United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Nam	е				
historic	Cedar Rapids I	Post Of	fice and Public	Building	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
and/or common	Witwer	Buildir	ng		
2. Loca	ition				
street & number	305 Second	Avenue	, sé		not for publication
city, town	Cedar Rapio	ds	vicinity of	congressional district	2
state	Iowa	code	19 count	yLinn	code 113
3. Clas	sificatio	n			
Category district _X building(s) structure site object	Ownership X public private both Public Acquisit in process being consider		Status X occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible X yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	entertainmentX_ government	museum park private residence religious scientific transportation other:
4. Own	er of Pro	pert	y		
name	Linn Count	zy			
street & number	930 Second	i Avenue	e, S.E.		
city, town	Cedar Rapi	lds	vicinity of	state	Iowa
5. Loca	tion of L	.ega	l Descript	ion	
courthouse, regis	try of deeds, etc.	Reco	order's Office		
street & number		Linr	County Courtho	use	
city, town	·	Ceda	r Rapids	state	Iowa
6. Repr	esentat	ion i	n Existing	Surveys	
title	NONE		has this p	property been determined e	elegible? yes no
date				federal st	ate county loca
depository for sur	rvey records			<u> </u>	
city, town				state	

7. Description			
Condition excellent dete	Check one riorated unaltered s altered	Check one X original site moved date	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Cedar Rapids Post Office and Federal Building occupies the corner of Second Avenue and Third Street in the downtown commercial area. Constructed in 1895, this three-story Renaissance Revival structure is one of only a few buildings erected in the late nineteenth century still standing in downtown Cedar Rapids. Actually, this building's present appearance dates only from 1906. When completed in the late nineteenth century, it was a Romanesque Revival edifice, complete with turrets, tower with pyramidal roof, monochromatic brick work, and steeply pitched gable roof. In 1906, however, James Knox Taylor, supervising architect of the United States Treasury, developed a plan whereby the building was enlarged, a third story was added, and thoroughly remodeled in such a way that it appeared to be almost an entirely new structure.

In typical Renaissance Revival fashion, the building is divided into base, body, and The edifice's partially raised basement and first floor constitute its base and culminates in a stone entablature at the base of the second story. Brownishcolored tooled stone is utilized around approximately one-third of the base while the remainder is sheathed in smooth dressed rusticated stonework of a lighter color. Windows in this section, most of which have been filled in, have rectangular stone openings while the main entrance on the north side of the building is marked by a highly decorative, stone trimmed archway. The brick sheathed second story comprises the body of the building. This portion is set off from the others by continuous stone bands; one-over-one wood sash windows with transors set in flat arched brick surrounds; strategically placed double windows set in arched brick surrounds and featuring stone trim and balustrades; and a continuous molded brick belt course at the base of the third story. The third story crown has a wide variety of decorative features including six-over-one wood sash windows set in rectangular surrounds with stone labels; stone trimmed decorative panels with geometric motiffs; a frieze sheathed in carved stone panels and featuring pairs of elaborately carved wooden brackets; a highly decorative metal cornice; and a bell cast mansard roof pierced on its north side by a single gabled dormer and on its east side by three similar ones.

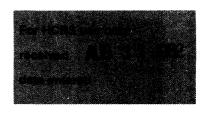
Inside, the building contains nearly one hundred rooms and offices. Although this structure has not been used as federal offices for well over forty years, many vestiges of its original occupant remain, including doors with terms "United States Court Room" and "United States Judge Private." Other original features include ornate carvings, decorative grill work marble flooring, decorative wood moldings, and elaborate doorways.

Presently, the building undergoing rehabilitation with the intention of returning it to its 1906 condition. According to a spokesman for the county,

"A time-oriented plan is in place to restore the Witwer Building's exterior to its 1906 appearance. The Witwer Building has served as the hub for the city bus network due to its central location in downtown Cedar Rapids with a bus ticket office and waiting area abutting the Witwer Building on the Third Street side. With the completion of the Ground Transportation Center in 1983, the city buses will converge at the Transportation Center rather than the Witwer Building. Buses stopping downtown will be served at the Merchants National Bank Building which is across the street from the Witwer Building.

United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

7 Description

Page

2.

Since the buses will no longer be converging at the Witwer Building in 1983, the bus ticket office and waiting area on the Third Street side will be removed and the original entrance to the building (which is on the Third Street side) will be re-opened. This restoration project will be continued to all sides of the building with the exterior being returned to its 1906 appearance. The ramp for the handicapped on the Second Avenue side will be modified to blend with the restored exterior.

Secondly, a restoration - rehabilitation plan for the building has been developed by Linn County. As stated in the application submitted in October, 1980, Linn County is in the process of restoring the interior of the Witwer Building. The Building Analysis and Feasibility Study of the Witwer Building (1980) included recommendations for rehabilitation work to be done on the building. Phase I which included repairing the roof, painting the fascia and soffitt, repairing and painting the dormers, and repairing the flashings and caulking was completed in 1980. Phase II includes the installation of a new automatic elevator, maintenance work on exterior windows and light core windows, exit modification as required by the fire marshall, and emergency and exit lighting; these tasks are scheduled to be completed in the summer of 1981. Phase III includes the remaining electrical work, new plumbing fixtures and water piping, insulation in the roof, and the construction of a second exit (on the back of the building). The timetable for Phase III would begin in July, 1981, with completion by June of 1982. Phase IV includes HVAC systems for the basement, part of the second and all of the third floor; work would begin in July, 1982, and be completed by June, 1983. Funding for Phases I and II has come from Linn County Health Center which is the landlord for Sharing monies (which have been designated) and Phase IV costs are projected to be covered by the annual \$80,000 payment Linn County will receive from the Weaver Witwer Trust.

Linn County support for the Witwer Building restoration has been evidenced by commissioning the Building Analysis and Feasibility Study as well as implementing and financing the various phases.

8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric agriculture architecture artX commerce communications	community pla conservation economics education engineering exploration/set		science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation
Specific dates	1895 - Present	Builder/Architect	James Knox Taylor (19	906 remodeling)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Between 1895 and 1933, the Old Cedar Rapids Post Office and Federal Building served as a focal point for the activities of the national government in that city and the area surrounding it. To a degree, it symbolizes the expanding role of the federal government as well. The extensive remodeling and enlargement that took place in 1906 during Theodore Roosevelt's presidency closely coincides with the expansion in federal power that he had set in motion on assuming the nation's highest office in 1901. By 1933, however, this building too had become too small for the purposes of the national government, and a new edifice was completed on May's Island.

The site occupied by this structure has an interesting and colorful history. Originally, the property belonged to Alexander L. Ely, at whose death a legal battle developed among his heirs over control of the property. Eventually John L. Schearer acquired it, and he in turn transferred it to the First New Order Presbyterian Church for one dollar. In 1850 the congregation built the first church in Cedar Rapids on this site with a \$75 loan and a \$500 mortgage. This stucco and grout walled edifice became known as "Little Muddy" because of its dark walls and was utilized for worship services until a fire gutted it in 1871. Later that same year, the congregation sold the ruined building and land to one of Ely's descendants and moved to its present location at 310 Fifth Street, southeast.

In 1895 the federal government built a new Post Office and Federal Building on the corner of what was then known as Eagle and Adams Streets. Constructed at a cost of \$100,000, the Romanesque Revival edifice, designed by the supervising architect of the treasury, was said to have every modern convenience, including the best and most economical steam heat available. When completed in 1897, the post office, U.S. District Court, and most local federal agencies had their offices there. At that time the facility served a population of 27,555.

In the early twentieth century, however, Cedar Rapids underwent significant growth, putting strain on the facilities in the Post Office and Federal Building. In 1906, the building was enlarged and thoroughly remodeled at a cost of around \$215,000. Under the direction of James Knox Taylor, the Supervising Architect of the United States Treasury, the building was remade into a structure resembling the Renaissance Revival style. This structure continued to be utilized by federal agencies until the new Post Office and Federal Building was completed on May's Island in 1933. In 1936 Weaver Witwer purchased the building and used it for his Witwer Grocery Company and office rentals until 1967. In that year Witwer leased the structure to Linn County for office space. After his death in 1979, Linn County acquired the building outright.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Attached Continuation Sheet

<u>10.</u>	Geographica	l Data		
Acreage Quadran	of nominated property <u>less</u> gle name <u>Cedar Rapids</u> , erences	than 1 acre _lowa	_	Quadrangle scale7.5
A 1,5 Zone C E	6 1 0 5 1 0 4 6 4 Easting Northin		B Zone D H	Easting Northing
Lots	ooundary description and joint and 2, Block 25 and inal town, now City o	d the south ϵ	easterly ten ds, Linn Coun	feet of Lot 3, Block 25, ity, lowa
List all	states and counties for pro	perties overla	pping state or o	county boundaries
state	N.A.	code	county	code
state		code	county	code
<u>11.</u>	Form Prepare	ed By		
name/title	Ralph J. (hristian 🔥	rchitectural	Historian
organizat				4-4-
street & n				Jeptember 1902
	Last 12th and	Grand Avenue		telephone 515/281-6825
city or tov		c Proco		Officer Certification
				Officer Certification
rne evalu	ated significance of this prop	•	ate is: X. local	
665), I her	signated State Historic Preser	vation Officer for r inclusion in the	the National Hist National Register	toric Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89– r and certify that it has been evaluated vation and Recreation Service.
State Hist	oric Preservation Officer sign	ature /	lin A.	prolecal
title ^I	Director, State Histor	ical Departme	ent	date September 29, 1982
		is included to the		dote
Chira	Fical-radion (Extended to the State of the S	"我"我没有		机会型列用 化电影性 医电影性 医多种乳质性 医甲腺

United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

9

Page

1

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette, August 14, 1906; August 19, 1907, March 28, 1908.

Cedar Rapids Gazette, July 12, 1970.

John Brandt to Ralph Christian, March 13, 1981, Division of Historic Preservation Files.

Olson, Popa, Novak, Architects, P.C., <u>Building Analysis and Feasibility Study of the Witwer Building, Cedar Rapids, Iowa</u> (Cedar Rapids: Olson, Popa, Novak, Architects, P.C., 1980).

United States Department of the InteriorNational Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only DEC | 5 |983 received date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Nam	le	icable se	CHOIIS					
			Put	olic	•			
historic Ced	lar Rapids Pos	t Office	e and Fed	eral Builo	ling			
and or common	Witwer Bui	lding						
2. Loca	ation							
street & number	305 Second	Avenue	S. E.			no	ot for publica	ation
city, town	Cedar Rapi	ds	vic	cinity of				
state	Iowa	code	019	county	Linn		code	113
3. Clas	sificatio	n						
Category district XX_ building(s) structure site object	Ownership XX_ public private both Public Acquisit in process being consid		Status _XX occupi unoccu work ir Accessible yes: re XX yes: ur	upied n progress e stricted	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainmen _XX government industrial military		_ museum _ park _ private res _ religious _ scientific _ transporta _ other:	
name Lin	n County Boar 930 Second A				· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·			
city, town	Cedar Rapids		vic	inity of	sta	te Iow	a	
5. Loca	ation of	Lega	l Des	criptio	n			
courthouse, regis	stry of deeds, etc.	(County Cle	erk's Offi	ce			
street & number		I	Linn Count	ty Courtho	use			
city, town		(Cedar Rap:	ids	sta	te Iow	а	
6. Repi	resentat	ion i	n Exis	ting S	urveys			
title _{N/A}				has this prop	erty been determined	l eligible?	' yes	no
date					federal	state	_ county _	loca
depository for su	irvey records							
city, town		-			sta	te		

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
excellent _XX good fair	deteriorated ruins unexposed	unaltered XX_ altered	_XX original s moved	ite date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The former Cedar Rapids Post Office and Federal Building (1908) is a fine example of the Renaissance Revival style, executed for a public building. The 1908 building, replaced a poorly built predecessor which was erected in 1892 and provided additional space for growing governmental operations.

In typical Renaissance Revival fashion, the building (94' by 112') is divided into base, body, and crown. The edifice's partially raised basement and first floor constitute its base and culminates in a stone entablature at the base of the second story. Brownishcolored tooled stone is utilized around approximately one-third of the base while the remainder is sheathed in smoothe dressed rusticated stonework of a lighter color. Windows in this section, most of which have been filled in, have rectangular stone openinas while the main entrance on the north side of the building is marked by a highly decorative, stone trimmed archway. The brick sheathed second story comprises the body of the building. This portion is set off from the others by continuous stone bands: oneover-one wood sash windows with transoms set in flat arched brick surrounds; strategically placed double windows set in arched brick surrounds and featuring stone trim and balustrades; and a continuous molded brick belt course at the base of the third story. THe third story crown has a wide variety of decorative features including sixover-one wood sash windows set in rectangular surrounds with stone labels; stone trimmed decorative panels with geometric motiffs; a frieze sheathed in carved stone panels and featuring metal cornices; and a bell cast mansard roof pierced on its north side by a single gabled dormer and on its east side by three similar ones.

Inside, the building contains nearly one hundred rooms and offices. Although this building has not been used as federal offices for well over forty years, many vestiges of its original occupant remain, including doors with terms "United States Court Room" and "United States Judge, Private." Other original features include ornate carvings, decorative grill wrk, marble flooring, decorative wood moldings, and elaborate doorways.

Presently, the building is undergoing rehabilitation with the intention of returning it to its 1908 condition. The building served as the hub for the city bus network because of its central location downtown, with a ticket office and waiting room adjoining on the Third Street side. The completion of the new Ground Transportation Center this year will eliminate that role, but a major downtown bus stop will be located across the street from this building. The bus service additions will be removed and the original Third Street entrance will be re-opened and restored. The handicapped access ramp on the Second Avenue side will be modified so as to blend with the restored exterior. The restoration/rehabilitation plan has been developed by Linn County. The County in restoring the interior. A 1980 building Analysis and Feasibility Study for the Witwer building recommended roof repair, fascia and soffit painting, dormer repair and repainting, flashing repair and caulking as as elements of phase one. Phase two will include the installation of a new automatic elevator, exterior window and light core maintenance work, fire code exit modifications, and emergency exit lighting. Both phases were completed in mid 1981. Subsequently HVAC systems were put in the basement, and other floors. Funding for this work came from Linn County Health Center and the Weaver Witwer Trust.

8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899XX 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric agricultureXX architecture art commerce communications		g landscape architecture law literature military music ent philosophy	e religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific dates	1908	Builder/Architect	James Knox Taylor, Ar Mr. McAlpin, Contract	chitect or.

Statement of Significance fin one paragraph)
The Cedar Rapids Post Office and Pederal Building (1908) is an elaborate example of the Renaissance Revival style in downtown Cedar Rapids. The present building attests to the faulty construction of its predecessor, and to the expanding needs for office space on the part of the federal government on the local level.

The first federal building was designed in the Romanesque Revival style and included in its plan s six story square corner tower which ultimately proved its undoing. The building was begun in late 1892 and occupied in late January 1895. Just three months later, the local paper noted "The stone wall under the tower of the government building has parted, and the first four layers of brick are cracked. This is due to the settling of the foundation into the sand. These signs of settling were apparent even before the building was finished. In November, 1895 the same source noted "The job was a botched one throughout. Much of the finishing work had to be done over and now it is found that the building is faulty at the foundtion, something that cannot be easily rectified."

The Post Office rapidly outgrew the new building and a request for funding for an addition was made as early as February 1904. By October, 1906, a \$200,000. appropriation for a new post office and federal building had been made, and the plans were complete by August 1907. These plans envisioned thorough remodeling of the existing building with a 35' addition to the east side, and the addition of a third story. The plans further stated "...the old part will be refaced in order to give the building a uniform appearance." The target completion date was to be November 1, 1909. The plan did not change the existing entrance points, provided much more post office space on the first floor, provided for the federal courts on the second floor, and the third floor for the railway mail service. The exterior of the third floor was to be pebble dashed. When smaller than anticipated bids were received, the plans were modified in November 1907 to execute the entire first floor in stone "... while chances are very good that the entire exterior will be of stone." In addition "...not a vestige of the present exterior will be left and when the bulding has been finished no one will be able to recognize in it any of the features of the present building. It will be one of the finest and most magnificent government structures in the west, or in any city in the United States the size of Cedar Rapids." The final plans revision announced in December 1907 envisioned a building that would "be by far the handsomest and most imposing structure in the city..." The foundation was to be of Kasota stone, the first floor exterior of Bedford Indiana limestone, the remaining stories of light red brick with wide mortar joints, and a tile green or red roof. A three and a half foot marble frieze would be just beneath the eaves. The contract price was \$135,000. Mr. McAlpin of Elgin Illinois was the contractor and was locally well known for his other jobs. "Nothing will be left of the present building except the foundation walls and a few of the interior partitions, the greater portions of these giving way because of the rearrangement of the interior of the building." The new building would provide double the interior space.

Demolition of the old building began in March 1908. On April 8 of that year the local newspaper reported "The old building has been pretty well demolished, and in a few more days will witness the last of it gone." New excavations made for the new building at that time strongly imply that even the foundation walls were removed and rebuilt further out.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Refer to continuation sheet.

GPO 894-785

10. Geograpi	hical Data		
creage of nominated propert	y less than one a	acre	
uadrangle name <u>Cedar</u> R	apids S outh		Quadrangle scale 1/24,000
TM References			
1,5 61,05,1,0	4 16 4 18 0 10 15	B L L L L	
Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing
			
		FLI LIL	
		H	
erbal boundary description	on and justification		
ots 1 and 2, Block a . own, City of Cedar Ra	5, and the southea apids.	asterly ten feet of Lo	ot 3, Block 3 5, original
	s for properties overl	apping state or county bo	undaries
tate N/A	code	county	code
		county	code
1. Form Pre		gister Coordinator	
1. Form Pre	pared By Disen, National Reg	gister Coordinator date	6 December 1983
1. Form Pre	pared By Discont National Reg al Bldg. & Grand Ave.	rister Coordinator date telephone	6 December 1983 515-281-8152
1. Form Pre Imme/title James E. Jacob ganization Iowa SHPO Historica reet & number E. 12th ty or town Des Moine	pared By Discontinuous Reg al Bldg. & Grand Ave.	gister Coordinator date telephone state	6 December 1983 515-281-8152 Iowa 50319
1. Form Pre ame/title James E. Jacob ganization Iowa SHPO Historica reet & number E. 12th ty or town Des Moine 2. State His	pared By Disen, National Reg al Bldg. & Grand Ave. Estoric Prese	date telephone state ervation Office	6 December 1983 515-281-8152
rganization Iowa SHPO Historica treet & number E. 12th	pared By Disen, National Reg al Bldg. & Grand Ave. Estoric Prese	date telephone state ervation Office	6 December 1983 515-281-8152 Iowa 50319
rganization Iowa SHPO Historica reet & number E. 12th ty or town Des Moine 12. State His he evaluated significance of the mational sthe designated State Historica sthe designated State His	pared By Disen, National Reg al Bldg. & Grand Ave. Es Storic Presentation Officer for the property for inclusion in the procedures set forth by the procedures set forth by the procedures of the procedure of	telephone state ervation Office state is: Xiocal for the National Historic Presente National Register and certifications.	6 December 1983 515-281-8152 Iowa 50319 Cer Certification Tryation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-fy that it has been evaluated
ame/title James E. Jacob ganization Iowa SHPO Historica reet & number E. 12th ty or town Des Moine 2. State His ne evaluated significance of to national sthe designated State Historica sthe designated State Historica cording to the criteria and postate Historic Preservation Offen.	pared By Disen, National Reg al Bldg. & Grand Ave. Diser Preservation Officer for inclusion in the rocedures set forth by the rocedure of t	telephone state ervation Office state is: Xiocal for the National Historic Presente National Register and certifice National Park Service.	6 December 1983 515-281-8152 Iowa 50319 Cer Certification Tryation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-fy that it has been evaluated
ame/title James E. Jacob ganization Iowa SHPO Historica reet & number E. 12th ty or town Des Moine 2. State His ne evaluated significance of the mational state designated State Historica state Historic Preservation Officiale Executive Directorical	pared By Disen, National Reg al Bldg. & Grand Ave. Diser Preservation Officer for inclusion in the rocedures set forth by the rocedure of t	telephone state ervation Office state is: Xiocal for the National Historic Presente National Register and certifice National Park Service.	6 December 1983 515-281-8152 Iowa 50319 Cer Certification Tryation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-fy that it has been evaluated
ame/title James E. Jacob ganization Iowa SHPO Historica reet & number E. 12th ty or town Des Moine 2. State His ne evaluated significance of to national sthe designated State Historica sthe designated State Historica cording to the criteria and postate Historic Preservation Offen.	pared By Disen, National Reg al Bldg. & Grand Ave. Es Storic Presonate This property within the service preservation Officer for formation in the procedures set forth by the service signature Lowa State History	telephone state ervation Office state is: Xiocal for the National Historic Presente National Register and certifice National Park Service.	6 December 1983 515-281-8152 Iowa 50319 Cer Certification Tryation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-fy that it has been evaluated
ame/title James E. Jacob ganization Iowa SHPO Historica reet & number E. 12th Ay or town Des Moine 2. State His ne evaluated significance of the mational sthe designated State Historica is the designated State Historica cording to the criteria and proceeding to the criteria an	pared By Disen, National Reg al Bldg. & Grand Ave. Es Storic Presonate This property within the service preservation Officer for formation in the procedures set forth by the service signature Lowa State History	telephone state ervation Office state is: Xiocal for the National Historic Presente National Register and certifice National Park Service.	6 December 1983 515-281-8152 Iowa 50319 Cer Certification Tryation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-fy that it has been evaluated
ame/title James E. Jacob ganization Iowa SHPO Historica reet & number E. 12th ty or town Des Moine 2. State His ne evaluated significance of the mational sthe designated State Historica is the designated State Historica state Historic Preservation Official Executive Director For NPS use only	pared By Disen, National Reg al Bldg. & Grand Ave. Es Storic Prese This property within the service preservation Officer frocedures set forth by the service signature Towa State Historic property is included in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the s	telephone state ervation Office state is: Xiocal for the National Historic Presente National Register and certifice National Park Service.	6 December 1983 515-281-8152 Iowa 50319 Cer Certification Tryation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-fy that it has been evaluated Language date 6 December 19
rganization Iowa SHPO Historica Freet & number E. 12th Historica Freet &	pared By Disen, National Reg al Bldg. & Grand Ave. Es Storic Prese This property within the service preservation Officer frocedures set forth by the service signature Towa State Historic property is included in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the service property in the service property is included in the service property in the s	telephone state ervation Office state is: Xiocal for the National Historic Presente National Register and certifice National Park Service.	6 December 1983 515-281-8152 Iowa 50319 Cer Certification Tryation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-fy that it has been evaluated Language date 6 December 19

United States Department of the InteriorNational Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received DEC 1 5 1983 date entered

Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number

8

Page

2

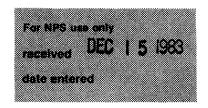
Construction was delayed due to non-arrival of materials in July, and the final completion date was extended to January 1910, due to the severity of the winter of 1909-10 which hindered exterior work. The roof was tiled in February 1909. Three vaults were constructed on the first floor for the post office. A forty by sixty four foot courtroom dominated the second floor, and featured five foot by two foot decorative cornices with a paneled ceiling. The ceiling of the courtroom extended four feet abovethe third floor level. On the third floor above, a dormitory was provided to house railway mail clerks who laid over in town between their runs. By November 1909 the extensive interior work was well underway. The building featured an elevator and Van Kennal revolving doors. The building was inspected by the U.S. building inspector in early January 1910 and was turned over to the local postmaster for occupancy. The postal department, using temporary lighting and heating systems and its old furniture occupied the first floor by mid-January 1910. The building was fully utilized by all of its occupants by March of that year.

The building continued to be used by federal agencies until the new post office and federal building was completed on May's Island in the center of the city in 1933. In 1936 Weaver Witwer purchased the building and used it for his Witwer Grocery Company and office rentals until 1967. In that same year Witwer leased the building to Linn County for office space. After Witwer's death in 1979, Linn County acquired the building outright.

James Knox Taylor, supervising architect, United States Treasury Department, directed the remodeling of the building in 1908.

United States Department of the InteriorNational Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette, August 14, 1906; August 19, 1907, March 28, 1908.

Cedar Rapids Gazette, July 12, 1970.

John Brandt to Ralph Christian, March 13, 1981, Division of Historic Preservation Files.

Olson, Popa, Novak, Architects, P.C., Building Analysis and Feasibility Study of the Witwer Building, Cedar Rapids, Iowa (Cedar Rapids: Olson, Popa, Novak, Architects, P.C., 1980).

Cedar Rapids Evening Gazettes Consulted:

December 7, 1892, p. 5 December 19, 1892, p. 4 January 31, 1893, p. 8 February 3, 1893, p. 8 February 24, 1893, pp. 1, 4, and 8 March 8, 1893, p. 5 April 1, 1893, p. 8 April 3, 1893, p. 8 April 12, 1893, p. 8 April 25, 1893, p. 8 May 18, 1893, pp. 5 and 8 June 12, 1893, p. 5 June 20, 1893, p. 5 July 10, 1893, p. 8 July 21, 1893, p. 8 ¿July 29, 1893, p. 8 August 1, 1893, p. 8 August 9, 1893, p. 5 October 17, 1893, p. 8 December 14, 1893, p. 8 December 25, 1893, p. 8 January 27, 1894, p. 8 April 3, 1894, p. 5 April 4, 1894, p. 5 May 12, 1894, p. 8 June 27, 1894, p. 8 December 15, 1894, p. 20 January 23, 1895, p. 8 April 17, 1895, p. 8 June 4, 1895, p. 8

February 27, 1904, p. 2 October 20, 1906, p. 11 February 8, 1907, pp. 7 and 11 August 19, 1907, p. 3 November 19, 1907, p. 6 December 9, 1907, p. 9 December 27, 1907, p. 8 March 18, 1908, p. 26 March 28, 1908, p. 8 April 8, 1908, p. 3 July 23, 1908, p. 5 August 6, 1908, p. 7 September 5, 1908, p. 4 February 17, 1908, p. 5 April 8, 1908, p. 3 November 9, 1909, p. 7 December 8, 1909, p. 5 December 10, 1909, p. 7 January 11, 1910, p. 5 February 9, 1910, p. 11

Cedar Rapids Gazette, July 12, 1970.