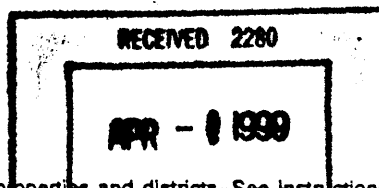


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



487

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 nominated, 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 Public Square Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number All bldgs facing & w/in 1/2 blk of the Public Square not for publication
plus 113-120 N. Jefferson & 115 W. Washington

city or town Sigourney vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Keokuk code 107 zip code 52591

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.)

Tom McLean 3/24/99
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:)

Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

4/29/99
Date of Action

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Commerce
- Politics & Government
- Architecture
- _____
- _____
- _____

Period of Significance

c.1865-c.1945

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Wetherell & Gage
Higgins, Burdette

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 # _____

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 11.9 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

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 Molly Myers Naumann, Consultant

organization Sigourney Historic Preservation Commission date 11/98

street & number 167 West Alta Vista telephone (515) 682-2743

city or town Ottumwa state IA zip code 52501-1437

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

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

Property Owner

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

name Various (see attached list)

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Public Square Historic District
Keokuk County, IA

Section number 7 Page 1

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:

Late 19th/E. 20th C. American Movements

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION:

The Public Square Historic District is a commercial district centered around the Keokuk County Courthouse. It contains 59 resources, 44 of which are considered to be contributing to the district (75%). In addition, there are five parking/vacant lots.

When Sigourney was originally platted in 1844, it had already been designated as the county seat, and it exhibited a Public Square near the center. The planners of Iowa's county seats (usually the county commissioners) used a variety of public square plans, many of which would feature a courthouse in the center. Tom Schmiedeler determined that the majority of these courthouse squares are located in the southern third of the state.¹ The most popular type of plan is the Shelbyville Square which featured a courthouse in the center of a single block. This was used in twenty-two Iowa communities, including Chariton, Washington, and Sigourney. This plan has a single block on each side of the square, with streets entering on each of the four corners. In Sigourney the blocks measured 276' square, allowing for 12' alleys, with lots measuring 66' x 132'. Streets around the Square were platted 66' wide. The streets in Sigourney retain the original names, with Main and Jefferson running north/south along the sides of the Square, and Washington and Marion running east/west across the top and bottom of the Square.

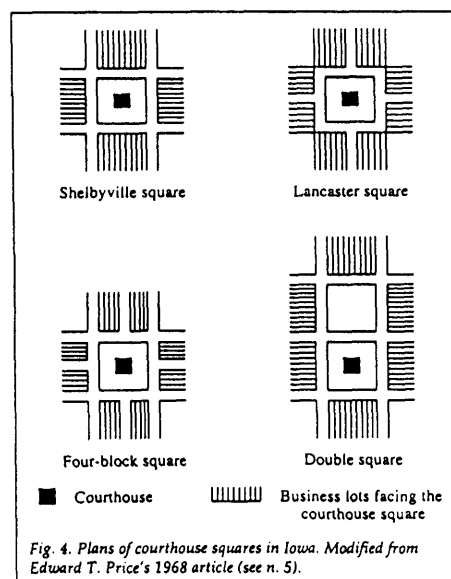


Illustration from Schmiedeler's article
In The Annals of Iowa, Vol 57, No 1 (Winter 1998), p 13.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

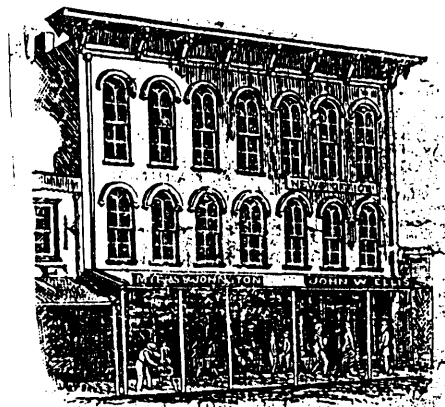
Public Square Historic District
Keokuk County, IA

Section number 7 Page 2

Today the Keokuk County Courthouse rests in the center of the Public Square surrounded by one and two story brick buildings (and two three story buildings). The broad streets around the courthouse allow for the diagonal parking commonly associated with Public Squares. Streets leading off the Square feature parallel parking spaces.

Early growth appears to have been slow, with the first sale of town lots in 1844 ending with only a single lot being sold, at a price of \$12. The following year a second sale yielded prices of \$50 per lot around the Square, with outlying lots ranging from \$5 to \$10. S.A. James was the first county clerk, and a long-time resident of Sigourney. It was James who built a log structure on the site of the county seat to ensure its validity, and over the years he remarked on current events, providing a "picture" of Sigourney as it developed. He commented on the change in location of the county seat from Sigourney to Lancaster, and back again, and noted that the years 1855 and 1856 saw the construction of more buildings in Sigourney than had been built altogether before that time.² Even so, when the "new" brick courthouse was completed in 1859, all but two of the commercial buildings around the Square were of frame construction. There is no record of where and when the first brick business buildings were built. Although local newspapers carried stories about Civil War battles, the need for more space in the schools, and new businesses being established, there were few, if any, references to new buildings going up around the Square during the war years.

Newspaper coverage for the years following the war is sketchy, but there are at least three major brick buildings around the square that were constructed during those years. The largest is the three story brick building at 106-108 E. Washington. This



106-108 E. Washington (1867)

double storefront was completed in 1867 for the Johnston brothers. It is a fine example of early Italianate commercial design with full round-arched windows with cast hoodmolds, and the original storefronts featured cast iron columns supporting round arched openings. A heavy bracketed wooden cornice completed the façade.

One-half block to the east, a two story brick single storefront building of similar design was completed about the same time. Located at 114 E. Washington, this later

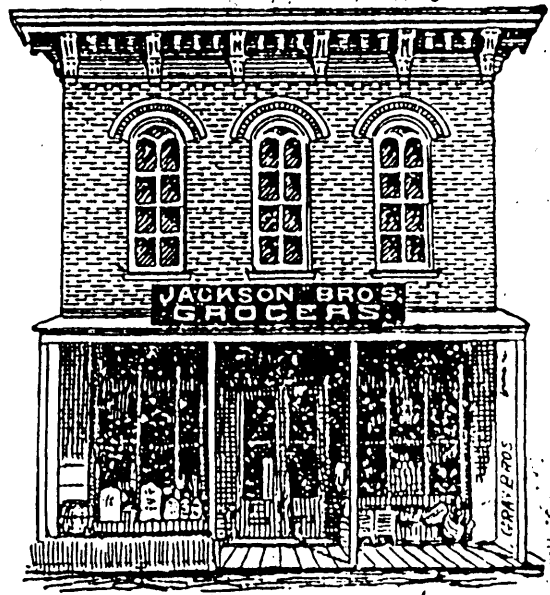
United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation Sheet

Public Square Historic District
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housed the Jackson Bros. Grocery. The round arched windows were capped by brick patterned hoodmolds and a bracketed wooden cornice topped the building.



114 E. Washington (c.1865-70)

Around the corner at 104-106 N. Main, a two story double storefront building was constructed c.1872-74 in a similar style, but with a pressed metal cornice. All three of these buildings are similar to several around the Mount Pleasant Square which were constructed between 1856 and 1863 and are listed on the NRHP. The Sigourney buildings, especially the three story example, illustrate the prosperity of the business district around the Square at this time.

The arrival of the Rock Island railroad in 1872 signaled a new period in Sigourney's development. Previously hard to get building materials were now readily available. The impact of this is seen in a construction "boom" which took place in the mid-1870s. All across the country the year 1876 appears to have been one of major construction. This can be partly attributed to the celebration of the nation's 100th birthday, but in many communities it was also the beginning of permanent commercial construction, with towns "dressing up" their Main Streets with elaborate new business blocks. In Sigourney it appears that construction was taking places on all sides of the Square. On the south side(west end) a two story double storefront was to be occupied by J.S. White & Son (dry goods and groceries). It featured segmental arched windows with brick patterned hoodmolds, and a wood bracketed cornice. The northeast eyetooth corner was filled in 1876 by the construction of two double storefront buildings, one for Mr. Strawhan on the

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Public Square Historic District
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corner, and one immediately to the north for Mr. Oelmeyer. Like the White building, these featured segmental arched windows with brick hoodmolds, but these also featured bracketed pressed metal cornices. The following year (1877) the Keller Building was completed at the east end of the north side, the walls were going up on a new business house for F. Schipfer on the east side, and on the west side (north end) the Opera House roof was completed. All of these featured segmental arched windows with cast hoodmolds and metal cornices. These represent a later, more sophisticated, type of Italianate design that depended on mass produced architectural elements which were brought to Sigourney by rail.

The first Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for the City of Sigourney was drawn in December 1883. The large two story brick courthouse with wooden brackets is located in the center of the Public Square (which is actually square in shape with well pumps in each corner). The north side of the Square is completely filled with buildings, with a wooden porch running across the facades and wrapping around the corners. (The building immediately east of the alley was the only one without a porch.) The northwest eyetooth corner contains a two story frame building, with brick buildings located farther north along Main. Wooden porches extend across the front of these brick buildings along the west side of Main. The northeast eyetooth corner is complete, and the post office is shown in the corner building (it had located there in 1881). Much of the east side of the square is filled except for the southernmost lots. The southeast eyetooth corner contains a two story double storefront, complete with wooden porch, while the southwest eyetooth corner also has a two story double storefront brick building. Both the south and west sides of the Square contain several empty lots. Major buildings on those two sides include the I.O.O.F. Hall at the east end of the south side, and the Opera House anchoring the north end of the west side. Off the Square, a livery stable is located just east on Washington, and a large lumberyard was a block south of the Square on Main. This Sanborn map reveals one very unusual feature about Sigourney: the wooden porches that extend across the facades of so many buildings. In most communities you may find one or two examples of such porches, but the majority of the buildings had canvas awnings. In Sigourney, the porches must have been a purely local preference.

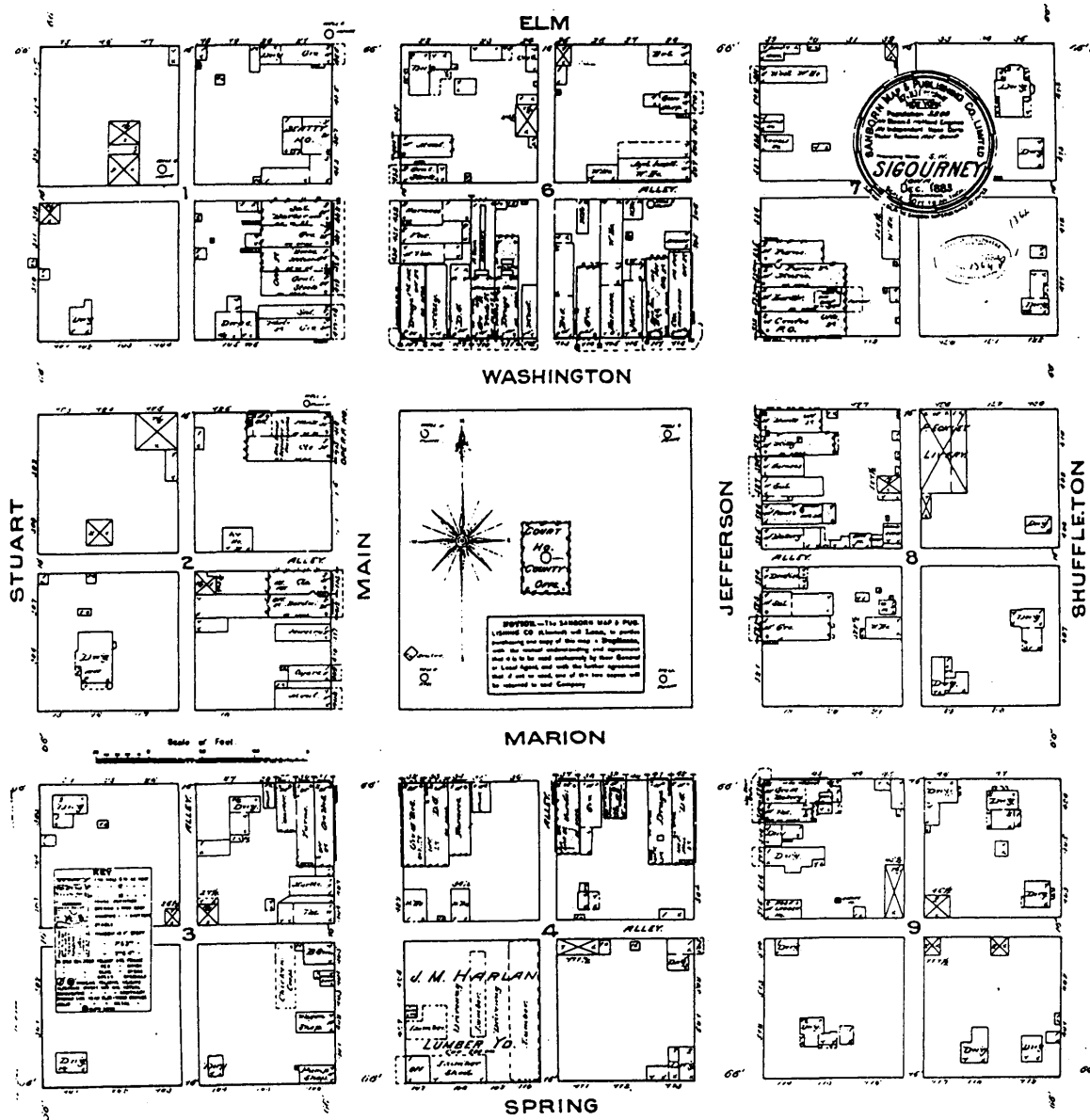
Sanborns from 1888, 1893, and 1899 show the continued development around the Square. By 1888 the Merchant's Hotel dominated the center of the south side of the Square. This two story triple storefront continued the use of the popular Italianate style. Frame buildings were being replaced by substantial brick blocks on a number of lots. 1892-93 saw major construction taking place on the west side of the Square. Charles Vorhaur was the owner of a three story building constructed at 106 S. Main, and he purchased the buildings on each side, both of which had been built within the previous two years. On the alley, Mrs. Merriam enlarged her building and had a second floor added to it to serve as her photography studio. Major building started on the empty lots at the south end of the east side of the Square. The Schipfer family was building a two story brick double storefront building that was to contain "the largest room in town."³ Within a few years the Schipfers built an adjoining two story brick at the corner of the block, complete with turret and outside iron staircase to the second floor.

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Public Square Historic District
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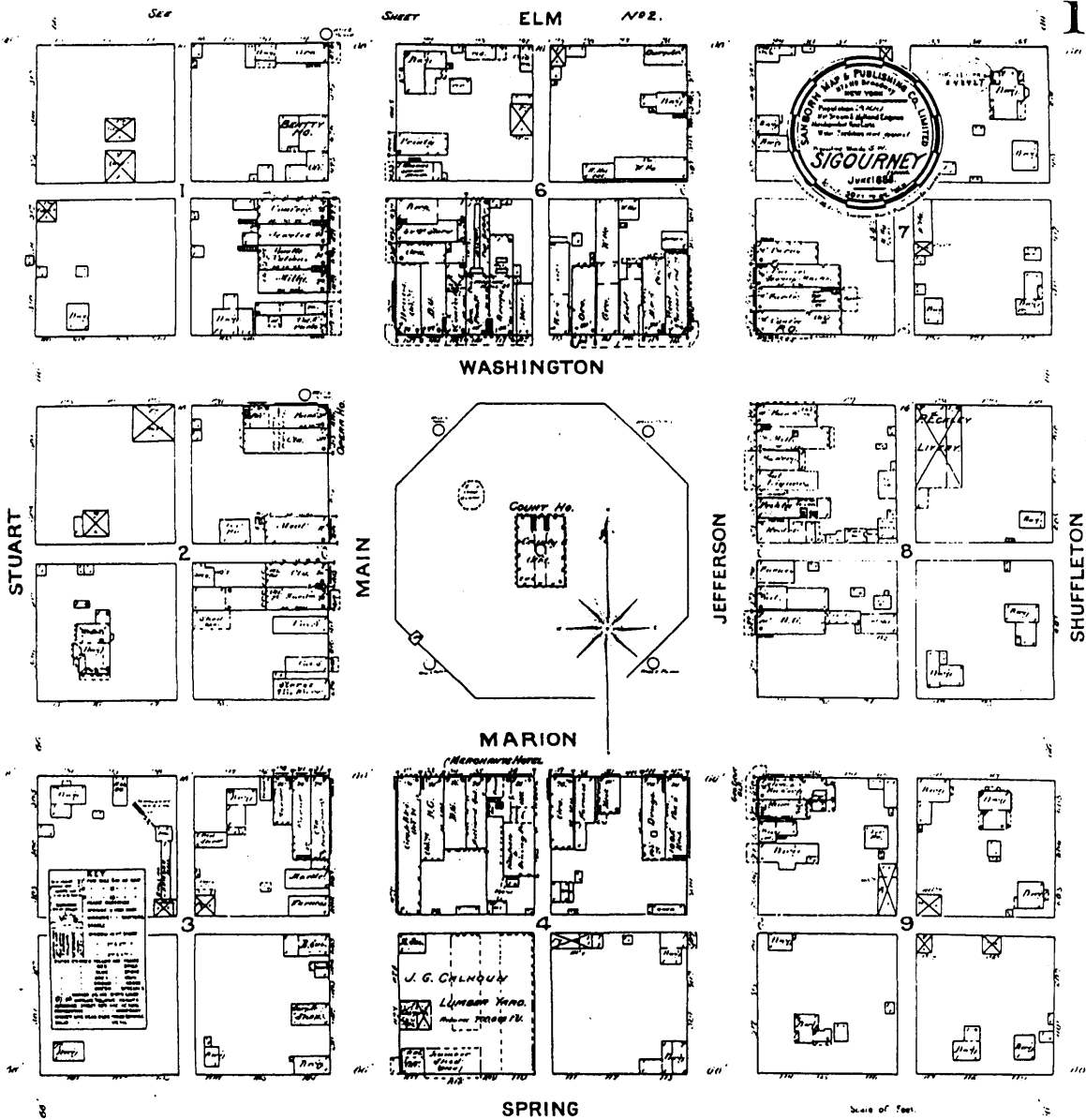
1883 Sanborn Map
Note that only the north side is completely filled.

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Public Square Historic District
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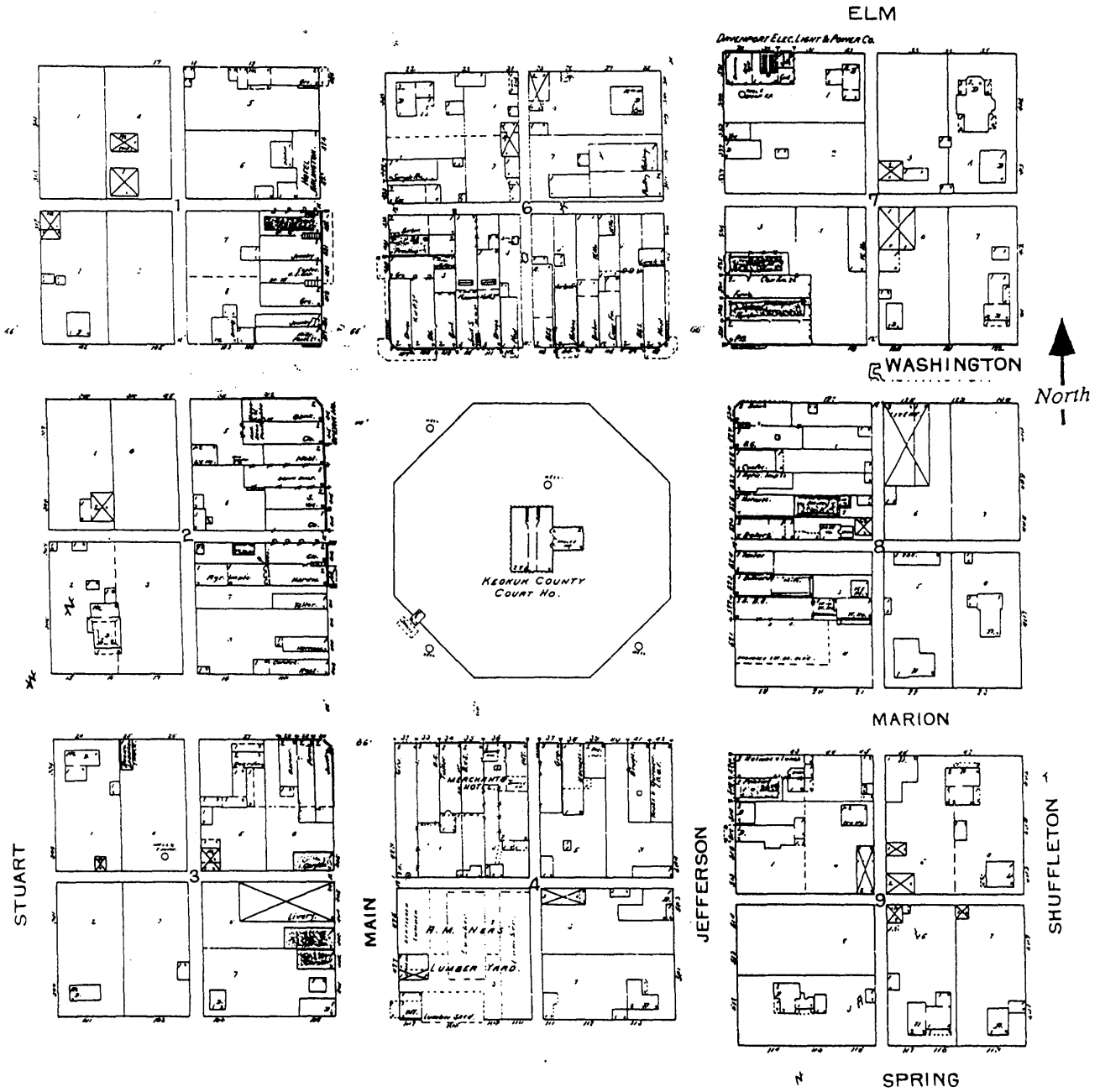
1888 Sanborn Map
Note Merchant's Hotel in middle of south side.

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Public Square Historic District
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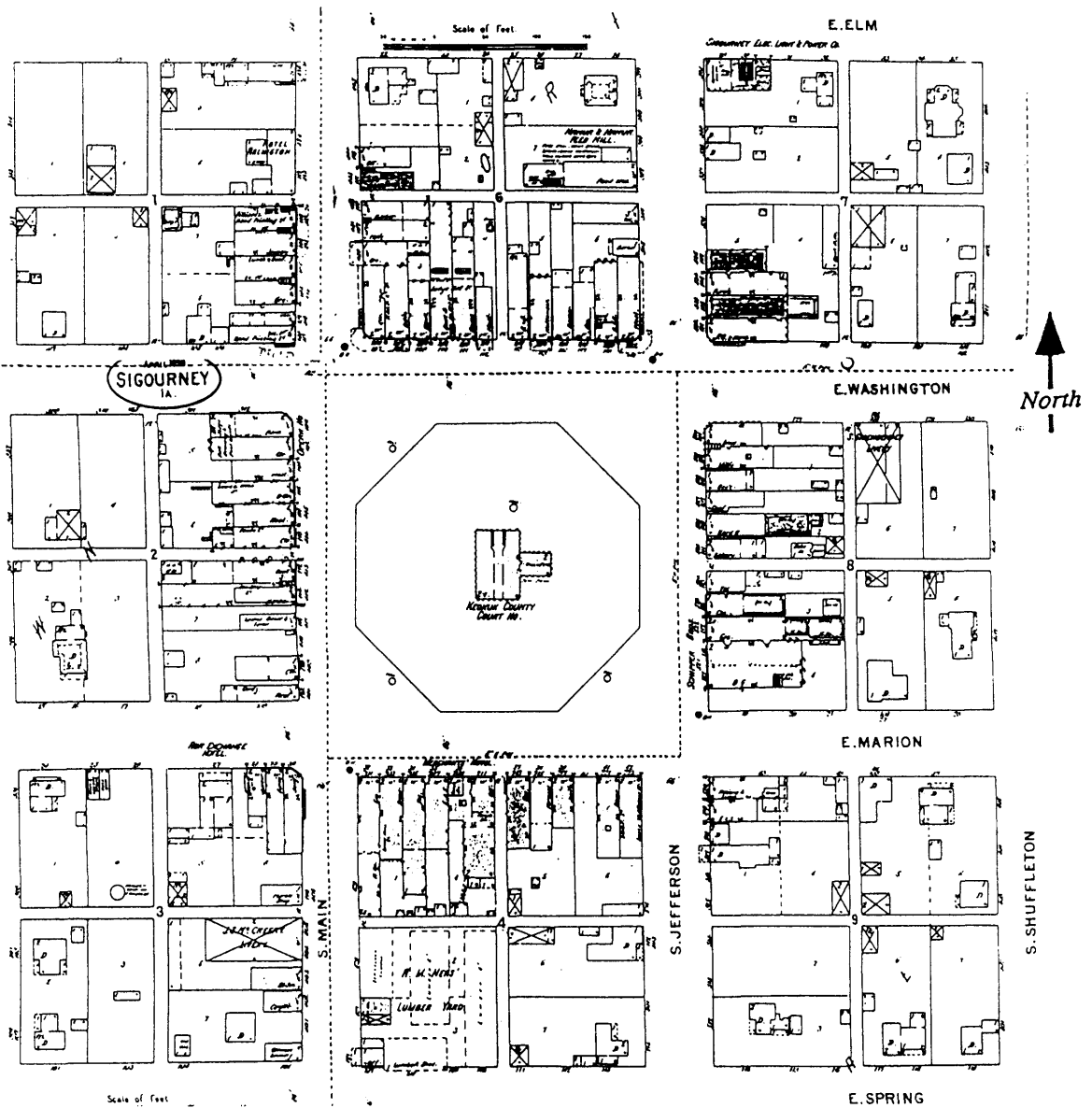
1893 Sanborn Map
Note major new construction on west, south, and east sides.

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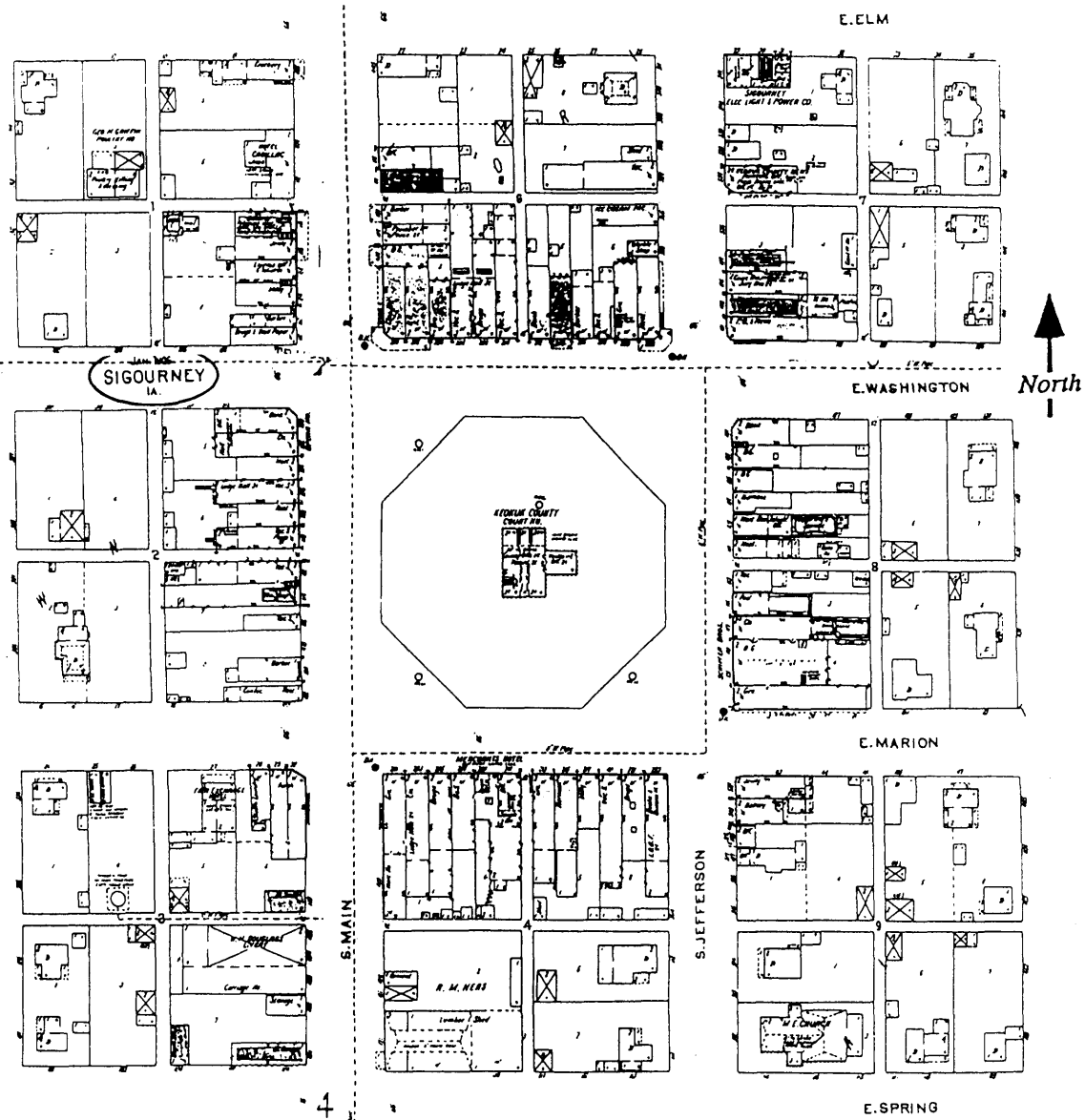
1899 Sanborn Map
Almost all lots around the Square are occupied.

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1906 Sanborn Map

The only empty lot facing the Square is on the west side, near the south end.

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Changes had been taking place in the center of the Public Square as well. The 1888 Sanborn shows the courtyard to be octagonal in shape, with the four wells located outside the courtyard proper, and a bandstand shown northwest of the courthouse. By 1893 the need for more space had caused an addition to be made to the east side of the courthouse. A new hitching rack installed around the courtyard in the summer of 1895 was said to be "a grand improvement."⁴

Shortly after the turn of the century one of the oldest buildings around the Square was demolished to make way for a new bank building. The "Old Jackson Building" was a frame structure located immediately east of the alley on the north side of the Square. It had been constructed in 1857 for William Jackson's hardware store. (It was the other "half" of the brick Jackson Building from c.1865-70.) The new building was to be the home of the Citizen's Savings Bank.⁵

Construction of a new courthouse began in 1909. Designed by the distinguished Des Moines architectural firm of Wetherell & Gage, it is a fine example of the Neo-classical style executed in Bedford limestone. Like many public buildings of the period it reflected the influence of the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Located in the center of the courtyard, it rests on a high foundation with two full floors above. The building features entrances on all four sides, with monumental Ionic columns stretching between the second and third floors above each entrance. The roof is covered with clay tile and a central clock tower completes the design.



Keokuk County Courthouse (1909-11), NRHP

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Public Square Historic District
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The courthouse was the first of three new public buildings constructed in Sigourney during the next ten years. Shortly after the courthouse was completed, plans were made for the construction of a free public library one block north of the Square at the corner of Elm and Jefferson. Technically outside the boundaries of the historic district, the library contributes strongly to the overall feeling of the district. Funded by the Carnegie corporation and designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Patton, Holmes, and Flynn, it is a Craftsman variation of the typical library of the period, resting on a high foundation with a symmetrical façade. The tile roof echoes that of the courthouse. Completed in 1914, the library (NRHP) speaks to the importance of being the county seat.

Concrete blocks were becoming a popular building material in the second decade of the 20th century. The Hoffman Cement Product Co. was doing such a good business that it expanded in 1913, and the owner (Andrew Hoffman) planned to build his own new residence (located just north of the county jail) of concrete blocks.⁶ These blocks were sometimes advertised as "artificial stone" and were called the "building material of the future" because the blocks looked like stone and were fireproof like stone, but were much less expensive. Unfortunately for the manufacturers, although the blocks were widely used for foundations and porches, there were relatively few houses and buildings constructed totally of the material. There are two buildings in the district built of this locally produced material: the Kendall-Friday Building (also known as Friday's Hall) just off the southwest corner of the Square at 210 S. Main, and the single story block building northeast of the Square at 117 N. Jefferson known as Jimmy Green's Ice Cream Parlor. Both buildings illustrate the use of rusticated block to heighten the illusion of stone.

Improvement continued around the Square. In 1914 the frame building located on the northwest eyetooth corner was replaced by a two story brick building (non-extant) to house the Haffner Drug Co. and Emil Thommen. In August of that year a frame building housing a restaurant on the east side (three doors south of Washington) was destroyed by fire.⁷ This allowed for the construction of a two story brick building on the site which housed the Garden Theater. The "new" Citizen's Savings Bank building just east of the alley on the north side of the Square was given a new front c.1915. It took on the appearance of the Neo-classical style, with terra cotta exterior featuring pedimented entries and a denticulated cornice. This was not only a popular style for bank buildings during this period, it also reflected the style of the new courthouse.

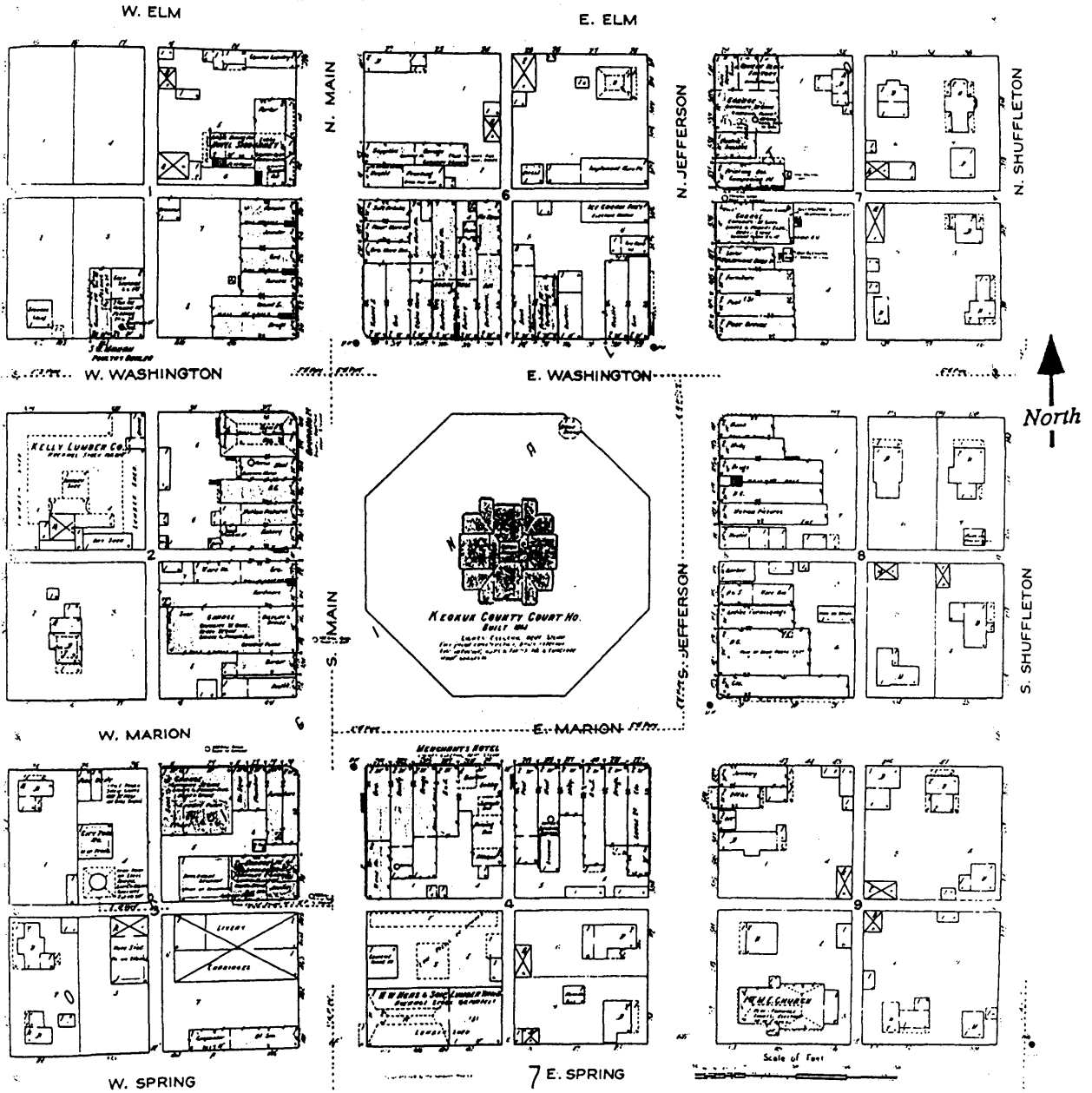
The 1916 Sanborn shows a new building type, the auto garage. There were six examples of auto garages within a block and a half of the Square. Due to the flammable nature of the auto, these buildings needed to be of fireproof construction so they usually had concrete floors and masonry walls. The garages had to have large open areas in which to maneuver the cars, so they often had a roof with wood or steel trusses. While many of the garages were for repair service only, others contained sales showrooms as well. In most communities the auto garages (both sale and service) were built just off the Square. Sigourney is the exception to this. Around 1915 Kracht and Snakenberg built their Ford dealership on the west side of the Square, south of the alley.

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Public Square Historic District
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1916 Sanborn Map
Note one empty lot on north side of Square,
and the single story buildings on the east and west sides.
Garages are shown on N. Jefferson, S. Main, and the west side of Square.

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Public Square Historic District
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This single story brick building had a display room and office in front and a garage with a capacity of twenty-eight cars in the rear.

A 1918 calendar featured panoramic photographs of the Square as well as photos of individual buildings. These pictures bring the 1916 Sanborn map to life. The only single story buildings remaining on the Square are located just south of the alley on the east side, and from Marion north three buildings on the west side. A major two story double storefront building on the north side of the Square was not shown on the calendar. The Noller-Croneweth Building was completed in 1918 after the photographs were taken. This brick building illustrates a more modern design, with flat patterned brickwork creating the major decorative elements. The second floor windows are banded in groups of four, and the horizontal emphasis is continued with the terra cotta/concrete cornice and coping. Simple panels in the rounded pediments complete the design. The entries have prism glass transoms above. With this building the development around the Sigourney Public Square was basically complete.

The first mention of a Memorial Building to honor Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Nurses of the first World War was a petition that was presented to the Board of Supervisors in November 1919.⁸ The request was for a Memorial Hospital Building, and an election was called for 29 December 1919 to vote on a \$100,000 facility. By the time that bonds were offered in 1921 for the construction of the present Memorial Hall, plans had been changed, and it was built as a combination City Hall and Auditorium. This large (60' x 120') two story brick building is a good example of Renaissance Revival design. It is one of the few buildings in Sigourney for which an architect has been identified. It was designed by Burdette Higgins of Des Moines.⁹ Renaissance Revival buildings reflect the palaces of the Italian Renaissance period and have a very definite division between each of the floors. This building features a symmetrical five bay façade on the east elevation, with two floors above the basement. The side elevations show a center portion with a single story above the basement, indicating the presence of a large auditorium. A high foundation capped by a stone watertable surrounds the building. On the façade (east elevation) the first and second floor windows have brick jack-arched tops with keystones and feature multi-light double hung sash. The side elevations feature monumental round arched windows with keystones, providing light into the auditorium area. These are also in the Renaissance tradition of handling different parts of the building in a different manner. While the front part of the building contains the city offices, and the center portion contains the auditorium, the rear portion houses the stage area and is proportionally taller than the rest. Memorial Hall is a remarkably unaltered resource.

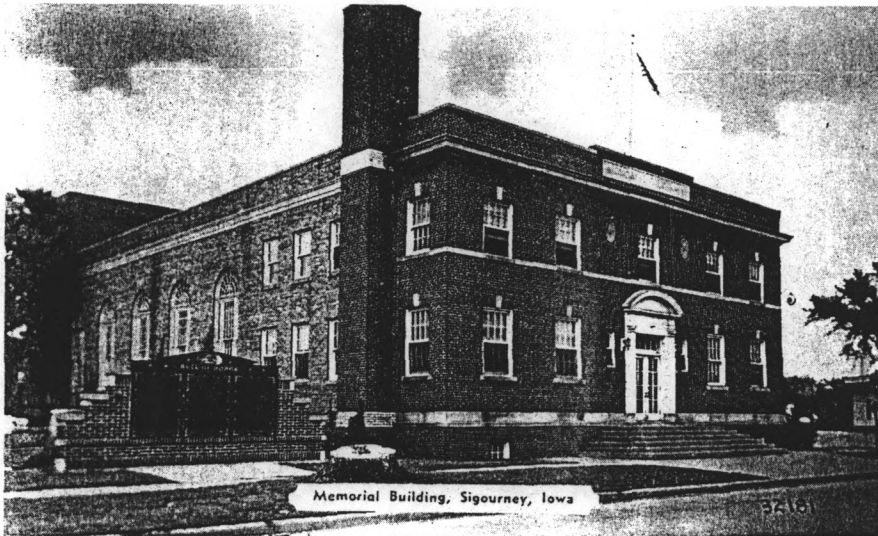
Following the decision not to build a memorial hospital, in 1921 Dr. William Pfannebcker and Dr. C.L. Heald of Cedar Rapids purchased the Merchant's Hotel on the south side of the Square for conversion into an up-to-date hospital. Adaptation of the building for this new function made few changes to the exterior. This building served the citizens of Sigourney and Keokuk County as their hospital until a new facility was built on the south edge of town in 1954.

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Public Square Historic District
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Memorial Hall, 120 N. Jefferson (1922-23)

The 1920s appear to be the period when new brick facades began replacing original storefronts on some buildings from the 1870s and '80s. Like the Noller-Croneweth Building, these new facades featured very simple brick patterning, using flat brick panels, or decorative patterns such as basket weave or herringbone, and are much more subdued than the earlier Italianate designs. Examples of new facades can be seen on the Laffer Building at 100 E. Washington (west end of the north side) and the Keokuk County Bank Building at 101-103 S. Jefferson (north end of east side).

The only major construction taking place during the Great Depression was the federally funded project to build a new post office. Located one block west of the Square on Washington, this single story brick building was completed in 1938 from plans provided by the Secretary of the Treasury (Henry Morgenthau, Jr.), with Louis A. Simon as Supervising Architect. The rectangular building features a symmetrical five bay façade on the long side. The exterior is of brick of varying shades, producing a visually interesting pattern. Although earlier post offices were often in the Neo-classical style, this building is a very simple Art Deco design. The major Art Deco element is the slightly recessed front entrance with stepped-back brickwork. Like many post offices constructed during the Depression, this one features a mural on the interior. Measuring 12' x 5' the oil on canvas painting was created by Richard Olsen and is entitled "Indian Harvest." The Indian in the center of the painting is usually referred to locally as a

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representation of Chief Keokuk. Like Memorial Hall, this building remains basically unaltered except for new energy efficient windows. (A handicapped accessible entrance was added to west elevation in 1998.)



U.S. Post Office, 115 W. Washington (1938)

In 1940 two changes were made to the courtyard itself.¹⁰ The old bandstand on the northeast corner was moved to Legion Park and it was replaced by the present fountain. A gift of Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Lewis, the fountain was in memory of their daughter who died in 1883 at age four. The re-inforced concrete structure measures 36' in diameter and features three basins of water at varying heights. Electrically operated, the jets of water formed various designs and colored lights changed with the patterns. The entire cycle took 43 minutes to complete. (A major restoration of this fountain has recently been completed.) To replace the wooden bandstand, a simple brick bandstand was constructed in the southwest corner of the courtyard. This octagonal structure measured 30' across. It consisted of a platform with concrete floor surrounded by a low brick wall. The first concert in this new facility took place on Saturday, 20 July 1940, with the Sigourney Municipal Band under the direction of J.R. McEldowney.

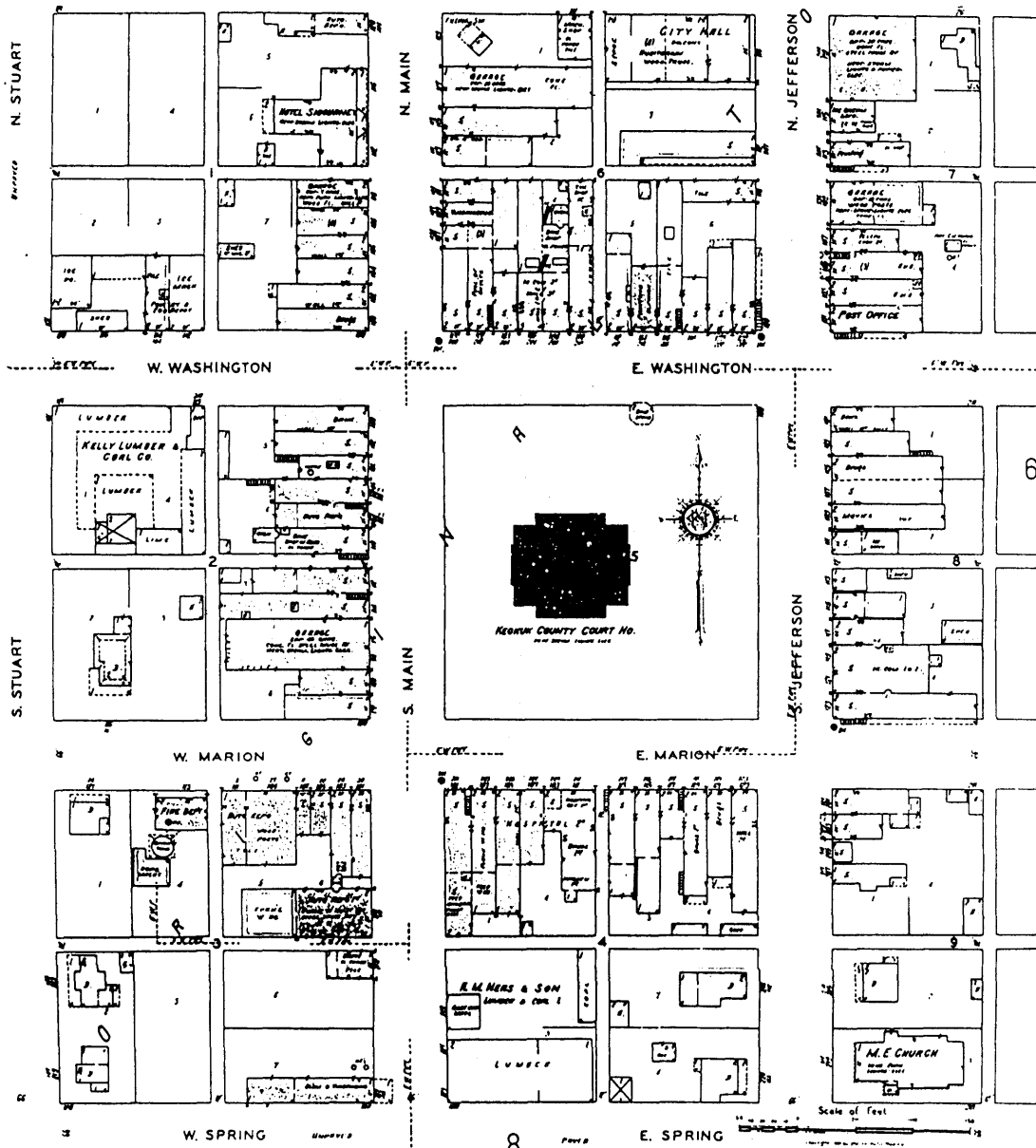
Following World War II the last frame buildings on the Square (on the east side, immediately south of the alley) were replaced by single story brick buildings. These buildings reflect the same highly simplified design found on the new facades from the 1920s and '30s around the Square. The only detailing was provided by simple brick panels. Somewhat later a small single story brick building was constructed at the far south end of the west side of the Square.

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1928 Sanborn Map
Shows full commercial development around the Public Square.
Post Office was built on site of Kelly Lumber (far left) in 1938.

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Typology

A typology has been developed for the buildings around the Sigourney Public Square. 51 of the 59 resources recorded fit into one of these five building types. The others are either new construction, or are the objects/structures on the Courthouse lawn.

Basically, the buildings around the Sigourney Public Square are of brick construction and are rectangular in shape with flat roofs sloping gently to the rear. The majority are two stories, with a few single story examples and two buildings that have three stories. Most of the buildings are a single storefront wide, but examples of double and triple storefronts exist.

Type I. This is a two or three story building, containing one or two storefronts, which has a definite division between the treatment of the street level and the upper levels of the building. The street level contains the broad display windows and recessed entry common to commercial buildings. The upper level(s) have a rhythmic pattern of windows evenly spaced across the façade. What sets Type I buildings apart from Type II buildings is the use of round arched openings at all levels. The round arches may be brick patterned or of cast metal. It also appears that most, if not all, of these Type I buildings originally featured large wooden brackets at the cornice. These buildings were constructed between c.1865-75, appear to be the oldest extant commercial buildings in the survey area, and are illustrative of early Italianate commercial design.



Type I: 114 E. Washington, Jackson Bros Building (c.1865-70)

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Type II. This is a two story building, usually one storefront in width, but occasionally two or three. Like the Type I buildings there will be a definite division between the treatment of the street level storefront and the upper levels of the building. Most of these will feature segmental arched windows, often with decorative hoodmolds of cast concrete, metal, or brick patterning. Originally these buildings were crowned by a bracketed metal cornice across the top. The Type II buildings were constructed between c.1875-c.1905 and can best be described as Italianate commercial design.



Type II: 105-109 E. Marion, Merchant's Hotel (1885)

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Type III. This is usually a two story building (occasionally only a single story), from one to two storefronts in width, with a more horizontal emphasis. Windows will be broader proportionally than the earlier buildings, and may be banded in groups of two or three. Detailing on these buildings reflects the simplicity of early 20th century design and will consist primarily of simple flat brickwork patterning and/or inset blocks of tile or concrete. Early automobile garages were a sub-type of this group, often with an arched roof. These buildings were common from c.1915-c.1935.



Type III: 116-118 E. Washington, Noller-Croneweth Building (1918)

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Type IV. This is a two (or more) story building to which Neo-classical details have been applied. The prime example is the Keokuk County Courthouse, but other buildings in the survey area reflect the influence. The basic building materials will be brick, but details of stone or terra cotta are common. These were built (or remodeled) from c.1910 on.



Type IV: 112 E. Washington, Citizen's Savings Bank (c.1915 façade)

Other. These buildings are primarily purely utilitarian structures that do not fit into one of the above categories, i.e. are buildings which have been so altered that the original design cannot be determined, or which were built after the period of significance and do not meet the 50 year requirement.

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Historic Views: North Side of Square
Top: Looking NE c.1930-35
Bottom: Looking NW c.1930-35

NORTH SIDE SQUARE, SIGOURNEY, IOWA

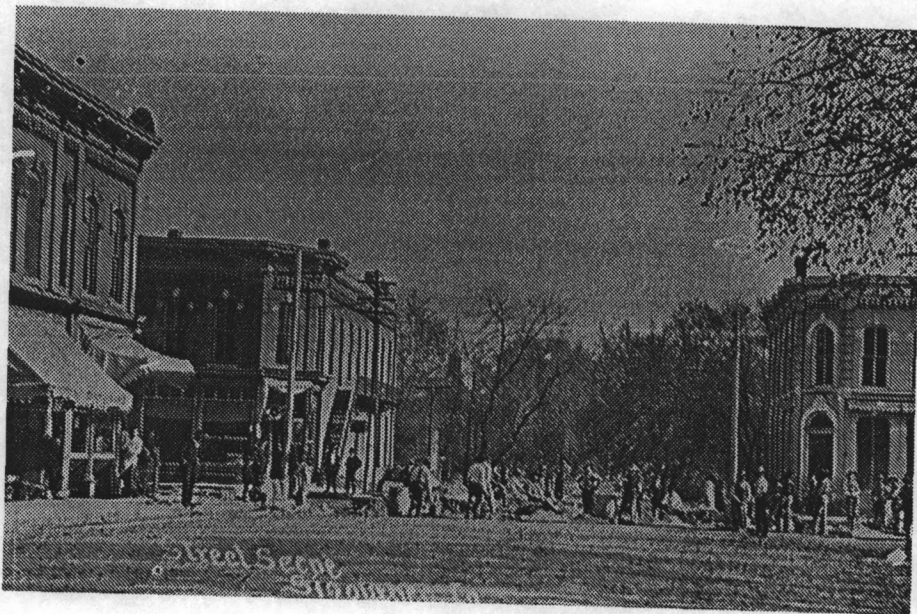


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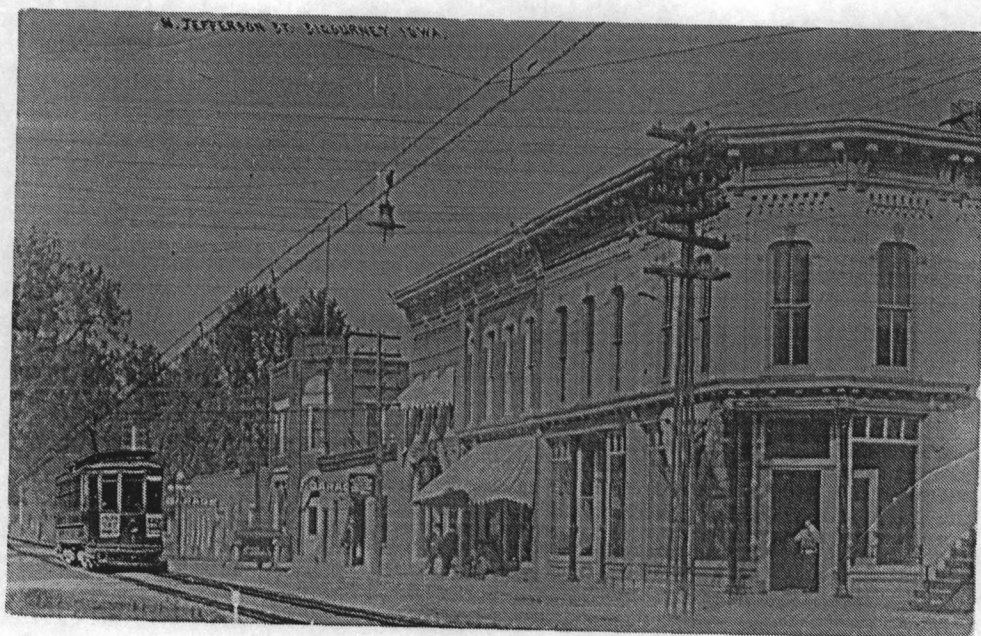
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Historic Views: Top: NE corner of Square looking E c.1910
Bottom: Looking NE from corner of Washington/Jefferson c.1910
(Trolley "added" to photograph)



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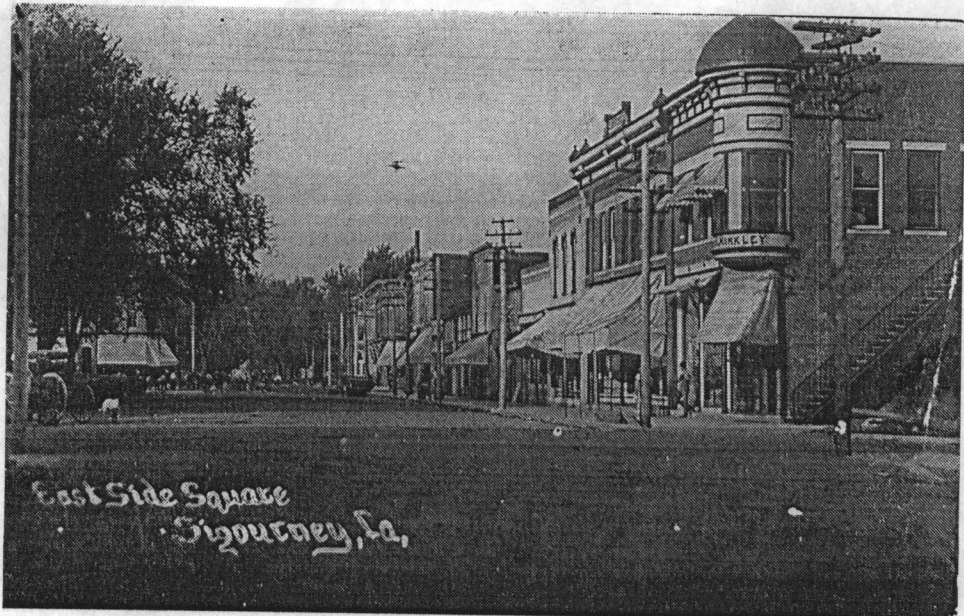
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Historic Views: East Side of Square
Top: Looking SE c.1915
Bottom: Looking NE c.1900-10



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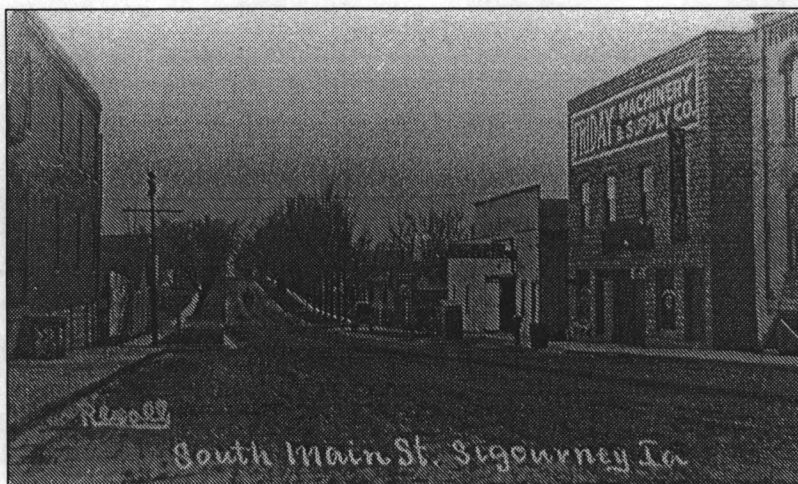


895A South Side of Square, Sigourney, Iowa

Historic Views:

Top: South Side of Square looking SW c. 1900-10

Bottom: S. Main looking SSW from Marion c.1915



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Historic Views: West Side of Square
Top: Looking NW c. 1935
Bottom: Looking SW c.1900-10

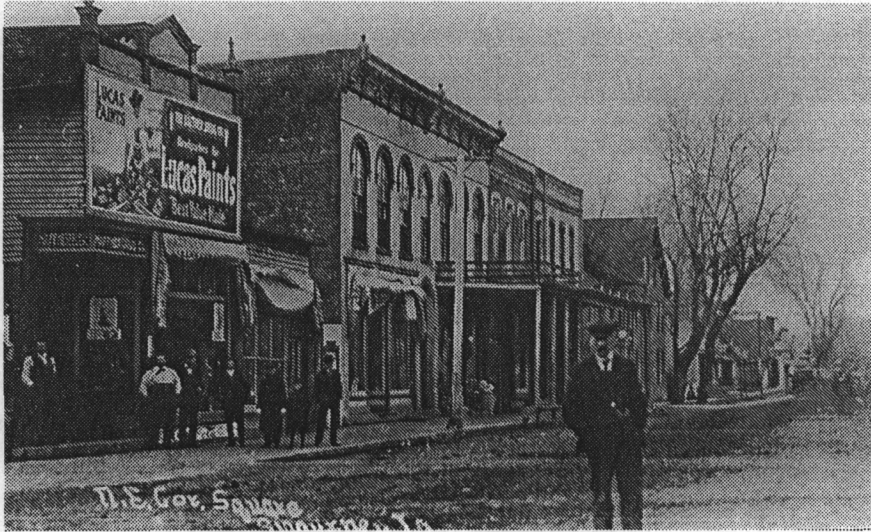


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Historic Views:

Top: West side of N. Main looking NW, c.1900
Bottom: West side of S. Main looking NE c.1900-10
Shows buggy parking around Square



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PRESENT APPEARANCE OF THE PUBLIC SQUARE

The courtyard in the center of the Public Square is occupied by the Keokuk County Courthouse (NRHP), the Lewis Memorial Fountain, Civil War Monument, Veteran's Monument, and the Bandstand. All but the Veteran's Monument (1965) are considered to be contributing to the historic district, and the courthouse is a key structure.

North Side. The north side of the Square (Washington Street) features buildings illustrating each of the four types identified, and includes three key structures. Two of the earliest buildings in the district are located here, the Johnston Building from 1867 at 106-108 E. Washington, and the Jackson Bros. Building from c.1865-70 at 114 E. Washington. These represent the early Italianate Type I designs. The Goldthwaite Building at 120 from c.1875-80 is typical of the later Italianate Type II buildings. In all three cases, the first floor (street level) has been altered over the years, but the upper levels retain a strong sense of original design and have been recently restored. The Noller-Croneweth Building at 116-118 from 1918 is a fine example of simplified early 20th century design, a Type III design. It has undergone restoration in recent years and retains a strong degree of integrity. The Citizens's State Bank Building on the alley at 112 is the best example of Type IV design in the community, with its Neo-classical terra cotta façade. Utilization as the Main Street Sigourney office has assured this building of proper care and maintenance. The Johnston Building, Noller-Croneweth Building, and Citizen's Bank are all key structures.

Other buildings in this 100 block of E. Washington have undergone more alterations. Some received new facades in the 1920s and '30s, while others have been altered since 1960. The Laffer Building on the west end appears to have been one of the first to receive a new front c.1930. The most extreme example is at the far east end of the block, where the Keller Building (1877) was given a totally new brick façade after the second story was removed, and the entrance was changed to Jefferson Street.

East Side. The 100 block of S. Jefferson contains a mix of one and two story buildings as well as a mix of types. The so-called Keokuk County Bank Building at the north end was originally a good example of Type II design, but it received a totally new light colored brick façade c.1925-30. Although it retains the chamfered entrance that was common to bank buildings of the late 19th century, it must be considered non-contributing. The Wilcockson Building (1910) next door at 105-107 has retained a strong sense of original design at the upper level though it has been altered at street level. The stone jack-arched windows are typical of Type IV design, but the modern replacement windows detract. The buildings in the middle of the block (109, 113, and 115) are representative of the simplified Type III designs, while the three Schipfer buildings in the south part of the block all represent late Italianate Type II designs. All have been altered at street level, and some changes have been made to the upper level windows, but each retains a strong sense of its original design. The Schipfer building with the highest level of integrity is that at 121 which retains the corner oriel window with finial and exterior iron staircase.

South Side. The south side of the Square (E. Marion) was originally composed entirely of Type II, late Italianate, buildings. However, four have undergone major

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remodeling and the new facades make them non-contributing. Most of the others have been altered to some degree at the street level but retain a strong sense of the original design at the second floor level. The I.O.O.F. and Franken buildings at the east end of the block are good examples of the Italianate style with segmental arched windows with decorative hoodmolds, and a bracketed metal cornice. At the opposite end of the block is the west one-half of the J. S. White Building from c.1875-80. It retains the arched windows with hoodmolds and decorative brick cornice panels, but has lost the original bracketed cornice. The major building on the south side remains the multi-front Merchant's Hotel from 1885. It retains the segmental arched windows with cast hoodmolds, and the bracketed metal cornice with date pediment. While alterations have been made at street level, the east portion retains a sense of the original design with recessed double door entry. The hotel building maintains a strong presence on this side of the Square.

West Side. The west side (S. Main) is the most difficult to deal with in terms of a district, because the south half of the block is new construction. However, from the alley north there remains a fine collection of two and three story buildings dating between 1877 and 1893, all of which are considered contributing to the district. The earliest building is the two story double store front Opera House at the north end. This building retains its original cast hoodmolds and bracketed metal cornice (although part of the cornice was damaged by a 1998 windstorm). Second floor windows have been covered with wooden panels, but it is believed that the original double hung sash and frames are extant. Note that the second floor of this building is taller than those on other buildings in the block. That was to allow room for the stage area. Although the chamfered entrance indicating use as a bank remains, the street level, on both elevations, has been "modernized". This remains a good example of Type II design. The Vorhaur Building at 106 S. Main is one of only two three story buildings around the Square, both having originally housed the Masonic Lodge Hall on the third floor. This building is a combination of Types II and IV, with very simple classical elements such as the lunette. Much of the original iron storefront can be seen. The other three buildings in the half block are all good two story examples of Type II design, and retain original decorative elements at the upper levels. The Valerius Building at 108 has received a careful restoration.

Off the Square. The northeast eyetooth corner (100 block of N. Jefferson) contains a two story double storefront (the Strawhan Building) from 1876. Although it has been painted, and the windows (both levels) have been covered with wood panels, the original design elements are in place: the iron storefronts, cast hoodmolds, brick patterned cornice, and bracketed metal cornice. This is a good example of Type II design and is a contributing structure. Between the Strawhan Building and the alley are two non-contributing structures. On the north side of the alley is the Needham Building (113 N. Jefferson) from 1900 which is an example of Type II and IV design, much like the Vorhaur Building on the west side of the Square. Immediately north of the Needham Building is a single story building of rusticated concrete blocks, similar to the Friday Hall. It has experienced few alterations and is a good contributing structure. On the opposite side of Jefferson (the west side) is Memorial Hall. This 1922-23 Renaissance Revival Building is basically unaltered and is a key structure in the historic district.

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The southeast eyetooth corner (Marion and Jefferson) is occupied by two new buildings which are non-contributing. The bank (201 S. Jefferson) and Masonic Lodge (207) replaced a two story brick double storefront from c.1880.

The southwest eyetooth corner is occupied by the two story brick triple storefront building from c.1880 known as the Pfaff Building (101-105 W. Marion). This has retained original design elements and does not appear to have been altered. Although the exterior has been painted, it is a fine example of Type II design and is considered a key structure in the historic district. To the west are found a small non-contributing, and a large contributing building.

The 200 block of S. Main contains Friday Hall, the 1912 building constructed of locally produced rusticated concrete blocks. The only apparent alteration involves the replacement of the wide central garage door with individual entrance doors. This building is representative of Type III simplified early 20th century design.

Off the northwest corner of the Square to the west is the Sigourney Post Office at 115 W. Washington. This 1938 Art Deco building is located on the south side of the street and is a key structure in the historic district.

The northwest eyetooth corner contains a new single story brick building which is considered non-contributing. There are two brick buildings to the north, both being two stories with double storefronts. The building at 104-106 N. Main was built in 1872-74 and is a good example of Type I early Italianate design with round arched windows and a bracketed metal cornice. Alterations to the street level detract but it remains a contributing structure. The building next door at 108-110 appears to have been built c.1880 as a Type II, late Italianate building. Early lithographs show a brick patterned cornice but not metal cornice. Until c.1910 there was a wooden porch across the façade. This building has been altered at street level and has new windows, and is considered a marginal contributing structure. The east side of the 100 block of N. Main contains three buildings, all brick single storefronts representing Type II design. The south building (107 N. Main) is a single story with iron storefront. It has been altered by panels covering the windows, but it appears that the originals are intact under the panels. The next two buildings (109 and 111) are very simple designs with segmental arched windows and brick cornices. Panels cover the original store windows on the street level. All three of these buildings are considered contributing structures to the district.

Although many of the buildings in the Public Square Historic District have been altered on the first floor level, most upper stories retain the original design elements common to their period and style. A walk around the Sigourney Public Square provides a definite sense of time and place.

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LIST OF SIGOURNEY BUILDINGS BY
TYPOLOGY AND SIGNIFICANCE

The NW corner of the Square (Washington at Main) is the division point
for addresses north/south and east/west.

Address	Name	Type	Cont.	Non-Cont.
Courthouse Square	Keokuk County Courthouse	IV	NRHP	
	Fountain		X	
	Bandstand		X	
	Civil War Monument		X	
	Veteran's Monument			X
101-103 N. Jefferson	Strawhan Bldg	II	X	
102	Keller Bldg (orig faced S)	II		X
105-107	Oelmeyer Bldg	II		X
109	Garage	O		X
113	Needham Bldg	II/IV	X	
117	Green Bldg	III	X	
120	Memorial Hall	IV	X (Key)	
101-103 S. Jefferson	Keokuk County Bank	II		X
105-107	Willcockson Bldg	IV	X	
109	Garden Theater	III	X	
113	Votroubek Bldg	III	X	
115	No Name	III	X	
117	Schipfer Bldg (1st)	II	X	
119	Schipfer Bldg (2nd)	II	X	
121	Schipfer Bldg (3rd)	II	X	
201	Bank (new)	-		X
207	Masonic Lodge (new)	-		X
100 N. Main	Corner Drug (new)	-		X
104-106	No Name	I	X	
107	No Name	II	X	
108-110	No Name	II	X?	
109	No Name	II	X	
111	No Name	II	X	

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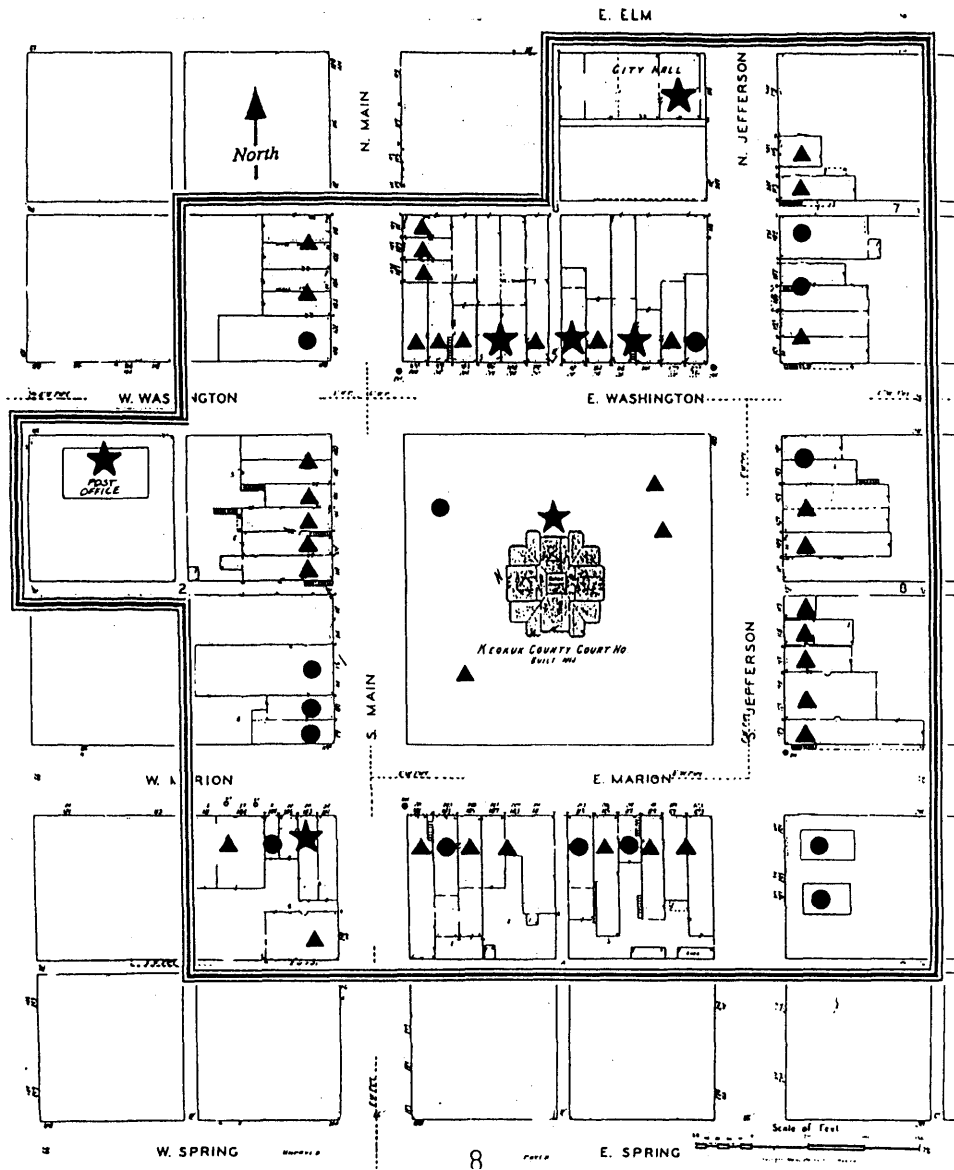
Address	Name	Type	Cont.	Non-Cont.
100-102 S. Main	Opera House	II	X	
104	Neiman Bldg	II	X	
106	Vorhaur Bldg	II/IV	X	
108	Valerius Bldg	II	X	
110	Merriam Bldg	II	X	
118	Jack & Jill	O		X
120	Deli	O		X
122	Law Offices (new)	-		X
210 S. Main	Friday's Hall	III	X	
101 E. Marion	J.S. White Bldg	I	X	
103	E 1/2 White Bldg	I		X
105	Merchants Hotel	II	X	
109	Merchants Hotel	II	X	
113	No Name	I		X
115	No Name	II	X	
117	No Name	II		X
119	Strawbridge Bldg	II/IV	X	
121-123	IOOF & Franken Bldg	II	X	
101-105 W. Marion	Pfaff Bldg	II	X (Key)	
107	No Name	O		X
109-111	Auto Garage	III	X	
100 E. Washington	Laffer Bldg	III	X	
102	No Name	III	X	
104	Sigourney Savings Bank	II	X	
106-108	Johnston Bldg	I	X (Key)	
110	Seibel Bldg	II/IV	X	
112	Citizens Savings Bank	IV	X (Key)	
114	Jackson Bros Bldg	I	X	
116-118	Noller-Croneweth Bldg	III	X (Key)	
120	Goldthwaite Bldg	II	X	
115 W. Washington	Post Office	III	X (Key)	

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MAP SHOWING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES
AND LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR EACH RESOURCE.

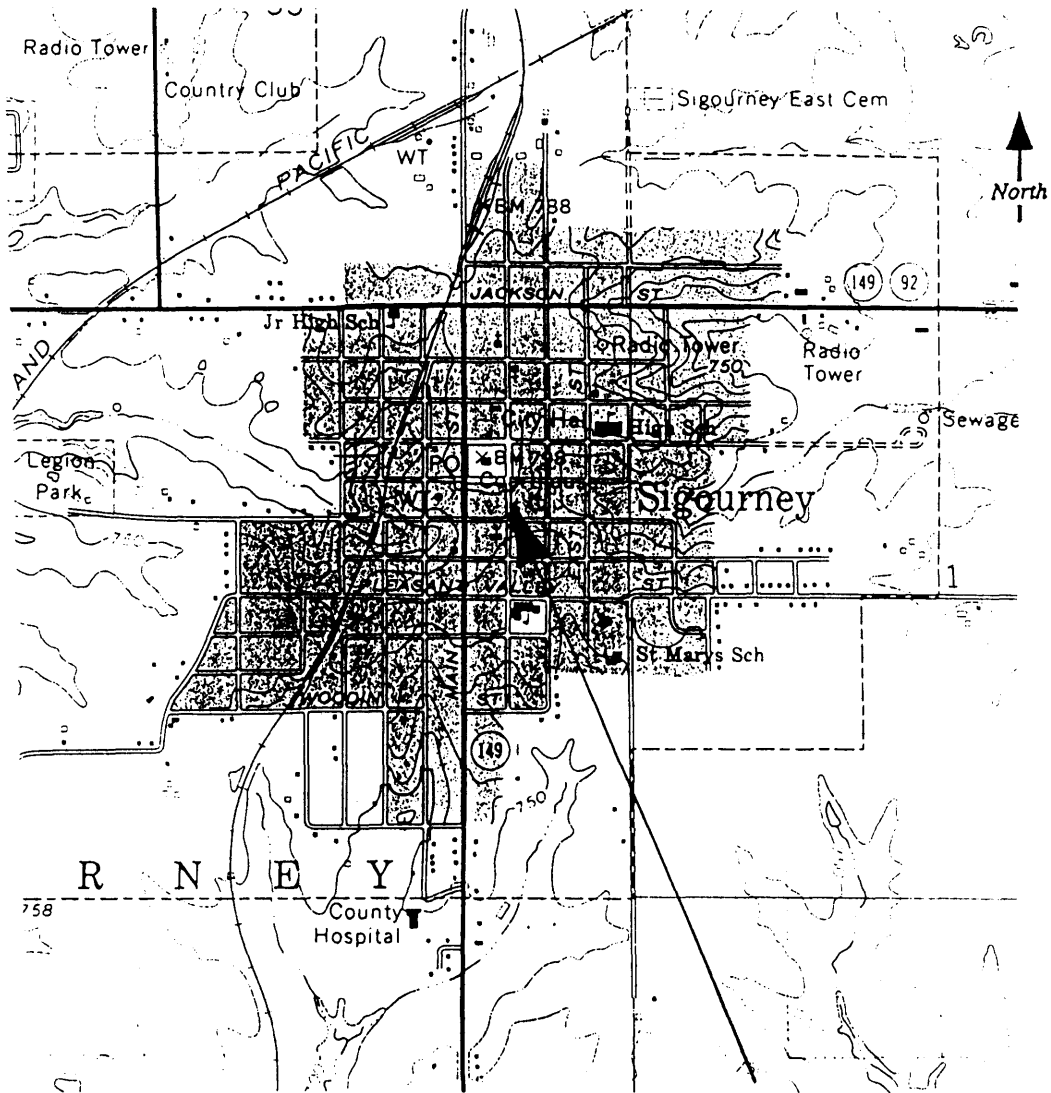
- ★ Key
- ▲ Contributing
- Non-contributing

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U.S.G.S. Map of Sigourney

Location of Public Square Historic District indicated by arrow.

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NOTES

¹ In his article "Frontier forms of Iowa's County Seats" Schmeideler discusses the different types of town square plans, and lists where each is found in Iowa. He identified a strong courthouse square tradition in the southern part of the state.

² S.A. Jones, Esq., *The Iowa Democrat*, 6 July 1860, n.p.

³ *Keokuk County News*, 16 November 1893, p 3, c 2.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 29 August 1895, p 3, c 2.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 11 June 1903, p 1, c 6.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 17 April 1913, p 1, c 1.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 27 August 1914, p 1, c 1.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 27 November 1919, p 1, c 5.

⁹ Burdette Higgins later became a partner in the firm of Tinsley, McBroom & Higgins of Des Moines.

¹⁰ *Sigourney News Review*, 2 July 1940, p 1.
3 July 1940, p 1.
24 July 1940, p 7.
28 August 1940, p 1.
4 September 1940, p 1.

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SIGNIFICANCE:

The Public Square Historic District in Sigourney, IA is locally significant under Criterion A as it illustrates the importance of county seat designation to the commercial development of a community, and under Criterion C as it represents a cross section of popular commercial architectural design. The period of significance is from c.1865 (the construction date of the oldest extant building) to c.1945 (the beginning of post-WW II construction). The district meets the integrity requirements established in the Multiple Property Documentation Form for commercial and public buildings as well as for a historic district.

Designation as the county seat assured a community of growing and thriving. People came to the courthouse to pay taxes, record a birth or death, sit on a jury, etc. When they did so they often stayed to shop, might spend the night in the local hotel, eat in a local restaurant, and attend a play at the opera house. As the seat of county government the town was the social and economic center of the county.

Sigourney achieved county seat designation on two different occasions. The first was in 1844, when the county commissioners chose a site near the geographic center of the county, shortly after Keokuk County was organized. Following objections, the seat of justice was moved to Lancaster, closer to the population center, from 1846-56. In 1856 the decision was made by popular vote to move the county seat back to Sigourney, and there has been no further controversy. The business district around the Public Square developed primarily after the county seat was moved back to Sigourney in 1856 and the courthouse was completed in 1859.

The first permanent courthouse was built in the center of the Public Square at a cost of \$17,200. Completed in 1859, it was a two story (plus basement) brick structure of Italianate design with a bracketed cornice and central cupola. No architect has been identified for this building, but it is possible that one was involved. The publications of the day covered the dedication of this fine public building in May 1859, and described the accommodations within. The first floor held offices (five "commodius" rooms plus two fireproof vaults), while the second floor housed the courtroom and two jury rooms. The courtroom, with its gallery, was said to seat 1,000 people.¹ The basement, which appears to have been partially above grade, was used for fuel storage and the temporary detention of prisoners.

With the courthouse in the center of the Public Square, businesses started growing up around the edges. Retail establishments such as general stores, hardware, and drug stores faced the new courthouse, while service related businesses such as harness shops and livery stables were located on side streets. The newspapers carried ads for a number of physicians and attorneys (including George D. Woodin who served as the district attorney) as well as for dry goods, hardware, boots and shoes, etc. The Tannery and Harness Shop of Blair & Boyd advertised that "plaster's hair is always on hand at fair prices." In February 1862 Martin Pfaff established a furniture store on the southwest corner of the Square ("...coffins kept on hand and trimmed in any style desired.") The Pfaff family remained in the business on this site until 1909. At the end of the Civil War

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Sigourney was a small county seat town of approximately 500 people, waiting for the soldiers to return and the economy to boom.

The brick buildings constructed after the Civil War brought an element of style to the community with their early Italianate commercial design. These also provided space for leisure activities as well as business. The Hogan Lodge #32 of the Masonic order had been chartered in June 1852. When the three story Johnston Building was completed on the north side of the Square in 1867, the third floor was occupied by the Masons as their lodge hall. The I.O.O.F. constructed a building at the east end of the south side of the Square in 1881, renting the first floor to a dry goods merchant and using the second floor as their meeting hall for Lodge #98.

Businesses around the Square in the 1880s provided all the goods and services necessary for a thriving county seat town. In addition to the usual dry goods, hardware, groceries, and drugs, there was a meat market, shoe store, millinery, restaurant, furniture, music, jewelry, and book store, plus a confectionery, several saloons, a bakery, blacksmith, wagon shop, hotel, and a photographer. Above the first floor businesses were housed the offices of a number of physicians and dentists, and many attorneys.

On 29 December 1887 the *Keokuk County News* published a special edition devoted to local businesses and business owners, and included many portraits and lithographs of buildings around the Square. It is interesting to note that the paper covered not just businessmen, but businesswomen as well. Mrs. G.W. Dobie was "the head of the largest millinery and dressmaking establishment in the county. She owns the entire building and carries an immense stock....." The picture of her building shows it to be next door to the Keokuk County Bank at the north end of the east side of the Square.

New types of goods were being offered for sale by local merchants, such as the Kodak Cameras advertised in 1891 by Peter G. Daut.² Daut must have been one of the more enterprising businessmen, because in the spring of 1892 the newspaper noted that "We stopped into Peter Daut's restaurant the other evening. He's got a new \$600 soda fountain. It's the latest make and very fine."³ Mrs. Merriam enlarged her building on the west side of the Square and added a second floor to serve as her photography studio (skylights provided excellent lighting for the camera). A new millinery shop opened next to Pfaff's on the southwest corner, and a 3' clock was installed at the northwest corner of the Square by W.I. McLain, Jr. for the benefit of the public. There was enough business being transacted in Sigourney that the carriage shops/wagon works expanded, and a new livery opened south of the Square. The Schipfer family recognized the potential of the community, and made a substantial investment by constructing three buildings on the east side of the Square to house the family businesses.

The decision to build a new courthouse was based not only on physical need, but also on community and county pride. This large stone public building represented a positive image to outsiders. By 1911 Sigourney could boast of over 2,000 inhabitants. In addition to the vital retail community, the town was home to a number of professionals. A directory in the *Keokuk County News* of 21 November 1912 listed six doctors (Johnson, Sherlock, Pfannebecker, Oliver, Strawbridge, and Dulin); two veterinarians (Nelson and Ferguson); three dentists (Snakenberg, Hinkley, and Goldthwaite); and *eleven* attorneys

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(Hamilton, Goeldner, Updegraff, Henniger, Stockman & Baker, Brown, Wagner, Johnson & Son, and Wyllie). County seats always have an ample number of lawyers.

The construction of a new library was another example of community pride at work. Andrew Carnegie was willing to provide funding for free public libraries around the country, but these needed to be in towns large enough to support such an institution. As the county seat, Sigourney could provide this support. The location selected (just a block north of the Square) served as a link between the residential and commercial areas. A few years later (1922-23) the new city hall and auditorium (Memorial Hall) was built diagonally across the street from the library, reflecting the continuing growth and prosperity of the community.

Another necessity for a county seat town was a hospital. When the decision was made to build a city hall rather than a hospital as the World War I memorial, two physicians assumed the responsibility for providing such a medical facility. In 1921 Drs. Pfannebecker and Heald purchased the Merchant's Hotel on the south side of the Square for conversion to a hospital. The new facility was to include first class equipment, including x-ray and clinical laboratories. When the hospital opened in December 1921 the *Keokuk County News* carried the following description,

.....nine or ten rooms for patients, a diet kitchen, physicians' dressing room, linen closet, operating room, sterilizing room, laboratory, x-ray and developing rooms, and physicians' library. The operating room is enameled white. Building is heated throughout and every room is provided with a lavatory with both hot and cold water. Laura Broghamar is the surgical nurse, and Winnie Ramey is the courteous and efficient secretary. Dr. Heald is located on the second floor with Dr. Pfannebecker on the first floor adjoining the spacious waiting room.⁴

While some small towns had a movie theater in the first quarter of this century, county seats often had more than one. In the early 1920s Sigourney had two in operation, the Majestic and the Garden. Once the two came under the same ownership only the Garden Theater on the east side of the Square survived. In 1927 it was announced that Sigourney would be "one of the first small towns in the state to have sound movies."⁵

The growing popularity of the automobile was probably one of the important factors in Sigourney's early 20th century development. There was a need for new types of buildings, such as service (oil) stations and garages. Several buildings in the community were built specifically to serve these needs. In 1909 Gus & Wilferd Kracht, local carriage makers, opened the first Ford agency in the state.⁶ Around 1915 Kracht and Snakenberg built their Ford dealership on the west side of the Square (south of the alley). This single story brick building housed both sales and service. The Kendall-Friday Building at 210 S. Main was constructed of locally produced concrete blocks, a fire proof material, and housed a garage on the first floor and meeting hall/theater on the second. Sigourney could boast of a number of auto dealerships in the 'teens and twenties, offering, among others, Chevrolets, Packards, Studebakers, and LaSalles.

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There were so many cars being parked around the Square and on the side streets, that spaces had to be marked to show people how to park, thereby providing as much space as possible. The newspaper noted how busy the downtown was on Saturday nights,

Sometimes one wonders where all the folks come from when he sees them in town. Saturday night was a beautiful night and good roads and the town was just filled with folks. There was nothing going on that we know of but they just came and visited with each other. The streets were just filled with cars blocks away from the Square. They are welcome.⁷

Automobiles required well maintained, hard surfaced roads, and in 1928 the two state highways which intersected in Sigourney were both paved. Now the residents could drive with ease to Ottumwa, Cedar Rapids, and Washington. These roads allowed residents of the far corners of Keokuk County to make the trip to Sigourney in record time and comfort. Shopping that had once been done in the near-by farm service towns was now done in the county seat. Businesses in Sigourney, especially those around the Square, profited greatly from these changes.

The trend towards centralized shopping, plus the amenities offered by the county seat (such as the movie theater, library, etc.) continued to bring people into Sigourney during the 1930s. The construction of the new Post Office in 1938 was another acknowledgement of the community's importance. Sigourney reached a peak population of 2,400 in 1940. The period of development around the Square was basically over. Following World War II the businesses would be maintained, and some buildings would be modernized, but the overall sense of the Square remained unchanged.

Today, the business district around the Sigourney Public Square remains the primary commercial area of the community. The Square serves as the center for community activities, with events scheduled in the courtyard and many taking place in Memorial Hall. Recent preservation activities include restoration of the fountain, exterior work on the courthouse, façade rehabs as part of the Main Street program, and an on-going restoration of Memorial Hall.

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NOTES

¹ James T. Hair, Iowa State Gazetteer. (Chicago: Bailey & Hair, 1865), p 244.

² *Keokuk County News*, 19 March 1891, p 2, c 7, 8 & 9.

³ Ibid., 12 May 1892, p 2, c 5.

⁴ Ibid., 1 December 1921, p 1, c 1.
22 December 1921, p 1, c 2.

⁵ *Sigourney Review*, 13 March 1927, p1, c4.

⁶ *Keokuk County News*, 12 September 1935, n.p.

⁷ *Sigourney Review*, 16 May 1928, p1, c 2.

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Newspapers

Life in the West (1859)

Iowa Weekly Democrat, (1859 & 1860)

Keokuk County News (September 1860-May 1863)
(March 1876-January 1881)
(January 1891-December 1895)
(June 1903-August 1905)
(November 1912-February 1915)
(November 1991-December 1921)

Sigourney News-Review (November 1899-June 1902)
(October 1927-December 1940)

Historic Photographs

Collections of the Keokuk County Historical Society and Main Street Sigourney.

Private Collections: Dorothy Beasley, Jim Eversmeyer, Herb Mohr, and Harrison Seip.

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GEOGRAPHIC DATA:

UTM References:

A)	15	566700	4576000
B)	15	566700	4575760
C)	15	566480	4575760
D)	15	566480	4575820
E)	15	566440	4575820
F)	15	566440	4575900
G)	15	566480	4575900
H)	15	566480	4575940
I)	15	566580	4575940
J)	15	566580	4576000

Verbal Boundary Description:

The area included in this Historic District is located in the Original Town, Sigourney (Keokuk County), Iowa. It includes the Public Square, plus all lots facing the Public Square and those within one-half block of the Square, plus those on N. Jefferson north from the alley to Elm, and the south side of Washington from the alley west to Stuart. Legal descriptions for this area are: Block 1, lots 7 & 8; Block 2, lots 1, 4-8; Block 3, lots 5 & 8; Block 4, lots 1, 4-6; Block 5, the Courthouse Square; Block 6, lots 3-8; Block 7, lots 1-4; Block 8, lots 1-4; and Block 9, lots 1 & 4. This encompasses 11.9 acres.

Boundary Justification:

This area contains the commercial resources directly related to the commercial, governmental, and civic development around the Public Square. It is the area historically considered to be the Sigourney "business district."

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PHOTOGRAPHS:

The photographs submitted with this nomination were taken by the Sigourney Historic Preservation Commission in April and October 1998. The negatives are on file at Sigourney City Hall, 120 N. Jefferson, Sigourney, IA.

1. Keokuk County Courthouse (NRHP), looking NW. Bandstand can be seen just to the left of the street light.
2. Memorial Fountain in NE corner of courthouse lawn, looking WSW.
3. Civil War Monument in NE quarter of courthouse lawn, looking SW.
4. North side of Square (E. Washington), looking NE. Johnston Building is the three story structure.
5. North side of Square (E. Washington), looking NW. East half of block contains the Citizen's Savings Bank and Noller-Croneweth buildings.
6. Memorial Hall, 120 N. Jefferson, looking NW. This is located one block N of Square.
7. 113 & 117 N. Jefferson, the Green Building (concrete block) and Needham Building, looking NE. Note Sigourney Public Library (NRHP) in background.
8. NE eyetooth corner of the Square (Washington at Jefferson), looking NE. Corner building is the Strawhan Building, the two storefronts to the left are the Oelmeyer Building.
9. East side of the Square, north half, looking NE. Willcockson Building is in the center.
10. East side of Square, looking NE. The three buildings at the south end of the block are the Schipfer buildings.
11. SE eyetooth corner of the Square (Jefferson at Marion), looking ESE. This corner contains two new buildings (bank and Masonic Lodge).
12. South side of Square, looking SW. I.O.O.F. Building is at far left (east end), Merchant's Hotel near the center of the block.
13. South side of Square, looking SE. Merchant's Hotel dominates the block.
14. SW eyetooth corner of the Square (Pfaff Building), looking SW.
15. Friday's Hall, 210 S. Main, looking SW. Built of locally produced concrete block.

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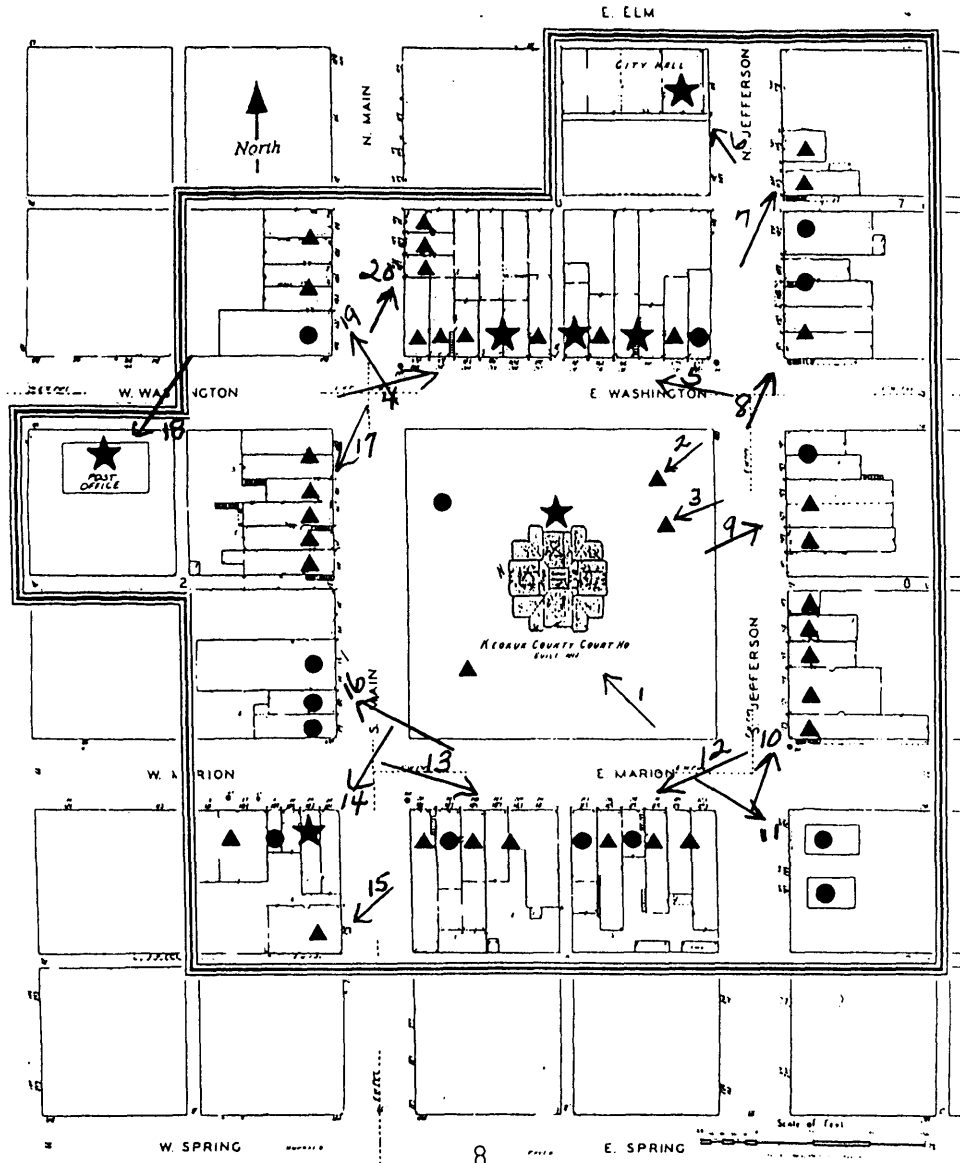
16. West side of Square, looking NW. South half is composed of non-contributing structures.
17. West side of Square, looking SW. All of north half is contributing, including the Opera House on the corner.
18. Sigourney Post Office, 115 W. Washington, looking SW.
19. NW eyetooth corner of Square (Main at Washington), looking NW.
20. East side of 100 block N. Main, looking NE.

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Map indicating direction of photographs.

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LIST OF PROPERTY OWNERS

DON J ADAMS
720 ADAIR ST
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

BERG WATER SYSTEMS INC
214040 HWY 92
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

DRS CHOTE & BHOONSRI THUMASATHIT
710 SOUTH STUART
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

DAVID GENE & DIANE BRUNS
1945 WEST 18TH
WASHINGTON IA 52353

HEIDI L BRUNS
108 N MAIN
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

PHIL J BUSCHMANN
103 SOUTH JEFFERSON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

CENTRAL VALLEY BANK
112 N MAIN
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

KENNETH CHANEY
114 E WASHINGTON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

CITY OF SIGOURNEY
120 N JEFFERSON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

TOM ALLEN & DEBORAH KAY CLARAHAN
405 W KELLY
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

BILLY W & CHARLOTTE S CLAYWELL
24131 252ND AVE
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

CRAIG D & SHIRLEY J CONKLIN
113 SOUTH JEFFERSON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

RICHARD V DEREGNIER TRUST
905 W SPRING
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

TERRY L & JAQUELINE L DOBBINS
109 SOUTH JEFFERSON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

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J DAVID & ADRIAN GENTRY
302 MARSHALL
OLLIE IA 52576

JERRY P & DIANA W GIBSON
113 EAST MARION
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

CLIFTON E & MARIAN J HARKNESS
814 LEROY
MUSCATINE IA 52761

FRANCIS L & NANCY C HARRIS
118 S MAIN
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

CHARLES L & CONNIE S HARTLEY
105 EAST MARION
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

JUSTIN R JOENS/HEATHER R BOMBEI
2320 J STREET SW
CEDAR RAPIDS IA 52404

DARLENE KELLY EDWARDS
2096 230TH ST
WASHINGTON IA 52353

DR JOSEPH P KELLY
605 SOUTH SHUFFLETON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

ATTN KATHY BATES
KEOKUK CO ABSTRACT
100 S MAIN
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

KEOKUK CO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COURTHOUSE
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

KINDS INC
118 S MAIN
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

GARY R KRUSE
103 EAST MARION
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

ROBERT MARGET
KEOKUK COUNTY STATE BANK
201 SOUTH JEFFERSON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

MYLES H & PATRICIA A SNAKENBERG MILLER
106 E WASHINGTON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

DR RHONDA WEHR
108 S MAIN
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

ATTN DAVE WILSON
FIRST RESOURCES CORP
109 EAST MARION
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

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PEGGY & MARVIN MINER
103 E MARION ST
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

DANIEL L, JOHN W & DEBRA S MOORE
518 W HICKORY
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

PAUL E O'ROURKE
105 SOUTH JEFFERSON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

KATHLEEN A O'ROURKE
20118 200TH
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

ROBERT C & ROBERT B PARKER
110 EAST WASHINGTON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

SIGOURNEY POSTMASTER
SIGOURNEY POST OFFICE
115 W WASHINGTON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

SIGOURNEY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
107 W MARION
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

JAMES E & EILEEN A THOMPSON
603 W SPRING
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

JACK R VALLANDINGHAM JR
100 N MAIN
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

RON WAGLER
2779 RUTLEDGE
OSKALOOSA IA 52577

RONNIE R & JANET J WARD
19446 210TH AVE
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

JOHN F & WILMA E WILKENING
809 S DELTA ROAD
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

L E WILLIAMSON
601 GARFIELD ST
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

CATHY J & PAUL R YOCK
610 S SHUFFLETON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

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GALEN W & BONNIE L BOWER
615 EAST WASHINGTON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

HUBERT A BRUTY
520 E JACKSON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

H DARRELL & DORIS M CONNER
304 E RINGGOLD
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

ROBERT LEE & JERRE CONNER
101 W MARION
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

HARRIS & KIND CO INC
118 S MAIN
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

WILLIS W & MAY ANN JAACKS
102 NORTH JEFFERSON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

RANDY G & JODY L MILLER
104 SOUTH MAIN
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

ATTN R L & ELIZABETH SCHOTT
EAST COUNTY LINE INC
PO BOX 268
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

JOHN N & DIANA M ROMERO WEHR
116 EAST WASHINGTON
SIGOURNEY IA 52591

JERRY & EMILY A WOHLER
810 MACKEY
SIGOURNEY IA 52591