

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Grinnell Herald Building
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 813 5th Avenue [] not for publication
city, town Grinnell [] vicinity
state Iowa code IA county Poweshiek code 157 zip code 50112

3. Classification

| Ownership of Property | Category of Property | Number of Resources within Property | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| | | Contributing | Noncontributing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <u>1</u> | _____ buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district | _____ | _____ sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site | _____ | _____ structures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure | _____ | _____ objects |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object | <u>1</u> | _____ Total |

Name of related multiple property listing: Architectural and Historic Resources of Grinnell, Iowa; The Architectural Legacy of Proudfoot and Bird, et al. in Iowa 1882-1940
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. 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 sets forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheets.

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official State Historical Society of Iowa
Date 11/29/90
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official
Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

Entered in the National Register

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. [] See continuation sheet.
[] Removed from National Register.
[] Other, (explain): _____

[Signature]

1/17/91

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Industry/Communications facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Commerce/Business

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Neo-Classical revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls brick

roof shed: tar & gravel

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The *Grinnell Herald* Building is located on 5th Avenue mid-block between Main and Broad Streets and adjacent to a north-south alley. The building faces south. It is one-half block west of the United States Post Office and is surrounded by other commercial buildings ranging in height from one to three stories.

The *Grinnell Herald* Building is a 1-story, red brick building constructed over a raised basement. The brick is a common color of red and laid in common bond. Mortar joints are wide and mortar color is white with large aggregate. The facade is divided symmetrically into three sections with the outer sections wider than the middle section. The entrance is centrally located and is surrounded by cast-concrete decorated with simple linear moldings. The door is flanked by side lights and topped with a transom. Four brick pilasters with concrete Ionic capitals and bases mark the divisions of the facade. These pilasters frame large expanses of glass which light the first floor. Even the space above the entrance is filled with glass, rather than a wall. Later alterations have filled the first story window openings with glass brick. The raised basement is also lighted by windows on the facade, but these are small and square. They are wood framed and original to the building. Echoing the tripartite division, there are three basement windows flanking the entrance. The Ionic ordered pilasters support a concrete entablature with a simple cornice. A brick parapet continues the facade over the entablature. The alley wall is decorated with two horizontal, smoothly textured concrete, linear rectangles in the cornice area. Vertical concrete bands tie the two horizontal bands together visually and mark the progression of the wall along its length. The east side also features a broken band of concrete at the foundation level and industrial style, metal windows located in the rear bays. These windows are also situated at the rear of the building. Access to the main level can be gained through an interior concrete staircase at the front or smaller access stairs on the side of the building near its rear.

The interior of the building features a cast iron, spiral staircase with access from the basement to the upper level. There are two skylights, one of which is still visible and functional at the rear of the building. The other skylight is covered over. Below each of these skylights were opaque glass panels in the floor to provide extra light in the basement pressroom. These remain mostly intact although one is covered by carpeting. A motor-driven freight elevator stands near the rear of the building and opens on the alley. This provides an efficient means to transfer supplies and equipment into the building and also to ship out printed products. Interior walls are textured plaster. They retain their original configuration. The only major alteration to the interior is the lowering of the ceiling in the front section of the main

[X] See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Journalism

Period of Significance

1916

1916-1940

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Located in the northern part of Grinnell's central business district, the *Grinnell Herald* Building derives significance under Criterion A by calling attention to an architypical example of a small town newspaper and its strong impact on the community. The publishers and editors of the newspaper have been among the most influential citizens in Grinnell. They have historically promoted the development of the community by supporting public improvement projects like hard-surfaced streets and walks, new technologies like telephones, and fostering good relations between Grinnell the city and Grinnell the college. The *Grinnell Herald* continues this support today. Although this newspaper's policy might, historically, be seen as conservative on some social and political issues, when it came to the economic development of Grinnell, the newspaper took a very progressive and forward thinking position.

The *Grinnell Herald* Building also derives significance under Criterion C--architectural design embodying a period of style. The building exhibits the influence of Neo-Classicism as applied to commercial design in its symmetrical facade, Ionic pilasters, and denticulated cornice. Planned by Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson, architects of Des Moines, Iowa, the building is also unusual as a type--a newspaper office and printing plant. Both these functions required design solutions to technical problems. The architects' original tracings for the building survive and add a further note of significance. The interior layout of the building's equipment and work stations was planned by a professional efficiency expert in 1916. These plans also survive. Although most of the original equipment no longer remains in the building, the work areas designated in these plans remain the same. The employment of professional assistance for this layout plan witnesses the newspaper's commitment to order its own house as well as to urge modern business practices within the community.

BACKGROUND

The *Grinnell Herald* is the oldest newspaper in the City of Grinnell and the second oldest newspaper in Poweshiek County, Iowa. Established in 1868 as the *Poweshiek County Herald*, the newspaper rivaled for some time the *Montezuma Republican* which had been founded in 1856. By 1872, the *Grinnell Herald* had far and away the largest circulation in the county (Cravath, p. 1). This was due undoubtedly to the population growth of the City of Grinnell and railroad service to this community, but Montezuma did have the major advantage of being county seat of Poweshiek County which Grinnell did not.

[x] See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

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 Report # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Specify repository:
Brooks, Borg & Skiles, Architects, Des Moines, IA

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| A | [13] | [522895] | [4921260] | B | [] | [] [] [] [] [] [] | [] [] [] [] [] [] |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| C | [] | [] [] [] [] [] [] | [] [] [] [] [] [] | D | [] | [] [] [] [] [] [] | [] [] [] [] [] [] |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The east forty (40) feet of Lot 1 of Block 6 in the original plat of Grinnell, Iowa.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Boundary includes all property associated with the building and excludes all other buildings.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title W C PAGE, PUBLIC HISTORIAN; PEGGY PINDER
organization The Dunbar/Jones Partnership date SEPTEMBER 1990
street & number 110 SOUTHWEST FIFTH STREET telephone 515/280-8026
city or town DES MOINES state IA zip code 50309

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7

Page 2

CFN-259-1116

floor. This is easily reversible. There remains a quantity of printing equipment in the basement. The firm continues to print short orders and layout of the newspaper is done in this building although the printing itself is at another location.

Designed in 1916 by Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson, architects of Des Moines, Iowa, the building was constructed closely to plan. This can be documented through comparison of original tracings of the building with the built structure. The building shows some changes to plan. The biggest was in the substitution of stone for terra cotta as the material for architectural details. Also the *Grinnell Herald* title in the cornice area is cut in stone rather than mounted in bronze letters. The title plaques and outside lights flanking the front door were not installed although the architect suggested them. These changes do not compromise the integrity of the architectural design. These and similar changes are, in fact, typical when comparing designed plans and constructed buildings. The changes from terra cotta to stone in the *Grinnell Herald* Building appear to have been made to increase the permanency of the building rather than to save money.

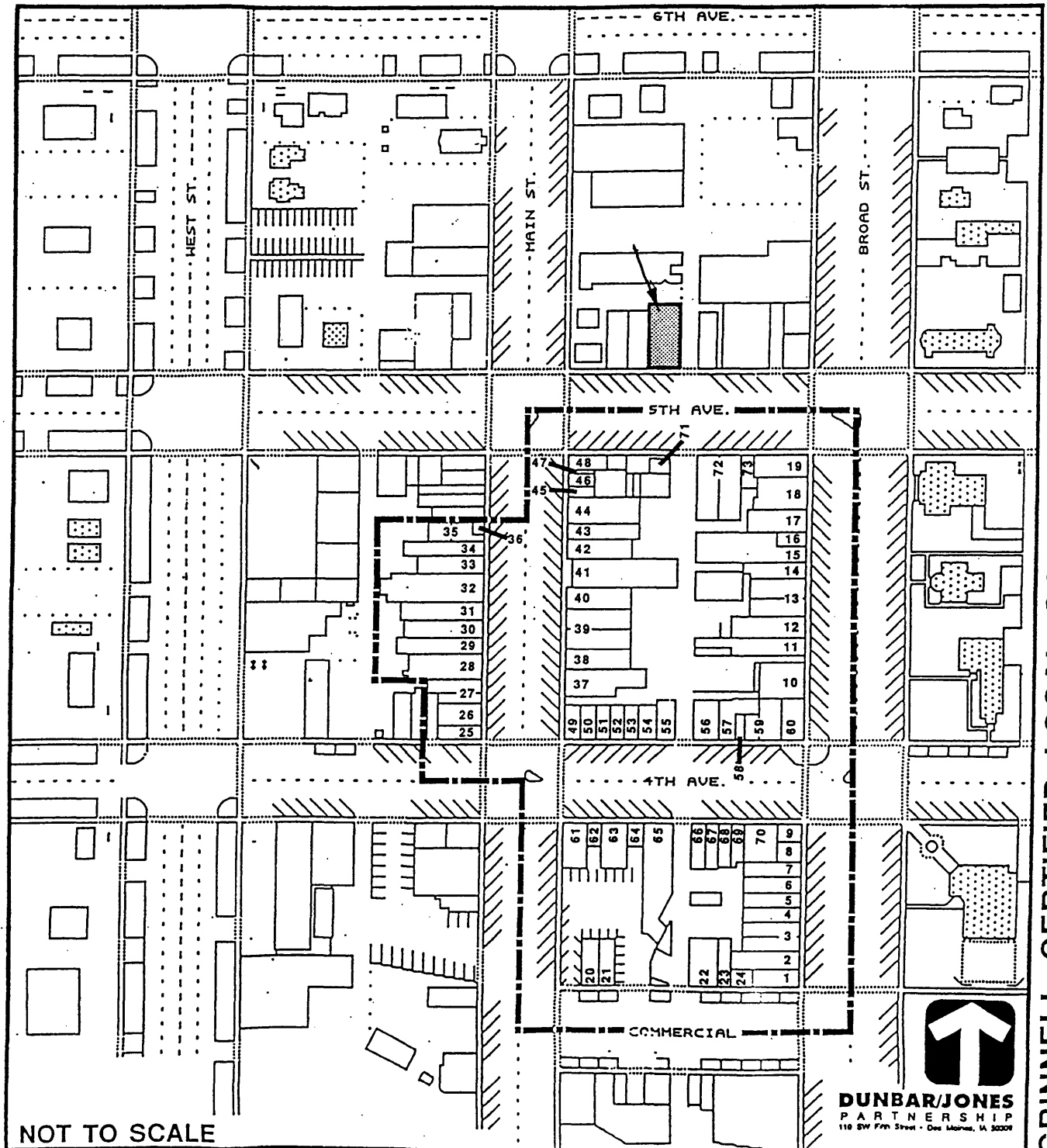
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 3

CFN-259-1116

Map indicates historic district site numbers



NOT TO SCALE

"Grinnell Herald" Building

DUNBAR/JONES
PARTNERSHIP
110 SW 7th Street - Des Moines, IA 50307

GRINNELL, IOWA
PHASE TWO
GRINNELL CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT
NATIONAL REGISTER PROJECT

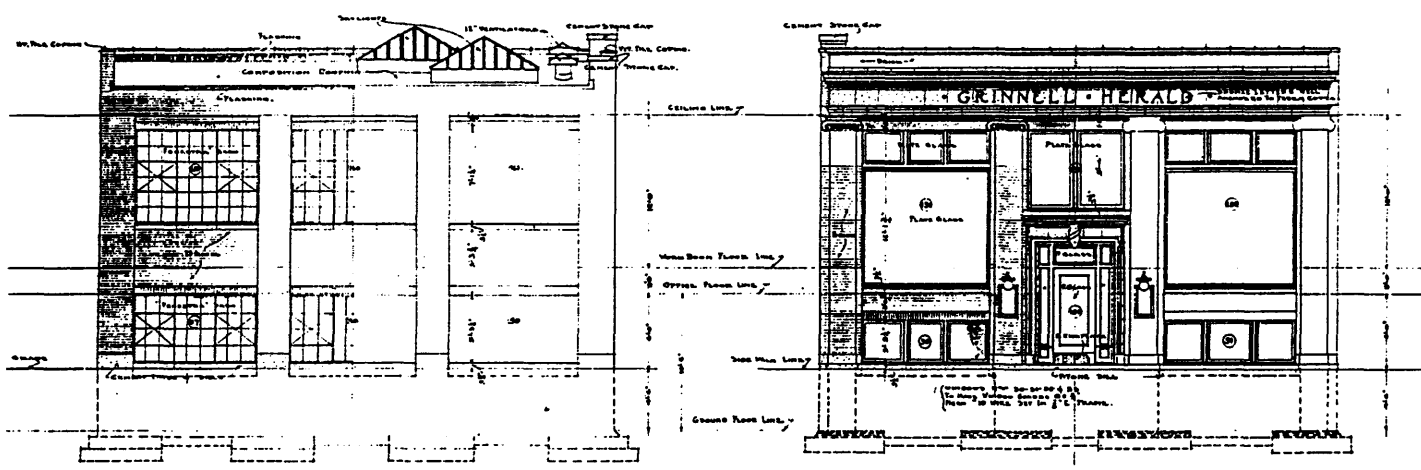
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7

Page 4

CFN-259-1116



· NORTH · ELEVATION ·

SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

· SOUTH · ELEVATION ·

NOTE:
 UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED
 MATERIALS TO BE IDENTIFIED ARE TO BE IDENTIFIED.
 DIMENSIONS SHOWN TO INDICATE SIZE AND
 OR LOCATIONS. FINISHES BY OWNER.

BUILDING NO. 1700
SHEET NO. 5049 SHEETS

GRINNELL HERALD BUILDING

PROFFER, BRIDGEMAN & ZANUSCH
ARCHITECTS

NORTH AND SOUTH ELEVATIONS.
ORIGINAL 25"X37" TRACING FOR BUILDING.
PROPERTY BROOKS, BORG, AND SKILES.

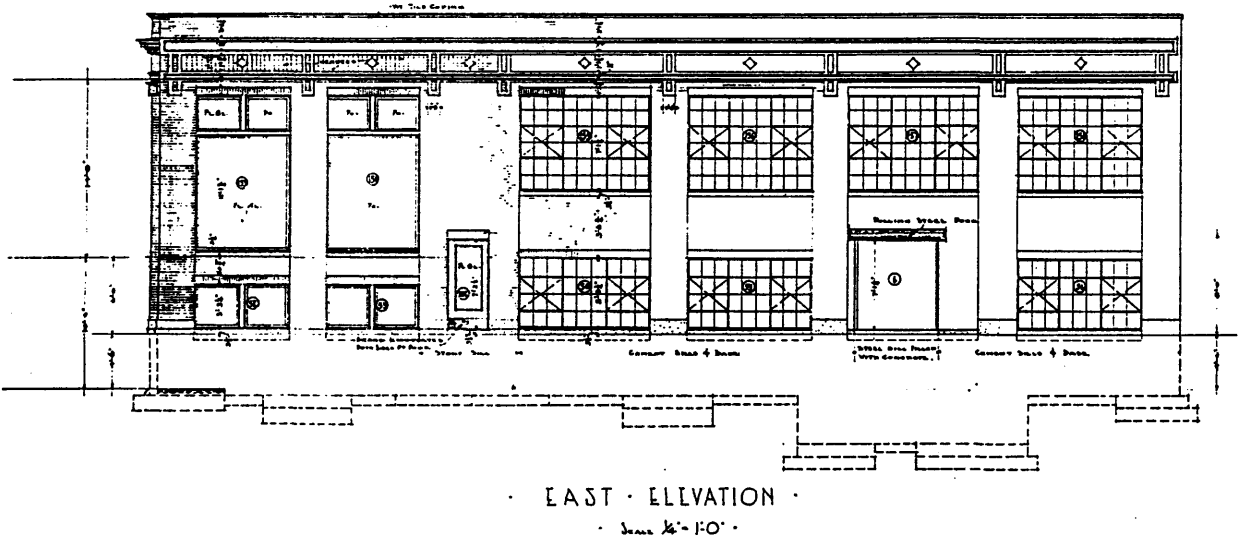
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7

Page 5

CFN-259-1116



BUILDING NO. 1700
SHEET NO. 6 OF 9 SHEETS
DATE: APRIL 19 1916

GRINNELL HERALD BUILDING
GRINNELL IOWA

FRANK COFFEE & DANIELSON
ARCHITECTS
DES MOINES IOWA

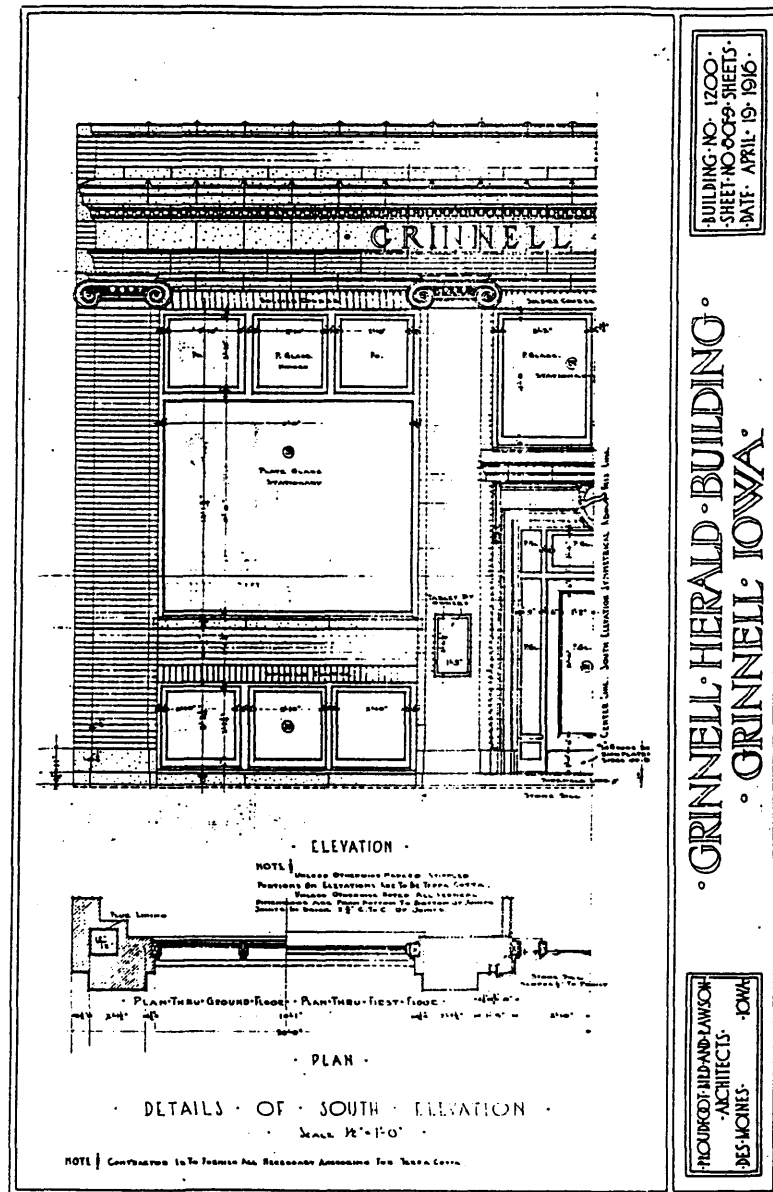
EAST ELEVATION.
ORIGINAL 25" X 37" TRACING FOR BUILDING.
PROPERTY BROOKS, BORG, AND SKILES.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 6

CFN-259-1116



**SPLICED FROM ORIGINAL 25" X 37" TRACING.
PROPERTY BROOKS, BORG, AND SKILES.**

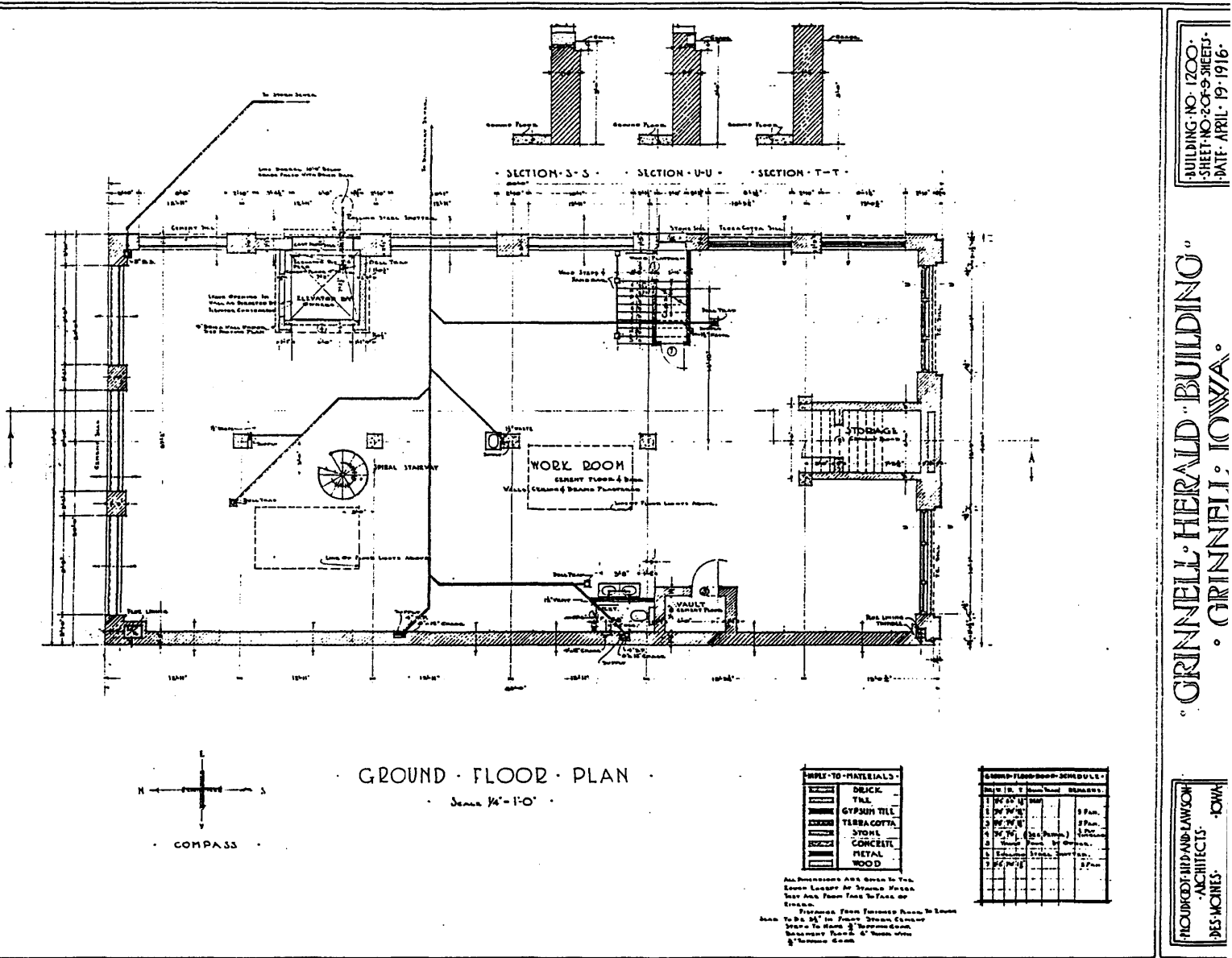
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7

Page 2

CFN-259-1116



BUILDING NO. 1200
SHEET NO. 2 OF 9 SHEETS
DATE: APRIL 19 1916

GRINNELL HERALD BUILDING
GRINNELL, IOWA

HOWARD H. AND LAWSON
ARCHITECTS
DES. MOINES, IOWA

INDEX TO MATERIALS.
FROM ORIGINAL 25"X37" TRACING FOR BUILDING.
PROPERTY BROOKS, BORG, AND SKILES.

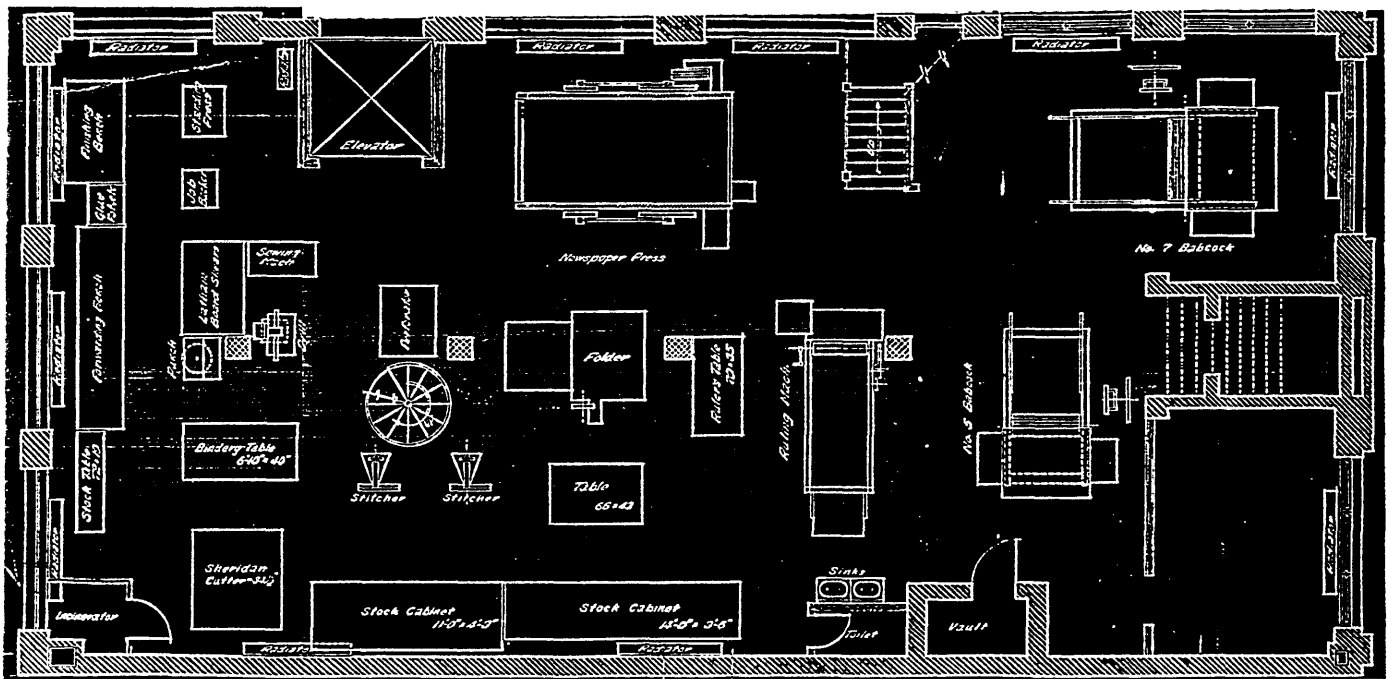
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7

Page 8

CFN-259-1116



**BASEMENT
EQUIPMENT & WORK STATION LAYOUT PLAN
INTERNATIONAL TYPESETTING COMPANY, PROBABLE DESIGNER.**

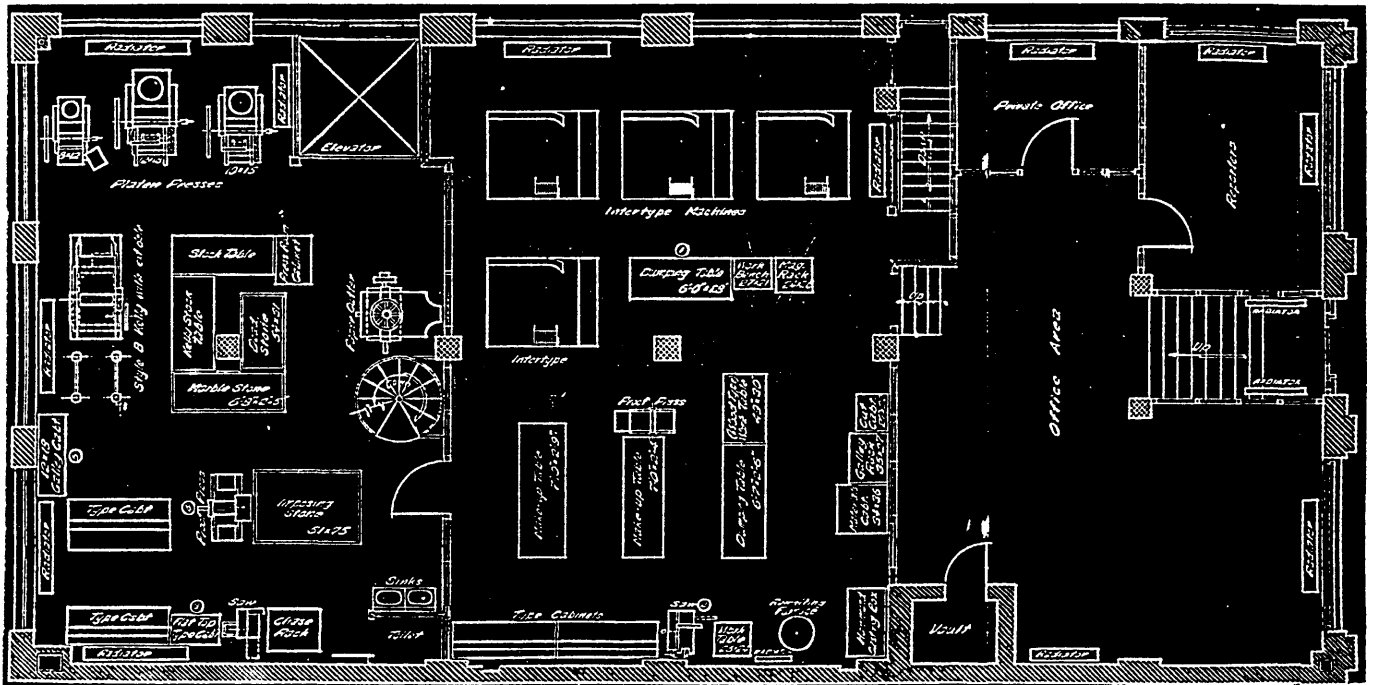
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7

Page 9

CFN-259-1116



FIRST FLOOR
EQUIPMENT & WORK STATION LAYOUT PLAN
INTERNATIONAL TYPESETTING COMPANY, PROBABLE DESIGNER.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 2

CFN-259-1116

The *Grinnell Herald* was housed in a number of buildings during its early years. One location was in Phelps Block. In 1874, the newspaper leased a lot on Main Street (south of the present Elks location) and built a 1-story, frame building 20'x40'. An attached shed was at the rear large enough for a horse. For more than six years, a horse supplied power to print the newspaper press.

In 1881, owners of the lot decided to erect a new brick building, the Ames Block. (This was one of three buildings in Block 8 which survived the Great Fire of June 1889. It was later pulled down). Displaced by construction of the Ames Block, the *Grinnell Herald* bought a site on Commercial Street and erected a brick building on it. This building was destroyed by the Great Fire of 1889 along with the job press and steam engine. The *Herald* thereupon erected another brick building on Commercial as part of the Phoenix phenomenon. The newspaper remained at this location until 1916 when it moved to its present site in 5th Avenue.

The *Grinnell Herald* has employed a variety of equipment through the years. In 1872, the press consisted of an "old-fashioned Washington" press owned by Grinnell College who also owned the type. In 1872, the paper bought a new Cincinnati cylinder press and new type. The size and perceived weight of this press was such that the landlord allowed the newspaper to set up this press on the proviso that the newspaper would be responsible for any structural damage to the building.

Although Grinnell has had a number of newspapers over the years, the *Grinnell Herald* has always been dominant. These other newspapers included *The Independent*, *The Signal*, and *The Independent-Signal*. The *Grinnell Herald* may have absorbed some of these in the early Twentieth Century. In 1901 another newspaper, the *Grinnell Register*, began publication. This newspaper was owned by members of a Grinnell family who had returned to Grinnell from the Washington, D. C. area where they had also had been involved in publishing. This newspaper remained in operation until 1936. At this time, the *Register* and the *Herald* consolidated and have since continued publication as the *Herald-Register*. The *Grinnell Register* was located originally on Broad Street. In 1916 the firm built their offices and pressrooms at 937 Broad Street. The firm's newspapers remain as paper files in poor condition and have not been microfilmed. The *Grinnell Herald* newspapers have been microfilmed and are mostly complete since the 1870s. The importance of this information for local history is inestimable and the value of this data today confirms the importance of the newspaper for the historic scene. Grinnell not only supported two newspapers, but these businesses were financially secure enough to construct new buildings to house their operations, both in 1916.

Historically there has been an important symbiotic relationship between the leaders of the Grinnell community and the *Grinnell Herald*. The publishers and editors of the *Grinnell Herald* have actively supported the economic and cultural development of the community. This is evident from the newspaper's local coverage of the first electric company in Grinnell, the paving of street and sidewalks, the first telephone company in the community, and promoting progressive, forward-thinking ideas, practices, and technology which would benefit the economic growth of Grinnell. The newspaper also actively promoted good relations between town and gown. The *Grinnell Herald* could write in 1900 that "It is the friendship of men like him [J. C. Bacon], the men who have built Grinnell and the neighboring community that has

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 3

CFN-259-1116

kept The Herald on the map" ("Looking Backward"). This could equally be said of the *Grinnell Herald* itself.

The relationship between this newspaper and community leaders was established early on when, for example, J. B. Grinnell received a printing press from the R. Hoe Company of New York to equip a newspaper. The Rev. J. M. Hillyer, an early minister in the community, became the paper's first editor in March 1868. In 1869 the paper was purchased by Col. S. F. Cooper and the Rev. J. M. Chamberlain.

Dr. S. A. Cravath became editor and an owner of the *Grinnell Herald* in 1874. He remained in this position until 1894. Cravath, a medical doctor, was responsible for many transitions at the newspaper including the introduction of steam power to power the printing plant (1881) and the beginning of book binding operations (1881 or before). Cravath was also responsible for building new facilities to house the newspaper, first in 1881 and again in 1889 after the Great Fire. As an editor, Cravath strove to promote the interests of Grinnell and Poweshiek County. Cravath showed considerable business acumen. During the 1870s, for example, the *Grinnell Herald* under his leadership printed the *Malcom Gazette*, *The Searsboro Journal*, *The Gilman Advertiser and Independent Critic*. These newspapers shared the same format as the *Grinnell Herald* except for one page which was given over to local news and advertising. Such an efficient arrangement was unusual for the time and indicates Cravath's commercial and business sense.

During Cravath's tenure, Albert Shaw, Grinnell College Class of 1879, became associate editor of the paper (1879-1883). Shaw later engaged in graduate study at Johns Hopkins. Shaw's greatest contribution to American history is as founder and editor of the *Review of Reviews*.

During the 1890s and first decades of the Twentieth Century ownership of the newspaper was shared. W. G. Ray, R. MacDonald, G. W. Cowden, A. P. Haines, and A(lbert) L(owrie) Frisbie, Jr., for example, owned different portions of the firm at different times. In 1910, ownership passed to Ray and Frisbie where it remained until 1936. Ray was publisher of the paper and also a superintendent of schools in Grinnell. Frisbie was the paper's editor. It was during the Ray-Frisbie tenure that a lot was bought on Fifth Avenue (1914) and the present building constructed (1916). In 1936, Ray sold his interest in the newspaper to Mr. Needham. In 1938 majority interest in the paper was purchased by Tom Murphy and Ralph Overholser, both connected with the calendar company in Red Oak, Iowa. Overholser was publisher of a Red Oak newspaper. Frisbie continued to hold an interest in the firm. In 1943/1944 K(enneth) C. Crabb became manager of the paper and purchased a portion of interest from Murphy and Overholser.

Lowrie Frisbie served for more than 50 years as editor of the *Grinnell Herald*. Son of the Rev. A. L. Frisbie, pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church in Des Moines, Frisbie was a 1900 graduate of Grinnell College and, as editor of the *Grinnell Herald*, "the principal ambassador for both town and gown in constantly striving to improve town-gown relationships." "He faithfully chronicled the news of Grinnell and the surrounding area and adopted the position of Grinnell's number one standard

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 4

CFN-259-1116

bearer" (obituary). Frisbie's tenure saw the consolidation of the *Grinnell Herald* with the *Grinnell Register*. His editorials were noted for progressive and forward thinking and were frequently published in other newspapers in Iowa. Frisbie retired in 1953 but continued to write for the paper until his death.

L. B. Watt bought out all previous owners in 1944, and since this time, the *Grinnell Herald* has been owned by one family. Although beyond the period of significance for this nomination, the contemporary history of the newspaper is interesting because it further underlines the importance of this institution for the economic development of Grinnell. Watt was a 1914 graduate of Grinnell College and had apprenticed at the *Grinnell Herald* while a student. He had worked with newspapers since the age of 11. Watt also worked with newspapers in Corning, Des Moines, and Storm Lake, Iowa, where he remained until buying the Grinnell paper. Watt was active in promoting the economic well-being of Grinnell. He made many trips to Chicago to meet with officials at the headquarters of the Rock Island railroad to remind them of Grinnell's community needs. Watt also kept in close contact with management of J. C. Penney's and Spurgeons' department stores to insure that they understood their importance to the community.

In 1949, Dorothy Pinder, daughter of L. B. Watt, and her husband A. J. Pinder moved to Grinnell and began working at the newspaper. They began buying the paper from L. B. Watt, full ownership being accomplished over a period of years. Al Pinder appears to have taken a cue from and continued his father-in-law's leadership role in the community. In the early 1950s, for example, the Grinnell Chamber of Commerce believed money should not be spent on industrial recruitment. During these years, Pinder personally paid for trips to corporate offices to promote Grinnell. From these beginnings emerged the Grinnell Greater Development Corporation. This private corporation bought land south of town center and developed it as an industrial site. It remains a private corporation today and has successfully attracted business. A street in this industrial park is named Pinder Avenue in recognition of his leadership. Pinder remains heavily involved in industrial recruitment for the City of Grinnell, in hosting state, national, and international visitors to the community, and in keeping the name Grinnell current in business circles. A first stop on visits to Grinnell is the *Grinnell Herald* Building.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The *Grinnell Herald* Building calls attention to important trends in the development of Grinnell during the 1916-1940 period of significance: 1) the strength of the community-based newspaper; 2) the evolution of the Grinnell central business district; 3) the development of Grinnell's modern infrastructure, and 4) the lengthy tenure and influence of a well-known editor, A. L. Frisbie.

Community-based newspapers have been integral to the growth and prosperity of small Iowa towns. Newspapers have, conversely, been a barometer of the towns they serve. Until almost the end of the period of significance, Grinnell had two and often three newspapers. The town's prosperity and growth are indicated by the building in 1916 of not one but two new newspaper buildings, one for the *Herald* and one for the *Register*. These two papers, typical of small-town papers, had a symbiotic relationship, rivaling one another in news coverage and in buildings as well as experiencing trade-offs

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 5

CFN-259-1116

in staff. The seminal figure during the period of significance, A. L. Frisbie, illustrates this point. Beginning at the *Register*, Frisbie purchased in 1908 a minority interest in the *Herald*. At the same time an important *Herald* figure made the opposite move to the *Register*. By 1916, both institutions were strong enough to build new buildings that were then state-of-the-art. The history of the two papers is interwoven into the history of the town itself, having been partly owned by a lawyer, the local postmaster, a school superintendent, a minister, a president of the Iowa Press Association, and a principal in the famous Murphy Calendar Company of Red Oak, Iowa. During the 1916-1940 period, several owners held interest at various times in both papers which brought about the consolidation of the two papers in 1936. In the changing economy of Iowa, it was typical in this period for towns which had supported more than one newspaper to see the consolidation into a single, hyphenated newspaper. When the two papers consolidated in 1936, they had the choice of two modern brick buildings. They chose the *Grinnell Herald* Building for the permanent home of the *Grinnell Herald-Register*.

True to its nature as a community-based newspaper, the *Grinnell Herald* in the 1916-1940 period worked, issue by issue, to forward the development of the town it served. The historic growth of Grinnell was completed around the turn of the Twentieth Century. By this time, Grinnell was clearly a viable community with prospects of a hopeful future if its townspeople continued progressive development. The period 1916-1940 laid the infrastructure for the town's second major period of growth which has occurred since World War II. Paving of streets, electrification of the community, and wiring for telephone service were achieved in the 1916-1940 period with the important help of the *Grinnell Herald*. Although Babbitt has given boosterism a bad name, the small newspaper in Grinnell served as the voice and conscience of the community and helped to form public opinion in support of the expenditure of the time and money necessary to make these improvements. Grinnell, with the strong assistance of the *Herald*, embarked on a program of infrastructure improvements which has helped to insure its future after 1945.

A. L. Frisbie helped shape the 1916-1940 period in Grinnell. Coming to the *Herald* as a junior partner in 1908, he became editor and strongly pushed for construction of the *Grinnell Herald's* new home in 1916. Frisbie graduated from Grinnell College. He continued the *Herald's* long tradition of strong relationships with the town and college and was equally eloquent for the support and development of them both as well as the surrounding community. As a minority owner from 1910 to 1953, Frisbie participated in the business of the newspaper. Much more importantly, he marked the era and the building that calls it to attention with his personality. Frisbie's literal style and his dry wit earned him re-publication in other Iowa newspapers of editorials he wrote, particularly those containing colloquies between himself and the backyard rabbit and talking birds. The format of these editorials allowed Frisbie to cut to the quick of issues in a humorous way. Frisbie and his "Robins" became known throughout Iowa. Frisbie also introduced headlines to the *Herald*. Until his editorial pen inserted them, the paper had retained an unbroken columnar format. In 1953 Frisbie received the Iowa Press Association's Iowa Master Editor-Publisher award.

Frisbie served as editor of the paper from 1910 until 1936 when the major ownership changed and consolidation took place. He continued to write for the paper until his death in 1958. The period from 1916 when the *Grinnell Herald* Building was built until 1944 when majority ownership was bought by the family of present owners constitutes the Frisbie period in the *Grinnell Herald's* history.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 6

CFN-259-1116

It should be also noted that women in this newspaper's history were and remain an important presence. Mrs. A. L. Frisbie was a bright and vibrant character who played her role behind the scenes (as was then customary) but played it decisively according to the present owners. This tradition has been preserved, like the building itself, by the present owners. The purchasers in 1944, L. B. and Hazel Watt, held stock in each of their names, and Mrs. Watt continued as a voting stockholder until her death in 1986. The Watts' daughter, Dorothy, and her husband purchased the paper. Dorothy is a principal to this day as well as one of the paper's regular employees. Daughters of Dorothy have worked and are working at the paper, one of whom has moved on to assistant to the foreign editor of the *New York Times*. Five of the six children in this third generation are active newspaper people or have been active in the field at one time.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

This is a very good example of a simplified Neo-Classical design executed in brick and cast concrete. Designed by an important architectural firm in Iowa, the building demonstrates its non-retail usage by its raised first floor. The symmetrical facade with Ionic pilasters create a solid, trustworthy appearance for a newspaper, while the large windows provide natural light for working. This building continues the practice in Grinnell of using well-known architects for major buildings. Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson designed more buildings for Grinnell than any other town in Iowa except Des Moines. A Multiple Property Documentation Form addressed in 1988 the "Architectural Legacy of Proudfoot and Bird." This document demonstrates the firm's widespread practice within Iowa. It concentrates on Iowa although the firm engaged in many commissions outside the state. The firm had a special relationship to Grinnell. Rawson attended Grinnell College for two years and his brother, Charles Rawson, was a U. S. Senator from Iowa and trustee of Grinnell College.

Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson prepared designs for many building types, including residences (single-family and apartments); automobile-related buildings; hotels; banks; publishing houses; public schools; college and university buildings, and facilities associated with government; cemeteries; libraries; lodges; and churches, among others. An important subtype of the firm's work, commissions related to publishing houses, included the *Register and Leader* Building (Des Moines) and the Wallace Publishing Company Building (Des Moines). Smaller commissions included newspaper offices for Marshalltown and the *Grinnell Herald*. The newspaper office in Newton might be another of the firm's work. The two buildings in Des Moines exhibit a wealth of architectural detail commensurate with these publishing firms' position in Iowa and the nation. The example in Grinnell is, of course, on a much smaller scale but exhibits the contrast between brick and concrete trim as so many of Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson's designs for small commercial buildings.

The *Grinnell Herald* Building exhibits an interesting solution to problems specific to the newspaper business. These revolve around preparation of journalist copy and its printing. Both functions were performed in this building. To facilitate the work, Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson designed an extra-high basement to house the heavy printing equipment. This accounts for the building's unusually high basement ceiling and the above-grade first floor with its walk-up entrance.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8

Page 7

CFN-259-1116

For the office area, large plate glass windows provided natural light for employees. The major alteration to the building is the removal of these windows on the south and their replacement with opaque glass block. This was done in the early 1950s because the single-paned plate glass conducted cold during the winter and ice formed about 1 foot high and several inches thick at the base of the windows. The reverse was true during the summer when the sun, blasting into the large plate glass, made the offices there almost uninhabitable. Opaque glass block was considered state-of-the-art in the early 1950s to remedy this problem. While it would have been preferable to have left the windows in original form, this alteration is not considered sufficient to negate eligibility. Reversal is recommended and the property owners are considering this.

Structural design of the building was planned, an article in the *Grinnell Herald* said, so that a second floor could be added to the building at a later time if needed. This second floor was never built.

The *Grinnell Herald* Building also calls attention to the expansion northward of Grinnell's central business district and to the importance of newspaper in the life of the community. The area to the north saw considerable construction in the first decades of the Twentieth Century and Fifth Avenue became a major part of the business district instead of an edge of it. Service businesses such as medical offices, newspaper editing and printing rooms, and telephone services typified the sort commerce characterized in this informal "service zone."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 2

CFN-259-1116

Cravath, S. A.; "The Herald; Its History, Appliances, Owners, Abodes, Associate Publications, etc;" *Grinnell Herald*; 2 April 1900; p. 1. Cravath was former editor and sole proprietor of the *Grinnell Herald*.

Deminoff, William, Professor of History, Grinnell College. Telephone Interview with Karen Bode Baxter; 3 July 1990.

"Editor A. L. Frisbie Dies Here Friday;" *Grinnell Herald-Register*; 3 March 1958; p. 1, c. 6-7 including photo "taken only a few days prior to his death..."

"Editor Frisbie of Grinnell Dies;" *Des Moines Register*; 1 March 1958.

Floor Plans (Two sheets comprising basement and first floor). These appear to be plans prepared by D. N. Mallory, "Efficiency Expert" of the International Typesetting Company, who consulted with the *Grinnell Herald* management on layout of equipment and work stations in the new building. Plans property the *Grinnell Herald-Register*.

Grinnell, A Century of Progress 1854-1954; A History of Grinnell, Iowa Commemorating 100 Years of Progress; Grinnell, IA; *The Grinnell Herald-Register*; 1954.

Kleinschmidt, Dr. John, Professor Emeritus of French, Grinnell College. Interviews with W. C. Page; Winter 1989.

Long, Barbara Beving; "Proudfoot, Bird, Et Al. Survey;" Typewritten Ms. prepared for the State Historical Society of Iowa, Bureau of Historic Preservation; 1987/1988.

"Looking Backward;" *Grinnell Herald*; March 1? [13th or 18th], 1917. Feature article discusses history of the *Grinnell Herald*. Includes information about the newly constructed building and D. N. Mallory, "Efficiency Expert" of the International Typesetting company who consulted on equipment design and location. Also includes photograph of Mallory and the new building, "the handsomest and most commodious newspaper home in Iowa for a town of 5,000 people." "The new home was completed Jan. 15, 1917, and occupied by the Herald Jan. 20." The article also says that the building "was designed by an efficiency expert, D. N. Mallory, now representing the International Typesetting company, a man of wide experience, who looked after the details and has no reason to be ashamed of his work." The article concludes: "The Herald is pleased with its new home. We will gladly welcome every citizen who wishes to visit us. Come in and look us over. We won't ask you to subscribe for the paper. Just come along and see the best country newspaper home in Iowa."

Mills, George. Telephone Interview with W. C. Page; 11 July 1990.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 3

CFN-259-1116

Original Tracings of Grinnell Herald Building; Archives, Brooks, Borg, and Skiles, Architects/Planners; Des Moines, IA. Twelve sheets numbered: 1) Footing Plan, 2) Ground Floor Plan, 3) First Floor Plan, 4) Roof Plan, 5) North and South Elevations, 6) East Elevation, 7) Longitudinal Section, 8) Details, 9) Details of Office Partitions, Counter, Trim, Doors, Etc., 10) First Floor Framing Plan, 201) Ground Floor Plan, 202) First Floor Plan. Ink on architect's linen. Dated June 21, 1916. Original tracings measure 25"x37". Brooks, Borg, and Skiles is the successor firm of Proudfoot, Bird, and Rawson and curates the papers of this earlier firm. They permitted the xeroxing of these tracings with the following proviso: "These drawings are not as built. No representation is made nor should not be inferred that conditions in the field are as shown herein. All data, locations, conditions, information and notes shown must be verified with actual conditions in the field."

Parker, L. F. History of Poweshiek County, Iowa; Chicago; S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, Inc.; Volume I; 1911; pp 149-154.

Pinder, A. J. Interviews with Peggy Pinder during Summer 1990. Peggy Pinder is also part-owner of *The Grinnell Herald-Register*.

Pinder, Dorothy née Watt; Part-owner *The Grinnell Herald-Register*. Telephone Interview with Karen Bode Baxter; 10 July 1990.

Pinder, Dorothy. Interviews with Peggy Pinder during Summer 1990.

Ratcliffe, John, Architect, Brooks, Borg, and Skiles, Architects/Engineers, Des Moines, IA. Informant interview with W. C. Page; 2 July 1990.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.

"The Herald Will Occupy New Home; Plans Are Practically Completed For New, Modern and Fireproof Building;" *Grinnell Herald*; 24 March 1916, p. 1. "It will be constructed with a view to the addition of another story as needed."

The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography; New York; James T. White & Company; Year Volumes 1910-1932, None of these volumes listed D. N. Mallory, efficiency expert.

Who's Who in America; Chicago; A. N. Marquis & Company; Year Volumes 1912-1932. None of these volumes listed D. N. Mallory, efficiency expert.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 10 Page 2

CFN-259-1116

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

1. *Grinnell Herald* Building
815 - 5th Avenue
Grinnell, IA 50112
Looking north
Jack Robertson, Photographer
March 1990

2. *Grinnell Herald* Building
815 - 5th Avenue
Grinnell, IA 50112
Looking northwest
Jack Robertson, Photographer
March 1990

3. *Grinnell Herald* Building
815 - 5th Avenue
Grinnell, IA 50112
Interior View
Jack Robertson, Photographer
July 1990

4. *Grinnell Herald* Building
815 - 5th Avenue
Grinnell, IA 50112
Interior View
Jack Robertson, Photographer
July 1990