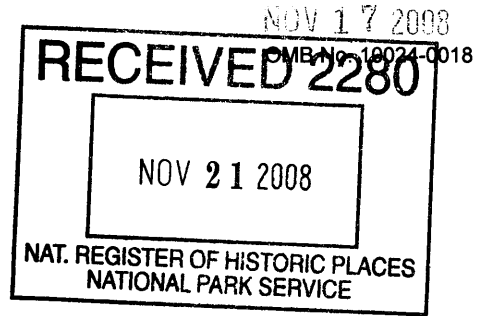


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Herring Hotel

other names/site number Herring Cottage, The Herring, Hotel Herring, The Graham House Hotel

2. Location

street & number 718 13th Street N/A  not for publication

city or town Belle Plaine N/A  vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Benton code 011 zip code 52208

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Bonnie Mitchell, DSHPO 11/18/08  
Signature of certifying official/Title 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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

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

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall 12.31.08

Herring Hotel  
Name of Property

Benton County, IA  
County and State

**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**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

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

N/A

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

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

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

DOMESTIC/hotel  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**7. Description**

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

LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY AM. MOVEMENTS/  
Craftsman  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/Limestone  
walls BRICK  
SYNTHETICS/Vinyl  
roof ASPHALT  
other STONE/Sandstone  
WOOD/Weatherboard

**Narrative Description**

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

Herring Hotel  
Name of Property

Benton County, IA  
County and State

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

**A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

**B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

**C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

**D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

**A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

**B** removed from its original location.

**C** a birthplace or grave.

**D** a cemetery.

**E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

**F** a commemorative property.

**G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

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

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

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

TRANSPORTATION

#### Period of Significance

1900-1937

#### Significant Dates

1900

1914

1919-1922

#### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Herring, William Palmer

#### Cultural Affiliation

#### Architect/Builder

Deiman, Charles A.

Park, James

#### Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_



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Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

## Narrative Description

The Herring Hotel is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of 8th Avenue and 13th Street in the town of Belle Plaine in Benton County, Iowa. The hotel fronted 8th Avenue when originally built, but the main entrance was moved to the 13th Street frontage during a 1922 remodeling of the building. The building currently has an address of 718 13th Street.<sup>1</sup> The location of this prominent three-story edifice is near the center of Belle Plaine, just north of the main commercial area of the town. In its heyday in the early twentieth century, the hotel was along the Lincoln Highway, with the route of this transcontinental highway variously heading along the 13th Street side of the building or turning at the intersection and heading north along 8th Avenue. While historical sources differ on this point, historic photographs strongly suggest that the original Lincoln Highway route headed west along 13th Street at the Herring Hotel, but for a time after turned north onto 8th Avenue before being re-routed a second time west along 13th Street. The hotel was also strategically located near the railroad lines that extended through Belle Plaine, with the main passenger depot located within two blocks of the hotel. Hotel owner and operator, William "Will" P. Herring, ran a small auto bus from the hotel to the railroad depot to pick up guests and deliver them back to the train. In 1919, the hotel added a service station on the 13th Street side of the property to the rear of the hotel to further accommodate automobile traffic. The hotel also served as the headquarters of the Lincoln Highway Glad Hand Club and as a control point on the Lincoln Highway from which mileage distances were measured for the traveling public. It was also an official hotel for the American Motor League, which was the first national governing body of motoring formed to discuss and publicize all aspects of motoring (Hobbs 2007). Herring's son and business partner, James, also served as the local Lincoln Highway Consul.

The Herring Hotel was originally built in 1900 as a two-story building with full attic and basement levels and a stone foundation. The base of the foundation is of rubble limestone construction, with the exterior wall faced with cut blocks having a rusticated or quarry-face finish. The limestone wall is capped with red sandstone blocks, with red-tinted mortar to match the sandstone color. The core of the original building remains intact, although subsequent remodeling projects enlarged the building vertically and horizontally and re-siding of the exterior walls.

The ground plan of the original hotel was L-shaped, with the main core of the building fronting 8th Avenue. The original roofline was a truncated hipped roof capped with a "widows walk" balustrade around the flat deck (see Page 33). The form of the original design had a shallow projecting ell on the façade, with the façade of the first floor covered by a three-quarters length open porch that featured paired and tripled full-height round columns. The porch also had a rounded projection in the center, which mirrored the projecting ell in the center of the façade and allowed for a rounded balcony off the second floor of the ell. The design featured narrow clapboard siding, 9/1 double-hung windows, hipped dormers on the front and side roof slopes, and a round-arched window with exaggerated keystone detail in the gable end of the projecting ell. The design was influenced by the Colonial Revival style of architecture then popular nationwide in 1900. The original hotel was designed by Cedar Rapids architect, Charles A. Dieman, who was also responsible for the design of the 1922 remodel of the hotel (*Belle Plaine Union* 1921; *The American Contractor* 1899). James Park of Belle Plaine was the general contractor for the original construction and all of the various remodeling projects for the hotel in the early twentieth century.

There have been a number of remodelings of the Herring Hotel during its 108 year history, with the first prompted by a fire that destroyed the attic and roof on February 11, 1914. In the wake of the fire, a full third story was added to the hotel. This addition generated additional hotel rooms (*Belle Plaine Union* 1914a, 1914b). Some of the rooms were rearranged to accommodate private baths, with the entire building replumbed and a large soft-water reservoir added. During this remodel, the main interior staircase was moved from the west side of the lobby to the southwest corner where it remains to the present

<sup>1</sup> The original address for the hotel was 1302 8th Avenue (Belle Plaine Business Directory 1916).

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Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

day. The front desk was moved from the north side of the lobby to the west side. Water and smoke damage to the entire building also resulted in updated décor and new furnishings throughout (*ibid.*).

In 1919, the hotel was again remodeled with the addition of a rathskeller in the basement, the enlargement of the steam-heated garage, the remodeling of the old dining room to make a billiards room for guests, a new boiler room, and a gasoline station to the rear of the building (*Belle Plaine Union* 1915, 1919).

The original gasoline station had in the rear section the steam-heated garage referred to above, with the garage intended for housing the automobiles of hotel guests. The earliest photographs of the gasoline station show no building on its west side (see Page 40). By 1927, the garage area had been expanded to the west with a capacity for housing 30 cars (see Page 27). This addition abutted the west wall of the gasoline station building, with interior access through a pass door between the two buildings. The garage later housed auto sales businesses, including the Essex sales room operated by Edward Herring for a time. Both the service station and garage additions were eventually separated from the hotel property in ownership and remain so to the present day; however, the service station building was recently demolished in June 2008. The garage and filling station were still part of the Herring Hotel property when Will P. Herring died in 1937 bequeathing the "hotel, garage and filling station" to son, James Herring (Herring 1937).

In 1920, the interior of the hotel was refurbished, with the hallway walls painted green and the ceilings a buff color. The hotel rooms were painted in a reverse color scheme, with the walls buff and the ceilings green. The local newspaper noted that the effect of the new paint scheme gave "an air of repose" (*Belle Plaine Union* 1920).

In 1922, a major remodeling project was undertaken that involved extending the east side of the hotel out flush with the sidewalk along 8th Avenue, with the main entrance moved to the southeast corner of the building and fronting 13th Street (see Page 39). The shift in the front entry from 8th Avenue to 13th Street may have been prompted by the shift the year before in the route of the Lincoln Highway in Belle Plaine from turning north on 8th Avenue to continuing due west along 13th Street (Butko 2005:132). The architect for this remodeling project was Charles Dieman & Company of Cedar Rapids (*Belle Plaine Union* 1921). The selection of this firm reflects the earlier employment of Charles Dieman for the design of the original hotel building in 1900 (*The American Contractor* 1899). The 1922 remodeling design featured an inset porch on the third floor for the center room on the 8th Avenue side of the building. This room is a larger suite and was where VIPs stayed. The new design also featured a brick veneer on the first floor façade that wrapped around the southeast corner and the new entryway, which consisted of a glass-paned door with sidelights and transom windows, tapered brick posts flanking the door, and a flat roof overhang above the door. The first floor addition also featured banks of paired and single Craftsman style-influenced double-hung windows having decorative upper panes over single panes. These windows gave light to the entry vestibule and stairs, the main lobby, and the sun room. These windows remain in place to the present day. The basic stylistic influence of the remodeling design details came from the Craftsman style of architecture, which was very popular in the 1920s.

By the late 1940s, exterior photographs of the hotel showed a rundown appearance, with the clapboard in need of painting and repair. In the early to mid-1950s, the entire exterior of the hotel building was faced with a faux brick finish, which is still largely in place to the present day although in a deteriorated condition (see Page 41). The gas station to the rear was also remodeled into a brickfront with stepped parapet, with the canopy removed by this time. It had become an auto sales and service business by the late 1940s (see Pages 28 and 42). In the mid to late twentieth century, the hotel also served as a station for the Greyhound bus line.

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**Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA**

In the 1970s, the hotel building operated as The Graham House, a residential hotel where patrons could rent overnight or for long-term stays (see Page 43). Some of the hotel rooms were combined to accommodate a larger living space during this period. A portion of the basement was made into a Laundromat, which was a business that served not only the tenants of the hotel but also the general public. The Laundromat continued to operate even after the building was acquired by the Belle Plaine Historical Society.

In the late 1990s, the building was again refurbished on the exterior with the application of vinyl siding to the second and third floors on the 8th Avenue façade only (see Page 43). The building is now vacant, with rehabilitation in progress.

The hotel currently has a low-pitched truncated hip roof that was badly damaged by an ice storm in recent years and is in need of repair. The exterior is covered with the faux brick finish from the 1950s remodel; however, this finish is pulling away from the wall on the rear (west side). This area shows that the bricks are thin sections that were applied to the building over a chicken wire base, which is attached to the older clapboard siding underneath. In 1999, vinyl siding was applied to the front of the second and third floors on the 8th Avenue side only because the faux brick had badly deteriorated in that area. The windows include many of the original multi-pane over single pane double-hung windows as well as the decorative windows from the 1922 remodel of the first floor facade. Some of the windows are now covered with aluminum storm windows.

The current interior of the hotel shows many of the original and early remodeling components. Most notable of the surviving original components is the elaborate wooden staircase that leads from the main lobby up to the second floor. This staircase was moved from its original location along the west wall of the lobby to the southwest corner during the 1914 post-fire remodeling of the hotel but is the same staircase as shown in pre-fire photographs of the lobby interior. The lobby and sunroom areas date from the 1922 remodel and retain the terrazzo floors from that remodel. Two of the rooms off the south side of the lobby are labeled as the "parlor" and the "writing room" in tile at their thresholds. Both rooms have glass-paned French doors also dating from the 1922 remodel. The north side of the lobby where the dining room was originally sited was converted into an apartment in the 1970s. This room features the original brick fireplace in the kitchen area. The living room of this apartment is part of the 1922 sun room along the east side of the building. The entryway to the lobby is reached by a flight of stairs down to ground level where the main door fronts 13th Street. The vestibule floor and stairs are covered with terrazzo, with "Herring" spelled out in tile on the landing just inside the front door. The staircase also features brass handrails, with all of the entryway details dating from the 1922 remodel, which included shifting the front entry from 8th Avenue (east side) to 13th Street (southeast corner).

The front door features a glass-paned door with sidelights and transom infilled with glass blocks. Both the door and the glass-block infill date from the 1950s remodel of the building, which resulted in the addition of faux brick to the exterior. The basement windows on the 13th Street frontage were also filled in with glass blocks at this time. The original entry door, sidelights and transom windows at this location reflected the Craftsman style influence of the 1922 remodel (see Page 41). The doorway is flanked by the tapered brick columns from the 1922 remodel; however, the original flat roof overhang above the door was later replaced with a shallow shed-roof overhang.

The interior of the upper floors of the hotel shows many historic components including door and window surrounds, mopboards, and even some bathroom fixtures from both original and later remodelings of the building. Some of the original cast iron tubs remain in place. All of the older bathrooms have raised floors to accommodate the plumbing. Transom windows remain above most of the room doorways off the hallways. The main staircase to the third floor is in pieces but can be restored. A charred beam is visible in the rear ell on the second floor and is remnant evidence of the 1914 fire, which destroyed the attic and roof above.

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**Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA**

The third floor, which was added after the 1914 fire, has a skylight in the main hallway, although it is now covered over. The center room on the east side of the building is a larger apartment that also has an inset porch featuring a beaded-board ceiling and 6/1 and 9/1 double-hung windows. The room has hardwood floors and a kitchen and was originally a VIP suite before it was converted into an apartment in the 1970s. Some of the third floor rooms have a sink in the main room separate from the bathroom, while others have the sink in the bathroom. Other rooms feature round-arched doorways.

The basement has a tile floor in the Laundromat area, which is along the south side of the basement. This area of the basement had earlier housed the rathskeller. There are several rooms along the east side of basement that were rental rooms used for offices originally and later for sleeping rooms. There is a cistern in the floor towards the rear of the basement, which has a brick dome with limestone cap. The heating plant for the hotel was in a one-story ell off the back of the hotel and behind the garage.

The service station and garage additions were located to the rear of the hotel building, with the garage still standing and the service station only recently demolished. The loss of the service station severed the physical connection between the hotel and the garage because historically all three buildings were connected by interior doorways. As a result, the current nomination is for the hotel building only. The former garage (and later automobile sales room) has undergone modification through the years but still retains its façade fenestration and may retain its stepped parapet underneath a modern cover-up panel. However, as a now stand-alone and separately-owned building, the garage building is not included in the current nomination.

Finally, evaluating the Herring Hotel under the seven aspects of integrity shows that the current integrity is rather marginal on the exterior with the interior retaining a higher degree of historic integrity, particularly in the main lobby area of the building. Some of the historic interior materials and workmanship date from the original 1900 construction, with most dating from the 1914-22 remodeling and enlargement of the building. The interior has been impacted by deterioration and damage from the elements; however, it still retains a strong sense of time and place and association as a historic hotel building on all three floors of the building. The exterior is more problematic having been altered a great deal from its original 1900 configuration and even from its 1914-22 configurations, thus diminishing its integrity of design. However, the building does retain some historic materials including the older clapboard siding, which is extant under portions of the 1950s faux brick siding on the building, although it appears to be gone from other areas. The upper floors of the east façade were covered with vinyl siding in 1999 because the faux brick siding on that side had pulled away from the wall. The building does retain many original and historic period windows.

The hotel still retains its integrity of location, setting, and association, being situated at the corner of 8th Avenue and 13th Street, which is still the main east-west thoroughfare in town. It is also located in close proximity to several other Lincoln Highway-era properties in Belle Plaine including: the Lincoln Café located across the street at the southwest corner of the same intersection; the Sankot Motor Company located at the southeast corner of the same intersection and listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1995;<sup>2</sup> and another local landmark, George Preston's gas station, which is located at the intersection of 4th Avenue and 13th Street four blocks west of the Herring Hotel. Overall, the Herring Hotel is still identifiable as a historic hotel building and as a prominent building in Belle Plaine. It has been identified as a landmark along the Lincoln Highway through Iowa in recent studies of that historic highway and certainly has the ability to convey its significant historical associations with its use as an important hotel along the Lincoln Highway in Iowa (Keller et al. 2005). This building is the most identifiable extant building associated with Will P. Herring and still has the ability to convey that

<sup>2</sup> Property address for the Sankot Motor Company (a.k.a. Sankot Garage) is 807 13th Street.



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**Herring Hotel  
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significant association as the best representation of Herring and his family's contributions to the early to mid-twentieth century history of Belle Plaine and the Lincoln Highway.

Furthermore, the entire evolution of the building from its construction in 1900 through the 1914 and 1922 remodeling projects and its mid-twentieth century updating is identifiable in the essential physical features of the current building. The 1900-22 features include: the core of the original 1900 hotel and its stone foundation as well as remnant original features and fixtures on the building's interior; the main element of the 1914 remodeling visible in the addition of the third floor and the moving of the main interior staircase as well as other remnant features and fixtures on the building's interior; and the main elements of the 1922 remodel in the presence of the front addition and the moving of the main entry from 8th Avenue to 13th Street as well as extant interior features and fixtures, particularly in the front lobby and entryway areas. The mid-twentieth century updating primarily involved the addition of the faux brick siding to the exterior and the glass-block infill of the basement windows and the entryway door sidelights and transom. Otherwise, the building's essential features during its period of significance are still recognizable.

The current owner of the hotel building, James Morrow, and his daughter, Kristine Pope, are in the process of rehabilitating the hotel. This effort includes nomination of the property to the National Register of Historic Places to assist in the rehabilitation and to formally acknowledge the significance of this important building in Belle Plaine and along the historic Lincoln Highway.

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Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

## Significant Dates (continued)

1937

## Narrative Statement of Significance

The Herring Hotel in Belle Plaine, Iowa, is locally significant under Criterion A for its association with the railroad and road transportation history of this community, including a significant association as a prominent hotel version of the so-called "one-stop" along the Lincoln Highway where travelers could not only find lodging but also a meal, gasoline, and service for their cars. In the case of the Herring Hotel, one could also find entertainment. The hotel is further considered significant at the local level under Criterion B for its association with Will P. Herring, a prominent businessman in Belle Plaine, whose business acumen made him a successful hotel keeper in the community for over 50 years. This acumen included embracing innovative advertising and marketing tied to the Lincoln Highway and recognizing early on the growing importance of the automobile in American travel. The period of significance is from 1900, when the hotel was first built, to 1937 when Will P. Herring passed away. The Herring family continued to own the hotel until 1960, but during this period the hotel was largely operated by others and its reputation gradually diminished. Significant dates include: 1900 when the hotel was built; 1914 when a fire resulted in a major remodeling project including the addition of a third floor to the hotel; 1919-22 when additional remodeling projects resulted in the basic form and design of the current hotel configuration; and 1937 when Will P. Herring died and the prominence of "The Herring" began to fade. The year 1937 also marks the end of the hotel's association with the historic Lincoln Highway and its subsequent incarnation as U.S. Highway 30. In that year, the highway was rerouted north of Belle Plaine, completely bypassing that community and the Herring Hotel.

## History of Belle Plaine, Iowa

In 1860 Presley Hutton laid out a new town site just north of the existing site of Guinnville (platted in 1856), located in Iowa Township in the southwest corner of Benton County. Due to the hilly nature of the countryside, the town was called Belle Plaine, or "Beautiful Plain." Because the Chicago & Northwestern Railway planned to lay track here, and because of the separation between Belle Plaine and larger towns such as Cedar Rapids and Tama, this plot of land seemed ideal for a town site. The railroad and developing road systems would prove to be most beneficial in the advancement of Belle Plaine (Hill 1910:347; Historical Society Book Committee 1989:13).

Although it was surveyed and plotted in 1860, it was not until the fall of 1861 that the first storehouse was built by William White. Shortly thereafter a second storehouse was constructed, this time by I.N. Isham, which was stocked and run by H.H. Smith. In 1862 White constructed the first dwelling house on the town plat. The Guinnville post office was moved to the Belle Plaine town site July of 1862, and the following year a blacksmith shop run by James Ellis was established. Two schools were added in this same year (Western Historical Company 1878:443).

Although the railroad was intended to be finished in Belle Plaine shortly after Hutton laid the town's foundation, a disagreement between the railroad and the construction company put the job on hold. While the railroad company wanted the track in Belle Plaine, the construction company fought to place it in Buckeye, a site three miles east of Belle Plaine. After a lengthy battle, in 1863 the Chicago & Northwestern Railway was indeed completed into the town of Belle Plaine. With the railroad bringing business to the area, Belle Plaine was officially incorporated on May 22, 1868, as "a city of the second class," as stated in its charter. The first elected officials were D.A. Kennedy, mayor; J.P. Henry, treasurer; J.F. Roberts, marshal; and E.A. Bird, E.G. Brown, D.C. Twogood, and J. Fohls, councilmen (Hill 1910:347-351).

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With the railroad in working order, Belle Plaine businesses rapidly prospered. In 1868 the town could boast of three hotels, seven general stores, eight grocery stores, four agriculture implement houses, three hardware stores, five lumber dealers, two furniture stores, three drug stores, one book store, two millinery stores, five tailors, six physicians, six attorneys, two jewelry shops, one music store, three dentists, four wagon shops, four blacksmith shops, one livery stable, nine saloons, four boarding houses, four shoe shops, three harness shops, two auctioneers, one flouring-mill, one planing mill, two painters, one bakery, twenty-four carpenters, one tobacco store, five drays, five insurance agents, one newspaper, and several grain buyers. Also due to the rapid growth in Belle Plaine, an independent school district was incorporated on September 4, 1865. S.L. Bardwell of Chicago added a bank in 1869 (Hill 1910:349).

The Chicago & Northwestern Railway proved to be the asset that Belle Plaine needed to thrive. In 1887 it was noted that fourteen regular trains heading east left Belle Plaine daily, while another fifteen went west, and an additional four or five passed through each way (Chapman Brothers 1887). By 1884 a roundhouse was completed, which held 30 locomotive stalls and housed 120 workers. The roundhouse greatly contributed to the further growth of Belle Plaine. The total town population at this time was 2,092.

However, on July 28, 1894, tragedy struck this developing railroad town. Robert Liddle, one of the local blacksmiths, was setting ties on some wagon wheels at the same time that C.H. Kroh was lifting a rye hay bale into his feed store next door. A spark from Liddle's work ignited the hay, and a fire spread throughout the entire city. Almost five solid city blocks and eighty businesses were lost that day. Many buildings were destroyed by the fire but others were torn down in an effort to stop the spread of the fire. Total damage was estimated at \$500,000; however, only \$200,000 of it was insured. Although a major setback for Belle Plaine, by December 20th of the same year, much of the burned area had been rebuilt. Among the burned businesses was the Herring Hotel (the former Tremont House) operated by Will P. Herring. It was the loss of this business that eventually resulted in the construction of the extant Herring Hotel six years later. Also lost was the recently completed Greenlee Opera House, which stood as a prominent ruin in the wake of the fire (Swailles 1962:52-59).

An unusual footnote in Belle Plaine's history was the number of artesian wells in the area. The water in the artesian vein carries a high percentage of minerals, mainly calcium and magnesium sulphate, which is not suitable for drinking or cooking but was believed to have medicinal benefits. The first well in the vicinity was sunk in 1882 by Frank Bardwell, a local farmer. At a depth of 260 feet, water was struck that came within 25 feet of the surface. Others heard of his success and followed suit. However, "it was not until the spring of 1886 that any great headway was made in developing the artesian water vein" (*Belle Plaine Union* 1926). Hilton Brothers, who had just established a creamery business that was in need of water, sank a well and at 215 feet hit a flow of water that literally gushed from the hole causing a local sensation. Encouraged by this discovery, a number of other wells were sunk that spring and summer, with the potential medicinal value of the mineral water soon touted. "The well sunk at the Tremont house by Mr. Will P. Herring perhaps gained the greatest reputation" (*ibid.*). Herring wrote a candid testimonial in 1886 of this event:

Having inherited a bilious temperament, I have been compelled to take medicine for years, at least every 30 days, to remove bile and to obtain relief from constipation and piles. Since striking our mineral well last April 30th, I have used its water exclusive of all other drinks, and since that time find myself perfectly well and cured from my previous ailments. Yours to command, Will P. Herring (quoted in *Belle Plaine Union* 1926).

The largest of the artesian wells was sunk on August 26, 1886, and became known as the "Jumbo" well of Belle Plaine. It was located at the corner of 8th Street and 8th Avenue and hit mineral water that gushed so forcefully from the ground that the flow rate could not be controlled. So much water gushed forth that two 12 foot wide by one foot deep ditches had to be dug to

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carry the excess water to the Iowa River two miles away. The well became a sensation with “some newspapers around the globe” calling it the “8th wonder of the world” (Historical Society Book Committee 1989:15). The water flow was finally brought under control on October 6, 1887. To this day, a small underground flow from this well still empties into Minnow Creek to the east of town. The site of the well was later marked with a large granite boulder bearing a bronze plaque. It was dedicated at this site in 1955 (ibid.).

Since platted, the town of Belle Plaine has been a product of transportation systems. Given its substantial distance from larger communities such as Cedar Rapids, Tama, or even Des Moines, Belle Plaine has fully depended on transportation of goods and trade through the railroad. Roads eventually added to this reliance when the Lincoln Highway was extended through Belle Plaine in the 1910s. In 1918 the highway through Belle Plaine was paved one mile to the east and two miles to the north. In the 1920s, it was paved another two and one-half miles north; and finally by 1927 one could travel all the way from Belle Plaine to Vinton on a paved roadway (Benton County Historical Society 1989). The Lincoln Highway was renamed U.S. Highway 30 in 1926, a highway which continued to benefit Belle Plaine’s growth until the town was bypassed to the north by Highway 30 in 1936-37.<sup>3</sup> In more recent years, tourism related to the Lincoln Highway has once again begun to benefit Belle Plaine as people get off the main highway to travel through Belle Plaine along the historic highway route and to view and visit the extant Lincoln Highway landmarks in the community.

William P. Herring

William “Will” Palmer Herring was born on September 11, 1858, in Livingston County, New York, the son of William B. and Adela A. Herring. His father, originally from Wales, immigrated to the United States with his parents at a young age, settling in New York. When little Will was five years of age his family migrated westward to Iowa, and his father gained a job as a fireman on the Northwestern Railway. After several years working in Clinton and then Belle Plaine, his father was promoted to engineer and the family relocated to Boone in 1870. Upon his high school graduation, Will worked as a railroad fireman and, at the age of 20, was promoted to engineer on the Iowa Central Railway. This line would later become part of the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railroad (*Cedar Rapids Gazette* 1937; Wilcox 1897).

After several years working on railroads, Will married Ida Blossom on November 7, 1881, marking the beginning of Will’s long career in the hotel business. Ida’s father, William Blossom, was a pioneer hotelkeeper in the town of Belle Plaine. Within a year of their marriage, Blossom had convinced Will and Ida, who were then living in Grinnell, Iowa, to move to Belle Plaine and operate his Tremont House hotel. Will took control of the Tremont House in 1882, which at that time was one of three hotels in Belle Plaine. He subsequently renamed this hotel after himself. This Herring Hotel, located at the corner of 7th Avenue and 12th Street, was completely destroyed in the 1894 fire for an estimated loss of \$8000. Herring did not immediately rebuild but did retain possession of the lot. He would later build an “annex” to his later Herring Hotel on the old hotel site. Instead of rebuilding the old hotel, Herring built a house for his family large enough to let out rooms to guests. However, “often finding that his guests out-numbered the rooms, Mr. Herring found lodging about town for them and advertised far and wide that he had the largest hotel in a town of its size in the world, covering seven square blocks or more” (*Belle Plaine Union* 1932b). But “by strict attention to business, a gift for making friends and remembering faces and names, Mr. Herring soon out-grew that place” so he purchased a new lot at the northwest corner of Second Street and Beech (later to become 13th Street and 8th Avenue, respectively) and began building a new hotel in 1899 (ibid.). The hotel was not

<sup>3</sup> On October 26, 1937, Highway 30 was straightened through Tama and Benton counties, with the old route west of Belle Plaine becoming part of Iowa Highway 212 and the route north of Belle Plaine becoming Iowa Highway 131. The cutoff opened east of Iowa 21 on June 23, 1936, but U.S. Highway 30 would not be rerouted until the Tama County segment opened. Therefore, Belle Plaine was not fully bypassed by Highway 30 until 1937 (Hancock 2008).

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completed and opened for business until May 4, 1900, when Herring held the grand opening of the new Herring Hotel, or "Herring Cottage" as it was better known in its early years. This hotel was soon advertised, and was so for many years, as "The Swellest Little Hotel in Iowa," and gained a national reputation (*Belle Plaine Union* 1932b; *Cedar Rapids Republican* 1905; Swailes 1962:57).

Ida Herring passed away following the birth of their daughter Edna, but Will remarried on March 7, 1887, to Mary Arnold, who also had a daughter, Maud Arnold, from a previous marriage. Will and Mary had two sons, Edward and James. For a second time he was left a widower and he was married a third time on November 12, 1906, to Hester Van Scoy (*Cedar Rapids Gazette* 1937).

Through the years, transportation systems have had a major impact on the town of Belle Plaine. These systems include both the Chicago & Northwestern Railway and the Lincoln Highway, and especially affected the business interests of Will P. Herring, who capitalized on both modes of transportation in his marketing of the Herring Hotel. Before the automobile had captured the American public, railroads were the major mode of cross-country transportation. The location of the Herring Hotel was within two blocks of the town's railroad depot, and Herring made his hotel all the more attractive to travelers by providing rides to and from the depot in his auto bus. His hotel also offered not only clean and well appointed rooms in which to stay, some even with private baths, but also offered a dining room in which to eat and a spacious lobby for socializing and entertaining. The entertainment eventually included a rathskeller and billiards room but also included a radio, reading and writing rooms, and the general hospitality and sociability of Will P. Herring himself. Dallas Lore Sharp wrote in 1928 in *The Better Country* of staying overnight at The Herring with his wife, Daphne. They found Will P. Herring eager to please his guests:

"You're in the home of the literati," said mine host.... "I've entertained other great men, you see." I braced up visibly, and asked about something to eat. "We don't serve meals," he replied with fervor, "but I have the best radio set in this town, if not in the entire State.<sup>4</sup> Be my guests at the concert to-night, I beg you."

After dinner at a café, perhaps the Lincoln across the street, they returned to the parlor "to attend the concert upon the air." Except the hotel "was too full of 'bones,' the static spoiling everything over Belle Plaine that night except the Bedtime Story" (Butko 2005:132).

When the Lincoln Highway was first established in 1913, the route extended through Belle Plaine along 13th Street and passed along the south side of the Herring Hotel. The highway was re-routed for a time north along 8th Avenue from the 13th Street intersection on the east side of the hotel. It was re-routed a third time back along 13th Street where it remained until the Lincoln Highway was renamed Highway 30 and the highway subsequently bypassed Belle Plaine altogether. The business potential of the Lincoln Highway was fully grasped by Will Herring and his sons, Edward and James, who served at different times as his business partner. James Herring even served as the local Lincoln Highway Consul, while the Herring Hotel became a control station on the highway because it was situated halfway between Chicago and Omaha.<sup>5</sup> It also served as the headquarters of the Lincoln Highway Glad Hand Club, which was an association of businesses catering to the interests of the

<sup>4</sup> It is known that at times during the period of significance that the Herring Hotel did serve meals as evidenced in the presence of a dining room and notations by other early travelers of having eaten at the hotel (Butko 2005:132; Hokanson 1999:141).

<sup>5</sup> Consuls were picked to represent the Lincoln Highway Association along the highway. "The consuls were merchants, attorneys, and editors who represented the association in local and regional affairs, kept headquarters informed of events and decisions that affected Lincoln Highway matters, provided tourist information and assistance, and were usually the first to determine the condition of the road after bad weather. At maximum, there were nearly three hundred consuls scattered across the country" (Hokanson 1999:15).

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traveling public. To capitalize on the business potential of the Lincoln Highway, the Herrings enlarged and remodeled the hotel and added such traveling amenities as a café, a rathskeller, and a filling station/service garage. The so-called “Annex” to the hotel was built in 1905 on the site of the old Herring Hotel/Tremont House, a few blocks from the Herring Hotel to accommodate the overflow from the new hotel (*Cedar Rapids Republican* 1905).

Over the years, Herring marketed his hotel as the “Swellest Little Hotel in Iowa” at a time when his clientele primarily traveled through Belle Plaine on the train. Herring facilitated their stay at his hotel by providing auto bus transport to and from the train depot. He later changed his slogan to the “Swellest Little Hotel on the Lincoln Highway” to capitalize on this association and to appeal to a new clientele of motor tourists (Hokanson 1999:141). The Herring Hotel was referred to in the 1910 Benton County history as “the leading hotel of Belle Plaine and is one of the most home-like places of public entertainment in Iowa” and “has a wide reputation for hospitality and good service” (Hill 1910: 354-5). As automobile traffic increased, Herring designed his advertising and his hotel amenities to accommodate this new breed of tourists.

The 1917 *Automobile Blue Book* carried an advertisement for the Herring Hotel where travelers were invited to:

stop and knock off some of the mud or dust, as the case may be, and get a Souvenir Postal Card anyway, whether it is meal time or not. You are welcome. Rooms with baths. Cordially yours, Will P. Herring & Son (quoted in Hokanson 1999:141).

This type of advertisement, which encouraged motorists to stay at a hotel, further illustrates the business savvy of Herring because one of the reasons that tourist camps and motel courts could effectively compete with the hotels of the day was that the average auto traveler, who was often covered with dust, was reluctant to stay in a hotel where they had to traipse through a fancy lobby in their grimy clothes. Herring’s offering of a room with a bath and that travelers were welcome to “knock off some of the mud or dust” in his hotel was probably effective in winning over some travelers, who might otherwise have settled for the less formal offerings of the nearby Wayfarer’s Cottage Camp on the Lincoln Highway just east of town (Margolies 1995:8; Tippie 2007). His addition of a heated garage for guests’ automobiles was another savvy move to compete with tourist camps and motels where the advantage was that travelers were not separated from their cars. At a motel or camp, “motorists could park their car immediately adjacent to the sleeping quarters, saving the time and bother of having to unload everything, and the expense of tipping a bellhop and paying for a parking space in a garage” (Margolies 1995:8). While guests at The Herring would still have to unload their cars, and their rooms would be some distance from their cars, they had the luxury, particularly during inclement weather, of unloading their cars in a heated, enclosed garage directly connected to the hotel where they could comfortably spend the night. This type of amenity would certainly appeal to those travelers less enchanted by the casual, rustic (and sometimes rough) nature of most tourist camps and motels of the day (ibid.).

In the 1924, Opie Read, author of *A Complete Official Road Guide of The Lincoln Highway*, referred to the Herring Hotel as “A Bright Spot in the Desert” after having stayed there on his travels. Years later, and shortly before Will Herring’s death in 1937, Read again came through Belle Plaine to visit his old friend. Herring was known as one of the most genial men in the area and he often made lasting relationships with those he encountered. But not everyone was always satisfied with the Herring Hotel’s amenities. In 1927, when Dallas Lore Sharp stayed at the Herring, he later wrote, “I shaved in cold water and thought of travelers in swift, warm sleeping cars” (quoted in Hokanson 1999:141).

In addition to the hotel business, Will P. Herring was also very involved in the Belle Plaine community and was one of nineteen charter members of the local Rotary Club, established in 1919. He also served as secretary-treasurer for the Rotary for many years, and his minutes of the meetings were often peppered with his strong personal opinions and comments. In

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1932, Herring's fiftieth year in the hotel business in Belle Plaine, a celebration was held by the Rotary commemorating his long-standing influence on the community (*Belle Plaine Union* 1932b). Herring was also a member of the Belle Plaine Commerce Club and the Masonic orders. It was perhaps fitting that when he died in 1937, it was at his beloved Rotary Club luncheon (*Cedar Rapids Gazette* 1937).

While other buildings historically associated with Will P. Herring, such as the hotel annex, may still be extant in Belle Plaine, it is the Herring Hotel that best represents his significance in the community because it was the hotel that served as his main place of business during the period of significance. The Herring Hotel was also the culmination of Herring's business success in the community and, as such, is the best representation of Herring's place in Belle Plaine's history and is the only building still strongly identified locally with Herring.

### History of the Herring Hotel

The Herring Hotel was completed in 1900, with the grand opening held in early May of that year (*Belle Plaine Union* 1900b). In January 1900, while it was still under construction, the local newspaper described the new hotel as follows:

This new hotel will be as comfortable and convenient a place for the traveling public as can be found anywhere in the state. Its capacity is ample for the needs of the town. The rooms are all of good size, well lighted and ventilated, and the building is fitted with all modern sanitary conveniences (*Belle Plaine Union* 1900a).

The hotel was designed by Cedar Rapids' architect, Charles A. Dieman, as reported in *The American Contractor* on September 2, 1899. This notice indicated that Dieman's plans for the hotel included frame construction, "steam heat, plate glass, electric bells, bathroom outfits, water closet fixtures, marble work and mantels" and would cost \$7000 (*The American Contractor* 1899:13).<sup>6</sup> On September 13, 1899, *The Construction News* reported that the Herring Hotel would have exterior walls of "stone and frame" and would include three stories and a basement.<sup>7</sup> The woodwork would be oak and pine, while the roof would be covered with shingle and tin. Listed specifications included: cornices, metal skylights, Fort Dodge Flint Plaster, wood lath, lavatories, bathroom fittings, water closets, cement floors, veneered doors, wood mantels, hardwood floors, marble, fireplace tiles, tile wainscoting, plate glass, electric wiring, deadening felt, laundry fixtures, boilers, refrigerators, a water tank, a pump, and fire escapes (*The Construction News* 1899a). Bids were to close September 17, 1899 (*ibid.*). It is known that local contractor, James Park, was awarded the hotel construction project (*The Construction News* 1899b). Charles Dieman was also the architect employed for the 1922 remodel of The Herring, with Park again serving as the contractor. In fact, Park served as the contractor for all of the various remodeling projects executed between 1914 and 1922 (*Belle Plaine Union* 1914a, 1919).

The hotel was soon being advertised as "The Swellest Little Hotel in Iowa" and initially went by the name of the "Herring Cottage." In 1905, Herring built an annex on the site of his former hotel, the Tremont, to accommodate the overflow from the Herring Cottage (*Cedar Rapids Republican* 1905).

On February 11, 1914, a fire destroyed the attic and roof of the Herring Hotel. In the wake of the fire, Will P. Herring decided to add a full third story to the hotel. This addition generated 11 additional hotel rooms, bringing the total number of sleeping

<sup>6</sup> Around the same time, a group of Grundy Center businessmen planned to open a hotel of similar design to that of The Herring and met with "the Herring's architect" (i.e., Charles Dieman) to discuss the matter (*Belle Plaine Union* 1900c).

<sup>7</sup> The reference to "three stories" suggests that the attic space was being counted as a full third story and might have included finished living space.

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rooms to 39 according to the initial newspaper article, although a subsequent article listed the total number of rooms as 40 (*Belle Plaine Union* 1914a, 1914b).

During this remodel, the main interior staircase was moved from the west side of the lobby to the southwest corner. The front desk was moved from the north side of the lobby to the west side. An addition was made to the dining room, increasing its seating capacity from 30 to 50 persons. Some of the sleeping rooms were also rearranged so that three rooms on the second floor and two rooms on the third would have private bathrooms, although here again, the second article indicated that seven rooms ended up with private baths. The entire building was replumbed, with a large soft-water reservoir added. This reservoir is a brick-lined cistern still evident in the basement level of the building. Water and smoke damage to the entire building also resulted in updated décor and new furnishings throughout (*ibid.*). The local newspaper trumpeted the refurbished hotel:

All-in-all, The Herring as it stands today, is one of the niftiest little hotels in Iowa, and next to the Jumbo Well is known to more people away from Belle Plaine than any other institution. Will P. Herring as a hotel man is a prince and he has a wide acquaintance and thousands of friends who are always saying a good word for his place. He has worked hard, and does yet, but the reward has been success. He has a splendid hotel and is proud of it and well he may be (*Belle Plaine Union* 1914b).

In September 1915, Will P. Herring went into partnership with his eldest son, Edward, under the firm name of Will P. Herring & Son. It was noted at the time that Edward had “grown up in the hotel business” and, with the new partnership in place, the Herrings planned to once again enlarge the hotel (*Belle Plaine Union* 1915). This new project was to involve construction of a new wing to the rear of the hotel, with a number of sleeping rooms provided with private baths. A new dining room and a pool and billiards room were also planned. It was noted at the time:

For many years Mr. Herring has conducted the Herring Hotel and it has become known to the traveling public far and wide as the “Swellest Little Hotel in Iowa.” No man ever gave closer attention to his business than has Mr. Herring and no hotel man ever tried harder to please his guests and make them feel at home than has he. His efforts have borne fruit as is attested by the generous patronage which the Herring Hotel enjoys (*Belle Plaine Union* 1915).

The remodeling project does not appear to have been actually executed until 1919, by which time, Herring’s younger son, James A., was in partnership with his father. The completed project included not only the planned rear addition and billiards room, but also a steam-heated garage, a new boiler room, a rathskeller<sup>8</sup> in the basement, and notably a gasoline station. The project also involved placing new windows on the 13th Street side of the hotel, but it is unclear whether these were new basement windows or new windows on the upper floors. The billiards room was made out of the old dining room space. Local contractor, James Park, completed the 1919 remodeling work (*Belle Plaine Union* 1919).

It was the Herrings’ intention to operate the hotel and gasoline station and lease out the rathskeller, which was to have an outside entrance on 13th Street and an interior entrance from the lobby. In subsequent years, they also leased out the gasoline station. A contract was made in 1919 with the Hawkeye Oil Company to supply the station, and the local newspaper noted that “the filling station will be appreciated by autoists” (*Belle Plaine Union* 1919). It was further noted of the remodeling project as a whole:

The changes contemplated by Mr. Herring will appeal to the traveling public, particularly to the tourist and will give Mr. Herring one of the most up to date and commodious hostelries on the Lincoln Highway. For conveniences such as

<sup>8</sup> Rathskeller is a German word for a restaurant or tavern below street level.



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tourists appreciate, Cedar Rapids and other large places will have nothing comparing with the service that may be procured at the Herring (ibid.).

The gasoline station was a Hawkeye Oil Co. station that first sold Red Ball Gasoline and later Sinclair gas. It was originally intended by Will P. Herring and his son, James A. Herring, who was his partner by 1919, to operate the hotel and service station and lease out the rathskeller (ibid.). However, by at least 1920, the Herring Filling Station was being operated by L.W. Ruhl, with Mike Conitoux operating the station by 1922 (Belle Plaine Historical Society n.d.; Midland Map & Engineering Co. 1920). Other proprietors of Herring's station included Hugh Hastings c.1930 and Jens Jacobsen starting in 1932 (*Belle Plaine Union* 1932a; Herring 1930).

In late November 1921, the local newspaper announced plans to further remodel and expand the Herring Hotel. Given the lateness of this notice in the year, it would appear that the actual construction was not executed until 1922. These plans called for extending the east side of the building out flush with the sidewalk along 8th Avenue and moving the entrance to the southeast corner of the building on the 13th Street frontage. The new front of the first floor was to be an office extension and a large sun parlor, "making it a light and airy place in which to pass leisure hours and also affording an excellent place in which to hold dances and other social gatherings of that nature" (*Belle Plaine Union* 1921). The second and third floors of the extension were to "be given over to additional guest rooms," with the top center room to have an inset porch that appeared to be screened in originally (ibid.).

In the remodel the hotel will be considerably enlarged as to guest rooms and thoroughly modernized. The office floor and sun parlor will have terrazine floor (ibid.).

The "terrazine" floor (more properly called terrazzo, which consists of marble or granite chips set in mortar and then polished to a high gloss and used as flooring and countertop material) was actually laid over the entire lobby area as well. The side parlor and writing room were identified as such in the tile laid at their respective thresholds. The name "Herring" was also spelled out in tile on the landing just inside the new front door.

Perhaps most significant of the new remodeling plans was the moving of the main hotel entrance from 8th Avenue to 13th Street. This move coincided with the rerouting of the Lincoln Highway from its turn north along 8th Avenue at the 13th Street intersection to a route that stayed on 13th Street all the way through Belle Plaine. Once again, it appears that the Herrings were positioning their hotel business to make the most of the connection to the Lincoln Highway and to further attract the motorists traveling by their hotel. By moving the entrance to the 13th Street side, the address of the hotel now corresponded to that of the Lincoln Highway in town and the hotel continued to formally front the highway to better attract guests.

The architectural firm hired for the new remodel was Charles Dieman and Co. of Cedar Rapids. Dieman had been the architect for the original Herring Hotel design and had embarked on a solo career in architecture in December 1896 (*Cedar Rapids Gazette* 1896; *The American Contractor* 1899). He had previously been in the employ of Josselyn and Taylor, another Cedar Rapids architectural firm, where he had served as Chief Designer for several years. Prior to that he had received his training in Milwaukee where he was a carpenter's apprentice and later studied with Professor Schmidt at the Berlin Polytechnic Institute. He was then employed by architects, Leipold and Wiskocil, of Milwaukee before settling in Cedar Rapids. It has been noted that Dieman had "made for himself an enviable reputation for originality, stability and beauty in his plans for public buildings and private residences" (*Cedar Rapids Gazette* 1896). From 1900 until 1910, Dieman practiced in partnership with Ferdinand C. Fiske under the firm name of Dieman and Fiske (Shank 1999:51; *The Construction News* 1900:174). That firm had an office in Cedar Rapids, where Dieman was in charge, and a second office in Omaha, Nebraska,

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where Fiske was in charge (ibid.). Among designs in the Cedar Rapids-Marion area attributable to Charles Dieman were residences built for George A. Mullin, Luther A. Brewer, J.H. Schindle, Mrs. W.W. Walker, Mrs. Sinclair, James Bever, F.H. Harwood, Dr. Skinner, Charles Green, B.S. Griswold, Charles W. Perkins, Carl N. Owen, and James W. Bowman. Public and commercial buildings attributed to Dieman in this area included the Palace Hotel, the Sokol Gymnasium, the Matic Skolska School and an addition to the C.S.P.S. Hall in Cedar Rapids and the Carnegie Public Library in Marion. Dieman also took on projects outside of the Cedar Rapids-Marion area, with other designs including: the Clermont Public High School, the Newton High School, and the David Hughes House in Williamsburg, Iowa (Shank 1999:51). It appears that he was also responsible for the design of the Hotel Columbia in Grundy Center, Iowa, using a design very similar to that of the Herring Hotel and built around the same time (*Belle Plaine Union* 1900c). Dieman continued to practice in Cedar Rapids until 1922 when he moved to Colorado (Shank 1999:51). As such, the 1921-22 remodeling of the Herring Hotel would have been among his last commissions in Iowa.

The hotel was operated by Will P. Herring and his sons until Will retired in 1935. Edward Herring was involved in the business from 1915 to 1918, when his enlistment in the army during World War I took him away from home. When he died in 1944, his obituary stated that he had returned to Belle Plaine after the war rejoining his father and younger brother, James, in the hotel business and even operated an automobile agency for a time in town. However, his obituary also stated that "about 26 years ago" from the time of his death in 1944 he had relocated to Hollywood, California, where he worked in the production department of Paramount pictures (*Belle Plaine Union* 1944). This time-line would have him leaving for Hollywood in 1918, or about the time he would have been returning from the war. However, a typescript on the "Life of Ed Herring" possibly written c.1948 by his step-mother, Hester O. Herring, stated that he was working in Cleveland, Ohio, after the war and did not move back to Belle Plaine until 1926. At that time, he operated a garage and Hudson-Essex salesroom in conjunction with the Herring Hotel. This account states that Ed Herring did not move to California until May 1930.

A 1919 newspaper article about a remodeling project at the Herring Hotel listed only James A. Herring, in partnership with his father. At the time, they were operating the hotel and were proposing to add the gas station to the family business (*Belle Plaine Union* 1919). At the time of Will P. Herring's death in 1937, Will had been retired from the hotel business for two years, with son James continuing to operate the hotel after his father's retirement and then inheriting the hotel and gas station property upon his father's death.<sup>9</sup> The ownership was held jointly by James, his wife, Ruth, and his step-mother, Hester O. Herring. This joint ownership remained in place until 1952 when Hester died; however, it appears that the family's actual operation of the hotel business may have ended sometime between 1937 when Will P. Herring died and 1944 when it was noted in Edward Herring's obituary that his brother James was then living in California (*Belle Plaine Union* 1944). While Hester Herring may have operated the hotel in her step-son's absence, the hotel may instead have been leased or contracted out to others during this period. It is known that the hotel property legally stayed under Herring family ownership until James' death in 1960, with the hotel continuing to operate under the Herring name.

According to historic photographs in the possession of the Herring family, the hotel was again remodeled sometime during the late 1940s to early 1950s (see Page 38). This remodeling involved the addition of the faux brick siding and the glass block infill of the front entry and basement windows. It occurred under the Herring's continued ownership, although in 1953, the hotel was contracted out to Doris L. Fry, who later married Paul Alexander. Whether the Herring family or Doris Fry was responsible for this remodel is uncertain. It may be that the Herring's refurbished the hotel in the early 1950s in order to facilitate the contract sale to Fry. In 1957, Doris Fry Alexander sold her contract obligation to Helen Dinnie, an obligation

<sup>9</sup> By 1944, however, his brother's obituary lists James Herring as then living in Hollywood, California (*Belle Plaine Union* 1944; *Cedar Rapids Gazette* 1937). Therefore, sometime after his father's death, James and Ruth Herring moved to California but continued to own the hotel property jointly with Hester Herring, James' step-mother.

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that was still ongoing when James Herring died in 1960. At that time, Helen Dinnie financed the rest of the obligated amount to have the deed fully transferred to her from the Herring family. Dinnie subsequently transferred the property to Lloyd L. Chesmore in 1965, whose family later sold the property to Graham Housing, Inc. in June of 1975, with the hotel then operated as a residential hotel under the name of The Graham House. The Belle Plaine Historical Society owned the property from October 2003 until April 2005 when current owner, James A. Morrow, acquired the now-vacant building.<sup>10</sup>

Notable persons who frequented the Herring Hotel in its heyday included: Teddy Roosevelt (U.S. President from 1901-09 and who gave speeches in various locations in Iowa including Des Moines and Keokuk between 1903 and 1918); Senators A.B. Cummins and J.P. Dolliver; Kansas Governor, E.W. Hoch; Congressmen R.P. Hobson and James W. Good; James Wilson, former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and Tama County, Iowa, native; William Jennings Bryan, perennial Presidential candidate, Democratic and Populist leader, frequent Chautauqua speaker, and perhaps best known for his role in the so-called Scopes "Monkey" trial just before his death in 1925; Milton Florsheim of Florsheim Shoes, who reportedly encouraged the Herring Station's mechanic/attendant to relocate to California to work with him because he was so impressed with the man's customer service skills; and Opie Read, newspaper editor, printer, writer and humorist from Chicago (*Cedar Rapids Gazette* 1937; Oral history information from Herring family provided by Kristine Pope, 2007; Redpath Lyceum Bureau 1914-15). In 1936, the local newspaper took note of a return visit by Opie "Reed" to Belle Plaine to visit with Will P. Herring, who by then had retired from the hotel business. The article noted that "some thirty years ago, Mr. Reed was a guest at the Herring and he had never forgotten its genial host" (*Belle Plaine Union* 1936). The article further noted that "during the years that Mr. Herring was at the helm of Belle Plaine's popular hostelry he had the pleasure of entertaining many noted personages, and has in his possession autographed photographs of many of these guests" (ibid.). His 1937 obituary noted that Herring had many letters and photographs, "framed and hung on the walls of the hotel lobby, coming from guests who had not forgotten his genial hospitality and friendliness" (*Cedar Rapids Gazette* 1937).

Many of the notable guests listed above were lecturers in the Redpath Lyceum Bureau and Chautauqua circuits in Iowa. Keith Vawter purchased a one-third interest in the Redpath Lyceum Bureau in 1901. He moved his operations to Cedar Rapids a few years later and subsequently launched the first Chautauqua circuit in 1904. Vawter and Harry P. Harrison, a manager with the Redpath Chautauquas, were among the noted guests of the Herring Hotel (Maxwell 2000; McCown 1973).

The Herring Hotel is also notable for its association with the railroad and road transportation history of Belle Plaine and Iowa. When it was first built, railroads were the major mode of cross-county transportation. As noted above, Will P. Herring sited his new hotel in 1900 in the heart of Belle Plaine only two blocks from the railroad depot. He would transport his guests back and forth from the depot via his distinctive auto bus.

However, even in 1900, the automobile was on the scene and was soon to supersede the railroad as the preferred mode of public transportation. Will P. Herring appears to have been quick to see the potential of automobile transportation and, in 1913, when the nation's first transcontinental highway was routed through Belle Plaine and subsequently became known as the Lincoln Highway, Herring made every marketing and advertising connection he could to the new highway and automobile travelers. Even before the Lincoln Highway, he had his hotel designated as an "official hotel" of the American Motor League, which was the first national governing body of motoring formed to discuss and publicize all aspects of motoring (Hobbs 2007). The Herring Hotel tie-ins to the Lincoln Highway included: signage on the hotel and in front pointing out the route and the amenities to travelers offered by the hotel; establishment of the hotel as a control station on the Lincoln Highway from which travel miles were counted; and formation of the Lincoln Highway Glad Hand Club, with the

<sup>10</sup> Land transfer information provided by James Morrow, Belle Plaine, Iowa, and Kristine Pope, Williamsburg, Iowa.

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Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

Herring Hotel serving as the club's headquarters. James Herring served as the local Lincoln Highway Consul and was instrumental in the organization of the Glad Hand Club.

The Lincoln Highway Glad Hand Club was established to band together business proprietors who catered to the traveling public along the Lincoln Highway "for the mutual protection of the tourist" (Lincoln Highway Glad Hand Club 1926).

Its membership is pledged to see that in every transaction with a tourist satisfaction shall be given.

There is nothing idealistic about this—it is merely a practical business proposition based upon the idea that honesty pays and that satisfaction or service is appreciated. Consequently, if the tourist likes the treatment given by the members of the Club, they are going to come back again. We are glad you came, we are sorry you are going, we hope you have a good time, and we hope we will have the pleasure of seeing you again (ibid.).

The organizational meeting for the Glad Hand Club was held in February 1925 at the Herring Hotel and was hosted by James Herring. The Herring Hotel was designated as the official headquarters of the club, whose members were to be composed of those "who served Lincoln Highway travelers" (Vileta 2003:24). The Glad Hand Club brochure from 1926 shows that the largest concentration of club members was in Belle Plaine where fifteen businesses were listed as members including: the Auto Parts Company, Belle Plaine Filling Station, Commercial Cafe, Dix Camp, Frank's Camp, Hauptert Motor Co., Hawkeye Oil Co., Herring Hotel and Garage, Hudson Essex Sales Co., Kozy Korner Confectionery, Keyes Bakery, LaDage Oil Company, Malcom Auto Agency, Stryker's Garage, and the Trans-Continental Garage (Lincoln Highway Glad Hand Club 1926). In comparison, the other listed cities, which included Cedar Rapids, Tama, Marshalltown, Nevada, Ames, Boone, Ogden, Carroll, Denison, Missouri Valley, and Omaha, had only one to three businesses listed as members (ibid.). The intention was to spread the Glad Hand Club service across the entirety of the Lincoln Highway. As noted in the 1926 brochure, the membership did eventually spread between Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Omaha, Nebraska, with the members in the Belle Plaine area "especially enthused" (Vileta 2003:24). However, few members existed outside of Iowa. The Glad Hand Club ceased to exist once the highway became U.S. Highway 30 (ibid.).

The Herrings appear to have been interested in new innovations in advertising and took full advantage of these opportunities. The Lincoln Highway Glad Hand Club was one such example, with others being: the designation of the Herring Hotel as an official hotel of the American Motor League in the early 1900s; the designation of the Herring Hotel as a Lincoln Highway control station and James' tenure as a local Lincoln Highway Consul; multiple advertisements in Lincoln Highway road guides and Redpath Lyceum/Chautauqua programs; placement of signage on and around the hotel designed to maximize the tourist's impression of the place and to make sure tourists knew of all the amenities offered by The Herring; postcards touting the hotel's amenities and famous clientele; and the moving of the hotel entrance from 8th Avenue to 13th Street to correspond with the rerouting of the Lincoln Highway in Belle Plaine. The Herrings were also quick to couple the hotel business with several other businesses catering to the traveling public including: a café where people could eat even if they did not stay overnight at the hotel, the rathskeller (although it is unknown how long this actually operated), and the filling station/garage. The intent was obviously to make The Herring, a "one-stop" experience for the traveler where they could get a meal, a bed for the night, and get their car serviced and filled up for the trip ahead. The "one-stop" innovation was something most often seen along the Lincoln Highway as a motel or tourist camp coupled with a café and gas station; therefore, the Herring Hotel, Café and Garage appears to be Will P. Herring & Son's take on the one-stop innovation. This attempt to couple a hotel with these amenities probably was an attempt to compete with the growing tourist camp and motel industry.

Hotel owners nationwide, alarmed by this new and sometimes substandard competition, lobbied various levels of government to regulate or even abolish the cabin trade. But this strategy backfired, and instead of causing the competition

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**Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA**

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to go away, it caused cabin camps to upgrade and expand their facilities--creating even more competition for the hotels marooned in downtowns (Margolies 1995:36).

While the Herring Hotel was not exactly "marooned" in a downtown area, being situated right next to the main tourist highway, the Herrings must have felt the need to try and compete with the number of one-stop operations popping up along the Lincoln Highway. There were several such operations just east and west of Belle Plaine on the Lincoln Highway including the Youngville Café (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) located in Benton County northeast of Belle Plaine, the Wayfarer's Cottage Camp just east of Belle Plaine, and the King Tower Café located to the west in Tama. The Youngville and Tama operations included filling stations, cafes, and tourist cabins in their facilities, with the Wayfarer's Cottage Camp including cottages and a filling station where groceries could be purchased. Competition with the Wayfarer's Cottage Camp and gas station must have been felt in Belle Plaine because the owner reported that "Belle Plaine tried in every way to hurt us, they put signs up in the round house, 'Don't trade with Tippie, he sells a foreign product'" (Tippie 2007:7).

Other hotels of note along the Lincoln Highway in Iowa include: the Lincoln Hotel in Lowden (recently restored as an apartment building); the Lafayette Hotel in Clinton (also later converted to apartments, this hotel was the original control point for the Lincoln Highway), the Iowa Hotel in Belle Plaine (a smaller and less well-known hotel than the Herring Hotel but also located on 13th Street); and the Tall Corn Hotel in Marshalltown (eight story hotel later converted to apartments). Of these, only the Lincoln Hotel in Lowden is currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places (Keller et al. 2005).

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**Herring Hotel  
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**Geographical Data**

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Herring Hotel is shown as the dashed line on the accompanying map entitled "Plan Map Showing National Register Boundary of Herring Hotel" on Page 23.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the main building of the Herring Hotel at the height of its hotel operations during the period of significance.

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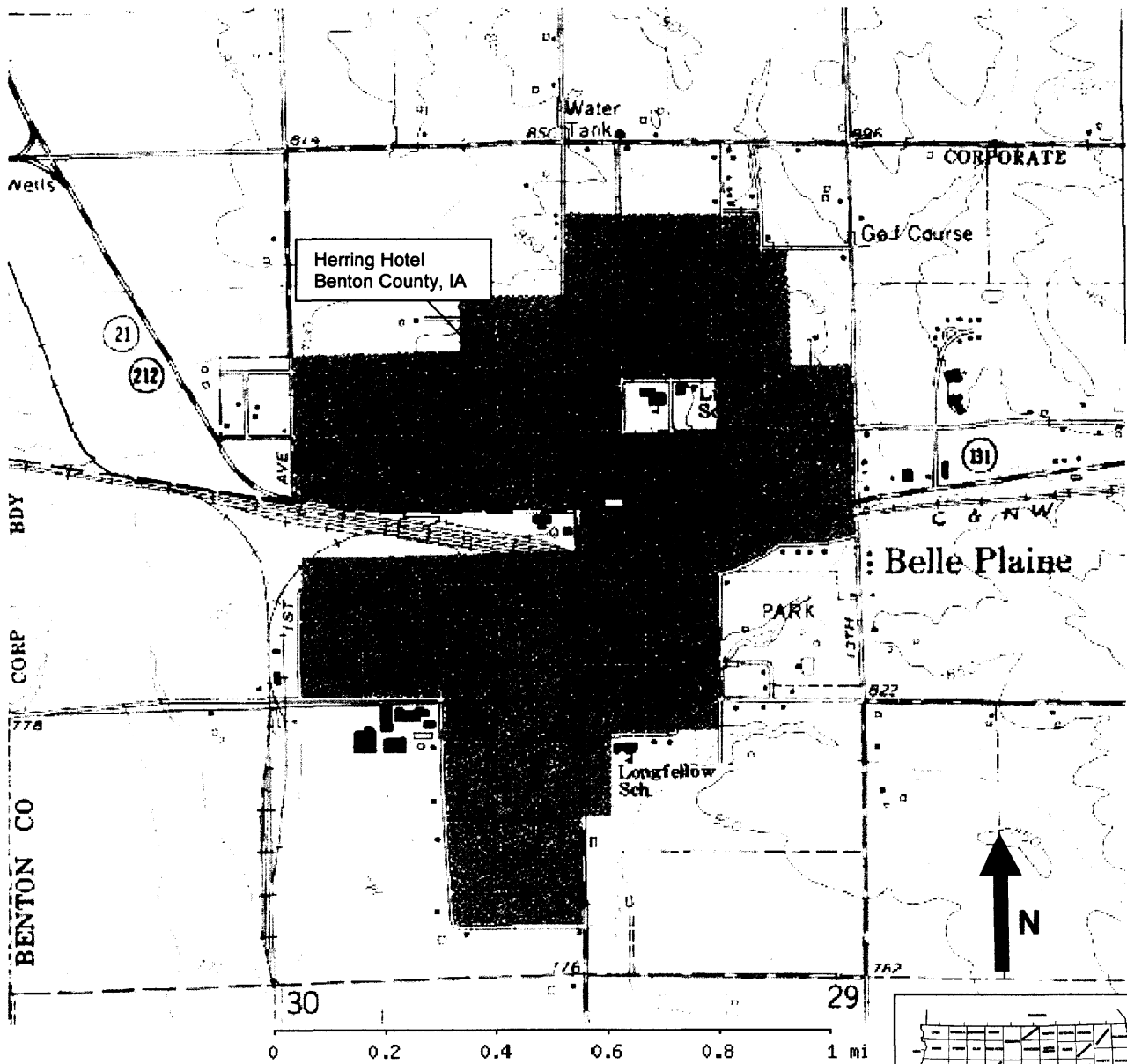
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Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

Topographic Location of Herring Hotel, Belle Plaine, Benton County, IA

Source of Map: USGS Belle Plaine (IA) Quadrangle, 7.5' Series, 1979, copy obtained from [Topozone.com](http://Topozone.com)



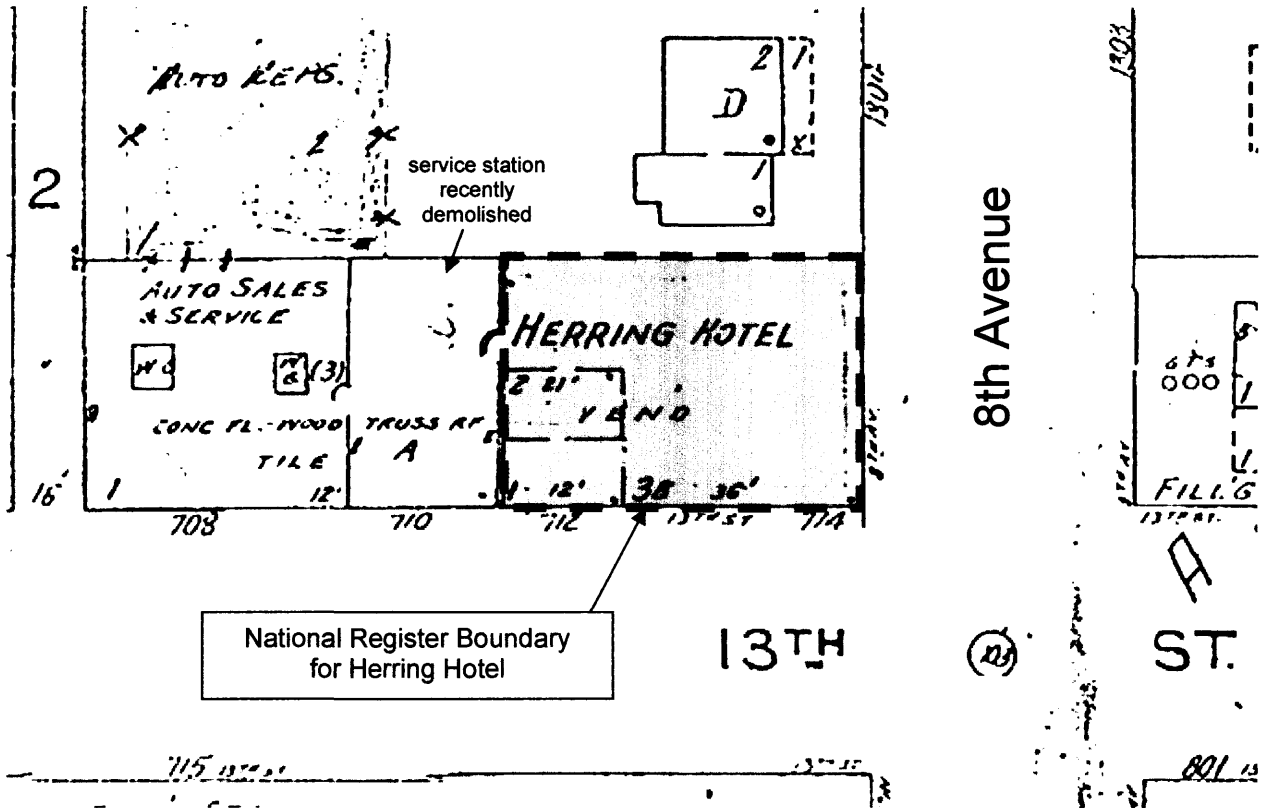
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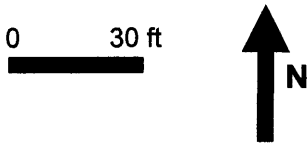
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Herring Hotel  
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Plan Map Showing National Register Boundary of Herring Hotel (dashed line and shaded in gray)  
Source for Base Map: Sanborn 1927-49



National Register Boundary for Herring Hotel



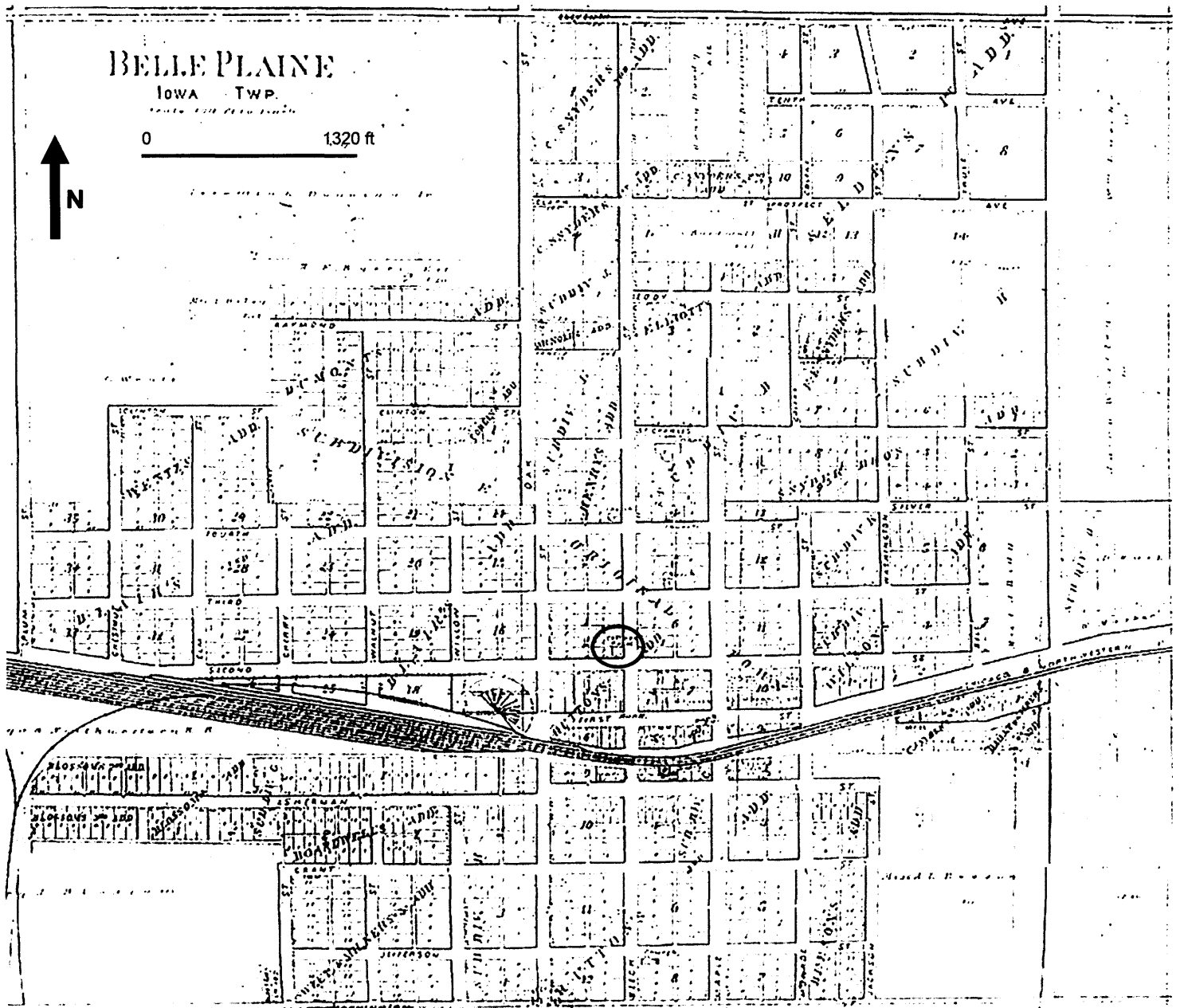
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Herring Hotel  
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1901 Plat Map of north half of Belle Plaine showing circled location of Herring Hotel, labeled "Cottage Hotel" on plat  
Source of Plat: Ogle and Co. 1901



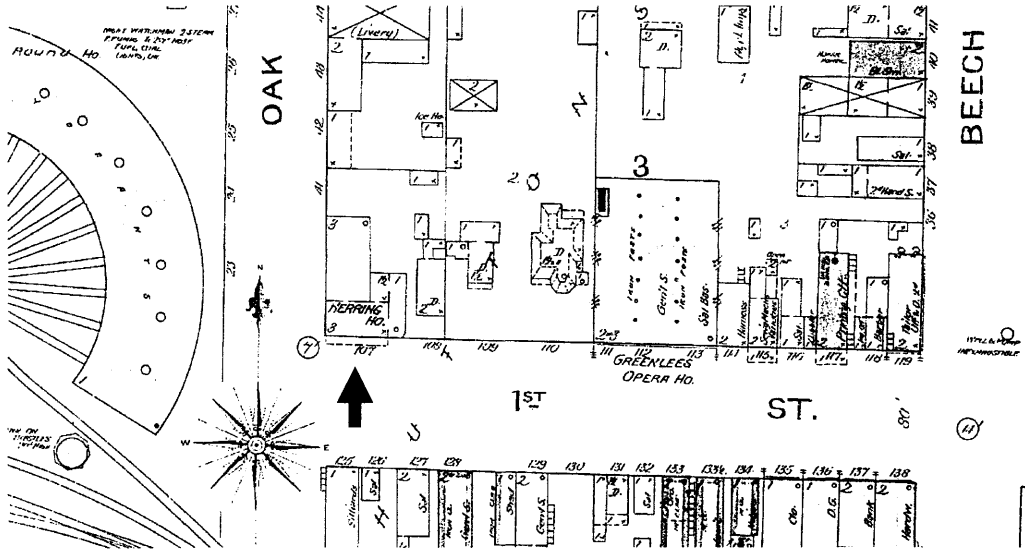
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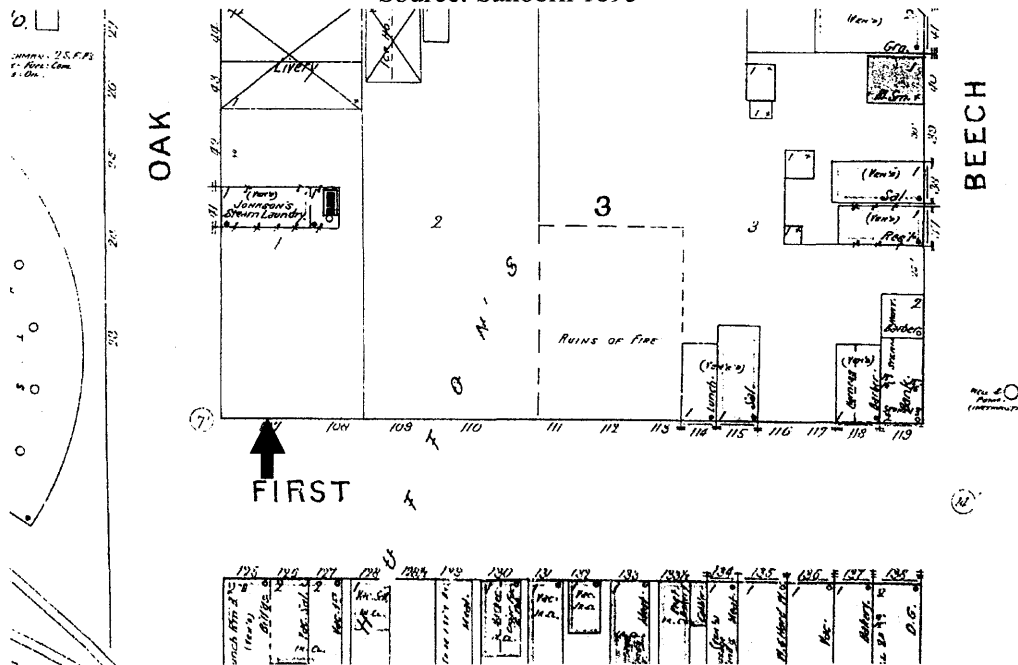
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Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

1894 Sanborn fire insurance map showing location of original Herring Hotel just prior to fire  
Source: Sanborn 1894



1895 Sanborn fire insurance map showing aftermath of fire  
Source: Sanborn 1895





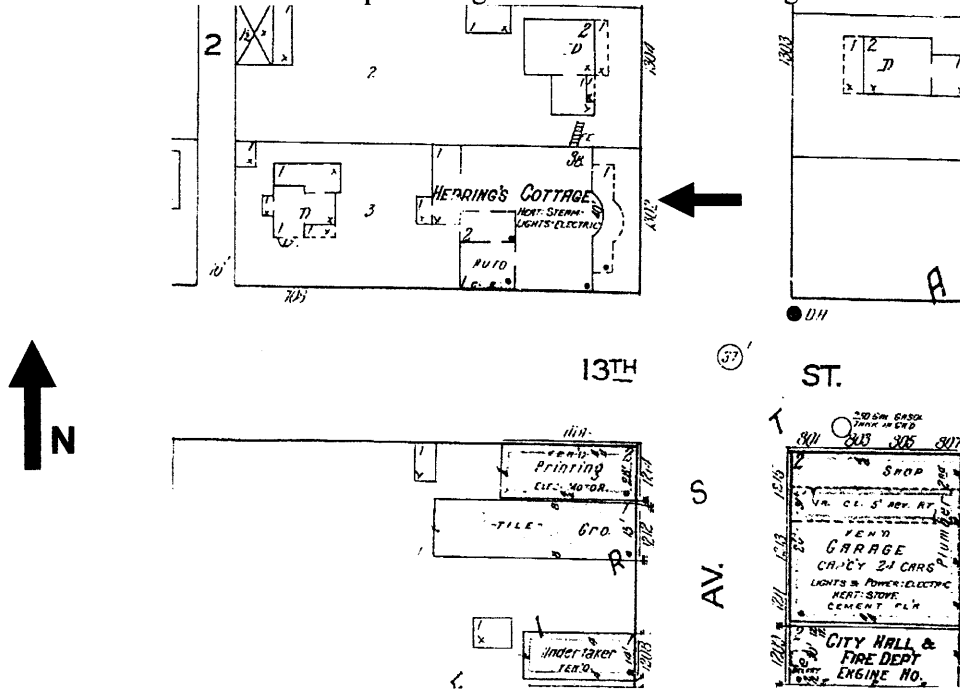
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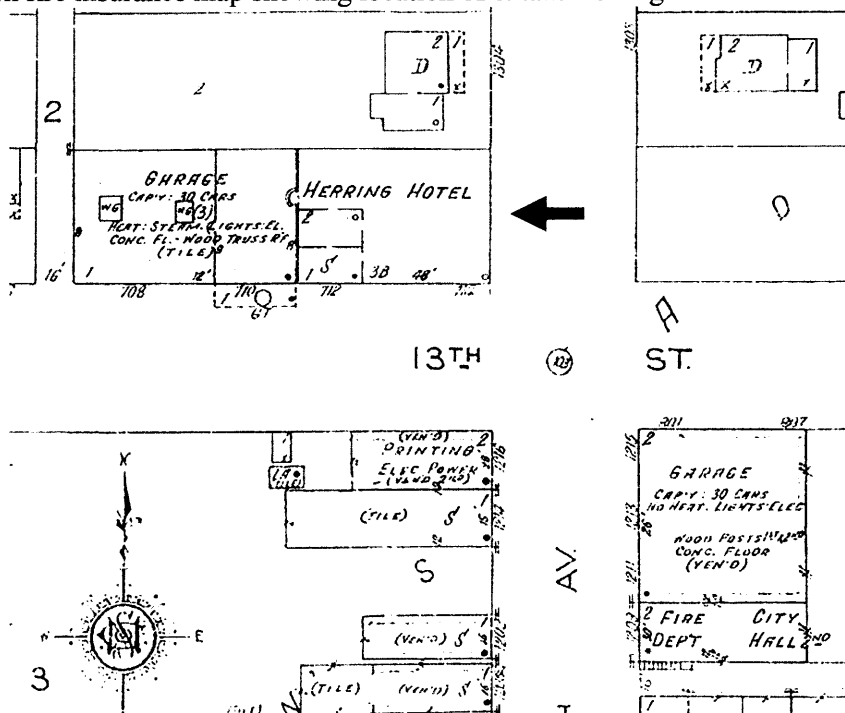
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Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

1916 Sanborn fire insurance map showing location of extant Herring Hotel. Source: Sanborn 1916



1927 Sanborn fire insurance map showing location of extant Herring Hotel. Source: Sanborn 1927



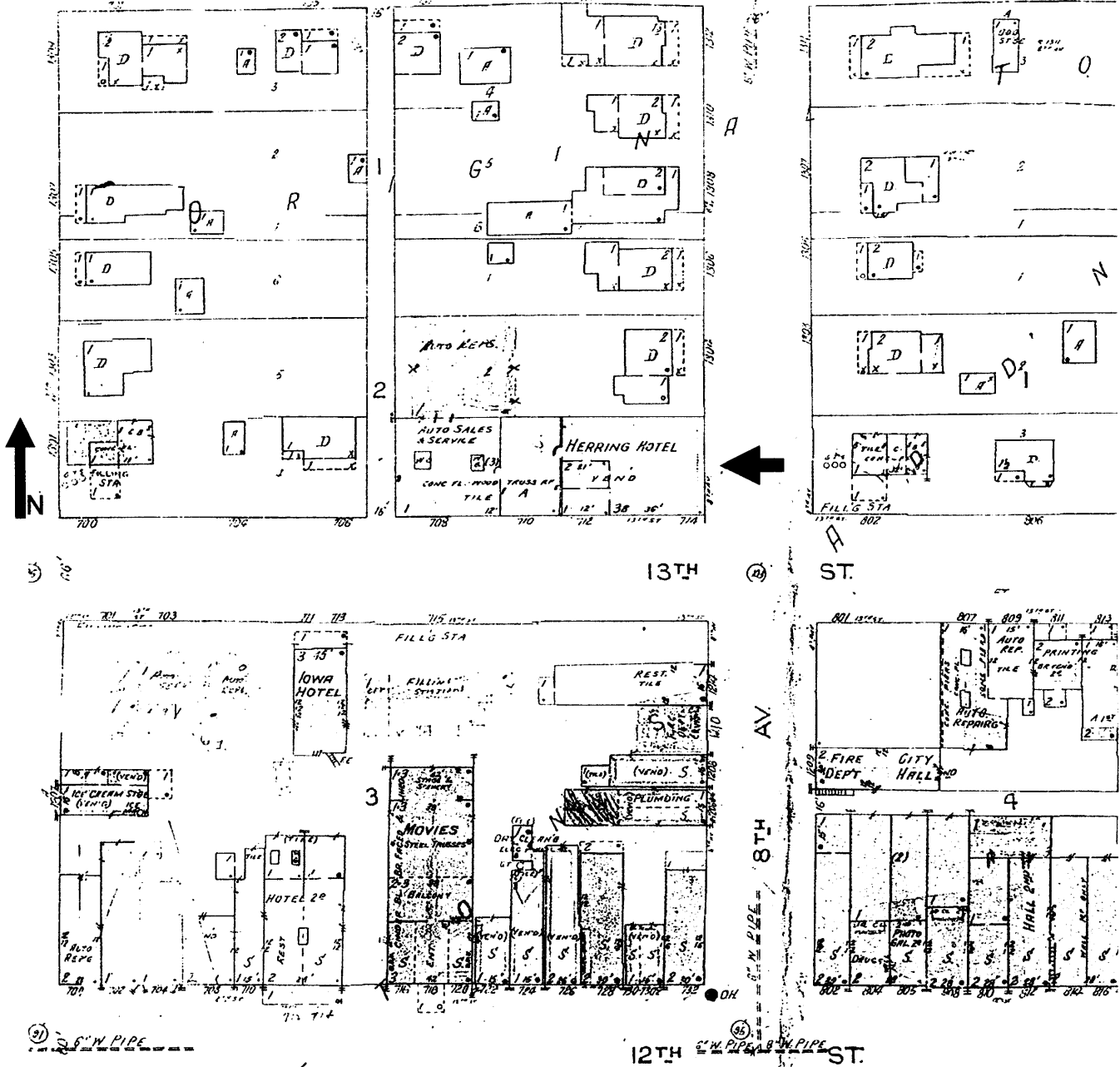
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Updated 1949 Sanborn fire insurance map showing location of extant Herring Hotel  
Source: Sanborn 1927-49





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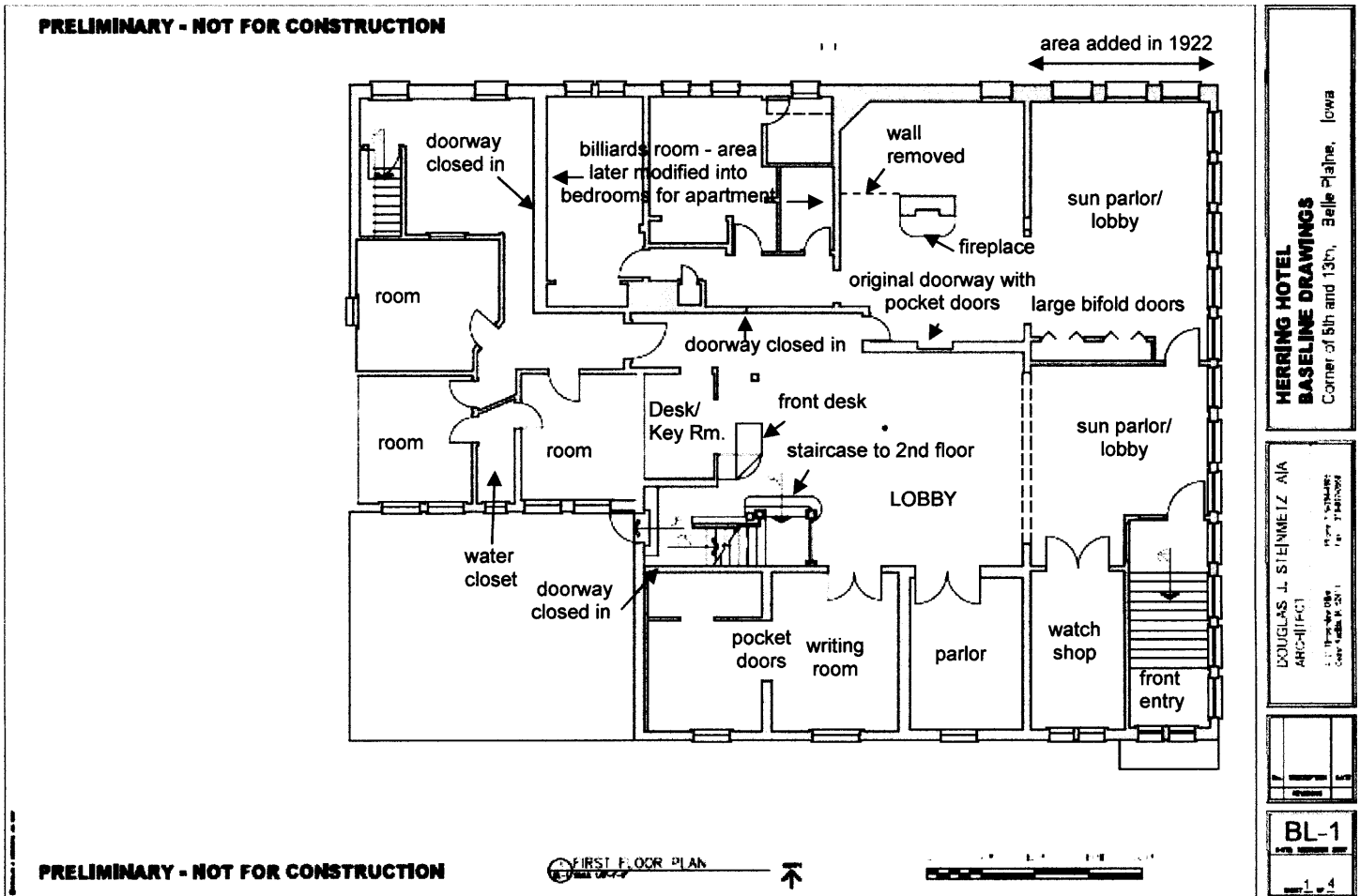
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Herring Hotel  
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Current Floor Plans for the Herring Hotel Showing Historic Use (Source: Douglas J. Steinmetz, Cedar Rapids, Iowa)

First Floor



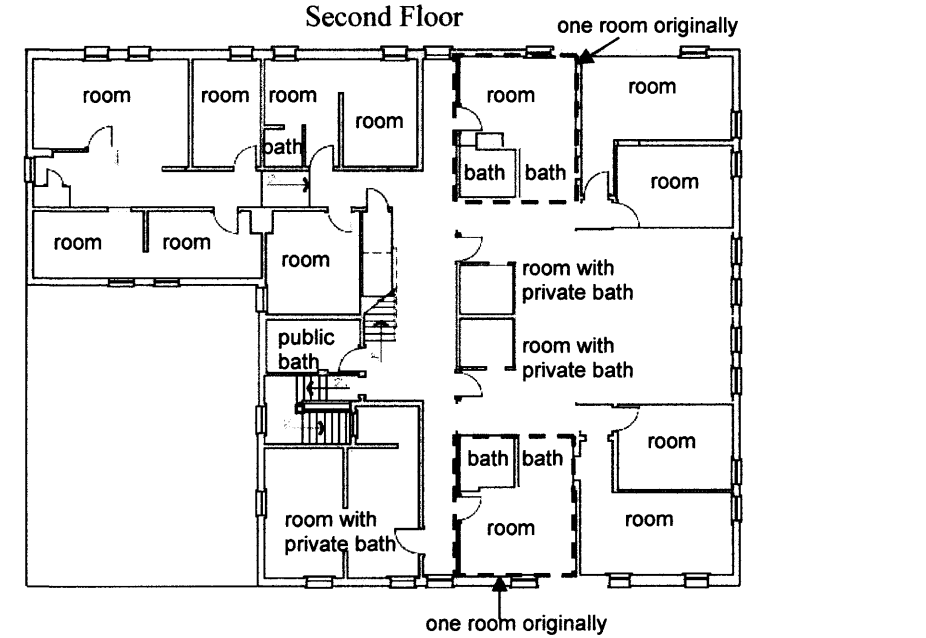
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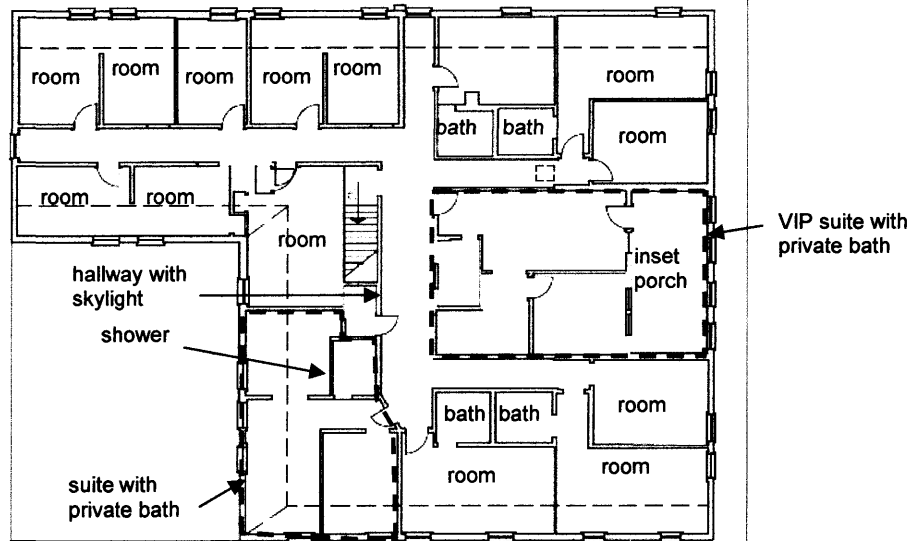
**Herring Hotel  
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Current Floor Plans for the Herring Hotel Showing Historic Use (Source: Douglas J. Steinmetz, Cedar Rapids, Iowa)



**INSTRUCTION** SECOND FLOOR PLAN

### Third Floor



**INSTRUCTION** THIRD FLOOR PLAN

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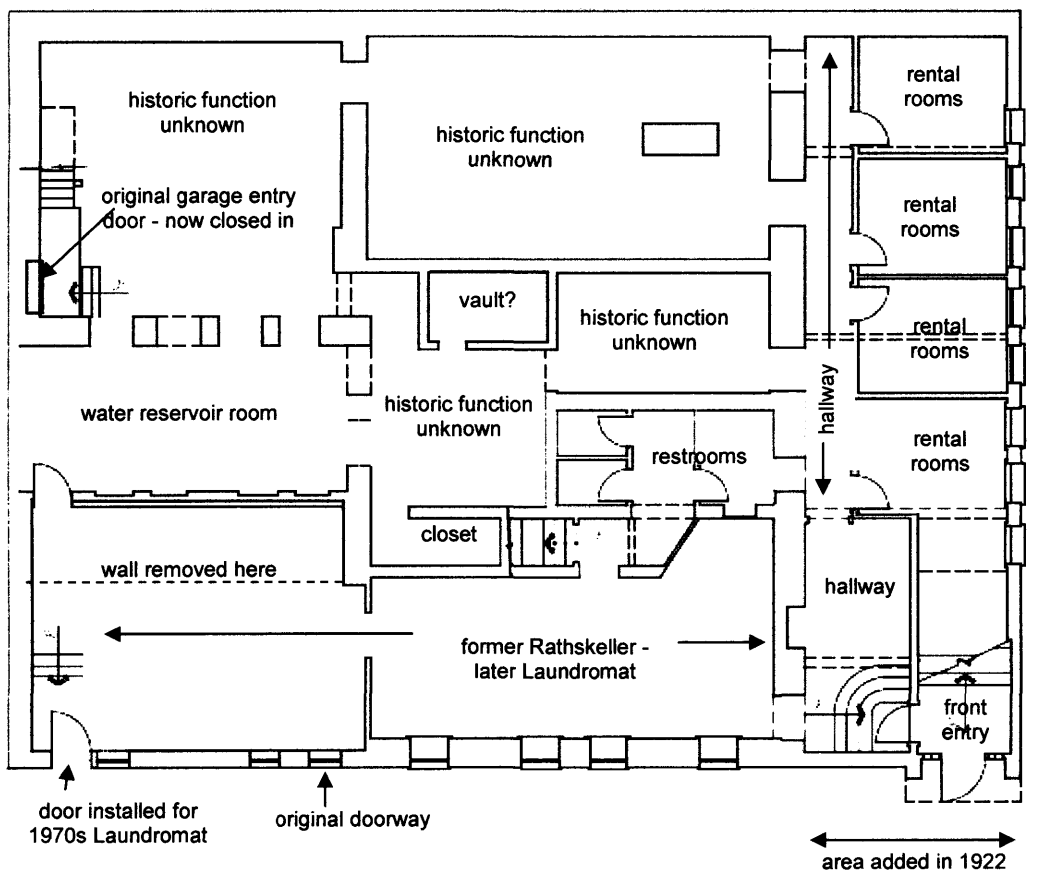
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**Herring Hotel  
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Current Floor Plans for the Herring Hotel Showing Historic Use (Source: Douglas J. Steinmetz, Cedar Rapids, Iowa)

Basement Level



**INSTRUCTION**

LOWER LEVEL PLAN



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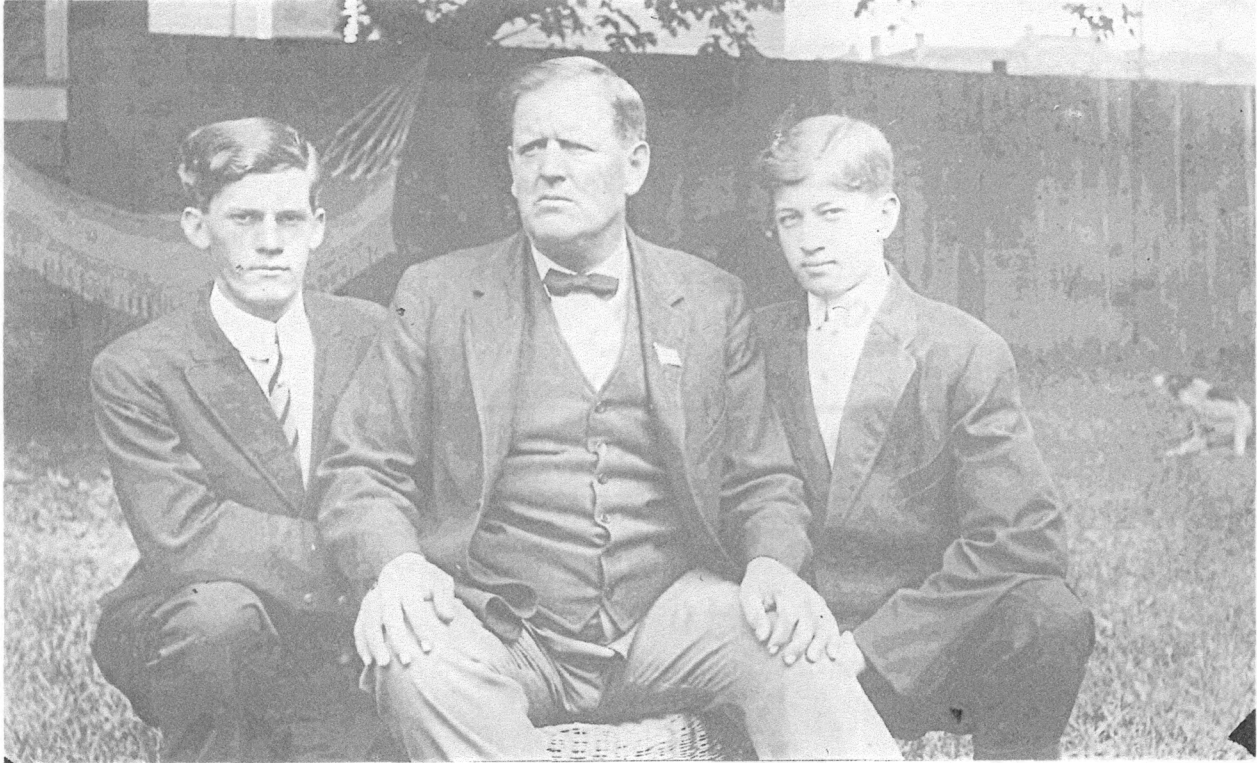
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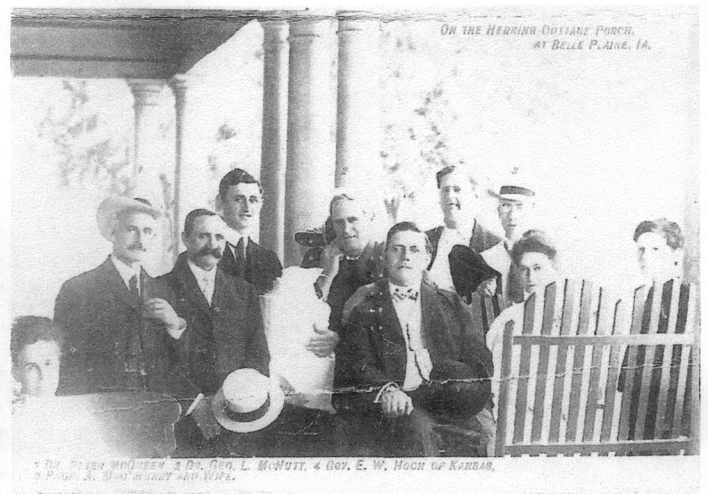
Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

Wm. P. Herring (center) and sons

(Source for all photographs on page: Herring Family Private Collection; copy provided by Kristine Pope, Williamsburg, Iowa)



Herring family on front porch of hotel in early 1900s



Herring (back row right center) with other notables including Gov. E. W. Hoch of Kansas (seated at center) c.1908 on hotel porch

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1910 Photograph of Herring Hotel looking WNW  
(Source: Belle Plaine Historical Society, Belle Plaine, Iowa)



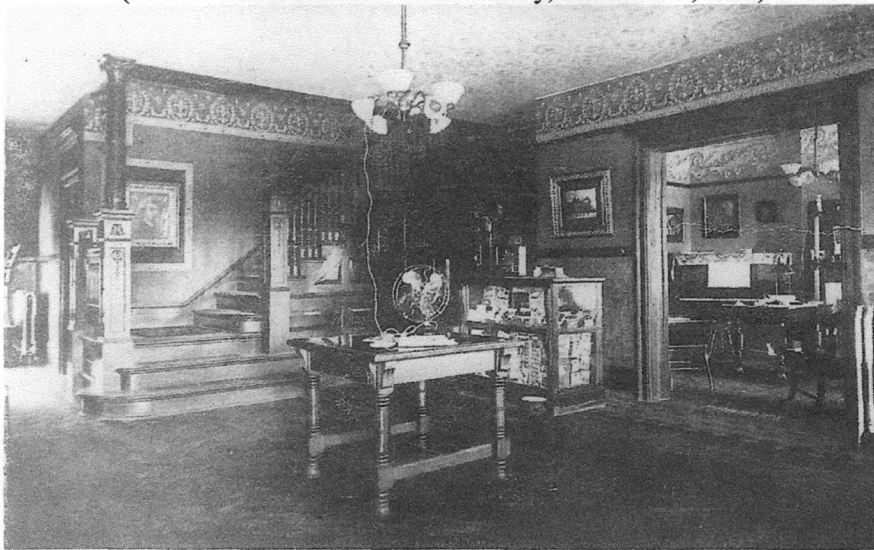
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Herring Hotel  
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c.1908 photographs of original interior of Herring Hotel  
(Source: Belle Plaine Historical Society, Belle Plaine, Iowa)



OFFICE OF HERRING COTTAGE, BELLE PLAINE, IA.  
"THE SWELLEST LITTLE HOTEL IN IOWA."



"LOBBY"

"The Herring Cottage", Belle Plaine. The Swellest Little Hotel in Iowa.

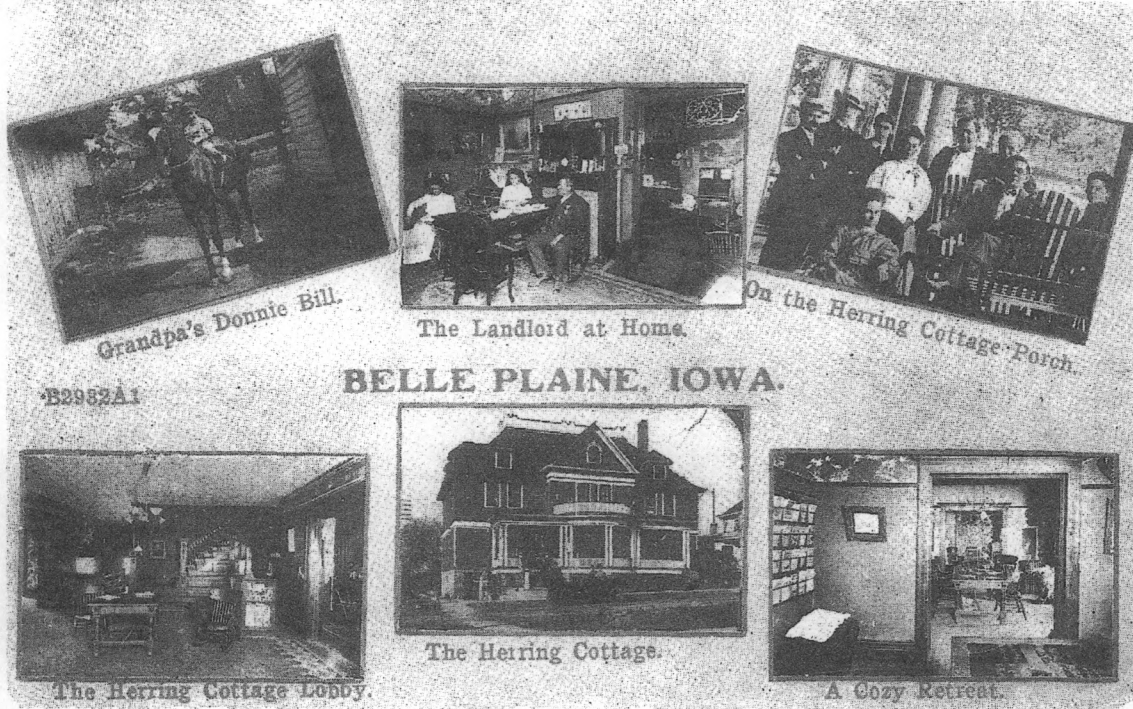
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Herring Hotel  
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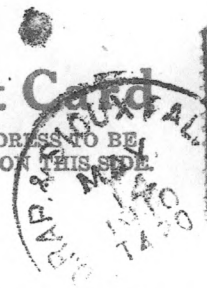
1910 postcard for the Herring Cottage (Source: James A. Morrow Family Collection, Belle Plaine, Iowa)



Published by H. G. Zimmerman & Co.  
Chicago

*We had breakfast at this hotel. Left Belle Plaine 8:30 am Got here at 9:20 am. Took a rig to see bridge # 67 & pictures taken 7 photographs of it. Dan thinks well of it. Call up Mrs. Dan & tell her he is coming back to life. Yours, Gus.*

Post Card  
THE ADDRESS TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE



*M. W. Cluxton Esq.  
567 W. Washington St  
Chicago*

*10 John Const. Co.*

*Ill*

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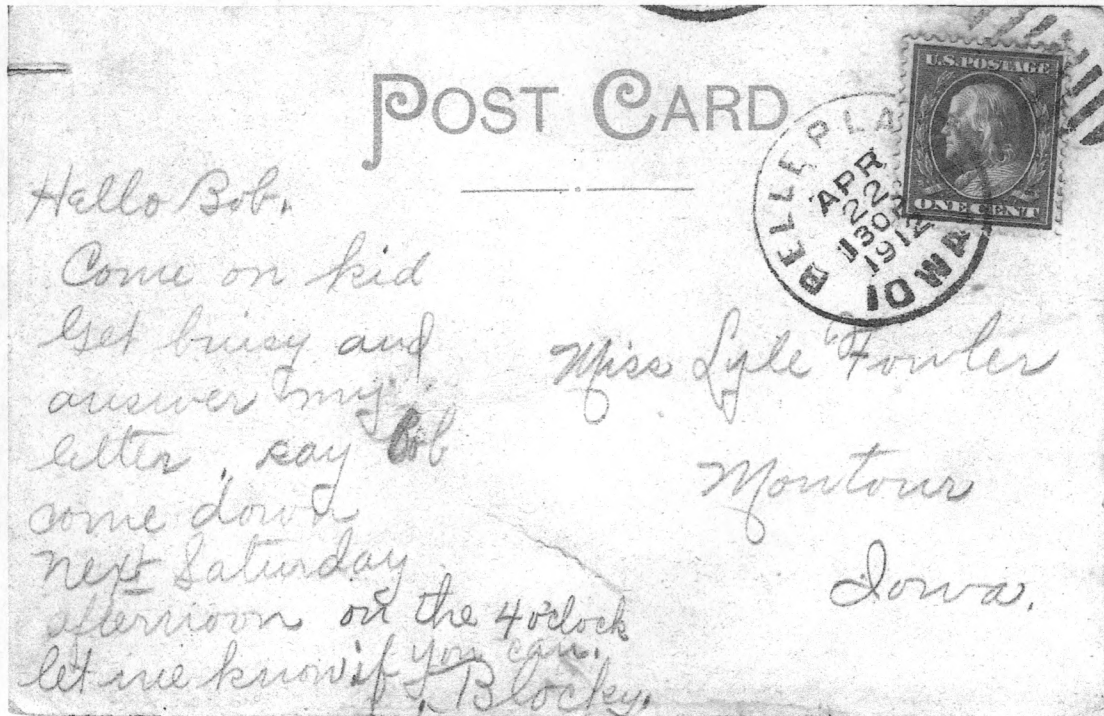
Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

1912 postcard for the Herring Cottage (Source: James A. Morrow Family Collection, Belle Plaine, Iowa)



"The Herring Cottage" Belle Plaine. The Swellest Little Hotel in Iowa.

No. 164 Published by S. Langsdorf & Co., New York. Germany





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Herring Hotel  
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c.1913 photograph of Herring Hotel (Note: the sign is also on the 1914-22 remodeled hotel and the porch has the same "Official Hotel American Motor League" sign on the porch. Lincoln Highway signs not yet in place.) (Source: Belle Plaine Historical Society)



c.1914 photograph of Herring Hotel (garage not there yet on rear so also pre-1919. Inset shows signage on the pole, which shows the route of the Lincoln Highway heading west with both a "Lincoln L Highway" sign and an "Iowa Official Trans-Cont. Route" sign below with two arrows pointing to left. The Lincoln Highway Control Station sign is not yet on the porch, suggesting a pre-1915 date for this photo and with the upper floor added to the building, a 1914 date is indicated for this photograph.) (Source: Herring Family Collection)



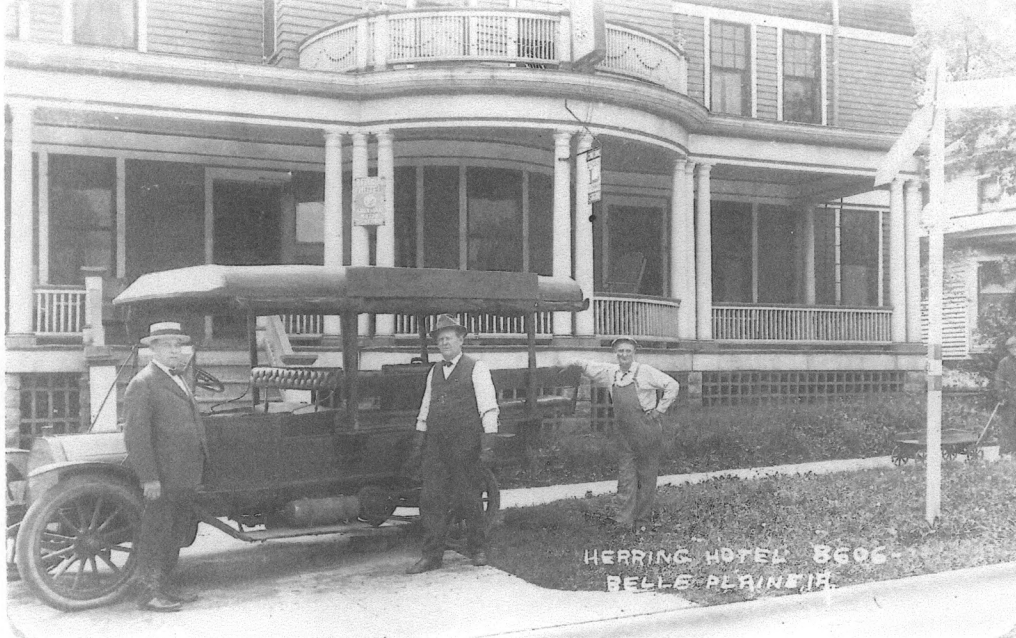
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c.1915-19 photograph of Wm. P. Herring (center) with autobus he used to pick people up at the train station (Note: American Motor League and Lincoln Highway Control Station signs on porch posts.) (Source: Herring Family Collection)



c.1922 lobby interior

(Copy obtained from <http://www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org/iowa/postcard/bentonCo/herringInterior.jpg>, 1-31-2008)



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Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

1920s photograph of Herring Hotel looking northwest. (Note: speed limit sign on post just below Lincoln Highway sign. Sign post and filling station placards on the east side first show in c.1915-19 photos of the property. Paint markings on the lamp posts and the pole further suggest the Lincoln Highway route was heading north along 8th Avenue during this period.) (Source: Herring Family Collection.)



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Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

1920s photograph showing gas station at rear of hotel, looking northeast. (Source: Lyell Henry Collection, Iowa City, IA)



1920 photo of gas station at rear of hotel, looking to the north. (Source: Belle Plaine Historical Society)



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Additional

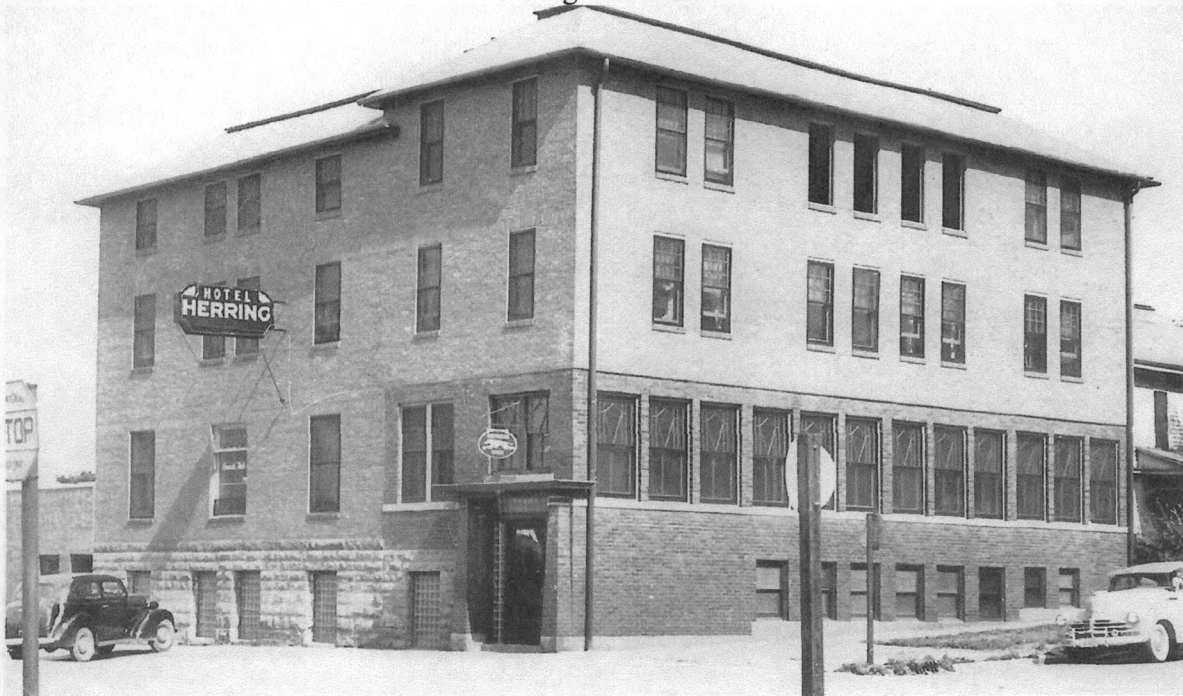
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Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

Late 1940s (based on car models) photograph of Herring Hotel, looking northwest (note rundown exterior)  
(Source for photographs on this page: Herring Family Collection, copies provided by Kristine Pope, Williamsburg, IA)



1950s photograph of Herring Hotel (car to right is an early 1950s model) showing brick-veneered exterior remodel, looking northwest.



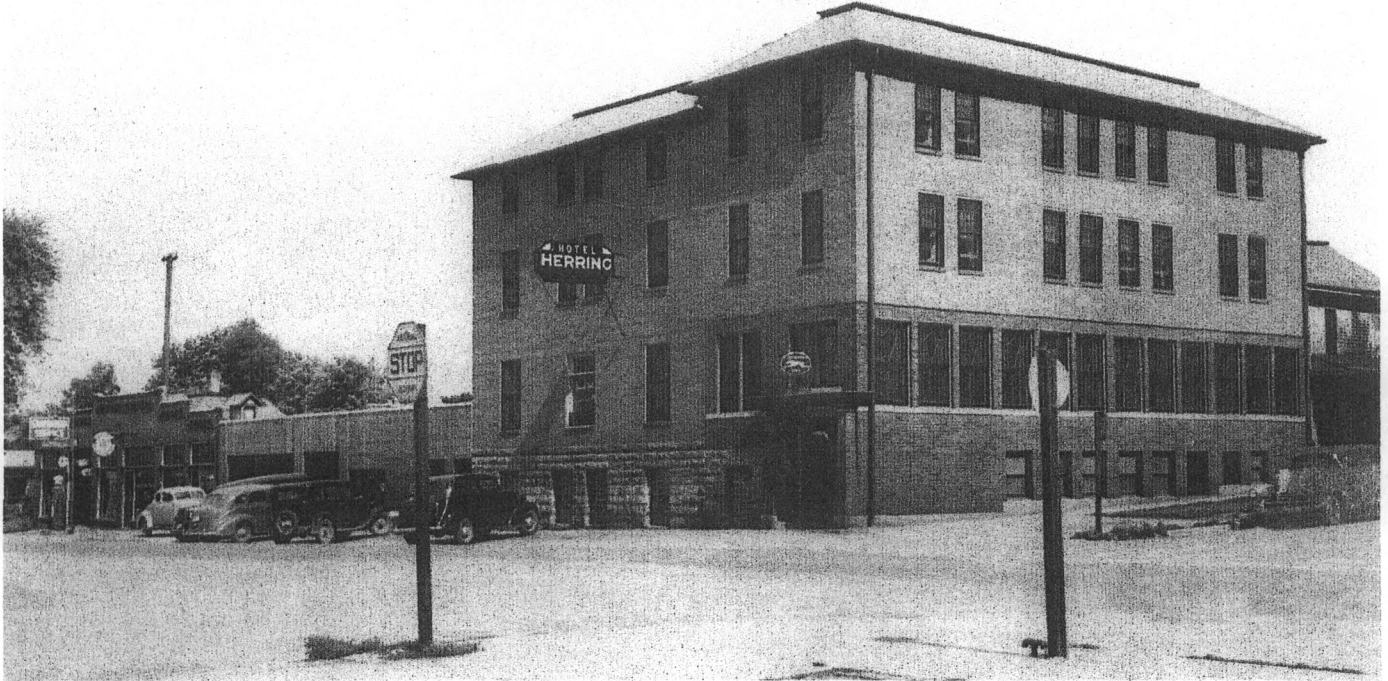
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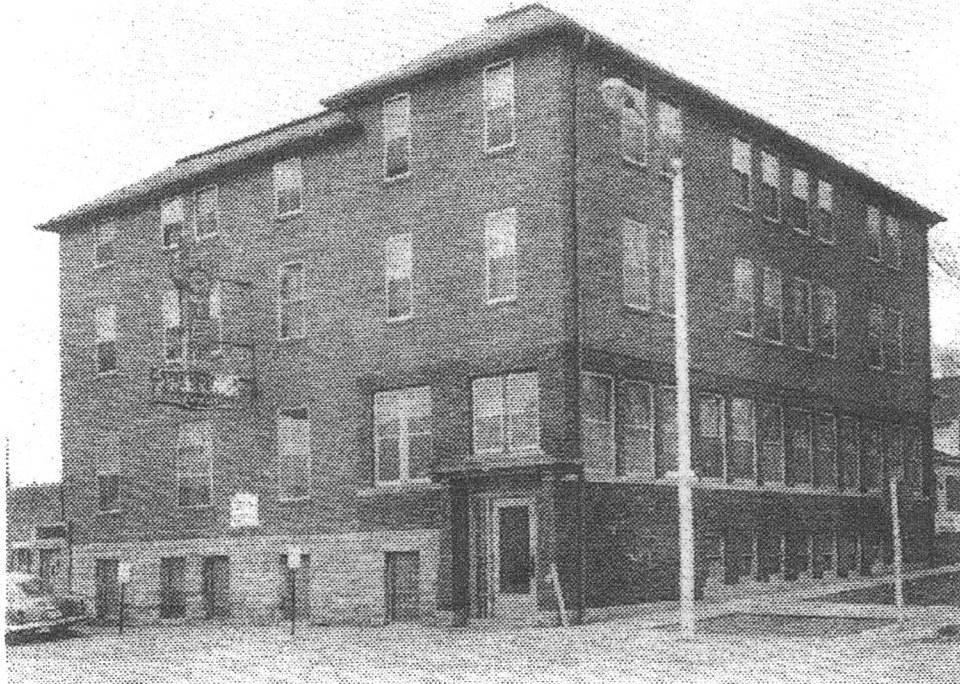
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**Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA**

1950s photograph also showing hotel, former service station, and auto sales building, looking northwest.  
(Lyell Henry Collection, Iowa City, IA)



1962 photograph of Herring Hotel looking northwest (Source: Swailes 1962)



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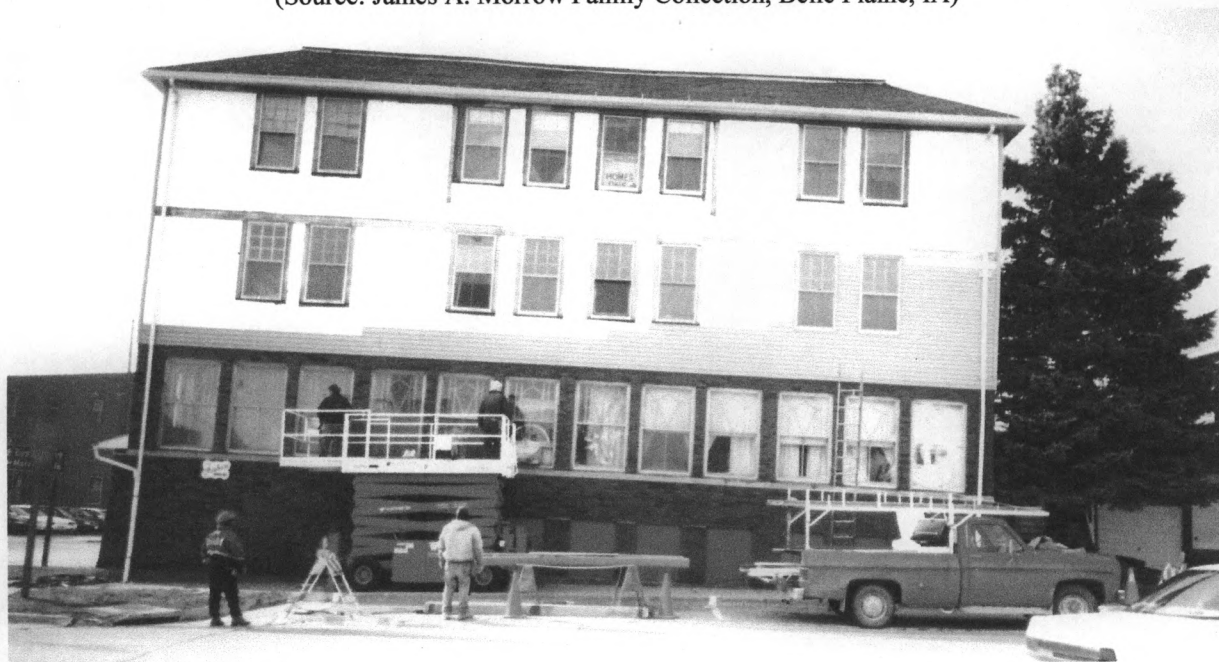
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Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

1970s photograph showing incarnation as The Graham House Hotel, looking northwest.  
(Source: Belle Plaine Historical Society)



1999 photograph showing most recent exterior remodel in progress, looking west  
(Source: James A. Morrow Family Collection, Belle Plaine, IA)



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Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

1920 Lincoln Highway Guide with Herring Hotel advertisements. Source: Midland Map & Engineering 1920

**OMAHA TO MARSHALLTOWN**

**HERRING HOTEL HERRING CAFE**  
**HERRING GARAGE HERRING FILLING ST'N**  
*What More Do You Want?*



BELLE PLAINE IOWA

**GRAYDON E. ROBESON**  
GARAGE AND AUTOMOBILE SUPPLIES  
GOODYEAR AND FIRESTONE TIRES  
STORAGE  
ONE BLOCK SOUTH OF THE LINCOLN HIGHWAY  
TAMA, IOWA

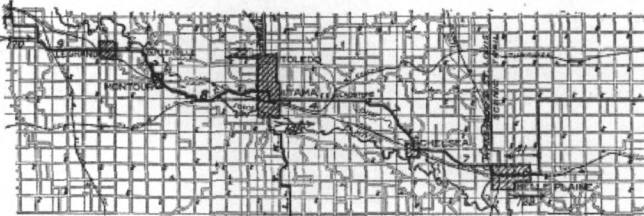


**Herring Filling Station**  
L. W. RUIH, Prop.  
The Herring  
Auto Accessories  
Trumper and  
Courtship Service  
Belle Plaine, Ia.

**'Hanus & Croskrey**  
**STORAGE**  
GENERAL REPAIRING  
One Block South of Lincoln Highway  
Phone 292-R2 TAMA, IA.

**Belle Plaine's Finest Restaurant**  
*On The Lincoln Highway*  
**The Herring Lunch** BELLE PLAINE, IOWA

**OFFICIAL**  
**LINCOLN**  
**HIGHWAY**  
**GUIDE THRU IOWA**



**HOTEL JEFFERSON**  
(FIREPROOF)  
*One of Iowa's Best*  
CAFE AND CAFETERIA  
GARAGES NEARBY  
HEADQUARTERS FOR TOURISTS  
IOWA CITY, IOWA

COPYRIGHTED 1920  
MIDLAND MAP & ENGINEERING CO.  
Des Moines, Iowa **PRICE 25c**

**Save on Your Insurance**

**Garages Stores Mercantile Stocks**  
**Automobiles**


We insure Garages, Stores and Commercial Stocks of all kinds against Fire and Lightning.  
We insure Automobiles against Fire and Theft.  
We have never had a loss suit, controversy or disagreement over the settlement of a claim.  
All losses paid promptly.  
We have paid over \$25,000.00 in losses since Jan. 1, 1920.

**AUTOMOBILE TRADE MUTUAL INSURANCE**  
Polk Building DES MOINES, IA.

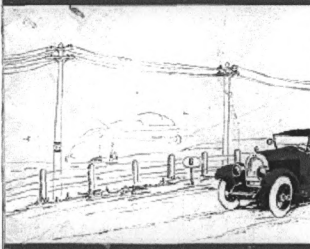
HUDSON ESSEX CHEVROLET

**Trans-Continental Garage**  
*On Lincoln Highway*  
*Opposite Herring Hotel*  
Accessories Storage Repairing

Phone 460 Belle Plaine, Iowa



**LINCOLN HIGHWAY**  
*Glad Hand Club*



**Witte's News Stand and Shining Parlor**  
CARROLL, IOWA  
CIGARETTES, CIGARS AND CANDIES  
Hat Cleaning on Short Notice  
COMPLETE LINE OF PERIODICALS  
*"Where You Find Service—Above Sell!"*

**25¢**

**Lincoln Highway Glad Hand Club**

HERE is a Club, the membership of which is made up of those who cater to the tourists along the Lincoln Highway. They are banded together for the mutual protection of the tourist. Its membership is pledged to see that in every transaction with a tourist satisfaction shall be given.

There is nothing idealistic about this. It is merely a practical business proposition based upon the idea that honesty pays and that satisfaction of service is appreciated. Consequently, if the tourist likes the treatment given by the members of the Club, they are going to come back again. We are glad you came, we are sorry you are going, we hope you have a good time, and we hope we will have the pleasure of seeing you again.

- Lincoln Highway Glad Hand Club Membership**
- Allison Hotel Lincoln Hotel Travel Inn
  - JUNCTION Nos. 6 and 66 Wheeler 1st No. 1
  - JUNCTION Nos. 6 and 82 Wheeler 1st No. 2
  - BELLE PLAINE
  - Auto Parts Company Belle Plaine Filling Station
  - Commercial Cafe Dick Camp Frank's Camp
  - Edmund Motor Co. Harlow's Oil Co.
  - Herring Hotel & Garage Hudson Rexey Sales Co.
  - Key-Ketter Automobiles Keyes Motors
  - LaDore Oil Company Harlow's Auto Agency
  - Wheeler's Garage Texas-Continental Garage
  - TAMA
  - Clifton Hotel and Cafe
  - MARSHALLTOWN
  - Pilgrim Hotel and Cafe
  - NEWARK
  - Andrew's Tourist Park
  - AMES
  - Lewis Ham Service Station Pull's Filling Station
  - BRANN
  - Corham's Service Station
  - OGDEN
  - Lincoln Service Station
  - CALDWELL
  - Witte's News Stand and Shining Parlor
  - DES MOINES
  - Hotel Denison Stuart-Jennings Co.
  - JENNETT VALLEY
  - Harvey's Service Station
  - OMAHA
  - Davenport Garage Hotel Corant
  - Omaha Stationary Company
  - \*State Headquarters.

1926 Motor Trails Map with description of Lincoln Highway Glad Hand Club, the state headquarters of which was at the Herring Hotel in Belle Plaine

Source: Lincoln Highway Glad Hand Club 1926



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Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

**Photographs:**

Name of Property: Herring Hotel  
County and State: Benton County, Iowa  
Name of Photographer: Leah D. Rogers, Tallgrass Historians L.C.  
Date of Photographs: September 8, 2007 and August 9, 2008  
Location of Original Negative: Tallgrass Historians L.C., 2460 S. Riverside Drive, Iowa City, IA 52246

Numbers keyed to plan map on page 39:

*Date of photographs #1-15 is September 8, 2007 prior to demolition of service station building next to hotel*

- #1 General view of property, View to the NW
- #2 General view of property, View to the WNW
- #3 General view of property, View to the NE
- #4 General view of property, View to the ENE
- #5 Northwest corner of hotel, View to the SE
- #6 North wall of hotel, View to the SE
- #7 General view of hotel, View to the SW
- #8 East wall of hotel, View to the West
- #9 Entrance on south side of hotel, View to the North
- #10 Entry door on south side of hotel, View to the North
- #11 Interior of entry vestibule and stairs, View to the North
- #12 Detail of "Herring" in tile floor inside front door, View to the North
- #13 Detail of interior front doors to lobby/sunroom, View to the North
- #14 Detail of front sunroom windows, View to the East
- #15 Interior of lobby showing main staircase and front desk, View to the West

*Date of photographs #16-18 is August 9, 2008 following demolition of service station next to hotel*

- #16 General view of 13th Street frontage of property, View to the WNW
- #17 View of south side of hotel, View to the NNW
- #18 View of rear of hotel, View to the ENE

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Herring Hotel  
Benton County, IA

Plan Map Showing Direction of Photograph Views for Herring Hotel  
Source for Base Map: Sanborn 1927-49

