Part III

Efflorescence: Mid–1960s to Mid–1970s

DURING THE 1960S AND WELL INTO THE 1970S, AI RESEARCH BLOSSOMED AND progress seemed rapid. The laboratories established at MIT, Carnegie Mellon, Stanford, SRI, and Edinburgh expanded, and several new groups got started at other universities and companies. Achievements during the preceding years, even though modest in retrospect, were exciting and full of promise, which enticed several new people into the field, myself included. Many of us were just as optimistic about success as Herb Simon and Marvin Minsky were when they made their predictions about rapid progress.

AI entered a period of flowering that led to many new and important inventions. Several ideas originated in the context of Ph.D. dissertation research projects. Others emerged from research laboratories and from individual investigators wrestling with theoretical problems. In this part, I'll highlight some of the important projects and research results. Although not a complete account, they typify much of what was going on in AI during the period. I'll begin with work in computer vision.