



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" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Fort Madison High School

other names/site number Fort Madison Junior High School, Fort Madison Middle School

2. Location

street & number 1812 Avenue F not for publication N/A  
city or town Fort Madison vicinity N/A  
state Iowa code IA county Lee code 111 zip code 52627

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant    nationally    statewide X locally. (    See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Steve King 04 DEC 2014  
Signature of certifying official Date  
State Historical Society of Iowa  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

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

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:  
X 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 W. Beall 1-21-15  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

Fort Madison High School  
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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

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

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing    Noncontributing

- |              |                         |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| <u>  1  </u> | <u>  2  </u> buildings  |
| <u>    </u>  | <u>    </u> sites       |
| <u>    </u>  | <u>  1  </u> structures |
| <u>    </u>  | <u>    </u> objects     |
| <u>  1  </u> | <u>  3  </u> 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)

EDUCATION/school  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> & 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS /  
  Late Gothic Revival  

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation   STONE    
roof   SYNTHETICS/Rubber    
\_\_\_\_\_  
walls   BRICK    
  STONE    
\_\_\_\_\_  
other     
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

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**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 3 acres

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

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing		
1	15	641095	4499044	3	15	641223	4498951
2	15	641223	4499045	4	15	641094	4498947

See continuation sheet.

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 Jan Olive Full, Historian  
organization Tallgrass Historians LC date May 2014

street & number 2460 S. Riverside Drive telephone 319.354.6722

city or town Iowa City state IA zip code 52246

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

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

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

**Property Owner**

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

name Todd Schneider / School House Apartments, LLC

street & number 1944 303<sup>rd</sup> Ave. telephone 319-470-8711

city or town Fort Madison state IA zip code 52627

=====  
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).  
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.



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## 7. Description

### *Summary Paragraph*

Constructed and put into service in 1923, the Fort Madison High School is located in the center of Fort Madison, a long narrow town lying along the west bank of the Mississippi River, in northern Lee County, Iowa. This county of about 35,000 persons, in far southeastern Iowa, is unique in the state because it has two county seats, Fort Madison in the north-central area and Keokuk in the far southern foot of the county. Neither is geographically central in the county, also a relatively unusual circumstance for Iowa county seats. The Mississippi River flows southwesterly past Fort Madison on its generally southern course toward the Gulf of Mexico. The school is about 10 blocks west of the city's main retail shopping district along Avenue G. Its neighborhood is an older residential area, primarily of modest story-and-a-half frame dwellings from the early twentieth century, though one large brick Queen Anne house (1899) sits diagonally through the intersection to the northeast of the school. Off the southeast corner of the school's block, are the remnants of a small commercial node consisting of an early-twentieth century store building and a frame grocery building from the turn of the century. The school's property occupies a full city block, bordered on the north by Avenue F, on the south by Avenue G, 19<sup>th</sup> Street on the west, and 18<sup>th</sup> Street/IA 103<sup>rd</sup> on the east. Within this city block, the school sits toward the eastern end, its prominent front entrance facing east toward the historic heart of the city. Along the north side of the school building are two "temporary" class room buildings from the 1970s (noncontributing). A hard-surfaced tennis court from the same time period is located at the far northwest corner of the school's block (noncontributing). Paved parking lots cover the ground immediately around the tennis courts and there are sidewalk approaches to the school on the south side, one of which swings around to the east side's entrance pavement and stairways. The rest of the block is in grassy lawn with a few mature evergreens along the west and north sides. A single large deciduous tree sits among the evergreens on the west side. Perimeter sidewalks around this block are public and not a part of the school's parcel. The main footprint of the three-story school building is square in shape, approximately 76 by 150 feet. A narrower, two-story wing and then a one-story boiler wing telescope from the rear, west elevation of the main building. A portion of these rear wings is original, and there are two additions, one in place by 1946 and another built in 1959. The Gothic Revival-styled school building is made primarily of reinforced concrete, clad on the exterior with reddish-brown brick and heavily detailed in stone trim, which includes belt courses, window sills, and, along the roofline, crenulations, crockets, quatrefoil panels, elaborate heraldic panels, and signage panels. Windows throughout were changed out sometime between the 1970s and 1990s for smaller white-metal sashes with large aqua-colored solid panels above. Vacant and unused as a school building since 2012, the interior is intact as it was last used. Surfaces generally are original, with plaster walls, terrazzo flooring and wood flooring, and wood trim, though some floors have been carpeted and some wood trim has been painted, especially in the class rooms.

### *Exterior: Primary East Facade*

The primary façade is symmetrical and balanced on either side of the prominent front entrance at the center, which entrance is reached from the sidewalk by two wide flights of concrete steps spaced between short concrete piers. The flat terrace surface separating the flights is concrete also. At each facade corner, the roofline is slightly higher and the wall under this raised roof protrudes out slightly to form a solid looking end block to the massive building. Walls are clad in a reddish brown brick trimmed with stone details and rest on a stone foundation. The main entrance block also projects above the rest of the roofline and is elaborate both in design and detail. The front doors (a central double door flanked by singles) are located within an arched stone portal and buttressed on the sides by "barbicans," a defensive tower-like detail traditionally found on the outer wall of a castle. The stone panels above the doorway arch bear a repeating image suggestive of a shield, a common centerpiece of heraldry symbolism. Over this impressive main entrance, the barbicans continue in brick to the roofline to become "watchtowers," though the crenellations at the top are now covered by metal caps. Above the ground-floor portal—between these barbicans—are three second-floor windows and above those is a large stone sign panel with the words "High School" (in Old English font) in the center flanked by end panels containing another shield symbol inset within tracery. Three more windows are above the signage at the third story level. Above those are the crowning details to the main entrance block: stone

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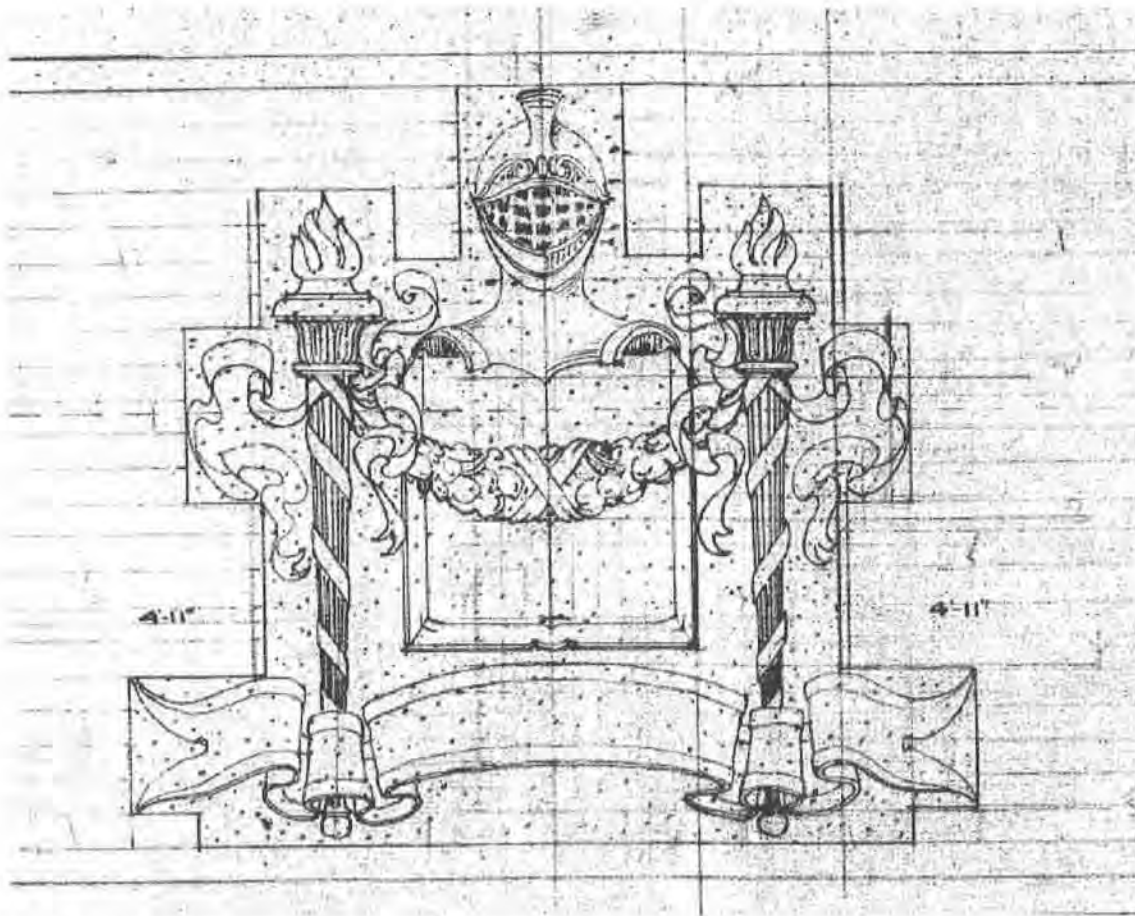
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tracery panels stretching between the barbicans (which at this level are a mix of brick and stone quoining and quatrefoils), and finally a central brick and stone pediment with the carved portraiture in bas-relief of knight's armor within an oval frame decorated by curled banners below and to the side. Two tall roofline finials that suggest crockets (or banner standards, or perhaps plumes) terminate the roofline on either side of the knight's image.

Window openings on either side of this grand main entrance block, on all three floors, alternate between wide openings and single openings. All have stone sills and flat headers. The wide window openings originally held three double-hung, divided light sashes but now hold two of the newer windows and aqua panels. There are eight openings for windows on each side of the main entrance block. In between stories are thin stone beltcourses between the first and second stories and between the top of the third story and the parapeted roofline. At the roofline, to each side of the entrance block, is a decorative stone balustrade and three additional, slightly smaller, knight-in-armor motifs. In this case the knight has torches on either side, and banners below it (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1** Detail from 1922 plan sheet showing heraldry symbolism at the façade's roofline parapet. Just under the armored helmet, is what was described in the newspaper as an "open book motif, symbol of learning." By August, 1923, as the workers sped the building toward completion, the "laurel wreath" across this "open book" was eliminated, perhaps for cost reasons. *Evening Democrat*, 8/17/1923.

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*South Side Elevation*

This elevation is divided into three vertical sections, with an offset central section (to the east) that is slightly raised and slightly bumped forward from the plane of the rest of the side wall. The entrance to the building from this south elevation is just west of the raised central section and, while more modest than the front portal, contains an impressive secondary entranceway, consisting of a square stone doorway frame flanked by stone and brick buttresses, over which is a brick pediment with a stone heraldic panel. A small minor doorway is located on the ground floor, near the rear corner. The stone foundation and beltcourses seen on the façade wrap around and continue along this side wall. Windows are the same replacement type with aqua panels as seen on the façade. There are 13 window openings along this side on each floor, except at ground level where one large central window has been bricked in with slightly lighter colored bricks (this newer infilled brick also has a date block reading "1922" but this clearly is not the original location for this feature). The window pattern groups the larger openings together to illuminate the class rooms inside while the single window openings are used often to light up interior stairwells. Other single windows simply finish out the fenestration pattern the architect sought to achieve. At the roofline of the central section are three more decorative balustrades and two more torched knight panels (see Fig. 1).

*North Side Elevation*

The north side appears identical to the south side, with the exception that there is no minor single doorway entrance near the rear corner. Here instead is another single window. Northside windows on the two later rear additions (refer to their descriptions below) are white-metal-sash with aqua solid panels. The two temporary class rooms have been placed near this side wall of the school. They are separated from the school building by several yards. One-story in height, these frame buildings have shallow gabled roofs facing east and west with entrances at one of the gabled end walls and small windows along the side walls.

*West Rear Elevation*

The rear wall footprint of the overall building is irregular because of later additions. The ground floor and second levels of the original three-story building are obscured by these additions and the one original rear boiler wing. The third-story windows of the main building are reduced in size just like the other elevations, but there are at least six or seven smaller windows near the center of the wall that have been infilled with newer brick (these related to the upper level of the auditorium inside). Originally, a small two-story wing and the narrow one-story boiler wing telescoped off the back of the three-story building. The boiler chimney's tall brick stack is still extant, protruding upward from the narrow boiler wing. By 1946, Sanborn fire insurance maps indicate the boiler wing had been more than doubled in size by the construction of an equally long but wider concrete block addition attached to the north side of the boiler wing. Another 1-story square concrete block addition had been constructed by this time to fill the space between the two-story rear original wing and the new boiler wing addition. This northwest area of the school was again expanded in 1959 by a two-room addition. Plans for this work bear the label "Karl Keefer Associates, Des Moines" but nothing was discovered about this firm. Finally, toward the south end of the west rear wall is an exterior stair enclosure that was added around 2008 because of code requirements. It has a brick base and metal or wood-clad upper stories.

The far west wall of the boiler room and its c. 1946 expansion has large openings, one, toward the south corner is the original drive doorway into the boiler room. It has a wooden overhead door with small windows. A smaller overhead door in the center of the wall provides entry into the c. 1946 addition, but has a newer metal door. Next to that is a large opening that is infilled with aqua paneling and a door with a window. Finally, toward the north corner of the one-story boiler room addition is a large window opening also infilled with aqua paneling.



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*Interior: Generally*

The interior floor plan of the three-story main building is very clever. The remarkable feature of the building is an enormous 1200-seat *central* auditorium combined with a gymnasium floor located behind the stage proscenium. This central space, with a metal truss system supporting its roof, occupies all three floors. The ground floor has seating and the stage/gymnasium; the balcony, supported by concrete columns, occupies about a third of the second level; the truss roof structure the third level. Class rooms are then wrapped around three sides of this auditorium – north, east, and south. Without the auditorium, the school would be an alphabet school in a U shape, with the main entrance at the center of the base. Perhaps one of the most ingenious (and functional) features of the overall school plan is the use of light courts or light wells to illuminate the interior hallways and the central auditorium, which otherwise would have no natural daylight (Fig. 2). Open to the sky, there is one light court on either side of the auditorium's long north and south sides. Since class rooms are arranged around the perimeter of the U, interior hallways fill the space between the central auditorium and the perimeter class rooms. The light courts provide natural daylight for these hallways.



THE AUDITORIUM

**Figure 2** The 1924 school yearbook contained this view of the auditorium from the stage behind the proscenium. Note the basketball lines painted on the wooden floor for gymnasium purposes. The light court windows and the natural daylight they provided are clearly evident in this photograph. Currently the windows are painted. Collection of Todd Schneider.

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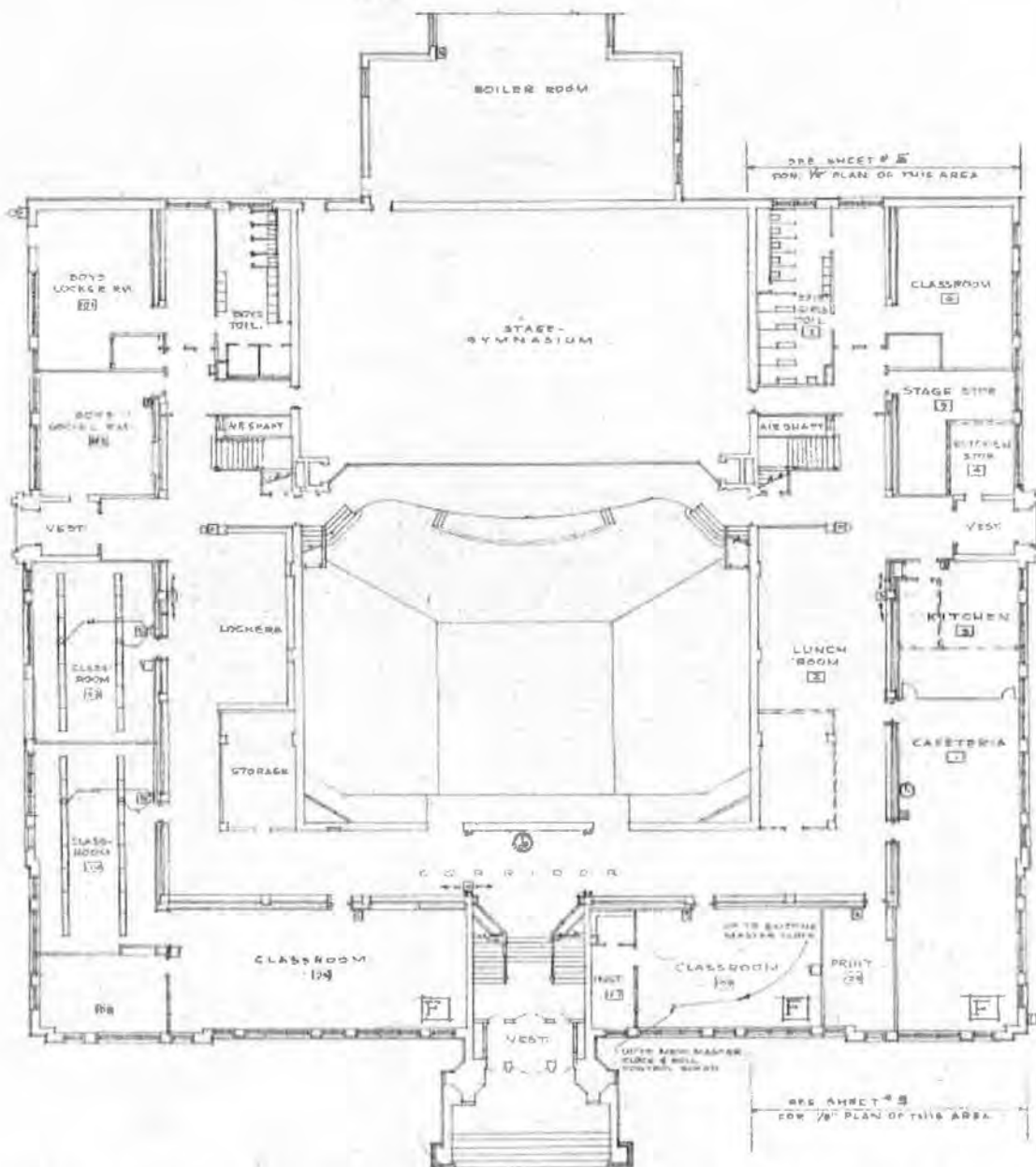
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*Ground/First Floor Interior*

The school building has 56 major rooms, 26 of which are on the ground floor. This includes rooms both in the three-story portion and the rear wings. The plans below (Figs. 3-5) are from 1959 but the drafter used the room functions found on the original 1922 plans. Most of the rear one-story boiler room is not shown.



**Figure 3 FIRST FLOOR.** Room functions are those originally assigned in 1922. Collection of Todd Schneider.



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Walls on the ground level are plastered. Inside the front entrance the vestibule and stairwell have what appears to be pink Tennessee marble wainscoting. The flooring is gray terrazzo in the main hallways. Class rooms have tile or carpeted floors. Dark-stained wood trim is used for doors with overhead transoms, chair rails in the class rooms, and similar chair rails placed somewhat higher on the main hallway walls. Metal lockers are grouped together and inset within the walls of these main halls. The stairways to other floors are terrazzo covered concrete with black metal banisters with wooden top hand rails. These stairway railings have mortarboard newels. In addition to the plaster walls and carpeted floors, class rooms have dry-eraser "chalk" boards and florescent panel lighting at the ceiling. Some class rooms have built-in wooden storage cabinets. The original restrooms have the pink Tennessee marble stalls and wainscoting.

The interior of the auditorium has a polished concrete floor on the ground level that gently slants down toward the stage. Theater seating is bolted to the floor and there is a central aisle as well as side aisles. The seats and backs of these chairs are not original, though the framework bolted to the floor probably is. Concrete pillars are positioned toward the rear of the auditorium floor and support the balcony overhead. Stairways to the balcony are located on either side wall and rise up over the ground floor side aisles. Side doorways located at the base of these stairs provide exits near the stage. They are accessed by wooden stairs from the seating floor. The exit doors are at the same level as the stage.

The stage floor is polished wood and the front lip is slightly curved outward toward the seating. The stage floor is raised just enough so that those occupying the front row seats had to slightly tilt their heads upward. The view to the back of the stage, where the gymnasium floor is, probably was not very good from these low seats. On the stage floor, tall sliding wooden panels and hanging curtains separated the audience from the performers, speakers, and athletes. The gymnasium floor behind the curtains has basketball lines painted on it and a hoop high on the either side wall.

*Second Floor Interior*

The second floor of the school has 18 major rooms, including those in the two-story rear wing. The hallways are similar to the first floor, with plaster walls, terrazzo floors, and metal lockers. Class rooms have wood floors and some have slate chalk boards in addition to dry eraser boards. Class room doorways are wooden with privacy glass panels and overhead glass transoms. The same wooden chair rail trim seen in the first floor was repeated on this floor. The library in the southeast corner double room has more woodwork in the form of built-in book cases and fixed counters or freestanding half-bookcases. Entry to the library is via French doors with clear glass and there is a wide clear glass transom over the entry wall area. Original restrooms are finished in the same grayish pink marble as the lower floor.

The three French-door entrances to the auditorium's balcony are located in the hallway opposite the main staircase from the front entrance. These balcony entrances are marked by hallway ceiling beams resting on elaborate console brackets, empty wall niches, and a large clock that hangs over the central door into the balcony. The hallway walls outside the balcony have marble wainscoting. Balcony seating is also bolted to the concrete floor but here the seating is upholstered and the chair backs and seats may be original, though covered by newer fabric. Sidewall lamp sconces and ceiling fixtures are glass and metal and appear original. At the center rear wall of the balcony is an enclosed projection booth. Railings throughout the balcony are metal and painted in a dark tone.

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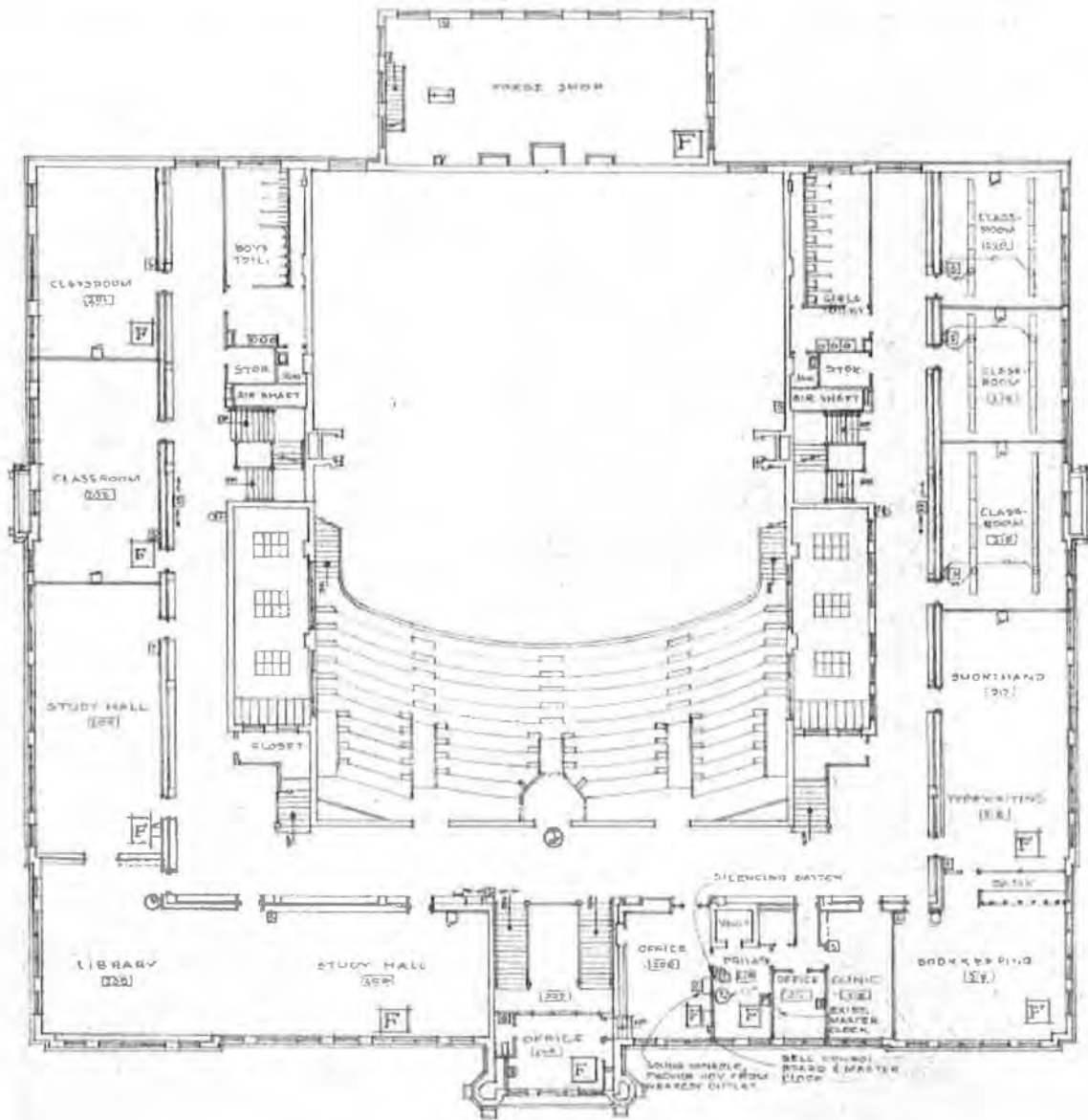


Figure 4 SECOND FLOOR. Room functions are those originally assigned in 1922. Collection of Todd Schneider.

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*Third Floor Interior*

The third floor has 12 class rooms, most of which are larger than the lower floors and originally earmarked for special functions, such as home economics, or science related laboratories for physics or chemistry study. Floors are carpeted or tiled except in the hallways where they are terrazzo. Because of their special functions, rooms typically have more built-in hanging and full height wood cabinets, bookcases, counters, under-counter cabinets and drawers, and, in some rooms, special laboratory wooden desks with stone (slate?) tops. The “domestic science” rooms still

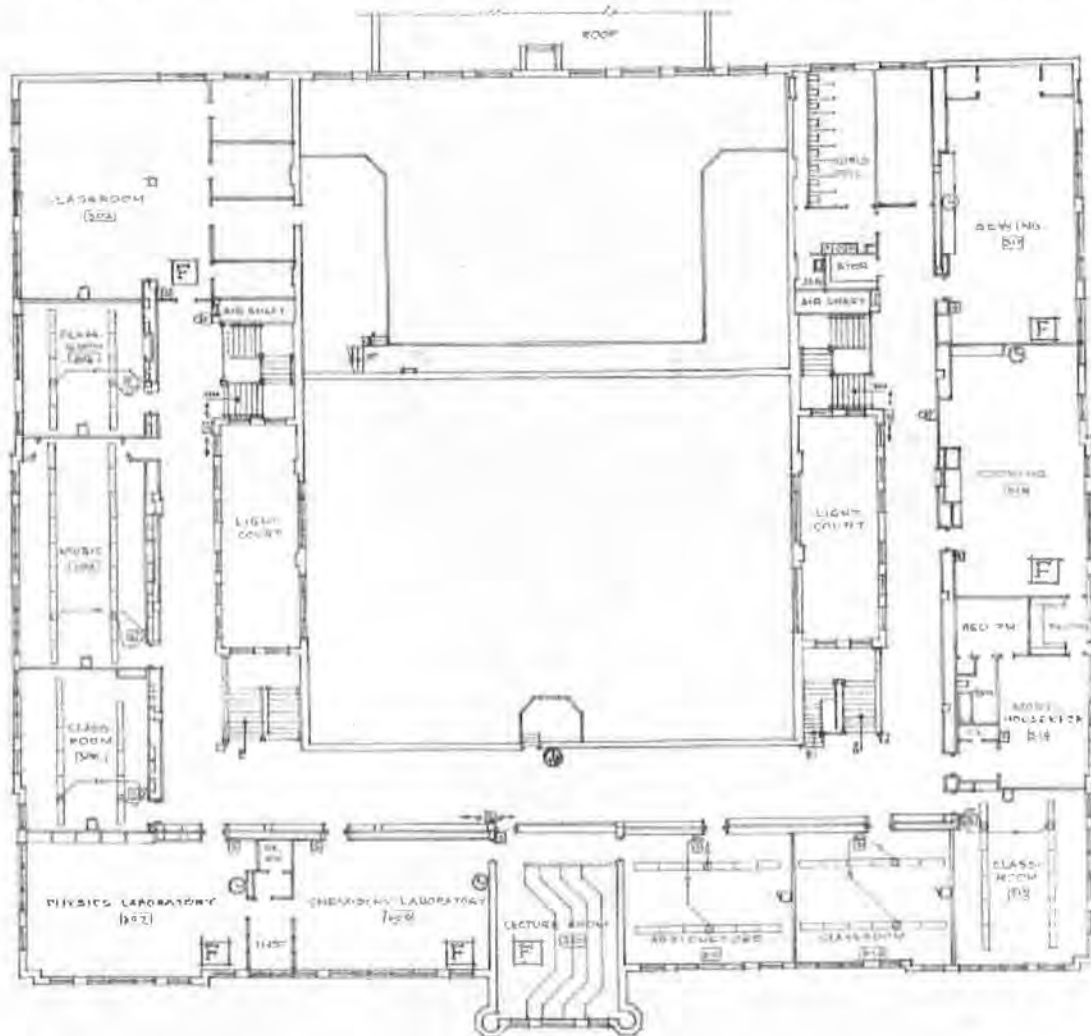


Figure 5 THIRD FLOOR. Room functions are those originally assigned in 1922. Collection of Todd Schneider.

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have their modern stoves and kitchen sinks. Doors into the class rooms are similar to those on lower floors, but some have clear glass in the doors and privacy glass in the overhead transoms. Main hallways have both inset metal lockers and metal lockers that are not built into the wall, suggesting, perhaps, the addition of student lockers over the years as the school's population grew.

*Integrity*

The building has good historic integrity inside and out. The most significant alteration is the window replacements, a very common mid- to late-twentieth century change for older Iowa schools as heating and lighting systems were upgraded. Despite these newer windows, the building's substantial size, scale, and detailing, within its residential neighborhood context, mean the "overall sense of past time and place is evident" (*National Register Bulletin: How to Complete the National Register Form 4*).

Comments on specific integrity aspects are as follows:

- (1) location: the building is in its original location;
- (2) design: the exterior is largely unchanged except for the window replacements noted above and the c. 1946 and 1959 rear additions. The interior maintains its original floor plan and most of its historic finishes. The floor plan design reflects the school functions;
- (3) setting: the surrounding residential neighborhood is largely the way it was when the school was put into service in 1923, with the exception of the absence of a small butcher and slaughterhouse located directly across the street to the east. The "H.J. Doering Butcher Shop and Slaughter House" (Sanborn fire insurance map from 1913) was probably a small one-person neighborhood operation and related to the commercial businesses at the intersection just to the southeast. Some form of the butcher shop lasted through 1946. A small hipped roof commercial building, which may be newer, and a concrete parking lot are there now. The rest of the neighborhood surrounding the school remains residential from the early twentieth century;
- (4) materials: the exterior materials are original to both the main building and to the later rear additions; interior finishes, including plaster walls, marbled surfaces, terrazzo flooring, and wood trim, doors, and cabinets are original;
- (5) workmanship: the workmanship employed in the building is best reflected in the skills needed to lay the brick and the decorative masonry, with the stone heraldic panels being quite notable;
- (6) feeling: the overall plan, vertical mass, and aesthetics of this Gothic-Revival-styled building produce the clear feeling of an early twentieth century Iowa high school;
- (7) association: the school's long service as the town's principal high school is directly related to the building's historic significance.

*Address Note:* While the street number "1800" appears on the front of the building, over the east entrance, its address is *not* 1800 18<sup>th</sup> Street. The current address used by the county assessor for this building is 1812 Avenue F.



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## 8. Narrative Statement of Significance

### *Summary Paragraph*

The Fort Madison High School, in Fort Madison, Iowa, is significant under Criteria A and C as the city's principal high school for several decades during much of its 89 years of educational service. It was the edifice through which most local and many rural students passed on their way toward graduation and adulthood, and which provided a large and easily accessible community venue for mixing Fort Madison's residents without regard to class or status. Modern in every sense of the word for its time, the school reflects the matured progressive ideals of efficient education and training for youth in the gendered roles of the twentieth century. From its specialized class rooms on the third floor to its large auditorium and gymnasium, the school building served as a well equipped institution for producing competent, capable men and women who were expected to rise in the middle class and contribute to society as productive citizens. The school is also significant as a modified "open plan" school building, planned under the principals of modern school architecture. Designed by the Kansas City, Missouri architectural firm of Owen, Payson & Carswell, the school's Gothic Revival (aka Collegiate Gothic) style reflects the influence of the "nation's preeminent school architect, William B. Ittner of St. Louis," and Ittner's preference for "Old English" architecture as a suitable style for public school buildings.<sup>1</sup> The period of significance runs from the building's placement into service in 1923 until 1964, the moving 50-year rule of the National Register program, which period includes all the high school years (1923-1958) most of the building's junior high/middle school years (1958-2012).

### *Progressive School Architecture in Iowa*

Similar to lightly settled regions throughout the nation in the nineteenth century, Iowa's school children were initially taught in buildings designed for other purposes, a private home or cabin, for example, or the upper floor over a store.<sup>2</sup> These facilities and their teachers were supported by private funds, through subscriptions paid by parents. Universal free education was neither available nor deemed a right of Iowa's children. With community support and state legislation however, free one-room rural schools<sup>3</sup> (all ages in one room) and urban primary schools (younger children in grades by age) became available very early, as authorized by state law in 1858.<sup>4</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, urban secondary high schools were common, especially in the state's larger towns.<sup>5</sup>

Late nineteenth-century school buildings in Iowa could be boxy, dark, and dank places to study (Fig. 6). Traditional urban schools were massive square buildings, often with bell towers and peaked roofs, that were filled with wasted space, had poor lighting and ventilation, and lacked insulation. This was true for school buildings even in large urban areas like Chicago.<sup>6</sup> Vertical in orientation, class rooms typically were arranged on the upper floors around a central hall with the bathrooms and utilities located in the basement. The only natural light the hallways received was from the endwall windows, and halls often were not heated or ventilated properly. Basements were damp, cold, and poorly vented also.

<sup>1</sup> Dale Allen Gyure, *The Chicago Schoolhouse: High School Architecture and Education Reform, 1856-2006* (Chicago: The Center for American Places at Columbia College Chicago, 2011), 102.

<sup>2</sup> Wayne E. Fuller, *One-Room Schools of the Middle West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1994), esp. Chap. 2, "Pioneer Schools," 7-12.

<sup>3</sup> One historian gives high praise for the state's one-room schools, saying "In much of America, particularly the rural schools of the Midwest and West... one-teacher schools were reasonably well supported and effective. Their graduates in some rural states, like Iowa, were among the most literate citizens in the nation." Andrew Gulliford, *America's Country Schools*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1996), 7.

<sup>4</sup> Clarence R. Aurner, *History of Education in Iowa*, vol. I (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1914), 50.

<sup>5</sup> Camilla Deiber and Peggy Beedle, *City Schools for Iowa* (Des Moines: State Historical Society of Iowa, 2002), 3, 5.

<sup>6</sup> Gyure, 16.

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The Progressive Era, from the 1890s to about 1920,<sup>7</sup> found educators advocating for reforms in these “unhealthy” late nineteenth century buildings. “Progressives believed that the great technological developments...that were underway in the United States had the potential to cause great material progress for citizens throughout the country...In the new system, elementary schools focused on the basics; and high school became a mandatory institution designed to ‘prepare the youth for entry into twentieth-century society on competitive terms.’”<sup>8</sup>



Independence High School Building.—Architect, Henry Nacott, Independence, Iowa.

**Figure 6** The Independence High School appears to fall into the category of traditional schoolhouses constructed with classrooms around central hallways, a form progressive educators sought to replace. Source: Frontispiece in *Suggestions and Plans for Iowa Schoolhouses and Grounds* (1916)

The Iowa Department of Public Instruction, created in 1913, was an outgrowth of this progressive reform impulse. Authorized in 1912 by the 35<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, department officials quickly set about to examine and improve the state’s schoolhouses. In 1915, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Albert M. Deyoe, issued a detailed guide with suggestions and recommendations for achieving a modern Iowa school building. While the guide evidenced concern for improving sanitation and acknowledged the need for specialized rooms including an auditorium and gymnasium – all good progressive steps toward the modern schoolhouse – the guide’s model plans did not actually vary much from the older traditional form of school building.

<sup>7</sup> The generally accepted bookend dates for the Progressive Era (1890-1920) do *not* mean progressive ideas simply dropped from sight in 1921, only that historians find other cultural trends and agents of change becoming stronger or more dominant after the 1910s.

<sup>8</sup> Deiber and Beedle, 5.

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The bulky traditional school building of the nineteenth century would finally give way, however, under the influence of a handful of innovative architects who became well known on a national level. John J. Donovan, Dwight Perkins, and William B. Ittner were “disciples of the city beautiful idea, and felt that architects should design a building so that it would enhance its surroundings” and believed that the architect should work closely with professional educators to design a workable school.<sup>9</sup> Their most innovative advancements for school architecture came in the changes they made to the building layout and basic form. Their modern schools had an “open plan, in an I, L, or U shape, with a main entrance that was the architectural focal point of the building.”<sup>10</sup> The designers of the Fort Madison High School adopted the open plan concept but, perhaps because of land or financial constraints, they cleverly modified it to accommodate the enormous combined auditorium/gymnasium without losing the natural daylight and ventilation, which by then was clearly viewed as essential to student well being.

*High School Building in Fort Madison*

Community interest in building a progressive new “modern” high school was strong in early 1922. Population had jumped by more than 35% in the decade between 1910 and 1920 (Fig. 7) and school officials believed the number of rural students enrolling in the city’s high school would be on the increase.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, the existing high school, built in 1890, was a brick and stone Romanesque edifice that could have been the model for the old, bulky school buildings so despised by progressives (Fig. 8).<sup>12</sup>

Early in the summer of 1922, the school board put before voters a request for bond authority to finance a new high school and, in what was described as an “overwhelming vote of more than four to one,” residents signaled their clear approval, giving the school board authority to issues bonds up to \$265,000.<sup>13</sup> Fort Madison’s strong support for a new high school was applauded by the editor of the influential *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, based in another southeast Iowa Mississippi River town not far north of Fort Madison. He wrote: “There is no small city in the middle west that has been attracting more favorable attention recently than our progressive little neighbor, Fort Madison... The time is always ripe for a city to show progress and push—provided the citizens have confidence in their city.”<sup>14</sup>

Armed with this show of confidence, the school board selected a site – a full city block – for the new school in a relatively established neighborhood of modest homes, some 10 blocks west of downtown and seven or eight blocks north of the city’s Santa Fe railroad yard.<sup>15</sup> At the time, Fort Madison was

<sup>9</sup> Deiber and Beedle, 12.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> [Fort Madison] *Evening Democrat*, 9/1/1922; 5/25/1923.

<sup>12</sup> Andy Andrews, President, North Lee County Historical Society, telephone interview with author, 5/23/2014.

<sup>13</sup> *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, 3/15/1922.

<sup>14</sup> *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, 3/16/1922.

<sup>15</sup> The Santa Fe Railroad arrived in Fort Madison in 1887 and the town became an important stop where trains took on fuel, food, and other needed supplies. The railroad also established repair shops in town to service engines, which attracted workers as permanent residents. Because of the Santa Fe’s penetration into southwestern states along the Mexico border, Mexican immigrants were among these permanent new workers. Neighborhoods called Shopton, Santa Fe Town, and Factoria came into existence during the 1910s and 1920s, located 10 or more blocks southwest of the Fort Madison High

Historical population		
Census	Pop.	%±
1850	1,509	—
1860	2,886	91.3%
1870	4,011	39.0%
1880	4,679	16.7%
1890	7,901	68.9%
1900	9,278	17.4%
1910	8,900	-4.1%
1920	12,066	35.6%
1930	13,779	14.2%
1940	14,063	2.1%
1950	14,954	6.3%
1960	15,247	2.0%
1970	13,996	-8.2%
1980	13,520	-3.4%
1990	11,618	-14.1%
2000	10,715	-7.8%
2010	11,051	3.1%

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expanding westward but this neighborhood still had a few vacant lots. Residents of the neighborhood likely worked for the railroads (the Santa Fe and the C.B. & Q. were both in town), or one of the city's factories – the W.A. Sheaffer [pen] Company among them.<sup>16</sup>



**Figure 8** This Fort Madison High School was constructed in 1890 four blocks east of the extant high school (at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Maple). This view of the building is from 1914. Its basic blocky shape is extended with at least two gabled class room wings. Covered by a high pitched roof, the school had a small tower on the peak of the main roof in addition the prominent tower next to the main entrance. Taken from *History of Lee County, Iowa* (1914), available at <http://iagenweb.org/lee/HistoryVol1/LCHisV1Chap17.html> on 5/23/2014.

The only problem with the school board's preferred location were the 10 existing houses along the north side of the block and the lone, but more substantial, "modern" house at the southwest corner of the block.<sup>17</sup> The 10 small houses were quickly sold

School site. The construction of the new high school does not appear to have been prompted by the growth in this Mexican immigrant group, many of whom were Catholic and probably attended the Catholic high school. In 2010, ethnicity of Fort Madison was 91.7% white and 6.7% Latino, with African Americans and mixed race groups representing the rest of the population. *Fort Madison Comprehensive Plan*, accessed at <http://www.fortmadison-ia.com/DocumentCenter/View/191> on 6/25/2014; *Fort Madison and Santa [sic] Fe Town*, accessed at <http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/DINWIDDIE/1999-09/0938743840> on 6/25/2014.

<sup>16</sup> Andrews interview. Sheaffer Company was founded in 1912 ([www.sheaffer.com](http://www.sheaffer.com), accessed on 5/23/2014).



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and moved off their foundations. After briefly considering the remaining two-story house as a potential residence for the school superintendent, the board abandoned the idea in favor of a school “play ground” on that corner of the block. In the meantime, school construction had started and the brickwork was about to commence.<sup>18</sup>

Materials for the new school began to arrive at the height of the summer.<sup>19</sup> Bricks came in from Decatur, Illinois – described as a “fine high grade dark red brick” – and Bedford stone arrived, presumably from the famed limestone quarries of south-central Bedford, Indiana.<sup>20</sup> A ventilation system from St. Louis, Missouri, was ordered to “purif[y] the air as it is fanned through the entire building.” The board even considered sending an engineer down to the St. Louis factory “for the purpose of learning the intricacies of the system in order that the apparatus may be efficiently operated once it is installed.”<sup>21</sup> The architects’ on-site foreman, various named in the newspaper accounts as W.F. Moore and Raymond Moore, reported progress regularly to the school board and, apparently, the local newspaper. Pressure was on for the new building to be complete and useable by the fall school year, 1923, but costs were rising. The price estimate by April, 1923 had shot up to \$370,000, more than \$100,000 in excess of the bond authorization.<sup>22</sup>

By late spring, 1923, the exterior work was completed, including the impressive main entrance on the east side. “The entrance to the high school is one of the most beautiful examples of Gothic architecture in the city. The huge arch directly above the doorway is of Bedford stone and the beauty of which is emphasized by the relief of the buttresses [sic] and flanking piers.”<sup>23</sup> In July, the local paper reported that, while the school could be occupied in the fall, it was unlikely to be completely finished.<sup>24</sup> A month later, even this tentative optimism had slipped and the newspaper suggested that not only would the auditorium/gymnasium not be finished and “it is very likely that the old high school building will be used as both a grade and high school for a short time at least...” The school board appears to have been trying to contain costs at this point as well as the schedule, by eliminating some of the stone decorations along the parapet.<sup>25</sup> At least one local company stepped in with a significant donation that also reflected the gendered roles the students would assume once they graduated. The Fort Madison Electric Company donated all the electric appliances that would be needed for the “domestic science” studies, a good progressive term intended to suggest both modernity and efficiency. These “domestic science” activities would occupy one of the new specialized and larger class rooms on the top floor. The donated equipment included “two electric ranges, two washing machines, two vacuum cleaners, irons, percolators, bread toasters, griddles, waffle irons, table stoves, electric egg beaters, sewing machine motors, and curling irons.” With this equipment, the “girls will prepare the food, learn the modern methods of housekeeping and become acquainted with what is most modern and efficient in the line of electrical goods manufactured for household duties.” Further, through this new equipment, “students of the domestic classes will learn how easily great quantities of labor may be saved...[and] the housewives of tomorrow will learn how to conduct their homes not only on an economical basis but on a cleanly and orderly one as well.” The newspaper writer concluded, “The gift of the Fort Madison Electric company marks a long step forward to modern education.”<sup>26</sup> High school boys, too, would have their own “manual training” department, which included a “forge shop,” in the new school building. It would be many decades before this notion of highly gendered roles for high school students would change from being viewed as progressive and modern to seeming tired and restrictive.

<sup>17</sup> Sanborn Map Co., fire insurance map of Fort Madison, 1919; *Evening Democrat*, 9/27/1922.

<sup>18</sup> *Evening Democrat*, 9/27/1922.

<sup>19</sup> *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, 7/28/1922.

<sup>20</sup> *Evening Democrat*, 6/5/1922; 4/2/1923.

<sup>21</sup> *Evening Democrat*, 9/20/1922.

<sup>22</sup> *Evening Democrat*, 4/2/1923.

<sup>23</sup> *Evening Democrat*, 5/29/1923.

<sup>24</sup> *Evening Democrat*, 7/18/1923.

<sup>25</sup> *Evening Democrat*, 8/17/1923.

<sup>26</sup> *Evening Democrat*, 9/11/1923.

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As predicted, when the brand new high school opened in mid-September, 1923, the auditorium was not finished and a “rousing pep meeting” was held in the old high school’s assembly hall. The new auditorium would hold 1,200 people but completing it postponed the school’s official dedication to early December. Among the planned speakers was architect Arthur Sidney Owen, senior member of the firm that designed the building.<sup>27</sup> However, it turned out to be architect Charles Henry Payson, another member of the firm, who attended and spoke at the dedication ceremonies.<sup>28</sup> “After describing the many features embodied in the new building, Mr. Payson of the Owen, Payson & Carswell architectural firm...formally presented the building to be used for educational purposes *for all time* to Mr. C. H. Finch, president of the board of education [emphasis added].” Finch, in turn, praised the architectural firm, saying “The board of education was fortunate in securing the services of Owen, Payson and Carswell, architects, whose efficiency had already been proven in their work on the Jefferson [school] building, which was erected several years ago. These architects drew up plans for the new building, without assurance of compensation, before the bond issue for funds for the new school was put to a vote of the community...”<sup>29</sup>

While the school building may not have served Fort Madison’s high school students “for all time,” nevertheless it was used for educational purposes for 89 years of its existence, first as the town’s only public high school for 35 years (there was a parochial high school at the same time), and then as a junior high and middle school for another 54 years. In 1958, after a series of failed bond issues, the school board was successful in building its next new high school. Located near the athletic field that had been built two to three blocks away for the 1923 high school, this new building still serves the community as its only public high school. The track and football field built for the 1923 school are still in use next to this new school, but the baseball field was sacrificed for the new high school’s construction.<sup>30</sup>

The jewel of the 1923 high school – its combination auditorium and gymnasium – continued to serve the community throughout the building’s educational tenure, right up to the point the school board completely abandoned the building in 2012. According to Mr. Andy Andrews, President of the North Lee County Historical Society and a long-time Fort Madison resident who spent his freshman year at in the Fort Madison High School, this big auditorium was the only place in town for large gatherings needing a stage. Once the movie theaters converted to “talkies” in the mid 1920s, any theater stage that remained became unavailable for public use. Andrews claimed all of the town’s service clubs used the auditorium, as did the Chamber of Commerce, and the local theater group. Among the many community events that were regularly scheduled in the Fort Madison High School’s auditorium were exhibition basketball games by professional traveling teams (Harlem Globetrotters, Kansas City Globetrotters, and a women’s team called the Texas Cowgirls), the Sweet Adeline’s musical shows, a local hospital’s annual fundraiser called the “High Fever Follies,” the “Sheaffer Review” (the pen company), home shows sponsored by the Chamber, and the “Lion’s Travelogue Series.” Even after 1958, the high school students’ school plays and band concerts were held in the old 1923 school’s auditorium.<sup>31</sup>

The 1923 high school also anchored the surrounding neighborhood of young families, according to Andrews, and the commercial businesses at the southwest corner of the school block provided venues for the high school students to socialize. At least through the 1950s, these businesses consisted of the Thompson & Enderle Café (established in 1939), which was a “high school hangout,” and the Scott Central Drug store, which had a soda fountain and also saw a lot of student activity. And while the grounds around the school never had the room for a proper athletic field, the grounds did provide the neighborhood with open green space and lent a festive air to the surroundings at Christmas time. Traditional holiday lights

<sup>27</sup> *Evening Democrat*, 12/4/1923.

<sup>28</sup> *Evening Democrat*, 12/5/1923.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Andrews interview.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

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were hung every year on one of the grounds' largest evergreen trees until one year a student chopped it down, resulting in his immediate expulsion.<sup>32</sup>

*Owen, Payson and Carswell in the Wake of William B. Ittner*

William Butts Ittner (1864-1936), of St. Louis, Missouri, has been described as "the nation's preeminent school architect," who found "the Old English, the Dutch, and the Flemish feeling" to be the "most suitable for public school buildings." He designed more than 500 schools in these styles across the nation, including St. Louis schools that were either "castellated Gothic or English Tudor." His style was applauded by the *American School Board Journal* because it abandoned "turrets and towers, as well as the high slant roofs" in favor of a "dignified and graceful exterior" achieved without the need of "steeple and towers." The *Journal* also referred to the older schools as having ridiculous roofs and useless domes. By placing the large new modern schools within residential neighborhoods, the image of public schools was thought enhanced, though some other architects found "their towering presence over the surrounding rows of houses...jarring."<sup>33</sup>

Born in St. Louis, Ittner graduated in 1884 from Washington University's Manual Training School, and then took a degree in Architecture from Cornell University. First working in the office of Eames & Young, Ittner practiced alone for a few years and then in partnership with a series of other architects and firms. Ittner was president of the St. Louis chapter of the American Institute of Architects (1893-95) and served as Commissioner of School Buildings for the St. Louis Board of Education from 1897 to 1910. He designed some 50 schools in St. Louis in addition to the "hundreds of school buildings in over 25 states" that were produced by "his firm."<sup>34</sup> While no direct association of Ittner with Owen, Payson, and Carswell has been found or is suggested here, nevertheless it is not hard to imagine the influence Ittner had on other firms working in the same field, especially other nearby firms within Missouri and adjacent Midwest states.

Records are unclear about which of the partners in Owen, Payson, and Carswell actually designed the Fort Madison High School. Robin Brainard Carswell, the junior member in age and seniority, often in recent years has been credited with the project. Carswell did move to Fort Madison about the time of the school's construction, and then lived in Burlington, just up the Mississippi River from Fort Madison. He outlived both his senior partners, and perhaps that fact, plus his long Iowa residency led some researchers to conclude he must have designed the school.

In 1921, about the time Owen, Payson, and Carswell would have been drawing up the plans for the Fort Madison High School, the firm was located at 505 Interstate Building, Kansas City, Missouri.<sup>35</sup> The next year, at the same time the firm was advertizing for bids for the Fort Madison High School project in professional journals, the firm also placed ads for contractors for a Marshall, Missouri junior/high school and two grade schools.<sup>36</sup> By 1922, in addition to its Kansas City offices, the firm had opened a local office in Fort Madison where potential contractors could inspect the plans and specifications for the new Fort Madison high school.<sup>37</sup> The firm's interest in designing schools is evidenced not only by these many ads, but by its notices posted in *The American School Board Journal*, an educational periodical "devoted to the interests of school boards, school officials, superintendents and school architects" according to its title page of volume 65 published for the July through December 1922 period. The firm advertized in the same journal in 1921 as just "Owen &

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Gyure, 101-105.

<sup>34</sup> Landmarks Association of St. Louis. Accessed at <http://www.landmarks-stl.org/> on 5/22/2014.

<sup>35</sup> *Industrial Distribution* [trade journal], 1921, at 107.

<sup>36</sup> *Manufacturers Record*, 6/15, 12/7/1922; *The American Contractor*, 43 (1922) 41.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.



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Payson," suggesting that Carswell either had not yet joined the firm, was not yet a partner in it, or was not yet experienced in school architecture.

*Albert Sidney Owen (1878-1942)*

Senior member of the firm, Albert S. Owen was born in Missouri and achieved his architect status (and membership in the American Institute of Architects) without the benefit of professional training. The 1940 federal census indicates that his high school graduation was the highest education level he completed. Despite statements in some past National Register nominations to the effect that Owen died in 1925, he was actually quite alive and still active as an architect as late as 1940. In 1938, Owen was meeting over plans with the Jefferson City, Missouri school board, and two years later he was featured in a Kansas City Star newspaper article about a Ranch house design created for his son, Aubrey S. Owen. At this point, Owen's firm affiliation had changed to Saylor & Owen, no doubt due to Payson's death in 1934 and Carswell's permanent removal to Iowa.<sup>38</sup> Albert S. Owen died in 1942.<sup>39</sup>

*Charles Henry Payson (1876-1934)*

Not a lot is known about Payson, but he was born in Illinois and lived in Kansas City by 1900 where he was working as an architectural draftsman.<sup>40</sup> According to one historian, Payson "honed his drafting skills under the employ of the eccentric and famed Kansas City architect Louis Curtiss" before joining the firm of Root and Siemens in 1902.<sup>41</sup> Payson joined Owen in partnership in 1908. Like Owen, Payson was both a board member and president of the Kansas City chapter of the American Institute of Architects.<sup>42</sup> Charles H. Payson died in 1934.<sup>43</sup>

*Robin Brainard Carswell (1893-1965)*

According to an Iowa historian who completed a detailed site inventory form on an important Burlington, Iowa building, Robin Carswell moved to Fort Madison in 1917 for an Owen, Payson and Carswell project. The document states that Carswell was born in Wisconsin and was "educated at Hillside Home School under Frank Lloyd Wright." Carswell moved to Burlington, Iowa in 1935. This inventory form appears to rely on a 1965 interview the 72-year-old Carswell gave, which would have been just a few months before his death in late July, 1965. Carswell may not have remembered his early professional years clearly at that point.<sup>44</sup>

*Conclusion*

Regardless of which person in the Owen, Payson, and Carswell firm actually designed the For Madison High School, the building's Gothic Revival or "Old English" styling, which is seen primarily in the details and massing of the three-story front entrance, and the many stone panels and iconography, makes this building a very good representative of the type of modern school buildings being promoted by the leading national architects. The school's new physical form and interior layout were associated with progressive education reform in Iowa and beyond, during the first decades of the twentieth century. Finally, the school's long service to the town included not only preparing Fort Madison's adolescents for productive adult lives, but

<sup>38</sup> *Daily Capital News*, 8/27/1938; *Jefferson City Post-Tribune*, 1/27/1938; *Kansas City Star*, 10/27/1940.

<sup>39</sup> Christy Davis, "St. Regis Hotel [in Kansas City, MO]" (National Register of Historic Places nomination, 2013), 12.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*; also, *Quarterly Bulletin* [of the Kansas City AIA chapter], vols. 11-12, accessed through Google.com on 5/25/2014.

<sup>43</sup> Davis, 12.

<sup>44</sup> "Memorial Auditorium," Iowa Site Inventory form #29-00965 (2013). Available at the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office.



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also providing local residents with a significant (perhaps the most significant) venue for large gatherings where their shared sense of community could be sustained and strengthened.

*Future Plans*

The school building has not been used for education purposes since 2012 and is currently vacant. It was recently purchased by a private citizen who is developing plans for its adaptive reuse.

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nomination includes the entire city block within the perimeter public sidewalks bounded by Avenue F on the north, Avenue G on the south, 19<sup>th</sup> Street on the east, and 18<sup>th</sup> Street/IA 103 on the west; located within Block 5 of the Douglas Addition to the town of Fort Madison. The nomination does not include the parking spaces along the north side of the block.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the parcel historically associated with the Fort Madison High School during the period of significance.



Source: Lee County (IA) Assessor, 2014



No Scale

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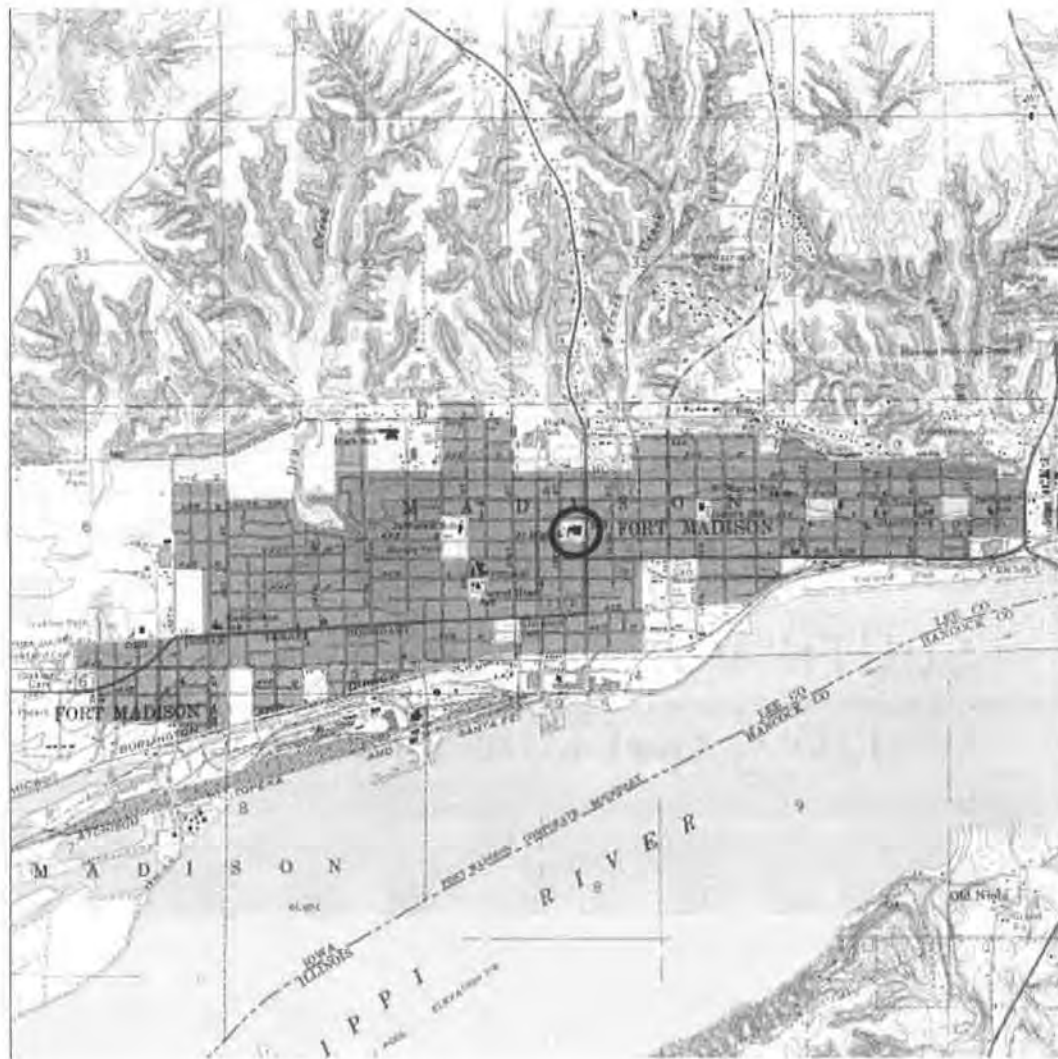
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**Fort Madison, Lee County, Iowa, with approximate location  
of the nominated property circled.**

(detail obtained 5/27/2014 from U.S.G.S. 7.5' topographic map: <http://ortho.gis.iastate.edu/client.cgi?zoom=10&x0=642508&y0=4498808&layer=drg24&action=pan&pwidth=600&pheight=600&x=147&y=261>)









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OK



EXIT

208

208



















EXIT





315

314

EXIT

OK

LBP

015

LBP















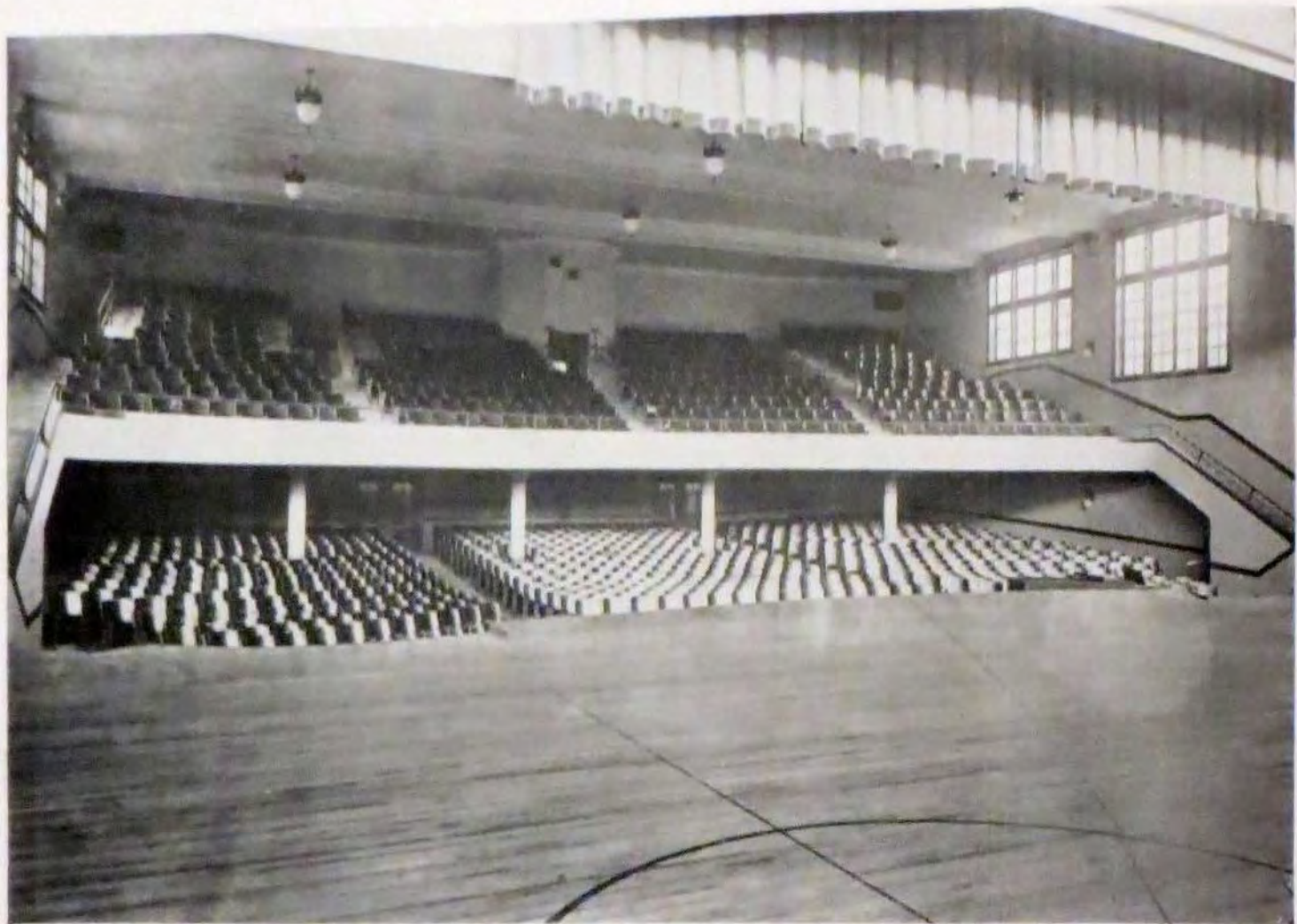












THE AUDITORIUM



THE NEW HIGH SCHOOL

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HIGH SCHOOL, FORT MADISON, IOWA



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Fort Madison High School

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: IOWA, Lee

DATE RECEIVED: 12/05/14      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/05/15  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/20/15      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/21/15  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14001169

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: N    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N    NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    1.21.15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
the National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

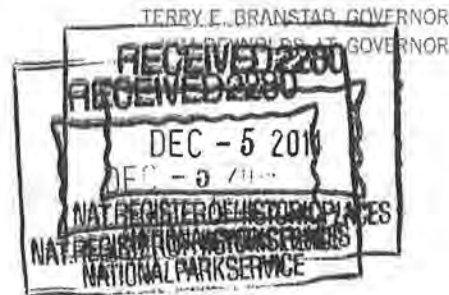
DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



# IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

MARY COWNIE, DIRECTOR  
CHRIS KRAMER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR



IOWA  
ARTS  
COUNCIL

PRODUCE  
IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY OF IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL  
MUSEUM OF IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL  
LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

STATE  
HISTORIC  
SITES

STATE HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
OFFICE OF IOWA

IOWA  
HISTORICAL  
FOUNDATION

December 4, 2014

Carol Shull, Interim Keeper  
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 listing if acceptable.

- Forest Park Historic District, Mason City, Cerro Gordo County, Iowa
- Fort Madison High School, Fort Madison, Lee County, Iowa
- Downtown Commercial Historic District, Burlington, Des Moines County, Iowa
- Our Mother of Sorrows Grotto Historic District, Cedar Rapids, Linn County Iowa
  - (Revised from SLR – topo map remained at the NPS)

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Foster Hill  
National Register