

ARMS AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE IOWA TROOPS IN THE CIVIL WAR

At the outbreak of the Civil War the State of Iowa was in a condition of almost total disarmament. Not a single company of regular troops was stationed within the limits of the State; and there was not a fort, garrison, military post, or arsenal located on Iowa soil. The nearest arsenal was at St. Louis. Indeed, in 1861 there were but two arsenals west of the Mississippi River: at St. Louis and at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. There had been some agitation for the establishment of military posts at Fort Dodge, Sioux City, and Council Bluffs, but it had been stifled by the "masterly inactivity" of the General Assembly. That body, for a number of years previous to the conflict, had not considered military affairs seriously. The legislature had been worse than apathetic: it had been trifling, even jocose. Committees on military affairs seem to have considered it their main duty to furnish entertainment for the Assembly. A special committee appointed in 1858 to inquire into the number of arms received from the United States government and their place of deposit failed to make any report. The chief executive was also ignorant of military matters. Governor Ralph P. Lowe stated to the House of Representatives in 1858, in response to a query, that he was unable to gain definite information as to the number of arms received from the general government, and as to their condition and disposition.¹

¹ *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, March 27, 1862; *Senate Journal*, 1858, pp. 78, 103; *House Journal*, 1858, p. 502; Shambaugh's *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, Vol. II, pp. 201, 202.

As a matter of fact the number of arms in Iowa was almost negligible. What few arms there were in the State were of a primitive pattern and practically useless for actual warfare. Between 1850 and 1860 there had been received from the general government only 1850 muskets and 115 Harper's Ferry pattern rifles. The majority of these guns (1790 in number) were sent to the State in July, 1856, under authority of a special act of Congress of that year. They were old flint lock muskets altered to the percussion type.

This scarcity of arms in Iowa was in part the natural consequence of the "do-nothing" policy of the General Assembly, as a result of which Iowa was not receiving its quota of arms. It was said that while "other States, by reason of their well-directed efforts to effect a thorough military organization, have received their allotment of arms and accoutrements every year, and been provided with well-fitted up arsenals, the State of Iowa has never received anything of the kind, if we except a few muskets set aside to her by a special act of Congress in 1856". This situation had arisen because "in the absence of all laws for the enrollment and organization of the militia, of course the proper returns could not be made, and as a consequence the Secretary of War very properly refused to transfer to this State its quota of arms and accoutrements, camp equipments, etc."²

Even had arms been issued to Iowa each year as they were to the other States, the number would have been much less than a State with the population of Iowa should have received. The distribution was based on the Congressional

² *Report of the Adjutant-General of Iowa*, 1861, pp. 9, 10; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 57; *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, May 11, 1861. Iowa had received a few muskets in 1851 and a few rifles in 1858, but in the main this statement was true.—*Report of the Adjutant-General of Iowa*, 1861, pp. 9, 10.

apportionment of 1850, whereas, by the census of 1860 it was shown that between 1850 and 1860 Iowa had increased in population 251 per cent. Wisconsin had increased 154 per cent, Illinois 101 per cent, Michigan 90 per cent, Indiana 37 per cent, and Ohio 18 per cent.³

In 1860 a few arms were placed in Iowa by the Federal government. These consisted of one hundred rifled muskets of .58-inch caliber, costing \$13.93; and twelve long-range rifles of .58-inch caliber, costing \$17.43. Indeed, it appears that in 1860 Iowa was treated more liberally than either Wisconsin or Illinois. At this time some ordnance, a few revolvers, and the like were also furnished to the State.⁴ Early in 1861, before the war began, Iowa received forty rifled muskets and one hundred rifles. Thus it is evident that the arms in Iowa at the outbreak of the war were few in number. While not strictly accurate, the statement of Governor Kirkwood that "when the war broke out we had in the State some 1,500 old muskets, about 200 rifles and rifled muskets, and four 6-pounder pieces of artillery" is indicative of the situation. A later writer has declared there were "no arms worth counting in all the state", and in this statement there is probably more than a modicum of truth.⁵

What few guns were owned by the State of Iowa at this time were in the hands of local militia companies, unorganized, undrilled, and scattered throughout the State. The captain of each company of not less than thirty men, could,

³ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 128; *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, April 13, 1861.

⁴ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 28; *Report of the Adjutant-General of Iowa*, 1861, p. 10.

⁵ *Report of the Adjutant-General of Iowa*, 1861, p. 10; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, pp. 560, 561; Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 29; Lathrop's *The Life and Times of Samuel J. Kirkwood*, p. 113; *Laws of Iowa*, 1856 (Extra Session), p. 89; *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, April 25, 1861, p. 5; *Burlington Daily Hawk-Eye*, September 6, 1861.

upon filing a bond "for their safe keeping and return thereof" secure from the Governor a loan of arms for his men. He in turn took individual bonds from the members of his company for each gun entrusted to their keeping. A part of the guns were also placed in the hands of companies and individuals along the northern and western borders, where there was danger of Indian raids. Some communities had secured a small number of arms from private sources in addition to those furnished by the State. Thus the people of the little village of Epworth had in their possession some musketry and a village cannon. At Washington, Iowa, a makeshift cannon was constructed out of a steel tube covered with iron.⁶

ARMS FOR BORDER DEFENSE

The actual coming of war created an urgent need for arms and ammunition. Not only must the frontier be protected from Indian raids, but the southern border of the State must be made safe from incursions of Confederate sympathizers from Missouri. There was also felt to be some danger from "Copperheads" within the State. "The cry for 'muskets,' 'more muskets,' came up from every quarter of the state", and the efforts of Governor Kirkwood to secure arms were unceasing. But home defense was only one phase of the problem. The troops that were to be raised for service at the front must also be armed, clothed, and equipped. This was one of the most troublesome questions with which Governor Kirkwood had to contend. While the Federal government agreed to furnish arms and equipments for the troops after they were mustered into service, they were to be maintained at the expense of the State until that time. Besides, the War Department

⁶ One hundred and seventy muskets were "Lost, destroyed, and not accounted for".— *Report of the Adjutant-General of Iowa, 1861, p. 11.*

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was unable to meet all needs immediately, and for a time the State was obliged to care for the troops even after they were mustered into United States service.⁷

Efforts to secure arms for the State were made even before the outbreak of the war. On January 25, 1861, Governor Kirkwood appealed to the Secretary of War for an additional number of arms to be stored at Des Moines or Fort Dodge, to be used in case of an Indian outbreak. He also suggested the advisability of stationing a United States army officer at one of these places. Later, the withdrawal of the troops from Fort Randall and Fort Kearny on the upper Missouri caused so much uneasiness on the western border of Iowa that on April 18th Governor Kirkwood asked the War Department to store five hundred long-range rifles at Council Bluffs and a like number at Sioux City.⁸ At the same time he advised the residents of the border counties to form themselves into companies of "minute men" for their own protection, promising that arms would be supplied as soon as they could be secured. On April 25th he wrote to Caleb Baldwin at Council Bluffs that there "are not now any arms to send there except about fifty muskets that will be sent at once. The people should organize as minute men, and arm themselves with private arms as best they can." "Double-barreled shot-guns and hunting rifles", wrote the Governor to another citizen of Iowa, "although not the best, are good arms in the hands of brave men."⁹

⁷ Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 46; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 118.

⁸ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, pp. 57, 86, 89. Captain Taylor, the Commandant at Fort Kearny, had, before leaving the fort, spiked twelve of the best cannon under his charge.—*The Dubuque Weekly Times*, May 30, 1861, p. 4.

⁹ *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, May 11, 1861; Lathrop's *The Life and Times of Samuel J. Kirkwood*, p. 134; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 561.

Appeals for arms came in from every corner of the State. Caleb Baldwin, a Justice of the Iowa Supreme Court, resident at Council Bluffs, appealed directly to the Secretary of War for arms for use in the protection of the western border. The people of Sioux City were equally as anxious as those of Council Bluffs to secure the means of defense. Citizens of the southern counties also became clamorous for arms. Everywhere companies organized for war service were requesting arms with which to drill.¹⁰

Meanwhile the Governor was "moving heaven & earth almost" to get a supply of arms for the State. There were men in abundance, but it seemed impossible to secure arms. The State was without funds. In a speech at Davenport on the evening of April 16th, Governor Kirkwood had estimated that the enlistment and maintenance of the first regiment would probably cost about ten thousand dollars, and stated that he would undertake to raise that sum at once, if he had to pledge every dollar of his own property. His letter to the Secretary of War on April 18th was followed on April 23rd by the sending of Senator Grimes as a special messenger to Washington to secure arms. On April 24th Kirkwood wrote to the Governor of Connecticut asking if arms could be bought of private manufacturers in that State. Owing to the interruption of the mail and telegraph nothing had yet been heard from these sources on May 1st.¹¹

Governor Kirkwood seemed unable to impress the authorities at Washington with the need for arms in Iowa. Secretary Cameron replied to Kirkwood's letter of April

¹⁰ Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 71; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, pp. 89, 128.

¹¹ Letter from Kirkwood to A. J. Withrow of Salem, Iowa, April 30, 1861, in *Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 1, p. 39; *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), April 22, May 13, 1861; *The Iowa State Register* (Des Moines), May 15, 1861.

18th that if the Iowa troops were removed from the State "provision will be made to meet . . . the emergencies" on the western border. On the same day the Governor wrote a second letter to the Secretary of War. "If no arrangement has yet been made for arms for this State, do, for God's sake, send us some", was his appeal. "We should have at least 5,000 beyond those required to arm the troops the United States may require — say, one-half rifles." The officials at Washington apparently thought that arms and soldiers at Keokuk afforded sufficient protection to the State. "A glance at the map of Iowa", again wrote the Governor on May 4th, "will show you that the troops raised in this State will at Keokuk be at least 300 miles from the nearest point (Council Bluffs), and 400 miles from the point (Sioux City) most exposed to Indian depredations."¹²

But back came the reply that "1,000 stand of arms ought to be forwarded to Keokuk, to be there taken in charge by Colonel Curtis or some other responsible person, to be used in case of an emergency." Again Governor Kirkwood protested that Iowa was a large State, with only a few miles of railroad, absolutely defenseless so far as arms were concerned, and with danger threatening from ruffians on the South and Indians on the frontier. "We have no arms", he wrote. "I cannot, after diligent inquiry, learn where any can be bought . . . I must be allowed to urge again the absolute necessity of sending a liberal supply to this State beyond the quota to arm the troops raised here for the service of the United States." At this time Illinois, a well settled State with almost no exposed border, had been well supplied with arms.¹³

¹² *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, pp. 127, 128, 158.

¹³ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, pp. 162, 185, 186; *Burlington Daily Hawk-Eye*, May 21, 1861.

Letters were written to John A. Kasson, Fitz Henry Warren, and other persons in Washington, urging them to impress upon the President the need of this State for arms. "Every manufacturer of arms in the country was telegraphed and written to for a supply", but the time required to manufacture arms made it impracticable to place dependence on this source of supply. Besides, the State bonds were not in demand, and cash payments were out of the question. Arrangements were made with a military committee in Chicago for a loan of one thousand guns which the committee was to receive, along with others, from the Springfield Arsenal. But the arms were stopped in transitu before they reached Chicago, upon information from the Governor of Illinois that that State had been supplied with arms from St. Louis.¹⁴ When Governor Kirkwood learned that Governor Yates of Illinois had received a supply of arms from St. Louis largely in excess of the requisition in his favor,¹⁵ he wrote him a letter and also despatched a special messenger to Springfield to secure some of the guns, if possible.¹⁶ This attempt also was unsuccessful.

¹⁴ Lathrop's *The Life and Times of Samuel J. Kirkwood*, p. 138; *Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 1, pp. 182-184; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 163; *The Iowa State Register* (Des Moines), May 15, 1861.

¹⁵ This was the reason why Iowa was unable to secure arms from the St. Louis Arsenal. Captain Stokes of Chicago had an order for ten thousand stand of arms from the War Department. He went to St. Louis to secure them and found the arsenal threatened by secessionists. As a decoy he had five hundred old muskets taken to one point on the river to be sent off for repairs. The crowd was attracted there, and in the meantime the arsenal force worked until two o'clock at night loading the rest of the arms on a steamboat bound for Alton and Springfield. With the consent of the officer in charge, Captain Stokes overdrew his order and took 21,000 muskets, 500 rifles, 500 revolvers, 110,000 musket cartridges, and a number of cannon.—*Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), May 6, 1861, p. 2.

¹⁶ *Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 1, pp. 35, 39; *The Iowa State Register* (Des Moines), May 15, 1861; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 163.

On the 2nd of May, 1861, Governor Kirkwood telegraphed to Simeon Draper, President of the Union Defense Committee at New York. "For God's sake, send us arms", was the message flashed over the wires. "Our First regiment has been in drill a week, a thousand strong. It has tents and blankets, but no arms. The Second regiment is full, and drilling. *Send us arms.* Ten thousand men can be had, if they can have arms." Four days later he wrote to General John E. Wool, Commander of the Department of the East, informing him of the situation, and requesting "5,000 long-range rifles or rifle muskets and accoutrements, with proper ammunition". A letter dated May 9th, to Eli Whitney of Connecticut, inquired the prices of rifles equal in quality to the United States long-range rifles.¹⁷

Efforts to secure arms from the East continued throughout the summer. Indeed, in August, 1861, the Governor himself went to New York and Washington to secure arms and make arrangements for insuring peace on the borders of the State.¹⁸ His failure was largely due to the fact that the State bonds were not salable.¹⁹

During this period, however, there was not a total lack of arms in the exposed portions of the State. Arms were taken from places where there was no immediate need for them and transferred to the border. All guns in every part of the State were cleaned and repaired and made service-

¹⁷ Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 47; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 163; *Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 1, p. 139.

¹⁸ Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 72; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 433; *Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 1, p. 309. Gov. Kirkwood was again in Washington late in 1862.—*Iowa City Republican*, January 6, 1863.

¹⁹ *Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 1, pp. 413-415. On August 3, 1861, the Governor wrote: "My contract for rifles and revolvers failed, because I had no money to pay for them."—Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 72. For a discussion of the State bond issue see Pollock's *The Iowa War Loan of 1861* in *THE IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS*, Vol. XV, pp. 467-502.

able. "Get the 55 muskets of J. M. Byers, at Oskaloosa," wrote the Adjutant General to James Matthews of Knoxville, "and another 12 from E. Sells at Des Moines, and place yourself in defense against traitors." On May 9th the Governor wrote to W. S. Robinson, Captain of the Union Guards at Columbus City: "Please accept for yourself & your company my thanks for their cheerful surrender of their arms. . . . it increases my regard for your company that have been willing to make this sacrifice without complaint for the protection of their fellow citizens who are exposed to danger." Many of the newly organized volunteer companies were compelled to drill without arms. It was reported that a Des Moines cavalry company was using wooden swords and it was suggested that they might ride wooden horses as well.²⁰ In some places the people secured their own arms without aid from the State. At Bloomfield, it was said, the Home Guards "have adopted and will procure for arms the 'Menard rifle' ".²¹

The Governor and his aids were very active in securing arms and ammunition for the Home Guards, and for the newly formed companies in the State. Early in May they seized the powder in the magazine at Davenport without lawful authority. "I have forwarded to Council Bluffs 140 stands of arms," the Governor told the General Assembly late in May, "and have ordered one 8-lb. field piece and forty revolvers with the necessary equipments and ammunition transported thither without delay, incurring for express charges, freight, etc., an expense now known of \$359.95. The force necessary to protect the north and western frontier should be had by organizing in each county

²⁰ Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 34; *Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 1, pp. 140, 141; *Burlington Daily Hawk-Eye*, May 18, 1861.

²¹ Quoted from the *Bloomfield Clarion* in the *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), May 6, 1861.

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a company of mounted rangers the expense attending such force consists in furnishing each member of a company with a rifle and sword bayonet valued at from \$23 to \$50, and a Colt's revolver valued at \$22 to \$25." The Council Bluffs "Flying Artillery" and "Union Cavalry" received a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition. The infantry companies complained of neglect. Indeed, Lieutenant C. C. Rice of the "Council Bluffs Guards" spent weeks making cartridges for his company. But the artillery by July had enough ammunition to practice at target shooting. And in September there were enough arms on the western border to warrant the withdrawal of the Des Moines Cavalry from Council Bluffs.²²

Other points were not neglected. By June 27th sixty muskets had been sent to Page County, forty long-range rifles to Taylor County, and muskets to other points. By July several hundred arms had been distributed along the southern border. "The Governor's efforts to supply the border with the means of protection have been highly praiseworthy", declared an Iowa editor. The people made their own cartridges by the thousands. In Keokuk it was said that "all the guns and muskets in the city have been or are being cleaned and repaired". In a border paper appeared the following advertisement: "Wanted, about 75,000 stand of fire arms, of all sorts, to repair ready for peace or war, at the New Gun Making and Repairing Establishment, by W. DUNCAN, on Broadway, opposite City Hotel".²³

The members of all militia companies were required to

²² Letter from Kirkwood to Mr. Bridgman of Keokuk, May 10, 1861, in *Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 1, p. 178; *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), May 6, 1861; Lathrop's *The Life and Times of Samuel J. Kirkwood*, p. 135; *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, May 25, June 1, July 20, September 21, 1861. See also *Council Bluffs Bugle*, August 11, 1864.

²³ *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, June 27, 1861; *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), July 22, 29, 1861; *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, April 20, 1861.

turn in arms, ammunition, and accoutrements. Jesse Bowen presented the State with a brass eight-pounder cannon and eighty rifles.²⁴ At Davenport there was a foundry owned by Mr. Donahue, who had been "occupied two years at West Point making cannon balls, bomb-shells, &c, and during the Mexican war engaged in making the same materials for the use of our army."²⁵ It was urged that he should now make arms and ammunition for the Iowa troops. In October, 1861, the Dubuque Shot Tower was putting out one hundred sacks of shot per day.²⁶

In October, 1861, the War Department was still making excuses because it was not able to supply artillery and small arms for border defense. Money was voted by the General Assembly of Iowa at the extra session of 1861 for the purchase of five thousand stand of arms, but they had not yet been purchased in January, 1862.²⁷

Eventually Governor Kirkwood organized companies and supplied arms to them in the first and second tiers of counties along the southern border, but this work was not completed until in 1863. These companies furnished their own clothing, horses, and equipments. As late as August 18, 1862, Josiah B. Grinnell wrote from the southern border to Governor Kirkwood: "We want arms. Can we not have them?" In March, 1863, Governor Kirkwood wrote to the War Department: "I regard it as a matter of the first and most pressing importance to get a supply of arms and ammunition." He asked at this time for five thousand stand

²⁴ *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, May 4, 1861; Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 43.

²⁵ Quoted from the *Davenport Gazette* in the *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, May 11, 1861.

²⁶ *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, October 3, 1861, p. 5.

²⁷ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 574; *Report of the Adjutant-General of Iowa*, 1861, p. 13.

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of arms, accoutrements, and ammunition.²⁸ They were needed to put down expected resistance to the draft and compel the payment of taxes. There was still a scarcity of arms in southern Iowa at the time of the "Tally War" in 1863.²⁹

ARMS FOR IOWA INFANTRY REGIMENTS IN FEDERAL SERVICE

Throughout the entire summer of 1861 barely enough arms were available to supply the Iowa volunteers, and it was only after much delay that guns were secured. "Where are the arms promised to our regiments?", the Adjutant General inquired in August. "Do send us arms for our infantry and cavalry." The providing of arms for the companies who enlisted for Federal service was a big task. Guns were scarce throughout the country; and an enormous supply was needed. Although eastern manufacturing plants worked at full speed they could not keep pace with the demand for arms. Especially in the West was this situation felt. Delays were many and when the arms did arrive they were unsatisfactory and often unserviceable. The

²⁸ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, pp. 561, 562, Vol. II, pp. 403, 404, Vol. III, pp. 62, 67, 68; letter from Kirkwood to G. W. Devin of Ottumwa, February 16, 1863, in *Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 5, p. 110.

²⁹ Lathrop's *The Life and Times of Samuel J. Kirkwood*, p. 248.

An artillery squad which accompanied the Governor to the scene of this skirmish, having no ammunition for their guns, cut up bars and rods of iron into inch pieces "to do duty in the place of canister, grape and solid shot."—Lathrop's *The Life and Times of Samuel J. Kirkwood*, p. 248.

It was here, also, that the following occurrence took place. One of the artillerymen was standing guard with his gun in the early morning. "A stranger, led by curiosity or as a spy from the Tally camp, came up within speaking distance of the guard, and asked him what he had there". The reply was, "That, sir, by —, is a butternut cracker."—Lathrop's *The Life and Times of Samuel J. Kirkwood*, pp. 251, 252.

In July, 1863, the authorities intercepted a box containing "double-barrelled rifles made of the most approved pattern", destined for the Knights of the Golden Circle.—*Dubuque Semi-Weekly Times*, July 28, 1863.

arms that were refused by eastern troops were frequently sent to the western companies.³⁰

The call for the first regiment of Iowa volunteers was issued on April 15, 1861. This regiment was to serve for three months. Calls for additional regiments came in steadily throughout the next three years. Most of the troops from Iowa were enlisted for three years, although some regiments were made up of hundred day men and others of men who enlisted for various terms. Iowa furnished a total of between seventy and eighty thousand troops. To arm and equip this number alone was a large task at that time. When it is remembered that the Iowa troops constituted only a small part of the great Union army, it is little wonder that there was delay and confusion in the accomplishment of the task.³¹

For the most part the first two regiments were made up of independent, voluntary militia companies which had been organized before the war. The companies in existence at the outbreak of the war were poorly armed. Scarcely a company had a full stand of arms, and the guns they did own were in many cases not fit for use in war, although they would do for drill purposes. Later companies prior to enlistment sometimes used the guns of former companies who had been taken into United States service and been given a new supply of guns.³²

³⁰ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 407.

Assistant Secretary of War Scott wrote in September, 1861, to Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania that "We shall send the arms you cannot use to the West", when that official had protested against some Prussian muskets which had been furnished him.—*War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, pp. 526, 538. Possibly these were the identical four thousand muskets which the Iowa troops received later in the same year.—*Report of the Adjutant-General of Iowa*, 1861, p. 13.

³¹ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, pp. 68, 69; Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 28; Phisterer's *Statistical Record of the Armies of the United States*, pp. 3-11; Briggs's *The Enlistment of Iowa Troops during the Civil War* in *THE IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS*, Vol. XV, p. 373.

³² *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), July 1, 1861.

Especially was difficulty encountered in arming the first few regiments from Iowa. The United States government agreed to furnish the arms and accoutrements. The arms so furnished were distributed through the agency of the Adjutant General, who had been required by law to serve as Acting Quartermaster General. The First Iowa Regiment was in rendezvous at Keokuk more than a week before the time set, and could have been there sooner, but the "Governor saw no special reason for hurrying them on to the rendezvous before the arrival of arms".³³

Arms for seven hundred and eighty men were to have been retained at the St. Louis Arsenal when the shipment was sent to Springfield, Illinois, but for some reason they were not left. On May 10th Governor Kirkwood wrote to the Secretary of War that the "First Iowa Regiment is in rendezvous at Keokuk, and I hope will soon be supplied with arms." Earlier in May Captain R. G. Herron had been sent by the Governor to Springfield, Illinois, with a requisition for five thousand stand of arms. "He found nothing there but the old flint-lock muskets, which have been altered to percussion. There were also bayonets, but no scabbards. He very properly refused to touch any of them, and returned empty handed."³⁴

The troops at Keokuk lived in daily expectation of their arms. On May 17th word came that two thousand stand had been ordered from St. Louis. And on Sunday morning, May 19th, two thousand of these "precious treasures" arrived from St. Louis, "escorted by a company from

³³ *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, April 25, 1861; *Report of Adjutant-General of Iowa*, 1864, p. xiv; *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), May 13, 1861.

³⁴ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, pp. 162, 185; Wilkie's *The Iowa First: Letters from the War*, p. 14.

Mr. Franc B. Wilkie accompanied the First Regiment of Iowa Volunteers as correspondent for *The Dubuque Herald* and the *New York Times*. The work to which reference is made is a collection of his letters to *The Dubuque Herald*, printed in 1861.

Quincy", to guard them from secessionists. "I think it would be a master stroke of policy to allow the secessionists to steal them", wrote Franc B. Wilkie to the *Dubuque Herald*. "They are the 'old-fashioned-brass-mounted-and-of-such-is-the-kingdom-of-Heaven' kind that are infinitely more dangerous to friend than enemy — will kick further than they will shoot, and are appropriately known from their awkward peculiarities in this and other respects, among our Germans as *Kuh-fuss* — 'Cow-foot.' They were brought hither by Col. Curtis for the use of the 2nd Regiment but were stopped by Lieut. Chambers, and by some happy arrangement between him and Curtis, 1000 of them have been retained here for the use of the 1st Regiment. Their appearance creates intense disgust in the mind of every recruit.

"Why is it that our Iowa regiments cannot be armed and equipped, say one-half as well as the regiments of Illinois? All of the latter are armed with the very best arms in use, either Sharpe's or Minie rifles — our men are put off with an old rusty machine that is a cross between a blunderbuss and a Chinese matchlock, and is one which would excite the merriment even of a Digger Indian, unless he happened to be behind it."³⁵

"The bayonets don't shine at all," commented the *Des Moines Valley Whig*, "and we learn that the soldiers don't much affect the old-fashioned smooth bore. But there is a prospect that new patterns will be received before long." This prospect was based on the achievement of Colonel Samuel R. Curtis, who had been sent to Washington to secure arms. He returned soon after the middle of May, having obtained an order for two thousand guns; while cartridge boxes, bayonet scabbards, and waistbands were

³⁵ *The Dubuque Herald*, May 17, 1861; Wilkie's *The Iowa First: Letters from the War*, pp. 24, 25.

to be made and shipped by express from Pittsburg immediately. The above named accoutrements arrived in Keokuk the fore part of June, and were put in Burns & Rentgen's warehouse. There were enough of them to equip the first and second regiments.³⁶

The muskets, however, which were furnished the First Iowa Regiment were not replaced.³⁷ Upon receiving the order to move south from Keokuk, one of the men with the First Regiment of Iowa Volunteers wrote home: "Heaven forgive us all our sins if we are to be sent down among those rampageous, half-horse, half-alligator 'Border Ruffians,' with only these old muskets and triangular bayonets! If we ain't kicked over the borders at the very first discharge, it will be through the special interposition of Providence — or it will be through the same influence, if we are not all dead in three weeks from lugging so much rusty old iron about the hot fastnesses of Missouri. We shall be equally in danger from the muzzles of Missourian muskets and the breeches of our own". An attempt was made by a Union regiment in Missouri to supply these men with new guns, but nothing came of it. Indeed, the men of the First Regiment were doubtless the most illy armed and clothed troops that Iowa furnished.³⁸

The story of the arming of later regiments is one of continued delay and dissatisfaction. Arms were supposed to be supplied to the troops before they left the State, but often this result was not accomplished. The Second Iowa

³⁶ *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), May 20, 27, June 10, 1861.

³⁷ The Governor's Greys of Dubuque were armed with rifled muskets. Probably they secured them from private sources before leaving Dubuque. To offset the advantage of having superior arms, the Greys were inconvenienced by the necessity of running their own bullets to fit them, since they were of a different caliber from the rest of the arms.—Wilkie's *The Iowa First: Letters from the War*, pp. 46, 47.

³⁸ *The Dubuque Herald*, June 18, 1861; Wilkie's *The Iowa First: Letters from the War*, p. 65.

Regiment "was placed in rendezvous at Keokuk, and without arms." This regiment, together with the Third and Fourth Regiments, was reported on June 8, 1861, to be in rendezvous "anxiously awaiting arms." The Third Regiment left Keokuk without cartridges or cartridge boxes. "Destitute of all equipment but empty muskets and bayonets, and without means of transportation," the Third Regiment was on July 1st "hastened westward more than halfway across the state [Missouri]." Not until August 23rd were three thousand "Improved Muskets" shipped "on the Jeannie Deans to the Iowa troops in St. Louis and Missouri." Minie rifles were to have been furnished.³⁹

Varied were the arms dealt out to the Iowa troops. Many of the guns were old flint-lock muskets altered to percussion.⁴⁰ Other troops received rifled muskets, Austrian muskets, Prussian muskets, Belgian rifles, Harper's Ferry muskets, Spencer's carbines, Sharps carbines, Colt's revolvers, navy revolvers, Whitworth rifles, Colt's revolving rifles, Minie rifles, or Enfield rifles. During the year 1862 the State of Iowa received from the United States government one thousand Austrian rifles (caliber .58); twenty-seven hundred Austrian rifles (caliber .54); ten thousand

³⁹ Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, pp. 47, 484; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 261; *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), July 1, August 26, 1861; *The Gate City* (Keokuk), July 1, 1861.

⁴⁰ These arms were generally regarded by the soldiers as worthless. A resident of Dubuque, who claimed to have "had some experience under Government, in this matter," and who signed himself "ORDINANCE", championed them and asserted that they were "as serviceable as any that can be issued from the War Department, with the exception, perhaps, of the rifled musket, which latter arm requires no inconsiderable experience on the part of the soldier". Their propensity to "kick" he explained away by saying that "in the discharge of innumerable guns, during an engagement, it is necessary that the soldier feels his to be among the number that have been discharged." A little cleaning, polishing, and browning, he declared, would make them "as good as if fresh from the national armories". The conviction which his brief carries is somewhat dissipated by the orthography of the writer's *nom de guerre*.—*The Dubuque Weekly Times*, June 27, 1861.

Enfield rifles (caliber .58); fifty-nine hundred Prussian muskets (caliber .72); nine hundred Prussian rifled muskets (caliber .69); six hundred Springfield muskets (caliber .69); one thousand Garibaldi rifled muskets (caliber .71); twelve hundred French rifles (caliber .58); twelve hundred Colt's revolvers; and twelve hundred sabres, with accoutrements for all.⁴¹

The Enfield rifle was the arm which the soldiers were always desirous of securing, since it was one of the best guns in the service at the time. It is interesting to note that an improved Enfield rifle is the arm used in the present war by the English troops and will probably be used by the American troops.⁴²

A part of the Fourth Iowa Infantry Regiment received muskets while still in rendezvous at Camp Kirkwood, Council Bluffs. The rifles had been stored at Fort Kearny and it is said that the order for their delivery was made out by Robert E. Lee, who was at that time Chief of Staff to Lieutenant General Scott, Chief of the Army. Better arms were supplied to the regiment in the field late in September. There was also a battery consisting of four twelve-pound howitzers connected with the Fourth Regiment.⁴³

The Fifth Iowa Regiment was sworn into service at Burlington on the 15th, 16th, and 17th of July, 1861. Arms were distributed to the men of this regiment just a month later, on the way to the front. They, too, were given com-

⁴¹ *Report of the Adjutant-General of Iowa*, 1862, Vol. I, pp. xvi, xvii.

⁴² There is an interesting Civil War anecdote told in connection with the Enfield rifles. One of the nurses in a field hospital "approached the cot on which a wounded soldier of the Massachusetts Fifteenth regiment was lying and asked him, 'Is there anything which you think of that you want?' 'Yes,' was the quick reply, 'an Enfield rifle.'" Most of the men in his regiment were equipped with smooth-bores.—*The Dubuque Weekly Times*, November 28, 1861.

⁴³ *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, July 20, August 3, 1861; *Byers's Iowa in War Times*, p. 605; *Des Moines Valley Whig*, September 23, 1861.

mon muskets, but with the assurance that other arms would be forthcoming in about thirty days. The Sixth Iowa received "miserable Austrian muskets," concerning which a Dutch member of the regiment said, "a man might be killed more as twelve times before de tam ding would shoot off."⁴⁴

The organization of the Seventh Regiment occurred soon after the battle of Bull Run. Owing to pressing military necessity this regiment was sent to the South before it was armed. They received their arms at St. Louis, "the flank companies 'A' and 'B' getting the Springfield rifle with tape self primers, and the other eight companies received the improved 'buck and ball' Springfield musket."⁴⁵ This regiment was also given eight pieces of artillery.⁴⁶ Belgian muskets were supplied to the Eighth Regiment at Keokuk on its way down the river to St. Louis. These guns were received with dissatisfaction by the men. "Uneven caliber, some crooked barrels, locks out of repair! The boys called them 'pumpkin slingers' and pronounced the crooked barrels adapted to shooting around hills."⁴⁷

The Eleventh Iowa Regiment, while it has the distinction of being "the first full regiment, completely uniformed, armed and equipped, which, as such, trod the soil of Iowa", was, nevertheless, unfortunate enough to secure percussion lock, smooth-bore muskets.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 488; *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, February 6, 1862; *Des Moines Valley Whig*, October 21, 1861.

⁴⁵ Smith's *History of the Seventh Iowa Veteran Volunteer Infantry during the Civil War*, p. 6.

⁴⁶ *The Dubuque Herald*, July 21, 1861. Six-pound brass howitzers for Iowa troops were made in Omaha by Charles Hendrie and furnished at a contract price of one thousand dollars each.—*The Dubuque Weekly Times*, September 12, 1861.

⁴⁷ Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, pp. 495, 496.

⁴⁸ *Iowa Historical Record*, Vol. I, p. 129; *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, November 9, 1861.

Within one month after being mustered into service the Twelfth Iowa received arms and accoutrements. This regiment, "owing to the persistent effort of Colonel Woods or the influence which he had with 'the powers that be,' . . . was so fortunate that while others — the Thirteenth Iowa, for instance — was being armed with Harper's Ferry muskets altered from old flintlocks, or with Belgian smooth-bores, the Twelfth received the very best arms then in the service — new Enfield rifles, of which the men were very proud." The Fourteenth Regiment was armed by companies. Three companies had received their arms and were on their way to Fort Randall, in Dakota Territory, late in October, 1861, while the remaining companies had not received arms late in November. When guns were received they were of the poorest sort. W. W. Kirkwood, a nephew of Governor Samuel J. Kirkwood, wrote to his uncle from Benton Barracks on January 12, 1862, complaining of the character of the arms furnished, and asking him to do something to remedy the situation. The arms were worthless, said the young soldier, who declared that "there was one to my certain knowledge Broken by striking it lightly across a pine Box. The barrel broke entirely off in two places." Many of the muskets, he said, burst at the first discharge.⁴⁹

The members of the Eighteenth Iowa Regiment were armed with Austrian rifled muskets upon their arrival in St. Louis; while the Twenty-first Iowa was unusually fortunate in the matter of arms. Going into rendezvous the 25th of August, 1862, all the members of this regiment who had not been previously armed were equipped with Enfield rifles on the 9th of September. The supply of these arms, however, was not lasting. The Twenty-second and Twenty-

⁴⁹ Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 507; Reed's *Campaigns and Battles of the Twelfth Regiment Iowa Veteran Volunteer Infantry*, p. 11; *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, October 31, 1861; *The Weekly Gate City* (Keokuk), December 2, 1861; *Kirkwood Correspondence*, No. 433.

fourth Regiments were compelled to drill with wooden guns and swords of their own manufacture.⁵⁰

Indeed, although a requisition for arms for the "Temperance Regiment" — the Twenty-fourth — was issued early in August, "the regiment paraded and drilled with wooden swords and guns until the middle of October", when it was lucky enough to secure new Enfield rifles. On September 20th Adjutant General Baker wrote to the Secretary of War, asking for arms for ten additional regiments. They were almost immediately furnished.⁵¹

Enfield rifles were furnished to the men of the Twenty-fifth Iowa Regiment on their way down the Mississippi to the field of action. Yet to the Thirty-third Regiment were issued smooth-bore muskets, which were not exchanged for Enfields until some months afterward. And as late as December, 1862, Governor Kirkwood wrote to Edwin M. Stanton, protesting against the character of arms furnished to the Thirty-fifth Iowa Infantry, and asking that they be exchanged for "serviceable guns". Later, the Thirty-eighth Regiment received satisfactory arms before leaving the camp at Dubuque.⁵²

During the early years of the war the guns were so constructed that it was necessary for the men to bite off the ends of the cartridges before loading. Indeed, at the time of the draft, some of those drafted attempted to escape service by having their teeth pulled, thus rendering them

⁵⁰ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. II, p. 287; *The Weekly Gate City* (Keokuk), August 20, 1862; *Dubuque Weekly Herald*, August 20, 1862; Crooke's *The Twenty-first Regiment of Iowa Volunteer Infantry*, p. 13; Jones's *Reminiscences of the Twenty-Second Iowa Volunteer Infantry*, p. 8; *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. I, p. 18.

⁵¹ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. II, pp. 325, 575, 577; *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. I, p. 18.

⁵² *The Weekly Gate City* (Keokuk), November 5, 1862; Sperry's *History of the 33d Iowa Infantry Volunteer Regiment*, p. 3; *Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 5, p. 44; *Dubuque Democratic Herald*, December 24, 1862.

incapable of tearing the cartridges. But toward the end of the war, muskets were used which made this process unnecessary. The rifles used in 1863 by the Dubuque Union Guards, a company which later served as "Hundred Days Men", were "of the Austrian pattern, of which the company have one hundred, with all the accompanying equipments, including 5,000 rounds of ammunition. The guns are of the latest improved pattern, and are made so that the owner is not obliged to bite off the ends of the cartridges, a little instrument accomplishing that work for him, thus enabling one to load and fire almost twice as quick as by the old method." Other companies of these "Hundred Days Men" of 1864 were furnished Enfield rifles. Arms were seemingly plentiful at this time.⁵³

ARMS FOR CAVALRY AND ARTILLERY

The cavalry and artillery, while perhaps faring somewhat better than the infantry, were also subjected to delays and disappointments. For some time the members of the First Iowa Cavalry were armed only with pistols and sabers. The First Iowa Battery was given its first armament at Benton Barracks in December, 1861. This consisted of "four 6-pounder guns and two 12-pounder howitzers". Not until April 29, 1864, did the battery receive "its new armament of six 10-pounder Parrott guns."⁵⁴

The Second Iowa Cavalry in the beginning of its service was likewise armed only with sabers and pistols. Later, however, the men were more satisfactorily armed, some companies with Colt's revolving rifles and some with Sharps carbines. The Third Cavalry was much more speedily

⁵³ *Dubuque Semi-Weekly Times*, August 11, 1863, June 7, 1864; *Burlington Daily Hawk-Eye*, October 27, 1864; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. I, Vol. XLI, Pt. 2, p. 757.

⁵⁴ Lothrop's *A History of the First Regiment Iowa Cavalry Veteran Volunteers*, p. 43; Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, pp. 596, 597.

equipped. By December of 1861 the members of this regiment were "said to be fully armed and equipped with carbines, sabres, and navy revolvers". The Fourth Regiment of Cavalry was mustered in and under marching orders for Fort Leavenworth, and still was without arms late in January, 1862.⁵⁵

But not until March, 1862, were arms added to the heavy dragoon sabers carried by the Fourth Cavalry. And "what arms" they were when they were furnished! They were described as follows:

About four hundred men were loaded with "Austrian" rifles, a very heavy and clumsy, though rather short, infantry gun, a muzzle-loader, with a ramrod. Half the remainder had "Starr's" revolver, a five-shooter, percussion-cap and paper-cartridge pistol, of a bad pattern and poorly made, while all, or nearly all, received a pair of horse-pistols, to be carried in holsters on the pommel of the saddle, the smooth-bore, single-barrelled, muzzle-loader used in the Mexican war.

These rifles and revolvers never gained favor in the regiment; indeed, it is probable that they did more harm than good, because there was a general want of reliance upon them. The Starr revolver caused more fear in the regiment than it ever did among the enemy. Its shot was very uncertain, its machinery often failed to work, and it had a vicious tendency to go off at a wrong moment. The holster-pistols were better thought of. They were found to be more effective than the revolvers, and far more easily managed than the rifles. Many of them were retained until the Colt's revolvers came, in 1863.⁵⁶

The Second Regiment of Iowa Cavalry, after it was transformed, in March, 1864, into the Second Iowa Cavalry Veteran Volunteers, was, on the 19th of June, "armed with *Spencer's Seven Shooting Carbines*. This was the best arm

⁵⁵ Pierce's *History of the Second Iowa Cavalry*, pp. 12, 26, 27, 54, 70; *The Weekly Gate City* (Keokuk), December 16, 1861; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, pp. 786, 790.

⁵⁶ Scott's *The Story of a Cavalry Regiment: The Career of the Fourth Iowa Veteran Volunteers*, pp. 25, 26.

in service, carrying a forced ball, and so arranged that the mounted trooper could throw fourteen balls from it per minute — dismounted, a little more.” Some Confederate prisoners captured by a squad of the Second Cavalry armed with these guns “asked to see ‘one of the guns you all fight with,’ ” and added, “you bring them to your shoulder and hold them there, while a continuous stream of lead rolls from them into our faces. It is no use for us to fight you’ens with that kind of gun.” Later one of the prisoners inquired if the cavalrymen “loaded Sundays and fired all the week.”⁵⁷

Occasionally the Iowa troops would secure guns from captured prisoners or from a store of arms taken in a skirmish. The First Iowa Cavalry at one time secured in this manner seventy-three wagons, five hundred horses and mules, eleven hundred rifles and shot guns, one hundred pistols, and commissary stores and ammunition.⁵⁸

UNIFORMS OF THE IOWA TROOPS

Equipment was even more conspicuously lacking than arms in Iowa in 1861, and the difficulty of securing necessary supplies during the first years of the war was correspondingly greater. For, while effective arms were not an absolute necessity until the battle-field was reached, blankets and clothing were indispensable in rendezvous camps and on the way to the scene of conflict. And while it may be true, as Napoleon suggested, that an army travels on its stomach, nevertheless, stout shoes keep the feet from dragging. Equipment must be furnished the troops immediately after enlistment. It is true that the independent militia companies which were the first to volunteer had

⁵⁷ Pierce's *History of the Second Iowa Cavalry*, pp. 95, 97, 98.

⁵⁸ Lothrop's *A History of the First Regiment Iowa Cavalry Veteran Volunteers*, p. 44. See also p. 54.

uniforms; and the Governor's Greys of Dubuque offered their services to the Governor, January 15, 1861, as a "fully equipped volunteer company".⁵⁹ But such uniforms! They were designed for the delight of the ladies when the company was on parade, rather than for service at the front. Handsome enough were the brave lads in white, red, grey, green, blue, and every other hue of the rainbow on Fourth of July dress parades; but their uniforms would not have been as fitting had they been exposed to the rain and mud and cold which the men were later obliged to endure.

The Davenport Sarsfield Guards, although organized during the money panic of 1858, "equipped themselves with a handsome uniform".⁶⁰ The other companies of the State acted along similar lines. Indeed, these ante-bellum military organizations were, in the main, social organizations. Parades and balls were their chief activities and the various communities seemed to vie with one another in making their own unit most gorgeous. This tendency was evidenced later by the various uniforms worn by the different companies making up the first Iowa regiments, many of which received their initial uniforms from home town patriots. Equipment, like arms, was to be furnished by the general government before the troops left the State. But on their way to and during their stay in the camps of rendezvous, the soldiers were to be cared for by the State.

This was a work which the State might well be expected to perform, and one to which the people of Iowa responded generously. The State government was handicapped by a lack of funds. The war loan bonds were practically unsalable. In part the situation was relieved by voluntary donations from patriotic citizens, but the strain on the State finances was great. Among the first to come to the

⁵⁹ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 56.

⁶⁰ *Annals of Iowa* (First Series), Vol. I, pp. 161, 162.

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Governor's aid were two citizens of Dubuque. "The very morning after Sumter was fired on, J. K. Graves & R. E. Graves, his brother, telegraphed the Governor, saying they would claim it an honor and privilege to honor his drafts to the extent of thirty thousand dollars; leaving repayment to the pleasure of the state, if it could help equip and send the boys to the front." W. T. Smith, of Oskaloosa, together with other war Democrats, offered aid to the Governor. "Private citizens in every town vied with one another in personal sacrifice to aid in the good cause." Solomon Sturges, a Chicago millionaire, offered to loan Governor Kirkwood \$100,000.⁶¹ Town funds were made up. "At little Brighton, \$1,250, cash, was raised in a few minutes from Republicans and Democrats alike, and as much more promised, to help feed and clothe the boys who volunteered."⁶² Hiram Price and Ezekiel Clark were active in raising funds with which to equip the troops. The banks of the State, namely the State Bank and its branches, rallied to the support of the Governor. Kirkwood himself "gave his own personal bonds, pledging all his own prop-

⁶¹ Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, pp. 42, 43; *Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 1, p. 264.

Later R. E. Graves offered to loan \$10,000 to the State on behalf of the Dubuque Branch of the State Bank. He agreed to accept payment in State bonds at par.—*Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 1, pp. 2, 259.

William B. Allison donated fifty dollars to the Governor's Greys, "to be spent by them as their pleasure might dictate." James C. Patterson gave ten dollars to the Keokuk Union Guards.—*The Dubuque Weekly Times*, April 25, 1861; *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), April 22, 1861.

⁶² Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 43. Later, in 1862, the Amana Community sent \$1000 to Governor Kirkwood for similar purposes. "We take the liberty", they wrote, "of sending you enclosed \$1000. Our elders or trustees are inclined to do something for our beloved Union, and as our conscience on religious principles, as you know, prohibits us, like other citizens, from bearing weapons against any other men, we beg you to use the \$1000 for the relief of our sick and wounded soldiers; or, if you think our soldiers in the field are more suffering on account of cold weather, you may use it partly for their relief."—*Iowa City Republican*, November 19, 1862.

erty and earnings, many times over, that the first soldiers of the state might have shoes to wear, blankets to sleep on, and bread to eat."⁶³

Many of the towns fitted out their own troops with uniforms. At a meeting of the citizens of Fort Madison it was voted to instruct the town authorities to appropriate \$2000 for the purpose of equipping the Fort Madison Rifles. "All over the state, companies were kept together drilling, their subsistence furnished by boards of supervisors or by patriotic citizens, some of whom not only helped subsist the would-be soldiers, but furnished them uniforms at their own expense." The Decorah Guards were outfitted by the citizens of Winneshiek County. Shirts, pants, and caps were given to the Pioneer Greys by the townspeople of Cedar Falls.⁶⁴

Governor Kirkwood, recognizing the instant and imperative need for clothing, at his own risk, sent Ezekiel Clark to Chicago to buy cloth for fifteen hundred uniforms. "Let the material be strong and durable", he wrote. But unfortunately the only cloth which could be obtained was "some very poor, thin, sleazy gray satinett, half cotton and half wool, only fit for summer wear".⁶⁵ This material was thought to be stout enough for uniforms for the men in the First Regiment, whose term of enlistment was for the summer months; but "the boys, before the march to Springfield in Missouri, had got their thin clothes badly worn out,

⁶³ *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. I, pp. 594, 595; *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), April 22, 1861; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 87; Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 42.

⁶⁴ *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), May 20, June 10, 1861; Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 47.

⁶⁵ Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 45; Lathrop's *The Life and Times of Samuel J. Kirkwood*, pp. 117, 137. The uniforms of the first three regiments from Iowa were gray. In the summer of 1861 General McClellan forbade the use of gray uniforms by Union troops.—*Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), September 2, 1861.

especially behind, and many of them took flour sacks and made themselves aprons and wore them there instead of in front. When Gen. Lyon saw the first one of these on a soldier, he ordered him to remove it at once, but when he found its removal left the whole fighting force of that soldier without a 'rear guard' and exposed to the jibes and jokes of friend and foe, he ordered it quickly replaced."⁶⁶

The loyal women of the State responded nobly to the task of outfitting the first Iowa regiments. They formed "Soldiers' Aid Societies" and undertook to cut the cloth purchased and make it up into uniforms. Especially active were the ladies of Dubuque, which city was represented by two companies in the First Regiment. The Dubuque tailors also lent their aid. Indeed, two hundred and forty-eight people helped make uniforms for the two Dubuque companies and nine days were consumed in the work. No wonder, with so many "fingers in the pie", that the product was "somewhat lacking in the trim, artistic finish of the 'Tailor shop.'"⁶⁷ The amount of clothing thus made and that otherwise furnished to the First Regiment was reported to the House of Representatives by Governor Kirkwood to be as follows:

Capt. Herron's Company, Dubuque; each man, hat, frock coat, pants, two flannel shirts, two pairs of socks and one pair of shoes.

Capt. Gottschalk's Company, Dubuque; blouse instead of coat, and other articles same as Capt. Herron's.

⁶⁶ Lathrop's *The Life and Times of Samuel J. Kirkwood*, p. 117. "So ragged an appearance did the First Iowa present on its march to Springfield, that Gen. Lyon called them his 'tatterdemalion gypsies,' and when afterward they outmarched all his other troops, he called them his 'Iowa Greyhounds.'" Franc B. Wilkie wrote home that none of the First Iowa would "run from a lady or the enemy — for very shame's sake they would not dare turn aught but their faces to either." Clean shirts, he wrote, would be acceptable, "not . . . so much for the sake of cleanliness as . . . for that of appearances — clean shirts hanging out like banners in the rear, look much better than dirty ones." — Wilkie's *The Iowa First: Letters from the War*, p. 84.

⁶⁷ *The Dubuque Herald*, May 9, 1861.

Capt. Cook's Company, Cedar Rapids; hat, two flannel shirts, pants, socks, and shoes, no jacket or coat.

Capt. Mahanna's Company, Iowa City; hat, jacket, pants, two flannel shirts, socks and shoes.

Capt. Wentz's Company, Davenport; hat, blouse, pants, two flannel shirts, socks and shoes.

Capt. Cummins' Company, Muscatine; cap, jacket, pants, two flannel shirts, socks and shoes.

Capt. Mason's Company, Muscatine; same as Capt. Cummins.

Capt. Matthies' Company, Burlington; hat, blouse, pants, two flannel shirts, socks and shoes.

Capt. Streaper's Company, Burlington; same as Capt. Matthies.

Capt. Wise's Company, Mt. Pleasant; same as Capt. Matthies.

I am not sure that all the Companies were furnished with all the socks, shoes and shirts. Some of the shoes, I have reason to believe, were not of good quality, costing only from \$1.25 to \$1.50 per pair, others I know were good, costing from \$2.00 to \$2.50 per pair. One thousand extra shirts were sent to Keokuk to supply any deficiency that may have existed in that particular. Most of the material for pants was satinet and not of good quality, costing, as far as the same came under my observation, from 40 to 60 cents per yard by the quantity. The entire amount expended for Clothing, so far as I can give it from the data in my possession, is about \$12,000 or \$13,000, including the one thousand shirts above mentioned. If it be desirable in your judgment to have the Companies of this Regiment uniformed alike, it will be necessary to furnish all with coats of the same make, as also with pants, and to furnish an additional number of hats or caps. Hats were procured for all, but some preferred the cap and procured it, and the cost has been provided for. I cannot think that all the Companies need new shoes, as some of the shoes furnished were of excellent quality, and have not yet been worn more than two or three weeks.

I am satisfied it is requisite for the comfort of these troops, that many of them be furnished with pantaloons and shoes, and some of them with socks. As the Second and Third Regiments will be clothed throughout alike, it would, no doubt, be very gratifying to the First Regiment to be placed in the same position, and it will afford me much pleasure to carry out whatever may be your wishes in that regard.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Shambaugh's *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, Vol. II, pp. 413, 415.

In response to this suggestion, the General Assembly by joint resolution authorized Governor Kirkwood to outfit the First Regiment in the same manner as the Second and Third Regiment were clothed. He telegraphed to Merrill, who was in Boston: "Furnish one thousand more, Pants, Coats, and Shoes, same as contracted for, at same prices". These outfits cost about fifteen dollars per man.⁶⁹

The following picturesque account is given of the Governor's Greys when they donned their first uniforms:

They are admirable fits, all of them, except say eighty or a hundred A majority of the boys are able to get their pantaloons from the floor by buttoning the waistbands around their necks — others accomplish this desirable result by bringing the waistbands tight up under the arms and rolling them up six or eight inches at the bottom. To be sure this is a little inconvenient in some respects — a fellow has to take off his belts, then his coat, and then ascend one story before he can reach his pockets, and after reaching them they are so deep that one has to take the pants off entirely before he can reach the bottom. Each pocket will hold a shirt, a blanket and even the wearer himself if at any time he finds such a retreat necessary.

And the coats fit beautifully — almost in fact as well as the pants. To be sure half of them are two feet too large around the waist, and almost as much too small around the chest — but then these two drawbacks admirably offset each other. In the cases of fifteen or twenty of them the top of the collar is but a trifle above the small of the wearer's back, and in the cases of about as many more the same article is a few inches above the head of their owners. The same collar also in some cases terminates beneath each ear, and in many others it sweeps away around in a magnificent curve, forming a vast basin whose rim is yards distant from the neck of its possessor. And the sleeves, too, have here and there a fault — some are so tight under the arms that they lift one up as if he were swinging upon a couple of ropes that pass underneath his armpits — others strike boldly out and do not terminate their voluminous course till

⁶⁹ *Laws of Iowa*, 1861 (Extra Session), p. 35; Shambaugh's *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, Vol. II, p. 421; *Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 1, p. 254.

at a distance of several inches beyond the tips of his fingers, while others conclude their journey after marching an inch or so below the elbows.⁷⁰

Nevertheless, the work of the women was appreciated. The Governor's Greys adopted the following resolution:

HEAD-QUARTERS, G. GREYS, CO. I, 1ST REG. I. S. M.,
VERANDAH HALL, KEOKUK, May 15, 1861

At a meeting of the company the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, The matrons and maidens of Dubuque, fired with the same noble patriotism and enthusiasm as inspired those of '76, and emulating their noble example, have left their daily avocations of business or pleasure, to unite in aiding us to go forth properly accoutred to meet the enemies of our country; therefore

Resolved, That we appreciate with the liveliest emotions of gratitude that self-sacrificing patriotism which flowers indigenous in the breast of woman, and has prompted them to this act of kindness toward us.

Resolved, That the consciousness that we shall daily carry with us the smiles and the prayers, the hopes and the fears of so many lovely faces and warm hearts, will strengthen our rougher bosoms to endure with patience the hardships, and courage to meet boldly the dangers that may oppose us, while fighting the battles of our country.

Resolved, That these uniforms, into which so fair hands have woven so many and so kind wishes, will be an impenetrable web to the entrance of traitors or cowardly thoughts and a sacred remembrance of those for whose protection we are fighting.

Resolved, That the coats shall be our *coats of arms*, that they shall never be *turn coats*, that they will always remind us of the *petti-coats*, and that while we wear the pants we shall always *pant* for honor, and hope to make the ladies *partici-pants* of that hour.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to the President of the Ladies' Volunteer Aid Association and to the daily papers of Dubuque.

F. J. HERRON, Capt. Co. I.

CHARLES N. CLARK, Clerk of Co. I.

⁷⁰ Wilkie's *The Iowa First: Letters from the War*, pp. 21, 22.

Governor Kirkwood also appreciated the services of the women of the State, for he wrote the following letter to Dubuque:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE, Des Moines, Iowa,
May 17th, 1861

Mrs. A. Gillespie, Sec'y, &c., Dubuque, Iowa:

DEAR MADAM:— Through the attention of D. N. Cooley, Esq., I am informed of the voluntary services rendered by yourself and other ladies of Dubuque, in fitting out the two companies of volunteers from your city.

I can not allow the occasion to pass without expressing my sincere thanks for this practical display of the patriotism of the ladies of Dubuque.

You have set a noble example in thus coming forward in the time of our need, and have shown us by this patriotic offering to the welfare of our gallant soldiers, that it needs, but the occasion to reproduce the heroines of '76. With the request that you will convey to each and every one of the ladies connected with you in this good work, my assurance, that your general assistance will be fully appreciated by the people of the State, I beg to subscribe myself, most respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

SAMUEL J. KIRKWOOD.⁷¹

The women of Iowa rendered valuable service throughout the war in making havelocks, lint, bandages, towels, needle books, and various kinds of hospital stores for the soldiers. And, indeed, the uniforms made by the women fitted as well as many of the tailored uniforms. The suits furnished to the Twenty-second Regiment in September, 1862, "were most ridiculous misfits, some had to give their pants two or three rolls at the heels, others had shirts much too large which were, therefore, baggy, while others had to place paper in their hats so they would not slip down over

⁷¹ *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, May 23, 1861; Wilkie's *The Iowa First: Letters from the War*, p. 26; *Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 1, p. 142.

their ears." "Our blouses are somewhat abbreviated," was written of the clothing furnished to the hundred day men of 1864, "and our *gunboats*, as we call our shoes, make up the size which is lacking in our blouses — presenting a most comical appearance."⁷²

BLANKETS FOR THE IOWA TROOPS

There was much actual suffering among the men of the early regiments because of lack of equipment. Great difficulty was encountered in securing blankets for the men. They could not be bought readily in the East and there was not a sufficient quantity on hand within the State. Many of the companies did not have enough blankets to go around, and one company of the Second Regiment had "*nary* blanket." Patriotic citizens donated blankets by the dozen, some of the companies being supplied before they left home for the place of rendezvous. In fact, in October, 1861, Adjutant General Baker published an order requesting all officers who were sending or bringing recruits to make known to their men the importance of bringing along at least one good blanket, comfort or quilt, for each volunteer. Captain D. B. Clarke's company marched clear across the State in December, 1861, from Council Bluffs to Keokuk with only such blankets as the citizens of their own community could supply to them. In one part of the State, a "little trouble was had by Mr. Allison in buying blankets with Iowa bonds, for use of the men so rapidly volunteering. . . . Adj. Genl. Baker, sent him word to ask once more for blankets, and if not forthcoming, some troops would be sent at once to that part of Iowa, and 'the reason found out.' The blankets were soon bought now, in abun-

⁷² *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, August 24, 1861; *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, April 25, July 4, 1861; *Burlington Daily Hawk-Eye*, June 25, 1861; Jones's *Reminiscences of the Twenty-second Iowa Volunteer Infantry*, pp. 8, 9; *Dubuque Semi-Weekly Times*, June 7, 1864.

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dance." In August, 1862, the Governor was still appealing for blankets. He requested ten thousand blankets from the War Department to equip the men coming into rendezvous. He could furnish fifteen regiments but had blankets for only five. "The weather grows cold," he said, "and our men suffer for want of clothing and blankets."⁷³

The scarcity of equipment and the slowness with which the government acted were a drawback to the service. "It would much hasten matters", wrote Governor Kirkwood, "if clothing and equipments could be sent to deliver as companies are mustered in. The delay in furnishing these to other regiments discourages enlistments." In 1862 the lack of blankets made it impossible for the regiments to be in rendezvous at the appointed time. The First Iowa Regiment did not get army uniforms until after the term of enlistment expired and the men were on their way home. Some of the other States seemed to be treated better than Iowa. One of the men of the Seventh Regiment wrote home from Bird's Point in the fall of 1861 that "it makes quite a difference whether a regiment hails from Iowa or from Illinois. Shoulder strap officials recognize the difference between Hawkeyes and Suckers. It has been with difficulty that our claims at the Quartermaster's and pay department could be recognized until Illinois regiments had been attended to first."⁷⁴

GENERAL CONDITION OF IOWA REGIMENTS

The first three regiments, when assembled at Keokuk, presented an appearance resembling a "crazyquilt". One

⁷³ *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), May 27, 1861; *The Dubuque Herald*, May 3, 9, 1861; *Burlington Daily Hawk-Eye*, August 14, 1861; *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, October 26, November 30, 1861; Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, pp. 59, 60; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. II, pp. 400, 417, 658.

⁷⁴ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 499, Vol. II, p. 486; O'Connor's *History of the First Regiment of Iowa Volunteers*, p. 13; *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, November 7, 1861.

company was uniformed in navy blue shirt and grey pants, another in grey jacket and black striped pants, while still another had "a dark blue coat, with green trimmings, light blue pants and fatigue caps of dark blue."⁷⁵ Other and better uniforms were contracted for by the State. Samuel Merrill of Clayton County took the contract for three thousand "full suits or uniforms, including shirts, drawers, shoes, caps and stockings",⁷⁶ and agreed to have them ready within thirty days from the date of contract, an agreement which he fulfilled. The manufacturer in Boston kept a force busy nights and Sundays in order to get them done in time. The uniforms for the Third Regiment were sent by express and reached their destination before the arrival of those for the First and Second Regiments, which were sent by freight. These uniforms would have been provided sooner, but Governor Kirkwood could not get a response from the War Department to the question of whether or not the State would be expected to furnish uniforms. As it was, some of the clothing made close connections. The First and Second Regiments had left Keokuk before their uniforms arrived; while the uniforms for the Third Regiment reached Keokuk the night before the men left for Hannibal, Missouri. It had been remarked that if

⁷⁵ *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), June 10, July 1, 1861.

⁷⁶ *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, July 4, 1861. The first contract entered into was for:

"2,000 Gray, all wool frock coats.

"2,000 Gray, all wool pants.

"2,000 Gray Felt hats.

"4,000 Gray, all wool flannel shirts.

"4,000 Gray, all wool flannel drawers.

"4,000 pairs all wool knit socks.

"2,000 pairs best army brogans.

"Being 1 hat, 1 coat, 1 pair pants, 2 shirts, 2 pairs drawers, 2 pairs socks and 1 pair shoes for each man, at the price of twenty-one dollars for each man" in the Second and Third regiments. Those for the First were ordered later.—Shambaugh's *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, Vol. II, p. 421.

the regiment left without their new clothing, "they could only rely on scaring the secessionists to death by their appearance."⁷⁷

The Seventh Iowa left for the front before it received uniforms or equipment. This regiment drew no overcoats. Rubber blankets and ponchos were not furnished to the troops at that time, so the men used their gray woolen blankets for both raincoats and overcoats.⁷⁸

There was, however, an occasional break in the monotonous record of delay. Army overcoats were distributed to the Second Regiment as early as September 27, 1861. The uniforms for the Twelfth Regiment were unloaded at Dubuque before the regiment left that city. Credit was given to William B. Allison "for obtaining the uniforms thus early." The members of the Nineteenth Regiment, when they left the State for St. Louis, were in possession of "superb equipments". The Twenty-second Iowa and the Thirtieth Iowa were speedily equipped upon their mobilization. The Forty-second Regiment received "overcoats, under-clothes, hats, feathers, shoes, bugles, small drums and other trimmings" before leaving Dubuque. At one period in the history of the Thirty-fourth Regiment the men were in such good condition and so well equipped that in a prize drill with five of the best companies in the division, this regiment stood first in some respects and second in the aggregate.⁷⁹

When the equipment furnished by the Federal govern-

⁷⁷ *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), June 10, 24, July 1, 1861; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 221; *The Dubuque Herald*, July 3, 1861.

⁷⁸ Smith's *History of the Seventh Iowa Veteran Volunteer Infantry*, pp. 6, 7.

⁷⁹ *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), October 7, 1861; *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, October 17, 1861; *The Weekly Gate City* (Keokuk), September 10, 1862; Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 540; Barnett's *History of the Twenty-second Regiment Iowa Volunteer Infantry*, p. 1; *Dubuque Democratic Herald*, December 17, 1862; Clark's *The Thirty-fourth Iowa Regiment*, p. 19.

ment did arrive, there was often a lack of system in its delivery. "The clothing and camp and garrison equipage [of the Eighth Regiment] were distributed in the following generous manner: Being drawn by the regimental quartermaster, they were deposited in a pile on the parade ground, and each company commander directed to march his men to the place, where they were supplied. Company officers made no requisitions and the quartermaster took no receipts."⁸⁰

Although clothing was so scarce, there were a few scapegraces among the troops who would sell the clothing and equipments issued to them for whiskey and the like. In December, 1861, the Fifteenth Regiment was drawn up for inspection, and each man required to show all his "plunder", the object being to find out who were the culprits. Finally, the War Department issued an order prohibiting soldiers from selling or giving away clothing, arms, or equipments. Occasionally clothing was stolen from the soldiers.⁸¹

When the uniforms were issued in due season to a regiment, there was often a delinquency in some other respect. Thus, although the uniforms of the Second Regiment gave satisfaction, the knapsacks were so damaged that they had to be rejected. Perhaps the one situation which caused the greatest discomfort to the soldiers was the lack of shoes. At one time "only 25 men in Company H [First Regiment] were able to do camp duty for want of shoes. Arrangements were made by the Company last week for 82 pairs of shoes on their own account." "There is some neglect somewhere by somebody in furnishing the volunteers", was the

⁸⁰ Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 496.

⁸¹ *The Weekly Gate City* (Keokuk), December 16, 1861, January 20, 1862; *Anamosa Eureka*, November 20, 1863; *Dubuque Semi-Weekly Times*, August 7, 1863.

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bitter comment. "It is fortunate they enlisted in summer or the State and national government would let them freeze to death." The shoes that were issued were many times poor in quality. When the Second Regiment received shoes, one man testified that he "saw several of those men, that same day, with those same shoes on their feet, and holding in their hands the heels, which had already dropped off from them." Many members of the Fourth Regiment were in camp in Council Bluffs without shoes. Poor shoes and scant clothing helped to raise the mortality rate of the Twelfth Regiment.

Lack of shoes was a source of constant trouble throughout the period of the war. The long, hard marches soon wore out the shoes; and there was little chance of their being repaired or replaced. Many are the tales of tired and bleeding feet and footprints marked by blood. Many soldiers bound pieces of rawhide onto their feet. Several of the men of the Sixth Regiment marched with Sherman to Knoxville, barefooted. Gloves and mittens, too, were lacking. Captain Kittle's company [Fifteenth Regiment] appeared at dress parade "without gloves or mittens, even in the coldest days."⁸²

BAGGAGE TRAINS

Despite the fact that equipment in general was scarce and difficult to obtain, the baggage wagons of some of the companies in the early days of the war would have rivalled the impedimenta trains which always accompanied the armies of Caesar. Before the war was over, however, the Iowa troops learned that heavy equipments were a hindrance rather than an aid. The size of the equipment trains

⁸² *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), July 15, 1861; *The Dubuque Herald*, June 2, 18, 1861, July 30, 1862; Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, pp. 71, 72, 498, 522, 524, 592; *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, January 23, 1862; *The Weekly Gate City* (Keokuk), December 16, 1861.

is suggested by the fact that at one time the Confederate forces captured thirty-five baggage wagons of the Twenty-first Iowa Regiment. Each company of the Eighth Regiment "was allowed two six-mule teams with three for regimental headquarters. . . . Tents, axes, hatchets and the knapsacks of the weak were piled into these wagons till they could hold no more." The Twelfth Regiment was outfitted with "a full supply of camp and garrison equipage, including Sibley tents, heavy mess chests, axes, spades, picks, with kettles and pans innumerable, and an immense wagon train consisting of twelve wagons, each drawn by six mules; two ambulances, each drawn by four horses." In fact, the regiment set out "with more baggage and a larger train than would have been allowed three years later for the whole 16th Army Corps". Without any doubt, "very little, if any, of the heavy camp and garrison equipage first set up by the regiment at Smithland survived the first summer campaign, if, indeed, any of it survived the battle of Shiloh."⁸³

These immense trains of baggage were necessitated in part by the fact that such things as tents and mess chests, later furnished in individual sizes and carried by the men, were, at first, in a form which the men could not carry. Instead of individual mess kits there were company mess kits, containing tin plates, cups, spoons, knives, and forks for each man. Each chest contained the mess kits of sixteen men. But "the contents of the mess chest was soon divided up, each man carrying his own plate, cup, knife and spoon in his haversack with his rations".⁸⁴ The first tents, too, were of the Sibley pattern, invented by General Sibley

⁸³ *Dubuque Democratic Herald*, December 3, 1862; *Byers's Iowa in War Times*, p. 496; *Reed's Campaigns and Battles of the Twelfth Regiment*, pp. 11, 13.

⁸⁴ *Reed's Campaigns and Battles of the Twelfth Regiment*, pp. 12, 13.

and modeled after the Indian tepee. They were cone-shaped, about sixteen feet across at the base and supported by a pole in the center which had an iron tripod foot. The top of the pole supported an iron ring about one foot in diameter, to which the cloth of the tent was attached, thus leaving an opening one foot across at the apex of the tent for ventilation. Each tent accommodated sixteen men, who slept with their heads toward the outer edge of the tent. There was room in the center for a fire. But these tents were too heavy and unwieldy for active service, and soon gave place to the small wedge tent, which in turn was supplanted by the "shelter", or "pup" tent, just large enough for two men, and so arranged that each man could carry half a tent. When these tents were used it was not necessary to await the wagons before camp could be made.⁸⁵

TRANSPORTATION OF TROOPS

Very different from the present-day mobilization of troops in the great concentration camps were the methods employed in transporting troops to, and caring for them in, the rendezvous camp of 1861 and 1862. It is true that the railways of the day offered to carry free all volunteer companies of troops whose services were accepted by the Governor, but the mileage of Iowa railroads in 1861 was very small, and most of the troops were compelled to march overland, or travel by stage at least a part of the way. Some companies, of course, were carried down the Mississippi River by boats. Regiments were raised by squads

⁸⁵ Reed's *Campaigns and Battles of the Twelfth Regiment*, pp. 12, 13. The Third Cavalry was provided with Sibley tents,—*Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), October 14, 1861—but the Sixth Cavalry was supplied "a small, inferior tent".—*Dubuque Democratic Herald*, March 25, 1863. Another style of tent was used by some of the regiments—the wedge tent.—Jones's *Reminiscences of the Thirty-second Iowa Volunteer Infantry*, p. 10.

The Sibley tents and the "pup" tents are the two most commonly used in army and militia camps at the present time.

and companies over the entire State, and those which marched to rendezvous, especially, underwent many hardships.⁸⁶ Scantily clothed, often without tents, and many of them barefooted, they tramped through mud and mire, stumbled over frozen clods, and slept without covering in the rain and sleet. A Des Moines company traveled overland to Council Bluffs in coaches of the Western Stagecoach Company at the price of \$4.00 a passenger.⁸⁷

Those who were transported down the Mississippi River at times fared little better. Herded on to open barges, with snow falling, the wind sweeping down the river, and the temperature hovering about the freezing mark, the troops were chilled to the bone. One commander refused such transportation and marched his men back to camp until something better could be arranged. And yet Adjutant General Baker was very attentive to the care given Iowa troops. Even the smallest details were watched. A Mississippi River steamboat company carrying soldiers under contract wished also to take on freight. "Yes," telegraphed Baker, "*take* the freight on if you wish to, but if you do, you take no Iowa soldiers." Some of the hardships endured on these mobilization marches and in the camps were almost as great as those suffered later in the field.⁸⁸

TENTS AND BARRACKS

Tents were an absolute necessity to troops which were raised in all parts of the State. And yet many of the com-

⁸⁶ *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, April 25, 1861; Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 43; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. II, p. 171.

⁸⁷ *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, July 20, 1861. At the very outset of the war, three companies of United States troops which had been ordered east from Fort Randall had to be transported across Iowa, via Des Moines and Davenport, "Owing to the fact that the management of the Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad, at the dictation of the people along the line of the road, refuses to transport them across Missouri"—*Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, May 4, 1861.

⁸⁸ Reed's *Campaigns and Battles of the Twelfth Regiment*, p. 9; Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 58.

panies did not have them. In the first months of the war tents could not be secured from Washington, but orders were given to get them wherever they could be found. As late as June 23, 1862, Adjutant General Baker wrote to Secretary Stanton that "tents are indispensable Let me have the tents [for the Eighteenth Regiment] immediately. Are they on the way?"⁸⁹

Even upon arrival at the place of rendezvous the first few regiments were supplied only with tents. Indeed, they could not go into camp upon arrival, but were housed in empty halls, store buildings, and the like until tents were secured. The Governor's Greys of Dubuque upon their arrival in Keokuk were located in "the U. S. Court House", and the other companies were given quarters in a large brick building in the center of the town. The bunks were filled with clean straw and the quarters were very satisfactory; in fact more comfortable than those provided later in camp. For then seven men were squeezed into a small tent and no straw or hay was allowed to the men to lie on.⁹⁰

Barracks were provided for later companies, although they were always very rough structures and not always snugly built. The lumber was furnished by the government; and the actual work of construction was often done by the troops themselves. Some of the barracks were constructed of pine lumber, others of logs, plastered in the interstices; some were shingled, while others were not; and some were heated, although most of them were not. The ordinary barrack was twenty by fifty feet in dimensions, and housed one company. There were some double barracks for two companies. They were built "without floors,

⁸⁹ *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), May 20, 1861; *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. II, p. 171.

⁹⁰ Wilkie's *The Iowa First: Letters from the War*, p. 16; *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), May 27, 1861.

windows or chimnies", and "with two platforms, one above the other, each about twelve feet wide, extending the whole length of the building, each platform intended to give sleeping accommodations for fifty men, twenty-five on each side, heads together in the middle." Of the barracks for one regiment it was estimated that the expense of building was about two dollars per man.⁹¹ There is evidence that later barracks were more comfortable. It was said that those erected for the Eighth Cavalry Regiment would "be superior to any that have heretofore been erected in this State. They will be built in the most substantial manner, and fitted with all the improvements for comfort and cleanliness which experience has suggested during the war." The barracks erected in 1863 at Camp McClellan for the conscripts were "made of bran new lumber, with excellent ventilation and comfortable bunks." The tables were put up in the open, and "consisted of a plank about a foot wide, and sixteen feet long, with stakes driven in the ground for legs".⁹²

RATIONS AND FOOD SUPPLIES

The situation with regard to the rations dealt out to the Iowa troops was no different than that with respect to the other things furnished. Undoubtedly many of the companies received proper and sufficient food over considerable periods of time, but there were others who did not, and these latter instances, of course, have been emphasized. As a matter of fact, the army rations were fixed by law. "Twenty-two ounces of bread or flour, or one pound of hard bread fresh beef shall be issued when practicable, in place of salt meat; beans and rice or

⁹¹ Sperry's *History of the 33d Iowa Infantry*, p. 2; Lothrop's *A History of the First Regiment Iowa Cavalry*, p. 34; Reed's *Campaigns and Battles of the Twelfth Regiment*, pp. 3, 4; *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, December 19, 1861.

⁹² *Dubuque Semi-Weekly Times*, July 31, December 8, 1863; Smith's *History of the Seventh Iowa Veteran Volunteer Infantry*, pp. 5, 6.

hominy and one pound of potatoes per man shall be issued at least three times a week, if practicable; and when these articles cannot be issued in these proportions, an equivalent in value shall be issued in some other proper food, and a ration of tea may be substituted for a ration of coffee".⁹³ In the Eighth Iowa Regiment the first issue of hard tack "nearly created insurrection." Later the men came to thank their stars that they had even hard tack and its companion ration — "sow bosom" — to eat. Many were the days when whole companies went without a bite to eat. "Nothing but beans one meal and a small piece of side-meat for the next" is a representative entry in the journals of many of the soldiers.

The first companies, while in rendezvous camps, were regaled with every kind of gustatory luxury in addition to substantial eatables. But in spite of this fact at times there was a scarcity of food, especially potatoes. Eggs were plenty and sold at six dozen for a quarter.⁹⁴ In 1862 and 1863 individuals and Soldiers' Aid Societies were kept busy supplying vegetables and other food supplies to the troops in the field and to the sick in the hospitals. The name of Mrs. Annie Wittenmyer stands at the head of the list of those active in this work. Early in 1863 she sent out an appeal for "potatoes, onions, corn-meal, dried fruit, eggs, butter, cheese, kroust, cranberries, dried rusks, beer, ale, horseradish, pepper, spice, dried berries, pickles, ginger snaps, soda crackers, codfish, anything that will afford nutrition, or variety".⁹⁵

⁹³ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Ser. III, Vol. I, p. 399.

⁹⁴ Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 496; *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), June 10, 17, July 1, 1861; Wilkie's *The Iowa First: Letters from the War*, p. 38; *Burlington Daily Hawk-Eye*, June 4, 1861; *The Dubuque Herald*, May 14, 1861.

⁹⁵ *Dubuque Semi-Weekly Times*, September 8, 1863; *Kirkwood Military Letter Book*, No. 6, pp. 72, 73; *The Weekly Gate City* (Keokuk), March 4, 1862.

Of one thing there seems to have been no lack among the early regiments: beer and other liquors were supplied by friendly citizens in great quantities. "The friends of all the companies are extremely liberal in one particular respect . . . and that is in sending in supplies of liquors", wrote Franc B. Wilkie in an account of the First Iowa Regiment. "Every express that comes in — every company that arrives, brings . . . a big supply of drinking materials. Half or more of the carts in Keokuk are constantly engaged in hauling these supplies into camp. They come in the shape of a ten gallon keg of whiskey — a 'choice bottle of old brandy' and a 'nice bottle of cocktail' — a couple of kegs of lager — in short, in all shapes, from all parts of the State".⁹⁶

The regimental and company flags were quite uniformly gifts of the home communities, and very often were the handiwork of the women. Sometimes complimentary equipment and regimentals were also presented to the officers.⁹⁷

EQUIPMENT OF CAVALRY REGIMENTS

Some of the cavalry regiments were unusually well equipped. The horses, arms, and accoutrements of the First Iowa Cavalry Regiment were said to be of "quite remarkable excellence". In December, 1861, the Third Iowa Cavalry was "the largest and best mounted body of men" at Benton Barracks. It contrasted very decidedly with the Third Michigan Cavalry. The latter was said to be "worse off in the matter of horses than Falstaff's regiment was for

⁹⁶ Wilkie's *The Iowa First: Letters from the War*, pp. 39, 40.

⁹⁷ *Annals of Iowa* (First Series), Vol. I, p. 135. Scott's *Story of the Thirty-Second Iowa Infantry Volunteers*, p. 34; Barney's *Recollections of Field Service with the Twentieth Iowa Infantry Volunteers*, p. 19; Lothrop's *A History of the First Regiment Iowa Cavalry*, pp. 19, 21, 22; Pierce's *History of the Second Iowa Cavalry*, p. 11; *Dubuque Democratic Herald*, January 7, 1863; *Des Moines Valley Whig* (Keokuk), June 10, 1861.

shirts; there's but one horse in the whole regiment, and that's a mule!"⁹⁸

The big task was to secure horses that were acceptable. To some companies horses were furnished by the government; while to soldiers who owned their horses forty cents per day was paid for the use of their mounts. Cavalry horses were required to be fifteen hands and one inch high, and from five to nine years old. The Fourth Iowa Cavalry secured a full supply of remarkably good horses. They were purchased and examined under the personal supervision of Colonel Porter. He took especial pride in mounting his men. "He assigned the horses to the several companies in different colors. Many companies, of course, were mounted upon bays. The next highest number were on sorrels, and the next on browns. But Company A had grays, and Company K blacks The Regimental Band all rode fine large roans. There was a continued effort made during the early part of the service of the regiment to maintain this arrangement of the colors, fresh horses being distributed, as far as possible, in accordance with it; but the difficulty of obtaining horses steadily increased, and the maintenance of the colors became impracticable."⁹⁹

During the early months of the war the cavalymen carried an immense amount of equipment, as is shown in the following description:

Mounted upon his charger, in the midst of all the paraphernalia and adornments of war, a moving arsenal and military depot, he must have struck surprise, if not terror, into the minds of his enemies. Strapped and strung over his clothes, he carried a big

⁹⁸ *The Dubuque Weekly Times*, November 21, 1861; *The Weekly Gate City* (Keokuk), December 16, 1861.

⁹⁹ Lothrop's *A History of the First Regiment Iowa Cavalry*, p. 31; *The Dubuque Herald*, July 21, August 6, 1861; *Anamosa Eureka*, October 31, 1862; Scott's *The Story of a Cavalry Regiment*, p. 22.

sabre and metal scabbard four feet long, an Austrian rifle or a heavy revolver, a box of cartridges, a box of percussion caps, a tin canteen for water, a haversack containing rations, a tin coffee-cup, and such other devices and traps as were recommended to his fancy as useful or beautiful. The weight of all this easily reached or exceeded twenty-five pounds. The army clothing was heavy, and, with the overcoat, must have been twenty pounds. So this man, intended especially for light and active service, carried on his body, in the early part of his career, a weight of nearly fifty pounds. When he was on foot he moved with a great clapping and clanking of his arms and accoutrements, and so constrained by the many bands crossing his body that any rapid motion was absurdly impossible. When he was mounted, his surrounding equipments were doubled in number, and his appearance became more ridiculous. His horse carried, fastened to the saddle, a pair of thick leather holsters with pistols, a pair of saddle-bags filled with the rider's extra clothing, toilet articles, and small belongings, a nose-bag, perhaps filled with corn, a heavy leather halter, an iron picket-pin with a long lariat or rope for tethering the horse, usually two horse-shoes with extra nails, a curry-comb and horse-brush, a set of gun-tools and materials for the care of arms, a rubber blanket or *poncho*, a pair of woollen blankets, a blouse, a cap or hat, and such other utensils and articles of clothing or decoration as the owner was pleased to keep. This mass of furniture, with the saddle, would weigh in most cases seventy pounds. So, in the first marches, the unfortunate horse was compelled to carry a burden ranging from two hundred to two hundred and fifty pounds. When the rider was in the saddle, begirt with all his magazine, it was easy to imagine him protected from any ordinary assault. His properties rose before and behind him like fortifications, and those strung over his shoulders covered well his flanks. To the uninitiated it was mystery how the rider got into the saddle; how he could rise to a sufficient height and how then descend upon the seat was the problem. The irreverent infantry said it was done with the aid of a derrick, or by first climbing to the top of a high fence or the fork of a tree.

It was perhaps due to the custom of carrying these complex incumbrances that the story became current among the rebels in the East, in the early part of the war, that the Yankee cavalymen were strapped to their saddles to prevent their running away.

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Yet some of the men were not content with the regulation load. They added a set of plate-armor to it. Among the scores of articles for various uses which were peddled in the camps within the first year of the war, was an "armored vest." It was a vest of blue cloth, cut in military style, with two plates of steel, formed to fit the body and fastened between the cloth and the lining, so as to cover the front of the wearer from the neck to the waist. Samples of the plates were exhibited in the camps, with deep marks upon them where bullets had failed to penetrate, a spectacle which, with the glib tongues of the dealers, induced a few of the officers and men to buy; and some of the horses, accordingly, had eight or ten pounds more to carry.

Not for long, however, did any of the horses bear these dreadful loads. The evident bad effect upon the horses, the care of so many articles, the fact that some of them were not used often enough to justify the trouble of keeping them, and the invaluable lesson steadily taught by experience, that only a few things are really *needed* by a soldier, presented a succession of reasons for diminishing the inventory. The few "armored vests" disappeared on the first march. The lariat was of little use, it often entangled the feet of horses and burned them, and, with its big picket-pin, it was "lost". The nose-bag was thrown away by many, and carried empty as much as possible by others. The rider's clothing was reduced to the least possible — a mere change of underclothing in addition to the garments worn. The hat was stripped of its trimmings, or disappeared entirely in favor of the cap. The pair of blankets was reduced to a single one. Of the small articles for toilet and other uses, only those absolutely necessary were retained. One horseshoe and four nails only were carried, unless there was an express order to carry more. If a curry-comb or brush disappeared, no matter, — one man with a comb and another with a brush had enough for two. Even the supply remaining according to this description was further reduced by many of the men. It became a fine art how to lessen the burden of the horse; and the best soldiers were those whose horses were packed so lightly that the carbine was the biggest part of the load. If it is a wonder in the first campaign how a cavalryman could get on to or move his horse when equipped for the field, the wonder afterward came to be, how a man could live with so meagre an equipment.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Scott's *The Story of a Cavalry Regiment*, pp. 26-29.

CONCLUSION

The State of Iowa furnished its full quota of men for the northern armies during the Civil War. If these men were at times not promptly and properly equipped, if they were forced to undergo unnecessary hardships and privations, it was not due to lack of interest and endeavor on the part of the State authorities to see that the troops received proper care. Nor was there any lack of patriotism, loyalty, and sacrifice on the part of the citizens of Iowa who remained at home. Money, supplies, and personal services were generously given in order that the soldiers might have every possible comfort. The untiring labors of Governor Kirkwood in outfitting and caring for the Iowa soldiers, the incessant toil of Adjutant General Nathaniel B. Baker in looking after the welfare of "his boys", and the patriotism and loyalty of the men and women of the State make bright the pages of this period of Iowa history.

CYRIL B. UPHAM

THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA
IOWA CITY