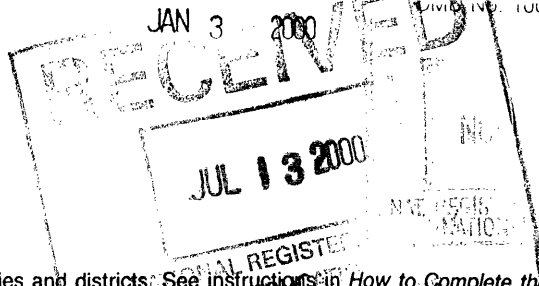


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

921



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 Turner Hall

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 119 East Greene Street N/A not for publication

city or town Postville N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Allamakee code 005 zip code 52162

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 Chalkins DSHPO 7-11-00
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

State of 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 commenting 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:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Linda McChelland 12/11/00

Turner Hall
Name of Property

Allamakee Co., IA
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	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	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)

Social - meeting hall
Recreation and Culture - auditorium
Recreation and Culture - sports facility
Government - city hall

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Social - meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Brick
roof Asphalt
other

Narrative Description

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

Turner Hall
Name of Property

Allamakee Co., IA
County and State

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Entertainment/Recreation

Ethnic Heritage (European)

Period of Significance

1914 to 1940

Significant Dates

1914

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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:

City of Postville

Turner Hall
Name of Property

Allamakee Co., IA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 0.1

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	5
---	---

6	1	6	0	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	7	7	1	0	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

3

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Matthew J. Erickson, chairman

organization Postville Community Improvement Corp. date December 28, 1999

street & number 127 South Lawler Street telephone 319-864-7219

city or town Postville state Iowa zip code 52162-0118

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Postville

street & number 415 Oak Drive telephone 319-864-7454

city or town Postville state Iowa zip code 52162-0242

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018) Washington, DC 20503

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Turner Hall
Allamakee Co., IA

Turner Hall is from the late 19th and 20th Century Revivals type of architecture. Its foundation is concrete, the walls are brick, and the roof is asphalt.

This description is taken from excerpts from the local newspapers in 1913 when the building was constructed. The structure is hollow brick made in Clermont, Iowa, a nearby community. The brick was laid in red colored mortar. The outside dimensions are 48 feet by 106 feet. A basement under the building has a ceiling height of 9 feet. The basement was divided into two stage dressing rooms in the rear, a boiler room, a 30 foot by 24 foot kitchen, and the balance was used as a dining room. The main floor or "opera house proper" contained a stage 46 feet wide and 24 feet deep. The stage opening was 14 feet by 26 feet, and a stairway led to the dressing rooms in the basement. The main auditorium was 64 feet by 46 feet; and the balance of the area in front was devoted to ticket offices, cloak rooms and toilets.

The building was electric lighted and steam heated. It took the plasterers five weeks to complete their work on the interior. The interior required 11 tons of stucco and over 20 tons of sand mix.

The building was considered practically fireproof, being built of brick, steel and cement. The cost of construction was \$15,000.

Present. The outside appearance is the same as when the building was constructed in 1913. The basement is essentially the same. The dressing rooms are now storerooms, and part of the dining room has been enclosed for use as a coat room and entry, and another room for storage.

The main floor has been altered. The back portion of the stage has been enclosed for use as an office or meeting room. The cloakrooms in the front have been remodeled for use as offices when the building served as city council chambers. Some of the original windows have been enclosed for energy efficiency.

Following World War II, a low brick structure was built immediately to the west of Turner Hall. This structure is 30 feet wide and 80 feet long; and it shares a common wall with Turner Hall. There is no entry between the two buildings and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Turner Hall
Allamakee Co., IA

they are not connected in any way except the use of the common wall. This building to the west was used to house fire trucks for the City of Postville until a new fire station was built in approximately 1980. The new fire station is located to the east of Turner Hall, but is not connected in any way. The building to the west is now used for storage by the City of Postville.

The original front door for Turner Hall eventually required replacement. The exact date when the door was replaced is unknown. A single door made of wood now serves as the entry way to Turner Hall.

A block two-bay garage was constructed next to Turner Hall in 1946. This garage shares a common wall. The garage is also owned by the City of Postville; and it was used as a fire station from 1946 to 1980. The local volunteer fire department would sometimes hold meetings in Turner Hall during these years. The two-bay garage is still owned by the City of Postville.

A new high school gymnasium was constructed in 1940, and use of Turner Hall for large social gatherings began to dwindle. Turner Hall was used by the City of Postville for its office and meeting room from 1940 to 1990.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 3Turner Hall
Allamakee Co., IA

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Turner Hall is significant under criterion "A" both for its recognized importance as a social center for Postville and as a German-American social club illustrating the presence of German-American settlement as the largest single immigrant element within the town and surrounding county. It is also significant for its association with National YMCA leader, John R. Mott, a Postville native, whose return to speak at the newly opened Turner Hall marked a milestone in community pride. He won the Nobel Peace prize 40 years later in 1946.

The building of Turner Hall served not only as an immigrant organization to foster greater fellowship among German-Americans in the areas of gymnastics and other social customs, but also as a means to build bridges between Americans and Germans. Local excitement was high as the day approached for the February 4, 1914 grand opening. "Friends," the editor of the Postville Review exalted, "this magnificent auditorium and play house is what Postville people have desired for many years. It is a grand reality now. The best of material and workmanship are in evidence in all its parts and appointments" and "that everyone is proud of what the Turn-Verein has done for Postville is a fact" The subsequent response of the community showed its strong approval. The evening's Grand Opening Ball and Supper, reported the newspaper's editor, "will long be remembered as the date of the one great, big, mammoth, stupendous and all overshadowing social event in the history of Postville. It was the night ... which the people of this good old town and surrounding country had been looking forward to with anticipation and pleasure for many weeks past, and in its realization they found they had not waited in vain." The outpouring of attendance for the evening's dinners, orchestra and public inspection of the building "proved to the Turner Society as nothing else could that home folks thoroughly appreciate the new hall."

Within three weeks came its first major event. At the Turner Hall, Postville hosted what was termed "the splendid 'Welcome Home' to our distinguished former townsman"--John R. Mott. Postville had been the boyhood home of John Mott where his father was a lumber dealer. From there he left to undertake a career as an evangelist, promoter of international understanding, author of 21 books, and eventual winner of the Nobel Prize in

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 4Turner Hall
Allamakee Co., IA

1946 for his humanitarian work. In 1914, at age 48, he had already established an international reputation for his work in the World's Christian Student Movement, Interdenominational work in the Foreign Mission field and YMCA work in the Foreign Field. Moreover, he had been first choice of President Wilson for minister to China, which portfolio he declined. Now in the evening of February 22, 1914, the people thronged to hear Mott speak at what was described as "the largest religious assemblage ever convened in Allamakee County." Despite "mercury down to zero" and "a stiff northeast gale," by 7:30 P.M. "the main auditorium, gallery and stage were a solid sea of humanity--more than 700 in all--and each one had a good comfortable seat. Then, "for two hours Mr. Mott held the closest attention of the assemblage as he related in clear voice and scholarly manner the story in brief of the world tour from which he has but recently returned" and found in all countries visited that "the doors are now open to Christianity." In subsequent years, Mott continued to describe Postville as the place he called his hometown. This was remembered locally. Over forty years later when he died in 1955, the editor of the Postville Herald referred to Mott as having "carried the name of our community throughout the world and it was with pride that we could point to a native of Postville as a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize and other high awards from countries throughout the world."

The building was used from 1914 to 1940 for plays, theatre productions, high school graduations, and large group meetings for many public purposes. From 1914 to the present, the building has served as a meeting place for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H clubs, historical society, VFW and its auxiliary, American Legion and its auxiliary, churches, community service organizations, and a gun club. It has also served as a youth center, and the open spaces were used for roller skating. Businesses that were in need of temporary space also found a home in the building; and an example is that a grocery store was in the building until its own facilities were completed.

From about 1940 until 1990, the building housed the city council chambers and administrative offices for the City of Postville. During that time it also served as a polling station and drivers license station. The basement has been used the past 20 years by senior citizens and the area agency on aging as a meal site. The rear of the building was used temporarily as a fire station.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Turner Hall
Allamakee Co., Iowa

The name "Turner Hall" is derived from a German-American gymnastic and social organization known as "Turn-Verein", or commonly known as "Turner Society". The Turner Hall in Postville, Iowa was built by the Turner Society. It was common for the Turner Society to construct a building for its social gatherings and gymnastics; the organization constructed buildings in other communities in Iowa.

German-American immigrants were a large portion of the Iowa population in the late 19th century and early 20th century. Buildings such as the Turner Hall were an important part of their social life.

The present Turner Hall, constructed of brick in 1913-14, replaced an earlier Turner Hall, of frame construction, on Greene Street. Both buildings were manifestations of the German Turn Verein movement and the significant role played by German-Americans in the history and development of Postville, and of Allamakee County.

Turner Hall is currently used as a community center or gathering place for larger groups. However, it is not handicapped-accessible and this limits its use by public organizations. The community of Postville intend to use Turner Hall as a museum and a location for items and material of historic interest owned or held by the Postville Historical Society.

Turner Hall, in sum, is a reminder of the substantial number of German-Americans who shaped the history of Postville and of Allamakee County. In particular, Turner Hall is significant under Criterion A. as an important gathering point for the community of Postville. The building began its use as a German-American social club, and continuing as a social center for the community, and use as the center of government by the City of Postville for fifty years. It is a reminder, also, of Postville's "Favorite son," Dr. John Mott, 1946 Nobel Prize winner, whose life was intertwined, from time to time, with the history of Turner Hall. The connections of this building to John R. Mott's life, however, lie mainly in the series of lectures given by him, which at this time are considered an insufficient basis upon which to claim eligibility for the National Register under Criterion B.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9, 10 Page 6

Turner Hall
Allamakee Co., Iowa

Bibliography

- Buxbaum, Katherine. "John R. Mott, World Citizen," *Annals of Iowa*, 40:2 (Fall 1969), 137-142.
- Obituary for John R. Mott in *Annals of Iowa*, 33:1 (July 1955), 67.
- "Grand Opening Arranged: Postville's New Turner Hall Will be Formally Opened With a Ball and Supper on February 4," *Postville Review*, January 16, 1914, p. 1, c. 3.
- "A Whirlwind of Joy!: Grand Opening of Postville's New Turner Hall a Tremendous Success From Every Point of View . . ." *Postville Review*, February 6, 1914, p. 1, c. 2.
- "Sunday Eve, Feb. 22," *Postville Review*, February 13, 1914, p. 1, c. 3.
- "A Tremendous Success: The John R. Mott Meeting Was the Largest Religious Assemblage Ever Convened in Allamakee County," *Postville Review*, February 27, 1914, p. 1, c. 3.
- C. W. D. "As I See It," *Postville Herald*, February 2, 1955, p. 10, c. 1.
- "Dr. John Mott Passes Away at Florida Home," *Postville Herald*, February 2, 1955, p.1, c. 6.

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 21, 22 and 23, Block 1, Mott's Addition to Postville, Allamakee County, Iowa. This includes Turner Hall and the two-bay garage.

The south side is bounded by Greene Street, and the North side is bounded by Mott Street, Postville, Iowa.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire city lots known as Lot 21, 22 and 23, Block 1, Mott's Addition to Postville, Allamakee County, Iowa. These entire city lots have been historically associated with the nominated property. This includes Turner Hall built in 1913/1914 and the two-bay garage which shares a common wall.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

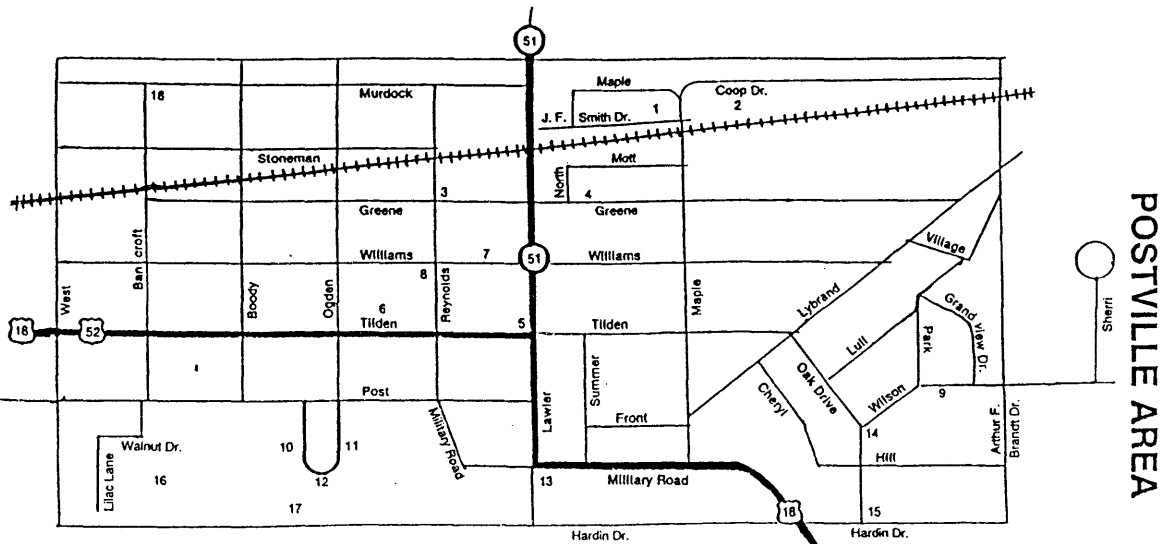
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Add'1 Page 7

Turner Hall
Allamakee Co., IA

© 1989 Northeast Iowa Regional Telephone Directory

31



POSTVILLE AREA

POSTVILLE - IOWA

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| 1. City Ball Diamond | 5. Telephone Office | 9. Swimming Pool | 13. Lutheran Church |
| 2. Big 4 Fair Grounds | 6. Library | 10. High School | 14. Lull's Park |
| 3. City Park | 7. Catholic Church | 11. Elementary School | 15. Postville Community Svc. Ctr. & Yeshiva |
| 4. Memorial Hall | 8. Presbyterian Church | 12. New Gym | 16. High School Ball Diamonds |
| | | | 17. Football/Track Complex |
| | | | 18. Clinton Meyer Park |

Also known as Turner Hall



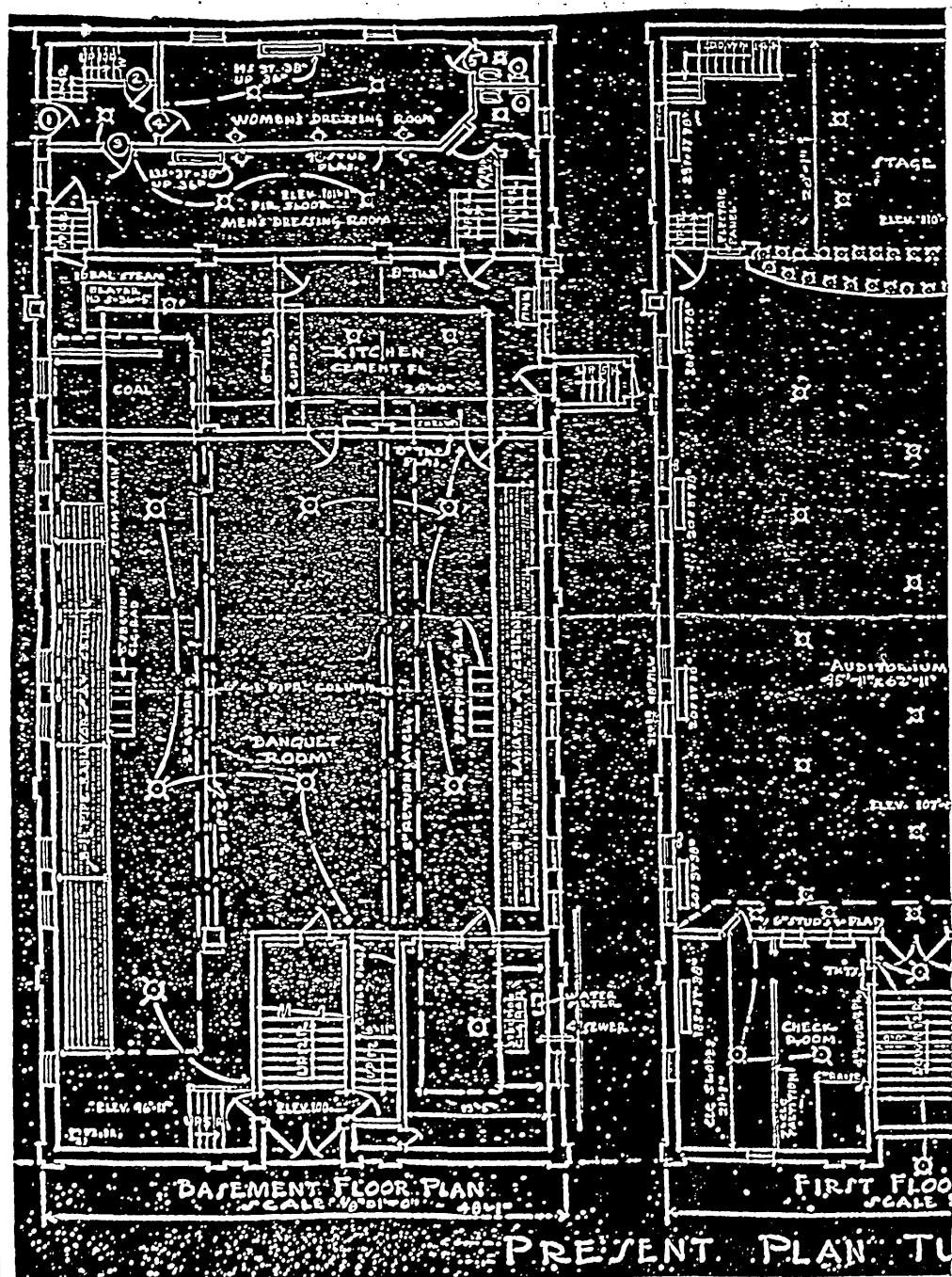
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Add'1 Page 8

Turner Hall
Allamakee Co., IA

Copy obtained from blueprint. Source unknown.
Turner Hall, first floor or basement.



NORTH

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Add'l Page 9

Turner Hall
Allamakee Co., IA

Copy obtained from blueprint. Source unknown.
Turner Hall, second floor.

