

Number responding to sick call.....	5,799
Number prescriptions compounded.....	17,289
Number cared for.....	751
Number deaths.....	30
Number died away from home.....	
Number examinations made for admission and re-admission.....	319
Average number present.....	468
Number returned to quarters or discharged from home.....	115
Number remaining in hospital June 30, 1895.....	42
Number deaths per 1,000 of whole number cared for.....	41.27
Number graves in home cemetery June 30, 1895, including 1 woman.....	121
Amount of drugs and instruments purchased, hospital, dormitory, barn and bar-ber supplies, \$1,356.49.	

Comparing the reports you will readily see the necessity of immediate action to increase the capacity for caring for those who are eligible and are knocking at the door for admission. For courteous treatment received from all the officers I hereby tender my thanks. Respectfully submitted,

HAMILTON P. DUFFIELD,  
*Surgeon*

# REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

OF THE  
TWENTY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE  
STATE OF IOWA,

APPOINTED TO VISIT THE  
IOWA SOLDIERS' HOME,

LOCATED AT  
MARSHALLTOWN.

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

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## REPORT.

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*To the Twenty-Sixth General Assembly of the State of Iowa:*

Your joint committee appointed to visit, examine and report upon the condition of the Soldiers' Home at Marshalltown, having performed that duty, beg leave to submit the following report:

We visited the home on Thursday, January 23d inst., and found the home in its every day condition.

We made an exhaustive examination of the home and all that pertains to it in detail. We found the main building, or home proper, well cared for, the interior clean, the ventilation good, the beds (made of iron and each for one occupant), in good condition, the bedding and all other clothing and textile goods used by the inmates clean and well cared for, the rooms free from offensive odors, the kitchen commodious and clean, well supplied with necessary cooking appliances, the store-room, pantries, cold storage, vegetable rooms, refrigerators, bake ovens and ranges, all admirably located, in good order and ample in capacity, the food material of excellent quality and variety, well kept and healthful.

The food prepared for the table was well cooked, and brought to the table in excellent condition and appearance; the three dining rooms are large, clean, well ventilated and free from offensive odors. The furniture, long plain hard wood tables, the seats, plain wooden stools, free from soil or stain, the dishes plain, but ample for use and perfectly clean, the service excellent, the large crowds at the table being rapidly supplied and without confusion, the smoking room isolated as far as possible from the other rooms of the building in good order, well supplied for its purposes with tables and chairs, the library well supplied with useful and interesting reading



matter including the leading magazines and daily papers; the laundry in which all the washing for the entire plant is done is commodious and well supplied with all necessary appliances for washing, drying, ironing and distributing to the various wards or rooms. The chapel, much too small for present needs, is comfortable, well lighted and religious services are held there every Sunday, being supplied by the ministers from the various churches of Marshalltown.

To all parts of the building and grounds the inmates have free access except that part occupied by the commandant and his family as a residence, and the room used as the business office. Good order is maintained without apparent difficulty, and with few exceptions, content among the inmates is manifest.

The clothing, which is issued free to the men, is excellent in quality, neat in appearance and serviceable.

In the purchase and issue of the large amount of subsistence and quartermaster's stores, we found in operation a very complete system, by which every article and every pound purchased is fully accounted for upon the receipt of the proper person. This system which was inaugurated by the present administration establishes and fixes an accountability which has already shown excellent results, materially reducing the pro rata cost and also the pro rata consumption, both of clothing and subsistence.

This building is crowded to discomfort; its capacity as constructed is 350. The number on the rolls is now 608; of which 78 are in the hospital, 95 temporarily absent on furlough, leaving an actual occupancy of the rooms of 430, with cots in place for the furloughed men when they return; total number of 525, or 175 more than intended to hold.

The exterior wood work has not been repainted since first erected, nearly eight years, and is now greatly in need of being painted. The floors of the dining room, of other public rooms and in most of the wards or sleeping rooms, are greatly out of repair, worn thin in places, splintered and holes through and the same numerous; new floors are a necessity.

Your committee believes that the cottage plan for the use of soldiers with their wives has proved impractical and recommend that no more be constructed. There are ten of them, each with three rooms, neat and comfortable, and all occupied by aged couples. These must go to the main building for their meals from 100 to 150 yards distant.

The wife has nothing with which to occupy hands or mind and with limited opportunity for associating with others, and your committee recommend the plan of the commission for the construction of a dormitory building for these soldiers and their wives as greater economy and much more satisfactory.

The old ladies' dormitory is a substantial building, neatly finished, having fourteen rooms for the occupants besides the toilet rooms, dining and reception rooms, and two rooms in use by the matron for an office and sleeping room.

The rooms for the occupants were intended for two beds each, but the construction or plan is faulty. The largest of the rooms is  $9\frac{1}{2}$  feet by 13 feet and there are but six of them, the others being  $8\frac{1}{2}$  by 13 feet each, with windows so placed that few only can accommodate more than one bed without discomfort and danger. There are no clothes closets in the building. No cooking is done in the building; the food all prepared is carted over from the kitchen of the main building, and, we are informed, comes to the tables in good shape. The third story or attic is unfinished and should be finished so far as may be necessary to accommodate the necessary servants and employes, but a portion of the space is needed for storage, not needing further finishing. The beds, bed clothing, furniture and all the rooms are comfortable and clean, the inmates apparently contented and happy, and cared for in a most solicitious manner by the matron, Mrs. Reed, who is evidently enthusiastically devoted to her work. The building is comfortably warmed from the steam heating plant, from which heat is furnished to all the buildings, except the cottages, which are warmed by stoves. There are now fifteen women domiciled there and applications on file with the commandant for the admission of many more, necessarily refused for want of space accommodations.

This building with its furniture cost \$9,822.53, of which \$1,148.05 was expended for furniture. The money was obtained from state appropriations—Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth General Assemblies—\$8,000; from the Woman's Relief Corps of the state, \$400, and from what is called the contingent fund, \$1,422.53. (See pages 41-42 report of commissioners of Soldiers' Home and page 143, chapter 147, laws of the Twenty-fifth General Assembly.) And your committee believe that every dollar was faithfully expended; but a building costing three times the sum would have been in the interest of true economy, and



your committee believe that another woman's dormitory building should be erected connected with the one now there containing dormitories only, for which \$12,500 should be appropriated. The state should abandon the care of the aged indigent mothers and widows of soldiers, or should make ample provisions for their care and comfort.

The indigent soldiers with their wives have also become a feature of the Soldiers' Home, but with grossly inadequate facilities for their care. The cottages were designed for this class, but the plan has proved expensive and unsatisfactory. The commissioners have asked for an appropriation of \$30,000 with which to erect for them a dormitory, and your committee earnestly recommend that the request be granted, believing that the building is urgently needed and will be in the interest of economy.

There are now over fifty applications on file with the commandant for the admission of that many more couples who of course cannot be accommodated. It is the belief of the commandant and of your committee that a building fitted for the accommodation of 100 couples would be fully occupied before the meeting of the next general assembly. Such a building could be placed near the woman's dormitory, also near the cottages, supplied with kitchen and laundry facilities for all.

The hospital at the home urgently demands the attention of the state. The present building is inadequate in capacity and deficient in design. In it are crowded seventy-eight sick soldiers, most of them suffering from some chronic disorder. The rooms are small, without ventilation, one room only is occupied by one cot, five rooms each 14x10x13 feet contain three cots each, or 607 cubic feet of air space for each bed, and all other rooms are crowded in the same proportion.

The surgeon with his family, four nurses and the kitchen help also occupy rooms in the building. The floor space in these rooms is crowded to the extent of rendering it extremely difficult to wait upon the sick, nor is there any opportunity for isolation, which in some of the cases is imperatively demanded. Those afflicted with disorders emitting offensive odors are necessarily quartered with others in close contact, rendering comfort impossible and greatly retarding the process of recovery. With all the care given to the sanitary conditions of the hospital, it is not possible to prevent smells more or less offensive pervading the entire building.

The demand for a new hospital building is most urgent and your committee recommend the appropriation of \$40,000 as asked for by the commissioners for that purpose. The new building should have space for at least 100 patients, disposed of in rooms or wards ample for comfort—for patients and attendants. Such a building will relieve the present one of the sick, which in turn can be occupied by the older and weaker inmates of the home and the convalescent from the hospital, and thus relieve the main building of its congested condition.

When it is known that the average ages of the inmates of the home is over sixty-two years, and that all are in ill health and feeble, the population of the hospital is not surprising.

Your committee also recommend that provision be made in the appropriation for the home for the employment of trained nurses, as the old soldiers employed for that work are incapacitated by age and disabilities from performing the services, and are utterly wanting in experience.

Your committee also recommend the appropriation asked for by the commissioners for residences for the commandant and surgeon, but would suggest that each should cost no more than \$3,000. By this means the space now occupied by the commandant and surgeon in the main home building and hospital respectively, could be occupied by the cots of the soldiers, giving, with the present hospital buildings entire, room for not less than 100 more soldiers at the home, and with the increased facilities in the proposed new hospital, twenty more could be accommodated. This increased space will not meet present demands, for in addition to the 608 now on the rolls of the home, over 300 applications for admission are now on file with the commandant.

With the new buildings asked for and needed, the new boiler and dynamo asked for by the commissioners cannot be dispensed with, as those now in use are taxed to their utmost capacity, and your committee recommend that the appropriation asked for for that purpose be granted.

In the opinion of your committee the purchase of additional ground for a new cemetery is not a pressing necessity. While the land contemplated by the commissioners in the purchase is a beautiful grove, and from its location in reference to the land now owned by the state makes it desirable that the state should



own it, there is abundant room on the state grounds for the cemetery for all time to come. We would, however, recommend that an appropriation of \$1,000 be made for the purchase of said land if it can be had for that price.

The commissioners ask for an appropriation of \$4,000 to complete the improvement of the grounds; your committee believes that not more than one-half that sum is needed.

It has been and is the custom at the home to pay the soldier inmates for every item of work performed by them excepting the sweeping and keeping the buildings clean, and preparing vegetables for cooking which is done by detail. Your committee believe that the practice is not only unnecessary but wrong. Some of the services performed require some degree of experience and training, such as the kitchen and laundry work and waiting on the tables, and to secure this the parties performing it should be paid, but otherwise the work should be done by details from those able to do it. Especially could much of the work of improving the grounds, cultivating the farm lands, raising and harvesting the crops—now hired—be had by the system of detail which would be of advantage to the state and of great benefit to the soldiers in the preservation of health. The condition of absolute idleness prevailing with so large a body of men is deplorable from every point of view, and your committee recommend that measures be taken to keep those who are able to work employed as far as may be with the view of improving their sanitary condition, the employment to be light and of short reliefs.

#### THE CONTINGENT FUND.

The commissioners ask for an appropriation of \$2,000 as a contingent fund. Hitherto this institution has had no such fund appropriated, but a so-called contingent fund has been created from moneys received from sources other than the state. Attention is called to the report of the commissioners concerning this matter on pages 40 and 41 of their report to this General Assembly, where it will be seen that this fund has been charged with the sum of \$10,767.32. All of which, save the sum of \$1,031.62 is derived from the pensions of the soldiers resident at the home.

The report also shows that this sum is disbursed in the payment of salaries, constructing sewers, improvement of grounds and buildings, and \$4,500 converted into the state treasury. Under the term salary found in this report all expenditures for

work and services rendered are included, whatever that service may be and by whomsoever rendered, so it will be seen that those of the inmates drawing pensions—about 60 per cent—have contributed to the support and improvement of the home the sum of \$9,735.70 during the two years ending June 30, 1895.

The commissioners adopted and have had in force a rule requiring all applicants for admission to the home to agree to surrender to the commandant all of their quarterly payments of pensions except the sum of six dollars per month, which sum the soldier is permitted to keep for spending money, the balance, in case the pensioners have dependent relatives, is sent to such relatives. If he has no such relatives, the sum retained is used for the support of the home and forms the bulk of the so-called contingent fund. The commissioners justify this retention of the pensions on the ground that it is necessary to discipline in the cases of those who are given to excessive drink (claimed to be about 30 per cent) and further that it is just that the soldier should support himself in so far as he is able.

That no soldier having a pension of \$24.00 per month or more is admitted, because with that sum he can support himself elsewhere and if he has a pension sufficient to partly support him in the home, it is right that he should be required so to do.

Your committee commend the rule so far as requiring the pensioners to send the sum not needed to his indigent relatives who otherwise might be a public charge, nor do we question the propriety of requiring the pensioner to contribute of his income to his own support so far as that may be needed, but the justice of the rule as now applied is open to grave doubt.

The books of the management show, and the commissioners aver it to be a fact, that the cost to the state of maintaining each inmate in the home is from \$125 to \$130 per year, this is understood to include every item of support, expense of food, clothing, salaries, heat, lights, etc.

Now of this sum the United States contributes by the payment to the state the sum of \$100 per year for every inmate, leaving but the sum of \$25 to \$30 for each person to be paid by the state. If it be admitted that it is just and right that the soldier, when he can, shall contribute to his own support while in the home, the justice of his doing more than that, of aiding in this way



the state to support those not drawing pensions, is not so clear; to illustrate, the soldier has a pension of \$12 per month, not sufficient to support him out of the home, by entering there he has the benefit of the government's donation of \$100 per year for his support, leaving a balance of \$25 or \$30 which, it may be admitted, he should pay from his pension, but the rule referred to takes from him \$72 per year or at the outside \$42 per year more than needed for that purpose and appears to be an exorbitant tax for one citizen of the state to pay in support of one of the state institutions.

Your committee is informed that in all cases where pensions are so retained the general government rebates from its donation a sum equal to one-half the pension money retained, so that as in the case above, where \$72 is retained, \$36 is kept back from the government donation, and even then the soldier pays from \$6 to \$11 more than required for his own support.

Your committee deem it advisable to refer to this matter in their report from the fact that the commissioners on page 7 of their report to this legislature, ask or suggest that their board be authorized to retain of such pensioners all but \$3 per month for their indigent relatives, or for the state. We refer to the discussion of this question by the commissioners found on pages 6 to 11 inclusive, of their report.

Your committee find that all sums appropriated by the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth General Assemblies to the support and improvement of this institution whether for grounds or buildings has been wisely and judiciously expended for the objects for which they were appropriated, or otherwise accounted for.

That no indebtedness has been contracted in excess of the appropriations, but find that there have been expended in excess of the appropriations and taken from the so called contingent and other funds, as follows:

Salaries and wages.....	\$ 1,000.00
Improvement of grounds.....	518.55
New floors .....	15.66
Women's dormitory.....	674.48

The appropriation for sewers was \$4,500, the cost of same, \$4,707.34, but of this \$2,456.22 was taken from the contingent fund, leaving \$2,243.88 of the appropriation unused.

Appropriation for refrigerators was \$800, of which \$600, only was used. For bake oven the appropriation was \$375, the sum used, \$281.25. Appropriation for fire escape was \$300, the sum used, \$225, total unused appropriations, \$2,617.63.

There have been no diversions of any of the funds from the specific purpose for which appropriated, and the law relating to the drawing of money from the state treasury has been complied with.

The offices, employes and wages of same are as follows:

## SALARY AND WAGES PER MONTH.

J. R. Ratekin, commandant, subsistence, self and family.....	\$ 100.00
B. F. Warfel, adjutant, with residence.....	75.00
C. L. Longley, quartermaster, with residence.....	75.00
H. P. Duffield, surgeon, subsistence, self and family.....	100.00
H. B. McClure, chief engineer .....	75.00
M. A. Reed, matron, with subsistence.....	35.00
Chaplains .....	30.00
Total.....	\$ 460.00

## NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS.

Steward, main building.....	\$ 20.00
Steward, hospital.....	15.00
Steward, dormitory.....	10.00
Quartermaster sergeant.....	15.00
Eighteen rooms or ward sergeants, \$2 to \$4.....	55.00
Two guides, \$3 each.....	6.00
Postmaster and librarian.....	10.00
Bugler.....	5.00
Night watch.....	12.00
Flag sergeant.....	3.00
Two bath room police, \$3 each.....	6.00
Sergeant-major or commandant's clerk.....	25.00
Depot keeper.....	3.00
Total.....	\$ 185.00

## HEAT AND LIGHT.

Electric engineer.....	\$ 40.00
Three firemen, \$16.66 each.....	50.00
Two teamsters, \$16.66 each.....	33.33
Depot keeper.....	3.00
Total.....	\$ 123.33

## SUBSISTENCE.

Chief cook, main building.....	\$ 45.00
First assistant cook, main building.....	12.00
Second assistant cook, main building.....	8.00
Baker.....	25.00
Chief cook, hospital.....	50.00
Assistant cook, hospital.....	8.00
Twenty-one table waiters, hospital, \$5 each.....	105.00
Four table waiters, main building, \$5 each.....	20.00
Total.....	\$ 273.00
Grand total.....	\$ 1,041.33

## MISCELLANEOUS.

Four nurses, hospital, \$10 to \$15.....	\$ 40.00
Domestic, dormitory.....	13.00
Florist.....	15.00
Two teamsters (mail and cart, \$10 each).....	20.00
House cleaner.....	10.00
Shoemaker.....	10.00



Tailor.....	\$ 12.00
Barber.....	10.00
Carpenter.....	15.00
Four laundrymen, two \$8, \$7, and two \$5 each.....	25.00
Linen room keeper.....	6.00

A new chapel costing not to exceed the sum of \$3,500 would give additional space in the main building for at least forty cots, and as the demand for such space is urgent and the present chapel grossly inadequate for present, to say nothing of future needs, we recommend that an appropriation be made for that purpose.

Your committee recommend the following appropriations in addition to a general appropriation of \$1,250 per month for salaries and wages to be made by this General Assembly, to-wit:

For finishing a portion of attic in woman's building.....	\$ 200.00
For new boiler.....	1,000.00
For new dynamo.....	1,000.00
For automatic boiler cleaners.....	400.00
For improvement of grounds.....	2,000.00
For residence for commandant.....	3,000.00
For residence for surgeon.....	2,500.00
For new floors in main building.....	1,600.00
For painting main building and ten cottages.....	1,000.00
For new hospital building.....	40,000.00
For new, old (married) peoples' building.....	30,000.00
For new woman's building.....	12,500.00
For new chapel.....	3,500.00
For furniture for hospital and the other new buildings.....	5,000.00
For contingent fund.....	2,000.00

And we recommend that all sums of the above appropriation not needed for the purposes for which appropriated be transferred to the contingent fund and so accounted for.

P. A. SMITH,

N. A. MERRILL,

*For the House.*

J. S. LOTHROP,

*For the Senate.*