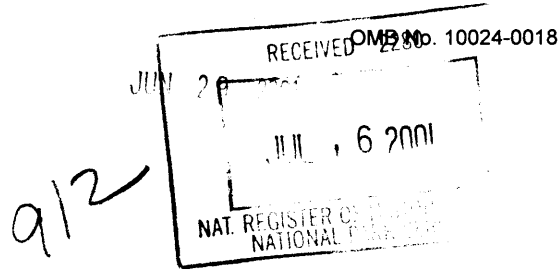


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 Commercial Hotel

other names/site number Wapello Hotel

2. Location

street & number 227 N. Main Street [NA] not for publication

city or town Wapello [NA] vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Louisa code 115 zip code 52653

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).

Rowell G. Saitte July 11, 2001
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

ENTERED AUG 30 2001

Date of Action

Wapello Hotel
Name of Property

Louisa, Iowa
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	0	buildings
		_____ sites
		_____ structures
		_____ objects
1	0	Total

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

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

NA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/hotel

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/hotel
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH C. & EARLY 20TH C. REVIVALS
LATE VICTORIAN

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
walls BRICK
WOOD
roof ASPHALT
other _____

Narrative Description

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

Wapello Hotel
Name of Property

Louisa, Iowa
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

Period of Significance

1906 to ca. 1951

Significant Dates

1906

1930

ca. 1950

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

PEASE, H. O.

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository:

Patrick Murphy Archive

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number: 7 Page: 1

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND CONSTRUCTION HISTORY

Summary Statement

The Commercial Hotel is located halfway between the Louisa County Courthouse and the business district of the town of Wapello, being about two blocks from each. It is a two-story brick building with two parts dating to different periods. One part is a Greek Revival two-story school built in 1853 that serves as the owner's residence. The second part is the two-story hotel proper built in 1906. The hotel was designed by the Wapello architect and contractor, H. O. Pease.

Detailed Description and Construction History

Old District School

The earliest section of the Commercial Hotel building (now called the Wapello Hotel), is a brick school building constructed in 1853.¹ It was used as a school until 1879. In 1887 the Hon. F. W. Tatlock, a Wapello lawyer and judge, purchased the building for his law office. He used the second floor and rented out the first floor. In 1901, Gus Tiemeyer purchased the building and lived in the old school. He had a livery stable on the corner where the hotel wing stands today (See fire insurance map on page 3).²

The school is a gable-front Greek Revival building with a three bay façade. An examination of the fire insurance maps reveals that the original building had no porch, as was common for Greek Revival buildings, but a one story porch was added before 1909, when one appears on the Fire Insurance Map of that date. The only other evidence of the porch is a glimpse of it in the historic photo of 1906-7, page 12. It has since been removed. The entrance is on the right or north side of the façade leading to an entry hall with a single flight of stairs leading to the second floor. The interior has been renovated into a large, two-story apartment (see floor plans following).

The Hotel Wing

¹ Arthur Springer, *History of Louisa County, Iowa from its earliest settlement to 1912*, Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1912), p. 636.

² "Hotel Prospects," *Wapello Republican*, April 19, 1906.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number: 7 Page: 2

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

The hotel wing was designed by the Wapello architect and contractor, H. O. Pease.³ The building has two stories and is "L" shaped. It is physically joined to the old school with a doorway into the hall of the hotel on each floor. Although architect designed, the building is vernacular in appearance with its simple form and hipped roof. The Wapello *Republican* article of September 20, 1906 states that the building was constructed of brick veneer on a wood frame. There were originally twenty-one sleeping rooms, lobby, office, dining room, kitchen, pantry, store room, laundry and sample room.

The original hotel had a wrap-around porch at the first floor level that extended across the entire building front including the school portion. An historic photograph shows the hotel soon after it was constructed (see page 12 and photo No. 15).⁴ The porch on the school seems to be a separate porch. A second historic view can be seen on a post card that was mailed in 1909. In this photo only the hotel is evident with the school/home in shadows. The original one-story porch appears here as well.⁵ That original porch has been changed substantially. Today it exists across the front and side of the protruding portion of the building only, and rather than the original one-story porch, the present one has pillars that extend up to the roof above the second floor. This appears to be an example of a wide-spread trend toward what could be called "Mt. Vernonization." This is a desire popular at that time to make buildings look like they came from the colonial past.

There seems to be an intermediate stage for the porch. The 1909 Fire Insurance Map shows a porch which seems to have a division between the school and the hotel, and the school portion appears to be narrower in depth than the hotel porch. By the time of the 1926 Fire Insurance Map, the porch on the school portion was widened to meet the width of the porch on the hotel portion. There is no Fire Insurance Map more recent that shows the present porch, which has two-stories and crosses the front and side of the protruding portion of the main street façade only. Mr. Gus Tiemeyer's estate went to Willa C. Fowler in 1937. She was possibly a daughter. In 1940 the property was sold to Kenneth B. Baker and there was a \$6,000 mortgage on the property. This might have been when the porch with two-story columns was added. Its Colonial Revival style seems to be appropriate for that date.

The building still serves many of its original functions. It is a hotel with rooms to rent by the night and apartments as well. There remains a lobby. The former dining room and kitchen area make an apartment rented by the night or longer. There are still 12 sleeping rooms. Some of the upstairs rooms have been joined into apartments and new bathrooms have been added to accommodate modern usage (see plans pages 6 & 7).

³ Ibid, and Iowa State Gazetteer and Business Directory 1908-1909.

⁴ Historic Photo, date unknown, Wapello Hotel Archives, Patrick Murphy, owner.

⁵ "Views of Wapello, Iowa," Post card of 1909, Wapello Hotel Archives, Patrick Murphy, owner.

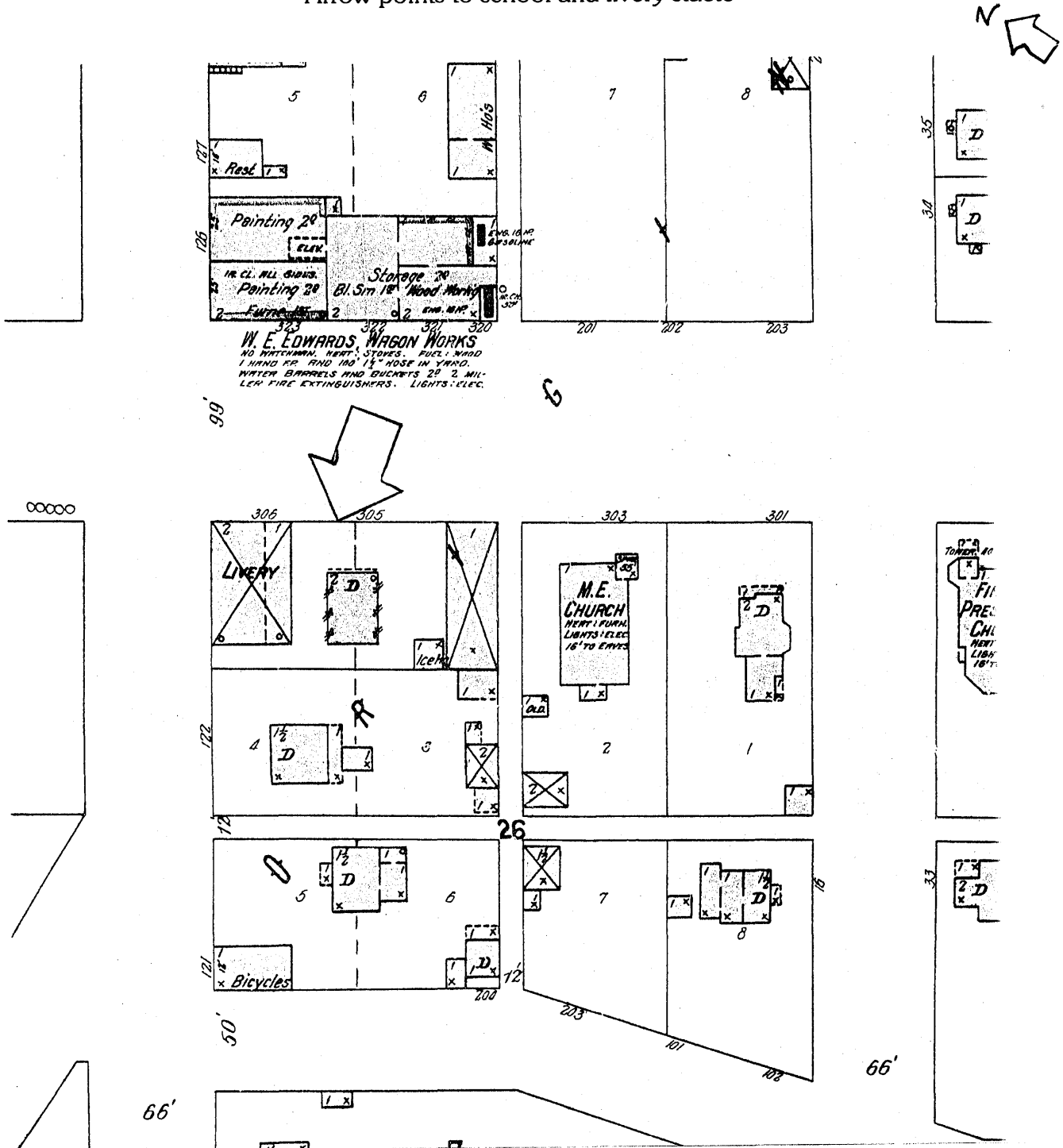
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

Section number: 7 Page: 3

Wapello, Iowa, Fire Insurance Map, Detail, 1899
Arrow points to school and livery stable



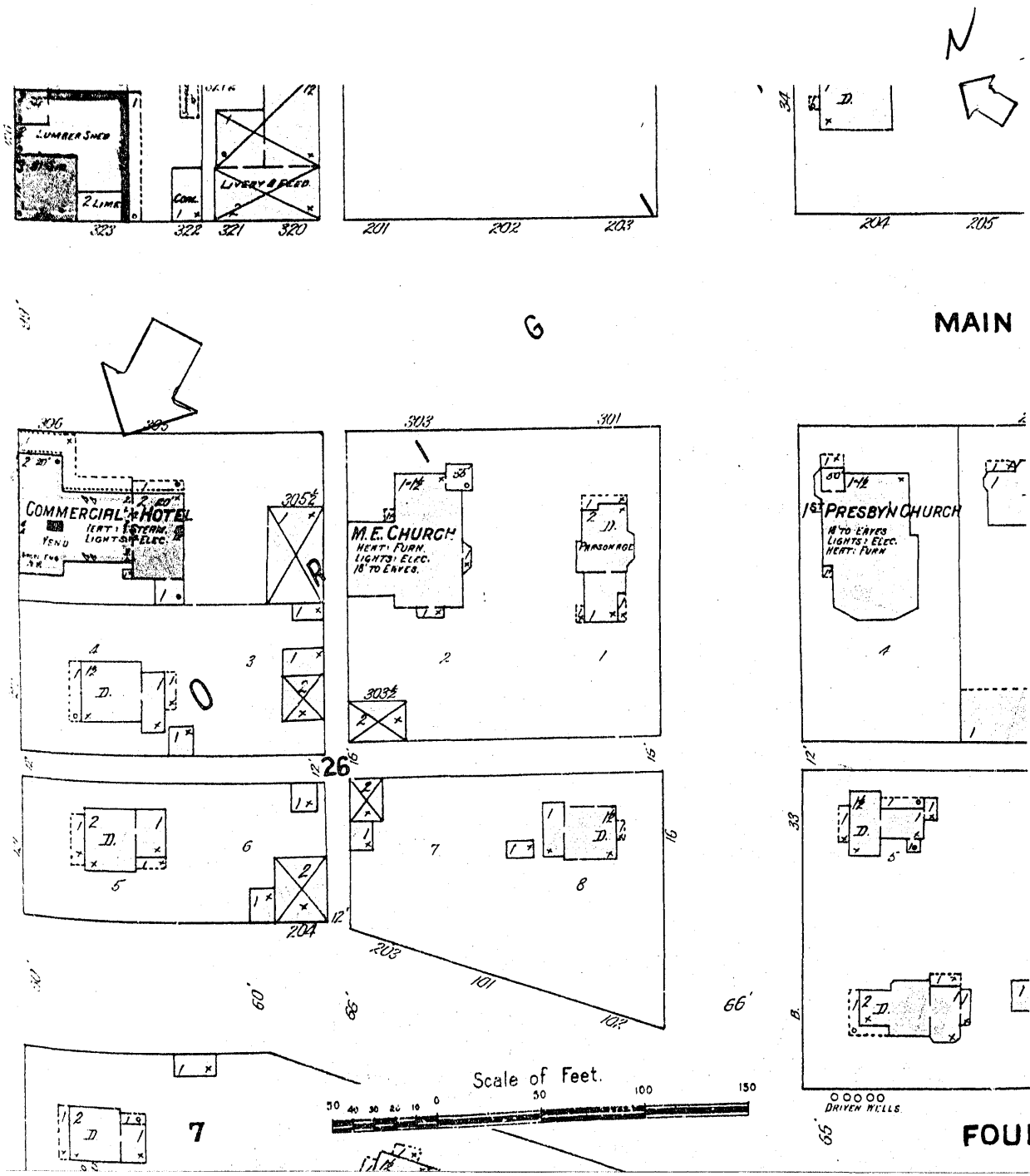
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number: 7 Page: 4

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

Wapello, Iowa, Fire Insurance Map, Detail, 1909
Arrow points to hotel.



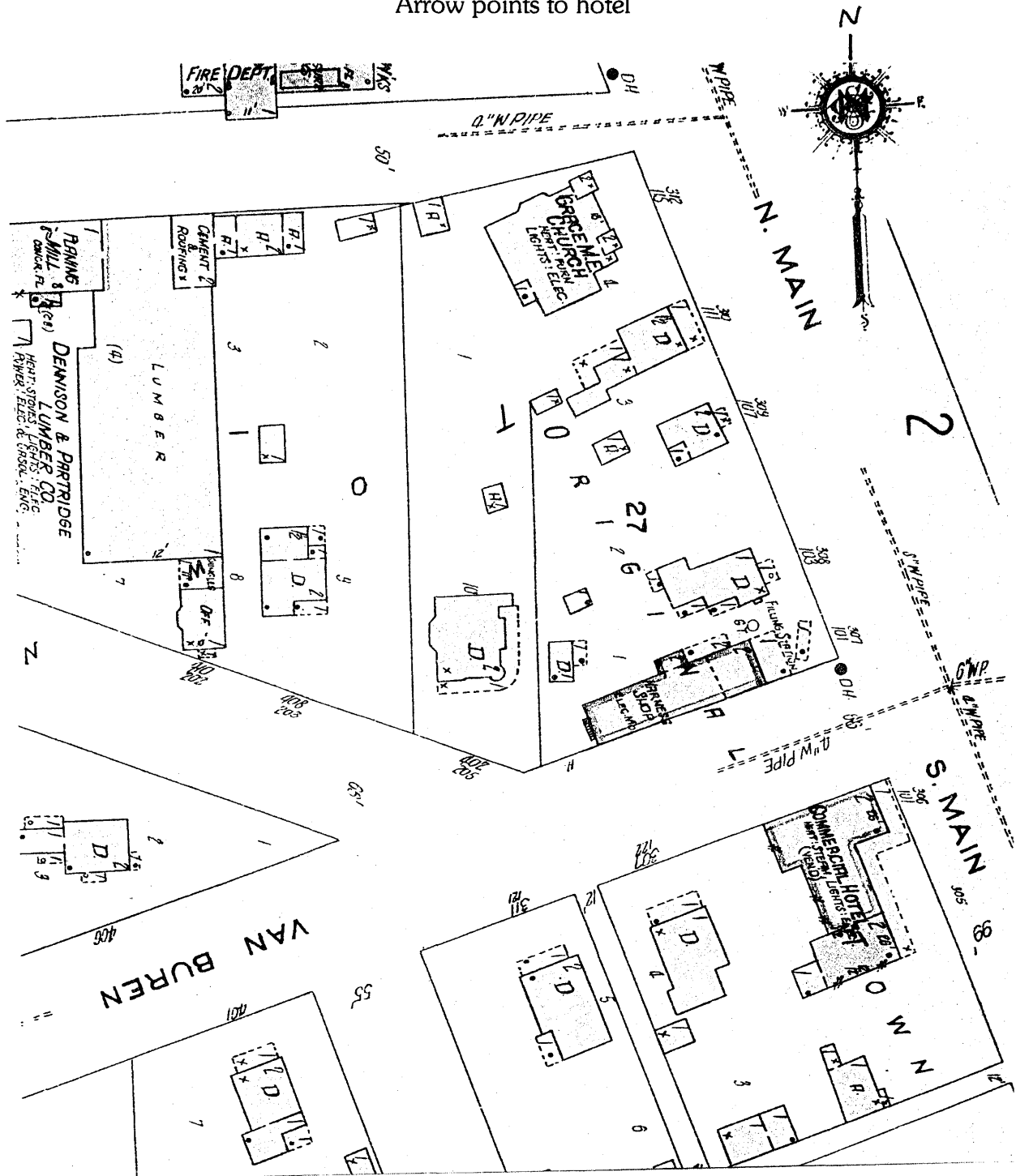
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number: 7 Page: 5

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

Wapello, Iowa, Fire Insurance Map, Detail, 1926
Arrow points to hotel



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

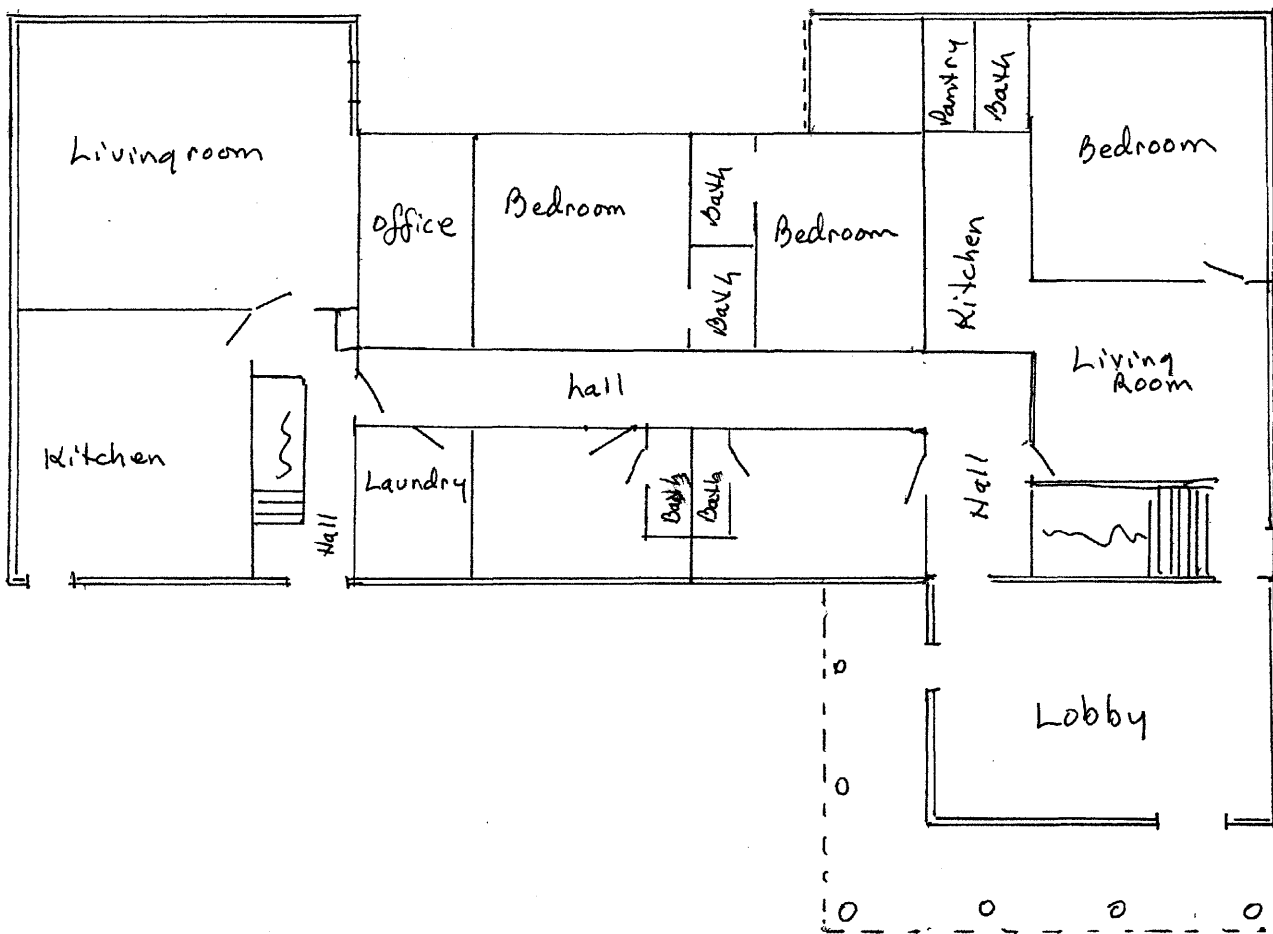
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number: 7 Page: 6

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

First Floor Plan

Sketch drawing to scale by Patricia Eckhardt, 2000.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number: 7 Page: 7

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

Second Floor Plan

Sketch drawing to scale by Patrick Murphy, 2000.



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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number: 8 Page: 8

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary Statement

The Commercial Hotel is locally significant under criterion A as an important element of the business community of the town of Wapello. It might have significance in Criterion C, but more research is needed. The hotel was designed by Wapello architect and contractor, H. O. Pease.

Significance and Historical Contexts

The Commercial Hotel In Its Town Context

The commercial Hotel is located between the Louisa County Courthouse and the Wapello business district. It has served its community well since it was constructed. A map of Wapello (page 11), shows the location of the hotel, the courthouse in the public square, and the business district. A Hotel has always been an integral part of the business community in the town of Wapello. Not only was it essential for the county residents from out-lying areas when visiting the Louisa County Courthouse, but it was needed for visiting businessmen as well.

Wapello has always had one good hotel. One of the earliest was the Iowa House. A drawing of it can be found in the Atlas of Louisa County (See page 12)⁶. It had a two-story porch or veranda on two sides. It was located by the river and was torn down years before this mention in the Wapello Republican in July 1905.⁷ The most important hotel in town around the turn of the 20th century was the Traveling Man's Hotel. It was located downtown at the corner of Mechanics and Second Streets. It was considered Wapello's only "good" hotel.⁸ Built in 1893, it had twenty rooms, and it was built of brick and supposed to be fireproof. Nevertheless, it was destroyed by fire in July 1905. A newspaper article published after the fire states "What Wapello needs is a good hotel." The article goes on to state that the Old Traveling Man's Hotel was the only good hotel. It continues to say that the Sherman House 'has done the best it could, but it is too small.' A couple of other rooming houses and small inns were mentioned, but essentially, the Traveling Man's Hotel was where most visitors stayed. It had no competition, and there were no advertisements in the newspapers for any other hotel or inn.

When the construction of the new Commercial Hotel was announced in the newspaper in 1906, the importance of a hotel to the community was again pointed out. "The need is urgent, the time opportune and the city fortunate in the prospect of soon having a hotel adequate to our needs as

⁶ A. T. Andreas, *Atlas Map of Louisa County, Iowa* (Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1874), p. 43.

⁷ "Old Iowa House was down by the River." *The Wapello Republican*, May 25, 1905.

⁸ *Ibid.*

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number: 8 Page: 9

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

the county seat and as a growing and prosperous community.”⁹ The announcement that a new hotel would be built by Mr. Tiemeyer was greeted with great optimism. Lengthy newspaper articles described the hotel when it was announced and again when it first opened to the public.¹⁰ The new Commercial Hotel began to serve the community immediately and continues to serve it today.

The importance of the hotel to the community is further emphasized by the post card illustrating “Views of Wapello, Ia.,” (see page 14). The hotel, one of only four views, has pride-of-place in the upper left hand corner. Shown with it are the Louisa County Courthouse, the important Iowa River Bridge and a view of the main business street.

The hotel’s significance under criterion C is unclear at this time, but the hotel appears to fit with the architectural framework sketched below.

Surveys of hotel architecture are infrequent and episodic in Iowa presently. A hotel or inn usually receives notice and analysis when it is researched for a survey or a National Register nomination. There are some that are famous such as the Manning Hotel in Manning, Iowa, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Richard Longstreth mentions hotels in his book *The Buildings of Main Street*, but he never identifies specific types and their characteristics. He names hotel categories as follows: Premier facility in a major metropolis, a tradesman’s hotel, a residential hotel, a hotel in a small town, a railroad hotel, and a resort hotel, but he doesn’t seem to develop them further.

The Commercial Hotel shares many characteristics with other small town hotels. It is a freestanding, two-story or more, brick, and has a porch or veranda. Its interior accommodates the multitude of functions, as all hotels must, such as a lobby, an office, a place to eat, and laundry facilities, as well as sleeping rooms, but no commercial space other than a sample room. Common sense would place the Commercial Hotel into either the “small town hotel” or a “tradesman hotel” category.

Wapello’s earliest hotel was the Iowa House mentioned earlier. It had a two-story porch on two facades. The Traveling Man’s Hotel, the hotel preceding the Commercial Hotel, appears to be of a different type. It was located in the business district, although on a corner. There are no photos, but its plan appears on the 1899 Fire Insurance Map of Wapello (see page 13). It exhibits no front porch, but there is a porch along the inner side of the rear section. A porch seems to have been deemed a part of the hotel experience.

⁹ “Hotel Prospects,” *Wapello Republican*, April 19, 1906.

¹⁰ “Tiemeyer’s New Hotel”, *Wapello Republican*, September 20, 1906.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number: 8 Page: 10

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

A few examples of the small town hotel type have been taken from various sources for comparison with the Commercial Hotel, and they exhibit similar characteristics. Two from Fort Dodge¹¹ seem to blend the two types as they seem located in business districts, but they both had the first floor veranda with no apparent commercial use on the first floor (See pp. 15 & 16). They both are freestanding buildings but larger and have more stories than the Commercial. What they have appears to be a second floor open porch on top of the first floor porch.

Three more hotels serve as comparative examples as well. The City Hotel in St. Ansgar, Iowa is on a scale closer to that of the Commercial Hotel.¹² It is free standing and two stories. A one-story porch crosses one side and part of the second side. The Grand Hotel in Mt. Pleasant has porches on two stories within the block of the building. It is free standing, and there appears to be no commercial use.¹³ This hotel is non-extant.

¹¹ *Illustrated Fort Dodge*, no date.

¹² *Mitchell County Atlas*, 1911, P. Sec. 1 Page 1.

¹³ *Mt. Pleasant Beautiful*, Mt. Pleasant Beautiful Committee, 1988, p. 29.

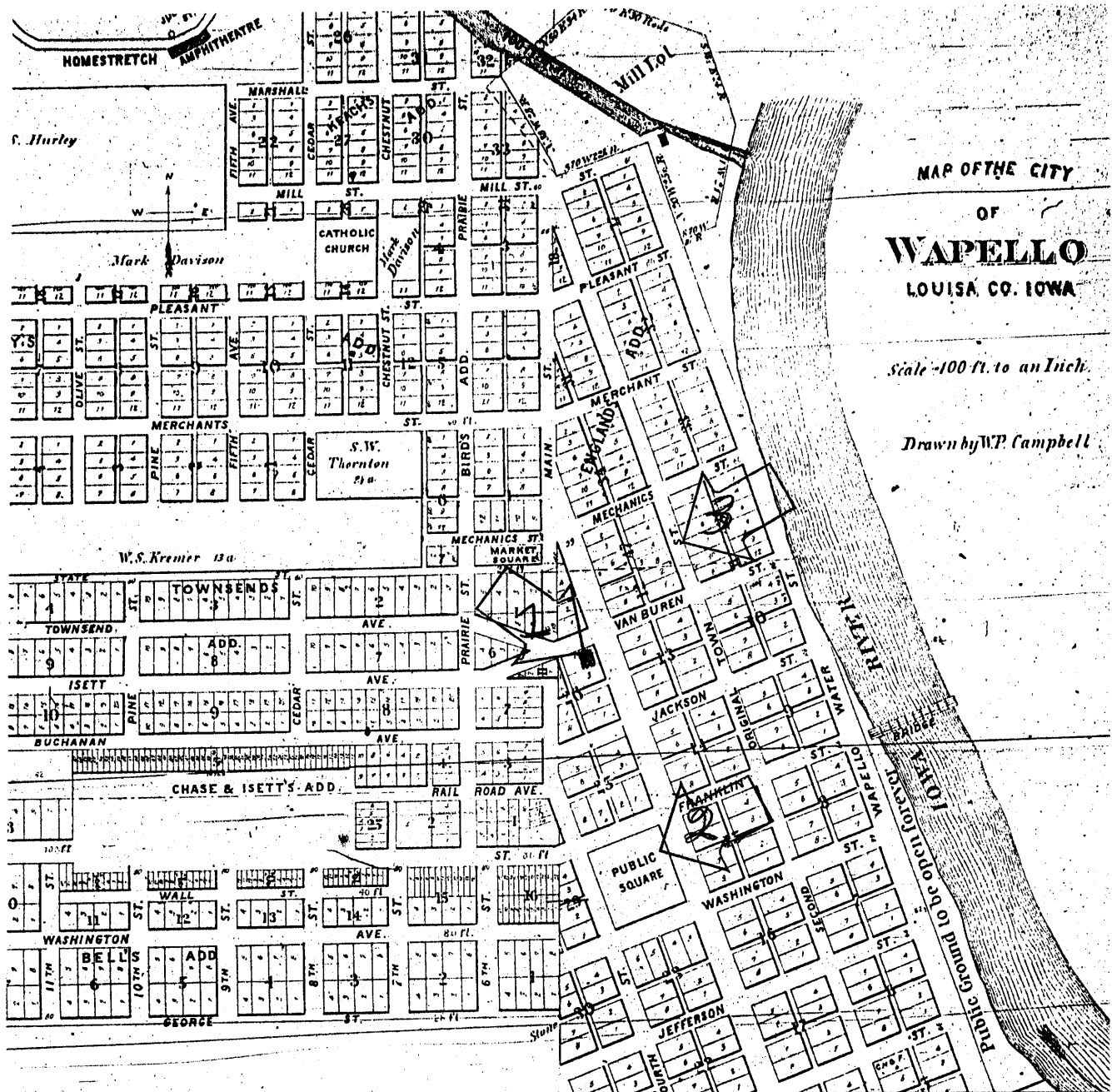
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number: 8 Page: 11

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

Map of Wapello with arrows for 1) The Commercial Hotel,
2) The Louisa County Courthouse, and 3) The Business District.



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

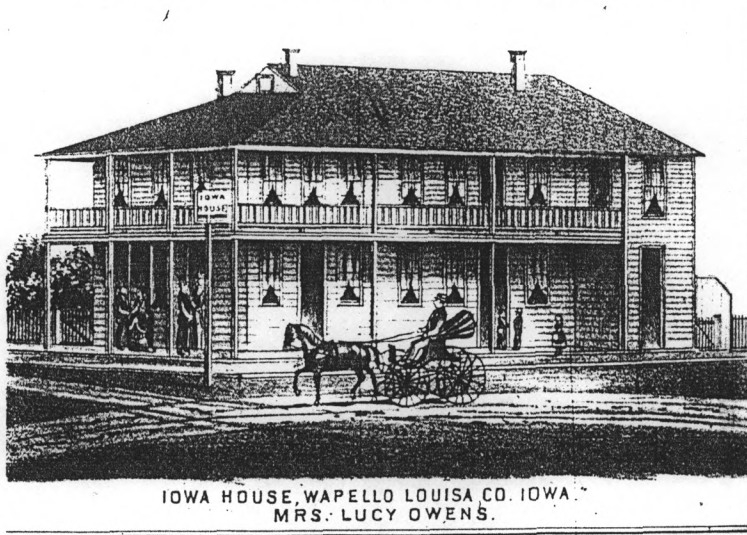
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number: 8 Page: 12

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

Iowa House

Illustration from the Andreas Atlas of Louisa County, 1899.



Historic Photograph of the Commercial Hotel, 1906-7



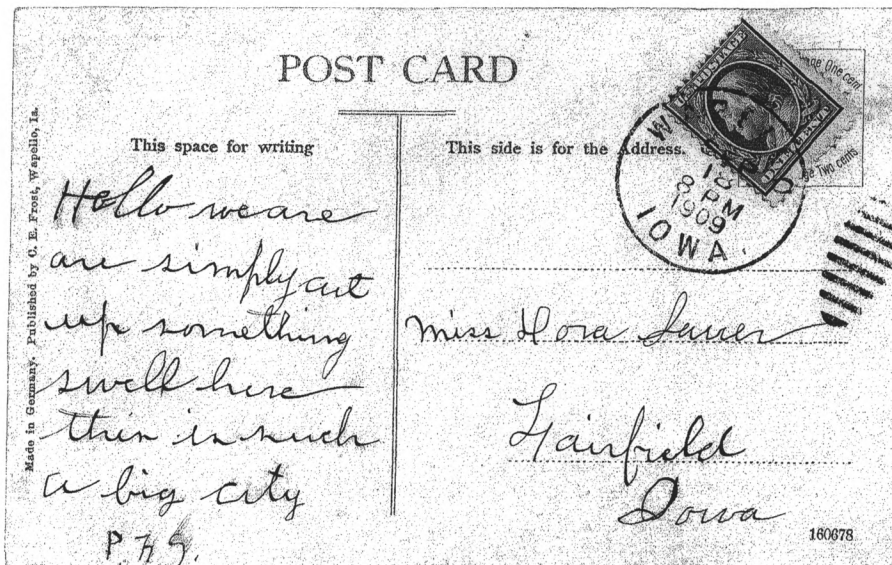
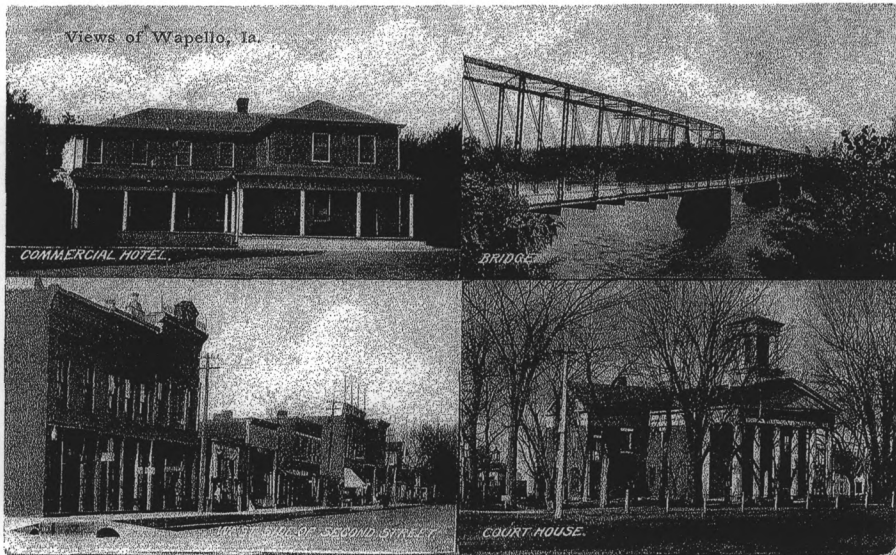
**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

Section number: 8 Page: 13

"Views of Wapello, Ia."
Post Card of 1909 in Wapello Hotel Archives.



Made in Germany. Published by C. E. Frost, Wapello, Ia.

This space for writing

This side is for the address.

*Hello we are
are simply cut
up something
swell here
than in such
a big city
P. H. G.*

*Miss Flora Lauer
Fairfield
Iowa*

180078

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number: 8 Page: 14

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

Duncombe House Fort Dodge, Iowa
Illustrated Fort Dodge, Ill. 101.



THE DUNCOMBE HOUSE.
Mr. George W. Wilson, Proprietor.

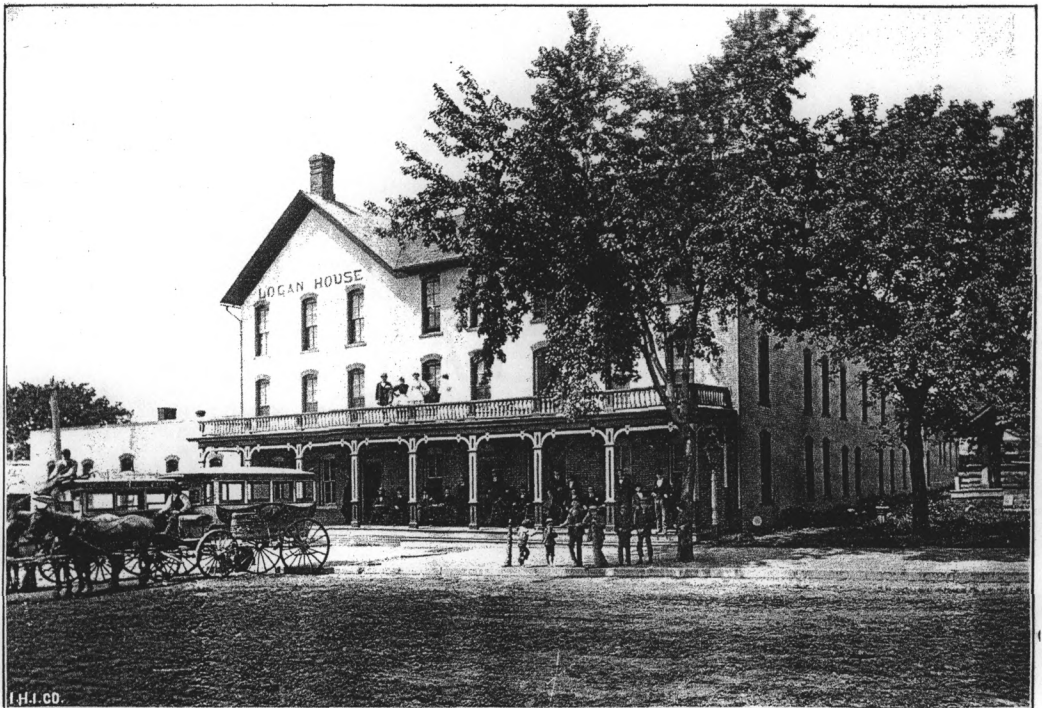
**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number: 8 Page: 15

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

The Logan House, Fort Dodge, Iowa
Illustrated Fort Dodge, Ill. 102.



THE LOGAN HOUSE.
Mr. L. R. Chase, Proprietor.

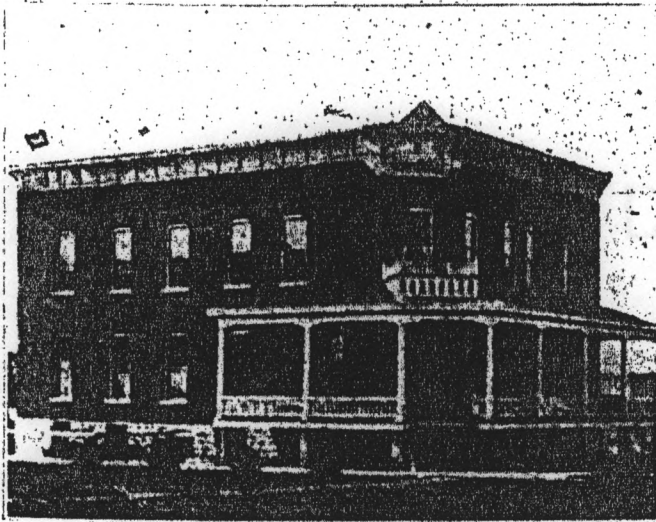
**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number: 8 Page: 16

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

The City Hotel, St. Ansgar, Iowa
From Mitchell County Atlas, 1911



THE CITY HOTEL

Martin Klindt, Prop.

Modern, Up-to-Date

Special Weekly and Permanent Rates

ST. ANSGAR - - IOWA

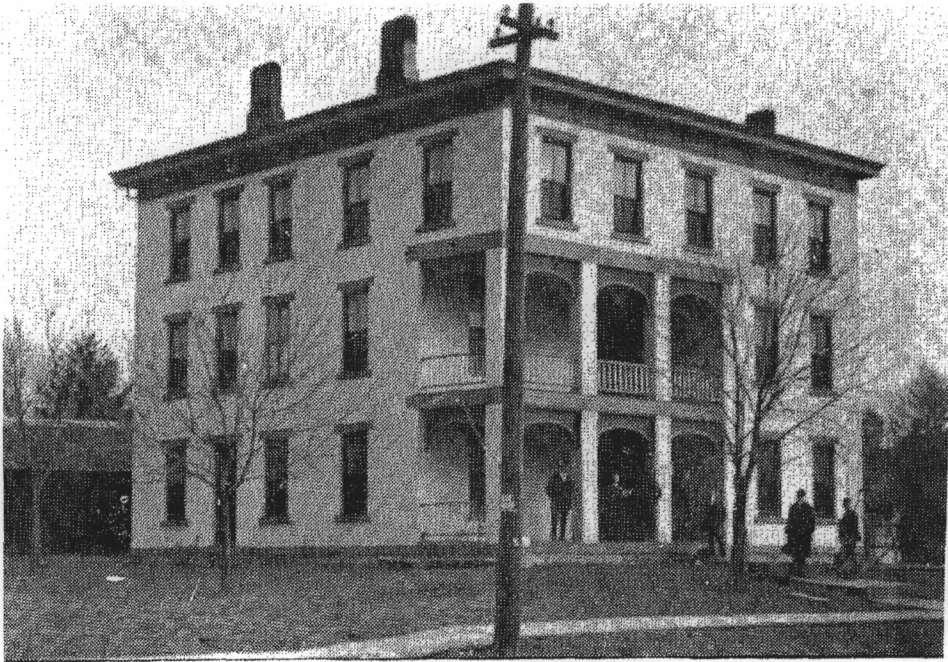
**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number: 8 Page: 17

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

Grand Hotel, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa
Mt. Pleasant Beautiful, p. 29.



THE GRAND HOTEL, WEST WASHINGTON ST.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number: 9 Page: 18

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

SOURCES

Atlas Map of Louisa County, Iowa. Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1874.

County Assessors Records for 227 N. Main Street, Wapello, Iowa.

Hotel Wapello Archives, Held by Patrick Murphy, Owner in Wapello, Iowa.

Illustrated Fort Dodge, no date.

Iowa State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1908-1909. Detroit: R. L. Polk, and Company, and A. C. Dasser, 1908.

Longstreth, Richard. *The Buildings of Main Street. Washington D. C.: The National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1987.*

Mitchell County Atlas, 1911.

Mt. Pleasant Beautiful. Mt. Pleasant: Mt. Pleasant Beautiful Committee, 1988.

Ogle, George A., compiler. *Standard Atlas of Louisa County, Iowa.* Chicago, George A. Ogle and Company, 1899-1900.

Ogle, George A., compiler. *Standard Atlas of Louisa County, Iowa.* Chicago: George A. Ogle and Company, 1917.

Polk's Iowa State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1901-1902. Chicago: R. L. Polk and company, 1901.

Portrait and Biographical Album of Louisa County, Iowa. Chicago: Acme Publishing Company, 1889.

Property Abstract for 227 N. Main Street, Wapello, Louisa County, Iowa

Springer, Arthur. *History of Louisa County, Iowa from Its Early Settlement to 1912.* Chicago: The S. H. Clarke Publishing Company., 1912.

Wapello, Iowa, Fire Insurance Maps, 1899, 1905.

Wapello Republican, January 5, 1906 – December 27, 1906.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number: 10 Page: 19

Commercial Hotel
Louisa County, Iowa

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The Commercial Hotel is located at 227 N. Main Street. It is parcel Number 0827401003. The legal description of the property is E76 ½ Lot 4 & N 20 1/4 E76 ½ Lot 3 Block 26, Wapello, Iowa.

Verbal Justification

This boundary encloses the original two lots (2 & 3), upon which the school and hotel were built, and is the property historically associated with the hotel.