

Johnston is located immediately northwest of the City of Des Moines in Polk County which is one of three counties comprising the Des Moines Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Johnston's population of approximately 7,000 comprises 1.7% of the three-county total population of 392,928 (1996). The corporate limits of Johnston encompass approximately 15 square miles.

The landscape of Johnston has been shaped by both natural features and man made facilities. The Des Moines River and Beaver Creek are the predominate water bodies passing through the community. The dam for Saylorville Lake is located in northeastern Johnston. The northern (Northridge) section of the community also features a strong ridge area which provides broad vistas to both the west and the south.

The dominant man made feature in Johnston is Camp Dodge which is a United States Army and National Guard installation. The camp is actively used today as a training facility for troops stationed throughout the country.

Johnston is named after George Johnston who was the first station master for the Des Moines and Central Iowa Railway which ran from Des Moines to Perry. When the railroad was started in 1905, there were approximately 25 homes in the surrounding area. In its early years, Johnston was primarily an agricultural community.

HISTORY

In 1908, Fruitland Drive (55th Street) and Brennan Drive (57th Street) were constructed. After the roadways were completed and houses were built, the Fruitland/Brennan League was formed in 1915 as the first "neighborhood association" in the area. Scattered residential growth occurred over the next several decades and by 1960, population in the Johnston area was estimated at 1,460.

In 1926, the Pioneer Seed Company was organized and established in Johnston. The company owned and maintained cornfields and utilized large portions of their land holdings for beef cattle. By the mid-1970's, Pioneer abandoned their beef operation and initiated a land development arm of the business. In the late 1970s, the Green Meadows Planned Unit Development established a mix of homes, commercial establishments and park and open space areas in central Johnston. Despite the role of Green Meadows in "urbanizing" Johnston, the presence of Pioneer continues to serve as a reminder of the agricultural heritage of the area. In addition to Pioneer, Johnston is currently the home of four landscaping nurseries and the headquarters of the Men's Garden Club of America.

No history of Johnston can be complete without a mention of Camp Dodge. In 1907, the Iowa General Assembly established a permanent Iowa National Guard encampment on 78.5 acres of land in Jefferson Township which was bounded on the north and east by the Des Moines River. In 1910, the facility became known

as Camp Dodge and in 1913, the legislature appropriated funds for the first buildings and an arsenal. By 1917, the encampment covered 571 acres. By the end of 1917, the War Department had increased the size of Camp and one-half of all of the land holdings was leased from private landowners.

The development of Camp Dodge prompted road improvements extending ten miles to the southeast connecting to the City of Des Moines. Property owners in the area donated land for the construction of a brick road that later became Merle Hay Road. As evidence that history truly does repeat itself, the City of Johnston received federal funding in 1991 to upgrade Northwest 86th Street as a primary means of providing access to the southern entrance of Camp Dodge along Northwest 70th Avenue.

Today, Camp Dodge covers over 4,300 acres and serves as a major troop training facility. Because a substantial portion of Camp Dodge remains in a natural state, it doubles as the eleventh largest wildlife refuge in the State of Iowa.

Sources: History of Johnston, Johnston City Clerk, 1989
The Historical and Architectural Development of Camp Dodge, Iowa, Barbara Beving Long.

TWO "JOHN F. JOHNSTONS"

Historical Society members who go back to 1998 may remember a program and story in the July 1998 newsletter featuring a

John F. Johnston, a citizen of St. Charles, Iowa for whom the claim was made that he may have been the one for whom our community was named.

And if you will look at your July 2003 Newsletter, you will see the copy of an obituary of John F. Johnston who had been general agent of the Des Moines and Central Iowa Railway.

We recently obtained (courtesy of Ray Schleih) a copy of a newspaper obituary for the John F. Johnston of St. Charles, from a local paper. As we compare information in both accounts, we are convinced that the second John F. Johnston, of Des Moines, who died in Des Moines on February 14, 1939, is the Johnston of "Johnston's Station" where he was agent for the Inter-urban RR. The area was later known as "Johnston Station", and finally "Johnston".

The J.F. Johnston from St. Charles, who died in 1937, age 84, had been a prominent citizen in that community; he had been a livestock dealer and founded a bank. But he did not give his name to the City of Johnston.



CONTRIBUTIONS

To our House and Barn renovation:

Many thanks to the following

Dragoons: (\$10,000 to 24,000)

Anonymous

Pioneer Hi-Bred International
Johnston, Iowa

Want to help with renovation of the House and Barn? Call Bob Tomas at 277-3882

Johnston Historical Society Newsletter September 2003

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Mr. & Mrs. Walter Olmstead
Vista, CA

In loving memory of Gloria Thomas

Ferne Michael

Windsor Heights, IA
In memory of Weldon Kingsbury

SEPTEMBER 11: A DAY OF CARING

Thanks to Kathy Wallerstedt, who promoted our project, a program of Pioneer Hi-Bred International, in cooperation with United Way, benefited our house and barn.

On September 11, Pioneer employees were encouraged to give to their local communities in volunteer activities, and some 35 people chose to help out at the house and barn.

Bob Thomas and Kathy organized jobs to be done, and as volunteers arrived Mary Jane Paez, Bob Thomas, Garland Seibert, and Bob Finney put them to work on:

- Constructing forms for concrete posts on barn patio
- Painting east barn wall
- Scraping woodwork in the house
- Mulching and weeding trees and garden
- Removing porch floor, and uncovering the cylindrical porch pillars
- Power-washing barn doors, metal frames and other items needing a clean-up

The results, as Mary Jane says, are amazing

In addition, to helping organize the work, Kathy arranged a lunch for the volunteers – pizza, relishes, cookies and brownies as well as drinks.



INTRODUCTION

In early 1993, a Johnston Historical Search Committee was formed to assemble information and photographs pertinent to our local history. This committee included Bob Otto, Jeanne Hansen, Ray Schleih, Lowell Temple, Barbara Zorn and Lori Belknap. The committee attempted to contact every service organization, church and descendent of early homesteaders in Johnston. Realizing there are some gaps, the committee hopes that this document will be added to as more information and photographs become available.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Early Johnston Pioneer.....	Page 1
The Early Business Ventures.....	Page 7
Other Business Ventures 1900 to Present.....	Page 10
Johnston School Chronological History.....	Page 14
History of the Johnston Evangelical Free Church.....	Page 18
History of Saint James Lutheran Church.....	Page 20
History of St. Paul Presbyterian Church.....	Page 25
The City of Johnston.....	Page 26
History of the Johnston Lions Club.....	Page 31
History of the Johnston Rotary Club.....	Page 34
History of the Johnston Jay Cees.....	Page 35
History of the Johnston Garden Club.....	Page 36
History of the Johnston Kiwanis.....	Page 37
History of the 20 Year Club.....	Page 38
History of the Johnston Historical Society.....	Page 39
History of Camp Dodge.....	Page 40
Geologic History of the Saylorville Gorge.....	Page 41
Pioneer Hi-Bred Corn Company -- The Beginning.....	Page 42
Growth and Development of Pioneer Hi-Bred	Page 43

THE EARLY JOHNSTON PIONEERS

Before Iowa officially became a state in 1846, people began emigrating to this soon to be state while it was still a part of the Northwest Territory as designated by the Federal Government. After statehood was achieved in 1846, more and more people came into this state, attracted, no doubt, by the temperate climate and fertile farm land which could be homesteaded for a filing fee only or purchased outright for \$1.25 per acre. A farm of eighty acres could be had for \$100.00 plus closing costs!

One of the Johnston area's first citizens was Ezekiel Hunt who came into the Jefferson Township area in 1846 and established a sawmill operation where Hallet Pallet Company is now located at N.W. 58th and N.W. Beaver. His grandchildren Sam and Jim Hunt still have relatives living in the Johnston area.

Ezekiel Hunt and his family settled first in the area adjacent to what is now the YMCA Home area at Merle Hay Road and Beaver. They named this area Huntsville. They acquired vast amounts of land in four townships: Crocker, Webster, Jefferson and Madison.

Moving from the first home site further north in Jefferson township, the Hunt family established the town of Ridgedale. Ridgedale had a post office, grocery store, a Methodist church, and a cemetery. This cemetery was originally named Hunt's burial ground and later re-named Ridgedale Cemetery.

The Hunts were prosperous and at one time jointly owned 1,215 acres of land. They gave some of their land holdings to build Ridgedale Cemetery, Ridgedale School and a church all in the community of Ridgedale. For many years after the establishment of Ridgedale, the people, and later their ancestors who lived in and around Ridgedale, called themselves Ridge-runners and would gather annually for a summer day of food, games and visiting.

In 1851 I.A. McDivitt settled in the Johnston area on Meredith Drive. McDivitt was a farmer and gave land to establish McDivitt cemetery and McDivitt Grove Church both located on Meredith Drive.

Next to arrive was Jacob Rittgers whose farm on Northwest Beaver Drive was early on a stage coach stopping point for food and rest.

In 1855 the Lawson brothers, Moses and John, arrived in the Johnston area developing farms and a sawmill on Lower

Beaver Road. Part of the farm of the Lawsons was located in the then named Valley township and John Lawson gave land to develop the first elementary school in this area known as Valley school. This school was located where the Lloyd Busbys now live at 60th and Beaver. Moses Lawson operated a sawmill operation on Lower Beaver Road and a river ferry operation where the present Johnston soccer fields are located.

The present elementary school on N.W. 62nd Avenue was recently named John F. Lawson in honor of the farmer whose land gift helped establish one of the first elementary schools and which was later to be one of the original elementary schools along with Ridgedale, Rider and Friar elementary school brought together in 1915 to form the Johnston Independent Consolidated School District.



Moses H. Lawson
Sawmill Operator and River Ferry Operator

In 1856 John White bought land in Ridgedale Acres (now Camp Dodge) and began farming. His first homestead was located where the Camp Dodge pool is now. His second farmstead home is still standing and houses the present Camp Dodge base commander. This home is a double brick-wall structure.

John White married shortly after his arrival here and his bride Florida Boone was a direct descendant of Daniel Boone.

The next early Johnston area resident to arrive was John Temple in 1969 who homesteaded in Jefferson township. He and his family owned this farm until it was purchased by the Corp of Engineers to construct Saylorville Lake and Dam site. This land ownership spanned approximately 100 years.

In the same year (1869) Henry Seibert came into the Johnston area and acquired a farm on what is now known as N.W. 100th Street. This land is still in the Seibert family and has been designated by the federal government as a Century Farm. An elementary school named Seibert school was built in this area and operated as such until around 1920 when the school district was incorporated into the present Johnston School District. Henry Seibert has many relatives still living in the Johnston area.

M.W. Robinson came into this area in 1869 and quickly acquired over 1,100 acres of land which he used to operate a sheep ranch. This land is now south of Green Meadows and what is known to older Johnston residents as the "South Acreage" or to newer Johnston residents as the land on 55th and 60th streets.

The next pioneer to arrive in Johnston was Edward Kinsey. Mr. Kinsey homesteaded on what is now known as N.W. 62nd Avenue. Here he built a large farmhouse that is still standing and is now owned by the Harry Allender family.

Kinsey cemetery was developed from land given by Edward Kinsey. Next to the cemetery a church was also built on land donated by Edward Kinsey. The church is no longer in existence. In his later years, Edward moved to the "North Acreage" and built a large two story house. This house is now owned and occupied by the James Gilbert family. Many of Kinsey's relatives still live in the Johnston area.

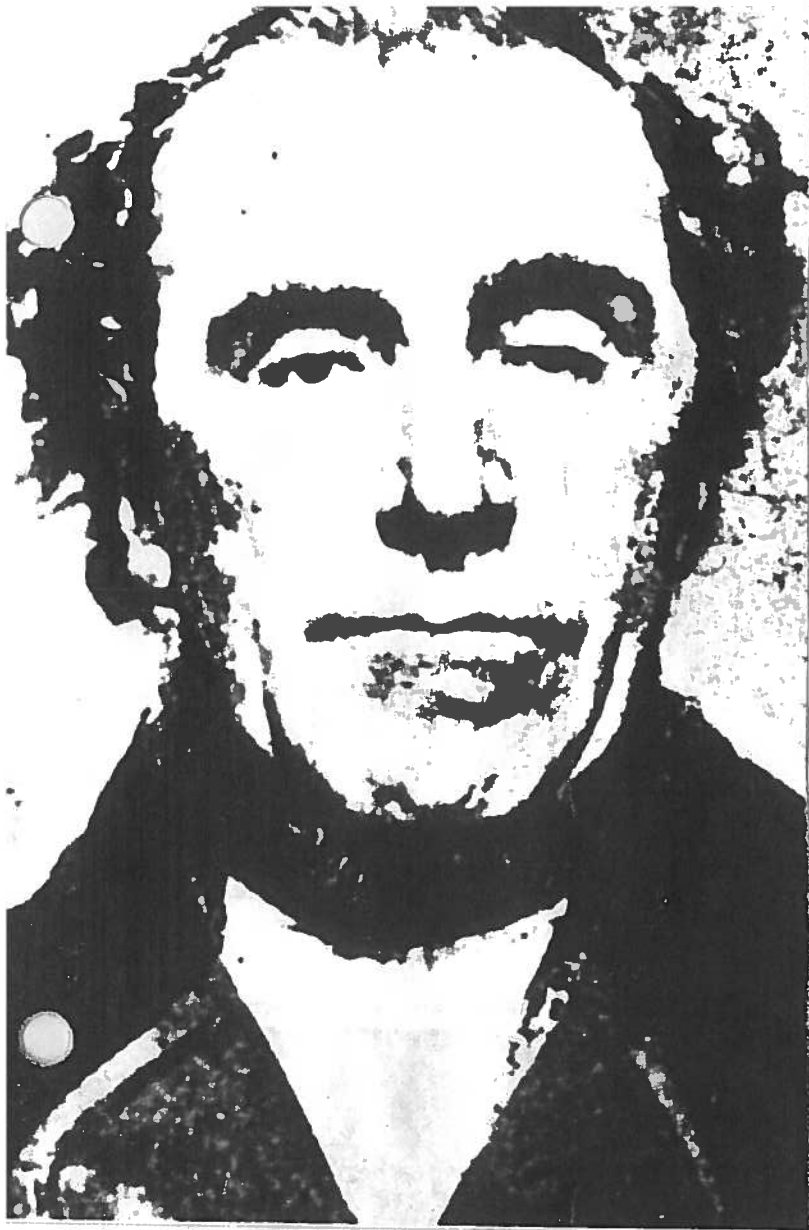
The last of the pioneers to arrive in the Johnston area were the Kuefner brothers, Diedrick and Julius. Their father John Kuefner was a successful business man in Des Moines and for many years supplied baked goods to the soldiers stationed at Fort Des Moines. In 1879 he purchased two farms on what is now N.W. 54th street and set his two sons up in the farming business. In earlier days the road leading to their farms was known as Kuefner Road. Much later their two farms were purchased by Pioneer Hi-Bred. The Kuefners also have many relatives living in the Johnston area.

Some other early pioneers whose family names are familiar to Johnston residents would be the following:

John Betz 1853
John Finley 1853
D.F. Ritchart 1860
Nathan Frazier 1868

Charles Grefe 1869
B.N. Kingman 1871
A.R. Mc Pherson 1875

Bob Otto

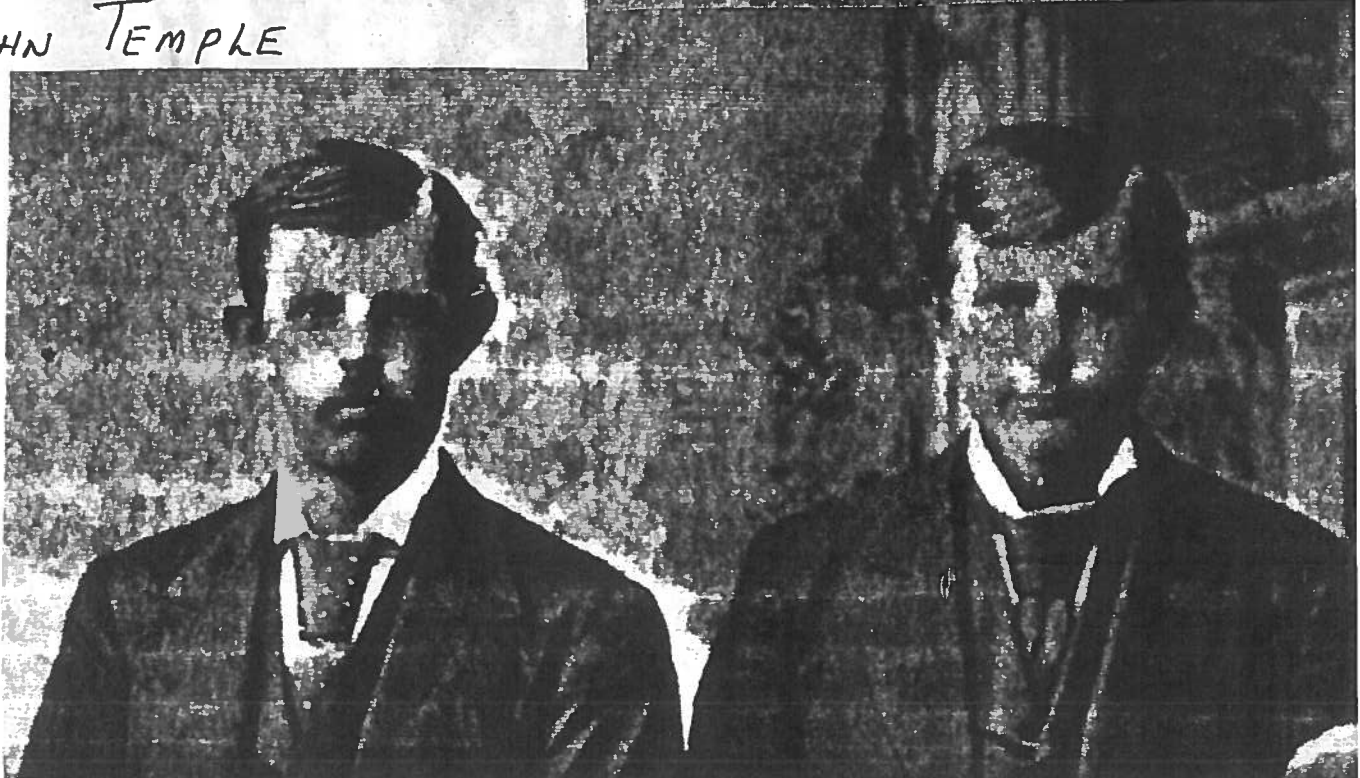


JOHN TEMPLE

EDWARD KINSEY (1870) FARMER. DONATE
LAND FOR KINSEY CEMETERY



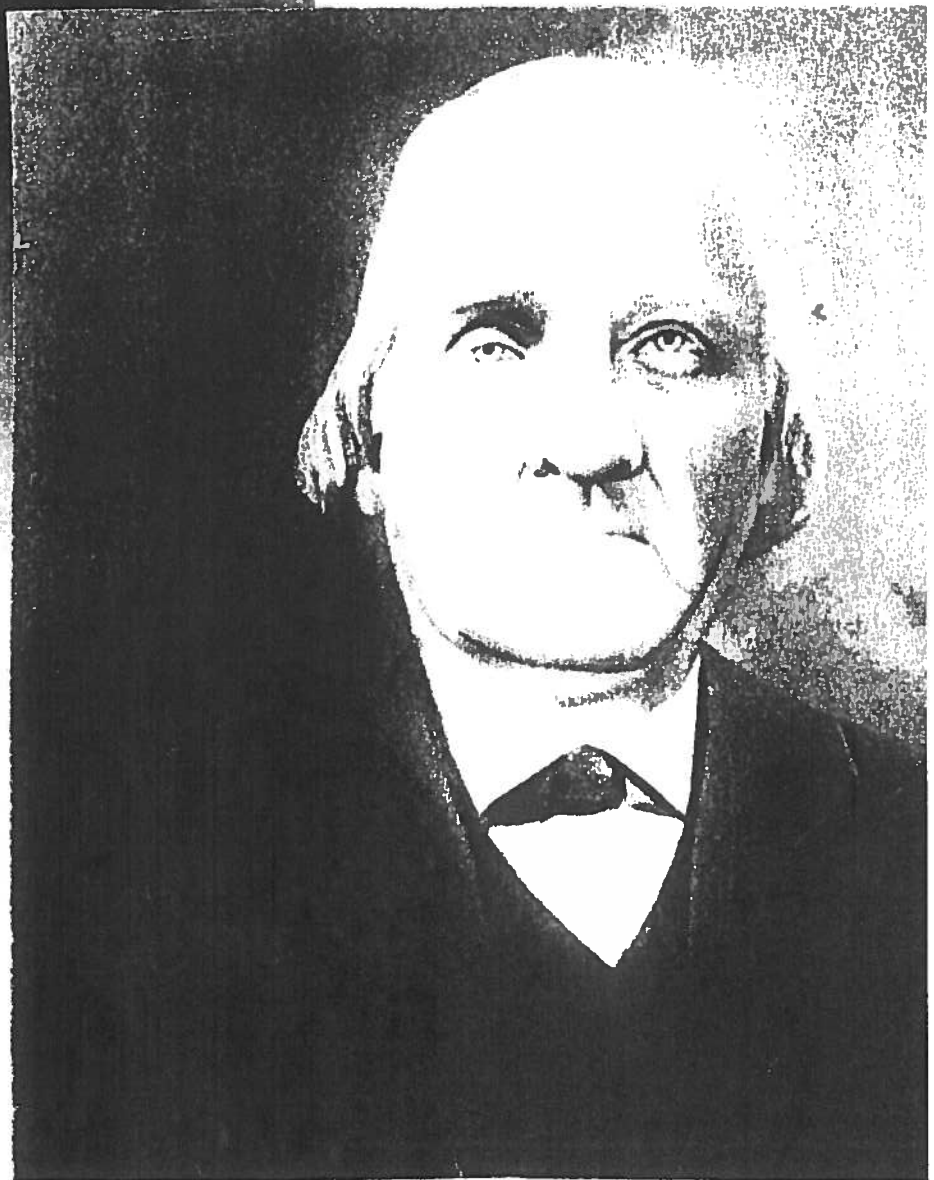
DIEDRICK
AND
JULIUS
KUEFNER





J F LAWSON

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
LAND DONOR



J.R. RITTGERS : STAGE COACH STOP OPERATOR

EARLY BUSINESS VENTURES IN JOHNSTON

The early Johnston, rural in nature, was lacking the amenities common to the citizens of today. The emerging community had the usual narrow dirt roads, no utility services, limited formal government, and very little of anything else to help the community to grow except its proximity to Des Moines, the capital city of Iowa.

But grow it did! Perhaps the first significant changes in the new community were community names changes. Born on the edge of the Wisconsin glacial drift, the emerging community was first known as Beaver Creek Settlement by the native Americans in the area. The Interurban Railroad development in 1905 caused the original name to be changed to Johnston Station after station agent John Johnston. After municipal incorporation in 1969 the name was shortened to Johnston.

As the area grew, it acquired its first utilities, railway transportation and somewhat later, telephone service from the Grimes Telephone Company. The telephone service was strictly party line and all calls were placed through a central operator. Anyone on your party line who wanted to listen to your conversation could listen in and often did. Calls to Des Moines were considered long distance and the charges were added to your monthly bill.

Not only did the Johnston residents gain transportation from the electric railway serving the city, it also gained electric service to their homes and business. This was a much wanted utility, but unfortunately there was a slight hitch in that the electric power was twenty-five cycle which meant that it produced a slight flickering power supply but also required special equipment to receive the power and turn it into useful wants and needs.

Johnston gained a volunteer fire fighting force through unusual circumstances. If a significant event such as a house or business fire happened, the phone company central operator rang all party lines simultaneously and announced the news and volunteers rushed to help.

Along with the telephone and railway utilities came hard surface roads. Merle Hay Road, so named after the first World War I soldier from Iowa to be killed in action, was constructed in 1907 (the naming was after WWI was over). It was brick surfaced, rough and subject to frequent repair, but it was a hard surface and not mud! Other hard surface roads soon followed. Panora speedway (state highway 64) now 62nd Avenue was constructed around 1915 from Merle Hay road to Grimes and beyond.

With the changing utilities the town prospered and the early business community grew rapidly. The dates and length of existence are estimates drawn from first hand knowledge and conversations with older citizens of the community.

The sawmills probably were the first type of commercial business in the Johnston area. Ezekiel Hunt on Merle Hay Road east of Hyperion and the Lawson brothers on Lower Beaver Road where the Lloyd Busby's now reside (N.W. 60th & Beaver). The Lawsons also operated a ferry across the Des Moines River. This ferry service was North of the current bridge on 66th Avenue. 1860 - 1880

The sawmills were quickly followed by dairies - Olson on Pioneer original site, Ferrels on N.W. 59th Court and much later, Scotts on Merle Hay Road. (1920 - 1945) Grocery stores followed about the same time as dairies - Rittgers on 62nd and Merle Hay Road, Carters on 62nd and Merle Hay Road and Bottenfield on N.W. 59th Court. (1900 - 1940)

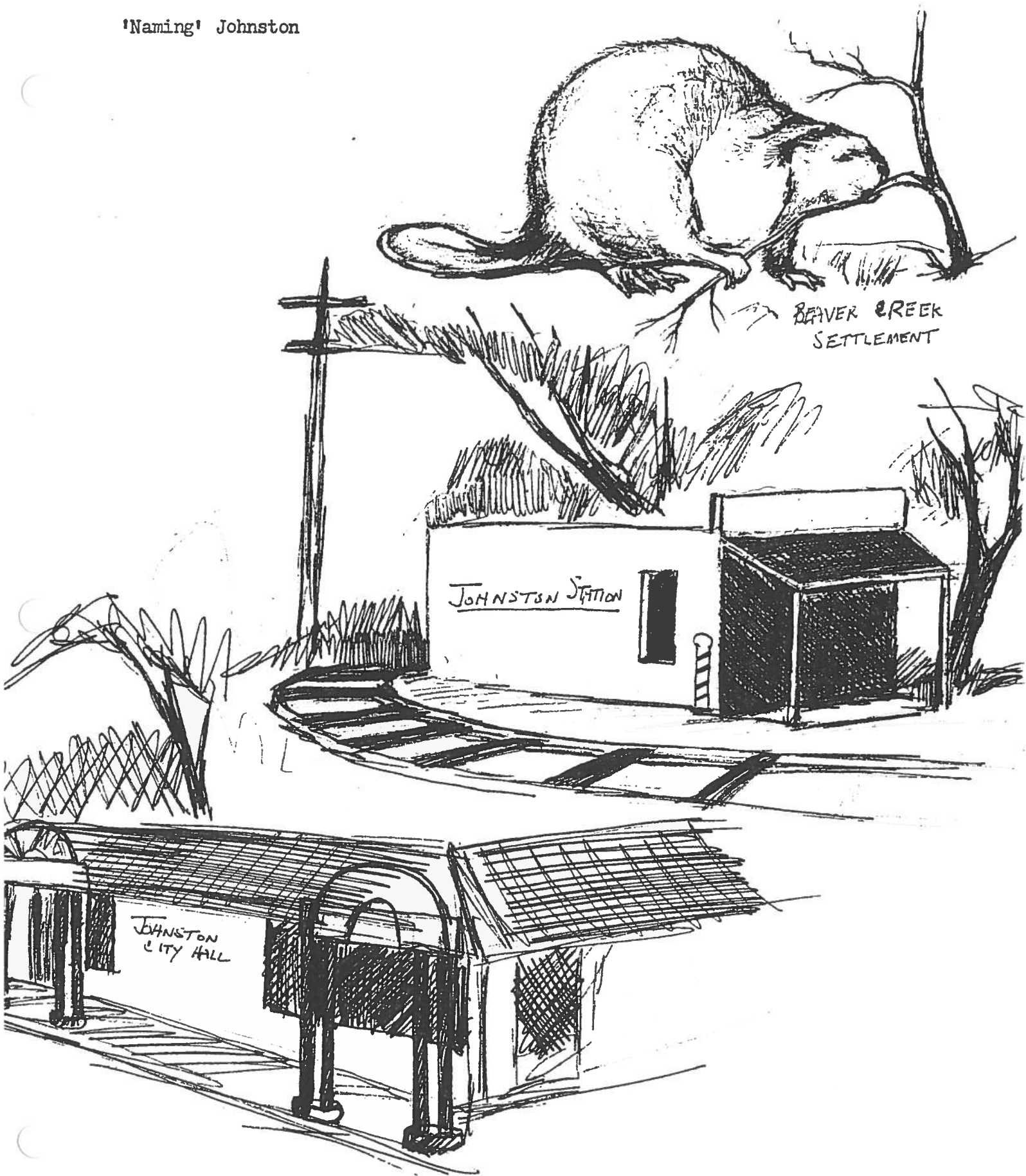
By the early 1900's autos were becoming more popular and service stations and garages came into existence. Hummels was first located on Merle Hay Road and still exists farther south on the same street. Robinette was located on Merle Hay Road in 1920. Otto's was also on Merle Hay Road in 1922. Barker was located on 62nd Avenue, and Witts on Merle Hay Road followed soon after. (1920 - 1980)

As cars became more prevalent and roads improved, several truck gardens began operation in Johnston. Longos and Ivers on Merle Hay Road and Schlenker on 62nd Avenue were followed in later years by Scavos and Foshe. The current library and city hall complex was a truck garden owned by these families. (1910 - 1950)

In an agrarian community blacksmith shops were very important and early Johnston had two - Sam Hunt on 70th Avenue and Clyde Hunt on Merle Hay Road. (1900 - 1950)

Of the early Johnston business ventures (sixty in all), only Hummels and Pioneer Hi-Bred Seed Company, the largest seed corn producer in the world today, survive!

'Naming' Johnston



OTHER JOHNSTON BUSINESS VENTURES 1900 TO PRESENT

These are the business ventures mentioned in our area survey. Some business ventures may have been overlooked or not reported in the survey.

Tavern and Dance Hall

Rainbow Gardens, Merle Hay Road 1939 - 1950

Kingman Tavern and Dance Hall 1935 - 1940

Grocery Store

Elwell, Merle Hay Road 1953 - 1973

Otto's, Merle Hay Road 1935 - 1960

Garage and Car Repair

B. Robinette, 59th Court 1950 - 1970

Hardware Store

Bottenfield, 59th Court 1930 - 1950

DeGrote, 62nd and Merle Hay Road 1942 - 1948

Hatcheries

Stu Harvey, 60th Avenue 1935 - 1955

Ice Cream Shoppe

Roth, Merle Hay Road 1920 - 1925

Sawmills

Stanleys, Lower Beaver Road 1900 - 1920

Flower Garden and Nurseries

Lockards, Merle Hay Road 1948 - 1955

Roanfields, N.W. 57th Street 1920 - 1940

Lumber Yard

Iltis, Merle Hay Road 1930 - 1970

TV Repair

Don Degrote, 59th Court 1950 - 1965

Auto Body Shop

Stan Lilliards, 59th Court 1942 - 1946

Crane Service and Towing

Tom Davis Crane Service, 59th Court 1970 - 1975

Flour and Feed Store

Scholes, Merle Hay Road 1925 - 1942

Garden Center and Supplies

Nassif, Merle Hay Road 1950 - 1960

Service Station, Gas and Oil

Hummels, Merle Hay Road 1915 - 1939

Walt Sellner, Merle Hay Road 1940 - 1948

Dunns, 59th Court 1944 - 1948

Otto's, 1922 - 1980

Locker Plant

Wheelers, 59th Court 1940 - 1955

Beauty Shoppes

Dorthy Dust, 61st Avenue 1949 - 1961

Betty Seibert, Merle Hay Road 1940 - 1945

Lunchenettes

Tiny's, 59th Court 1952 - 1960

Goodes, 59th Court 1960 - 1965

Restaurant and Tavern

Mac's Bungalou, 59th Court 1930 - 1978

Hilltop Inn, Merle Hay and Beaver 1930 - 1955

New and Used Car Sales and Repair

Robinette, Merle Hay Road
General Motors Products
Otto's
Chrysler Products

Men's work Clothing

Otto's, Merle Hay Road 1940 - 1945

Other

Pioneer Hi-Bred Seed Company, 62nd Avenue 1925 to present

Hy-line Poultry, 62nd Avenue 1939 - 1980

Examples of early 20th century business ventures in early Johnston

Carters Store

Donor: Jack Carter

1915-50



Otto's original service station (1922)
Donor: Robert Otto



Otto's 1922-80

JOHNSTON SCHOOL CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

A town and school history was originally developed about 1968 by the Johnston Junior High School social studies classes and teacher Mr. O. Herrick; and in 1970 by Jeanne Hansen, writing for the Northern Polk County News. In 1991 the reunion committee of the 1940, 1941 and 1942 classes updated and enlarged the school history. Be reminded that this is a summary and does not include all school history.

In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century public school (K-8) was held for the children of the area at Valley Grade School located one mile east of the present elementary school (Lawson) located on N.W. 62nd Avenue. Also at Friars Grade School located one quarter mile west of the present high school. Ridgedale Grade School was originally located at the present site of Ridgedale cemetery and later relocated just North of the Camp Dodge water tower. The fourth area school, Rider, was located in the far southwestern corner of the present school district. Students finishing eighth grade in these schools could choose to go to Herrold for a ninth grade of schooling, tuition themselves to Des Moines, or enter the work force.

1914. In this year the second consolidated school district in Polk County was formed which included the four districts previously mentioned and the new district was called: The Independent Consolidated School District of Webster and Jefferson Townships of Polk County Iowa. Members of the early board of directors included: J.F. Grace, John Lansley, Burn Snider, Robert Wilson, B.B. Dewey, F. Roenfield, and N.J. Otto.

1915. A contract was awarded for the construction of a new school building (K-9) on approximately four and one half acres of land on N.W. 62nd Avenue and N.W. 59th Court. This parcel of land was donated by the Ben McKee family.

1917. More territory was added (Seibert Grade School) and the long name changed to: The Consolidated Independent district of Johnston, Iowa.

1919. An addition was made to the original school building (west wing) and the unit was expanded to a K-12 school.

1920. "This year the district held its first high school graduation with six graduates and the school was certified as an accredited high school." Northern Polk County News, Jeanne Hansen, Editor.

1926. "A new addition for kindergarten and first grade was added to the west side of the building." Ibid

1928. "The first annual was published but was soon stopped due to the national depression." Ibid

1932. "The first school student council was organized and the school colors were changed from blue and white to yellow and blue and later to purple and gold." Ibid

1950. "Two large additions were added to the school: gym, science labs, and a shop." Ibid

1950 - 1968 "Upper elementary students were housed at Camp Dodge for schooling." Ibid

1953. "The old gymnasium was remodeled into three classrooms and a lunchroom." Ibid

1958. "The north wing of the new Johnston elementary school was build. Grant Voorhees (36) was the architect for this building." Ibid

1962. (The) "Johnston School District was expanded to its present size with the acquisition of the Herrold District. The school name was changed again to The Johnston Community Schools." Merton Hansen, board member

1968. Robert Otto (42) was appointed Junion/Senior High School Principal. One of his early goals was to revive the Johnston School Alumni Association. Additions were made to both the elementary (south wing) and the high school site (music building).

1970. The revived Johnston Alumni Organization held its first all-school reunion. Over four hundred alumni attended. Hundreds of old athletic and music trophies were given away to the attending alums.

1972 - 1974. New high school building constructed just west of the original high school.

1975 - 1977. Twenty additional rooms added to high school building.

1979 - 1981. New middle school building constructed.

1988. A second elementary school constructed. The two elementary schools were both named recently. The newest building has been named Henry Wallace Elementary in honor of the founder of Pioneer Hi-Bred and the older elementary has been named John Lawson Elementary in honor of the farmer who gave land and trees to build a one-room school (1888) located on Lower Beaver Road. This was one of the first schools built in Valley Township later to become a part of Webster Township. The new high school and middle school remain unnamed.

In this day and age with the controversy over women's rights, etc., Johnston schools had at one time three administrators - two of whom were women! They were Mary McPherson (24) who was junior high principal and Mrs. Bernice Scott who served as the high school principal. Both began about 1926 with Ms. McPherson leaving about 1945 and Mrs. Scott retiring in 1956.

Through the years Johnston students have received their share of honors and awards as follows:

Debate team - second in the state 1971 - 1972

Football - mythical state champion in their class in 1971, record 8 and 1. The only undefeated team was the 1941 team with a record of six wins and one tie. Lowell Temple (42) was captain.

Baseball - in state competition teams have finished first, second, third and fourth.

Basketball - Boys finished fourth in the state in 1973 and again in 1992. In 1994, the boys won the 3A state championship. Girls finished third in state in 1934 and were a state tournament team in 1935. Geneva Horner in 1934 and Mary Hawkins in 1935 were selected as Queens of the tournaments.

Track and Cross Country - boys own four state championships in CC - 1970, 1971, 1972 and 1973.

Wrestling - fourth in their class in state competition in 1973. There have been over ten state individual championships.

National Merit Scholars - too many to mention.

Music Awards - again, too many to mention.

"In 1926 a judging team of Melvin Temple, Wilbur Adamson, Walter Rittgers, and Carly Frazier represented Iowa at the International Dairy Congress in Detroit. Johnston placed seventh overall among the twenty-three states entered." Northern Polk County News.

District finances - Johnston had been one of the "poorest" districts in the state and now is one of the more affluent. The assessed evaluation as late as 1969 was eight million dollars and now tops 200 million and still growing.

At least twenty graduates have returned to Johnston as teachers or school administrators.

THE ORIGINAL FIRST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN THE JOHNSTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

John F. Lawson and brother Moses H. Lawson emigrated from England to the United States in the early 1800's. They settled first in Pennsylvania and later came to Iowa in 1855. They bought land in Valley Township, Polk County where they engaged in farming, the sawmill business and running a ferry across the Des Moines River.

Moses Lawson died in 1885. He was preceded in death by his first wife Abigail, who died in 1872, and his second wife Christina who died in 1884. All are buried in Kinsey cemetery in Johnston. His brother John F. Lawson died in 1928 at age ninety-three. He is also buried in Kinsey cemetery.

The first known school in Valley (now Webster) township was erected on the farm of John F. Lawson on Lower Beaver Road. The school was build about 1888 from logs cut and sawed from the Lawson farm. The school known as Valley School was used until 1915 when it and three other elementary schools (Rider, Ridgedale, and Friar) were merged into the newly formed Independent Consolidated School District of Webster and Jefferson Townships of Polk County Iowa. One of the Valley School graduates, Mary McPherson, later became Johnston Junior High School principal.

John F. Lawson was the father of six children, one of whom was Elizabeth who later married Nick Otto. Nick served as the first treasurer of the newly formed school district. Their son, Arlie, served on the board of directors for twelve years, and a grandson, Robert, served the district for fifteen years as the high school principal.

HISTORY OF THE JOHNSTON EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

In the fall of 1914, a small group of Christian men and women established the Johnston Union Sunday School. Meetings were held in a little one room building known as the Friar School which was one mile west of Johnston on the north side of the road.

Within one year the group had grown so that a larger place became necessary. Under the guidance of Pastor Joseph Wells, President of the American Sunday School Union, who lived on Fruitland Drive (now N.W. 55th Street), a large wooden building was erected on the lot just south of the old church building. The original land was donated by T.D. Wilson. In later years another lot was given by T.M. Wilson. They called it the Johnston Tabernacle. It was a rather primitive affair, lighted by kerosene lamps and heated with an old-fashioned round stove like those in railroad depots of yesteryear. The wood floor had many cracks for ventilation. The exterior was tar paper. It was too cold for winter use so meetings were held in the new consolidated school building in severe weather.

By 1917, the spiritual needs of the people of all ages became so apparent that a meeting was held on Sunday afternoon, January 14, to form a church organization. This resulted in the adoption of a committee report establishing the Federated Church of Johnston, Iowa, with the object of unifying all Christian people in this area who were active member of protestant evangelical churches. In April of that year the Sunday school transferred all of its property to the church.

Pastor J.J. Smith was their first pastor. He served through 1917 and 1918. With the advent of the automobile, a steady growth developed in Beaver Valley so that by 1920 the facilities of the old wooden tabernacle were inadequate. Then under the leadership of Pastor John Wright, the brick basement church building was constructed. The church was legally incorporated May 1, 1920. The parsonage was purchased in December of 1937.

Down through the years, the basement served its purpose. Only a few people remain of the original congregation. They and some of the new generation well remember the hard work, and the example of dedication of the pastors who served in that building.

Pastor E.A. Elliot ministered to the church from September 24, 1924 to October 4, 1925, and Pastor Wallace served from November 1, 1925 to October 13, 1926. For the next three years, the pulpit was filled by theology students from the Bible College of Drake University.

The following pastors have served from 1929 to the present:

W.L. Cannon	1929 - 1935
R.J. Cornell	1935 - 1936
H.W. Lambert	1936 - 1938
R.E. Hodgson	1938 - 1941
Harold Scholes	1941 - 1945
Albert D. Kurtz	1945 - 1949
Edward S. Blomberg	1949 - 1955
Edwin Guber	1955 - 1958
Laverne Floberg	1958 - 1960
Harold Friesen	1960 - 1968
Marlin Jones	1968 - 1969
Bruce Dowlin	1970 - 1973
R. Wesley Carlson	1973 - 1991
Jes Tarp	1992 - Present
Jim Kirkpatrick	1994 - Associate Pastor

Grant Voorhees, who grew up in the community and in the church, donated his services as architect and fulfilled a boyhood dream of designing a new church building for Johnston. Work began with the digging of the footings on April 4, 1953. The first meeting in the new sanctuary was a communion service on Good Friday, April 23, 1954.

Since April 1, 1953, the congregation has been affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America.

The church parsonage was remodeled in late 1958 and between November 13, 1962, and June 11, 1963, the basement was remodeled to serve as an educational unit. The house is now used for Sunday school, youth and other church activities and is now called the Lighthouse.

In 1979, a 2800 square foot addition was build, a second story above the original basement church. It includes classrooms, nursery facilities, restrooms, a fireside room and a kitchenette.

An additional pastoral position was established in 1983 by the church body - Associate Pastor for Youth and Christian Education. Pastor Dwight D. Warden was called to serve in that position.

HISTORY OF SAINT JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

In the fall of 1957, several families of the community discussed the possibility of beginning a Lutheran church in Johnston, Iowa. After doing some research, it was discovered that the Iowa Synod of the United Lutheran Church in America had spoken for the area to survey for a new mission church. The group met with Dr. Alfred Beil, President of the Iowa Synod, in November of 1957. There were eleven interested families. The Johnston Lions Club was rented for Sunday mornings. The Rev. Don H. Zinger, S.T.M., of Grand View College in Des Moines was called upon to begin holding services on January 5, 1958. In the meantime, laymen led the services until Pastor Zinger was available.

The Board of American Missions paid the pastor's salary and furnished 25 hymnals to begin services. The Iowa Synod placed an option on 4.3 acres of ground at the corner of Merle Hay Road and Fruitland Drive (now N.W. 57th Avenue) as a future building site. Located on the property was a home constructed from a barracks building moved from Camp Dodge after World War I. There were numerous homes in Johnston build from these buildings.

Sunday Church School started on February 2, 1958. At this time, the congregation moved to the Johnston school lunch room, as the Lion's Club was too small to accommodate this function.

The following were elected as the first temporary council: Albert Aulich, John Betz, Max Mc Clung, Herbert Peitzman, and Jack Sharp. Don Wehring and Don Peitzman served as treasurer and secretary, respectively. Mrs. Irene Aulich served as pianist and Mrs. Harriet Lamar substitute. Mrs. Esther Peitzman was elected Sunday School Superintendent and Rex Sharp treasurer of the Sunday School. The following volunteered as teachers: Irene Aulich, Anita Betz, Mary Schuessler, Luella Surber, and Viola Wehring.

The first service of Holy Communion was Thursday evening April 3, 1958. Twenty-two communed.

The Rev. and Mrs. George Munroe were sent by the Board of American Missions on June 1, 1958. The Rev. Munroe was a student pastor who was to serve as Mission Developer and to survey the area. During his ministry, the Luther League was organized and Vacation Church School was conducted for one week. More than 100 children attended the first Vacation Church School, many of them friends of members.

The Rev. Munroe returned to school in September, at which time Dr. Fred Weertz, retired pastor from St. John's Lutheran Church, Des Moines, served as temporary pastor. He was assisted by Mr. Lee Larson and other lay pastors who served very capably.

Mr. Lee Larson instructed the first Confirmation Class. They were confirmed on March 29, 1959 with the assistance of Dr. Alfred Biel. Members of the class were: James Rodine, Mary Rodine, Dennis Habick, James Surber, Richard Hummel, Susie Gilligan, Marilyn Gilligan, Douglas Wehring, Kathy Aulich, Janice Sharp, and Caralee Jensen.

The women of St. James showed an interest in forming a Lutheran Church Women's group. Permission was granted and it was soon well organized. The women enjoyed the programs and Bible studies provided by the headquarters in Philadelphia as well as being involved in many projects - meals were prepared for those in or just out of the hospital, assistance was given to families showing a need, and the group became involved with the state organization. Esther Peitzman was a member of the state board for two terms and was elected state president in 1974 - 1976.

The home located on the property purchased was renovated, a room and carport added to serve as the first parsonage for the first resident pastor, the spring of 1960. Pastor and Mrs. Gerald Hibbard and family of Postville, IA, moved in March 1, 1960.

Saint James was officially organized as a congregation on December 27, 1959. In January of 1960 the church volunteered to sponsor Boy Scout Troop #44 of Johnston, IA.

In 1960 a building committee was appointed to plan a future building program. Chairman, Jack Sharp, Rex Sharp, Albert Aulich, Richard Hummel, Sr., Herbert Peitzman, Kenneth Rodine and Carroll Surber served on the committee. In September of 1960, the property title was transferred from Iowa Synod Lutheran Church to Saint James Lutheran Church. In December of 1960, \$4,500 was to be paid and \$4,500 to be paid by December, 1961.

In November of 1960, Russell & Lynch Architects were selected and approved to draw plans for Saint James Lutheran Church home. The plans were drawn as three units. #1 - The

Educational Wing (Sunday School wing and Chapel). #2 - The Nave and #3 - the Fellowship Unit. The congregation felt the desperate need of this, their own church home, and seeing they would not financially be able to enter into the first unit building program asked, the first unit be reduced to the Sunday School mechanical room and restrooms. Upon approval by the Board of American Missions this step was taken and was used as a worship center.

Pastor and Mrs. Gerald Hibbard left the mission of Saint James to serve in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on December 1, 1962. Mr. Lee Larson again faithfully and reverently served as Lay Pastor until the arrival of Rev. and Mrs. Justin Silvias, April 8, 1963. Timothy joined them in June of the same year.

The building was under construction by the middle of September 1962. The specifications were 33,382 cubic feet or 2,608 square feet. The cost without landscaping, furnishings or parking area was \$36,246.40. The contractors were Varvter Construction Company, Proctor Plumbing and heating and Brown Brothers Electric. The parking bid was handled by S.E. Duke Trucking and landscaping by Nassif Nursery. The pulpit and lectern were constructed by Beihal Construction. The chancel area of redwood designed and built by Rex Sharp and Carroll Surber.

The Cornerstone Laying service was on November 11, 1962 and Groundbreaking was September 30, 1962. Dr. Harstrup of Iowa Synod was present and officiated at both of these services. The building really began the middle of September, 1962 and was completed Christmas the same year.

On December 23, 1962, the first service was held in the newly constructed building with 144 in attendance, in a unit that seated 150. The congregation will always remember Christmas 1962 as a special gift from the Lord. On December 30, 1952, Linda Mott-Ohnhaus became the first person baptized in our new church facility. Dennis Winders and Connie Reams were the first couple to be married in the building.

In 1964 a new parsonage was purchased and the original parsonage was remodeled for Sunday School classes. It was crowded, but helpful.

The congregation worked hard to make ends meet. They were helped again with the pastor's salary by the Board of American Missions.

The last paragraph of our May, 1963 dedication booklet reads thus:

The history of Saint James can best be described as a pioneering history. The road has not been easy. When other missions were able to grow rapidly, by having the advantage of being located in a heavily populated area, Saint James pioneered for five long years before tangible results began to reward dedicated efforts. Even though the area of Johnston had a limited population at present, we have rejoiced in receiving 28 confirmed members during 1962. Ten more new members will be received on May 26.

This was the first sign of major growth in Saint James.

The members of St. John's Lutheran Church in downtown Des Moines were very supportive of us, giving of their time and talents throughout the years. Pioneer Hi-Bred called upon us to serve meals for their field days numbering from 500 to 1000. We made thousands of sandwiches and sack lunches, gallons and gallons of potato salad, baked beans and other food items to go with barbecued chicken or chops. We baked pancakes for some 2000 at some of these field days. We served meals when the temperature was 90 to 100 degrees and a dairy cow sale when it was 12 degrees below zero. Pioneer Hi-Bred gave us gratuities for these services and our members learned to know and respect each other very well. There was much cooperating, love and caring shown. This helped to rapidly reduce the debt.

Pastor Silvias accepted a call to Cedar Rapids, Iowa in August of 1966. The Rev. J. Walton Kempe, who had retired as Pastor of Grand View Lutheran Church in Des Moines served as Interim Pastor. The Rev. David Samuelson was called to serve. It was rough going. After several years of barely meeting expenses with a full time pastor, the Rev. Samuelson served as a Tentmaker leader, teaching at Grand View College full time and serving Saint James for the use of the parsonage as his home. Pastor Samuelson served several years as Tentmaker but accepted a call to Swea City, Iowa on May 22, 1974.

Dr. Ernest Nielsen, retired President of Grand View College, served as Vice Pastor for nearly three years. He decided to take full retirement and the Rev. Dr. Norman Ullestad served as Vice Pastor for two and one half years. In June 1977 intern Ronald Beitzel served a term and was followed by Intern Richard Chronis beginning September 1, 1978 for nearly 1 year. The Rev. David Bergstrom was called July 1979. the Board of American Missions approved a partial salary aid again until we could become self-supporting.

The community began to grow, and the church again reflected the growth. We built an annex to help relieve the crowding in Sunday School.

The congregation voted in 1982 to sell two acres of the property and use the proceeds to construct a nave to seat 160 along with offices, restrooms and a mechanical room. The new nave was occupied in March, 1984. This addition was about 3100 square feet and the cost exceeded \$150,000. The dedication was scheduled for October, 1984. Pastor Bergstrom received a call to Missouri Valley, Iowa, which he accepted. He left on July 30, 1984. The dedication was combined with the twenty-fifth anniversary of our organization as a congregation.

The Rev. Gregory Nelson Davis was called to serve as our new pastor. He began in February 1985. We experienced a surge of visitors and the membership and attendance improved to the extent that in 1989, Sunday School rooms and a kitchen were made by remodeling that part of our building constructed in 1962. Also in 1989, we completed the installation of a pipe organ purchased from Bethany Lutheran Church in Des Moines which was discontinued. The congregation sold the parsonage in 1988 when the pastor expressed his desire to own his own home. On February 2, 1992, Saint James hosted the Doctor of Ministry Commencement exercises of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago for four Lutheran pastors in Iowa. Pastor Davis received this advanced professional degree for pastors in parish ministry, a degree he began and completed while pastor at Saint James.

Due to Johnston now being a very fast growing community, our facilities are crowded again. A new building committee has construction documents and financing arranged for a large expansion to our present building. The nave is to be enlarged to accommodate 250 at worship. The project includes a new Fellowship Hall, new offices and kitchen, restrooms and Sunday school rooms of approximately 7500 square feet at a cost of more than \$500,000. Groundbreaking for this new facility was held on Easter Sunday, April 11, 1993.

-Jean Mott and Esther Peitzman

THE HISTORY OF ST. PAUL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

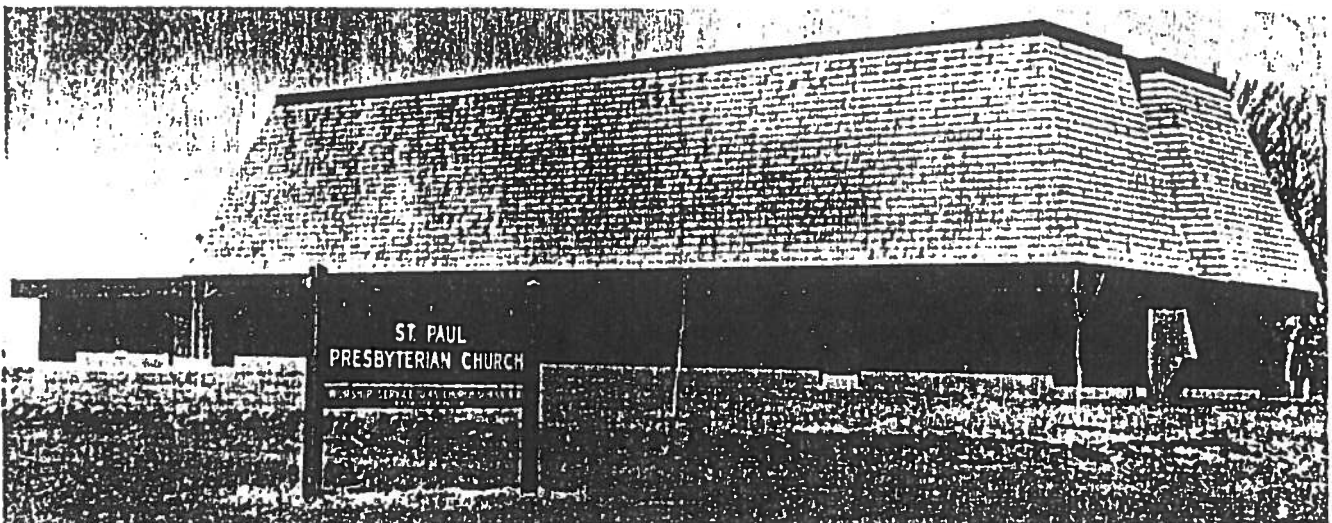
On December 6, 1959, a meeting was held by a group of people whose purpose was to organize a Presbyterian church in Johnston. Permission was obtained from the Des Moines Presbytery, the church was formally organized and their first meeting was held on February 28, 1960. There were seventy-four charter members.

Groundbreaking for the first unit of St. Paul Presbyterian church was on October 7, 1962. The new sanctuary was dedicated on May 19, 1962.

The first pastor of the church was Wade Anderson. He was followed by Russell V. Snyder, Jr., who served as pastor during the construction of the sanctuary and remained until 1969 when he became a hospital chaplain. Other pastors included Lowell Johnson and Dr. Robert Poland. In 1982 Wesley Snodgrass became pastor and he served until his death of a heart attack in 1989. Gayle Miller became the interim pastor in 1990 and served until John Gilmore became the pastor in 1991.

At the 25th National Conference on church architecture held in Dallas Texas, in 1964, St. Paul Church of Johnston was one of four named merit award winners, cited for excellence in simple beauty of the church. On Easter Sunday, April 22, 1984, groundbreaking ceremonies were held for the second unit of education/kitchen-fellowship hall/office addition. The new unit was dedicated on October 14, 1984.

Charter members who are still members of St. Paul church are: Jason and Margaret Beck, Betty Christensen, Mary Fulton, Jim and Jean Gilbert, Mert and Jeanne Hansen, Thelma Keltner, Ken and Ellen Krueger, Kay Law, Marilyn Law Coonley, Mildred Rastovac, Viola Rastovac, Ted and Florence Rittgers, Darlene Sheer, Joe and Arlene Shore.



WINS NATIONAL AWARD. St. Paul Presbyterian Church has been named merit award winner at the 25th National Conference on Church Architecture, held in Dallas, Tex., April 7, 8 and 9, for design excellence.

THE CITY OF JOHNSTON

Prior to 1969, the community known as Johnston was a part of the unincorporated area of Polk County, held together by a sprawling school district that stretched into the city limits of Urbandale and Des Moines and north almost to Granger. The Des Moines River formed a natural boundary on the east.

Most of the residents were satisfied with their status as a semi-rural area protected by the county sheriff and governed by the Board of Supervisors. However, some were troubled by the lack of a dependable source of pure water and had explored the legal steps necessary to incorporate. David A. Goss, Jr., was one of those with concerns, and he invited an attorney friend to talk to the local Lions Club about the possibilities of forming a city. There was interest, but more thought the idea was highly improbable. A few years later when the Saylorville Dam was completed, it became apparent that the area would develop rapidly and more serious thought was given to the subject of incorporation.

About that time the city of Urbandale began to seriously consider annexing part of the Johnston area. Des Moines planners also expressed interest in taking part of the area. Then Ankeny joined the annexation talk, and it looked as if Johnston would be divided up unless action was taken to stop it. Residents could envision neighbors living across their streets and being in different towns, and they didn't like the idea.

Since Iowa law prohibits a city from being incorporated within three miles of an existing city, a group of men living just outside the three-mile limit got together to map their strategy. These men included Harold Southerwick, James Ahern, William Myers, Robert Rubel, Richard Franklin and Arthur Green. The first election in 1968 failed to win approval for incorporation by an 84-40 vote.

Undaunted, the men regrouped and started over. James Ahern, who had been mayor of Urbandale in the 1940's, used his experience in municipal government to counsel the group as they approached the court for permission to incorporate and on ways to proceed toward their goal. In spite of opposition from the Board of Supervisors, a petition signed by 28 persons seeking authority to incorporate was approved. The court appointed Harold Southerwick, James Ahern, Lowell Temple, W. Lawrence Oliver and Andrew Prine as commissioners to carry out the necessary procedures.

Camp Dodge was included in the proposed incorporated area and when a second election was held on June 23, 1969, the incorporation was approved on a 71-13 vote. On September 8, 1969, the first mayor and council were elected to serve until January. Harold Southerwick was sworn in as mayor by Justice of the Peace Don Christenson on September 18, 1969. He then swore in as councilmen: James Ahern, William Myers, Arthur Green, Walter Eichhorn and Robert Rubel. In the November election Southerwick, Ahern, Rubel, and Myers were re-elected and Richard Franklin and Paul Gomis were elected for their first terms.

Edwin H. Allen, Jr., technical services representative from the Iowa League of Municipalities, was invited to work with the first council as they began to write the ordinances for the new city.

In the meantime, David A. Goss, Jr., and Robert Swanson of the Lions Club were named to head up a committee to secure voluntary annexation petitions from adjoining property owners. Lions Club members and their wives spread out through the populated areas south and west of the new city with petitions for voluntary annexation. By mid-December they had obtained 302 petitions which were promptly accepted. On that day Urbandale's city council voted to approve a resolution to annex land bordered by N.W. 100th on the north, by N.W. 70th on the west, Interstate 35-80 on the south and the Des Moines River on the east. Five hundred Johnston residents attended a meeting at the high school to protest the actions taken by the Urbandale council.

In February the Des Moines Plan and Zoning Commission's planner Charles Ford recommended that Des Moines annex two areas from the Johnston school district within two years. He was recommending annexation of the land south of the Interstate between N.W. Beaver Drive and Merle Hay Road and north of the interstate to the section line located between N.W. 57th Avenue and N.W. 60th. He expressed surprise when told that some of the land he proposed to annex was already a part of a city.

A big boost came to Johnston's incorporation process when Pioneer Hi-Bred International voluntarily petitioned for annexation of the 1800 acres of their land within the proposed city. James Ahern recalled a visit with Pioneer president Wayne Skidmore at Pioneer's corporate offices. Mr. Skidmore, in response to a request to include Pioneer's property in the city, called his board of directors to a meeting and within ten minutes, the decision was made to proceed with the petition for annexation.

Later that month, Des Moines agreed to drop plans to annex property already in Johnston although the land was still included in a legal notice of proposed annexation that was to be voted on in May.

Settlement of the boundary dispute between Johnston and Urbandale came at the end of April when Urbandale agreed not to annex unincorporated land beyond a line bounded by N.W. 54th Avenue north to 100th then to N.W. 70th west to Highway 141 and south to I 35-80. Urbandale then agreed to lift an intent to annex for ten years. A ten year moratorium on annexation was also agreed upon with Ankeny. The center line of the Des Moines River was to be the boundary between Johnston and Ankeny.

Soon after the new council and mayor took office, the mayor appointed the first plan and zoning commission consisting of Dr. William Brown, Col. Wayne Daffron, Robert Swanson, William Heard, Wayne Stall, David A. Goss, Jr., and Joseph Tweedy. Appointed to a water commission were Helmut Mueller, Merton Hansen and Virgil Andresen.

H.A. Aulich was appointed city clerk replacing Mrs. Lucille Southerwick, who had served as clerk during the formation of the city. Dennis McCarty was named the first police chief. Ralph Keltner was appointed early in 1971 to be the city building inspector.

In January of 1971, Johnston signed an agreement with the Urbandale Library for use of their facilities for a fee of \$1300. Johnston residents continued to use the Urbandale library until a separate library was established in Johnston in 1991.

A board of adjustment was appointed in 1971. Members were William Heard, Raymond Schleih, L.W. Simpson, Charles Iler and Robert Nygard. Arlie V. Otto was name zoning administrator. Lowen Pooch was named to replace William Heard on the plan and zoning commission.

Paul Gomis resigned from the council in early 1971 to take a position with the city streets department and Mark Johnson was appointed to serve until a new council would be elected in November.

In May of 1971, the mayor appointed the following persons to serve on the park and recreation committee: Richard Dunn, Michael Freking, O.B. Herrick, Ernest Beck, John Clarkson, Lucille Southerwick, Mary Jane Paez, and

Robert Otto. In June Mrs. Paez resigned because she was leaving the area and Jeanne Hansen was appointed in her place. The group worked to establish the first city park, Sycamore Park, on the banks of the Des Moines River. It was later abandoned because of the danger of flooding when the release rate of Saylorville dam was raised by the Corps of Engineers.

Joe Billings, who had served as legal counsel for the city on a temporary basis, was replaced by Blair Dewey as city attorney and Kenneth Rittgers as assistant city attorney.

At the first city-wide elections since the voluntary annexation drive, Harold Southerwick was elected mayor. A write-in vote for James Ahern fell short. Three top vote-getters in the council race were to have three year terms and the next two were to receive two year terms. Merton Hansen, Richard Franklin and Mark Johnson topped the voting and were sworn in for three years. Elroy Munck and Robert Leonard received the two year terms.

The city council soon began exploring the possibility of bringing a municipal water system to Johnston. Their engineers, the firm of Veenstra and Kimm, determined that the easiest and least costly method would be to purchase water from the Des Moines Water Board. Earlier the city began negotiations with HUD (the department of Housing and Urban Development) for funding of a water system. Public meetings were held in October of 1972 on the purchase of water from Des Moines and by November the final agreement for water purchase was concluded. On November 30, 1972, final documents were received from HUD granting Federal funding and the mayor was authorized to sign the agreement and to execute the contract with Des Moines. The issue was put to a vote of the people on January 8, 1973. Slightly more than the sixty percent approval was received and the measure passed. That very night word came from HUD that no more federal funds were to be issued for water and sewer projects, but Johnston's vote that day would be in time to avoid the cutoff.

By October of 1974, 77,000 feet of water main had been laid and on December 12, 1974, a resolution accepting the municipal water utility was approved by the council. Water was now available to all of the properties and residents were given until April 1, 1975, to connect to the system.

Richard Franklin was elected mayor in November of 1977 when Harold Southerwick retired. Robert Leonard and Elroy Munck were elected to full three year terms and Larry Rolfstad was appointed to succeed Franklin on the council.

Among the projects completed by the early councils were the seal coating of all the streets, establishment of Dewey Park, adoption of a comprehensive development plan, construction of tennis courts and establishment of a police court. In later years the police court was abandoned. A branch of the Urbandale library was established in Johnston in July of 1988. On July 1, 1992 that branch became the independent Johnston Public Library.

At first new development came slowly, but with the establishment of the Green Meadows housing development by Pioneer in 1989, the city saw rapid growth that continues with Green Meadows West, North Glen and ~~Glenwood Hills~~ ^{Greenwood Hills} developments.

Mayors who have served the city of Johnston since its incorporation are:

Harold Southerwick
Richard Franklin
Ruth Schuler
Mary Ann Roberts
Jim Powell
John Ver Hoef

Persons who have been members of the city council are:
James Ahern, William Myers, Robert Rubel, Walter Eichhorn, Arthur Green, Richard Franklin, Paul Gomis, Mark Johnson, Merton Hansen, Elroy Munck, Robert Leonard, Larry Rolfstad, Harold Neff, Bill Wagner, Jim White, Tom Leffler, Droga Vignovich, Parke Heller, Richard Garland, Mary Jane Paez, Karla Rankin, Randy Lehman, and Andy Christenson.

THE HISTORY OF THE JOHNSTON LIONS CLUB

On December 18, 1944, thirty-nine civic minded men of the Johnston community met to organize a chapter of the International Association of Lions. On January 29, 1945, the group was officially chartered. Those first members were: Raymond Baker, Samuel Baker, Carl Bauman, Albert Billings, Wesley Clampitt, Ben Dewey, Percy Dunbar, August Edmonds, Craig Findley, Charles Foshe, Walter Gandy, William Garlock, Chester Hartman, Stuart Harvey, Owen Hauser, Lyle Hinckley, Ray Hunt, Frank Knapp, Joe Longo, Royal Manny, Frank McGovern, Curtis Murphy, Ed Murray, Wilmer Newlin, Arlie Otto, Paul Phipps, Robert Quick, Carl Rittgers, James Robinette, Dan Rock, Harold Scholes, James Scotet, Albert Sellner, George Sorenson, Worthy Surber, Gerald Torney, Walter Wheeler and James Weatherspoon.

First officers were: President Chester Hartman, first vice president Wilmer Newlin, second vice president Dan Rock, third vice president Robert Quick, secretary-treasurer Royal Manny, lion tamer Frank McGovern, tail twister Albert Sellner, and directors Ben Dewey, Arlie Otto, James Robinette and Worthy Surber.

A big project was undertaken by the Lions in 1951 when they funded and built bleachers in the school gymnasium. It took six fund-raisers and six work sessions to complete the job.

The Lions supplied Christmas trees and candy to every school classroom for years and later purchased artificial trees for the school. One year the Lions painted the school locker rooms. When the new football stadium was built, the Lions built the press box for it. Another project the Lions spearheaded was a 60 by 100 foot concrete slab used for roller skating behind the school. In 1974 they purchased and installed playground equipment behind their clubhouse so that neighborhood children would have a place to play. For several winters they permitted construction of an ice skating rink on their property.

A building at the corner of Merle Hay Road and N.W. 64th Avenue was purchased in 1947, and it was used as a clubhouse. Through the years the Lions clubhouse has been home to 4-H clubs, Scouts, the Garden Club and it served as a meeting place for the city council when the city was first incorporated. Several churches got their start in the clubhouse.

When the clubhouse could no longer accommodate the club, a sizeable challenge donation was made by charter member Raymond Baker and a building fund drive, led by Lyle Kreps got underway. The fund drive goal was quickly met and the modern clubhouse built in 1990 now serves as a meeting place for community activities and for private functions.

Johnston got its first street lights thanks to the efforts of Robert Swanson and the Johnston Lions Club. For several years club members collected fees of \$6 per year from each householder to pay for the lights. They gladly turned the project over to the city after incorporation. The Club was also instrumental in getting improvements made to a dangerous intersection known as Garlock Corner between Johnston and Grimes. They gathered information and presented it to the Highway Commission who acted promptly to make the needed changes.

Thousands of dollars have been donated by the Lions to International and State sight and hearing projects. Through donations from the Lions Club, many Johnston children have been supplied with eye care and glasses that they were not able to afford. The club also brought the glaucoma testing unit to the community for many years. They have conducted blood donor drives and have donated equipment to the local rescue unit.

For the past two years the Lions have held a book sale to benefit the Johnston Public Library, giving the Library \$1000 each year to use for equipment and books. They have loaned their name and their membership to many other civic projects from supplying food baskets to the needy at holidays to raising funds for bone marrow transplants, the Children's Habilitation Home and the Johnston Music Department. Through the sale of advertising and programs they have donated thousands of dollars to the Booster club to be used for extra-curricular activities.

The Club sold programs at the Grand Prix for three years, raising about \$10,000 to help fund civic projects. In 1992 the Lions offered \$1000 in scholarships to Johnston seniors and in 1993 they doubled the scholarship money to \$2000.

Other projects of the Lions include the funding of candidates to Boys and Girls State, sponsorship of a Little League team, and donations of funds to send students to Washington, D.C. They raised money for construction of classrooms in Kenya, Africa, sent aid to hurricane victims in Florida, Louisiana and Hawaii and provided funds to bring foreign students to Johnston.

In 1993 they donated \$1000 toward the State Fair renovation.

-Jeanne Hansen

THE HISTORY OF THE JOHNSTON ROTARY CLUB

The Rotary Club was organized in 1968 and was designed to serve the northwest area of Des Moines, mainly Johnston, Urbandale and roughly the Hoover school area. Their many accomplishments have been to work closely with drug abuse programs, prevention of child abuse, programs for the homeless, and working with Easter Seals and the Salvation Army.

The Rotarians provide one scholarship to a student from Johnston, Urbandale and Hoover high schools, plus a two year scholarship to a student that chooses to pursue education in a technical field.

The Rotary Club is an international organization which helps to serve the third world.

THE HISTORY OF THE JOHNSTON JAY CEES

The Johnston Jay Cees were organized in February 1989, and although they enjoyed growth for a while, they disbanded in the early 1990's. As of this writing, a new group is organizing in the summer of 1994.

They are a civic minded organization and have three main areas of focus: community service, which includes such work as planning the annual Easter egg hunt, the luminary light at Christmas, highway cleaning, helping with Johnston Fun Daze and other worthwhile projects.

They also conduct courses on management in business and other areas. Some of their effort is directed at getting the people out to vote on all issues.

Theirs is an open membership that fluctuates between twenty-five and forty.

THE HISTORY OF THE JOHNSTON GARDEN CLUB

In the summer of 1955, Elsie Six, who had moved to Johnston a few years earlier, went up and down the streets visiting with the ladies she had met at other organizations about starting a Garden Club in Johnston. She had been a member of the Highland Park Garden Club in Des Moines. On August 19, with the help of several Highland Park members, a group of ladies gathered at the home of Laura Minick on Merle Hay Road to organize a club. Mrs. Lewis was named temporary chairperson and Melba Sorenson was named temporary secretary.

A nominating committee composed of Hazel Schleihs, Mable Murray and Justine Billings was appointed. At a meeting at Hazel Schleihs' cabin on September 28, 1955, it was decided that the club would meet on the second Monday of each month and that dues would be \$.50 per year. Elsie Six was named president. Nita Strauss was elected vice president, and Mamie Zarley was named secretary-treasurer.

Charter members of the club were Justine Billings, Greta Longo, Laura Minick, Hazel Schleihs, Margaret Schweitzer, Elsie Six, Melba Sorenson, Eva Stall, Beverly Stokka and Mamie Zarley. Those present also included Mildred Bakey, Margaret Frost, Ruth Gross and Frances Six. Greta Longo and Melba Sorenson are the only two charter members who are still active in the club.

Johnston Garden Club became affiliated with the National Federated Garden Clubs in 1958 sponsored by Highland Park Garden Club. Meetings are now held the third Monday of each month at 1:00 p.m. in the community room of city hall.

Over the years the club took on a number of community and garden projects. These included landscaping at the old Lions Club building where they met for many years, local flower shows. the home show at Veteran's Auditorium in Des Moines and flower shows on the state level. They have had booths at the state fair, therapy projects at retirement homes, helped with landscaping at the schools and post office, participated in parades, started the Farmer's Market and purchased cherry trees for planting throughout the city. They were a Blue Ribbon club and continue to hold that distinction. The members have donated time to the Des Moines Botanical Center and helped in the lighting of the city Christmas tree.

THE JOHNSTON KIWANIS

The Johnston Kiwanis Club was formed in November of 1986 with thirty-two active members. Meetings are held each Tuesday at 7 a.m. at Johnston city hall.

Among the activities sponsored by the Kiwanis are the funding of scholarships through the Dollars for Scholars program, a VIP Christmas party for disadvantaged youth in connection with Polk County Juvenile Services and the annual Kiwanis pancake breakfast which raises funds for charities. The club has also sponsored a Johnston Little League team.

THE 20 YEAR CLUB

The 20 Year Club that met for many years in Johnston included many of the women who were long-time Johnston residents. Pictured here are the members who met in October of 1956. Left to right are Mrs. Jim Hunt, Mrs. Borcus, Mrs. Ethel Robinette, Mrs. Bernice Scott, Mrs. Eva Stall, Dorothy Rittgers, Mrs. Harry Minick, Mrs. Harvey, and Mrs. Charles Fisher. The picture was taken by Mrs. Ben Dewey.



JOHNSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Johnston Historical Society was chartered in May of 1994. The Society meets monthly to research and preserve early Johnston History.

CAMP DODGE

(A Brief History)

Located in Johnston a suburb northwest of Des Moines, Camp Dodge is an Iowa National Guard facility. Most of the more than 100 buildings and structures are located in a 200 acre area off N.W. Beaver Drive. Camp Dodge is located in Jefferson Township, an irregularly shaped township in Polk County, bounded on the north and east by the Des Moines River.

In 1907 the Iowa General Assembly established a permanent Iowa National Guard encampment of 78.5 acres. In 1910 the place received its present name, Camp Dodge. Development of Camp Dodge was slow by steady in the early years of the twentieth century. In 1913 the legislature appropriated funds for buildings and an arsenal. By 1917 the encampment covered 571 acres. By the end of the 1917, the War Department had increased the Camp Dodge are by 2100 acres in purchases and were leasing 2100 acres more.

The Development of Camp Dodge also spurred road improvements to the site ten miles northwest of downtown Des Moines. When a farmer who lived along N.W. Beaver Drive wanted excessive compensation for his land, the secretary of the Polk County Board of Supervisors, Bennet Dewey, stepped in. He helped convince residents along the extension of Des Moines' 58th Street to donate their land for a brick paved road. Later the new road was named formally Merle Hay Road.

Private enterprises sprang up near the base but was strictly supervised. Herrold, the tiny interurban stop that the expanded camp engulfed, had a small theater, pool hall, three restaurants, and several small stores. Two places, Dodge City and Army City, sprang up in direct response to cantonment presence as their names reflect.

CAMP DODGE TODAY

Camp Dodge now covers approximately 2300 acres. Of this number, 505 acres in the rifle range is now covered by Saylorville Lake. The remaining 595 acres is used for troop training and doubles as the eleventh largest wildlife refuge in the state.

This information came entirely from a commission awarded to Barbara Beving Long, completed in 1989, and is entitled: The Historical and Architectural Development of Camp Dodge, Iowa.

-Bob Otto

GEOLOGIC HISTORY OF THE SAYLORVILLE GORGE:
THE PLEISTOCENE EPOCH OR THE WISCONSIN GLACIAL DRIFT
OF 10,000 YEARS AGO

According to the U.S. Corp of Engineers, the following statements will explain and define this era of time.

In no county of the state of Iowa is the evidence of glaciation more visible evident than in Polk County. At least three times glaciers estimated to be 1000 feet thick have extended to the Saylorville area. The most recent of these, the Cary Lobe of the Wisconsin Ice Sheet, reached to where the state capital stands today.

The valley now occupied by the Des Moines River north of Saylorville Lake was formed when the Wisconsinian Glacier melted around 12,600 years ago. Ancient drainage patterns before this time suggest the Des Moines River occupied the valley of Beaver Creek. After the Cary Lobe retreated to northern Iowa, the meltwater washed out the present day Des Moines River valley. The geologically young Des Moines River valley north of Saylorville Lake joins its ancestral valley approximately two miles downstream from the Saylorville Dam.

-Barb Zorn

PIONEER HI-BRED CORN COMPANY -- THE BEGINNING

The story of hybrid corn and particularly Pioneer Hi-Bred Corn Company really begins with the story of Henry Agard Wallace.

Henry Agard Wallace was associated prominently for many years with issues of national politics and international diplomacy -- and many persons throughout the nation and the world who feel an almost personal acquaintance with the famous Iowa have forgotten, or never knew, that he stands in the forefront of the early hybrid-corn makers. Without the unrelenting efforts of Wallace, registered both as a corn breeder and as an editor of the leading farm magazine in the foremost corn-producing state, Iowa, the wide use of hybrid corn would unquestionable have been greatly retarded.

Wallace's experiments with corn breeding, began in garden plots in Des Moines, had been moved by degrees to farms near Des Moines in the early twenties. Mrs. Wallace had traded a southern Iowa farm for forty acres of sandy soil just northwest of Des Moines near the little town of Johnston. Mrs. Wallace and Wallace's father acquired additional land nearby so that by 1928 the land at his disposal amounted to a substantial acreage.

Wallace invited an acquaintance of long standing, Jay Newlin, to take over the direction and operation of the farm at Johnston.

Another of Wallace's acquaintances Simon Casady, a real estate man in Des Moines with a farm just outside of the city, took a lot of interest in corn breeding. As early as 1922, Wallace did work on the Casady farm, Henry Wallace used to make a practice during the growing season so he could study his corn breeding plots. Copper Cross (Wallace's first hybrid) was developed here.

In 1925 Henry Wallace, aided by his friends, Newlin and Casady, organized the first company ever to be formed exclusively for the purpose of developing strains of hybrid corn and for the production and distribution of the seed. At Wallace's suggestion the new organization was named the Hi-Bred Corn Company. Later the name was changed to the Pioneer Hi-Bred Corn Company.

Henry Agard Wallace
Rutgers University Press
1947

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

RESEARCH, RESEARCH AND MORE RESEARCH

In 1926, the newly formed Hi-Bred Corn Company at Johnston sold 650 bushels of hybrid seed corn out of a total production of 1000 bushels...roughly a half century later (1979) farmers in this country planted just under 80 million acres of corn, using 21 million bags of seed corn. Sales of Pioneer hybrid seed corn for this same year amounted to over 6.2 million bags or about 30 percent of the United States market.

The Men Who Made Pioneer
Robert Jarnigan

Several of Henry A. Wallace's early associates believe the founder of Pioneer looked on the company solely as a means to generate funds for additional research. The emphasis on research at Pioneer has not changed. The Company strongly believes that Research is the Key to Progress.



Rittger family: early pioneers, property owners in Johnston

SUBMITTED BY THE JOHNSTON (STATION) HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In about 1795, John Augustin Rittgers came to the United States from Prussia as an indentured servant to John Comer, who owned a "plantation" in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. Rittgers later married Comer's daughter Catherine; this released him from indentured status. John and Catherine raised nine children in Virginia, including sons Jacob B. and Daniel.

After Comer's death, the Rittgers family moved to Ohio. John Augustin died in 1848, and his sons, the two brothers Jacob B. and Daniel, came to the Johnston area in 1853 and settled. Jacob was at the time in his fifties, and Daniel was somewhat younger. They brought with them mature, young children.

Jacob B. purchased land along NW Beaver Drive, east of what is now Merle Hay Road. His residence, at the junction of Beaver and Kempton Drive (NW 66th Ave.) was a stop on the old stage coach route along Beaver Drive, from Des Moines to Woodward, and on to Fort Dodge. Plat maps of the Johnston area, drawn in 1875, give some idea of the extent of the Rittgers' local land holdings.

Daniel Rittgers had a sawmill along the stage route on what is now NW Beaver Drive, about where the pallet business is now located. At one time he owned the land where Rittgers Oaks is currently being developed; in 1875 it was an orchard farm belonging to his nephew Jacob R., son of Jacob B.

East of Merle Hay Road, the North Glenn neighborhood occupies what was Daniel's son David Rittger's farm. Most recently, this belonged to Carl Rittgers, who farmed the land, with help from his nephew Clarence, great grandson of

Daniel, until Carl's death in 1975. Older residents will remember the old house and barn perched amid trees, on the hillside along Merle Hay Road.

In 1875, the farmland then in Johnston now bounded by Merle Hay Road, NW 66th Ave. and NW 62nd Ave. was owned, western half by Reuben R., son of Daniel, and the eastern by Andrew, son of Jacob B. Currently, Mary Rittgers, wife of the late Clarence Rittgers, lives on an acreage on NW 51st St., which was once a part of Reuben Rittgers' farm. It is the last remaining plot of land currently and continually owned by the Rittgers family since they arrived here nearly 150 years ago.

The development known as Eagle Ridge on NW Beaver is being built on land which was passed from Jacob B. to son Jacob R. and to his son Andrew. The property then passed to Andrew's son, the late Theodore Rittgers, who with his family lived along NW Beaver at the Kempton Drive (NW 66th Ave.) intersection. Their big white house was moved across the river a few years ago. Theodore developed a park and picnic spot behind the house along the Des Moines River. It was known as Rockaway Beach as was popular with local groups for picnics and gatherings.

Another local development on former Rittgers land is the Community State Bank on the corner of Merle Hay and NW 62nd Ave. The late Walter Rittgers owned this property.

There remains another memorial to these early Johnston pioneers. The Rittgers family cemetery has been the burial ground for generations of the Rittgers, beginning with Jacob B. It is located on the south side of NW Beaver, just northwest of the traffic light at Kempton Drive.

Total Population for Iowa's Incorporated Places: 1850-2000

Area	Population															
	2000	1990	1980	1970	1960	1950	1940	1930	1920	1910	1900	1890	1880	1870	1860	1850
Hubbard	885	814	852	846	806	836	779	795	681	568	676	452	—	—	—	—
Hudson	2,117	2,037	2,267	1,535	1,085	613	492	470	408	372	359	—	—	—	—	—
Hull	1,960	1,724	1,714	1,523	1,289	1,127	1,072	905	791	658	626	566	—	—	—	—
Humboldt	4,452	4,438	4,794	4,665	4,031	3,219	2,819	2,251	2,232	1,809	1,474	1,075	606	335	—	—
Humeston	543	553	671	673	638	750	903	924	1,214	1,006	945	642	—	—	—	—
Huxley	2,316	2,047	1,884	937	486	422	392	362	366	336	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ida Grove	2,350	2,357	2,285	2,261	2,265	2,202	2,238	2,206	2,020	1,874	1,967	1,563	759	30	—	—
Imogene	66	88	188	192	264	274	280	303	268	341	296	279	158	—	—	—
Independence	6,014	5,972	6,392	5,910	5,498	4,865	4,342	3,691	3,672	3,517	3,656	3,163	3,128	2,945	1,395	—
Indianola	12,998	11,340	10,843	8,852	7,062	5,145	4,123	3,488	3,628	3,283	3,261	2,254	2,146	1,428	836	—
Inwood	875	824	755	644	638	644	634	670	746	595	477	—	—	—	—	—
Ionia	277	304	350	270	265	301	283	246	280	298	306	—	—	—	—	—
Iowa City	62,220	59,735	50,508	46,850	33,443	27,212	17,182	15,340	11,267	10,091	7,987	7,016	7,123	5,914	5,214	1,250
Iowa Falls	5,193	5,435	6,174	6,454	5,565	4,900	4,425	4,112	3,954	2,797	2,840	1,796	955	—	—	—
Ireton	585	597	588	582	510	573	653	612	730	631	545	412	—	—	—	—
Irwin	372	394	427	446	425	381	345	357	311	278	295	—	—	—	—	—
Jackson Junction	60	87	94	106	89	107	122	126	130	160	171	—	—	—	—	—
Jamaica	237	232	275	271	256	303	283	311	295	379	—	—	—	—	—	—
Janesville	829	822	840	741	648	445	366	331	261	269	311	—	—	—	—	—
Jefferson	4,626	4,292	4,854	4,735	4,570	4,326	4,088	3,431	3,416	2,477	2,601	1,875	1,444	779	—	—
Jesup	2,212	2,121	2,343	1,662	1,488	1,158	902	736	774	697	690	573	569	—	—	—
Jewell Junction	1,239	1,106	1,145	1,152	1,113	973	1,051	950	1,090	941	947	414	—	—	—	—
Johnston	8,649	4,702	2,526	222	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Joice	231	245	223	201	231	244	263	225	233	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Jolley	54	68	91	112	120	195	161	174	300	250	266	—	—	—	—	—
Kalona	2,293	1,942	1,862	1,488	1,235	947	765	704	632	466	530	211	—	—	—	—
Kamrar	229	203	225	243	268	261	288	286	256	262	223	—	—	—	—	—
Kanawha	739	763	756	822	735	747	767	609	659	398	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kellerton	372	314	278	299	341	483	563	540	693	503	458	277	169	—	—	—
Kelley	300	246	237	235	239	244	159	179	192	231	187	—	—	—	—	—
Kellogg	606	626	654	607	623	670	648	580	603	610	653	700	772	—	—	—
Kensett	280	298	360	361	409	424	392	394	338	360	459	—	—	—	—	—
Kent	52	65	70	86	94	169	138	177	183	158	—	—	—	—	—	—
Keokuk	11,427	12,451	13,536	14,631	16,316	16,144	15,076	15,106	14,423	14,008	14,641	14,101	12,117	12,766	8,136	2,478
Keomah Village	97	99	99	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Keosauqua	1,066	1,020	1,003	1,018	1,023	1,101	1,040	855	851	1,009	1,117	831	883	869	—	705

Save the Maplenol Barn in West Des Moines

a barn in town? how cool!

Inheriting a barn and moving it | Simpson Barn

Posted on January 18, 2012 by julia



The Simpson Barn today

This barn is located in Johnston, IA and owned by the Johnston Historical Society. The following was written by Mary Jane Paez, who tells the story of how the barn became a resource that is now shared with the entire community.

Founded in 1993, the Society had been looking for a home for quite awhile. After looking at various options, one of the members shyly suggested that their family had a house that might be suitable. It was a six bedroom farmhouse built in 1902. As President of the Society, I made contact with the Simpsons to work out the details of the transfer. After we discussed the house and its history, I was reminded of the farmhouse and barn that my grandparents built in the same era in Minnesota. I asked the Simpsons if they would consider donating the barn along with the house. After consulting with their sons, they agreed. They also threw in the windmill.

The negotiating with the Simpsons then began. There were deadlines (a little less than a year and a half), mowing requirements, condition of the site after removal of the structures and insurance and tax requirements. This agreement with the Simpsons was signed in March, 2001. Next came the panic of how we would accomplish this gargantuan task.

The next negotiation was with the City of Johnston to move the structures to a city park just west of the beautiful modern library. There were more deadlines and more requirements.

Starting in July, 2001, many Society volunteers descended on the house to clean out, disconnect utilities, and

prepare the structure for transport. Once the house was just about ready, the barn was next on the list. Fewer Society volunteers signed up to help with the barn, which had been built as a dairy barn in 1936. The first barn built at the turn of the century was all wooden and was a victim of fire. The latest version had clay tile walls and a unique loft with diagonally sliding hay doors. The Simpsons bought the property in 1955 and converted the barn to accommodate their love of horses. This meant that there were many horse stalls, a tack room, and an office on the ground level. The loft was filled with 30 year old hay about a foot deep. To clear the hay, there were two 4 foot square doors at each end that had to be the exit for the hay. With pitch forks and snow shovels and wearing goggles and bandana masks, it took three weekends to clear the mess. We all came out looking like coal miners after an explosion.

Come back for more of the story — [subscribe to this blog](#) and have it in your email inbox as soon as it is published.

Like 0 Tweet [Share / Save](#) [f](#) [t](#) [g](#) [+](#)



About Julia

a diverse background for a unique perspective.

[View all posts by Julia →](#)

This entry was posted in [Barn of the Month](#) and tagged [simpson barn](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#)

2 Responses to *Inheriting a barn and moving it | Simpson Barn*

Pingback: [Restore | The Simpson Barn | Save the Maplenol Barn in West Des Moines](#)

Pingback: [Renew | The Simpson Barn | Save the Maplenol Barn in West Des Moines](#)

Save the Maplenol Barn in West Des Moines

Proudly powered by [WordPress](#).

An aerial, high-contrast black and white photograph showing a vast military camp. Rows of rectangular barracks are arranged in a grid pattern across a flat landscape. In the foreground, there are some smaller structures and what appears to be a vehicle. The overall scene depicts a large-scale encampment.

CAMP DODGE

Article by Timothy Grover

In 1917, a "city" of 40,000 rose almost overnight in the countryside northwest of Des Moines. For hundreds of thousands of Midwesterners, this army encampment was their first home away from home on their way to fight the Great War of 1914–1918.

Soldier Wilbur Boian in his army uniform, 1918.



Courtesy of Wilbur Boian

Inside the *Des Moines Register* that morning, the Majestic Theater offered a ten-cent matinee for Mary Pickford's *Poor Little Rich Girl*, urging parents to "Let Every Kiddy See It." And if those kiddies returned home with a bellyache, Fletcher's Castoria touted itself as "a harmless substitute for castor oil . . . it contains neither opium, morphine, or any other narcotic substance"—though it did contain as much alcohol as beer.

The ads, however, received scant attention. For along with their breakfasts of freshly-squeezed milk and just-gathered eggs, Iowans were too busy digesting the morning headlines. It was Friday, April 6, 1917. Congress had just voted to uphold President Wilson's declaration of war against Germany. The bloody conflict "over there" would now be coming home.

Northwest of Des Moines, an encampment that had its origins during the Civil War would play a pivotal role in training the nation's army. Within the coming nineteen months, the site, known as Camp Dodge, would develop almost overnight into a city of 2,000 buildings. Several hundred thousand troops would pass through its gates to toil in mock trenches and simulated gas chambers. Housing for 40,000 troops, 1,400 officers, and 15,000 horses and mules would be connected by twenty miles of streets and illuminated by 1,500 light bulbs.

Camp Dodge would be the destination of tens of thousands of draftees from Iowa and several other states in the Midwest, responding to their nation's call to arms. Here, they would receive their first taste of army life and the preparation they would need to fight on foreign battlefields. They would march for former president William Howard Taft, and they would drill for a yet-to-be hero of World War I—Omar Bradley. Camp Dodge would be a place of new friendships and hasty farewells, as in a few months' time, farm boys were turned into doughboys.

This encampment would also witness probably what ranks as the most infamous incident in Iowa military history—the hanging of three black soldiers for rape. And it would be devastated by the dreaded Spanish Influenza epidemic of 1918 which would claim the lives of hundreds of soldiers. But all this was to come. On April 6, 1917,

Camp Dodge consisted largely of cornfields and bottom-land pasture.

America's entry into World War I climaxed almost three years of mixed national sentiment about participation in this "war to end all wars." Europe itself had been plunged into conflict in August of 1914, two months after a Serbian nationalist assassinated Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir-apparent to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Although isolationist in attitude at the outset, Americans became increasingly alarmed for their own interests, especially after a German U-boat sank an unarmed British passenger ship, the *Lusitania*, in May of 1915. Nearly 1,200 perished, including 128 Americans, and largely as a consequence of this treacherous act, the United States began supplying arms to France and Great Britain.

Still, Americans had unsettled feelings as war raged throughout their ancestral homelands. They berated Woodrow Wilson for not having developed this country's defenses, but in 1916 they returned him to the White House for a second term because he had kept the country out of war.

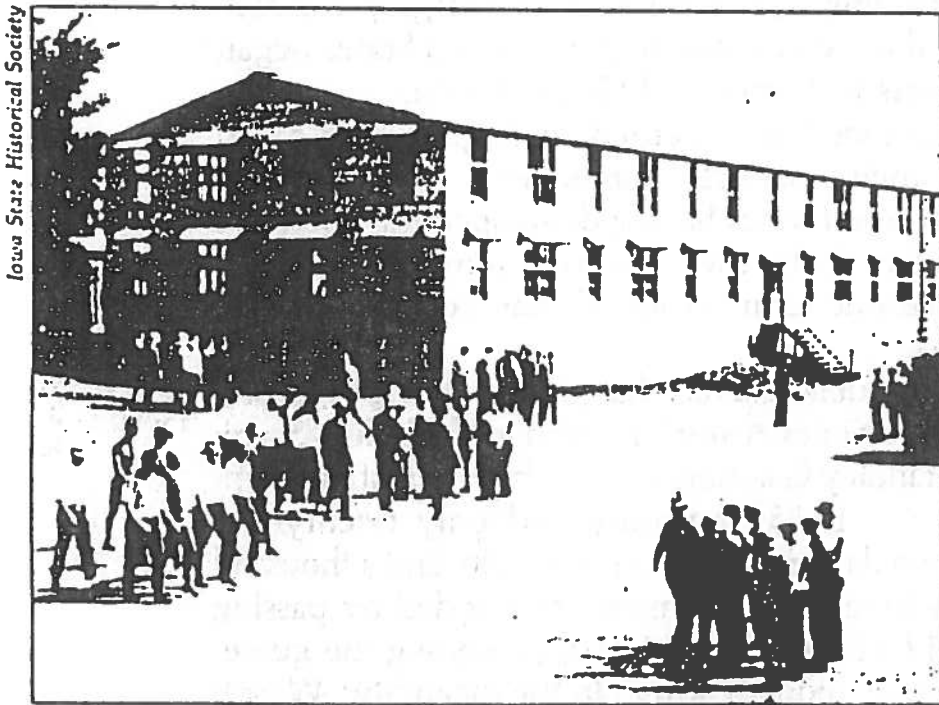
It was a well-publicized fact that prior to Wilson's second term the United States Army had been in shambles. Secretary of War Lindley Garrison, prior to his resignation, complained that, in 1915, the army had only twenty-one airplanes, a two days' supply of ammunition, and a thousand obsolete machine guns. Congress responded by passing the National Defense Act of 1916, providing the guidelines for a strong, modern army. In the meantime, Wilson had unsuccessfully attempted a diplomatic solution to the war. Germany's announcement in January of 1917 that it would escalate unrestricted submarine warfare tipped the balance in favor of America's entry. Fearful of American losses, Wilson declared war against Germany on April 2, 1917.

A sunny site—and a lack of saloons

Not quite three months later, on June 29, 1917, construction quartermaster N.A. Butler surveyed the Camp Dodge boundaries from horseback, contemplating the job that lay ahead. Since the Civil War, Camp Dodge (named

for soldier, politician, and railroad builder Grenville Dodge) had been used for summer maneuvers by the Iowa National Guard. The area, ten miles northwest of Des Moines, encompassed a ridge and broad valley between the Des Moines River and Beaver Creek, north of a village called Johnston. On the grounds were six occupied farm homes, twelve Iowa Guard mess halls, a concrete arsenal building, and a brick house used as officers' headquarters. The state of Iowa had owned the campgrounds since 1907.

An unattributed, hand-typed history of Camp Dodge, on file at the camp's Gold Star Museum, describes how the site evolved into one of the First World War's busiest



Iowa State Historical Society

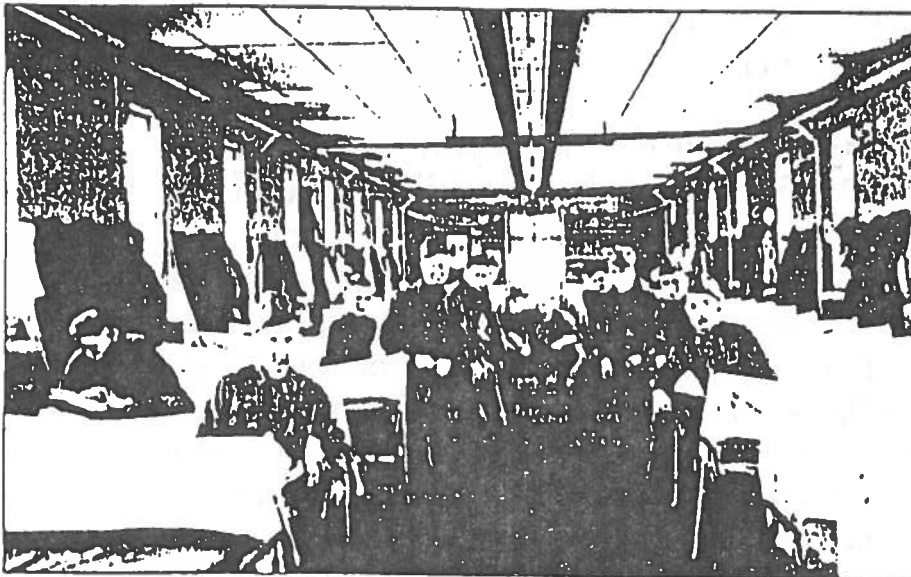
New arrivals in camp

training centers. On May 22, 1917, three Des Moines businessmen traveled to St. Paul, Minnesota, where members of a U.S. Army selection board were in the first stages of choosing locations for six training camps within a fifteen-state region. Landing such a facility would be a great economic boost to any community, and the Des Moines threesome were well aware of this when they met with the selection board.

Convinced that the Camp Dodge setting would be an ideal choice, the Des Moines contingent invited the board

to come to Iowa for a look. When the Army people arrived on May 27th, they were given a royal treatment. Their first view of the camp, from the west veranda of the Hyperion Club, "seemed to have a powerful psychological effect on the visitors." After a tour of the proposed boundaries, engineers in transportation, sanitation, and water explained how Camp Dodge could be built to support 20,000 troops. (Eventually it would contain twice that number.) Through lease options, 6,400 acres—about ten square miles—would be at the army's disposal.

The Des Moines supporters also boasted about the area's well-drained soil, the quality of Beaver Road (which led from Des Moines to the camp), and the ready access to a railroad—the tracks of the Des Moines and Central Iowa interurban line traversed the site diagonally. Des Moines' industrial surroundings and mild climate ("3,000 more



Mary C. Hallock—Gold Star Museum

Inside the barracks

hours of sunshine yearly than rival states") also impressed the selection committee as did the lack of saloons.

The hard sell worked. On June 15, Camp Dodge became the thirteenth of sixteen National Army training camps, edging out proposed locations in Cedar Rapids and the Twin Cities. Secretary of War Baker wired his hearty congratulations and urged "that state authorities cooperate in keeping women of unsavory character away from the camp."

The immense job of building a facility to house and train thousands of troops began on July 1, when one hundred laborers stepped off the interurban to begin turning cornfields into training fields. Ten days later, they were joined by 800 builders and laborers. Bidding on the overall project was hastily won by a Des Moines firm, Charles Weitz Construction, with the understanding that it would subcontract work to other local firms. (Years later, Weitz was sued for monopolizing the project. The suit was dropped, however, when no written evidence was found to substantiate the charges.)

62½ cents an hour

As had been expected, the presence of Camp Dodge in the Des Moines area had a healthy effect on the local economy. Consider some of the statistics surrounding its construction. As general contractor, Weitz offered carpenters 62-1/2 cents hourly, with time and a half for overtime, and 33-1/3 cents hourly for laborers. There was work to be had. On July 22, the Raymond Wright Company advertised for "150 men and 50 teams for paving and road building." A contractor's report for September 15 showed that 5,759 people had been employed in the construction of Camp Dodge for that week alone.

A story about the country girding itself for war in the November-December issue of *National Geographic* magazine revealed that the weekly national pay roll for cantonment workers (those engaged in building the training camps) was double the monthly pay roll for the Panama Canal project of a decade earlier. The same issue of the *National Geographic* reported that in one day at Camp Dodge "the equivalent of 300 miles of twelve-inch boards" was unloaded alongside the interurban. (Although horses were originally used to haul materials to building sites, it was quickly discovered that tractors were more economical.)

By July 23, thirty barracks had risen. Each of the two-story buildings measured 140 feet long and 43 feet wide and could accommodate 150 men. (The first floor contained mess and assembly halls; the second, sleeping quarters.) Less than three weeks later, the number of barracks had swelled to 158. The encampment began to take on

the appearance of a town as other facilities were constructed: a base hospital, three fire stations, post offices, libraries, and railroad depots. An area known as the Civic Center was dominated by a 3,000-seat auditorium. Elsewhere, there were eight YMCA halls; a YMCA auditorium, a YWCA Hostess House, and centers for such organizations as the Knights of Columbus, the Lutheran Brotherhood, and the Jewish Welfare Service.

Just outside the cantonment camp, work progressed on a bank, a general store, a meat market, a drug store, a clothing shop, a barbershop, and two theaters. Beaver Road was graded—and oiled frequently—to provide a suitable surface for the 640 heavy-duty food supply trucks that shuttled daily between Des Moines and the camp.

Except for the hospital and two headquarters for officers, the first phase of the Camp Dodge construction was wrapped up by Thanksgiving 1917. Depending on the source consulted, between 1,200 and 2,000 buildings would stand by war's end, constructed at a total cost of \$3.5 million. Ironically, the final nail was driven into the last building on November 11, 1918—Armistice Day.

As the sawdust flew at Camp Dodge, the U.S. War Department put together an army of sixteen National Divisions, each to be headquartered at one of the cantonment camps. The camps would provide sixteen weeks of extensive training. Divisions would be shipped to France depending on the need for replacement and the availability of transportation. The army appointed Major General Edward Plummer commander of Camp Dodge. A West Point graduate (class of 1887), Plummer was a thirty-year Army man, well liked by troops, whose most recent tour of duty had been in the Panama Canal zone.

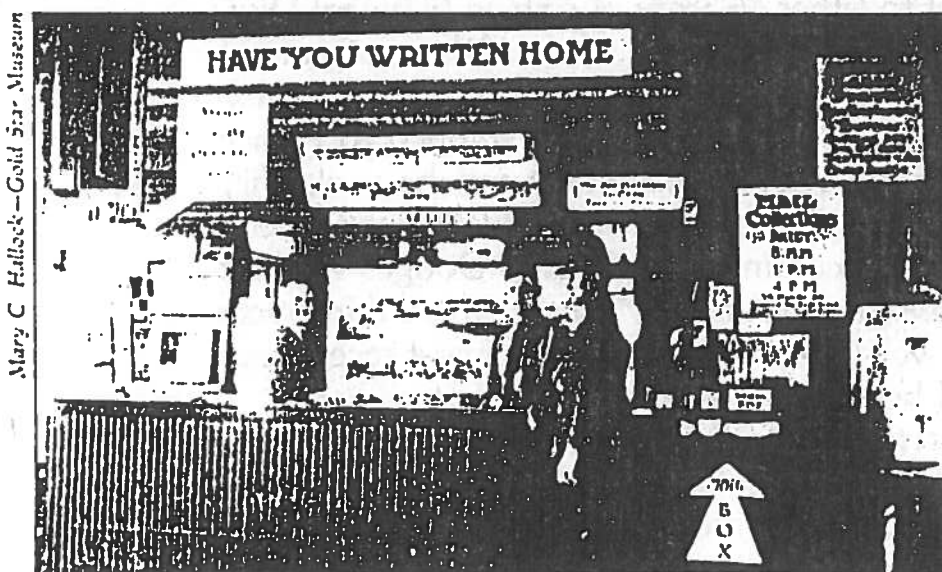
Upon his arrival at Camp Dodge on August 25, 1917, Plummer began organizing the 88th division. He established four infantry divisions, three artillery regiments, three machine-gun battalions, a trench mortar battery, signal and engineer corps, and supply train detachments. A depot brigade was formed to handle men physically unfit for combat and to retain specialists pending their assignment to special services. Plummer's junior officers arrived for duty from Fort Snelling, Minnesota, on August 29.

Initially, the 88th Division would be comprised of 27,000 men from ages twenty-one to thirty, including 8,000 Iowans. The remaining troops would come from Minnesota, the Dakotas, and central Illinois. War Department statistics later revealed that seventy percent of the new recruits had been drafted and that eighteen percent were foreign-born, with little understanding of English.

"... a wonderful miscellany of humanity"

One consequence of America's entry into the war was a strong outbreak of anti-German sentiment. This had a special significance for communities in the Upper Midwest, many of which had been settled by German immigrants. In Iowa, the use of any language other than English was outlawed for public gatherings—even church services. German was dropped from school curriculums, and towns were renamed—Germania became Lakota, and Berlin became Lincoln.

Still, the nation wondered how well their drafted sons would react to military training. Many of the new recruits were of German descent; and the war itself was not popular with isolationist groups. In fact, the Socialist Party had



Canteen

gained a foothold among Americans who were opposed to the war.

Long-time Iowa journalist and writer Dorothy Ashby

Pownall was a cub reporter for the *Des Moines Capitol* when she was sent to Camp Dodge on September 5, 1917, to cover the arrival of the first troops. Writing years later, in an article which appeared in *The Palimpsest* magazine (June 1966), she recalled that, on that day, "the sun was shining, the dust was swirling, and the officers were waiting." The first recruit to report for duty was George Whitmer, a Des Moines native who served as the city's mayor for about a year in the mid-1960s. According to Pownall, "a comparatively small contingent arrived by train and automobile." Although many were farmers, "a strange and wonderful miscellany of humanity" included "some [who] could not speak English," as well as, "some who would miss the country club crowd."

From field exercises to filling ruts

Ninety-five-year-old Wilbur Boian, a World War I veteran and resident of Windsor Heights, Iowa, remembers that the initial physical at Camp Dodge wasn't very intensive. "He [an examining officer] looked in my mouth to see if I had my teeth and checked to see if I had fallen arches," says Boian. "I don't recall that he ever checked my heart, but I was in the army then." Boian eventually went overseas where he served as a photographer, bridge engineer, and battlefield observer.

Following the physical, the soldier took the oath of allegiance. He then received a large cotton bag which he filled with straw. Placed on a cot in the spartan barracks, this became the soldier's bed. Next came the time-honored military tradition of waiting in line for uniforms, blankets, equipment, guns, and whatever else was available for issue at this time.

The new arrivals were greeted with the announcement that "men are urged to take a bath as soon as possible, not because officers feel they may be unclean, but because a bath several times a week is part of the sanitary and hygienic programs that will be worked out." Since the new barracks at this time (early September) reportedly had not yet been hooked to a water supply, it is unclear how soldiers acted upon this suggestion.

In the meantime, the Des Moines Chamber of Com-



Ninety-five-year-old Wilbur Boian of Windsor Heights, Iowa, was checked for fallen arches when he arrived at Camp Dodge in the winter of 1917-1918. He served in France as a photographer, bridge engineer, and battlefield observer.

merce, eager to provide suitable recreation for the incoming troops, gathered information from soldiers regarding their homes, family history, religious affiliation, and membership in service organizations. This effort had been planned. According to the July 1917 issue of *Des Moines* magazine, "appropriate committees will then look after their [the soldiers'] welfare. The men will have something to do—and something to do is a powerful antidote to trouble and carelessness of action."

The magazine's reassurance about "something to do" proved accurate. The first days at camp for new recruits emphasized physical training, marching drills, and study

of the army manual. The days were long—seventeen hours from reveille to taps. The “get up” call was blown at 5:30 a.m., with companies assembling for roll call fifteen minutes later. Next came exercises, “designed to expand the soldier’s chest, strengthen his back, and make a man of him generally,” reported a *Des Moines Register* article.

The call to breakfast sounded at 6:15, followed by a general camp cleanup until sick call at seven. Soldiers who made a habit of feigning illness received “evil-smelling, extremely unpalatable pills [which] usually result in complete recovery,” said the *Register* article.

Marching practice followed for thirty minutes, complete with “rifle, haversack and blanket roll, which includes a field mess kit.” Then came lectures on “school of the soldier,” which included company movements, and “school of the squad,” which were small group drills. When these drills ended at 11:30, the troops were given a half-hour rest before noon mess call.

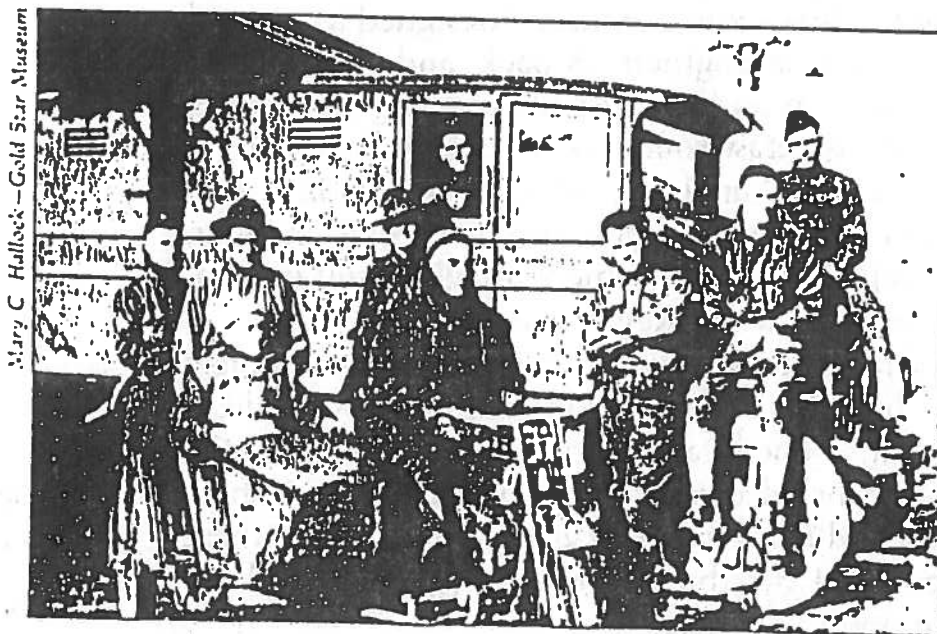
There was no letup to the pace in the afternoon. Having finished lunch, companies assembled for hour-long lectures on “military maneuvers, sanitation, care of the feet, personal cleanliness, etc.” Troops then disbanded for an hour of learning “how to send and receive semaphore signals in the field, and obey the orders thus received.” After a forty-five-minute rest, squads regrouped for another forty-five-minute drill.

Evening mess call sounded at 5:30. At 6:30 troops and officers gathered for the National Anthem, played by a military band, and the lowering of the flag. Troops were then free to do what they wished, within their company area, until 10:15, at which time taps was sounded. Those not on guard duty crawled into their straw beds.

Equipment shortages were common in many cantonment camps. A soldier at Camp Grant [Illinois] claimed that he wore out his civilian shoes before being issued army boots. Rifles were in short supply. Many troops trained with brooms or wooden sticks, and several infantrymen were pressed into overseas duty so quickly that they had never fired a gun!

By November of 1917, specialized training schools had been established at Camp Dodge. In addition to learning

how to handle small arms and field artillery, soldiers learned the basics of gas warfare and intelligence techniques. According to the book, *The 88th Division in the World War of 1914-1918*, training "was of the most prac-



Mary C. Hallock—Gold Star Museum

Ambulance crew

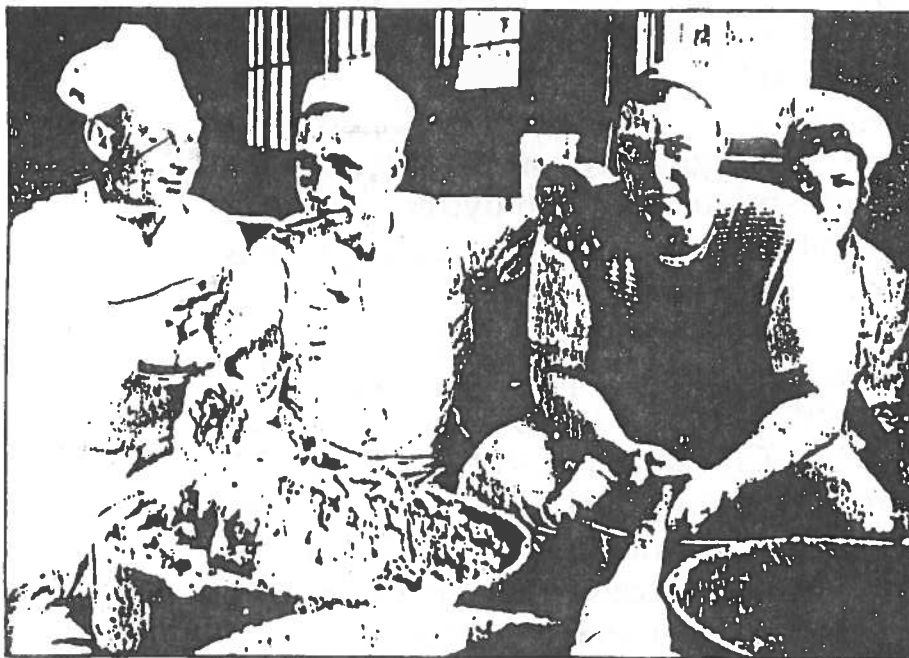
tical sort. Elaborate systems of trenches were constructed; gas chambers were constructed where men . . . were obliged to go through rooms filled with gas to gain confidence in their gas masks; bayonet courses were built in the regimental drill area, and snipers were given special courses in camouflage."

For some soldiers, the "training" was less adventuresome, less glamorous. Says Ernest Raney, a ninety-year-old retired Livermore [Iowa] farmer, "I'm a graduate mule packer. I was sent to the remount station to learn to pack mules for overseas duty."

Veteran Boian arrived at Camp Dodge in the winter. "Being a horse outfit," he says, "they immediately put us guys out filling the ruts in the road where the wagons had gone back and forth hauling equipment. . . . Then we helped load feed and grain at the remount station. And then indoors, they taught us how to tie knots." Boian also remembered bayonet practice, stoking the coal furnaces in the barracks, and keeping the fire burning in the bathhouse to prevent the water heater from freezing.

Training eased on October 20, 1917, when Camp Dodge received a distinguished visitor. Former President William Howard Taft, "in his capacity as president of the League to Enforce Peace," arrived in Des Moines for a review of the troops and for the chance to address the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce. According to the *Des Moines Register*, Taft was greeted by the Camp Dodge military band and 3,750 troops in a downtown parade. He later delivered a rousing speech at the Des Moines Coliseum, outlining the reasons for American war involvement and urging the purchase of Liberty Loans. The rally raised \$1,300, part of which was earmarked for the "Smokes for Soldiers" fund. Taft made several other visits to Des Moines during the war.

Despite the rally and the strong public support for America's part in the war, morale at Camp Dodge ebbed during the fall of 1917. The cause was the War Depart-



Mary C. Hallock—Gold Star Museum

Cooks in general mess

ment's policy of constantly transferring troops to other military bases. Officers complained that just as soon as soldiers seemed to be making progress in functioning as a cohesive unit, orders for transfer would be handed down. To the disillusioned officers, it appeared as though the 88th might be little more than a replacement division. By De-

cember 10, 1917, 13,500 troops had been transferred to three other locations—Camp Cody in New Mexico, Camp Logan in Texas, and Camp Pike in Arkansas.

The War Department considered the reassignments necessary, in order to keep General John Pershing, who that autumn had begun leading the American Expeditionary Force in France, adequately supplied with troops. The first three American casualties were reported on November 3—one of them was infantryman Merle Hay, a native of Glidden, Iowa. Although Hay had not trained at Camp Dodge, the road leading to it from the northwest side of Des Moines was renamed in his honor. (Nearly forty years later, the first large Des Moines shopping center would also be named after Merle Hay.)

Woolen helmets and a heavyweight champ

The news of American casualties made training seem all the more urgent. Still, time was set aside for holiday celebrations. On Thanksgiving, Camp Dodge officers dined on "Rhode Island Turkey with Oyster dressing, Allied Mince Pie, and Red Cross Champagne," plus other so-called delicacies. The regular troops shared ten tons of turkey, two tons of—presumably non-oyster—dressing, five tons each of white and sweet potatoes, 5,000 pounds each of cranberries and celery, and 4,000 pies.

On Christmas Eve, the Red Cross delivered to Camp Dodge 16,000 sweaters, 13,000 pairs of socks, 8,000 wristlets, 4,500 mufflers, and 600 woolen helmets. That night, at a spectacular Christmas pageant in the YMCA Auditorium, Director Dean Cooper led his army singers in a rousing program of patriotic anthems. The following day, soldiers who had not received holiday passes were warmly welcomed in Des Moines by churches, social organizations, and individual families for holiday dinners. As the year drew to a close, the entire nation wondered apprehensively what lay ahead in 1918.

One aspect of camp life that touched every soldier was leisure time. There was the question of what to do with the hours that were not spent training, eating, or sleeping. To boost morale and give a semblance of normal civilian life, there were a variety of camp-sanctioned



Gold Star Museum, Camp Dodge

On a stifling July day in 1918, 18,000 officers and soldiers posed as Lady Liberty on the parade grounds at Camp Dodge. According to a July 3, 1986 story in the Fort Dodge Messenger, many men fainted—they were dressed in woolen uniforms—as the temperature neared 105 degrees. The photo, taken from the top of a specially constructed tower by a Chicago photography studio, was intended to help promote the sale of war bonds but was never used.

activities—from athletic contests to social get-togethers with members of the opposite sex.

Sports had been a favorite diversion for the soldiers since the Camp's inception. Baseball and football were both popular. In November of 1918, a Camp Dodge football team played the University of Iowa Hawkeyes to a score-

less tie in a charity game at Drake. During the winter months, when the weather made participation in outdoor sports impractical, every man was urged to learn boxing. On hand to teach them was a former heavyweight champion, James Corbett.

Another prominent sports personality serving at Camp Dodge was Earl Caddock, the reigning world heavyweight champ. In February, Caddock displayed his prowess by successfully defending his title against a Polish challenger at the YMCA Auditorium. In the spring, Captain John Griffith (later a commissioner of the Big Ten Conference) arrived to organize track meets and team sports.

For those soldiers that wanted to exercise their minds, there were educational courses in a variety of subjects. French, as might be guessed, was especially popular. In March of 1918, over 5,000 soldiers were enrolled in 159 different classes. Musical activities were enhanced by the spring appearance of noted Chicago bandmaster Bohumir Kryl, who conducted a concert featuring eight different camp bands.

Troops also utilized writing rooms, visited the nearest library, and received regular visits from the clergy. Not all recreation was noble. "Most of my social activity was playing cards or shooting dice," says Ernie Raney, who used his winnings to supplement his \$30-per-month salary. "It [gambling] paid me pretty well, too. I never lost a cent to a gambler."

Social dancing was popular with the troops. Their partners were provided by the Girls Volunteer Aid, "an organization of 2,000 carefully selected young Des Moines women." Camp dances were closely monitored, and city officials posted strict rules at public dance halls. "All unnecessary shoulder or body movement shall be forbidden," read one. "No undue familiarity or suggestive forms of dancing will be tolerated," warned another.

In February, the YWCA officially dedicated its Hostess House, which quickly became a popular meeting place for visiting mothers, wives, and sweethearts. Weddings were held there, and a nursery was established. During its first six months, the Hostess House provided lodging for 1,000

Camp Dodge,

continued from page 35

women, and, in one month alone—June—served over 83,000 persons.

While soldiers spent their free time in various pursuits, much of the regular training that bitterly cold winter was spent mastering the use of the newly-designed Enfield rifle, 20,000 of which had arrived at Camp Dodge in January. One doughboy said that the training continued even as the temperature reached ten below zero. "Several men froze their nose and fingers, and one man froze his ears right through his helmet," he wrote in a letter to his parents.

That winter, the camp commander, General Plummer, traveled to France to review the war effort. When he returned in February, the genial Plummer was bitterly disappointed to learn that he would not be the officer leading the 88th Division into battle. The War Department, apparently acting on a desire to have younger officer leadership, transferred Plummer to Fort Sill. Brigadier General Robert Getty briefly took Plummer's place at Camp Dodge and then was succeeded by General W.D. Beach.

The major troop transfers, which had an adverse effect on morale, continued throughout the winter. In February, 15,000 new recruits arrived from Iowa and Minnesota; shortly afterward, 9,000 others were shuttled out. And each day, it seemed, more departed via the interurban for specialized training schools. Beach later estimated that the camp "sent over 80,000 men to France before the 88th got overseas. . . . There were Camp Dodge soldiers in every engagement in which Americans participated." Transfers stabilized somewhat when the army ruled that troops had to have at least three months of training prior to any move.

As winter progressed, Camp Dodge received a major influx of black recruits from the Deep South, an action that would set the stage for a shameful chapter in Iowa's military history.

It is possible that the black troops were assigned to Camp Dodge (which normally drew its recruits from the Midwest) because there was a black officer's training camp at Fort Des Moines at the southern border of the capital city. Since the military was then segregated (integration of troops did not happen until World War II), the black soldiers formed the nucleus

of the newly-organized 366th Infantry. The 366th eventually became the first intact unit of the 88th Division to go abroad, where its members received wide acclaim for their combat bravery.

At home, shocked attention focused on an incident that some troops later said was worse than anything they ever saw in battle. In the summer of 1918, three black soldiers were executed in Iowa's only military hanging. The case involved a white girl who had been raped on May 24 near the Hyperion Country Club. Four blacks were quickly arrested, and in separate military trials, three of the men were found guilty of rape and sentenced to hang. Both President Wilson and the Secretary of War upheld the verdicts.

"... the sickening scene"

Newspaper coverage of the entire affair was restrained. On July 5, 1918, the afternoon *Des Moines Tribune* carried a generally sympathetic account of the proceedings. The construction of the gallows had dampened the Fourth of July celebration the previous day; few soldiers slept well that night. At nine o'clock on the fifth, the three Alabama natives were led through the still, muggy air to the gallows. The entire division was ordered to witness the hanging, with the 3,000 black troops in camp forced to stand nearest to the platform. Hundreds of curious onlookers, mostly civilians from Des Moines, watched the spectacle through binoculars from the Hyperion Country Club.

"Soon the shrieks of Negro soldiers, unwilling and terrified spectators, driven into a hysterical state, added to the sickening scene," reported the *Tribune*. Many troops fainted in the stifling heat.

In a 1978 interview for the *Des Moines Register*, eyewitness Russell Rathbun recalled that, "Three ropes fell from the platform to the rear of the scaffold. Only one of the ropes activated all three traps—two were dummies—and only Captain [Harry] Baker knew for sure which rope was alive. Three of Baker's enlisted military policemen stood with upraised axes and upon command simultaneously cut the ropes."

This would be the only time in Iowa history that there would be an execution—in this case, three—carried

out on a non-murder charge.

The drama of the hangings was soon replaced by excitement of a different kind. On July 22, the War Department ordered the 88th Division activated for combat. An advance detachment of 110 officers and 107 troops left camp on July 28, and many more troop trains rolled eastward during August.

The logistics of the troop movement are described in detail in the book, *Memoirs of France and the 88th Division*:

On the morning of August 9, 1918, we were all ordered to roll packs and be ready to move out. . . . All boys were anxious to leave Camp Dodge as we had been drilling long and hard. . . . At 11:00 we were served sandwiches for dinner; at noon we were ordered to fall in. . . . By 2:20 we were all loaded onto the train [and] were soon on the way. We passed over the Chicago Northwestern route which took us to Ames, where we stopped while the train crew worked on a hot box that developed on one of the car trucks. Leaving Ames, we made a steady run to Clinton where we were served cold coffee and cookies by the Red Cross ladies. . . ."

Reaching Fort Wayne in the early morning hours, the train passed a factory where several hundred cheering women employees threw the troops roses. After this reception, the train continued through Buffalo to Camp Upton, Long Island. Prior to boarding ship, "barracks were scrubbed, bedsacks emptied, and everything that could not be taken to France was sent home or burned."

The advance detachment had set sail August 6, landing in Liverpool six days later. Division headquarters were formed August 20 at Semur, Cote d'or, France; by early September, the entire 88th was finally overseas as an intact unit. New recruits arrived at Camp Dodge to replace the departed, forming the short-lived 19th Division.

Back home, the new troops would be subject to a different trial—a siege of the dreaded Spanish influenza which swept the world in 1918, claiming twenty million victims.

Establishing proper and adequate medical facilities had been a priority during the camp's construction. According to a November 1917 issue of the *Des Moines Register*, the 500-bed base hospital sprawled over forty-five

acres in the settlement of Herrold located on the northern borders of the camp. The length of the hospital corridors totaled four-and-a-half miles, and each room had a southern exposure, which was deemed healthful. The desegregated hospital (the remainder of the camp was segregated) had its own post office, library, general store, and YMCA. The hospital kitchen—Iowa's largest—could serve up to 2,000 diners, and cooks could boil four bushels of potatoes at once in large steamers.

There were twenty different wards, classified according to illness. For example, there were wards for tonsillitis, pneumonia, mumps, scarlet fever, measles, tuberculosis, psychiatric disorders—plus three for venereal disease. Medical Corps officers and Red Cross nurses provided the care.

A government health report dated July 19, 1918 and published in *Des Moines* magazine included the following statistics: Sickness per one thousand Camp Dodge troops averaged 24.9. Pneumonia cases were nine per thousand, and there were forty-nine measles cases. No new cases of dysentery, malaria, meningitis, or scarlet fever were diagnosed, but there were seventy-one newly-diagnosed cases of venereal disease.

By today's standards, medical care was primitive. One soldier complained that:

"They give you a pill no matter what ails you. Monday I went up to the sawbones with a lame back. He gave me a pill and put iodine on

the sore spot. Tuesday I had a sore foot. He painted the foot with iodine and gave me a pill. Wednesday I felt pretty good, but fell off my cot and strained my knee, so he treated my knee with iodine and gave me another pill. Now I've got a complexion like a giraffe and I rattle when I hop, like a toad full of shot."

"... patients dying by the dozens"

The Spanish Influenza supposedly originated in the spring of 1918 in the trenches of the European battlefields. It has been suggested that constant gas attacks, along with the cramped, muddy proximity of tired horses and undernourished soldiers, may have had something to do with the flu's origin. First, it gripped the Germans; then it spread quickly through the Allied camps and made its way to the United States. In this country, the flu reached its peak in October. Before it had run its course, it took the lives of over a half-million Americans, including 5,000 Iowans.

At Camp Dodge, more than 10,000 soldiers were hospitalized, and 702 of them died. Social centers were shut down, and the camp itself was quarantined for twenty days. Coincidentally, the camp grew quieter at about this time with the massive transfer of troops to Camp Gordon in Georgia.

In a 1971 interview, World War II General Omar Bradley recalled the epidemic which struck Camp Dodge a few months after he arrived there as a twenty-four-year-old major:

"The epidemic struck all units of the division, but it appeared to me that those men who had just joined us from Alaska were particularly susceptible. In the company I

brought from Butte, Montana, there were, as I remember it, only five influenza cases and no deaths, but one of the companies from Alaska, which had only 86 men assigned, developed 85 cases and 25 deaths. Many of my close friends were lost. . . . I vividly remember the sad sight of dozens of corpses being taken to the undertaking establishments in Des Moines."

Efforts by camp personnel to combat afflicted soldiers were heroic. Nurse Irene Wilcox, in an October 15, 1918, letter to her parents, wrote:

"I am not sick at all . . . but there is a terrible strain all the time of being so short of help, and patients dying by the dozens all the time. . . . Last Sunday evening after 7 o'clock I had to evacuate my ward of 33 patients, all flu cases, and get ready for 28 pneumonia cases [all of whom had been flu cases]. . . . I didn't leave the ward until 2:15 Monday morning. Then Monday, 23 more patients were brought in, in less than ten minutes. . . . Some [nurses] have had as many as 150 patients and were on the ward all alone. But we think things are going to quiet down some now, as yesterday there were only 70-some patients . . . quite a drop from 1,200 to 1,500 . . . it looks encouraging. If France is worse off than this, you could never begin to see or imagine what it is like. . . ."

Miraculously, the Spanish flu mysteriously lifted as rapidly as it had spread. By November 1, most of the people in this country who had been stricken and survived had recovered by now. No new cases were being reported.

American troops abroad had first entered combat in large numbers in June 1918, helping to curb a massive German offensive. By mid-July, the Allied forces had launched a tremendous counterattack. Overwhelmed by the American presence and weakened by the flu, Germany initiated talks with the Allies in October. The Meuse-Argonne offensive drove the Germans back to their border, and an armistice was signed November 11, 1918. World War I ground to a close after four years, three-and-a-half months. In all, it cost \$186 billion, claimed over eighteen million lives (including civilian casualties), and set the stage for an even bloodier conflict that would engulf the world a generation later. The death toll for Iowa in World War I was

3,580—of these deaths, 1,550 were combat-related; 1,890 were disease-related; and 140 were accident-related.

Americans remained in Europe until May 1919. After arriving stateside, troops were mustered out at the camps nearest their homes.

With the end of the War, the bustling community of Camp Dodge had outlived its purpose. Within a few months after the Armistice was signed, only Iowa National Guard units remained at the camp to utilize its facilities. In May of 1921, the federal government sold much of the camp to the Northwest Lumber and Wrecking Company from Minneapolis. The firm paid \$251,000 for approximately 1,200 buildings. Seven miles of hastily constructed wooden barracks fell to the wrecking ball. (Camp Dodge experienced a revival of sorts when it served as an induction center during World War II.)

Now, nearly seventy years later, only three buildings from the World War One era remain standing at Camp Dodge. The interurban, like so many railroads, has long since disappeared, and the rifle range lies submerged beneath Saylorville Lake.

The great-grandsons and great-granddaughters of the 88th Division train at Camp Dodge, but their number never exceeds one thousand at any given time. Colonel Al Rolfes (retired), archivist and director of the camp's Gold Star Museum, says the post is now used by the Iowa National Guard, various ROTC and Reserve units, and the Iowa Academy of Law Enforcement. "The camp doesn't have the numbers or terrain it once had, and they no longer conduct anything but

small arms firing," comments Rolfes.

It seems reasonable to assume that Camp Dodge will never again experience the prominence it knew during World War I. It was a community unto itself, a military melting pot that affected the lives and fortunes of countless people—Iowans and non-Iowans alike. With each passing year, the number of people who have first-hand memories of what it was like to be there, training to fight the "War to End All Wars," grows smaller. Someday, their memories too will be a part of history.

Tim Grover, a free-lance writer, videotape editor, and disk jockey, lives in Des Moines. The author wishes to thank the following for their assistance in preparing this article: the Des Moines Public Library, the Des Moines Register, W. A. Boian, and Ernest Raney. A special word of thanks goes to Colonel Al Rolfes, Camp Dodge archivist and curator of the Gold Star Museum, located in the lower level of the Chapel at Camp Dodge. Museum hours are 1 to 4, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoons. For more information, call 515-278-9313.

Sources consulted include: The 88th Division in the World War of 1914-1918, Wynkoop, Hallenbeck, Crawford Co., New York; Iowa in Times of War, by Jacob Swisher, Iowa State Historical Society, 1943; The Pageant of America, vol. 7, by William Wood and Ralph Henry Gabriel, Yale University Press, 1928; The War to End All Wars, by Edward Coffman, Oxford University Press, 1968; The Palimpsest magazine, June 1966, published by the Iowa State Historical Society; and the Des Moines Register and Tribune.

6

THE HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF CAMP DODGE, IOWA

Introduction (1)

Early Use (2)

Pre-World War I Period (2)

The 13th Cantonment (3)

Cantonment Design (4)

"A Feat of Swift Construction" (5)

The 88th "Clover Leaf" Division (7)

"A Great Educational Enterprise" (8)

Postwar Developments (10)

World War II (12)

Camp Dodge Today (12)

Design Sources (13)

Study Methods (14)

Rationale (14)

Work Done (15)

Literature Search (15)

Field Investigation (15)

Bibliography (17)

Notes (20)

*Barbara Beving Long
1989*

THE HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF CAMP DODGE, IOWA

Introduction

Located in Johnson, a suburb northwest of Des Moines, Iowa, Camp Dodge is an Iowa National Guard facility. Most of the more than 100 buildings and structures are located in a 200-acre area off N.W. Beaver Drive. Building shapes, sizes, materials, placement, and use are quite varied. For example, materials include stone, painted and unpainted brick, metal siding, and stucco. However, the approximately fifty brick-faced barracks (former mess halls) that are aligned along Des Moines Avenue provide a notable unifying feature. Warehousing or arsenals along the former interurban tracks are also located in a linear fashion, but their varied sizes and materials dispel the feeling of architectural similarity. Other buildings are scattered throughout the facility in an array that does not follow a clear grid system. Alterations to most buildings include removal of exposed rafter ends, application of metal siding, stucco applied over brick, paint to originally unpainted surfaces, and a different roofline (hipped) for the former mess halls. The rolling topography, unfolding open spaces, tree cover, immense swimming pool and bathing pavilion, and curving streets contribute to the spacious parklike appearance of Camp Dodge.

The history of Camp Dodge relates to a number of important themes:

1. The relationship between the state and federal levels of government in the defense of the nation, especially during periods of stress
2. The creation of the 13th Divisional Cantonment at Camp Dodge during World War I
3. Responses, including civilian, to America's entry into World War I
4. Contemporary philosophies regarding troop training, especially the importance of suitable recreational activities

5. Evolution of the Iowa National Guard, a fundamental part of the nation's military establishment.

Camp Dodge is important to Iowa history as the best (but altered) example that illustrates these themes. However, all but a handful of buildings dating from World War I or before have been removed, and those that remain are either substantially altered or of minor importance individually in illustrating these themes. (One property, the gatehouse (A31 NW Beaver Drive), is of high potential interest as an example of WPA construction, a theme outside the bounds of this project.)

There is an exception. Built in 1921-22 to provide recreation for Guardsmen and also for public use, the relatively unaltered swimming pool and bathing pavilion call attention to the post-World War I Iowa National Guard. It appears likely that when it was constructed the Camp Dodge pool was one of the largest outdoor swimming pools in the country, if not the largest. Thus, the sheer size of the pool is noteworthy and clearly illustrates the planned size of Guard encampments during the 1920s as well as the high importance placed upon wholesome recreation (both for civilians and the military). The value of recreation was a strong theme of World War I Cantonment activities. The pool and pavilion call attention to this early twentieth century belief in the value of recreation. The attractive design, hillside siting, and unusually large size of the pool and pavilion are additional areas of significance.

Buildings and structures owned by the Iowa National Guard in the Camp Dodge area have been evaluated for their significance based on National Register of Historic Places criteria (history and architecture). Analysis of significance was based on a comprehensive literature review and field survey of Camp Dodge. Only the swimming pool complex

appears to be eligible for the National Register under Camp Dodge themes.

Early Use

Camp Dodge is located in Jefferson Township, an irregularly shaped township in Polk County bounded on the north and east by the Des Moines River. Organized on January 2, 1851, the township is northwest of Des Moines, the Capital of Iowa beginning in 1857. Its west boundary is also the western limit of Polk County.

Well watered by two branches of Beaver Creek, the township developed early on as an area of small farms. By 1856, the first year census figures are available, population had reached 228, including 54 land owners and 99 men who qualified for militia duty. Within nine years Jefferson Township population had increased to 532. Settlement was steady but not remarkable. In 1867, when population totaled 667, there were 114 farm homes dotting the area housing 257 children and an evenly divided number of men and women. Six blacks reportedly lived in the township in 1867.

The experience of some early Jefferson Township residents illustrates settlement patterns for the area. Of the 37 families listed in an 1880 county history, most were American-born and engaged in farming. Their farms were scattered about in virtually all 36 sections of the township. Englishman John Temple (who had been a cabin boy and later "tended lock" on the Erie Canal) had the largest farm, 950 acres in section 14. Others farmed as little as 40 or 50 acres. Many entries boasted of having a farm that was completely fenced.

A number of residents had experience in the lumber business, having engaged in sawmilling, boatbuilding, or lumbering--experience of use in the heavily wooded areas along the Des Moines River. The village of Andrews hosted two physicians in 1880, including Charles Swan, who had read law, surveyed land for the federal government, raised fruit trees near Muscatine, and sold insurance. J.W. Towner in section 20 was proprietor of Towner's Lake, a "delightful summer resort" whose lake was stocked with "black bass,

salmon-trout, California salmon, horned trout and various other varieties," according to the 1880 county history.

Ohioan J.A. White came to the township in 1866, having engaged in the lumber business and sawmilling in the 1850s elsewhere in Iowa. With seven children and his wife Florida, White lived in the large brick house on the present Camp Dodge grounds (A20Q 7th Street). White built the gabled house, perhaps as early as 1873, using local timber and bricks fabricated on the premises. Since country schools were located in either direction of the nearby road, teachers from both schools boarded at the White house.

No important market centers existed in Jefferson Township. Early residents traveled across the Des Moines River and northeast of the township to Polk City or southeast to Des Moines. After 1880 Grimes to the southwest provided another market place. Two small post offices served the township, including the Lincoln Post Office in the village of Andrews and the post offices of Ridgedale, Ayers' Grove, and Towner's Lake. Nine country schools dotted the township by 1875 as well as one church and Ridgedale cemetery. The latter is located roughly across from Camp Dodge on present N.W. Beaver Drive, an early road that follows the ridge-line between the Des Moines River and Beaver Creek.

Pre-World War I Period

Military organizational history in Iowa centered around the concept of the militia--citizen soldiers who are trained and ready to step forth in time of emergency but are not part of a permanent standing army. As early as 1839, the Territorial Governor had appointed officers to head divisions of the militia.

In his 1874 report to Governor Cyrus C. Carpenter (like all governors, he was also the state's Commander-in-Chief), Adjutant General Nathaniel B. Baker quoted the words of the founding fathers regarding the undesirability of a standing army, yet the importance of military preparedness. In seeking additional funding and legislative changes, Baker noted that President James Madison

believed that "the greatest danger to liberty is from large standing armies," but that President George Washington pointed out that "The militia of this country must be considered as the palladium of our security and our first effectual resort in case of hostility."

Baker's concepts of a well-trained volunteer militia echoed the hopes for the state militia in Iowa. Writing just after the Civil War, in 1867, Adjutant General Baker wanted "a few well-organized and well-drilled 'active' militia companies" in the state. Baker felt that such units could form a well trained nucleus for other volunteers to rally around in times of great emergencies. Throughout the post-Civil War period, however, Iowa counties each maintained militia forces whose training, facilities, and equipment varied greatly.

In 1898, 294,874 Iowa men constituted the militia pool of manpower potentially subject to state military duty. Not all were active members of the Iowa National Guard which then consisted of 48 companies and 4 bands in 2 brigades of infantry, including 2,369 officers. In the late nineteenth century counties continued to maintain their own facilities ("home stations"), which an assistant inspector-general inspected annually. Hostilities during the Spanish-American War interrupted the usual yearly inspections of home stations in 1898, and most of the Iowa National Guard was absorbed into the United States volunteers. A feature of the state militias was that these units could be transformed into components of the federal military in time of such emergencies as the Spanish-American War.

During peacetime, annual National Guard encampments where training and rifle practice occurred were held at sites around the state, including Clear Lake.¹ In his 1899 report, Adjutant General Melvin Byers noted the need for a permanent state-owned campground and target range. Such a permanent facility would be more efficient, eliminating the waste of setting up and then destroying guard encampments four times a year, then the practice. Byers estimated that \$10,000 would cover the cost.

Less than ten years after the Byers report, in 1907, the Iowa General Assembly established a permanent Iowa National Guard encamp-

ment of 78.5 acres. In 1910 the place received its present name, Camp Dodge.² Development of Camp Dodge was slow but steady in the early years of the twentieth century. In 1913 the Legislature appropriated funds for buildings, and an arsenal was constructed.³ More land was also purchased for what an Adjutant General annual report termed the "state camp grounds and rifle ranges, known as Camp Dodge," and 1917 the encampment covered 570.66 acres.

Members of the Iowa National Guard continued to be called up for federal duty during this period. In 1917 some of the Guard was on duty along the Mexican border to protect against possible invasion, while other contingents guarded bridges and munitions plants. Camp Dodge was used less during this period since members of the Iowa National Guard were away serving in the National Army.

With continued fighting in Europe and the Mexican border problems in mind, the United States took steps to reorganize the National Guard and encourage growth of additional military might. The National Defense Act of June 3, 1916 authorized states to organize additional manpower units: a field hospital, a field artillery battalion, and an infantry regiment. Leaders of the Iowa National Guard proceeded accordingly. By the end of 1918 (and the close of World War I), the field hospital and infantry regiments had been organized, although the field artillery battalion not at full strength.

The 13th Cantonment

The contribution of Camp Dodge to America's World War I effort far surpassed use by an expanded Iowa National Guard. On April 6, 1917 the United States entered the war in Europe and proceeded to mobilize troops for the American Expeditionary Force. The Emergency Army Law of May 18, 1917 augmented the National Guard and Regular Army forces. The law authorized creation of the National Army consisting of men drafted into active duty. Not since the Civil War in 1864 had American men been subject to compulsory enrollment in the armed forces. Plans were hurriedly put in force for an estimated 300,000 Regular Army, 450,000

National Guard, and 1,000,000 National Army troops.

The federal government established training camps for the hundreds of thousands of new soldiers. The newly created National Army received training in 16 newly established temporary training facilities--cantonments--around the country. Each cantonment was designed to accommodate around 40,000 troops. Members of the various states' National Guards were sent to 15 other camps across the country. For example, troops from the Iowa National Guard spent time in Camp Cody, near Deming, New Mexico.

Local boosters in Des Moines considered the economic benefits of cantonment construction and troop presence and sought to gain such a facility for central Iowa. They realized that soldiers and their relatives from all over the region would visit or hear of Des Moines, Iowa. In addition to geographic balance, the Secretary of War considered such factors as climate and proximity to a good-sized city (for construction labor and for leisure activities for the soldiers) in selecting cantonment site. Sufficient space for drills, maneuvers, and target ranges was also important.

In Des Moines the Chamber of Commerce, especially its Greater Des Moines Committee, led in the campaign to bring to Camp Dodge a cantonment for recruits from the upper Midwest. The choice soon narrowed to Camp Dodge and Fort Snelling, Minnesota for the 13th Divisional Cantonment. The higher number of sunny days and being a "saloonless" city reportedly tipped the scales in favor of the Iowa site. News that Camp Dodge was to be the 13th Divisional Cantonment became widely known the end of June 1917. It was to be a busy summer.

In spite of their elation at receiving the cantonment designation, Des Moines boosters were not unaware of the challenges ahead. The Chamber of Commerce magazine *Des Moines* in its "The Business of War" section noted in September 1917 that

Des Moines is face to face with the greatest problem it ever had [in the areas of] commerce, transportation, recreation, general social be-

havior, public morals, law and order, and its name and reputation.

Des Moines, indeed Iowa, residents volunteered their time and expertise in a statewide patriotic effort. Des Moines boosters immediately raised \$50,000 for a general cantonment fund. The Chamber organized committees--on soldier recreation, military and naval affairs, and streets and roads. Noting in their monthly magazine the "immense traffic incident to the cantonment," they immediately set about improving roads to Camp Dodge, especially Beaver Road and 11th, 41st, and 58th Streets.

In one of the more unusual patriotic efforts, Iowa clubwomen under the leadership of a University of Iowa professor sewed thousands of anti-vermin undergarments for men to wear in the trenches. The War Department ordered 25,000 pairs. The chemically treated "cootie suits" were dipped in a solution intended to protect the wearer from body lice, a serious problem in the trenches. However, officers with the American Expeditionary Force soon reported that the "cootie underwear so far received from the States has proved unsatisfactory," and the noble experiment ended.

Cantonment Design

In the interests of speed and efficiency, the plan of the 16 cantonments established around the country and their buildings were designed following standard plans formulated in Washington, D.C. The government tapped the expertise of civilian town planners, water supply and sewerage experts, and architects and builders to lay out the model cantonment and its facilities.

The model cantonment plan was U-shaped and extended for 2.5 miles around a parade ground. Railroad spurs, receiving depots, and warehousing were typically located along the long sides of the "U." A special Civic Center area provided buildings for recreational and leisure use (library, YMCA, Knights of Columbus). Broad avenues separated the one-story officers' quarters from the enlisted men's two-story barracks, all wood frame. Other streets separated the various battalions; the design was intended to

reinforce troop identification with their respective companies. Wider avenues that doubled as fire breaks (an important consideration in a wood "city") were placed between the regiments and doubled as parade grounds. The hospital, which required the ability to quarantine patients, was typically placed outside the "U."

Every detail was standardized as much as possible in the interest of efficiency. Even locks and hinges and stables and sheds were intended to be the same in all the cantonments. Buildings in northern climates were to have outer walls and ceilings lined with paper and wainscotting and lining inside the wall board. All lavatory buildings were to have concrete floors and foundations. Despite these details, and the provision for electricity, heating, and plumbing, the cantonments were intended to be temporary facilities, not permanent army installations. Inevitable shortages and delays affected the intentions of complete standardization.

"A Feat of Swift Construction"

Iowa learned that Camp Dodge was to be a cantonment and home for the 88th (infantry) Division the end of June 1917.⁴ On July 5, a local construction company, Charles Weitz' Sons Company, was selected to act as general contractor. The choice was reportedly the only case where a local builder acted in that capacity. Weitz actually was the main contractor and contact with the government for a consortium of local contractors. They were faced with a monumental task.⁵

The last official use for Camp Dodge before it achieved cantonment status was for the Iowa National Guard's annual encampment in 1916. A single track line of the electrically powered interurban railway and less than two dozen buildings then occupied the site.⁶ But by the autumn of 1917 a small city had arisen on what historian Johnson Brigham called "the beautiful valley of the Des Moines River with its dotted furrows of corn, its drill-lines of grain and the emerald-green of grass with its brown-black setting of earth." Brigham continued:

...the scene had changed as if by magic, the transformation rivaling the miracles of *The*

Thousand and One Nights. There...had sprung up a city with nearly two thousand buildings, all evidently designed by the same mind and hand--rows and rows of barracks, here and there a mess-house with its kitchen; eight green-painted buildings and one large auditorium [of the Civic Center]....

Events rapidly tumbled over one another that summer in 1917. Beginning July 5, construction on what eventually totaled 3,000 buildings began, including over 300 barracks. By July 23, 30 barracks were in place, some of which were used to house the construction workers. Even the most inexperienced carpenter reportedly received from \$7 to \$10 a day. In a 1969 paper, Rudolph Weitz recalled the "tremendous problem of organizing more than a thousand teams of horses and mules, providing feed and water, veterinarian and blacksmith services" for hauling dirt and supplies.⁷

The extent of the camp was similarly transformed. As of July 1917, the State of Iowa owned 570.66 acres for its National Guard camp. By the end of that year, the War Department greatly increased the camp size, buying approximately 2,100 acres to the north and leasing several thousand more. During planning and construction of the cantonment, no distinction was made in these ownership arrangements, a factor in postwar state and federal negotiations.

Although the basic components of a model cantonment were found at Camp Dodge, the terrain dictated a variation on the model "U" shape, in favor of a roughly "J"-shape running north and south. Several features affected the plan: the ridgeline road to the east and interurban tracks and Beaver Creek to the west formed a sloping band of open space between them. North of the ridge was the Des Moines River. In the rolling topography of the extended band between this ridgeline and the creek and tracks lay the heart of the cantonment.

The present Camp Dodge has a street lay-out that extends between 1st and 13th Streets. The 1917 cantonment extended from 1st to

29th Streets where street alignment shifted slightly and continued to 40th Street. The present streets occupy just one-third of the World War I-era Camp Dodge.

Activity emanated from the transportation lifeline, the interurban tracks. Arrayed along them were (and are) warehouses and arsenals. W5 and W6 Railroad Avenue are examples, both altered, of World War I-era buildings. On the east side of the tracks, between Railroad and Main Avenues, were corrals. The more extensive Remount Depot was located on a small spur at mid-camp, to the west of the tracks and Beaver Creek.

Located between the still extant north-south avenues of Main and Des Moines Avenues were barracks for the enlisted men. The two-story wood frame gabled buildings were long and narrow (40' x 120') and sheathed in unpainted pine. Double-hung windows (some grouped in pairs) with multiple panes sported narrow awnings. A rear section was only one-story and housed the kitchen.

The standard barracks was intended to house one 150-man company. They were grouped in four's, since four companies comprised a battalion. Under prewar conditions, an American company consisted of 150 men, but the number was increased to 250 to conform with European company organization. In a chilling commentary on the casualties of World War I, Tricoche's 1917 book on the war effort noted that "especially for trench warfare," a 150-man company was "much too small; it would be soon depleted so as to become useless."

The hundreds of barracks extended in a sea of rooflines from 1st Street (where the "one regiment of colored infantry" was in 1917) northward to Depot Street (between 22nd and 24th Streets) and beyond. Panoramic views from the period depict an unbroken view of rooftops. Each unit drilled near its barracks, and each had its own bayonet course and parade ground. Rifle and machine gun ranges were located east of the camp. East of the barracks along Des Moines Avenue were officers' quarters. Standard officers' quarters were one-story, gabled, and long and low (25 x 150').

Camp Dodge was so extensive that there were three interurban stations. The first, Arsenal Station, was at the south end, at 5th Street. Near the center at Depot Street and the Civic Center was Camp Dodge Station. Herrold Station was located at the north end by the Base Hospital. Herrold was a small pre-cantonment interurban station established around 1915 that found itself completely surrounded by the cantonment.⁸

Barracks for the artillery regiments were located at the north end of the camp near the Base Hospital while the more extensive infantry units were on the south end. The Base Hospital, which accommodated between 1,000 and 1,600 beds, included a series of long and narrow hipped roof wood frame buildings. They were set on quite high foundations, and steep wood stairs provided access. By war's end, a detention camp and a quarantine camp had been added at the north end of the camp, the principal additions in addition to mess halls just west of Hyperion Golf and Country Club.

The first troop arrivals in early September were greeted with facilities as far north as 7th Street. In the early months the facility lacked sidewalks and water, but did have ample open trenches, torn up roads, and copious amounts of dust or mud depending on the weather. Within about four months of the start, by November 24, 1917, all buildings authorized to that date were complete, except the theatre and two officers' quarters at the hospital.⁹

Specialized uses required special buildings. For example, Bakery Company 331 had a bakery that was completely screened. Three separate field ovens were intended to be dismantled and moved with them to Europe. With a capacity for turning out 86,000 pounds of bread every 24 hours, the company placed great importance on cleanliness and efficiency. In fact, their motto was "Swat the fly," referring to their unremitting effort to keep the bakery insect-free. The facility, supposedly the only completely fireproof bakery in the army, was photographed and studied for a proposed army booklet on proper field bakery construction and use, according to a contemporary newspaper account.

The federal government spent \$1,480,000 on buildings at Camp Dodge. Accounts differ, but Adjutant General Louis Lasher repeatedly stated in his annual reports that 3,000 buildings were erected, 667 on land the State of Iowa owned. In addition, the cost of concrete roads, interurban spur lines, and sewer, electrical, and water systems added another \$520,000. Land acquisition costs further boosted the total federal outlay to approximately \$8,000,000 by war's end.

The development of Camp Dodge also spurred road improvements to the site ten miles northwest of downtown Des Moines. When a farmer who lived along Beaver Drive wanted excessive compensation for his land, the secretary of the Polk County Board of Supervisors, Bennett Dewey, stepped in. He helped convince residents along the extension of Des Moines' 58th Street to donate their land for a brick-paved road. Dewey was an early resident in Johnson, having moved there in 1910. Later the former 58th Street was renamed Merle Hay Road in honor of one of the first three American casualties in World War I, Merle Hay of Glidden, Iowa.

The 88th "Clover Leaf" Division

On September 5, 1917, the first recruits were mustered in at Camp Dodge. By September 9, most of the initial allotment of 2,350 men had arrived and begun their conversion "from untrained citizenry into alert, intelligent, well-set-up soldiers," in the words of the 88th Division's official history. The second increment of the draft arrived hard on the heels of the first, beginning September 19. By the end of the month the 88th Division had 684 officers and 18,428 enlisted men assigned to it.

At first, soldiers for the 88th Division came from North Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa and were intended to come from South Dakota and Nebraska as well. However, plans rapidly changed and northern Illinois and perhaps Missouri replaced these two states as soldier sources. By November 1917 blacks from the South, especially Alabama, also journeyed north to the cantonment.

The United States armed forces were segregated during this period, as was most of American society. Thus, separate quarters

and recreational facilities were provided for the blacks at Camp Dodge and in Des Moines. In general, the concerns and fears about the presence of blacks among the white Northerners were unfounded. One incident, however, caused great consternation. On May 24, 1918, several black soldiers assaulted a white girl on the cantonment grounds. Charges were eventually dropped for one of the five originally implicated. To dispense with the case as soon as possible, a court martial was held within a month of the assault. Counsel was appointed to represent the soldiers. Most of the members of the court martial board and also the counsel were attorneys in private life, and each soldier was tried separately.

According to newspaper accounts of the trials, the girl was walking in the evening with her companion, a private assigned to the bakery company. The blacks attacked the private and he was then unable to come to his girl's assistance. She apparently suffered no serious or permanent injuries.

On July 5, 1917 the verdicts were announced: one acquitted, three guilty. Gallows were constructed near the barracks for the 3,000-4,000 black soldiers, and the three found guilty were hanged. All members of the camp attended; civilians watched from the adjacent Hypérion clubhouse. Calling the executions "a very painful duty," the colonel in charge stated that "the execution was mainly to prevent others from going astray, not for vengeance on the men sentenced." President Woodrow Wilson approved the verdicts and sentences for the charges, the only military hangings in Iowa.

Coverage in the newspapers was generally muted and located on the back pages--in contrast with similar stories in peacetime. It appears that the local newspapers felt it their patriotic duty to play down the potentially sensational aspects of the event. More recent accounts have interpreted "assault" to mean "rape," but contemporary accounts gave no such statements, and the exact nature of the assault remains unclear.

Many Camp Dodge soldiers looked forward with eagerness to going abroad to fight. However, in October the first of a series of orders arrived that undermined the morale

and enthusiasm of members of the 88th "Clover Leaf" Division.¹⁰ The first blow came when the War Department transferred 3,000 men to the 34th Division at Camp Cody, New Mexico. The pattern continued: as soon as the officers of the 88th had trained their recruits, they were more often than not shipped off to other divisions. Approximately 48,490 men started their military life in the 88th Division at Camp Dodge and then were sent to other divisions. Camp Dodge "alumni" saw action in virtually every campaign that involved United States troops in World War I.

The 88th Division not unnaturally harbored fears they had been designated a "replacement division" and would never see active duty as a united division. However, on July 22, 1918, officers at Camp Dodge learned that the 88th was finally to be mobilized. When part of the 339th Field Artillery Regiment prepared to leave, on August 12, "one of the Iowa wind and dust storms, which made life at Camp Dodge such a trial at times, was in progress," according to memoirs from the division. By early September the Division was in France where they received additional training but saw limited service.¹¹

Despite the mobilization, at last, of the 88th Division, Camp Dodge was by no means deserted, and new conscripts continued to arrive. Beginning in September 1918, the 14th Infantry Regiment was ordered to Camp Dodge as part of a newly forming 19th Infantry Regiment. Among those attached to the old 14th Regiment was Omar N. Bradley. Since he was stateside during World War I, Bradley recalled in his memoirs that he was

absolutely convinced that, having missed the war, I was professionally ruined. I could only look forward to a career lifetime of dull routine assignments and would be lucky to retire after thirty years as a lieutenant colonel.

Then a major, Bradley went on to World War II fame and rose to the rank of five-star general.

In October 1918 the first cases of a life-threatening influenza hit Camp Dodge, part

of a worldwide epidemic. Over a two-year period there were 705 flu-related deaths at Camp Dodge and approximately 10,000 were hospitalized, taxing the medical resources to the limit. Writing in a letter postmarked from Camp Dodge on October 15, 1918, Nurse Irene Robb described the scene: "The patients on litters were lined up five and six in a row along the outside corridor, waiting their turn to get in. Many of those have died now."

On November 11, 1918 World War I ended. The 88th Division received orders to return to the United States in April of 1919. Camp Dodge was site for the end of the military commitment for more than 10,000 officers and men who were demobilized there. Des Moines boosters completed their contribution to the cantonment by meeting every troop train arriving in Des Moines. The soldiers paraded from the rail yards to Fifth and Grand where various welfare societies provided a meal. According to a description of the parades in the 88th Division's official history

The men found it very difficult to keep their heads and eyes straight to the front. It was the day that the men had been waiting for ever since the Germans signed the Armistice--they were back again with their own people....

After the parade and meal, the men went to Camp Dodge and were formally demobilized within 48 hours. Each had a red chevron sewn on his left sleeve, evidence of his regained civilian status.

"A Great Educational Enterprise"

The reason behind the establishment of the Camp Dodge cantonment was of course to train tens of thousands of men for military service. From first light until early evening, soldiers were on duty. The days of the "doughboys" were filled with lectures, close order drills, and practice in trench warfare, shooting, and gas defense. But the military considered provision of suitable recreation to be nearly as important as the military training of these raw recruits. Singing, a variety of competitive games and other recreation,

and educational courses were interspersed among the drills. Classes in English (for the illiterate and foreign-born) and in French were held for these European-bound troops. Contemporary literature is filled with such phrases as "human welfare environment of the soldiers," "social work at Camp Dodge," and "soldiers' moral, physical and mental welfare."

The thinking behind provision of suitable wholesome recreation, education, and amusements was both altruistic and self-serving. A prevailing belief was that a reasonably content and occupied man made the best soldier, but also that such a busy soldier was less likely to get into trouble. Social workers associated with the Commission on Training Camp Activities sought to re-create the wholesome and familiar aspects of civilian life (by sponsoring dances, for example) and also to furnish substitute recreational, social, and educational activities (such as writing letters home or putting on shows using soldier talent).

Programs centered about three areas: (1) keeping vice and alcohol as far from the camp as possible, (2) providing educational opportunities on the base, and (3) working to have neighboring communities, especially Des Moines, offer only wholesome off-duty activities. Venereal disease and unwanted pregnancies were serious concerns, all the more since "young girls are apt completely to lose their heads over the soldiers. The girls are eager...to show their appreciation of what the soldiers are doing...." according to a contemporary account, "Social Work at Camp Dodge." Poems were written about the ramifications of venereal disease, such as one exhorting "Soldiers, Come Back Clean." Des Moines was commended for hiring an active sheriff to "clean up" the city. Special meeting places, such as the club for Jewish soldiers at 715 Grand Avenue in Des Moines, were provided for off duty troops.

The programs may have helped: during June of 1918 only six new cases of venereal disease and 14 arrests for drunkenness were recorded for some 40,000 soldiers. However, 71 cases of venereal disease were reported for the week ending July 19, 1918, according to official federal reports; the second highest

incidence of illness was 49 cases of measles.

Private enterprise sprang up near the base but was strictly supervised. Herrold, the tiny interurban stop that the expanded camp engulfed, had a small theater, pool hall, three restaurants, and several small stores. Two places, Dodge City and Army City, sprang up in direct response to cantonment presence, as their names reflect. They too offered movie houses and other entertainments.

At Camp Dodge provision was made for active and beneficial off duty time. Special buildings were constructed around the camp in addition to the larger facilities in the Civic Center between 22nd and 24th Streets. Brigham's 1917 description mentions the Civic Center:

Eight green-painted buildings and one large auditorium [mark] the well-directed efforts of the Young Men's Christian Association to ameliorate the moral and mental condition of thousands of young men, many if not most of them for the first time separated from the comforts and delights of home. Brothering up to the central auditorium of the Y.M.C.A. was the recreation center of the Knights of Columbus. To the west was the building erected by the Lutherans. Across the street was the huge auditorium erected by the government for recreation purposes. To the west of this was the central library building, erected by the American Library Association....

These and other organizations provided space for homesick or bored soldiers to write letters home, read, sing, or converse. The Red Cross was there to assist soldiers and families with special problems¹² but also distributed approximately 15,000 sweaters and other knitted clothing for the Christmas of 1917.

Civic Center buildings were gabled, wood frame, and as simply and rapidly constructed

as the barracks. The YMCA auditorium, with its broad gabled roof and clerestory, could seat 3,500. The YMCA also had eight other buildings placed among the various brigades in the camp. The main room of these buildings (50 x 120') could seat 1,000, another indication of the magnitude of Camp Dodge. The Hostess House, completed in January 1918, was a YWCA project and provided a place for women whose friends or relatives were at the camp. It featured two two-story gable-front sections joined at the center by a lower intersecting gabled portion with a long inviting porch.

In 1918 the Camp Dodge Library at the Civic Center opened, with hometown newspapers, 45 magazines, and over 7,000 books on hand, and 8,000 more on order. By October the library, its 17 branches, and numerous small company libraries had 41,000 volumes to circulate; the public donated some 30,000 of them. The Carnegie Corporation gave \$10,000 for the library's construction. And Liberty Theatre, also at the Civic Center, opened February 6, 1918 with an audience of 2,500 watching "Rip Van Winkle."

In "Social Work at Camp Dodge," Brigham painted a picture of typical off-duty weekend pursuits:

Two almost continuous lines of automobiles could be seen creeping along in opposite directions. The main avenue, on every Sunday afternoon, was lined with soldiers off duty and their relatives and friends and curious visitors strolling from one point of interest to another. The open windows of the barracks were alive with khaki-clad 'boys' sunning themselves and exchanging comments on the moving picture before them. In the open spaces were groups of athletic youths practicing football kicks and passes for future games. Sounds of vocal and instrumental music came from the Y.M.C.A. buildings, and exhilarating shouts of laughter arose from groups of men assembled on the

cross-roads and in the miniature parks.

Organized recreational athletics was of such importance that the military named a Divisional Athletic Director in September 1917, the month recruits first arrived in Camp Dodge. As director, John L. Griffith applied experience he had with Drake University's athletic program. Each company also had a designated athletic officer. In the fall football teams were especially popular, but track and field, baseball, boxing, and wrestling were also important. Some games and contests involved skills applicable to fighting the war, such as Company Ditch Jump, Over the Top, and Crouch Shuttle Relay. Since much of the fighting in Europe involved hand-to-hand combat, athletics at Camp Dodge also included wrestling and other forms of fighting.

Camp Dodge was a virtually self-contained community with its own commerce and newspaper. Nineteen permanent post exchanges were located throughout the camp and sold everything from cameras to soap. One in particular, the 352d Infantry Exchange, was known for its special features, including the only barber shop and tailor shop on the post and an especially spacious store. Its profits, \$28,000, were far larger than any other regimental exchange. The cantonment's own newspaper, the *Camp Dodger*, began publication on September 21, 1917. It was the first of the National Army newspapers to see print stateside, and it was also the first to begin publication of its Overseas Edition, in January 1919.

Postwar Developments

After the November 11, 1918 Armistice, Iowa and America began the conversion to a peacetime footing. The Iowa National Guard was re-constituted out of the federal military and again required space for annual training encampments. More than ever, centrally located Camp Dodge seemed the ideal spot, for it had received many improvements during its cantonment period.

With the end of World War I the federal government no longer wanted to maintain 16 cantonments designed as training centers

around the country. Significant changes, indeed the dismantling of the 13th Divisional Cantonment, thus took place in the years immediately following World War I. The federal government announced the auction of 690 buildings, small eight-man housing units, in July 1920. The Northwestern Lumber and Wrecking Company of Minneapolis bought more buildings from the War Department for \$251,000 in May 1921. On October 9, 1922, the State of Iowa held an auction of surplus buildings and equipment, netting \$69,350. About equal amounts were received for 342 buildings (\$38,000) and for equipment such as 534 furnaces and 35 ice boxes (\$35,000).

Recognizing that Camp Dodge now contained important improvements--concrete roads, sewer, water and electrical systems--the State of Iowa began negotiations with the federal government to pay for these changes made to Camp Dodge. In addition to these improvements, the State determined that 667 buildings of the 3,000 constructed on the expanded Camp Dodge were on the 570 acres the State owned. Negotiations dragged on, due to considerable delays at the federal level, until March 1922. The State of Iowa then purchased the improvements made to Camp Dodge for \$35,808.95.

Despite the delays, Iowa Governor N.E. Kendall was confident that an agreement between the state and the federal government would eventually be made. In his capacity as Commander-in-Chief of the Iowa National Guard, Kendall appointed a five-man Board of Officers from National Guard staff to inspect Camp Dodge and make recommendations regarding its return to Guard camp status. In 1921 the Board found (not surprisingly) that Camp Dodge was eminently suited to be a Guard camp and recommended the following immediate changes: build a fence, repair roads, provide storage for motor vehicles, and landscape the grounds. In addition, the Board felt "that in order to properly equip the permanent camp grounds at Camp Dodge, that a swimming pool 150 yards in length by 50 yards in width, should be provided...."

After paying the federal government the \$35,800 owed it for Camp Dodge improvements, the Iowa National Guard had a profit of \$34,550. In addition, they had the federal

cantonment improvements, including a complete water system, sewer systems, electric light and power equipment, paved roads, four warehouses, 61 ice boxes, plumbing supplies, the former hospital building, houses around the Brigade headquarters, and the motor repair shop.¹³

The Iowa National Guard proceeded immediately with its construction plans, armed with federal approval as of July 29, 1921. By November 7, 1921, a motor transport building (S4 or S5 Ordinance Rd),¹⁴ a 320 x 110' brick-covered building, was completed. Except for final grading and roadwork, the immense swimming pool and its bathing pavilion (A-22, A-24 9th St) were complete by 1922. Des Moines architects and landscape architects, Pearse, Robinson & Sprague, received the commissions for these improvements, including landscaping.

Improvements continued apace. By 1924, 50 mess halls with kitchens had been built for \$136,750 (now barracks), three regimental headquarters for \$14,850 (now housing), and 11 bath houses and latrines for \$16,830. All were tile with brick facing, considerably more permanent materials than the wood frame cantonment buildings.

Funds for construction came from the Adjutant General's Permanent Improvement Fund. With these 1920s improvements, the Adjutant General boasted in his biennial report that

Iowa now has the most complete permanent National Guard grounds in the United States, and the War Department has pronounced it the most adequate, economical, and complete plan of construction. They are recommending our plan, type of buildings and construction be followed by all States.

Two years later, in 1926, \$42,746 in improvements made at state expense had been accomplished, including a \$15,054 Memorial Recreation building (B57 7th St) and nine stables for cavalry animals (\$21,425). Additional improvements were made to Camp Dodge during the period between the two world wars. For example, in 1929-30 a

\$5,000 Administration Building and a \$10,000 Hostess House (not extant) were built. In 1936 a new one-story repair and maintenance garage (S3 Ordinance Rd) replaced one destroyed by fire. During the 1930s depression years, federal work programs built the attractive stone octagonal gatehouse (A31 N.W. Beaver Dr) and fence that introduces visitors to Camp Dodge.

The Iowa National Guard held its first post-World War I encampment in August of 1921. During this period officers in the Iowa National Guard worked diligently to encourage enlistment. In 1921 Adjutant General Lasher described the annual encampment as a "fifteen-day period of fun and wholesome military training." He noted in a 1921 newspaper article the considerable advantages of participation, including being paid while on this "fifteen-day vacation," rifle practice on the "best located and equipped rifle range in the middle west," and the fine recreational features (such as the swimming pool).

Lasher's efforts bore fruit. An estimated 3,000 enlisted men and officers attended the two week encampment in 1922. The new swimming pool proved to be a popular place for off duty recreation. An estimated two-thirds of the men used it daily, according to a contemporary newspaper account.

World War II

Like the World War I experience, Iowa boosters successfully approached the federal government about using Camp Dodge--but for far less ambitious uses. The United States government paid one dollar and signed a lease on May 23, 1942 for 574.34 acres of Camp Dodge. Camp Dodge was used as a "United States Army Induction and Reception Center and Repair Shop." According to the lease, the federal use was to begin on June 1, 1942 and continue "for the duration of the present war and for six months thereafter." At the Camp Dodge Induction Center, draftees received physical examinations for formal induction into the armed forces.

When Camp Dodge became an induction center, the facility had approximately 90 buildings and structures built between 1873 and 1942. Building materials were also

varied, ranging from a heavy masonry arsenal to light wood frame exchange buildings, as reported in the 1942 survey of Camp Dodge buildings. The building type most widely represented was the mess hall (now barracks), of which there were 40 to 50 arrayed along Des Moines Avenue. Types of buildings included residences, warehouses, and garage and transportation maintenance buildings, in addition to specialized military facilities for large numbers of soldiers (mess halls, arsenals, latrines).

When the United States entered World War II, the states' National Guard units became part of the federal fighting forces. The Iowa State Guard, similar to the erroneously termed "home guard" of World War I, was formed December 15, 1941 to respond to local emergencies in the state. Beginning in 1942, the Iowa State Guard began receiving training at part of Camp Dodge. The force served as Iowa's domestic military, called out for such emergencies as floods and other natural disasters. Members of the State Guard also spent 92 days at the Eldora Boys' Training School after riots occurred there. In all, the guard was called out 55 times.

When World War II ended, Camp Dodge returned to its Iowa National Guard uses--with one million dollars in federal improvements. These included a finance building, three mess halls, theater (B58 7th Street), fire department, several barracks, and a cafeteria. Portions of these World War II-era buildings now are used for the State Military Academy (M-1 to M14).

Camp Dodge Today

Camp Dodge now covers approximately 2,300 acres. Of this number, 505 acres in the "surface danger area" where rifle practice occurs is leased for farming for safety purposes. The principal area where most buildings and the swimming pool are found occupies 200 acres. The remaining 1,595 acres are available for troop training and double as the eleventh largest wildlife refuge in the state.

The National Guard of Iowa continues to use Camp Dodge for an annual training site and also for weekend training. In addition, it

serves as a logistical support center, including the records center and the veterans affairs department. Approximately 7,900 members of the Guard from 50 communities around the state can use these services. The State Military Academy conducts classes at the north end of the camp.

Three, sometimes four, training camps are held each year at Camp Dodge, but the largest use is for weekend training. In 1988 National Guard training amounted to 248,500 "days." (One day equals one person working one day at the camp.) Members of the Army and Navy Reserve, Air National Guard, ROTC, USMC Reserve, and other military training schools use Camp Dodge, especially for overnight stays and refueling as units move across the state.

The Iowa National Guard plans to expand the size and use of Camp Dodge significantly. The expansion is part of a proposed \$30 million enhancement, which would make Camp Dodge an important regional training facility. If completed, Iowa military units who now travel out of state to larger facilities would be able to use Camp Dodge, and non-Iowa units would also use Camp Dodge. If the planned expansion occurs, training could reach 280,000 "days" by 1990.

Design Sources

As stated, the cantonment-era plan and building designs were developed from uniform plans made in Washington, D.C. Iowa architectural firms received commissions for Iowa National Guard buildings and structures. For example, Andersen & Spooner was responsible for a number of extant Camp Dodge buildings constructed shortly after World War I. Among them are three regimental headquarters buildings (A3Q, A5Q, and A12Q Burma Road), 11 latrines, and 35 "company dining halls" (B11-B51 Burma Road). These and other similar buildings are now used as barracks and are one of the dominant building types found on Camp Dodge.¹⁵

The firm of Andersen & Spooner was located in Council Bluffs in 1923, the date of blueprints for the dining halls. Spooner, who had a degree in architecture from MIT, was

among the many former employees of the important Des Moines architectural firm, Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson, between 1918 and 1922. In the early 1920s he practiced with Andersen in Council Bluffs, but returned to Des Moines in the 1930s where he practiced alone or with others.

Pearse, Robinson & Sprague received the commission for the bathing pavilion and the swimming pool in 1921. In the years before 1927, formal certification through the Iowa Board of Architectural Examiners was not required, and the firm combined architectural, engineering, and landscape architectural services. The combination was a useful one for Iowa National Guard leaders, for construction of the pool complex required application of all those specialties. The firm remained in that form in the early 1920s and was known as Pearse-Robinson in 1924-28. Francis A. Robinson was a prominent member of the landscape architectural profession in Iowa; among his commissions was a study of the Clay County Fairgrounds in Spencer. There is little information about Rubee J. Pearse or Harold G. Sprague.

William Nels Nielsen, a Des Moines architect between 1932 and 1970, was the recipient of WPA-era commissions at Camp Dodge, including the concessions building for the pool in 1936. Nielsen & Baty was responsible for the fine stone fence, entrance, and octagonal guard house, according to blueprints dated May 30, 1935. Nielsen graduated from Iowa State University (then College), in 1925 with a degree in architectural engineering. He worked for Tinsley, McBroom & Higgins in Des Moines between 1925 and 1931. In 1935 he and Spooner briefly joined to form Spooner & Nielsen.

STUDY METHODS

Rationale

The survey of Camp Dodge began with certain assumptions. National Register eligibility was the standards by which architectural and historical significance was to be measured. Based on previous experience with the topic, five areas of interest were initially identified that seemed to address topics of potential significance. These were:

1. Pre-Camp Dodge uses
2. Development of the Iowa National Guard, especially with respect to Camp Dodge
3. Camp Dodge as World War I Cantonment and the role of the federal government
4. Role of interurban during Cantonment period
5. Effect of Depression-era public works programs.

Subsequent analysis and evaluation showed that the interurban line played a relatively minor role in the Camp Dodge story, other than helping to define the plan of the cantonment and, of course, to move supplies and troops. Public works programs from the 1930s were also not found to be a major theme, although the present gatehouse and fence on N.W. Beaver Drive are particularly well done examples of WPA work. It was initially thought that the pool and pavilion dated from the WPA period.

In the course of the literature research and analysis, additional topics surfaced:

1. Role of recreation in early twentieth century military theory and practice
2. Role of civilians regarding Camp Dodge
3. Camp Dodge during World War II.

Construction of one of the nation's largest outdoor swimming pools, the bathing pavilion, and the concession stand were found to relate strongly to the first two of these additional topics. The last theme was not found

to be a significant one for understanding the architectural and historical development of Camp Dodge. It should be emphasized that an understanding of events gained by sifting through potentially important themes was useful for developing the historic contexts that define Camp Dodge.

The historical and architectural significance of extant buildings and structures at Camp Dodge were evaluated using National Register of Historic Places standards. A fundamental consideration was therefore the degree of alteration to these buildings and structures. In addition, the association and degree of that association with important themes--their ability to illustrate them--was a crucial factor in evaluating National Register eligibility. For example, the approximately 50 former mess halls once had gabled roofs, not the present hipped roofs, a major change. While the history of Camp Dodge, especially its years as a cantonment, is a compelling one, few extant buildings adequately illustrate or reflect that heritage. Since the cantonment by definition was intended to be temporary, this absence is not surprising.

Only the swimming pool and related buildings were found to be sufficiently unaltered and of substantial historical and architectural significance to merit National Register eligibility. A nomination for the Camp Dodge swimming pool district is attached to this report, and formal submission of that nomination is encouraged.¹⁶

Other extant buildings were eliminated from National Register consideration for the following reason(s):

1. Alterations diminish ability to illustrate one or more themes outlined above
2. Theme or topic (for example, World War II uses) of low significance.
3. Association of theme to building or structure was indirect.

Camp Dodge is important to Iowa history as the best (but altered) example that illustrates the development of the Iowa National Guard, a fundamental part of the nation's military establishment. Built in 1921-22 to provide recreation for Guardsmen and also for public use, the relatively unaltered swimming pool and bathing pavilion call attention to the post-World War I Iowa National Guard. In addition, the sheer size of the pool is noteworthy and clearly illustrates the planned size of Guard encampments during the 1920s as well as the high importance placed upon wholesome recreation. The value of recreation was a strong theme of World War I Cantonment activities. The pool and pavilion call attention to this early twentieth century belief in the value of recreation.

Work Done

Literature Search. The previous experience of Midwest Research with Polk County and Camp Dodge sources helped organize and facilitate this intensive level survey. This earlier survey and research work made it possible to concentrate rather quickly on the key themes and their sources for this project.

The fruits of the literature search were used to fashion the historic context, The Historical and Architectural Development of Camp Dodge, Iowa. This contextual report, in turn, provided the basis for evaluating the potential significance of properties at Camp Dodge.

Research for Camp Dodge centered on records and materials at the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI) and Camp Dodge. The investigation was exhaustive and comprehensive. A wide range of sources was studied at the SHSI Bureau of Historic Preservation, SHSI Archives, SHSI Historical Library, and also the Gold Star Museum and Facility Services, both at Camp Dodge. In addition, sources at the Public Library of Des Moines, the State Library, the architectural firm of Brooks, Borg & Skiles, the Curt Teich Postcard Collection, and Midwest Research's iconographic collection were used. Knowledgeable informants, especially Col. Rolfes and Col. Larry Lampe, provided important insights.

One source eluded detection. There are tantalizing references in the literature of the period to Curator Edgar Harlan of the Historical Department of Iowa using a "moving-picture machine" to record, among other things, "Iowa troops at Camp Dodge." Neither the State Archivist nor Museum staff, however, knows of such films.

The bibliography included in this report lists 55 sources consulted for the project. Sources used for the project included papers of Iowa governors, Chamber of Commerce publications, numerous contemporary newspaper accounts, Adjutant General reports, magazine and journal articles, census records, memoirs, blueprints, and historic photographs and postcards.

National Guard surveys of Camp Dodge conducted in 1919 just after World War I and in 1942 just before World War II were invaluable for documenting information about the camp as well as individual buildings. These earlier surveys and other iconographic sources and historic maps complemented the field investigation of current conditions.

Copies of relevant documents that supplement this report will be deposited with the Bureau of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Iowa.

Field Investigation. All properties built before 1948 and listed in the Scope of Work for the project were inspected. (Since several were listed twice, the total number of buildings or structures considered in the project totaled 129.) On the site forms, Camp Dodge terminology was adopted for stating the current use and conforms to the list included with these survey forms.

The area surveyed encompassed buildings and structures the National Guard owns in the Camp Dodge area, approximately 2,300 acres. Most buildings are located in the c. 200-acre area commonly identified as Camp Dodge.

Properties were analyzed for building type, degree of alteration, and historical or architectural significance (based on contexts identified during the literature search). Significance was primarily based on National Register criteria outlined in National Register Bulletin 16. Representative examples were

photographed, described, mapped, and further evaluated. Where possible, historical data about these representative examples was collected and included with the site forms. For all surveyed properties, Iowa Site Inventory forms were completed with the information specified for the project. Also in accordance with project instructions, only representative examples received more detailed descriptions. To do otherwise would have resulted in needless duplication of information.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following codes refer to locations of unpublished materials: SHSI = State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines; CD = Camp Dodge. Also, IJHP = Iowa Journal of History and Politics.

Books

- A.T. Andreas' Historical Atlas of 1875.* Chicago: Lakeside Press, 1875.
- Biennial Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Iowa.* Des Moines: State of Iowa, [1930]. For 1929-30.
- Biennial Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Iowa.* Des Moines: State of Iowa, [1932]. For 7/1/30-6/30/32.
- Biennial Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Iowa.* Des Moines: State of Iowa, [1944]. For 7/1/42-6/30/44.
- Bradley, Omar N. and Blair, Clay. *A General's Life.* New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983.
- Brigham, Johnson. *History of Des Moines and Polk County, Iowa.* 2 vols. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1911.
- Bushnell, J.P. *Resources and Advantages of Des Moines.* Des Moines: J.P. Bushnell & Co., 1917.
- The 88th Division in the World War of 1914-1918.* New York: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Co., c. 1918.
- The History of Polk County, Iowa.* Des Moines: Union Historical Co., 1880.
- Larson, E.J.D., comp. *Memoirs of France and the 88th Division.* Minneapolis: n.p., 1920.
- Lees, James H. *Iowa Geologic Survey. The Region about Camp Dodge.* N.p., 1918.
- Plat Book of Polk County, Iowa.* Des Moines: Midland Map & Engineering Co., [c. 1918].
- Report of Nathaniel B. Baker, Adjutant-General of Iowa, to Hon. William M. Stone, Governor of Iowa.* Des Moines: State Printer, 1868.
- Report of Nathaniel B. Baker, Adjutant General and A.Q.M.G. of the State of Iowa to Hon. Cyrus C. Carpenter, Governor of Iowa.* No. 9. Des Moines: State Printer, 1874.
- Report of the Adjutant-General to the Governor of the State of Iowa.* Des Moines: State Printer, [1899]. For 1898-99.
- Report of the Adjutant General of Iowa.* Des Moines: State of Iowa, 1919. For 1917-8.
- Report of the Adjutant General of Iowa.* Des Moines: State of Iowa, [1922]. For 7/1/20-6/30/22.
- Report of the Adjutant General of Iowa.* Des Moines: State of Iowa, [1924]. For 7/1/22-6/30/24.
- Report of the Adjutant General of Iowa.* Des Moines: State of Iowa, [1926]. For 1925-6.
- State Census of Iowa.* Des Moines: State of Iowa. For the years 1856, 1867.
- Tricoche, George N. *Our Army in a Nutshell.* Harvey Military Series. New York: George U. Harvey Publishing Co., 1916.

Periodicals

- "Army Houses to be Sold." *The American Architect* 118 (July 7, 1920): 22.
- Beardslee, Clarence. "Development of Army Camp Planning." *Civil Engineering* 12 (September 1942): 489-492.

Briggs, John E. "The Legislation of the 39th General Assembly of Iowa." *Iowa Journal of History and Politics (IJHP)* 19 (October 1921): 489-666.

---- and Van Ek, Jacob. "The Legislation of the 40th General Assembly of Iowa." *IJHP* 21 (October 1923): 507-676.

"Camp Dodge." *Polk County Historical Society Newsletter* 25 (December 1986): 1-2.

"Camp Dodge." *IJHP* 32 (July 1934): 257-8.

Des Moines. (1917-1919), especially "The Business of War" section.

"Dodge, Augustus C." *Iowa Historical Record* 3 (January 1887): 385-421.

Fortescue, Major Granville. "Training the New Armies of Liberty." *National Geographic* 32 (November-December 1917): 421-438.

Grover, Timothy. "Camp Dodge." *The Iowan* 36 (Winter 1987): 28-35, 59-62.

Haynes, Fred E. "Social Work at Camp Dodge." *IJHP* 4 (October 1918): 471-547.

Pownall, Dorothy Ashby. "A Girl Reporter at Camp Dodge." 5 articles in *Palimpsest* 57 (June 1966): 225-256.

Showalter, William J. "America's New Soldier Cities." *National Geographic* 32 (November-December 1917): 439-476.

Upham, Cyril. "Historical Survey of the Militia in Iowa." *IJHP* 27 (July 1929): 413-440.

Newspapers

Des Moines Capital, May 26, 1921; August 16, December 9, 1922; June 10, 17, 18, 1923.

Des Moines Register, May 26, 28, 30, June 1, 2, 9, 16, July 5, 6, 1918; June 1, 9,

12, 29, August 8, 1921; June 1, 1935; September 9, 1941; March 17, June 15, 1942; November 7, 1976; July 4, 1983; May 29, 1985; October 30, 1986; September 20, 1988.; January 11, 1989.

Des Moines Tribune, August 14, 1922; April 13, 1936; June 9, 1942; September 18, January 18, 1944; September 26, 1947; February 8, 1964; September 5, 1966; July 5, 1978; August 19, 1983.

Unpublished Papers, Iconographic, and Archival Materials

Architects in Iowa Files. Bureau of Historic Preservation. (SHSI)

"Brick House, Camp Dodge, Iowa." (CD)

Board of Officers. Minutebook. 1921. (CD)

"Camp Dodge Guest Guide." (CD)

Capaldo, Anthony. "'The Bravest of the Brave.' A Brief History of the Iowa Army National Guard." (CD)

Company A, Iowa Engineers. Topographical Map of National Cantonment No. 13, Camp Dodge. (Buildings authorized up to October 5, 1917.) (SHSI)

Curt Teich Postcard Collection. Lake Forest, Illinois.

Des Moines, Iowa. SHSI Archives. Governor N.E. Kendall Papers.

Des Moines, Iowa. SHSI Archives. Governor Warren L. Harding Papers.

Camp Dodge, Iowa. Gold Star Museum. Scrapbooks and other unaccessioned documents and clippings.

The Historical Record. Camp Utilities. Camp Dodge, Iowa. Report from the Officer in Charge of Utilities, Camp Dodge, Iowa to Construction Division of the Army, Washington, D.C., February 1, 1919. (CD)

"Johnston and Camp Dodge." CIRALG historical survey for Bureau of Historic Preservation. c. 1980. (SHSI)

Lease. State of Iowa to United States of America. May 23, 1942. (CD)

Midwest Research. Collection of historic photographs.

"Our Sons at Camp Dodge." Des Moines Register & Evening Tribune. [1917].

Survey of Camp Dodge - Herrold, Iowa to Determine the Present Condition of the Premises for Transfer from the State of Iowa to The United States of America under Lease Dated May 23, 1942. (CD)

Tracings list. Design for Camp Dodge Liberty Theatre. Brooks, Borg & Skiles, Des Moines, Iowa.

Weitz, Rudolph W. "Pioneer Building Industry in Polk County." 1969. (SHSI)

Wilcox, Ella Wheeler. "Soldiers, Come Back Clean." N.p.: Star Company, 1917. (Copy in Gov. Harding Papers, File 270.)

NOTES

1. In 1898, the Adjutant General reported that at the encampment of the Fiftieth Regiment, recently mustered out of the United States military after the Spanish-American War, "the use of liquor was entirely too free" and that some men "made a raid on fruit stands, etc., in the vicinity of camp...injuring the reputation of the guard."
2. Camp Dodge was named in honor of one, perhaps two, early Iowa military leaders: Civil War General and railroad builder Grenville M. Dodge and/or territorial militia officer and influential politician Augustus C. Dodge. Accounts vary.
3. The first arsenal is probably W6 Railroad Avenue, although other sources give a 1915 construction date.
4. Sources vary for the exact date, including the 27th, the 18th, and the 12th of June when "a new era began in Des Moines."
5. After the war, the U.S. Attorney General brought suit against all the contractors of cantonments, claiming they had profited unduly and seeking to recover \$4,500,000. Political factors seem to have been involved in the decision to sue. Charles Weitz' Sons were absolved of wrongdoing in the matter, as well as in a later suit brought by local subcontractors. Although high by peacetime standards, the cost of Camp Dodge construction ran below that of other cantonments.
6. Two brick warehouses or arsenals, a dozen mess halls, tent floors, the old brick farmhouse, and a small water system and electrical wiring, according to the Adjutant-General's report for 1921.
7. Sources vary widely regarding the number of men employed. One states that between July 5 and September 15, 1917, the construction consortium headed by Charles Weitz' Sons employed 5,759 men, while a recent article in *The Iowan* gives that figure for one week of work.
8. In 1989 the government completed purchase of property at the Herrold site occupied by civilians.
9. A 1987 article in *The Iowan* states that the hospital, not the theatre, was unfinished; the first performance was held at the theatre on February 6, 1918, and it seems likely that completing the hospital would have been a high priority.
10. The insignia for the 88th Division was a cloverleaf.
11. Not all soldiers were eager to serve; in *Memoirs of France* it was reported that "one or two" suicides or attempted suicides occurred when the overseas order came.
12. For example, a soldier felt that with a trip home he could collect \$160 due him and also arrange for the harvest of his potato crop; the Red Cross arranged for the furlough.
13. Adjutant General Lasher noted in his annual report that, had the federal government acted more quickly and properly in making the transfer, the State of Iowa would have had a \$75,000 profit.
14. Current Camp Dodge maps use "Ordinance Road," rather than "Ordinance Road," and that spelling has been continued for this report.

15. See site sheets from the 1988 Camp Dodge survey on file at the State Historical Society of Iowa, Bureau of Historic Preservation for detailed information.

16. The nomination format used has to date not been approved for use by the National Park Service; if the nomination is submitted, Midwest Research should be contacted to ensure that necessary approval has been given.