

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 instruction 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 Wilson Building
other names/site number Wilson Block

2. Location

street & number 106-108 South Court Street not for publication
city, town Fairfield vicinity
state Iowa code IA county Jefferson code 101 zip code 52556

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: United States Senator James F. Wilson Historic Resources 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
State or Federal agency and bureau

11/29/90
Date

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

Signature of commenting or other official

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 Removed from National Register.
 Other, (explain:)

Patricia Andrus

1/24/91

[Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Commerce/Speciality Store

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Commerce/Speciality Store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)
Italianate

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick & Stone

roof Composition

other Iron columns on facade 1st fl.

Stone hood molds/2nd fl. windows

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

This is a 2-story, commercial type building constructed in 1876. The building consists of two commercial rooms and stands about one-half block south of Fairfield's Central Park.

Facade consists of 7-bays, symmetrically placed and occupied entirely by windows on the second floor. On the first floor, the main entry is centered. This entrance gives access to the second floor. Two commercial rooms (or store fronts) flank this entryway on each side. Each store front features a central entrance with large windows flanking the doors. Originally these first floor windows were plate glass. The plate glass windows have been shortened by wood in-fill. (These are the main alterations to the building and they are easily reversible because little historic fabric was removed). Cast iron columns frame the first floor bays. The columns have decorative capitals. There is a pressed metal cornice between first and second floors. Main entryway is flanked by stone pilasters with star details in them. Entryway lintel features "Wilson Building". There is a pediment above this.

Second floor features the five windows already mentioned. They are regularly placed and feature stone lintels with a star design. Windows themselves are double-hung, 2/2 and appear to be original. There is also cornice above the second floor. This features two scrolled brackets which are placed to define the center window. Contemporary newspaper accounts describe this material as "Joliet Stone." First floor pilasters are also constructed of this material. Brick used in this building is, according to reports, "Philadelphia brick."

This building should be evaluated architecturally in conjunction with the Former United States Post Office Building (110 South Court Street), its neighbor to the south. These buildings were built contemporaneously by James F Wilson. The Wilson Building is a larger building both in terms of width and height. Its importance is further enhanced by employment of stone which gives added dignity to it.

Directly adjacent to the north stands the First National Bank Building. This was constructed at the same time as the Wilson Building and the Former United States Post Office Building. It was also faced with stone but was extensively remodeled in the 1920s. This row of three commercial buildings was conceived as a unit and designed to be compatible with one another.

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 form instructions)

Commerce

Politics

Period of Significance

1876-1895

1883-1895

Significant Dates

N/A

N/A

Significant Person

U. S. Senator James F Wilson

Architect/Builder

N. C. Terrill & Company, builder

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

Constructed in 1876 by James F. Wilson as an investment, the Wilson Building housed several commercial establishments. It is eligible for nomination under Criterion B, buildings that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past. The building is significant because it calls attention to James F. Wilson's importance to the economic development of Fairfield, Iowa. The building is also important in calling attention to Wilson's later political career because it served as Wilson's local office during his tenure in the United States Senate (1883-1895).

Wilson returned to Fairfield in 1869, after serving three full terms in Congress. He had already helped found the First National Bank in Fairfield in 1865. From its establishment until his death thirty years later, Wilson served as president of this institution. The First National Bank was one of the two major chartered financial institutions in Fairfield during the Nineteenth Century. Wilson used his position to promote economic growth. The railroads in Jefferson County demanded supplies of coal, for example. In 1870 Wilson, along with R. H. Hufford, C. W. Slagle, and George Acheson, organized the Jefferson County Coal Company. The company owned 300 acres of land near Fairfield, employed some 60 miners, and in 1878 produced 374,600 bushels of coal. Wilson headed a company to produce utility gas for Fairfield, another good example. The gas works plant was in operation by 1876. By 1877 there were public street lights in Fairfield as well as service to business and residential houses.

In 1876 the bank embarked on construction of a new building at the southeast corner of Fairfield's Central Park. At the same time, Wilson built the Wilson Building (106-108 South Court) as a private investment. This building was constructed directly adjacent to the bank. Wilson secured an agreement from the United States Post Office to rent space in another building which Wilson built at 110 South Court. All the buildings mentioned above about one another in a commercial row.

There is a minor question regarding the proper name for this building. Contemporary newspaper accounts call it the "Wilson Block," while the stone name plaque over the central entryway reads "Wilson Building." The latter name has been chosen as the historic name of the property because it seems to reflect Wilson's own preference.

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: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	B	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	D	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Block 18, Old Plat to the City of Fairfield, Jefferson County, Iowa. Commencing at a point on the East line of said Lot One (1) twenty-two (22) feet from the Southeast corner of said Lot; thence running North on the East line of said lot forty-four (44) feet; thence West parallel with the South line of said lot twenty-two (22) feet; thence South parallel with the East line forty-four (44) feet; thence East parallel with the North line twenty-two (22) feet to the point of beginning.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries given above contain all the land associated with this resource.

See continuation sheet

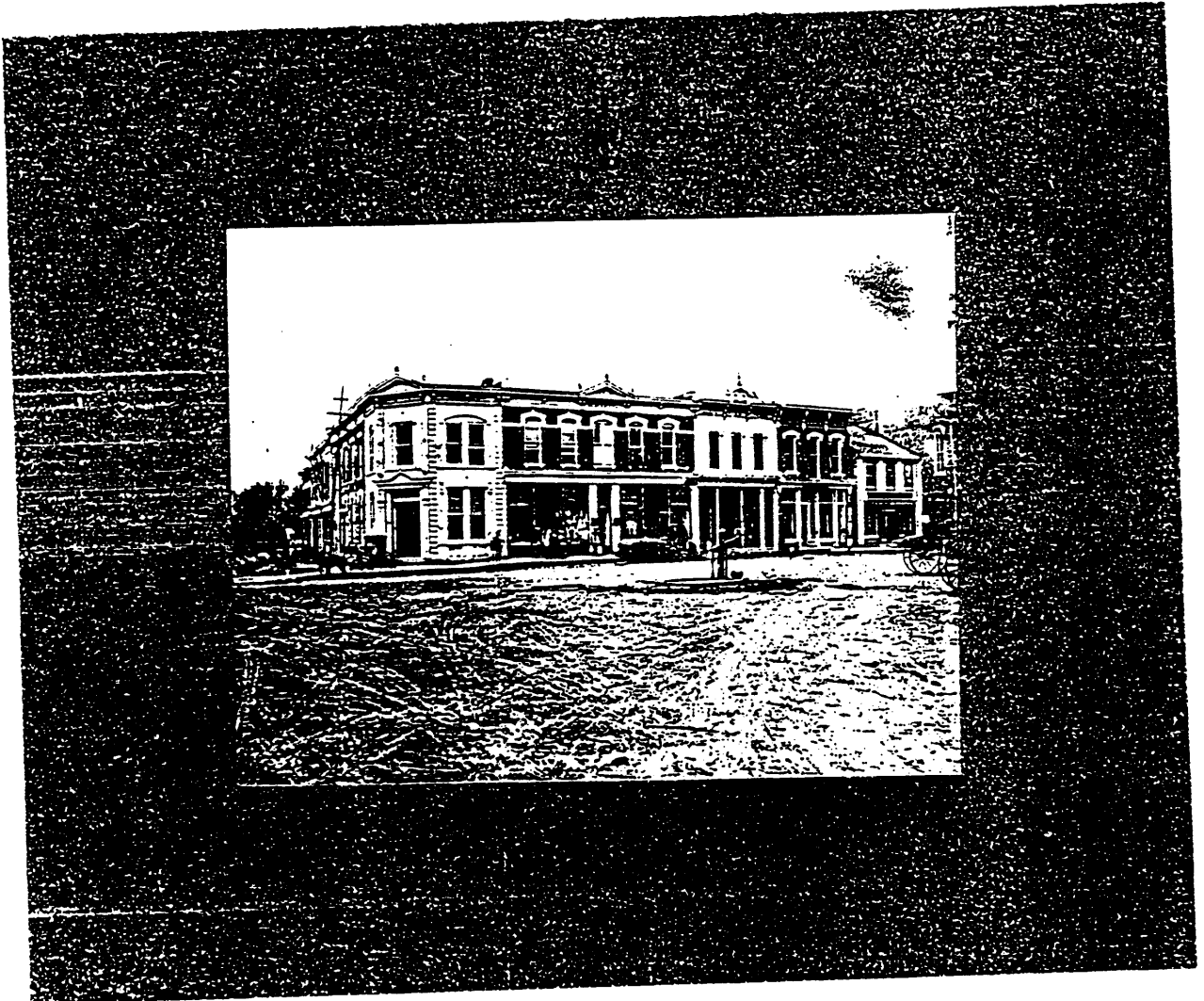
11. Form Prepared By

name/title <u>W C Page, Public Historian</u>	date <u>December 10, 1989</u>
organization _____	telephone <u>515/243-5740</u>
street & number <u>520 East Sheridan Avenue</u>	state <u>IA</u> zip code <u>50313</u>
city or town <u>Des Moines</u>	

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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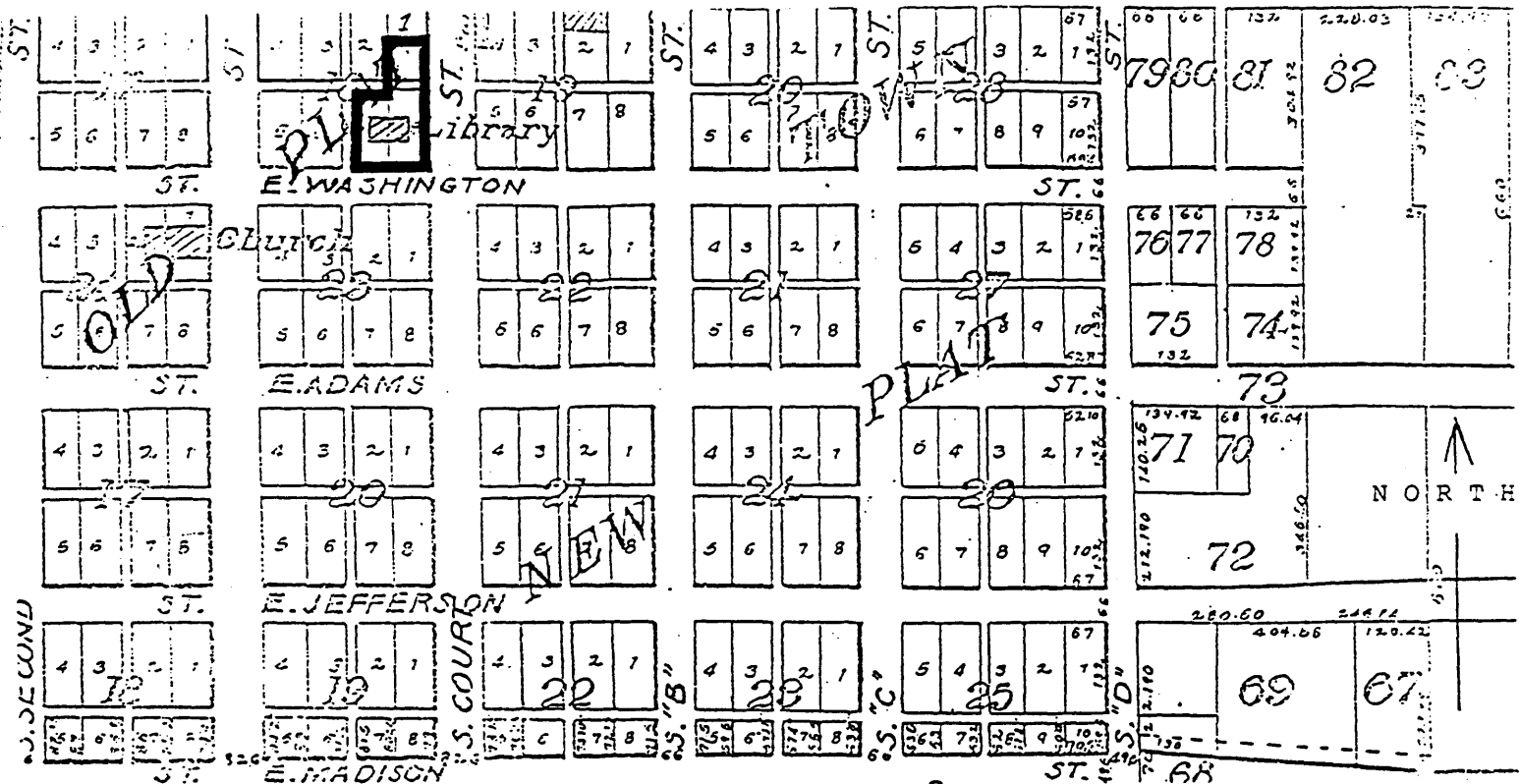


South Side Fairfield Central Park. Undated [circa 1898?].
First National Bank, Wilson Building, & US Post Office
appear at far left.

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Source: "City of Fairfield" in *Atlas of Jefferson County, Iowa*; 1909.

Bold boundary indicates location of Fairfield Public Library (marked with hachures), US Post Office, and Wilson Building within Old Plat, Fairfield, Iowa.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9

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CFN-259-1116

PRIMARY

Fairfield Ledger; 29 April 1875; p. 3 c. 4. Speaks of the south side of the Fairfield Central Park as cleared for new construction: "Not a building with the exception of bank building is left standing from Huntzinger's brick to the corner."

Fairfield Ledger; 24 June 1875; p. 3 c. 5: "The stone work of the Wilson Building and the Bank are about completed. The brick work will commence next week."

Fairfield Ledger; 4 November 1875; p. 3 c. 6. The new sidewalks in front of the Wilson Building are artificial stone laid in diamond squares (evidently a new and unusual building material in Fairfield).

Fairfield Ledger; 11 November 1875; p. 3 c. 7; "A Handsome Building/A Nobby Store Room/Jas. F. Wilson Building." Feature article transcribed *in toto* on continuation sheet.

Fairfield Ledger; 2 December 1875; p. 3 c. 7; "the First National Bank." N. C. Terrill and Company are builders. Facade stone is described as "Joliet Stone" while other elevations have "Philadelphia Brick." Contains much specific information about interior appointments. Attribution of N. C. Terrill and Company as builders of Wilson Building is extrapolated from their work on the bank building and its construction in tandem with the Wilson Building.

Fairfield Ledger; 11 May 1876; p. 2 c. 5. Says Ben J. Bartlett, Architect, will be in Fairfield for consultations. Newspaper editor says, p. 3 c. 8, Bartlett prepared plans for the Baptist church in Fairfield. This information provides a reason to consider Bartlett as a possible architect of the Wilson Building.

Souvenir of Fairfield, Iowa; Portland, Maine; Chisholm Brothers (published for Clarke & Junkin and McElderry, Fairfield, IA); 1891. Pictures First National Bank Building and Wilson Building in view looking southwest.

SECONDARY

Page, W. C.; Jefferson County, Iowa: An Historical Survey of Buildings; Typewritten MS; Area XV Cultural Resources Survey (Ottumwa, IA); 1980; pp. 170-2.

Architectural Survey Fairfield, Iowa; Typewritten MS; Area XV Cultural Resources Survey (Ottumwa, IA); 1981.

Welty, Susan Fulton; A Fair Field; Detroit, MI; Harlo Press; 1976; pp. 42, 61, 81-87, 100, 109, 111, 114, 130, 154, 205, 276, 280, 283, 310, 337-38.