

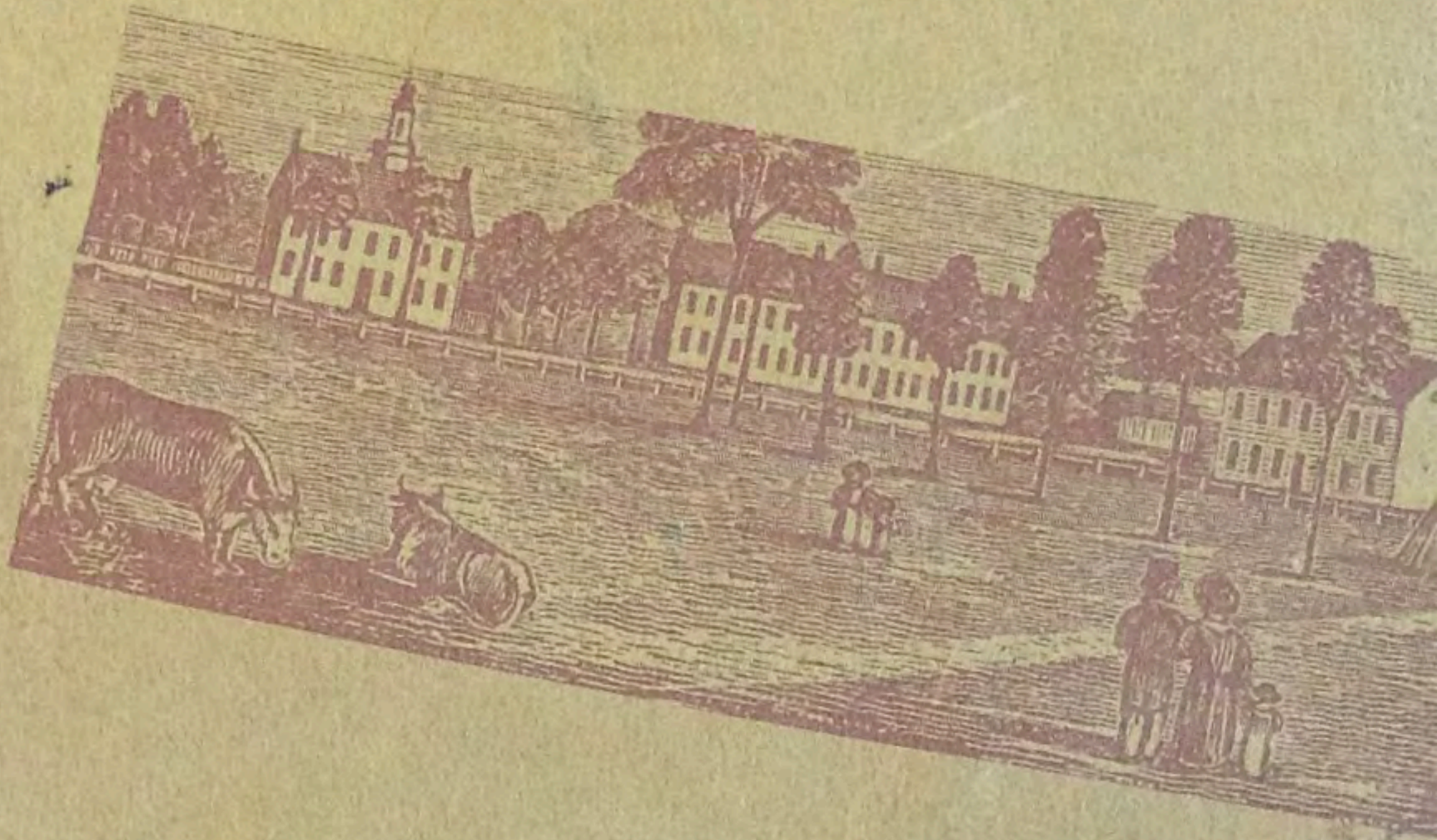
# At the Crossroads

## Springfield, Massachusetts 1636-1975

AMHERST COLLEGE



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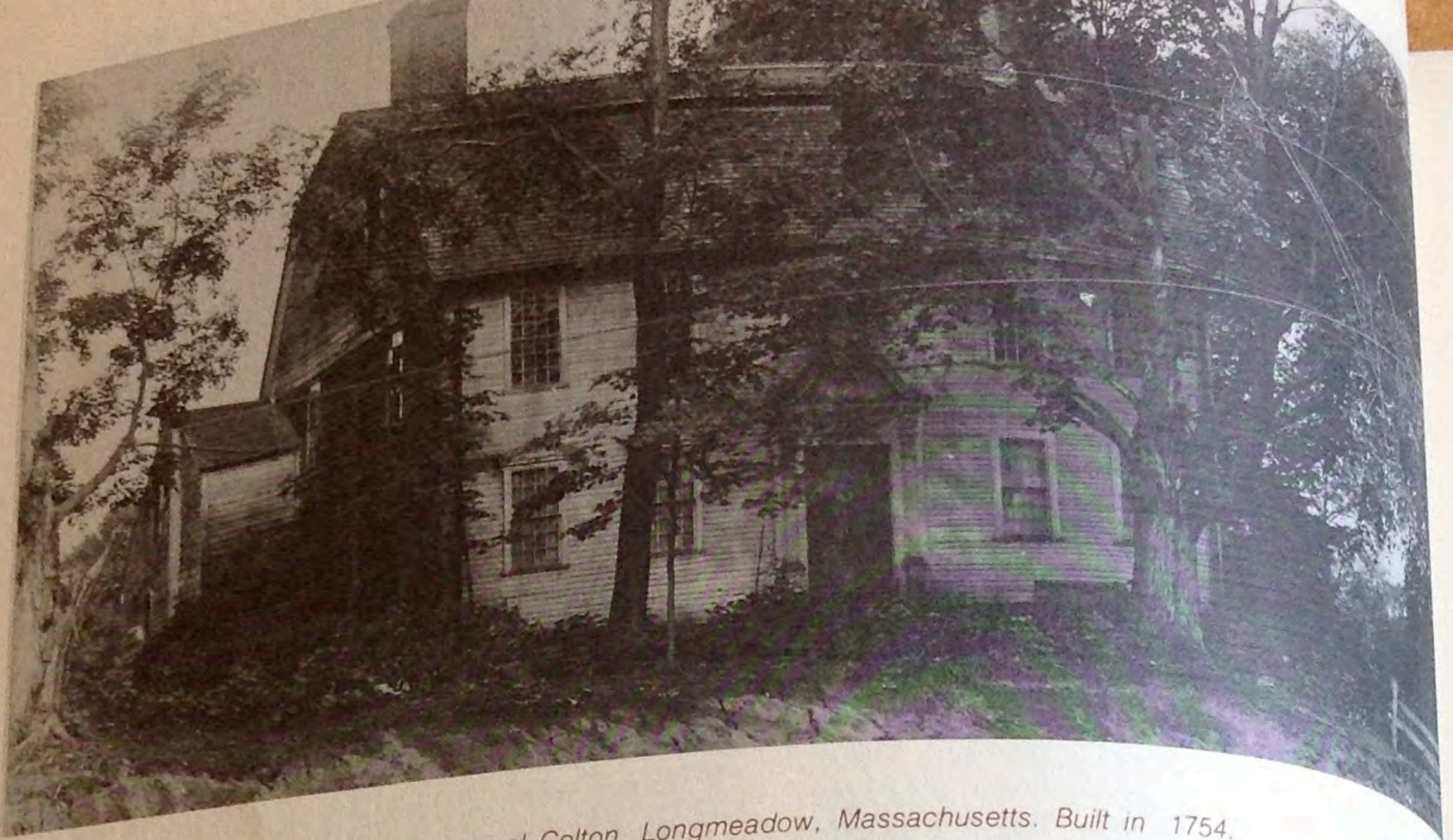


JOHN LITTLE  
...  
JAN M. THOMPSON,  
...  
LARRY W. GORDEN,  
HAT CASE & STORE  
...  
G. S. ...  
FRENCH BOOT MAKER  
...  
UNITED STATES HOTEL  
...  
E. W. ...  
LEVI LITTLE  
...



HAYNES





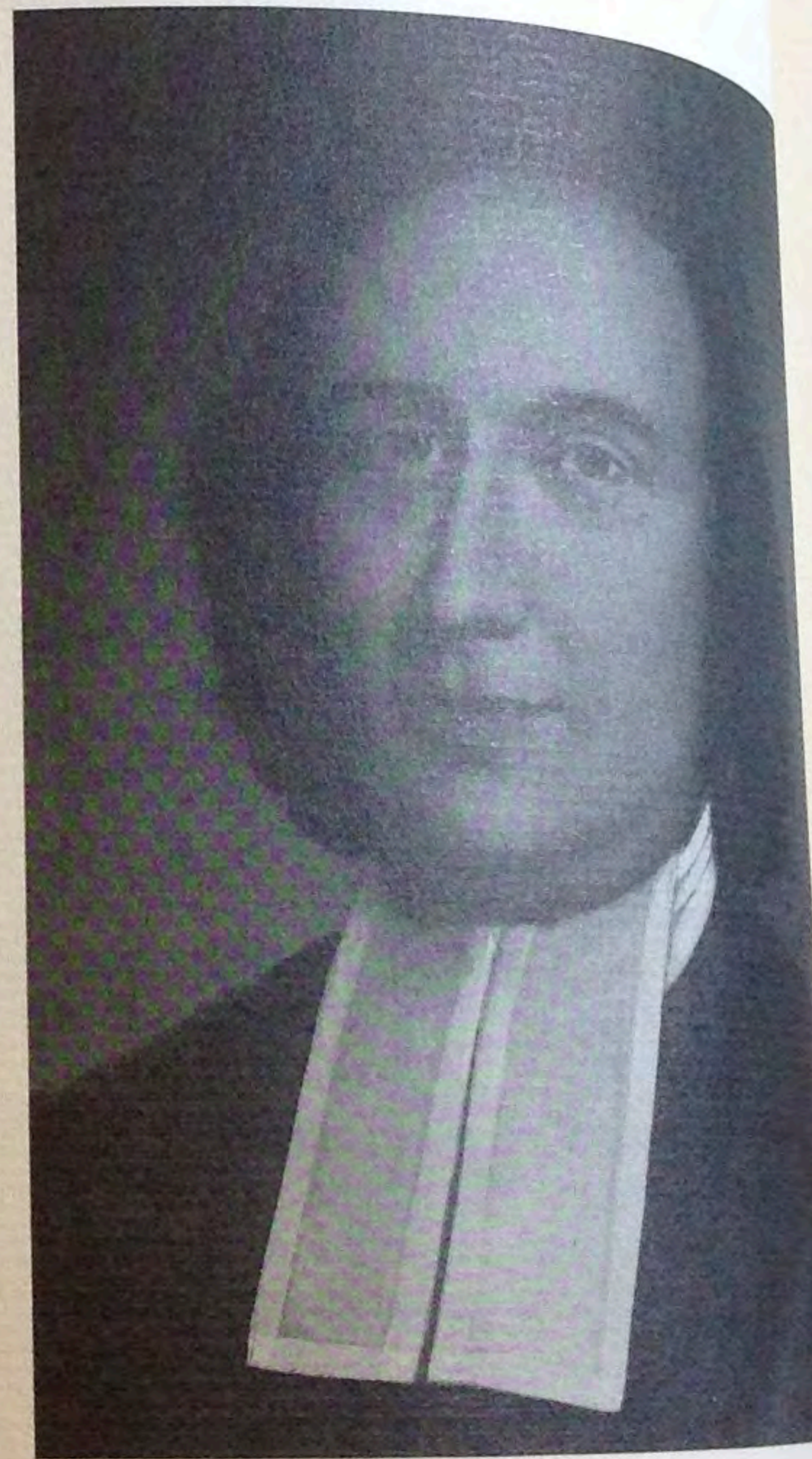
*Home of Samuel Colton, Longmeadow, Massachusetts. Built in 1754.*

West Indies trade and in merchandising here and in England. He was not averse to trading in slaves and was a slave-owner himself as were some of his neighbors, including Pastor Williams. Both men were along in years and by disposition conservative. Colton was held to be of Tory sympathies by some who knew him, though he protested this label and asserted his patriotism. At the same time he retorted that he did not share the "liberty-mad" views of some townsmen.

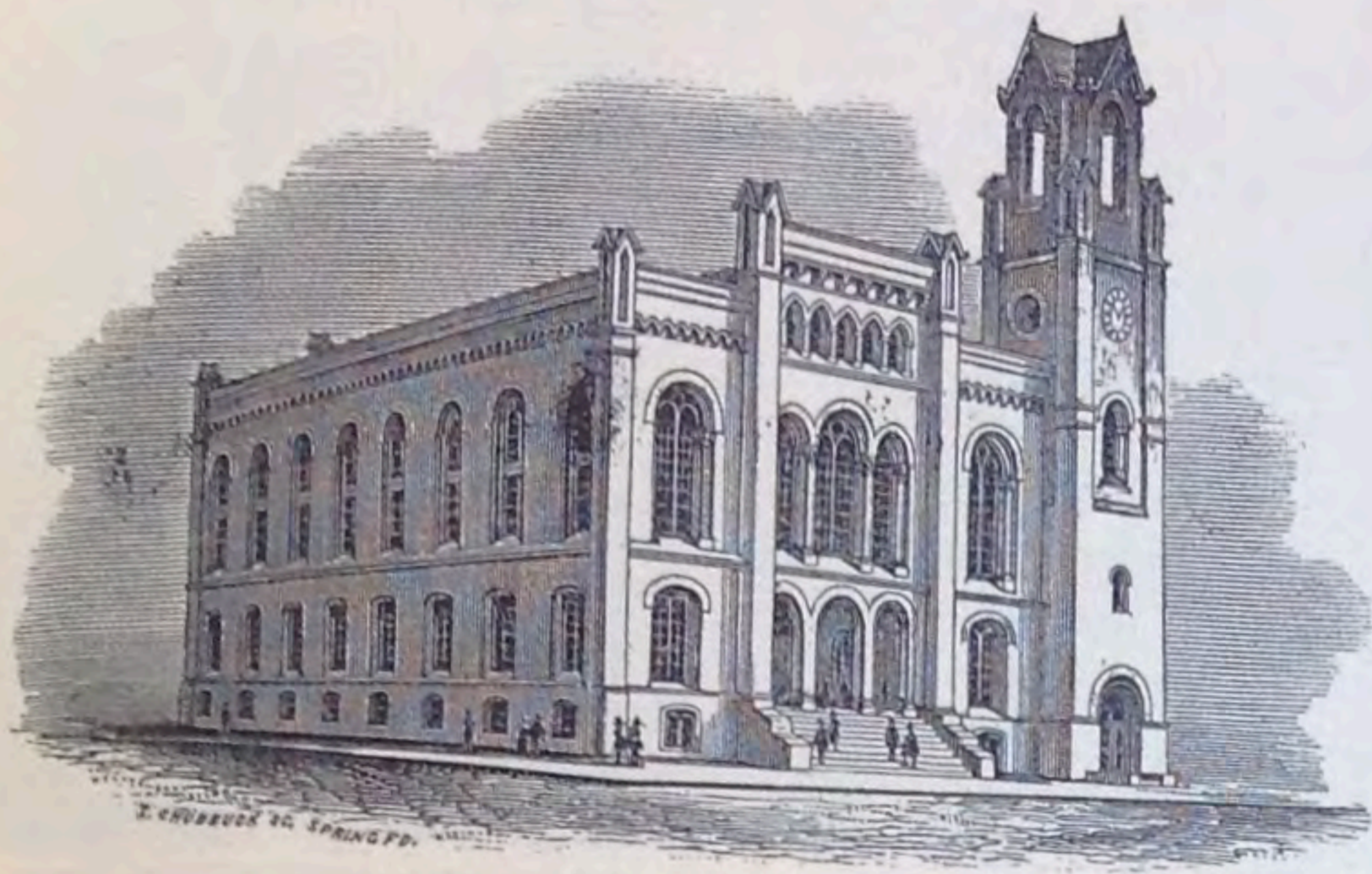
One July midnight, 1776, a group of his neighbors and fellow parishioners with blackened faces and barely disguised as Indians attacked the house where he kept his stores and carted off rum, salt, molasses and other goods. Their complaint was that Colton would not accept continental currency and demanded high prices, thus hurting the new nation's economy.

Pastor Williams noted the occurrence in his diary: "July 24, a number of people . . . some dressed like Indians . . . went to Merchant Colton's and have taken away his goods. I don't see the justice or equity of it."

Acknowledging in his diary that he could "perceive that the people are out of humor with me for things I have said and done," the minister steered a humble course and bowed to the spirit of the day. His diary entry of August 11, 1776, reveals that he read the Declaration of Independence to his congregation "being required to do so by the Provincial Congress." Springfield Historian Harry A. Wright comments that



*The Reverend Stephen Williams.*



Springfield's "new" City Hall, completed in 1856.

A City Hall was started two years after the charter was granted. The noted editor-historian Josiah G. Holland delivered the address on that dedicatory occasion, January 1, 1856. It was a fitting assignment, for Holland had just completed his detailed and readable *History of Western Massachusetts*.

Dr. Holland and City Clerk Ingraham knew they were witnessing a transformation of the community, but they could not foresee the sudden and dramatic changes that were to occur in the following decade with the outbreak of war.

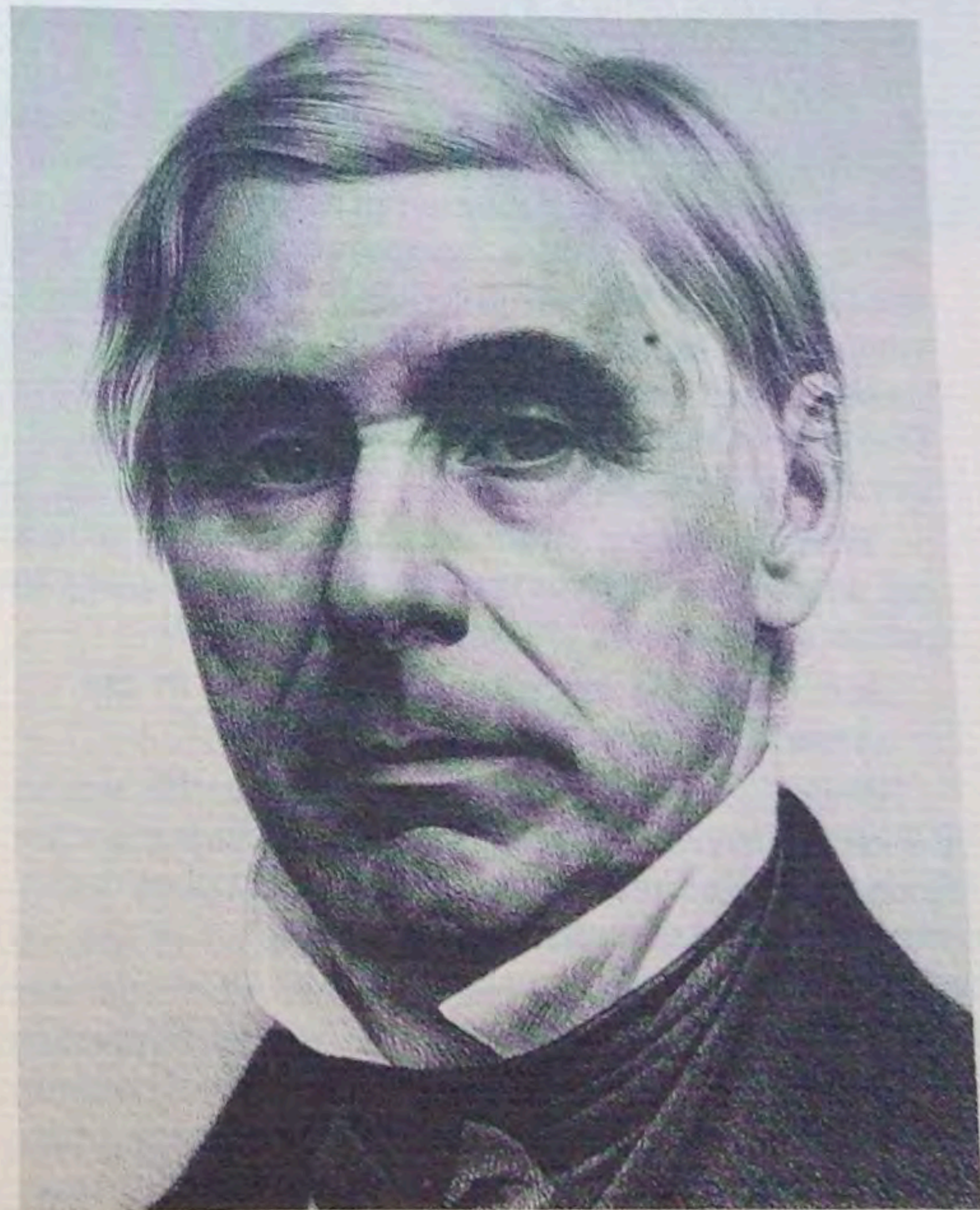
Springfield at mid-century had no thought of war. The citizenry generally disliked slavery, but it also disliked anti-slavery agitators. In the winter of 1851, an angry mob prevented an English abolitionist, George Thompson, from holding an announced rally here. He was besieged in his hotel room by an unruly crowd and hanged in effigy in Court Square. *The Springfield Republican* denounced the visitor as a "vile slanderer of America and her people" and lumped Thompson with other abolitionists and "revilers of religion and the Union."

Early in the century, however, the community had given tangible indication of its feeling toward slavery when by public subscription it purchased the freedom of a fugitive slave. The runaway, a woman from Schenectady, N.Y., had come here with her son and had married a black man called Old Jack, reported to have been a slave in Longmeadow. The woman's master, Peter Van Geyseling, arrived here in February, 1808, and had her arrested. A stir was created in town by the situation, and nineteen residents contributed \$100 to allow the selectmen to buy "a negro woman, called Jenny, about thirty years of age." It is noteworthy that six women were among the contributors responding to the appeal by the Rev. Bezaeleel Howard and that the selectmen themselves assisted the effort.

It was some years later in 1840, when the first political abolitionist organization, The Liberty Party, was established in town. The "underground railroad" operated here with the assistance of both white and black residents, in defiance of the law. The runaway slave would take refuge at the home of a "friend of freedom," be given breakfast and a sleeping place, then resume his journey north. The destination in most instances was Canada.

The house of Dr. Samuel B. Osgood on Main Street below Howard Street was one of the "stations" on this railroad. Dr. Osgood, minister of the old church, took care of as many as 50 slaves a year in this fashion. He was one of the community's leading abolitionists. Another was John Brown, the historic martyr of the anti-slavery cause, who lived part of his life in Springfield.

Brown, born in Torrington, Connecticut, of Mayflower ancestry, came to Springfield sometime before 1850 to engage in the wool business. He helped organize a wool cooperative here to assist growers in their dealings with the manufacturers. After some business reverses, he left Springfield to live in New York state but soon returned here to resume abolitionist efforts with a new intensity. He rallied blacks and their friends here and formed the first and only known branch of the United States League of Gileadites to aid fugitive slaves.



Samuel Osgood, minister of First Church.

Forty-four blacks, at least, joined the organization, according to Springfield Historian Mason A. Green. Heading the list was B.C. Dowling. Other members included J.N. Howard, sexton of the South Church, known for his stories on slavelife; Thomas Thomas, who had been born a slave in Maryland and had bought his freedom; and Eli S. Baptist, a free black from Pennsylvania who had come to this community in 1850 and later helped found St. John's Church and the Sumner Lodge of Masons here.

Baptist was one of a group of blacks who went to colonize the island country of Haiti in the Caribbean in 1860-63, abandoning that effort to return to Springfield. Thomas, who came to Springfield in 1840, had worked on steamboats and in hotels. He was employed for a time at the Hampden House and Chandler House, and later ran his own restaurant.

In Springfield John Brown was known as a religious man with church connections and as a Bible-quoting leader of stubborn convictions on the anti-slavery side. He lived here with his family in several locations. One residence at 31 Franklin Street was well known to the neighborhood until it was torn down in this century. Associates of Brown recognized him as a dedicated and shrewd leader, but they did not guess the lengths to which he would go for his cause.

As Brown lay wounded in Virginia in 1859 following his ill-fated seizure of the U.S. Armory at Harpers Ferry, his thoughts turned to Springfield and old friends here. He appealed to Judge Reuben A. Chapman for legal help in defense of himself and five fellow prisoners. The latter could not respond, and all six were hanged for treason. Before his death, Brown penned an eloquent statement of his intentions, denying any plan to murder, commit treason or incite to rebellion. In a funeral eulogy for Brown, the noted orator and reformer, Wendell Phillips, saw virtue exalted "that such a man had lived." The bell at the Methodist Church on Union Street here tolled on the day he was hanged.

Whittier wrote a poem honoring Brown's memory, but other lines best remembered are those sung by soldiers and school children after his death:

"John Brown's body lies mouldering in the grave  
"But his soul goes marching on."

While Brown's aggressiveness was not the reason, the anti-slavery cause gained in Springfield. *The Springfield Republican*, reflecting community sentiment, had at first insisted that restoration of the national union was the compelling issue in the conflict that was shaping. The danger of Southern secession to the republic was underlined as a threat to the liberty of all people. But before actual hostilities broke, the anti-slavery stance had been assumed here. When President Lincoln declared for emancipation, the city responded amen.

"Let every loyal man feel grateful that he has two good and great ends . . . to fight for, instead of one," said *The Republican*, embracing the double-barreled cause of saving the Union and freeing the slaves.

The bombardment of Ft. Sumter in April, 1861 followed by the presidential call for 75,000 militia from the states created a spine-tingling patriotism from Immediate enlistments resulted, reminding of another April response — that of 1775.

It was a stirring time of men marching off under the colors, of companies being organized and drilled here and then leaving with gala sendoffs. City Clerk Horace C. Lee, Ingraham's successor in the office, departed to form an infantry regiment, to lead men into battle, to be taken prisoner and then be lucky enough to be exchanged and mustered out with brevet of brigadier-general. (And subsequently to serve as the city's postmaster for 12 years.)

James Barnes of Springfield, a West Point graduate, civil engineer and builder of railroads, was not so fortunate. Like Lee, he entered the war early and led troops in several campaigns. He was wounded, seriously enough that he did not go back to field duty, returning home as brevet major-general. His health was not restored, and he died three years later.

Civil War Historian James L. Bowen, writing of Hampden County's part in the "War of 1861-65," notes that soldiers of this area were spread through 80 Massachusetts units as well as in troops of other states. Many were in regiments recruited, organized and trained in Springfield. In some instances these outfits were commanded by local leaders, though Bowen says that commissions were not handed out generously in western Massachusetts. Local commanders did include Lee, Judge William Shurtleff, Oliver Edwards and Henry Briggs. The Tenth Regiment, with Briggs commanding, was one of those units training in this city. The camp was in Hampden Park in the North End, near today's wholesale food center.

The Twenty-Seventh Massachusetts Volunteers also trained here in a flat area on the Hill, now known as Winchester Square. Both of these units were given an enthusiastic sendoff after their short periods of preparation in 1861. Two other regiments were royally greeted the following year, including the Thirty-Seventh, which later fought at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg with many casualties.

As the war ground along with victory less immediate than had been anticipated, the casualty rolls growing and the calls for fresh troops all too frequent, the "glory" of the conflict was fading fast.

The poignant journal of a Springfield soldier suggests the atmosphere and recites the sacrificing routine of the times. The diary, quoted in Harry A. Wright's *The Story of Western Massachusetts*, was that of a 19-year-old who had responded to President



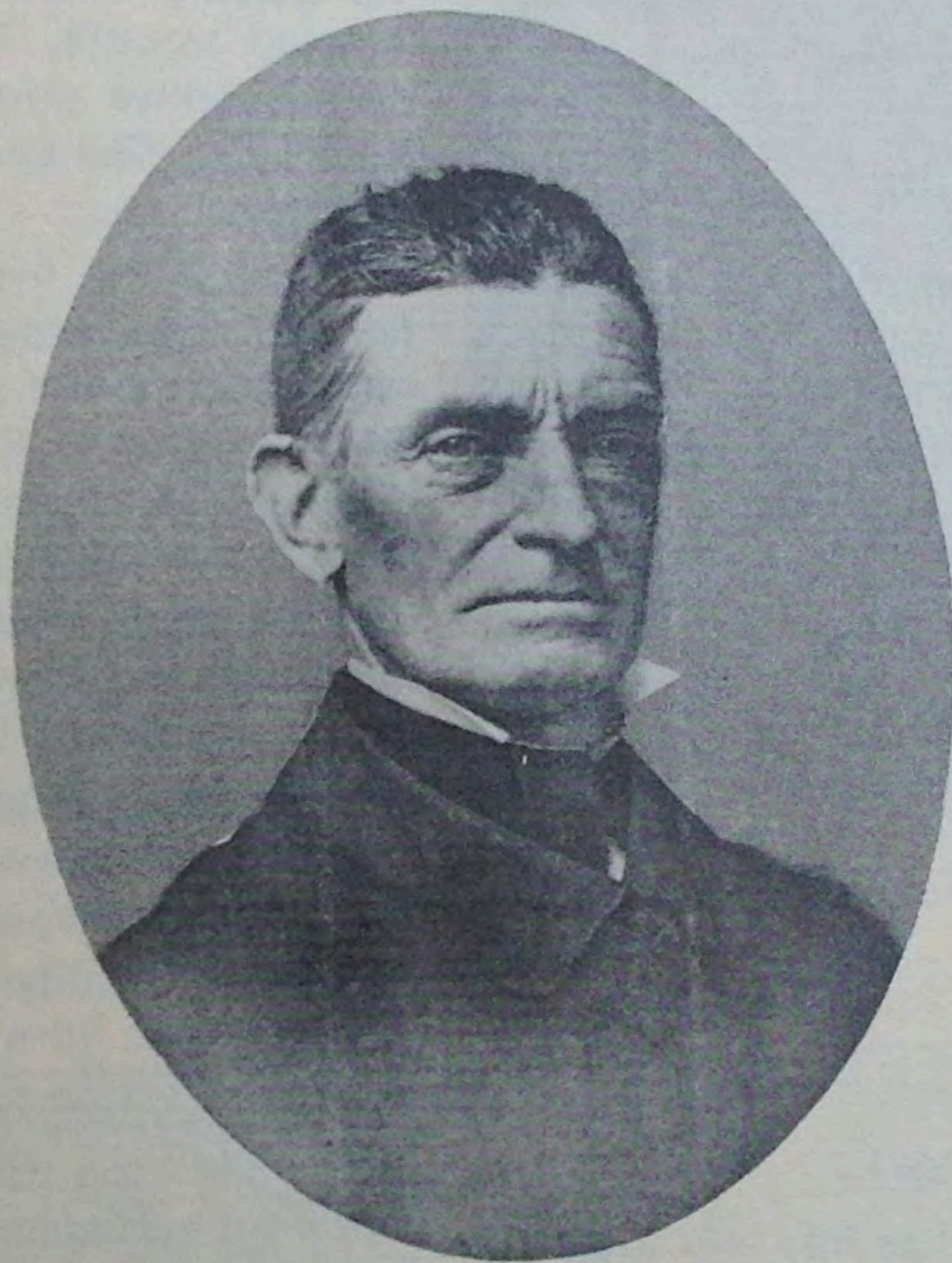
Camp Banks, on Boston Road, was used as a training center for troops.



General James Barnes.



Eli Baptist. Courtesy, History of St. John's Congregational Church, Springfield. (1962)



John Brown.

Abraham Lincoln's call for volunteers in 1862, early in the war.

The Bliss Street youth, Andrew, whose surname is omitted in Wright's history, was an assistant to the Springfield postmaster, William Stowe, an experience that kept him out of some of the fighting. He was assigned to the 46th Regiment, Company A, made up principally of Springfield men.

With bands playing, the unit steamed out of Boston Harbor, soon joined by a gunboat escort. By

November week of 1862 the men were encamped on the banks of the Neuse River, near New Bern, North Carolina — "God-forsaken looking country," Andrew reported. He and some companions spent their first Thanksgiving Day away from home having "a first-rate dinner" for \$1 each at a hotel in New Bern. The following Sunday Andrew attended Congregational services there and heard a sermon preached by an Army chaplain titled "This Is My Beloved Son in Whom I Am Well Pleased."

# The Draft!

All men subject to the Draft in the Sub-District including

Ward 2 and Part of Ward 3,  
Are earnestly invited to meet at the

**CITY HALL,**  
**THIS TUESDAY EVENING,**

[At 7 1-2 o'clock, ]

To decide whether they will use the means to accomplish the work of filling the Quota of that Sub-District, or whether they will sit quietly down until the Draft is unavoidable.

**Men! You can Fill the Quota if you**  
will give your personal attention to it! But, be assured, it must have the co-operation and support of every man who has a ticket in this lottery!

## Will You Do It?

Give your answer in person at the **CITY HALL,**  
**THIS EVENING.**

Per Order of the War Committee.

SPRINGFIELD, Dec. 22, 1863.

A typical draft notice.

"Very good sermon," Andrew wrote.

Soon there came an expedition into the countryside to meet the enemy, but Andrew's mail duty with the regiment left him behind.

"Expedition returned after 11 days . . . 46th lost one man Co., B, Holyoke, and three wounded, Co. B, and Co., I, Wilbraham," Andrew recorded.

Christmas passed uneventfully, but the diseases of a strange climate were beginning to take a toll among the New Englanders. Andrew's diary for January (1863) tells the sad news:

"Wednesday, the 11th, H.D. Bartlett, member of Co. A of the 46th passed away, never more to visit this earth. He was taken sick while on guard . . . Away from home, friends and kindred, he laid down his life for his country . . . No more will his friends hear his ringing laugh."

Then later that month:  
"This week George D. Kingsley died . . . of fever. Was sick only a short time . . ."

The regiment, released from service in July, 1863, lost 215 men, 33 from sickness.

The calls for more men during the war found Springfield always successful in meeting its quotas, though the strain showed. Bounties were dangled before the eyes of eligible young men. Orators, musical bands and the newspapers prodded for responses. Some youths accepted the tidy sum of \$300 to join up, but soon the reward was increased to \$875, a sum equivalent to well over a year's wages. This was federal, state and local money combined.

Forced enlistments came as a repugnant measure. There were draft riots in New York City and violent protests in Boston. Tension mounted locally, but Springfield wisely mobilized more than a hundred of its leading citizens to support the draft and was spared trouble. The practice of paid substitutes saved some young men from service here as elsewhere. The going price of a stand-in was about \$600.

Springfield, like other cities, borrowed and solicited funds to raise bounty money. The city counted its contribution of men to the Union armies at 2,265, about a tenth of the population and more than 200 over its quota. James L. Bowen puts the total of soldiers and sailors from Springfield in the war at 2,485, most of whom were in the 10th, 27th, 37th and 46th regiments. All except the 37th were encamped here before leaving for the front.

Springfield blacks responded exceptionally to active service in the war, contributing a high percentage of their numbers. In 1860 there were only 57 men of that race in the city between the ages of 16 and 45, yet 25 black men from Springfield enlisted in the army.

The Lincoln administration at first was not receptive to the idea of blacks serving. As the situation worsened for the North, however, the War Department authorized the formation of "colored" regiments. Even before then, Springfield blacks had been urged by their leaders to assist the Union cause. The *Springfield Republican* under the heading "Colored man's plea" in August, 1862 quotes the Rev. J. N. Mars of the Sanford Street church as asking whether it would be unconstitutional for the blacks to take up arms, and saying, "We see the rebels slaughtering our white friends and destroying their property; must we stand and look on quietly?"

The clergyman himself later went to North Carolina to help form regiments for the Union army and he served as chaplain for a black brigade. Blacks from Springfield served in a variety of units, including the 11th regiment U.S. Colored Heavy Artillery and the 54th Massachusetts Volunteers, Massachusetts

first black military unit. They also were among the 5th Massachusetts Volunteer Cavalry, the state's only black cavalry unit, which in April, 1865 was first to enter Richmond after that Confederate city had been evacuated.



*One of the Springfield members of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry, Pvt. Charles H. Arnum.*

The black soldiers had been promised the same pay as the whites — \$13 a month — but instead received only \$10.

In addition to their war service, blacks on the homefront collected money and clothes to send to freed slaves in the South. They arranged for a celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation at City Hall, inviting "all lovers of liberty to attend."

The war sent Armory production skyrocketing. When Fort Sumter was fired on, output at the Armory was 1,000 guns per month. By 1864, it had been speeded to that same number per day, turned out by 3,400 employees working around the clock. With the Harpers Ferry Armory in Southern hands, the Springfield installation was the Union's principal

source of small arms. Fearful that rebel emissaries might seek to destroy this vital gun plant, the government provided extra security during the war years, and the Springfield City Guard helped in the protection.

The city was put to another great test during the progress of the war when the sick and the wounded began to arrive here in numbers. Not only did Springfield have its own men to care for, but, with the railroads converging here — at the crossroads — there were the ailing and the maimed from other sections to be looked after while they awaited train connections. Church women, fire companies and workers from the Armory responded to this urgent need. They were joined by the Young Men's Christian Commission, formed for the purpose. A building known as the Soldier's Rest Association was erected near the railroad station and continued in war relief activities for the duration.

To help support this effort a great Soldiers' Fair was held at the City Hall for several days in 1864, where there was an auditorium large enough to accommodate 2,500 people. The Fair was aided by a visit from Governor Andrew and had the support of many of the communities of the area. It raised a whopping \$18,000. President Lincoln sent regrets in a letter addressed to the "Ladies managing the Soldiers' Fair", stating he was compelled by public duties in Washington to decline their invitation to come to the Fair. The President did say that "The recent good news from Generals Sherman, Thomas, and indeed from all quarters, will be far better than my presence."

*The Soldier's Rest was located near the railroad depot pictured here.*



The changes contrasted with the bucolic aspects of the city's main stem which, even as late as 1865, found cows still grazing near Court Square and homesteads still stretching from Main Street to the river, as they had in settlement days. There was a noticeable increase in living density, however, and vacant lots were being filled in all over the city. The housing shortage was acute during the war years, and real estate changed hands at astonishing rates.

At first there was a reluctance on the part of investors and builders to meet the construction needs lest they be caught at the end of the war with idle properties. By 1864, however, a building boom had started and there was a scarcity of carpenters and masons. Tracts were developed and the houses filled up fast. The city counted more than 3,500 dwellings at the end of the war, a gain of more than 700 since 1860. Most of these were modest homes for workers.

The residential development was nicely balanced. Pearl Street filled up with frame houses from the Armory to the railroad. In the South End, Loring and Lombard Streets were opened up. On the Hill, residences filled up lots on the old streets of Bay, Hancock and Oak. There was substantial building in the North End, near Round Hill, where there was a concentration of Irish.

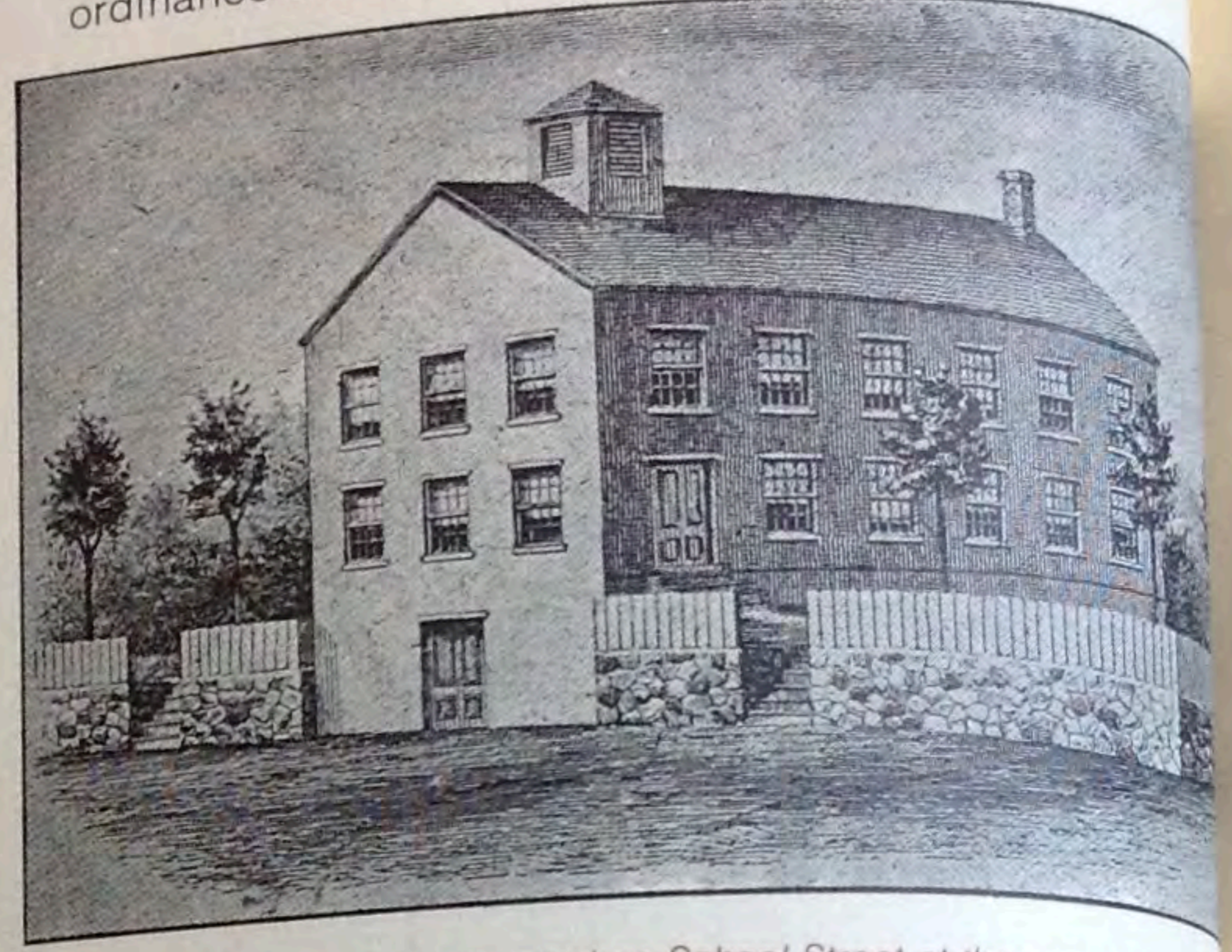
Though the population of the state increased only in a small way during the war, Springfield's grew at an unusual rate. The gain here in the decade between 1855-65 was an impressive 65 per cent. By the end of the war Springfield had become the state's seventh largest city whereas in 1860 it had stood 12th. Some of the gain was at the expense of the immediate neighbors, Hampden County towns losing population as workers moved into the city for jobs.

Immigration accounted for only a small part of the population gain. The big influx of foreign-born was to come in later decades. The new citizens of wartime were in many cases young people seeking the opportunities offered in the bustling city, or mechanics arriving from towns far and near knowing that their skills were needed here. Older replacements were needed, too, as the younger men marched off to fight.

The Civil War and its attendant effects had a preoccupying impact on Springfield's fledgling city government, but still the community found time and strength to deal with numerous concerns.

An important one was schools. Public education, then as now, was under certain compulsions of the state. Springfield as a town had operated under the old school district system, provided in a state statute of 1789. Springfield at mid-century had 12 such districts, independent entities which levied their own taxes and owned their schools. This decentralized operation, its critics noted, resulted in education becoming subordinate to the tax-rate. Even with the later

state law of 1826 requiring a town-wide school committee, the districts continued to hold the whip hand and continued both parsimonious and provincial. With the city charter in 1852, the districts stubbornly, and for a time successfully, blocked the consolidation ordinance that brought the unified system.



The first high school was located on School Street at the corner of High Street.

The town's low estimate of the value of schooling was indicated in the fate of the first high school, built in 1827 at the northeast corner of School and High Streets. Historian Alfred M. Copeland notes that the school was used until about 1839 "when it was vacated, and the high school idea virtually abolished, being neither advantageous nor profitable for the education of youth, according to the opinion of the tax-paying residents." It was voted to sell the land and building in 1841. However, reports Copeland, "a high school in town was imperative under the law, hence in 1841 the district school building on Elm Street . . . was occupied for that purpose." The first principal there was the Rev. Sanford Lawton. In the dozen years of the old high school there had been eight principals, mostly young men fresh out of college who found the pay low and discipline difficult to maintain among the several dozen boys attending. (Girls did not need a high school education, it was felt.)

In 1840 the town appropriated \$7,811 for school purposes and named its first superintendent of schools, S.S. Green. The position was abolished after two years, and not until long after the town had become a city did Springfield have another school superintendent. He was E.A. Hubbard, appointed in 1865, and who served nine productive years which saw the building of numerous new schools. Before his appointment, three members of the school committee had given generously of themselves to oversee the system, interviewing teacher applicants and visiting school buildings.



Taxpayer reluctance in public education gave encouragement to the formation of private schools. One of the earliest was on Elm Street which functioned with a staff of "professors" for a dozen years from 1812. A school for girls well patronized by some of the affluent families was opened by Julia Hawkes on Maple Street in 1829. In that same year an English oriented Lancasterian school, in which the higher class students helped teach those below them, opened for a short two years. A more lasting institution was that of the Rev. George Nichols, started in 1835 at Main and State Streets, later moving to a building on Court Street. It continued for nearly a half-century, becoming in its later years the Springfield English and Classical Institute in the charge of Mrs. Nichols and with a strong faculty.

The growing improvement and acceptance of public schools ended the need for the private institutions, though some still operated into the closing decades of the 19th century, including Miss Howard's preparatory school for girls, the Rev. M. C. Stebbins' college preparatory school and "The Elms" for girls, the latter noted for its preparation of students for girls' colleges.

The Public Library, like the public schools, had slow going at the start. It was in 1857 that the City Library Association was formed and a small collection of books gathered in two rooms at City Hall. It seems remarkable that during the war period the

books there were increased nearly tenfold to 18,000 volumes. Circulation doubled, even with a one dollar borrowing fee. There was a big impetus in 1863 when the well-to-do George Bliss donated the spacious site at State and Chestnut Streets. This was accompanied by private gifts totaling \$77,000. Though the library building itself did not come until later in the century, the breakthrough for Springfield's preeminence in the field was assured at this time.

The city association was not the first library effort in the community. Early in the century a Springfield library "company", as Historian Alfred M. Copeland refers to it, existed and owned a few hundred books of history, travel, poetry and miscellaneous works. Details of its activities do not show in meager records available. Another early book collection was that of the Franklin Library Association, sponsored principally by people connected with the Armory. That library continued to 1844 when it was made part of the newly organized Young Men's Institute. The Hampden Mechanics Association had a library for its members beginning in 1824, and this collection, too, was transferred to the Young Men's Institute in 1845. The latter group sponsored lectures and debates and later affiliated with a similar club called the Young Men's Literary Association in petitioning for \$2,000 in public money for a city library. The request was sidetracked by the priority given to the expenditures for the new city hall. The formation of the voluntary City Library Association followed, and this group was incorporated



The City Library's first building.

A number of Springfield women were prominent community leaders in this same period, including several exceptional organizers. Among them was Mrs. Maria Owen, a relative of Benjamin Franklin and Daniel Webster, and a botanist. She founded the Botanical Club here and was an organizer of the Springfield Women's Club, which she headed for a decade. Mrs. Charlotte Gulick, the wife of Professor Luther H. Gulick Jr. of Springfield College, was the founder of the Camp Fire Girls.



Mary Allard Booth.

Springfield women, too, established reputations in writing, science, art and the suffrage movement during the final decades of the 19th century. Among the most prominent was Miss Mary Booth, who became nationally famous in photo micrography. She was honored for her work at the New Orleans Exposition of 1885 and the St. Louis Exposition of 1904. A fellow of the Royal Microscopic Society of London, she lectured and displayed her photo specimens of minute objects. A story is told that she once discovered a sick bumble bee in her garden, investigated and found it to be burdened with 17 different parasites. Miss Booth was well known in Springfield, too, as the first woman to own and operate an automobile here, in 1901.

Two young Springfield ladies had unusual pioneering careers in assisting the newly liberated blacks after the Civil War. Miss Mary Ames of the noted paper-making family, whose birthplace was in the Maple Street mansion of her parents, joined Miss Emily Bliss in going to Edisto island off Charleston, South Carolina where they coordinated with the military in guiding the ex-slaves into lives of freedom.

The affluent post-war period also saw freer spending for streets, sewers, and water. "We can't run Springfield like a small village," observed *The Republican*, calling for facilities that would encourage the city's continued growth.

New streets were graded and accepted, the more important ones paved with the new macadam, named for its Scottish discoverer, John L. McAdam. Street work, which in the city budget of 1865 was the largest item at \$30,000, had risen to a \$140,000 expenditure four years later. Sewers were laid as never before. The Worthington Street trunk line took the old town brook under ground while another line was laid on Union Street, running west from the crest of the hill. By 1870 more than 15 miles of new sewers had been built in a prodigious catching-up on a neglected community need.

Water supply, too, came in for urgent attention. Springfield from its township days had relied heavily on wells and springs. The town brook running along the east side of Main Street was useful for washing purposes even though it had become too sullied for drinking. The privately owned Aqueduct Company, started by Charles Stearns and beginning service in 1850, sold water to the city for fire protection. Its supply, however, lacked reliability, especially in dry seasons. An 1860 committee headed by Mayor Daniel L. Harris brought in a \$50,000 plan for utilizing Armory Hill water, using springs and rainfall. A scholarly engineer derided the idea that the city could rely on such a source.

The pessimistic engineer was William Worthen, who had designed the Hartford water system. He came up with a \$250,000 plan — a figure that shocked the city fathers. The plan would have used the rivers or distant watersheds and would have required extensive aqueducts.

A new contract was made with the Aqueduct Company after it had agreed to install cement and iron pipes in place of the rotting wooden pipes and to create a 40-million gallon reservoir at Van Horn. City leaders reserved the right to buy the company at any time for 10 percent over cost. Springfield was to get all the water it needed for fire protection and public buildings at \$2,500 a year.

By 1870 there were 1,500 families in the Hill area, located too high to be served by the Van Horn Reservoir and outside the reach of the company lines.

century, and at about the same time the German Evangelical Lutheran Church was established on King Street, near Walnut. The Swedish Lutherans built their Bethesda Church on Union Street, near Main, while the Jews had established a synagogue at 24 Gray's Avenue.

The Italians did not build their own church until the next century, but by 1893 there were about 2,000 of them here and they had already formed a society of their own. Several members of this ethnic group arrived here during and just after the Civil War, but there were only a few families until the 1880's. The early comers were listed in the city directories as employed by Kibbe Brothers Candy Company, the Western Railroad, Smith & Wesson, the Armory and by Everett H. Barney, perhaps as gardeners. There were also box makers and peanut vendors among them. One man, Louis Monteverdi, is reported to have opened the first fruit store on Lyman Street, which until the recent establishment of the wholesale food center at Avocado Street, had been the center of the wholesale produce trade in the city for many decades.

For many more decades, stretching back to the 17th century, blacks had been a part of Springfield's population. The blacks had had their own churches and societies in the city since before the Civil War. Their Charles Sumner Lodge of Masons was formed in 1866. In that same year the blacks had a Mutual Benefit Society with sickness and death payments, under the leadership of Eli S. Baptist.

The community was rich with fraternal and sorority societies in these gregarious years before movies, radio, television and the motor car. Springfield had five bicycle clubs, including one for women, and nine temperance societies, comprising Catholic men, Protestant men and several exclusively for women. There were rod and gun clubs, camera and botanical clubs and several workmen's aid societies.

Skating groups were popular in the post-war years. In 1868 Miss Carrie A. Moore performed so gracefully in an exhibition that many women took up the sport. There were contests on the Connecticut River and on numerous ponds. Firemen flooded the river ice to create a smoother surface. The river had become less popular after a woman skater had almost drowned there and was saved by a youth who had grabbed hold of her hoop skirt as she was slipping under the ice.

The danger of natural skating areas such as the river and ponds led to the establishment of several skating rinks. The Graves' rink on Franklin Street was one gathering place. This estate later became the upper part of Tenth and Greenwood Streets. An exhibition contest was held at Wayland's Maple Street rink, opened in 1867, and the winner was Everett H. Barney, whose reputation as a skate-maker was just

beginning at this time. His "fancy movements" earned him the prize, a pair of model skates.

The city's reputation in educational and cultural pursuits was well established before the new century dawned. Alfred Minot Copeland in his history of Hampden County notes that when the first colleges appeared on the city scene in the 1880's, Springfield "long had been known as a seat of culture and refinement."

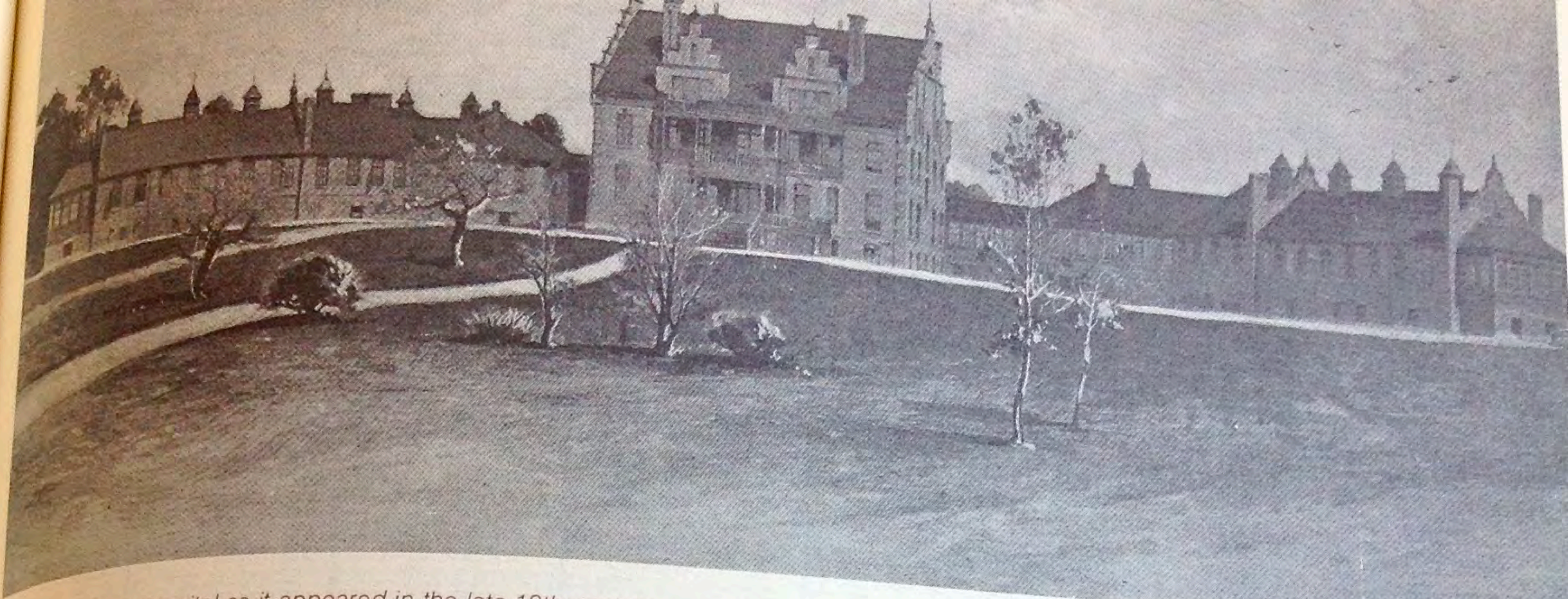
The Springfield Lyceum with its debates and lectures and a debating society, both active here before the Civil War, had contributed to this reputation. The erudite press, the public and private schools, the library association and the publishing houses had all lent prestige.

It seemed appropriate that the city should add institutions of higher learning. First was the School for Christian Workers, founded in 1885 by the Reverend David Allen Reed. One department of this was the training school for Young Men's Christian Association staff members, which was operated as a separate corporation with its buildings on Massasoit Lake (and in this century becoming Springfield College.) It was invented. One part of the School for Christian Workers was the Bible Normal College, headed by the Rev. Mr. Reed. After a few years in Springfield it moved to Hartford.

The French-Protestant College came to this city from Lowell in 1888 and was known later as the French-American College with special attention to the education of French-Canadian citizens. It was open to both men and women, and from the beginning here had women on its board of trustees, including Mary E. Wooley, later president of Mt. Holyoke College. This school became American International College in 1905 and had as many as 14 nationalities represented among its students.

A number of business schools operated successfully in the Main Street area in the 1870's and 1880's. There were also private schools for young women and at least one health institute. Church-operated parochial schools also had hundreds of students, and there were several kindergartens operated privately, two exclusively for blacks.

Enhancing the city's cultural status was the Connecticut Valley Historical Society, formed in the national centennial year of 1876 "to procure and preserve what ever may relate to the . . . history of the country, and especially to the territory included in the Connecticut valley." The organizers included Judge Henry Morris, who was elected the first president. Samuel Bowles, Homer Merriam, Joseph C. Pynchon and other leading citizens. The membership was nearly 100. By 1882, however, meetings had been discontinued, and it took a reorganization several



*Springfield Hospital as it appeared in the late 19th century.*

Dorcas Chapin, widow of the railroad magnate, Chester W. Chapin, helped to bring about the organization of Springfield Hospital, saying that an endowment of such an institution had been a favorite idea of her husband. On her death in 1886 she left \$25,000 for the purpose, and a year later the Fuller farm on North Chestnut Street was acquired and the hospital built there opened in 1889. Many private bequests enabled a rapid expansion of its services.

In the next decade the House of Mercy Hospital was opened, at the beginning using the remodeled Allis house on Carew Street. The Allis house was immediately helpful in caring for soldiers of the 2nd Regiment, returning from the Spanish War in Cuba. A new building was definitely needed and Bishop Thomas D. Beaven gave personal supervision to its construction. The Sisters of Providence were the nurses in charge of the facility, while three women served on the hospital's board of directors.

The gifts of Daniel B. Wesson and his wife, Cynthia, brought about the founding of the Wesson Hospital in the former Wesson residence on High Street. This was in 1900. Six years later a new hospital building was opened, and in 1908 came the maternity hospital, (Of the first eight babies born there were four "Elizabeths" and four "Roberts," reports Dr. W.A.R. Chapin in his history of Springfield medicine, 1955.)

The hospitals and other organizations mentioned are only a few of the scores of philanthropies that graced the Springfield scene in this period. Many families of means found projects to support and gave



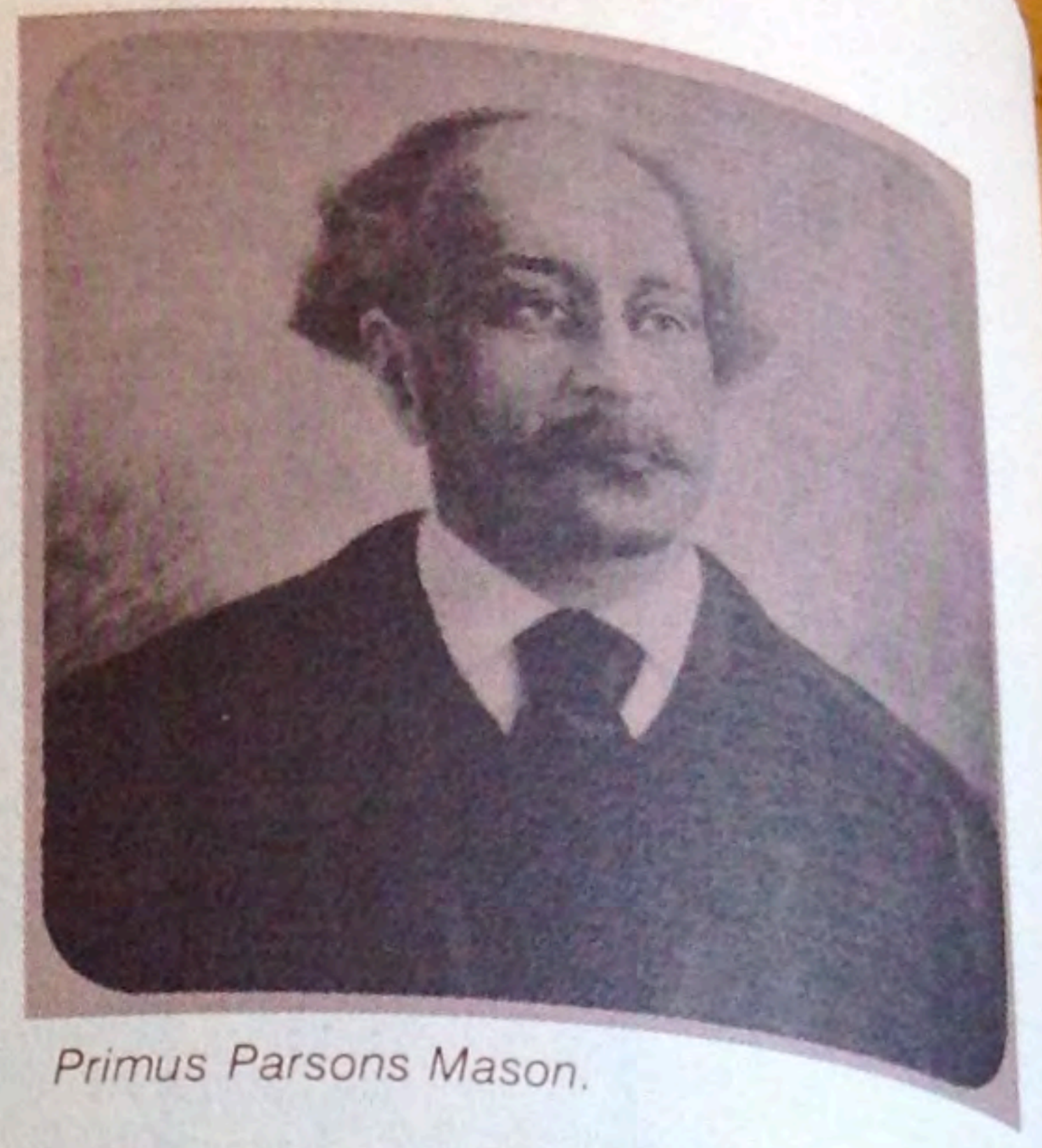
*Mercy Hospital.*

generously toward them, returning portions of their fortunes to the people at large as if to say, "The community has been good to us; may we be good to the community." Numerous endowment funds were set up for lasting support of one cause and another, funds that are operative to this day.

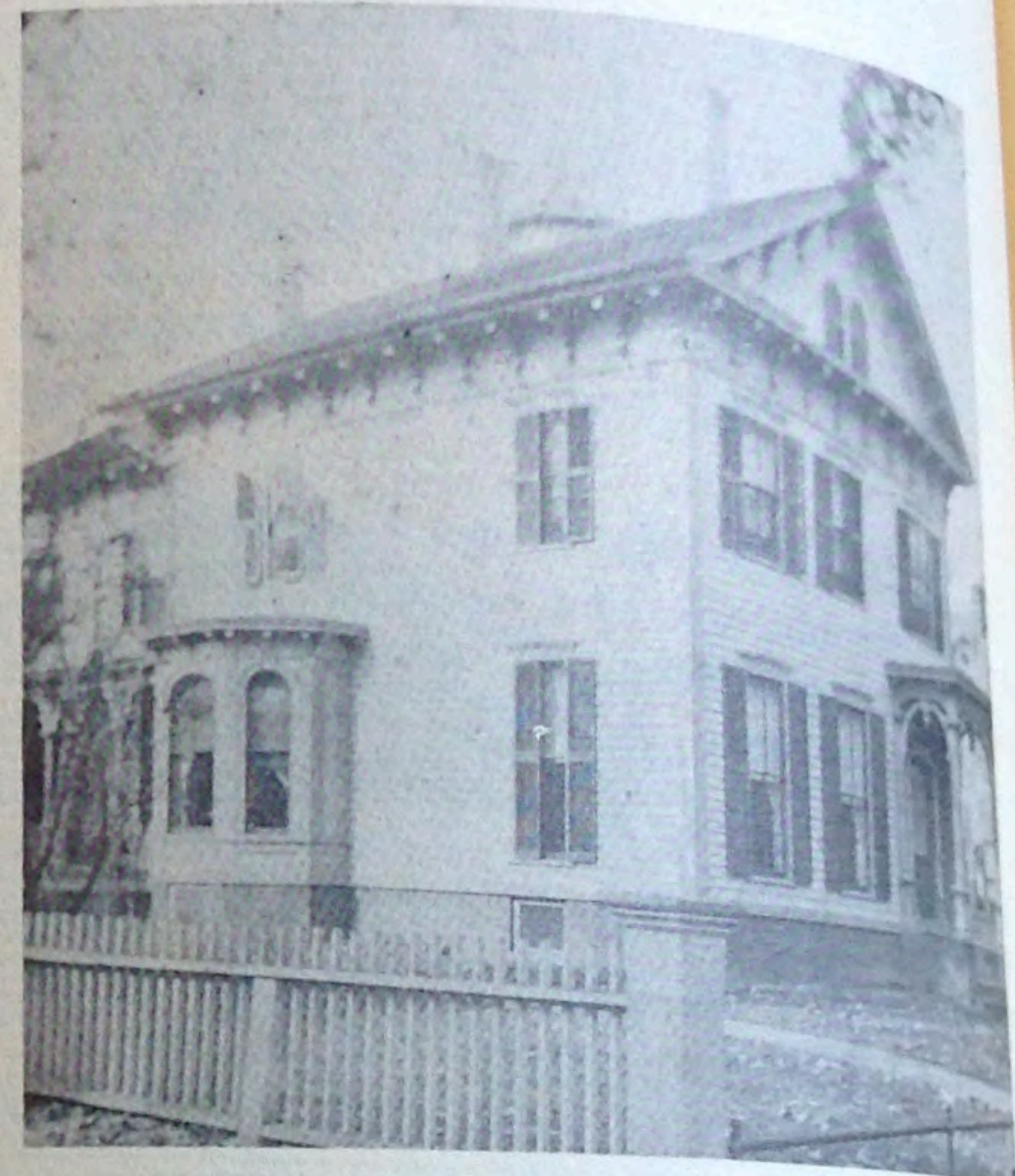
An unusual benefaction and an inspiring one came with the incorporation of the Springfield Home for Aged Men in 1897 — unusual because the bequest was from a black and inspiring because so many other gifts for the same project were heaped upon it by an approving community.

Primus Parsons Mason was born in Monson in 1817. He had worked as a farm boy in that town and in Suffield, came to Springfield when he was 20 and engaged in a series of menial occupations. Caught in the Gold Rush fever of 1849, he left for California and like many another, found there was no fortune waiting there. He returned to Springfield and began where he had left off. Possessed of good memory, shrewd and honest — as his contemporaries remember — he invested in real estate with successful result. When he died, without family, in 1892, he left his \$29,451 estate "for the benefit of worthy old men," without regard for color. His plan was to have the fund lie dormant until enough money was built up to erect a home. In a few years other gifts had swelled the fund to \$45,000, and the first building at 832 State Street was acquired. Stephen Hill, an aged friend of Mason, and Asahel Billings were the first to be cared for at the home. Soon the property of Charles H. Barrows at 74 Walnut Street with its spacious residence was acquired. Later bequests boosted the fund well over a million dollars, and in 1924 the present white-columned building of brick and masonry was constructed. So well endowed is the institution that it is self-supporting. Many of the city's leading citizens have served on its board and guided its fortunes through the years, mindful of the purposes prescribed by the will of Primus Mason.

Along with the growing public appropriations for the common good, directed from City Hall, the Springfield citizenry in the latter decades of the 19th century had indeed become a community of good spenders.



*Primus Parsons Mason.*



*Residence of Charles H. Barrows. 74 Walnut Street. First home for aged men.*

It was a December morning in 1891 and Instructor James Naismith had just finished devising a new indoor competition for his gym class at the Young Men's Christian Association Training School — men who had become bored with their routine of calisthenics. It was another long winter indoors after the invigoration of the football season and before it was time for spring track and baseball.

James Naismith, who had transferred into the YMCA school (later Springfield College) after first studying for the ministry in his native Canada, had an inventive spirit born of enthusiasm. When young Dr. Luther Halsey Gulick Jr., pioneering head of the physical education department of the school, found the students fretting under their indoor schedule, he called on Naismith to take over the class.



James Naismith.

School for Christian Workers at State and Sherman streets.

Naismith, a second-year student in the two-year course, had been named instructor along with the later famed football coach, Alonzo Stagg. Naismith was teaching Bible study and other subjects. With others in Dr. Gulick's classes, he pondered over the need for a new indoor game.

To keep his class interesting, as well as physically valuable, Naismith tried several experiments early that winter in gym competition. A form of indoor cricket and a gymnasium baseball idea did not work well. Nor did football, soccer and lacrosse in the confined quarters.

Dr. Gulick and Naismith had agreed that for a new indoor game a ball was essential — a ball large enough so as not to require a bat. Playing space was small and gym floors hard, so there was the need to limit running and roughness. Naismith decided that running meant no tackling and thus no roughness.

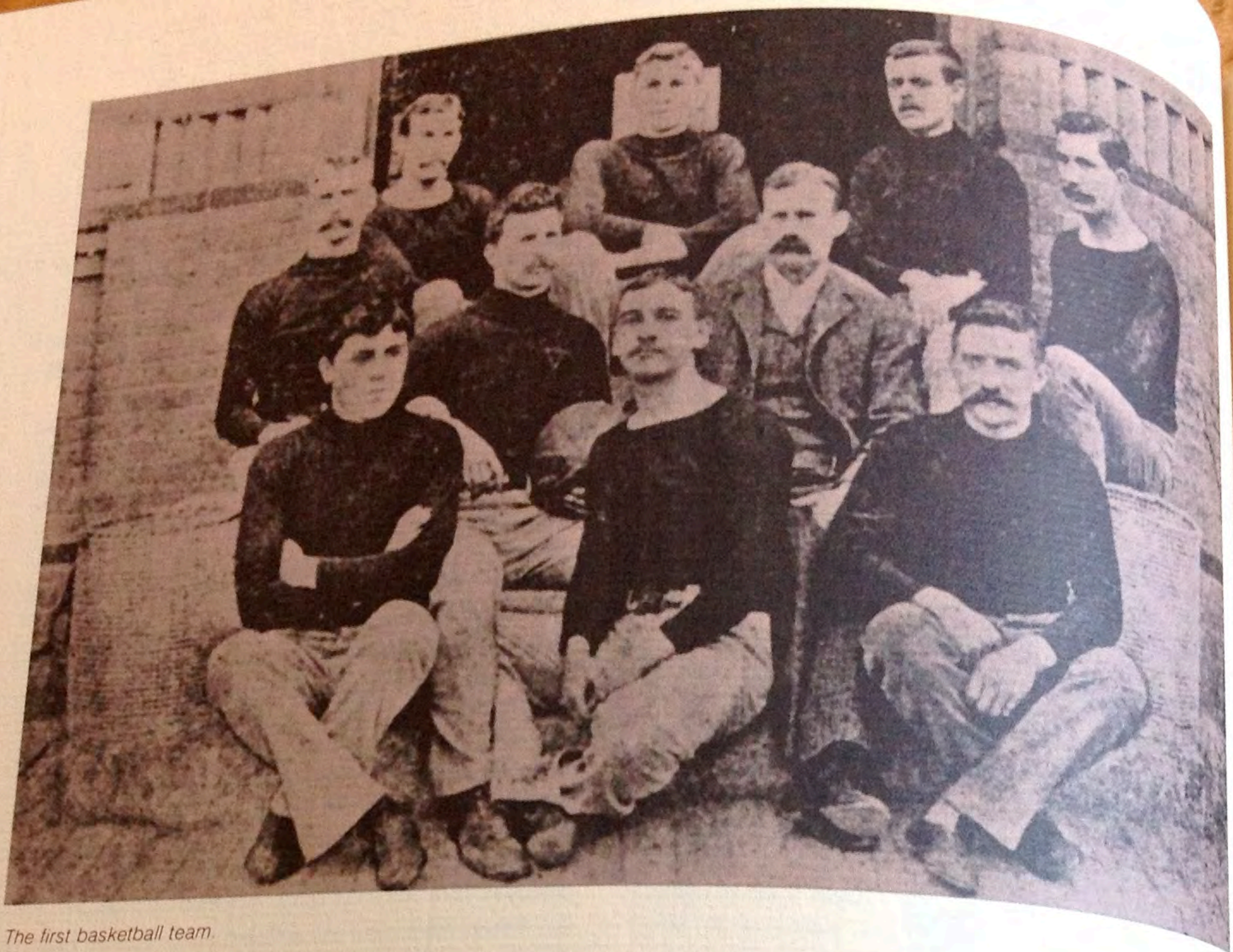
An unresolved element was the type of goal, and this proved a stickler. On the day the gym class was first to try the new game, Naismith asked a janitor if he had two boxes about 18 inches square.

"I have two old peach baskets down in the storeroom, if they'll do you any good," was the reply. That was the answer. Naismith looked over the peach baskets, and then came the climaxing idea. He nailed the baskets, one at each end of the gym about 10 feet above the floor. Quickly he wrote a set of simple rules, somewhat like those of lacrosse, a bit of rugby football and yet with little running and body contact.

When the class assembled at 11:30 that morning, there were the rules of a new game thumbtacked inside the gym door.

"Huh! Another new game!" one student cracked derisively. Naismith heard and had misgivings.





*The first basketball team.*

The game went well, however. The 18 men — nine to a team — found it exciting. Only one basket was made in that first contest — from mid-court. The ball had to be retrieved by using a stepladder since the baskets were still with bottoms and held the ball. The open baskets came later.

Naismith soon had an exhibition team in uniform, and interested spectators dropped into the gym to watch this exciting new game when the word spread. Some were women teachers from Buckingham School nearby, and later they asked to play and were allowed on the floor — but male spectators were not allowed to watch their play.

Word spread far and wide that a physical education class in Springfield was finding its sessions zestful. By the following April the game had been introduced into New York. Soon after, basketball was being played in gymnasiums throughout the nation and in foreign countries where the YMCA school had graduates.

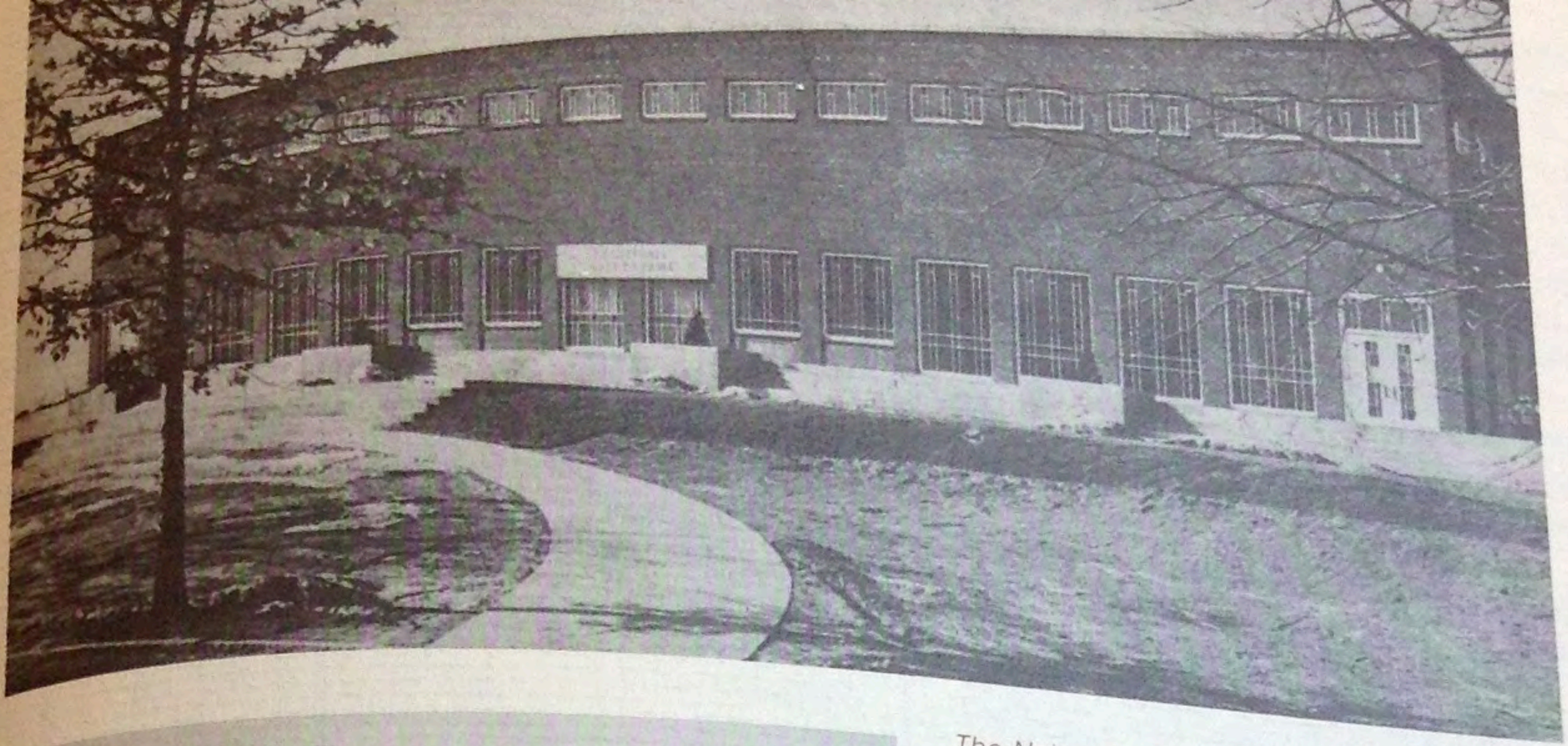
*The Springfield Republican* of March 12, 1892 carried an account of a match between faculty and students here. Dr. Gulick and Naismith performed well, it was reported, and Alonzo Stagg was "resplendent in his old Yale uniform." Stagg scored the

only point for the faculty, but Naismith deplored his teammates' roughhouse tactics. The students won, 5 to 1. Surprisingly, this game was one of the only two that its inventor ever played in. Naismith did watch with interest, however, as the sport caught on.

He was disturbed by the women coming to play in high-heeled shoes and superfluous clothing, but was pleased with their enthusiasm. Bloomers became the female uniform, and it was not until the early 1900's that this attire had become acceptable for viewing by men spectators. Naismith left Springfield in 1895 for Denver, with his bride Maude Sherman, daughter of his landlady here. He studied medicine, earned his medical degree and then enjoyed a long and distinguished career as director of physical education at the University of Kansas.

"The father of basketball", as he came to be known, enjoyed a triumph by witnessing basketball being played in the Olympics at Berlin in 1936. This was three years before his death in 1939 at age 78 at Lawrence, Kansas. The Basketball Hall of Fame, incorporated here in 1959, serves as the Naismith Memorial.

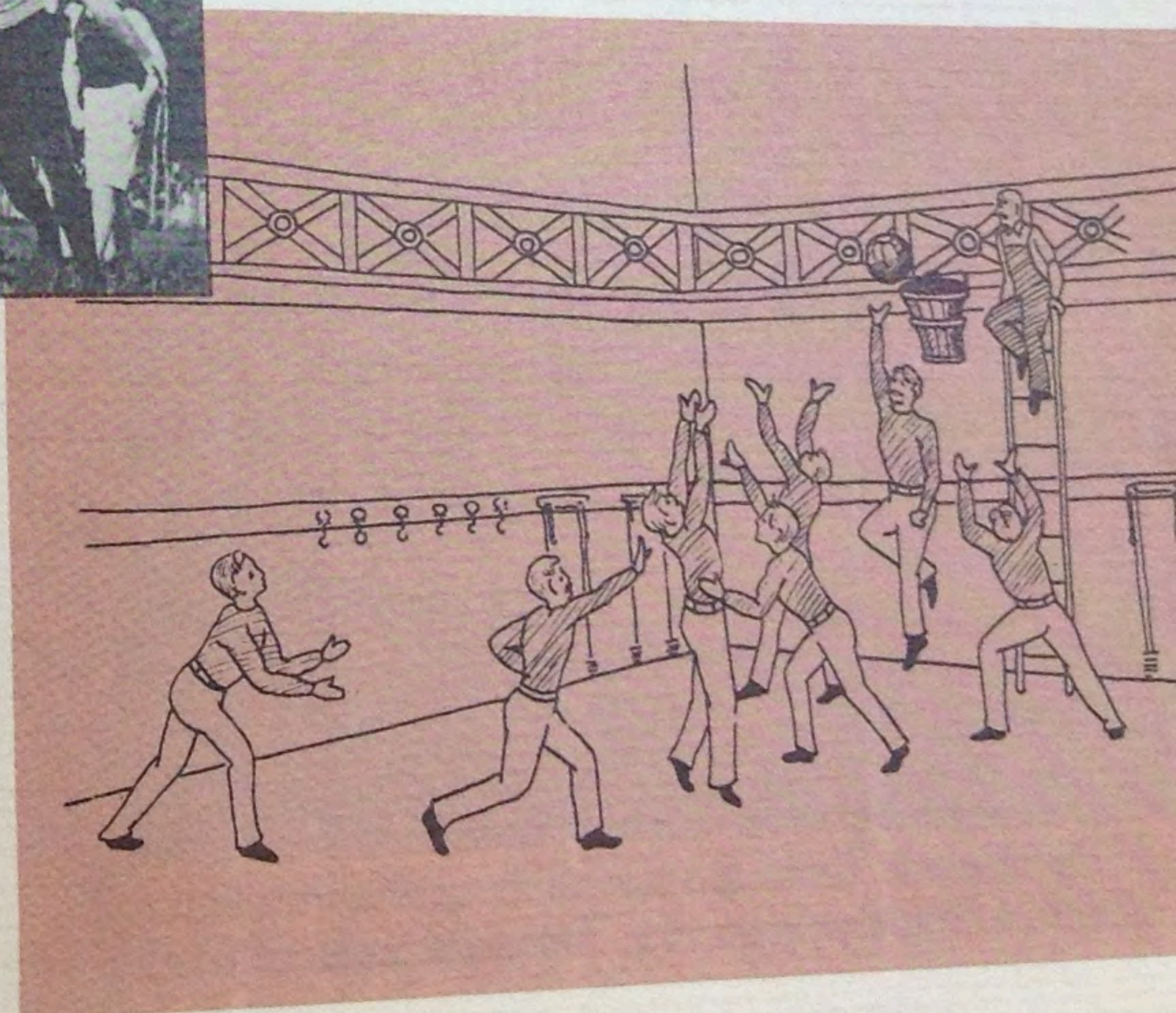
It was the happenstance of occupation that



The Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame on Alden Street.



Playing basketball outdoors in 1892.



drawing of what the original basketball game was like, done by one of the original team members.



ations topped \$30 million; and the city's manufacturing output was placed at more than \$100 million. Work had started on the spacious Union railroad station between Liberty and Lyman Streets. The nationally famous Shrine Hospital had opened on Carew Street. Massachusetts Mutual's impressive and handsome building on a site of 30 acres was about to be occupied on the "outskirts" of the city on Upper State Street. *The Springfield Republican* and *Daily News* had long since settled into its trim and functional quarters on Cypress Street, near Boylston Street.



*Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company.*

The attitude of the community toward its unprecedented growth was reflected in the remarks of William W. McClench, president of the insurance company when he announced plans for the new Massachusetts Mutual building, saying: "When we moved into the present eight-story building (State and Main Streets) in 1908, we thought the home office would remain there for the next thousand years. We had no conception then of the wonderful growth (ahead). . ."

And so it was with other institutions moving into new structures: The Christian Science Church (1922) and the Masonic Temple (1926), both on State Street;

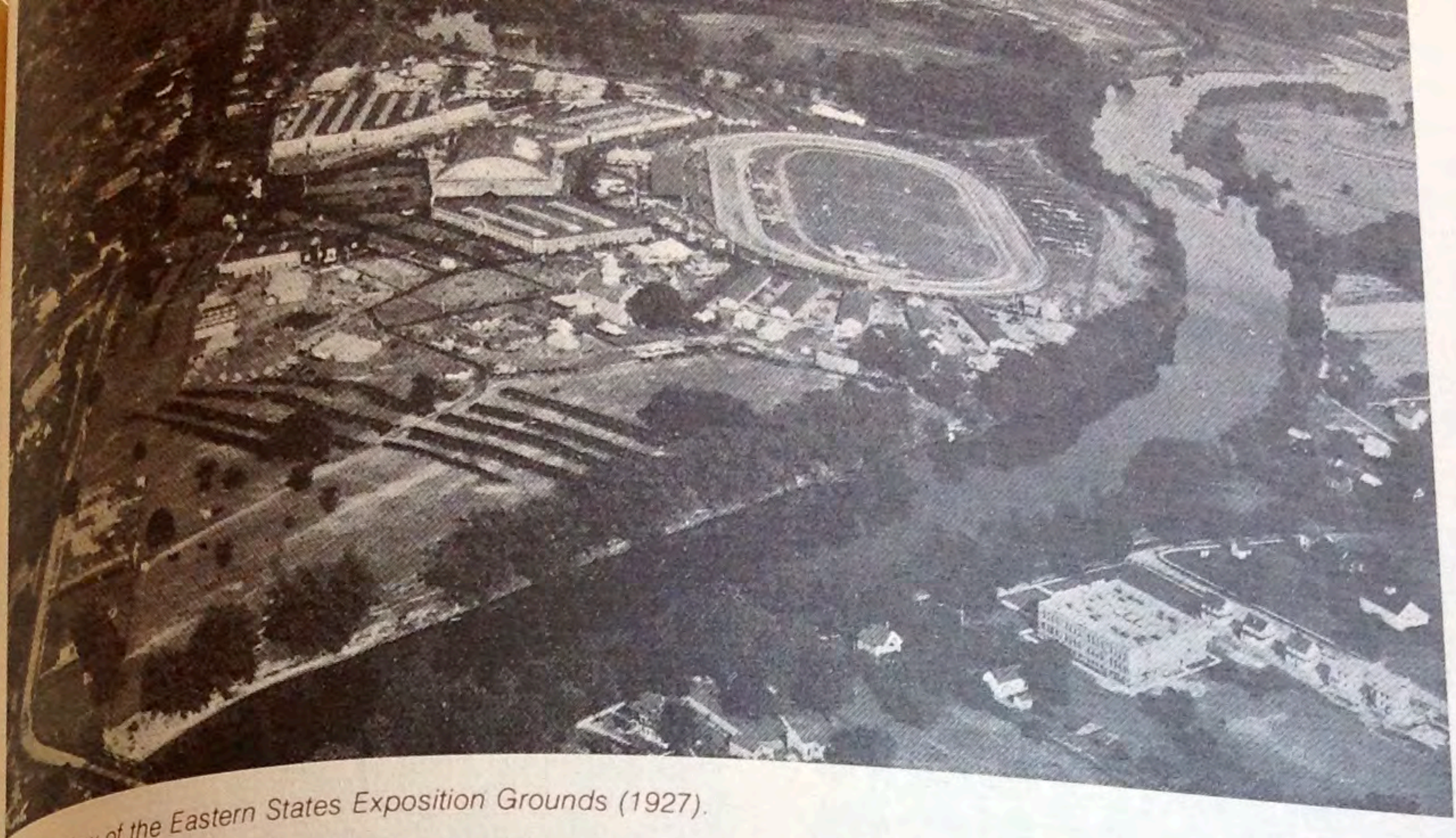
the Federal Land Bank (1924), State and Byers Streets; Trinity Church on Sumner Avenue and the William Pynchon Memorial Building in the Quadrangle (both 1927); the District Court Building (1928), near the Municipal Group, and a host of other buildings attesting to the vitality of Springfield's industry and its religious and cultural appreciations — and its philanthropy.

Numerous people worked to make Springfield a better place in which to live in the early decades of this century. A leader in this effort was the Rev. Dr. William N. DeBerry, pastor of St. John's Congregational Church and later head of the Dunbar Community League. The league, a non-sectarian social organization, grew out of the St. John's Church Institutional Activities, which included the oft-heard choir and jubilee singers.

Dr. DeBerry, who had been born of slave parents in Nashville, Tennessee, graduated in 1896 from Fisk University and then earned his doctor of divinity degree at Oberlin. He came to the Springfield congregation in 1899 and, with the aid of his wife, built the church up to an influential and well attended unit of the Congregational organization in New England. His sociological studies of blacks in Springfield proved especially valuable as he was called upon by church, city and state to serve on several commissions. His long residence and wide acquaintance in the city served him well as a member of the Board of Public Welfare during Depression days when he was with the Dunbar League. He lived to see several younger members of his congregation take their places in government and industry here and to see his pastoral successor, the Rev. Roland T. Heacock, assume an influential role in the community. DeBerry School, built in 1951, three years after Dr. DeBerry's death, was named in his honor.

The benefactions of Horace A. Moses, a paper manufacturer (Strathmore), are an example of the philanthropy in this period that benefited both urban and rural areas. He made possible the cathedral-like Trinity Church. One of Moses' best known projects was the establishment of Junior Achievement, an organization designed to give city youth training in business and industry.

Raised on a farm, Moses was also concerned with making improvements in agriculture. In 1913 he helped found the Hampden County Improvement League to encourage advancements in farm work. An outgrowth of the League was the Eastern States Farmers Exchange. Originally housed on Lyman Street, the Eastern States Farmers Exchange was a large cooperative purchasing system operating in nine states. Horace Moses was also involved in the Eastern States Exposition, begun in 1916 as a source of recreation and education for farm and city families. Joshua L. Brooks, an associate of Moses in the forma-



An aerial view of the Eastern States Exposition Grounds (1927).

tion of the Eastern States Exposition, headed the enterprise for many years.

Horace A. Moses concern for city and farm interests made more sense than most people recognized. It was the agricultural depression of the twenties that contributed to the hard times immediately ahead, though the dangerous over-production and excessive speculation of the period are generally believed to have been mainly responsible for the abrupt turnabout that came late in 1929.

In that buoyant year (until October), the high-rise Charles Hotel was completed near the new railroad station, the Paramount Theater opened on the site of the old Massasoit House, and the Springfield Airport acquired a 40-plane hangar. That was the year, too, when Christ Episcopal Church on Chestnut Street was made the Cathedral of the Diocese of western Massachusetts, just around the corner from St. Michael's Cathedral which had attained the episcopal see status in the Roman Catholic church in 1870.

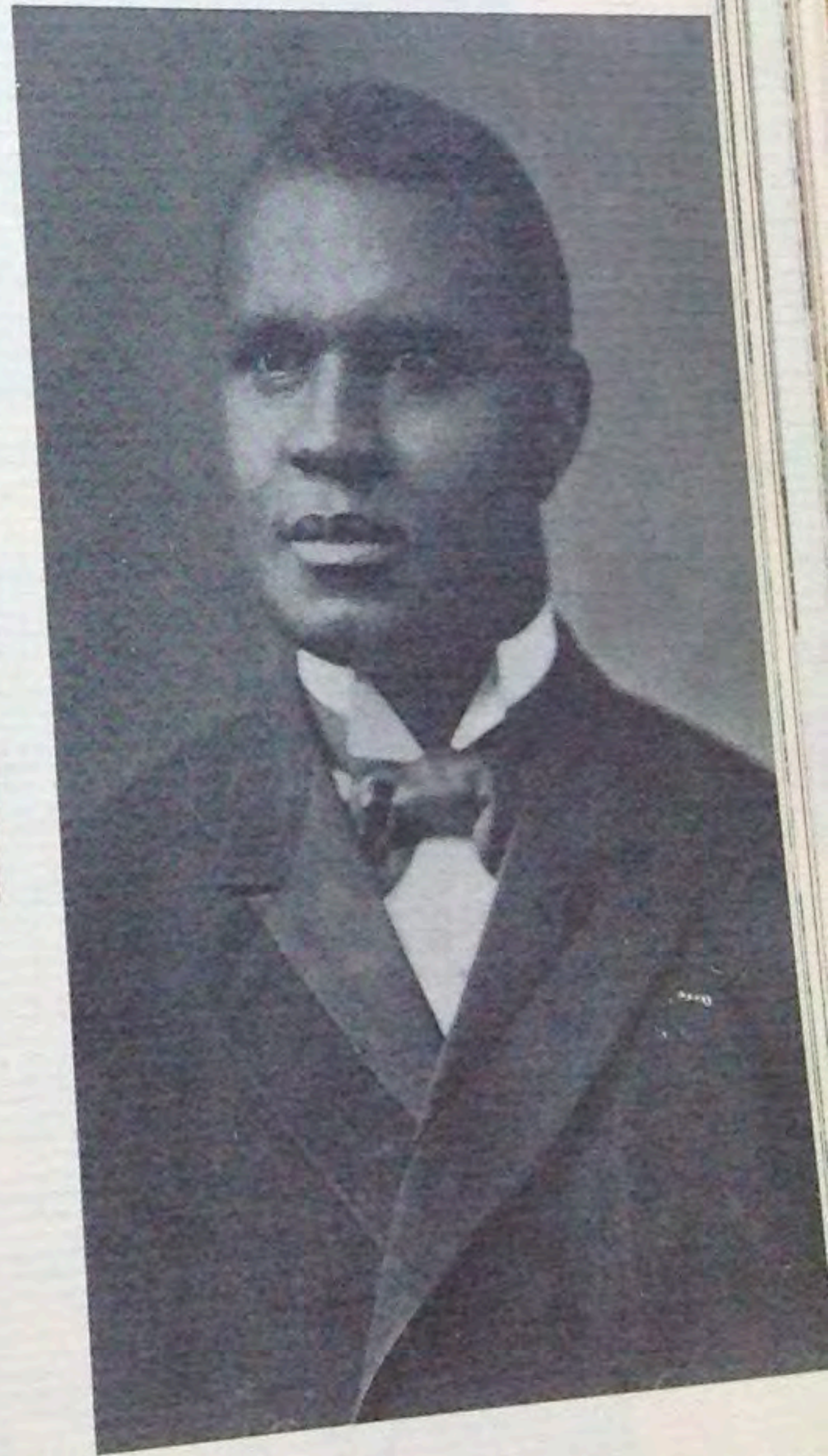
In addition to the Stock Market crash in the Fall of 1929, which wiped out some family fortunes here and precipitated the Great Depression, Springfield sustained another unexpected loss when its Congressman and former postmaster, W. Kirk Kaynor, was killed in an airplane accident.

These were sobering experiences. The impact of the economic setback was not generally discerned, however, and Springfield looked for the resilience that it had known in the post-war depressions. This time there was no escape, and the economic slump cramped Springfield's style, and depleted its resources, just as it did for the nation as a whole.



Horace A. Moses.

The Reverend William DeBerry.



Earlier in the decade, Springfield was host to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which brought scores of blacks here for the society's 21st annual conference. Delegates were housed at the city's newest hotel, the Charles. Speakers dealt with many controversial subjects. Resolutions demanded justice for the Negro and suggested that the time was near for a "serious battle for the civil rights" of blacks. Before leaving the city, the N.A.A.C.P. expressed its thanks: "for local arrangements which rank among the very best ever made for one of our meetings . . ."

There were numerous happy events during this decade of difficult times. The Museum of Fine Arts took its place in the Quadrangle through the benefactions of Mr. and Mrs. James Philip Gray, offering a wide collection of paintings, sculpture and other art forms. Across the green in the Quadrangle the popular Planetarium was opened in the Museum of Science, attracting thousands to watch its spectacular display of the night skies. Several hopeful organizing events rounded out the decade. The Greater Springfield Council of Churches was formed for a lasting service. The Adult Education Bureau came into being, which later resulted in the well utilized Adult Evening Schools. An energetic Junior Chamber of Commerce had its inception, adding to the momentum of the business sector here.

The city's most opportune project was the start on its \$1¼-million Trade High School on State Street, opposite the Massachusetts Mutual headquarters, which came into service just in time to handle the heavy demand for trained defense workers. Mayor Roger L. Putnam, for whom the school later was named, was accused by many of promoting a "white elephant" at the time but very soon enjoyed vindication when both the government and local industry placed a high premium on the school and its graduates, including a large number of women trainees who took their place in defense work here. Principal George A. Burrige found that his school was ahead of the government's requirements when military and other government staffers came to Springfield for special training.

In 1937, the noted author-pastor, Dr. James Gordon Gilkey, minister of the well-attended South Congregational Church on Maple Street, took a hard look at the city and found discouragement in "change wrought by the Great Depression." He was reviewing his two decades in Springfield in a sermon delivered to a full congregation in the winter of that year.

"That change began in 1930," Dr. Gilkey said. "In 1930 the growth of Springfield stopped short — literally . . . Fewer people were living here in 1935 than lived here in 1930 . . . Meantime the financial and social damage wrought by the depression was incalculable.

Most of the few private fortunes in the city were greatly reduced in size, the normal development of our educational and philanthropic agencies was stopped short, and the younger men who were supposed to inherit our positions of business and civic leadership found their careers completely upset . . ."

Dr. Gilkey deplored, too, the "tragic decline of cultural interest," citing the loss of musical organizations that had existed here since the previous century and of professional drama with the changeover to movies at the Court Square Theater.

Two years after the Gilkey appraisal, however, Springfield won a high rating by an impartial outside observer, Dr. Edward L. Thorndike. Thorndike, an educational psychologist of the Teachers College, ranked this city third in New England for "general goodness," behind Brookline and Newton but ahead of Boston in a complicated evaluation that took into consideration financial and cultural factors and everyday living advantages.

In the two years between the Gilkey and Thorndike judgments, there had been events in the city to indicate that the worst of the hard times was over. A number of local companies engaged in export trade reported in 1937 that their volumes of overseas orders were rising, and there was some consequent expansion of employee numbers. The big Westinghouse foundry at the East Springfield plant was completed at a cost of \$395,000. The G. & C. Merriam dictionary company started its new home on Federal Street, and the Springfield Institution for Savings had a two-story addition to its State Street building. The impressive General Edwards Bridge over the Watershops was dedicated, facilitating cross-town traffic in that area.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt visited Springfield in 1938 and addressed 3,000 admirers in the Auditorium. Mayor Putnam took the occasion to send thanks through her to the President for the federal help after the hurricane, specifically the assistance of the Civilian Conservation Corps in cleaning up the widespread debris and for dikes built with the aid of the Work Projects Administration. The mayor smilingly told the First Lady that the city could use more federal aid for flood protection. The remark, it would seem, had effect, for later attention to the Connecticut River works has assured the city against devastation from the high waters of historical experience.

Another expression of appreciation for Franklin Roosevelt was to be found in Springfield during these Depression years with the youthful Lawrence F. O'Brien getting his start in a notable political career by working for the election of F.D.R. O'Brien, who later became chairman of the Democratic National Committee, was also this city's principal contributor to the election of another president, John F. Kennedy, as one of Kennedy's closest aides.

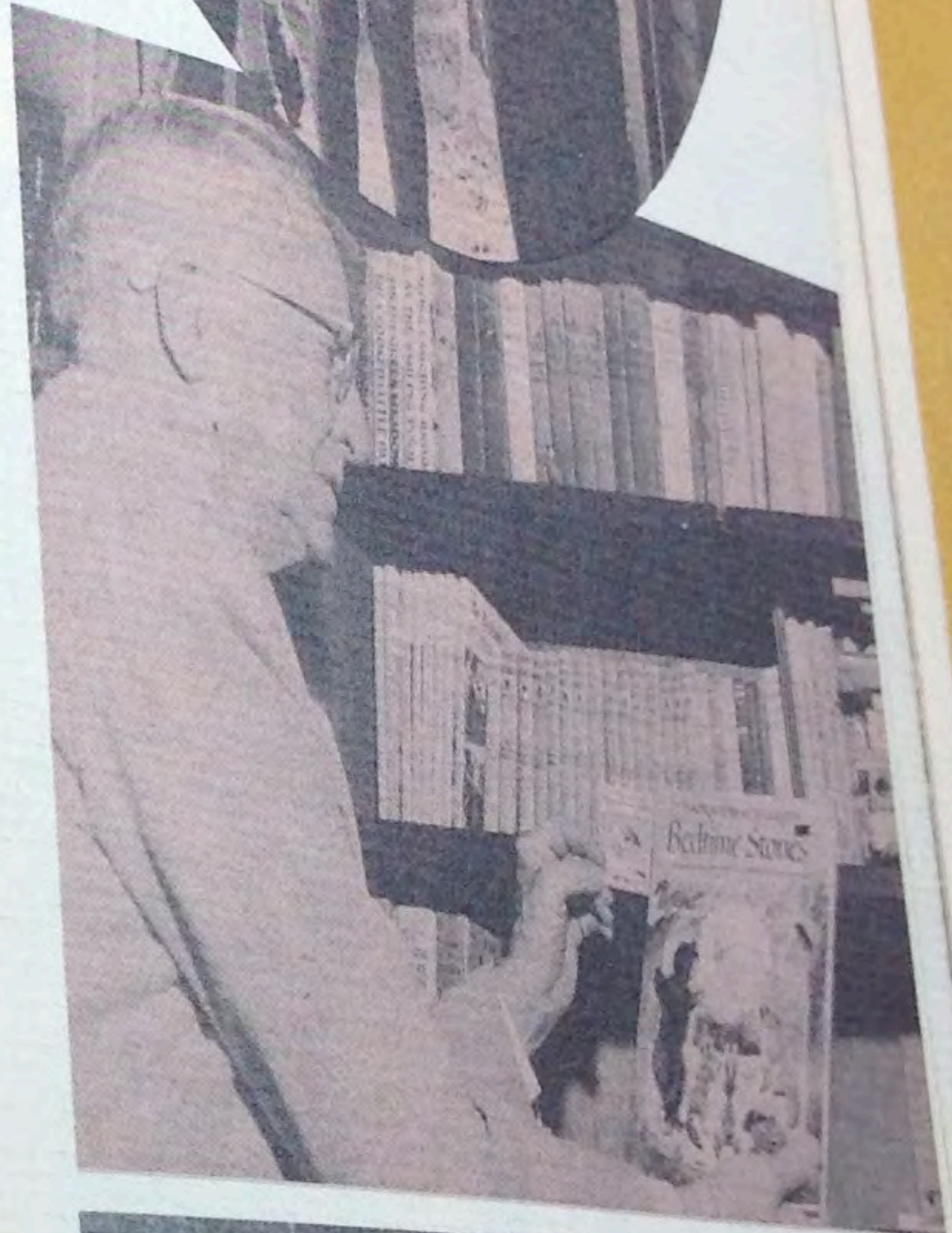
bank build... to the editor"  
wake its hands... expressed impatience in this matter. So it was during  
wartime in Springfield.

All was not grim on the local scene, however. The bedtime stories of the area's own Thornton W. Burgess were enjoyed by children and their parents in the local newspaper. The chimes sounded beautifully from the Campanile as the ringer, G. Wesson Clow, played regular concerts. And baseball fans gathered before the playing boards that were operated by the newspapers during the World Series. The boards simulated the playing fields, and the progress of the game was depicted graphically as quickly as the radio carried word of the plays. Audiences gathered before the boards, hooted and howled almost as though they were watching the game itself!

The school system's famed Springfield Plan, started by Dr. John Granrud, superintendent, came into full flower in the Forties. It was "education for citizenship" and "democracy in action," a program that gained nationwide attention and brought many school officials and social workers to this city to see for themselves. While the plan had its critics, who found it superficial and lacking the power to bridge the gap from school to home and employer, there is no doubt of its impact. It taught young people from practical experience what it means to live and work together. Its stressing of the interdependence of nations was copied by many other programs throughout the nation.

Two leaders of the movement here, Clarence I. Chatto and Alice L. Halligan, recognized the incompleteness of the plan. In a chapter headed "Unfinished Business" in their book, *The Story of the Springfield Plan*, are found these prophetic statements: "The world is becoming a tight little world where people cannot escape from one another; they must learn to live together or to perish . . ." "Problems of employment, of economic adjustment, or intergroup relations . . . will tax the wisdom of our people."

The Springfield Plan was featured on the widely-viewed "March of Time" film, showing students of Technical High School in the process of conducting a forum, and other aspects of the Plan made the national radio networks. Springfield was setting an example.

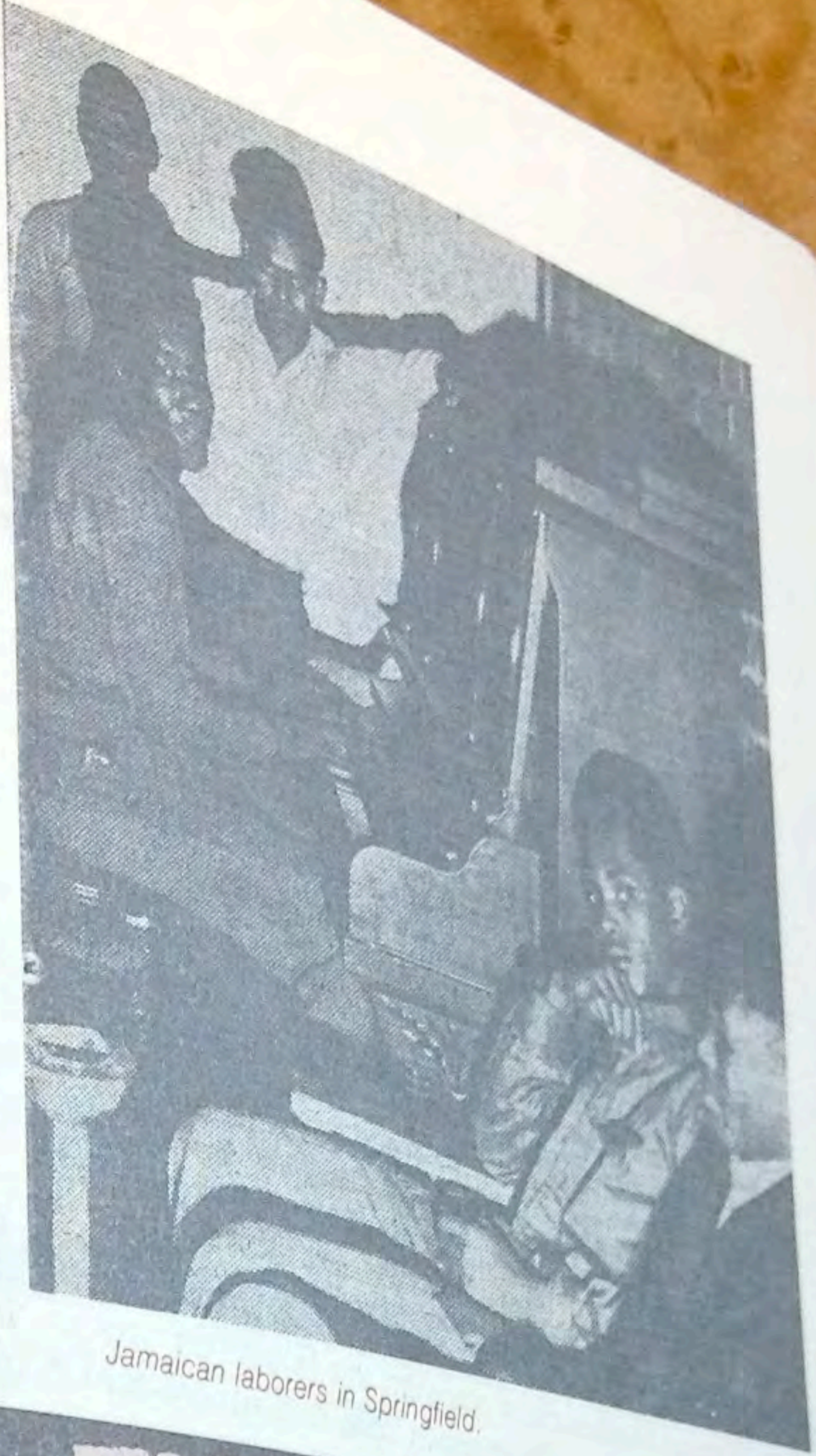


*Top and middle: Author Thornton Burgess.  
Right: A classroom implementing the Springfield Plan.*

...veterans, and indeed many other household-  
 ...were determined to break away from old, multi-  
 ...dwelling units into single-family houses on  
 ...spaces. Fortunately for the city, there were areas  
 ...suburbia" within its own boundaries to accommo-  
 ...this inclination. Luckily, too, during the Depres-  
 ...and war years, Springfield's planners had been  
 ...and there were zoning laws and sub-division  
 ...regulations to give stability to the newer develop-  
 ...ments.

The mood for a fresh start after the war extended,  
 ...to other segments such as public buildings,  
 ...streets and highways, parks and open spaces. Rec-  
 ...recreation was a foremost consideration. The returned  
 ...veteran, while committed to performing a useful func-  
 ...tion in this changing society, was determined that life  
 ...should include more leisure time with the facilities to  
 ...enjoy it.

The stage was set as the 1940's were winding up  
 ...the first half-century, for many changes in the post-  
 ...war years. Springfield was in a strong position to  
 ...carry out the renovations. It had the means, the space  
 ...and the planning. From such a springboard and in  
 ...such an atmosphere it was inevitable that the com-  
 ...munity was on the way to a renewal that would not be  
 ...sidetracked.



Jamaican laborers in Springfield.

Newspaper headline from the day before V-E Day.

The Weather  
 Fair Tonight,  
 Cloudy Tuesday

# Springfield Evening Union

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 Closing Stock Quotations  
 THREE CENTS

# NAZI WAR ENDS

## Greatest War in History Over As Germans Beg for Mercy



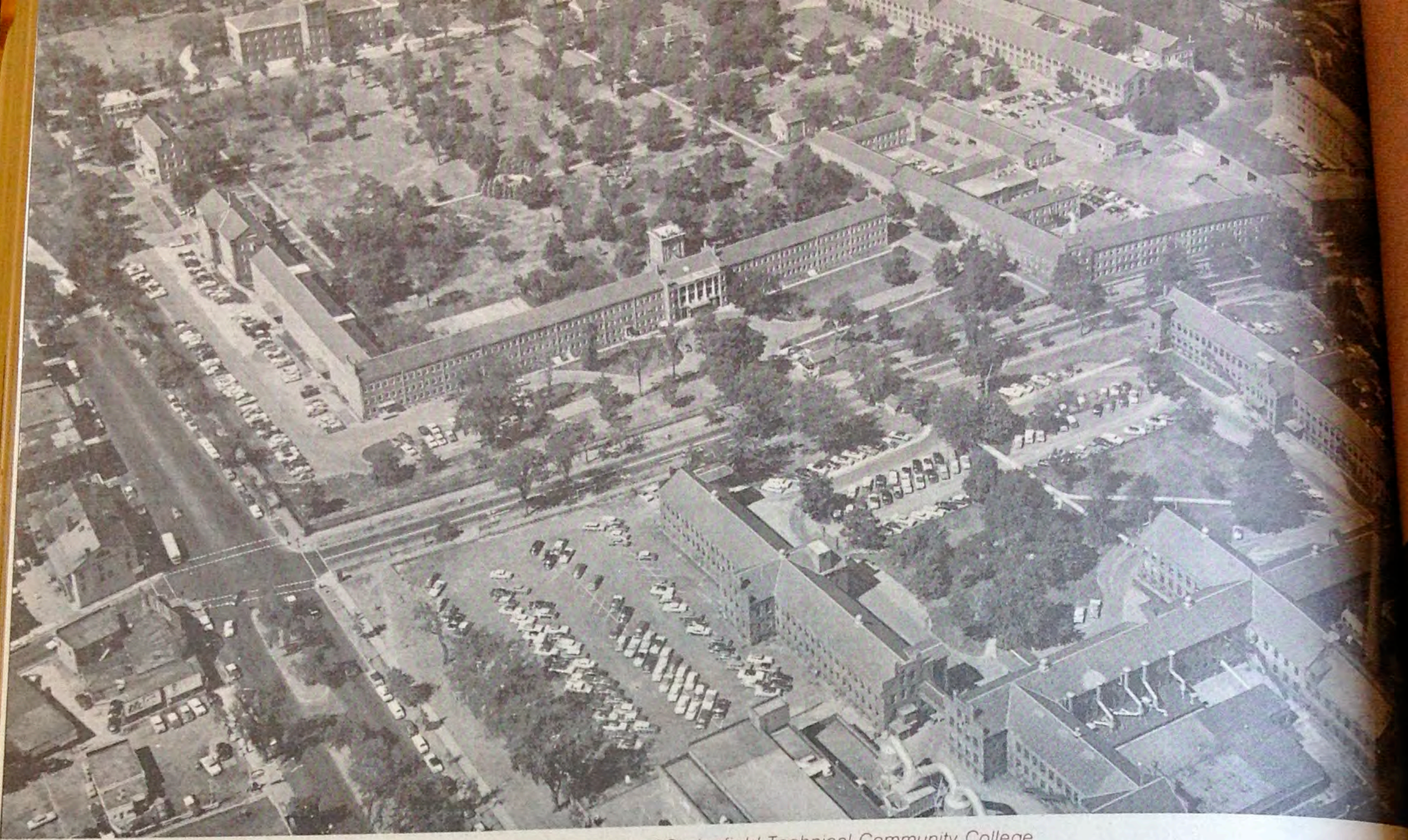
### V-E Day In Britain Tomorrow

Churchill Will Make An-  
 nouncement to British  
 Empire at 9 A. M.,  
 (E.W.T.), Ministry of In-  
 formation Officially States  
 LONDON, May 7 (AP)—The Brit-  
 ish Ministry of Information an-  
 nounced that tomorrow will be treated



### Surrender M To All of A

Germany Thoroughly Smashed  
 Gives Up Unconditionally—Ter-  
 at Gen. Eisenhower's Headqu-  
 ishes Bloodiest Conflict Which  
 Days and Cost 40 Million Casu-  
 Announcement Came From Be-  
 NEW YORK, May 7.—CBS reported at 11  
 an announcement by ABRSE, the official An-  
 nouncement station in Europe, saying: "Germany  
 unconditionally. The war is officially over."  
 ABRSE said President Truman, Prime  
 Minister Stalin "are expected to meet  
 at the official



*An aerial view of the old Armory grounds, now the campus of Springfield Technical Community College.*

Even before Mayor Ryan had exhausted his campaign to save the Armory, business interests had moved to convert part of the historic grounds to new productive purposes. Industries moved in, and some jobs were salvaged for Springfield area residents.

The relocation of a community college from Trade High School to a major portion of the Armory grounds in 1967 found many citizens unimpressed. It hardly compensated for the loss of a federal manufactory, they felt. Not many people could foresee that within a decade Springfield Technical Community College, as the school came to be known, would grow to be the largest institution of its kind in the state, with an enrollment of 3,300 and a teaching staff of 177. Few either would have imagined that the 54-acre campus, embracing the Armory's inner Quadrangle, would soon be the location of a multi-million dollar construction program with a master plan that outlines extensive building ahead.

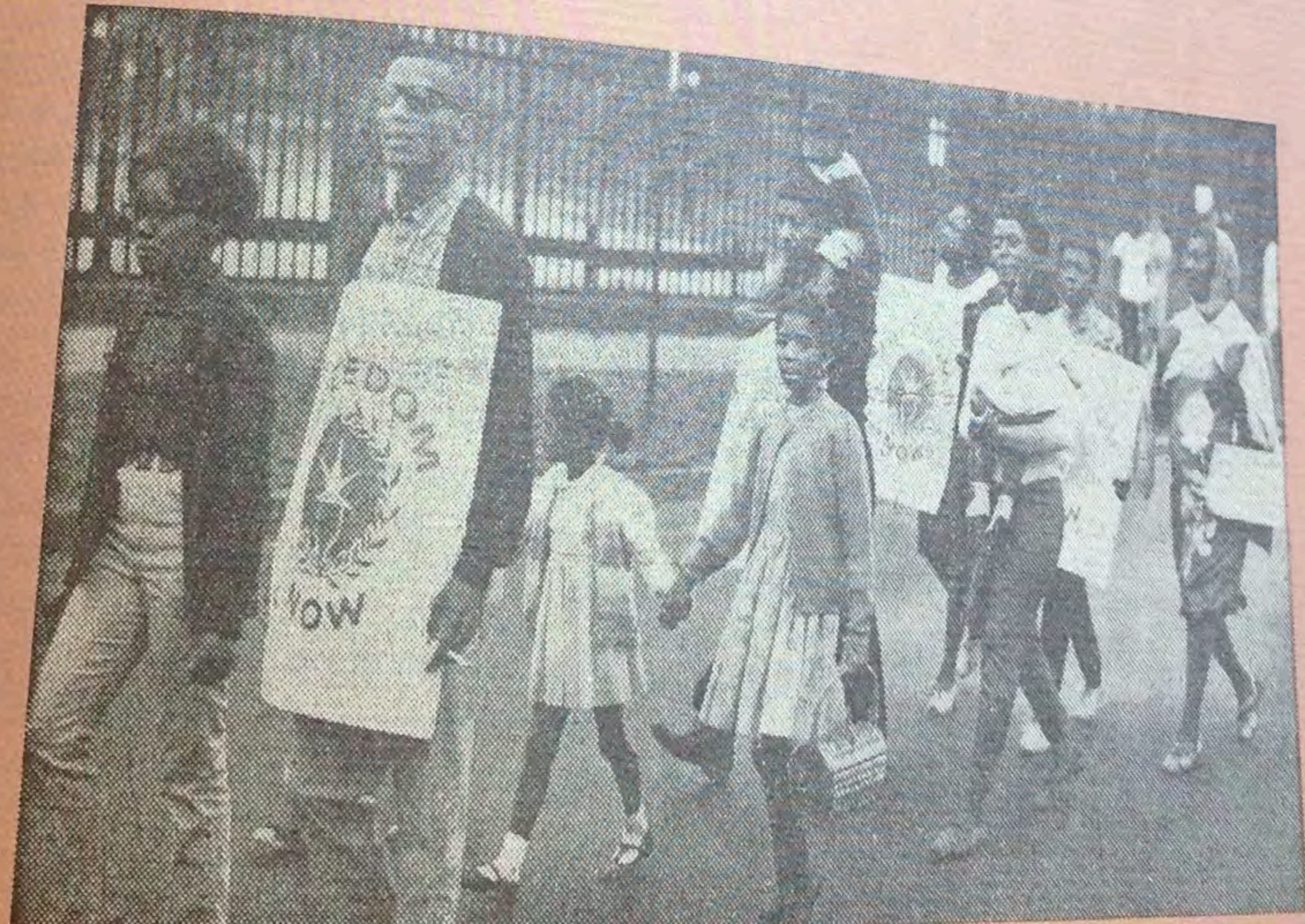
Oldtimers were reconciled, too, in knowing that the Armory Museum remains as a lasting memorial and tie with the past. The "organ of guns" viewed by the poet Longfellow is still there along with the world's largest collection of military equipment. In the annals of history, too, the name "Springfield" continues synonymous with "rifle."

Another blow to Springfield's self-satisfaction came in the sixties in the form of racial disturbances. To the majority of citizens, who were not close to the black community, the outbreaks came as shocking surprises. With the schools' Springfield Plan of recent memory, stressing as it did tolerance and understanding among all races, and with black representation in the City Council for some years, the community, to many superficial observers, appeared insulated from the troubles in other cities.

There were hints early in the decade that had meaning for the discerning. A few citizens saw the friction coming, but were unable to communicate to the city that changing times and the rising demand for civil rights on the national scene had created a gap here that was not being bridged. A meeting of 200 people at the Dunbar Community Center on Oak Street in December, 1960 heard the black minister of St. John's Congregational Church, the Rev. Charles E. Cobb, president of the Springfield Pastors' Council, speak of subtle discrimination practiced here. Jobs for blacks was one of the many concerns. Another important consideration was housing. This subject dramatically came to the fore in the winter of 1963 when a full-page ad in local newspapers appealed for assistance in relocating families in urban renewal



Scenes from a racial demonstration in Springfield, August 22, 1965.



areas. The ad, signed by scores of citizens and sponsored by the Mayor's Minority Group Housing Committee, stated bluntly that there had been "enormous difficulty in finding decent homes for people of minority groups despite the large number of apartments for rent and homes for sale in the city."

Two years later there was an incident of arrests at a nightclub that brought charges of police brutality and was followed by a march of protesting blacks down State Street while National Guardsmen looked on. There were other ominous incidents and demonstrations resulting in arrests and court hearings. It became plain that Springfield had racial problems just as other cities.

The city's racial unrest soon came to take center stage in the school system where for many years now the edicts of the United States Supreme Court have represented a challenge to local governments. In the case of Springfield, a principal issue has been that of racial balance. In 1965, 5,000 city residents

petitioned to keep neighborhood schools intact. Two years later the hard-pressed school superintendent, Dr. John E. Deady, was constrained to observe that the neighborhood school was "dead as a dodo." Through many years there has been a tug-of-war between the State Board of Education and the city government on the question of balance and busing, with Springfield sometimes feeling that it has been singled out as a target city in the state.

Strikes, sitdowns and a variety of melees in the schools themselves have brought injuries and much distress as well as disruption to the learning process. Meanwhile an increase in the number of Hispanic residents in the city has added new balancing problems to the school system and posed language difficulties as well.

Springfield's rebuilding, it is clear, encompasses many complexities of human relations that will tax the community's resources and its leadership for some time to come.