

REPORT  
OF THE  
JOINT COMMITTEE

OF THE  
TWENTY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE  
STATE OF IOWA,

APPOINTED TO VISIT THE  
SOLDIERS' HOME

LOCATED AT  
MARSHALLTOWN.

---

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

---

DES MOINES:  
G. H. RAGSDALE, STATE PRINTER.  
1890.

## REPORT.

---

*To the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:*

Your Joint Committee to whom was assigned the duty of visiting and reporting upon the condition of the Iowa Soldiers' Home, located at Marshalltown, have discharged that duty, and report as follows:

It has now been in use and operation but about two years, yet it is in every department called upon by the necessities of the public, wounded and dependent soldiers of the State, to the exercise of the fullest limit of its capacity, and, in general terms, is an institution whose claims upon the State are of such character as appeal with increasing force and earnestness for that consideration which gratitude prompts.

Such investigation as your Committee was able to make—not as thorough as more time would have enabled them to prosecute—was nevertheless such as to confirm them in the opinion that the appropriations made by the last General Assembly had been most wisely and judiciously expended, and for the object for which the funds were appropriated, and no debts in excess of the appropriations have been incurred. The system of keeping the books and managing the financial affairs of the institution is in the highest degree commendable, creditable to the business and army training of the Commandant and his assistants.

The Home, at this date, has 360 crippled and dependent soldiers present and absent on its rolls; 32, at the time your Committee visited the Home, being absent on short furlongs. There were 14 sick on this day in the hospital and 30 were excused from duty. The present allowance of \$6,000 per annum for salaries of officers and employes of the Home is not, in the opinion of your Committee, sufficient. More waiters in the hospital and more help in various capacities about the Home are needed. The salary of the Commandant is not commensurate with the ability and business skill

and capacity demanded and well employed by the present Commandant in the interests of the State and of those committed to his care.

Your Committee deem it proper in this connection to enter somewhat into the details of the operation of the Home, that a better understanding of its needs and requirements may be had, and report that on the 1st day of January, 1890, there had been admitted to the Home, from the date of the beginning of its operation, 495 veterans. Of the whole number admitted thirty-one have died, ninety-five were discharged and nineteen dropped from the rolls; leaving three hundred and forty-nine in good standing. Of the whole number admitted nine are over eighty years of age, forty-four between seventy and eighty, and hundred and twenty-five between sixty and seventy, and the average age of the whole, fifty-seven. Of the whole number admitted three hundred and fifty-six are native Americans, fifty-eight were born in Ireland, forty in Germany, twenty-seven in England, five in Switzerland, two each in Scotland, Prussia and France, one each in Mexico, Austria and Wales. Of the whole number admitted two hundred and thirty-three entered the army from Iowa, seventy-three from Illinois, twenty-five from Wisconsin, twenty-four from Ohio, twenty-two from New York, twenty from Missouri, seventeen from Indiana, thirteen from Pennsylvania, five each from Colorado and Minnesota, four each from Kentucky and Michigan, three from Massachusetts, two from California, one each from Connecticut, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia and New Jersey; six Mexican War and thirty United States army and navy. The average time of their service in the army was two and one-half years; ranging all the way from a hundred days to five years. Eight men have been sent to the insane asylum since the Home was opened, one died and two were taken and cared for by their friends, and five are supported in the asylum by the Home at an expense of \$14 per month, while the Home is allowed only \$10. The average number for 1888 was one hundred and sixty-nine; the average number for 1889 was two hundred and eighty-seven; the present capacity of the Home is three hundred and fifty, and there are three hundred and forty-nine present and absent, and twenty-nine applications accepted of parties not yet received. They can carry more on the rolls than they have beds for, as there are always some absent on leave and constant changes by parties taking discharge in consequence of their getting their pensions from the Government and by improvement in health so they are able to

earn their own living. Many of the pensioners receive back pay in sufficient amounts for their support outside the Home, and this class of cases is on the increase. Their leaving the home makes room for those who do not receive pensions. The present indications are that the demands for admission to the Home will increase for some years to come. The general health of the members of the Home has been good. From July 4, 1889, to January 15, 1890, there was no death in the Home, although they had nearly thirty cases that are practically bedridden of old chronic cases who entered the Home in a helpless condition, and this class of cases would largely increase if the hospital accommodations of the Home would admit of it. In addition to the hospital accommodations originally provided, when the Home was built, they have been obliged to use two other wards for hospital patients, neither of which has the conveniences necessary for the comfort of the patients, and we desire to recommend additional hospital accommodations. It is the great need of the Home, and if the hospital patients were provided for outside of the present building, it would enable the Home to admit at least fifty more members. The following is a statement of the principal articles of food purchased in the years 1888 and 1889, and their cost: The cost of the uncooked rations for 1888 was 14 4-5 cents per man per day, and for 1889 it was 13 cents. There was received from the farm in 1888, \$481.23, in products at the regular market value, and in 1889, \$899.79. The farm labor was performed by the members of the Home. Their compensation is fixed at 30 cents per day for about eight hours work. The farm is under a good state of cultivation, having been plentifully supplied with fertilizers for the past two years, and with an average season for crops the farm will produce all the vegetables the Home will require.

The employes of the Home are as follows, with the monthly salary named:

Milo Smith, Commandant.....	\$ 100.00
Fred F. Wells, Adjutant.....	50.00
Ben E. Eberhart, Quartermaster.....	50.00
W. M. Fisher, engineer.....	50.00
A. E. Dodd, cook.....	50.00
W. B. Waters, Surgeon.....	50.00

Your Committee would recommend as appropriations for the Home, for the first biennial period, the following:

For hospital building, furniture and fixtures.....	\$ 25,000.00
For new boiler-room and heating apparatus for main building and hospital...	6,000.00
For three cottages and furniture for employes.....	7,500.00
For additional sewerage.....	1,250.00
For salaries of officers and employes per month.....	1,000.00

The sewerage system has been found inadequate, depending on cess pools. A better and more perfect system is greatly needed—demanded by the requirements of health.

The appropriation of last session for a Quartermaster's building was judiciously used, as was also that for the barn, a good substantial brick barn 40x60 feet having been erected. The erection of a hospital building will obviate the necessity, if indeed it could be deemed desirable at any time, to place an elevator in the main building.

The following winter bill of fare will give evidence that the veterans are well provided for; the food being well and palatably cooked and regularly served:

## SUNDAY.

*Breakfast*—Oat meal and milk, breakfast bacon, potatoes, bread, butter and coffee.  
*Dinner*—Roast beef, potatoes, parsnips, pie, bread, butter and coffee.  
*Supper*—Mush and milk, cold meats, cheese, pickles and syrup, bread, butter and tea.

## MONDAY.

*Breakfast*—Oat meal and milk, beefsteak, potatoes, bread, butter and coffee.  
*Dinner*—Corn beef and cabbage, kraut, potatoes, bread, butter and coffee.  
*Supper*—Mush and milk, cold meat, sauce, pickles, syrup, bread, butter and tea.

## TUESDAY.

*Breakfast*—Oat meal and milk, hash, potatoes, bread, butter and coffee.  
*Dinner*—Soup, pork and beans, corn, potatoes, bread, butter and coffee.  
*Supper*—Cold meat, rice, cheese, pickles, syrup, bread, butter and tea.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Breakfast*—Oat meal and milk, Irish stew, potatoes, bread, butter and coffee.  
*Dinner*—Bollid beef, potatoes, stewed onions, bread, butter and coffee.  
*Supper*—Mush and milk, ginger cake, sauce, pickles, syrup, bread, butter and tea.

## THURSDAY.

*Breakfast*—Oat meal and milk, breakfast bacon, potatoes, bread, butter and coffee.  
*Dinner*—Roast veal with dressing, potatoes, turnips, bread, butter and coffee.  
*Supper*—Rice, cold meat, cheese, pickles, syrup, bread, butter and cheese.

## FRIDAY.

*Breakfast*—Oat meal and milk, cream codfish, potatoes, bread, butter and coffee.  
*Dinner*—Soup, corn beef and cabbage or mutton pie, potatoes, bread, butter and coffee.  
*Supper*—Mush and milk, cold meat, sauce, pickles, syrup, bread, butter and tea.

## SATURDAY.

*Breakfast*—Oat meal and milk, sausage, potatoes, bread, butter and coffee.  
*Dinner*—Soup, roast pork, potatoes, tomatoes, bread, butter and coffee.  
*Supper*—Rice, cold meat, sauce, pickles, syrup, bread, butter and tea.  
*NOTE*—All kinds of garden produce in their season.

B. E. EBERHART, Q. M.

The number of soldiers in the Home drawing pensions of \$8 per month and upwards is seventy-two.

The Home is doing all that its friends could expect and is worthy of the people whose gratitude found partial expression in dedicating it to the use of the wounded, maimed and dependent veterans.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

N. V. BROWER,

*On the part of the Senate,*

JOHN LAW,

MATT EWART,

*On part of the House.*

IOWA  
STATE HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY.