Mormon Battalion Mustering Grounds Marker
Iowa School for the Deaf, Council Bluffs, Iowa

TRAIL SEGMENT
2. Main Command

TRAIL DATE
16 Jul 1846

DEDICATION DATE
1986

GPS COORDINATES
41° 13.536' N
95° 49.366' W
WGS84

Description
Small marker on Valley View Trail just inside the entrance to the Iowa School for the Deaf. It appears that some future enlistees gathered and camped for a few days at or near the Church Headquarters at Redemption Hill, aka Taylor-Pratt Hill (½ mile north, across Mosquito Creek). But after being mustered here on 16 July, the entire Battalion immediately marched south to Sarpy’s trading post.

Driving Directions
From I-29, just south of high speed interchange with I-80 in Council Bluffs, Iowa, take U.S. Highway 275/Iowa Highway 92 exit and go northeast 0.6 miles to first traffic light. Turn right (southeast) on Harry Langdon Boulevard. Go 655 feet to first traffic light and turn left on Bell Drive at main entrance to Iowa School for the Deaf (1600 S. Highway 275). Marker is north of Bell Drive on Valley View Trail, 82 feet to left.
One of the most remarkable infantry marches in American history began here in July 1846 with the mustering of the Mormon Battalion. Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) responded to the request from President James K. Polk to serve the United States in the war with Mexico. The 500 volunteers were among thousands of Mormons who had left Nauvoo, Illinois, that year and were moving west in search of a new home. The Battalion demonstrated the patriotism of the Mormons and also enabled them to earn money for their westward trek.

Accompanied by a number of wives and children who served as laundresses and aids, the Battalion marched south to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to be equipped, then on through Santa Fe, New Mexico and Tucson, Arizona to the Pacific Coast -- more than 2,000 miles in six months. Although not required to engage in combat, the Mormon Battalion made an important contribution in opening new roads to California and the Pacific coast. Their commanding officer, Lt. Col. Philip St. George Cooke, said of their achievement, "History may be searched in vain for an equal march of infantry."
History
This marker was erected in 1986 by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Sesquicentennial reenactment of the mustering in 2009 took place on the School parade/athletic field 670 feet southeast of here.

Credits
• J. J. Prats was the editor who published this page.