

Thirty Years After

In the thirty years that have transpired since 1937, Davenport has made giant strides in its development. The population has increased from 66,039 in 1940 to 95,781 in 1966, one of the four most spectacular gains made by major cities in the Hawkeye State. This burgeoning population is contained within 61 square miles, an area greater than San Francisco.

The growth of metropolitan Davenport during the decade 1950-1960 is attested by the following:

	Metropolitan area total	In Central cities	Metropolitan area total	In Central cities
	1960		1950	
Davenport-Rock Island, Moline	319,375	183,549	280,748	160,656
Des Moines	266,315	208,982	226,010	177,965
Cedar Rapids	136,899	92,035	104,274	72,296
Sioux City	120,017	89,159	114,318	83,991
Waterloo	122,482	71,755	100,448	65,198
San Francisco- Oakland	2,935,000	1,107,864	2,135,934	1,159,932

The reason for including the entire Quad-City area is quite logical since 60 per cent of the labor force of each of the Quad-City towns is employed in a city other than that in which it lives. Thus, thousands of Davenporters are employed at such

places as Deere and Company with its 11,500 employees, International Harvester with 7,500 employees, and the Rock Island Arsenal with 7,000 employees. The Quad-City area affords the second biggest market in Iowa and Illinois, being surpassed only by Chicago.

The growth of Davenport in the past thirty years can be measured by the following:

	1937	1967
Gas Meters	16,000	39,000
Telephones	19,000	72,310
Electric Meters	19,000	42,922
Automobiles	26,292	80,600
Paved Roads	194.48 mi.	303.82 mi.

Industrial growth, as indicated below, is a key to Davenport's rapid expansion:

<i>Company</i>	<i>Employees</i>
1. Aluminum Company of America (Bettendorf)	3,500
2. Oscar Mayer & Co.	1,600
3. J. I. Case Company	1,500
4. Iowa-Illinois Gas & Electric Co.	1,276
5. Bendix Corporation	1,250
6. Caterpillar Tractor Co.	1,000
7. Eagle Signal (Division of E. W. Bliss)	900
8. Sivyer Steel Casting Co.	500
9. Continental Baking Co.	350
10. Davenport Newspapers	340
11. Ralston Purina Co.	325
12. Red Jacket Mfg. Co.	325
13. Dewey Portland Cement Co.	280
14. Nichols Wire & Aluminum Co.	250
15. Brammer Mfg. Co.	250

16. French & Hecht	225
17. Lusk Candy Co.	200

Nearly half of the above companies have come to the Davenport-Bettendorf area in the past thirty years. Fourteen additional companies might have been listed employing between 100 and 199 persons while 96 smaller firms are contained in the *Industrial Directory* compiled by the Greater Davenport Chamber of Commerce.

The growth in educational facilities has kept pace with Davenport's industrial and population expansion. In 1935, there were 10,000 students in the public schools compared with 19,861 in 1967. Today there are 23 public schools, 4 junior high schools, and 2 senior high schools. In addition to these, there are 1 industrial arts, 1 special school, 1 technical school, 1 oral deaf school, 10 parochial schools, 1 parochial high school, 1 private college for men (St. Ambrose), 1 private college for women (Marycrest), Palmer College of Chiropractic, 1 junior college (Palmer), and the American Institute of Commerce. Augustana College in Rock Island, Black Hawk College in Moline, and Eastern Iowa Community College in Riverdale offer additional opportunities.

The passing from the scene of many old buildings, together with the refurbishing of many store fronts and interiors, are characteristic changes of downtown Davenport. An old-timer returning to Davenport after an absence of thirty years would

gaze in wonder at the many changes in the downtown area. The new Iowa-Illinois Gas and Electric building won first place in the International Applied Lighting Competition sponsored by the Illuminating Engineering Society. Others competing for the honor were the NASA headquarters and the Houston Astrodome. The Lee Building and Bishop Cafeteria, the latter located on the "Hickey Corner," add beauty to the shopping area. Two new parking ramps completed in 1964 afford facilities to 583 downtown patrons. These ramps, coupled with space for 1,700 cars along the Davenport waterfront, have done much to alleviate downtown parking. An additional factor has been the creation of two shopping centers along old Highway 6.

The recreational and cultural growth of Davenport since 1960 is without parallel. The new \$2,000,000 modernistic YMCA-YWCA is the only combined YM-YWCA in the State of Iowa and one of a few of this type in the entire country. Opened early in 1964, the "Y" plays an important role in the life of the community. That Davenporters have been mindful of others is evidenced by the Lend-A-Hand Club and Friendly House.

The completion of the new Davenport Public Museum and the Davenport Art Gallery with its unique Grant Wood collection are institutions of which cities of half a million would be justly proud. A new home for the Public Library is un-

der way in 1967 to house the 150,000 books for Davenport readers.

William C. Redfield was right when he prophesied, in 1828, that the region located around the southern tip of Rock Island would be the logical point for a transcontinental railroad. The Iron Horse of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific, supplemented by the Milwaukee and the Burlington, continue to be a potent factor in the growth of Davenport and her sister cities clustered around strategic Rock Island. But three other transportation factors, in addition to railroads, have played a dramatic role for this crossroads of empire.

Davenport, first of all, has been a focal point for converging highways from Territorial Days to the advent of the paved road system in the 1930's. The four-lane Rock Island Centennial Bridge and the first of the Twin-Bridges linking Bettendorf with Moline developed new pathways of commerce and communication for the Metropolitan Quad-Cities before the outbreak of World War II. Some 70 common carriers make scheduled stops in the Quad-City area and about 450 trucks are outbound daily during a typical 24-hour day. No single episode in this story, however, from the advent of the covered wagon to the modern truck and bus, can be compared with the completion of Interstate 80 across Iowa, and the dedication of the new \$5 million I-80 bridge across the Mississippi River near LeClaire in October 1966. This

event put the entire Quad-City area on the main transcontinental Interstate Highway across the United States and augured well for still greater industrial and commercial expansion.

Equally significant has been the tremendous growth of barge line traffic on the Mississippi during the past thirty years. The completion of the last dam in the series constructed between Alton, Illinois, and St. Paul, Minnesota, ushered in the towboat era on the Upper Mississippi. In 1938, a scant 1,000,000 tons were carried in the Rock Island District. By 1948, this tonnage had surged to 2,750,000. Since that year the tonnage through the Rock Island District has exceeded the most sanguine prophecies:

1949	4,000,000	1959	10,090,981
1950	5,000,000	1960	10,563,636
1951	5,000,000	1961	10,606,470
1952	5,000,000	1962	11,741,493
1953	6,000,000	1963	13,492,603
1954	7,000,000	1964	14,412,454
1955	7,750,000	1965	14,362,605 (flood)
1956	7,750,000	1966	16,772,138
1957	8,250,000	1967	17,500,000 (est.)
1958	9,250,000		

Some idea of the magnitude of this tonnage may be gleaned from the fact that the total tonnage carried on the entire Mississippi System was only 5,000,000 tons when Iowa became a State in 1846. This had grown to only 10,000,000 tons when Mark Twain was a pilot on the Mississippi in

1860. It will not be long before the Upper Mississippi alone will boast double this tonnage.

Aviation has played an exciting role in the development of the Quad-Cities. Thirty years ago this passenger and freight traffic was relatively insignificant. The period following World War II has seen a fabulous growth in airports and aviation and the Quad-Cities are well-prepared for the Jet Age with Ozark and United Airline service. Thirty-four flights are scheduled daily out of the Quad-City airport. Davenporters have immediate access to one of the finest fields in the Midwest. New York and San Francisco are hours away.

Not long after the close of World War I, Iowans were electrified when Station WOC began broadcasting to listeners, many of whom were able to tune in from remote distances. A new means of communication, television, has been ushered in since the close of World War II. Virtually undreamed of before Pearl Harbor, the Quad-City area is favored by TV stations representing the three major networks—NBC in Davenport, CBS in Rock Island, and ABC in Moline. Few cities of comparable size have such selection.

Davenport offers widely divergent opportunities for entertainment. Its city parks and its golf courses would be the envy of many larger cities. The Quad-City Angels play professional baseball in a handsome ball park located on the bank of the Mississippi. The Mississippi Valley Fair

Grounds is a popular rendezvous. So is the Outing Club founded in 1890-1891, which has served a "great part of the social pleasure of Davenport."

The historical beginnings of Davenport institutions are worthy of comment. Although many trace their origins before the Civil War, there are three that had their inception just a century ago in 1867. The Academy of Science was organized on December 14, 1867 and became the proud progenitor of the Davenport Public Museum. The YMCA was founded in 1867 and occupied its "new building" in 1909. Today's still newer building is evidence of Davenport's continued support of this important work. In 1867 the Board of Trade was established and, after various reorganizations, emerged as the Greater Davenport Chamber of Commerce in 1906. The intellectual, social, recreational, and industrial life of the community is reflected in these century-old institutions.

Many years ago Sidney Foster wrote: "In all that is good, Iowa affords the best." One need only substitute "Davenport" for "Iowa" to present the same picture for Davenport today, a town still worthy of the crown bestowed by Andrew Logan—"The Queen City of the Far West."

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