NPS Form 10-900 (Oct. 1990)

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

### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1077

Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" on the appropriate line 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,

nistoric name G.A.R. N					
	IEMORIAL HALL				
other names/site number	ALGONA SCHOOLHOU	JSE			
2. Location					
treet & number	122 S. DODGE	STREET			N/A not for publication
ity or town	ALGONA				N/A vicinity
state IOWA	code <u>IA</u> county	y KOSSUTH code	109	zip code	50511
3. State/Federal Agen	cy Certification				
State or Federal	tifying official/Title  E HISTORICAL SOCIETY Cagency and bureau  the property (_ meets _ does not	OF IOWA			et for additional
Signature of cer	tifying official/Title		Date		
State or Endard	agency and bureau	1			
State of rederal	- Marine Francisco Company				
4. National Park Serv	ice Certification	low		1	

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.

G.A.R. Memorial Hall Name of Property	Kossuth County, Iowa County and State			
5. Classification				
Ownership of Property Category of Property (Check as many lines as apply) (Check only one line)  X private  _ public-local _ public-State _ public-Federal  _ structure _ public-federal	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)  Contributing  Noncontributing  1  0  buildings sites structures			
object  Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)  N/A	1 0 Total  Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register			
6. Function or Use				
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)			
EDUCATION/SCHOOL	RECREATION AND CULTURE/MUSEUM			
SOCIAL/MEETING HALL				
7. Description				
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)			
LATE VICTORIAN/ITALIANATE	foundation STONE/LIMESTONE			
	walls WOOD			
	roof WOOD			
	other ASPHALT			

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

G.A.R. Me Name of F	emorial Hall Property	Kossuth County, Iowa County and State	+
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A-C-	ment of Significance		
(Mark "x"	on one or more lines for the criteria qualifying the property al Register listing)	Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)	
X A Pr	operty is associated with events that have made	ARCHITECTURE	
as	significant contribution to the broad patterns of	SOCIAL HISTORY	
ou	ur history.	EDUCATION	
	roperty is associated with the lives of persons gnificant in our past.		
of	perty embodies the distinctive characteristics a type, period, or method of construction or presents the work of a master, or possesses		
hi	gh artistic values, or represents a significant and stinguishable entity whose components lack	Period of Significance	
_ D Prop	dividual distinction.  perty has yielded, or is likely to yield, formation important in prehistory or history.	1867-1967	
Criteria	Considerations on all the lines that apply)	Significant Dates	
Property	지간 지선	1867	
F2		1887	
	wned by a religious institution or used for eligious purposes.		
X B re	moved from its original location.	Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)	
_ <b>C</b> a bi	orthplace or grave.	N/A	
_ <b>D</b> a	cemetery.	Cultural Affiliation	
_ E a	reconstructed building, object, or structure.		
_ F a	commemorative property.		
_ <b>G</b> le	ess than 50 years of age or achieved significance		
w	ithin the past 50 years.	Architect/Builder	
		HENDERSON, JAMES	
Narrativ	e Statement of Significance - (Explain the significance of the	e property on one or more continuation sheets)	
9. Major	r Bibliography References		
Bibliogra			
	pooks, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on o		
	documentation on file (NPS):	Primary location of additional data:	
	vious determination of individual listing (36 PK 67) has been requested	X State Historical Preservation Office	
	riously listed in the National Register	_ Other State agency _ Federal agency	
	viously determined eligible by the National	_ Local government	
	cord	_ University	
	gnated a National Historic Landmark	_ Other	
	orded by American Buildings Survey	Name of repository	
951126	orded by Historic American Engineering		

Record #

Name of Property			County and State	
10. Geog	graphical Data			
Acreage	of Property less	than one acre		
UTM Re	eferences	ces on a continuation sheet.)		
1 15	399293	4769110	Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a	
Zone	Easting	Northing	continuation sheet)	
2  Zone			Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)	
3				
Zone	Easting	Northing	T	
	n Prepared By		1	
		Alexa McDowell, Architectur	ral Historian	
		AKAY Consulting		
		103 W. Island Avenue		
		s state MN	100 100 100 100 100 100 100 100 100 100	
Addition	al Documentation	1		
Submit the	e following items wit	th the completed form:		
Continua	ation Sheets			
Maps				
	A USGS map (7.5	5 or 15 minute series) indicating the pro	operty's location.	
	A Sketch map for	historic districts and properties having	large acreage or numerous resources.	
Photogra	aphs - Representati	ive black and white photographs of the	he property.	
Addition	al items - (Check	with the SHPO or FPO for any addition	nal items)	
Property	Owner			
(Complete	this item at the requ	est of SHPO or FPO.)		
name K	Kossuth County	Historical Society		
street & 1	number 122 S. I	Dodge Street telephone		
city or to	wn Algona	stateIowa	_zip code <u>50511</u>	
properties	for listing or determ		ed for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a nded (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.

National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	7	Page 1	CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

#### NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

### Site Description

The G.A.R. Memorial Hall (aka Algona Schoolhouse) is located at the south edge of Algona's historic downtown commercial area, which is centered along State Street one block north of the present site of the resource. The commercial area grew up first along State Street, then spread one block to the north and south. The building was moved to its present site in 1887 from its original site three blocks to the southeast (Block 47), where it was constructed in 1867 to serve as Algona's first official schoolhouse (Figure 6.).

The G.A.R. Memorial Hall is located on a slightly sloping site at the northwest corner of the intersection of S. Dodge and E. Nebraska Street. The building is bounded on the north by a narrow alleyway separating the building from the remainder of the commercial district. The southwest corner of the block (to the rear of the building) is a paved parking lot. A public sidewalk runs the perimeter of the block and flush to the building on the south and the east. Commercial buildings line the opposite side of S. Dodge from E. Nebraska Street north to State Street and the opposite side of E. Nebraska from S. Dodge west to S. Thorington Street. The G.A.R. Memorial Hall (in both construction date and relocation date) pre-dates the commercial buildings that stand in the vicinity.

### **Property Description**

With retention of the historic form, gable roof, bracketed eaves, wood lap siding, some of the historic openings, and open interior spaces, the G.A.R. Memorial Hall remains today very much as it was when moved to the site in 1887. The G.A.R. Memorial Hall is the sole remaining building of its type in the Algona downtown commercial area – a number of other wood frame, gable roofed buildings formerly located in the area were lost many years ago.

The G.A.R. Memorial Hall is a two-story, wood frame building on a stone and concrete foundation. The building features a gable roof with its ridgeline oriented east to west. The exterior is sheathed in narrow, wood lap siding and the roof is covered in asphalt shingles. While most commonly associated with residential and commercial buildings, the stylistic details of the Italianate found their way to other property types. In the case of this building, the simple, rectangular form, symmetry, gable-pitched roof, and generous roof overhang with paired bracketing all indicate the influence of the Italianate.

As the historic image (Figure 8.) of the G.A.R. Memorial Hall shortly after it was moved to the present site in 1887 documents, many of the building's original features remained at that time. They included a belfry, a chimney at the west end of the ridge, entrances on the south and the east, the bracketed eave, running board fascia, wood lap siding, corner boards, and 9-over-6 double-hung windows with simple, flat headers on the south and east elevations. Further, a second, doublewide door with a transom was located on the south elevation, near the east end of the building. An historic image (Figure 9.) documents the alteration of this

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	 Page 2	CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

doorway to a window by ca.1899. The images also confirm the use of a stone foundation. The roof was likely covered in wood shingles.

An historic image dating to the early 1900s (Figure 10.) best documents the historic east elevation (now the façade). As the image reveals, the centered entrance originally featured a double door with transom, which has been replaced with a single door and sidelights (the use of sidelights allowed the retention of the original opening when the door size was diminished). The image also documents the loss of a single, round window above the east entrance (perhaps not removed, but only covered by the pent roof entrance awning now sheltering the entrance). Two upper story windows on the east elevation remain intact. The windows (with wood storms) are widely spaced and feature a two-over-two configuration with a simple, flat header and no sill. True to the original form, paired brackets with a simple, running board fascia highlight the moderate eave. The small portion of the foundation visible on the façade is concrete.

Historically, the building façade was the south elevation. As the historic images reveal, most of the original openings on the south elevation have been covered over. On the first floor, the former primary entrance has been closed, as have four, double-hung windows; wood lap siding covers the locations of the former openings. Today, the sole openings on the south elevation's first floor are two small, fixed windows near the east end of the building; the date of those windows is unknown. On the second floor, three of the four windows have been covered, but, opposed to those on the first floor, their locations remain discernible. The fourth of four windows remains in place, its two-over-two exterior storm also intact. The eave details, including the paired brackets and running fascia, continue on the south. The portion of the foundation visible on the south elevation (approximately 14-inches on this side due to a minor slope of the site) is concrete.

The rear (west elevation) features two small windows (now closed) on the first floor where none existed originally. Narrow, wood lap siding and eave details continue on this elevation and the stone foundation is visible.

Although no historic image has been located documenting the north elevation, it appears that covering of historic openings has occurred. Retained are two of the original window openings on the upper story and one on the lower. As is true on the south, some historic openings are fully covered, while the ghost markings of others remain. The history of two entrances (one on each floor) and the exterior staircase is unknown, but undoubtedly post-date the move to this site. Like the other elevations, the narrow, wood lap siding, running fascia board, and paired brackets are used on the north. It should be noted that where they exist, the two-over-two windows and storms post-date the move to the present location.

#### Interior

The interior of the G.A.R. Memorial Hall is comprised of a first and second story, each dominated by a large, open room. Although the building's design plans are not available, the open plan is indicative of the historic

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	7	Page 3	CFN-259-1116
-			

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

function – both in its original function as a schoolhouse and in its later function as a meeting hall. The basement is rough-finished, with a portion used for museum display.

Today, the building's first floor interior (Figure 3.) is comprised of an entrance hallway, staircase to the second floor, restroom, closet, small office, and a large open room encompassing the west 2/3 of the building. A narrow hallway runs the width of the building, providing access to the office on the south, the restroom, closet, and to the staircase leading to the second floor. Typical of the entire first floor, non-historic finishes have been introduced: walls are covered and painted; ceilings are tiled, and floors are covered in sheet linoleum. It remains undetermined if historic materials remain beneath the later additions. The bathroom (date unknown) utilizes non-historic fixtures and finishes.

The small office (located in the southeast corner) has its primary surfaces covered with non-historic materials. Two, small, fixed windows (described previously) are located on the south wall. A pair of non-historic, French doors open from the office into the large room.

The structure of the large room includes six square posts supporting the large north to south beams and the smaller, east to west beams that all remain exposed (but painted). A fireplace is located on the west wall. An exterior exit is situated in the northwest corner. As noted, throughout the first floor, the walls have been covered. In the large room, the walls use a varnished pine dado with covered and/or painted wall above. Due to the museum displays that fill the large room, it is difficult to determine the presence of some historic finishes - a crown molding remains intact, but the area of the baseboard is not visible. The windows in the large room of the first floor have all been permanently closed – covered from the interior and the exterior.

The building's second floor (Figure 4.) is likewise predominately without subdivision. Higher ceilings, fewer interior posts, and fewer displays heighten the sense of openness. Also like the first floor, the walls of the second are covered and painted and the ceiling is tiled. The floors, however, retain their historic wide, wood strip finish. The second floor retains two historic windows on the east and one on the north. Wood door and window trim is retained, as is a baseboard. Also of note is the retention of the secrecy peephole on the door to the assembly hall.

The east end of the second floor houses the stairwell, a small storage area and a former kitchen, which dates to the G.A.R. occupation. The kitchen retains floor to ceiling cabinetry on the north wall.

#### STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

The G.A.R. Memorial Hall (aka Algona Schoolhouse) retains a generally high level of historic integrity.

As it relates to integrity of location, the removal of the building from its original location presents an adverse impact specific to the building's original function. As a resource considered significant primarily for its architectural value, the building meets Criterion Consideration B relevant to the original function. Further,

National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	7	Page4	CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

the building was moved to the present location in 1887, placing it here for nearly 126 years and establishing the present site (including orientation) as historically relevant.

As it relates to integrity of setting, while the removal from its original location impacted setting, the present setting adjacent to the Algona commercial area has become historically relevant to the building. The building remains in close proximity to the commercial resources that dominate the area. It should be noted, that, as a building dating to 1867, the very nature of the building's historic character stands in stark contrast with the decidedly post-1900 commercial district – a truth that would have been apparent long ago.

As it relates to integrity of design, the G.A.R. Memorial Hall retains its historic form, gable roof, and details that mark it as a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century design exhibiting the influence of the Italianate. The reorientation of the primary entrance and loss of historic openings (particularly on the south elevation) are significant breaches of integrity of design. However, those exterior losses are balanced by the overall retention of historic character. Further, the retention of the open, interior spaces, essential to our understanding of the historic function (both schoolhouse and meeting hall), elevates integrity of design.

As it relates to integrity of materials, the G.A.R. Memorial Hall retains portions of its stone foundation, the majority of its wood lap siding, and, where retained, wood frame windows. Further, the interior retains its historic structural system, with posts and beams exposed.

As it relates to integrity of workmanship, the general condition of the G.A.R. Memorial Hall is testimony to integrity of workmanship as witnessed in its construction methods, withstanding a move and nearly 150 years of continuous use.

All told, the G.A.R. Memorial retains a strong sense of time and place by which integrity of feeling is measured.

#### FUTURE PLANS

The property owner, the Kossuth County Historical Society, has utilized the G.A.R. Memorial Hall (aka Algona Schoolhouse) as a museum since the organization purchased it from the American Legion in 1967. The present leadership, cognizant of the historic significance of the building, has undertaken the process of National Register nomination. The Historical Society intends to continue using the building for exhibition space and is committed to maintaining its historical, character-defining features.

National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	8	Page_	_5	CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The G.A.R. Memorial Hall (aka Algona Schoolhouse) in Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. The resource is locally significant as a rare example of early vernacular, timber frame construction. Built in 1867 to serve as a schoolhouse, the twostory building was moved to its present site in 1887 for use by the James C. Taylor Post No. 165 of the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.). That change in use required a minimum of alteration to the building the former open classrooms on both the first and the second floors readily accommodated the new occupant's need for assembly and meeting space. The building was subsequently occupied by the American Legion Post (1919-1967) and the Kossuth County Historical Society (1967 to present), both of which utilized the building with little material intervention.

At the time of the building's construction in 1867, timber frame construction represented a large percentage of Algona's building stock. In addition to residential buildings, historic images (Figures 6. and 9-12.) document that the community's commercial buildings and schools of the period were commonly simple, wood frame constructions on stone foundations - similar in form and detail to the G.A.R. Hall, which today is believed to be the sole remaining, 19th century, timber frame, non-residential building in Algona.

The G.A.R. Memorial Hall is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. In its original function as Algona's first official schoolhouse (1867-1887) and its temporary use as a library (1899), the resource is locally significant in association with the history of education. In its function as the G.A.R. Memorial Hall (1887-1919) the resource is locally significant in association with social history.

Algona was settled in ca.1855 and incorporated on February 2, 1867. For approximately ten years, school was held in the town hall, but by the mid-1860s the growing population required proper facilities for the education of its youth. The two-story, timber frame building was constructed as Algona's first official schoolhouse in 1867. It remained in use as a schoolhouse until it was relocated in 1887.

The building was moved to its present location for use as the G.A.R. Memorial Hall in 1887. The Algona public library moved into the lower story of the building in 1899 until a permanent library building was constructed in 1904.

The Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) was a nationwide, fraternal organization founded in 1866 with membership limited to honorably discharged Civil War veterans of the Union Army. The organization was founded on the "three cardinal principles" of fraternity, charity, and loyalty, each deeply rooted in military tradition. The James C. Taylor Post No. 165 of the G.A.R. of Algona was organized in 1883 with a charter membership of 24. In keeping with the national organization's tenets, Post No. 165 is locally remembered for providing fellowship for its membership, fundraising events, and its Memorial Day events.

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	8	Page6	CFN-259-1116
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G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

The G.A.R. Memorial Hall in Algona is one of a handful of Iowa buildings recorded in the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office records for their association with the history of that organization. Only one Iowa G.A.R. hall, the Franklin County G.A.R. Soldier's Memorial Hall in Hampton, is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Four additional Iowa buildings with a G.A.R. association have been identified, with only 2 of the 4 evaluated as eligible for Register listing. <sup>1</sup>

The Period of Significance for the G.A.R. Memorial Hall is 1867 through the end of its possession by the American Legion in 1967. The period encompasses the building's function as Algona's first schoolhouse, its removal to the present location and subsequent occupation by both the G.A.R. and the American Legion. Significant dates are 1867, the year of construction, and 1887, the year the building was moved to the present site.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The two-story, timber frame building was constructed as Algona's first official schoolhouse in 1867. To make room for a new, masonry school building, the wood frame building was moved two blocks to the northwest in 1887 for use as the G.A.R. Memorial Hall. The G.A.R. and subsequent occupants made minimal alterations to the building and, remarkably, the resource remains today much as it did at the time of its construction.

Algona was settled by brothers Asa C. Call and Ambrose A. Call in ca.1855 and incorporated on February 2, 1867. For approximately ten years, school was held in the town hall, but by the mid-1860s the growing population required proper facilities for the education of its youth. Such a building was constructed the very year the fledgling community was incorporated.<sup>3</sup>

On March 26, 1866, Orange Winkler, representing Algona Township, and contractor, James Henderson of Kossuth County, contracted for the construction of a new schoolhouse. In consideration of \$3200.00, Henderson was to "build a Wooden School House, and to furnish the material therefor, according to the plan and specifications for the erection of said house." The contract stipulates "the House is to be built of the best material in a substantial workmanlike manner." The contract specifications indicate that the building was to be 30-feet by 50-feet and two stories. The building sills and lower joists were of Burr Oak with the rest of the framework of hard wood timber. Floor joists were called for as 2 x 10s, with the ceiling and rafter joists being 2 x 6s. Wall studs were also 2 x 6s, set no more than 16 inches on-center. Exterior siding was specified as clear pine with a one-inch lap. Interior specifications called for top quality, clear pine flooring

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 514.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Berry Bennett, Iowa Site Inventory Coordinator, Iowa State Historic Preservation Office, May 01, 2013.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Benjamin F. Reed, History of Kossuth County Iowa (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1913), 481.

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	8	Page7	CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

and all walls throughout the building to be [illegible] 2-1/2-feet high with top quality, smooth dressed, clear pine flooring.<sup>4</sup>

The schoolhouse was constructed on the south half of Block 47 of the Original Plat; a location one block south and two blocks east of the building's present location. The half-block site was vacant except for the schoolhouse. Upon its completion, the construction cost came in at nearly \$3,500.00.

In June of 1867 a local newspaper reported that the "timber frame" building, which rested on a stone wall, would feature a first floor divided into two rooms and a second floor with one large room, two small ante rooms, and room for the staircase. Newspaper reports state that some 65 students used the single room on the second floor, requiring that recitations were conducted in front of the entire high school population, with the students warmed by a "cannon-ball stove." No information expanding upon the use of the first floor space has been located, but presumably the lower grades were taught on that level.

Population growth necessitated an expansion of the schoolhouse in subsequent years. In ca.1882, wing additions were made to the original building. Like the 1867 building, the wings were two-story, wood frame constructions with elements such as the roof form, eave overhang, and window placement and configuration designed in keeping with the original building.

Plans for construction of a new masonry high school building were underway by 1886. News articles preceding a decision about construction of a new facility indicate that the argument for a new school rested in great part on the condition of the 1867 building, which was widely described as "a disgrace to the town" and "a disease breeder." The prevailing opinion was held that a new building would benefit both the students and the town of Algona. School Superintendent Iteed made specific mention of the negative aspects of the 1867 building, citing overcrowding, which prevented graduation between grade levels. He also noted the deteriorated condition of the building, indicating that "ceilings of some of the lower rooms [look] as if they should be condemned as being dangerous and unsafe. These issues stood at the heart of the overwhelming support for a new school and a willingness to bond for its construction.<sup>8</sup>

Retention of the site on Block 47 for the new school was a must by many locals, necessitating the removal of the 1867 building. At a May 1887 meeting of the school board, the schoolhouse was sold to the G.A.R. Post for \$100.00. The post was responsible for purchasing the new site and for moving the building. The group indicated their intention to "put it in a thorough state of repair and [to] fit up the hall for their meetings and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Construction contract, 03/26/1866. Kossuth County Historical Society archive.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Reed, 514.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The Algona Upper Des Moines, "New School House" (Algona, 06/06/1867).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> "Cowles Tell of School of 49 Years Ago," November 1931. Kossuth County Historical Society archive.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Algona Upper Des Moines, "The School Bond Question" (Algona, 02/24/1886), 1.

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	8	Page_8	CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

for use by other societies." The post secured the lots for the new site from a Mr. Ingham $^9$  and Lewis H. Smith for 300 – land noted as valued at 8000.

In preparation for the move, the ca.1882 wings were separated from the 1867 building and moved to Normal Hill (just north of the intersection of E. Lucas and N. Wooster Streets) for use by the Northern Iowa Normal School. A new center section was constructed at that site and the wings attached (Figure 10.). Apparently never finding a sound footing, the Normal School only operated from 1886 to ca.1896. The building (including the ca.1882 wings originally attached to the building) is non-extant.

The November 1892 fire insurance map (Figure 5.) does not record the entire block (47) upon which the building was originally sited, but a note on the map does indicate a "frame public school" was situated on the south half of that block. The site on block 29 on which the building is now located was vacant in that year.<sup>12</sup>

### Life After the Move

The 1867 schoolhouse building was moved from its location on Block 47 to its present location on Lot 8 of Block 29 of the Original Plat for use as the G.A.R. Memorial Hall in 1887. The details of the move (specifically, the means and methods used) remain unknown. A historic view of the Algona commercial area, taken looking southwest from the Kossuth County Courthouse, documents the building on the site (Figure 6.).

The Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) was a nationwide, fraternal organization founded in 1866 by Dr. Benjamin Stephenson - the first post being established in Decatur, Illinois in April of that year. Membership was limited to honorably discharged Civil War veterans of the Union Army, Navy, Marine Corps or the Revenue Cutter Service that served between April 12, 1861 and April 9, 1865. After its inception, the G.A.R. spread rapidly and members from ten states as well as Washington, D.C. attended the first national encampment in November of 1866. The G.A.R. reached its peak in the early 1890s with nearly 500,000 members. The organization came to an end in 1956 when its last surviving member died at the age of 109 years. <sup>13</sup>

The G.A.R. was founded on "three cardinal principles," namely fraternity, charity, and loyalty. Unlike many other fraternal organizations, these principles had strong roots in the military. For example, an 1884 G.A.R. handbook states that the word fraternity was not used "as the world understands the term," but was instead

11 Kossuth County Advance, "Northern Iowa Normal School" (Algona, July 02, 1979).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> The Mr. Ingham referred to in the news article was very likely William H. Ingham, an early settler noted as a banker and real estate man (Reed, 8-10).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Algona Upper Des Moines, "The Grand Army Hall" (Algona, 05/18/1887).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Map (New York: Sanborn Map & Publishing Co. Limited, 1892), 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Sharon Becker, "The Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) and Kindred Society," Iowa GenWeb, 2009, http://iagenweb.org/civilwar/other/miscgar.htm. Accessed June 5, 2013.

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	8	Page9	CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

used to describe the brotherhood and bonds that were created from serving together in the Union Army. The same handbook argues that the principle of loyalty was not shared by any other fraternal organization, and that this principle was largely tied to the idea that G.A.R. members would be willing to once again bear arms to protect their nation if they were needed.<sup>14</sup>

Perhaps the most important of the three principles, however, was that of charity. The founders of the G.A.R. saw an urgent need to protect the soldiers and the families of the soldiers who were injured or killed during the war. In the 1880s, aid was given to around 9000 families per year. <sup>15</sup> It is estimated that in the ten-year period from 1887 to 1897, the national G.A.R. provided over \$2,000,000 to those in need, and in the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Iowa G.A.R. distributed between \$2,000 and \$7,000 dollars annually. <sup>16</sup>

The G.A.R. also worked hard to protect the memory of the war. They helped donate Civil War artifacts to museums, courthouses, and city parks. They worked to preserve battlefields, <sup>17</sup> donated flags to schools, <sup>18</sup> and helped fund memorials. <sup>19</sup> In 1868, the organization gave what is one of its most lasting legacies, an order that May 30<sup>th</sup> of every year would be Decoration Day. The order stated that members of the G.A.R. should remember those who died during the war. <sup>20</sup> Over the years, Decoration Day has turned into what we now know as Memorial Day. <sup>21</sup>

The G.A.R. was one of the first organized advocacy groups in American politics. Unlike veterans of previous wars, Civil War veterans refused to accept public indifference, instead moving quickly to support the organization of the United States Soldiers and Sailors Protective Society, which was established in New York City in August 1865. With the creation of the G.A.R. the following year, the issue of veteran benefits was pushed to the forefront of the American political scene. <sup>22</sup> G.A.R. founder Dr. Benjamin Stephenson saw that the road to adequate care for the organization's membership was political activism. To that end, the G.A.R. focused on insuring that no Northern politician opposed to veterans' benefits bore a chance of election. Despite the need for adequate veteran services, politicians and the general public resisted providing aid to veterans, fueling the fire that brought about the rise of the G.A.R. as the most powerful lobbying organization of the 19th century. <sup>23</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> A.C. Leonard, Grand Army of the Republic Hand Book (Lancaster, PA: Department of Pennsylvania, G.A.R., 1884), 9-10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Iowa GenWeb. http://iagenweb.org/civilwar/other/garvets.html. Accessed June 05, 2013.

<sup>17</sup> Becker.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> "G.A.R. Veterans in Iowa," Iowa GenWeb, http://iagenweb.org/civilwar/other/garvets.html. Accessed June 05, 2013.

<sup>19</sup> Becker.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Leonard, 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Becker.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Grand Army of the Republic Museum and Library website. http://garmuslib.org. Accessed July 19, 2013.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Michael Bellesiles, A People's History of the U.S. Military (New York: The New Press, 2012), 127.

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	8	Page10	CF	N-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

An indication of that power was the G.A.R.'s role in securing the passage of national legislation. Following their success pressuring Congress to create a national Memorial Day, the organization moved on to more significant legislation, such as the Arrears Bill of 1879, which provided bonuses to those who enlisted before the government had offered these bonuses and granted pensions to disabled veterans. By 1885 the Pension Bureau had expended some \$200 million dollars to 520,000 Union veterans, constituting the single largest item in the federal budget. Then president Grover Cleveland initially supported veterans' aid, but in 1887 he vetoed the Dependent Pension Bill, which would have extended pensions to veterans disabled after the war's end. The G.A.R. responded by ensuring Cleveland's loss to Republican Benjamin Harrison in the 1888 election. The G.A.R.'s political power continued to grow during the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, helping elect a total of six Republican presidents, beginning with Ulysses S. Grant and ending with William McKinley.

On September 26, 1866, Iowa became one of the first states in the United States to charter a department of the G.A.R., behind only Illinois and possibly Wisconsin. The Iowa department, however, did not become permanent until 13 years later, making it the 19<sup>th</sup> state to have a permanent G.A.R. department. Like the national organization, the G.A.R. in Iowa reached its peak in 1890, with 435 posts and over 20,000 members. From there, membership began to decline fairly rapidly, with the organization losing almost 1500 members between 1890 and 1893. The Iowa department of the G.A.R. effectively came to an end in 1949, when the last Iowa member died at the age of 101. The Iowa department of the G.A.R. effectively came to an end in 1949, when the

The James C. Taylor Post No. 165 of the G.A.R. was organized in 1883 by Mustering Officer Col. Burrell, with a charter membership of 24. The post was named for James C. Taylor, a member of Company F, Second Iowa Calvary, who was among the first volunteers from Kossuth County. Taylor died of disease in a military camp in St. Louis; he was the youngest son of Father Chauncey Taylor. By 1888, with a membership of 124, the post was meeting in the former schoolhouse. A news clip describes the hall as "two stories high, 30 x 60 [sic] feet in size" with "their lodge room on the second floor." 30

The Algona post was formed relatively late, a fact not indicative of the Kossuth County response to the call for volunteer soldiers. Although begun with the small charter membership of 18, the post grew to one of Iowa's largest.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> GAR Museum and Library website.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Leonard, 12-13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Iowa GenWeb. http://iagenweb.org/civilwar/other/garvets.html. Accessed June 05, 2013.

<sup>28</sup> Becker.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Rev. Chauncey Taylor (later referred to as Father) came to Algona from Vermont in 1856 for the purpose of organizing a Congregational Church on the Iowa frontier. Not only was Taylor actively involved in that work, but he was also pivotal in the establishment of Northwestern College, which is described as "in reality only an academy" (*The Algona Upper Des Moines*. "Father Taylor Gopher College Well Named." Algona, IA. 06/29/1954.)

<sup>30</sup> Algona Republican (Algona, 06/06/1888), 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> The Algona Upper Des Moines, "G.A.R. Post Had Vital Role in History" (Algona, 06/29/1954).

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	88	Page11	CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

The members of Post 165 shared their building with the Algona public library, which moved into the lower story of the building in 1899. An early postcard (Figure 10.) documents the space in the G.A.R. Hall used by the library. A permanent library building was constructed in 1904 on a site donated by Capt. W.H. Ingham and utilizing \$10,000 provided by Andrew Carnegie. The library building remains on its site across the intersection from the G.A.R. Hall, but is no longer utilized as a library.

The April 1892 fire insurance map (Figure 5.) records the "GAR Hall" on the site in the southeast corner of block 29. Historic images provide documentation of the building's appearance in the years immediately following its removal to block 29 (Figures 7. and 8.). Most apparent relevant to the building's appearance today is the reorientation of the primary entrance from the south to the east, which required the enclosure of the south entrance. By ca.1900, a window replaced the south elevation's secondary entrance and the cupola had been removed. An historic image dating to the early 1900s gives a rare look at the east elevation, which is now the façade (Figure 9.).

By 1900 the James C. Taylor Post No. 165, G.A.R. had declined through the deaths of its membership. For many years after its establishment in 1881, the post was the meeting site for former soldiers of the Civil War. The group became known for the annual bean supper, a widely anticipated event that drew large crowds. Observance of Memorial Day with a local parade was the second annual event the post became known for. The parade marched from the center of town to Riverview Cemetery where flowers were laid on the graves of soldiers.<sup>32</sup>

A plaque mounted in the building's entrance hallway commemorates the 1919 presentation of the hall by the James C. Taylor Post No. 165, G.A.R. to Hagg Post No. 90 of the American Legion. The plaque also notes the names of the G.A.R. Post's 19 surviving members.

The Kossuth County Historical Society was organized on December 14, 1909. The organization was inactive beginning in the 1930s, but reorganized in 1959. The Society purchased the building (then the American Legion) on January 3, 1967 for \$10,000. A formal opening and dedication was held on September 17, 1967 and the building has remains in their care today.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Ibid

<sup>33</sup> Kossuth County Historical Society archive.

National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	9	Page 1	2		CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

#### RELEVANT CULTURAL RESOURCE DOCUMENTS

At the time of the preparation of this nomination, neither Kossuth County nor Algona are part of the Certified Local Government program, with no systematic survey of Algona's historic architectural resources made. Algona has two resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Kossuth County Historical Society, although focused on artifact collection, maintains a solid archival collection of historical images and miscellaneous records including records specific to the history of the G.A.R. Memorial Hall.

#### POTENTIAL FOR HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY

The potential for historical archaeology was not assessed as part of the present National Register nomination. The building was moved to a vacant lot in ca.1887 with a basement dug at that time. Because the sub-grade footprint was disturbed at that time and because the remainder of the parcel surrounding the building has been graded and paved, it seems unlikely the building site retains archaeological and/or sub-grade historical resources.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This National Register nomination utilizes an array of reference resources in an attempt to create a full picture of the historic and architectural significance of the G.A.R. Memorial Hall in Algona, Iowa. The collection of the Kossuth County Historical Society, which was carefully scoured by Society board member, Manita Murphy, constitutes the core of the historical record. The original construction contract, numerous articles outlining the building's long history, the story of the G.A.R. post in Algona, and historic images were all provided by the historical society.

National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	9	Page13	CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

#### REFERENCE RESOURCES

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National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page	14 CFN-259-	-1116
G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa		
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. Adhttp:suvcw.org/gar.htm.	ccessed 01/15/2013.	
State Historical Society of Iowa. State Histo Resource Coordinator. December 20	oric Preservation Office. Resource database. Berry Bennett, 112.	
	ablic in Iowa." <i>University of Iowa Libraries Collections and</i> g.lib.uiowa.edu/speccoll/?s=grand+army+of+the+republic.	
Newspaper Articles		
Algona Republican. "G.A.R." 06/06/1888.		
Algona Upper Des Moines. "The School Bo	nd Question." 02/24/1886	
"New School House." 06/06/1867	•	
"District School." 12/05/1867.		
"The Grand Army Hall. The Old S	School Building Purchased and Soon to Be Moved." 05/18/188	87.
"Algona's Original Library." Cen	ntennial Edition. 06/29/1954.	
. "G.A.R. Post Had Vital Role in Ea	arly History." Centennial Edition. 06/29/1954.	
Kossuth County Advance. "History of Old T	'ime Buildings is Set Straight." 02/16/1950.	
"Grasshoppers Cost Algona Its Fin	rst College in 1880." 05/15/1972.	
"Northern Iowa Normal School."	07/02/1979.	

National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

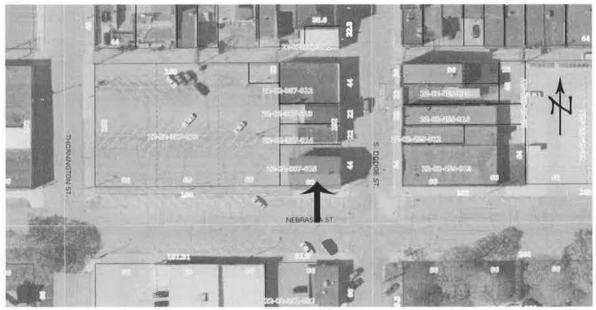
Section number	10	Page 15_	CFN-259-1116
Section number	10	rage1J	CFN-259-1

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa.

#### **GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Verbal Boundary Description

ORIGINAL PLAT, S 44' LOT 8 BLOCK 29



(MAP SOURCE: www.beacon.schneidercorp.com. Accessed December 10, 2012)

The location of the resource (parcel 007512202387015) is indicated by the arrow.

#### **Boundary Justification**

The boundary encompasses the lot upon which the building is sited.

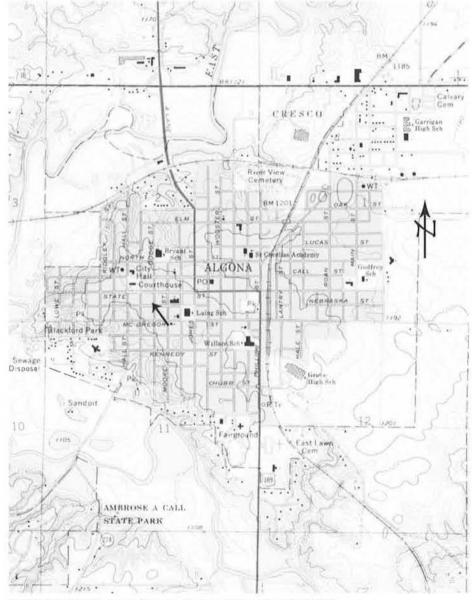
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Additional Information Page 16 CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

Figure 1. USGS 7.5 MINUTE TOPOGRAPHIC MAP - ALGONA QUAD (1972)



(SOURCE: http://www.trails.com. Accessed December 10, 2012.)

The location of the resource is indicated.

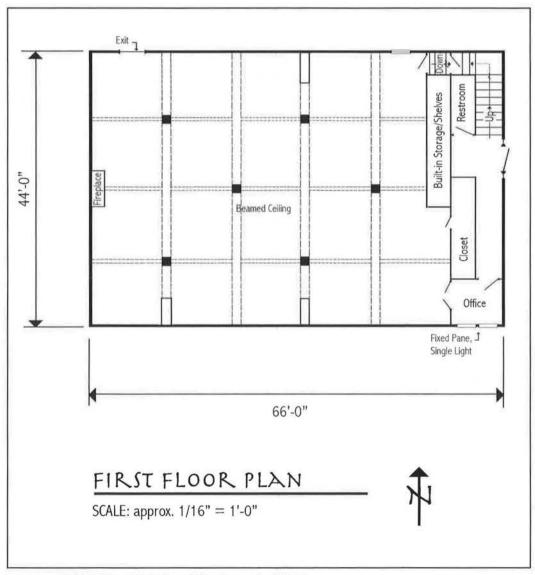
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	Additional Information	Page17	CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

Figure 2. FIRST FLOOR PLAN - 2012



(SOURCE: AKAY Consulting, September 2012.)

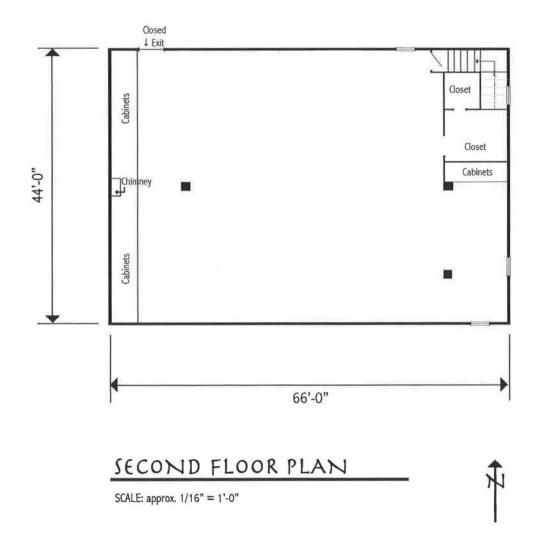
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Additional Information Page 18 CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

Figure 3. SECOND FLOOR PLAN - 2012



(SOURCE: AKAY Consulting, August 2012,)

National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

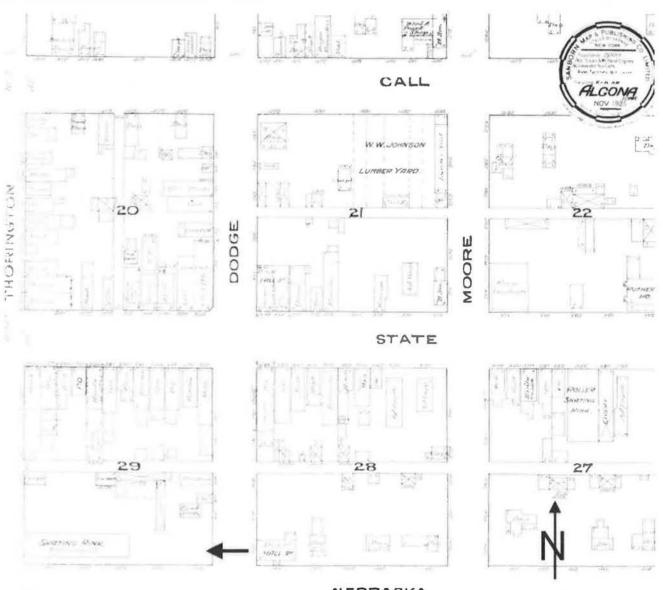
Section number Additional Information

Page\_\_19\_\_\_

CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

Figure 4. FIRE INSURANCE MAP - 1885



NEBRASKA

(SOURCE: https://catalog/cbpl.lib.ia.us/research/. Accessed 09/15/2011.)

Prior to the 1887 relocation, the site upon which the building is located (indicated) remained vacant.

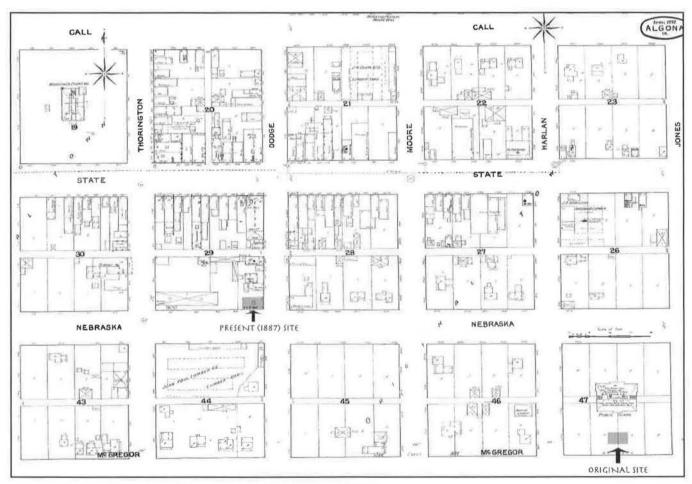
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Additional Information Page 20 CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

Figure 5. FIRE INSURANCE MAP - 1892



(SOURCE: https://catalog/cbpl.lib.ia.us/research/. Accessed 09/15/2011.)

The April 1892 fire insurance map shows the building on its new site. The original site is also noted.

National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Additional Information

Page\_\_21\_\_\_

CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

Figure 6. HISTORIC IMAGE – ca.1887



(SOURCE: Kossuth County Historical Society.)

View of the Algona commercial district looking southwest from the Kossuth County Courthouse.

The image post-dates the 1886 construction of the new Algona High School (1) and the relocation of the schoolhouse building (2). The wood frame building of the Algona College (3) is also in view east of the hall, its scale and form nearly identical to the schoolhouse building. The image also reveals the retention of numerous wood frame buildings that remained in the downtown at this time.

National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

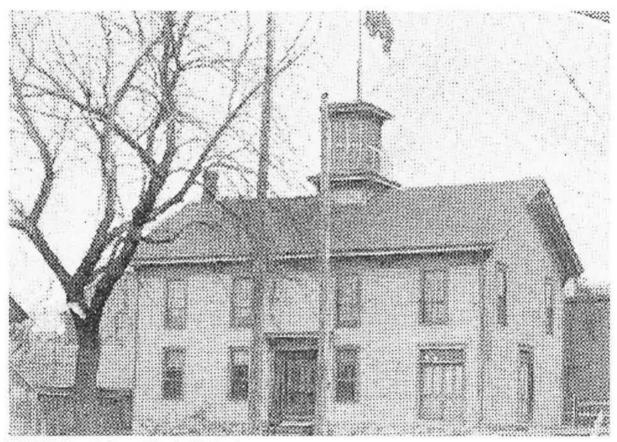
Section number Additional Information

Page\_\_22\_\_\_

CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

Figure 7. HISTORIC IMAGE - ca.1887



(SOURCE: Kossuth County Historical Society.)

This undated image documents the building's primary entrance on the south (E. Nebraska Street), with secondary entrances on the east end of the south elevation and on the east elevation. The image also documents the stone foundation, historic window placement, and a belfry.

National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Additional Information Page 23

CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

Figure 8. HISTORIC IMAGE - ca.1899



(SOURCE: Kossuth County Historical Society.)

View of the south elevation looking northeast. As the image indicates, the secondary entrance on this elevation was replaced by a window. The primary entrance and belfry remained.

National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number

Additional Information

Page\_\_24\_\_

CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

### Figure 9. HISTORIC IMAGE - Early 1900s



(SOURCE: Kossuth County Historical Society.)

In this view looking west along E. Nebraska Street, we see the hall's east elevation (white building in the background), which remains largely intact today. The view also confirms the loss of the belfry by this time. The building on the right (also wood frame on a stone foundation and similar in form and construction date to the G.A.R. Memorial Hall) housed the Algona College from ca.1871-1880 and later was a hotel. Fire insurance maps indicate the building was non-extant by 1942.

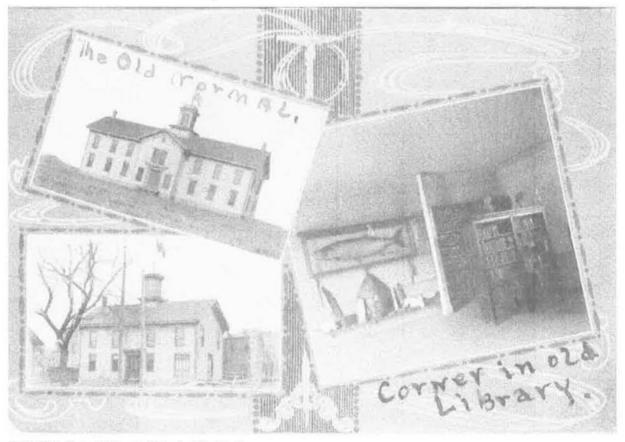
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Additional Information Page 25 \_\_\_ CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

Figure 10. HISTORIC IMAGE – ca.1899



(SOURCE: Kossuth County Historical Society.)

This postcard provides the sole representation of the hall's interior, which, in 1899, provided space for the library. An interesting note, the mounted fish seen in the image was moved to the new Carnegie library when it opened in 1904, where it remains today. The building exterior is pictured on the bottom left, the image pre-dating the removal of the entrances on the south elevation and of the belfry.

The Normal College (upper left) incorporated the ca.1882 wings of the 1867 Algona Schoolhouse with a new center bay on a site known as Normal Hill. The building is non-extant.

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Additional Information Page 26 CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

Figure 11. HISTORIC IMAGE - Algona's Wood Frame Buildings - ca.1890



(SOURCE: Algona Upper Des Moines. "Old Corner Loaded With History." 04/26/1966.)

This early view of the southwest corner of Block 44 (looking northeast from what is now the intersection of Thorington and McGregor Streets) documents the proliferation of wood frame construction in the town's historic core. By the date of this image, the building had been relocated to its present site on the southeast corner of the same block; the building is visible between the two houses.

National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Additional Information

Page\_\_27\_\_\_\_

CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

Figure 12. HISTORIC IMAGE - Algona's Wood Frame Buildings - Algona College - ca.1915



(SOURCE: Kossuth County Historical Society.)

Like the G.A.R. Memorial Hall, the Algona College building was a two-story, frame construction on a stone foundation. The building stood on Block 28, at the northeast corner of S. Dodge and E. Nebraska Streets, immediately east of the G.A.R Hall. Note the frame buildings to its north and east. The Algona College building last appeared on the 1926 fire insurance map, indicating that it was non-extant by the time the 1942 revision of the 1926 map was completed.

National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	Photographs	Page 28	CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

#### LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Schoolhouse - Algona
122 S. Dodge Street
Algona, Iowa
Kossuth County, Iowa
Photographer: Alexa McDowell, AKAY Consulting, Boone, IA
October 1, 2012

4 x 6" images printed on Canon Premium Photo Paper using Canon Chromalife 100+ ink CD-ROM on file with property owner and the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office

#### Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 0001. Context: View looking northeast toward the intersection of E. Nebraska and S. Dodge Streets IA\_KossuthCounty\_Schoolhouse\_0001.tif
- 0002. Exterior: View of the façade (east) and north elevation, looking southwest across S. Dodge Street IA\_KossuthCounty\_Schoolhouse \_0002.tif
- 0003. Exterior: View of the facade (east) and south elevation, looking northwest across E. Nebraska Street IA\_KossuthCounty\_Schoolhouse\_0003.tif
- 0004. Exterior: View of the south and west elevations, looking northeast across E. Nebraska Street IA KossuthCounty Schoolhouse 0004.tif
- 0005. Exterior: View of the west and north elevations looking southeast from the rear parking lot IA\_KossuthCounty\_Schoolhouse\_0005.tif
- 0006. Exterior Detail: View of the stone foundation on the west (rear) elevation IA KossuthCounty Schoolhouse 0006.tif
- 0007. Exterior Detail: View of the eave, fascia, and paired bracketing IA KossuthCounty Schoolhouse 0007.tif
- 0008. Interior: First floor, looking southwest.

  IA\_KossuthCounty\_Schoolhouse\_0008.tif
- 0009. Interior: First floor, looking southeast IA\_KossuthCounty\_Schoolhouse \_0009.tif
- 0010. Interior: Second floor, looking northwest IA KossuthCounty Schoolhouse 0010.tif

National Park Service

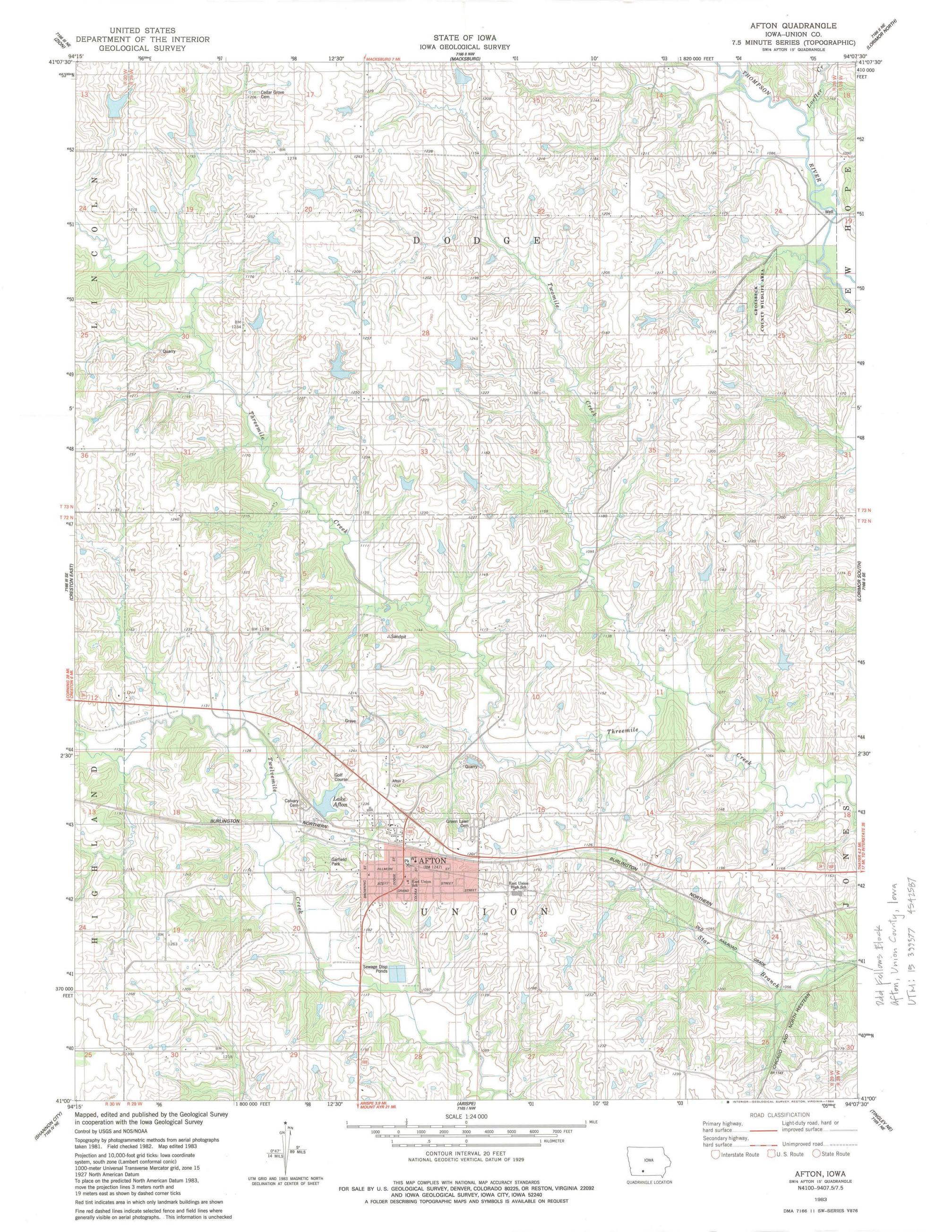
# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number	Photographs	Page29	CFN-259-1116

G.A.R. Memorial Hall - Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa

0011. Interior: Second floor, looking southeast IA\_KossuthCounty\_Schoolhouse\_0011.tif

0012. Interior: Basement, looking west IA\_KossuthCounty\_Schoolhouse\_0012.tif



























## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION
PROPERTY G.A.R. Memorial Hall NAME:
MULTIPLE NAME:
STATE & COUNTY: IOWA, Kossuth
DATE RECEIVED: 11/29/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST: DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF WEEKLY LIST: 1/15/14
REFERENCE NUMBER: 13001077
REASONS FOR REVIEW:
APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N
COMMENT WAIVER: N
Sentered in  The Mational Register  of Trestoric Places
RECOM./CRITERIA
REVIEWERDISCIPLINE
TELEPHONE DATE
DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N
If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

MARY COWNIE, DIRECTOR CHRIS KRAMER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR



SUSAN KLOEWER ADMINISTRATOR





NOV 2 9 2013

NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR

KIM REYNOLDS, LT. GOVERNOR

November 21, 2013

Carol Shull, Chief National Park Service National Register of Historic Places 1201 Eye Street, N.W.-- 8th Floor Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

The following National Register nomination(s) are enclosed for your review and listed if acceptable.

- Clarinda Carnegie Library, 300 N. 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Clarinda, Page County, Iowa
- G.A.R. Memorial Hall, 122 S. Dodge Street, Algona, Kossuth County, Iowa
- Odd Fellows Block, 175 E Kansas Street, Afton, Union County, Iowa
- Renken, Renke and Wubke (Francen), House, 401 Coates Street, Parkersburg, Butler County, Iowa
- White, Abiathar and Nancy (Corey), 713 North Main Street, Burlington, Des Moines County, Iowa

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Foster Hill, Manager

Elizabeth Faster Hill

National Register and Tax Incentive Programs

STATE HISTORICAL BUILDING 600 East Locust DES Moines, Iowa 50319

T. (515) 281-5111 F. (515) 242-6498

WWW.CULTURALAFFAIRS.ORG