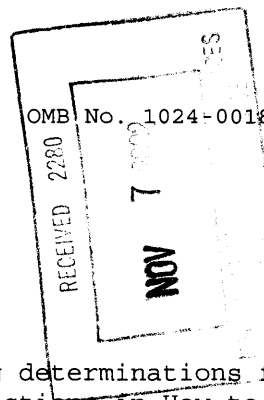


NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1542



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 any 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 Black Hawk Hotel
other names/site number Burr's Hotel

2. Location

street & number 115-119 Main Street not for publication N/A
city or town Cedar Falls vicinity N/A
state Iowa code IA county Black Hawk code 013 zip code 50413

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 ___XX___ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Arnold J. Torke November 4, 2002
Signature of certifying official Date
STATE 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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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): _____

Janet P. McMillan 12/19/02

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> 2 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	buildings
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	structures
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	objects
<u> 2 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>Hotel</u>
<u>Commerce/trade</u>	<u>Financial Institution</u>
<u>Commerce/trade</u>	<u>Restaurant</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Work in Progress Sub: _____

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian: Second Empire
Late 19th & Early 20th Century American Movements
Late Victorian: Italianate

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Limestone
roof Asphalt
walls Brick

other Stone
Concrete

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.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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)

Architecture

Period of Significance 1915

Significant Dates 1870, 1884
1915

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Ralston, John G.

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

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

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(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: _____

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10. Geographical Data

=====

Acree of Property Less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>15</u>	<u>545525</u>	<u>4709370</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	<u>See continuation sheet.</u>					

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 Barbara J. Henning, historian
e-mail address BJHenning@springnet1.com

organization Rivercrest Associates, Inc. date 2002

street & number 203 North 13th Street telephone 217-632-2614

city or town Petersburg state IL zip code 62675

=====
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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name Tindall Enterprises LLC

street & number 1807 4th Avenue telephone 641-236-8453

city or town Grinnell state IA zip code 50112

=====
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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa

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Located in the heart of Cedar Falls' principal commercial street, the Black Hawk Hotel is a four-story, brick commercial building whose appearance admirably combines elements of the Second Empire style with late 19th and early 20th century American commercial design. Main Street is a four-block long collection of mostly two- and three-story brick commercial buildings. It has been the commercial center of the community since the 1850s, but most extant buildings, many of which have storefront alterations, date from the late 19th and early 20th century. Still operating as a hotel, as it has since the 1880s, the Black Hawk Hotel is in good condition and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The venerable hostelry is slated for Tax Act rehabilitation following the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines.

Known as Burr's Hotel from 1884 until 1915, the distinctive mansard-roofed hotel is a local landmark. As one of the best relatively unaltered examples of commercial architecture on Cedar Falls' main street, the Black Hawk Hotel is significant under Criteria A and C. As a notable and properly blended representative of the Second Empire and also late 19th and early 20th century American commercial design, the hotel embodies the distinctive characteristics of these two periods of construction. John G. Ralston, a regionally important architect in practice in Black Hawk County between 1898 and approximately 1953, was responsible for the 1915 alterations associated with the property's evolution to the more modern Black Hawk Hotel. The changes are a reflection of the progressive efforts of Cedar Falls boosters to improve their community. According to blueprints dated August 1914, these alterations (completed in 1915) included expansion into the adjacent 1870s commercial building, a third story addition on the rear of the hotel, new brick on the main façade, and a redesigned ground floor façade. The Black Hawk Hotel thus includes three areas of architectural design and evolution: Burr's Hotel, conversion to the Black Hawk Hotel, and expansion into the adjacent building to accommodate the hotel coffee shop and rooms for hotel employees.

Essentially L-shaped (with small one story extensions trailing to portions of the rear façade), the flat-roofed approximately 89' x 130' building (hotel and coffee shop) has a stone foundation, brick wall surfaces, asphalt shingle on the mansard roof, and limestone and molded metal trim. The main building is four stories, with a three story portion to the rear, a two story

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Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa

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portion dating from the 1870s to the south and also fronting on Main Street, and assorted one story addendums in the rear. Both parts (hotel and coffee shop) have structural systems of load-bearing brick.

Burr's Hotel. The hotel's most prominent feature is its mansard roof with concave sides. Other design elements exhibiting Second Empire stylistic influences include four tall brick chimneys, four wood gabled dormer windows, and, on the Main Street or east façade, paired windows having segmentally arched (now painted) limestone heads with keystones and simple stone sills. Centered on the mansard roof is a brick parapet which echoes both the chimney shapes and the larger paired double-hung windows in evidence below. Burr's Hotel, as the property was known from 1884 to 1914, seems to have been constructed as a five-by-three bay four story main hotel with a long, narrow two story portion trailing to the rear which contained the kitchen and dining room. Though relatively modest compared with more elaborate Second Empire designs—such as Terrace Hill, the Iowa Governor's Mansion—nonetheless Burr's Hotel, its scale, form, and details capture the exuberance and boldness that are hallmarks of the style.

Townsend & Knapp Bank Building. The building that was connected to the hotel when it was modernized in the 1910s was originally a bank built in the 1870s. A 6' x 8' portion of the basement is solid rock from floor to ceiling and may have been the base for a walk-in bank safe. An historic photograph taken after 1875 and before 1880 shows the Carter House (which members of the Burr family operated between 1874 and around 1881), and the present ornate two story building located just south of it. A sign identifies it as a bank. While the three round-arched openings shown in the historic photograph have been removed or covered on the first floor, the elaborate metal ornamentation of the second story remains, now painted dark brown. The vegetal detail on two of the upper windows is quite exuberant and contrasts well with the more refined, somewhat classical design of the center window. Square "pillows" march up the sides of the second story, which is capped by an elaborate cornice having dentils and brackets.

Black Hawk Hotel. Beginning in 1914 and completed early in 1915, the former Burr's Hotel was modernized to accommodate changing practices in the hotel industry and to emphasize Cedar Falls' progressive commitment to the most up-to-date architectural design. Noted regional architect John G. Ralston prepared plans,

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Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa

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of which a partial set remains, to renovate the hotel. The principal exterior change was to the main façade, especially the first floor. New face brick was applied on all stories of the main façade and the rechristened Black Hawk Hotel received new first floor windows, entry, and entry canopy. A series of brick pilasters having simple smooth geometric limestone detail are arrayed between the ample plate glass windows. Awnings currently mask the multiple pane top lights of these windows. Several simple stone courses separate the first and second stories and further draw attention to the modernized first floor.

To make the interior more efficient and modern, architect Ralston redesigned the lobby to be more open and expansive. Wood beams (now painted) divide the ceiling into a series of inset panels, and floor tile patterns echo these squares. As part of the modernization, the original metal columns were encased in attractive oak and have simple (now painted) geometric capitals. A new staircase was placed on the north wall, replacing a centrally located version. The present stairs retain their original architect-designed enclosed wood balustrade. Like motifs employed throughout the Black Hawk Hotel, it displays simple geometric patterns. A doorway in the lobby offers access to the coffee shop on the south end of the building.

It is possible to visually trace the 1915 changes on the north or alley façade of the hotel. A third story was added above the original kitchen and dining room and the building was extended by about half. The limestone foundation is slightly different for the rear extension. In the course of these changes and additions, some windows were bricked up while others having I-beam lintels were added.

The west or rear façade of the property is irregular in outline and looks onto a parking lot. There are three one story extensions to the main buildings, including a small altered entry that was shown as infill on the 1926 Sanborn map for Cedar Falls (but not on the 1916 map). The rear façade continues the materials of the principal parts of the building and is utilitarian in design and use.

Alterations. Alterations are not unexpected for a building constructed nearly a dozen decades ago. Some changes are historic, for they were part of the 1915 transformation from the old Burr's Hotel to the new Black Hawk Hotel. According to the

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Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa

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specifications for the project, three canopied balconies (shown on an historic photograph) were removed, new face brick was applied to the front, and all other brick was painted. The centered brick pavilion was slightly rebuilt and simple geometric brick design added to it. As noted above, a third story was added to rear, larger windows were placed on the north façade, there was a small rear addition, and some windows were bricked up. Hotel operations expanded into the adjacent building, both to serve as a hotel coffee shop (and other services) and also to provide lodging for employees on the second floor.

In the postwar era, additional alterations were completed, including removal of decorative brackets at the cornice. The 1915 canopy was replaced, and in the 1960s a new entry was installed. As part of the ongoing rehabilitation of the property, the metal and imitation stone panels from the entry have recently been removed. In the 1970s an angled entry door and plate glass window replaced the original openings of the cafe. There are now two small offices on either side of the hotel lobby, and, to provide street access to them, the 1915 windows have been attractively replaced with doors. Much of the interior has been altered with drop ceilings and florescent lighting and replacement paneling, although important lobby elements remain. Ongoing rehabilitation plans will respect the integrity of the hotel while making it a safer and more modern facility.

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Section 8 Page 5

Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa

Known as Burr's Hotel from 1884 until 1915, the distinctive mansard-roofed four-story hotel is a local landmark. As one of the best examples of commercial architecture on Cedar Falls' main street, the Black Hawk Hotel is significant under Criterion C, for it embodies the important characteristics of two important periods of architectural design, and under Criterion A as an important example of the successful efforts of local residents to promote and improve their community. As a notable and properly blended representative of the Second Empire style and also late 19th and early 20th century American commercial design, the hotel embodies the distinctive characteristics of these two periods of construction. The property, which is undergoing rehabilitation, has always been a hotel. John G. Ralston, a regionally important architect in practice in Black Hawk County between 1898 and approximately 1953, was responsible for the 1914 alterations associated with the property's transformation into the more modern Black Hawk Hotel. The changes are a reflection of the progressive efforts of Cedar Falls boosters to improve and modernize their community. The design, materials, and decorative details of the property evince the desires of the owners to construct a thoroughly modern hostelry at two distinct periods of time. The Black Hawk Hotel thus illustrates two important periods of architectural design and evolution: the 1884 Burr's Hotel and the 1914 conversion to the Black Hawk Hotel, including expansion into the 1870s adjacent building to accommodate the hotel coffee shop and rooms for hotel employees.

The north half of the southeast quarter of Block 1 in the Original Town Plat of Cedar Falls, Iowa, has been the location of a hotel since the early 1850s, virtually since the town's founding. In 1853, the Winslow House (later the Western and then the Carter House) opened on the site of the present Black Hawk Hotel. An historic photo showing the west side of Main Street likely dates from the late 1870s and shows the Carter House as well as the adjacent bank building that is now part of the Black Hawk Hotel.¹

¹ Peter Melendy, *Fifty Years. Historical Record of Cedar Falls, the Garden City of Iowa* (Cedar Falls: Peter Melendy, 1893), p. 69; historic photo, west side Main Street, ca. 1875. Location: Cedar Falls Historical Society.

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Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa

Members of the Burr family were associated with a hotel at the present site as early as 1874. In that year, "Burr and Davis" operated the Carter House. Born in New York in 1839, Orson Burr had come to Cedar Falls in 1868. According to the 1880 federal census, he was "keeping hotel" and his wife Alice and baby daughter Anna were also in residence along with three servants and ten boarders. The census taker wrote on the form that the family lived on "Main Street." Sometime between 1878 and 1880, the Carter House became the Davis House, although Davis does not appear to have been involved in the daily management of the hotel. The partnership continued until 1881.²

Orson Burr died on June 23, 1881, at the age of 46. His widow, L. Alice Burr, and David Davis were appointed administrators of his estate. It appears that Orson's brothers, Thomas J. (Jerry) and Adelbert N. (Del), stepped in at this point to assume operation of the hotel. By 1884, the brothers advertised that they were the proprietors of Burr's Hotel, "(formerly Davis house)," suggesting that the four-story hotel was in place and under the supervision of the Burr brothers.³

The Burr brothers likely razed the 1853 Carter House and replaced it with the splendid, thoroughly up-to-date four-story hotel. (It is possible they remodeled and greatly enlarged the older property--sources disagree on this matter--but no conclusive documentary or physical evidence has come to light on the fate of the Carter or Davis House.) Burr's Hotel was definitely in place by 1885. The 1885 Sanborn map shows a four-story hotel whose depiction on subsequent maps remained relatively unchanged. The hostelry was not the Carter House, for it was (eventually) three stories. The Burr brothers were in residence and operating the facility in 1885. The state census revealed that Jerry Burr, age 55, was a "hotel keeper," and younger brother Adelbert, age 42, was involved with hotel management at the same hotel. Also present were Jerry's wife Anna, and the brothers' mother, 77-

² City Directory, Cedar Falls, 1874; *History of Black Hawk County* (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1878), p. 495; *Iowa State Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1880-81* (St. Paul: R.L. Polk & Company, 1880); U.S. census, 1880.

³ Iowa Genealogical Society, comp., Probates [sic]. Black Hawk County, Iowa, 1000-1500. November 19, 1878-September 27, 1887, 1986; *Iowa State Gazetteer*, 1884-85.

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Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa

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year-old Mary. Two servants attended to the needs of the six boarders present when the census taker arrived.⁴

During the years the Carter House stood and continuing after the opening of Burr's Hotel, a two-story building stood alongside the south façade of the hotel. Originally a bank built in the 1870s, this building was connected to the hotel when it was modernized in the 1910s. An historic photograph taken after 1875 and before 1880 shows the Carter House and the present ornate two story building with sign identifying it as a bank. The 1874 city directory lists the Townsend and Knapp bank on the west side of Main Street between 1st and 2nd Streets, the same location description employed for the Carter House. Other businesses on the west side of that block of Main Street in 1874 included F.N. Chase (grocer), Pickton and Landgraf (tailors), W.A. Pettitt (physician), Bowman and Smith (real estate), and two restaurants (C.C. Shockey and W.H. Powell). Some may have occupied second stories of buildings on the block.

By 1896-7, the next available city directory, a boots and shoes store, Manville and Company, occupied the former bank, with a physician and a real estate and loan business also using the two-story building. Sanborn maps place the post office at the property in 1885 and 1892, and it is clear the building was located in the heart of commercial Cedar Falls.

The Burr brothers continued to operate their hotel into the 20th century. Thomas J. Burr, age 83, died on April 17, 1912, setting into motion change at the venerable hostelry. Burr was remembered as "an exceptional man" who was "well read on many subjects." For many years, he was the leader of Cedar Falls' village band and a staunch member of his church choir.⁵

The early decades of the 20th century were a time of prosperity and innovation in many small cities and towns in America, especially the Midwest. Across the country, local leaders (boosters) believed fervently that growth in all areas—population, real estate value, type and number of businesses, and

⁴ Melendy, p. 69; Sanborn map, Cedar Falls, 1885; Iowa state census, 1885.

⁵ Northeast Iowa Genealogical Society, comp. *Black Hawk County, Iowa Deaths. Old Settlers Organization. 1899-1919, 1997*; "T.J. Burr is Dead," *Cedar Falls Record*, April 18, 1912, quoting.

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Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa

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cultural institutions--was fundamentally important, appropriate, and necessary. Many residents had seen first hand how quickly a raw pioneer settlement could bloom and develop. They saw how the potent combination of "abundant resources and optimism" could work wonders. Community betterment was simply a given. Local leaders employed three approaches to meet their goals. They organized as associations of businessmen, they advertised or promoted their community, and they underwrote proposed improvements with cash, land, and other incentives.⁶

Cedar Falls was a prime example of the "can-do" spirit. An indication of this optimistic, growth-oriented atmosphere was the establishment in 1909 of the Cedar Falls Commercial Club. Prior to the club's inception, Cedar Falls seemed to be in the economic doldrums, but residents felt that the club "began to revolve the wheels of the city a little faster."⁷ Throughout the 1910s, the newspaper was regularly filled with news of yet another planned or completed improvement in Cedar Falls. For example, in 1912 Joseph Sartori donated \$25,000 toward a hospital, Citizens Savings Bank opened an elaborate facility, on Main Street, and the Commercial Club concluded that "the way to make a booster is to immediately quite grouching."⁸

A county history published in 1915 crowed that "The total building in the city for the past year [probably 1914], including residences, factories and business blocks, has amounted to over one million dollars." Among the 20 new ventures specifically mentioned in the county history were the Cotton Theater (on NRHP), Viking Pump Company, Cedar Falls Hospital, and the Black Hawk Hotel. The scope and number of improvements was such that the newspaper printed its first improvements issue the end of 1914, noting that the "marvelous rejuvenation and growth [was] due in large measure to concerted efforts of the City's Boosters." In the years 1912-1914, the largest dollar amount of improvements--\$463,500--occurred in 1914.⁹

⁶ Lewis Atherton, *Main Street on the Middle Border* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1954; Quadrangle, 1966), pp. 331 (quoting), 330-332.

⁷ John C. Hartmann, *History of Black Hawk County and its People*, 2 vols. (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1915), 1:276, quoting.

⁸ Cedar Falls *Record*, November 14, April 27, April 18 (quoting), 1912.

⁹ John C. Hartmann, *History of Black Hawk County and its People*, 2 vols. (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1915), 1:276, quote regarding total building; Cedar Falls *Record*, Improvements issue, December 3, 1914, quote regarding rejuvenation.

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Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa

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The \$25,000 facelift of the hotel was among the improvements dating from the banner year 1914. With the death of his brother, Adelbert Burr was apparently ready to retire. The Cedar Falls Hotel Company was organized and obtained Burr's Hotel. To proclaim the participation of the hotel in the renaissance Cedar Falls was undergoing, the company determined to modernize the old hotel. To that end, they obtained the services of one of the region's most important architects, John G. Ralston.¹⁰

Practicing in the nearby Black Hawk county seat of Waterloo since 1898, Ralston (either alone or in 1898-1904 as Murphy & Ralston) was responsible for many major buildings in northeast Iowa. By 1912, the firm had designed 100 Waterloo homes, 90 out-of-town houses, and 33 Waterloo and 46 non-Waterloo commercial and public buildings. Ralston works covered Waterloo, and included the east and west side libraries, most west side schools, buildings for the Masons, Knights of Pythias, and Moose fraternal organizations, also churches, Memorial Hall, and the Dairy Cattle Congress Hippodrome.¹¹

Outside Waterloo, the Ralston firm designed courthouses, banks, and at least 20 schools over the years. In 1914 alone, there were seven buildings in Cedar Falls "now under construction from [Ralston] plans." In addition to the Black Hawk Hotel, the hospital Sartori initiated, Graham flats, a double house for Henry Dahl, and residences for Mrs. Vesta Bryant, R.E. McLaughlin, and T.A. Messier were Ralston designs that were underway.¹²

As part of the 1914 transformation from the old Burr's Hotel to the new Black Hawk Hotel, architect Ralston prepared the plans dated August 1914 for the project. Bids from contractors were due September 9, 1914. It has not been determined which contractors were selected, although a Mr. Cotton was described as the contractor in an October 29, 1914 newspaper article; in

¹⁰ John G. Ralston, Specifications of the Material and Labor to be Furnished by General Contractor for Hotel to be Erected for Cedar Falls Hotel Co. at Cedar Falls, Iowa, 1914; Ralston, Partial set of blueprints for Black Hawk Hotel, August 1914.

¹¹ Barbara Beving Long, Waterloo. *The Factory City of Iowa. Survey of Architecture and History*, 1986, pp. 186-87.

¹² Cedar Falls Record, Improvements issue, December 3, 1914. Ad for J.G. Ralston.

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Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa

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addition to the general contractor, work on heating, plumbing, lighting and the phone system was contracted out separately.

The transformation of the old hotel proceeded, with some delays. Changes to the main façade were delayed until a carload of steel arrived late in October of 1914. By the early spring of 1915, however, J.W. Gemmill was installed as the proprietor of the Black Hawk Hotel. Despite the delay of a shipment of beds, the hotel opened on April 1, 1915. Area residents supplied beds until the ordered ones arrived. Delays aside, the thoroughly modern hotel was warmly greeted by Cedar Falls residents, who appreciated the transformation. "The brick[s] are artistic in color and design and, with the addition of the large windows and doors that [were] put in, [give] the front of the hotel a modern and attractive appearance." Indeed, "the new hotel has been polished, and drapped [sic], and washed, and scrubbed until it shines like a bran[d] new silver dollar."¹³

In later years, H.J. Christoffersen and others operated the facility, and in 1946, the Burke family purchased the hotel. The Black Hawk Hotel remained in the Burke family from 1946 until 2002.¹⁴ The various owners of the hotel over the years presumably sought to maintain the standards set by the Burr brothers, "who understand what constitutes a first class house and see to it that their hotel comes up to the ideal. The home-like character of the place makes the traveler always desire to return. These genial gentlemen spare no pains to please their guests."¹⁵

As discussed above, the Black Hawk Hotel is an excellent representative of two important periods of Cedar Falls' development. First settled in 1845 as a mill site, the community was laid out in 1851 and enjoyed early success as a milling center. With the coming of railroad connections a decade later, the city stood ready to enter a new era. Following the Civil War, Cedar Falls emerged as an important agricultural shipping point and also a commercial center in the region. Salesmen and

¹³ Cedar Falls Record, "Work on Hotel Moving Faster," October 29, 1914, quote regarding façade, "New Blackhawk to Open Tonight," April 1, 1915, quote regarding silver dollar.

¹⁴ City directories, Cedar Falls, 1915, 1919, 1927, 1934; interview with William Burke, former owner, April 23, 2002.

¹⁵ Cedar Falls Illustrated. Supplement to the Cedar Falls Globe. February 1, 1894.

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Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa

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other travelers required accommodation, such as Burr's Hotel, when they visited the community. Others likely visited Cedar Falls because of the presence of Iowa State Teachers' College (now the University of Northern Iowa), which was established in 1876. By the turn of the 20th century, Cedar Falls enjoyed a comfortable industrial base in addition to the educational, commercial, and transportation sectors that characterized its historical development. Booster organizations developed and one, the Cedar Falls Commercial Club, sponsored the transformation of the old Burr's Hotel into the modern Black Hawk Hotel.

Regarding the architectural significance of the property, the hotel's most prominent feature is its Second Empire mansard roof with concave sides. Other design elements exhibiting Second Empire stylistic influences include tall brick chimneys, wood gabled dormer windows, and, on the Main Street façade, paired windows having segmentally arched limestone heads with keystones and simple stone sills. Though relatively modest compared with more elaborate Second Empire designs—such as Terrace Hill, the Iowa Governor's Mansion—nonetheless the hotel, its scale, form, and details capture the exuberance and boldness that are hallmarks of the style. The adjacent former bank building, now part of the hotel complex, displays Italianate elements, including elaborate hood molds, rusticated quoin effects, and enriched surfaces, all executed in metal. Modernization efforts from the early 20th century display features of late 19th and early 20th century American movements, notably brick pilasters, simple smooth geometric limestone detail, ample plate glass windows, and simple stone courses.

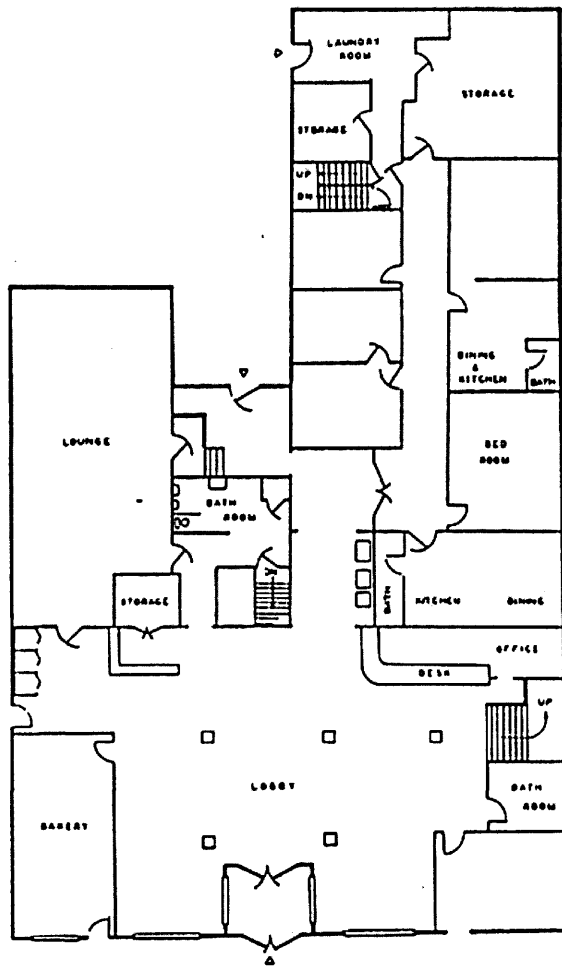
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Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa



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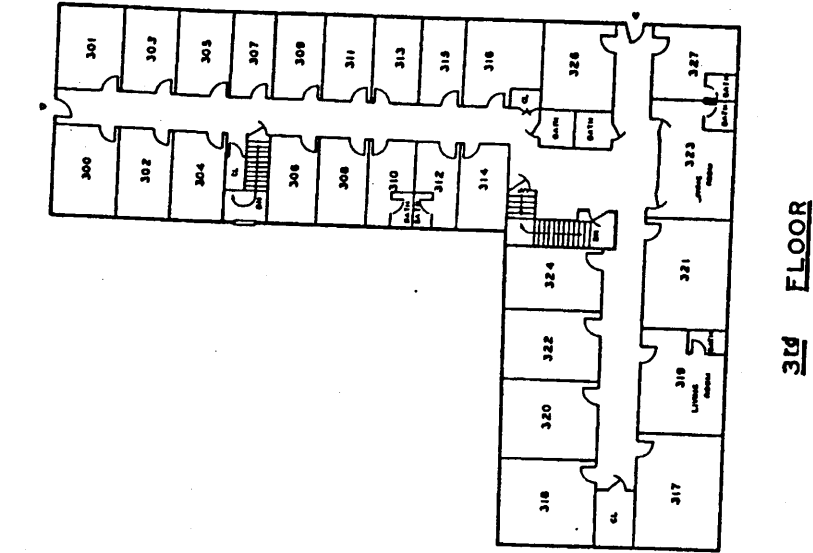
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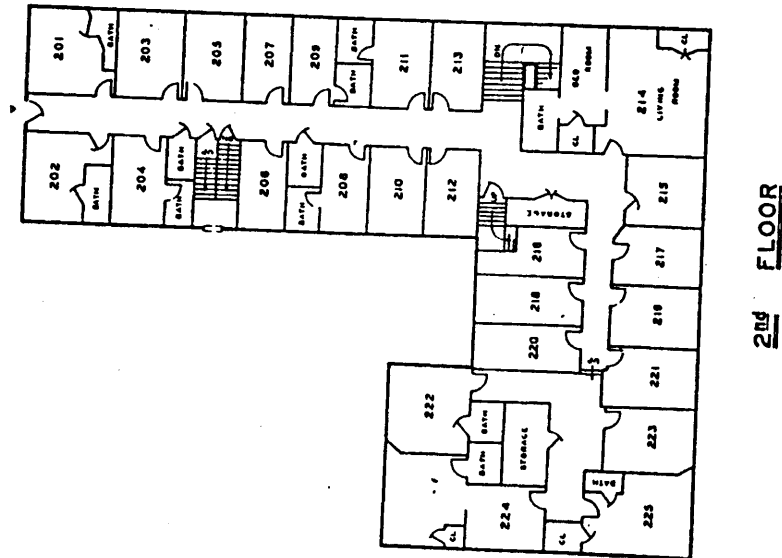
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Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa



Source: Stenson Warm Grimes Port, 1986

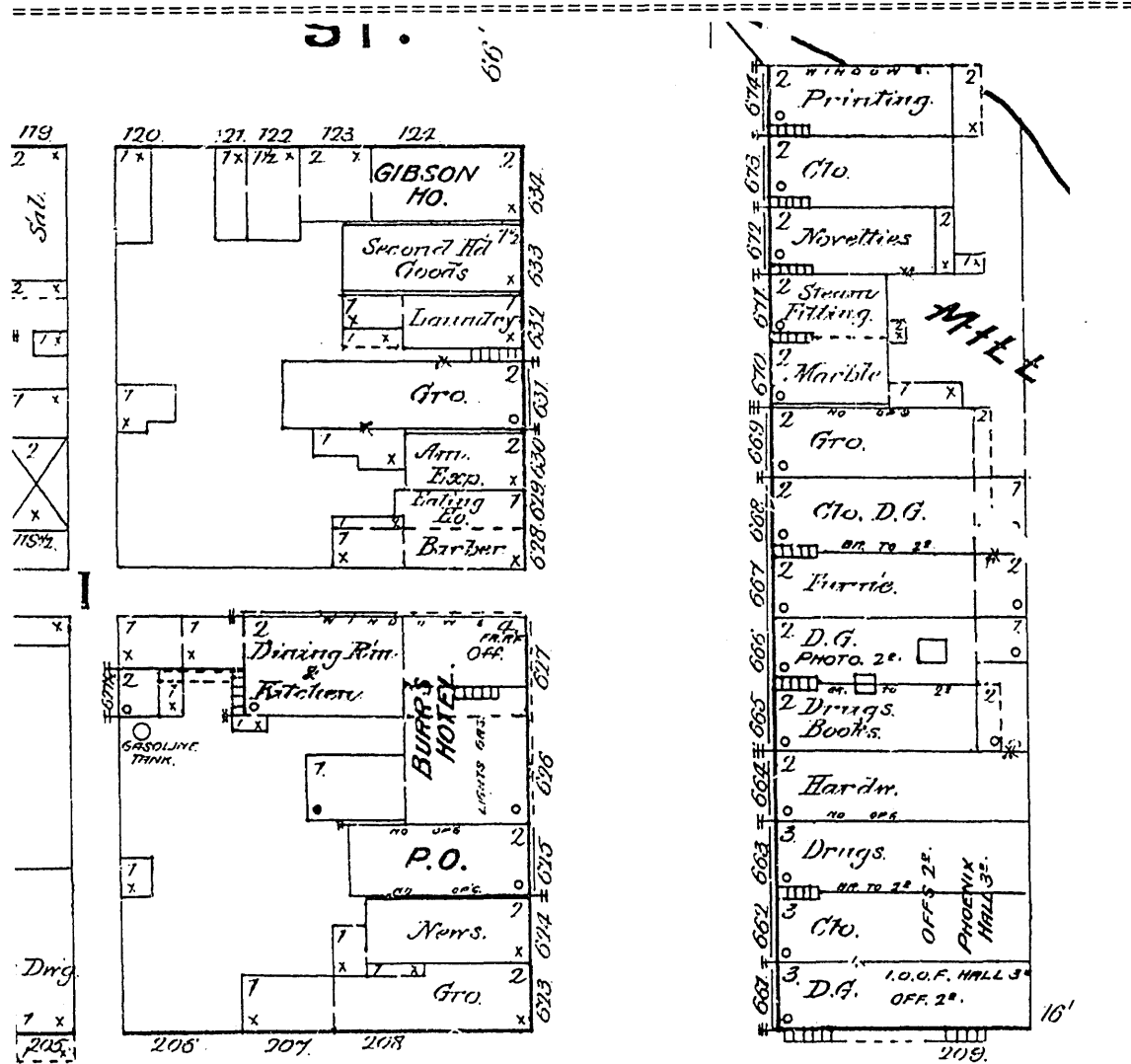


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Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa



Site Plan. Source: Sanborn Map Company, Cedar Falls, 1885. Shows Burr's Hotel as four-story hotel on Block 1.

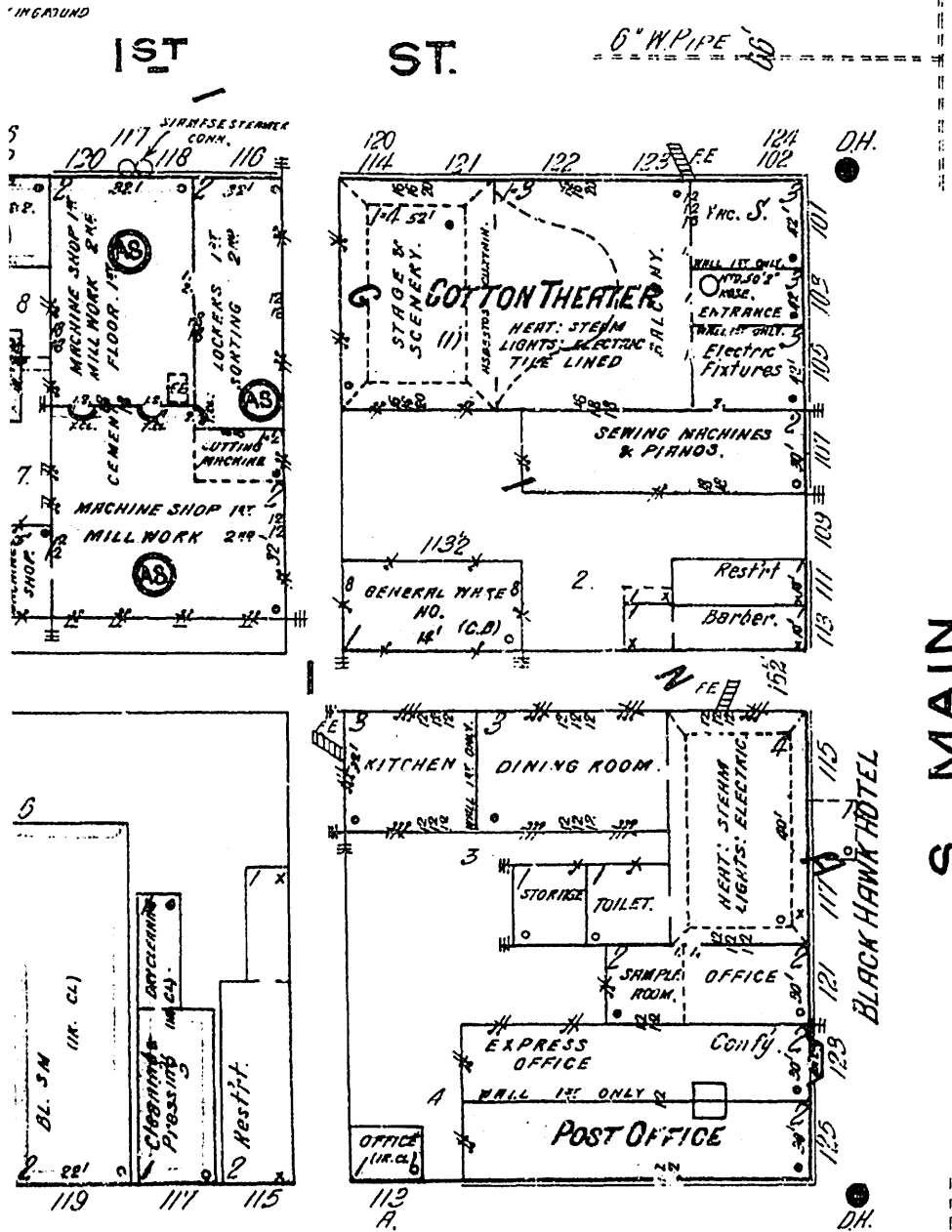
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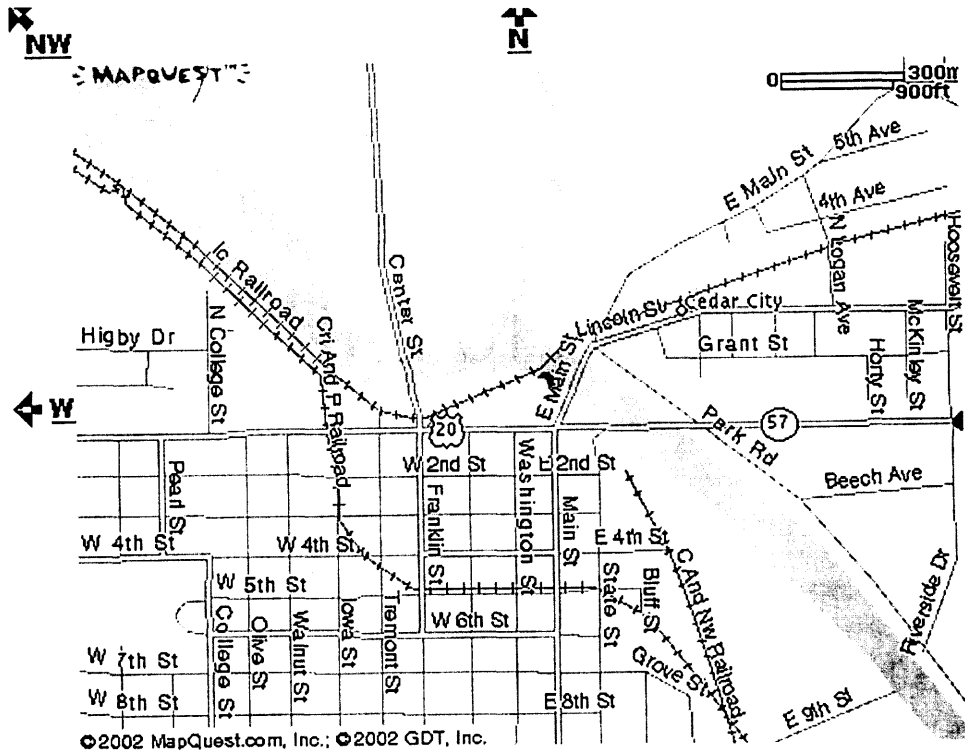
Site Plan. Source: Sanborn Map Company, Cedar Falls, 1916. Shows Black Hotel with 1915 transformation complete.

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Black Hawk Hotel
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Plat Map. Portion of Cedar Falls Map. Source: Mapquest, 2002.

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Black Hawk Hotel
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Historic photo, west side Main Street, ca. 1875. Location: Cedar Falls Historical Society. Note two story bank building (present coffee shop associated with hotel) south of Carter House (location of Black Hawk Hotel).

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Historic Photograph. Burr's Hotel, ca. 1894. Note canopied balconies.
Source: Cedar Falls Historical Society.

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Historic Photograph. Black Hawk Hotel, ca. 1915. Source: Cedar Falls Historical Society.

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 "New Blackhawk to Open Tonight." April 1, 1915.

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Black Hawk Hotel
Black Hawk County, Iowa

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries for the property are the approximately 89'x132' parcel in the north half of the southeast quarter of block 1 of the Original Town Plat of Cedar Falls, Iowa.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is that property which has historically been associated with the hotel, which occupies all of this urban parcel.

Photographs

For all photographs: Black Hawk Hotel, Black Hawk County, Iowa; photographer, Barbara J. Henning; date, April 2002; negative location, owner (Tindall Enterprises).

Photo 1. Main or east façade, camera facing west.

Photo 2. East and north facades, camera facing southwest.

Photo 3. Street scene, camera facing northwest.

Photo 4. West and north facades, camera facing northeast.

Photo 5. Rear or west façade, camera facing east.