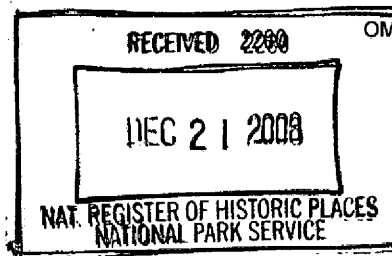


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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 Youngville Café

other names/site number Youngville Station

2. Location

street & number 2409 73rd Street N/A not for publication

city or town Watkins vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Benton code 011 zip code 52354

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).

Donald J. Sorke, Deputy SHPO December 19, 2006
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall 2.1.07

Youngville Cafe
Name of Property

Benton County, IA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
1		sites
	1	structures
	3	objects
3	4	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant
- COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
- DOMESTIC/single dwelling
- DOMESTIC/secondary structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum
- DOMESTIC/secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

- LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS/
- Tudor Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation CONCRETE
- walls CONCRETE
- STUCCO
- roof ASPHALT
- other

Narrative Description

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

Youngville Café
Name of Property

Benton County, IA
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE _____

COMMERCE _____

TRANSPORTATION _____

Period of Significance

1931-1956 _____

Significant Dates

1931 _____

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A _____

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _____ 1 acre _____

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	[1][5]	[5][8][0][7][5][0]	[4][6][4][6][2][2][6]	2	[1][5]	[0][0][0][0][0][0]	[0][0][0][0][0][0]
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
3	[1][5]	[0][0][0][0][0][0]	[0][0][0][0][0][0]	4	[1][5]	[0][0][0][0][0][0]	[0][0][0][0][0][0]
							<input type="checkbox"/> 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 _____ Leah D. Rogers/Consultant _____

organization _____ Tallgrass Historians L.C. _____ date _____ December 4, 2006 _____

street & number _____ 2460 S. Riverside Drive _____ telephone _____ 319-354-6722 _____

city or town _____ Iowa City _____ state _____ IA _____ zip code _____ 52246 _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the complete form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name _____ Youngville Highway History Association (Contact: Richard Grovert) _____

street & number _____ 2719 68th Street _____ telephone _____ 319-223-5465 _____

city or town _____ Newhall _____ state _____ IA _____ zip code _____ 52315 _____

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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA**Section number 7 Page 1**Narrative Description**

The Youngville Café (a.k.a., the Youngville Station) was built by Joe Young for his daughter Elizabeth "Lizzie" Wheeler in 1931. It is situated on a nearly level to gently rolling divide on the north side of Highway 30 in-between Cedar Rapids and Belle Plaine, Iowa. The café was built at the northeast corner of a section-line crossroads at the intersection of U.S. Highways 218 and 30, which was the former Lincoln Highway at this location. The building also functioned as a Skelly gasoline station and the residence of the station owner and operators. For a time, there were three small cabins for rent to travelers located northeast of the café. The original cabins are non-extant. A recent attempt to move and restore three historic cabins from a nearby one-stop of the same vintage ended in disappointment when an arsonist burned the cabins to the ground just short of their completed restoration. The site of the former cabins is considered contributing to the overall property. At present, the only other standing building on the property is a garage that dates from the period of significance for this property and is considered a contributing building along with the café building. The buildings are surrounded by grassy lawn, with a gravel driveway entering the property from the east and circling a tree on the east side of the café building. One non-contributing structure is a modern retaining wall that was built at the rear of the café/station to replace a deteriorated concrete block wall. Three vintage gasoline pumps were recently placed at the original pump locations in front of the café but are considered non-contributing objects because they are not original to the site even though they certainly enhance the historic look of the overall restoration project. The café/station was restored in the late 1990s by the non-profit Youngville Highway History Association (YHHA) with the assistance of federal and state grants and private donations.

The Youngville Café is a two-story Tudor Revival style building, which features a main roofline that is side-gabled and parallel to the highway. The second floor is a front-gabled projection, which features a balcony extending out over the drive-up for the gas pumps and sheltering the main entry door to the café. One-story gabled projections on the east and west sides housed a private automobile garage (the east side bay projection) for the station owner or occupants and the filling station room (the west side bay projection). The Tudor stylistic influence is evidenced by the stucco finish over masonry walls, the faux half timbering in the gable ends on the front and sides, and the peaked windows and louvered vents in the gable peaks. Distinctive dark red asphalt shingles cover the roof, which flares slightly along the front eave line. The windows are wood-framed and include both fixed multi-pane casement windows, 6/6 double-hungs, smaller 3/3 double-hungs, and a large single pane window with smaller transom lights above on the front of the café. The walls of the building are constructed of locally-manufactured cinder blocks, with stucco applied on the exterior.

The interior floor plan of the ground floor of the café building consists of a large front-center room that historically served as the café, with a kitchen and storeroom to the rear. A small room off of the southeast corner of the café was used by Lizzie Wheeler for a day bed and a piano as a place for her to rest and relax during the business day. The filling station room was off of the southwest corner of the building and is entered from an exterior door facing the gas pumps. This room is unfinished on the interior and was used by the operators as an office and storage space. Two restrooms, one for the ladies and one for the gentlemen were behind the filling station room, with the men's room entered only from the exterior and the ladies' room entered from the interior of the café. The automobile garage bay was off the east side of the building and was entered from the kitchen via a pass door or from the exterior via a wooden overhead garage door. The staircase to the upstairs is at the rear of the main building, with access through the kitchen.

The second floor consists of two small bedrooms at the rear of the building separated by the stairwell, with two shallow closets above the stairwell and opening into each bedroom. On the west side of the center hallway is a small bathroom complete with tub, toilet, and sink. The large living room occupies the front of the building and provides access to a larger closet and a storage room on the east side, with an additional storage space in the attic above the garage bay. The living room also provides access to the balcony. The second floor is largely intact, with original features including the wood floors, mopboards, door and window surrounds, and oak doors.

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

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

**Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA**

Section number 7 Page 2

The café/station operated until 1967 and was then used solely as a residence until the 1980s when it was abandoned. By the mid-1990s, the café/station was in poor repair and in danger of demolition. Many of the windows had been broken out, doors were missing or ajar, and the balcony was propped up to keep it from falling off the building. However, much original material remained, and the building was still basically sound. However, with a planned widening of Highway 30 from two to four lanes, the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) was considering demolishing the building altogether and the building was initially concluded to be ineligible for the National Register (Davidson 1993). This decision was appealed by Lowell Soike of the Iowa Historic Preservation Program, with a request for further investigation by the IDOT. A supplemental investigation was undertaken to further evaluate the building's National Register status. This additional study resulted in recommendation for potential eligibility under Criterion A, with the building recommended for avoidance (Frantz 1994). The IDOT then worked with area residents to avoid adversely impacting the Youngville site. In 1996, the YHHA was incorporated to preserve not only the café building but to demonstrate how such buildings "are representative of the development of roadside business, architecture, and culture in the 1930s, the crucial decade for this evolution" (Kelly 2002:6).

In the late 1990s, the YHHA successfully acquired grants from the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), the Historic Resource Development Program (HRDP), and the Iowa Sesquicentennial Commission, with additional support from generous private donations to restore the building and grounds and establish both a business and an interpretive museum at this location. The first phase of the restoration was completed under the guidance of the Cedar Rapids architectural firm of Brown Healey Stone & Sauer and the State Historical Society of Iowa in Des Moines. The restoration involved the following:

tuckpointing, roofing, window repair and replacement, and balcony restoration on the main café building. Interior work included new plumbing, electrical service, central heating, complete kitchen installation, and complete renovation of the floor, walls, and ceiling. By the end of 1999, except for some trim and finish work, Phase I was completed (Kelly 2002:6).

Phase II of the restoration consisted of "accessorizing for historic accuracy," including the addition of vintage gas pumps and obtaining three original booths from Blazek's Park, a landmark Lincoln Highway café and dance pavilion in Chelsea, Iowa (Kelly 2002:6). As part of this accessorizing, three cabins from a motor court located three miles east of Youngville were moved to this site for restoration. These cabins were to represent the three that once were part of the Youngville "one-stop" operation. However, just as the restoration of these cabins was nearing completion, an arsonist burned them to the ground. They have not been replaced, although the YHHA hopes to obtain vintage replacements. Since completion of Phases I and II, the Youngville Café has received a restaurant license and is open three days a week between May and October. The volunteer-staffed café serves a menu similar to the original including homemade pies of many varieties. Historic photographs, newspaper articles and other historic items from the Youngville Café and the Lincoln Highway are on display in the café.

The garage to the rear of the property was built in the 1930s during the period of significance for this property, which extends from 1931 when the café building was built, until 1956, the 50-year cut-off date for National Register eligibility. However, the café/service station business continued to operate until 1967 when it closed for good. At present, significance beyond 1956 is not claimed for this property. The garage is a single-stall, front-gabled building with horizontal wood board siding, an asphalt shingled roof, and a low concrete form foundation. A flat overhead wooden door covers the garage entry on the south side. The property once had a chicken coop located near the garage, but this small outbuilding is non-extant. The original gas tank for the station is still in the ground off the west end of the filling station room. The tank was evaluated by the Department of Natural Resources as sound and has since been filled in with slurry but remains intact and in place.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 **Page** 3

**Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA**

The site of the former cabins is considered contributing to the nominated property, with other areas of the property also having some potential for significant archaeological remains associated with this property. However, significance under Criterion D, for information potential, is not claimed at the present time.

As a whole, the Youngville Café retains high degree of integrity and has been restored with historical accuracy to maintain that integrity. It is among the larger Tudor-style café/service stations along U.S. 30 and the Lincoln Highway in Iowa to remain standing and in such good condition. The building still presents a strong sense of time and place, retains much of the original material, strong evidence of the original design and workmanship details, and maintains its association with the historic highway, which in this case is the route of both the Lincoln Highway and later U.S. 30.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 4**Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA****Statement of Significance**

The Youngville Café (a.k.a. Youngville Station) is locally significant under Criterion C as a well preserved and notable example of an early 1930s Tudor Revival-style one-stop roadside business, which was the forerunner of the multi-purpose gas station/convenience store and motels of the present day. It is further considered eligible under Criterion A for its association with the technological and cultural evolution of the modern highway system and roadside landscape and as an example of the new options becoming available to women as business owners in the early to mid-twentieth century. In this instance, the woman was Lizzie Wheeler, a widow, for whom her father, Joe Young, built this building so that she could support herself and her two children. The Youngville Café served not only as a Skelly filling and service station and café but also housed the living quarters of the owner and operators of the station. Three small rental cabins once completed the operation but are no longer standing, with this site considered contributing to the nominated property. A standing garage is associated with the historical operation of this station and is considered contributing along with the extant café/station, which has been restored to nearly its original appearance. As such, the Youngville Café is very representative of the so-called "one-stop" where highway travelers could not only refuel their cars and their stomachs but could also spend the night if needed. It is also the best Benton County representation of this period of highway-related businesses and advertising along U.S. 30, the former Lincoln Highway in this area. The period of significance for the Youngville Café is from 1931, when the café/station was built, until 1956, the 50-year cut-off for National Register consideration. The café/station continued to operate until 1967.

The Architecture of the Youngville Café

The Youngville Café has noted by many as an unusual and eye-catching attraction by the side of the highway. "This two-story, stucco-covered cinder block building seems to have been the only such structure in Benton County and the surrounding area" (Frantz 1994:11). At the time the café was built during the early years of the Great Depression, "businesses became very creative in attempting to attract a competitive market to their establishments by using the latest in building technologies and styles, or unusual shapes or themes, to catch the eyes of passersby" (ibid.). This may account for the stylish and distinctive design of the Youngville Café, with its dynamic roof shingle pattern and color and bright red painted trim. It has been speculated that Lizzie Wheeler's contact with her late husband's construction business influenced the design, "or it could have been advertisements run by the local Ellis Lumber Company for English Tudor kit houses that caught her eye" (ibid.:12).¹ One source noted that the building was constructed by the Wheeler Construction Company (Rasdal 1995). The use of cinder block in the wall construction of the café is also notable because while the patent for this type of concrete block had been awarded in 1917, it was "not until the late twenties and thirties that cinder block began to widely replace the earlier concrete block" (Simpson 1989:112). "The Youngville Café in these two respects, the use of new technology and manipulating style to attract business, provides a notable example of roadside business in the 1930s" (Frantz 1994:12).

The History of the Youngville Café

The Youngville Café was built by Joseph (Joe) W. Young for his daughter, Elizabeth (Lizzie) Wheeler. Both Joe and Lizzie had been widowed in the 1920s. At the age of 76, Joe Young decided that he needed to provide his daughter with the means to support herself and her two children. He saw an opportunity in the pasture land that they owned at the intersection of what is now U.S. 30 and 218. The opportunity he saw was in serving the needs of the growing number of travelers along the historic Lincoln Highway route, which led past his pasture (*Blairstown Press* 1936; Frantz 1994:11). By the late 1920s, this route had been designated as Highway 30 and was growing into a major east-west highway route through Iowa.

¹ Lizzie Wheeler's husband, Andrew Wheeler, was a contractor who worked in the family business known as the Wheeler Construction Company located in Newhall, Iowa. Andrew Wheeler died in 1921 as the result of a construction accident (Peitz 1982:335).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA

Section number 8 Page 5

The stretch of Lincoln Highway between Cedar Rapids and Belle Plaine, Iowa, is the exception to the rule that the original Lincoln Highway route followed the Main Streets of America. In Benton County, the original route runs between a string of four towns to the north and four to the south. This positioning created a series of 'corners,' which in turn logically became home to a series of road house/café/gas station/cabin camps/campgrounds to meet the needs of Lincoln Highway travelers.

The problem was that prior to paving in 1928, the Benton County stretch of highway was one of the least improved sections in the nation, and a simple thunderstorm could shut it down quicker than a January blizzard. Following its paving, the wheels of progress were able to turn on a regular schedule and the highway continued to evolve as a route for truckers, passenger buses, and traveling salesmen (Kelly 2002:5).

Seizing on this opportunity, Joe Young built "an eye-catching oasis" on his pasture land. He and Lizzie embarked on a "recipe for success" by offering travelers "Skelly gas, fried chicken, homemade pie, live piano music, a couple of slot machines, and a few groceries" (Kelly 2002:5). The Youngville Café "developed a reputation for a family-style atmosphere even with its slot machines" (ibid.). The café became the primary part of the business, with the gas station secondary in importance. It was noted that "when Youngville's lot was full, customers would park across the street at the Midway Station and cross the highway to eat at Youngville" (Frantz 1994:12).²

Joe Young lived only a few years in the station with Lizzie. He died in 1936, with Lizzie Wheeler continuing to operate the café/station while living upstairs. Sisters, Frances and Myrta Brandt, worked for Lizzie in the café in the early 1930s. When Lizzie finally retired, she moved into Cedar Rapids and leased out the station to others to operate. Among the subsequent operators were Carl and Ella Shaffer from 1951-56. However, Lizzie grew tired of life in Cedar Rapids and decided to return home to the Youngville Café in 1967 when the last lease ran out. She took up occupancy once again and lived here until her death in 1976.

The Youngville Café also served as a commercial bus stop for a number of years, and the Greyhound and Jefferson bus lines sometimes referred to this stop as the "Youngville Station" (Kelly 2002:5). The three small cabins, which were built behind the café building, were rented out to travelers for a time in the 1930s-40s.

The Youngville café/station closed for good in 1967 primarily because the site did not have sufficient parking space for cars and trucks. Vehicles were no longer allowed to park along the highway shoulder. The building was used as a residence until the 1980s when it was finally abandoned. By the mid-1990s, the building was derelict and in danger of demolition. "In 1994, the Benton County Sesquicentennial Commission, spearheaded by Anne Schoonover, adopted the abandoned Youngville Café as a local restoration project in celebration of Iowa's 150th anniversary of statehood" (Kelly 2002:5). In 1996, the Youngville Highway History Association was formed to preserve the building and Lincoln Highway history. In the late 1990s, restoration work was undertaken, with the building now open for business once again, on a limited basis, as a roadside café.

² The Midway Station was located across the road to the southwest of the Youngville station and was first known as the Wheeler Inn (no relation to Lizzie's husband). The Wheeler Inn was a roadhouse of a rather unsavory reputation and was later known by the names of "Midway" and the "Bean Pot" (Kelly 2002). The Wheeler Inn later burned to the ground.

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

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

**Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA**

Section number 8 Page 6

The Lincoln Highway

On September 14, 1913, following months of publicity and speculation, the Lincoln Highway Association (LHA) announced the official route of the nation's first transcontinental highway, to extend from New York City to San Francisco. The idea had originated with Carl Fisher, founder of the Prest-O-Lite Company, which manufactured carbide headlights for automobiles. Fisher had also launched the hugely popular Indianapolis 500 at his brick-paved Indianapolis Motor Speedway in 1911 (Hokanson 1988:5-6, 14-15).

In 1912, there were approximately one million motor vehicles registered in America—up from only 8,000 in 1900—but few improved roads. Of the 2.5 million miles of roadway existing throughout the country, the vast majority were dirt roads that were often impassable when wet. Experiments with concrete as a road material had only recently begun, with the first mile of concrete road poured in 1908, near Detroit. Long-distance travel by car was still very much a novelty. Doing so definitely required a taste for adventure (Hokanson 1988:6-7, 18, 75).

Although the Good Roads Movement, aimed at improving the condition of the nation's roads, had been gaining momentum since the late nineteenth century, there was still little central administration and no federal funding for road construction when Fisher began planning his highway. He had realized that for long-distance automobile travel to be practical, a network of reliable, all-weather roads must be built. The "Coast-to-Coast Rock Highway" Fisher envisioned was to be a grand boulevard across America, threading together the main streets of towns from the Atlantic to the Pacific. By 1913, the highway's route was mapped out by the Lincoln Highway Association, a group put together by Fisher of car company executives and others interested in his plan. Under the leadership of LHA president Henry B. Joy, a route was finally selected. Starting in Times Square, New York City, the route traversed a total of 3,389 miles through thirteen states: New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, and California, although Colorado was subsequently removed from the main route. The route ended at the Pacific Ocean in Lincoln Square, San Francisco. After it was suggested to Fisher that perhaps his highway would benefit from a more patriotic-sounding name, he approached the Lincoln Memorial Road Association, who readily turned over the name of their defunct highway. Thus was born the "Lincoln Highway" (Hokanson 1988:9, 17, 42-43; May 1965:E2-5).

It was due in large part to the LHA's efforts to educate the public as to the value of good highways that substantial progress was made toward paving the route in the years after World War I. In addition to the object lesson of concrete seedling miles, the association dramatically demonstrated the need for improved roads after persuading the government to send a military convoy across the country over the Lincoln Highway in July 1919. The much-publicized trip brought a sense of urgency to the nation's need for reliable roads and contributed to the successful passage of both local bond initiatives and increased federal funding for highway construction. By 1920, most of the highway east of Indiana had been paved. Extensive improvements to the remaining portions of the highway were made following passage of the Federal Highway Act in 1921, although parts of the western route would never be paved (Seely 1987:71-72).

The establishment of a federal system led eventually to the end of named highways. In 1925, the maze of crisscrossing named highways was replaced with a reorganized system of numbered highways. As part of this plan, and over the objections of the LHA, the Lincoln Highway was divided into several different numbered routes. These included federal routes 1, 30, 30N, 30S, 530, 40, and 50 across the length of the highway. In Iowa, the route was designated as Highway 30. However, unofficial interest in the Lincoln Highway continued in the ensuing years as evidenced by the concrete markers that were placed along the route in 1928 and by the revival of the Lincoln Highway Association in 1992. Today the mission of the LHA is to promote the study, preservation, and enjoyment of the historic Lincoln Highway (Hokanson 1988:20, 87, 108-32).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA

The Lincoln Highway in Iowa

There was never any question among the LHA directors that the nation's first transcontinental highway would pass through Iowa; they needed a route to connect Omaha and the Platte River Route with Chicago, so of course the highway must pass through Iowa and Illinois. President Joy later remarked it was these two states that presented the biggest challenge in planning the highway. Because of the relatively flat terrain, there were any number of routes that could be taken across these states, all of them equally unimproved (Hokanson 1988:52).

In Iowa, the bridge at Clinton was selected as the route's Mississippi crossing, and Joy traveled the state many times trying to determine the best means of connecting the two rivers. The route's 358 miles through the state passed through thirteen counties. Beginning at Clinton and heading west, these were: Clinton, Cedar, Linn, Benton, Tama, Marshall, Story, **Boone**, Greene, Carroll, Crawford, Harrison and Pottawattamie. The main towns the western-bound traveler passed through were Cedar Rapids, Tama, Marshalltown, Ames, Boone, Jefferson, Carroll, Denison, Logan, and Council Bluffs.

Until 1924, the only paved sections of the rural part of the Lincoln Highway in Iowa were in Greene and Linn counties. The way was cleared for further paving of the Lincoln Highway in Iowa by the Federal Highway Act of 1921, a bill that the LHA helped to draft. This act would involve the federal government directly in the business of building roads for the nation. With the federal government now assuming what the LHA had believed to be its proper role in highway construction, the LHA could now cease its central administration role. However, it did not foresee that this would lead ultimately to the dismantling of both the Lincoln Highway and the LHA (Hokanson 1988:108-110).

In 1927, the LHA, having largely fulfilled its original mission, closed its offices. The highway itself was no longer officially called the Lincoln Highway, with the route now numbered as U.S. Highway 30 in Iowa. As U.S. 30 evolved in Iowa, some of the older sections of the Lincoln Highway were abandoned in favor of bypassing the many small towns along its route. However, the route that passed by the Youngville site remained in the same location as the original Lincoln Highway. Therefore, while the Youngville Café itself was built shortly after the Lincoln Highway had ceased to exist as a named highway, it was situated along the historic route of this early transcontinental highway. U.S. 30 remained among the primary east-west routes across Iowa until it was superseded in importance by the construction of Interstate 80 in the 1960s (Thompson 1989:245).

The Evolution of Roadside Services

As the highways improved, automobile traffic increased in the early twentieth century and the need for support services tailored to travelers' needs increased as well. These services included gasoline and repair services, food, and affordable shelter for the night. The café was tailor-made for roadside service as it provided the original "fast-food" and easy access from the highways.

It wasn't long before someone crossed a row of gas pumps with an eating place and bore the first truck stop. Like roadhouses, truck stops were often out in the hinterlands, or at least the edge of town, where land was cheaper. To capitalize on every possible customer, they were usually built at the intersections of major highways...

As the great American roadside grew into an institution, entrepreneurs invented new places for travelers to rest from a long day on the road. Tourist camps became cabin camps, motor courts, then motels. They had begun as simple campgrounds in the days following World War I: shaded grassy areas, usually owned by the city or town, and usually free, where travelers in rough clothes pitched tents, cooked over fires, and kept lookout for road liars. When

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communities began charging for overnight stays, private operators got into the act, and soon competition had them all adding amenities like laundry buildings, picnic tables, hot showers, even electric hookups.

But as travelers turned away from riding in open cars, they also turned away from the notion of sleeping in open tents and roughing it in general. Operators soon began building tiny cabins so travelers could leave the tent at home....Day by day these 'cabin camps' added the comforts of home: bedding, electricity, heating, kitchenettes, and before long, camping was forgotten (Hokanson 1988:119 and 122).

As the amenities grew, the cabin camps gave way to the more formal motor courts, which typically consisted of cabins arranged in an L or U shape around a central courtyard. It was from the motor courts that the modern motel was born.

Sometime in the late 1940s, the term *motel* came into common use. By now the cabins had been connected, neon added wherever possible, and the motorist slept in a miniature, idealized version of home, complete with oil paintings on the wall, a Bible, and hangers in the closet (Hokanson 1988:122).

The further evolution of this process was to tie together all the needed roadside services into one convenient enterprise, often termed the "one-stop," which included a gas/service station, café, and tourist camp, motor court, or motel, all under one ownership and at one location along the highway. There were a number of one-stops along both the Lincoln Highway and U.S. 30 as it developed in Iowa, with notable extant properties including the Youngville Café, Niland's Corner in Colo, and the King Tower Café in Tama, Iowa. Both the Youngville Café and the King Tower Café were originally associated with full-service gas stations and tourist cabins, with only one cabin extant at the King Tower Café. Niland's Corner retains the full set of one-stop facilities including the café, gas station, and early motel units (Colo Development Group n.d.; Henry 1997). All three represent significant examples of an important evolution in roadside services along the Lincoln Highway and U.S. 30. There were once several other such businesses in Benton County along this highway in addition to the Youngville Café; however, this building is the only one to survive with such a high degree of integrity and is one of the best preserved examples of the one-stop in this area in the present day.

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**Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA**

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Youngville Café is shown as the dashed line on the accompanying map entitled "Map showing National Register boundary of Youngville Café" found on page 12.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property consists of the parcel of land historically associated with the Youngville Café operation including the location of the café, pumps, garage, and former cabins site.

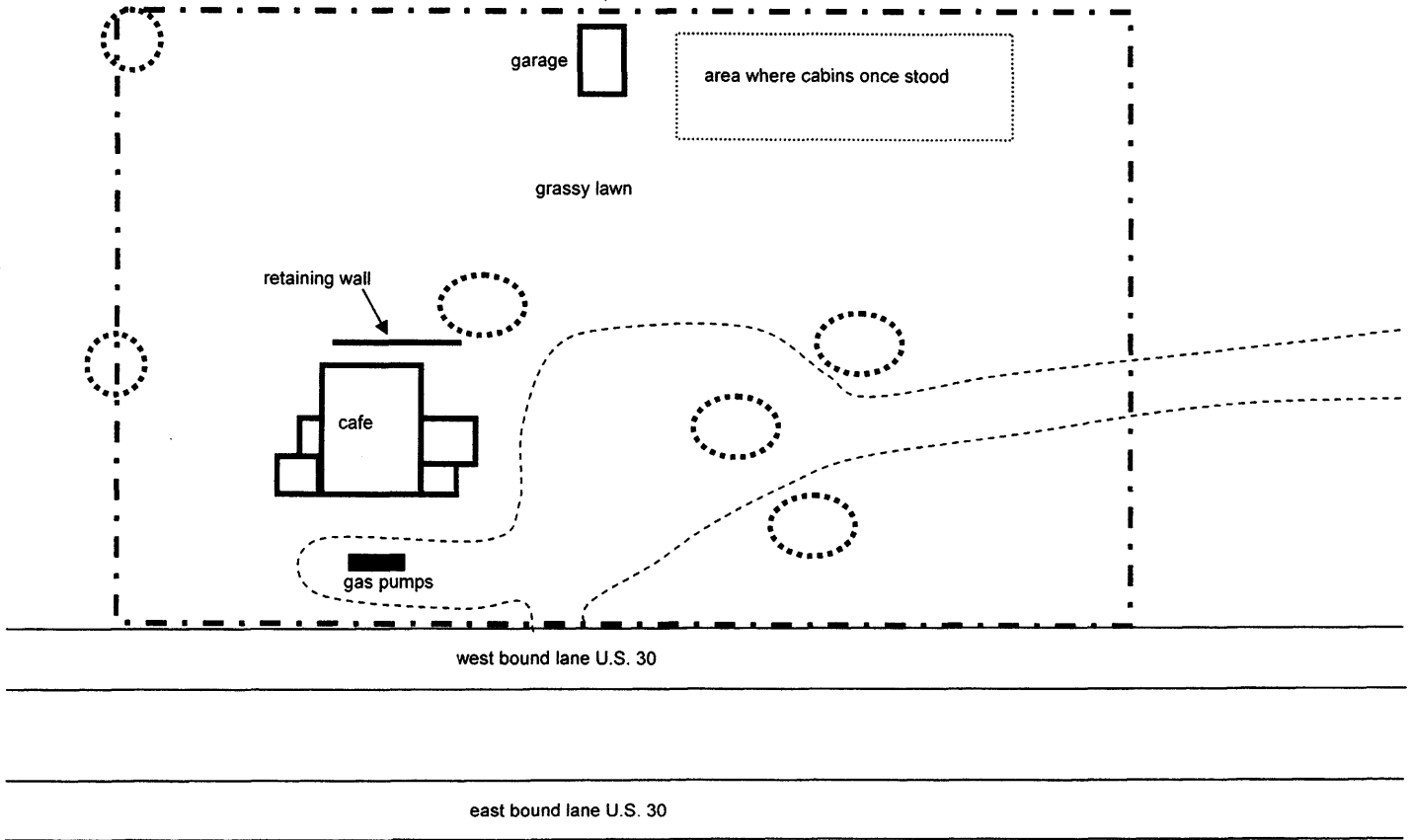
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Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA

Map showing National Register boundary of Youngville Café



- . - . - . = boundary of National Register district
- - - - - = outline of gravel driveway
- = trees



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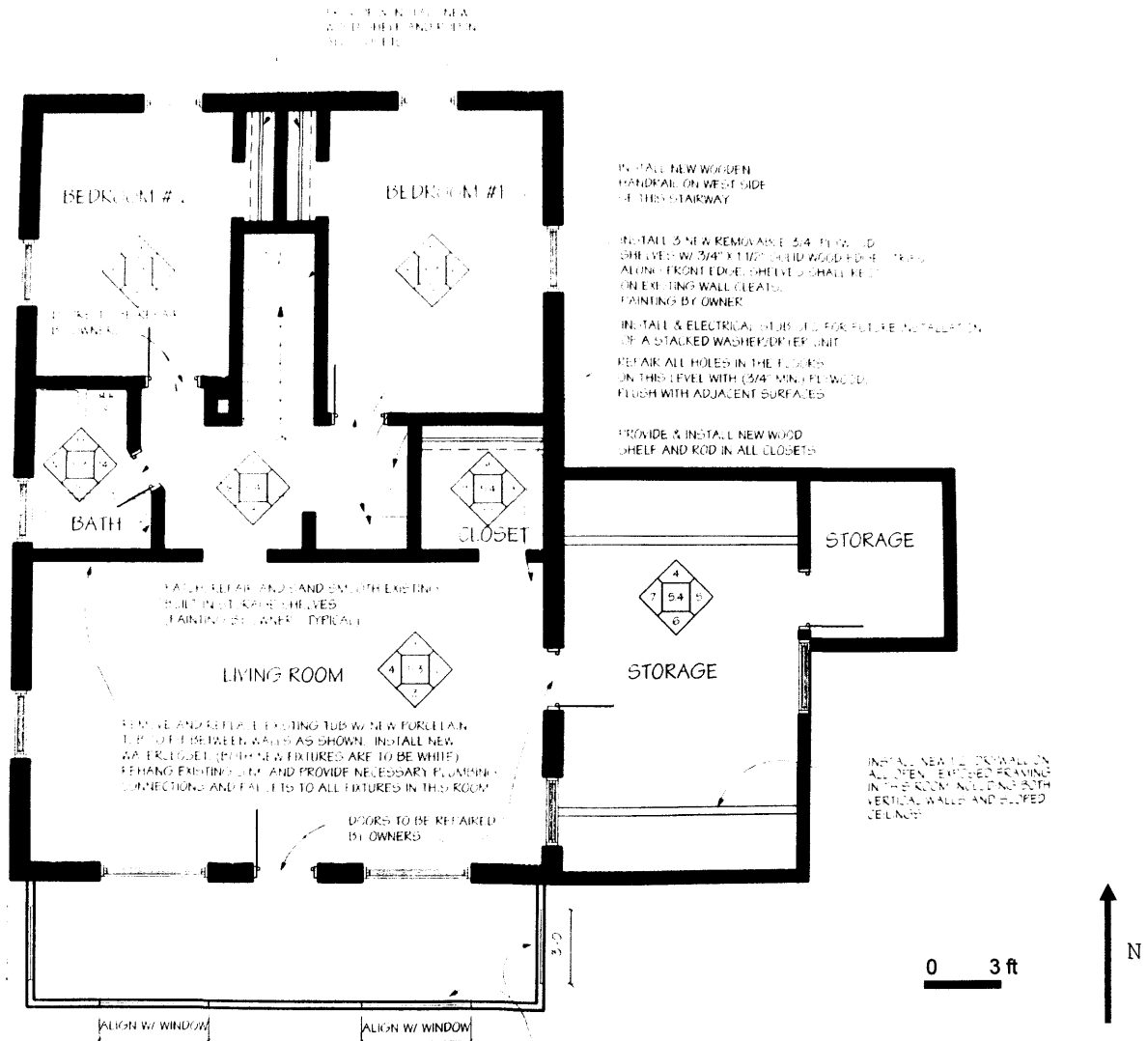
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Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA

Second floor plan of Youngville Café from 1990s restoration showing historic functions of rooms

Configuration of second floor today has not changed from original plan



Source of plan: Brown Healey Stone & Sauer, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

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**Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA**

Current photographs showing interior components of interest. Photographs taken April 26, 2006.



Interior of second floor living room, View to the SW from center of room



Interior of second floor living room, View to the ESE from center of room

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Youngville Cafe
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Current photographs showing interior components of interest. Photographs taken April 26, 2006.



Interior first floor café, View to the WSW



Interior first floor café, View to the NE towards kitchen

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**Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA**

Current photograph showing interior components of interest. Photograph taken April 26, 2006.



Interior of filling station room, View to the SW

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Youngville Cafe
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Current photograph of contributing garage. Photograph taken April 26, 2006. View to the NW.



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Youngville Café in 1931, View to the Northeast



Youngville Café in 1935, View to the Northwest with Joe Young in front of the building

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Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA

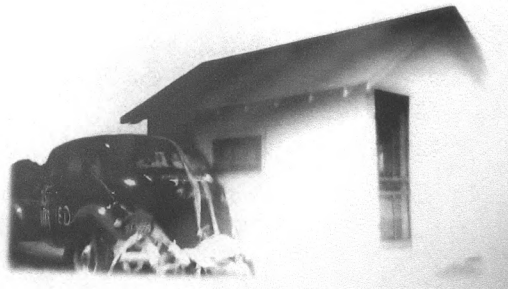


Interior of Youngville Café in 1936
with Lizzie Wheeler (on right) and her daughter (left) behind the lunch counter



Youngville
Honeymoon
Cabin

Dale & Helen
Mathis
married
July 14, 1944



One of the cabins behind the Youngville Café in the 1940s

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**Youngville Cafe
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Abandoned and derelict Youngville Café in 1995, View to the Northeast



Youngville Café in October 2005 fully restored, View to the Northwest

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**Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA**

Photographs

Name of Property: Youngville Café
County and State: Benton County, IA
Photographer: Leah D. Rogers
Date of Photograph: April 27, 2006
Location of Original Negative: Tallgrass Historians L.C., Iowa City, IA

- #1 General view of Youngville Café, View to the ENE
- #2 Facade of Youngville Café, View to the North
- #3 General view of Youngville Café, View to the NW
- #4 Youngville Café, View to the WNW
- #5 Rear of Youngville Café, View to the WSW
- #6 Rear of Youngville Café, View to the South
- #7 West side of Youngville Café, View to the East

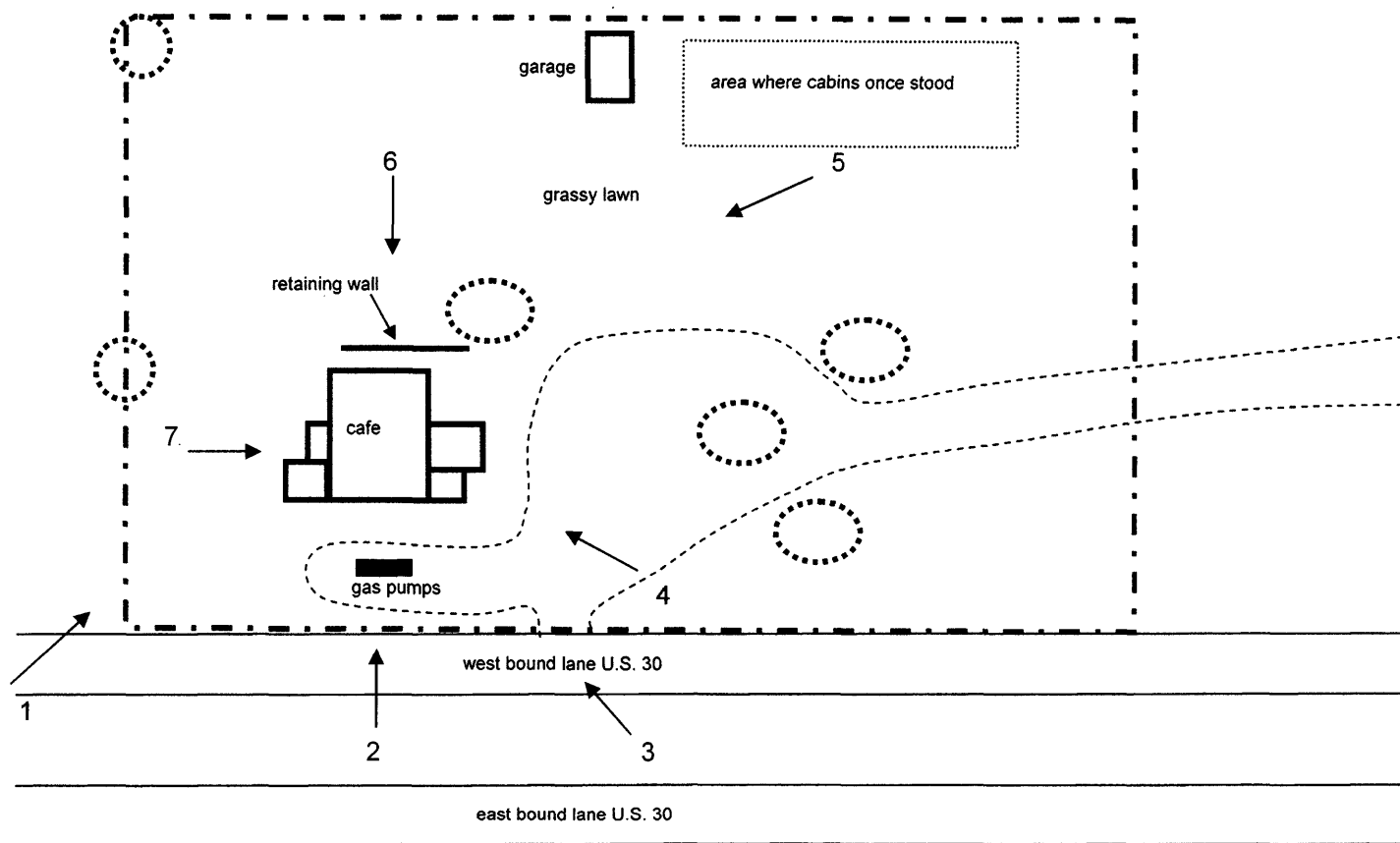
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Youngville Cafe
Benton County, IA

Map Showing Direction of Photographs



- - - - - = boundary of National Register district
- - - - - = outline of gravel driveway
- = trees

