

JAN 29 2016

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 10-90)  
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

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

1. Name of Property

historic name New Providence Building Association Stores  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 401-405 West Main Street Drive not for publication NA  
city or town New Providence \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity NA  
state Iowa code IA county Hardin code 199 zip code 50206

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.)

Steve King \_\_\_\_\_ 15 JAN 2016  
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



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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Commerce/trade\_\_\_\_\_ Sub: Department store\_\_\_\_\_

Commerce/trade\_\_\_\_\_ Specialty store\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Commerce/trade\_\_\_\_\_ Sub: \_Specialty Store\_\_\_\_\_

\_Social\_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Hall\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Movements

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete\_\_\_\_\_

roof asphalt \_\_\_\_\_

walls brick\_\_\_\_\_

other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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8. Statement of Significance  
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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)

Commerce\_\_\_\_\_

Community development\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance  1911-1965\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates 1911\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder  Unknown\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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9. Major Bibliographical References  
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(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

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Tom and Marlene McDonald

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10. Geographical Data  
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Acreage of Property Less than one acre

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

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

1 15N \_485828 \_4681037 NAD 83

2 \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet.

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

S133.5FT LOT 8 BLOCK 6

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

The boundaries for this nomination include all the property historically included in the New Providence Building Association Stores.

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

name/title Marlene McDonald e-mail address  
[marlenemcd@newprovidencehardware.com](mailto:marlenemcd@newprovidencehardware.com)

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date November 20, 2014

street & number 401 Quince Ave telephone 641-497-5413

city or town New Providence state IA zip code 50206  
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Additional Documentation  
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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

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

name Tom and Marlene McDonald

street & number 401 Quince Drive telephone 641-497-5413

city or town New Providence state IA zip code 50206  
=====

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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New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

## Architectural Description

### Summary Statement

The New Providence Community Association Stores built in 1911 are located in the small rural farming community of New Providence, (1905 population 240, 2010 population 228) Hardin County in central Iowa. (2010 census)The building is in the heart of the 200 foot business district of the community. Other businesses are across the street to the west and to the south, but residential homes are within the city block of the businesses. The building faces south on the corner of Main Street going east and west, and the side of the building paralleling Main Street going north and south. The one-part 20<sup>th</sup> Century brick commercial building is divided into three sections with large glass display windows. The brick work has some ornamentation but is mostly basic to the function of the 80'x 86.5'building. The north side of the building has a driveway for deliveries and rear entrances. The building has good integrity and would be recognizable to the builders in 1911. It continues to be used as social center and commercial business, one of which is an original business occupant, New Providence Hardware store established in 1863.

### Description

#### Store Front (West Main Street)

The front of the building is divided by pilasters into three store sections. A postcard c 1914 (e.g. Fig.1) shows the street and building are separated by a broad sidewalk with two steps ascending into recessed entries. Each entry is flanked with a single display window with two transom windows. The doors have been replaced with aluminum frame glass doors and have large transom windows above that could be opened for ventilation, but because of air conditioning are not used currently. Each store section has brick and wooden bulkheads which are the foundation for showcase windows. The store sections are unified by simple patterned brick work above the windows and the parapet wall.

The display windows are the distinguishing features to the individuality of the sections. The west and east sections have two showcase windows topped with four fixed-pane obscure transom windows across the front. The east section's outer windows have been closed in with wooden panels that serve as decorative signage. A few trim accent pieces have been added, but every other aspect of the store section is the same as it was when it was built including much of the original glass. The smaller middle section has a single display window on either side of the entrance with the transom windows covered with wood panels, though the original windows may be observed from the inside. In the recessed door area the left display window has been replaced



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with a smaller window and a wall below. These changes were made in the 1970's to accommodate an air conditioner above the window. The west section display windows had been shortened in the 1970's, but were fully restored using thermal pane glass in 2005 to match the historic photos the building and the wood framing of the east section.

East side (North Main Street)

The foundation of the east side is poured concrete supporting walls of hollow clay tile faced with brick. The solid soft red face brick used on the building measures 3 7/8" depth x 2 1/2" high and 8 1/4" long, joined with 3/8" mortar joints. The mortar analysis, tested August, 2012 from mortar removed from the front of the west store, is tan in color and extremely soft in consistency with an approximate ratio of three parts of sand to four parts of lime by volume. The sand used was relatively coarse.

The simple brickwork on the 80 foot long wall is continuous in design, broken only by windows and a side entry door. There are two partial below grade level windows and three windows half way up the building. The lower three pane fixed windows have been boarded from the inside and the upper windows have been covered with decorative signage. The window openings have a masonry sash and brick arch headers. The door opening is two steps above ground level with a glass transom and an arch header matching the windows, but the door opening has been filled in for modern merchandising. The parapet walls follow the elevation of the slightly sloping roof divided by chimney stacks into three bays stepping down from front to back. The bricks between the chimneys stacks had fallen from the building in the late 1970's and were replaced with wood. The third chimney stack was partially removed in 2011 to prevent a falling hazard. In the summer of 2013, the east wall and chimney was restored with brick to match the original profile with two parallel lines of brick shown between the chimneys.

North side

The north side of the building serves as the "working side" with docks at the east and middle section and concrete steps at the west building as access to the back entries of the stores along a gravel driveway. The east section has a side door leading to the basement of the store with an arched doorway and two large arch windows on either side of the arched dock door. The windows have been filled in with wood. There are also two partial below grade arched windows that have been filled in. The middle and west section walls have been completely replaced with metal siding when the brick walls fell in the 1980's. The doors are the only openings in these sections. A small lot behind the stores once housed a warehouse, but is a grass lot presently.



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New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

The west side of the building is a shared wall with an unrelated building.

Interior

East Section

The east section is a hardware store with modern merchandising with the interior much the same as it was when it was built as a large open space with metal support columns. The fir  $\frac{3}{4}$ " x  $3\frac{1}{4}$ " tongue and groove flooring running parallel to the walls, and  $\frac{3}{4}$ " x  $7\frac{1}{2}$ " subflooring running diagonally, rests on 11" x  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x 16' joist beams. The joists are 16" apart spanning 16' from the exterior wall to 10" high x 8" wide beams running north and south in the middle of the basement. The joist is then nailed to another one completing the span across the basement to the middle section wall. The beams are supported by twenty two inch square brick columns. These brick columns also support five hollow metal columns seen in the retail space. The metal columns provide support for the roof and are duplicated in the west section.

In the 1960's, underlayment and tile were put over the original flooring in the front three fourths merchandising area. In 2010 the tile was removed and hardwood tongue and grove floor was installed while the back twenty foot of the building retains the original wood flooring. The walls are plaster covered hollow tile block. Part of the east wall's block is exposed where some of the plaster has dropped. The west wall has the original plastered hollow block tile in excellent condition. Two door openings provide access between the east and middle section. The ornate pressed tin ceiling has ten inch decorative cornice around the perimeter of the store and also covering structural beams down the center of the room with decorative eagles adorning the corner pieces.

The back twenty foot of the room is divided by a wainscot wall with stairs leading to an elevated office space and storage space above the stairwell to the basement on the east side. There are also stairs leading to a glass enclosed overhead storage space on the west wall which canopies wooden bolt bins. The rear wall has two windows, a door leading to the dock and a door leading to the basement. The original trim work on these openings is still intact, but they have been filled in for more efficient use.

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New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

### Middle Section

Originally believed to be a large space, this middle section is now divided into partitioned spaces. A separate space, for office, has been developed within the larger section that utilizes the door and west display window. This space has laminate flooring, paneled walls, and a lowered suspended ceiling. The east display window is part of the hardware store display area and has a hallway leading to merchandising area behind the office space. This hardware merchandising space has a suspended ceiling and painted original wood flooring. The remaining back half of the section is used as cold storage and mechanical area. Here the floors are three inch wooden boards, the walls are plaster, and the ceiling is decorative pressed metal with ten inch cornice as it was when it was built. A wooden canopy over the stair well to the basement serves as overhead storage. A portion of the metal ceiling above the office space has been removed and the rafters and roof foundation are exposed but otherwise it is in good condition. Two side doors connect to the eastern section.

### West Section

The original display windows had been shortened and the transoms removed with remodeling in the 1960's. In early 2000's, the original wooden floors were refinished, and the ornate metal ceiling was exposed. 1930's display cases were installed on the side walls and a drug store booth area and marble soda fountain with stools were also added. A bathroom was added on the east side behind the booth area. A back space used as a kitchen was partitioned on the west side by original stairs leading to an overhead "office" and a partial wall from the east. Under the stairs to the "office" the original storage shelves and safe remain. On the east side a door and a wall of wainscot shelving form the wall of the stairwell to the basement, and acts as support for overhead storage. The rear wall has a delivery door and was replaced with sheetrock in the late 1990s.

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Hardin County, Iowa

Statement of Integrity

The New Providence Building Association Stores retain a high level of historic integrity as it relates to all seven aspects of integrity: location, association, setting, design, workmanship, materials, and feeling.

Retention of building's original site results in a high level of historic integrity as it relates to location.

Further, retention of the resource's physical and functional relationship to the historic commercial area with which it was constructed results in a high level of integrity related to association. The building has continued its purpose as the central location for business in this small rural community. This resource is important because the building is National Register eligible under Criterion A in its importance of developing the community of New Providence and the surrounding agricultural area. The east section is the hardware store which was established as one of the first businesses in the developing town in the mid-1800s and was one of the original tenants of the brick building after a fire destroyed its wooden building. It is important that it has stayed as such throughout the period of significance. The two other sections have housed other commercial interests, and remains true to its original physical characteristics and function. The integrity of association is high.

The setting is the commercial area with its surroundings remaining much as they did at the time of the building's construction in 1911. A bank building built in 1905, across the street to the east is still present. Other commercial interests to the west complete the 200 foot business area making the business setting much as it was in 1911. Within a few blocks in each direction of the business area is the agricultural region it supports. The integrity of setting is high.

The retention of the exterior design elements that define it as an example of the Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Movements as it applies to the commercial building results in a very good level of integrity as it relates to design. The historic brick façade, large pane display windows, parapet wall and flat roof, are characteristic of the Commercial style of this era. On the east wall, part of the brick wall was rebuilt in 2013 to restore the original profile of two parallel corbel brick pattern between the chimneys. The integrity of design is very good.

The retention of the interior plan design is very good. The building is partitioned into three sections by masonry walls with open floor plans and elevated office spaces. Pressed metal ceilings with decorative cornices, metal supporting beams in the east and west larger sections

and wooden floors contribute to the design integrity. The middle section has an office and store

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Hardin County, Iowa

area with lowered ceilings within the larger open space but is in keeping with the function of commerce. The remaining space has pressed metal ceilings, original wooden floor and masonry walls. A very good level of design integrity specific to the function of commerce and the development of the community is significant under Criterion A.

As it relates to materials, the building association stores retain a high level of historic integrity. Retention of exterior historic brick façade, wooden bulkhead, and display glass positively impact integrity of materials. Retention of interior materials of pressed metal ceiling, masonry walls, metal support beams, wainscoting partitions, and wooden floors all enhance the integrity of materials. There is a high level of integrity of materials.

Integrity of workmanship is also high with the retention of historic brick, display windows, pressed metal ceilings and cornice, wainscoting partitions, wooden bolt and nail bins, and elevated office space are evidence of the construction methods of the period and the skill of the craftsmen.

With the retention of integrity of location, setting, association, design, materials, and workmanship, the building relates well to the feeling of commerce in an agricultural community in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This results in a very good level of integrity of feeling.

The owner completed a sensitive rehabilitation of the building using state and federal historic tax credits in 2013. Future plans for the building are to continue to use the building as commercial and community space.

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New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

### Statement of Significance

The New Providence Building Association Stores are locally significant (under criterion A) as the central hub of this rural town's commerce and the unified effort by the New Providence community to construct a store complex after a fire in 1910. The community is in the heart of Providence Township, once named the "Best Rural Township in the Country" (Murphy, 1922) for its rich agricultural land, value of education and progressive leadership in farming and civic duties. The business location of being in the center of town at the intersection of the main streets entering the town made it an ideal location for area farmers and local residents to get services and supplies. The destruction of businesses serving from wooden structures by a fire December 30, 1910, (e.g. Fig.2) provided the impetus to unite the community and form New Providence Building Association. The association's commission was to purchase land and erect buildings to lease space to business owners. The present brick buildings were erected consisting of three store fronts. (e.g. Fig. 3, Fig. 4) The sturdy brickwork and large display windows are characteristic of Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Movements commercial buildings. The hardware business, established in 1863, has been in continuous operation on the corner of Main and Main and believed to be the oldest hardware store in Iowa. (Hovelson, 1991) In spite of the total loss of structure and contents from the fire of 1910, a New Providence Hardware business sales ledger/journal from 1906-1907 survived. (McDonald) This document illustrates the importance of the hardware business to the community with recorded sales to the school board, county bridge construction, reconstruction of a new church (after a fire) and countless farmer transactions. The buildings have been well maintained and preserve the character and feel of the time when they were first put to use. They are the only place in town where everyday goods and services can be purchased and people can gather as a community.

The period of significance for the Nation Register listing is 1911 when the building was placed in service to 1965 because of the 50 year rule.

#### Historical background and significance:

Providence Township, one of the wealthiest townships in Hardin County, provided fertile land for new settlers almost entirely made up of members of the Society of Friends (Quaker). (History of Hardin County Iowa 1883, 1883) "It has been said that Providence Township is fortunate because it was settled by honest, thrifty, industrious, God-fearing people, who early found a way to do the necessary thing for the welfare of the community." (Marshalltown Times-Republican, 1930) Among them were the Mulford brothers. J.B. Mulford was the visionary to establish a hardware store at lot 8 block 6 in the budding new town in the fall of 1863, but it was his brother S. S. Mulford that partnered with him in 1865 to grow the business alongside the newly established town for 22 years. In 1867 William F. Andrews purchased the interest of J.B. Mulford, who retired and S.S. Mulford was again the sole proprietor in 1869 when Mr. Andrews retired. The Hardin County History of 1883 states about the business, "His stock is large and complete in all the various lines demanded in the neighborhood and he has an excellent trade, with the confidence of the community in which he resides." (History of Hardin County Iowa 1883, 1883)

S.S. Mulford, ill in health, sold the business in 1887 and moved to California. His son-in-law Frank Clampitt, manager of the store at the time and lived in the apartment above the wood framed building, told of the sale. "C.L. Haworth, head clerk in an Iowa Falls store, and Tom Pollock, then a young fellow wanting to

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find an opening made an offer on the business of 50 cents on the dollar for everything.” “the results, when it came to the final closing up of S.S. Mulford’s thirty years of business in New Providence, were disappointing.

He (S.S. Mulford) had started in as a clerk for John King, (who owned a general store) in the late fifties finally buying out his employer and gradually enlarging his business and growing up with the community. A more honest and conscientious man never lived. It showed in his countenance and was evidenced in every deal that he ever made.” “But he was not a good business man. He was too ready to trust those who did not pay and many hundreds of dollars on his books were lost. He also failed to keep strict account with himself in his use of money. There was no bank in the town, and because folks trusted him they would often ask if he could not use their surplus cash. He had funds in this way from a number of his customers. When the money was due they would prefer that he keep it, which he did, renewing the notes and adding in the interest. All this but gave a false feeling of prosperity.” “So when these friendly loans were paid and settlement made with all firms with whom he had done business, there was little left.” (Clampitt, 1935)

Commerce of the community was influenced not only by what it had, but more by what it did not have. The 1880’s brought the boom of the Chicago and North Western Railway Company. The railroad was the center of business and commerce for the day, any town along its tracks was sure to flourish. A track was being built west from Gifford and approached New Providence to give them land for a depot and a right of way for tracks. William F. Andrews persuaded the citizens to turn down the request thinking the railroad would build through the town without the gift of land, but the rail line skirted one mile north on lower ground to Lawn Hill depriving New Providence of this life line. Regretting his influence, Andrews organized a group to build a road called “The Pike” providing service from New Providence to and from Lawn Hill to accommodate the transportation of goods that the daily East West trains would bring. (Kirk, 1967) The establishment of the Chicago and Northwestern Rail Road through the newly formed town had such significance at that time that it was thought Lawn Hill being centrally located within the county would certainly become the county seat and be the demise of other communities. Some of the houses and businesses of New Providence established themselves at the new railroad town, but after about ten years they relocated back to New Providence. (Moir, 1911) The hardware store “put in a branch store at Lawn Hill when the railroad came through in 1881. This store had been run a few years, at a loss, and then, shortly before I began working for him (S.S. Mulford) had been closed and the stock brought down to New Providence, which had resulted in the doubling up of many lines, and much of this old stock remained.” Frank Clampitt stated of the Lawn Hill branch store when he was to sell New Providence Hardware for S.S. Mulford. (Clampitt, 1935)

The lack of the railroad didn’t go unnoticed or without repercussions. Even though it was surrounded by some of the best farming land in the country and settled by thrifty people, it did not see the growth that was expected. (History of Hardin County Iowa 1883, 1883) “The town always lacked the redeeming feature of a western town, namely, railroad facilities. It has, however, always been a good country town trading point, the business being carried on by the best of honest men and the people have been well served.” The result was that the town “never increased much in size and business houses.” “In 1905 the town had a population of two hundred and forty.” (Moir, 1911)

The progression of the hardware business was varied. A cancelled check dating November 15, 1887 states A. Miller, Dealer in Hardware and Drugs. An advertisement in the Northern, 1895 states O.E. Miller and Son, New Providence, Iowa, Dealers in Hardware (McDonald) and reference to Thornton and Miller hardware in the fire of 1910. (Kirk, 1967)

Devastation struck in December 30 of 1910 as a fire roared down Main Street engulfing the largely wood constructed business district. "The fire was discovered about 1:20 o'clock midnight in the buildings  
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owned by Enos Reece and before help could be had the fire had reached such headway that nothing could be done to stop it and nothing could be removed from the buildings occupied by the Alberry Harness Shop, Mohler Meat Market and the local telephone company's building. The next buildings to go were the garage owned by W.L. Thornton and the buildings occupied by the New Providence Hardware Co. The last three buildings were owned by W.F. Andrews. Of all these buildings mentioned nothing was left standing except the cement walls of the garage. (New Providence Nearly Destroyed, 1911)

Businesses not affected by the fire were the New Providence State Bank built in 1906, Globe Hotel and Livery, Marley Reese Barber Shop, E.L. Rash dry goods and grocery store with Harry Wood's dentist's office above, Alberry Bros. Wagon Shop, Bert Smallwood and George Campbell's blacksmith shops and the post office. (Kirk, 1967)

While the town regrouped, the hardware store kept its doors open by moving its operation to their warehouse facility. The Eldora Ledger of January 5, 1911 reported "there is little or no probability of the removal of the town although as yet no definite plans for the rebuilding have been made. It is probable that the hardware store will use as temporary quarters their store room across the street from the burned buildings." (New Providence Nearly Destroyed, 1911)

In an era before insurance claims and disaster relief funds communities were forced to rely upon one another for support. The fire damages were estimated at \$70,000 (approximately \$250,000 in 2010's standards). Influential leaders in the community gathered together to form the New Providence Building Association. The articles of incorporation state the general nature of the business shall be buying, owning and holding of real estate within the towns of New Providence or Lawn Hill, Iowa and erecting buildings and improvements thereon. Capital stock was issued in the amount of \$15,000 in 300 shares of \$50 each. The association commenced on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of March, 1911 with charter members N.S. Martin, President, E.F. Morris, Secretary, W.V. Moon, and A.F. Styles. The Eldora Ledger March 2, 1911 stated "The association is composed of more than thirty of the influential men of the community, farmers, mechanics, merchants and teachers. More than \$6,800 has already been subscribed, while \$8,000 is wanted. Active steps are being taken to begin building at the earliest moment possible. The building will be 80 x 85 feet, of brick, one story, divided into three rooms, tenants for two of which are already in sight." (To Rebuild New Providence, 1911) New Providence Hardware Company was one of the two tenants committed to the space.

Postcards showing the new merchant buildings date August, 1911. (McDonald) (e.g.Fig.4) The three store fronts were leased to individuals to insure continuation of goods and services. There were never any stores supported at Lawn Hill.

Gaps in the business of New Providence Hardware Company exist, but in the 1920's the store was leased to Walter Stickney and his son, Dave. From 1924 – 1929 Vern and Minnie Hobson had the store and was known for installing Aermotor windmills and at that time sold Red Crown gasoline from pumps in front of the store. In the 1930's Pete Pruisner was owner with Art Church and Guy Heath providing plumbing service. (e.g.Fig.5) In 1939 Lawn Hill Coop owned the store until Burt McCown returned from duty in World War II in 1946 and purchased the hardware business. (Minutes of Lawn Hill Coop, 1939-40,1945-46) Burt along with J. C. Whitehead, and Wilson H. Hadley having 1/4<sup>th</sup> interest and Otis Rash, Miriam Rash, J. Keo Rash, Fay Rash, each having 1/16 interest formed a partnership that purchased the property of New Providence Community Stores May 2, 1951. Wilson H. Hadley was to manage, control, maintain, rent, and preserve the real estate. (McDonald)



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New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

partners. Between the two families there were seven boys and it was hoped that one of them may be interested in continuing the business. In 1975 Tom, Martha's son, seeing the opportunity purchased Hoeksema's shares. In 1979 Marlene, wife of Tom, purchased Martha's shares of the hardware business and the couple purchased the buildings.

The only existing business from that time is the hardware store, still providing goods and heating, air conditioning and plumbing services to the town and surrounding communities. The middle building is display area and cold storage for the hardware. The west building is used for weekly volunteer breakfasts serving as a gathering place for the community and hosting visitors from surrounding communities. The only other remaining business in New Providence is an antiques shop.

New Providence Hardware Inc and its buildings have been the anchor of this community and significant locally and state wide. In 2002 the Iowa Department of Economic Development honored New Providence Hardware Inc as a Century Business. Among the recipients there were many newspapers, funeral homes and financial institutions, but only a couple general or hardware stores that were established in the late 1800's. New Providence Hardware Inc was the oldest business. (Century Business Program 2000-2004, 2013)

The Des Moines Register highlighted the store on its 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1991. They interviewed Jim Cory, the Iowa Hardware Association president, about the decline of the retail hardware presence. "Iowa has lost more than 600 hardware stores over the past few decades, leaving Iowa with about 800. The recession of the 1980's had a lot to do with that, he said, but there were other factors. Everyone nicked away the hardware stores, getting into one part of their business here, another part there." he said. "But the hardware stores didn't nick back. A lot of the older people in the business were reluctant to change; they still wanted to make it selling nuts and bolts. To stay in business today, the hardware store owner has to find a niche and the needs of the people." (Hovelson, 1991)

In spite of many ownership changes, New Providence Hardware has demonstrated durability without the support of being a railroad center, surviving a fire that destroyed most of the Main Street businesses, the Great Depression of the 1930s, the farm crisis of the 1980s, and the mass merchant and home center push that systematically dismantled many small businesses in rural America. It has been able to continue with the community's support and their valued customer base. New Providence Hardware is proud to be an icon of the anchor that small businesses are for their communities. It celebrated its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in the fall of 2013.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

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New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

**Major Bibliographical References**

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 12

New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

**Index of Figures**

Name of Property: New Providence Building Association Stores  
City or Vacinity: New Providence  
County: Hardin  
State: IA  
Name of Photographer: Unknown  
Date of Photographs: 1914  
Location of Original Digital Files: 401-405 West Main Street, New Providence, Iowa 50206

Figure # 1

Postcard of New Providence Building Association Stores, 1914, camera facing northwest

Name of Property: New Providence Building Association Stores  
City or Vacinity: New Providence  
County: Hardin  
State: IA  
Name of Photographer: Unknown  
Date of Photographs: December 31, 1910  
Location of Original Digital Files: 401-405 West Main Street, New Providence, Iowa 50206

Figure #2

Postcard of Main Street New Providence, After the fire, camera facing northwest

Name of Property: New Providence Building Association Stores  
City or Vacinity: New Providence  
County: Hardin  
State: IA  
Name of Photographer: Unknown  
Date of Photographs: 1911  
Location of Original Digital Files: 401-405 West Main Street, New Providence, Iowa 50206

Figure #3

Postcard of Building Association Stores, Rebuilding with brick, camera facing north

Name of Property: New Providence Building Association Stores  
City or Vacinity: New Providence  
County: Hardin  
State: IA  
Name of Photographer: Unknown  
Date of Photographs: August 5, 1911  
Location of Original Digital Files: 401-405 West Main Street, New Providence, Iowa 50206

Figure # 4

Postcard of New Providence Building Association Stores completed, camera facing northwest

NPS Form 10-900-a  
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 13

New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

Name of Property:	New Providence Building Association Stores
City or Vacinity:	New Providence
County:	Hardin
State:	IA
Name of Photographer:	Unknown
Date of Photographs:	August 5, 1911
Location of Original Digital Files:	401-405 West Main Street, New Providence, Iowa 50206

Figure # 5

Postcard of New Providence Building Association Stores, 1914, camera facing northwest

Name of Property:	New Providence Building Association Stores
City or Vacinity:	New Providence
County:	Hardin
State:	IA
Name of Photographer:	Unknown
Date of Photographs:	1930's
Location of Original Digital Files:	401-405 West Main Street, New Providence, Iowa 50206

Figure # 6

Interior of east (hardware) store, camera facing north

Peter Pruisner, owner, on the left, Art Church, employee, on the right

Name of Property:	New Providence Building Association Stores
City or Vacinity:	New Providence
County:	Hardin
State:	IA
Name of Photographer:	Google Maps
Date of Photographs:	April 27, 2014
Location of Original Digital Files:	401-405 West Main Street, New Providence, Iowa 50206

Figure # 7

Plat map city of New Providence and New Providence Building Association Stores location

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 14

New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

Information in common for Figure # 8 and Figure # 9

Name of Property:	New Providence Building Association Stores
City or Vacinity:	New Providence
County:	Hardin
State:	IA
Name of Drawer	Marlene McDonald
Date of Photographs:	April 27, 2014
Location of Original Digital Files:	401-405 West Main Street, New Providence, Iowa 50206

Figure # 8

Map of interior of New Providence Building Association Stores

Figure # 9

Photo map of New Providence Building Association Stores

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

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New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

NR Nomination Photograph Log Page

Name of Property:	New Providence Building Association Stores
City or Vacinity:	New Providence
County:	Hardin
State:	IA
Name of Photographer:	Tom McDonald
Date of Photographs:	September 14, 2014
Location of Original Digital Files:	401-405 West Main Street, New Providence, Iowa 50206

Photo #1

South facade, West Main Street camera facing north

The following information is common to photo # 2-#5

Name of Property:	New Providence Building Association Stores
City or Vacinity:	New Providence
County:	Hardin
State:	IA
Name of Photographer:	Kevin Burkett
Date of Photographs:	April 27, 2014
Location of Original Digital Files:	401-405 West Main Street, New Providence, Iowa 50206

Photo #2

East wall, North Main Street camera facing west

Photo #3

North side, store back, camera facing south

Photo #4

Interior of east store, camera facing north

Photo #5

Interior of east store, camera facing south

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Photos Page 16

New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

The following information is common to photos # 6-#8

Name of Property:	New Providence Building Association Stores
City or Vacinity:	New Providence
County:	Hardin
State:	IA
Name of Photographer:	Marlene McDonald
Date of Photographs:	November 8, 2014
Location of Original Digital Files:	401-405 West Main Street, New Providence, Iowa 50206

Photo # 6

East store bolt and nail bin, stairwell to overhead storage facing north

Photo # 7

Middle building storage facing south

Photo # 8

Middle building storage, display window facing south

Name of Property:	New Providence Building Association Stores
City or Vacinity:	New Providence
County:	Hardin
State:	IA
Name of Photographer:	Kevin Burkett
Date of Photographs:	April 27, 2014
Location of Original Digital Files:	401-405 West Main Street, New Providence, Iowa 50206

Photo #9

West building interior facing north

North facade, store back, camera facing south



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Photos Page 17

New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

Name of Property: New Providence Building Association Stores  
City or Vacinity: New Providence  
County: Hardin  
State: IA  
Name of Photographer: Alan McDonald  
Date of Photographs: July 6, 2013  
Location of Original Digital Files: 401-405 West Main Street, New Providence, Iowa 50206

Photo # 10  
West Main Street Businesses, camera facing northwest

Name of Property: New Providence Building Association Stores  
City or Vacinity: New Providence  
County: Hardin  
State: IA  
Name of Photographer: Kevin Burkett  
Date of Photographs: April 27, 2014  
Location of Original Digital Files: 401-405 West Main Street, New Providence, Iowa 50206

Photo #11  
Tin ceiling corner insignia, west store south corner, camera facing southwest

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Imbedded Images Page \_18\_

New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

Figure # 1

From the collection of Tom and Marlene McDonald  
New Providence Building Association Stores, 1914



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Imbedded Images Page \_19\_

New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

Figure #2

Building New Providence Building Association Stores  
From the collection of Tom and Marlene McDonald  
New Providence, Iowa, The Day After, December 31, 1910



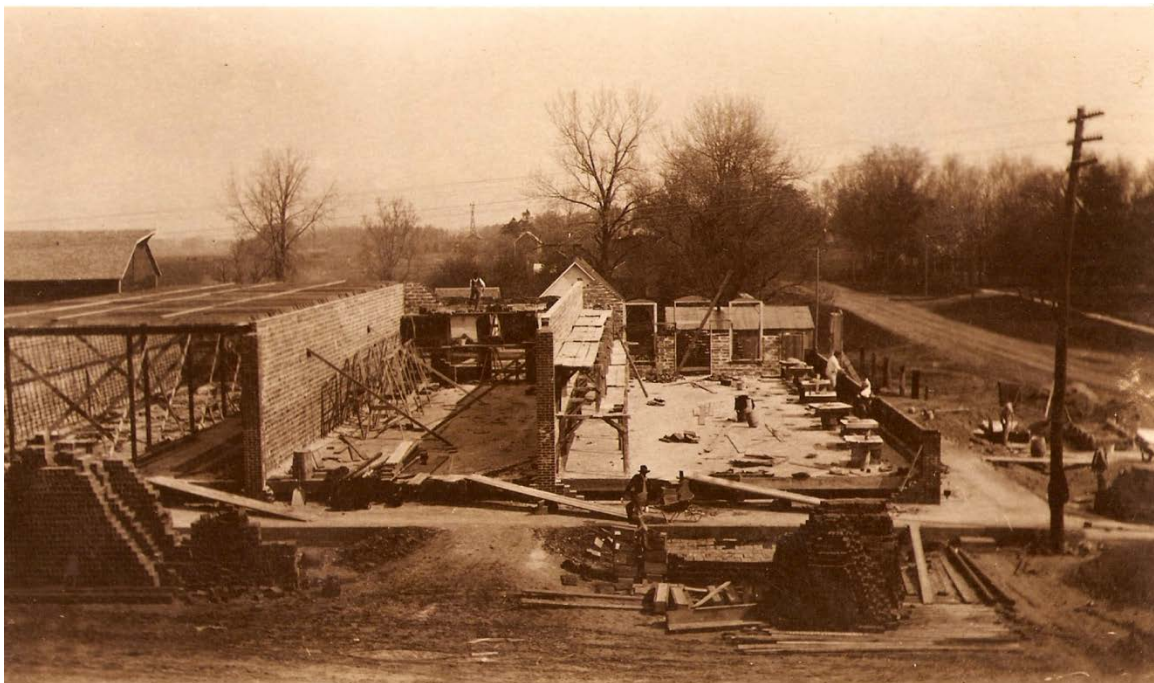
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Imbedded Images Page 20

New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

Figure # 3

Building New Providence Building Association Stores  
From the collection of Tom and Marlene McDonald  
Construction of New Providence Building Association Stores, 1911





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Imbedded Images Page 21

New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

Figure # 4

From the collection of Tom and Marlene McDonald  
Completion of New Providence Building Association Stores, August 5, 1911



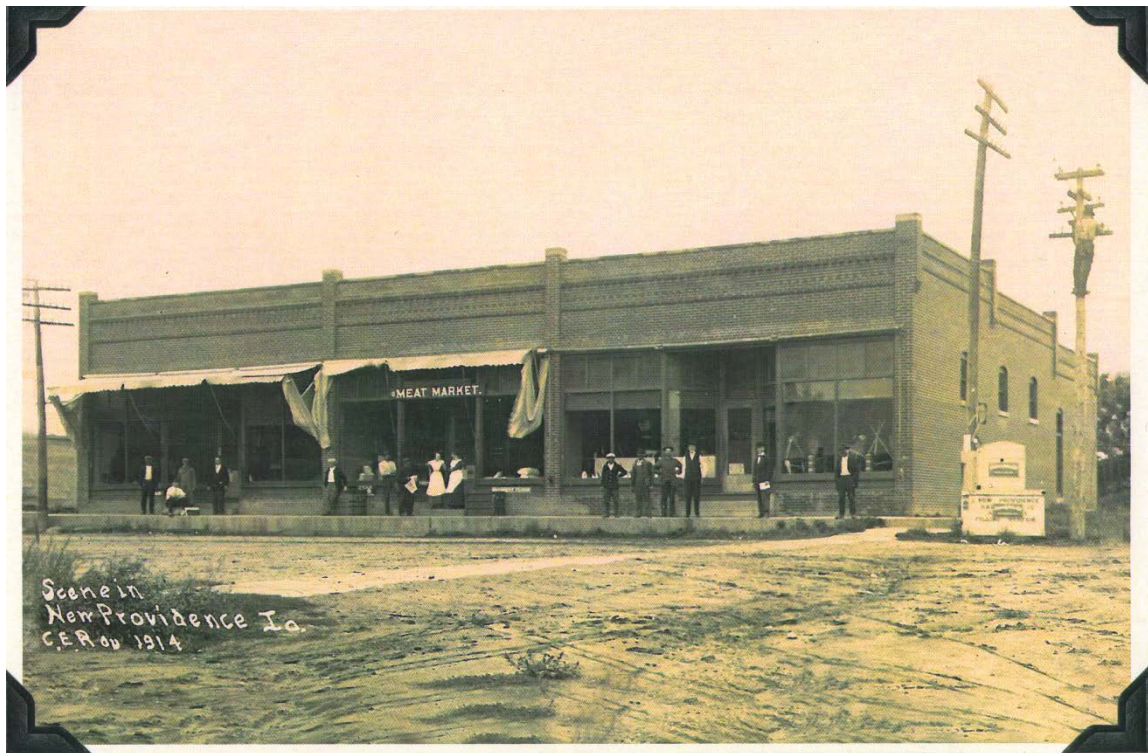
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Imbedded Images Page 22

New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

Figure # 5

From the collection of Tom and Marlene McDonald  
1914 Postcard of New Providence Building Association Stores



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

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New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

Figure # 6

From the collection of Tom and Marlene McDonald

Interior of New Providence Hardware Company, 1930, Peter Pruisner, owner, left, Art Church, employee, right





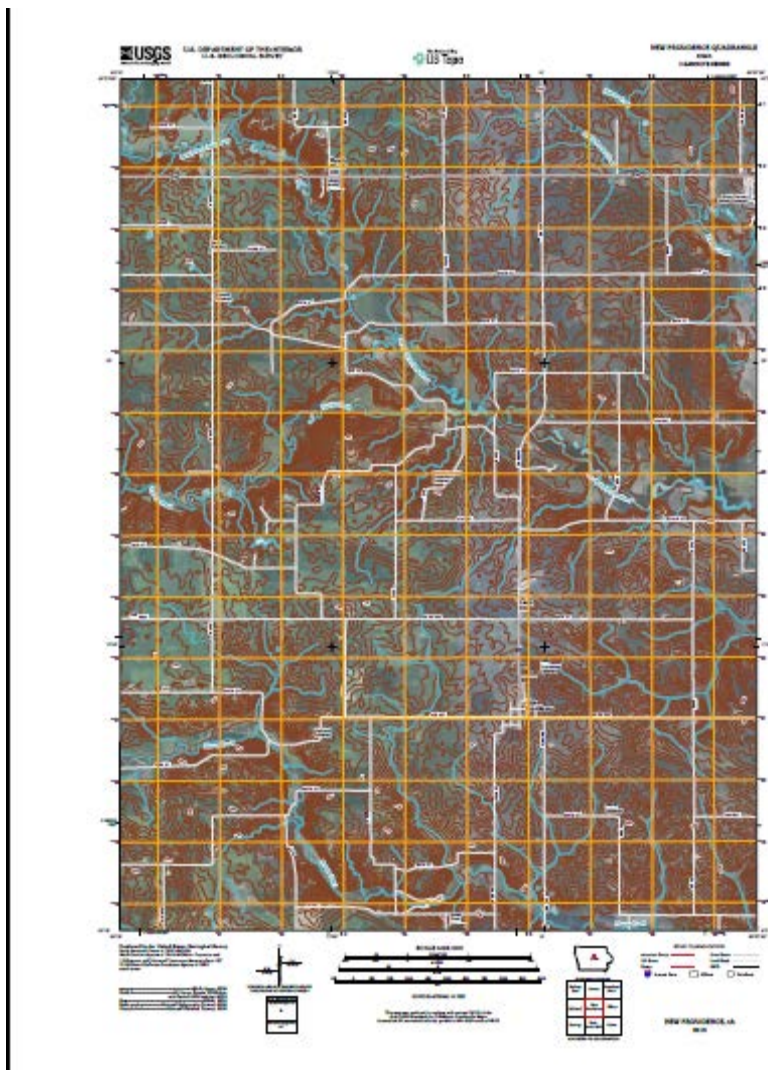
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Imbedded Images Page 24

New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

Figure # 7

New Providence, Iowa and location of New Providence Building Association Stores  
USGS map November 13, 2015



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Imbedded Images Page 25

New Providence Building Association Stores  
Hardin County, Iowa

Figure # 8

Main Floor Interior, New Providence Building Association Stores  
April 23, 2014 Drawn by Marlene McDonald

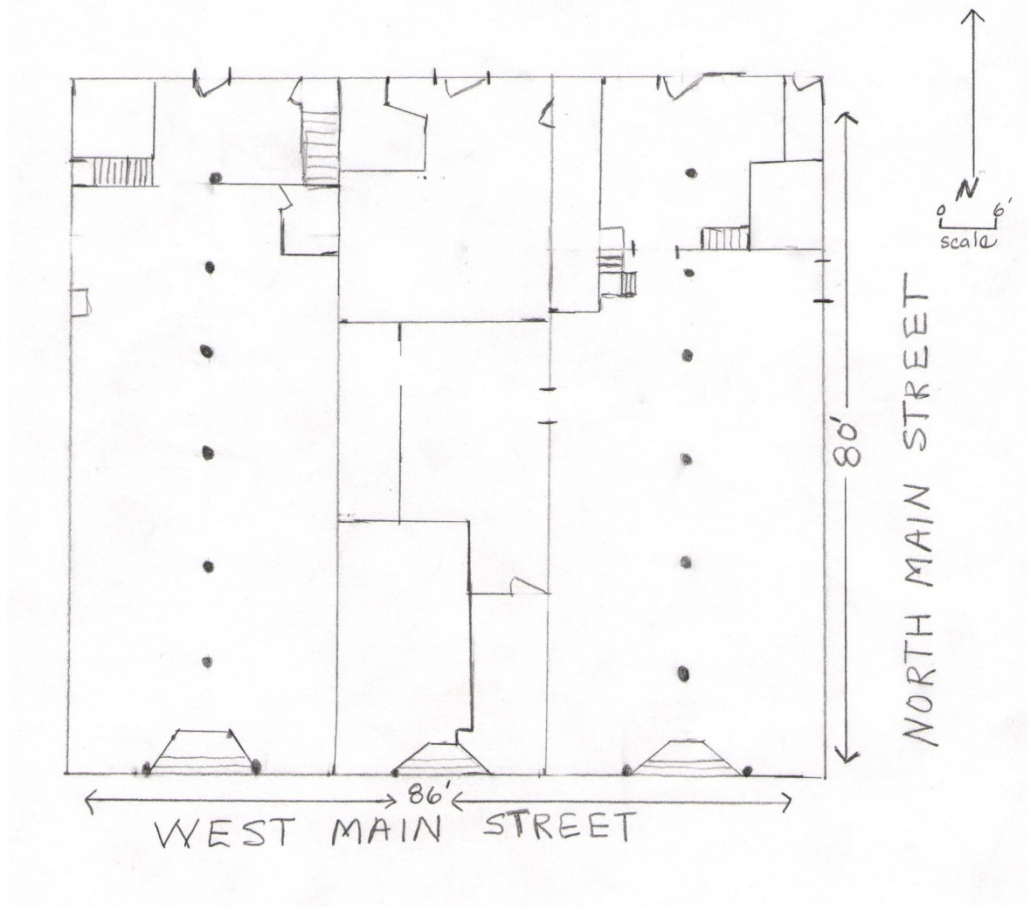
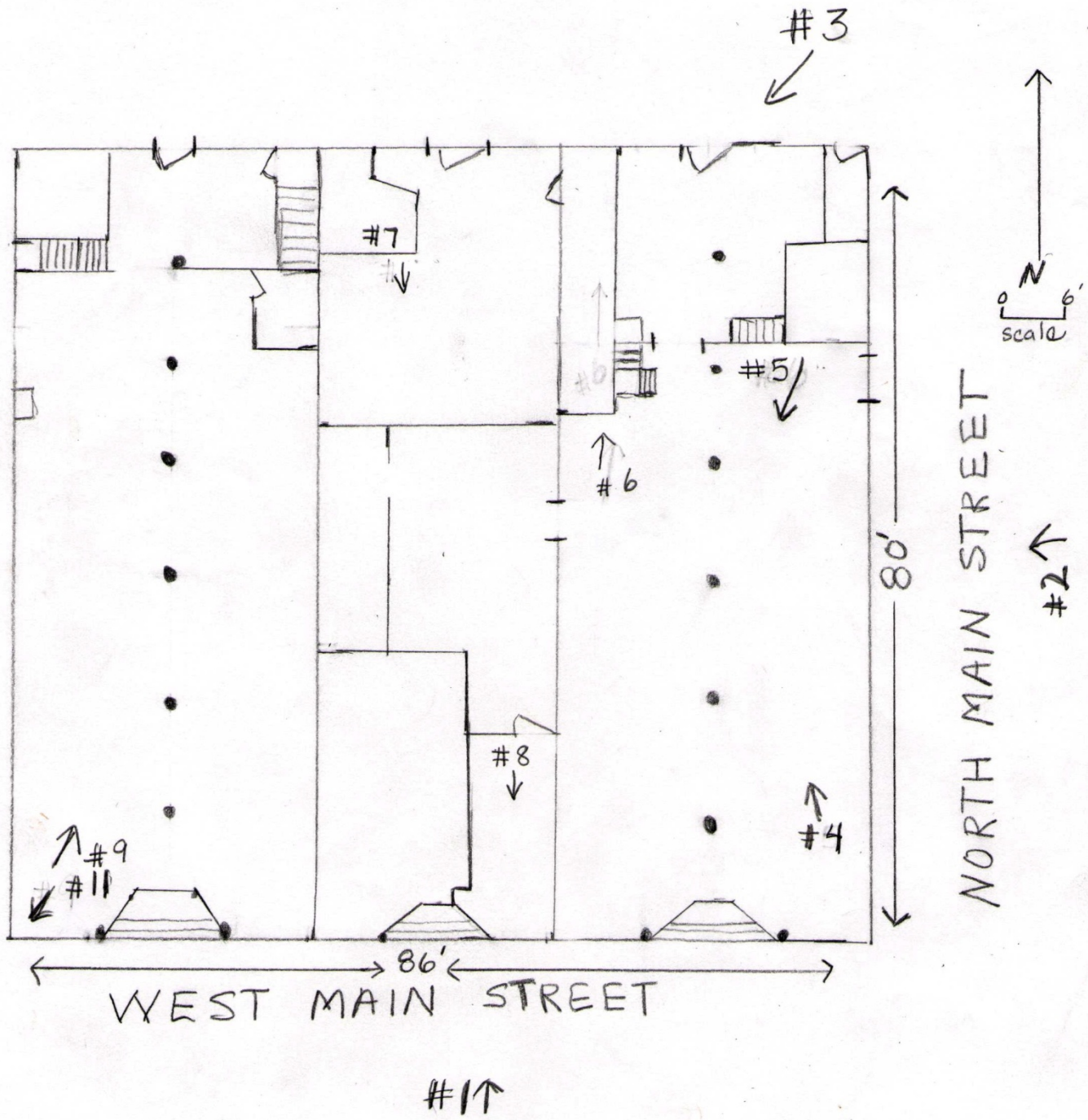


Figure # 9

New Providence Building Association Stores Photo log  
Drawn by Marlene McDonald











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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: New Providence Building Association Stores

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: IOWA, Hardin

DATE RECEIVED: 1/29/16 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/29/16  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/15/16 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/15/16  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000081

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 3-15-16 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

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

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

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

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

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



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF  
CULTURAL AFFAIRS

MARY COWNIE, DIRECTOR  
CHRIS KRAMER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR  
KIM REYNOLDS, LT. GOVERNOR

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JAN 29 2016

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

IOWA  
ARTS  
COUNCIL

January 15, 2016

PRODUCE  
IOWA

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief  
National Register and National Historic Landmarks  
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Fl.  
Washington D.C. 20005

STATE HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY OF IOWA

Dear Mr. Loether:

The following National Register nomination(s) from Iowa are enclosed for your review and listing if acceptable.

STATE HISTORICAL  
MUSEUM OF IOWA

- New Providence Building Association Stores, 401-405 West Main Street Drive, New Providence, Hardin County, Iowa

Thank you for your consideration.

STATE HISTORICAL  
LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

Sincerely,

*Elizabeth Foster Hill*

Elizabeth Foster Hill  
National Register

STATE  
HISTORIC  
SITES

STATE HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
OFFICE OF IOWA

IOWA  
HISTORICAL  
FOUNDATION