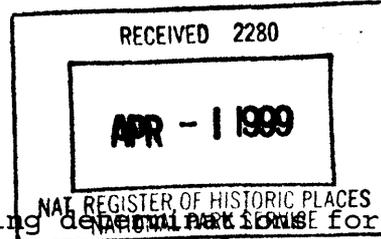


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



491

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting ~~departmental review~~ for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historical name: Teachout Building
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 500 - 502 East Locust Street not for publication N/A
city or town Des Moines vicinity N/A
state Iowa code IA county Polk code 153 zip code 50309

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Tom Morain 3/24/99
Signature of certifying official Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
4. National Park Service Certification
=====

I, hereby certify that this property is

- 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

Edson H. Beall 4-29-99

___ other (explain): _____

bee

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

=====
5. Classification
=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) The Architectural legacy of Proudfoot and Bird in Iowa.

=====
6. Function or Use
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Commerce</u>	Sub: <u>Business</u>
<u>Commerce</u>	<u>Professional</u>
<u>Commerce</u>	<u>Financial Institution</u>
<u>Health Care</u>	<u>Medical Offices</u>
<u>Social</u>	<u>Clubhouse</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Work in Progress</u>	Sub: _____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century American Movements/Commercial Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>CONCRETE</u>
roof	<u>SYNTHETICS/rubber</u>
walls	<u>BRICK</u>
other	<u>TERRA COTTA</u>

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

=====
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.)

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

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Commerce

Period of Significance 1912-1917

Significant Dates 1912

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
Teachout H.E.

Cultural Affiliation _____

Architect/Builder Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson

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

=====
9. Major Bibliographical References
=====

(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 # _____

- Primary Location of Additional Data
___ X State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other

Name of repository:

=====
10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property: less than one

UTM References: Attached

Table with 4 columns: Zone, Easting, Northing, and a blank column. Row 1: 1, 15, 449080, 4604220, 3, blank, blank, blank. Row 2: 2, blank, blank, blank, 4, blank, blank, blank. Row 3: blank, See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

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

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Claudia Cackler
 1304-Forty Sixth Street
 Des Moines, Iowa 50311
 (515) 255-8324 or 669-5629

date: 11/1/1998

=====
Additional Documentation
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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

Continuation Sheets, Maps, Photographs

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

Property Owner: Kirk V. Blunck, FAIA
 202 Fleming Building
 Des Moines, Iowa 50309
 (515) 288-9536

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

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

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Teachout Building
Polk County, Iowa

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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Setting

The Teachout Building is located in the East side commercial/civic area of Des Moines that includes the Iowa State Capitol, Iowa government buildings, City Hall and the Federal Courthouse. This downtown area is currently low to moderate density in terms of both scale and compactness of the buildings. With its diverse collection of building types, styles and ages, the overall demeanor of the district appears detached and fragmented. As is typical of many older, urban commercial centers, the majority of the older structures are in a state of decline.

Remnants of a once thriving residential, commercial and industrial center offer glimpses of what the area's past was like. Here was a commercial core near the river and at the at the foot of the Capitol, providing a full service center for the residents living in the immediate area, as well as those residents of Grandview, Highland Hills, and other neighborhoods further out. In addition, at the turn of the century, the planning effort known as the City Beautiful Movement¹, promised to link east and west banks of the river in a grand civic/governmental model. That promise was only partially realized.

Contrasted against more contemporary developments and modifications, these remnants offer some excellent opportunities for potential revitalization of both building and the riverfront landscape. In 1997, Chan Krieger & Associates conducted a study of what has recently been named "Capitol Gateway East (CGE)". The CGE building survey and assessment analysis focused upon the private commercial/retail sector. Determining that this particular area has the greatest potential of being affected by, or affecting redevelopment and revitalization efforts, the firm identified the Teachout Building at East Fifth and Locust, as one of the most important structures on the East side of Des Moines' downtown core.

The Building

The Teachout Building is perhaps the prime example of the structures that recall the lost vitality and spirit of this area, offering one of its best opportunities for renovation. "The fine six-story building appears to be competing with the capitol for its own place on the eastern horizon of downtown Des Moines", commented Linda Banger, columnist for the *Des Moines Register* recently.² Designed by Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson, it has been a landmark of the East Des Moines business district since it was constructed in 1912.

The construction plans were announced in spring, 1911.³ Originally conceived as a five-story building, there were hopes that Teachout would lease the upper floors to a hotel company for use as a "European" hotel.⁴

¹ A movement in architecture, landscape architecture and planning in the U.S. from the 1890's to the 1920's, advocating the beautification of cities in the image of the world's fairs, with civic centers, boulevards, and waterfront improvements, parks, etc.

² *Des Moines Register*, February, 1995 "Meet Me on the Corner", a historical column by Linda Banger.

³ *Des Moines Register and Leader*, July 30, 1911. It appears that Teachout may have procured preliminary drawings from a Chicago firm, but soon gave the commission to Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson. Architectural drawings at Brooks, Borg and Skiles (the successor firm) contain no indication of the involvement of any other architects than Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson.

⁴ *Register and Leader*, Friday Morning, April 14, 1911.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

Teachout Building
Polk County, Iowa

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By the time the building was nearing completion late summer, 1912, the decision was made to add a sixth floor. Iowa Trust and Savings Bank, which had occupied the former building on the site, was to occupy the second floor. The first floor would be retail. The hotel plans were dropped for one reason or another, and the third through sixth floors would be "devoted to office rooms."⁵

H.E. Teachout, his son, and later his grandson Harold, would maintain their offices on the third floor from 1913 to 1947. Over the years, the other offices were used primarily as medical, real estate and insurance offices.⁶

The Commercial style structure was seen as progressive at the time, being built of "fireproof" construction.⁷ The framing and flooring are concrete. The interior partitions are constructed of 4" X 12" X 24" Plymouth block, the precursor to gypsum fire-resistant wall products. In addition to being "fireproof", the Teachout building was the third tallest building on the East Side, surpassed only by the State Capitol and Capitol City Bank Building (7 stories, 1902, Hallet and Rawson, non-extant). It was one of the first Commercial style skyscrapers to be erected in Des Moines, that also included the Fleming Building (1907), the Hubbell Building (1912), and the Hippee Building (1913).

The narrow building is four bays wide and six bays long. The building is faced with hard, maize-colored brick. Terra cotta lions' heads, a horizontal terra cotta frieze above the first floor, and terra cotta base panels repeat along the two street sides. Decorative brickwork in a Gothic pattern forms a prelude to the structure's overhanging terra cotta cornice.

Originally the first floor of the building had large display windows for merchandising, with horizontal glass transoms made of four inch square panes of Luxfer glass with zinc muntins, along both primary street frontages.⁸ Some time in the early 1930's, the large retail window openings at this level were raised in height and replaced by an ornamental brickwork base, limestone window sills and double-hung wood office windows matching the original windows above. The zinc and glass transoms on the south and west elevations, all except for one above the entrance, were replaced by operable transoms and windows.⁹ Then in the 1970's, inappropriate, aluminum-framed, horizontal sliding windows replaced the wooden, double hung windows at the west and south elevations.¹⁰ The metal windows of the two elevations are currently being replaced by double-hung windows, identical to the originals in scale, materials and sash details. The one surviving zinc and glass transom is being restored and put back in position above the primary Locust Street entry. The original galvanized steel window frames with wire glass installed on the north and east facades have survived without alterations. These windows are being repaired in place; they require only minimal replacement of broken glass panels and repainting.

⁵ *Des Moines Register and Leader*, Sunday morning, September 22, 1912.

⁶ *Des Moines City Directories*, 1911 - 1950.

⁷ *The Midwestern Magazine*, September 1913.

⁸ *The Midwestern Magazine*, September, 1913. See continuation sheet 1, section 11. One transom still exists.

⁹ Photo # 1, Taken from Teachout letterhead, 1930's.

¹⁰ Photo #2, Beryl Halterman, former owner, 1970's.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 3

Teachout Building
Polk County, Iowa

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The most inappropriate alteration to the building was the application in the 1970's remodeling of dark brown rock-faced plywood panels over the first floor masonry and terra cotta surfaces. These panels have recently been removed. Though the underlying surface is somewhat damaged, with proper restoration of terra cotta and masonry, the storefront will look like it did in the 1930's.

The front entry is graced with a set of eight-foot tall mahogany doors, like the originals, patterned after identical doors just inside and to the east, leading into the adjoining Hohberger Building. Another set of these doors is to the west, leading into the first floor spaces. The double entry doors have side lights and operable transoms that have survived, unaltered, from the original 1912 construction.

The interior walls in the entrance are faced with gray and white Carrera marble. The floors are terrazzo, in excellent condition, with no cracking or alterations evident.

The decorative metal and wire glass elevator cage is original, though the cab was sold by the previous owner. It will be replaced as soon as a comparable one can be fabricated, using photographs of the original cab taken prior to its sale.

The hot water radiators in the entry and stairways have been reconnected in their original locations and a new high efficiency boiler installed to supply them. Locations have been determined by both photographic record and evidence of pipe chases in the floors.

The stair balustrades are cast metal with mahogany hand rail. The only missing piece of handrail has been located in the adjacent Hohberger Building and will be re-positioned and reinstalled.

Between the first and second floors in the stairway, there are windows which had been bricked up by a previous owner. New mahogany woodwork has been crafted and old hexagonal wire-glass will be replaced. Skylights, where the stairway run narrows, between the second and third stories, have two layers of glass. The exterior, stationary pane is hexagonal wire safety glass; the interior, movable wood-frames are glazed with decorative Florentine glass.

The first two floors of the Teachout Building have the most elegant spaces, with 16' high ornamental plaster ceilings. These are in addition to flat plaster and metal lath system above. In fact, there are two ceilings - another of the fireproof features. The first floor plan is open, with a smaller room in the back; the second is divided into two large spaces and one smaller office in the front. These ceilings were designed to accommodate the first floor retail spaces and the second floor banking institution.

The floors are birch, except for entry areas, where they feature 3/4" X 3/4" square mosaic tiles forming a white background with *fleur de lis* designs in red, gold and green.

Floors three through six are 11'-6" feet high from the floor to the ceiling. Today, floors three, four and five each have a single enclosed office space on the Locust Street side, with the remainder of the partitions removed. The sixth floor is completely open. The doors and operable transoms are glazed with Florentine glass. Two floors

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 4

Teachout Building
Polk County, Iowa

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have retained their wood-grained formed metal door surrounds and trim. The rest of the trim has been replaced by wood surrounds designed to replicate the metal casings used on the majority of the original office doors.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 4

Teachout Building
Polk County, Iowa

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NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Teachout Building is important historically because it is reflective of the history of Des Moines development; because it is the only remaining building associated with the life of entrepreneur and politician H.E. Teachout; and because it is one of the few Commercial style “high rise” buildings designed by master architects Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson.

Des Moines Development

The Teachout Building is reflective of the history of the East Des Moines downtown, which has been a district subject to a pattern of purging, redevelopment and frequently changing uses, often times in competition with West side development.¹¹

Development of this area began in earnest at about the same time as that of the West side of Des Moines. In 1856, a vigorous campaign was launched by both West and East side businessmen to get the Capitol building on their respective sides of the Des Moines river. In 1885, building began on land given to the state by East siders, and by 1894 it was completed. It was this same year that entrepreneur Horace E. Teachout had the vision to acquire his lot and three-story brick building several blocks west of the Capitol for later development.

At the turn of the century, the hope was to create a grand civic/governmental core on both banks of the Des Moines River based on the popular model recommended by the City Beautiful Movement. This innovative Beaux-Arts scheme entailed building parks, boulevards, and a central civic area using the City’s riverfront as its central axis. The plan was only partially realized. However, the entire riverfront from Grand Avenue to Court Avenue was cleared to make way for the noble civic effort, and the residential neighborhoods near the river were displaced. The growth of the Capitol would also expedite this residential displacement, and ultimately have a negative impact upon the continued vitality of the East Des Moines business center. The Teachout Building reflected the eventual transition, with its ground floor retail changing to commercial office use, and by its frequent vacancies on floors three through six.¹²

In 1902, architects Hallett & Rawson received the commission for the 7-story Capitol City Bank Building on the SW Corner of E. 5th and Locust. 1911 saw construction of a new City Hall. That same year, Horace E. Teachout, East side visionary, began plans for what would be the tallest commercial building on the East side. An East Des Moines booster, he was supporting development that provided a first-rate commercial core near the river and at the foot of the State Capitol. This area would provide a full service center for the residents living in the immediate area, as well as those residents of Grandview, Highland Hills, and other neighborhoods further out.

¹¹ *DES MOINES: CAPITOL GATEWAY EAST* Urban Design Plan, 1997, by Chan Krieger & Assoc., Brooks Borg & Skiles, Developmental Strategies, Inc., and Howard Stein Hudson.

¹² Des Moines City Directories, 1911 - 1950.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 5

Teachout Building
Polk County, Iowa

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As East Des Moines evolved, it redefined its commercial presence by luring development that might otherwise occur in the suburbs. It adapted, but was never able to create momentum or the significant critical mass necessary for full-scale success. That there was East side pride is not in question. The "East Des Moines Club," whose mission was to promote the East side, was located in the basement of the Teachout Building from 1974 to 1993.

The last, and possibly most significant event, that would forever impact the district's dynamics occurred in the early 1960's. With the construction of the MacVicar Freeway, Des Moines realized the upheaval caused by urban renewal and transportation projects across the country. Upon completion, the freeway imposed a steady and unrelenting stranglehold upon the future of the East side. The freeway became a physical barrier between the East side core and the remaining neighborhoods directly to the north that once supported it. It also offered an efficient means by which residents could easily access other commercial destinations within the city, especially the ever-expanding western suburbs, thereby passing the East side.¹³

The building was a candidate for renovation in the 1970's, in one of the many renovation and rebuilding attempts during the area's recent lifetime. The previous owners completed the demolition of interior partitions, finishes and HVAC systems, but did not go through with the remodeling.¹⁴ Although the ground floors of the building were occupied by a company known as Flightags, floors three through six, loaded with debris, stood vacant for years, entirely unoccupied and unserviceable from 1974 until the recent rehabilitation.

The building has recently been granted a chance for a proud, new existence. It was one of many buildings that had been radically modified at street-front level in a wrong-headed attempt to "modernize" its image and streamline its maintenance requirements and costs. However, since its purchase by architect Kirk V. Blunk in 1997 and consequent restoration, it stands a chance of catalyzing the entire East Des Moines downtown area as a viable economic and historic district. Of course, it would not be the first of its neighbors to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It would join the State Capitol Building (1885), the Old State Historical Building (1909), Des Moines City Hall (1911), the Studio Building at 524 E. Grand (1890) and the Northwestern Hotel, 321 E. Walnut (1914).

Association with H.E. Teachout, Entrepreneur and Politician

The Teachout Building is the only surviving building personally associated with Horace E. Teachout, one of Des Moines' most prominent businessmen and elected public servants in the late 1800's and early 1900's. His home at 1301 East Grand was demolished for Urban Renewal in 1966.¹⁵

¹³DES MOINES: CAPITOL GATEWAY EAST Urban Design Plan, 1997, by Chan Krieger & Assoc., Brooks Borg & Skiles, Developmental Strategies, Inc., and Howard Stein Hudson.

¹⁴ Conversations with Beryl Halterman, previous owner.

¹⁵ Des Moines Tribune, September 17, 1966.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 6

Teachout Building
Polk County, Iowa

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In 1876, at the age of 30, Teachout moved to Des Moines from New York for improved business opportunities.¹⁶ He was elected secretary of the Chamber of Commerce in 1880 and was appointed by ex-Governor Merrill to serve on the Des Moines Improvement Committee, along with such well-known Des Moines businessmen as James Callanan, T.E. Brown, J.S. Polk, George Hippee, and J.H. Windsor.¹⁷

Teachout is probably most well remembered as the persistent builder of the first electric street car line in Des Moines, 1886 - 88, which he was able to sell to J.S. Polk in 1889 for \$350,000.

This business venture was an aside to Teachout's ice business, his original business enterprise, first known as the Capital City Ice Company, and later as the Des Moines Ice Company. The timing for his enterprise was excellent, as the demand for ice grew quickly as the population expanded.

Typical of many "booster" types in U.S. history, Teachout also organized the Mutual Telephone Co. in 1889, and served as its treasurer and secretary. In 1891, helped to organize the Home Savings Bank, and served as its vice president. One bank not being sufficient to satisfy his business propensity, in the same year he organized the Citizens Bank at Benton, Savings Bank at Waukee, and later the Citizens Bank at Earlham, Farmers Bank of Ankeny, and Citizens Bank at Dallas Center. He retained an interest in all of them, except Earlham and Dallas Center, well into the twentieth century.

Teachout's political career was as impressive as his lively business endeavors. In 1895, he was elected a member of the Polk County Board of Supervisors. He was made chairman of the board, an office which he held for four years. This may have been the first time he came into contact with the architectural firm of Proudfoot and Bird, since it was during Teachout's tenure that plans were made and a contract signed for the construction of the Polk County Courthouse.

In 1896, he was elected to the East Des Moines School Board. He was made treasurer, a post which he held for the next four years.

In 1901, Teachout was elected representative for Polk County (Republican) in the Twenty-ninth General Assembly of the State of Iowa. He was re-elected to Thirtieth and Thirty-first General Assemblies and served on several important committees.

Horace E. Teachout died in February, 1917. It has been more difficult to find out information about his son, Herbert Teachout, other than the fact that he was a "capitalist" and involved in some of the same businesses as his father.

¹⁶ Most biographical information that follows on Horace E. Teachout is from two comprehensive newspaper articles, a feature that appeared in the *Des Moines Register and Leader*, Sunday, May 2, 1909, and his obituary that appeared in the *Register* February 23, 1917.

¹⁷ Brigham's History of Des Moines and Polk County, 1911, by Johnson Brigham, State Librarian of Iowa, p.306.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 7

Teachout Building
Polk County, Iowa

Herbert's son, Harold Teachout, was quite well known in the community. He became the chair of the Des Moines Parks and Recreation Board, Secretary of the East Des Moines Club, on the Bowling Proprietors board, and an official at the Drake Relays. Teachout Aquatic Center and Teachout Park and Pool were all named for him in recognition of his philanthropic contributions to these projects. He sold the building in 1947 to Jester Real Estate.¹⁸

The Work of Master Architects Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson

It was probably through his political, civic and business enterprises that Horace E. Teachout became acquainted with the Des Moines architectural firm of Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson. Speculation aside, it would have been highly unusual for him not to have been familiar with the work of these architects. For well over forty years, Proudfoot & Bird¹⁹ played an extraordinarily significant role in designing Iowa's architectural heritage. The firm's years of permanent Iowa residency, dating from 1896, illustrate an unusual continuum. Few firms can trace a similar record of uninterrupted practice, one that also placed them in the forefront of architectural practice in any state.²⁰

The Proudfoot firm was considered the foremost architectural firm in Iowa, especially between 1910 and 1925, when Harry Rawson was a partner. While the firm was not on the cutting edge of architectural experimentation, it provided a solid body of design within the self-imposed limitations of the demands of their clients and the accepted architectural styles for the period. The architectural philosophy of the firm can be characterized as conservative, both in design and attention to cost. Their designs reflected those who commissioned them: the local boards of education, the State Board of Education, county boards of supervisors, successful, old-line households, and prosperous commercial businesses.

The firm was responsible for several major office buildings, over two hundred residences, more than one hundred commercial buildings, including the Teachout Building, and some fifty public schools across the state. Approximately thirty apartment buildings and a like number of banks are also represented in the firm's records. In addition, they designed ten Carnegie libraries, hotels, theatres, lodge halls, churches, hospitals and other public and semipublic buildings such as courthouses in five counties, the Iowa Fish and Game Pavilion at the Iowa State Fairgrounds, and the Central Fire Department firehouse in Des Moines.

The Proudfoot & Bird firm evolved and changed over time. William Thomas Proudfoot & George Washington Bird began to seek commissions as partners in 1882. Their first commissions were out of state, primarily in Kansas and Utah.

¹⁸ Miscellaneous correspondence found at Teachout Building.

¹⁹ The firm name has changed periodically to reflect various partnerships.

²⁰ Information on Proudfoot and Bird is primarily taken from "The Architectural Legacy of Proudfoot & Bird in Iowa, 1882-1940, a national Register Multiple Property Nomination," by Barbara Beving Long, 1988, property of the State Historical Society of Iowa. The study is well documented with primary sources.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 8

Teachout Building
Polk County, Iowa

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Proudfoot and Bird first appear in the Des Moines city directory in 1896. In 1898, the firm gained their crucial commission in Iowa that vaulted them to eminence. They won the competition for a new collegiate building (Schaeffer Hall) on the then State University of Iowa campus in Iowa City. This led to the firm's successful and long standing relationship with the State Board of Education and their selection as the permanent architect for all three of Iowa's state colleges. They retained this position for thirty years.

Harry Rawson, formerly in a successful Des Moines practice with George Hallett, joined the Proudfoot and Bird architectural firm as a partner in 1910.

The early decades of the twentieth century were a time of unprecedented prosperity in the state of Iowa, in both rural and urban areas, due to high crop prices accompanied by high demand. Growth on virtually all fronts - in urban population, business starts and number of school-age children - meant ever more commissions for architectural firms. This resulted in vastly increased numbers of commissions for Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson.

Of the firm's some 700 some Iowa commissions between 1885 and 1940, half were in Des Moines, including some of the city's most prominent landmarks. Probably the most well known examples are the Polk County Courthouse (1900 - 1906; Fifth and Court) and the nineteen-story Equitable Building (1922-24; 604 Locust St.). In all, twenty-seven examples of Proudfoot & Bird's commercial buildings still stand in Des Moines. The Teachout Building is one of the most noteworthy, as are the Meredith Publishing Co, the Wallace-Homestead Building, Northwestern Hotel, Hotel Fort Des Moines, the Des Moines Building and the Firststar Bank Building (Formerly Valley National Bank and previously Iowa Des Moines National Bank.) To date, twenty of the firm's buildings have been individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Though the Teachout Building has some of the characteristics of other Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson commercial designs - the airy cornice treatment, the use of terra cotta, the light-colored base with darker colored shaft - it was one of the first Commercial style buildings they designed.

It was one of the first Chicago style structures to go up in Des Moines, preceded only by Hallett and Rawson's Capitol City Bank Building (1902, non-extant), David Burnham's Fleming Building (1907) and Proudfoot and Bird's Hubbell Building (1912) (now significantly altered). The 12-story Hippee Building at 6th and Mulberry (now known as the Midland Building) was constructed during the same year as Teachout's building, and opened, like the Teachout Building, in 1913.

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Teachout Building
Polk County, Iowa

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Teachout Building
Polk County, Iowa

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Verbal Boundary Description

LOT 2, H.E. Teachout Place
Polk County, Iowa

Boundary Justification

The boundaries were selected because they are the legally recorded boundary lines historically associated with the Teachout Building and it is a single property.