

## *Western Branch of the Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers\**

South of the city a couple of miles, is the western branch of the Home for disabled volunteer soldiers; and a more desirable place for the visitor and sight-seer could not be found by a year's travel across the seas. It is situated on a nearly level plateau, several hundred feet above the channel, and but a few hundred feet west of the Missouri river. Magnificent trees shade the grounds in summer, and bowers of all descriptions made by the hands of the many hundreds of old battle-scarred veterans. Here, the Brigadier General, the Colonel, the Captain, Lieutenant, Sergeant and Private meet on a common level, in a good cozy home and will pass their last years on earth in quietude and repose.

In 1885, Congress appropriated \$350,000 for the erection of buildings, and it is fair to presume that each succeeding year Congress will make such necessary appropriations as will insure its speedy completion. The plans were drawn by Mr. E. T. Carr. The stone and brick was done by Mr. J. A. McGonigle, and the plumbing and steam heating work by Mr. James Foley, all of Leavenworth. The work is a credit to the city. Each barrack has a capacity of 124 men.

On the first day of September 1885, the first disabled soldier was admitted as a member of the Home. Since that time and up to March 17, 1886, four hundred and eighteen old soldiers have been received. The weekly arrivals average from fifteen to twenty, while the discharges average from five to ten, showing that they not only come but go. In the near future this Home will decidedly advantage our city, and appreciably unfold the benefits locally derived from the close proximity of this permanent, worthy and beneficent institution. There are two Chapels at the Home, a fine cornet band is attached to the institution and a firing party whose duty it is to fire salutes at funerals, which average one per week. The Home has two pieces of artillery and has the privilege of firing a morning and evening gun.

The dining hall of the home will seat 1,200 at table. The buildings are inspected every day. Many of the veterans are practical as well as theoretical farmers and the veterans plant and harvest corn, peas, potatoes, rhubarb, cabbage, turnips, onions, tomatoes, radishes and other staples for the table. Six hundred fruit trees on the grounds provide apples, pears, peaches and cherries. Strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, currants, gooseberries and other small fruits have been set and will bear in time.

The G. A. R. Post at the Home has been named in honor of the first inmate that died, (Thos. Brennan) and is called Brennan Post, Henry F. Jacobs, Commander.

Members of the Soldiers' Home are given transportation from any place in the United States to the Home when they are admitted. On their arrival they are given a suit of clothes, two suits of underwear, three pairs of hose, one pair of shoes, a cap and an overcoat, a good warm room, plenty to eat, and tobacco to chew and smoke if he does not draw a pension. If he draws a pension, he is required to purchase his tobacco.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION.**

**FIRST** — An honorable discharge from the United States service.

**SECOND** — Disability which prevents the applicant from earning his living by labor.

**THIRD** — Applicants for admission will be required to stipulate and agree to abide by all the rules and regulations made by the Board of Managers, or by their order; to perform all duties required of them, and to obey all the lawful orders of the officers of the Home. Attention is called to the fact that by the law establishing the Home, the members are made subject to the Rules and Articles of War, and will be governed thereby in the same manner as if they were in the Army of the United States.

**FOURTH** — A soldier or sailor must forward with his application for admission his discharge paper, and when he is a pensioner his pension certificate, before his application will be considered, which papers will be retained at the branch to which the applicant is admitted, to be kept there for him, and returned to him when he is discharged. This rule is adopted to prevent the loss of such papers and certificates, and to hinder, fraudulent practices; and no application will be considered unless these papers be sent with it. If the original discharge does not exist, a copy of discharge, certified by the War or Navy Department, or by the Adjutant General of the State, must accompany the application. On admission he must also transfer his pension certificate to the Home, and the monies secured thereby, and empower the treasurer of the Home to draw the said monies, and to hold and dispose of them, subject to the Laws of Congress and the rules, regulations and orders which have been or may hereafter be made by the Board of Managers of said National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers.

\* This was compiled from several pieces in early city directories and stories from the Leavenworth Times.