

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTING IN IOWA

It is the purpose of this paper to outline briefly the history of legislation on the subject of congressional districting in Iowa—pointing out the changes made from time to time, showing by means of maps the exact form and extent of the districts established by the several acts of the General Assembly, and commenting upon the motives and circumstances prompting alterations in the boundaries of these districts.

Prior to 1847 there were no congressional districts in the State. From 1838 to 1846 Iowa existed as a separate Territory, entitled to one Delegate in Congress, who was chosen for a term of two years and who represented the entire territorial area and population.¹ Then came the change incident to statehood. On August 4, 1846, Congress passed an act defining the boundaries of the State of Iowa and providing that, until the next census and apportionment, the new State should be entitled to two seats in the House of Representatives.² A State Constitution was adopted, and on December 28, 1846, Iowa entered the Union. The State had not, however, been districted in time for the election of that year; hence the two congressmen were chosen on a general ticket, each to represent the State as a whole.³ Since that time Iowa congressmen have been elected by districts,

¹ *Laws of Iowa*, 1838, p. 38.

² *U. S. Statutes at Large*, Vol. ix, p. 52.

³ *The Iowa Standard*, Nov. 4, Nov. 11, and Dec. 2, 1846.

and the General Assembly has enacted seven laws respecting the division of the State for this purpose.

THE ACT OF 1847

On December 7, 1846, the State Senate voted that a "select committee of seven" be appointed to "report a bill to the Senate, dividing the State into two congressional districts, so as to include, as nearly as can be done, an equal portion of the territory and an equal portion of the population of the State in each district, and that the vote given in August last for and against the constitution be taken as the basis in dividing the population."¹ This committee reported a bill which was later referred to a selected committee of three from each judicial district.² From this body the bill emerged in a somewhat modified form;³ and, after considerable discussion and amendment both in the Senate⁴ and in the House,⁵ it became a law, February 22, 1847.⁶ This first statute on the subject divided the State into two congressional districts: the *first* was to consist of the counties of Lee, Van Buren, Jefferson, Wapello, Davis, Appanoose, Henry, Mahaska, Monroe, Marion, Jasper, Polk, Keokuk, and the country south of a line drawn from the northwest corner of Polk county west to the Missouri river; the *second* was composed of the counties of Clayton, Dubuque, Delaware, Jackson, Clinton, Jones, Linn, Poweshiek, Benton, Iowa, Johnson, Cedar, Scott, Muscatine, Washington, Louisa,

¹ *Senate Journal*, 1st G. A., p. 31.

² *Ibid*, pp. 50, 69.

³ *Ibid*, p. 109.

⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 117-118.

⁵ *House Journal*, 1st G. A., pp. 339, 355.

⁶ *Laws of Iowa*, 1st Sess., 1st G. A., p. 84.

Des Moines, and all north of a line from the northwest corner of Polk county west to the Missouri.

From the standpoint of area, of population, and of politics, this arrangement seems to have been equitable. Turning to Map I, on which the limits of the two districts are indicated, we see that the dividing line marks off a southern, or *first* district, and a northern, or *second* district, which are fairly regular in outline, but quite unequal in area. This inequality is, however, readily explained in this way. To compensate for the sparse settlement of the northwest, the eastern portion of the boundary line veers to the south so that the comparatively dense population of the southeast may be shared by the second district. In population, on the other hand, the first (and smaller) district leads by more than 2,000;¹ while in voters it outnumbers the second district by about 500.² As to politics, each district returned a Democratic majority of a few hundred.³ But there is little ground for a charge of gerrymander; for, while the Whig minority was large in each case, it was so distributed as to make the formation of even one Whig district⁴ impossible, except through the establishment of the most irregular and unnatural boundaries.

¹ Hull's *Historical and Comparative Census of Iowa*, p. 196.

² *The Iowa Standard*, Sept. 15, 1847.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Whig majorities in 1847 were:—Henry 131, Jasper 38, Mahaska 25, Dallas 7, Clayton 4, Cedar 22, Delaware 20, Jones 2, Scott 13, Muscatine 14, Washington 80, Louisa 103. Total 459.—*The Iowa Standard*, Sept. 15, 1847.

THE ACT OF 1848

Early in January, 1848, a bill was introduced into the House of Representatives providing for the transfer of Poweshiek county from the second congressional district to the first.¹ Apparently without opposition, this measure passed both houses, and on January 24 received the signature of the Governor.² Why this transfer was made, is not clear. It is true that on this same January 24 the first law was passed for the organization of the county of Poweshiek,³ whose boundaries had been fixed a few years before;⁴ but this change in the status of the county did not necessitate a change in its relation to the congressional districting of the State. The transfer was not to equalize the population of the two districts; for the census returns for 1847, 1848, and 1849 show that the inhabitants of the first district outnumbered those of the second by several thousand.⁵ Nor could the political motive have been weighty; for, while the election returns indicate a decreasing Democratic majority in the first district and an increasing Democratic majority in the second, the Whig majority of *five* in Poweshiek was not sufficient to make any material difference in the political complexion of either district.⁶ The chief merit of the law seems to have been that it tended to straighten the dividing

¹ *House Journal*, 1st G. A., Extra Sess., pp. 37, 64.

² *House Journal*, 1st G. A., Extra Sess., p. 70; *Senate Journal*, p. 59; *Laws of Iowa*, 1st G. A., Extra Sess., p. 34.

³ *Laws of Iowa*, 1st G. A., Extra Sess., p. 55.

⁴ *Revised Statutes of the Territory of Iowa*, 1842-1843, p. 131.

⁵ *House Journal*, 1st G. A., Extra Sess., p. 69; Hull's *Historical and Comparative Census*, pp. 196, 198.

⁶ Fairall's *Manual*, 1882, pp. 14, 15.

line and so make the form of the districts more regular. (See Map II).

THE ACT OF 1857

On January 24, 1857, Mr. Foster from the Senate committee on apportionment reported a bill to alter the boundaries of the congressional districts.¹ The measure promptly passed both houses without amendment,² and on January 28 became a law. By its terms, three counties (Des Moines, Louisa, and Washington) were detached from the second district and attached to the first.³ The reasons for this change are not far to seek. In the first place, the population of the second district had been increasing much more rapidly than that of the first. In 1849 the latter had numbered 86,899 inhabitants, while the former had only 68,074; but in 1856 the order of precedence was reversed, since the first district had but 222,120, whereas the population of the second had grown to 285,755.⁴ A slight change of boundaries was, therefore, warranted in order to restore equality. Moreover, several circumstances argued in favor of the transfer of the three counties mentioned in the act. It tended to equalize the population of the two districts, and yet guarded against the necessity of a too early readjustment, by giving the first district a slight excess of inhabitants to offset the more rapid increase in the second.⁵ Fur-

¹ *Senate Journal*, 6th G. A., p. 450.

² *Senate Journal*, 6th G. A., pp. 464, 488; *House Journal*, 6th G. A., pp. 492, 516.

³ *Laws of Iowa*, 6th G. A., p. 323.

⁴ Hull's *Historical and Comparative Census*, p. 196.

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 196. By the new arrangement the first district had 262,999 and the second 244,876 inhabitants.

thermore, it served to secure greater regularity in the boundaries and forms of the districts than any other arrangement would have done.¹ But it seems also to have subserved partisan ends. In the congressional election of 1856 the second district returned a Republican majority of 6,017, while the first went Republican by only 955 votes.² The second was safe; but no great change of sentiment would be requisite to give the first to the Democrats. The counties of Des Moines, Louisa, and Washington alone had, in 1856, given a majority of 862 for the Republican candidate. This vote could be shifted to the first district; and so, without endangering party success in the northern district, the Republican chances in case of general Democratic gains would be strengthened several fold. The outcome of the election of 1858 vindicated the wisdom of this precautionary step; for the Republican majorities were reduced to 2,739 in the second district and 600 in the first, while the three counties in question were carried by only 499 votes. This last number subtracted from the 600 would have left the dominant party with the uncomfortably narrow margin of 101 in the southern district.³ The act of 1857 had relieved the Republicans of great anxiety and fortified their success for the future.

THE ACT OF 1862

The census of 1860 revealed marvelous growth on the part of Iowa. During the decade then closing the popula-

¹ See Maps II and III.

² Fairall's *Manual*, 1882, p. 21.

³ *Tipton Advertiser*, Dec. 11, 1858.

tion of the State had increased more than 250 per cent.¹ For the same period the ratio of national representation, fixed by Congress after the taking of each census, had been raised only about 37 per cent.² When the new figures for the population of Iowa were divided by the new ratio the result was *five* and a large fraction. Moreover, in 1862 Congress decided to increase the total number of Representatives from 233 to 241, and, in recognition of the fraction above mentioned, to award one of these new representatives to the State of Iowa.³ Thus the number of seats in Congress to which Iowa was entitled was suddenly increased from two to six. The State was to be redistricted accordingly. This work was promptly taken up by the General Assembly. It was on March 25, 1862, that Mr. Eaton introduced into the House a bill which was speedily passed and presented to the Senate on the very day of its introduction in the House.⁴ Here it was referred to the committee on congressional districts, from which it was reported with important amendments. Over this report a spirited discussion arose; numerous additional amendments were suggested and lost; but the bill was finally passed substantially as it came from the Senate committee.⁵ Thereupon the House refused to concur in the senate amendments. A committee of conference

¹Population of Iowa in 1850 was 192,214; in 1860, 674,913.—Hull's *Historical and Comparative Census*, pp. 198-9.

²Ratio of representation fixed after the census of 1850 was 93,500; after the census of 1860 it was 127,941.

³*U. S. Statutes at Large*, Vol. xii, p. 353. Act of March 4, 1862.

⁴*House Journal*, 9th G. A., p. 692; vote 53 to 22.

⁵*Senate Journal*, 9th G. A., pp. 449, 456, 516, 517, 519, 536; vote 26 to 16.

was chosen by each house, and a compromise measure was agreed upon, which became a law April 5, 1862.¹

By this act the State was divided into the following six districts: The *first*, consisting of the counties of Lee, Van Buren, Davis, Jefferson, Henry, Des Moines, Louisa, and Washington; the *second*, of Muscatine, Scott, Clinton, Jackson, Cedar, Jones, and Linn; the *third*, of Dubuque, Clayton, Allamakee, Winneshiek, Howard, Mitchell, Buchanan, Floyd, Chickasaw, Bremer, Fayette, and Delaware; the *fourth*, of Appanoose, Monroe, Wapello, Marion, Mahaska, Keokuk, Jasper, Poweshiek, Iowa, Johnson, Tama, and Benton; the *fifth*, of Polk, Dallas, Guthrie, Audubon, Shelby, Harrison, Warren, Madison, Adair, Cass, Pottawattamie, Lucas, Clarke, Union, Adams, Montgomery, Mills, Wayne, Decatur, Ringgold, Taylor, Page, and Fremont; the *sixth*, of Worth, Cerro Gordo, Black Hawk, Grundy, Butler, Franklin, Hardin, Marshall, Story, Hamilton, Wright, Hancock, Winnebago, Boone, Webster, Humboldt, Kossuth, Greene, Calhoun, Pocahontas, Palo Alto, Emmet, Carroll, Sac, Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson, Crawford, Ida, Cherokee, O'Brien, Osceola, Monona, Woodbury, Plymouth, Sioux, and Buncombe.²

The territorial features of this enactment are clearly represented on Map IV. Perhaps the most striking fact in this connection is the great inequality in the size of the districts.

¹ *Senate Journal*, 9th G. A., pp. 550, 564, 580, 586, 595. It is probable that this is the senatorial plan for the six districts which is given in the *Dubuque Weekly Times*, April 10, 1862.

² *Laws of Iowa*, 9th G. A., Reg. Sess., p. 182. Buncombe was the original name of Lyon county. The name was changed, December 10, 1862;—see *Laws of Iowa*, 9th G. A., Extra Sess., p. 22.

A vast area, more than half the State, is embraced in two districts; while the sixth district alone occupies more than one-third of the entire Commonwealth. This is suggestive of the unequal distribution of population throughout the State; but the territorial inequality of the districts is by no means commensurate with the inequality in the distribution of population. In fact, the population of the districts varies almost inversely as their areas. The first had 138,032 inhabitants in 1860; the second, 125,036; the third, 128,646; the fourth, 134,895; the fifth, 101,571; and the sixth, 46,732.¹ Had the people of Iowa been divided equally among six districts, made up of contiguous territory, these large districts would have been still larger and, perhaps, would have exceeded the limits consistent with the most serviceable and effective representation. Nor were political considerations lost sight of. The dominant party not unnaturally looked out for its own interests. The population of the several districts was made almost exactly proportionate to the strength of the Democratic opposition in those districts. The success of these party efforts was apparent in the fall of 1862; for, while the Democrats cast more than three-sevenths of the vote of the State, each one of the new districts chose a Republican representative.² The distribution of territory

¹ Hull's *Historical and Comparative Census*, p. 197.

² Vote for congressmen, in 1862:—

PARTY	1ST DIST.	2ND DIST.	3RD DIST.	4TH DIST.	5TH DIST.	6TH DIST.
Republican.....	12705	12433	12112	12900	10306	5396
Democratic.....	10486	8930	8452	11520	7346	2755
Rep. Majority.....	2219	3503	3660	1380	2960	2631

—Fairall's *Manual*, 1882, p. 26.

and voters by which this result was accomplished was not, however, especially remarkable or reprehensible; for, while the Democratic vote was strong, it was so distributed as to make the erection of more than one or two Democratic districts (e. g. the first and fourth) impossible without resort to palpable gerrymandering in favor of Democracy.

THE ACT OF 1872

On July 14, 1862, Congress passed a law prescribing that in each State, entitled to more than one representative, the number to which such State should be entitled should be elected *by districts* composed of contiguous territory and equal in number to the number of representatives to which the State should be entitled.¹ Since that time, each federal statute relating to the number and apportionment of representatives in Congress, has re-enacted these provisions and has further specified (1) that the districts in each State shall contain, as nearly as practicable, an equal number of inhabitants, and (2) that, if the number of representatives from any State be increased, the State shall choose a delegate at large until the State legislature shall have re-districted the State.²

As Iowa legislation on the subject had hitherto been roughly conformable to these conditions, their enactment into national law had no appreciable effect upon the later laws of the State relating to the congressional districting. It may be of interest, however, to note that the first act

¹ *U. S. Statutes at Large*, Vol. XII, p. 572.

² *U. S. Statutes at Large*, Vol. XVII, p. 28; Vol. XXII, p. 5; Vol. XXVI, p. 735.

subsequent to this national regulation was that of 1872. The congressional apportionment act of February 22, 1872, increased the number of representatives assigned to Iowa from six to nine.¹ Even in anticipation of a new apportionment, the Iowa State Senate had appointed a congressional districting committee consisting of one senator from each judicial district, and had later augmented the membership of this committee by three.² They reported a bill, which was slightly altered, and, after the failure of numerous other amendments, was passed by the Senate.³ Upon being submitted to the House, the bill was referred to the committee on congressional districts, was reported favorably, and passed without amendment,⁴ but by a strictly party vote, all Democrats voting in the negative.⁵

This act, which was signed by the Governor, April 17, 1872, divided the State into nine districts: the *first* consisting of Lee, VanBuren, Jefferson, Henry, DesMoines, Louisa, and Washington counties; the *second* of Muscatine, Scott, Clinton, Jackson, Jones, and Cedar; the *third*, of Dubuque, Clayton, Allamakee, Winneshiek, Fayette, Buchanan, and Delaware; the *fourth*, of Black Hawk, Bremer, Chickasaw, Howard, Mitchell, Floyd, Butler, Grundy, Hardin, Franklin, Cerro Gordo, Worth, Winnebago, Hancock, and Wright; the *fifth*, of Johnson, Iowa, Poweshiek, Marshall, Tama, Benton, and Linn; the *sixth*, of Davis, Wapello, Keokuk, Mahaska,

¹ *U. S. Statutes at Large*, Vol. xvii, p. 28.

² *Senate Journal*, 14th G. A., pp. 13, 35, 44.

³ *Ibid*, pp. 381, 403; vote, 34 to 7.

⁴ *House Journal*, 19th G. A., pp. 519, 549, 591, 688.

⁵ *Iowa State Register*, April 17, 1872.

Jasper, Marion, Monroe, and Appanoose; the *seventh*, of Wayne, Decatur, Clarke, Lucas, Warren, Polk, Dallas, Madison, Adair, Guthrie; the *eighth*, of Ringgold, Union, Adams, Taylor, Page, Montgomery, Cass, Audubon, Shelby, Harrison, Pottawattamie, Mills, Fremont; the *ninth*, of Story, Boone, Hamilton, Webster, Humboldt, Kossuth, Crocker,¹ Emmet, Palo Alto, Pocahontas, Calhoun, Greene, Carroll, Sac, Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson, Osceola, O'Brien, Cherokee, Ida, Crawford, Monona, Plymouth, Sioux, Lyon, and Woodbury.²

The following table shows the population and the political complexion of each district:

NUMBER OF DISTRICT	POPULATION ³ 1870	REPUBLICAN ⁴ VOTE 1872	DEMOCRATIC ⁴ VOTE 1872	REPUBLICAN ⁴ MAJORITY 1872
1st District.	153269	15149	10961	4188
2nd District.	157725	12521	12346	175
3rd District.	159617	13654	11774	1880
4th District.	118385	15615	4574	11041
5th District.	144364	15531	7434	8097
6th District.	155585	14638	11703	2935
7th District.	125211	14909	7702	7207
8th District.	94121	12675	6999	5676
9th District.	85743	12402	6152	6250
Total.	1194020	127094	79645	47449

¹ May 13, 1870, a law was enacted erecting the northernmost townships of Kossuth county into a separate county known as Crocker.— See *Laws of Iowa*, 13th G. A., p. 239. But on December 11, 1871, the Supreme Court declared the law unconstitutional on the ground that these townships did not contain the minimum area required for a county erected under the Constitution of the State.— Stiles Reports, XII, 16 (old series); XXXIII, 16 (new series).

² *Laws of Iowa*, 14th G. A., Reg. Sess., p. 63.

³ Hull's *Historical and Comparative Census*, pp. 197–9.

⁴ *Census of Iowa*, 1873, p. 80; vote for congressmen.

From Map V, it will be seen that these districts were reasonably regular and that the grouping of counties was fairly convenient from a territorial point of view; while variation in extent of districts was naturally much less striking than before.

The case in 1872 closely paralleled that of 1862. Congress had made a new apportionment in accordance with a new census. Iowa's representation had been increased. The Republicans were in control of the State, and sought to secure the new districts as well as the old. The Democrats still cast about two-fifths of the votes of the State. The formation of a few Democratic districts would have been easy,¹ but convenience and regularity of districting did not demand it. The Republicans lived up to all their opportunities. As in 1862, population was made to vary directly as the strength of Democratic opposition. Eastern districts were made the more populous, and at the first election after the new apportionment all the districts returned Republican majorities. But in 1872 the second district was carried by the narrow margin of only 175 votes,² and in 1874 the third went Democratic by 63 votes.³

Early in 1878 a majority of the Iowa house committee on congressional districts reported favorably a bill for the redistricting of the State.⁴ The minority, however, protested

¹The second, for example, by transferring Cedar or Jones (each with about 1400 Republican majority) to the fifth district.—*Census of Iowa*, 1873, pp. 75-76.

²*Census of Iowa*, 1873, p. 80.

³Fairall's *Manual*, 1882, p. 40.

⁴*House Journal*, 17th G. A., pp. 414, 444.

on two grounds: (1) that the census of 1880 would soon lead to a reorganization of the districts and would probably increase the number allotted to Iowa; (2) that the proposed changes were unwise and unjustifiable since they affected only the third and fourth districts and destroyed the symmetry of both, making both reach from the Mississippi far westward in narrow strips of twenty-four by a hundred and seventy-five.¹ Nothing ever came of this proposition, which was evidently an attempt to divide the Democratic vote of the northeastern part of the State in such a way as to make the dubious third district securely Republican.

THE ACT OF 1882

In accordance with the census of 1882, Iowa's quota of representatives was increased to eleven. The new apportionment bill was enacted February 25, 1882.² Immediately the question of redistricting the State was taken up in earnest by the General Assembly and the press. Within two weeks nearly a dozen plans had been published in the *State Register* alone,³ and no less than four distinct bills had been introduced in the Senate,⁴ and three in the House.⁵ In each house these proposals were referred to the proper committee, which, in each case, reported a substitute for the numerous measures submitted.⁶ The two houses passed their respec-

¹ *House Journal*, 17th G. A., p. 461.

² *U. S. Statutes at Large*, Vol. XXII, p. 5.

³ February 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, March. 1.

⁴ *Senate Journal*, 19th G. A., pp. 239, 260, 288, 337.

⁵ *House Journal*, 19th G. A., pp. 324, 355.

⁶ *Senate Journal*, 19th G. A., pp. 239, 260, 292, 337, 365; *House Journal*, 19th G. A., 324, 355, 479.

tive substitutes almost simultaneously and, on the same day, March 14, each was notified of the action of the other.¹ In the House, the senate substitute was referred to the committee on congressional districts.² In the Senate, the house substitute was so amended as to change radically the composition and boundaries of the western districts.³ The House refused to concur in these amendments;⁴ the Senate refused to recede from its position; and a committee of conference was decided upon.⁵ This committee agreed upon a slightly modified form of the Senate measure,⁶ and their report was adopted by both houses,⁷ submitted to the Governor, and on March 23 became a law.

The arrangement was as follows: *first* district, made up of the counties of Lee, Des Moines, Henry, Van Buren, Jefferson, Washington, and Louisa; the *second*, of Jones, Jackson, Clinton, Cedar, Scott, and Muscatine; the *third*, of Dubuque, Delaware, Buchanan, Black Hawk, Bremer, Butler, and Grundy; the *fourth*, of Clayton, Fayette, Winneshek, Allamakee, Howard, Mitchell, Floyd, and Chickasaw; the *fifth*, of Marshall, Tama, Benton, Linn, Johnson, and

¹ *Senate Journal*, 19th G. A., pp. 403-405, 428; *House Journal*, 19th G. A., p. 520.

² *House Journal*, 19th G. A., p. 526.

³ *Senate Journal*, 19th G. A., p. 446.

⁴ *House Journal*, pp. 561, 562.

⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 578, 579, 584.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 599; *Senate Journal*, p. 496; *State Register*, March 17, 1882. Audubon was changed from the 7th to the 9th district; Kosuth from the 11th to the 10th; Monona from the 9th to the 11th.

⁷ *House Journal*, 19th G. A., pp. 599, 600, 604; *Senate Journal*, p. 497

Iowa; the *sixth*, of Jasper, Poweshiek, Mahaska, Monroe, Wapello, Keokuk, and Davis; the *seventh*, of Guthrie, Dallas, Polk, Adair, Madison, Warren, and Marion; the *eighth*, of Clarke, Lucas, Ringgold, Decatur, Wayne, Appanoose, Union, Adams, Page, and Taylor; the *ninth*, of Pottawattamie, Cass, Mills, Audubon, Crawford, Montgomery, Shelby, Fremont, and Harrison; the *tenth*, of Boone, Story, Hardin, Hamilton, Webster, Franklin, Wright, Humboldt, Hancock, Cerro Gordo, Worth, Winnebago, and Kossuth; and the *eleventh*, of Lyon, Osceola, Dickinson, Emmet, Sioux, O'Brien, Clay, Palo Alto, Plymouth, Cherokee, Buena Vista, Pocahontas, Woodbury, Ida, Sac, Calhoun, Monona, Carroll, and Greene.¹

According to the census of 1880, the population was now somewhat more evenly distributed than by any previous arrangement, the first district having 156,972 inhabitants, the second, 164,958, the third, 144,418, the fourth, 149,227, the fifth, 152,112, the sixth, 146,831, the seventh, 147,125, the eighth, 148,397, the ninth, 153,683, the tenth, 137,368, and the eleventh, 121,534.² But territorially the districts of 1882 compare less favorably. On Map VI the long, slim figures of the third and the eighth, and the ragged outlines of the sixth especially arrest our attention. Further examination of the situation shows that these irregular boundaries are the result of an attempt to render harmless the Democratic and Greenback opposition of the east and south. Apparently this object had been accomplished; for on the basis of the election returns of 1880 each of the eleven new

¹*Laws of Iowa*, 19th G. A., Reg. Sess., p. 150.

²Hull's *Historical and Comparative Census*, pp. 196-7.

districts was Republican by several thousand.¹ But this sweeping triumph was only apparent. In the fall of 1882, the Democrats carried three Districts (the second, fourth, and ninth), while the fifth gave a Republican majority of only twenty-three.² The political weakness of this grouping was further demonstrated in 1884, when the second, fifth, and sixth districts went Democratic, and the vote in the first, fourth, and ninth was very close.³ The climax, however, was reached in 1885, when in the State election the Fusionists carried six of the congressional districts (the first, second, third, fifth, sixth, and ninth); while the Republicans carried only five districts (the fourth, seventh, eighth, tenth, and eleventh).⁴

Early in March, 1886, Republican newspapers and legislators began the vigorous agitation of the question of reorganizing the congressional districts of the State. No additions had been made to Iowa's representation in Congress; no new apportionment bill had been passed at all. But the press advocated redistricting on several grounds: (1) that the increase in population since the last apportionment had disturbed the equality then established, and so wrought manifest injustice as among the different districts; (2) that Iowa was a Republican State and should have a Republican delegation in Congress, but under the present arrangement Democrats were likely to fill a large percentage of her seats

¹ Fairall's, *Manual*, 1882, p. 49-51.

² *Ibid*, pp. 58-59.

³ *Ibid*, 1885, p. 34.

⁴ *Census of Iowa*, 1885, p. 356-397; *Iowa Official Register*, 1886, p. 82.

in the national legislature;¹ (3) that redistricting in the interests of a stronger Republican delegation from Iowa was especially desirable at that time, when the Republicans had a reasonable hope of gaining control of the next Congress.² The relative importance of these arguments is not difficult to determine. While the shifting of population was a matter to be taken into consideration after a redistricting had been decided upon, it alone was not of sufficient importance to warrant a reorganization so soon. In fact the inequalities were less notable than immediately after the passage of earlier redistricting acts.³ The paramount consideration was political. This the press was free to acknowledge, and in answer to Democratic criticism was cited the disfranchisement of the negro in the South.⁴

THE ACT OF 1886

Separate bills for the redivision of the State were early introduced into the two branches of the General Assembly.⁵ The senate measure was reported favorably from the com-

¹ *Iowa State Register*, March 5, 1886 (From *Dallas County News*).

² *Ibid*, March 17, 1886; March 30, 1886.

³ A comparative table may be serviceable.

NO. OF DISTRICT	1862	1872	1882	1885
1st District	138032	153269	156972	150214
2nd District	125036	157725	164958	165262
3rd District	128646	159617	144418	146195
4th District	134895	119385	149227	141681
5th District	101571	126788	152112	152516
6th District	46732	155585	146831	147209
7th District		125211	147125	160025
8th District		94117	148397	151967
9th District		75743	153683	173258
10th District			137368	164806
11th District			121534	200849

— See Hull's *Historical and Comparative Census*, pp. 196-200; also *Census of Iowa*, 1888, pp. 1-81.

⁴ *Iowa State Register*, March 6, March 17, April 10, 1886.

⁵ *Senate Journal*, 21st, G. A., p. 296; *House Journal*, p. 324.

mittee on congressional districts;¹ but during the discussion a substitute was offered² which was promptly accepted by the House³ and, on April 10, received the signature of the Governor.⁴ In the words of the *State Register*, "The measure had the support of a strong majority, but was opposed by some of the strongest and best Republicans in the House."⁵

This act apportioned the counties as follows: the *first* district, Washington, Louisa, Jefferson, Henry, Des Moines, Lee, and Van Buren; the *second*, Muscatine, Scott, Clinton, Jackson, Johnson, and Iowa; the *third*, Dubuque, Delaware, Buchanan, Black Hawk, Bremer, Butler, Franklin, Hardin, and Wright; the *fourth*, Clayton, Allamakee, Fayette, Winneshiek, Howard, Chickasaw, Floyd, Mitchell, Worth, and Cerro Gordo; the *fifth*, Jones, Linn, Benton, Tama, Marshall, Grundy, and Cedar; the *sixth*, Davis, Wapello, Keokuk, Mahaska, Poweshiek, Monroe, and Jasper; the *seventh*, Story, Dallas, Polk, Madison, Warren, and Marion; the *eighth*, Adams, Union, Clarke, Lucas, Page, Appanoose, Wayne, Decatur, Ringgold, Taylor, and Fremont; the *ninth*, Harrison, Shelby, Audubon, Guthrie, Pottawattamie, Cass, Adair, Mills, and Montgomery; the *tenth*, Crawford, Carroll, Greene, Boone, Calhoun, Webster, Hamilton, Pocahontas, Humboldt, Palo Alto, Kossuth, Hancock, Emmet, and Winnebago; and the *eleventh*, Lyon, Osceola, Dickinson, Sioux, O'Brien, Clay, Plymouth, Cherokee, Buena Vista, Woodbury, Ida, Sac, and Monona.⁶

¹ *Senate Journal*, p. 404.

² *Ibid*, pp. 688, 707, 736.

³ *House Journal*, pp. 721, 744.

⁴ *Senate Journal*, pp. 766, 773.

⁵ April 10, 1886.

⁶ *Laws of Iowa*, 21st G. A., Reg. Sess., p. 180.

The first district remained unchanged. Slightly Democratic in 1885 and surrounded by Democratic counties, it could not well be transformed into a sure Republican district. The odd new second district was formed by taking the Republican counties of Cedar and Jones away from the old second and replacing them by the strongly Democratic counties of Johnson and Iowa, thus adding nearly 1600 votes to the already heavy Democratic majority of the district, while a 500 Republican majority was released for use where it could be used to advantage. The elongated third and fourth were stretched still farther westward so as to include enough Republican counties to counteract the Democratic influence of Dubuque, Clayton, Allamakee and Fayette. Both were now unmistakably Republican. From the remnants of the old second, third, and fifth was pieced together a long new fifth, solidly Republican. The doubtful sixth remained unchanged, although various suggestions had been made with a view to assuring it to the dominant party.¹ The seventh lost Guthrie and Adair, gained Story and remained decidedly Republican. The eighth gained the Democratic county of Fremont, which its vigorous Republicanism readily assimilated. The ninth lost Democratic Fremont and Crawford and gained Republican Adair and Guthrie, and so became Republican by a small majority. The tenth exchanged Republican Worth, Cerro Gordo, Franklin, Wright, Hardin and Story for Democratic Crawford and Carroll and Republican Greene, Palo Alto, Pocahontas, Calhoun and Emmet, thus retaining its position beside the

¹ *Ottumwa Democrat*, April 11, March 5, 1886; *Iowa State Register*, March 6, 1886.

depleted eleventh as an overwhelmingly Republican district. According, then, to the vote of 1885, eight of the new districts were Republican and three Democratic. Since that time various changes have taken place in the political sentiments of the voters in these several groups of counties.¹ In 1888 the Democrats lost two of their districts; in 1890 they succeeded in electing five congressmen; in 1892 they returned but one representative to Congress; while from 1894 to 1902 they failed to carry a single district. In the campaign of 1902, Judge M. J. Wade (Democrat of the second district) succeeded in breaking into the Iowa delegation. From time to time, bills have been introduced into the General Assembly for the reorganization of these congressional districts; but all have come to nought. It is the arrangement of 1886 which obtains to-day and which gives to the State of Iowa one Democratic and ten Republican representatives in the American Congress.

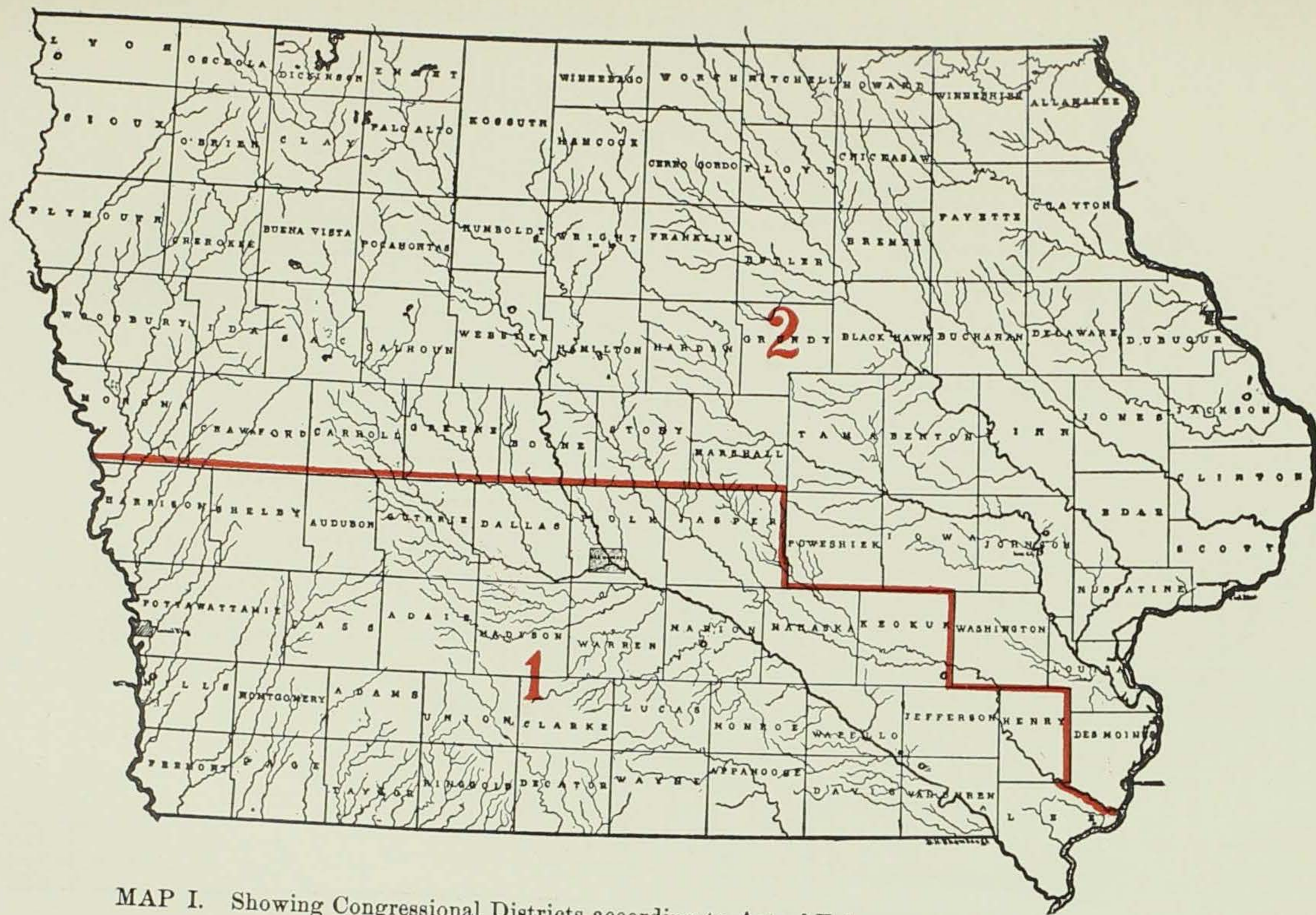
PAUL S. PEIRCE

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
IOWA CITY

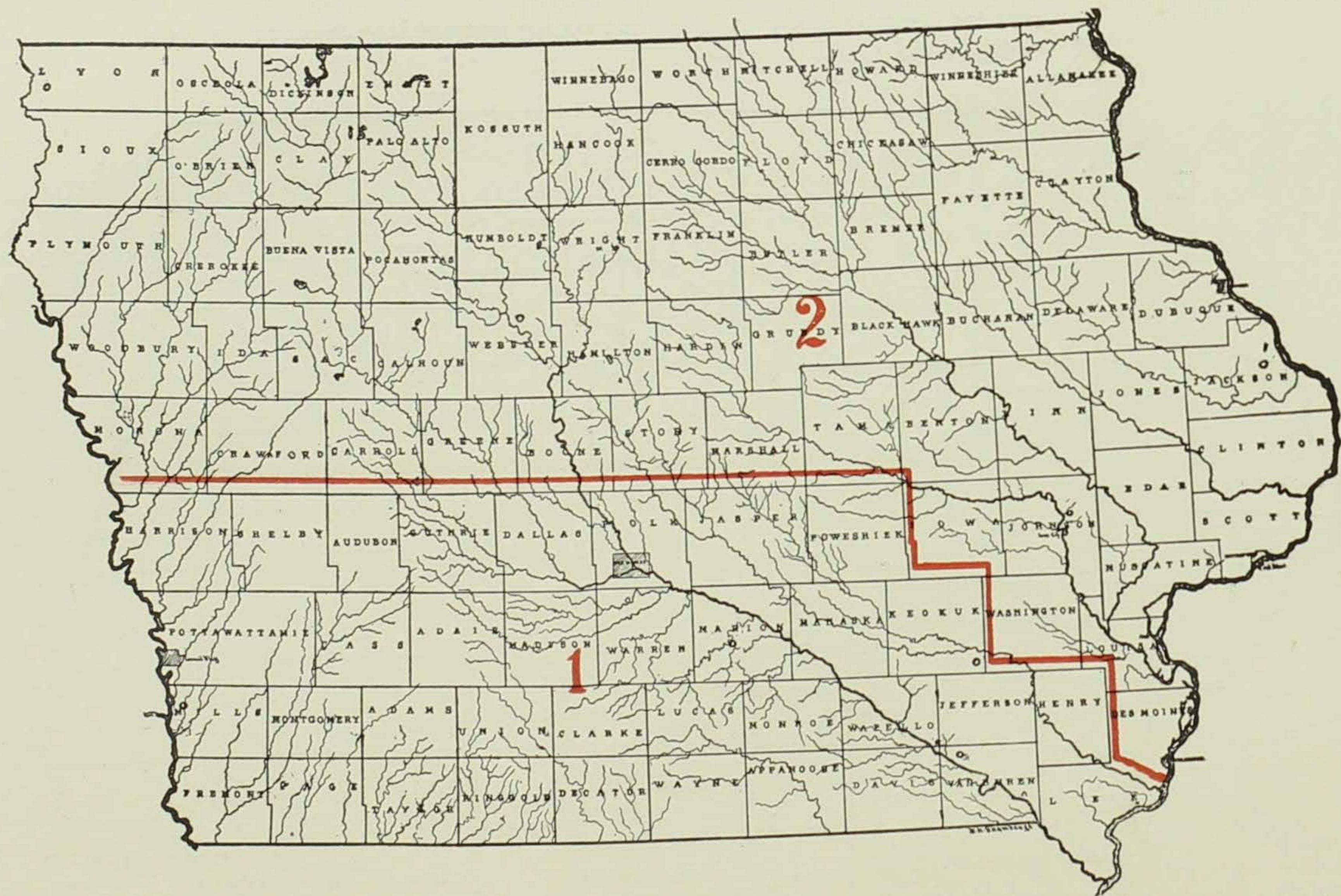
¹ This table gives the pluralities in each congressional district since the last districting. Democratic pluralities are marked D; Republican, R.

No. of Dist.	1886	1888	1890	1892	1894	1896	1898	1900	1902
1st District	R 1037	R 874	D 1071	R 629	R 3836	R 3295	R 3249	R 3368	R 1923
2nd District	D 7300	D 5032	D 9010	D 7772	R 436	R 3320	R 1282	R 1465	D 1158
3rd District	R 2929	R 4585	R 198	R 1459	R 1459	R 10423	R 7019	R 11325	R 5539
4th District	R 1930	R 2222	D 1949	R 1590	R 1590	R 8868	R 7619	R 10863	R 5023
5th District	R 733	R 2516	R 293	R 1098	R 5774	R 7368	R 5365	R 8858	R 5783
6th District	D 618	R 828	D 1520	R 1175	R 6836	R 1201	R 1471	R 3144	R 1813
7th District	R 926	R 5397	R 2545	R 6080	R 7225	R 6226	R 7652	R 12143	R 9123
8th District	D 2225	R 995	R 116	R 4331	R 4134	R 827	R 3824	R 5451	R 6861
9th District	R 2206	R 3694	D 1343	R 2478	R 3057	R 2382	R 4492	R 6948	R 7358
10th District	R 3899	R 5368	R 1311	R 4944	R 14357	R 10968	R 7403	R 15936	R 12774
11th District	R 4437	R 6259	R 907	R 1277	R 9981	R 6828	R 6283	R 12152	R 9133

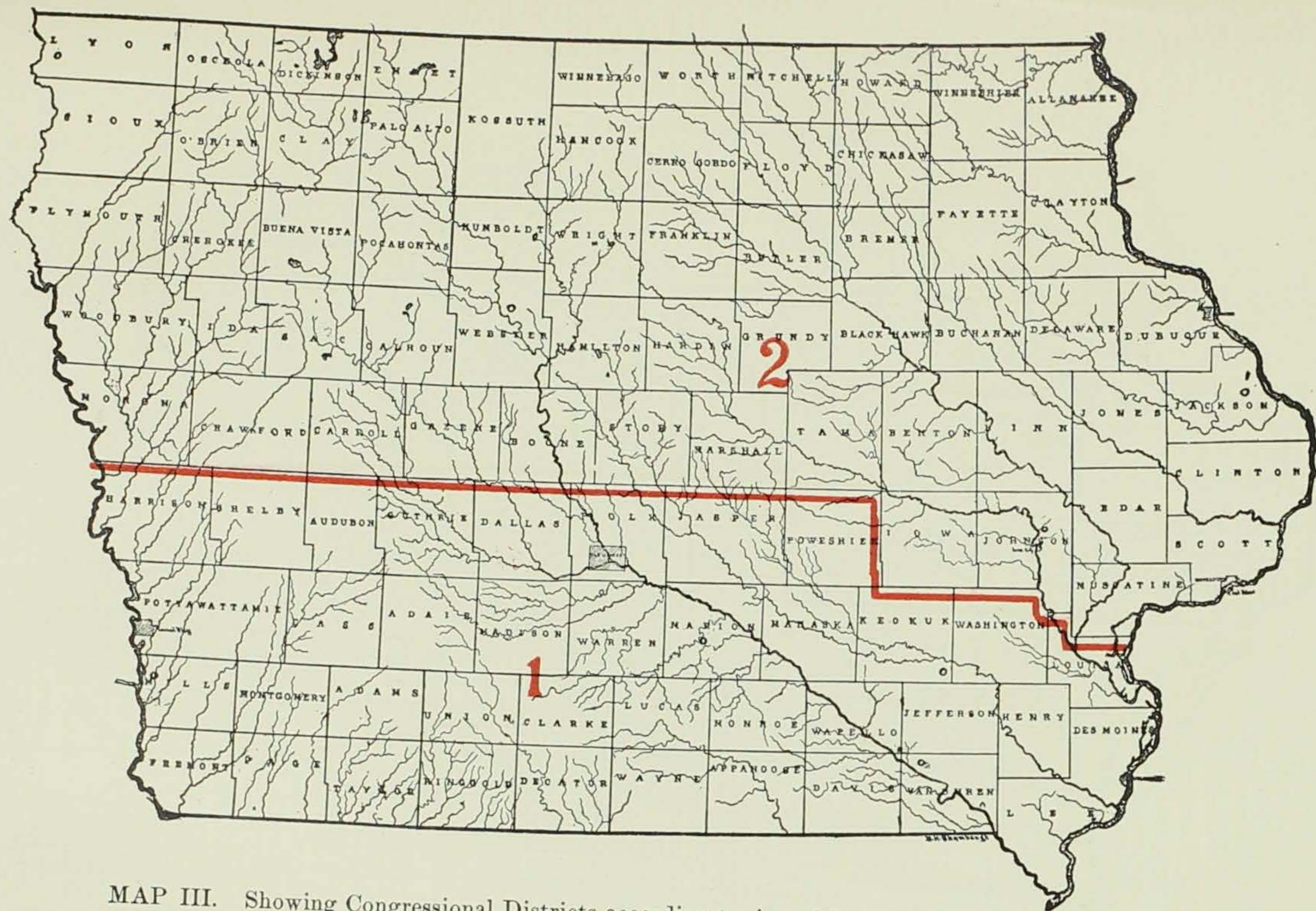
—From *Iowa Official Registers*.



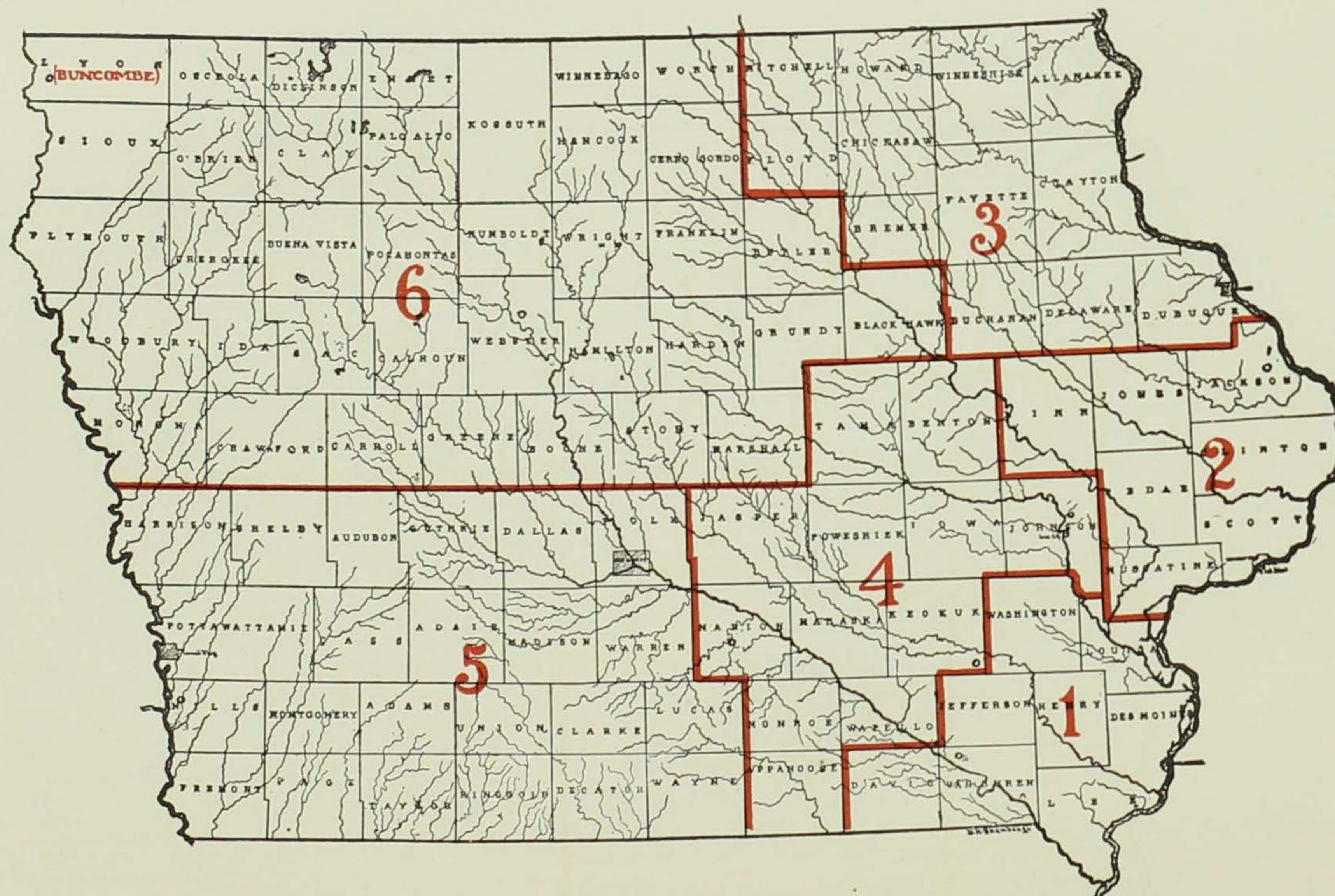
MAP I. Showing Congressional Districts according to Act of February 22, 1847



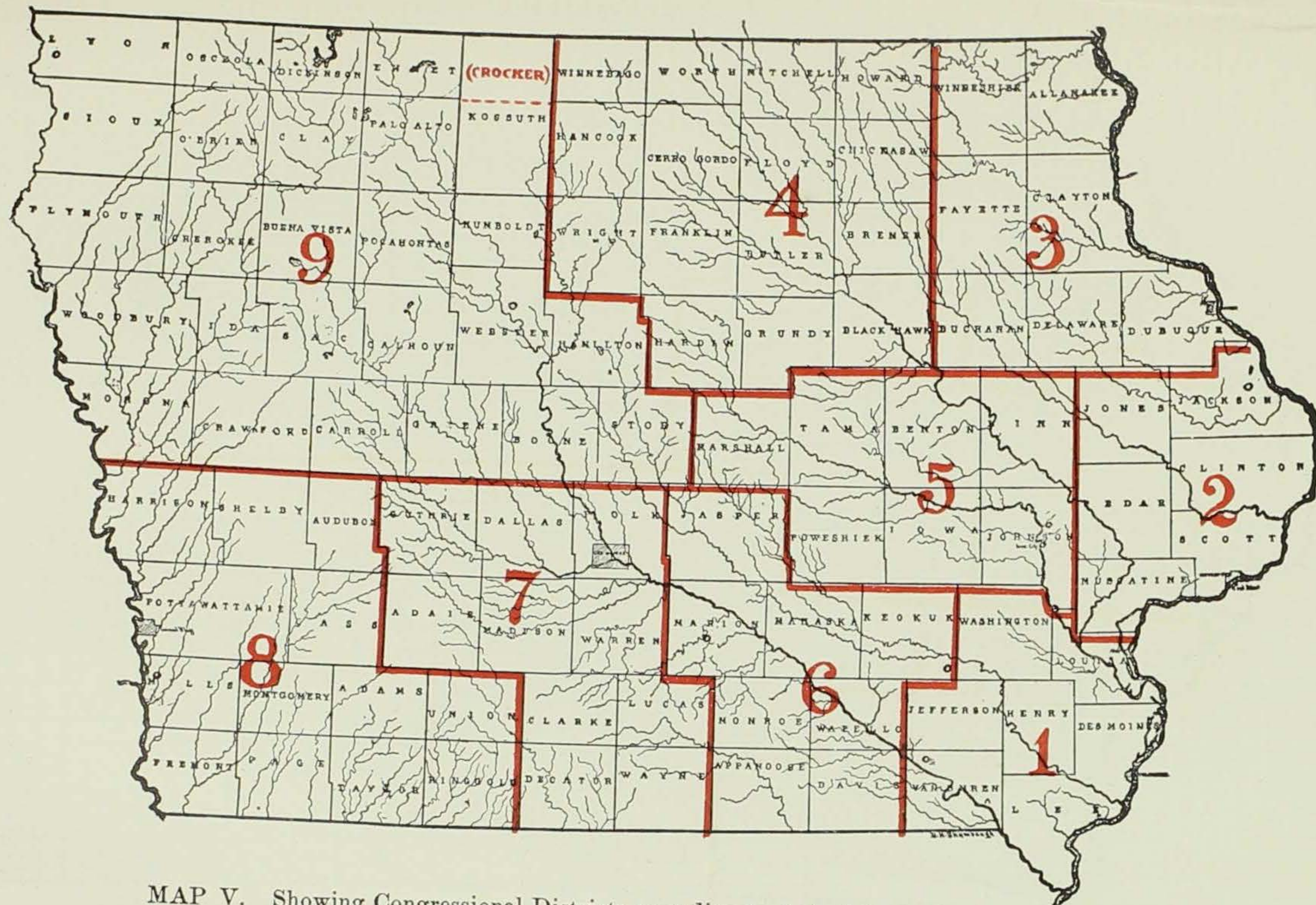
MAP II. Showing Congressional Districts according to Act of January 24, 1848

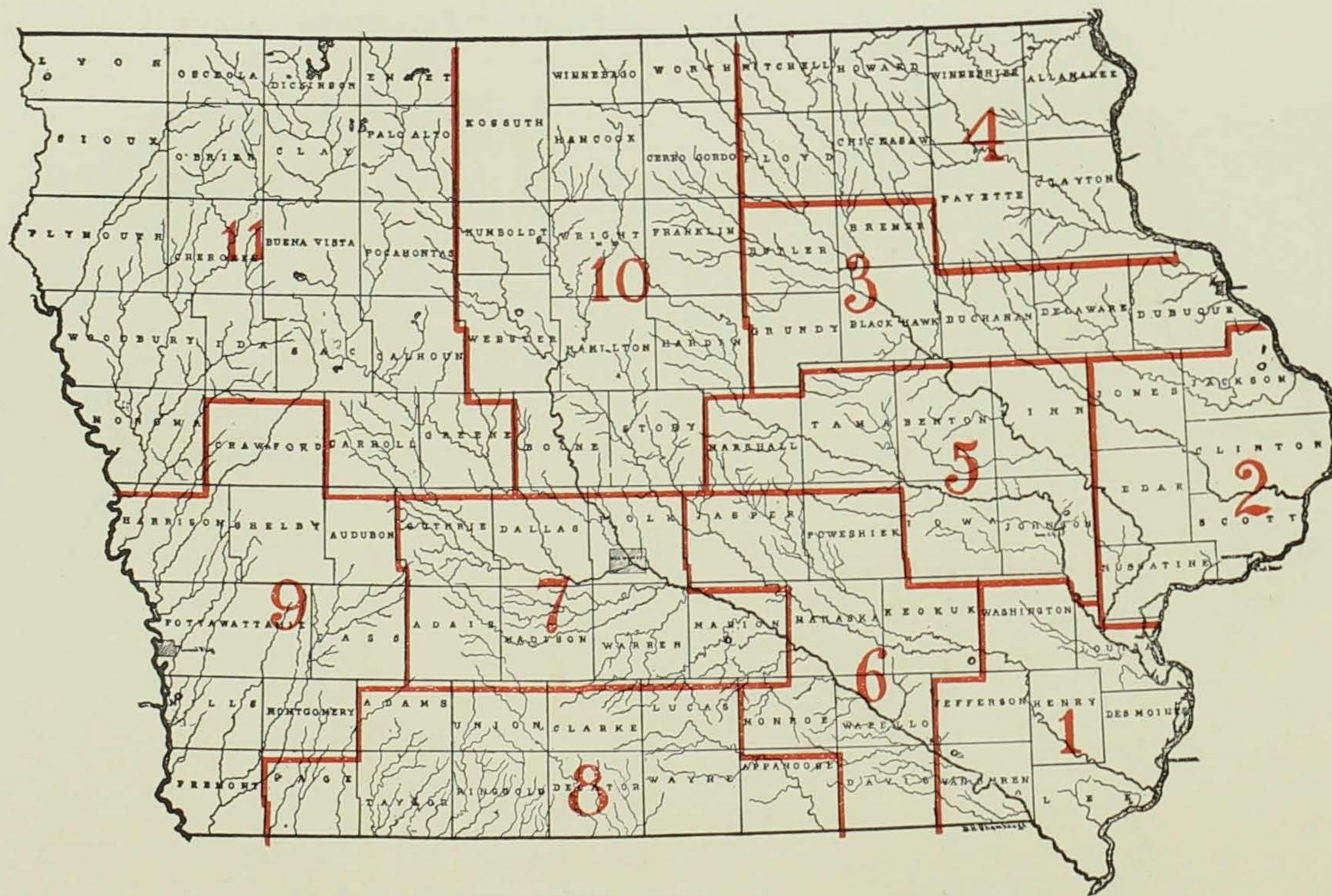


MAP III. Showing Congressional Districts according to Act of January 28, 1857

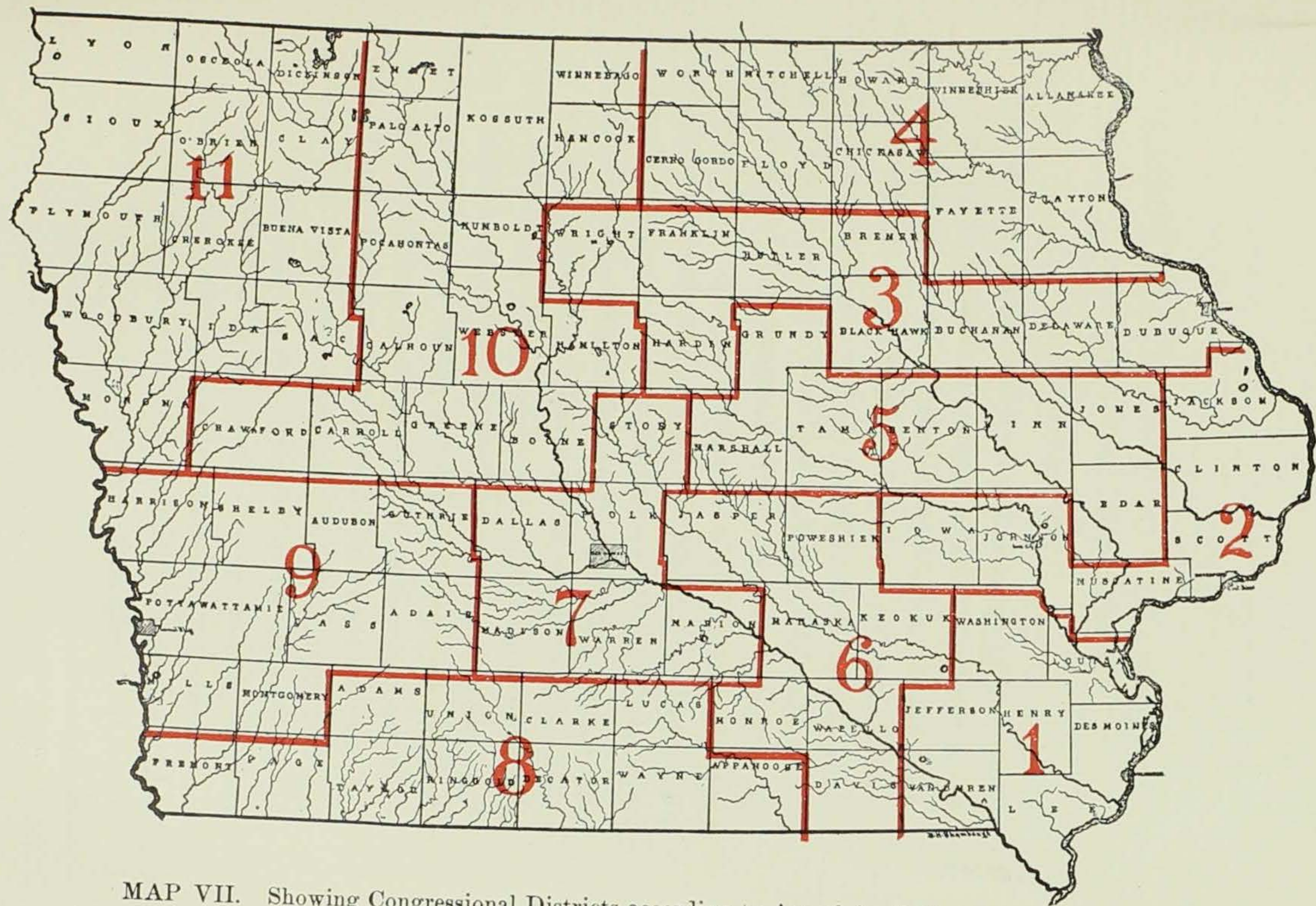


MAP IV. Showing Congressional Districts according to Act of April 8, 1862





MAP VI. Showing Congressional Districts according to Act of March 23, 1882



MAP VII. Showing Congressional Districts according to Act of April 10, 1886