

ARCHITECTURAL / HISTORICAL SURVEY

DAVENPORT, IOWA

The Architects Office

Wehner, Nowysz, Pottsichull and Pfiffner
901 day building, iowa city iowa 52240

DAVENPORT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
IOWA DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

SITE # 82-10- HA-602 MAP # 3

HIST. DIST. _____

NAME Union Electric Telephone & Telegraph H C

ADDRESS 602 Harrison St.

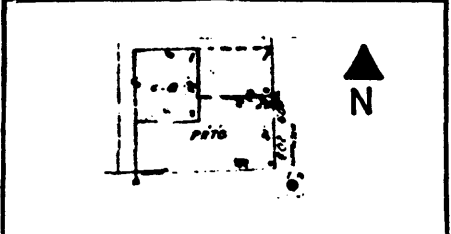
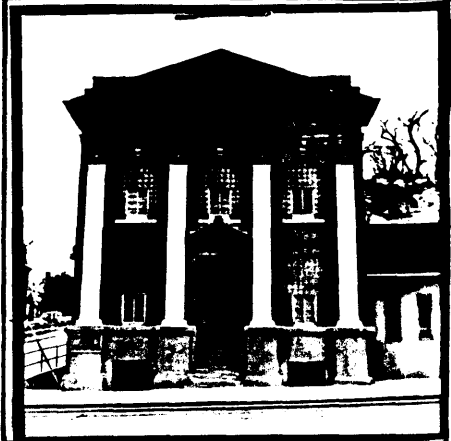
LEGAL DES. Original Town 33 S 60' of lot 4
SUB-DIVISION BLOCK PARCEL SUB-PARCEL

UTM 2 15 710,213,01 4,599,976,01 ACREAGE -1 ZONE M-1
EASTING NORTHING

OWNER Ellsworth O. James

250 E. Locust St., Davenport, IA 52803

TITLE H. _____
(OF DIFF.) _____



SITE SHEET

DESCRIPTION

FORM 2 story, L-plan block on high basement, symmetrical 3-bay front CONST. DATE 1910

MATERIALS Brick, stone, wood ARCH STYLE Neoclassical Revival

FENESTRATION Rectangular & round arched

DIST. FEATURES Giant pilasters of corinthian order, supporting triangular pediment

ALTERATIONS Glass block & industrial-type windows

SITE & RELATED STR. Corner site, in small-scale commercial area along a major thoroughfare

STATEMENT

On a street of small commercial enterprises ranging from the Mid-19th century to the present, the Union Electric Telephone Building catches the eye with its delightfully incongruous classicism. The pediment on giant, fluted corinthian pilasters seems to have been put on almost after the fact. Presumably, the facade was meant to project, through stylisms popularly associated with government buildings, an air of public service that would reassure and encourage local inhabitants to subscribe to Union's telephone system.

ARCHITECTURE

SOURCES

SIGNIFICANCE

This building illustrates several aspects of turn of the century telephone service - the competitive nature of local telephone franchises and the limited but growing scale of local service. In addition, the building's juxtaposition with the modern day Bell telephone building is a telling historical footnote.

DESCRIPTION

Telephone service first appeared in Davenport in 1878 and expanded substantially by 1900 with more than 1600 customers being served by the only franchise company, Iowa Telephone Company. Before WW I, two other companies provided competition, including Union Electric Telephone and Telegraph Company. Established in 1903, with a 25 year franchise, Union had approximately 1400 customers. Its 6th and Harrison building served until the company closed in 1911. Another company, Tri-City Automatic Telephone Company opened in 1912 but closed a few years later. More than 50 private phone companies operated in Scott County in 1910. Thus, by 1916 the only surviving company was the Iowa Telephone Company, the parent of the modern day Bell system.

SOURCES

"Local Calls Hit 102,000 Daily in City," Centennial and Fiftieth Anniversary Edition, Davenport Times, July 11, 1936.
City Directories, 1902-1918.
Christiansen, T.P., "An Industrial History of Scott County, Iowa," Annals of Iowa, April, 1940.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN: Martha Bowers | HISTORIAN: MARLYS SVENDSEN - ROESLER | SURVEY COMP 1981

EVALUATION

ARCHITECTURAL

I. ARCH. EVALUATION Fair

II. ENVIR. STATURE Incident

III. INT. OF CONTEXT Fair

IV. INT. OF FABRIC Good

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE:

NAT. STATE LOCAL N. ELIG.

HISTORICAL

I. THEME(S) OF SIGNIFICANCE:

A. PRIMARY Communications

B. SECONDARY Telephone

II. LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

NAT. STATE LOCAL

III. NR.H.P.

ELIGIBLE NOT ELIGIBLE

HISTORIC DISTRICT CLASSIFICATION

FOR DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION USE ONLY

1. DATE RECEIVED _____

2. DATE OF STAFF EVALUATION _____

	A. ARCHITECTURAL	B. HISTORICAL
ELIGIBLE FOR N.R.H.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NOT ELIGIBLE FOR N.R.H.P.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. NRHP ACTION

A. STATE REVIEW COMM. APP. DISAPP. TABLED DATE _____

B. FEDERAL REVIEW APP. DISAPP. TABLED DATE _____

4. D.H.P. SOURCES

COUNTY RESOURCES

W'SHIELD SURVEY

NRHP

GRANT _____

5. SUBJECT TRACES

6. PHOTO

1618-10