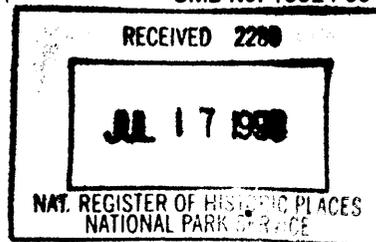


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

#### 1. Name of Property

historic name The Maas Commercial Building

other names/site number none

#### 2. Location

street & number 209 1st Str. E. N/A  not for publication

city or town Independence N/A  vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Buchanan code 019 zip code 50644

#### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Patricia Oularkin DSHPO 7-1-98  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

IOWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson M. Bell 6-14-98  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Maas Commercial Building  
Name of Property

Buchanan County, Iowa  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>		Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Specialty Store

SOCIAL/Meeting Hall

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Specialty Store

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/limestone

walls BRICK

roof SYNTHETICS/Rubber

other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1874

**Significant Dates**

1874

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

unknown

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1

The Maas Commercial Building, Buchanan County, Iowa

The Maas Commercial Building is locally significant under Criterion "C" as an example of Late Victorian architecture in the Italinat style. It is one of a continuous band of similar buildings which line the south side of 1st Street East in the business district of Independence, Iowa. The approximately 20 ft. wide and 115 ft. long, two story commercial building was built for Nathan Maas in 1874. It was built following a fire which destroyed most of the commercial property of the young town. As a reaction against the former situation, the building was built of brick over an irregularly laid limestone foundation. Masonry fire walls separate it from the buildings on either side. The flat roof, which is covered with synthetic roofing material, slopes evenly from the front to the back.

The first floor of the north, or front, facade contains the store front and a modern door with a transom on the west which covers the stairway to the second floor. Both east and west edges of the building are covered with unmatched flat cast iron structural members. The east one is decorated with applied scroll work, which matches the design of the adjacent building, and the west one is fluted. The edges of the doorway alcove and the east edge of the stairway are formed with rounded iron members which are decorated with a rope twist. They are labeled products of the Megow Foundry which was operating in Independence in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The store windows have been reduced in size, but some of the original sashes and wooden framing of the store front remain (At least one pane of glass appears old). One of the walls which supports a store window retains its original decorative race track molding. The building was divided to house two separate businesses. Therefore, there are two front doors in the alcove of the store front. Only the east one is used at this time. The cast iron columns of the store front support an exposed "I" beam which carries the load of the second story wall. This "I" beam is ornamented with a metal ogee molding which runs along its upper edge. The running bond brick second story wall contains four evenly spaced arch topped windows with stone sills. The windows are double hung with four light sashes. The most prominent decoration on this face of the building are the metal hoods which arch over the top edges of the windows and the classically inspired metal cornice which runs across the top edge of the wall.

The east face of the building is completely covered by the adjacent building.

The south facade is more utilitarian. The north 95 ft. of the building is two stories tall. The remaining 20 ft. of the building's length is only one story. The one story extension is clad with modern metal siding. A modern doorway is centered in this otherwise blank wall. A wooden stairway rises along the west side of the one story section and leads to a door in the second story. A second first floor door is located under this exterior stairway. The surface of the south face of the second story is covered with stucco. This smooth wall is broken by four uniform, evenly spaced, arched openings. The one on the west is filled with a door and the other three are filled with double hung windows with four light sashes. Modern combination storm windows shield the original sashes.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

---

The Maas Commercial Building, Buchanan County, Iowa

Only the west face of the single story section is visible. This wall is covered with modern metal siding. The west face of the two story section is completely covered by the adjacent building.

Although only one of the two shop front doors is used, the building still houses two businesses. The commercial space is divided longitudinally. The east half is the larger as it contains most of the one story extension to the south. This space has been modified and retains little of its original character. A trap door in the rear of this half provides access to the basement. The west half is entered through an opening in the dividing wall. In this half a portion of the original embossed metal ceiling is visible.

One enters the second floor by ascending the front stairs. At the top of the stairs is a small entry area. The residential area is entered through a door in the east wall. Originally the second floor was used as a meeting hall. Later, a radio station used the front half of the space. The current owners have divided the space to serve as their residence. They have retained original features that have survived. About half of the walls retain a beaded wainscoting which covers the lower four feet of the walls. The floors are of pine and the ceilings are 15 ft. tall. Immediately inside the entry door is a large square living room. Windows fill the north wall. The southeast corner of the room has been boxed in to enclose space for a laundry room. At the north end of the west wall is a door which leads to a small bedroom located above the stairway which rises from the front of the building. A door in the south wall leads to a wide hallway leading to the rear of the building. The bathroom and a single bedroom open off of this hallway. At the rear of the building, the hallway opens into a large square dining room and kitchen. A door in the east end of the north wall in the kitchen area leads to a pantry area. The south wall is also filled with windows and the door which leads to the exterior back stair.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

---

The Maas Commercial Building, Buchanan County, Iowa

The Maas Commercial Building is locally significant under Criterion "C" as a fine example of Italianate commercial architecture. Located at 209 1st Street East in Independence, Iowa, it is one of a group of similar buildings which forms the southern wall of the business district. The original plat of Independence was in the traditional town square pattern. However, commercial activity was localized outside of that area near the Wapsipinicon River and the mills which took advantage of the water power. Therefore, the business district in Independence developed originally as a strip of stores lining Main Street as it descends to the bridge over the river and the mills located on the west bank.

The business district of Independence was destroyed by two disastrous fires in 1873 and 1874. The buildings which were built to replace the earlier wooden structures were built of stone and brick over a relatively short time period immediately after the fires. Also wooden sheds which had been located behind each of the buildings were eliminated. These buildings are similar in construction and present a unified character along what is now First Street East. Several events have claimed some of the original buildings in the last 120 years, but most of the post fire buildings remain.

A vintage stereopticon picture taken from an upper floor of the Wapsipinicon Mill shows the south side of First Street East under construction. The line of buildings was built as one continuous project. The grade of the street falls as it nears the river and the buildings form a slight stair step as they descend the hill. The rate of this grade is believed to have determined the division of the buildings' front elevations. Each of the store fronts was owned by a separate individual, but if the grade was slight enough, two adjacent stores were grouped to form one unified building front. The Maas building is one of the few single store front buildings of the group. The building also retains a high degree of historical integrity. Unlike some of the adjacent buildings, The Mass building still presents its original Italianate ornamentation to prospective customers. Also, its original store front unit is largely intact. Some of the store windows have been reduced in size or covered with signage, but the original wood and cast iron framing remain. This may be due to the fact that the building was rented to merchants by owners whose motivation was profit. These landlords were merchants located in other buildings along First Street East. They felt economic pressure to update their own store fronts but the Maas building produced the same return without these alterations. Therefore, economic pressure (which some are recognizing as an important issue in historic preservation today) is largely responsible for the integrity of this building.

The Maas building displays its architectural style, basically, on the second floor. The smooth running bond brick wall is interrupted by uniform, evenly spaced windows. These windows have semicircular arched tops that are ornamented with cast metal hoods. A prominent classical metal cornice extends across the top of the wall. This ornamentation is similar to that on the adjacent buildings. The front wall rests on an exposed "I" beam which spans the distance above the glass and cast iron store front. The iron corners of the store

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

---

The Maas Commercial Building, Buchanan County, Iowa

front are signed products of the Megow Foundry owned by Frank Megow and located in Independence during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Many of the 1870's vintage store fronts in Independence retain such structural members. A picture of the original store front of the Fisher/Plane Commercial Building in Independence shows that the large front windows were divided into four lights. The Maas building most likely had such windows, also. Originally the store windows extended from the "I" beam down to a low wooden base. Over the years the windows have been reduced in size and some of the infill fabric has been replaced. However, much of the original framing and at least one of the window sashes remains. In the alcove which contains the front doors there is one original window support wall which retains its decorative race track molding.

Nathan Maas (1833 - 1916) was a German immigrant who moved to Iowa in September of 1863. In January of 1869, he and his wife, Hannah (Baum) Maas, purchased the building which stood on the site considered in this nomination. They operated a clothing store. In the Great Fire of 1874 their property was destroyed with much of the rest of the business district in Independence. The history of Independence published in 1881 records their loss as \$25,000 and also, that \$15,000 was covered by insurance. They secured a mortgage for \$3000 and rebuilt immediately. The stores that rose from the ashes of the fire are a continuous row of two story buildings that stair step down the hill as they approach the river. To accommodate that slope, the Maas Building is approximately 20 feet wide, but still it was divided to house two businesses. The income from that second commercial space and the second floor presumably helped repay the mortgage at the end of six months.

N. Maas' store was a fixture on Main Street for many years. He was very active in the Masonic Lodge in Independence and served as a City Councilman at one time. His first wife, Hannah, died in 1888 and Maas sold the store building to Charles F. Herrick in 1889. C.F. Herrick was a jeweler whose shop was located in the building directly to the west of the Maas Building. From this time until the present owners purchased the property in 1989, the Maas Building was rented to a series of retail tenants. At the time of Nathan Maas' death, the space housed the Littlejohn Shoe Store.

C.F. Herrick (1835 - 1905) located in Independence in 1856 when he was 21 years old. He had finished his apprenticeship in the jewelry trade and left his home in New York to seek a successful career in the west. He continued in business with a series of partners in Independence until his death. He was an active member of the Masonic Lodge and a veteran of the Civil War, having served in the regimental band with the Eleventh Illinois Infantry and as captain of Company D of the Forty-sixth Iowa Infantry. And he was active in civic affairs. He was elected to two terms as mayor and several terms as councilman. At the time of his death he was again serving the city as Mayor.

Herrick family descendants sold the Maas Commercial Building to Ronald I. and Elsie D.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

---

The Maas Commercial Building, Buchanan County, Iowa

(ByVank) Baum in 1943 and the Baums continued to utilize the building as an income property by renting it to other retailers. Several generations of the Baum family were clothing retailers in Independence. Ronald Baum (1899 - 1970) moved to Independence in 1918 and entered the clothing business with his uncle, Albert Israel. He purchased the business from his uncle in 1933 and continued until his death at the age of 71. Baum was a leader in many groups. He was a past president of the Independence Lions Club and the Independence Area Chamber of Commerce. He was past commander of the American Legion post and a 50 year member of the Masonic Lodge. He was past state president of the Iowa Retail Clothiers Association and a member of the Elks Club and the Sons of Jacob Synagogue in Waterloo, Iowa.

Elsie Baum (1898 - 1981) moved to Independence in 1925 and taught music in the Independence public schools before her marriage to R.I. Baum in 1927. She joined him in the clothing business and remained in business after his death until her own death at the age of 83. Mrs. Baum was also active in the Iowa Retail Clothiers Association and the Sons of Jacob Synagogue and Sisterhood and Hadaisch. She was a member of the Ladies Musical Society, the Ladies Literary Society, the Order of Eastern Star, and the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs which she served as state treasurer.

The current owners, Carol and Gary Wright, bought the Maas Commercial Building from the Baum family descendants in 1989 and it once again became owner occupied. They have adapted the second story to serve as their residence and they operate a specialty store in the east half of the first story. The west half of the commercial space is rented to a florist. They are in the process of upgrading the property to emphasize its historical character.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 6

---

The Maas Commercial Building, Buchanan County, Iowa

### Bibliography:

Buchanan County Genealogical Society, Independence, Iowa, files.

Church, Harry, and Katharyn Joella Chappell. History of Buchanan County Iowa and Its People. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing, 1914.

Green, Fayal. The Anatomy of a House. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Pub. Group, Inc., 1991.

History of Buchanan Co. Iowa. Cleveland, Ohio: Williams Bros., 1881.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 7

---

The Maas Commercial Building, Buchanan County, Iowa

### Boundary Description:

The West 8 feet of Lot 3 and the East Quarter of Lot 4 of Block 4 of Stoughton and McClure's Addition to Independence, Buchanan County, Iowa

### Boundary Justification:

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Maas Commercial Building.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photographs Page 8

---

The Maas Commercial Building, Buchanan County, Iowa

The following information is common to all photographs.

Photographer - Mark A. White

Date - July 1996

Negatives in the possession of the photographer

1. North facade of the building - camera facing south
2. Original store front fabric - camera facing southwest
3. South facade of the building - camera facing north
4. South second story windows and door - camera facing northwest
5. Pressed metal ceiling in west commercial space
6. Kitchen/Dining room on second story - camera facing south

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

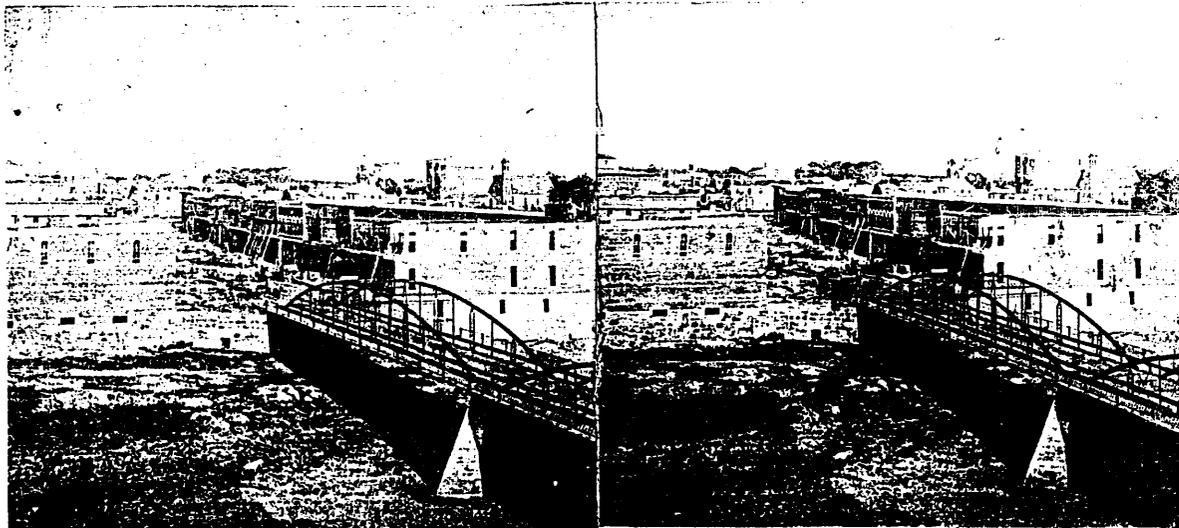
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photographs Page 9

---

The Maas Commercial Building, Buchanan County, Iowa

Photocopy of a stereopticon picture showing the construction of the south side of First Street East in Independence, Iowa, after the fire of 1874.



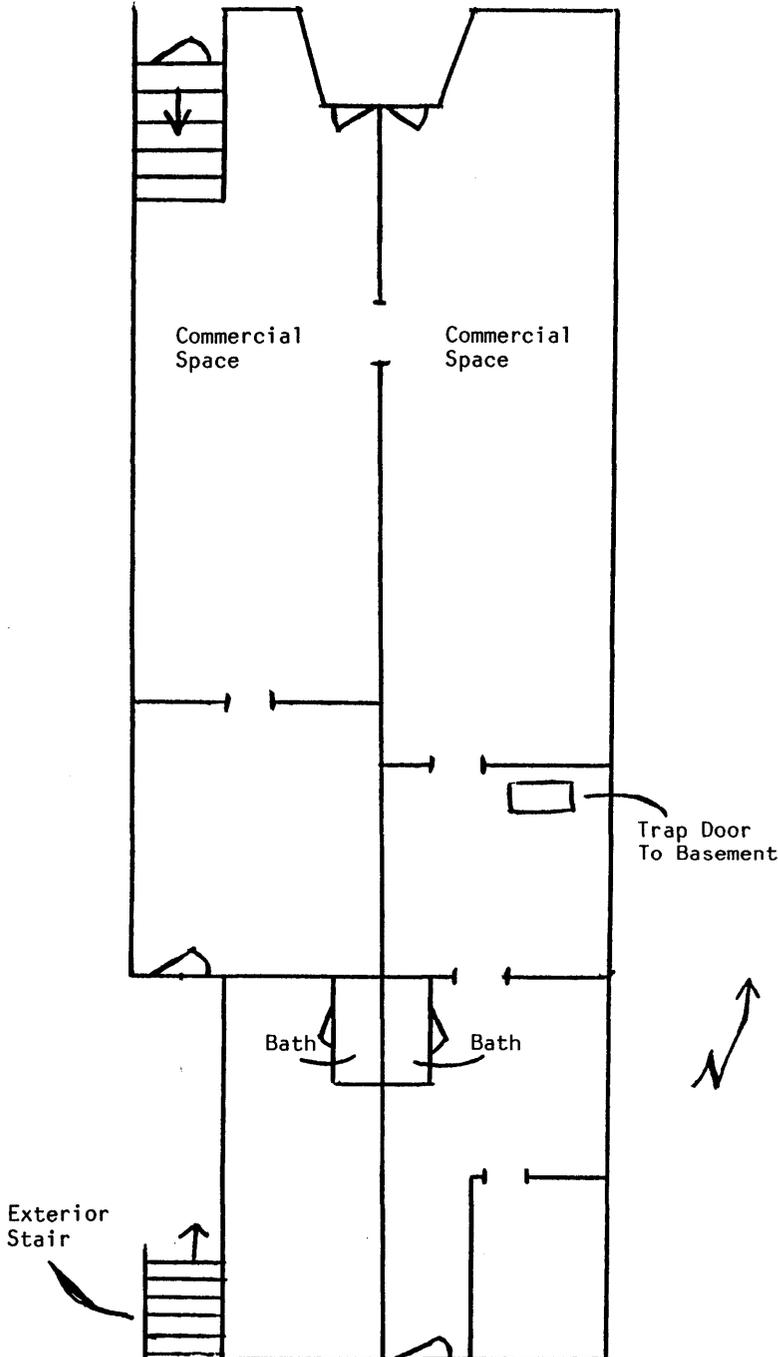
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

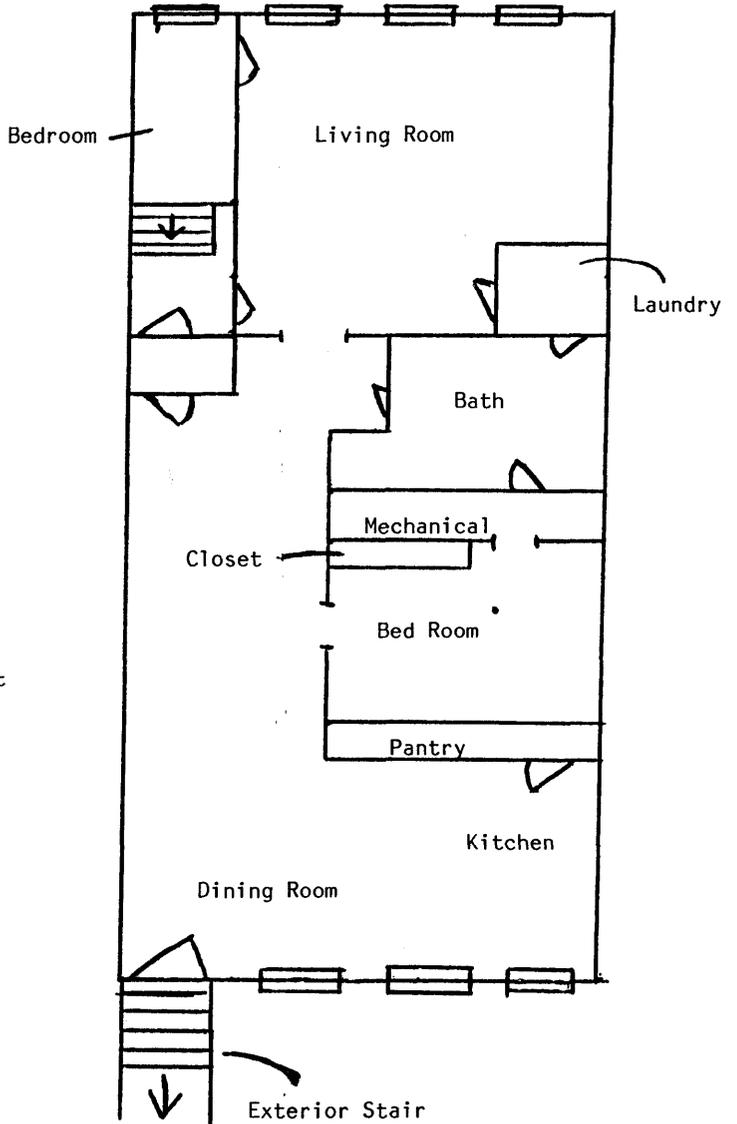
Section number Floor Plan Page 10

The Maas Commercial Building, Buchanan County, Iowa

1st Floor



2nd Floor

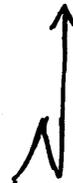
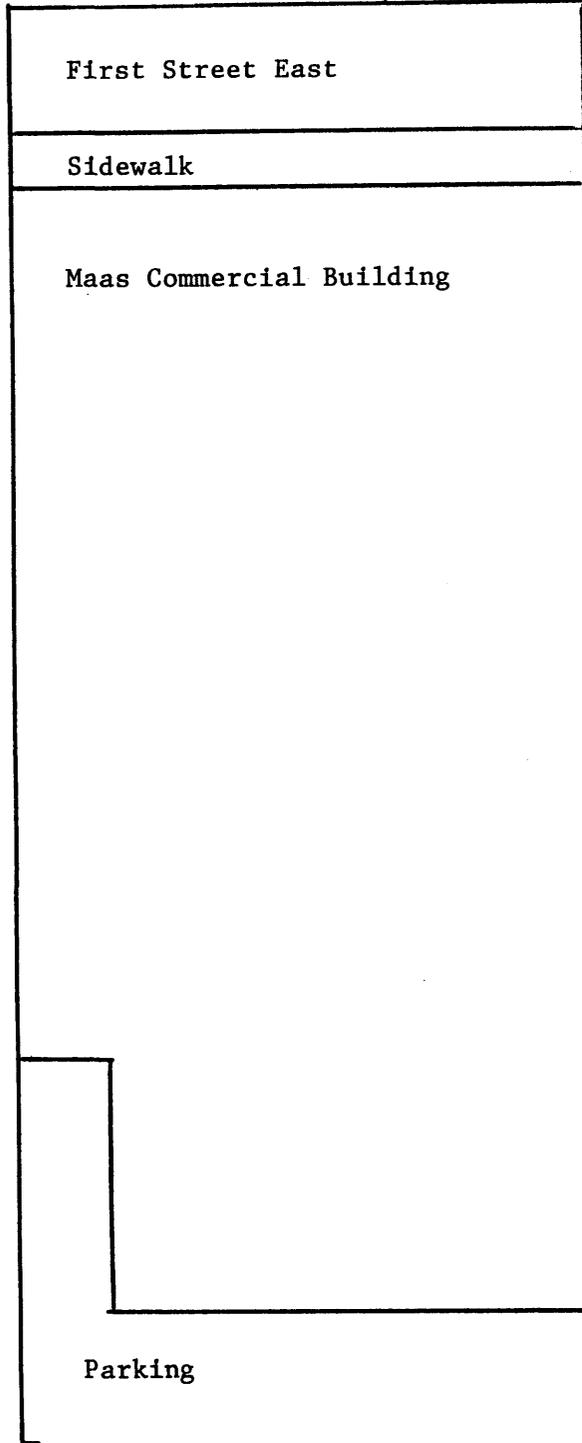


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Site Plan Page 11

The Maas Commercial Building, Buchanan County, Iowa



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Plat Map Page 12

The Maas Commercial Building, Buchanan County, Iowa

