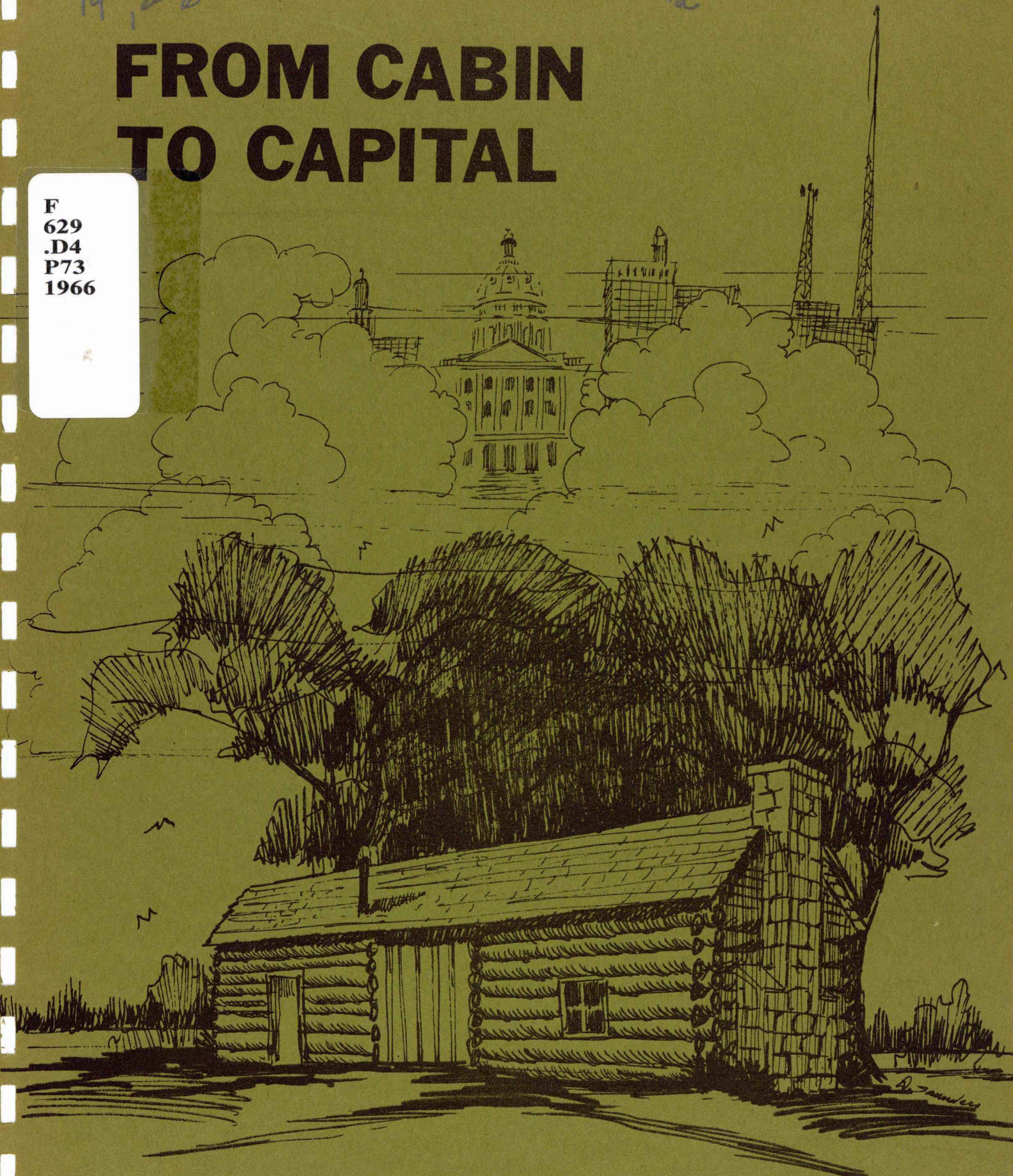


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FROM CABIN TO CAPITAL

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Foreword.

From Cabin to Capital has been prepared in response to numerous requests from teachers, students, historical groups, and other educational and lay organizations for information about our Capital City. It is hoped that this brief history of Des Moines and Polk County Iowa will fill this need.

Our citizens have recognized the importance of Iowa's heritage by requiring that the history of Iowa be taught in our schools. This serves to instill in our young people the perspective needed to properly understand local, regional, state, and national history and show how these are interrelated. The Division of Curriculum, Iowa State Department of Public Instruction, recommends that a sequential approach be used in teaching Iowa history, beginning in grades one through six, with a definite emphasis in the fifth grade.

This publication may be used as a reference by adults, students of all ages, and teachers of history. Anyone having a desire to learn more about the origins and development of our Capital City will find it of interest.

PAUL F. JOHNSTON
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Acknowledgment

Appreciation is expressed to all persons who gave of their time to go over the original draft of this publication to make it more readable and accurate. Lida Lisle Greene, librarian, State Historical Library, was most cooperative and helpful in checking dates and factual data. Paul Ashby, Cliff Millen, Woodrow Westholm, and other members of the Polk County Historical Society also assisted in verifying information. Drawings and art work were done by Marvin W. Ingle and Dennis Saunders, both of the State Department of Public Instruction, and by Architect-artist William J. Wagner.



FROM CABIN TO CAPITAL

A Brief History of Des Moines and Polk County Iowa

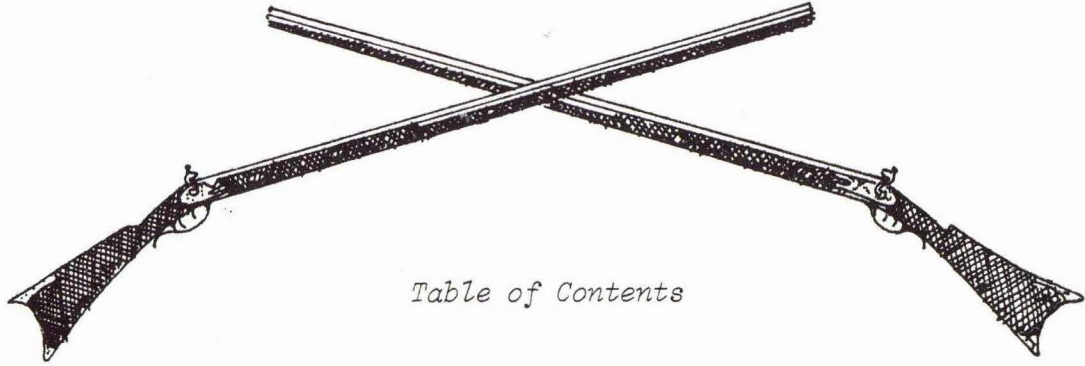


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The Birthplace of Des Moines

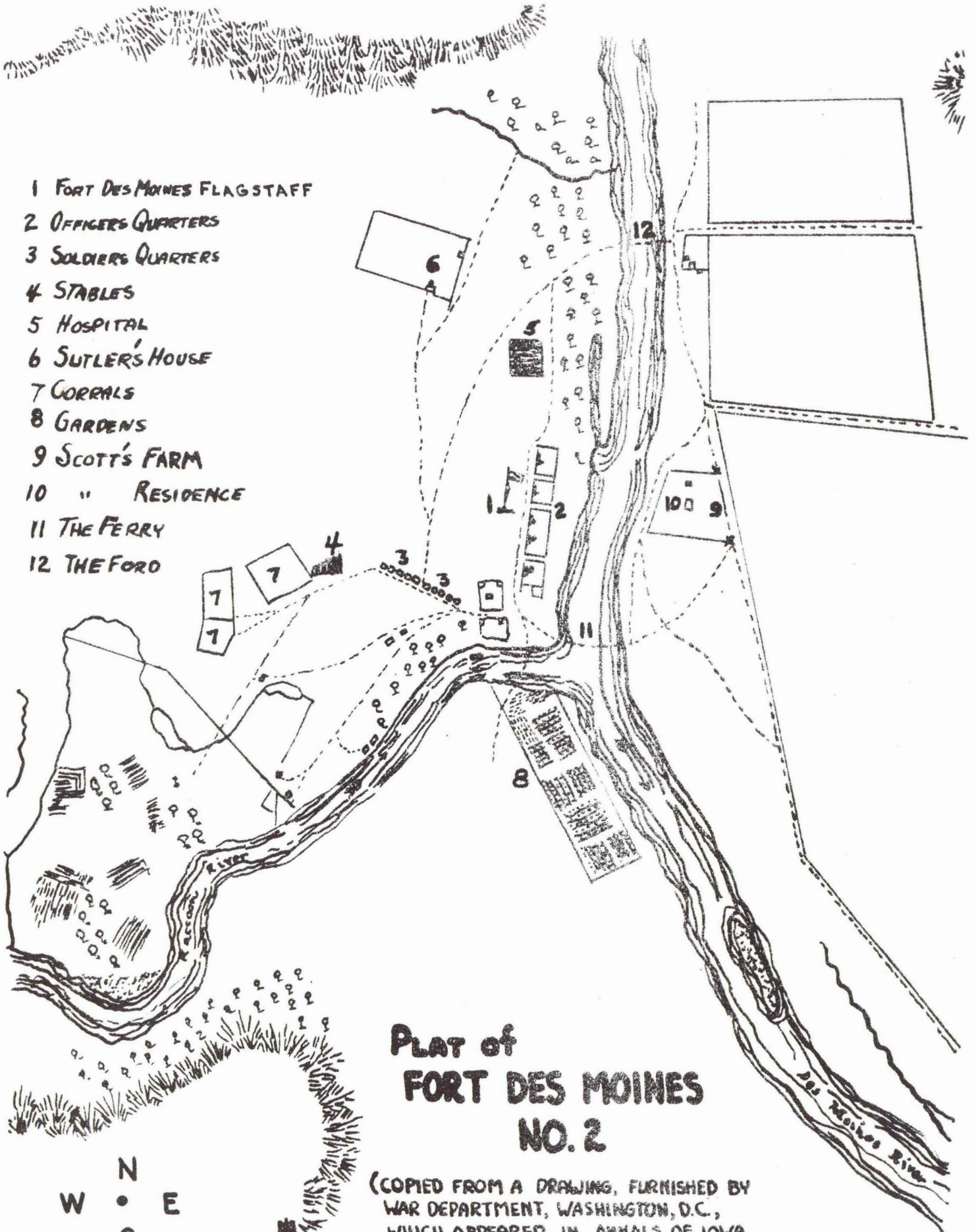
The capital and principal city of Iowa had its beginning at the forks of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers. This was one of the locations in a chain of military posts recommended in 1834 to the U. S. War Department. Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny (1794-1848) explored the area in 1820 and 1835 and considered the advantages of this site as a possible garrison. In July, 1841, Lieutenant John C. Fremont (1813-1890) surveyed the Des Moines River for the War Department. The fort was established on May 20, 1843, when Captain James Allen (1806-1846) and his company of U. S. Dragoons arrived here by river steamer from Fort Sanford, which was located on the Des Moines River near what is now Ottumwa in Wapello County. Captain Allen had visited the locality on several previous occasions and had recommended the point of land for the site of a fort because "the soil is rich; and wood, stone, water and grass are all at hand." In addition, keel boats could bring needed supplies up the Des Moines River to the post.

Captain Allen and his Company I, First Regiment U. S. Dragoons were joined on the next day following their landing by Captain J. R. B. Gardenier, in command of Company F, First U. S. Infantry, who had marched across country from Fort Crawford, at the site of present day Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin.

It was suggested by Captain Allen that the new post be named Fort Raccoon. However, this was considered by his superiors as "shocking" and "in very bad taste" and General Winfield Scott directed that the name Fort Des Moines be used. The fort was established, not to wage war, but to preserve peace and protect the Sac and Fox Indians from the hostile Sioux Indians and from unscrupulous white traders, land grabbers, and speculators.

At midnight of October 11, 1845, after the Sac and Fox Indians had, by treaty, relinquished their rights in this territory, the land was opened to white settlers. The signal agreed upon was the firing of a musket from the Indian Agency building located on the east side of the Des Moines River. The empire of the red man ended as the first shot was relayed from hill to hill until the signal was passed on for

- 1 FORT DES MOINES FLAGSTAFF
- 2 OFFICERS QUARTERS
- 3 SOLDIERS QUARTERS
- 4 STABLES
- 5 HOSPITAL
- 6 SUTLER'S HOUSE
- 7 CORRALS
- 8 GARDENS
- 9 SCOTT'S FARM
- 10 " RESIDENCE
- 11 THE FERRY
- 12 THE FORD



PLAT of FORT DES MOINES NO. 2

(COPIED FROM A DRAWING, FURNISHED BY
WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D.C.,
WHICH APPEARED IN ANNALS OF IOWA
FOR OCTOBER, 1899.)

miles around, and the civilization of the white man began in central Iowa. Before dawn, thousands of acres of the prairie land had been laid out in claims.

A military reservation one mile square and centering around the flagstaff of the fort was set aside by the U. S. government. Of this area, 160 acres and all buildings thereon were ceded by the government to Polk County on January 17, 1846 when the county was established. However, the official survey of the lands acquired by treaty from the Sac and Fox Indians was not completed until 1847. It was then discovered that because of individual claims to land within the military reservation, the county had actually obtained clear title to only a little over 144 acres, or nearly 16 acres short. This additional land was eventually acquired to develop the town site by purchasing it from the various persons having claims.

The order to abandon Fort Des Moines (No. 2) as a military post was signed at St. Louis on February 23, 1846. The Sac and Fox Indians still remaining in the area were rounded up by the Dragoons and escorted to a permanent reservation in Kansas, beyond the Missouri River.

On March 10, 1846 Fort Des Moines (No. 2) ceased to exist as a military post. During the three years of its existence, the 26-star U. S. flag flying over the garrison gave the needed protection against both the savage and unscrupulous white men in the territory.

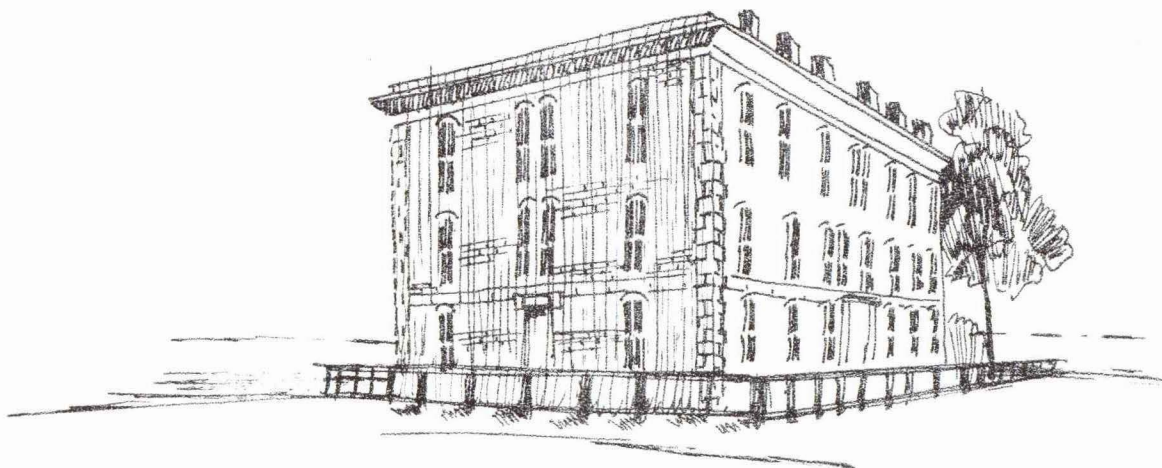
At the time of its establishment, Fort Des Moines (No. 2) was the extreme outpost on the northern frontier, in the midst of a region that was comparatively unexplored. Around here, however, a little colony of sturdy, determined, hardworking pioneers had gathered and they were ready to carry on when the soldiers left. The log cabins that had been built along the Des Moines River for the officers, and those along the Raccoon River for the enlisted men were left to the civilians--the first settlers of Des Moines. The townspeople took up residence in some of the abandoned cabins. The first professional men lived here--lawyers, doctors, ministers, and teachers. Merchants set up their shops. Farmers, blacksmiths, gunsmiths, and tailors moved in. The first sessions of court and the first elections were held in these buildings. The first scholars (13 of them) learned

their ABC's, the first sermons were preached, and the first newspapers were printed in the log cabins the Dragoons had built and occupied. New buildings, mostly one-story frame, were erected. Gradually, the settlement grew, spreading for miles beyond the "point."

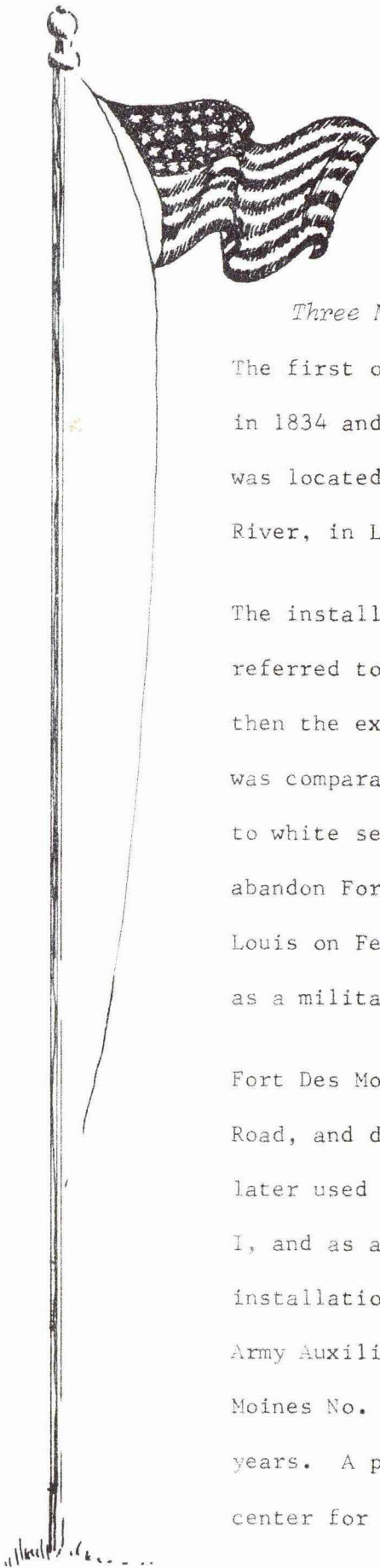
The town of Fort Des Moines was platted in 1847, but there were not enough settlers to formally organize a government. The first election was held on October 28, 1851 and the town was incorporated. Land was available for \$1.25 per acre and a double log cabin could be built for about \$70.

Fort Des Moines was selected as the county seat of Polk County and, in 1857, the name was changed to Des Moines. In that year, the town's population was 3,500 and there were 500 dwellings.

While Fort Des Moines had earlier been proposed as the state capital, since it was near the geographical center of Iowa, population at that time was concentrated in the eastern part of the state. Because of this, it was decided that the first permanent capital be located at Iowa City. The question of location became a hot political issue, but on October 19, 1857, Des Moines was at last proclaimed the state capital by Governor James W. Grimes.



STATE CAPITOL 1858



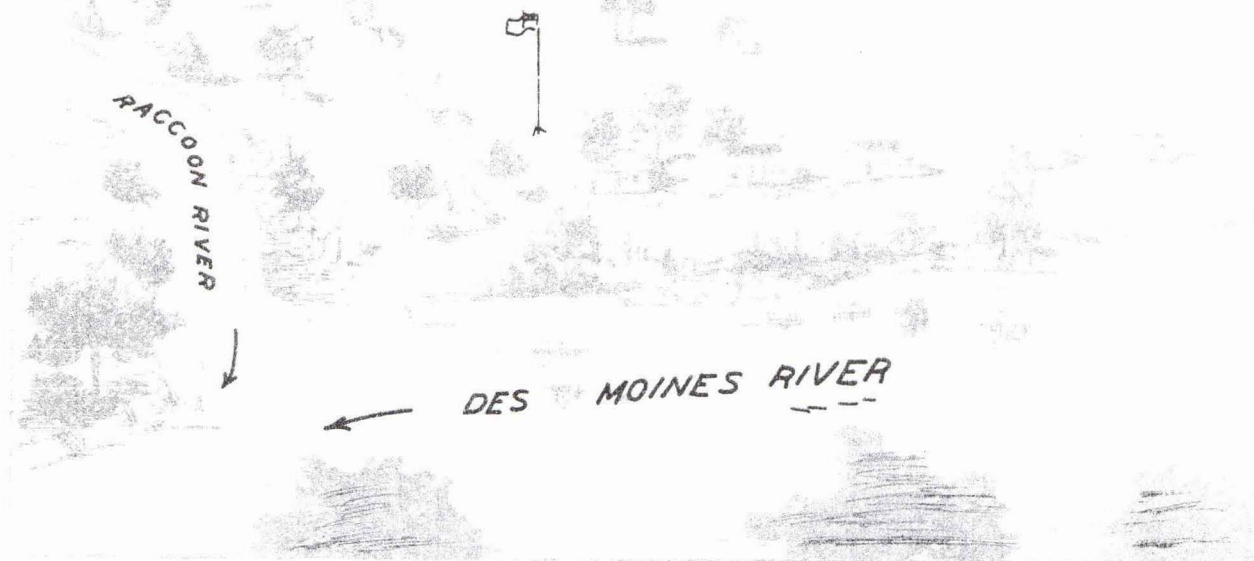
Three Military Posts in Iowa Have Been Named Fort Des Moines

The first of three forts to be called Fort Des Moines was established in 1834 and was maintained for three years. Fort Des Moines No. 1 was located near the present site of Montrose, on the Mississippi River, in Lee County.

The installation at the fork of the Raccoon and Des Moines Rivers is referred to as Fort Des Moines No. 2. Established in 1843, it was then the extreme outpost on the northern frontier, in a region that was comparatively unexplored. The Sac and Fox lands were thrown open to white settlement at midnight on October 11, 1845. The order to abandon Fort Des Moines No. 2 as a military post was signed at St. Louis on February 23, 1846, and on March 10, 1846 it ceased to exist as a military post.

Fort Des Moines No. 3 was established in 1901 south of Army Post Road, and dedicated as a cavalry post on November 13, 1903. It was later used as a training center for Negro officers during World War I, and as an Army convalescent hospital. During World War II the installation served as the first training center for the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC). Following World War II, Fort Des Moines No. 3 was used for a veterans' housing center for several years. A part of the original fort area is still used as a training center for Army, Navy, Marine, and Air Force reservists.

**FORT DES MOINES
(NO. 2)
1843**



Fort Des Moines (No. 2) -- 1843-1846

In the early part of 1843, at the junction of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, soldier-workmen began the construction of Fort Des Moines (No. 2). Logs were obtained from the woods nearby. A sawmill was set up on Middle River near its mouth, to furnish lumber, and suitable clay and limestone were located to produce bricks for fireplaces and chimneys.

One row of cabins was built for the officers, facing the Des Moines River, and was called "Officers' Row." This later became Water Street and is now Southwest First Street. Another row of cabins for the dragoons and infantry faced the Raccoon River and was called "Soldiers' Row" or "Raccoon Row." This is now Elm Street. Other buildings included the adjutant's office, a warehouse for commissary stores, a guard-house, stables, and corrals for the horses. There was a well, a flagstaff and "all appurtenances to an army post." Gardens were planted, roads cleared, and bridges built.

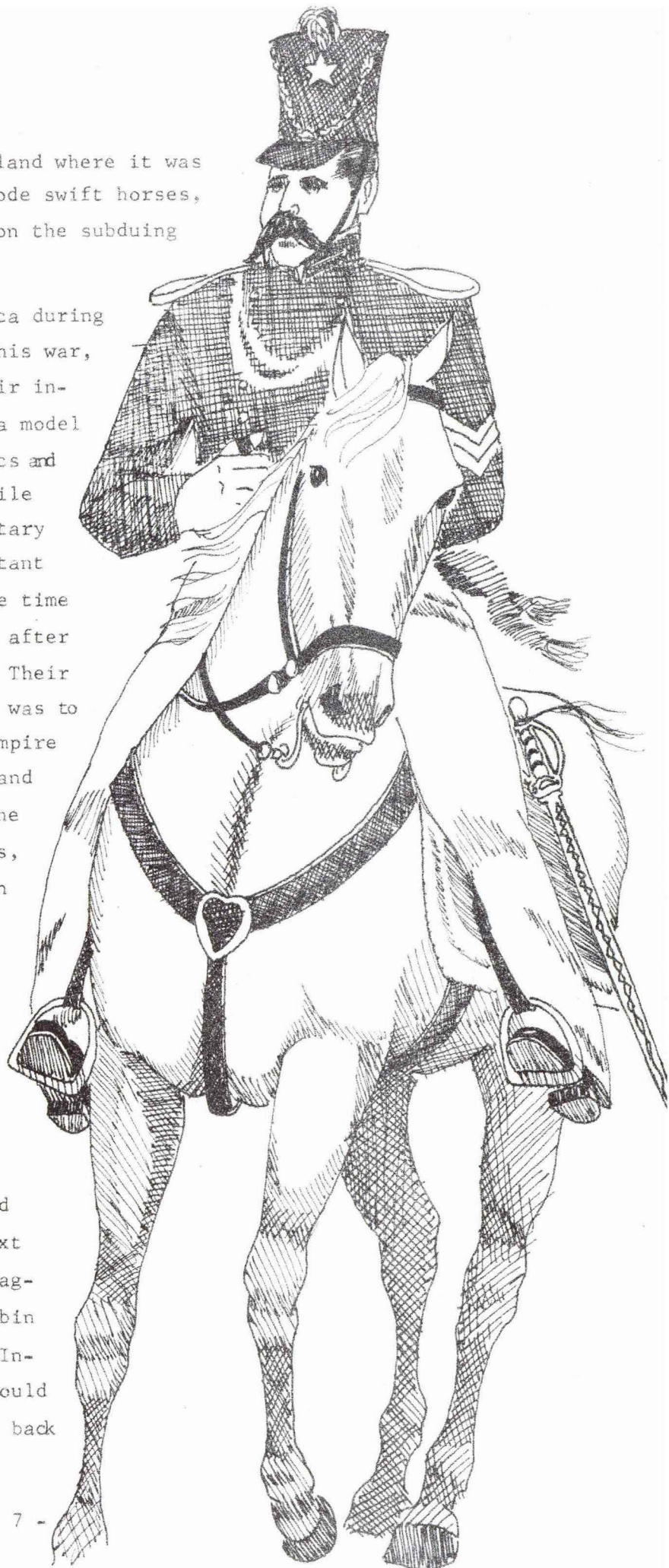
The course of the Raccoon River is now changed from its old location, joining the Des Moines River at a point further downstream than it did formerly.

Dragoons

The term "Dragoon" originated in England where it was applied to certain cavalry soldiers who rode swift horses, were lightly armed, and had as their mission the subduing of the obstinate Saxons for the King.

The Dragoons first appeared in America during the Revolutionary War. At the close of this war, after the American colonists gained their independence, the English army was used as a model for organizing our army. English tactics and English military terms were adopted. While the term dragoon is no longer used in military parlance, the Dragoons were a very important part of our military organization from the time a standing army was first organized until after the close of the Mexican War (1846-1848). Their unique mission for more than fifty years was to lead the van of civilization and act as umpire in cases of dispute between the pioneers and the Indians. They fully understood the character of the Indians and their tactics, and under ordinary circumstances one Dragoon was considered a match for five Indians.

In times of peace, the Dragoon knew no friends. He was as swift in administering punishment upon the trespassing white settler as upon the savage Indian. One day his mission would be to pursue a band of hostile savages who had left their reservation and menaced the lives and property of the settlers, while the next day his task might be to search out an aggressive squatter, who had erected a cabin across the boundary line in violation of Indian treaties. If found, the Dragoon would burn the cabin and drive the squatter back across the boundary line.



ROSTER--FORT DES MOINES (NO. 2)

The names of the officers and men who constituted the first garrison of Fort Des Moines (No. 2), Iowa, as of June 30, 1843, were as follows:

COMPANY I, FIRST U. S. DRAGOONS

Captain--James Allen	Corporals--Darius Halstead
First Lieutenant--Wm. N. Grier	Alexander Newal
Second Lieutenant--C. F. Ruff	Alonzo Williams
Sergeants--Parker Gideon	Robert Williams
John Haley	Bugler--Loren Holcomb
James Miller	Farrier & Blacksmith--
Charles Williams	George Marshall

Privates--Frederick Banfield, James Batty, Joseph Brown, William Brown, John J. Buckmuller, James Caterson, Augustine Dame, Benjamin F. Fiss, James Gould, George De Groote, Michael Halpin, James Hawkins, John Happ, John Harcourt, Alexander Howard, George Howlett, Willard Hill, Cornelius Hutton, William Jackson, John Jones, Jacob Kichait, Francis Kirkwood, Lewis Knolle, Charles W. Lazier, William Martin, Joshua M. Merrill, John W. Miller, Joseph C. Moses, John Newton, Polk O'Conner, Alphens Pomroy, William Ramsey, David Roach, Voorhus Robbins, Henry Robertson, James M. Sampson, V. H. Schlegel, Christopher Schultz, F. W. Sick, Geo. W. Silver, John Skillen, Francis Sleinwinder, Charles Stewart, Anthony Stromberger, Henry Stuckenberg, Ira Taylor, Michael Trainor, William Tyler, B. F. Vanhorn, Herman Walter, Erastus Washburn, Charles W. Wentz, Thomas Woolcut, Thomas Yeadon, and Peter Yerick.

COMPANY F, FIRST U. S. INFANTRY

Captain--J. R. B. Gardenier	Corporals--James Clore
First Lieutenant--John H. King	John Lynch
Second Lieutenant--T. d'Oremieux	Hiram G. Thorp
First Sergeant--Thomas Buxton	Drummer--Robert Porter
Sergeants--John Farley	Fife--Robert Lucky
John Fortes	
Augs. A. Sanford	

Privates--John Andrews, Ropon P. Andruss, John Barnes, William Burns, James M. Calder, Abraham Canon, Palmer Cheesebro, John Clee, Peter Collins, William B. Deros, Daniel Gatnet, Peter Grevelle, John Hamilton, William Hanson, William Hazen, William Hutchinson, Edmund L. Jarvis, James Keenan, Samuel Kellogg, Francis Kennedy, Terrence Lee, Thomas McDonald, Michael McDonough, Soloman Palmer, Thomas Pew, Frederick G. Potter, Charles Schlechtweg, Matthias Schlechtweg, John Shay, John Smith, John G. Smith, Samuel Smith, Owen Sullivan, William Tate, David Thompson, and John Welch.

(Source: *ANNALS OF POLK COUNTY, IOWA and City of Des Moines*, Will Porter. Des Moines, Iowa: Geo. A. Miller Printing Co. 1898.)



The Last of the Log Cabins at Fort Des Moines (No. 2)

In time, all of the old log buildings disappeared. At the turn of the century, the first house erected at Fort Des Moines (No. 2), in 1843, was somewhat altered and in disrepair. It was then the last remaining building at the old fort site. This was the residence of Lieutenant William N. Grier of the U. S. Dragoons. The first white child born at the settlement was a son of Lieutenant Grier, in 1845, who was also the first to die within its limits. It was Lieutenant Grier who commanded the company of Dragoons when Captain Allen was placed in command of the military post.

Restoration of Fort Des Moines (No. 2)

In more recent years, history-minded citizens of Des Moines became interested in restoring the site of Fort Des Moines (No. 2). The first organized attempt was probably in 1901 when the city park commission took over the land. In this respect, Des Moines is more fortunate than many cities in that its birthplace has been owned and preserved by the city and the original site has not fallen into private hands and commercial use.

There were other later attempts to restore the old fort. In 1939, complete Plans for the Restoration of Fort Des Moines at Original Site (1843) were drawn by the Park Board under the auspices of the Greater Des Moines Chamber of Commerce. But, once more, nothing came of these efforts.

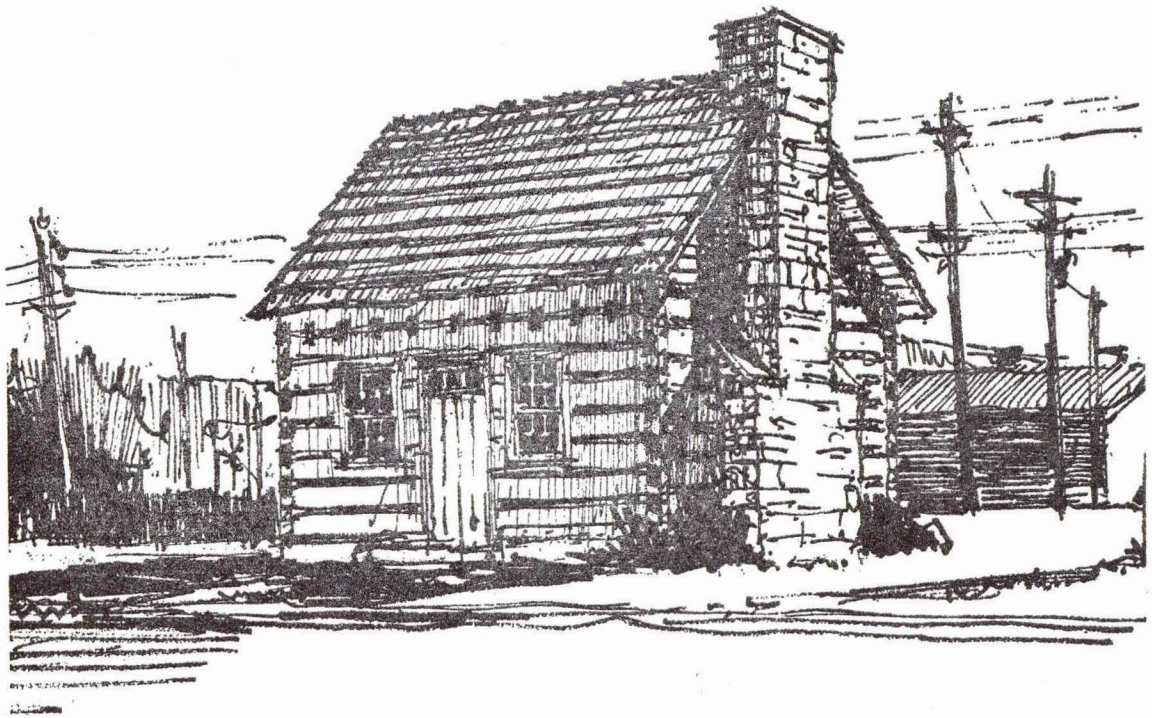
Following reactivation of the Polk County (Iowa) Historical Society in April, 1961 (the Society had been in active existence from 1938 to 1946), renewed emphasis was placed on the restoration project. Meetings were held with representatives of civic and community organizations and business firms. This resulted in the formation of the Birthplace of Des Moines Association. Proposed plans were approved by the City Park Board, City Plan and Zoning Commission, and the City Council. Donations were received and plans sketched for the first unit of the restoration at the original site of the old fort.

Exact reconstruction of the 1843 buildings would have been difficult. However, an old but well-preserved hand-hewn log cabin of the 1840 period was located in Washington County, purchased, disassembled, and moved to Des Moines on March 12, 1964 for the first building in the restoration project.

Ground was broken on October 15, 1964 for the erection of the first log cabin. In the true spirit of the pioneer, workmen continued with the construction at Southwest First and Elm Streets all through the winter of 1964-1965. By the 122nd anniversary of the arrival of Captain Allen at the junction of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, work on the cabin was completed. At last, on Sunday June 6, 1965, the

first restored building of old Fort Des Moines (No. 2) was formally dedicated. A crowd of approximately 400 gathered for the dedication ceremonies and the program that followed.

No attempt has been made to recreate the historic old fort. Instead, cabins of the same period, built elsewhere in Iowa, and resembling those which once stood at the point, have been restored at the site of the Birthplace of Des Moines.



Important Dates in the History of Des Moines

- 1673--Father Marquette and Louis Joliet landed their canoes on the west bank of the Mississippi on June 25, and became the first white men to see and set foot on Iowa land, claiming it for France.
- 1735--Nicolas Joseph de Noyelles with a force of 84 Frenchmen and their Indian allies were repulsed on April 19 by the Sac and Fox Indians in a battle at the Raccoon fork of the Des Moines River.
- 1763--French in America overthrown, and New France, which included Iowa, ceded to England by the Treaty of Paris. England then ceded Louisiana to Spain in exchange for Florida.
- 1788--Julian Dubuque began mining lead near the present site of the city of Dubuque. He received a Spanish land grant in 1796 and lived at the mouth of Catfish Creek until his death in 1810.
- 1798--French fur-trader Jean Baptiste Faribault passed through what is now Polk County.
- 1800--Louisiana Territory, including Iowa, ceded by Spain to France in secret treaty.
- 1803--On April 30 Iowa became part of the territory of the United States under the Louisiana Purchase from Napoleon, for \$15,000,000, or approximately 3¢ per acre. President Thomas Jefferson sent Lewis and Clark out to explore this vast area.
- 1808--First American military post in Iowa established at Fort Madison along the Mississippi River to guard the new frontier. It was evacuated and burned in 1813.
- 1820--Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny and the First Regiment of Dragoons, Michigan Territory, crossed Iowa.
- 1832--Indians defeated in the Black Hawk War, and Black Hawk Purchase Treaty signed September 21.
- 1833--First legal permanent settlement in the Black Hawk Purchase began June 1.
- 1834--Fort Des Moines No. 1 was built by Colonel Kearny on the present site of Montrose, in Lee County. It was maintained for three years.
- 1835--Kearny's second Dragoon expedition, during which the possibility of establishing a military fort at the junction of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers was investigated. Lieutenant Albert Miller Lea wrote his Notes on the Wisconsin Territory; Particularly with Reference to the Iowa District or Black Hawk Purchase; published in 1836, it was the first book about Iowa.
- 1838--Iowa became a Territory on July 4, with Robert Lucas appointed as the first governor.
- 1841--John C. Fremont surveyed the Des Moines River, from the Raccoon Forks to its mouth, for the War Department in July.

1842--Captain James Allen and a small detachment of Dragoons from Fort Sanford, traveling by river steamer, visited Raccoon Forks in November to consider the establishment of a military fort there. In a letter to the War Department dated December 30, Captain Allen recommended the location.

1843--With the site of Fort Des Moines No. 2 approved, Captain Allen, accompanied by friendly Sac and Fox Indians, returned by river steamer on April 29 to leave supplies in the care of a small Dragoon guard.

On May 20, Captain Allen, with 4 officers and 48 enlisted men, arrived by keel boat and wagons and began construction of Fort Des Moines No. 2 at Raccoon Forks. On the next day, Captain J. R. B. Gardenier in command of Company F, First U. S. Infantry, arrived, having marched across country from Fort Crawford, on the Mississippi River, at the site of present day Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin.

First mill within Polk County opened by Captain Allen and Moses Barlow on Middle River, about 10 miles from the fort, near present-day Carlisle, to furnish lumber for the military post. The mill was later purchased by John D. Parmalee. In 1847 Parmalee's Mill was converted to a grist mill, to grind corn, and was then the only milling point in central Iowa. Before this, settlers were required to spend several days to several weeks hauling their corn or grain to the nearest mill. By 1848, Parmalee's Mill was grinding wheat for flour. The first mill within the limits of the town was erected by W. H. Meacham on the east side of the Des Moines River, and was originally propelled by horse power.

Captain Allen began a military road to the southeast, through Toole's Point (now Monroe).

The Sac and Fox Indians were moved west of Red Rock, to remain three years and then go on southwest to Kansas.

1845--First regular religious meetings started March 4 (Rathbun Methodist Class), and organized as a church in December.

Central Iowa opened to white settlement at midnight, October 11.

Remaining Indians in the area escorted by U. S. Dragoons to reservations in Kansas.

1846--First Sunday school, numbering 7 children, established in the log cabin of Benjamin Hoxie.

Polk County (named for President James Knox Polk) established January 13, 1846.

Polk County organized and land ceded to Polk County on January 17 to develop the town site of Fort Des Moines.

First political meeting held February 14, 1846 to select candidates for Polk County offices.

Order to abandon Fort Des Moines No. 2 as a military post signed February 23, effective March 10 when the Dragoons left the fort and the civilians took over.

Dr. Thomas K. Brooks became first postmaster on March 2. (Indian Agent Josiah Smart was the first postmaster appointed, on December 13, 1845, but declined the appointment.) The first regular mail arrived March 3, and the first regular mail route was established in April from Keokuk, Iowa, via Toole's Point, Oskaloosa, Eddyville, Ottumwa, and Agency City.

The first district court convened on April 2.

The first Polk County election was held April 6 in one of the abandoned cabins on Raccoon Row, when a Board of 3 Commissioners was chosen.

First official entry in records of Polk County Recorder on April 20. The entry was for horses, buggy, and harness, sold by R. A. McKinzie to I. T. Meldrum for \$300.

Polk County incorporated April 22.

The town of Fort Des Moines was surveyed in June and the town plat was filed July 8.

First local census taken by Green B. Clark in July; population 127.

First auction of town lots on August 14.

First schools established in fall and winter of 1846-1847, in log cabins on Raccoon Row at Fort Des Moines No. 2. Miss Mary Davis taught 13 pupils; Lewis Whitten taught another class. These were subscription schools, with the pupils' parents paying expenses.

Iowa became the 29th state of the Union and the first free state west of the Mississippi River on December 28; population 102,388.

1847--First license for regular ferry service across the Des Moines River issued to John B. Scott, who operated the business with his brother, Willson Alexander Scott.

Official U. S. land survey completed of the territory acquired by treaty from Sac and Fox Indians.

1848--First telegraph lines reach Iowa from the east.

Presbyterian Church began services in one of the buildings at Fort Des Moines No. 2.

First brick building in town was erected by J. A. Campbell.

1849--First newspaper The Iowa Star, began publication on June 26, by Barlow Granger on a press installed in a former barracks at the fort.

First Great Western Stage Coach Company stage arrived July 1.

First public school in the town of Fort Des Moines was organized September 8, with Byron Rice as the teacher. Classes were first held in the Methodist church, but later were moved to the courthouse.

1850--First post office built by Hoyt Sherman, postmaster, on the north-east corner of Second and Vine Streets.

1851--Town of Fort Des Moines incorporated on September 22.

First town election held October 28. Reverend Thompson Bird (Presbyterian) became the first president of the town council (mayor).

\$100 was appropriated for purchase of land on which to erect a public school building.

1853--U. S. Land Office established at Fort Des Moines; Isaac Cooper, agent; R.L. Tidrick, register. J.B. Stewart appointed registrar of deeds in 1854.

1854--Shamrock House started by Michael McTighe at S. W. 2nd and Vine Street, a rallying place for the Irish and politicians.

First tax for the erection of a school building was levied.

1855--First public school building, costing about \$8,000, completed at the corner of 9th and Locust Streets, after being under construction for nearly two years. Known as Third Ward School or Brick School House, it was ready for use by winter.

1856--Sac and Fox Indians gave up their government payments and returned to Iowa to purchase land near Tama. Their collective farm land, owned by approximately 500 members of the tribe, now covers 3,600 acres.

First Savery Hotel built on present site of Kirkwood Hotel.

First pontoon bridge built across Des Moines River on Sycamore Street (now Grand Avenue) at the ferry crossing site; it was washed out by a flood two years later.

First toll bridge built at Court Avenue.

First photographer, G. L. Reynolds, opened his studio in Exchange Block, Walnut Street.

1857--Name of Fort Des Moines changed to Des Moines on January 28.

Spirit Lake Massacre March 8-13, during which time Inkpadutah and his band of Sioux Indians attacked the settlers at Arnolds Park, killing 41 people.

On October 19, Des Moines became the new State Capital, by proclamation of Governor James W. Grimes.

First capitol, a three-story brick structure, was erected about where the Soldiers and Sailors Monument stands today on the capitol grounds, and opened for business on November 10; used until 1886.

Trestle bridge built across the Des Moines River at Market Street.

- 1858--First meeting of State Legislature in new Capitol in Des Moines.
- 1861--The "Capitol Guards" with Marcellus M. Crocker left on May 4 for Keokuk to be mustered in for duty in the Civil War.
- 1862--First company of 12 runaway slaves from Missouri arrived in Des Moines.
- 1864--Gas lighting first used in Des Moines.
- 1866--First train of the Keokuk and Des Moines Valley Railroad reached Des Moines August 29. Stagecoach and river traffic began to decline and later ended.

First library in Des Moines established in the basement of the Methodist Church with 2,300 volumes and 30 newspapers and magazines. Founded by attorney Hiram Y. Smith, December 17.

- 1867--The Equitable Life Insurance Company incorporated on January 25, the first of its type organized west of the Mississippi River.

Northwestern Railroad completed to Council Bluffs, first line to span the state east to west.

Public library opened in September in rented rooms in the B. F. Allen Bank Building, Fourth and Court.

- 1868--Municipal water system established.
- 1869--Terrace Hill built by Benjamin Franklin Allen, a nephew of Captain James Allen and Iowa's first millionaire, on Sycamore Road (now 2300 Grand Avenue) at a cost of \$250,000.
- 1871--Construction begun on Iowa's present capitol building, dedicated in 1884, and completed in 1886 at a cost of \$2,873,295. Cornerstone cut from an Iowa granite boulder, and laid by Governor Samuel Merrill, on November 23.
- 1873--New cornerstone laid, September 29, to replace original of poor quality stone.
- 1877--Hoyt Sherman Place built by Major Hoyt Sherman, brother of General William Tecumseh Sherman, at Woodland Avenue and 15th Street.
- 1881--Drake University established. Named for one of its founders, General Francis Marion Drake, who was later elected Governor of Iowa and served one term (1896-1898).
- 1882--Completion of first pavement, made of cedar blocks.
- 1884--First free public kindergarten established. (Des Moines was second only to St. Louis in the United States in starting these classes.)
- 1885--Fairgrounds deeded to the State June 26.
- 1886--Present State Capitol completed.

Iowa State Fair located in Des Moines.

1888--First electric street cars in Des Moines put into service December 20.

1889--First brick paving laid in Des Moines.

Work begun on 145-foot high Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument.

1892--Iowa State Department of History and Archives organized by Charles Aldrich.

1894--"Kelly's Army" of nearly 1,000 unemployed men descended upon Des Moines in May on their march from Omaha to Washington to plead their cause in Congress. They built 150 flatboats in Des Moines and started on downstream May 9. Among the "sailors" was Jack London who later gained fame as a writer.

1895--Grand View College and Theological Seminary established.

1898--Construction of State Historical Building begun; cornerstone laid by Governor Leslie M. Shaw on May 17, 1899. An addition was made to the building in 1908.

1900--Cornerstone of present Main Library of Des Moines laid May 19.

1901--Fort Des Moines No. 3 established south of Army Post Road.

1903--Fort Des Moines No. 3 dedicated as a U. S. Army cavalry post November 13.

1904--Fire extensively damaged State Capitol on January 4.

1906--First dirigible flown around State Capitol.

1907--Des Moines adopted the commission system of city government at a special election held June 30. The new form of local government became operative on April 1, 1908, and was known throughout the United States as the Des Moines Plan.

1910--City Hall completed on East bank of Des Moines River between East Locust Street and East Grand Avenue on site of mill erected and operated in the early 1850's.

1914--Capitol grounds enlarged to 93 acres through efforts of Governor George W. Clarke (1913-1917).

1917--Camp Dodge established; 100,000 Iowans trained here for World War I.

1926--First municipal airport established 8 miles east of Des Moines. Dedicated by Charles A. Lindbergh in 1927.

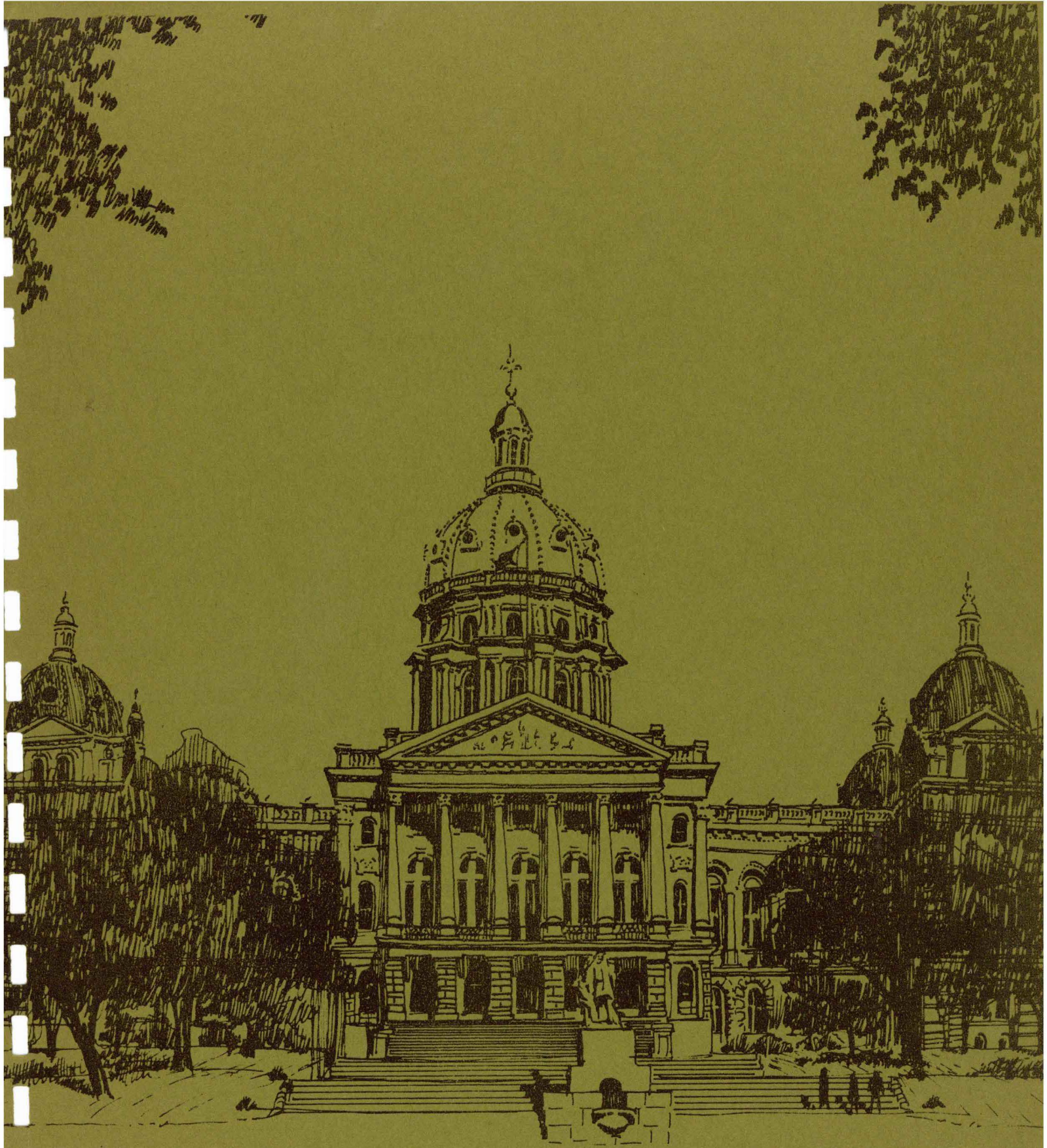
1933--Dedication of present municipal airport at Fleur Drive and Army Post Road.

1942--On July 20, Fort Des Moines No. 3 designated the first training center for the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC), which became the Women's Army Corps (WAC) on August 4, 1943.

- 1947--Governor's Mansion at 2900 Grand Avenue built by W. W. Witmer in 1903 purchased by the State of Iowa from Gerald S. Nollen, whose wife was a daughter of the builder. Cost of the house and lot was \$27,200. Remodeling cost another \$22,800 and furnishing and decorating \$22,421.
- 1948--Des Moines Art Center opened at Greenwood Park.
- 1949--Governor William S. Beardsley, in January, became the first chief executive of Iowa to occupy the Governor's Mansion at 2900 Grand Avenue.
- 1950--Council-Manager form of city government became effective.
- 1951--State Office Building completed at a cost of \$4,935,892.45.
- 1952--Construction started on Veterans Memorial Auditorium December 15. Cornerstone laid June 16, 1954; building completed in 1955.
- 1953--Tunnel from State Office Building to Capitol completed at a cost of \$92,841.71.
- 1963--Iowa Employment Security Commission building, 1000 East Grand Avenue, first occupied in October.
- 1964--Ground broken October 15 for erection of first unit in the Des Moines Birthplace restoration project.
- 1965--Birthplace of Des Moines dedication ceremonies held, Sunday June 6, at site of Fort Des Moines No. 2, Southwest First and Elm Streets, and attended by a crowd of approximately 400.
- 1966--Ground broken for New State Office Building at East Grand Avenue and East 14th Street on June 28.

Population Growth of Des Moines

1846	127	1900	62,139
1850	986	1910	86,368
1860	3,965	1920	126,468
1867	7,206	1930	142,550
1870	12,035	1940	159,819
1880	22,408	1950	177,965
1885	32,469	1960	208,982
1890	50,093	1965	212,400 (est.)



IOWA STATE CAPITOL COMPLETED 1886

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