

July 2019

## Des Moines Street names before 1908

A new city ordinance was passed in 1908 to help the city with the confusing street naming. Problems were such as the east side of Des Moines, thoroughfares changed names every few blocks.

Duplicate names were replaced. At least 25 names of streets were given to two or more streets. Jefferson and Washington Streets each could be found at five places in Des Moines. Harrison had four streets. Three streets were named Garfield, while Benjamin Franklin only had two streets named for him. AND there were six Lincolns.

1907 City Directory

Lincoln—W from 25th to 28th 1 s of Hickman av.

Lincoln (Hartley's Add)—S from Brooks and to C, R I & P Ry, first w of e 29th.

Lincoln (Seneca av) (Highland Park)—E from 11th to Cornell, third n of Euclid av.

Eleventh.

Tenth.

Ninth.

Eighth.

Seventh.

Wall.

Sixth av.

Yale.

Vassar.

Harvard.

Bowman.

Hamilton.

Oxford.

Cambridge.

Lincoln—E from 12th, first s of Enos av.

Lincoln (Hall's Add)—E from 1st to D M river, first n of Ascension.

Lincoln St (Prospect Park)—E from 10th to 8th, 1st n of Franklin.



Sixth Ave. looking south between Locust an Walnut. Three types of transportation which had to manuver all of those street names.

Additionally, Des Moines had numbered streets duplicated. Highland park had two Eighth and two Ninth streets. Numbered streets were changed to run in numeric order! Letter streets, A, B, C, etc., were duplicated also.

At the time of discussion of changing names, residents living on East Court Avenue, east of Eighteenth street, were anxious to have that part renamed, as part of Court had a bad reputation. They had chosen Carnarvon Ave. for their part of Court Ave, however the change was not made.

In all, 178 streets were renamed and 150 streets names were replaced. For the name changes new street signs had to made. At the same time, a large number of houses needed to be renumbered. A new map of the city was created. Two indexes were put together to help residents. One was alphabetical with the new names followed by the old names. The other was the reverse list, also alphabetical, old to new names to the right. These indexes in book form were given to policemen, firemen, the post office, merchants, wholesale houses, telephone and street directory companies, and streetcar conductors. Also, a supply to the Commercial Club to distribute.