Old State Capitol
Dedicated as a Memorial to
All Louisiana Veterans

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The building was planned by James Harrison Dakin and was started in 1847 and completed in December, 1849, at a cost of $396,000. It was outfitted with furnishings shipped from Europe to the Emperor Maximillian of Mexico, but which arrived too late, after that unhappy ruler's death.

From 1850 to 1862, when Baton Rouge was captured by Federal troops, the building housed the Louisiana State Government. In 1862 the building was reconstructed and another story added. Again it served as the State Capitol until the present Capitol was erected in 1932.

The building was rehabilitated in 1946-47 and dedicated as a Memorial to the Veterans of World War II.

**Monument to Confederate General on Grounds**

The pink marble monument located on the north side of the building was dedicated in memory of Henry Watkins Allen, Brigadier General in the Confederate Army. He was buried in his Confederate uniform.

Also located on the north side of the building, at the corner of St. Philip Street and North Blvd., is the Louisiana boxcar of the “Merci” train from France, expressing the gratitude of the people of that nation in appreciation of the generosity of the American people. It was presented to the state by Consul General Lionel Vasson on February 22, 1949. The dedication was made on these grounds by Drew Pearson on June 12, 1949. The erection of this monument was made by The Old State Capitol Memorial Commission. The American and the French flags are flown here daily.

**Iron Fence**

Of special interest is the cast iron fence. Upon each gate post rests an eagle with outspread wings, a symbol of Liberty. The center of each gate is fashioned like a Roman fasces, symbolizing Unity and Strength. Throughout the whole design, recurring again and again, is the fleur-de-lis—symbol of France, typifying the stock from which the greater part of Louisiana sprang.

**Once Lighted by Candles**

The old building was once lighted by candles, until 1857, when “modern” gas lighting was installed. In 1894 the build-
ing was wired for electricity, and few fixtures were installed in the building.

It was here that the Veterans Bonus was paid to the veterans of Louisiana who participated in World War II.

At this very site the legislature voted to secede from the Union. William Jennings Bryan, Chief Justice White, Jefferson Davis, Mark Twain and many other notable men have climbed the beautiful old spiral stairway. From the top of the building, the muddy Mississippi can be seen for miles.

The Old State Capitol was used as a seat of government during the following administrations:

Isaac Johnson .............................................. 1846-1850
Joseph M. Walker (died in office) .................. 1850-1853
Paul O. Hebert ............................................. 1853-1856
Robt. C. Wickliffe ........................................ 1856-1860
Thos. O. Moore ............................................ 1860-1862
Damuel D. McEnery ................................. 1881-1888
(As Lieutenant Governor succeeded Wilts who died in office)

Francis T. Nicholls ................................. 1888-1892
Murphy J. Foster ........................................ 1892-1900
Wm. J. Heard .............................................. 1900-1904
Newton C. Blanchard .................................. 1904-1908
Jared Y. Sanders ......................................... 1908-1912
Luther E. Hall .............................................. 1912-1916
Ruffin G. Pleasant ..................................... 1916-1920
John M. Parker ........................................... 1920-1924
Henry L. Fuqua (died in office) .................. 1924-1926
Oramel H. Simpson ...................................... 1926-1928
Huey P. Long (resigned) ............................. 1928-1931
Alvin O. King ............................................. 1931-1932