

## HISTORICAL TOUR OF ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL





# TOUR MAP



**Note:** This map is not drawn to scale. Some buildings and access roads may have been left off for clarity.

1. Fort Armstrong
2. Government Bridge
3. Corps of Engineers Clock Tower
4. First Bridge
5. Col. George Davenport House
6. Quarters 1
7. Golf Course Clubhouse
8. Civil War Prisoner of War Camp
9. Kingsbury Manufacturing Center
10. Stone Shops
11. Memorial Field
12. Confederate Cemetery
13. National Cemetery
14. Pump Station
15. Building 299



# 150 YEARS

150 Years

Since 1862, Rock Island Arsenal has provided vital logistics and technological support to the Soldiers of the United States Army.

Thank you for joining us as we celebrate our sesquicentennial and the service of the U.S. Army Soldiers, Civilians and Contractors that made the Arsenal a crucial installation for the past century and a half, and continue its important service in the 21st century.





## Fort Armstrong

Fort Armstrong was erected in 1816 as part of the government's efforts to construct a number of military posts throughout the Upper Mississippi Valley to deter British and other foreign trading outfits from operating there as well as to secure American interests against foreign and Native American threats. The fort had a garrison of approximately 200-300 Soldiers throughout its existence. Fort Armstrong was abandoned by



the government in 1836. From 1840-1856, the site was used as an ordnance depot by the Army until fire claimed the last of the four original structures. Today, a relic of an old blockhouse sits on the far western tip of the island to serve as a lasting reminder of the government's first military presence on the island.

Fort  
Armstrong





## Government Bridge

The Government Bridge, built in 1896, is a double-decker bridge with double railroad tracks above and a roadway below. This project was designed and directed by Ralph Modjeski. Its swing span, which can rotate 360 degrees for river traffic, is a nearly unique engineering feat.

The 1896 bridge was built on the same piers as the original 1872 bridge. It was positioned so as

not to interfere with the construction plans for the Arsenal. It was jointly built and co-owned by the U.S. Government and the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad.



**Government  
Bridge**





## **Clock Tower Building**

The Clock Tower Building was the first permanent structure built on the Arsenal by Maj. Charles P. Kingsbury, the first commanding officer of the Rock Island Arsenal. Construction began in 1863 and took four years to build. The building was used primarily as a storehouse for arsenal operations.

It gets its name from the large clock that is on top of its 117-foot tower. Each clock dial is 12



feet in diameter. It is the only clock of its type still running with original parts. The building became the home of the Corps of Engineers in 1934 with the completion of Lock and Dam 15.



**Clock  
Tower  
Building**



## 1856 Bridge

The first railroad bridge across the Mississippi River used Rock Island as a “hopping point” to cross the river. The arrival of the railroad on the east bank of the Mississippi River at Rock Island offered Midwest farmers from Iowa and northern Illinois a direct east-west trade route to Chicago and to urban markets farther east. The original bridge had a Howe-Truss-type superstructure with a single track. The superstructure was

constructed of timber and consisted of five wooden spans, plus a draw span. Its draw span, the heaviest and largest of its time, was located in the middle of the river. The bridging of the Mississippi was a major technological achievement as nothing of that size or status had yet been constructed in the area.



1856  
Bridge





## Davenport House

In 1833 Col. George Davenport built the area's most elegant family home at that time on Rock Island's northwest shore. Davenport's home was not the typical pioneer cabin. Clapboard lumber, ordered from the East, covered the two-story log-frame house. The clapboard siding gave Davenport's frontier home the exterior appearance of a fine eastern residence. Other features of the house included a portico or

porch roof, supported by columns; double-hung wood sashes; a gable roof with sawed shingles; and two massive brick chimneys. Davenport was murdered in his home on July 4, 1845, by bandits in search of money.



Davenport House





## Quarters One

Situated on the northern shore of Arsenal Island, Quarters One is the former residence of 38 of the Arsenal's commanding officers. At more than 20,000 square feet, Quarters One is the largest house owned by the Army and the second largest house owned by the U.S. Government, next to the White House. The residence was constructed from 1870-1871 and was personally designed by Brig. Gen. Thomas J. Rodman, considered to

be the Father of the Rock Island Arsenal. The residence was constructed using day laborers under the supervision of Army ordnance officers with Arsenal carpenters building much of the furniture for the home.



Quarters  
One



## **Golf Course Clubhouse**

The Golf Course Clubhouse was created by Col. Stanhope E. Blunt, Arsenal commander, in 1897. The original clubhouse caught fire in the fall of 1905 and was replaced by the current structure in 1906. Secretary of War (and future president) William Howard Taft granted the golf course a license in 1905 to continue operating at the Arsenal, thereby establishing a lasting



relationship between the golfing community and the Rock Island Arsenal.



Golf  
Course  
Clubhouse



## Confederate Prisoner of War Camp

The Rock Island Prison Barracks existed from December 1863 to July 1865. During the 20 months that the prison camp was active, a total of 12,192 prisoners were confined there. The prison consisted of 84 wooden barracks that could house 10,000 prisoners at any given time and was surrounded by a 12-foot high stockade fence. A total of 1,964 Confederate prisoners perished while imprisoned at Rock Island and



Confederate  
Prisoner of  
War Camp

are interred at the Confederate Prisoner of War  
Cemetery on Arsenal Island.





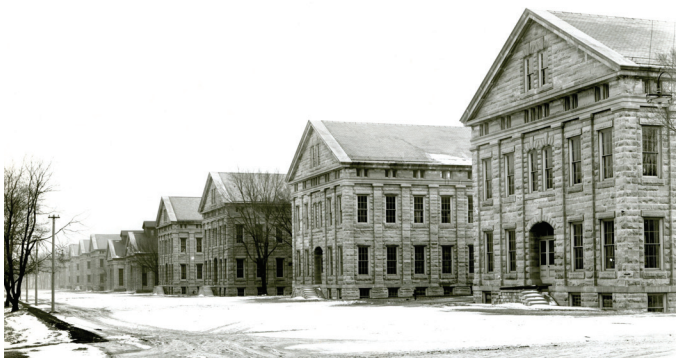
**JMTC**

The Rock Island Arsenal Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center occupies 1.5 million square feet of the Kingsbury Complex. As the only multi-purpose and vertically integrated metal manufacturer in the Department of Defense, the center possesses the unique technical expertise and equipment to manufacture products high in quality and sustainability. RIA-JMTC also reaches out to the community by offering

machinist apprenticeships and other training programs to qualified applicants. The availability of centralized manufacturing and testing allows production to come full circle, thus minimizing the need to outsource.

JMTC





## Stone Shops

The 10 stone shops form the center and heart of the Rock Island Arsenal. The shops were constructed from 1866-1893. The five buildings on the southern side were designated the “arsenal row” and used for the manufacture and overhaul of general ordnance materiel, such as personal equipment for troops. After 1875, Rock Island Arsenal supplied practically all the equipment required by the U.S. Army in the western frontier.

The five buildings on the northern side were designated the “armory row” and used for the manufacture and overhaul of small arms. For example, from 1904 to 1913 and again during the First World War, Rock Island Arsenal manufactured the Model 1903, .30 caliber, bolt-action rifle.

Stone  
Shops





## Memorial Field

Memorial Field was dedicated in 1950 to Rock Island Arsenal employees who died while serving with the U. S. Armed Forces during the Second World War. Col. Randall D. Corbin, commanding officer of Rock Island Arsenal, envisioned the civilian monument located at the center of the display. This monument was dedicated to civilian service on July 24, 2003. The 31 ordnance systems displayed are part of the collection of the



Rock Island Arsenal Museum, and many of the artillery pieces on display are arsenal products.



Memorial  
Field

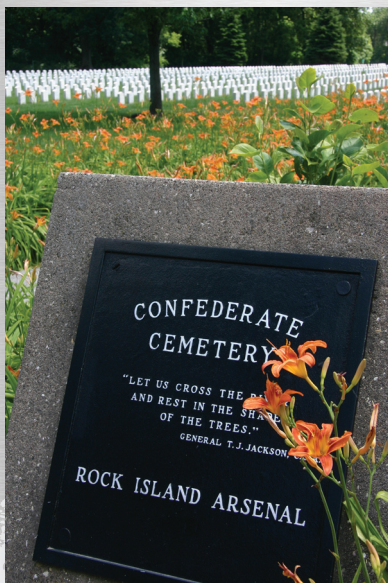




## Confederate Prisoner of War Cemetery

The Confederate Cemetery is the only tangible landmark remaining of the Rock Island Prison Barracks. A total of 1,964 prisoners died while confined at the prison camp. Of the 1,964 original burials, 11 soldiers have been removed by family and re-interred in their home states. The graves were marked with permanent headstones between 1906 and 1912, as directed by an Act of Congress. Each gravestone

identifies an individual soldier, his company and unit. The Veterans Administration operates both the Confederate Cemetery and the Rock Island National Cemetery.



Confederate  
Prisoner  
of War  
Cemetery



## National Cemetery

The cemetery was established in 1863 as the post cemetery for Union prison guards at the Rock Island Prison Barracks. It is one of the 20 oldest national cemeteries. The Rock Island National Cemetery has 23,000 to 24,000 gravestones representing approximately 29,000 burials. The National Cemetery currently covers 70 acres, and completed an expansion project in 2008. Included in the cemetery are the graves

of two former Commanding Officers of Rock  
Island Arsenal, Col. Thomas J. Rodman and Col.  
David M. King.



National  
Cemetery



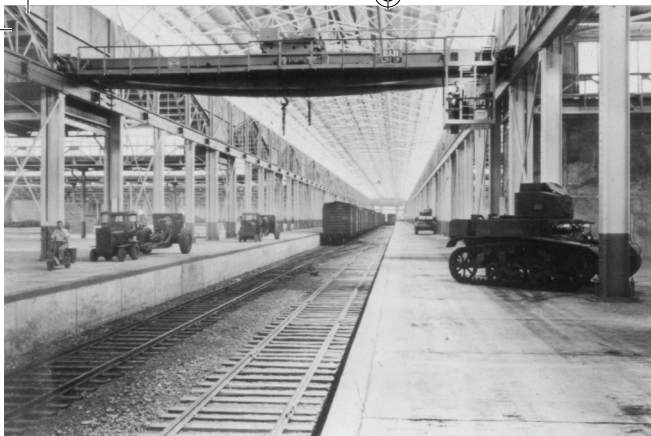
## Hydroelectric Plant

Col. Thomas J. Rodman's plan for Rock Island Arsenal included the construction of a dam and power house south of the manufacturing buildings on the Mississippi River's southern channel, now known as Sylvan Slough. He conceived the use of a telodynamic system of cables and towers, which mechanically transported power from the river to the southern row of shops along Rodman Avenue. Using this system to transmit power over a great distance had yet to be tried in America.

The telodynamic system mechanically transmitted power to the Arsenal shops by using water, which passed through openings at the dam, to rotate turbines. The rotation of the turbines was transferred through gears which, in turn, rotated a large drive wheel. This wheel, 15 feet in diameter, functioned as a large drive pulley from inside a power house adjacent to the dam. An endless cable loop extended from this ground station northward along First Avenue to a pulley at the top of a tower. From there, wire cables, one inch in diameter, formed loops that turned additional elevated wheels at the rear of the shop buildings south of Rodman Avenue.



Hydroelectric  
Plant



## **Building 299**

In April 1941, eight months before the attack on Pearl Harbor, construction began at Rock Island Arsenal on what would become the world's largest ordnance storehouse, Building 299. The building enclosed 18 acres under one roof with space for 17 football fields inside the warehouse. This structure was equipped with rail tracks and could load and unload a complete train at its interior docks. The building



represented the Arsenal's increasing role in wartime production and served as a testament to the Arsenal's capacity to store and ship large quantities of supplies throughout World War II.







# ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL



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SESQUICENTENNIAL

