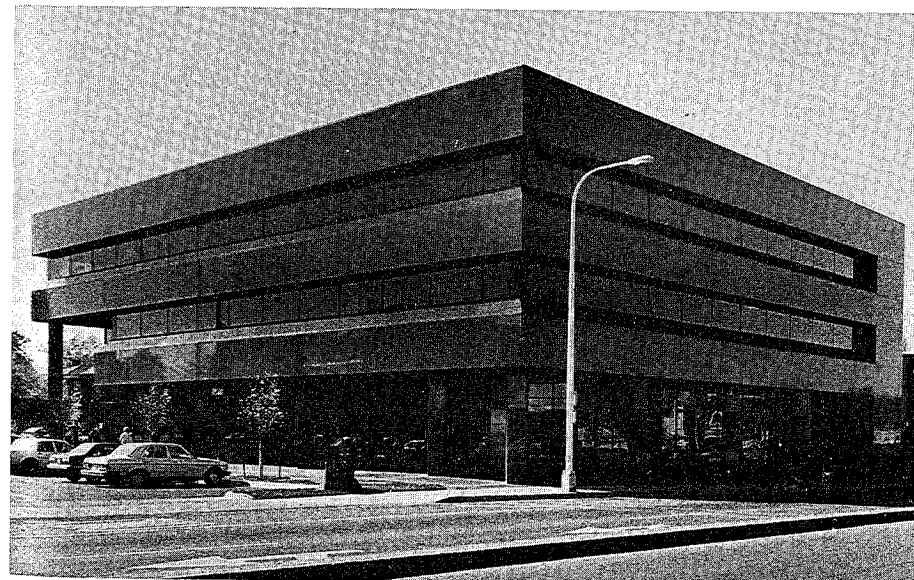
*Champaign County Correctional Center
204 East Main Street, Urbana*



*Champaign County Bank and Trust
102 East Main Street, Urbana*

Buildings which housed several small businesses in downtown Urbana were vacated in order to provide space for the expansion of the town's two major banks. The Champaign County Bank and Trust Company cleared a square block on the northeast corner of Main and Broadway Streets. The area was improved by the construction of a new five-story bank and office building, including a parking lot and multiple drive-through banking facility where the Montgomery Ward store had stood.

Busey First National Bank decided to remain in downtown Urbana and built an impressive modern banking center at its historic location on the southwest corner of Main and Race Streets. Demolition of several buildings along Race and Elm Streets was necessary to provide parking and drive-up facilities for the bank. The bold investments in downtown locations by two rapidly growing banks were stabilizing influences on the future of Urbana as a business center.



*Race Inn
115 South Race Street, Urbana
(Demolished, 1980)*

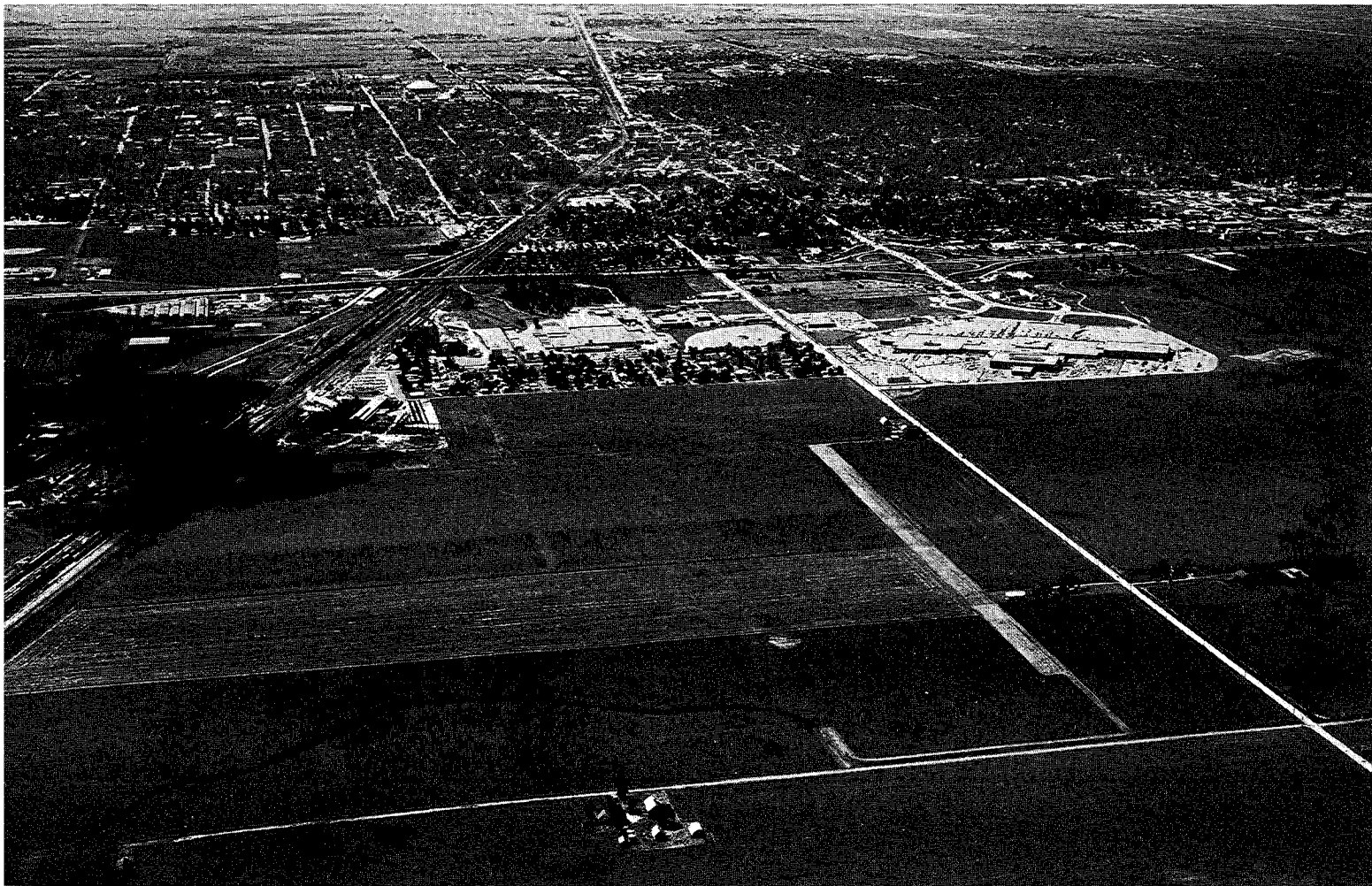
Many Urbana residents held fond memories of friendly, personal service rendered by such small businesses as the Race Inn Restaurant on Race Street and the Smith Drugstore next to the Montgomery Ward store on Main Street. Both were demolished during Urbana's era of downtown modernization.

*Busey First National Bank
201 West Main Street, Urbana*

The phenomenal changes in retail business centers which occurred in American cities during the 1960's were escalated during the 1970's by the development of the concept of regional shopping malls. In the first part of the decade, central business areas in Champaign and Urbana struggled to retain their retail character against increased competition from shopping centers. A crushing blow to those efforts came in 1974 when an official pre-annexation agreement was signed between the city of Champaign and the Chicago-based development firm of Landau and Heyman for construction of Market Place Mall, beyond Interstate 74, at Champaign's northern limits.

Construction on the Market Place Mall began in the fall of 1974 with space planned for fifty businesses. Confident of the mall's future, developers Landau and Heyman envisioned a later expansion to accommodate up to seventy stores. Sears, Roebuck and Company announced in 1975 that it would be the first major tenant to move from downtown Champaign to Market Place. Three years later, Champaign's other major national chain department store, J. C. Penney, also relocated to the popular shopping mall.

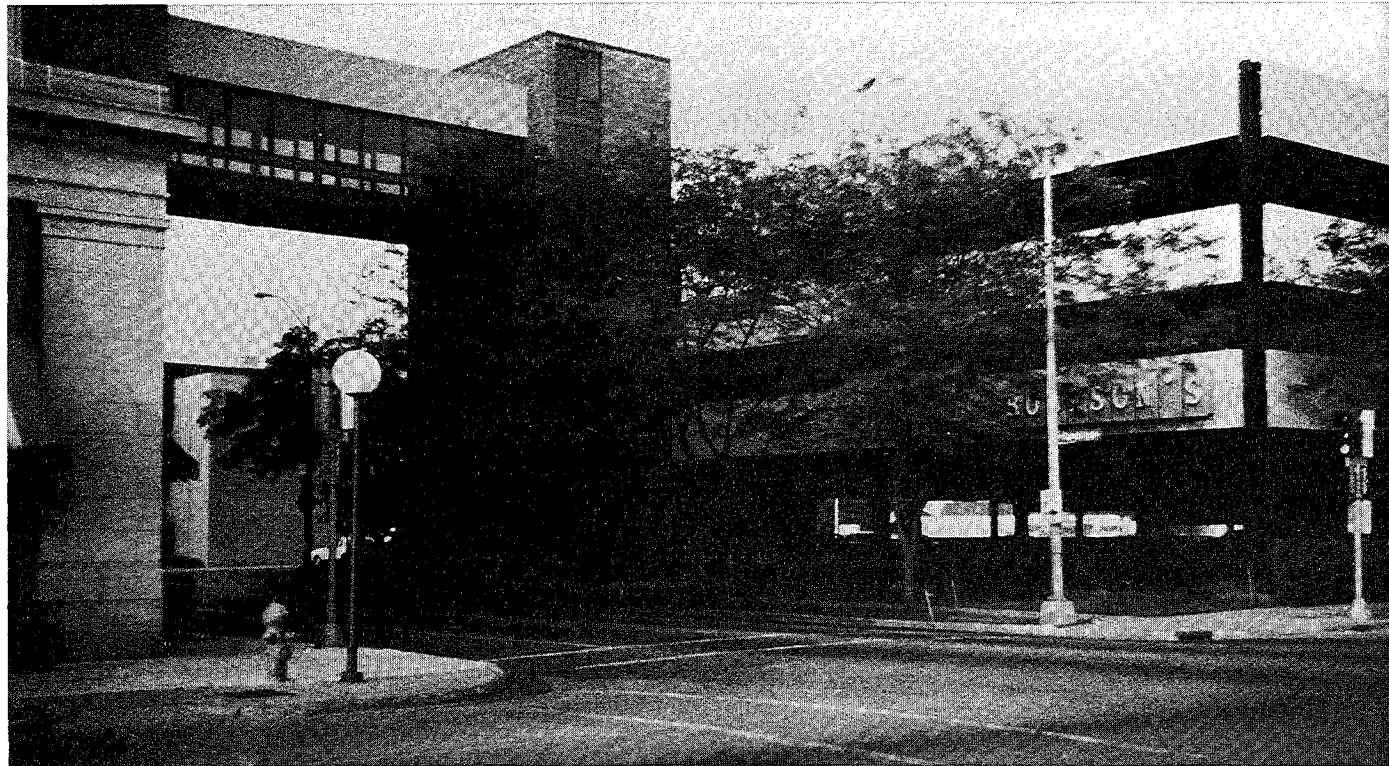
*Market Place Mall
2000 North Neil Street, Champaign*



Intense competition from outlying shopping centers caused downtown Champaign business leaders to consider the development of an enclosed mall as an inducement to shoppers. Construction was to begin in 1970, but lack of consensus from business and municipal governmental officials regarding financing prevented the project from getting started. Finally, in 1974, a contract was awarded to the Skoog Construction Company of Champaign to erect an open-air pedestrian mall centered along a two-block section of North Neil Street between University Avenue and the West Church and Main Street juncture. A reluctant, yet sympathetic Champaign City Council appropriated \$131,000 towards the Mall's cost, and business property owners were assessed the remaining \$666,900 needed to complete the project. The pedestrian mall opened in 1975, and within a short time became the outdoor setting for numerous business and civic events sponsored by downtown merchants. The extent of community benefits derived from closing Neil Street for the mall and the question of the mall's effectiveness in generating retail sales became an on-going subject for discussion and public evaluation for years to come.

*Downtown Champaign Mall
Looking North on Neil Street.*





Robeson's "Skyway Walk" and Parking Garage, Southwest Corner, Randolph and Church Streets, Champaign

Downtown Champaign's survival as a modified, yet viable retail center was heavily influenced by the determination of the Robeson family to modernize and expand its center city business operations. In 1973, Robeson's erected a multi-level parking garage in conjunction with a five-story, 118-room Howard Johnson franchised motel, a development which covered nearly three-fourths of a square block to the west of their department store. A significant feature was an enclosed pedestrian "skyway walk" high over Randolph Street which linked the parking structure with the Robeson building at the third floor level.

The following year, Robeson's store for men and boys opened at 113-115 West Church Street in the space formerly occupied by an S. S. Kresge store, and another empty building at 211 North Neil Street was remodeled for Roby II, a women's speciality shop. In 1974, Robeson's began its second century of retailing in downtown Champaign.

The cumulative loss of a number of major businesses ended downtown Champaign's dominance as the primary retail center of the county. The national chain of the W. T. Grant Company had gone bankrupt in 1965, leaving a large vacant building behind at No. 1 Main Street. By 1967, the sixty-five-year-old W. Lewis Company had discontinued its long history of retailing and the once successful Fields Department Store at 9 Main Street was closing out its stock and fixtures.

Fires were responsible for several gaping holes along the downtown streetscape. On January 26, 1972, the Lane Furniture Company at 24 Main Street was destroyed by flames, and three months later, on April 24, another fire consumed the adjacent structure at 20 Main Street which housed the Gallenkamp Shoe Store. On July 23, 1977, an arsonist's fire leveled the Hamilton Hotel building on the northeast corner of Park Avenue and Neil Streets. The Walgreen Drug Store which had been located on the first floor of the building relocated in a neighborhood shopping center. Several smaller retailers, along with the buildings in which they were located, disappeared from the center city. Demolition projects created new parking facilities for expanding bank and office complexes which became the major economic base for the downtown.



In 1974, the Commercial Bank of Champaign opened its new structure at the southwest corner of Randolph Street and University Avenue. Its reflective glass exterior walls mirrored surrounding buildings and served to introduce into downtown Champaign an architectural style current in larger cities in America and abroad.

*The Commercial Bank of Champaign
201 West University Avenue*

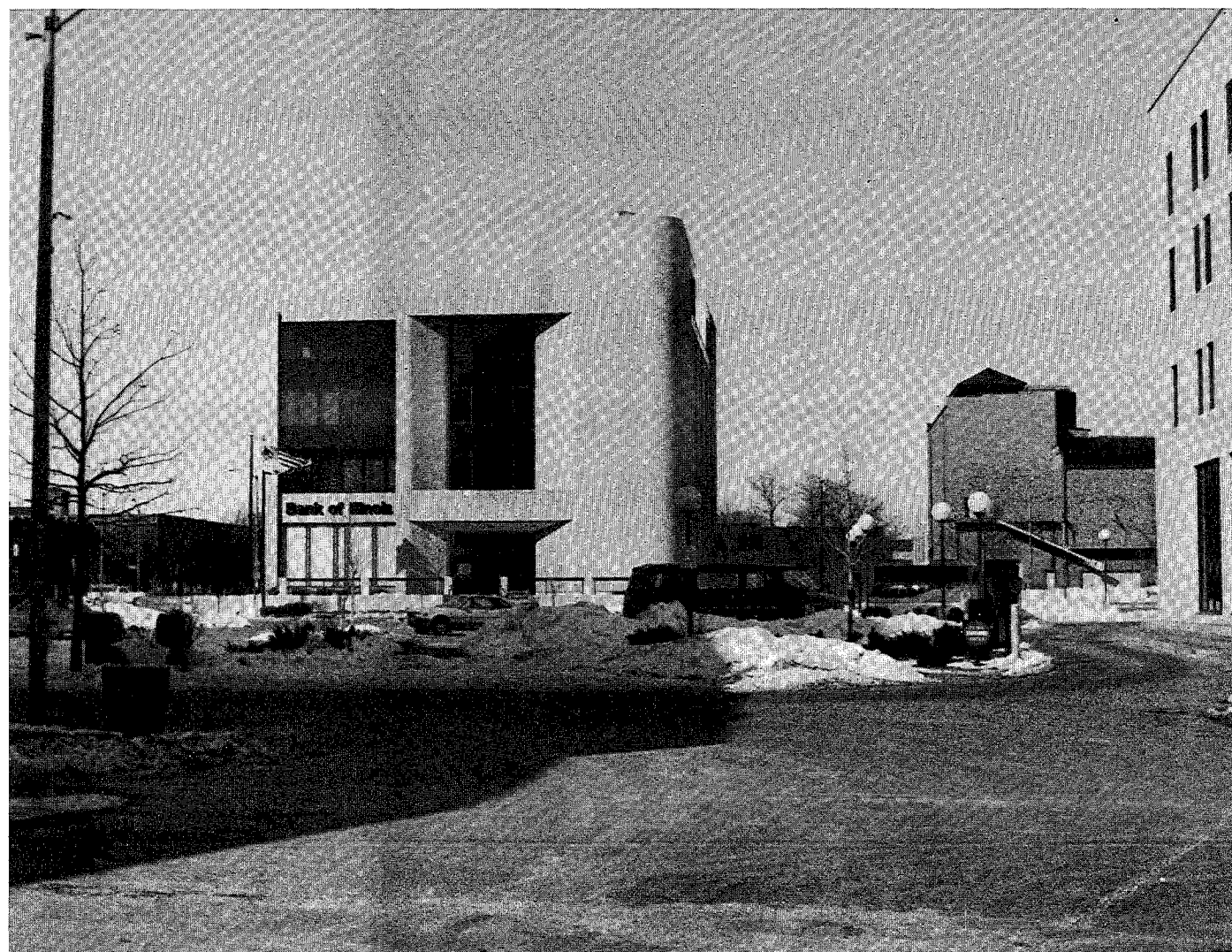


101-111 North Neil Street, Champaign
(Demolished, 1981)

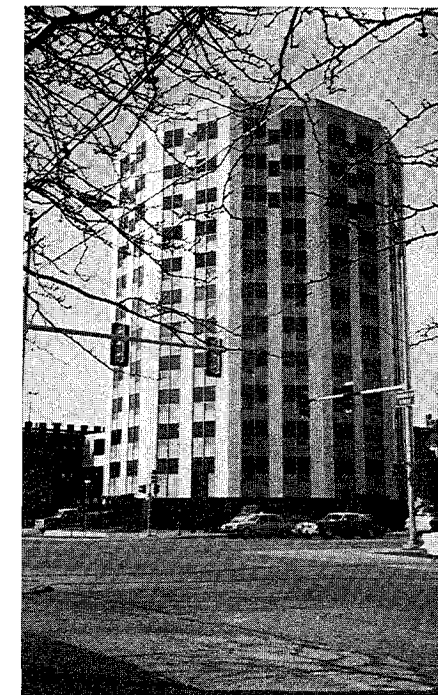
Bank of Illinois
Looking West from Neil Street

The area's most extensive revitalization project combined demolition, remodeling, and new construction. In 1978, the Bank of Illinois began a \$9 million development that first eliminated all but one building within a square block bounded by Neil and Randolph Streets and by Park and University Avenues. Bank of Illinois board chairman August C. Meyer determined to retain the landmark Illinois Building on North Neil Street and had the structure converted for use as the Bank of Illinois Executive Center. A new four-story, fifty-eight thousand square foot bank building was erected at the southwest corner of Randolph Street and University Avenue, a site formerly occupied by the First Baptist Church.

When the spacious new bank building opened July 6, 1982, it contained all of the traditional banking facilities plus an elaborate computerized data processing system that provided high technology information services for eleven other banks, forty-five independent telephone companies, and nearly one hundred business firms located in central Illinois.



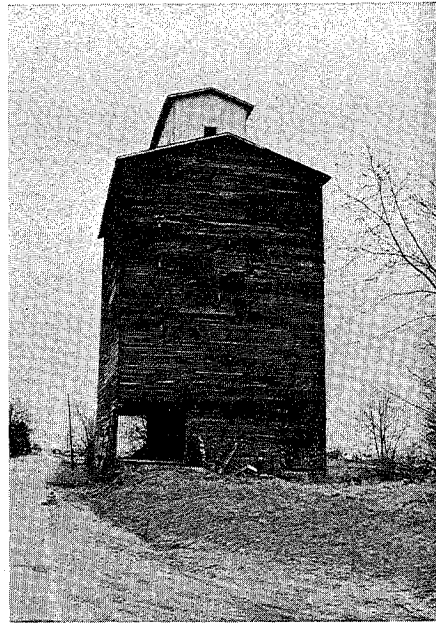
The single most dramatic change in the twin cities skyline occurred in 1970-71 with the erection of a twenty-story, ten-sided Corten steel building in Champaign, which was given the name Century Twenty-One. Architectural and Mechanical Systems Incorporated of Urbana was selected by the building developers to erect the tallest building ever built in Champaign County, at a cost of more than \$8 million. After opening in 1972, the building was financially unsuccessful under three different ownerships and was sold at the end of 1976 to Ramada Inn owners Durward G. Judy and Edward Campbell for \$1,800,000. The new management soon increased the building's use as a hotel-convention facility, and renamed it University Inn.



Huntington Towers
201 West Springfield Avenue, Champaign

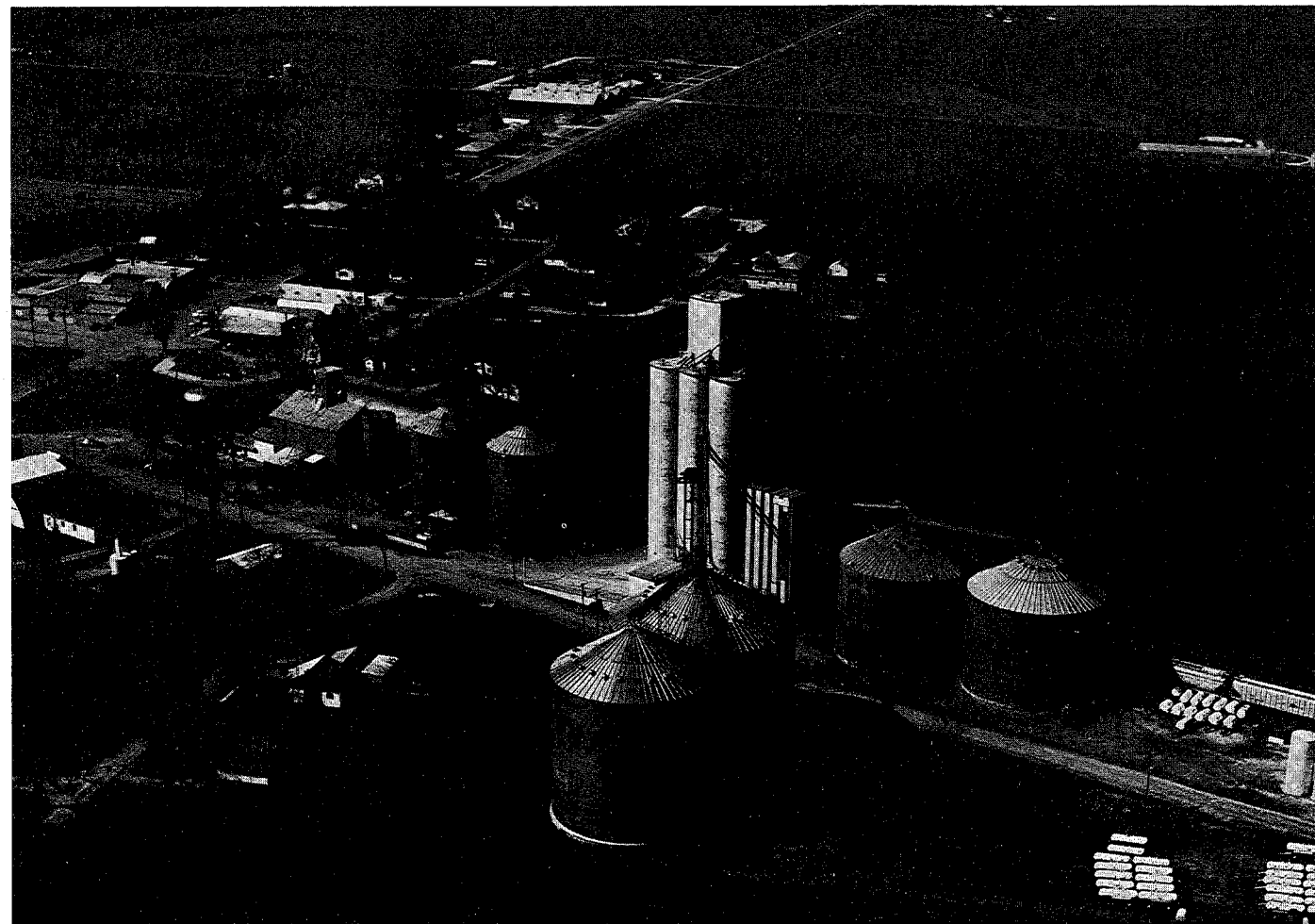
Another high-rise, multi-sided structure was built in Champaign by apartment builder Kermit Nogle. Unable to attract enough tenants for its apartments, Nogle sold the twelve-story building. A number of apartments were converted to rental space for professional offices in the newly-named Huntington Towers and the local office of the Internal Revenue Service became one of the building's best known tenants.

University Inn
302 East John Street, Champaign



Mayview Elevator
(Demolished, 1978)

Elevators at Royal

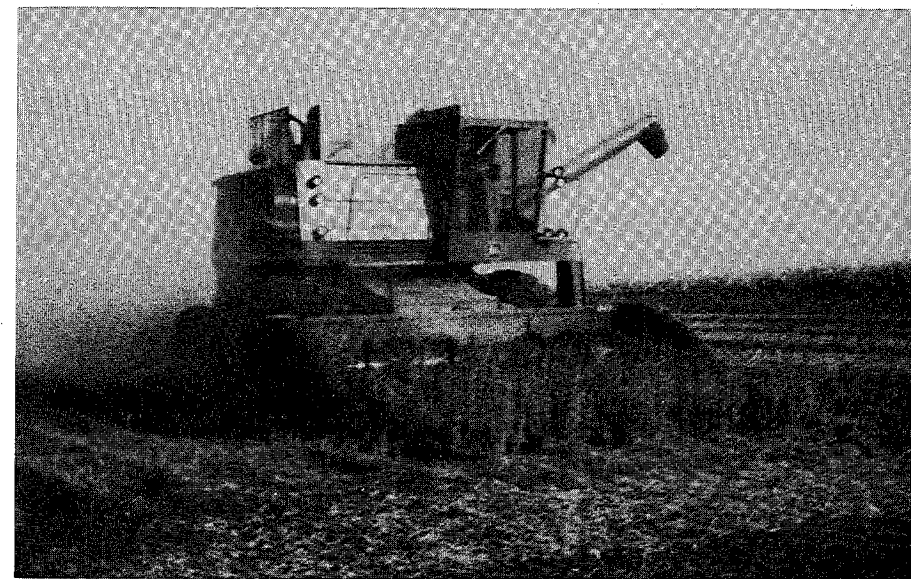


While highly visible changes occurred in major urban centers and smaller villages of the county during the late 1960's and 1970's, equally profound though more subtle changes took place in the rural landscape. These resulted when agricultural science and technology enabled cost-effective, large scale acreage farming to be done with fewer farm workers. Cash-grain farming of soybeans and corn increased while the raising of livestock gradually declined. With these changes came the clearing of much of the remaining woodlands and the plowing of pastures. Most of the osage orange hedgerows were uprooted and hundreds of miles of barbed wire fence were removed to further expand tillable field size.

The number of livestock diminished, as did the number of barns, once the symbols of success and pride on the part of farmstead owners. They were replaced as points of reference on the flat Illinois rural landscape by giant high-rise metal grain elevators that were built as direct harvest depositories by farmers' co-ops throughout the county. No longer needed, many of the old wooden elevators that had dotted the area for generations soon passed from the scene.

Champaign County entered the age of high-technology far better prepared to adapt than did many other areas of the state. Close proximity to the University of Illinois and ready access to information from its research facilities were primary factors in the favorable climate for change. In the late 1960's and early 1970's, corn and soybean research facilities such as Illinois Foundation Seeds and Pioneer Hybrid Corn Company of Illinois were expanded and soon were joined by new seed businesses which found the county a desirable place to locate.

In 1976, Pioneer began phasing out its operation on the southeast corner of Prospect Avenue and Bloomington Road in Champaign and built an extensive seed corn production and soybean research laboratory on a fifty-five acre site just east of St. Joseph on Route 150. United Agriseeds located its new high technology research seed facility on Route 45 south of Champaign, developing new varieties of corn, soybeans, and wheat in their greenhouses not too far from where M. L. Dunlap had experimented with his orchards more than a century earlier.



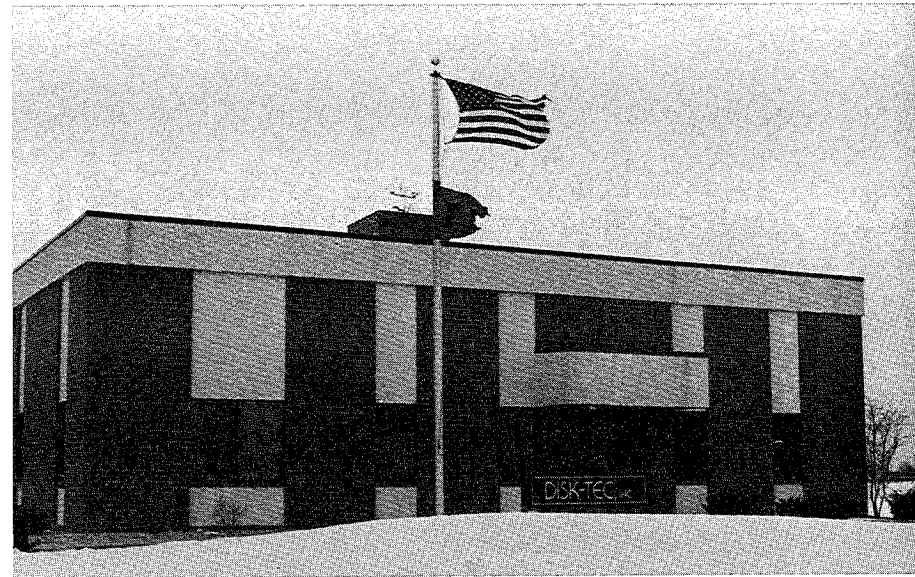
Combining on the Dean and Lois Crider Farm Near St. Joseph

Farming as an occupation changed from a skilled workman's way of life to a big-investment, high-risk business requiring specialized knowledge and management skills. By the end of 1982, fewer than fourteen hundred farmers in Champaign County continued to farm as a full-time occupation; approximately five hundred others engaged in farming as a secondary form of employment. Although there were fewer farmers, farm production increased four-fold over the previous twenty years. Total annual income from the sale of farm products by Champaign County farmers was secondary in importance to the local economy only to the \$250 million payroll of the University of Illinois.

The Illinois Foundation Seeds Company was established in 1936 in Peoria and moved to Champaign ten years later. The main office of the company relocated in 1970 from North Fifth Street in Champaign to Tolono as part of their expansion into soybean and hybrid sweet corn research. Other research stations were established in Ohio, Wisconsin, and Nebraska.

One hundred and fifty years after farmers bought the first land for \$1.25 an acre, land values had risen to over three thousand dollars an acre. The average farmer in Champaign County owned a half section of land with a market value of approximately \$1 million. However, Champaign County lost 749 farms, almost one-third of its total number, during the period 1962 through 1982. In 1962 there were 2,620 farms; at the end of 1982, the United States Bureau of Census recorded only 1,871 farms in the county.

Interstate Research Park was developed by brothers Newton H. Dodds and Donald C. Dodds, Jr., and was opened in 1963 on the east side of the Fisher Road northwest of Champaign. It was the first privately developed research park in Illinois.



DISK-Tec Incorporated
1401 Interstate Drive
Interstate Research Park, Champaign

A number of high-technology business firms in the fields of electronics, computers, and medical technology also developed in the Champaign-Urbana area because of the availability of highly skilled professional and technical labor. Advantageous sites for the location of such firms were available at the Interstate Research Park, an area designed especially for research industries.

Anticipating further expansion and increased needs for high-technology industry sites, local developer Walt Cunningham's firm, Cunningham and Associates, acquired property at the junction of Champaign's South Neil Street and St. Mary's Road, which provided convenient access to the university and to Willard Airport. In 1983, Illini Plaza High Tech Park opened there with several computer-oriented companies, including Digital Equipment Corporation and Super Soft, a manufacturer of flexible discs for computers. Plans for Phase III development included renovation of a former Kroger store in the complex and further construction on an additional nine acres.

The proliferation of scientific and technological advances in the new modern age was accompanied by the acceleration of change in almost every facet of life. In Champaign County, as in other places, the impact of these changes created a climate in which people looked forward to the future and to the excitement of new developments, yet also began to look for threads of continuity in the midst of the multiplicity of changes. Expressions of this attitude frequently materialized as commemorative celebrations. Beginning with the Illinois Sesquicentennial in 1968 and continuing over a fifteen year period through 1983, several important milestones in Champaign County's history were recognized.

In 1968, the United States Army selected Champaign over forty-six other university communities which had vied for its Construction and Engineering Research Laboratory. The C.E.R.L. facility was erected in the Interstate Research Park at a cost of \$7 million. Within the next fifteen years several specialized, high-technology industries opened in the park and provided employment for approximately two thousand skilled workers throughout a nineteen-building complex.



C.E.R.L.
2902 Newmark Drive, Champaign

Centennial celebrations held during this time included: Ogden, 1970; St. Joseph, 1972; Philo and Gifford, 1975; and Fisher and Penfield, 1976. The celebrations included pageants, parades, pig-roasts, pony-shows, and commemorative publications. The nation's bicentennial further stimulated many types of historical and patriotic activities throughout the county. In addition to the appointment of the Champaign County Bicentennial Commission, several communities were designated by the Illinois Bicentennial Commission as Bicentennial Communities which then undertook projects to record some parts of their town's history.

Communities joined in activities similar to those which their forefathers had chosen to commemorate earlier events in the county's history. Lighthearted and whimsical activities such as water-fights, beard-growing contests, greased-pig chases, and the colorful decorating of mailboxes and fireplugs joined more serious projects which were intended to preserve a permanent record of county life and to restore rapidly disappearing elements of the natural and the built environment.

The major project selected by the Champaign County Bicentennial Commission was the revitalization and beautification of the Boneyard Creek, which as a source of clear stream water had been an influence in the early settlement of this area. This ambitious undertaking was projected over a one hundred year span. Over sixty-eight thousand dollars, including a thirty thousand dollar state grant, was raised towards initiating an improvement program. This included an award of \$5,575 to construct and install concrete sculptures in Champaign's Scott Park which were designed by University of Illinois sculptor Frank Gallo and entitled "Boneyard People."



"Boneyard People"
Scott Park, Champaign

The "Bone Bank" was a well-known landmark on the Indiana bank of the Wabash River about ten miles from its juncture with the Ohio River. Extensive bone remains from an ancient Indian village covered an area almost fifteen hundred feet in length along the river's bluff. Early settlers at the Big Grove who came from Kentucky via the Wabash River passed the massive "Bone Bank" enroute to Illinois.

Upon arrival here, these settlers found a smaller version of the "Bone Bank" at the edge of the Big Grove near an abundant spring of water. This spring came from the bank of a small stream which then began its course approximately one-fourth mile west of what was to become the Champaign County Courthouse Square. The spring site had long been a favorite camping spot for roving Potawatomie and probably other Indian hunting parties. The refuse from their slaughtered game animals had accumulated along the stream's bank and the area became known to the white settlers as the "Bone Yard." Several years later the stream became popularly referred to as the "Bone Yard Branch" and eventually acquired the name of "Boneyard Creek."



Jeanne Rochford, Chairman
Champaign County Bicentennial
Commission

Prior to the start of the twin cities' 1976 July 4th parade, spectators and parade entrants joined hundreds of other communities through a nationwide telephone hook-up from Independence Hall in Philadelphia, in a freedom bell-ringing salute to the United States' 200th birthday. A birthday cake measuring ten feet by twelve feet and twelve feet high was served to fifty-five hundred persons at the end of the parade route on the athletic fields west of Memorial Stadium.

In 1972 a small committee was organized under the chairmanship of Mary Yearsley of Urbana and Eunice Creamer of Champaign to establish a Champaign County Historical Museum. Community support for the project, including a thirty thousand dollar gift from the Junior League of Champaign-Urbana, enabled the purchase of the Wilber Mansion, 709 West University Avenue, Champaign, for the museum's headquarters. The museum opened December 1, 1974.

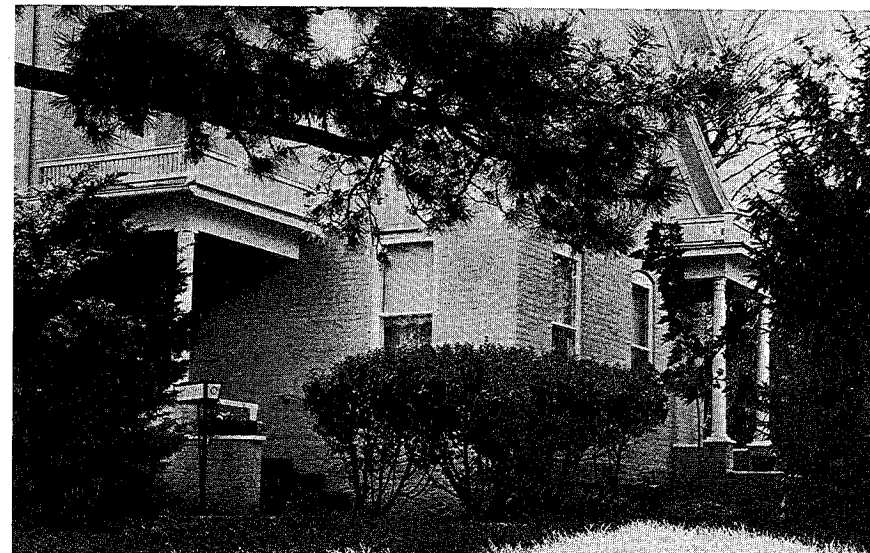
Dr. and Mrs. M. E. Webber's residence was one of the historic houses marked during the Bicentennial. It has been occupied by descendants of William T. Webber since the 1850's.

Webber House
605 East Main Street, Urbana

Through the efforts of the Champaign-Urbana Business and Professional Women's Club, the Champaign County Courthouse, a visual symbol of the county, was enhanced by the restoration of its long inoperative tower clock. Space was reserved in the courthouse to hang a hand-crafted commemorative quilt celebrating county history, which was executed in segments by skilled stitchers from throughout the county.

During the bicentennial, a number of educational activities were undertaken by the Champaign County Historical Museum. A grant from the Illinois Bicentennial Commission and the Community Foundation of Champaign County enabled the museum to develop a half-hour program which became a part of an all-day educational program for fourth grade students. This was conducted once a week at the museum throughout the school year. In cooperation with the Champaign County Bicentennial Commission, the museum's Marking and Preservation Committee identified and researched seventy-eight representative historic sites throughout the county. Red, white, and blue reflective markers were placed at each site, and a booklet describing the sites, *Historic Sites in Champaign County*, was published by the Champaign County Bicentennial Commission, the Champaign County Historical Museum, and the Central Illinois Tourism Council.

Other publications stimulated by the nation's bicentennial included: *Neipswah*, a history of Rantoul by Katie B. Podagrosi; *Homer, Past and Present*, issued by the Homer Historical Committee; and *History Of Sidney, 1827-1976*, by Virginia McElroy. Commemorative celebrations continued into the next decade. In 1982, Royal celebrated the centennial of its beginnings as a community and the village of Mahomet observed the 150th anniversary of its settlement.



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS

1833-1983

150

years of

contributions to the state, nation, and world.



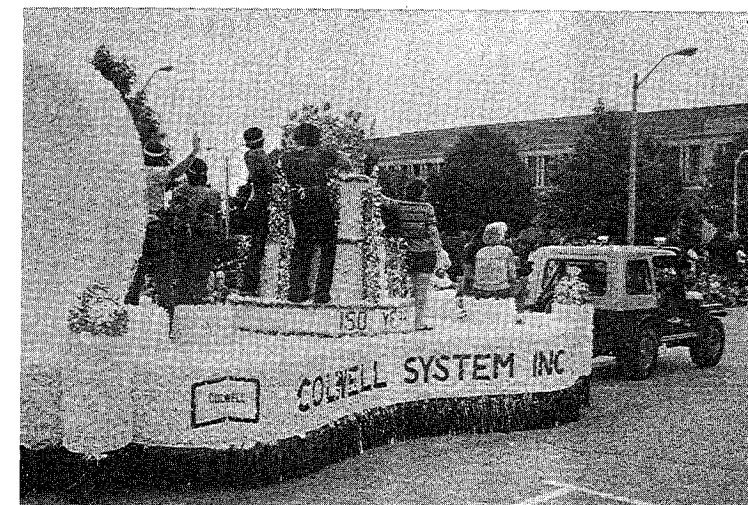
Above: Sesquicentennial Logo
Left: Sesquicentennial Slogan
The Champaign County Sesquicentennial Logo, designed by Barbara Austin Baker, depicts the state, nation, and world surrounded by two C's representing Champaign County and by the number 150.

In 1982, the Champaign County Board, looking forward to the sesquicentennial of the county's founding, appointed a committee to sponsor, coordinate, and encourage commemorative activities throughout 1983. The date of the county's founding, February 20, was marked by joint proclamations of the Champaign County Board, local mayors, and village presidents throughout the county. Celebration of the sesquicentennial was officially initiated May 3 with the "Rotary 150 Banquet," which was sponsored by the Rotary Clubs of Champaign, Rantoul, and Urbana, and held in the newly completed conference facility of Jumer's Castle Lodge in Urbana. Featured speaker for the evening was Godfrey Sperling, Washington, D.C., correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor* and a graduate of Urbana High School and the University of Illinois.

The Champaign County Sesquicentennial Committee, through a series of public meetings, encouraged the theme of the celebration, "Champaign County's contribution to the state, the nation, and the world", to be incorporated into many activities during the year. These included a salute to Champaign County at the Chanute Open House, June 18; the Champaign-Urbana Fourth of July Freedom Celebration; and fall festivals in Homer, Mahomet, and St. Joseph.

Members of the Champaign County Sesquicentennial Committee appointed by the Champaign County Board were: Willis "Bud" Baker, Chairman; Linda M. Mills, Secretary; Gary D. Adams, Michael C. Cahall, Marajen Stevick Chinigo, Lyle Grace, Judith L. Ikenberry, Gene Johnson, Patricia L. Miller, Malcolm Nygren, Gerald O'Neill, John W. Pollard, J. Wallace Rayburn, Paul Roberson and Taylor L. Thomas. The Illinois Heritage Association was designated as the coordinating office for the Sesquicentennial.

Lower Left:
Colwell Systems Incorporated
Fourth of July Float
Lower Right:
Village of St. Joseph
Fourth of July Float





Hensley Township Hall at the
Early American Museum

Special sesquicentennial activities were sponsored by numerous community organizations. July 25 was designated Sesquicentennial Day at the Champaign County Fair. Larry Werries, Director of the Illinois State Department of Agriculture, presented Illinois Centennial Farm Certificates honoring 168 owners of centennial farms in Champaign County. Registration of the farms owned by single families for a century in Champaign County was a project co-sponsored by the Champaign County Fair Board and the Champaign County Farm Bureau.

On September 11, the Early American Museum at the Lake of the Woods, Mahomet, presented a program commemorating one hundred and fifty years of agriculture in Champaign County and dedicated the relocated Hensley Township Hall.

An Urbana Sesquicentennial Committee was formed to pay special tribute to Urbana's founding as the county seat. The committee, chaired by Marilyn Webber Thies, joined with the Downtown Urbana Promotion Committee in sponsoring a weekend of history and entertainment on August 26-28, 1983. Several thousand people participated in activities which included musical presentations, dancing, children's games, and a sweet corn festival on Main Street. Highlight of the weekend celebration was "An Old-fashioned Day In the Park" with exhibits, contests, and entertainment in Crystal Lake Park, where the ancestors of many of those present had held the semi-centennial celebration a century earlier.

Civic organizations used the Sesquicentennial logo to promote their activities, businesses put it in their advertisements, and some used it on their letterhead. A billboard on the campus entered into the spirit of things with a congratulatory message, and at one of the home Illini football games, the scoreboard flashed a Sesquicentennial salute.

Billboard on the Deluxe Lunch Building
522 East Green Street, Champaign



The Champaign County Genealogical Society undertook a project to recognize descendents of early settlers in Champaign County. Certificates were issued to direct descendents of pioneers who settled in Champaign County prior to 1883. Other projects and activities during the year included: a photography contest sponsored by the Champaign County Camera Club; a Mother-Daughter Banquet hosted by the Philo Woman's Club; a picnic dinner and program, "Music in the Park", sponsored by the Mahomet Chamber of Commerce and the Mahomet Village Chorale; and a program at the First Methodist Church in Mahomet recreating a pioneer era dinner at the area's fabled Nine Gal Tavern.

Barbara Stamey Roberts was one of the seven hundred descendents of Champaign County pioneers who received a certificate from the Champaign County Genealogical Society.

Pioneer Certificate



TITLE *PARTNERS IN BLUE MARCH* ARRANGER 1ST LT HENRY N. EMERSON, USAF PAGE NO. 1

CONDUCTOR OR EXTRA PARTS

DEDICATED TO THE OBSERVANCE OF CHAMPAIGN COUNTY'S SESQUICENTENNIAL. *Henry N. Emerson* 18 JUNE 83

ALP 1st

SAXES 2nd 3rd

TRUMPETS 1st 2nd 3rd

TROMBONE 1 2 3

BASS

DRUMS

The image shows a page of a musical score for a marching band. It includes staves for various instruments: Alto Saxophone 1st, Saxophones 2nd and 3rd, Trumpets 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, Trombones 1, 2, and 3, Bass, and Drums. The score is in 2/4 time and features a variety of rhythmic patterns and dynamics. A dedication is written at the top: 'DEDICATED TO THE OBSERVANCE OF CHAMPAIGN COUNTY'S SESQUICENTENNIAL. Henry N. Emerson 18 JUNE 83'. The title 'PARTNERS IN BLUE MARCH' and arranger '1ST LT HENRY N. EMERSON, USAF' are at the top right. The page number '1' is also present.

Score From the "Partners In Blue March"

The parade theme of "Pride in the Past, Faith in the Future" was chosen to coincide with Champaign County's Sesquicentennial by Chanute Air Force Base during its 1983 Community Appreciation Day Open House celebration. The 505th Air Force Band of the Midwest played a special march, "Partners in Blue," composed by its band director, First Lieutenant Henry N. Emerson, in honor of the county's sesquicentennial. More than fifty thousand people attended the Open House.

Three publications were undertaken during the sesquicentennial year. *Champaign County Sesquicentennial Recipes, 1833-1983*, compiled by Charlotte Williamson of Mahomet, was distributed by the Illinois Heritage Association. A collection of news articles by Edna Lewis, who wrote of the people and everyday events of Homer for nearly half a century, formed the basis for a book, *Dear Edna*, to be issued by the Homer Historical Society. The present volume, *A Commemorative History Of Champaign County, 1833-1983*, was begun by the Illinois Heritage Association.

The commemorative activities of the Champaign County Sesquicentennial reminded people that throughout the course of one hundred and fifty years, Champaign County has experienced a constant process of change that was essentially positive. Railroads, highways, streets, businesses, schools, churches, parks, buildings, cities, and villages were created and flourished, each representing the hopes of Champaign County's citizens. Yet many of these features have succumbed to the alterations demanded by the county's growth. Change has transformed the appearance of the rural landscape and the streetscapes of the urban areas. Technological developments, revised religious and social philosophies, and new educational methods have all altered the character of Champaign County. External influences of state and national governmental policies have created a profound effect on the lives of every individual.

The uncertainty of modern life at times seems threatening. But an overview of the county's history permits an understanding of facts and inferences as to how the county has sustained its growth and development in the past. The historical record has shown that whether faced with opportunity or adversity, Champaign County citizens have been equal to the challenge. The fortuitous assets of rich soil, plentiful water, and a productive climate, combined with industrious forebearers and institutions that developed in a democratic society, have provided the residents of Champaign County with the opportunity to enjoy a quality of life seldom equaled anywhere in the world. Within this rich environment, innumerable contributions have been generated which have influenced and benefited the state, the nation, and the world.

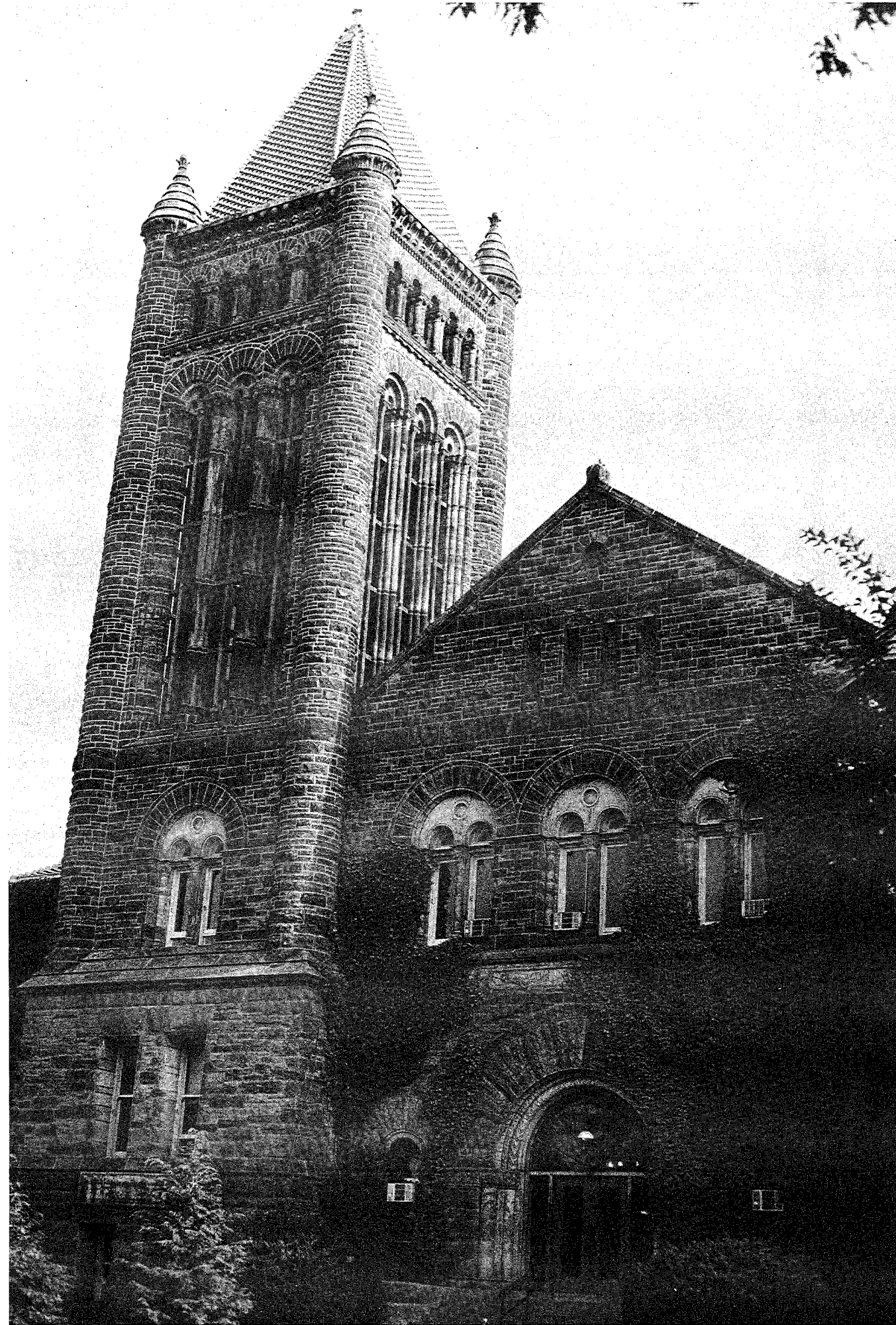
Railroads were significant factors in opening to settlement the "Grand Prairie" which lay over Champaign County. Ironically, the railroad right-of-ways, along with some early rural cemeteries, are among the isolated places where a few examples of the remaining species of prairie grasses and flowers can be found. The Illinois prairie has reached near extinction in its original Champaign County setting.

Efforts by private individuals and public agencies to preserve remnants of the original prairie have been stimulated by Educational Resources in Environmental Science, a non-profit organization in Champaign County.

Railroads have survived, but like the towns which grew to prosper along their tracks, they have undergone great change. Consolidation of companies, changes in names and ownership, and competition from other modern modes of transportation have transformed the railroads in many ways. Economic realities have required a reduction in or even the discontinuation of passenger and freight service to many communities. By 1983, the Illinois Central-Gulf Railroad had abandoned all of its east-west tracks in Champaign County over the route originally promoted by Benjamin Gifford as the Havana, Rantoul, and Eastern Railroad in the 1870's.



Abandoned Railroad Tracks
West of Cottage Grove Avenue, Urbana



THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

The National Register of Historic Places is a listing maintained by the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior. It is the official inventory of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture which have been designated as worth preserving. To date, nine properties in Champaign County have been listed on the National Register. There are numerous other sites which could be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as many sites which have local historical and architectural significance.

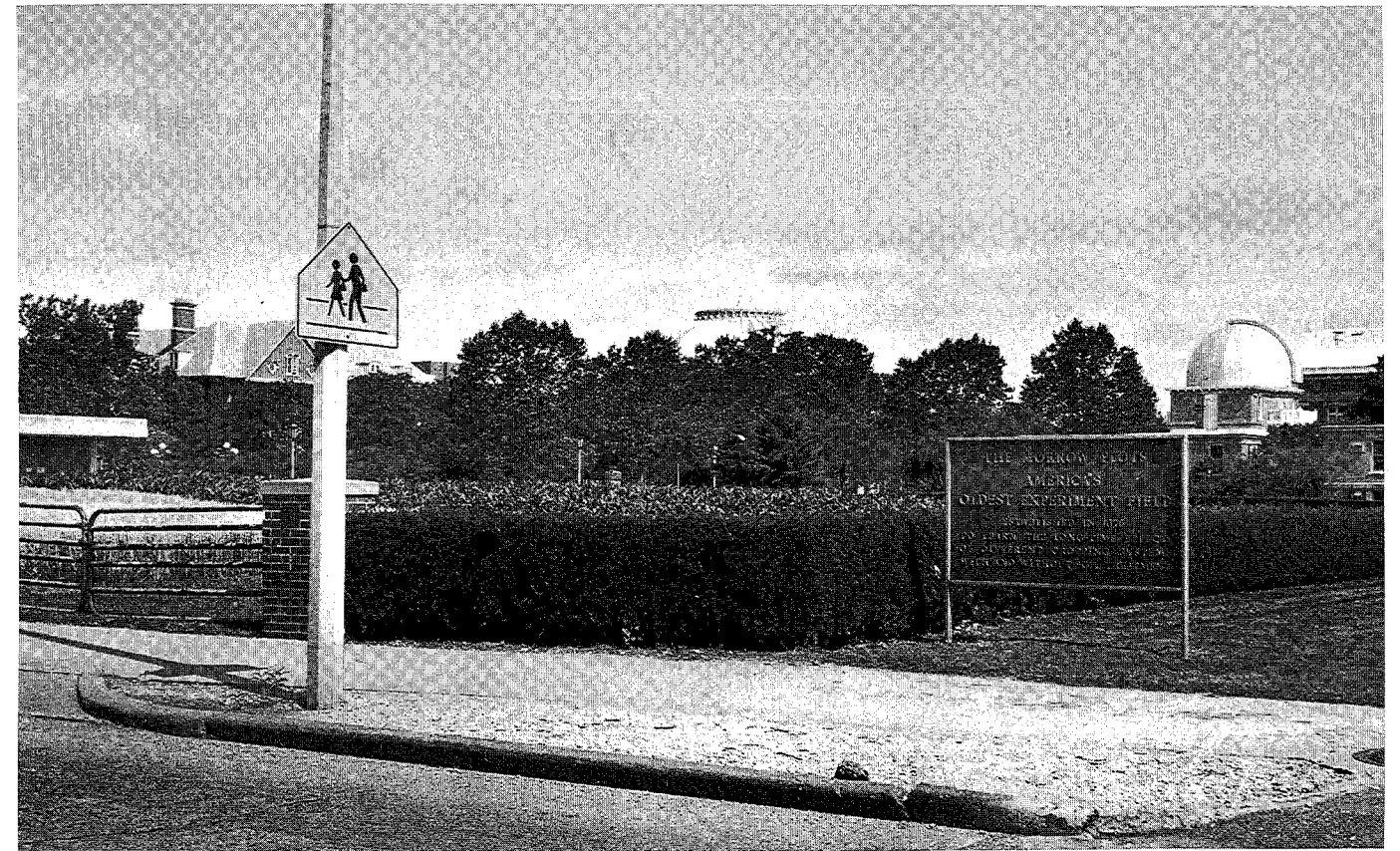
Two sites, Altgeld Hall and the Morrow Plots, are on the University of Illinois campus. The Greek Revival Cottage and the Griggs House are located in Urbana. Champaign contains the remaining five properties: the Cattle Bank, Vriner's Confectionery, the Stone Arch Bridge, the William L. Springer Federal Building, and the Burnham Athenaeum.

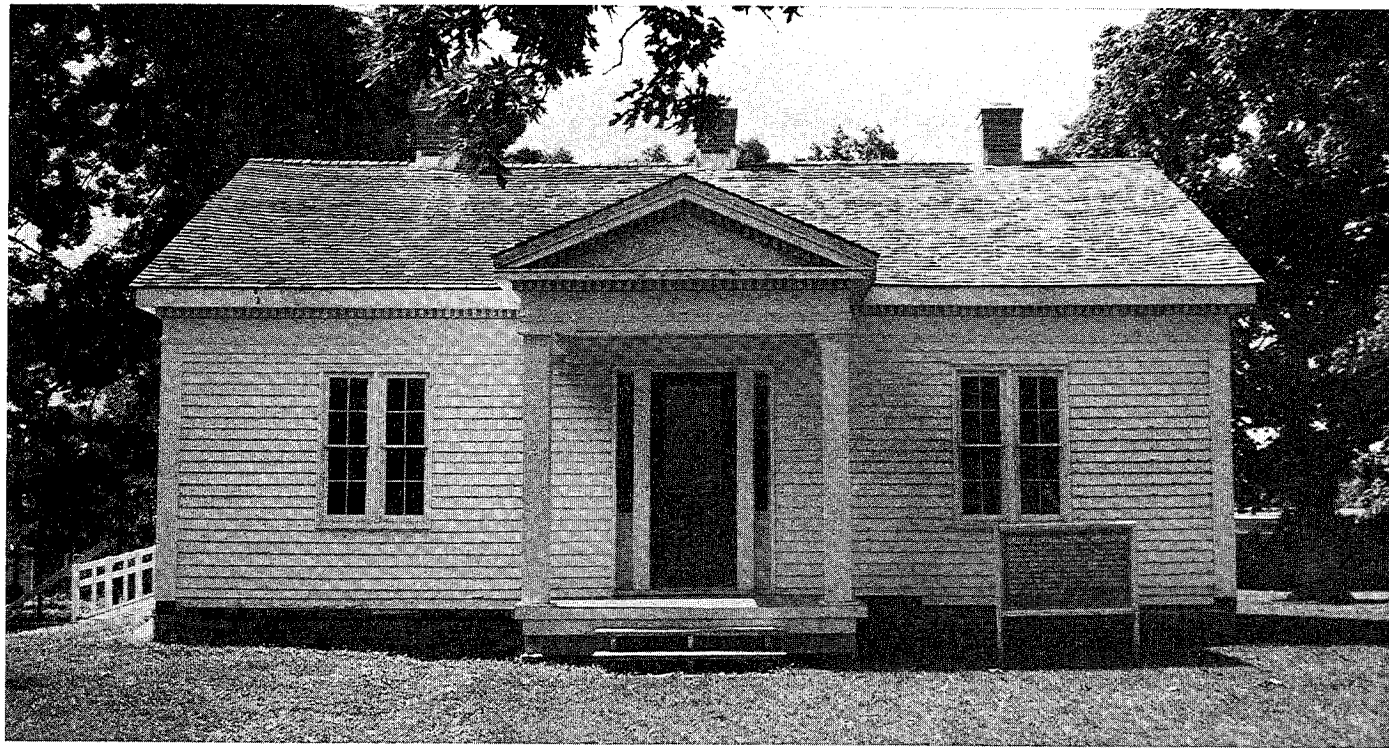
*Opposite page: Altgeld Hall
Southeast corner, Wright and Green Streets,
Urbana*

Altgeld Hall, named for former Governor John P. Altgeld, was designed in 1896 in the Richardsonian Romanesque style by university architects John M. White and Nathan C. Ricker for use as the Library.

The Morrow Plots were established in 1876 by Professor Manly Miles and later named for Agriculture Dean George E. Morrow. They are the oldest experimental agricultural plots under continuous cultivation in the United States. They have been designated as a National Historic Landmark.

*Morrow Plots
Gregory Drive, Urbana*



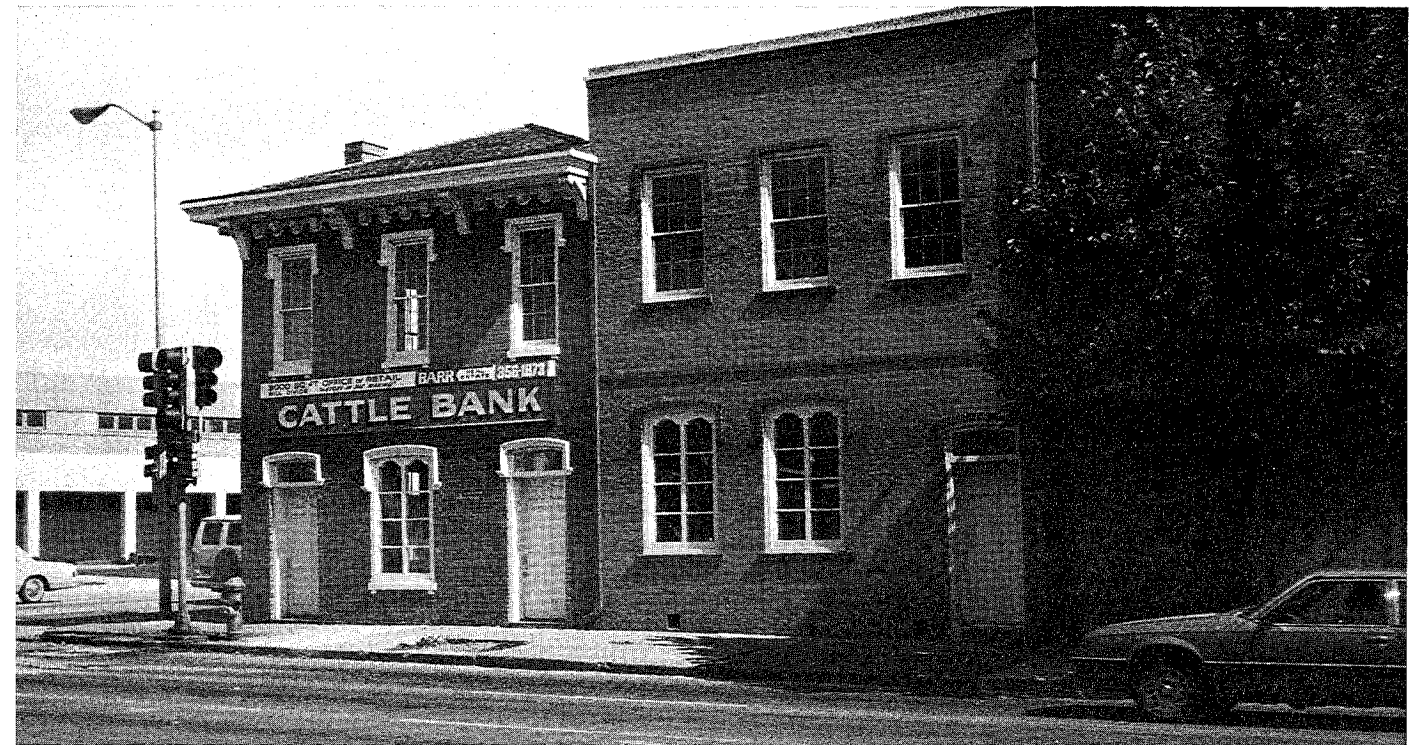


*Greek Revival Cottage
Leal Park, Urbana*

The Greek Revival Cottage dates from the 1850's and is the only known residential example of this style of architecture remaining in Champaign County. In 1978, as an alternative to its demolition, a cooperative effort by the University of Illinois, the Urbana Park District, and the Champaign County Historical Museum led to its relocation in Leal Park for restoration and use as a historic preservation resource center.

The Griggs House was built in 1871 as a wedding gift from Clark R. Griggs to his son. The Italianate style house was rescued from probable demolition in 1977 by Willis and Barbara Baker, and by architect Joseph Coble and his wife, Johanna. After a major renovation, the home was resold in 1979. It is the only private residence in Champaign County on the National Register.

*Clark R. Griggs House
505 West Main Street, Urbana*



*Cattle Bank
Northeast corner, First Street and
University Avenue, Champaign*

The Cattle Bank dates from 1858. Its proposed demolition was forestalled in 1975 by action of the Champaign County Historical Museum and by the Champaign City Council. Purchased by the city of Champaign in 1977, it was later transferred to the private ownership of Leon Jeske and Edward Haas. With assistance from the Preservation and Conservation Association of Champaign County and the Illinois State Department of Conservation, the building was restored by the owners for use as retail and office space.

The interior of Vriner's Confectionery maintains much of its turn-of-the-century ambiance. Few changes have occurred since it was begun in 1898 by Peter George Vriner. Ice cream and Christmas candies are still made on the premises and served with pride by the Vriner family.

*Vriner's Confectionery
55 Main Street, Champaign
Left to right: Georgia, Pete, Tyke, Willie,
and Joannie Vriner*



*Stone Arch Bridge
Northwest Corner, Second Street and
Springfield Avenue, Champaign*

The Stone Arch Bridge was built over the Boneyard Creek in 1863 to accommodate the horse-car railway which ran between the court house and the I.C. Depot. The partially collapsed bridge was purchased by the Champaign Park District in 1979 and was rebuilt by volunteers from Local No. 17 of the Bricklayer's Union and Local No. 44 of the Carpenter's Union.



The Federal Building was designed by James Taylor Knox. It was erected in 1903 as the Champaign Post Office. The building was discontinued as a Post Office in 1966 and converted to house federal government agencies. In 1980 it was named to honor retired Congressman William L. Springer of Champaign.

*William L. Springer Federal Building
Northwest Corner, Randolph and Church
Streets, Champaign*



*Burnham Athenaeum
306 West Church, Champaign*

The Burnham Athenaeum was built in 1896 for use as the Champaign Public Library. The City of Champaign sold the vacated building in April, 1979, to John and Rita Hirschfeld. In October of that year, while still unoccupied, it suffered extensive damage from fire by arson. The owners sold the building to the law firm of Meyer, Capel, Hirschfeld, Muncy, Jahn, and Aldeen in May, 1980, and it was reconstructed by English Brothers Company under the supervision of the Olsen-Lytle architectural firm.

The Burnham Athenaeum is one of only 22 structures on the Illinois Register of Historic Places, which lists places of special cultural value to Illinois.

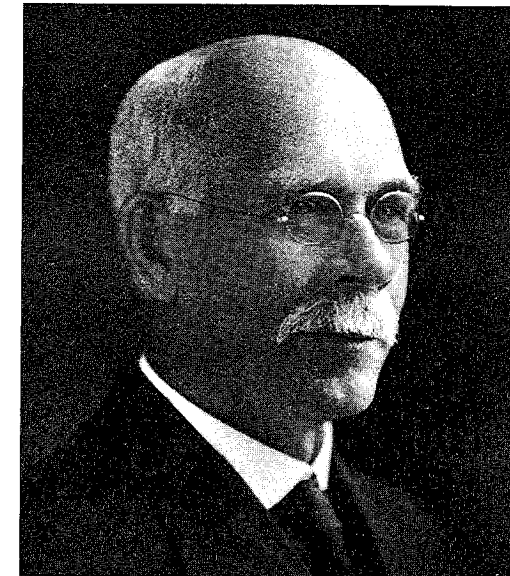
CENTENNIAL FARMS OF CHAMPAIGN COUNTY



*Curtis Brothers Farm
Centennial Farm Certificate*

The Illinois Centennial Farms recognition program was initiated by the Illinois Department of Agriculture in 1972. It was discontinued the following year, but reinstated in 1977. To gain Centennial Farm status the owner must document that the farm has remained in the same family ownership for at least one hundred years.

During the Sesquicentennial of Champaign County, a concerted effort was made to register eligible farms; this resulted in bringing the total of Champaign County Centennial Farms officially recognized by the State of Illinois to 168.



Samuel L. Burwash



Margaret M. Burwash

<i>Present Owner</i>	<i>Township/Section</i>	<i>Original Owner</i>	<i>Purchase Date</i>
Ackerman, Herman J.	Compromise/16 & 22	Ehme W. Gronewold	12-15-1873
Abrams, Maurice E. & Opal Abrams Humes	Scott/10	Isaac H. Abrams	1854
Behrens, Robert H.	Ogden/18	Harm G. Behrens	1874
Bond, Lucille & Joseph Miller	Tolono/17	Elizabeth Bond	2-9-1872
Buhr, S. B.	Compromise/34 & 26	John Buhr, Sr.	11-30-1871
Buhr, Vernon and Wilma	Compromise/34	Eibe Hinrichs	3-22-1872
Burwash, Richard H.	Champaign/33	Samuel Burwash	12-31-1869
Busboom, Mrs. Agtie	Stanton/12	Henry Gerbers	6-1882
Clapper, Ruth	Scott/9	William Bell	3-6-1866
Clifford, John C., Jr., & Mary Clifford Riden	Compromise/30	Cornelius Clifford	1876

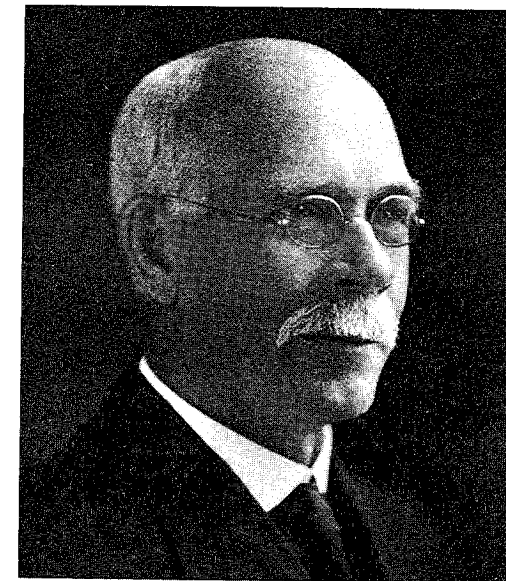
CENTENNIAL FARMS OF CHAMPAIGN COUNTY



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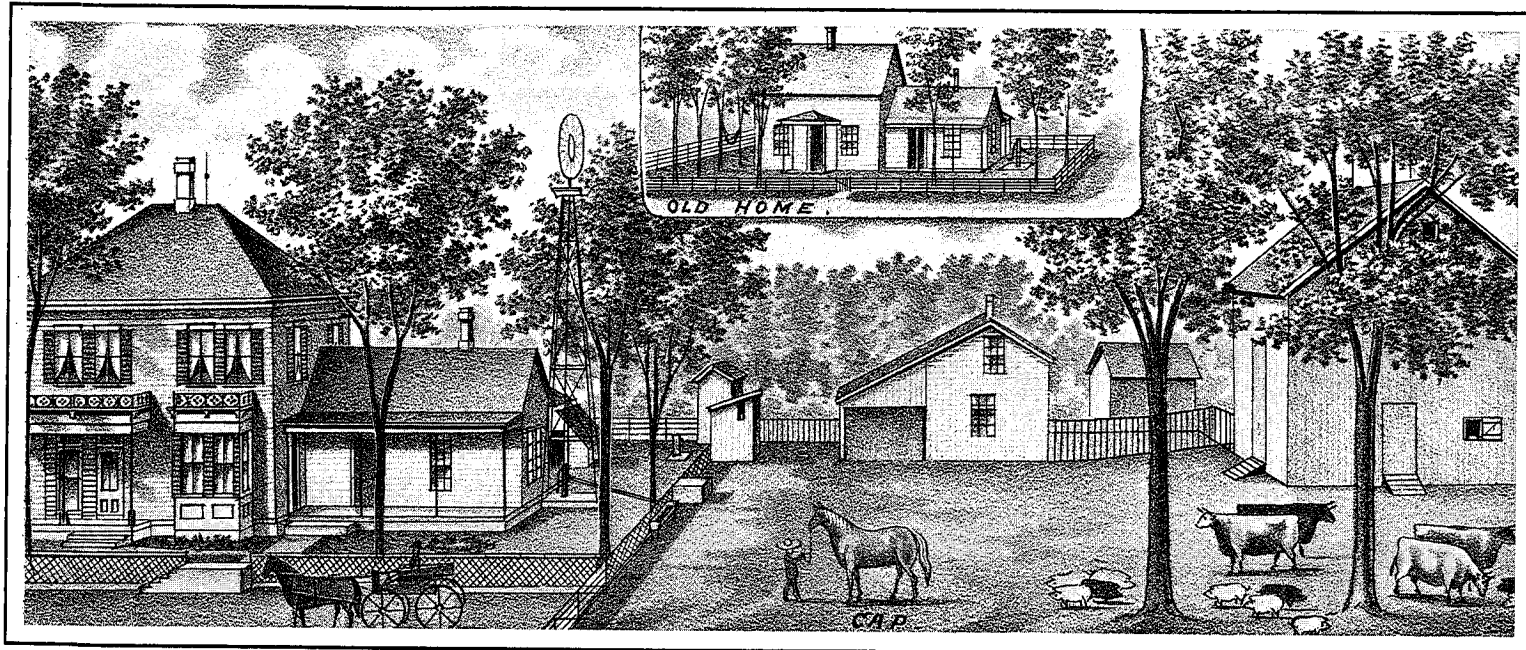


Samuel L. Burwash



Margaret M. Burwash

<i>Present Owner</i>	<i>Township/Section</i>	<i>Original Owner</i>	<i>Purchase Date</i>
Ackerman, Herman J.	Compromise/16 & 22	Ehme W. Gronewold	12-15-1873
Abrams, Maurice E. & Opal Abrams Humes	Scott/10	Isaac H. Abrams	1854
Behrens, Robert H.	Ogden/18	Harm G. Behrens	1874
Bond, Lucille & Joseph Miller	Tolono/17	Elizabeth Bond	2-9-1872
Buhr, S. B.	Compromise/34 & 26	John Buhr, Sr.	11-30-1871
Buhr, Vernon and Wilma	Compromise/34	Eibe Hinrichs	3-22-1872
Burwash, Richard H.	Champaign/33	Samuel Burwash	12-31-1869
Busboom, Mrs. Agtie	Stanton/12	Henry Gerbers	6-1882
Clapper, Ruth	Scott/9	William Bell	3-6-1866
Clifford, John C., Jr., & Mary Clifford Riden	Compromise/30	Cornelius Clifford	1876

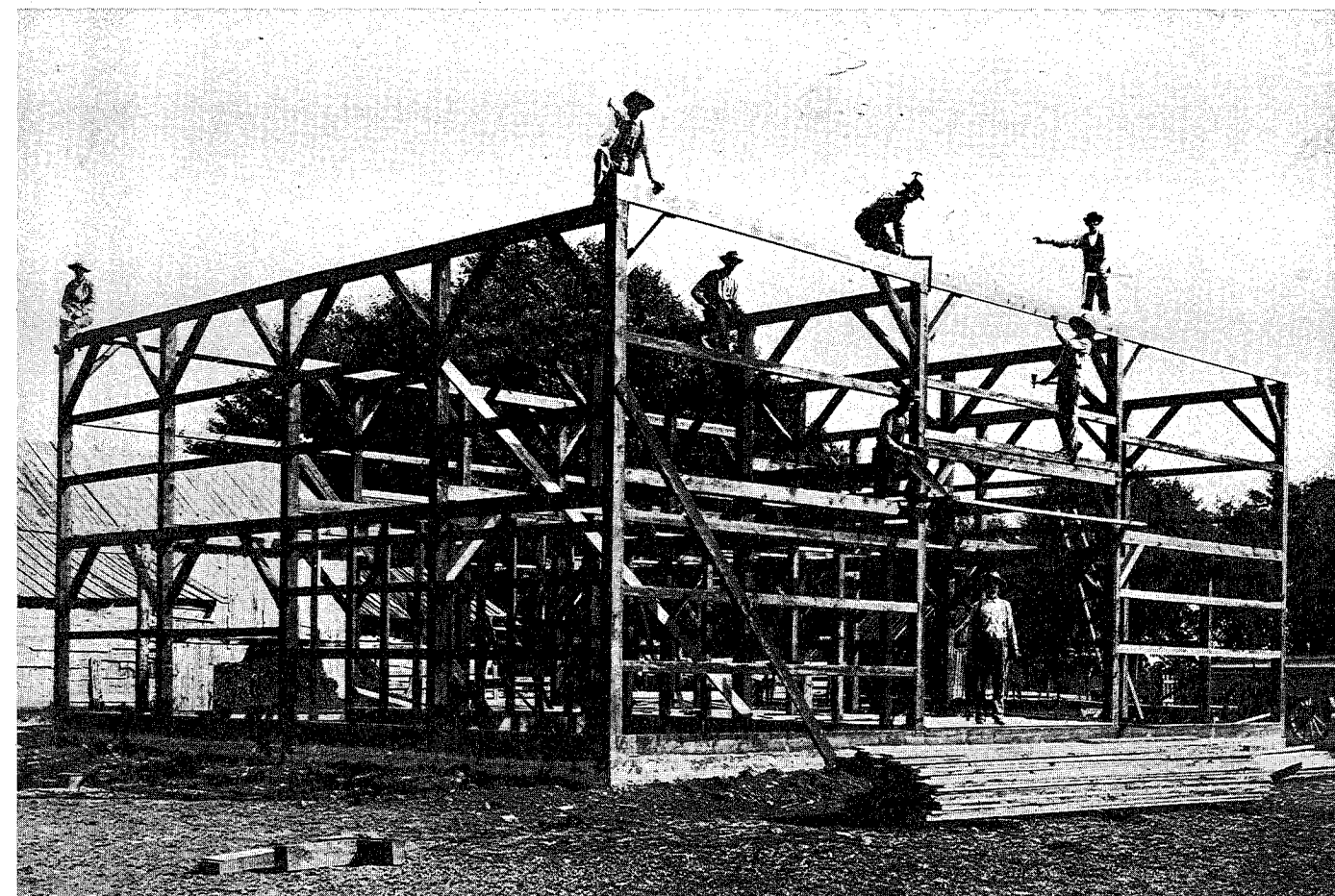


Samuel Crow Farm, Colfax Township

<i>Present Owner</i>	<i>Township Section</i>	<i>Original Owner</i>	<i>Purchase Date</i>
Cole, Charles Franklin	Philo/25	Charles Franklin Cole	9-24-1864
Colee, Glenn	Tolono/21	Lewis & Barbara Barreis	1-24-1881
Conkey, Edith Bond & Joe Bond	Tolono/8	Elizabeth Edwards Bond	1871-1872
Conkey, Edith Bond & Joe Bond	Tolono/17	David Bond	1871-1872
Craw, Way T.	Colfax/25	Samuel Crow	3-6-1865
Cresap, Robert Bruce	Scott/19	Benjamin F. Cresap	1-13-1863
Curtis Bros. Farm	Champaign/20	Thomas B. Curtis	3-1-1875
Dale, Viola W.	Mahomet/34	John Carter	6-1-1877
Dale, Viola W.	Scott/3	John Carter	2-28-1869
Davis, Irene	Raymond/17	Samual Fabert	2-22-1872
DeBolt, Frank & Roxie	Sadorus/34	James G. DeBolt	4-30-1868

<i>Present Owner</i>	<i>Township/Section</i>	<i>Original Owner</i>	<i>Purchase Date</i>
DeMoss, Elizabeth	Raymond/33	John Wesley Churchill	10-13-1865
Denton, Elizabeth	Stanton/22	Claiborne Haworth	9-30-1872
Dickerson, David Lindsey	Hensley/20	David F. Brown	11-1-1868
Dohme, Mr. & Mrs. Carl G.	Pesotum/13	Charles & Carolyn Dohme	3-4-1871
Duncan, Ruth Wiseman	Raymond/31	Caleb Taylor	1877
Dunn, Dorothy F. & Leah Dunn Linse	Sidney/15	David T. Thompson	10-11-1856
Early, Wandalu, Marian Forestal, & Donald C. Thomas	Scott/27	Mary J. Flowers & Isaac H. Flowers	1869
Early, Wandalu, Marian Forestal, & Donald C. Thomas	Scott/17	Daniel Thomas	1-20-1869
Ebert, Edward D. & Frederick D.	Ayers/9	Josiah Gorham	3-11-1872
Eichhorst, Grace R.	Somer/19	William Eichhorst	1-28-1873
Erb, Ella M.	Raymond/5	Phares M. Erb	1-18-1883
Fisher, John W.	Tolono/15	Henry Fisher	3-8-1869
Fisher, Mrs. Ralph T.	Philo/6	Daniel A. Fisher	3-17-1867
Fitton, Wm. Henry & Mary Evelyn	Rantoul/8	John J. Fitton	6-16-1869
Flynn, John J. & Thomas F.	Philo/20	Patrick Flynn	11-30-1867
Flowers, Max H., Jay Charles, & Dorothy Flowers Harshbarger	Scott/1	Augustus G. Ruhl	4-6-1869
Gatch, Ida P., Trust	Mahomet/33	Benjamin Franklin Harris	1842
Gatch, Ida P. Trust	Scott/4	Benjamin Franklin Harris	1842

<i>Present Owner</i>	<i>Township/Section</i>	<i>Original Owner</i>	<i>Purchase Date</i>
Giblin, Joseph J.	Colfax/15	Michael Giblin	12-18-1874
Giblin, Maude E.	Crittenden/11	James G. Ryan	11-1-1882
Gordon, Mary A., Exec., Estate of Daniel N. Gordon	Compromise/7	John Gordon	1869
Grace, Betty Shade & Genevieve Shade	Somer/21	John Thornburn	1869
Guyann, Godfrey	Condit/1	Robert Guyann, Sr.	1-3-1882
Hammel, Gertrude C.	Rantoul/30	Jacob Hammel	11-24-1869
Hanley, Mrs. Laura	Raymond/34	James George	6-12-1872
Harris, Earl R. & Mildred	Ludlow/27	John Roughton	12-5-1856
Harris, Earl R. & Mildred	Rantoul/16	Robert A. Reynolds	2-21-1871
Herriott, Dean & Merle, & Helen Clawson	Condit/31	John Fisher	3-8-1849
Hinrichs, Doris	Stanton/3	Peter Cornelius	11-3-1870
Hiser, Chester B.	Ogden/19	James Freeman	11-1-1849
Holloway, JoAnne & Dale	Philo/14	John N. Burr	1-13-1866
Huls, John L. & Anna S.	Stanton/2	Poppe J. Huls	12-27-1871
Huls, Melvin E.	Compromise/34	Jasper G. Huls	6-9-1874
Hyde, Mildred, John B., & Richard E.	East Bend/25	Amasa Hyde	11-28-1852
Ihnen, Ontke G.	Compromise/33	Ontke G. Ihnen	8-27-1870
Jacobs, Donald G. & Mary L.	Ogden/6	Mathew Jacobs	1-1877



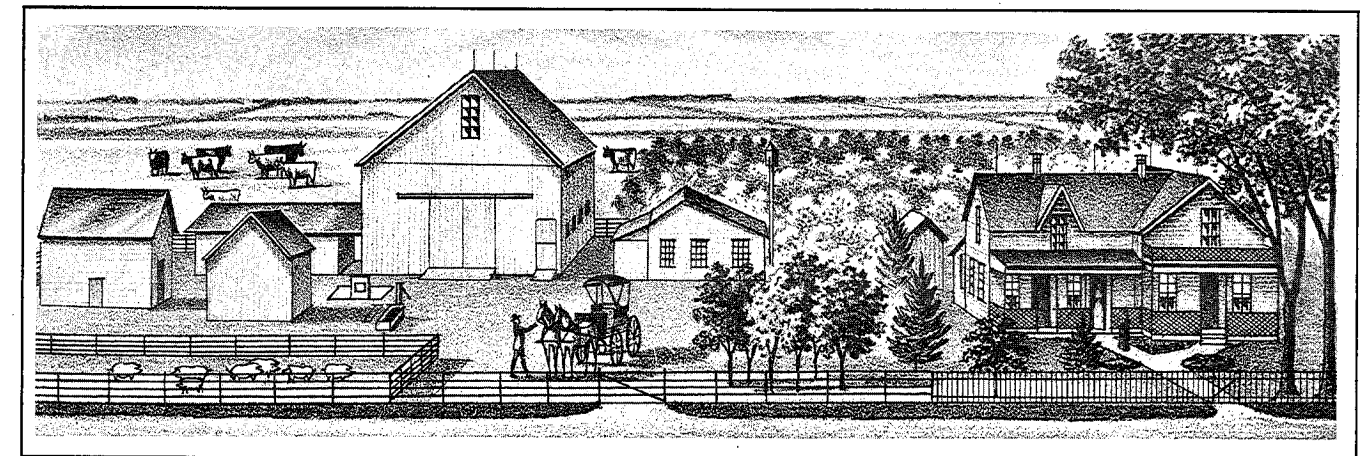
Barn Raising, George Mumm Farm, c. 1890

<i>Present Owner</i>	<i>Township/Section</i>	<i>Original Owner</i>	<i>Purchase Date</i>
Johnston, George Seely	Hensley/4	George W. Johnston	9-2-1865
Keoppel, James Russell	St. Joseph/32	Jefferson Huss	5-8-1848
Kesler, Keith C. & Evelyn Maxine	Stanton/18	Joseph Burley	2-23-1875
King, Mrs. Rachel Gatch	Hensley/8	Hezekiah Phillippe	4-9-1847
Kirby, Linda Lane & Karen Lane Heath	St. Joseph/18	William Dodson	9-14-1867
Krumm, Carl	Pesotum/7	Fredrick Bialeschke	10-14-1869
Krumm, Mrs. Oscar	Pesotum/12	Stephen Norton	6-20-1863
Kuder, Juanita B.	St. Joseph/26 & 27	John Kuder	3-28-1883

<i>Present Owner</i>	<i>Township/Section</i>	<i>Original Owner</i>	<i>Purchase Date</i>
Kurzweg, Harold & Velma	Hensley/14	J. W. Kurzweg	1872
Langford, Robert E.	Champaign/25	George E. Geiger	7-19-1875
Layman, Kenneth	Condit/11	Isaic Layman	1869
Lindsey, Louis F.	Hensley/20 & 21	David F. Brown	5-26-1881
Little, John R.	Crittenden/6	John Little	10-20-1870
Loeffler, Paul	Ogden/19	Christian Loeffler	9-14-1878
Loftus, Michael E.	Sadorus/29	Michael Loftus	9-13-1870
Love, Agnes H.	Sidney/19	Samual Sharon Love	1852
Loveless, Marion E. & Clara H.	Newcomb/14	Benjamin Lester	2-23-1854
McCorkle, Jeannette B. Guynn	East Bend/35	Robert Guynn, Sr.	9-14-1874
McDonnell, Mrs. Josephine	Crittenden/19	Daniel Quinlan	2-5-1874
McMahon, Lawrence P.	Tolono/2	Lawrence McMahon	7-1870
Maddock, Orval Leigh	Stanton/27	David Maddock	2-23-1864, & 10-21-1864
Marsh, Orena	St. Joseph/3	John Marsh	3-10-1862
Masek, William Jr. & Mildred A. Stephens	East Bend/10	John Hampton Helm	1871
Meharry Farm, Rachel Elizabeth Meharry Newlin	Crittenden/5, 4, 7	Thomas Meharry	1855
Miller, George W.	Mahomet/34	Job Miller	3-18-1869

<i>Present Owner</i>	<i>Township/Section</i>	<i>Original Owner</i>	<i>Purchase Date</i>
Mills, Wallace P.	Ogden/30	Augustus E. Parrett	2-20-1856
Miner, Charlie	Hensley/19	Charles Miner	1849
Miner, Ethel	Hensley/31	Thomas Miner	12-27-1875
Mohr, Lorraine	Raymond/11	Johann Edens	1-11-1872
Mohr, Mildred E.	Raymond/10 & 11	Johann Edens	1-11-1872
Mohr, Roland W.	Raymond/11	Johann Edens	1-11-1872
Mohr, Ronald H. & Marilyn J.	Raymond/11	Johann Edens	1-11-1872
Mumm, Lawrence H.	Sidney/20 & 18	John J. Mumm	12-31-1868
Negangard, Charles	Sidney/31	Joseph H. Logan	11-1871
Nofftz, Frank W., Estate	Pesotum/8 & 9	Albert & Frederick Nofftz	1867
O'Brien, Mary Manning & Albert	Sidney/17 & 20	Charles N. Wrisk	1870
Onken, Eleanor	Harwood/11	John LaNeve	1852
Osterbur, Carl, Estate	Ogden/8	Fokke T. Osterbur	1874

J. J. Mumm Farm, Sidney Township

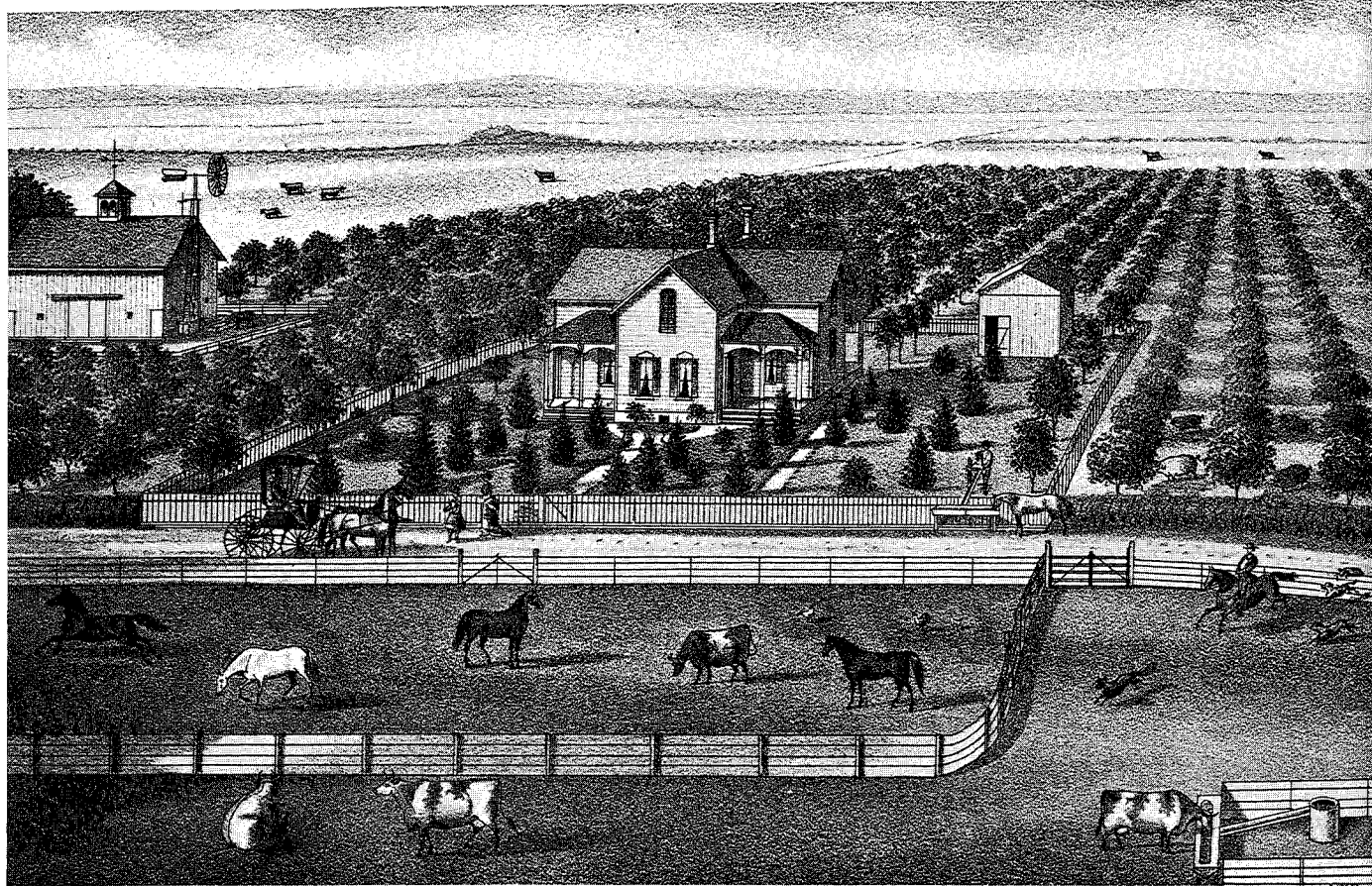




*Jake and Arthur Plotner,
Elijah Plotner Farm, Philo Township, 1940's*

<i>Present Owner</i>	<i>Township/Section</i>	<i>Original Owner</i>	<i>Purchase Date</i>
Palmer, Jane G.	Sidney/27	James B. Porterfield	1859
Parks, Eva	Raymond/34	James M. George	6-12-1872
Parrett, Harold	Mahomet/8	James Q. Thomas	2-10-1871
Perel, William M. & Ada R. Gaskill	Colfax/18	Alvah Craw	4-18-1868
Pinaire, Claude E.	Stanton/17 & 18	Greenberry Berkshire	9-8-1863
Place, DeEtta J.	Sidney/36	Jefferson R. Place	7-6-1871
Plotner, Matilda R.	Philo/34	Elijah Plotner	9-14-1880
Porter, Lyle B. & Helen N.	Somer/8	Loring H. Porter	9-12-1868
Prichard, William T., Jr. and Edward D.	Condit/34	William & Mary Townsend	11-27-1880

<i>Present Owner</i>	<i>Township/Section</i>	<i>Original Owner</i>	<i>Purchase Date</i>
Pritchard, Catherine	Colfax/23	Thomas Cain	2-1-1875
Purnell, Louise Jones & Isabelle	Mahomet/23	John R. Rayburn	1853
Putnam, George L. & Grace L.	Ogden/4 & 9	Fred Putnam	1-1871
Rayburn, Clarence L.	Mahomet/13	Robert Davis	12-28-1870
Reinhart, Lawrence J. & Edith M.	Pesotum/24	Wendel Reinhart	1867
Reynolds, Dewey M.	Harwood/14	Hanford H. Reynolds	1865
Rice, Richard T.	Sidney/30	Nathan L. Hazen	1857
Riggs, Dean & Muriel	Raymond/9	Fredrick Mohr	6-16-1853
Ross, Oleta L.	Champaign/33	Abraham Crist	1869
Russell, Ray Jr.	St. Joseph/9	Nicodemus Full	12-24-1868
Sadler, Ralph C.	Ogden/9	Lizzie C. Loeffler	6-6-1883
Sandwell, Lawrence M.	Crittenden/11	Lawrence Sandwell	8-19-1877
Schlueter, Harm B. & Anna	Stanton/12	Meenke H. Gerbers	3-21-1883
Schlueter, Judith, LeRoy, & Bonita Kopmann	Compromise/36	Henry & Katharine Kopmann	10-16-1875
Schmidt, Elizabeth Sanders & Jeanine Marie Craig	Sidney/12	William Coddington	2-2-1833
Schneider, Mr. & Mrs. William M.	Kerr/18 & 13	W. P. Martin	10-1869
Schreiber, Walter & Bernice	Somer/18	Fredrick Schreiber	1882
Schwengel, Wesley McMillen	Champaign/4	William McMillen	10-17-1859
Silver, Duane	Philo/11	David Silver	9-23-1854



Daniel W. Stamey Farm, Rantoul Township

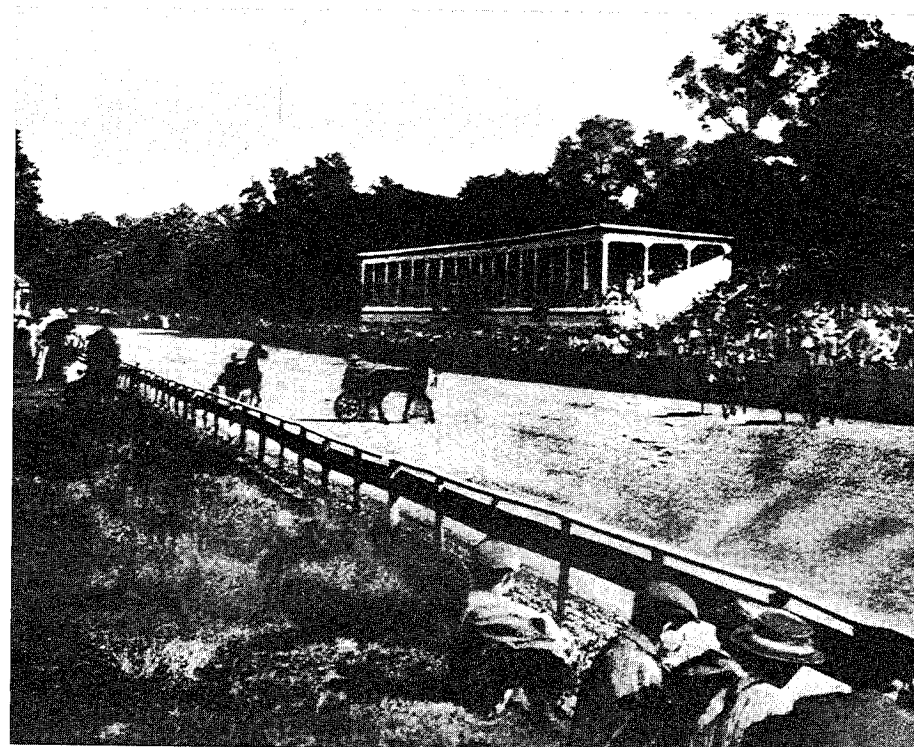
<i>Present Owner</i>	<i>Township/Section</i>	<i>Original Owner</i>	<i>Purchase Date</i>
Sizer, Donald E. & Elva O.	Newcomb/4	Mary N. Sizer	3-24-1851
Skelton, Virginia F. & J. Eugene Kane	Rantoul/31	Daniel W. Stamey	1-7-1871
Smith, Fred D.	Urbana/12	David Smith	2-28-1876
Smith, Homer B.	Urbana/11	A. B. Smith	1883
Smith, John T., Jr.	Tolono/9	Ellen Jordan	1878
Smith, Robert W. & Margaret E.	Tolono/16	Theron F. Jordan	4-4-1865
Smith, Charles, George, Edythe Smith Burt, & Helen Rosetta Smith Williams	Raymond/12	George W. Smith	1877
Spencer, Blanche	Sadorus/36	William O'Bryan	10-10-1861

<i>Present Owner</i>	<i>Township/Section</i>	<i>Original Owner</i>	<i>Purchase Date</i>
Sperling, Marjorie	East Bend/32 & 29	August Sperling	3-1872
Struck, Raymond	Raymond/14	Herman Struck	1-11-1872
Styan, Gregory A.	Sadorus/2	Jonathon Sewell	1868
Sullivan, Helen L. Wood	Condit/32	William Walter Wood	10-19-1863, & 1867
Sylvester, George B.	South Homer/19	George W. Sylvester	3-1-1855
Tracy Farm c/o Michael A. Tracy	Colfax/17	William Tracy	10-16-1869
Trimble, Eleanor S.	St. Joseph/31	Christopher Howser	10-12-1854
Trost Farm June Dust & Faythe Miller	Philo/34	John Trost	2-28-1872
Trotter, Inez Ruth	Condit/32	Marcus Nelson	1856
Verry, Margaret R.	Ayers/9	Josiah Gorham	3-11-1872
Vitoux, Mrs. Beth L.	Kerr/17 & 20	Willy Fowler	12-25-1882
Walsh, V. T. & Margaret B. Donovan	Sadorus/30	John Carey	3-5-1872
Warnes, Wilbur C. & Lois	Raymond/33	William Warnes	1869
Warnes, Wilbur C. & Lois	Raymond/29	John Warnes	2-2-1870
Waters, Freida M. Lee	Stanton/7	William S. & Elizabeth Waters	7-28-1869
Welles, Ralph J.	Compromise/7	Joseph H. Welles	11-14-1865
Whalen, Joseph E. & Florence E.	Kerr/25	Bernard Gordon	7-27-1874
Whalen, Robert, Jerome & John	Colfax/20	Andrew M. Whalen	11-30-1870
White, Helen P.	Sidney/27	J. B. Porterfield, Sr.	1859

Present Owner	Township/Section	Original Owner	Purchase Date
White, Mrs. Henry C. Bailey-Foos Farm	Brown/19 & 20	Ferguson Foos	3-15-1854
White, Paul E.	Colfax/17	James Neagle	3-8-1868
Williams, Chester, Heirs	Newcomb/16	Lewis Williams	4-20-1868
Wilson, Mrs. Rosella M.	Raymond/3	Thomas T. Wilson	1880
Wilson, Roy J.	Ogden/18	George Loeffler	5-30-1868
Wilson, Roy J.	Ogden/18	John George Loeffler	9-30-1868
Wisegarver, Gerald & Eleanor	Champaign/35	William H. Wisegarver, Sr.	3-3-1869
Woodworth, Mary Jane & Wayne	Tolono/21	D. I. Durfey	2-24-1877
Yearsley, John & Howard	Somer/14	John Yearsley	2-20-1879
Youmans, Clark E.	Ogden/19	Isabod Freeman	1851
Young, William W., Jr.	Scott/9	William Bell	4-22-1882
Ziegler, Henry & Edna L.	Somer/28 & 29	Diebold Ziegler	1865



Champaign County Centennial Farm
Plaque



Champaign County Fair, c. 1909

The first Champaign County Fair was held in 1852 in the Courthouse Square in Urbana. County fairs were held near the courthouse for several years, then at a site north of Urbana. During the last quarter of the century, the fairgrounds were located in the vicinity of Third and John Streets in Champaign. The present fairgrounds, northwest of Urbana, were purchased about 1905 by the newly-formed Champaign County Fair and Driving Association.

Champaign County Fair Officers and Directors in 1983 were: J. Wallace Rayburn, William L. Hatch, George J. Curzon, A. Andrew Edwards, Keith Kesler, Seely Johnston, Alvin Bray, Newton Dodds, Harvey Rice, Timothy O. Madigan, Alvin Fruhling, and James Prather.

The Champaign County Farm Bureau was organized in 1912 as the Champaign County Soil and Crop Improvement Association. M. O. Stover of Mahomet was the first Farm Bureau president, 1913-1914. Others who have served as president are: C. L. VanDoren, 1915-1919; Lorin Clark, 1920-1921; Dan J. Holterman, 1922-1923; W. E. Riegel, 1924-1925; W. Z. Black, 1926-1927; Roy Douglas, 1928-1929; Eugene Curtis, 1930-1931; G. C. Williams, 1932-1933; O. P. Hamm, 1934-1935; Harry Riefsteck, 1936-1937; A. R. Grindley, 1938-1939; Roy V. Edwards, 1940-1941; George W. Mayes, 1942-1943; Clark E. Wise, 1944-1945; Elmer C. Herriott, 1946-1947; Fred B. Meers, 1948-1949; Earl Maddock, 1950-1951; Oscar M. Baird, 1952-1953; C. Victor Swanson, 1954-1955; Lyle Grace, 1956-1962; John H. Matthews, 1962-1965; George E. Meharry, 1966-1967; E. Vern Huffington, 1968-1969; Marion S. Pasley, 1969-1972; Reider Watson, 1973-1974; Melvin Schroeder, 1975-1976; Daniel C. Mills, 1976-1977; Charles Ehler, 1978-1980; and John Reifsteck, 1981-1983.

Two organizations, the Champaign County Fair Association and the Champaign County Farm Bureau, both with lengthy histories of service to agricultural interests, were responsible for encouraging eligible farm owners to apply for Centennial Farm status.

During the 131st annual Champaign County Fair, a special day was set aside to salute the county's sesquicentennial. Fair Board President J. Wallace Rayburn and Secretary-Manager Keith Kesler worked with Farm Bureau Executive Director Robert Wendt and Information Director Dennis Riggs to organize a grandstand program in honor of Centennial Farm owners. Lorraine Mohr of St. Joseph headed a sub-committee of the Farm Bureau Women's Committee which researched records in the Illinois State Archives to determine a list of eligible Champaign County farms.

The Women's Committee was joined by the Champaign County First Production Credit Association, the Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Federal Land Bank in hosting the farm owners at the fair on July 25 and at a reception in front of the grandstand following a recognition program. Speakers at the evening event were Dr. John Campbell, Dean of the University of Illinois College of Agriculture; Patricia L. Miller, Executive Director of the Illinois Heritage Association; and Larry Werries, Director of the Illinois Department of Agriculture, who presented the official Centennial Farm certificates and green and white metal markers to the owners.



M. O. Stover

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting:

CERTIFICATE
No. 1468

WHEREAS *Mandy Osborn, and David Osborn, of Champaign County, Illinois* have deposited in the **GENERAL LAND OFFICE** of the United States, a Certificate of the **REGISTER OF THE LAND OFFICE** at *Vanbille* whereby it appears that full payment has been made by the said *Mandy Osborn, and David Osborn* according to the provisions of the Act of Congress of the 24th of April, 1820, entitled "An Act making further provision for the sale of the Public Lands," for the east half of the South East quarter of Section eleven, in Township twenty, North of Range seven east, in the District of land subject to sale at *Vanbille Illinois*, containing eighty acres.

according to the official plat of the survey of the said Lands, returned to the General Land Office by the **SURVEYOR GENERAL**, which said tract has been purchased by the said *Mandy Osborn, and David Osborn* **NOW KNOW YE**, That the **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**, in consideration of the Premises, and in conformity with the several acts of Congress, in such case made and provided, HAVE GIVEN AND GRANTED, and by these presents DO GIVE AND GRANT, unto the said *Mandy Osborn, and David Osborn* and to their heirs, the said tract above described: TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the same, together with all the rights, privileges, immunities, and appurtenances of whatsoever nature, thereto belonging, unto the said *Mandy Osborn, and David Osborn* and to their heirs and assigns forever.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I, *Martin Van Buren* **PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**, have caused these letters to be made **PATENT**, and the **SEAL** of the **GENERAL LAND OFFICE** to be hereunto affixed.

GIVEN under my hand, at the CITY OF WASHINGTON, the *fifteenth* day of *March* in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and *Thirty seven* and of the **INDEPENDENCE OF THE UNITED STATES** the *Sixty first*

BY THE PRESIDENT:
Martin Van Buren
By John P. Hill Secy
McDonald Recorder OF THE **GENERAL LAND OFFICE**

Recorded, Vol. 7, Page 151.

1837 Land Grant Document Issued to Mandy Osborn and David Osborn

Following the American Revolution, government land was sold in 640-acre sections at a minimum of \$1.00 per acre. In 1800, an attempt to gain more revenue resulted in the government's reducing the number of acres one could purchase to 320. The price rose to \$2.00 per acre; however, buyers were permitted credit terms for up to five years. An act of Congress in 1820 encouraged settlement in the Midwest and elsewhere by lowering the minimum purchase to 80 acres at \$1.25 per acre, with the stipulation that the full \$100 be paid at once.

Land grants were issued as instruments which legally transferred title in federal lands from public to private ownership. Andrew Jackson personally signed those land grants conveyed while he was president (1829-1837), a period which closely paralleled the earliest years of settlement in Champaign County. Jackson's successor, Martin Van Buren (1837-1841), delegated the signing of the Osborns' document to his secretary.

The 80 acres chosen by the Osborns, near the present-day Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve at Mahomet, was typical of the locations near woodlands and waterways which were sought by early settlers.

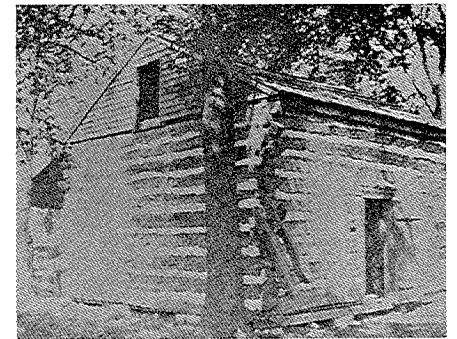
CHRONOLOGY OF SELECTED CHAMPAIGN COUNTY EVENTS

- 1818 December 3 — Illinois became a state.
- 1822 Runnel Fielder settled in Big Grove, north of present Urbana; he was the first recorded settler in future Champaign County. In 1828, he made the first land entry in the Big Grove area. The Grove covered about 5,000 acres and could be seen from a distance of ten miles.
- 1824 Henry Sadorus settled his family at Sadorus Grove; he is credited with being the first permanent settler in Champaign County.
- 1827 The first recorded settler in the Homer area was a man named Gentry. He remained only a few years.

The first land entry in what is now Champaign County was made by Jesse Williams on eighty acres in present Section 12, Sidney Township. Later that year, the other half of the quarter was taken by John Hendricks.
- 1828 The first settler in Condit Township was Ethan Newcomb, who settled at Newcomb's Ford between present Fisher and Dewey.

Nicholas Yount was the first settler in St. Joseph Township, followed the next year by his son-in-law, Jonathon Cazard. Both moved away in 1831. Joseph S. Stayton, who arrived October 10, 1830, was the first permanent settler in the area.
- 1829 The first school in Homer was taught by Abrams Johnson. There were fifteen pupils; tuition was \$2.50 a term.
- 1830 The first settler in Buck Grove (Penfield) was Isaac Moore. In 1834, Robert Wyatt entered the first land.

February 5 — William Tompkins entered eighty acres in what is now Urbana's downtown business district.
- c.1831 Cyrus Strong was the first tavern keeper in St. Joseph Township. His business eventually passed into the possession of Joseph Kelly. Kelly was appointed the first postmaster of St. Joseph c. 1850, and the village adopted the same name as the post office.



Sadorus Cabin
This cabin was the home of the Henry Sadorus family until 1838 when they built a permanent two-story house.



Joseph Kelly



Thomas L. Butler

1832 Thomas L. Butler, known familiarly as "Uncle Tommy" Butler, served in the cavalry during the Blackhawk War. Later, he settled near Homer, where he lived for many years.

The first land entry in the Mahomet area was made by Isaac Busey. Included were parts of the present village of Mahomet.

c.1833 The first school in St. Joseph Township was taught by John Lard in the kitchen of William Peters' home.

1833 February 20 — Champaign County was established by an act of the Illinois State Legislature.

The first school in the Mahomet area was established. The teacher was George Cooper.

The first school in Sidney was taught by Andrew Stevenson at the home of William Nox. Other early teachers in the neighborhood were George Akers and George Nox.

1834 December 11 — Henry Sadorus made the first land entry in Sadorus Township.

Thomas Richards was the first settler in Burr Oak Grove (Ogden).

1835 Fielding Scott settled on the Sangamon River and plowed a furrow to establish a straight line between Middletown (Mahomet) and Urbana. This became part of the Bloomington Road (later Route 150).

The first land entry in Brown Township was made by William Brown.

M. D. Coffeen built the first store in Old Homer.

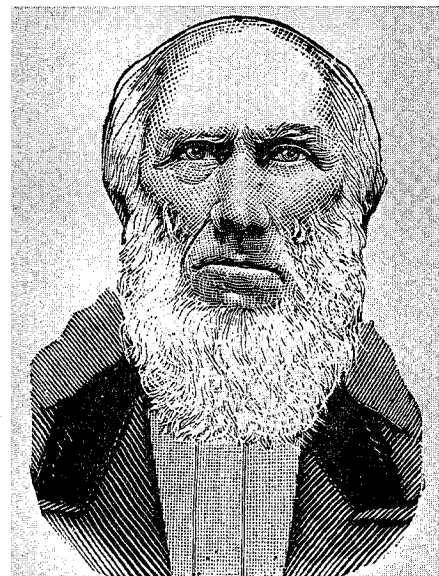
1837 The first land entry in Philo Township was made by Philo Hale.

William Pancake and Jesse W. Pancake settled at Pancake Point in Newcomb Township. Franklin Dobson and Lot King settled in East Bend Township.

William Nox, Jr., was appointed the first postmaster in Sidney (Nox Point). He served until 1842.

The first bridge in the county was across the Salt Fork at Strong's Ford, near old St. Joseph. It was built in 1837-38 by William Peters and was washed away a year later.

1838 Levi Asher taught the first school in Kerr Township on the farm of Otis Skinner.



Fielding Scott

1839 The earliest settler on the site of the village of St. Joseph was Catherine Hoss, a widow with three children; she entered forty acres. Mrs. Hoss taught school and was known for her ministry to the sick. In 1849, she married John Hoyt.

Dr. John S. Sadler was the first physician to locate in Urbana.

1840 Dr. W. A. Conkey located in Old Homer and began practicing there, retiring in 1850. In 1851, Dr. C. P. Mosier opened his office and continued his practice until 1859. In 1853, Dr. James Core began his practice in Homer, continuing until his death in 1888.

1842 A school house was erected in Sadorus Township. Margaret Patterson was hired as the teacher.

1843 The first church of the "Urbana Mission" of the Methodist Episcopal Church was completed on the south side of Elm between present Broadway and Race Streets. It was also used as a school and for occasional housing. It was replaced in 1856 by a new building, and the old building was used as a livery barn. The new building was dedicated in 1859, with Peter Cartwright officiating.

Peter Cartwright preached at the B. F. Harris property near Middletown (Mahomet).

c.1846 The Lindsey house was erected in Middletown (Mahomet). The front two rooms were used as a school.

1846 William D. Somers, the first resident lawyer in Champaign County, began his practice.

1849 Archa Campbell and his wife, who settled the previous year in Mink Grove (on the west side of present Rantoul), broke and planted a nearby tract of prairie.

1850 Urbana's population was 210. Mahomet and Homer were comparable in size.

1851 The first school in Newcomb Township was taught by Martha Newell.

1852 The county's first newspaper, *The Urbana Union*, began.

William H. Jaques established a stove store and tin shop in Urbana and made the first tin ware in the county.

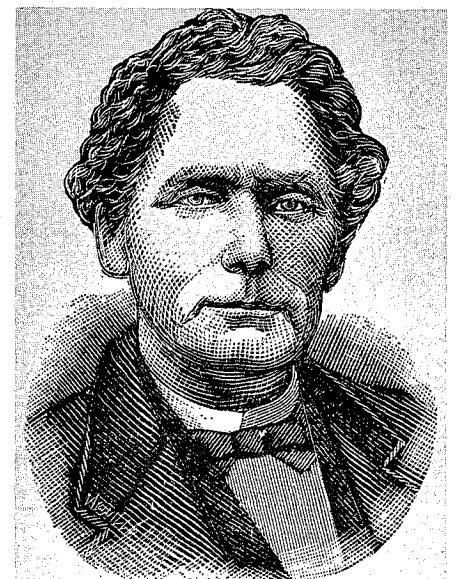
Courthouse Square was the site of the first county fair.



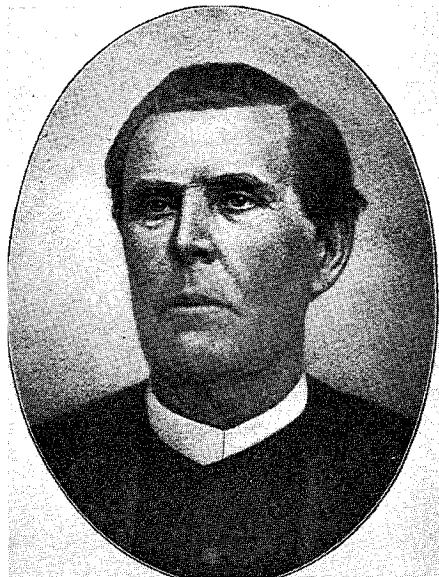
William D. Somers



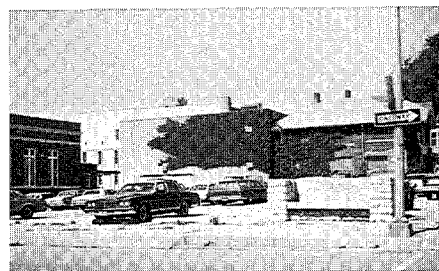
Lindsey House
705 East Main Street, Mahomet



Dr. Philip C. Mosier



Mark Carley



"Little Brick School" site, Southwest corner, Randolph and Hill Streets, Champaign

The school was razed and a high school built there in 1893. It was later used as a telephone company building. Today, it is a bank's parking lot.



Burkhardt House, 205 East Coffeen, Homer

This Gothic Revival style house was built in 1855 by an attorney named Gilman. It was occupied for many years by C. B. Burkhardt. Today it is the home of the Ernie Taylor family. Locally, it is known as the house of seven gables.

- 1853 William Prentice entered land in Compromise Township.
- 1854 Monday, July 24 — The first Illinois Central passenger train arrived at the "Urbana Station," two miles west of the courthouse in Urbana. A group of local residents boarded the train at the new station and made the first trip from there to Chicago. The area surrounding the depot soon became known as "West Urbana."
- Mark Carley built one of the earliest residences in what was to become West Urbana. The following year he built a grain elevator there and introduced a steam engine to operate his sheller.
- The first physicians to locate in West Urbana were Dr. R. W. Shoemaker, in 1854; Drs. Hartwell C. Howard and Samuel W. Kincaid, in 1855; and Dr. C. H. Mills, in 1856.
- October 24 — Abraham Lincoln delivered his third speech against slavery at the Champaign County Courthouse.

- 1854/55 Most of Old Homer was moved 1½ miles south during the winter by placing the buildings on skids and sliding them over the snow.

- 1855 A steam mill was built in West Urbana by Dr. H. C. Howard.
- The "Little Brick School" was built in West Urbana. It was the first school west of the I.C.R.R. and was the first public school in the district. Many important early meetings were held there.

- February 14 — The City of Urbana was chartered by an act of the Illinois General Assembly. Archa Campbell was elected the first mayor on June 2.

- March 29 — John Baddeley was appointed the first postmaster in West Urbana.

- The Evangelical Lutheran Church of West Urbana was organized.

- 1855/56 The first school in Homer was taught by Mr. Crosby.

- 1856 A herd of sixty deer was counted in a single line near the Sangamon timber.

- Rantoul's Illinois Central station was moved three miles north from its original site. A post office was established.

- March 6 — the Grand Prairie Bank opened in Urbana. This was the first bank in Champaign County.

- An emergency meeting was called to provide the salary for the pastor of the Goose Pond Church in West Urbana; a yoke of oxen and \$350 were raised from the membership.

- 1856 Dr. A. Catron was the first doctor to locate in Sadorus. He was followed in 1869 by Dr. J. G. Chambers.

June 1 — The Christian Church of Homer was organized.

July 22 — Vol. 1, No. 1, of the newspaper, *Our Constitution*, was issued.

Dr. Herman Chaffee was the first physician in Tolono. Other early doctors there included: Drs. B. D. Keator, S. S. Salisbury, A. T. Darrah, and C. B. Johnson.

The First Presbyterian Church of Urbana was organized.

- 1857 March 10 — The *Central Illinois Gazette* printed its first issue.

April 26 — The village of West Urbana was organized. E. T. McCann became the first president. In 1860, he was elected the first mayor of the newly named city of Champaign.

May — First services of the Methodist Episcopal Church were held in the Illinois Central Railroad depot. This was the beginning of the M. E. Church of Champaign; it was formally established in 1858.

The first Sunday School in Rantoul was conducted in the Penfield home.

Father William Lambert was appointed first resident priest for St. Mary's parish in West Urbana.

The first teacher's institute in Champaign County met.

July 9 — The first post office in Tolono was established.

William Redhed opened a lumber yard in Tolono.

Yankee Ridge School, the first school in Philo Township, opened.

September — The Presbyterian Church in Tolono was organized.

F. B. Sale was appointed the first postmaster in Condit Township.

Roads were laid out from Rantoul south to Urbana, west to Newcomb's Ford, northwest to Dobbin's Ford, north to Pera (Ludlow), and east to the county line.

Mr. William Freeman became the station agent for the Great Western Railroad at Sidney.

December 24 — The first two recorded marriages in St. Mary's parish in West Urbana were performed: W. C. Crowell wed Mary E. Lynard and Patrick McCarty wed Mary Graham.

- 1857/58 The first teacher in Rantoul was J. A. Benedict. In 1881, his son, John L. Benedict, was issued Rantoul's first school diploma.



William Redhed



F. B. Sale



Daniel Rugg

In 1872, Daniel Rugg built the "Metropolitan block" at the south-west corner of the intersection of Neil, Main, and Church Streets.



John W. Butler

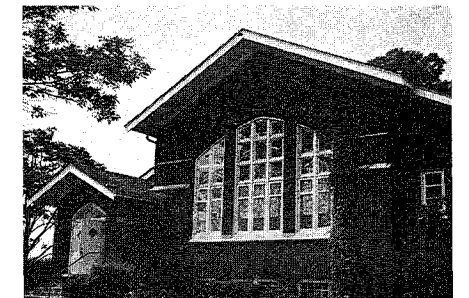
- 1858 February 18 — Construction was completed on the Cattle Bank in West Urbana.
- June 1 — The Urbana Woolen Factory opened.
- Mrs. Fletcher opened a Young Ladies Institute in West Urbana.
- December 1 — Daniel Rugg came to West Urbana. He opened the first shoe store there.
- 1859 *The Homer Journal* was begun.
- The First Presbyterian Church of Rantoul was organized.
- May 17 — The Universalist Church in Urbana was founded. In 1871, a brick church was erected on Green Street.
- 1860 The grist mills of Peter Meyers and Frank Sackett in Rantoul were destroyed by fire.
- April 1 — The Swannell Drug Store opened in West Urbana.
- 1861 March 4 — A ball in honor of President Lincoln's inaugural was held at the Doane House in Champaign. Tickets were \$1.25.
- 1862 Stanton Township separated from St. Joseph Township and was named for Lincoln's Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton.
- 1863 August — An early frost killed most of the corn crop. Prices rose from twelve cents to one dollar a bushel.
- John G. Thrasher of Rantoul lost his life at Nick Grove, Georgia, while serving in the Union Army.
- 1864 Morris Lowenstern began his dry goods business in Urbana.
- John W. Butler of Sidney was honorably discharged from the Union Army after serving two enlistments.
- John Van Arnom from Rantoul served in the 49th Regiment of the U.S. Colored Infantry in the Civil War.
- c.1865 Following the Civil War, five black families settled in Sidney Township. All five families attended the Methodist Church there.
- 1865 Col. J. S. Wolfe mustered out of the army after four years and two months of service. An elementary school was later named for Col. Wolfe, who practiced law in Champaign for many years.
- The village of Tolono was incorporated.

- 1865 Edwin Justin Udell was appointed manager of the Illinois Central Telegraph Office at Rantoul, a position he held for twenty years.
- 1866 *The Champaign County Herald* began publication in Urbana. In 1867, the paper moved to Champaign under the name, *Illinois Democrat*.
- The first Shiloh Methodist Church building, north of Mahomet, was dedicated. The present church building was dedicated in 1917.
- The Methodist Church was founded in Gifford. The Baptist Church was established in 1868, and St. Paul's Lutheran Church in 1892.
- November 21 — Champaign's Public Library was organized.
- 1867 The Mahomet Baptist Church was built. It is still in use today.
- The Busey Brothers Bank was organized in Urbana.
- 1868 July 4 — Fire destroyed the entire block between Main, Taylor, Market, and Walnut streets in Champaign. A volunteer fire company had been organized the previous year.
- August 4 — Fire destroyed a large area of downtown Urbana.
- All students at the Illinois Industrial University, founded in 1867, were paid eight cents an hour to perform compulsory manual labor at the new campus. This soon became voluntary.
- 1869 The first doctor in Pesotum was Dr. E. I. Birdsell.
- May 9 — The Homer Presbyterian Church was founded with Rev. J. L. McNain as the first pastor.
- The Village of Sidney was incorporated. A local ordinance decreed that all men between the ages of twenty-one and fifty were required to work four days a year on the streets and alleys. In 1891, this number was reduced to two days per year.
- 1869/70 The first mayor of Rantoul was Sheldon Tomlinson. He served a second term in 1870-71.
- The Hon. Abel Harwood was a member of the convention to draft a new constitution for the state of Illinois.
- c.1870 The first doctors in new St. Joseph were Dr. David Jennings and Dr. W. B. Sims. They were preceded in old St. Joseph by Dr. James Gillespie, Dr. Anthony Doyle, Dr. George Doyle and Dr. William Goodwin.

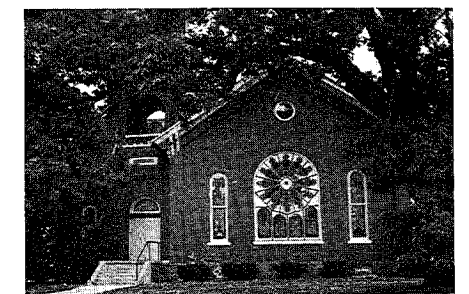


Edwin Justin Udell

Edwin Justin Udell was a poet whose work was frequently published in the *Chicago Tribune*, as well as in popular magazines such as the *Boston Pilot*, *Youth's Companion*, and *Potter's Magazine*.



Shiloh Methodist Church
County Road 2700 North and Route 47



Mahomet Baptist Church
402 South Elm



Mumford House, erected 1870

1870 May 16 - An "Old Settlers Society" was organized in Urbana.

A general store in Ogden was opened by T. J. Carpenter.

The first women students were admitted to the Illinois Industrial University. Twenty-two co-eds were enrolled the first year.

Mumford House, on Taft Drive near 6th Street, was built by the University of Illinois as a model farmhouse. It is the oldest building on the campus.

The first house was erected in Ogden by Theodore A. Haworth. Patrick Brennan built a residence shortly after. The first postmaster was Theodore E. Haworth. He served nine months; in January, 1871, he was succeeded by Thomas J. Carpenter, who held the office for many years.

One year after founding the National Women's Suffrage Association with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony spoke at Barrett Hall in Champaign. Her topic was "Work, Wages and the Ballot."

Early settlers near the site of the future village of Gifford included C. H. Willard, Alexander Craigmile, George A. Jackson, J. L. Buxton, F. J. L. Newburn, T. P. Barnes, H. M. Spencer, and "two Swedes by the name of Lindeleaf."

Dr. Stephens, the first recorded doctor in Foosland, was succeeded by Dr. H. L. Harris.

November 4 - J. W. Langley was elected as the first state senator from Champaign County.

1871 Dr. Job S. Coggshall began his practice in Ogden; he continued for over thirty years, until his death in 1902.

Thomas Edward Franks had the first greenhouse in Champaign, at the corner of Randolph and Vine.

The Big Four Railroad shops opened east of Urbana.

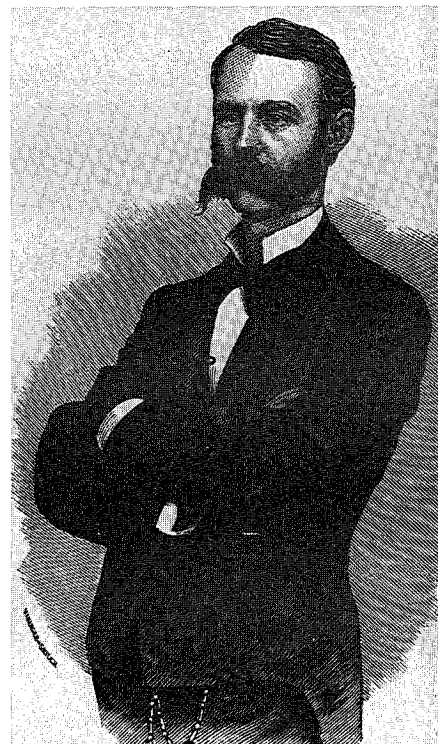
The Methodist Church and the Christian Church in Ogden were both erected.

1872 Col. George Scroggs became the sole proprietor of the *Champaign County Gazette*.

St. Malachy's Church was built in Rantoul.

1873 A new brick two-story school was built in Tolono. It served until 1917 when it was replaced by a new building.

June 5 — The Alumni Association of the University of Illinois organized with fifteen charter members.



Col. George Scroggs

1874 C. W. Gulick erected the first brick business building in Rantoul. Rantoul's first city building was built. It was destroyed by fire in 1901; when rebuilt, it contained fire walls eight inches thick.

David B. Stayton was appointed Township Supervisor of the St. Joseph Township, a post he was to hold for twenty-three years.

Louisa Allen became the head of the new School of Domestic Art and Science at the Illinois Industrial University. Although the experimental program lasted only six years, and was terminated upon the marriage of Miss Allen to University Regent John M. Gregory, it was the precursor of the School of Home Economics.

The fourth township high school in the state was built in Tolono.

July 31 — The Urbana Free Library was organized as a part of the city government. This was an outgrowth of a Library Association formed in 1872.

Area libraries contained the following: Rantoul, 1070 bound volumes, 11 magazines, 29 newspapers; Champaign, 800 volumes; Urbana, 1000 volumes, and over 30 magazines and newspapers.

1875 The parent firm of Cogdal and Hobbs Real Estate was founded in Urbana by H. M. Russell.

Tandy Pritchard erected the first dwelling at Fisher.

Wilke Emkes broke a section of nearby prairie south of Dillsburg, using two horses and a one-bottom plow.

April 16 — Notice was given of a Ku Klux Klan parade at the grove in Rantoul.

1876 The Champaign Art Club was formed.

The Illinois State Medical Society met in Champaign-Urbana. A move was initiated to enact a state medical practices act.

Dr. E. C. Bartholow of Mahomet was elected to the state legislature. He and his colleague, the Hon. R. A. Bower of Tolono, were instrumental in having the Illinois Medical Practices Act passed in 1876/77.

March 16 — H. D. Corlies opened a drug store in Gifford; West and Collison opened a store, and Henry Flesner was named Gifford's first postmaster.

W. B. Marvel opened a store and harness shop in Penfield.

A Methodist church was built in Gifford. The Baptist congregation shared the facility until they built their own church in 1888.



David B. Stayton



Louisa Catherine Allen Gregory



Morris Lowenstern

1877 The St. Joseph Methodist Church erected its first building; this structure burned in 1893. The building which was erected to replace it the following year served until it in turn was replaced with a new building in 1915/1916. This church served both the Mayview and St. Joseph congregations until 1942. At that time, they were separated by mutual consent.

A B'nai Brith chapter was organized in Champaign-Urbana. Morris Lowenstern was one of the founders.

June 17 — The First Baptist Church in Penfield was organized.

1878 September 2 — St. Mary's School opened in Champaign.

1879 January 16 — The Illinois State Historical Society was organized. Judge Joseph Cunningham of Urbana was a member of the first board of directors.

1880 The St. Joseph Church of Christ built its first building. The present brick building was dedicated in 1909.

1881 February 25 — The village of St. Joseph was incorporated.

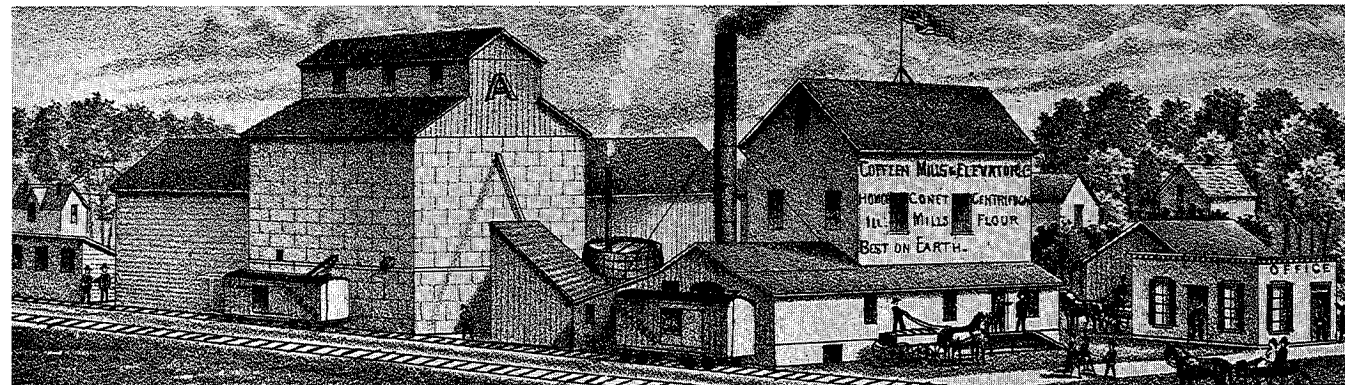
1882 February 3 — Smallpox cases were reported in Champaign.

February 12 — St. John's Lutheran Church in Royal was dedicated.

August 21 — Formal opening of the Champaign Opera House, formerly the Barrett House, was held.

1882 M. D. Coffeen, nephew of the earlier M. D. Coffeen who helped to establish Homer, opened a flouring mill there.

The Champaign National Bank opened. It was founded by Edward Bailey, who had been associated in the private bank of Bailey, Maxwell, and Miller, and by his father, David Bailey, one of the founders of the First National Bank of Champaign.



M. D. Coffeen Flouring Mill

1883 September 8 — The first newspaper in St. Joseph was issued. The *St. Joseph Record*, which later operated in St. Joseph for many years, was a descendent of this early newspaper.

The University Place Christian Church was founded. Their first church building was built in 1884 in the 600 block of West White Street, Champaign. Their current building was dedicated in 1936.

1884 St. Mary's convent was erected in Champaign.

Benjamin Gifford drained 7,500 acres of swampland in Champaign County by creating a system of thirty miles of drainage ditches.

The first pavement in Champaign was laid on Main Street.

Attempts to establish a coal mine in Sidney at first appeared successful when a high grade of coal was struck. However, the shaft repeatedly filled with water, and this, coupled with machinery breakdowns, caused the project to be abandoned.

1885 The first bank in Sidney, Winston's Bank, was established by Miller Winston. In 1911, the State Bank was organized. In 1931, the two banks merged.

The Exchange Bank was founded in Gifford by James M. Morse. It was later incorporated as the Morse State Bank. In 1950, the name was changed to the Gifford State Bank.

The First Christian Church of Urbana was organized. A church building was erected on Main Street in 1889.

The name of the Illinois Industrial University was changed to the University of Illinois.

1886 Abe Bowers, one of five persons from the first graduating high school class at St. Joseph, entered the first class of the newly named University of Illinois.

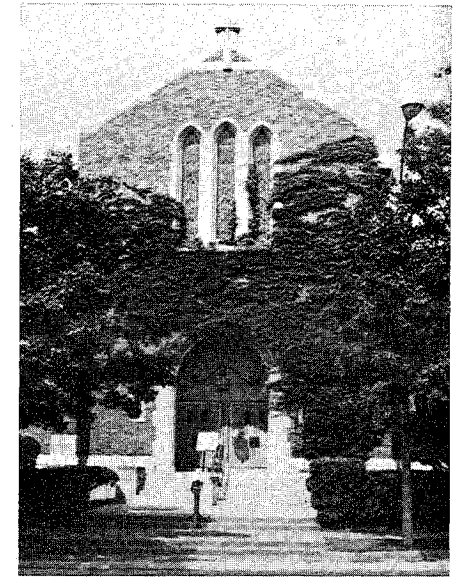
The post office at Royal was established.

1887 Isaac Hess graduated from Champaign High School. He became a leading merchant of Philo and an outstanding naturalist and ornithologist. He gathered data on 104 species of birds within a ten mile radius of his home.

Dr. C. D. Culver of Mahomet had a telephone line strung between his residence and his office.

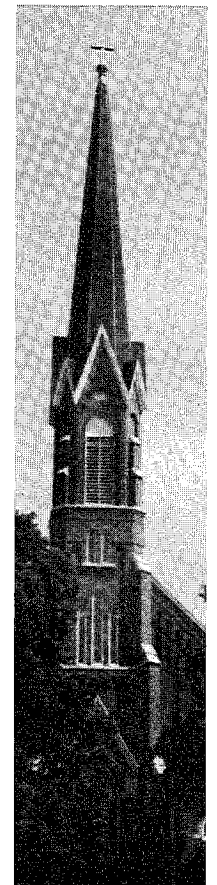
1888 Jonas Lester got a contract from the village of Mahomet to gravel Main Street from Ford's corner to Geiger's corner.

St. Mary's Church in Champaign was dedicated.

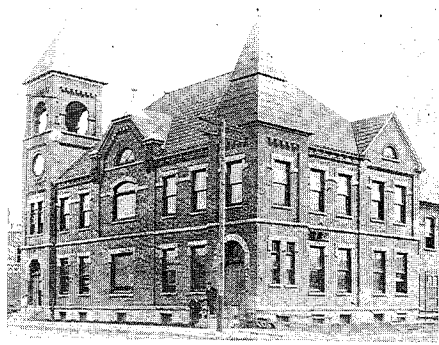


University Place Christian Church.
403 South Wright Street, Champaign

1983 marked the centennial of the University Place Christian Church



St. Mary's Church
612 East Park Avenue, Champaign



Champaign's 1889 City Hall
102 North Neil Street

Champaign's City Hall was described by historian and author J. R. Stewart as having an unimposing tower and not being up to the standard of the city's other public buildings.



Cunningham Children's Home, c. 1920
1301 North Cunningham Avenue, Urbana

Judge Joseph O. Cunningham and his wife donated their 1870 house and fifteen acres for a home for Methodist deaconesses and children. It opened in 1895. The house was torn down in the 1920's. New buildings and additions were made to the Cunningham Children's Home over the years; in 1983, a new school building was dedicated.

Burnham Hospital, c. 1915



- c.1889 Electricity came to Homer.
- c.1890 The Penfield Methodist Episcopal Church (now the Penfield United Methodist Church) erected a church building which is still in use today.
- 1890 The Broadlands Boardinghouse was built to serve hired hands working on nearby farms. The second floor once housed the first school in Broadlands.
- 1893 A bell was installed in St. John's Lutheran church in Royal. The bell is still rung on Saturday evenings to prepare parishioners for the Sabbath.
- Sidney's first concrete walk was built by J. W. Bocok.
- 1894 Oil lights were placed in the business district and residential areas of St. Joseph. It was not until 1912 that the village had electric street lights.
- Gifford's business district burned. In less than three hours, twenty businesses were destroyed, including two grain elevators.
- April 6 — The Twin City Ice and Cold Storage Company commenced the manufacture of ice and distilled water.
- 1895 A franchise was granted to the Homer Telephone Company. Telephone service began in 1899.
- The Julia F. Burnham Hospital opened on Springfield Avenue between Third and Fourth Streets in Champaign. In 1920, it became the city hospital.

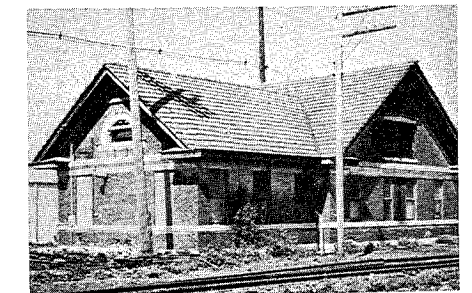
- 1896 The Beardsley Hotel opened in Champaign.
- 1896/97 Mahomet school principal C. A. Pricer was paid \$70 for a nine month term. Teachers' salaries ranged from \$35 to \$45.
- 1897 The Homer Woman's Club was organized as the Tuesday Club.
- 1898 The St. Lawrence Church in Penfield was organized as an independent parish.
- The first maypole dance at the University of Illinois was held.
- July 12 — Champaign's Doane House was destroyed by fire.
- 1899 A depot for the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago, and St. Louis (Big Four) Railroad was built on Broadway Street in Urbana. It is now the Station Theater.
- The Grace Methodist Church organized in Urbana. Their first building was the old creamery and cheese factory on East Main.
- Summer band concerts began in the park in St. Joseph.
- C. W. Dale of Ogden, a band leader and music instructor, published the "Company M, Fourth Illinois March," dedicated to soldiers of the Spanish-American War.
- Telephone service was established in Ogden.
- February 13 — A Rantoul fire destroyed half of the business district. The fire started in the Messenger Hotel; fire fighting was hampered by a temperature of fifteen below zero and frozen hoses.
- May 1 — The fountain in West Side Park, Champaign, was dedicated. Its bronze statue, "Prayer for Rain," was designed by Edward Kemeys, who also designed several groups for the Columbian Exposition of 1893. The fountain was donated by B. J. Johnson.
- June 9 — The Wood Shop at the University of Illinois was destroyed by fire.
- 1900 The First Presbyterian Church in Urbana was built on West Green Street. The Church was organized in September, 1850.
- The banking firm of Raynor and Babb was established in Homer by Eugene N. Raynor and Charles D. Babb.
- A new school in Gifford was completed. It replaced one built in 1898 that burned down before it was ever occupied. It, in turn had been built to replace the original building built in 1896 which burned in 1898.



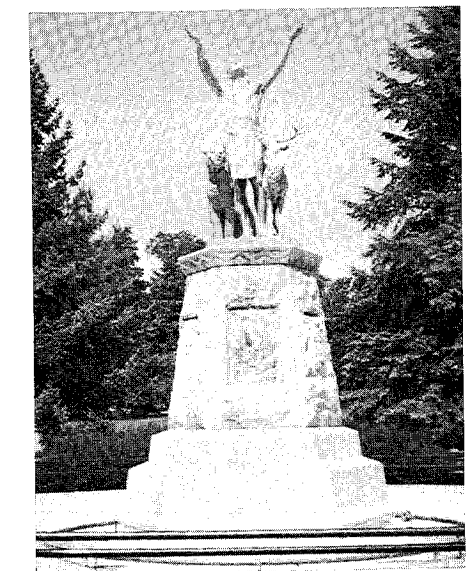
Beardsley Hotel, northwest corner, Hill and Neil Streets, Champaign



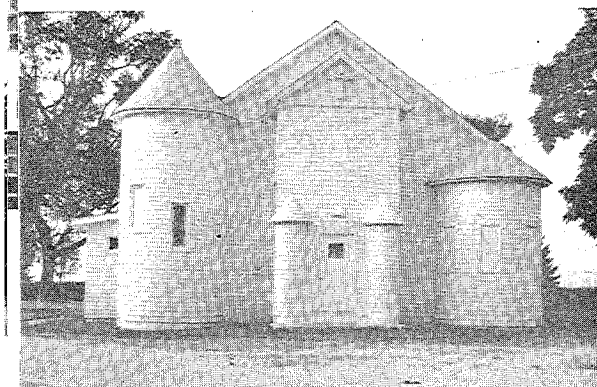
University of Illinois Maypole Dance



Station Theater, 223 Broadway Street, Urbana



Fountain, West Side Park, Champaign



*St. Boniface Roman Catholic Church
Five Miles Southwest of Bondville
County Road 1100 North*

*Champaign County Farmers at a University
of Illinois Agriculture Extension Outdoor
Classroom, mid-1920's.*



*Lyle Grace, President,
Champaign County Farm Bureau
1956-1962*



*Meadow Gold Milk
701 Kenyon Road, Champaign*

1962 January — The Illinois Bell Telephone Company changed the dialing system for local calls in the twin cities from five to seven digits.

The Alma Mater statue at the University of Illinois was moved from behind the Auditorium to its present site at the southeast corner of Wright and Green Streets in Urbana.

The St. Boniface Roman Catholic Church observed its fiftieth anniversary of the dedication of their church building, which was designed by George Stauduhar. The earlier church, a white frame structure, is located nearby on the church property.

The Champaign County Farm Bureau celebrated its 50th anniversary.



1962 The Meadow Gold Company moved into its new headquarters.

1963 The First Baptist Church of Urbana observed the 125th anniversary of its founding. The present building, erected in 1896, was enlarged with the addition of a wing in 1926. When it was first organized in 1836, it met in the Brumley school.

Rantoul's J. W. Eater Junior High School defeated the Chicago Heights Washington Junior High, 47 to 46, in a double overtime to win the Illinois State Junior High School Basketball Championship.

Kraft Foods opened a factory on eleven acres adjacent to the Humko Foods plant.

WRTL radio station in Rantoul went on the air under the partnership of Dick Williams and William Brown.

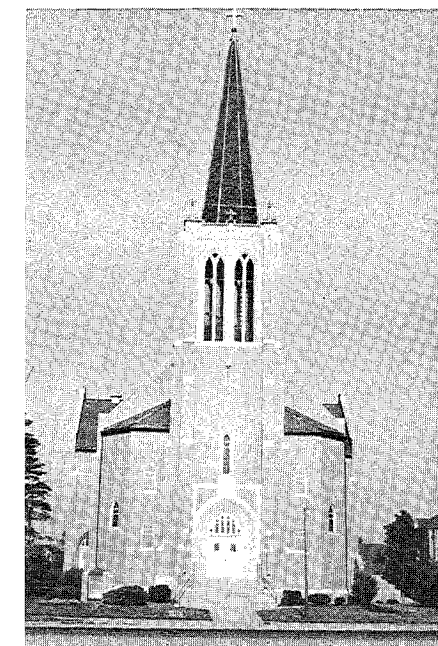
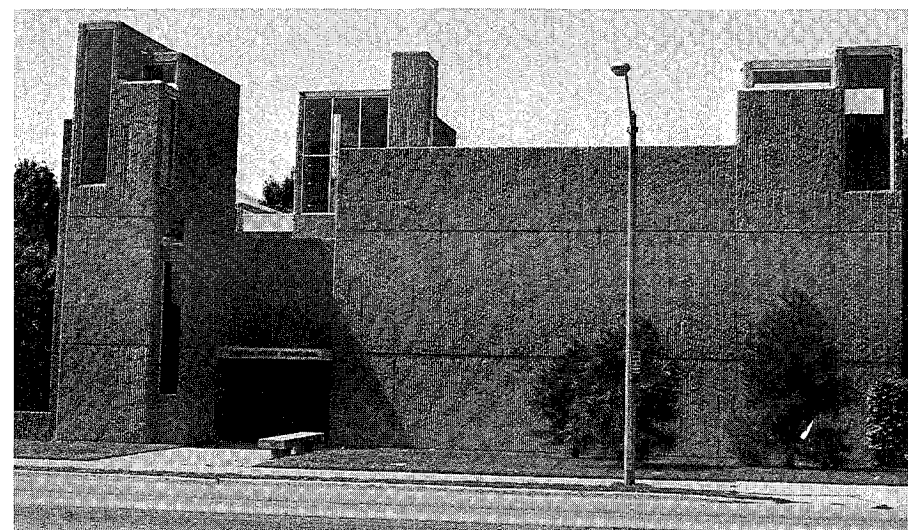
1964 January 2 — The "Illini" football team beat the Washington "Huskies", 17 to 7, in the Rose Bowl game at Pasadena, California.

1964 The Immanuel Lutheran Church of Flatville observed the 50th anniversary of the erection of their church building, often referred to as the "cathedral on the prairie." Its tall steeple can be seen for many miles, a visible symbol of the German immigrants who settled in the area in the 1870's.

December 6 — The First United Presbyterian Church of Urbana dedicated its new building at 602 West Green Street.

September — Centennial High School opened as an annex to Champaign High School. In the fall of 1967, it became a separate four year high school and the name of Champaign High School was changed to Central High School.

Compulsory ROTC ended at the University of Illinois.



*Immanuel Lutheran Church of Flatville
County Roads 2500 North and 2100 East*

*Christian Science Organization
Northwest Corner, Fourth Street and
Gregory Drive, Champaign*

1965 The Christian Science Organization on the university campus dedicated a new building designed by Paul Rudolph, former head of the Department of Architecture at Yale University. The campus organization was formed in 1906.

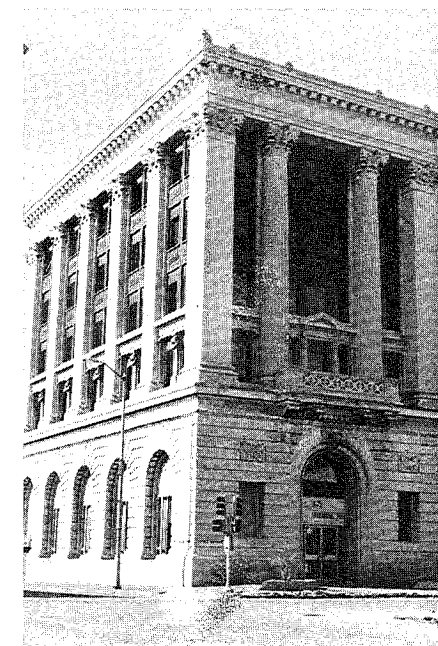
The G. I. Bill of educational benefits ended after twenty-one years. Forty-five thousand veterans, including fifteen thousand Korean War veterans, had studied at the University of Illinois through the program of financial assistance.

June 20 — The Covered Bridge at the Lake of the Woods Park was dedicated. Construction began in 1963.

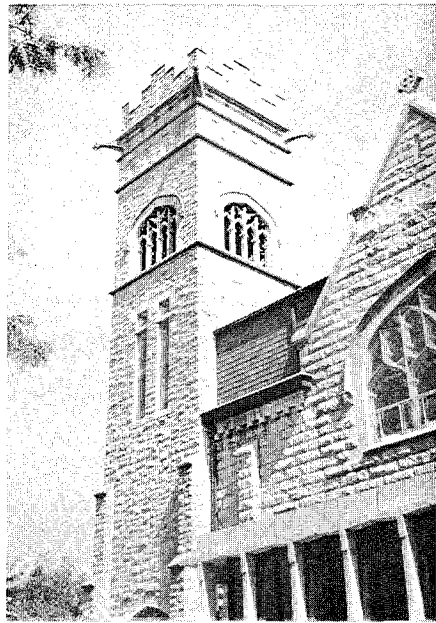
The First National Bank in Champaign celebrated its 100th anniversary. The present building, erected in 1900, replaced an earlier structure of 1872 at the same site.

The Dewey and Fisher school districts were consolidated, and a new high school building opened in Fisher. The Dewey school, built in 1928, was discontinued as a school building. It was later remodeled into a residence.

Mrs. Theodore Peterson became the first woman named to the Urbana Park Board.



*First National Bank in Champaign
Southwest Corner, Main and Walnut Streets*



First United Methodist Church
210 West Church, Champaign

The present First United Methodist Church building was designed by Bullard and Bullard of Springfield. It was built by English Brothers of Champaign in 1906, and was dedicated in 1907. The building was extensively remodeled in 1963.



Colwell Systems
201 Kenyon Road, Champaign

The *Physician's Daily Log* was created by Dr. John B. Colwell of Champaign. It was published by the Colwell Publishing Company and soon became used in thousands of doctor's offices as a one-year financial record-keeping book. Colwell Systems now employs 370 people with diversified printing of medical and dental office forms, a direct mail catalog, and forms for use with computer software.

1958 January — Mrs. H. S. Stillwell of Urbana headed over 1,000 Champaign County women in a door-to-door Mothers' Drive for the March of Dimes. The women encouraged the use of Salk vaccine for polio protection and collected funds to be used in the fight against the spreading polio epidemic.

The First United Methodist Church of Champaign observed the 100th anniversary of their founding as the Methodist Episcopal Church in West Urbana.

Champaign Mayor Virgil F. Lafferty appointed Donald E. Moyer, Sr., the first chairman of the city's Human Relations Committee.

Unity High School opened near Tolono.

1959 The Dun and Bradstreet Reference Book reported 1,517 businesses in Champaign County. Champaign had 724; Urbana, 320; Rantoul, 142; Homer, 32; Fisher, 29; Mahomet, 29; and St. Joseph, 21. The remaining 221 businesses were spread among the other towns of the county.

April 24 — Television station WCID aired its first program, "Northwest Passage", from 6:30-7:00 p.m. Originally assigned Channel 33, the station was changed in 1967 to Channel 15.

Champaign's Centennial Park, featuring a large swimming pool, was opened. Facilities for tennis were added later.

The Illinois Bell Telephone Company reported forty-four thousand telephones in use in Champaign-Urbana, an increase of three thousand over 1958.

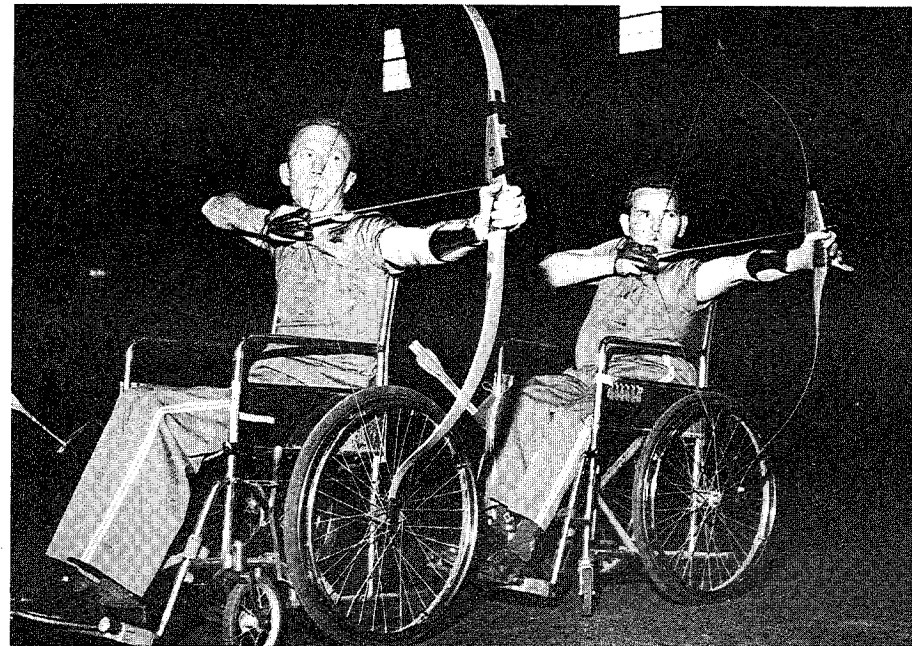
Champaign held its first election of a mayor and city council under its Council-Manager form of government.

1960 The University of Illinois Airport terminal and control tower were dedicated. The airport was renamed University of Illinois-Willard Airport in 1961.

Colwell Systems, Inc. moved into its new headquarters. The company was founded in 1927 by John B. and Pauline Groves Colwell.

October — John F. Kennedy spoke from a platform in front of the university auditorium. He was the first presidential candidate to be allowed to address the students.

Harry Lovering Gill was posthumously voted into the Sporting Goods Hall of Fame. As a competitor, he won the 1900 World's All-around Championship in track and field. In 1904, he began a thirty-year coaching career at the University of Illinois. In 1920, Gill developed the first accepted American-made javelin, later the first commercial starting blocks and the first aluminum vaulting pole. The Harry Gill Company was formed in Urbana in 1937.



Jack Whitman and Wayne Broeren

1960 September — Wayne Broeren, a three-time All-American Wheelchair basketball player, won a gold medal in basketball at the Para-Olympics Games in Rome. He and his partner, Jack Whitman, also won gold medals in darchery. Whitman went on to win two more medals in archery that year, two in 1962, four in 1963, and two in 1964, making a total of eleven Olympic World Wheelchair gold medals. Both men reside in Champaign.

A university enrollment of 21,955 resulted in the upper floor of McKinley Hospital being used for coed housing.

1961 January — The Gifford State Bank was robbed during the night.

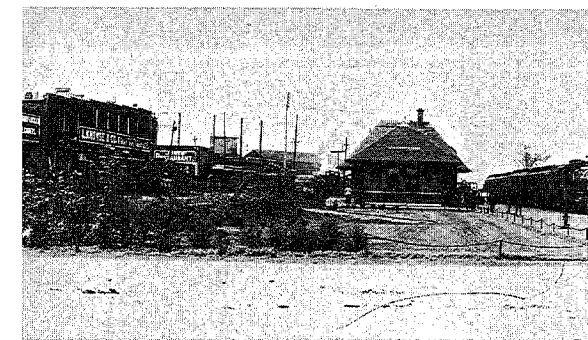
Charles W. Dale celebrated fifty years as the editor of the *St. Joseph Record*.

Guy Clifford Comstock of Champaign made his last trip as an Illinois Central Railroad Engineer after a half century of service on the railroad. He began work in 1910 as a roundhouse helper. On his last run he drove the famed City of New Orleans to Centralia, Illinois.

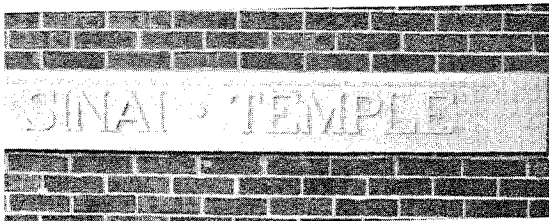
Ground was broken for the Bethany Park Christian Church Sanctuary at the northeast corner of Route 136 and Maplewood Drive on the east edge of Rantoul. Architects were Berger, Kelley, and Unteed of Champaign and the contractor was John Jacobson.

As a result of the Dutch elm disease, only ninety-four elms remained on the University of Illinois campus — a decrease of 2,173 from ten years earlier.

The Champaign County Urban League office was established.



Illinois Central Railroad Depot, 1905
Main and Chestnut Streets, Champaign



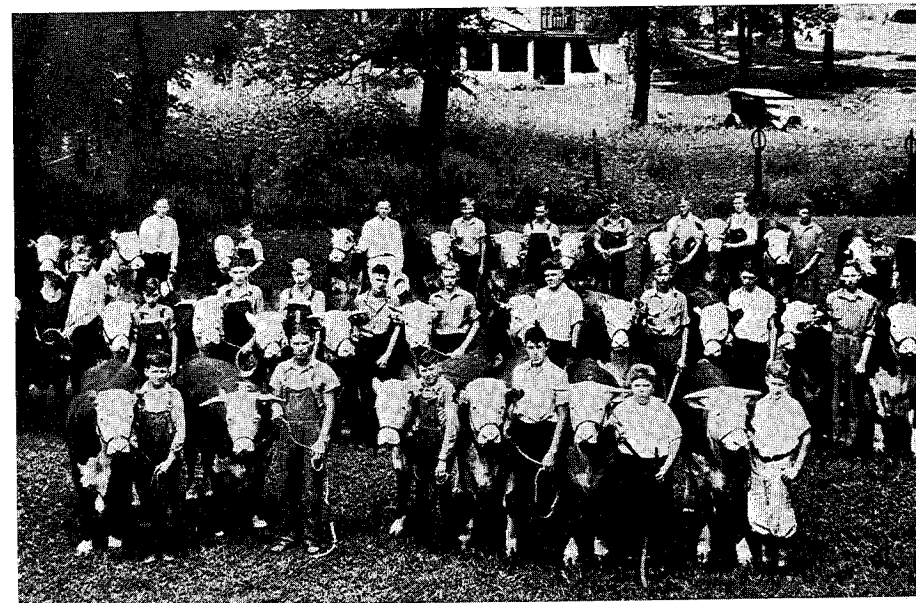
1954 Sinai Temple, the first Hebrew congregation in Champaign County, celebrated its Golden Anniversary. Twenty members joined at the first meeting, February 7, 1904. J. M. Kaufman was elected president. In 1918, the congregation erected a temple at the southwest corner of State and Clark Streets in Champaign, which was used until the interior was seriously damaged by fire January, 1971.

Sinai Temple
When the new temple was dedicated in 1975 at 3104 West Windsor Road, Champaign, the stone over the sanctuary and several pieces of stained glass were among items transferred from the old temple.

The hard work and dedication exhibited by young people in raising livestock for competitive judging has had a long tradition in Champaign County. The 4-H Beef Club in Champaign County was organized in 1928 by Leslie Karr and John Haines. Haines, a banker in Seymour, bought a load of prime feeder calves and sold them to 4-H club members, who secured them with their own personal notes.

Identified in the photo of the 4-H Beef Club are: Milton Bell, third from the left in the top row (to the right of Clifford C. Burns, Champaign County Farm Advisor); Bill Vinson and John Knox, lower right; and James Wilson, Ray Primer, and Raymond Kirkawit (nos. 5, 8, and 10 in the second row); the others are unknown.

The 4-H Beef Club Show
Champaign County Fair, c. 1929.

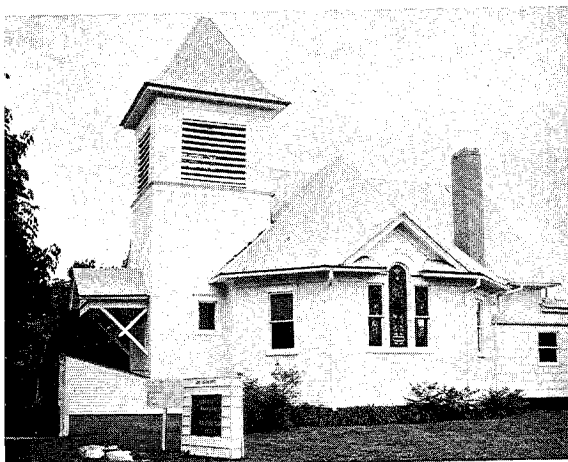


1955 November — Nancy Turner, Champaign High School junior, was chosen the top livestock show person and her Angus summer yearling, Julius, was named grand champion of the International Livestock Exposition in Chicago. The steer later sold for \$16,125.

The University of Illinois was named recipient of \$1 million in the will of Fred S. Bailey, Sr., of Champaign. Bailey owned a controlling interest in the Champaign National Bank.

1956 The Sidney Christian Church observed the 100th anniversary of its founding. It was the first church in Sidney. The present building, dedicated in 1904, was built on the site of an earlier structure, which was torn down in 1901. Ladies of the church salvaged bricks from the old foundation and cleaned them for reuse in the new structure.

A swimming pool was constructed in Rantoul's City Park on Wabash Street.



Sidney Christian Church

1956 Bevier Hall, the university's new home economics building, was completed.

April — United States Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren participated in the dedication of the new University of Illinois law building.

May — Lightning struck the tower of the Champaign County Courthouse and toppled debris onto Main and Broadway Streets.

June — Four and one-half tons of books and pamphlets from the personal collection of Carl Sandburg arrived at the University of Illinois Library, a gift of the author/poet.

November — Mrs. Ivy Baker Priest, United States Treasurer, spoke at the Champaign Moose Club.

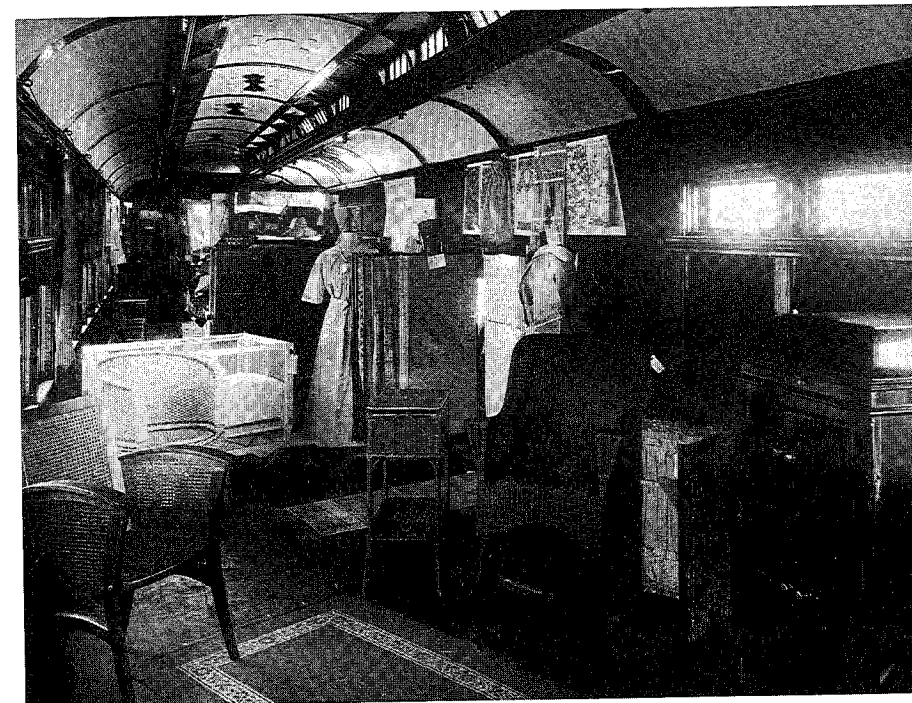


Bevier Hall,
905 South Goodwin Avenue, Urbana

In addition to training professional home economists, the university's Home Economics Department has had a long history of extension services all over the state. The Smith-Lever Congressional Act of 1914 enabled land grant universities to organize agricultural extension services through farm advisors and through home extension workers. These two programs were first operated together, but later were separated.

In 1916, as a part of its home economics extension services, the University of Illinois equipped a Pullman railroad car with labor-saving devices, kitchen utensils, and home furnishings. The Demonstration Car traveled about the state reaching thousands of homemakers.

Home Economics Demonstration Car



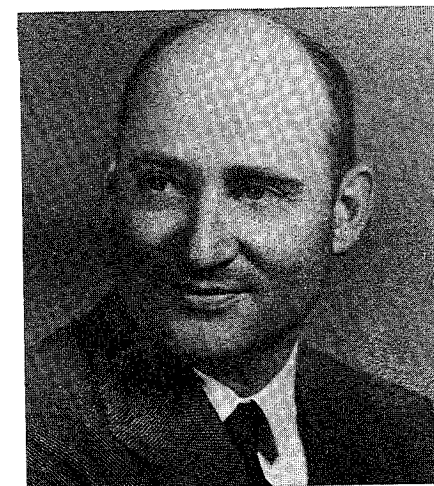
1957 Earl Bantz assumed the duties of Champaign County Farm Advisor. He retired in 1980 after serving twenty-two years. Champaign County's first Farm Advisor, C. H. Oathout, served from 1915 to 1923.

The Champaign Township Park Commission was reorganized as a Park District. D. C. "Pick" Dodds was named as the first president. He had served on the park commission since 1930.

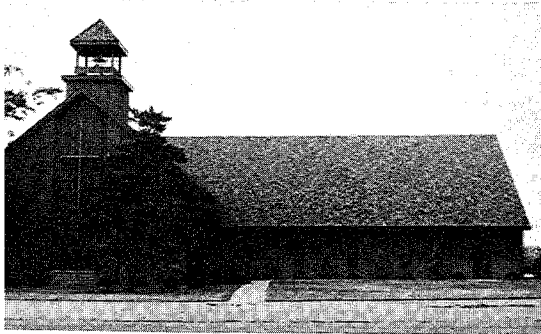
Champaign County had the highest rate of polio in Illinois.

September — Champaign's University Avenue and Church Street were limited to one-way traffic to connect with the I-57 interchange at the west edge of the city.

Training for missile technicians started at Chanute Air Force Base.



Earl Bantz



*East Bend Mennonite Church
East Bend Township*

- 1947 September 22 — The Champaign School Board leased the no longer needed USO building to the Illinois Bell Telephone Company.
- 1948 January — The Champaign County Forest Preserve District was established by a unanimous vote of the County Board of Supervisors. H. I. Gelvin, Wayne Winters, and Frank Meers of Champaign, C. V. Wilson of Urbana, and Lyle Franks of Tolono were named to the first board of directors.

The East Bend Mennonite Church extensively remodelled their building. The church was established about 1889 and held services in the Dixon school until 1892.

Following school consolidation, classes from Seymour's three year high school were transferred to Mahomet. In 1961, the 7th and 8th grade classes were also transferred to Mahomet.

Attorney Enos Phillips of Urbana was appointed chairman of the Community Plan Committee, which engaged Swanson and Associates to develop the C-U Comprehensive Development Plan, completed in 1950. Ten special advisory committees were formed to assist the professional planners. Among the 120 community advisors were two women: Ruth B. Jones and Mrs. George Ekblaw. Taylor Thomas was the only black person appointed to the committee.

The first televised Illini football game was on WGN-TV, Chicago. The contract specified that there be no commercials shown of beer, wine, or laxatives.

Tolono, Sidney, Philo, Sadorus, and Pesotum school districts consolidated to form the Community Unit 7 District.

May 5 — Th St. Joseph- Stanton Fire Protection District formed a volunteer fire department, which was the third district department formed in Illinois.

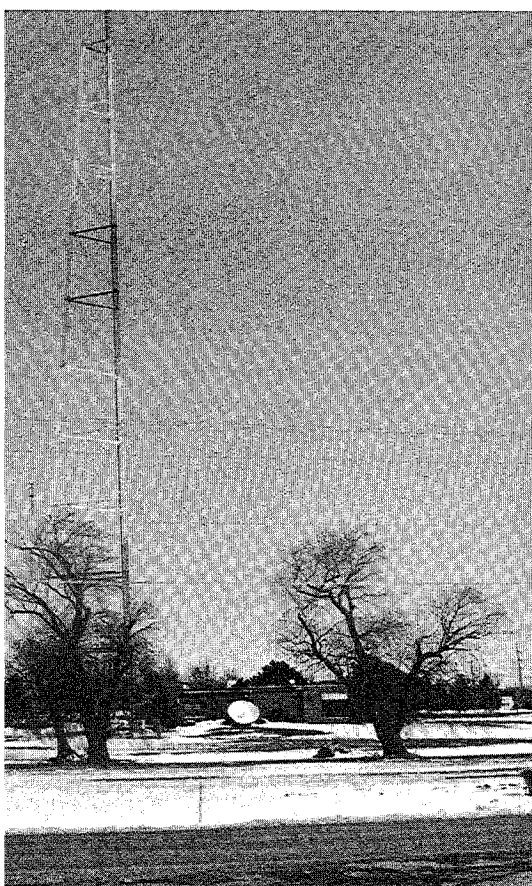
- 1949 The Urbana Half Century Club celebrated its 25th anniversary. The club is composed of persons who were born in Urbana more than fifty years ago, or who have resided in Urbana for fifty years.

The business area of Broadlands was destroyed by fire.

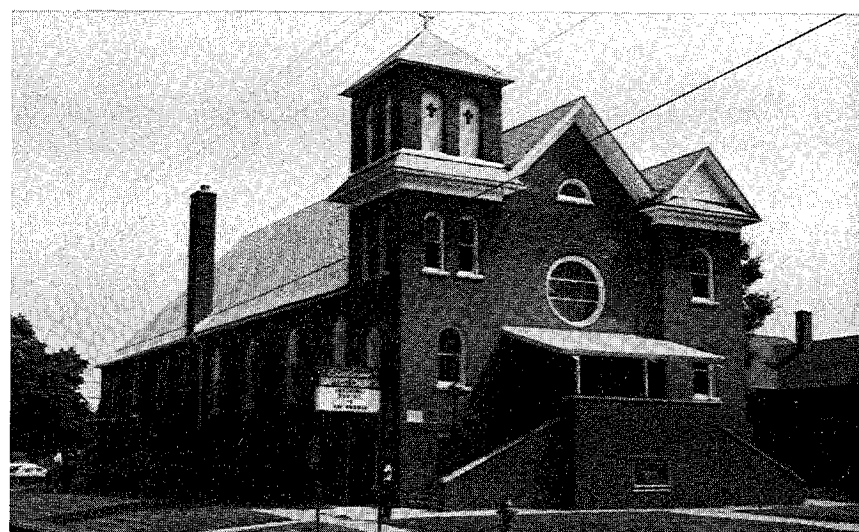
February — WDWS radio station moved to its new location one mile south of Champaign on U.S. Highway 45.

- 1950 Carl Mosson of Penfield, a veteran of World War II, was killed in the Korean conflict. Rantoul's servicemen who lost their lives in the Korean conflict included Donald L. "Oscar" Evans and Kenneth W. Reich.

The Fourth of July Freedom Celebration, Incorporated, of C-U was formed and J. W. O'Neill was named chairman of the first annual celebration.



*WDWS Radio Station
Route 45 and Windsor Road, Champaign*



*Salem Baptist Church
500 East Park Street, Champaign*

The present church building is on the site of the original frame church which was built about 1869.

- 1950 September — A mortgage-burning ceremony was held at the Salem Baptist Church. The church has been serving the needs of Champaign's black community since 1867.

December — The Champaign Eagles Club was formed; their clubrooms at 18½ Taylor Street were formerly occupied by the Champaign Moose Club.

- 1951 Residents moved into their new homes in Urbana's Carver Park, a black subdivision north of Bradley Avenue and east of Wright Street. The project was initiated by Charles E. Phillips, a black insurance agent and savings and loan executive: it was financed entirely with capital from black families.

- 1952 September 10 — Tolono's Lincoln marker was rededicated. The marker, erected in 1932, commemorates a brief address made there February 11, 1861, by President-elect Lincoln on his way to take office in Washington, D. C.

- 1953 Ross Wiley of Sidney was chosen "King for a day" at the University of Illinois's Father's Day.

Champaign-Urbana Jaycees sponsored two performances of cowboy movie star Gene Autry and his horse, Champion, at the Champaign Jr. High School. Five thousand people attended.

The village of Royal was incorporated.

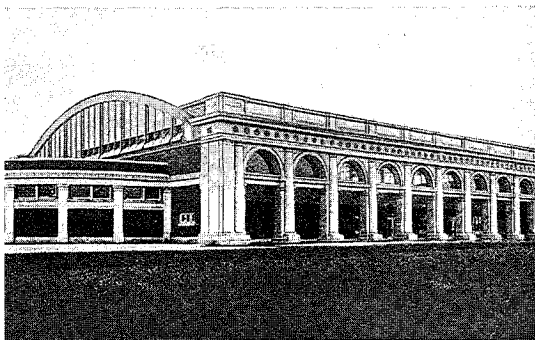
- 1954 The village of Gifford was incorporated.

January — The St. Joseph Grade School burned. Damage was estimated at \$250,000 to \$300,000.

December 4 — Sheriff Everett Hedrick began his first term of office. His first case was a bicycle theft report. Hedrick served three more terms as sheriff for a total of sixteen years.

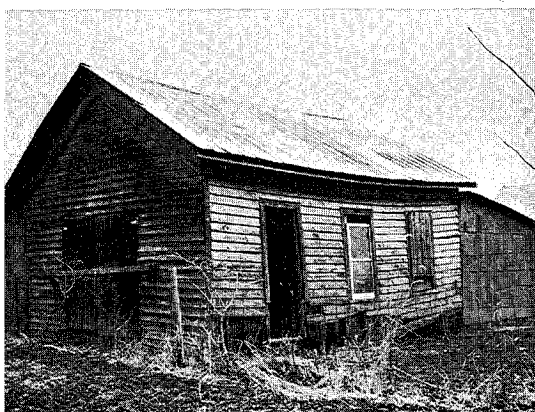


*Lincoln Marker
East of Tolono Depot*



University of Illinois Stock Pavilion
West Pennsylvania Avenue, Urbana

On May 25, 1945, Red Grange wired former coach Robert Zuppke asking him to attend an Illini Club luncheon at the Morrison Hotel in Chicago to participate in a scholarship award dinner. Zuppke declined, and simply stated, "I do not believe in athletic scholarships. Your friend, Bob Zuppke."



Old Blackberry School
Opposite Trelease Woods, North of Urbana

1941 Robert C. Zuppke resigned as head coach of the University of Illinois after twenty-nine years of service.

December — Contracts were awarded to Kuhne-Simmons Construction Company for a \$95,700 addition to the Rantoul Grade School. Reliable Plumbing and Heating was awarded \$17,000 for their work which used no copper or brass materials due to war regulations. The total cost of the project was \$133,000; P.W.A. funds paid all but Rantoul's share of \$20,000.

1942 January 29 — Ray Eliot was named head football coach at the University of Illinois to succeed Robert Zuppke. Eliot signed a one-year contract for \$6,000.

February 8 — Eleanor Roosevelt, the United States' First Lady, cut the cake in celebration of the Illini Union's first birthday.

University of Illinois enrollment on the Urbana campus was 7,677 — down by 22% due to the outbreak of war.

May 11 — Patrick Nolan of Penfield died in a prison camp in the Philippine Islands. He entered the Army April 18, 1941, before the outbreak of the war.

1943 January — The Champaign County Milk Producers met at their offices, 221 North Race Street, Urbana, and heard a report that the Co-op had a new profit of \$3,617.92 for the year 1942. The cheese factory operated in the building basement was a contributing factor to the profit realized.

c.1944 Captain Gayle Laymon, M.D., of the Army Medical Corp, a native of St. Joseph, lost his life in the Aleutians; St. Joseph was represented in World War II by 293 service men and women.

1944 Maurice and Paul Gritten of Penfield, and Charles Reese and Tom Leeper of Sidney lost their lives in the war.

January 27 — A United States Women's Army Air Corps school was established at Chanute Field to provide technical training for women.

February — The United States Navy Signal School used the University of Illinois Stock pavilion for indoor training. Twenty signal bridges were erected indoors.

The Champaign County Board of Review fixed the county's assessed valuation at \$55 million.

Blackberry School, one of the county's earliest schools, closed; the 1894 building was remodeled and used as a residence. The original school building, built in 1869, was moved across the road to property owned by the University of Illinois. It is adjacent to a two-story log cabin built in 1853 and later covered with clapboard.

1944 November 4 — The Champaign County Livestock Marketing Yards were destroyed by a fire which attracted 3,000 spectators.

The Sadorus Methodist Church celebrated its 40th Anniversary.

1945 Wayne A. Johnston, a native of Champaign County and a graduate of the University of Illinois, was appointed president of the Illinois Central Railroad, a position he held until 1965.

Veterans of the battles of Bataan and Corregidor included the following from Champaign County: Charles Schmidt, Penfield; Archie Stever, Richard Damm, William Hauser, Richard Beck, William Wright, Tony Bilek, Merle Lype and John Miller, Rantoul; and Leland Chandler, Fisher.

September — A cow owned by George W. Johnson of rural Gifford was named champion shorthorn milking producer from over 1,000 herds in the U. S. and Canada; Abbott's Mary produced 19,000 pounds of milk and 851.2 pounds of butterfat during her lactation period.

1946 January 10 — Chanute Air Force Base's Separation Center closed after discharging thirty thousand men in three months following the end of World War II.

January 31 — Jacklyn H. Lucas, youngest member of the U. S. Armed Forces to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor, enrolled in University High School. He had left the 8th grade at age 14 to join the Marines.

The Urbana Am Vets Post was organized.

1947 The Illini football team beat U.C.L.A. in the Rose Bowl game at Pasadena, California, 43-14.

The State Highway Department proposed a super highway along the route of Bradley Avenue. State Representative Charles Clabaugh rejected the proposal and told the Highway Department any such plan should be implemented north of Champaign so as not to disrupt local residents.

August — Cole Hospital opened in Champaign.

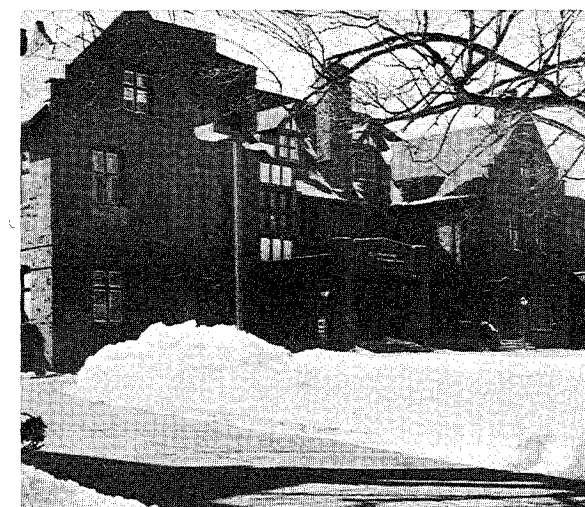
Railroad trackage in Champaign County traversed 24,235 miles and was valued at \$8,047,510. Mileage covered by individual railroads was: the Wabash, 71.74, New York Central, 50.81 miles; Illinois Central, 45.32 miles; Chicago and Eastern, Illinois, 44.27 miles; and Illinois Terminal, 30.21 miles.

Parking meters were installed in Rantoul.

The soybean crop in Champaign County had an estimated value of \$8 million. Soybeans were experimented with in the university greenhouses in 1903, and were introduced as a crop in Champaign County in the 1920's.



Champaign County Livestock
Marketing Yards
610 Gravel Road, Urbana

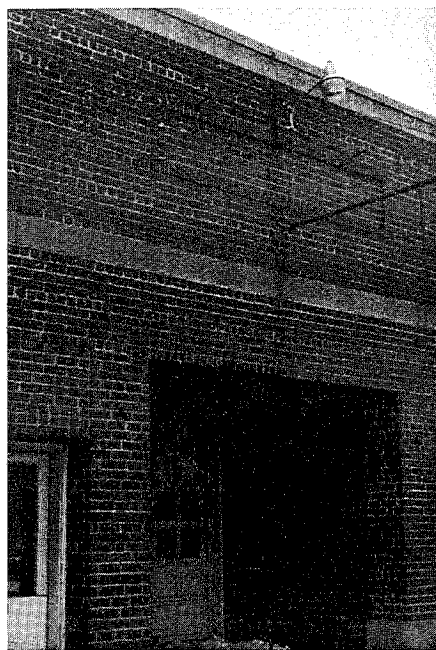


Cole Hospital
809 West Church Street, Champaign

Cole Hospital was originally the home of B. F. Harris, II. It was operated as a private institution by David and Faye Cole until 1972 when it was sold to Qualicare, Inc. The building was extensively remodeled and converted to a non-profit hospital operated by Cole Hospital, Inc. A large, new building addition was dedicated in 1979.



Rantoul Police Department
Southwest Corner, Sangamon and Tanner
Streets



Champaign City Garage Building
736 North Market Street

In December, 1974, the Champaign City Council voted to purchase eight city lots from Northwood, Incorporated for \$108,534 on which to build a new city garage at 702 Edgebrook Drive. The old city garage later became part of a community recycling center which opened in June, 1978.

- 1931 The University of Illinois Ice Rink was completed.
- 1932 Forty-two trunks containing John Philip Sousa's band library arrived at the university, as provided for in his will. The collection of several thousand copies of music included 110 of Sousa's own marches.
- 1933 Rantoul's Municipal Building was completed at a cost of \$25,000. Today it serves as a police station and court.
- January 1 — Knowlton and Bennett started their forty-fifth year as a drugstore in downtown Urbana and had never missed having an ad in an issue of the *Champaign County Herald* and the *Urbana Daily Courier* newspapers.
- January 8 — Fire destroyed the Royal School.
- January 26 — The University of Illinois College of Agriculture held a short course about new balloon tires for vehicles. Twenty-seven farmers attended.
- University of Illinois staff salaries were cut 10 percent. No salary was appropriated for the chimes player in Altgeld Hall and the traditional Sunday chimes concerts were suspended — a casualty of the Depression.
- June 20 — The First National Bank of Rantoul was held up by three gunmen who escaped with about \$5,000 in cash.
- June 28 — The E. R. Peters grain elevator at St. Joseph burned.
- Roads in the Sidney area were graveled through the Federal Works Program.
- The Urbana Chamber of Commerce set up a \$10,000 fund to back scrip which was accepted as money by Urbana businesses. Lloyd Morey, George Bennett, and Burke Webber were made trustees of the fund.
- Urbana schools had eight buildings and 2,656 students enrolled, a continuation of stable figures from the previous decade.
- The Champaign City garage was built on North Market Street with labor paid from federal emergency relief funds. The brickwork reveals the lack of masonry skill by those who erected the building; yet, it remains structurally sound a half-century later.
- c.1934 A mechanical corn picker was introduced to the Royal area.
- A cinch bug plague caused a large crop loss in the county.
- 1935 The Glover overhead road was completed east of St. Joseph.

- 1935 George Huff retired as Athletic Director of the University of Illinois after thirty-four years of service.
- 1937 The Champaign County Seed Company was formed.
- August 2 — Violet Jayne Schmidt died of tuberculosis in Champaign at age seventy. She was the first Dean of Women at the university, serving from 1897 until her marriage to Professor E. C. Schmidt in 1904.
- 1938 After being accepted at Harvard University, Bob Morrison of Mahomet rode his bicycle all the way to Boston. He later served as a military judge throughout Europe.
- Fire destroyed a block of the Gifford business district. Four businesses were lost. Damage was estimated at \$30,000 - \$35,000.
- 1939 The popcorn concession at the New York World's Fair was operated by Rantoul's Star Popcorn Products Company. It required 150-200 employees to operate the thirty stands; a half-million pounds of popcorn and three tank cars of popcorn seasoning were consumed.
- St. John's Lutheran Church at Royal was destroyed by fire.
- The worst flood recorded in Sidney occurred. The Town Hall was flooded, as was the telephone company. Every basement on the east side of David Street was flooded from two to four feet deep.
- 1940 The betatron was invented by University of Illinois physics professor Donald W. Kerst. Commonly called an "atom smasher," the betatron was capable of accelerating electrons to energies of hundreds of millions of electron volts.
- The Champaign County Farm Bureau had 1,785 memberships by the end of the year.
- The St. Joseph Waterworks was completed at a cost of \$66,000 — \$33,000 from bonds and \$33,000 from W.P.A. funds. The system covered the entire village, with a potential of 260 users.
- 1941 The 99th Pursuit Squadron, an all-black combat unit, was trained at Chanute Field.
- January 6 — W. E. Riegel, often credited as the first grower of soybeans in the county, gave a talk to a Farm Institute meeting at Sadorus.
- The Illinois Bell Telephone Company discontinued the crank-style telephone system, making it no longer necessary to dial county operator 116 and have her dial the number.



Huff Gymnasium
Fourth Street and Gregory Drive,
Champaign

The building was completed in 1926. It was named in honor of George Huff.



Professor Donald W. Kerst
Working on the betatron.



Sidney Town Hall, David and Main Streets

The 1939 flood waters rose almost to the doors of the Sidney City Hall.



Joseph T. Tykociner

1922 University of Illinois professor Joseph T. Tykociner presented the world's first public demonstration of sound-on-film, which revolutionized the motion picture industry.

A new building was dedicated by the Christian Church in Ogden. A new parsonage was built in 1931.

1924 June 15 — Fire destroyed the entire south side of the business district of Royal.

Street underpasses were completed under the Illinois Central Railroad tracks to provide better access between Champaign and Urbana. The project was begun in 1899. The tracks were originally laid at ground level.

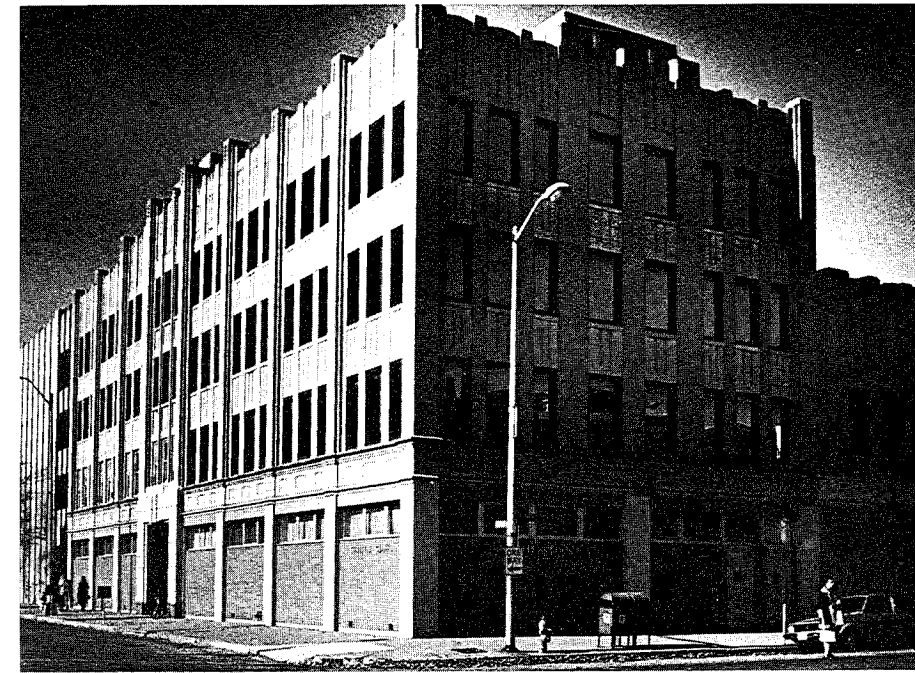
The Annabelle Huling Memorial Home for children was established in Rantoul as a result of a bequest from Madeline E. Huling.

1925 The Royal Band was organized and gave their first concert. In 1926 the band obtained uniforms. Their first marching practice was in the pasture on Fred Osterbur's farm.

Streets were paved in St. Joseph

1926 July 1 — Mahomet's Patton Lumber Company burned.

Collegiate Cap and Gown Company was founded in Champaign. Today, this company is the largest of its kind. Graduation gowns have not only supplied schools from kindergarten through college, but also many choirs, honorary degree recipients, and some Supreme Court Justices.



In 1937, Christie Clinic moved into offices at the corner of Clark and Neil Streets, in this building which they had purchased in 1936 and enlarged to five stories.

Christie Clinic
104 West Clark, Champaign

1927 Crystal Lake Park swimming pool opened in Urbana.

E. J. Molloy introduced the first "combine" in Champaign County on his farm northeast of Rantoul.

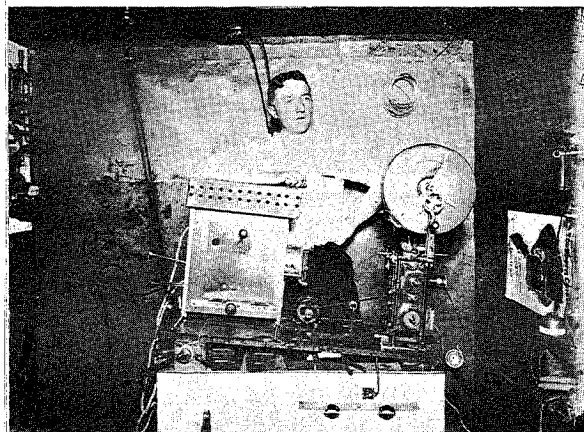
1928 May 10 — The relocation and rebuilding of the St. John's Lutheran Church of Royal was completed. The brick building, which had been erected in 1912 and located in the country, was dismantled and reassembled two miles east in the village of Royal.

1929 The world's first mass parachute jump of ten parachutists took place at Chanute Field.

Champaign's Christie Clinic was founded by Drs. C. W. and J. M. Christie, sons of an Irish farmer who came to Rantoul in the late nineteenth century and raised draft horses. The Clinic started on the top floor of the Lincoln Building on Main Street. Dr. J. B. Christie joined the clinic in 1934 and Drs. E. C. Albers and William Youngerman in 1935. A surprise party on December 7, 1954, at the Champaign Country Club marked the clinic's 50th anniversary. Plaques were presented to the Christies by Dr. Wendell R. Freeman, a member of the Board of Governors.

1930 June 2 - July 3 — The first free public kindergarten in Rantoul was in session.

Champaign County had 3,315 farms, with an average acreage of 183½ acres per farm. Modern machinery and industrial development enabled fewer farmers to till more acreage, as indicated by a drop of 315 farms and an increase of 18½ acres per farm during the previous decade.



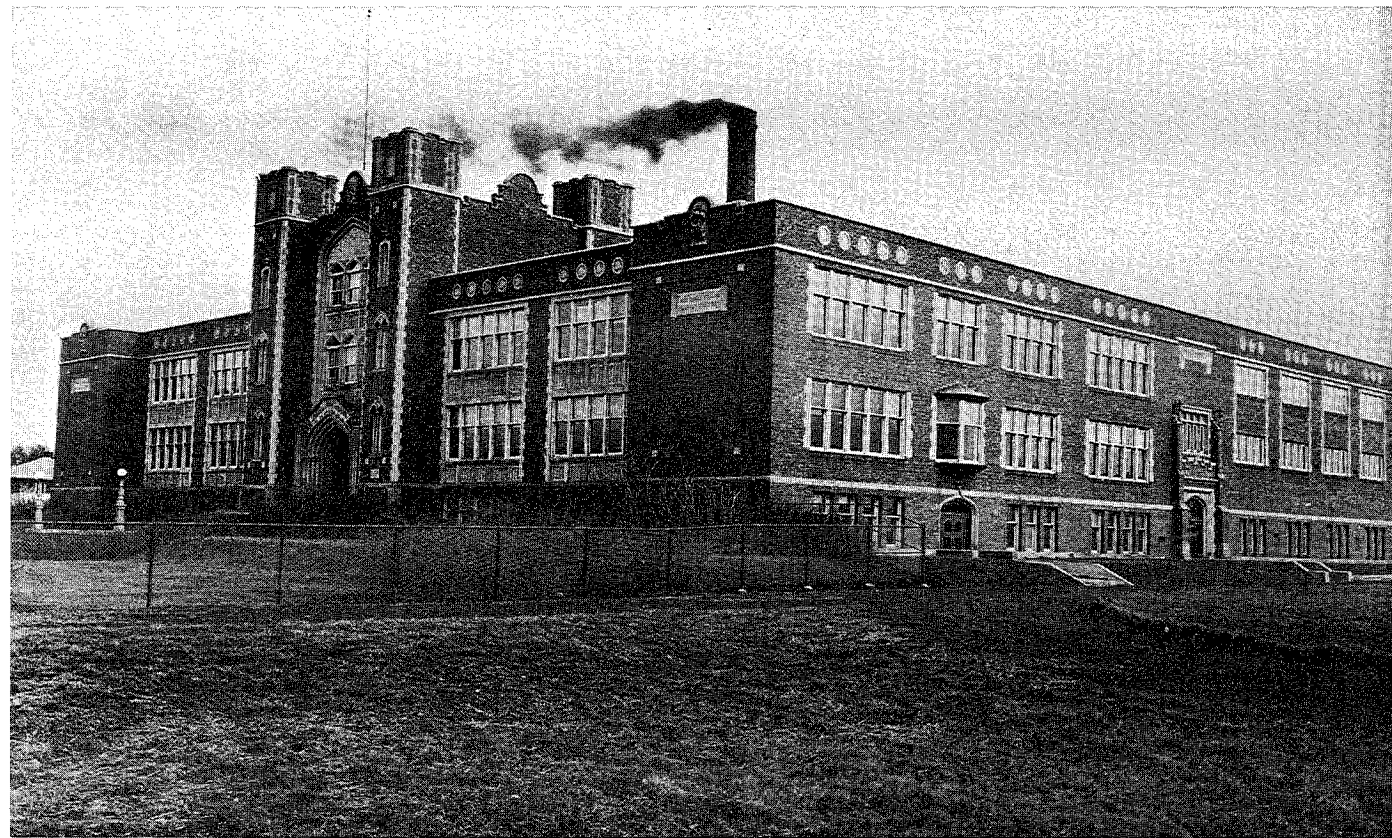
Silent Film Projectionist and Equipment
Champaign, 1909

Prior to Tykociner's invention, motion pictures were shown with written captions and frequently were accompanied by local musicians.



Gasoline Delivery Service

In 1929, the Champaign County Service Company was formed as a Farm Bureau Cooperative. The company soon began delivering fuel to farms for use in a rapidly increasing number of tractors and trucks.



Urbana High School
1002 South Race Street, Urbana



Walter Elmer Ekblaw

1916 The new Urbana High School opened. The three-story building was designed in the Gothic Revival style by Joseph W. Royer who also designed the county courthouse and many other local buildings. The high school included an auditorium seating 800; laboratories, a model dining room, pantry, and sewing room; a cafeteria; and locker rooms with lockers vented directly into the ventilating system. A vacuum cleaning system for the building was also a modern feature. A gymnasium wing complete with swimming pool and a running track was started in 1917.

The university's Ceramics Building was completed on Goodwin Avenue in Urbana.

1917 The St. Lawrence Academy in Penfield opened under the direction of the Dominican Sisters. At first a grade school, it later became a four-year high school. It was discontinued in 1943.

September 17 — *The Chicago Tribune* reported that Walter Elmer Ekblaw of Rantoul, a geologist and explorer, took his University of Illinois football with him on an expedition to Greenland and organized the first Eskimo football team there. Ekblaw, a member of the class of 1910, was a co-founder of the first collegiate homecoming, which was conducted at the University of Illinois that year. While at the university, he was also the editor of the *Daily Illini*.

The Fowler Bank, later the Fowler State Bank, was established in Rantoul. In 1962, the name was changed to the Bank of Rantoul.

1917 February — Mary E. Busey donated \$35,000 to build a library for Urbana. Ground was broken for the building in the summer.

1918 April 16 — Fire destroyed the Methodist Church and parsonage in Rantoul.

Busey Hall, a university dormitory for women, was completed on West Nevada Avenue in Urbana.

1919 The Rantoul school was destroyed by fire. It housed both the grade school and high school classes. Following the fire, construction was started on a new elementary school on the site of the old building and on a high school one block east.

1920 Carle Hospital opened in Urbana. The original building was the home of the Simeon Busey family. The enterprise was funded by a bequest from Margaret Burt Carle Morris.

Robeson's moved to their new store on Church and Randolph Streets in Champaign. It was the largest department store in central Illinois at the time.

The present Methodist Church building in Ogden was built. It was dedicated January, 9, 1921.

Champaign's Mittendorf Funeral Home acquired the first "motor" ambulance in the area.

The university's Smith Memorial Music Hall was completed. The building was the result of a gift of \$215,000 from Champaign attorney Captain Thomas Jefferson Smith in memory of his wife, Tina Weedon Smith. Captain Smith was a veteran of the Civil War.

1921 The University High School building was completed at 1212 W. Springfield, Urbana. The purpose of the school was to provide an education laboratory for the university.

A concrete bridge spanning the Salt Fork was built to the west of St. Joseph. The bridge was the largest in the county at the time. It was used until 1972 when it was officially closed.

The Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District was formed by a favorable vote of the twin cities. Dr. J. C. Dodds, P. W. Wright, and G. H. Radebaugh were appointed as the first Board of Trustees.

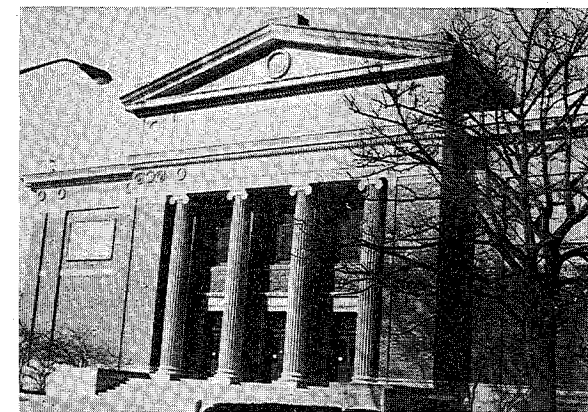
The University of Illinois started its own radio station. The call letters WILL were assigned to the station in 1928.

1922 September 29 — A hard road connecting Champaign and Danville was opened with a parade starting in Champaign and stopping in each village along the way.



Mary E. Busey

Mary E. Busey was elected to the University of Illinois Board of Trustees in 1904 for a six-year term.



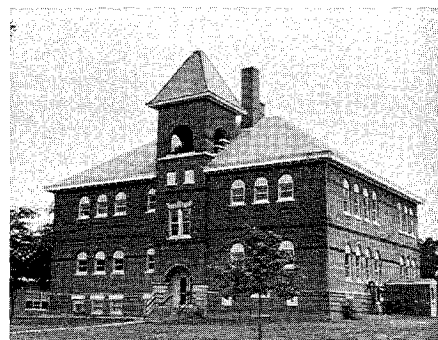
Smith Memorial Music Hall
805 South Matthews Avenue, Urbana



Detail, University High School

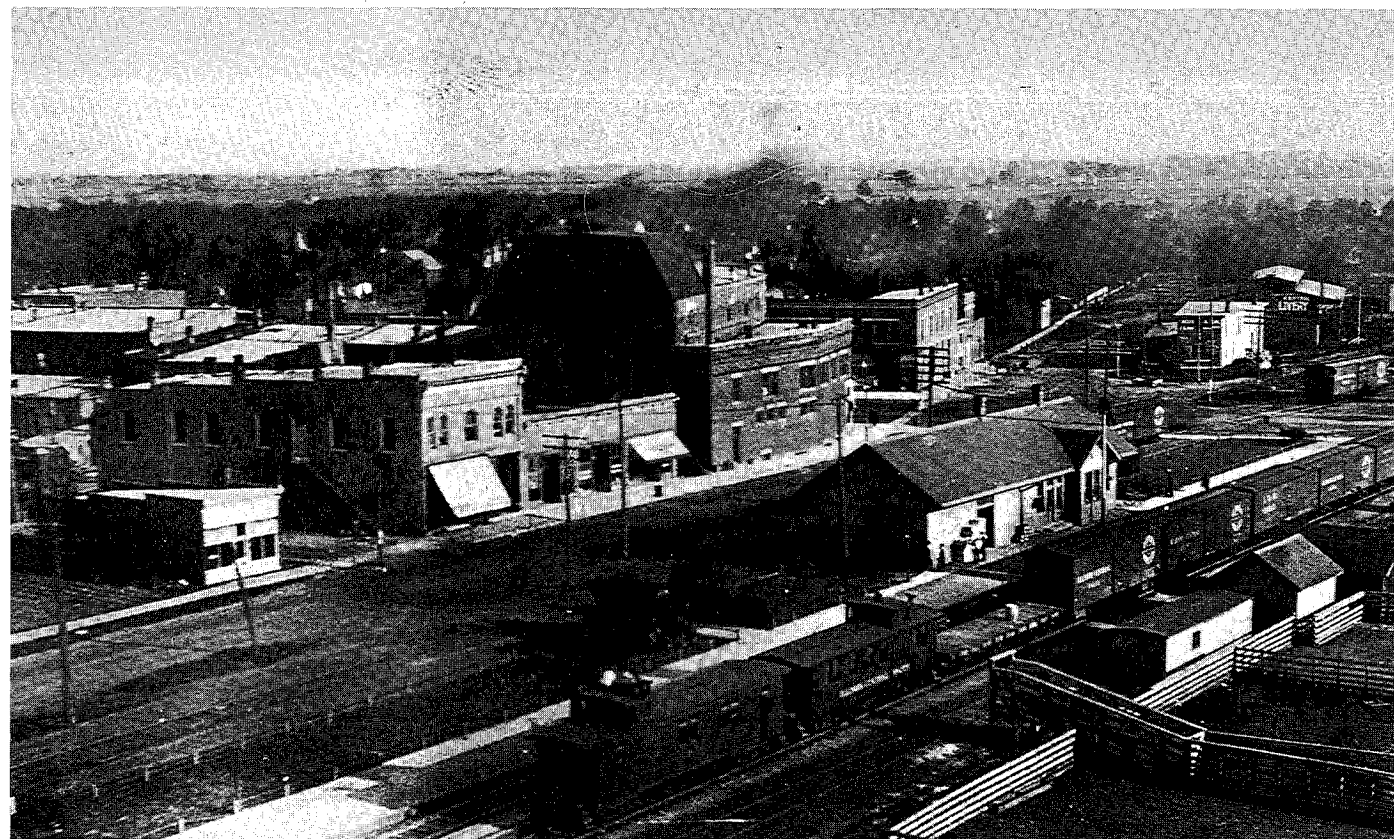


Looking West on Urbana's Main Street



Sangamon Grade School, erected 1908
Main and Jefferson Streets, Mahomet

Rantoul, between 1905-1912



- 1905 *The Rantoul Press* published 1,550 papers per week. Its competitor, *The Rantoul News*, also had recovered from the major fire of 1901. The two papers merged in the 1920's.
- 1905/06 The Fisher Electric Light Plant was built. At first privately operated, it became the village property in 1908.
- 1906 The Flatiron Building in Urbana was erected at the junction of Springfield Avenue and Main Street.
- May 10 — The Mahomet school burned. It housed both the grade school and the high school classes. The original plan of the school was closely followed when it was rebuilt in 1908. It is still used as a grade school.
- 1907 The first Corn Carnival and Fair was held in St. Joseph. It is still held each year in August.
- Much of Foosland was destroyed by fire.
- 1908 The Ogden Woman's Club was organized; it was federated in 1910.
- c.1909 The St. Joseph Co-operation Creamery opened; in May, 1910, it announced the biggest day of churning — 637 pounds of butter.

- 1910 June 28 — The St. Joseph elevator burned. Damage was estimated at \$7,000.

The first cars in Sidney were purchased by F. B. McElroy and by Albert Hudson. They were driven in the summer months and in the winter were stored on wooden blocks.

A third round barn erected by the University of Illinois was completed on St. Mary's Road, Urbana, making this the only place in the world where three round barns can be seen at once. The university's first round barn was built in 1902.



University of Illinois Round Barns

- 1911 Carrie Busey began work for the Champaign School system. She served as secretary to the Superintendent until her retirement in 1951. Carrie Busey School, 1605 West Kirby Avenue, Champaign, was named for her.

- 1912 October — Carle Park was donated to Urbana by Mrs. Margaret Burt Carle Morris.

The Penfield school burned.

- 1913 The *Fisher News* was founded by Pearl Hollingsworth.

- 1914 Dr. Henry E. Rowan, Champaign's first black physician, began practice on Walnut Street. He was in practice there until his retirement in 1929.

The Chief, a newspaper in Pesotum, was founded by A. F. Alblinger and Company.

A meeting of several women's organizations in St. Joseph was held for the purpose of receiving voting instructions. Elections required separate ballot boxes for women.

October — Champaign's new high school building at State and Green Streets opened. It included an auditorium with seating for 1,000, a swimming pool, gymnasium, cafeteria, and laboratories. Enrollment for 1914 was 585.

- 1915 January — The Four Nightingales, appearing at the Orpheum Theater in Champaign, took the opportunity to reorganize and rename themselves the Marx Brothers.

Two blocks of David Street in Sidney were paved with bricks.

November 4 — a new two-story brick school building was dedicated for St. Mary's parish in Champaign.

A second building for the St. Joseph Methodist Church was completed.

- 1916 The Farmers Elevator Company of Royal was organized.

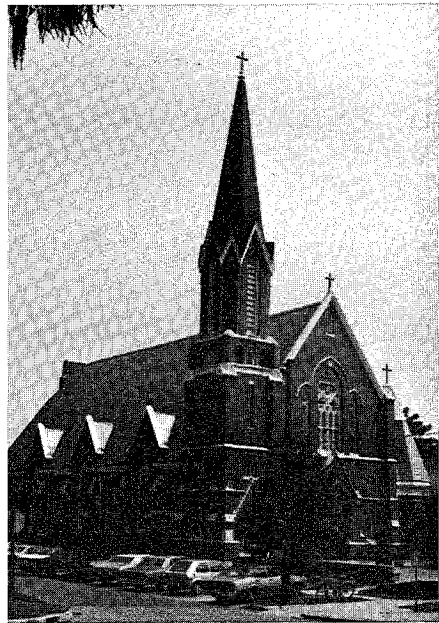


Carrie Busey in Her Champaign High School Graduation Dress, about 1908.



W. M. Ewing's Zouave Band

A popular musical group in the early years of the twentieth century was W. M. Ewing's Zouave Band, which performed throughout several states. Most of the musicians were from the Champaign area.



St. Patrick's Church
708 West Main Street, Urbana

1900 The Pleasant Hill Church, which was incorporated in 1893, built a church with the assistance of the Sidney Methodist Church. Mrs. A. G. Porterfield was the first Sunday School Superintendent. In 1962, the Pleasant Hill Church united with the Sidney Methodist Church.

1901 St. Patrick's Parish in Urbana was established. On May 24, St. Patrick's Church was dedicated. It was designed by George P. Stauduhar, who designed many midwest churches, including the Catholic churches at Penfield, Rantoul, and Ivesdale. The first priest at St. Patrick's was Fr. J. H. Cannon; he served until 1910.

The first telephone in Rantoul was installed by the Coon Brothers.

A telephone company was organized in Sidney by C. C. McElwee.

Thomas Arkle Clark was appointed the University of Illinois' Dean of Men, the first such position in any university.

The Christian Church of Sidney erected a house of worship.

The Presbyterian Church in Homer, organized by Rev. Enoch Kingsbury and A. P. Flech in 1857, was incorporated as the First Presbyterian Church of Homer. The first church building was erected in 1872. It was remodeled in 1901, the first of several alterations and additions.

August 9 — The entire business section of Rantoul was destroyed by fire.

August 20 — A dedication was held for the soldiers monument at the GAR cemetery at Homer.

1902 The Dewey State Bank was established.

June 19 — The Neal Opera House opened on Sangamon Street in Rantoul to a sellout crowd of several hundred people. Manager A. P. Neal's first production was "The King's Rival," a popular John Griffith comedy.

University of Illinois student R. C. Matthews became the country's first collegiate cheerleader.

December 6 — The Illinois Traction System officially opened between Urbana and St. Joseph.

1903 One of the big attractions at the Rantoul Fourth of July celebration was a merry-go-round. The day included speakers, games, and fireworks at Mink Grove.

October 7 — The St. Joseph Woman's Club was organized with twenty-seven members.

1903 The Methodist Church of Homer was established.

1903/04 The Busboom Grain Company elevator was built in Royal by William Kuhne of Rantoul.

1904 The Citizens Bank was established in Tolono by Lawrence Sandwell.

The Champaign Country Club was organized. Early presidents included: B. F. Harris, M. W. Busey, N. M. Harris, W. L. Gray, and R. R. Mattis.

April 30 — The Retail Merchants' Association of Champaign was organized; Frank Robeson was elected president. The following year the name was changed to The Chamber of Commerce of Champaign, and J. R. Trevett was elected president.

Royal's first doctor, Dr. George Potter, practiced medicine there from 1904 to 1920. Some of the lumber to build his home and office came from the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. He delivered 2,600 babies and organized the Christian Church in Royal.

Luther Tillotson started a bank in Royal.

The first block of concrete sidewalks was laid in St. Joseph. More were laid the following year.

The first train through Royal was on May 18; the first passenger train was on June 13.

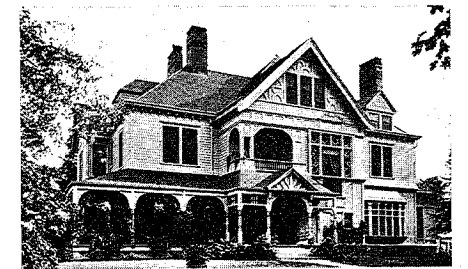
The first automobile in Rantoul was a Rambler owned by J. B. Meneley; it was soon joined by Dr. F. S. Diller's Oldsmobile.

1905 Homer Park opened. It drew as many as 3,000 visitors on Sundays with attractions such as a steam-powered excursion boat, skating and dancing facilities, and swimming with a toboggan waterslide and a diving tower.

Evangelist Billy Sunday spoke in Rantoul and claimed 550 converts to Christianity. The week long revival brought him \$2,481. His thirty-nine year preaching career included three hundred revivals where he reportedly received more than \$1 million in "free-will" offerings. As a result of his strong prohibition stance in Rantoul, the townspeople forced the closing of all six Rantoul saloons and at the next election voted the town dry.

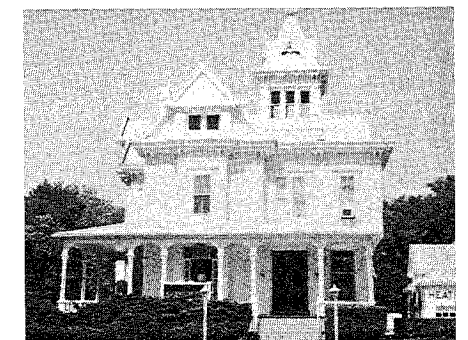
The bank in Royal was robbed. The robbers escaped with an unknown amount of money after blowing up the safe. The explosion threw the door of the safe through the roof of the building.

Water consumption in the twin cities rose to 1,000,000 gallons per day. By 1917, it became 2,000,000 gallons per day.



Newton M. Harris House
603 West Church Street, Champaign

The Newton M. Harris residence, shown in a photo from about 1905, is typical of the large houses erected in this west side neighborhood towards the end of the century. It was built in 1884. Newton M. Harris was the Vice President of the First National Bank of Champaign.



Mattis House
201 North Elm Street, Champaign

The large Queen Anne style Mattis house was built facing West Side Park by Ross Mattis, first president of Trevett-Mattis Bank. Today, it houses the Heath and Sons Funeral Home. The Trevett House was also built bordering West Side Park. The elegant Georgian Revival style home was built in 1900 by J. R. Trevett, partner of Ross Mattis. The Trevett-Mattis Bank was a predecessor of the Bank of Illinois. The residence is now the Owens Funeral Home.



Trevett House
101 North Elm Street, Champaign



Rantoul's "Shuttle Bus"

The Coon Family prepares to be transported to a family reunion aboard the "shuttle bus," a turn-of-the-century mode of transportation which operated on special occasions from Rantoul to Mink Grove.



Joseph Kuhn and Company



Foesland Grain Company

Right: Chester Transfer Company, 1909



Capron Memorial Play Sculpture
The sculpture was given by Mr. and Mrs. Donald Moyer, Sr., in memory of Mrs. Moyer's father, Hazen Capron, former Vice President of the First National Bank in Champaign.

1965 Joseph Kuhn and Company, 33 East Main Street, observed its 100th anniversary as Champaign retailers.

The Foesland Grain Company acquired the elevator at Bellflower. In 1968, the elevator celebrated its 50th year of operation.

1966 The Commercial Bank of Champaign installed the area's first televised-teller facility in a drive-up at their bank on the northwest corner of University Avenue and First Street.

The University of Illinois' Rehabilitation-Education Center at the northwest corner of Stadium Drive and Oak Street was dedicated.

William C. Rose, professor emeritus of chemistry at the University of Illinois, was named the recipient of the National Medal of Science for his discovery of the essential amino acid, threomine.

Revitalization of Champaign's "Old Town" was announced by O. F. Bartholow of Vaughn and Bartholow Real Estate. The old Chester and O'Byrne transfer company warehouse at 63 East Chester Street was converted into a restaurant and lounge called "Chances R."



1966 June 4 — The Capron Memorial play sculpture by William Fothergill was dedicated in Champaign's West Side Park.

The Champaign Park District's Prairie Farm, given in memory of Margaret O. Franklin by her husband, John, opened in Centennial Park with baby animals for children to touch.

1966 Tommy Stewart, Champaign High School coach, was named the Illinois Prep Coach of the year.

Weller Homes Incorporated offered to sell new houses in Champaign's Holiday Park and Urbana's Scottswood subdivisions for no money down on Veterans Administration loans or less than one hundred dollars down in any other financial arrangement.

Under a revised University of Illinois administration, Jack Peltason was named the first chancellor for the Champaign-Urbana campus and Earl Porter was named the first secretary to the Board of Trustees.

December — The Lindsey Triplets, Anita, Becky, and Cathy Lincicome of Philo, entertained servicemen at the Thule Air Force Base, Greenland, during a holiday tour sponsored by the U. S. Department of Defense.

December — The new Champaign Public Post Office opened at the northeast corner of Columbia and Neil Streets. Beginning January 1, 1967, post offices required the use of zip codes on all mail.

1967 January 25/26 — a severe ice storm struck Champaign County and destroyed 57 percent of the trees in the county. Electric power was cut off in some areas for weeks. The storm caused damage estimated at several million dollars.

January — Ezra Levin, a biochemist from Champaign, was notified that fish flour, a food product he had developed twelve years earlier from whole fresh fish, was approved for human consumption by the United States Food and Drug Administration. Levin was president of the Viobin Corporation in Monticello, Illinois.

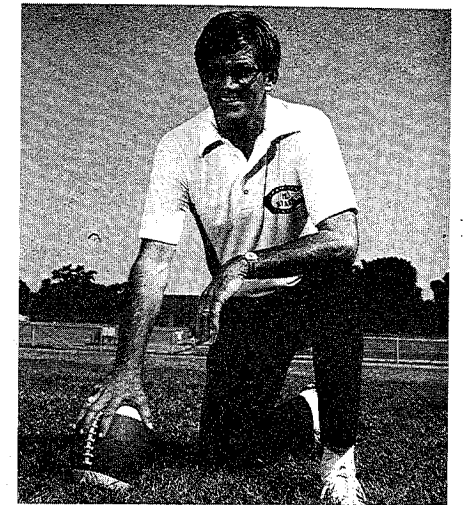
In its centennial year, enrollment at the Urbana-Champaign campus of the University of Illinois was 30,407. There were 177 physically handicapped students. Men students outnumbered women 20,173 to 10,234.

November — The twelve-sided, three-story Park Circle Professional Building, designed by the firm of Doyle and Brotherson, was completed at 507 South Second Street, Champaign.

December 20 — Lewis H. Clausen, President of the Champaign National Bank, announced a new drive-up facility would be built at the northeast corner of Springfield Avenue and Randolph Street due to frequent congestion of traffic near the bank's downtown site at Park Avenue and Randolph Street.

Assessed valuation of property in the county was estimated at \$601 million, an increase of almost \$42 million over that of 1966.

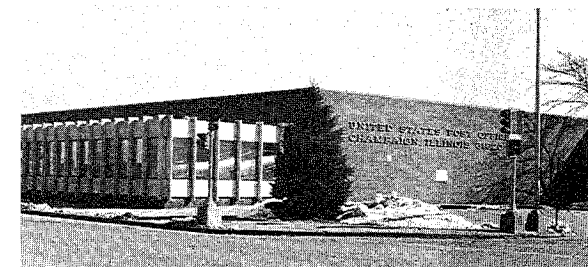
St. Thomas's Roman Catholic Church in Ivesdale celebrated its 100th anniversary. Their church building was erected in 1893.



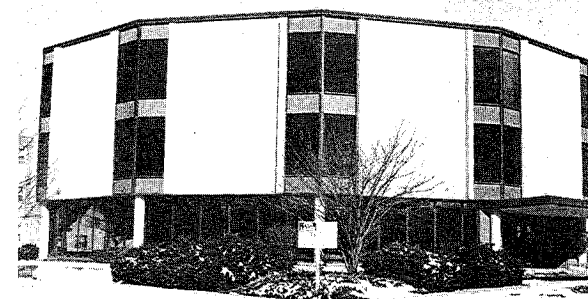
Tommy Stewart



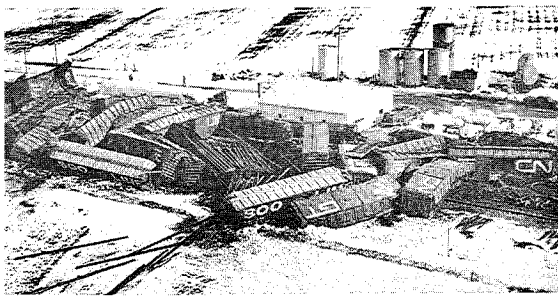
Earl Porter



Champaign Post Office



Park Circle



Train Derailment, Royal



Early American Museum, Mahomet



*Urbana Civic Center
I-72 and I-57 Interchange
West of Champaign*



1968 January 21 — A train derailment of forty-five cars at Royal caused five hundred thousand dollars damage.

The Sidney United Church was formed from the merger of the St. Paul's Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church. The new congregation met in the Presbyterian Church building while plans were made to build a new facility, a gift of Mrs. Mabel Hunter who was a former resident of Sidney.

The Champaign County Forest Preserve opened its museum at the Lake of the Woods, Mahomet, with a collection of artifacts given by William S. Redhed of Homer.

Plans for a major auto sales and service complex at 2000 South Neil Street, Champaign, were announced.

Ground was broken for the Urbana Civic Center.

1969 The Clifford-Jacobs Forging Company observed its 50th anniversary. Originally a two-man partnership, by the 1980's the company grew to employ an average of nearly three hundred people at its site north of Champaign. The company custom manufactures die steel forged parts for heavy equipment used in mining, farming, earth moving, tunnelling, oil field exploration, and the aircraft industry.

1970 The City of Champaign adopted an affirmative action ordinance.

The 100th anniversary of Parkville in Sadorus Township was observed. Originally the settlement was called Soonover; it was renamed in 1870.

October 21 — Interstate Highway 72 opened from I-57 at Champaign to White Heath, Illinois. The eleven-mile section cost \$5.6 million. It linked the previously completed section between White Heath and Monticello.

1971 Chanute Air Force Base ended all flight operations.

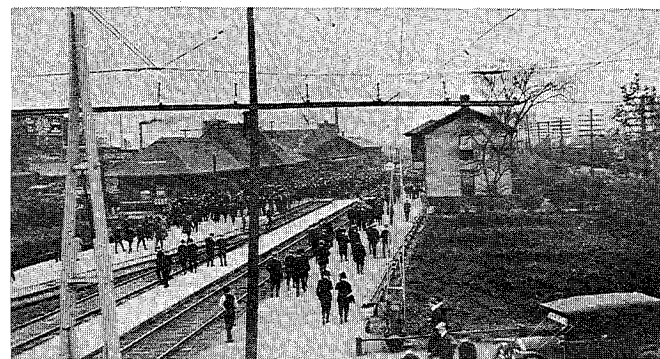
Richard Davis was the first black person to be elected to the Champaign Park Board.

The village of Bondville was incorporated.

May 1 — Amtrak took over all passenger service on the Illinois Central Railroad.

June — Urbana lost its major manufacturer. The Magnovox plant closed due to reduced government contracts; one thousand workers became unemployed.

Heimlicher's Sundry Store, which occupied the historic Cattle Bank building at the northeast corner of University Avenue and First Street in Champaign, was gutted by fire.



1971 Knowlton and Bennett drugstore sold their business to photographer Edward H. Dessen. The business was started in 1877. In 1926, the present building at the southeast corner of Race and Main Streets was built.

1972 Barney Grill of Rantoul was elected president of the American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor.

Voters approved the establishment of the Champaign County Mental Health (708) Board. Betty Lazarus was named the first executive director.

The first teachers' strike in Champaign's Unit Four School District took place. It lasted one week.

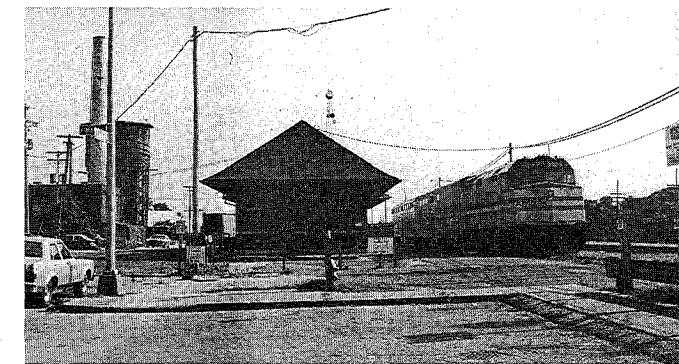
Democrat James Burgess, Jr., retired military officer, was elected County States Attorney. He was the first black person to be elected to an administrative office in the county. Burgess was later appointed a federal judge.

1973 A county zoning ordinance was enacted.

Bikeways were established and signs designating routes were posted in the twin cities.



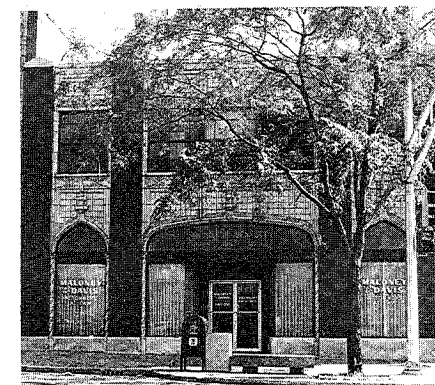
Chanute Air Force Base



*Above left: I. C. R. R. Depot, Early 1920's
Chestnut and Main Streets, Champaign*

*Above right: An Amtrak Boarding Site at the
Champaign Railroad Station*

Although a new railroad station was erected in 1924, the old depot and the old water tower remain a part of the scene. For several years the old depot housed the Railway Express Agency.



Knowlton and Bennett Building



Mittendorf Funeral Chapel
2400 Galen Drive, Champaign



Old Sidney Methodist Church, Main Street
The building is now a private residence.



Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church
County Roads 800 East and 2400 North

1973 The Rantoul Park District opened its Brookfield Golf Course. The Park District was established in 1943. Serving on the first board of directors were: K. T. Frost, Lynn Gibbs, Lee Morris, Lester Ogle, and Russell Waters.

September — The Rantoul Plaza Shopping Center opened east of Rantoul on Route 136.

The eighty-year old Dewey grain elevator, owned by the Fisher Farmers Coal and Grain Company, was destroyed by fire. One hundred thousand dollars worth of soybeans were lost.

1974 The new Mittendorf Funeral Chapel opened. Organized in 1899 as Mittendorf and Kiler, a combined furniture store and funeral home on Champaign's Main Street, the firm separated in 1914 and Louis Mittendorf moved the funeral services to 134 Park Avenue. From 1925-1974, the Mittendorf Funeral Home was located at the southwest corner of State Street and University Avenue in the former home of Albert Eisner, Sr.

An addition to the Urbana Free Library was completed and opened to the public. The \$3.1 million addition and extensive remodeling of the 1917 structure was authorized by a three-to-one vote of Urbana citizens in 1971. Work was completed in 1975.

Combe Laboratory opened at the Rantoul Industrial Park and provided employment for more than one hundred persons in the manufacture of toiletries.

The Sidney Methodist Church and the Philo United Methodist Church merged. A new church building was erected in Section 18 of Sidney Township and the church adopted the name of Countryside United Methodist Church.

August 14 — The Mount Vernon United Methodist Church celebrated its 100th anniversary, still using the building dedicated in 1874. The church originally had separate entrances for men and women; the men sat on the north side of the church and the women on the south side.

1975 There were 5,800 non-academic workers employed at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus.

The University of Illinois Large Animal Clinic opened at 1102 West Hazelwood Drive, Urbana, and the Medical Sciences Building opened at 506 South Matthews, Urbana.

For \$590,000, the Champaign County Forest Preserve District purchased 820 acres of land near Penfield from Kyle Robeson to be used as the Middle Fork Forest Preserve.

H. I. Gelvin, Lyle Franks, and C. V. Wilson retired as board members of the Champaign County Forest Preserve District. All of them had served since the District was formed in 1948. Gelvin had served continuously as the agency's president.

1975 The National Academy of Arts, established in 1971 by Gilbert Wright, obtained the Inman Hotel as a headquarters for their private school for students of ballet, dance, and music. The building was renamed the Pauline G. Colwell Center

The Illinois Bell Telephone Company's local manager, Harlan James, announced that there were over one hundred thousand telephones in the twin cities

The Solo Cup Company, which acquired the former Magnavox plant at 2505 East Main Street, Urbana, employed one hundred and fifty persons in the manufacture of paper cups and other paper and plastic products.

1976 The Chanute Military Credit Union constructed a new \$1 million, three-story building at the corner of Garrard Street and Champaign Avenue in Rantoul.

March 20 — Tornadoes left fifteen families homeless in Sadorus and did severe damage at Ogden. Philo and Ivesdale were also hit. Although no one was seriously hurt, dozens of people required medical treatment.

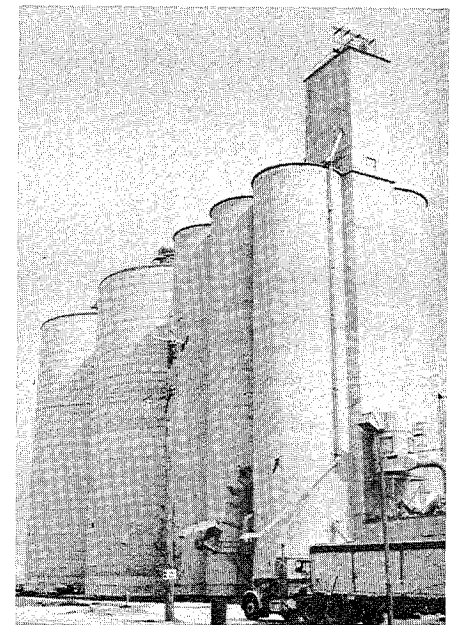
1977 Auctioneer Gordon Hannagan of rural Penfield sold a parcel of land for \$4,300 an acre, the highest price which had ever been received for farm land in Champaign County.

The Fisher Farmers Grain and Coal Company completed an addition to their grain elevator at Dewey. The company was established in 1906.

The Altar Guild of the Emmanuel Memorial Episcopal Church of Champaign observed its 50th year of selling thousands of decorated Easter eggs to raise funds for the church and altar furnishings.



National Academy of Arts
17 East University Avenue, Champaign



Fisher Farmers Grain and Coal Company
Dewey Elevator

Emmanuel Memorial Episcopal Church

The Emmanuel Memorial Episcopal Church, erected in 1917-1918 at the northeast corner of State Street and University Avenue in Champaign, replaced an earlier church of 1882 at the same site. The new building was designed by Ralph A. Cram, a leading exponent of Gothic Revival style. Cram also designed the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City.



Marajen Stevick Chinigo, Publisher
The Champaign-Urbana News Gazette

The Front Page of the Last Issue of the
Champaign-Urbana Morning Courier



Courier Building
111 North Race Street, Urbana

After the newspaper ceased publication, the Courier building remained empty for over a year. It reopened November 10, 1980, as the Courier Cafe.

- 1977 The Champaign-Urbana News Gazette observed its 125th year of operation. It was founded as the Urbana Union in 1852.
- 1978 December 20 — Cable TV went on the air in the twin cities after eight years of delays caused by franchise negotiations and litigation. The first subscribers to cable TV were Michael and Nancy Kirby of 1304 South Vine Street, Urbana.
Construction began on the new county jail.
- 1979 The Anita Purves Nature Center opened in Crystal Lake Park in Urbana.

The Courier newspaper ended publication following 102 years of service to the area. It began as the Champaign County Herald in 1877; in 1934, it was acquired by the Lindsay-Schaub newspapers.

Saturday
March 31, 1979

Classified 7:00
Deaths 7:00
Obituaries 7:00
Sports 7:00
News 7:00

List to trustees
in president hunt

How fair are
CAST reports?

Page 15 Page 4

The Morning Courier
CHAMPAIGN-URBANA, ILLINOIS

80 Pages — Vol. 106, No. 85

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA, ILLINOIS

Saturday, March 31, 1979 * 15 Cents

Goodbye, Champaign-Urbana

The torch is passed to you

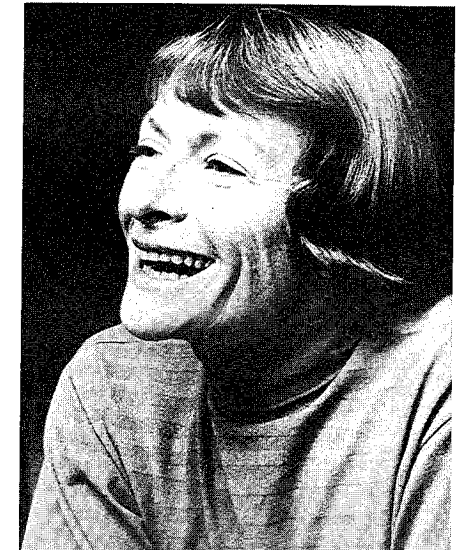
Parting words

More parting words, page 3, 16

102-year history of Courier comes to close

The Morning Courier ceased publication with today's issue. Although its traces remain in the pages of the newspaper, the torch is passed to you. The Morning Courier was founded in 1877 as the Champaign County Herald. It was acquired by the Lindsay-Schaub newspapers in 1934. The newspaper has a rich history of serving the community. The final issue is a testament to the dedication of its staff and the support of its readers. The building, which has stood for over a century, will be repurposed as the Courier Cafe. The staff wishes to thank the community for its support over the years. The Morning Courier is proud to have been a part of the Champaign-Urbana community for over 100 years.

- 1979 Joan Severns was elected the first woman mayor of Champaign.
The Southland Corporation, parent company of 7-Eleven Food Stores, opened a \$10 million food distribution center at the west edge of Champaign.
- 1980 August — The interior of St. Peter's United Church of Christ in Champaign was extensively damaged by fire. The building was erected in 1957, the third for the congregation. Earlier church buildings were located at 108 East Church Street (1865), and at the southwest corner of Fourth Street and University Avenue (1895).
The Foolsland Methodist Church observed the 75th anniversary of the 1905 rededication of their church, which was established in the 1870's.
CarleCare, a health maintenance organization, was established by the Carle Medical Center in Urbana.



Joan Severns

St. Peter's United Church of Christ
905 South Russell Street, Champaign



Southland Corporation Trucks
2309 Bloomington Road, Champaign



Foolsland Methodist Church



Albert E. Shelton

1981 Albert E. Shelton was selected the Illinois Small-Business Person of the Year. The Shelton Laundry, 1104 North Goodwin, Urbana, was started in 1942 by Shelton's mother. It operated out of their backyard. Sales in 1980 exceeded \$1.2 million, making it the largest commercial laundry in Illinois, south of Chicago.

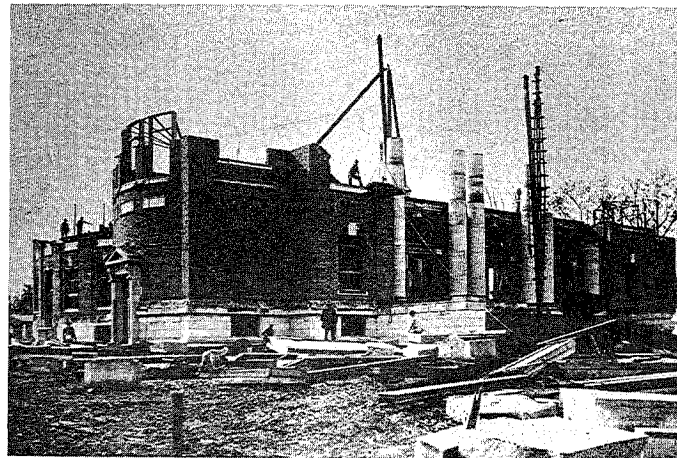
January 20 — Marine Sgt. Paul E. Lewis of Homer was released after being held hostage for 444 days in the American Embassy at Teheran, Iran. Several thousand people gathered along Homer's Main Street on January 31 to give Sergeant Lewis a hero's welcome home.

Construction began on the University of Illinois' \$11.8 million Agriculture Engineering Sciences building at 1208 West Peabody Drive, Urbana. It was funded by a state appropriation to the Food for Century III program.

1982 Chanutte Air Force Base received Congressional approval for \$23 million in improvements.

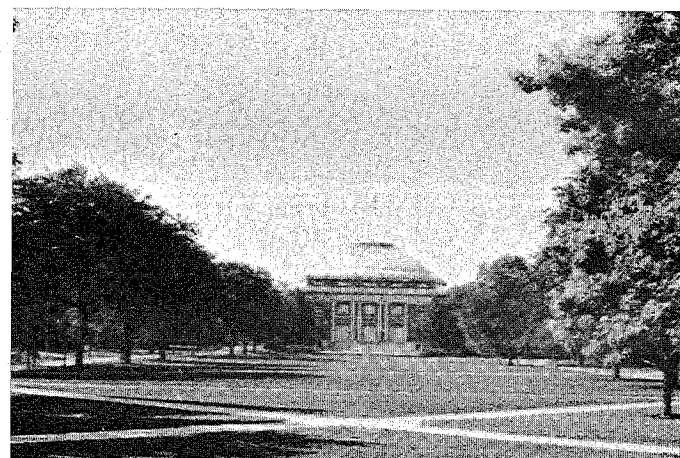
Rick Schmidt of Royal was elected to the Illinois Basketball Hall of Fame.

The Junior League of Champaign-Urbana celebrated fifty years of community service.



Left: University of Illinois Auditorium, 1906

Right: University of Illinois Auditorium, 1983



1982 The University of Illinois received a \$3 million gift from 1932 alumna Helene Foellinger to renovate the 1906 Auditorium building at the south end of the campus quadrangle.

1983 The Universal Bleacher Company in northwest Champaign closed after fifty years of making folding bleachers for gymnasiums.

Extreme heat and drought dropped the corn yield in Champaign County to 88.9 bushels per acre. The 1982 yield was 146.8 bushels per acre.

1983 The University of Illinois was named the third best public university in the country in a national survey of over six hundred college presidents. The survey was conducted by *U. S. News and World Report*.

The university's Veterinary Medicine Basic Sciences Building at 2001 South Lincoln Avenue, Urbana, was dedicated. The facility covered six acres of ground; it contained 158,000 square feet and cost \$25 million.

Mark Hindsley, director emeritus of the University of Illinois bands, was inducted into the National Band Association Hall of Fame at Troy, Alabama.

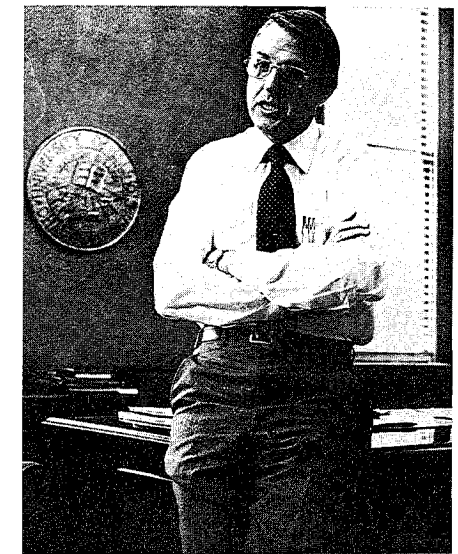
Congress approved a four-year funding program for \$79 million to build a new heating plant at Chanutte Air Force Base.

Carle Hospital officials determined that their maternity building, opened in 1959, was too energy-inefficient to modernize economically and the building was demolished.

Champaign County Farm Bureau Information Director Dennis Riggs reported more than six thousand members.

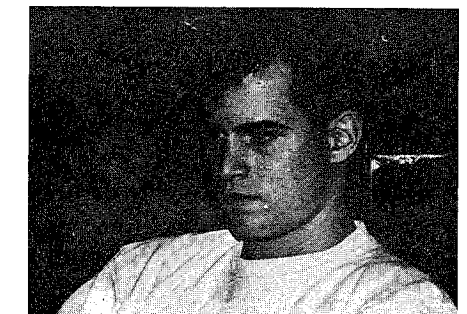
Rodney Morris of rural Champaign was elected as state president of the Future Farmers of America.

Sunday, October 23 — Marine Sergeant Joel Livingston of Champaign was one of 241 American servicemen and 58 French paratroopers who were killed by terrorists' bombing of the American Marine Headquarters in Beirut, Lebanon. Staff Sergeant Joe A. Curtis of Champaign, who was stationed at the Beirut Airport instead of the nearby headquarters, escaped the bombing.



Stanley O. Ikenberry
University of Illinois President

President Ikenberry came to the Champaign-Urbana campus in 1979 from Pennsylvania State University where he was the Senior Vice President of Administration. Two previous university presidents, David Dodds Henry, and George Dinsmore Stoddard, were alumni of Pennsylvania State.



Joel Livingston

Memorial markers honoring Champaign County veterans are present in several county cemeteries, including the Mt. Hope Cemetery at Sidney and the Bailey Memorial Cemetery northeast of Tolono. Joel Livingston was honored with a military funeral in Homer's G. A. R. Cemetery, which is operated by the Homer American Legion Post #290. Joel Livingston and Paul Lewis were brothers-in-law.

Memorial Marker, Dedicated 1971
Mt. Hope Cemetery, Champaign

Bank President Robert B. Rice and Philo Exchange Bank Personnel

The original portion of the bank's second structure is on the right. It was built in 1901 and extensively remodeled in 1957; an addition was made in 1966 which increased the banking space by approximately 125 percent.



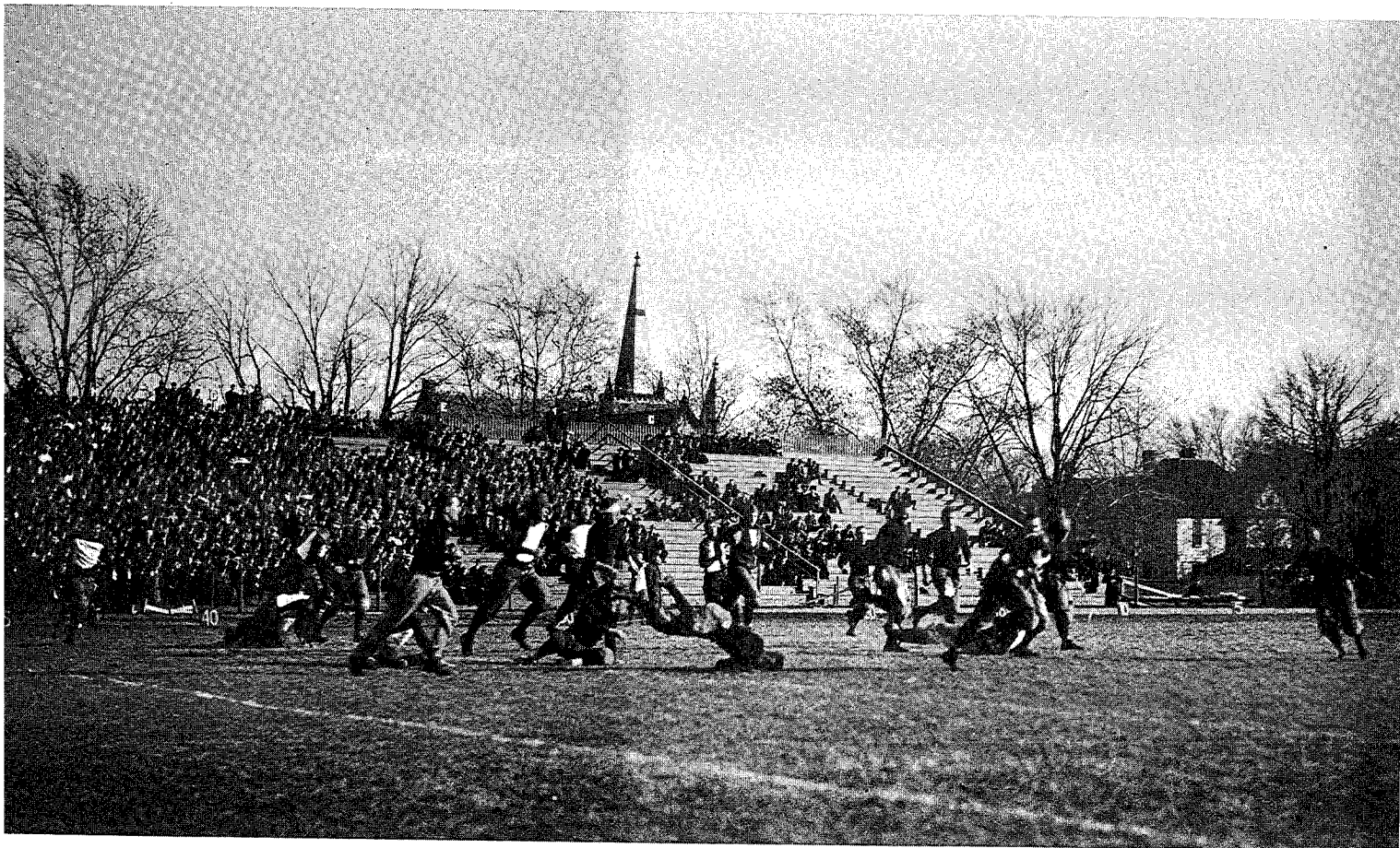
The 1910 Illini football team won the University of Illinois' first Big Ten Conference football championship. The team was unbeaten, untied, and unscored upon, while compiling a seven win-zero loss season record. Four opponents were Big Ten Conference Teams.

Illini Football Game, 1910

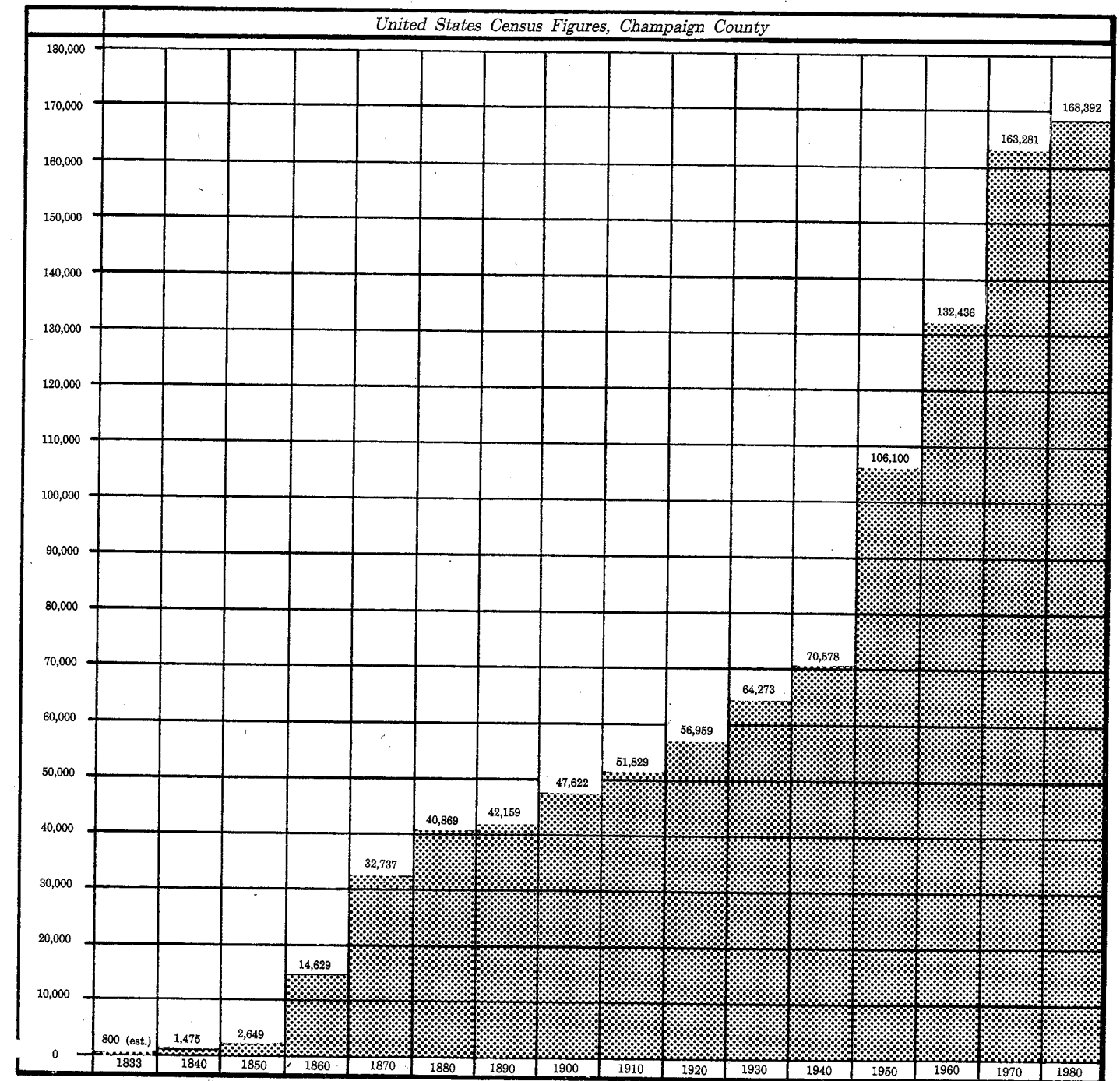
1983

The Philo Exchange Bank observed its 100th anniversary.

December — The Illini Football team won the Big Ten Conference championship with a regular season record of ten wins and one loss. Nine of the victories were over Big Ten Conference teams.



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY POPULATION



Census figures for 1980 for incorporated communities in Champaign County were: Allerton*, 8; Bondville, 442; Broadlands, 346; Champaign, 58,133; Fisher, 1,572; Foolsland, 153; Gifford, 848; Homer, 1,279; Ivesdale*, 337; Longview, 207; Ludlow, 397; Mahomet, 1,986; Ogden, 818; Pesotum, 651; Philo, 973; Rantoul, 20,161; Royal, 274; Sadorus, 435; St. Joseph, 1,900; Savoy, 2,126; Sidney, 886; Thomasboro, 1,242; Tolono, 2,434; and Urbana, 35,978. (Communities only partially in Champaign County are indicated with an *.)

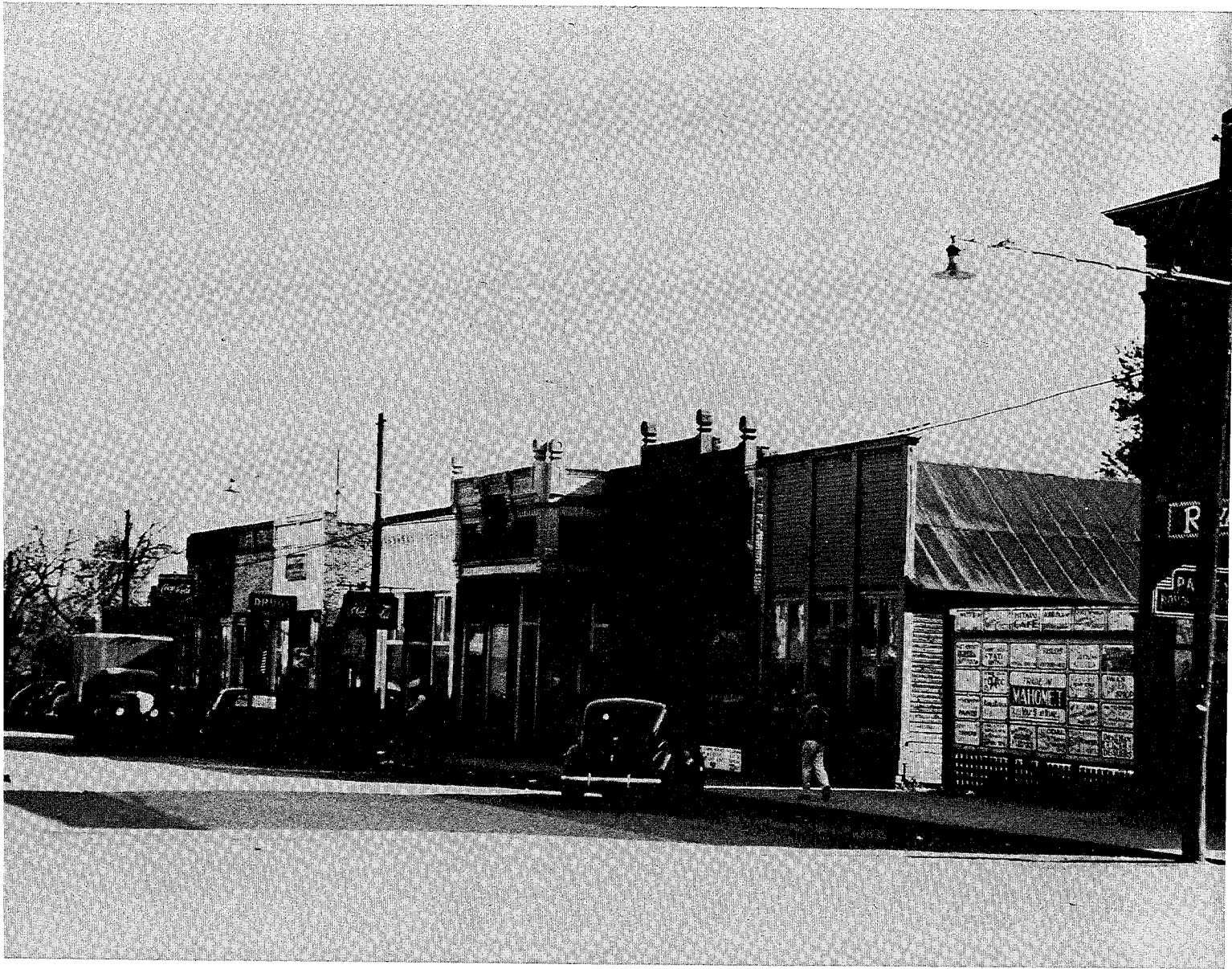
The Illinois Heritage Association and the Champaign County Sesquicentennial Committee have been supported by one hundred sponsors in the publication of this county history. Their commitment to preserving the heritage of Champaign County has made the publication of this book possible.

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 Henry and Edna Ziegler

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