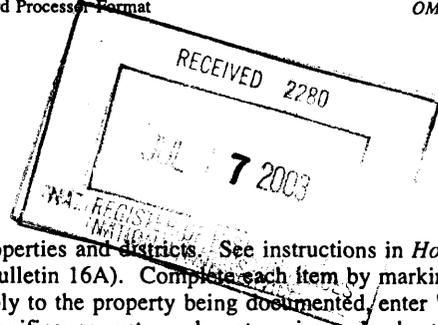


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
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, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name PORTER-RHYNSBURGER HOUSE

other names/site number C. & R. Rhynsburger House, Roger & Shirley Olson House

2. Location

street & number 514 Broadway Street N/A not for publication

city or town Pella N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Marion code 125 zip code 50219

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ( nomination  request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ( meets  does not meet) the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ( nationally  statewide  locally). (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Howell J. Lake  
Signature of certifying official/Title **STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA**

July 16, 2003  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ( meets  does not meet) the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is :
  - entered in the National Register.
    - See continuation sheet.
  - determined eligible for the National Register
    - See continuation sheet
  - determined not eligible for the National Register
  - removed from the National Register.
  - Other, (Explain)

Edson H. Beall  
Signature of Keeper

8/29/03  
Date of Action

Porter-Rhynsburger House  
Name of Property

Marion County, Iowa  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many lines as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one line)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

MID-19TH CENTURY  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick

Wood

roof Asphalt

other Glass

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

Porter-Rhynsburger House  
Name of Property

Marion County, Iowa  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" on one or more lines for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" on all the lines that apply)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1855

1870

**Significant Dates**

1855

1870

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

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

**9. Major Bibliography References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- previous determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Record
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historical Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository

\_\_\_\_\_

Porter-Rhynsburger House  
Name of Property

Marion County, Iowa  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 15 | 5 0 6 8 3 0 | 4 5 8 3 3 8 0 |

Zone Easting Northing

2 | | | |

Zone Easting Northing

3 | | | |

Zone Easting Northing

4 | | | |

**Verbal Boundary Description**

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

**Boundary Justification**

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

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title William C. Page, Public Historian; Joanne R. Page, Project Associate

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date August 31, 2002

street & number 520 East Sheridan Avenue telephone 515-243-5740; FAX 515-243-7285

city or town Des Moines state Iowa zip code 50313-5017

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

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

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

**Photographs** - Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

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

**Property Owner**

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

name Roger G. and Shirley K. Olson

street & number 514 Broadway Street telephone 641-628-1417

city or town Pella state IA zip code 50219

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

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

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1

CFN-259-1116

Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The Porter-Rhynsburger House is a 1-1/2-story, masonry, single-family dwelling built in two phases. The original building was completed in 1855. It consists of a main block and a wing. An addition at the rear of the house was completed in 1870. The integrity of this building is high. The few changes to it are noted below.

**EXTERIOR**

The Porter-Rhynsburger House features a stone foundation, brick walls, and an asphalt shingled roof. The building's first phase is ell-shaped. (See Continuation Sheet 7-7 and 7-17.) The main block of the ell runs east to west and measures about 24' x 37'. It is covered with a facade gable roof. A dormer window covered with a shed roof is situated on its north slope. The wing runs north and south and measures about 13' x 21'. The wing is covered with a gable roof. This roof is intersected by another gable roof on its west slope and a gabled dormer on its east slope.

The west facade of the main block features an asymmetrical arrangement of three bays on its first floor. An inset doorway is situated in the southern most bay. It is flanked by side windows and surmounted with a fixed transom with four window-panes. Double-sash windows fill the other two bays on the first floor. The second floor contains two windows in the gable end. The wing contains two windows on the first floor and a doorway in the gable end of the second floor. The south elevation of the wing contains a bay window on first floor and tall window in its gable end.

A 1-story addition stands at the rear of the building. It measures about 17' x 46' and is covered by a shed roof. Brick parapets are situated above the south, north, and west walls of the addition and mask the roof. A bay window is situated on the south elevation of this addition.

Fenestration throughout the building consists mostly of double-hung, 9/9 sash. Window openings have stone lintels and sills. Lintels and sills remain unpainted in their natural state. There are two brick chimneys, one near the rear gable, and one near the center of the core rectangle. Both chimneys are located on the ridge of the roof.

Architectural details abound on the building, including the extensive use of stone quoins. These quoins are situated on both corners of the facade and on the southwest corner of the wing. Quoins run from the foundation to the roof. The main entryway is a pronounced architectural detail of the building. It features a wood paneled door inset into the building and flanked on both sides and above with fixed windows. The entryway features wood paneling on the walls and ceiling. The entryway surrounds consist of stone columns supporting a stone lintel. The north column is dressed to resemble quoins and relates visually to the quoins on the southwest corner of the facade. The south column of the entryway is plainly finished and stands slightly inset in from the southwest corner of the facade, which it abuts. The entryway threshold is a large slab of stone.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 2

CFN-259-1116

Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

The Porter-Rhynsburger House appears small in size from the street because larger houses flank it, but its interior has a surprising air of spaciousness.

**INTERIOR**

The first floor of the Porter-Rhynsburger House features an entrance hall and staircase, front room, library, living room, dining room, kitchen, and washroom, now used as a laundry and pantry. The interior of the Porter-Rhynsburger House is finished with plaster wall finishes. The tops of the windows and doors on the first floor almost touch the ceiling.

The entrance hall features a passage to the living room, a door to the front room, the staircase to the second floor, and a closet. The closet originally housed a staircase to the basement, but it was converted into a closet many years ago.

The dining room is the largest room in the house. It features a built-in wall cupboard on its north wall with glass-paneled doors. This cupboard originally could also be accessed from the kitchen, but this second opening was blocked up when the kitchen was remodeled in the 1960s. Another cupboard is situated in the wall between the dining room and the living room. Wood-paneled doors access it from the dining room. The dining room also features a hardwood ceiling, and a walnut floor. Wainscoting, which stands 32" high, is situated around the perimeter of the dining room.

A half-bath is situated along the north wall of the front room. The Rhynsburger Sisters used the front room as a bedroom. The library possesses a fireplace on the north wall. The present fireplace dates from the remodeling of the house in the 1960s. A set of double, folding doors stands between the library and the living room. Although the kitchen has been remodeled, care was taken to integrate much of its original fabric into the design. A stairway is located in the southwest corner of the kitchen to access the basement.

The second floor features a hall, three bedrooms, and a full bath. The woodwork is original to the building. Paneled doors with 3/3 configurations access the rooms. Transom windows are situated above each of the doors. These transoms feature 2/2 pane configurations. During the remodeling of the house in the 1960s, the north window in the bathroom was closed to install a bathtub and shower and several closets installed. A closet and a cupboard were also installed in the south bedroom at the same time, and a closet was converted into a chest of drawers.

The interior possesses a total of nine flues. Each bedroom possesses a flue, and the house has two outside chimneys to serve this heating system. A steam heat system presently warms the house.

The basement features four rooms and a crawl space. The basement is accessed by one staircase, which leads to the kitchen and by one set of outside stairs, located on the east façade of the building. The basement floor is brick. Two rooms and a crawl space are situated under the original 1855 building. A brick, load-bearing wall divides these two rooms and runs east to west. A brick floor shelf, built in an el-shape, is situated in the southeast corner of the south room and stands 32" high. The north room

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 3

CFN-259-1116

Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

features a poured concrete floor shelf, built in an el-shape and situated in the southeast corner of the room, and a coal chute, which is now bricked up. A crawl space is situated the rest of the original house to the west. The basement under the 1870 addition to the house features two rooms. The north room possesses a modern furnace, the staircase to the kitchen, and a poured concrete floor shelf. The south room possesses a "U"-shaped, poured concrete floor shelf situated on its south wall.

**INTEGRITY**

The Porter-Rhynsburger House remains very much as originally built by Joseph Porter in 1855 and improved by C. and R. Rhynsburger in 1870. The exterior fabric retains considerable integrity. On the interior, the original floor plan of the building also appears to remain intact.

Because historic photographs document this building over a long period of time, it is possible to identify some alterations. The house presently features some replacement, 9/9 double-hung sash installed in 1997. These sash replaced some earlier replacements, which featured a 1/1 double-hung configuration. (See Continuation Sheet 7-18.) The building originally featured 9/9 double-hung sash. (See Continuation Sheet 7-17.) Although the loss of the building's original fenestration is regrettable, the present replacement conforms to its original design. The window cavities of the Porter-Rhynsburger House are unaffected by sash alterations.

At dates as yet undetermined, a gabled dormer window was installed on the east slope of the wing, and a dormer window with shed roof was installed on the north slope of the main building's roof. Both these additions are unobtrusive.

The house stands in Lot 3 of Block 61 of the Original Town plat of Pella. When first constructed and for many years thereafter, the site comprised all of Lots 2 and 3. Sometime before 1931, portions of both lots were sold off and new homes constructed on this subdivided land. The subdivision of lots is a common practice in urban residential neighborhoods. Although the greater building density alters somewhat the present appearance of the Porter-Rhynsburger House site, the newer homes are located sufficiently distant from it to leave the building without negative visual impact.

**SITE**

There is a pedestrian entry-walk to the Porter-Rhynsburger House running from Broadway to the entryway to the house. This entry-walk consists of concrete with large aggregate. Although installed outside the period of significance for the house, this structure is a notable landscape architectural element. A. Judd & Sons of Des Moines, Iowa, constructed this entry-walk. An iron plaque bearing the firm's name is embedded in the entry-walk near where it intersects the public sidewalk.

A detached, frame garage stands at the rear of the property near the alley. Built in 1996, it measures 24' x 28'. A patio is situated at the rear of the property. Built in the 1980s, it measures approximately 19' x 40'.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**CONTINUATION SHEET**

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CFN-259-1116

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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

Fire insurance maps show that several outbuildings stood on the property in the past. None of these remains extant.

**SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOOD**

The Porter-Rhynsburger House is located on Broadway Street. As its name implies, Broadway is a primary vehicular route in the city and connects the Pella central business district with Central College. Broadway along this four-block stretch is constructed of brick pavers and visually ties the neighborhood along its course together. As one of the few remaining brick streets in Pella, Broadway is a significant historic resource. The houses along Broadway exhibit a mixture of architectural styles and periods. They are generally large in size, rich in architectural detail, and well maintained and preserved. The neighborhood is likely eligible for nomination to the National Register as a residential historic district.

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National Park Service

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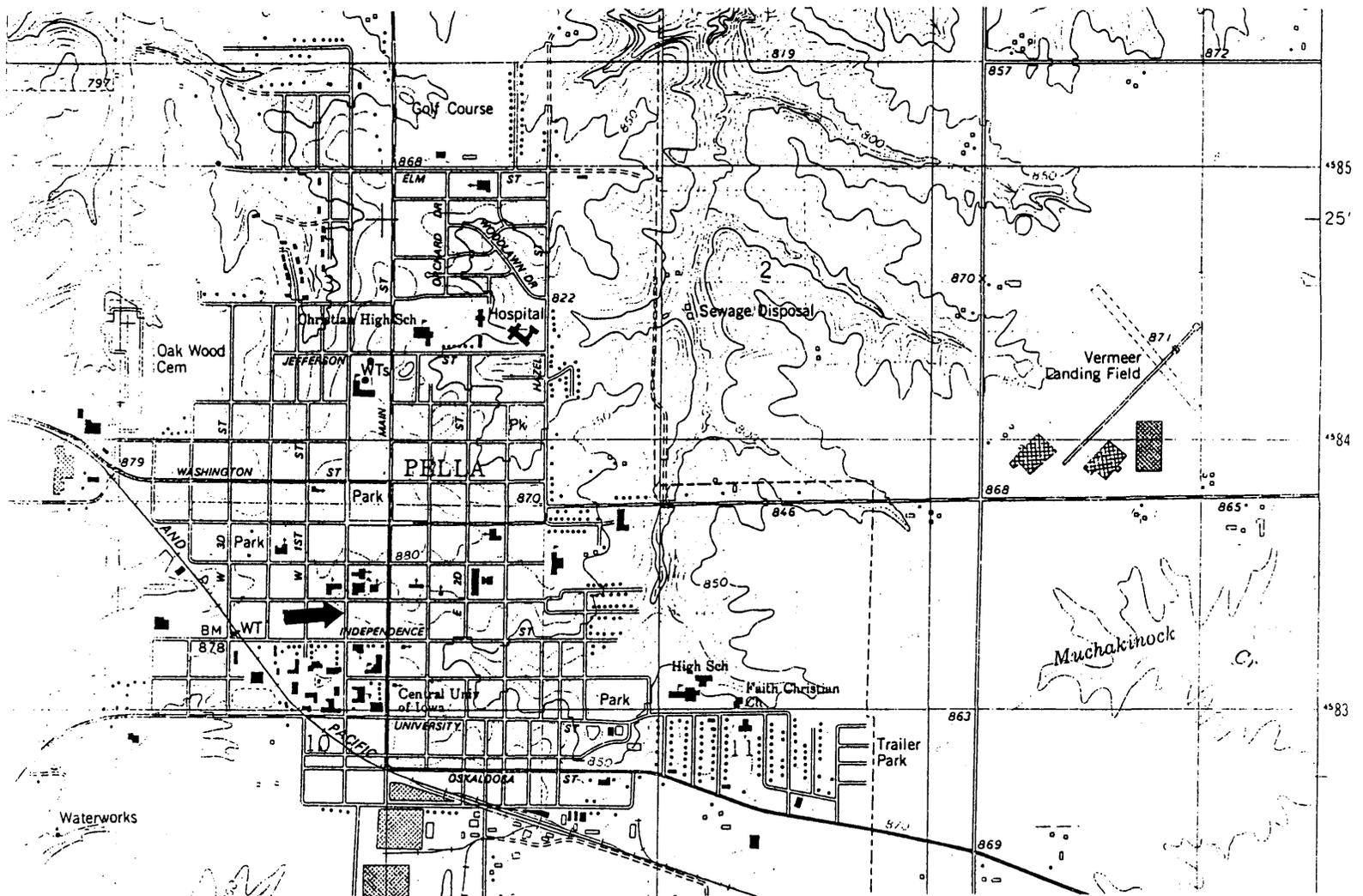
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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

SITE MAP  
ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



Source: U.S.G.S. Map (7.5 Minute Series), Pella, Iowa, Quadrangle, 1980.

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National Park Service

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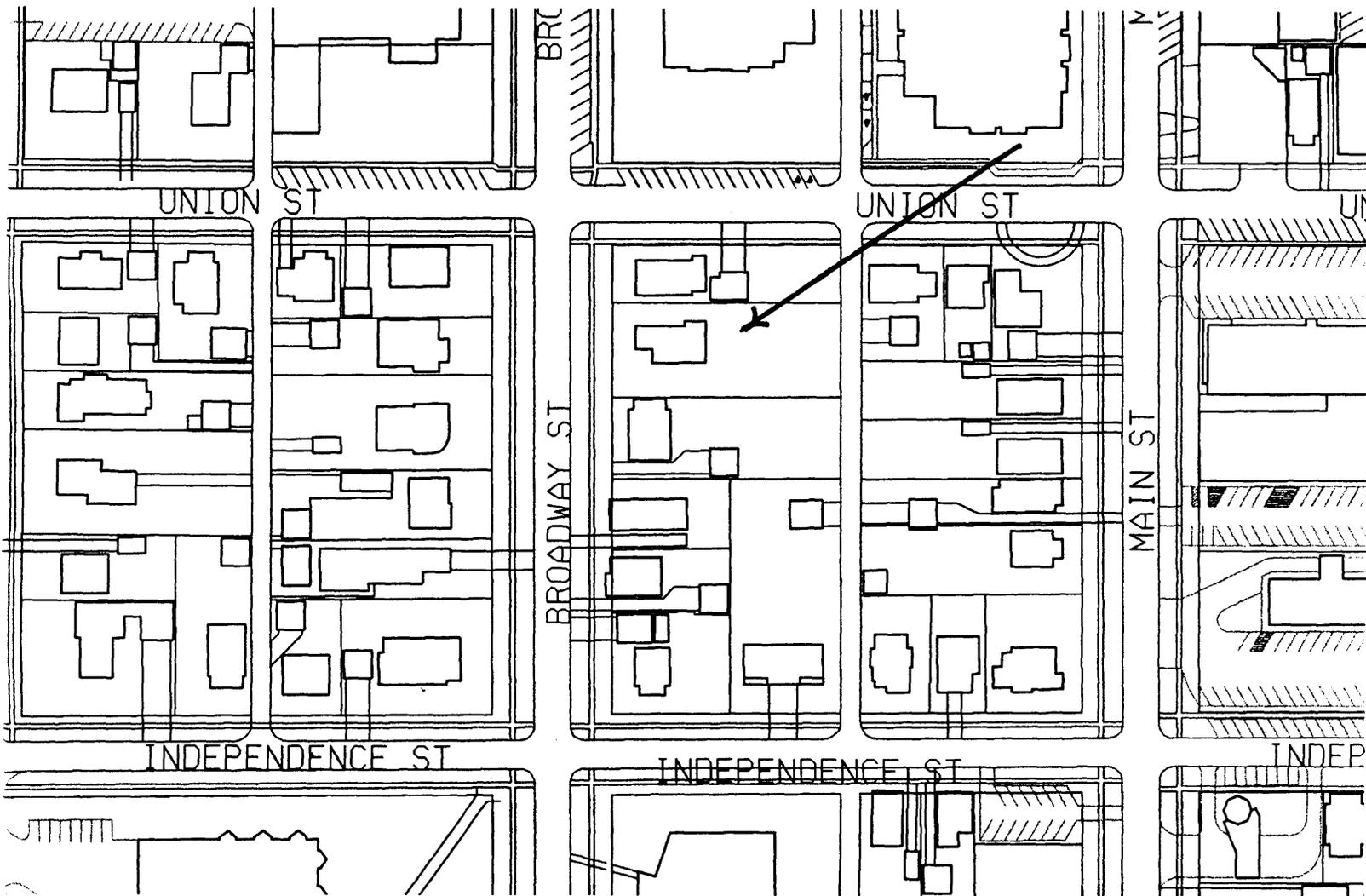
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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

## PLANEMETRIC MAP OF NEIGHBORHOOD

2002



Arrow locates Porter-Rhynsburger House.

Source: City of Pella, Iowa.



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National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

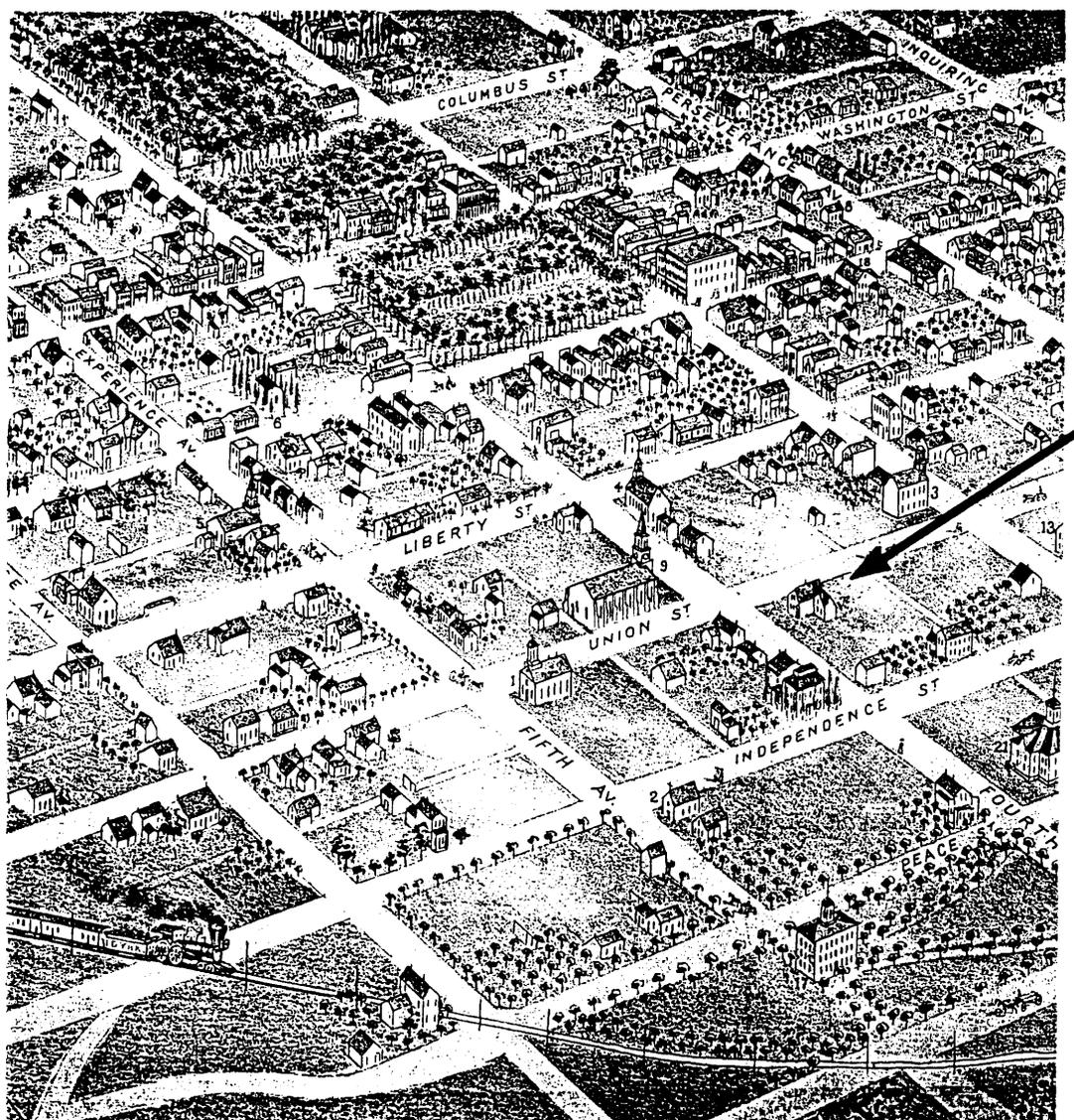
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CFN-259-1116

Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

## PORTER HOUSE

1869



Arrow points to the property.

Source: "Bird's Eye View of Pella, Marion County, Iowa in 1869."

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

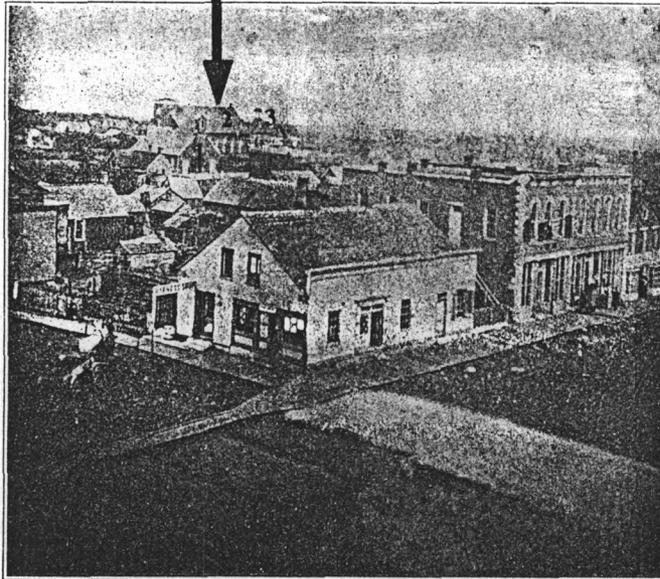
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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

## SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOOD

CIRCA 1876



Franklin Street Looking West from Geelhoed's Corner

Arrow indicates neighborhood surrounding the Porter-Rhynsburger House (not visible).

Numbers indicated nearby churches: 1. Second Reformed; 2. New First Reformed; 3. First Reformed.

Source: *Souvenir History of Pella, Iowa*, p. 252.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

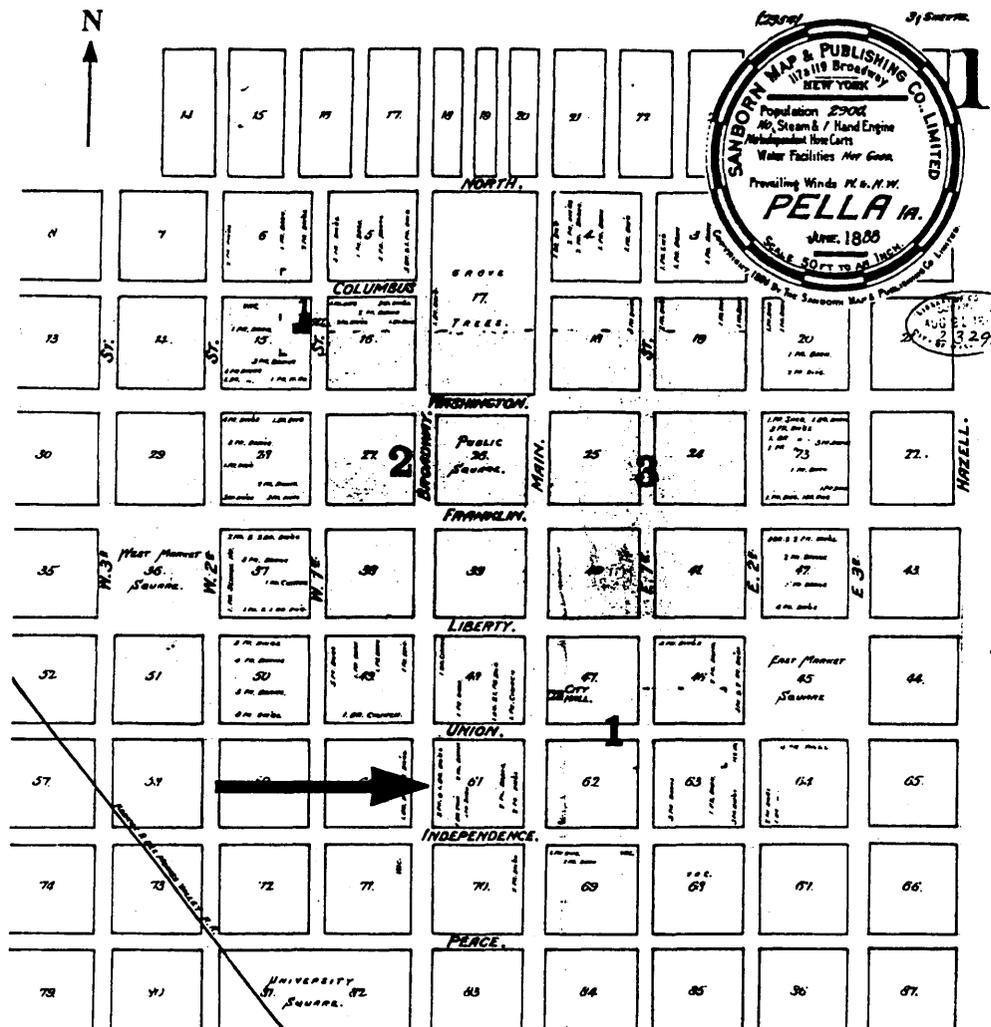
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CFN-259-1116

Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

## 1888 FIRE INSURANCE MAP

ARROW IDENTIFIES CITY BLOCK OF PROPERTY'S LOCATION



Map indicates that the west one-half of Block 61 is improved with two frame and one brick dwellings

Source: Sanborn Map Company, Pella, 1888.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

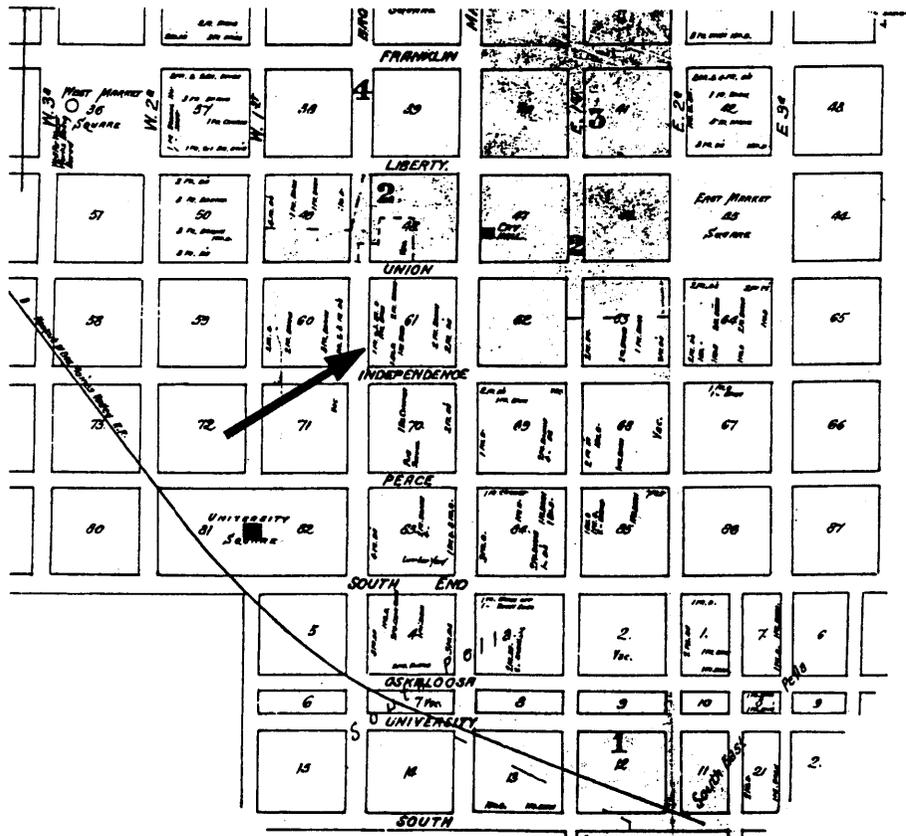
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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

## 1895 FIRE INSURANCE MAP

ARROW IDENTIFIES CITY BLOCK OF PROPERTY'S LOCATION



Map indicates that the west one-half of Block 61 is improved with two frame dwellings, one brick dwelling

Source: Sanborn Map Company, Pella, 1895.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

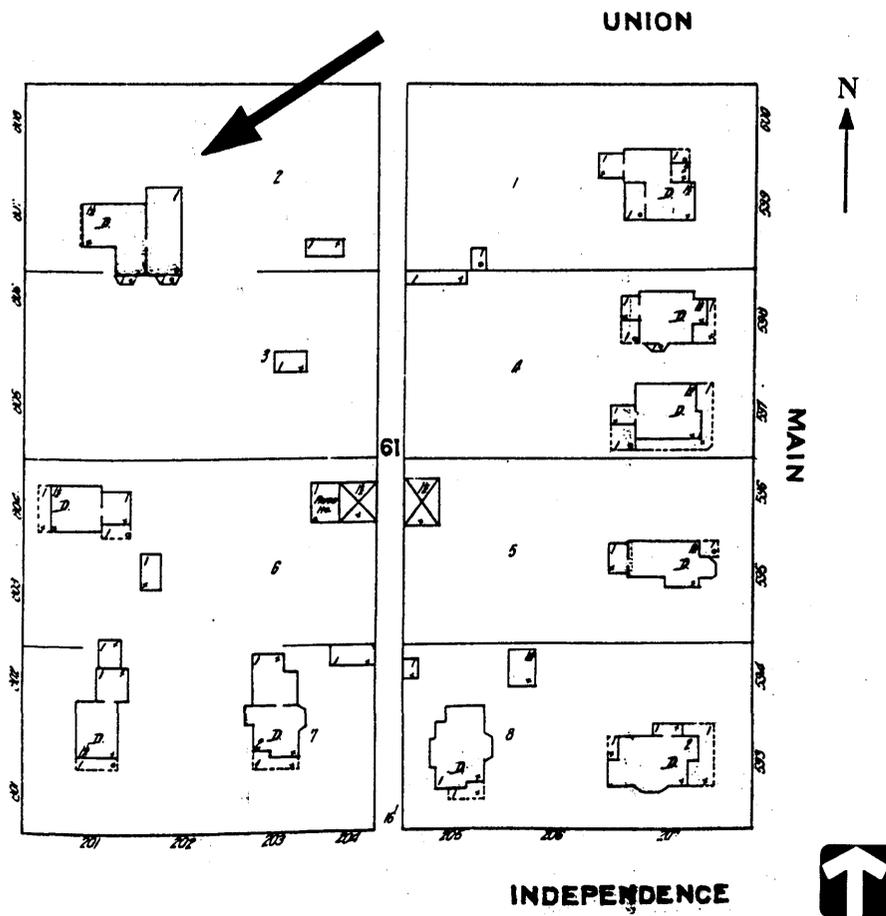
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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

## 1911 FIRE INSURANCE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



This map shows that the eastern two units of the townhouses were razed to push 11th Street through from Grand Avenue to High Street between 1901 and 1920.

Source: Sanborn Map Company, Pella, 1911.

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National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

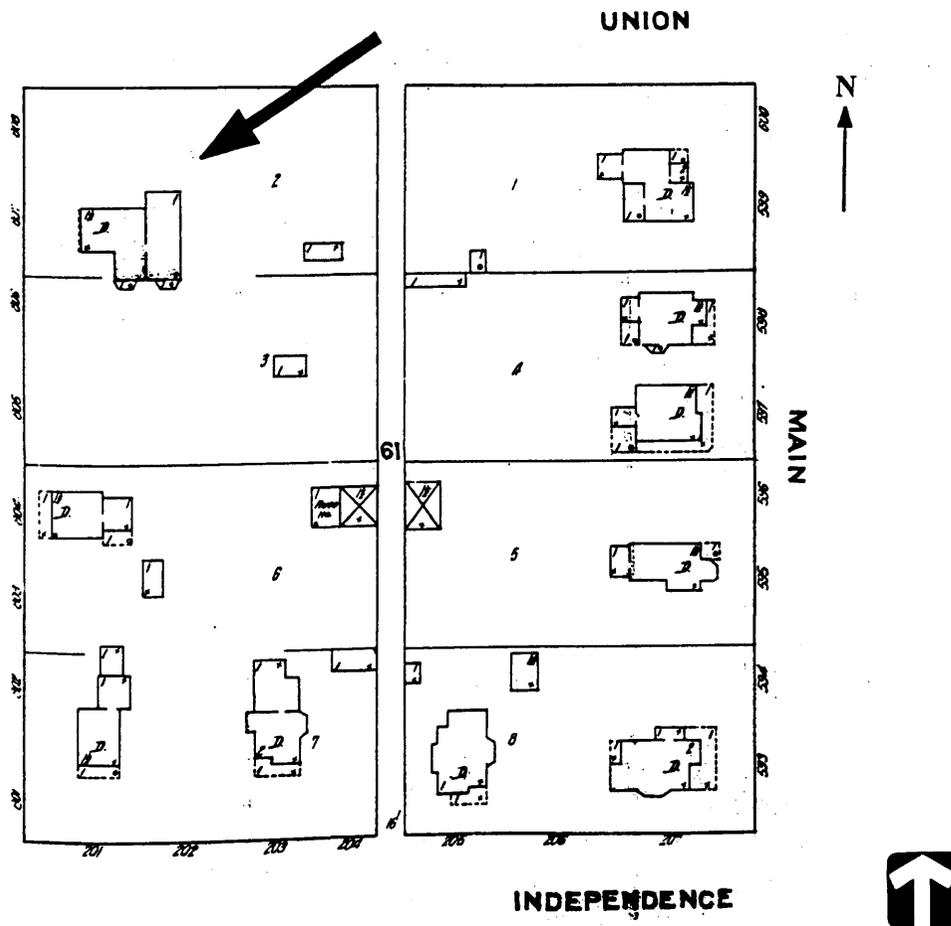
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CFN-259-1116

Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

## 1931 FIRE INSURANCE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



This map shows how Lot 2 was parcelized and a single-family dwelling constructed upon it (514 Broadway) and how Lot 3 was parcelized and a single-family dwelling constructed upon it (508 Broadway).

Source: Sanborn Map Company, Pella, 1931.

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National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

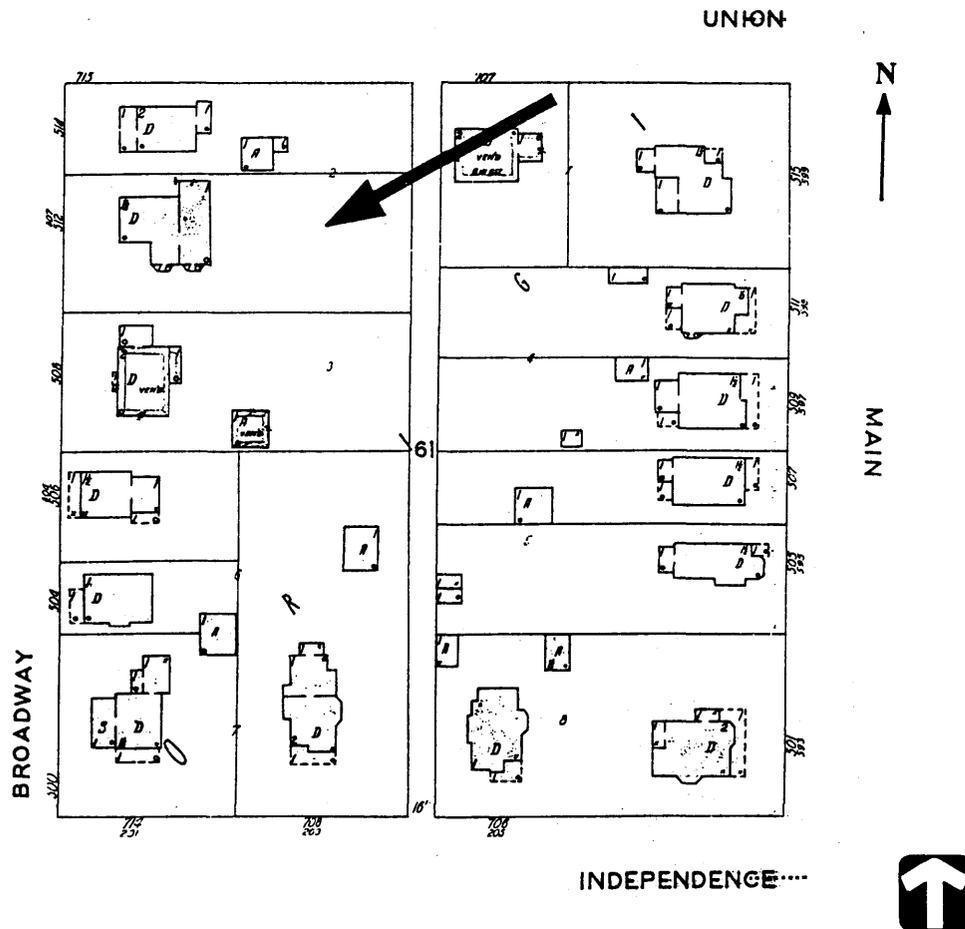
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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

## 1931 UPDATED FIRE INSURANCE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



This map shows the improvements on Lot 2 and Lot 3 substantially the same as in 1931.

Source: Sanborn Map Company, Pella, 1931 updated.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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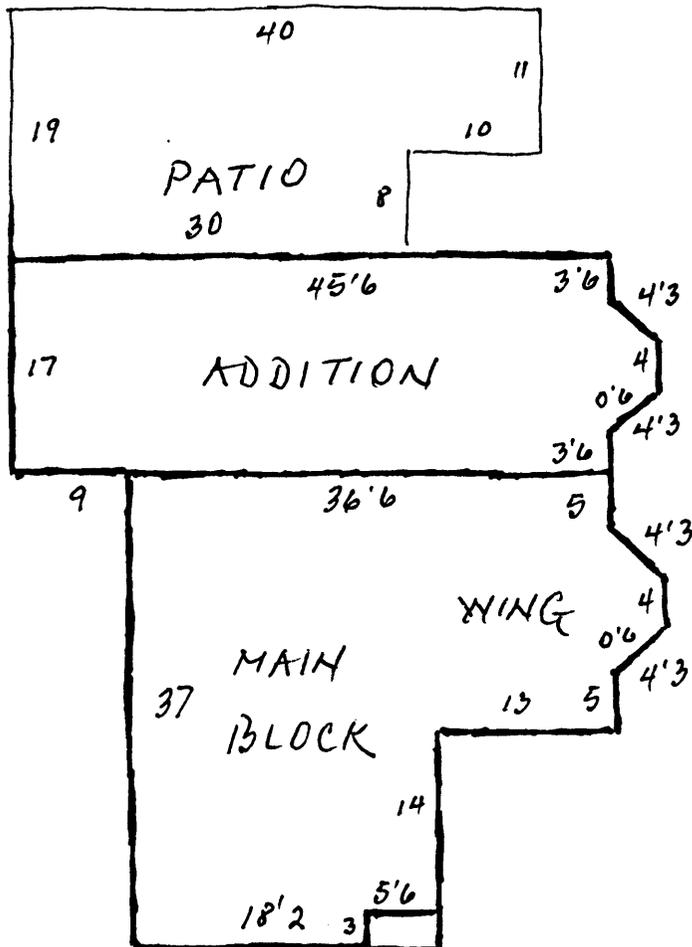
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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

## FOOTPRINT OF HOUSE

2002



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National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

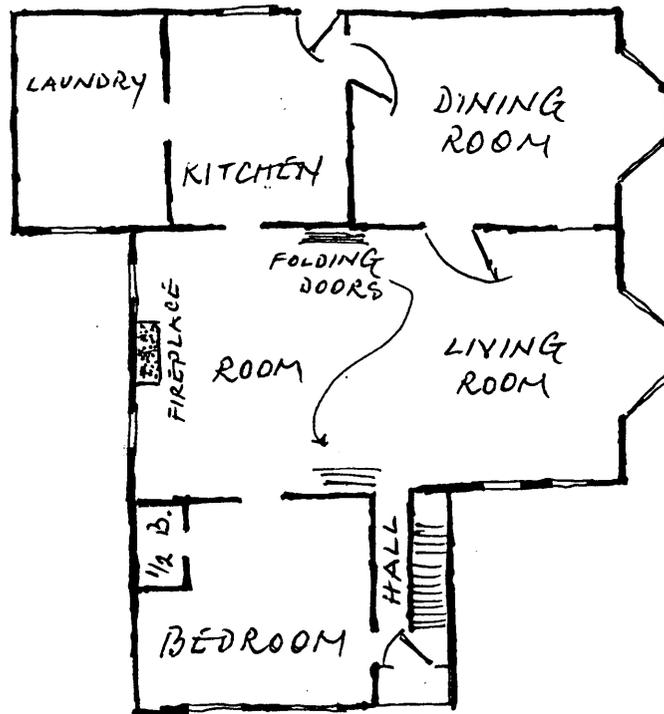
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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

## FIRST FLOOR PLAN SKETCH

2002



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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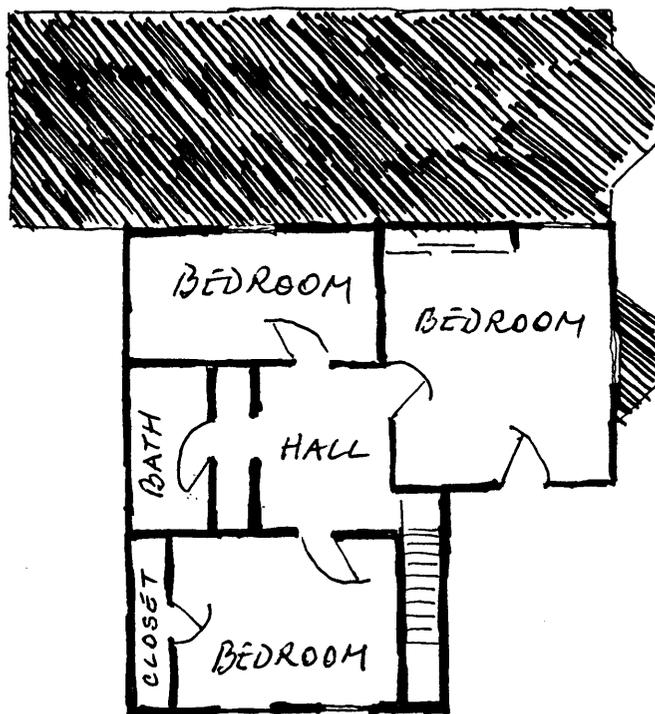
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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

## SECOND FLOOR PLAN SKETCH

2002



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7

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CPN-259-1116

Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

**PORTER-RHYSBURGER HOUSE**

1870

*c. Rhynsburger residence in 1870  
514 Broadway*



This photograph pictures the Porter House prior to the addition built by the Rhynsburgers in 1870.

Photograph courtesy Roger and Shirley Olson, Pella, Iowa.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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CFN-259-1116

Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

**PORTER-RHYSBURGER HOUSE**

1940



This photograph pictures the Porter-Rhynsburger House with the addition built by the Rhynsburgers in 1870.

Photograph courtesy Roger and Shirley Olson, Pella, Iowa.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

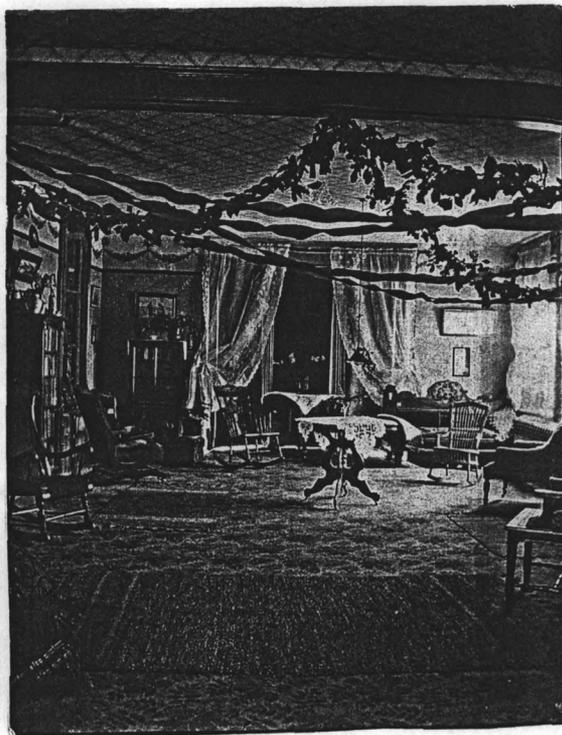
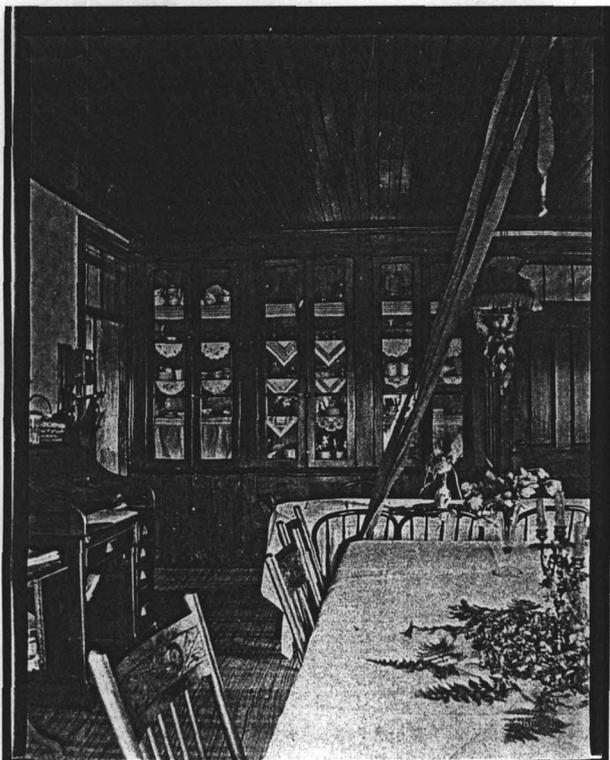
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CFN-259-1116

Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

# PORTER-RHYNSBURGER HOUSE

CIRCA 1900



The dining room (left) and the library and living room (right) decorated for a party

Photograph courtesy Roger and Shirley Olson, Pella, Iowa.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 20

CFN-259-1116

Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

**SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Completed and first occupied in 1855 by Joseph Porter and subsequently expanded in 1870 by C. and R. Rhynsburger, the Porter-Rhynsburger House is locally significant, under National Register Criterion C, as one of a small handful of extant brick buildings erected by Pella's first generation of settlers. The Porter-Rhynsburger House calls attention to the influence of vernacular building practices transplanted by Dutch settlers from their homeland in the Netherlands to Pella.

The period of significance, under Criterion C, is 1855 and 1870, the time when the building was constructed.

The property contains one contributing resource for this nomination--the house--classified as a building, and one noncontributing resource--the garage--also classified as a building.

**BACKGROUND**

Joseph Porter (b. 1818) was one of 76 settlers already in Lake Prairie and adjoining townships in Marion County, Iowa, when Hollanders under Domine Scholte began to arrive in 1847. (Donnel: 18-19) According to one local history, Porter:

was born in Kent county, Delaware, August 10, 1818, and spent his youth on a farm with his father until nineteen years of age. Then walked to Lafayette, Ind., a distance of 900 miles, and made the trip in twenty-six days. [Sic.] In 1847 he emigrated to this county and purchased a claim and engaged in farming for about five years, when he moved to Pella and built a sawmill and brought the first steam engine into Marion county. This mill was located on the lot now occupied by the C. Rhynsburger home. After two years he built another sawmill on East Third street, about two blocks east of where the Washington mill was formerly located. Here he also added a flour mill to his establishment. In 1857 he traded his mills to John B. Hamilton for part of the land which was afterwards well known as the Porterville farm. Here he lived for many years and became known as one of Marion county's most progressive and successful farmers and stock raisers. He married Miss Mary A. Chezum, December 31, 1840. By this union there were thirteen children, four of whom died in early infancy. The others were James, Elisabeth (Mrs. Wm. Millison), Marion, Nancy (Mrs. N. Wray), William, Charles, Mary F. and Joseph F. (twins), and Margaret Catherine. Mr. Porter owned the first reaper in the county and also operated one of the first threshing machines. (*Souvenir History of Pella, Iowa*: 23)

C. Rhynsburger (b. 1839) was born in the Netherlands, where he lived until emigrating to Marion County in 1855. Following several years of farming, Rhynsburger commenced a mercantile business in Pella in 1861, an occupation, which he pursued throughout a successful career in that endeavor. Rhynsburger and R. Vander Ley united in marriage in 1863, and the union bore eight children. (*Souvenir History of Pella, Iowa*: 187)

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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

Rhynsburger was proud of his Dutch heritage. In 1899, he published an article in a local newspaper entitled:

SHE LEADS THE WORLD  
HOLLAND, AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THE WORLD'S HISTORY  
C. RHYNSBURGER CONTRIBUTES AN ARTICLE WHICH SHOULD BE WIDELY READ AND UPON A SUBJECT OF  
WHICH HE IS A MASTER.

*(Pella Advertiser, August 17, 1899, p. 8, c. 1-3)*

This newspaper article demonstrates Rhynsburger's interest and pride in Dutch history and its place in American history. It also discusses the foreign affairs of the Netherlands in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and calls attention to efforts to establish a world court at The Hague at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Given Rhynsburger's interest in the history of his native land, it stands to reason that he consciously sought expression of its cultural heritage in the design of his home in Pella.

The laconic use of initials for the Rhynsburgers' first names--C. and R.--is of historic usage and employed, for that reason, as one of the property's common names.

### ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

An inclusive typology of Dutch residential building characteristics in Pella has yet to be developed. Architectural historians frequently note brick houses in the community, which exhibit ethnic building characteristics of the Netherlands. The B. H. and J. H. H. Van Spanckeren Row Houses (NRHP, 505 and 507 Franklin Street) and the Willem Van Asch House-Huibert DeBooy Commercial Room (NRHP, 1105, 1107 and 1109 West Washington Street), provide examples and were studied in 1987 and 1989. They were nominated because of their distinctive building techniques.

This nomination seeks to expand the understanding of early brick residences in Pella by introducing building shape as a diagnostic tool to analyze them. This same typology is included in the National Register nomination of the Hendrik J. and Wilhelmina H. Van Den Berg Cottage in Pella.

At least six building shapes are associated with early brick residences in Pella.

1. Side-gabled Rectangle: 1-story.

The facade features five bays with a central doorway flanked by two windows on either side covered with a side-gabled roof. This is the simplest type of brick residence in Pella. A good, albeit nonextant, example stood into the 1900s on

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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

the southwest corner of Main and Independence Streets. Variations of Type 1 include examples with rear wings.

2. Side-gabled Rectangle: 1-1/2 story.

The facade features five bays with a central doorway flanked by two windows on either side covered with a side-gabled roof. Variations of Type 2 include examples with rear wings. The Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage (NRHP, 925 Broadway Street) is representative of Type 2.

3. Side-gabled Rectangle: 2-story

Like Type 1 but with a full-height second floor. Variations of Type 2 include examples with a rear wing covered by a shed roof and examples with a rear wing covered by an extension of the main roof. The Willem Van Asch House (NRHP, 1109 West Washington Street) and the Huibert DeBooy Commercial Room (NRHP, 1105 West Washington Street) are representative.

4. Gable-end Facade: Simple

These residences feature gable-ended facades three bays wide. The entry door is asymmetrically located, either on the left or right side of the facade. These houses usually are 1-1/2 stories. An outstanding example at 506 Franklin Street was razed in 1989. Another remains extant at 1103 West Washington Street.

5. Gable-end Facade: Compound

These residences feature gable-ended facades (like Type 4) plus a side wing of equal height to the main block. A gable roof covers the wing and ties into the roof of the main block at right angles. Type 5 residences are rare in Pella. The Porter-Rhynsburger House is one example.

6. Row House

A series of attached, Type 2 residences. Always rare as a residential type in Pella, their incidence of survival has further limited them. The B. H. and J. H. H. Van Spanckeren Row Houses (NRHP, 505 and 507 Franklin Street) remain the best surviving examples in the community.

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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

**ARCHITECTURE**

Introduction

The Porter-Rhynsburger House is one of a small handful of extant brick buildings erected by Pella's early settlers that show the influence of the vernacular building practices transferred to Pella from the Netherlands. The house illustrates this influence in its employment of stone quoins; an outside door to the second floor; a steeply pitched, complex roof; and built-in cupboards inside the house. The house was constructed in a gable-end façade configuration, a Type 5 shape as outlined in the architectural typology above.

Although the Porter-Rhynsburger House was built for Joseph Porter, a native-born American, Dutch builders--the masons and carpenters in the community at the time--undoubtedly constructed it. The house was a showplace residence in Pella, suitable for Porter, one of the community's most prominent entrepreneurs and the owner of a sawmill and a flour mill.

Quoins

The use of quoins adds considerable architectural richness to the Porter-Rhynsburger House. These quoins, located on the northwest and southwest corners of the main block and the southwest corner of the wing, consist of stone laid in alternating courses of single- and double-width blocks.

The buff-colored stone of the quoins provides an appealing contrast to soft-red colored brick of the walls. This is further accented by the contrast between the planar look of the brick walls and the serrated look of the quoins. The quoins also provide a foil for the roof. They visually keep the steeply downward-jutting angles of the gables over the south wing in check against gravity.

Although it cannot be claimed that the employment of quoins is restricted to Dutch design, their use for decorative purposes is closely associated with that country, and their extensive use in the Porter-Rhynsburger House calls attention to this tradition. Indeed, the Porter-Rhynsburger House resembles in this respect Washington Irving's home "Sunnyside," built in 1832 on the Hudson River at Tarrytown, New York. Irving admired its richly textured walls, little nooks and crannies, and steeply pitched roofs, and likened the building to Knickerbocker architecture in old New York.

Outside Door to Second Floor

The outside door on the second floor of the west façade calls attention to a common Dutch building practice. The small rooms and steep staircases of Dutch homes limited the movement of household goods to and from their upper floors. To solve this problem, the Dutch often constructed outside doors to upper floors so that furniture could be transported without using the stairs. The Porter-Rhynsburger

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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

House calls attention to this practice. An historic photograph of the house shows how this door looked in 1870. (See Continuation Sheet 7-17.)

Cabinetwork

The interior of the Porter-Rhynsburger House features an extensive use of built-in cupboards in the dining room. The Rhynsburgers installed this cabinetry, when they improved the house in 1870. A built-in cupboard on the west wall of the dining room could also be accessed from the living room, and a built-in cupboard on the north wall of the dining room could also be accessed from the kitchen. (See Continuation Sheet 7-19) The presence of these built-ins calls attention to the Rhynsburgers' desire to conserve space and lend convenience to their home, customs they brought with them from their homeland. Such extensive built-in cupboards were unusual for a single-family residence in Iowa at the time.

Gable-end Façade: Compound

The Porter-Rhynsburger House is a fine example of a dwelling in Pella with a gable-end façade. Classified as a Type 5 dwelling in the typology presented above, the house remains one of the few extant examples of this architectural shape in the community today. This shape provides opportunities for a spacious interior (which the building's appearance belies from the street) and for a picturesque architectural treatment of the exterior, as described above.

The Type 5 shape, as devised for the Porter-Rhynsburger, allows for interior flexibility, convenience, and privacy. The front portion of the main block contains an entry hall on the south and a room (probably used by the Rhynsburgers as a bedroom) on the north. The wing and rear portion of the main block contain one room on the north and one room on the south. Large, folding doors separate these two rooms. These doors are tantamount to a folding wall. They run from the floor to the ceiling and from wall to wall. When these doors are open, they offer a space of more than 800 square feet. When they are closed, they render privacy to each room. The entry hall also accesses the south room and adds, as needed, further circulation or privacy to the floor plan. While it is not unusual for mainline residential architecture in Iowa during this period to feature large, double doors to connect principle rooms, the use of a folding wall to connect them is quite unusual. This design likely relates to traditional Dutch building practices. Further research is needed to confirm or contradict this claim.

Tie Rods

The Porter-Rhynsburger House is of architectural interest and perhaps significance because of its apparent use of tie rods for structural support. Two star-shaped tie rod heads are situated on the west façade of the main block between windows on its first and second floors. Their purpose is to prevent the exterior wall of the house from spreading outward at this point of weakness.

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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

Traditional Dutch building practices in Pella usually employ beam anchors to this end. A few brick buildings remain in Pella with their original beam anchors. Beam anchors consist of vertical strips of metal fastened by pins into a building's internal framing to help hold the building together. Tie rods, in contrast, run the length of the building from one wall to the other. Tie rods and beam anchors serve the same purpose but come from different building traditions.

The use of tie rods in the Porter-Rhynsburger House presents a mystery. One would expect to see beam anchors on an early building such as this in the community, yet an 1870 historic photograph of the building pictures star-shaped heads for tie rods already in place. (See Continuation Sheet 7-17.) Further survey work in Pella might uncover the solution to this mystery.

**REPRESENTATION IN PREVIOUS CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEYS**

In 1974 Stephen J. Stimmel conducted a windshield survey of Pella. Buildings were photographed, located on a city map, given an inventory number, and an Iowa Site Inventory form was completed. In 1978 the Central Iowa Regional Association of Local Governments (CIRALG) conducted a reconnaissance survey of Marion County, Iowa, including the City of Pella. This survey identified the Porter-Rhynsburger House, gave it inventory number 63-036-205, and evaluated it as a Category 1 resource. Category 1 was restricted to resources in Pella with highest potential for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The CIRALG survey identified 19 resources in Category 1.

In 1989 William C. Page, Public Historian of the Dunbar/Jones Partnership, conducted an intensive historical and architectural survey of the central business district in Pella. Although this survey was restricted to commercial buildings and surveyed no residential properties, the survey did evaluate the C. Rhynsburger Produce House (614 Franklin Street). Built in 1871, this highly important resource shows vernacular Dutch building characteristics, namely in its quoinwork and 2/2/2 triple-hung window sash. The building relates to the Porter-Rhynsburger House because both show concern and interest in quoinwork and window configurations.

**POTENTIAL FOR HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY**

The site's potential for archaeological significance is, as yet, unevaluated. Historical archaeological investigations may uncover traces of previous construction on the site--such as privies or other nonextant outbuildings.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND REGISTRATION**

As more is learned about early residential architecture in Pella, the typology developed for this nomination can be used to compare the Porter-Rhynsburger House with other contemporary examples.

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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

Further research might provide additional documentation concerning the construction dates of the Porter-Rhynsburger House. Joseph Porter bought the land on which the house stands from Henry P. Scholte and M. M. E. Scholte, his wife, in 1855. The price of this property was "\$1.00 and the building of a steam saw mill in Pella" (Warranty Deed dated February 24, 1855). Porter made good his bargain, as recounted in local histories (Donnel: 18-19), and constructed the promised sawmill as well as a brick house. Another warranty deed dated July 18, 1863 proves it. This instrument transferred the title to the property in 1863 to John Welch "to-wit: Lot 3 (and other lots) in Block 61 together with the steam saw mill, the Brickhouse and all further appurtenances thereto belonging upon said lots" (Warranty Deed dated July 18, 1863). Price for this transaction was \$3,750.00, according to the deed. In 1869, C. Rhynsburger purchased the brick house.

Oral tradition dates the year of the building's construction to 1855. This is according to Martha Lautenbach, a visitor to and admirer of the house over a period of many years. (Shirley Olson) Mrs. Lautenbach is likely to have received this information from the Rhynsburger Sisters, who lived there.

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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**PRIMARY**

*History of Marion County, Iowa*

1912 Chicago; The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co. Vol. I; pp. 155-56. Vol. II (biographical); pp. 386-387; 393-394.

*Pella Advertiser*

1899 "SHE LEADS THE WORLD/HOLLAND, AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THE WORLD'S HISTORY/C. RHYSBURGER CONTRIBUTES AN ARTICLE WHICH SHOULD BE WIDELY READ AND UPON A SUBJECT OF WHICH HE IS A MASTER." Newspaper article dated August 17, 1899; p. 8, c. 1-3.

*Souvenir History of Pella, Iowa*

1922 The Booster Press; Pella, Iowa. Biographical sketch of Rhynsburger including photographic portrait, page 187, and photograph of his commercial building at 614 Franklin Street after 1872 fire which destroyed buildings west of it, page 142.

**SECONDARY**

Central Iowa Regional Association of Local Governments (CIRALG)

1978 Cultural Resources Surveys for the State Historical Society of Iowa. "Architectural Survey Data Form." Evaluates Rhynsburger House as significant and eligible for nomination to National Register of Historic Places.

Franklin, Wayne

1987 Telephone conversation with William C. Page; February 1987. Professor Franklin, of the University of Iowa's English Department & American Studies, has studied and lectured on Pella architecture.

Gaass, Peter G.

1964 Letter of correspondence from Gaass & Gaass, attorneys at law, to Martha Lautenbach commenting on examination of property's abstract of title. July 22, 1954.

Marvel, James K.

1982 Letter of correspondence from Marvel Law Office to Mr. and Mrs. Roger Olson commenting on examination of property's abstract of title. August 2, 1982.

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Page, William C.

1989 "The Upbuilding of Pella's Town Center as a Commercial Node 1847-1941, (Reconnaissance/Intensive Architectural Surveys in the City of Pella, Iowa)." Report prepared for Community Development Committee of Pella City Council; October 1989; 276 pages.

Iowa Site Inventory Form #14, C. Rhynsburger Produce House at 614 Franklin Street, discusses this commercial building, an early and key landmark in Pella's architecture built by Mr. Rhynsburger in 1871 to house his mercantile business. This commercial house coupled with Rhynsburger's residence clearly demonstrate the man's interest in architecture and pride in his Dutch origins.

Stimmel, Stephen J.

1974 "Iowa Site Inventory Form." Community Programs Bureau of the State Historical Society of Iowa.

Shank, Wesley I.

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1979 *The Iowa Catalog, Historic American Buildings Survey*. Iowa City; University of Iowa Press. *Passim*..

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Yerbury, F R, editor

1925 *Old Domestic Architecture of Holland*. London; The Architectural Press; 1924; pp. ix-xv.

**MAPS**

"Bird's Eye View of Pella, Marion County, Iowa, 1869;" Chicago; Chicago Lithographing Company. "Drawn by Augustus Koch." Pictures Porter-Rhynsburger House in a view looking northeast.

This view is notable because it is the earliest known image of the building. It pictures the house without the later bay windows and east addition and shows that the building as early as 1869 did

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not have a porch on the west elevation of the south wing. There are no outbuildings shown associated with the house. Churches are situated in the neighborhood near the house.

Sanborn (Fire Insurance) Map Company; New York.

December 1883

Buildings adjacent to Central Park are mapped. Other sections of city (including Rhynsburger neighborhood) are unmapped.

June 1888

Block 61 is mapped without drawings of buildings but with the following information about the west side of the block: "2 frame and 1 brick dwelling."

November 1895

Block 61 is mapped without drawings of buildings but with the following information about the west side of the block: "1 frame dwelling, 1 brick dwelling, 1 brick barn"(?).

Map #2 shows "Bousquet and Rhynsburger Creamery & Egg Packing building located in the southwest quarter of Block 46, Original Town of Pella. Buildings include an ice house/box making building, poultry house, and a churning building.

October 1911

Drawing of Block 61 shows "807" Broadway with two sets of bay windows but without rear addition. South wall of the house appears to straddle the south line of Lot 1. Bay windows appear to be situated in Lot 2. A 1-story, frame outbuilding stands east near the rear of Lot 2. Another 1-story, frame outbuilding is situated in Lot 3.

Lots 6 and 7 of Block 48 to the north where Pella High School will build are unoccupied.

January 1931

Drawing of Block 61 shows "807/512" Broadway. Lot 2 has been subdivided with a 2-story frame dwelling (514-516 Broadway) and 1-story, frame garage situated in north portion. Balance of Lot 2 is without buildings or structures.

Lot 3 has also been subdivided. A 2-story, brick dwelling (508-510 Broadway) and a 1-story brick garage occupy a considerable portion of this subdivision.

Pella High School occupies Lots 6 and 7 of Block 48 to the north.

January 1931-Update (date of update unknown)

Same configuration of lots and buildings as indicated above on the January 1931 map. Pella High School and Third Reformed Church to north show big additions..

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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

United States Geological Survey; Pella Quadrangle; 1976.

**ORAL HISTORY**

Lautenbach, Martha with William C. Page, March 3, 1990, in her Pella home. Mrs. Lautenbach was a longtime resident of the Pella area, spoke Dutch, and formerly owned the Porter-Rhynsburger House. She was well acquainted with Cornelia E. and Amelia H. Rhynsburger, daughters of C. Rhynsburger. Cornelia continued to live in the family home until her death in the 1960s. Cornelia gave Mrs. Lautenbach historic photographs of the Porter-Rhynsburger House when Lautenbach purchased the building in 1964. Lautenbach subsequently passed them on to Roger G. and Shirley K. Olson when they purchased the property in 1982.

A partial transcription of this interview follows:

“Cornelia H. Rhynsburger and her twin sister Amelia E. Rhynsburger lived in the house. My husband, Bob, and I often called there. They had antiques and Bob bought the house from them. They were hard up. Bob said, ‘Why don’t you sell us this house. Live here as long as you live.’ This was Bob’s idea. He felt sorry for them, not to be able to live there. Bob died in 1953. He and Aunt Maria Lautenbach owned Lautenbach property in the country. I bought out Maria’s part of the farm. Cornelia said (Amelia had died by then) that if Martha would buy the house, Cornelia was going to the Manor [a retirement home in Pella]. I bought it for \$14,000. It was worth more.

“David Chrichton, recently died (a professor at Central College, lived in the house and had lived there for years. So, I let him continue to live there. I did some structural work, etc. The owners of a café in Pella named Marie and Mick had a fire in their café. They lived there until they rebuilt the coffee shop. After they left, I could start doing things to the house. Leonora Scholte Heddinga said the Olsons (especially Mrs.) wanted to know who owned the house. The Olsons bought the house from me on July 15, 1982. We signed the contract on July 2, 1982.

“Cornelia H. Rhynsburger was the younger of the two daughters. Their father enlarged the home for his growing family. Porter built a steam saw mill on the property and built the front part of the house. Rhynsburger started out farming in the Pella area and then went into mercantile business. After he bought the house, he enlarged the house and built the two south bays.

“The antique photos of the house came to me from Cornelia Rhynsburger. I gave them to the Olsons.”

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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The South Half of Lot Two (2) and the North Thirty (30) feet of Lot Three (3), all in Block Sixty-one (61) in the Original Town of Pella, Iowa.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

Contains all land associated with the historic resource today, the earlier configuration of the land--all of Lot 2 and Lot 3--having been reduced in size and improved with other single-family dwellings.

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Porter-Rhynsburger House, Marion County, Iowa.

**LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS**

1. Porter-Rhynsburger House  
514 Broadway Street  
Pella, IA 50219  
Looking east  
William C. Page, Photographer  
June 12, 2002
  
2. Porter-Rhynsburger House  
514 Broadway Street  
Pella, IA 50219  
Looking northeast  
William C. Page, Photographer  
June 12, 2002
  
3. Porter-Rhynsburger House  
514 Broadway Street  
Pella, IA 50219  
Looking west  
William C. Page, Photographer  
June 12, 2002