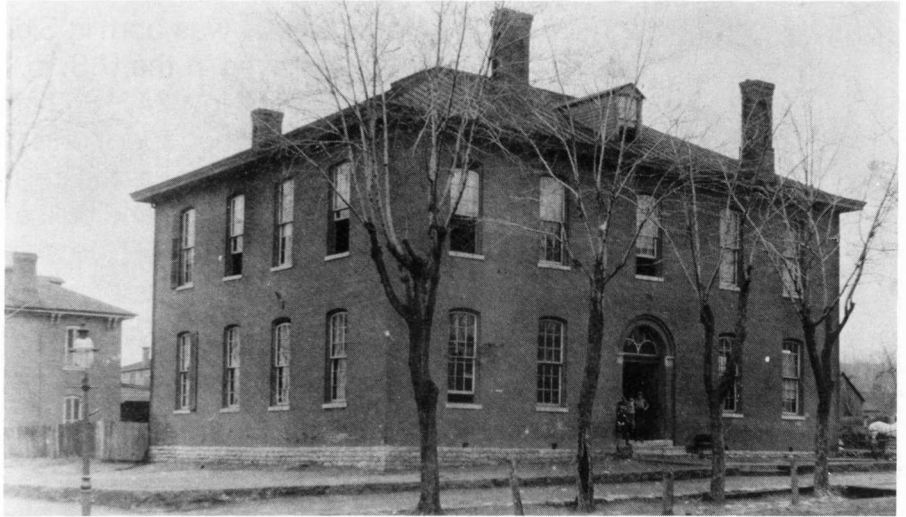
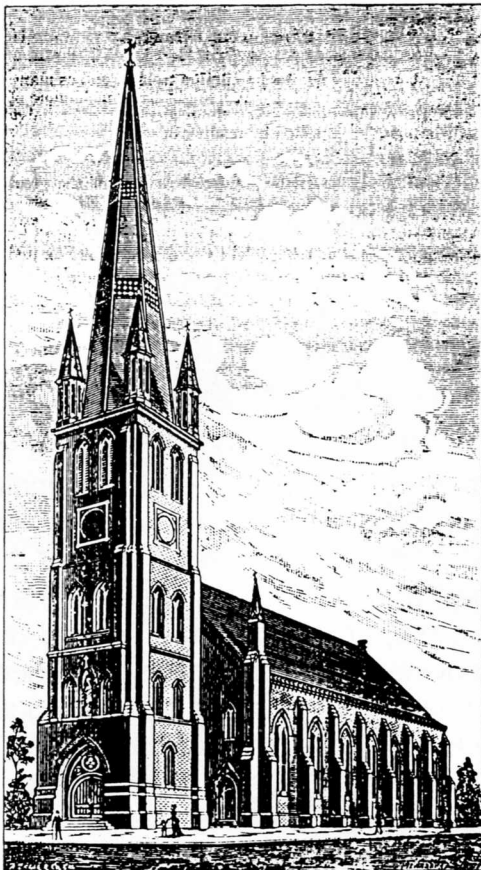


Our parish's first building was this brick school. Construction commenced in July, 1865 and it was dedicated and blessed on Nov. 9, 1865 having cost \$10,000. Known as the Kreuz Erhöhung Schule (Exaltation of the Holy Cross School) it was named in honor of the feast day (Sept. 14) on which the School Sisters of Notre Dame first arrived in Fort



Madison from Milwaukee in 1860. This photo shows the school as it appeared shortly before its demolition in April, 1899. The building to the left is the second convent, built about 1888.



Ground was broken for the church on Aug. 21, 1865. Designed by Walsh and Schmidt of St. Louis, it was 72 feet by 172 feet in size. The cornerstone was laid on Sunday, July 8, 1866 with great ceremony and the stone foundation and the brickwork up to the windowsills were completed that year. It was under roof and the brick tower was partially built when work stopped in late 1867. No more exterior work was done until June, 1869 when the brick tower was finished. The church was dedicated on Jan. 1, 1871. The exterior was completed, as shown, with the building of the wooden spire in 1872, giving the steeple a total height of 225 feet. Cost of the church was about \$40,000 with the spire and interior fixtures bringing the total cost to about \$100,000 by 1876. The church retained this appearance only until the tornado of 1876 demolished the spire. Note the round bricked-in spaces for clock faces, this originally being planned as a community clock tower.

