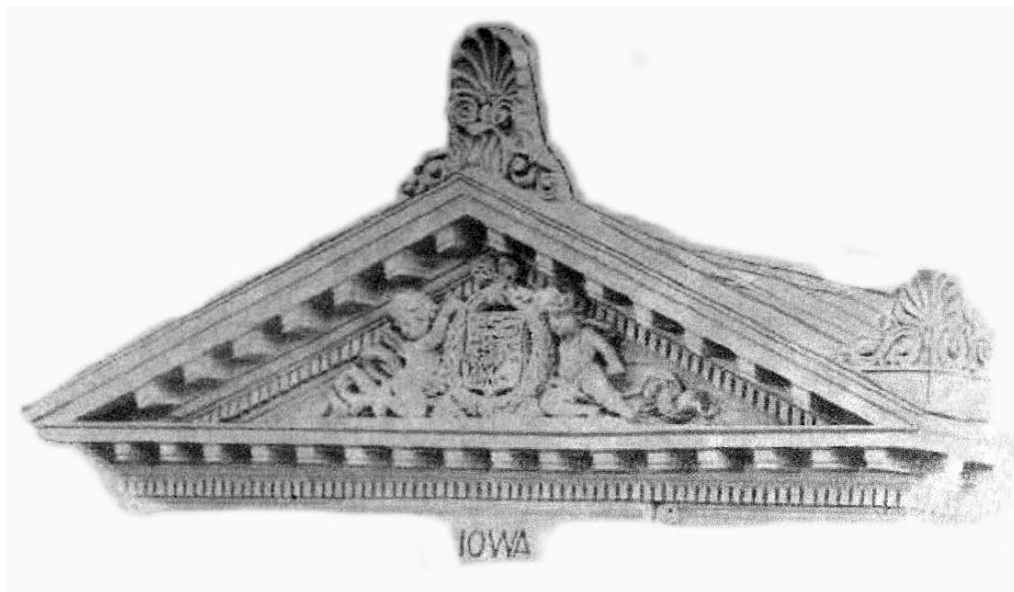


Pieces of Iowa's Past, published by the Iowa State Capitol Tour Guides weekly during the legislative session, features historical facts about Iowa, the Capitol, and the early workings of state government. All historical publications are reproduced here with the actual spelling, punctuation, and grammar retained.

May 4, 2011

THIS WEEK: Destruction and Salvage of the Iowa Building

BACKGROUND: Iowa was the first state to dedicate its building at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. This it did on November 14, 1903, five and one-half months before the opening of the World's Fair. The building was an extravagant structure, but its life was temporary. Destruction of the building began on December 1, 1905.



Iowa Building Pediment



Iowa Building at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in Saint Louis - 1904

The Iowa Building Destruction and Salvage

(From the *Des Moines Daily Capital*, March 30, 1905)

The State Board of Control received notice this morning from the Louisiana Purchase Exposition that every bit of material used in the construction of the Iowa Building had been removed and that the grounds has been restored to the same condition in which they were before the big exposition. All that remains to be done is to sow grass seed where stood the handsome Iowa Building, but this the Iowa Commission has been relieved from doing, owing to the season. Even the cement walks had to be removed and the cellar refilled before the grounds were accepted as restored.

In all, the Board of Control has secured 18 cars of material from the demolition of the Iowa Building, which were presented to the Board by the State Commission. Even the nails alone were saved in tearing down the structure, and over a dozen kegs of nails alone were shipped to Knoxville, where most of the material is to be used in the construction of the state hospital for inebriates.



Farwell to the Iowa Building

President Larrabee officially presents the key of the Iowa Building to Hon. John Cowie of the Board of Control, which assumed management, the Commission retiring December 5, 1904. Henry Jones of Des Moines with saw and axe is the superintendent of destruction.

There were four carloads of furniture and fixtures saved from the exposition building, which were distributed among the state institutions under the Board of Control. Twenty-two potted palms were also brought from the building and divided among the institutions at Davenport, Fort Madison, Mount Pleasant, Clarinda, and Glenwood. A car of building material was sent to each of the following institutions: Davenport, Independence, Eldora, Mitchellville, and Glenwood, to be used in the new buildings being erected there.

In all, it is figured that the Board of Control secured close to 140,000 feet of lumber from the Iowa Building. The bulk of this will be used at Knoxville this summer. In planning the administration building there the Board arranged to use the windows, doors, and interior finishings of the exposition building, and on one contract alone, a reduction of \$2,000 was secured for the use of the old material.

The tearing down of the Iowa Building began December 1, and has occupied four months. During that time, not an accident has occurred. Iowa is one of the first, if not the first state, to complete the removal of its state building from the exposition grounds. It is also said that this state has secured more salvage from its building than any other represented in St. Louis.



"I have but one regret, and that is a deep regret—the regret that these buildings and these exhibits could not be made permanent; that these buildings cannot be maintained as they are for our children and our children's children, and all who are to come after, as a permanent memorial of the greatness of this country. I think that an American who begrudges a dollar that has been spent here is not so farsighted as he should be. It is a credit to the United States to have had such an exposition carried on so successfully from the beginning to its conclusion." – **President Theodore Roosevelt**

