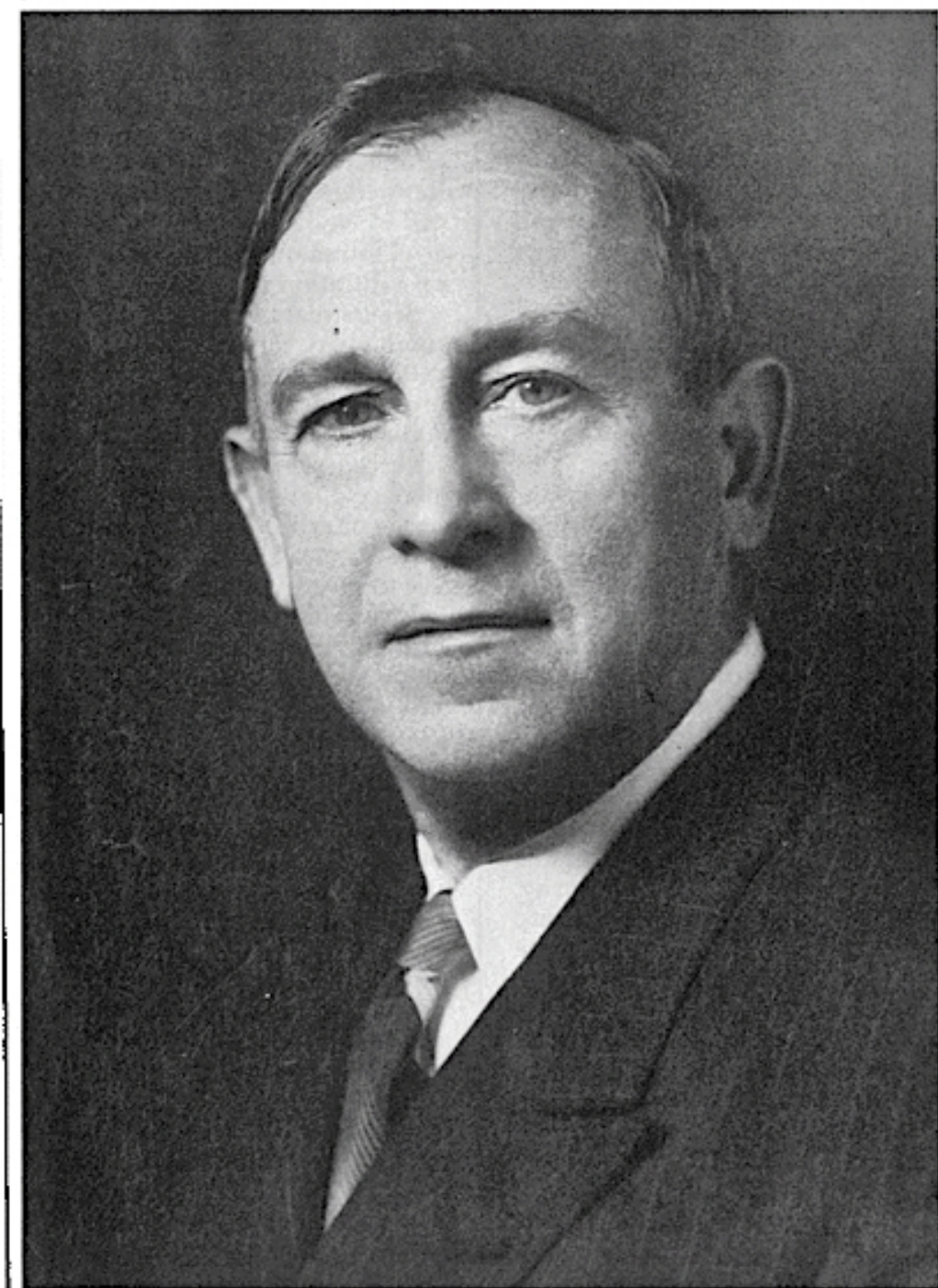


JAY B. NASH

Nash saw the athletic field, gymnasium, and campground as laboratories for fostering social intercourse, learning to cope with success and failure, and for developing cooperation, character, and citizenship.

J. THOMAS JABLE



“Die with your boots on, with a hundred interesting unfinished activities for which there was just not time. On such a prescription, one may live long and happy, often on borrowed time.” That was Jay Bryan Nash’s basic formula (1980) for a rich, full, and happy life. True to his own words, Nash was a busy man during his long and successful career. He kept busy most of the time not only with his professional duties, but also with numerous avocational activities. In 1965 he died at age 79 wearing his figurative boots, leaving behind a notable and distinguished career.

Physical educators have recognized Nash’s accomplishments and meritorious professional service by honoring him with two preeminent awards. In 1940, AAHPER presented him with the Luther Halsey Gulick Award, the highest honor an AAHPERD member can receive, and the American Academy of Physical Education chose him as its first recipient of the Clark W. Hetherington Award. This essay examines the major forces and events that made him one of the important leaders in American physical education.

The formative years

Born in the rural community of New Baltimore, Ohio in 1886, Jay B. Nash learned the American work ethic as he performed his daily farm chores. During his youth he heard Russell Conwell’s famous “Acres of Diamonds” speech, a presentation that inspired Nash to dream of exciting an audience the way Conwell did. Years later, he fulfilled his boyhood dream, becoming a highly talented public speaker, a trademark of his career (Jessup, 1967).

Nash’s older sister, Grace, a teacher, influenced him to continue his education beyond high