NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

State or Federal agency and bureau

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 Lenox Hotel historic name other names/site number White Way Café 2. Location street & number 114 S. Main Street not for publication N/A vicinity N/A state Iowa code IA county Taylor code 173 zip code _______ 3. State/Federal Agency Certification As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.) October 31, 2002 Signature of certifying official 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

1. National Park Service Certification
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):
Signature of Keeper Date of Action
. Classification
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) X private public-local public-State public-Federal Category of Property (Check only one box) X building(s) district site structure object
Contributing Noncontributing 1
Register <u>N/A</u> Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

6. Function	or Use			:=====================================
Historic Fu Cat: -	nctions (Enter categories Domestic Commerce/Trade		nstructions) Hotel Restaurant	·
	ctions (Enter categories : Work in Progress		tructions)	- - - -
7. Descript				
<u>Amer</u>	al Classification (Enter of 19 th & Early 20 th Century ican Movements			
	Enter categories from instantion Concrete Asphalt Brick	truction	ns)	
othe	r Porch - Concrete	e & Bric	sk	

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

8. Statement	of Significance				
Applicable Na	======================================				
_ X A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.				
В	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 Cons	iderations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)				
A	owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.				
В	removed from its original location.				
C	a birthplace or a 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 Sign	ificance (Enter categories from instructions) Commerce				
Period of Sig	nificance 1916 - 52				
Significant D	ates				
Significant Po	erson (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A				
Cultural Affi	liation N/A				

Architect/Builder <u>Dunlap, Vern</u>				
Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property or one or more continuation sheets.)				
9. Major Bibliographical References	الله جو الله هو بالد ها جو من الله من الله عن بالد من جو من من عالم			
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparir or more continuation sheets.)	ng this form on one			
Previous documentation on file (NPS) preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 6) requested. previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National Register designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # Primary Location of Additional Data X State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency Local government University Other Name of repository:	i7) has been			
10. Geographical Data				
Acreage of Property <u>Less than one acre</u>	:			
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continua	ation sheet)			
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing 1 15 368600 4626526 3	ſ			
Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the properties of the proper	property on a			
Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selection to the selection of the selection (Explain why the boundaries were selection)	ted on a			

11. Form Prepared By
name/title Betty Fay e-mail address ancrtch@frontiernet.net
organization datedate
street & number 3060 110th Street telephone 641-333-2560
city or town <u>Lenox</u> state <u>IA</u> zip code <u>50851</u>
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 Paul & Betty Fay
street & number 3060 - 110 th Street telephone 641-333-2560 city or town Lenox state IA zip code 50851
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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Section 7 Page 1

Lenox Hotel
Taylor County / Iowa

Description

The Lenox Hotel Building, ideally located on the primary business district street, was once the hub of activity for Lenox, Iowa. It was constructed in 1915 by several Lenox businessmen after the original hotel was destroyed by fire in 1912 It is a three story masonry building with a full and occupiable lower level. The exterior elevations of the building are characterized by symmetry and simplicity that are consistent for communities of this size with the distinctive architectural style of its era and its use as a hotel. The interior of the building is also simply and symmetrically organized. The entry lobby, a single large room of 20 feet by 32 feet, occupies the full width of the building. Its main stair, woodwork and counter all reveal the original oak wood and Craftsman inspired interior details. These, together with the inlaid mosaic tile floor and marble baseboards are the original décor of that room. Descendants of the townspeople who worked so hard to build this hotel still live here. Fond memories of the hotel, and of the White Way Café that once occupied its lower level, have been shared lovingly by those descendants and other area residents. A hotel would provide a much-needed commodity to Lenox for both overnight stays and for social activities. The lower level could easily house once again a restaurant or other commercial entities, while the restored lobby would be an inviting entrance for patrons to step back in time. It is planned that this theme be carried throughout the hotel.

The structure occupies a site consisting of 3 1/2 lots, with the advantage of a usable sideyard to the south that is 55' wide by 125' deep - presenting many options for outdoor activities. To the south is a one story building and directly to the north adjoining the common alleyway is the two story Tremont Lodge Building. The adjoining alleyways provide ample and convenient service access for any needs associated with the commercial use of the building.

The first level of the structure is raised approximately 3 1/2' above the grade of Main Street, lending prominence to the primary entrance, allowing the provision of partial height windows into the lower level along the two long elevations of structure. The three story section of the building is set back from Main Street 13' 2" from the public sidewalk. The setback accommodates a one story, raised entry porch with symmetrical steps on both ends of the formal porch structure constructed of concrete and brick. The structurally sound exterior walls are 14" thick.

The large double hung windows are spaced at approximately 10' on center on all sides of the structure, allowing ample light into all interior spaces and a high degree of flexibility regarding the placement of interior partitions.

The interior of the building is also simply and symmetrically organized. Each of the four usable floors is organized around a single, central hallway that connects the building from front to back. This corridor also connects a second vertical service stairway that serves the lower, first and second floors. The main stair connects all the floor levels.

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Section 7 Page 2

Lenox Hotel
Taylor County / Iowa

The lower level, which once housed the famous White Way Café and other business entities, is of concrete walls with the front partial height windows allowing light in and a view of Main Street activity to anyone looking out. This front room was once the dining room of the café. There are records and memories of a

light in and a view of Main Street activity to anyone looking out. This front room was once the dining room of the café. There are records and memories of a doctor's office, barber and beauty shops along with the café, laundry facilities and the heating system once occupying this lower level. The entire lower level could easily be renovated and customized for most any commercial entity.

The mechanical system consists of a hot water radiant system utilizing a central boiler located in the lower level and the original cast iron radiators at the perimeter walls. The electrical service to the building has been upgraded recently with a 200-amp service panel in place in the lower level. Electrical upgrades and modifications to the upper floors and individual rooms still need to be completed.

The possibility of a complete restoration exists in the front lobby, which still has the original oak stairs, counter and woodwork, along with the inlaid mosaic tile floor and marble baseboards. The wood has already been stripped in this room and is in excellent condition. The floor has some cracking, but can be restored also.

As one passes through the french doors of that front lobby area, one sees that there is need for more work here. Through the years this area was made into living quarters for the owners. We would like to open the room back up to be utilized for receptions, meetings and the like. We have no pictures of the way it originally was, but memories of those who were in here will have to serve as our guide. The oak trim (painted now) can be restored around the outside perimeter walls with the décor once again to follow the back in time theme. The dated kitchen toward the back of this level will be made convenient for anticipated social activities.

Floors and interior walls are generally structurally sound. Attention must be given to the structure above the main lobby space. The floor structure above this open lobby space has sagged 3" - 5". Plans to correct this sag may alter slightly the ceiling portion of the front lobby area but would still maintain its overall historic integrity.

Much of the interior remains structurally intact. Original sleeping room partitions on the second and third levels are largely in place, as are corridor walls. Most of the original interior plaster walls and ceilings have been stripped down to wood lath and wood stud partitions between rooms. The exterior walls have not been stripped down. Neglect in only the last few years has allowed some water damage. It is not irreparable and bids have already been received for the roof repairs. Prior to this the building had been consistently maintained and protected. It is a fundamentally sound structure that offers many opportunities for restoration and reuse.

A one story wood frame addition and 2-bay wide garage were added to the rear of the original structure in the early 1960's. It provides a secondary entrance, apartment facilities and garage. The exterior is white aluminum siding and the windows are contemporary casement type. Consideration is being given to various possibilities for its use or removal. A brick fireplace was also constructed at

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Lenox Hotel
Taylor County / Iowa

that time. Our intentions are to utilize it in the hotel renovation.

Even after the White Way Café closed in the late 1970's the Eberle sisters lived at and operated the hotel until 1990 when it was sold. Periodic maintenance was seen to and the new owners jumped in with great dreams and plans of renovation. They stripped a good amount of the first floor woodwork and removed plaster from the interior walls of the second and third floors. They also sold the majority of the original interior items including the doors, transoms, fixtures and furnishings. They met with illness and subsequent death in the family, which caused the neglect and deterioration of the building in the last few years. That family (the Riley's) also look forward to seeing their original dreams realized in the restoration now planned for the old Lenox Hotel.

In later years some of the second floor rooms had been made into more apartment-like living for some elderly tenants. The building was last occupied in 1992.

Significance Statement

The Lenox Hotel building is locally significant under Criterion A as a representative of the hotels that sprouted up in small towns across the prairies of the midwest as proud pioneers and settlers ventured westward. The Lenox Hotel filled the needs of all - the railroad workers, traveling salesmen, political figures and general public. A small town had to have a hotel - it was its lifeline to the rest of the country. Visitors coming in by rail, horse or car had to have a decent place to bathe, sleep and eat. This old hotel was known for its simplistic, organized structure, grand porch and second floor balcony allowing one to view the business district, watch for trains arriving or parades going by. Its accommodations and unsurpassed hospitality and service were known far and wide. The lobby entrance, with the original oak woodwork and stair, inlaid mosaic tile floor and marble baseboards will be as stunning when restored as it was then. It was one of the first hotels to boast electricity and a wash basin with running water in every room. The Lenox Hotel was a place for meetings, banquets and community events. It was representative of the spirit of its residents as they organized to rebuild after a destructive fire, and continued its services after the railroad no longer pulled into the Lenox depot. It was big city accommodations in a small town. In later years the age of its owners brought about the closing of their famous restaurant along with the (Memories of those days still make residents smile and their mouths water at the mere thought of the homemade meals, jams and pies.) The most recent owners put their hearts and souls into the hotel's renovation but were stymied by family illness and subsequent death, thus leading to the last few years of deterioration and neglect. Yes, the Lenox Hotel is representative of it all - the westward movement of early America and the character and spirit it takes to build and prosper in the small towns of yesteryear and today.

- 1912 Fire completely destroyed the Lenox Hotel building. (The previous building had been built in 1874.)
- 1914 A group of 10 businessmen, led by O.D. Tyler, formed The Lenox Hotel Company to assure the rebuilding of the hotel.

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Lenox Hotel
Taylor County / Iowa

- 1915 The rebuilding began and progress was followed in the weekly Lenox Time Table newspaper.
- 1916 A grand opening celebration.

 Lots south of hotel were improved to further beautify hotel grounds.
- 1934,1940 & 1949 Harlem GlobeTrotters played in Lenox and hearsay is that they stayed at the hotel. (We are researching to verify this claim.)
- 1938 New neon sign installed on the front of the building Lenox Hotel.
- 1942 Hotel sold to Georgia Eberle & Leah McIntyre. (Eberle sisters)
 White Way Café moved into hotel's lower level from previous location.
- 1960's Apartment addition built onto back of hotel building along with a two-car garage.
- 1979 White Way Café closed.
- 1990 Hotel sold to Mary & Russell Riley.
- 2002 Hotel sold to Paul & Betty Fay.

Lenox is a small town located on a long north-south ridge, which is one of the high points in the area. It is in the northeast corner of Taylor County, a mile south of the Adams County line, five miles west of the Ringgold County line. It is in the southwest part of the state, approximately twenty miles from the south border and sixty-five miles from the west boundary.

Those first settlers coming west found rich soil and slightly rolling terrain covered with tall prairie grass and some timber. When the grass was pastured, Kentucky blue grass propagated itself to make excellent pasture for livestock. Almost all the land was tillable. The comparatively flat surface made roads and lawns easier to care for and gave a neat appearance to the town. Lenox was platted in 1871 after the completion of the Creston to St. Joseph Branch of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad.

The original Lenox Hotel was built in 1874. It survived the 'great fire' of 1884, which destroyed all but a few buildings in this small southwest Iowa prairie town of Lenox. The townspeople rebuilt all its businesses and prospered in those early days of westward movement. (Lenox was the second town to be settled in Taylor County, Iowa.) The hotel then met its own demise in 1912 as it succumbed to fire. A small town in those days just could not survive without a hotel. A unique spirit emerged in this little town of Lenox that is with it still. A group of businessmen, led by O.D. Tyler, Pharmacist (whose grandson still has the Tyler Pharmacy in Lenox), formed the Lenox Hotel Company to assure the rebuilding of the hotel. These men: Samuel E. Wainwright (businessman & banker), George S. Beach (successful farmer and member of the Illinois state bar), J.P. Scroggs and T.W. Bennett, (both noted physicians/surgeons), Frank Wilkin, (banker), W.P. Oliver, Frank Heath, R.M. Tuttle, J.A. George, H.S. Ridgeway, and D. L. Carter (all businessmen of Lenox), held fundraisers and took donations until the monies were raised. These were the early pioneers who

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Lenox Hotel
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not only built the 'new' Lenox Hotel, but also founded and built the town of

Lenox bringing it from prairie to prosperity. Most have descendants still living in the Lenox area.

Construction was underway in 1915. Vern Dunlap was awarded general contract, Cunningham Bros. of DesMoines - the brick and tile work, and H.A. Etherington of Lenox did the carpentry. With much fanfare the hotel held a grand opening banquet in 1916. That same year the lots south of the hotel were planted with trees and grass to further beautify the hotel grounds. For a small town this was the finest of hotels. Once again its reputation was built on unsurpassed service and conveniences usually seen only in larger city hotels. The structure was typical of the period, solidly constructed of brick and concrete exterior with a grand double stair porch and a second floor front balcony the full width of the building. Once again it became the center of activity. The hotel was one of the first to boast electricity and a sink in each room. This was reason enough for travelers to pass through Lenox. And the Lenox shining hospitality was apparent even back then.

Improvements through the years were done as needed - including painting, varnishing and refurnishing of the rooms - upkeep that would not jeopardize the historic integrity of the structure or its lobby entrance. A phone booth stood in one corner of the lobby providing the first outgoing line. One resident related that this was the only place he could come to call his girl, which he would do after work each evening - no doubt many others did that too.

The front lobby still has the original oak woodwork and stairway, inlaid mosaic tile floor with marble baseboards, and the counter behind which managers tended to the business of room letting. The room behind the front lobby was the room of banquets and socializing. Many residents remember attending weddings, receptions, family gatherings and banquets in the hotel.

The partly exposed basement housed a variety of businesses through the years. A doctor's office, barber and beauty shops, the hotel laundry and of course, the famous White Way Café. Any adult in town can remember those days and especially the homemade food they waited in line to enjoy. The Eberle sisters (Georgia Eberle and Leah McIntyre) were descendents of earlier settlers of Lenox, wonderful German cooks, and dearly loved by everyone interviewed. Many still have a copy of their recipe book printed in 1984 after the café closed. The sisters are both deceased.

Through it all, this town's spirit and strength of character remains unchanged. To this day Lenox is known for its shining hospitality. The little town that went from prairie to prosperity due to the hard work, determination, spirit and character of its residents.

Now, as new owners of this distinctive property, we also are struck by that same spirit and need for the community. We see this restoration of the Lenox Hotel as a tribute to our forefathers and the lives they endured and their strength of character. We see the need to teach our young people an appreciation for those early pioneer days and instill in them that same strength of character and spirit it takes to keep a small town alive and well.

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Miller, Pauline, Lenox, IA, 2-4-02
Smithson, Donna, Lenox, IA, 2-4-02
Beck, Marilyn Lenox, IA, 2-7-02
Jenkins, Eldon & Isabelle, Lenox, IA, 2-9-02
Bunch, Dennis & Judy, Lenox, IA, 2-11-02
Cheese, Mike, Lenox, IA, 3-6-02
Morris, Robert, Lenox, IA 3-7-02
Henderson, Bill, Lenox, IA 3-10-02
Tyler, Bonnie & Win, Lenox, IA 3-10-02
(Many other residents have called to share their memories.)

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Lenox Hotel Taylor County / Iowa

Verbal boundary description

Lot 234 (except the South 6 feet thereof) and Lots 235, 236, 237, and 238 in the original Town of Lenox.

Verbal boundary justification

The property nominated includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Lenox Hotel.

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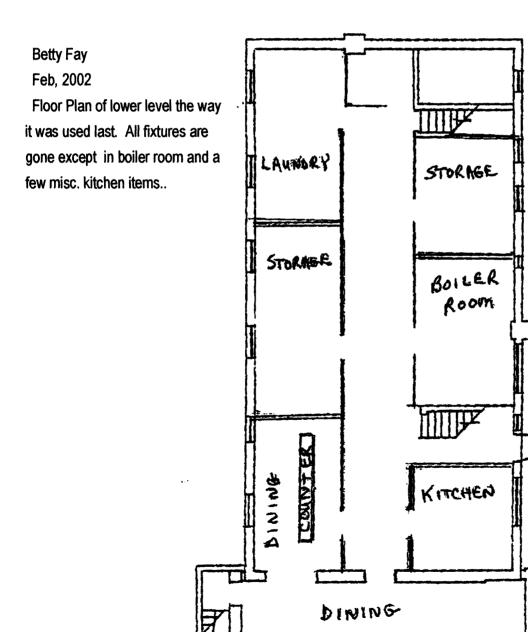
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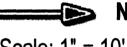
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Lenox Hotel

Taylor County / Iowa





Scale: 1" = 10'

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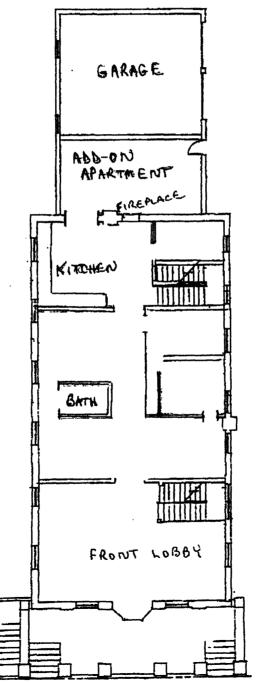
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Lenox Hotel

Taylor County / Iowa

Betty Fay Feb, 2002

Floor Plan of first floor the way it was used last. We plan to open up back to kitchen the way history indicates it was originally.



Scale: 1" = 14'

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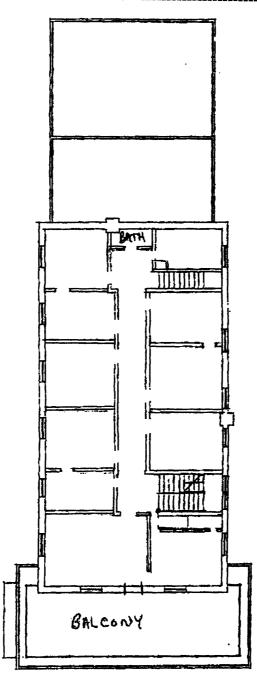
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Lenox Hotel
Taylor County / Iowa

Betty Fay
Feb, 2002
Floor Plan of second & third
floors the way they were used
last. Balcony on 2nd floor only.





Scale: 1" = 14'

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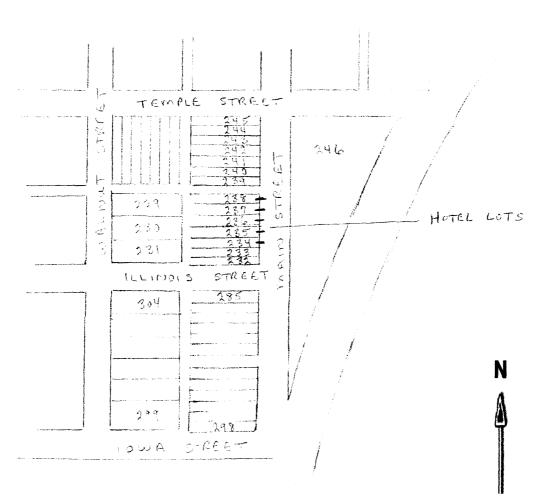
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Lenox Hotel
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Wilson P.C., Atty. Feb, 2002 Original Town of Lenox



Scale: 1" = 1/12 mile

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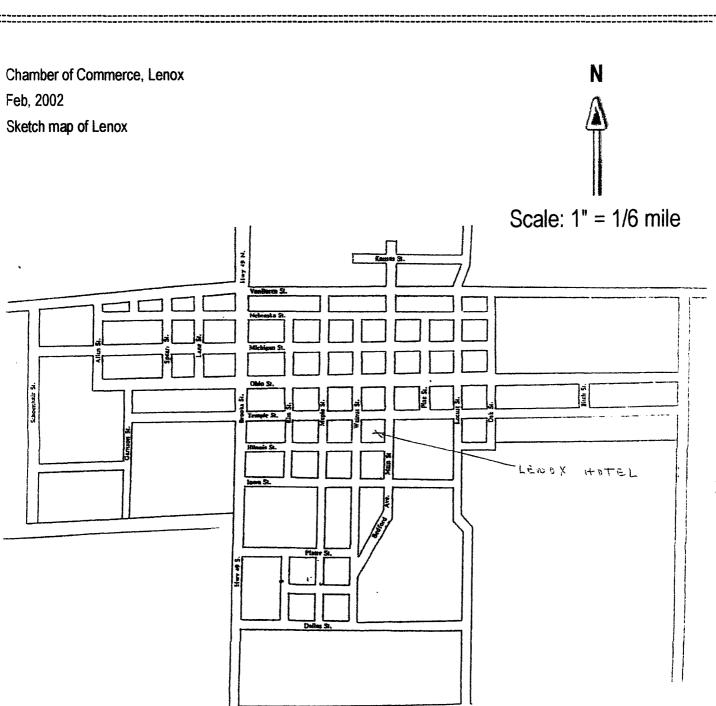
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Lenox Hotel
Taylor County / Iowa

Chamber of Commerce, Lenox
Centennial 1872 - 1972
1972
Aerial view of Lenox
(The inset shows the first Lenox
Hotel at the left with the small
balcony.)



N

Scale: 1" = 1/4 mile



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Lenox Hotel

Taylor County / Iowa

Betty Fay
Circa 1931
Old Photo of front lobby taken
facing southwest.



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Lenox Hotel

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Betty Fay (applies to all photos and slides)

May, 2002 (applies to all photos and slides)

Photo 1 - Front view of hotel, camera facing west.

Photo 2 - View of hotel, camera facing northwest.

Photo 3 - View of hotel, camera facing southwest.

Photo 4 - View of hotel showing addition, camera facing northeast.

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Photo 5 - View of hotel showing addition, camera facing southeast.

Photo 6 - View of front lobby current condition with original counter, camera facing southwest.

Photo 7 - View of front lobby current condition with original stair, camera facing northwest.

Photo 8 - View of front lobby inlaid mosaic tile floor, camera facing down.

Photo 9 - View of french doors to front lobby from banquet room, camera facing northeast.

Photo 10 - View of fireplace located in addition, camera facing northeast.

Photo 11 - View of 2nd floor hallway (3rd floor in same condition), camera facing east.

Photo 12 - View of lower level current condition (the old White Way Cafe), camera facing east.

Photo 13 - View of lower level current condition (the old White Way Cafe), camera facing west.

Photo 14 - View of lower level current condition (the old White Way Cafe), camera facing southeast.

Slide 1 - View of hotel, camera facing west.

Slide 2 - View of hotel, camera facing northwest.

Slide 3 - View of hotel, camera facing southwest.

Slide 4 - View of hotel, camera facing northeast.

Slide 5 - View of hotel, camera facing southeast.

Slide 6 - View of front lobby with original counter, camera facing southwest.

Slide 7 - View of front lobby with original stair, camera facing northwest.

Slide 8 - View of front lobby inlaid mosaic tile floor, camera facing down.

Slide 9 - View of fireplace located in addition, camera facing northeast.

Slide 10 - View of 2nd floor hallway (3rd floor in same condition), camera facing east.