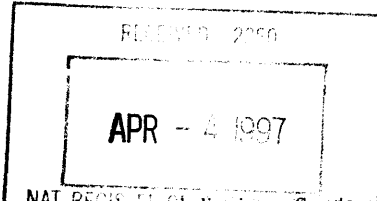


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**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" on the appropriate line 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 CEDAR FALLS INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS TEMPLE

other names/site number Odd Fellows Temple, 4th and Main Building

2. Location

street & number 401-403 Main Street N/A not for publication

city or town Cedar Falls N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Black Hawk code 013 zip code 50613

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.)

Patricia Christen
Signature of certifying official/Title

3-31-97
Date

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 Keeper
Patrick Andrews

Date of Action
5/2/97

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple
Name of Property

Black Hawk County, Iowa
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many lines as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one line)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/meeting hall
COMMERCE/TRADE/business

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/business

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone
walls Brick
Stone
roof Other
other Glass

Narrative Description

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

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple
Name of Property

Black Hawk County, Iowa
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" on one or more lines 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" on all the lines 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)

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1902

Significant Dates

1902

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Robinson, James E.

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

9. Major Bibliography 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):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historical Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository _____

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple
Name of Property

Black Hawk County, Iowa
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	15	545 600	4709 090	
Zone		Easting	Northing	
2				
Zone		Easting	Northing	
3				
Zone		Easting	Northing	
4				
Zone		Easting	Northing	

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 William C. Page, Public Historian; Joanne R. Walroth
organization _____ date April 21, 1996
street & number 520 East Sheridan Avenue (Page) telephone 515-243-5740; FAX 515-243-7285
city or town Des Moines state Iowa zip code 50313

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 Mikkel and Jan Mandt
street & number 2309 Grand Boulevard telephone 319-266-5040
city or town Cedar Falls state Iowa zip code 50613

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

Section number 7 Page 1

CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple is a 3-1/2 story, commercial building. Constructed in 1901 and 1902 by James E. Robinson, general contractor-builder of Cedar Falls, it features a stone foundation, a steel frame structural system faced with gray-colored brick, and a flat roof of composition material. The Odd Fellows Temple possesses two facades, one facing Main Street and the other facing 4th Street. These two facades are united by architectural detailing including a series of seven granite columns, 14 inches in diameter, and quoin-worked plinths situated between the first and third floors and wrapping around both facades. Although the upper floors of the building have been vacant for some time, the integrity of the building is very good and the present owners are studying their reuse. The building stands on the southwest corner of 4th and Main Streets, a key intersection in the community's central business district

EXTERIOR

The footprint of this building consists of a rectangle, which measures approximately 46' x 132' (width by depth). The east elevation contains three bays. Each bay is flanked with polished granite columns resting on stone plinths. The central bay features an open vestibule, which originally contained three entrances to the building. The middle entrance leads to stairs to the upper floors. Two entrances flank it and originally led to the two commercial rooms on the first floor. Although the south entrance was closed off a number of years ago, the north entrance continues to function as the primary entrance to the first floor. Aluminum windows now flank the central bay, having replaced the original storefront windows. A series of three windows, with 2/2 double-hung sash, are situated in each of the three bays on the second floor of the east elevation. A denticulated cornice is situated between the second and the third stories. This cornice surmounts a frieze, which is supported visually by the granite columns and plinths mentioned above. The third floor features a large, arched window in the central bay, which extends into the top half-story of the building. The flanking bays of the third floor feature a series of three arched windows in each of the flanking bays. The mullions of the central window are no longer in place, and the cavity is boarded over. The half-story features small, single-pane windows in each of the flanking bays.

The north elevation contains nine equally-spaced bays. For this description, these bays are numbered, beginning at the east and continuing to the west. Bays #1 and #2 are flanked by granite columns and quoin-worked plinths situated between the first and third floors. The fenestration on the second floor features 2/2 double-hung sash, with lintels, sills, and capitals of stone. The fenestration on the third floor features a series of three 2/2 double-hung sash with arched lintels in bays #1, #2, #8, and #9. Bays #3, #4, #5, #6, and #7 feature Chicago-style windows. All these sills are worked in stone. The fenestration on the top half-story features a series of two single-pane windows in all nine bays. The denticulated cornice, mentioned above, wraps around bays #1 and #2. A steel fire escape is situated on the north elevation of the building. Each of the bays in the east and north elevation is defined by pilasters worked in brick as quoins.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 2

CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

The west and south elevations are plain. They feature unadorned brick walls, fenestration reflecting the interior configuration of the building without regard to exterior design, and none of the architectural embellishments described above. A shadow sign, painted on the upper stories of the south elevation, is a palimpsest of several painted signs, all now weathered but each faintly discernible, including "The Hub," the name of one of the building's first commercial occupants. A parapet runs around the top of the building.

The Odd Fellows Temple is currently undergoing rehabilitation. A new roof has been installed. Measured drawings of the building have been prepared and the present owners are studying options for reuse of the upper floors.

BUILDING MATERIALS

The building materials employed in the construction of the Odd Fellows Temple are well documented.

The east and north elevations are clad with gray pressed brick, supplied by the Hydraulic Brick Company of St. Louis, Missouri. (*The Semi-Weekly Gazette* 1901g) The south and west elevations are clad with common red brick, supplied by the new brick yard, which had recently opened in Cedar Falls. (*The Semi-Weekly Gazette* 1901k)

The building was erected under the general supervision of James E. Robinson, contractor-builder of Cedar Falls. The cut stone work and brick work was provided by Arthur E. Watson, also of Cedar Falls. (*The Semi-Weekly Gazette* 1901i) The stone used for the building was obtained from quarries at Bedford, Indiana. (*Ibid.*) The seven polished granite pillars on the double facade came from quarries in Vermont. (*The Semi-Weekly Gazette* 1901o) Their installation caused local excitement.

Yesterday morning as workmen were hoisting one of those beautiful granite columns to the pedestal prepared for it, on the front of the Odd Fellows Temple, a rope broke which held the derrick; letting the pillar crash to the pavement, breaking it squarely in two. As it fell against another which was lying on the walk it also broke that. This makes a loss to the contractor, Arthur A. Watson, of about three hundred dollars. (*Ibid.*)

To facilitate the timely completion of the building, the building committee

held a meeting Monday evening and voted to permit the contractor to continue his work on the beautiful structures, as the broken granite columns could easily be repaired so that the break would not be perceptible placing them on the north side. Thus the work could be continued without a long and expensive delay. As the pillars are purely ornamental, it in no way weakens or mars the building to use these granite shafts. (*Ibid.*)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 3

CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

W. M. Benton, proprietor of the Cedar Falls Marble Works, held the contract to furnish these granite pillars. (*The Semi-Weekly Gazette* 1901j)

INTERIOR

The interior of the Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple is generally plain and simple with the exception of the third floor, which features a large meeting hall. Each of the floors contains approximately 6,072 square feet.

Since its completion, the first floor of this building has been used for various commercial purposes over the years. Although the floor plans of these rooms have been altered, they retain pressed metal ceilings and hardwood floors supported by wood floor joists.

The second floor originally provided offices for professional services, such as a medical doctor's office. The second floor features lath and plaster ceilings, plaster board on studs partitions, and pine floors supported by wood floor joists. Some years ago, the second floor was converted into apartments. At one time, eight units were situated here. These are no longer in use, and the second floor is presently vacant.

The third floor provided space for the Odd Fellows' ritual and social activities. Although some of the functions of the various rooms are not presently known precisely, the third floor consists of three rather distinct spaces. (See the floor plan on Continuation Sheet 7-15.) The eastern section, marked "A" on the referenced floor plan, served as the main hall for the Odd Fellows' meetings. Four small rooms are situated adjacent to the south and probably served in the organization's rituals. A balcony for spectators is situated above these small rooms. The middle section, marked "B" on the floor plan, contains one large room and three smaller rooms. The kitchens for the lodge and possibly a dining hall were situated here. The western portion of the third floor, marked "C" on the floor plan, also contains a series of smaller rooms. They were probably used for social activities and committee rooms. The floors on the third floor are pine supported by wood joists. The walls are lath and plaster. The third floor has been vacant for a number of years. It was never converted into apartments, as the second floor was. The third floor sustained some water damage in the southwest corner because of a faulty roof. The present owners have repaired the roof and stabilized this problem, localized to the third floor.

The third floor is architecturally significant because of its main hall, which is notable in Cedar Falls because of its large size and ceiling design. Because of this ceiling's height, barrel vaulting, and clear-span construction, the room possesses a feeling of great space. The hall itself measures approximately 64' x 36'. Its ceiling clear-spans the room without internal support columns. This is achieved by the employment of a bearing beam in the half-story above the main hall, which runs from east to west, and a series of trusses tied into it. (Erick Mandt and Wes Owen informant interview)

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

USE

A 1901 newspaper article described the proposed use of the Cedar Falls Odd Fellows Temple:

The first floor will be finished for stores. The second floor for offices, and the third for lodge rooms. (*The Semi-Weekly Gazette* 1901a)

These uses remained constant for many years. Originally "The Hub," a men's clothing store, occupied the corner room on the first floor. Frank J. Mullen occupied the other first floor room. On the second floor, Dr. F. N. Mead was an original occupant. The Knights of Pythias also rented rooms from the Odd Fellows for their own lodge meetings. It is assumed that the K. of P. used the third floor for this purpose. In the 1950s, the City Loan Company occupied a portion of the first floor. A dentist's office was located on the upper story. As mentioned above, the second floor was later converted into apartments, with eight units operating at one time.

SITE

The Odd Fellows Temple is situated on a portion of Lot 1 in Garrison and Deans Addition to Cedar Falls. This site measures approximately 47' x 132', and is taken up almost entirely by the building itself.

This site occupies the southwest corner of the intersection of 4th and Main Streets. One facade of the building stands on the west side of Main Street and faces east. The other facade stands on the south side of 4th Street and faces north. Sidewalks directly abut the building on the east and north and separate it from the streets. An alley is situated at the rear of the building.

Although this property is generally level, the land in the rear begins to slope upward to residential sections of Cedar Falls. Land to the north remains level along Main Street. The feeling of this area is that of a densely built-up commercial district of one, two, and three story buildings.

United States Department of the Interior
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

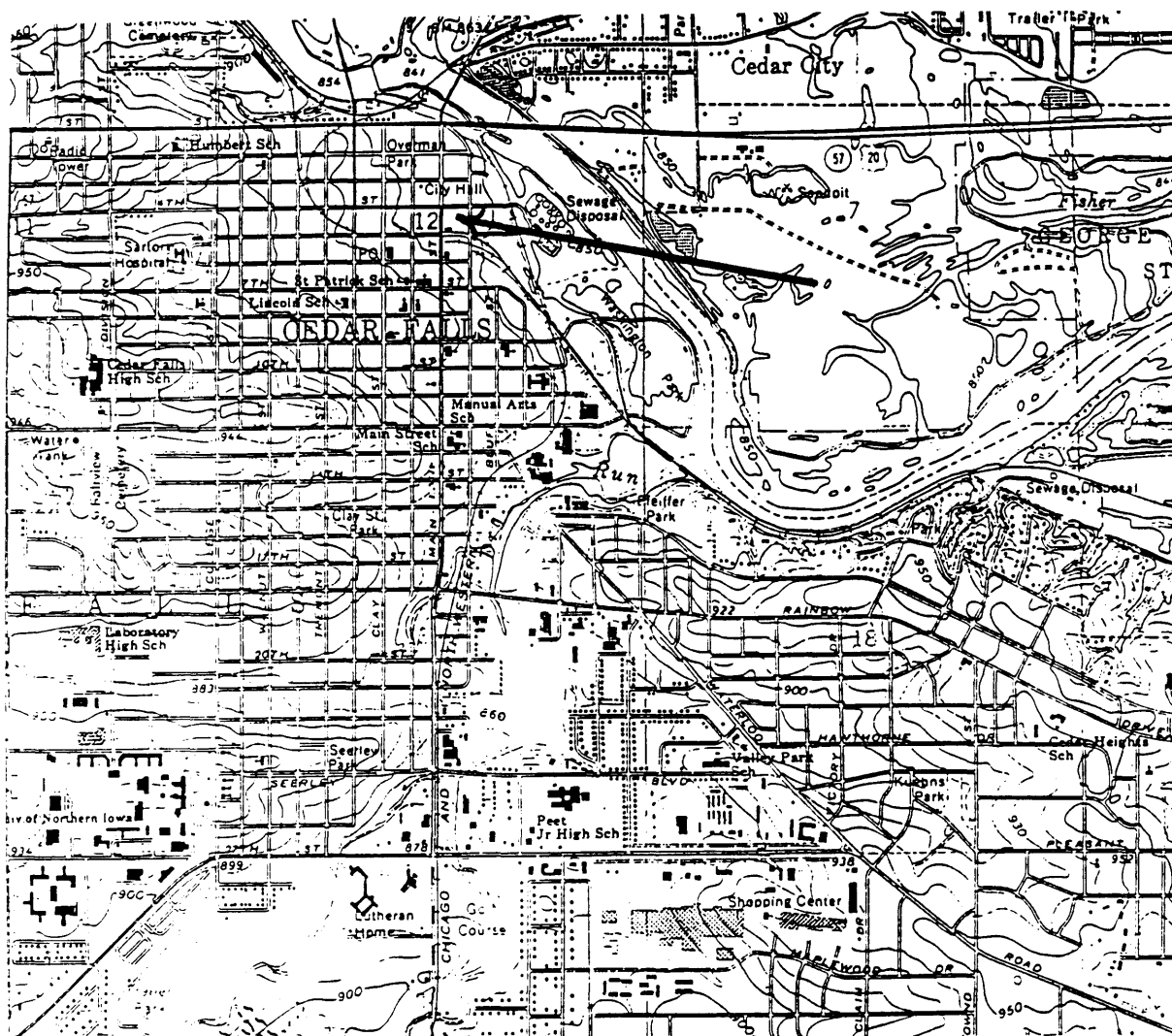
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CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

SITE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



Source: U.S.G.S. Map (7.5 Minute Series), Cedar Falls Quadrant.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

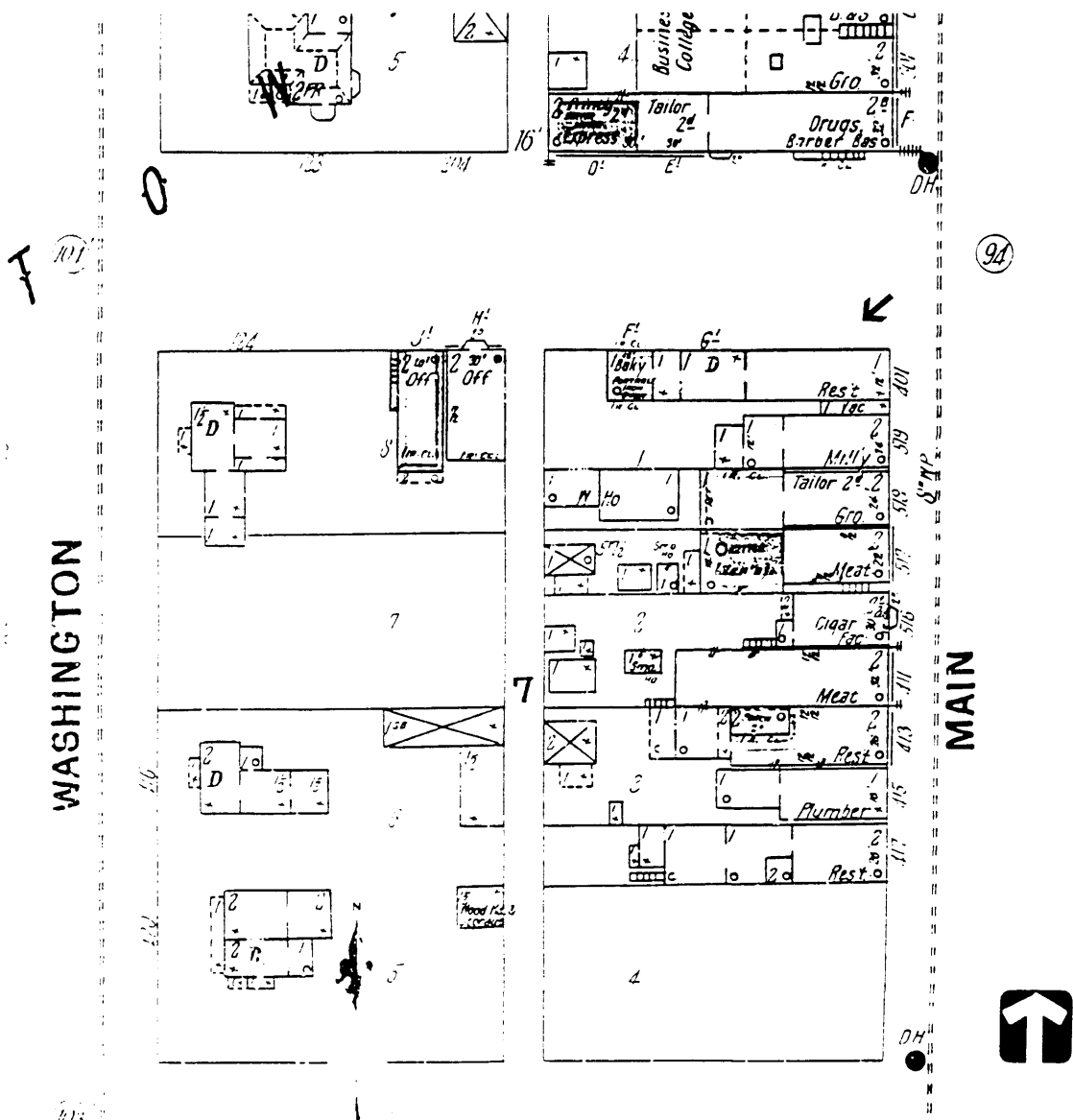
Section number 7 Page 6

CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

1900 FIRE INSURANCE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PREVIOUS BUILDING ON SITE



Source: Sanborn Map Company, Cedar Falls, November 1900, p. 5.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

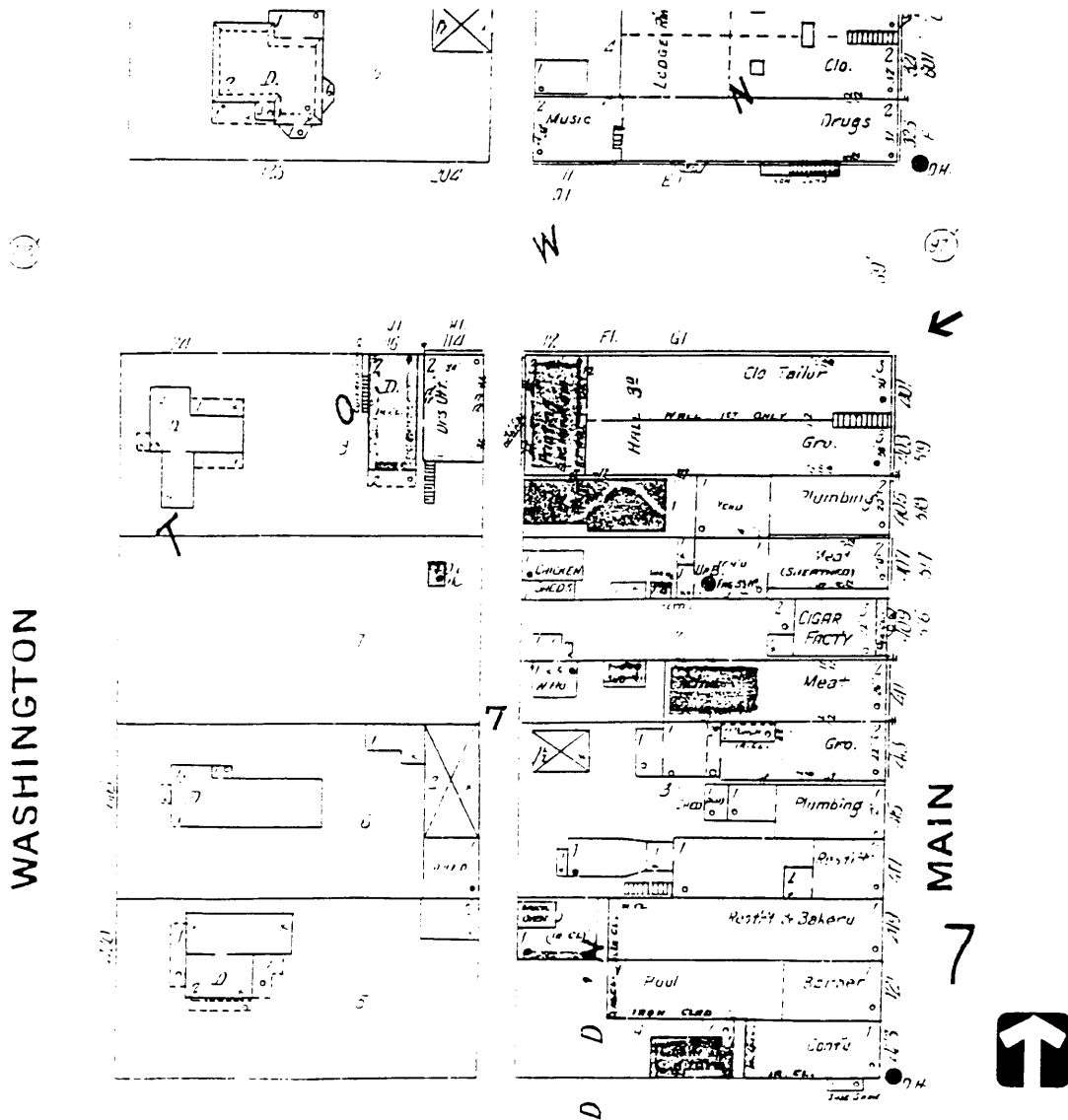
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CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

1909 FIRE INSURANCE MAP

ARROW LOCATES NEW ODD FELLOWS TEMPLE



Source: Sanborn Map Company, Cedar Falls, February 1909, p. 6.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

4TH AND MAIN STREET POSTCARD VIEW LOOKING NORTHWEST ABOUT 1908



1380 Main Street, Looking North, Cedar Falls, Iowa.

VEATCH STUDIO

Source: Photographic Collection of the Cedar Falls Historical Society.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

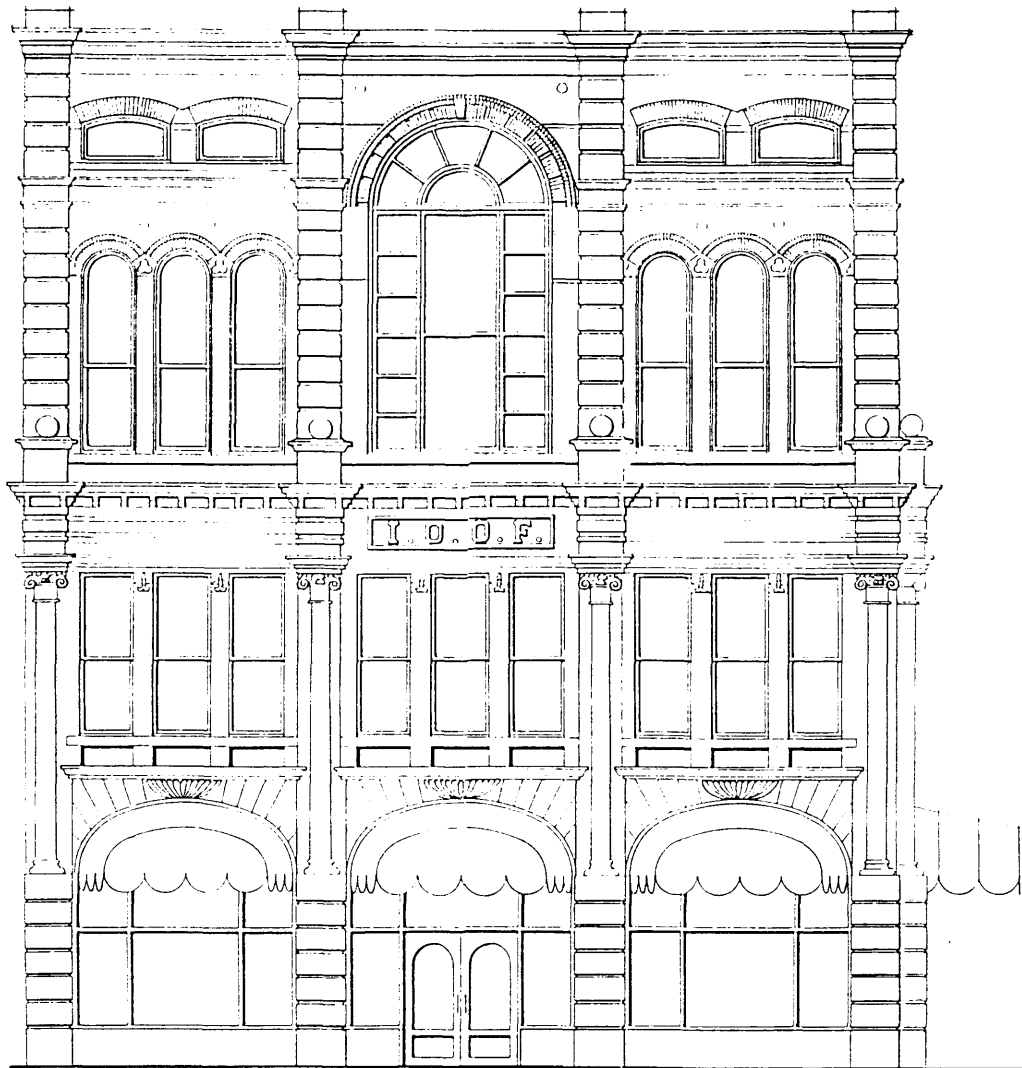
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

EAST ELEVATION CEDAR FALLS ODD FELLOWS TEMPLE



Source: Grimes-Port-Jones-Schwerdtfeger Architects, Inc., Waterloo, Iowa.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

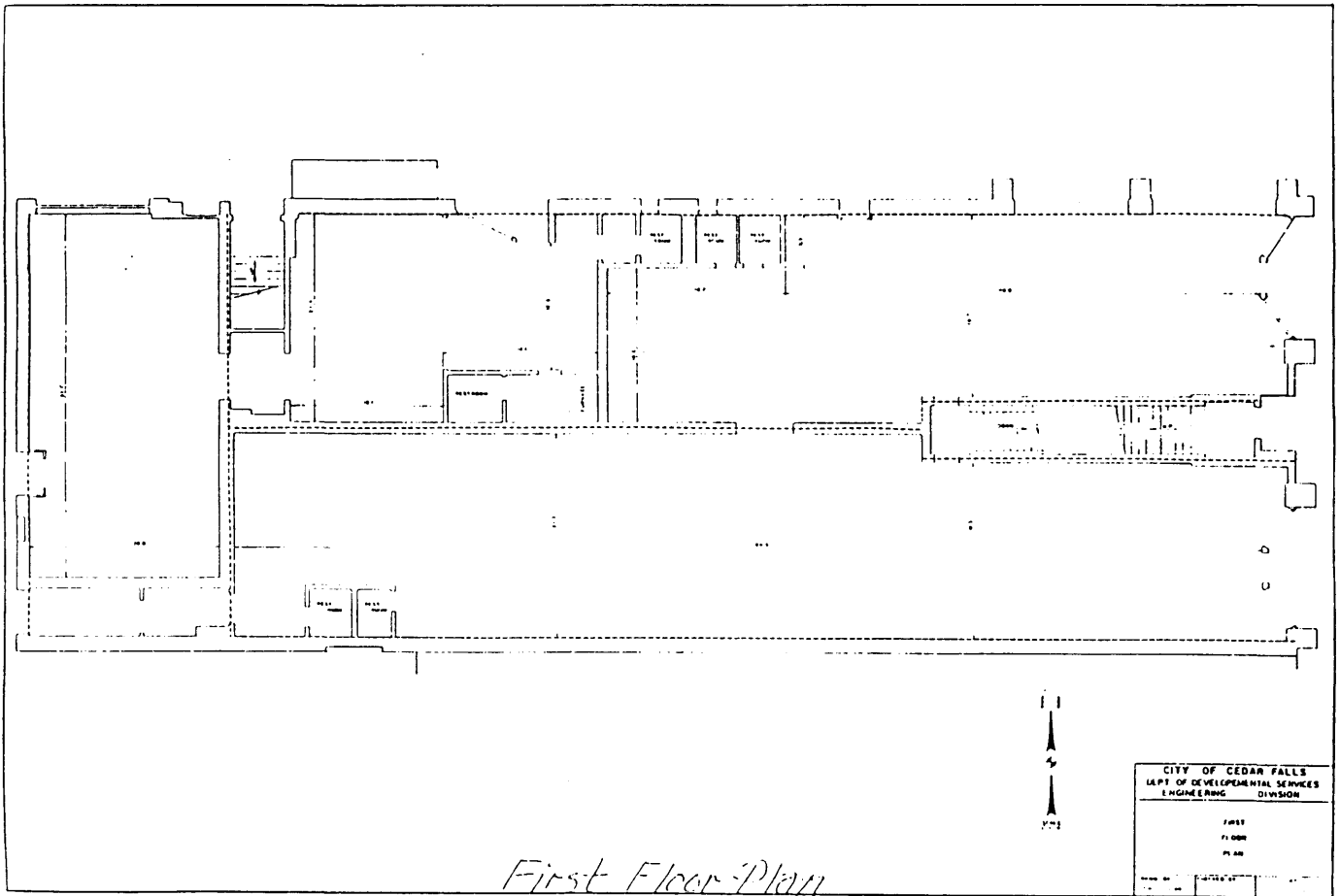
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CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

MODERN CONFIGURATION



Source: Department of Developmental Services, Engineering Division, City of Cedar Falls, Iowa, circa 1990.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

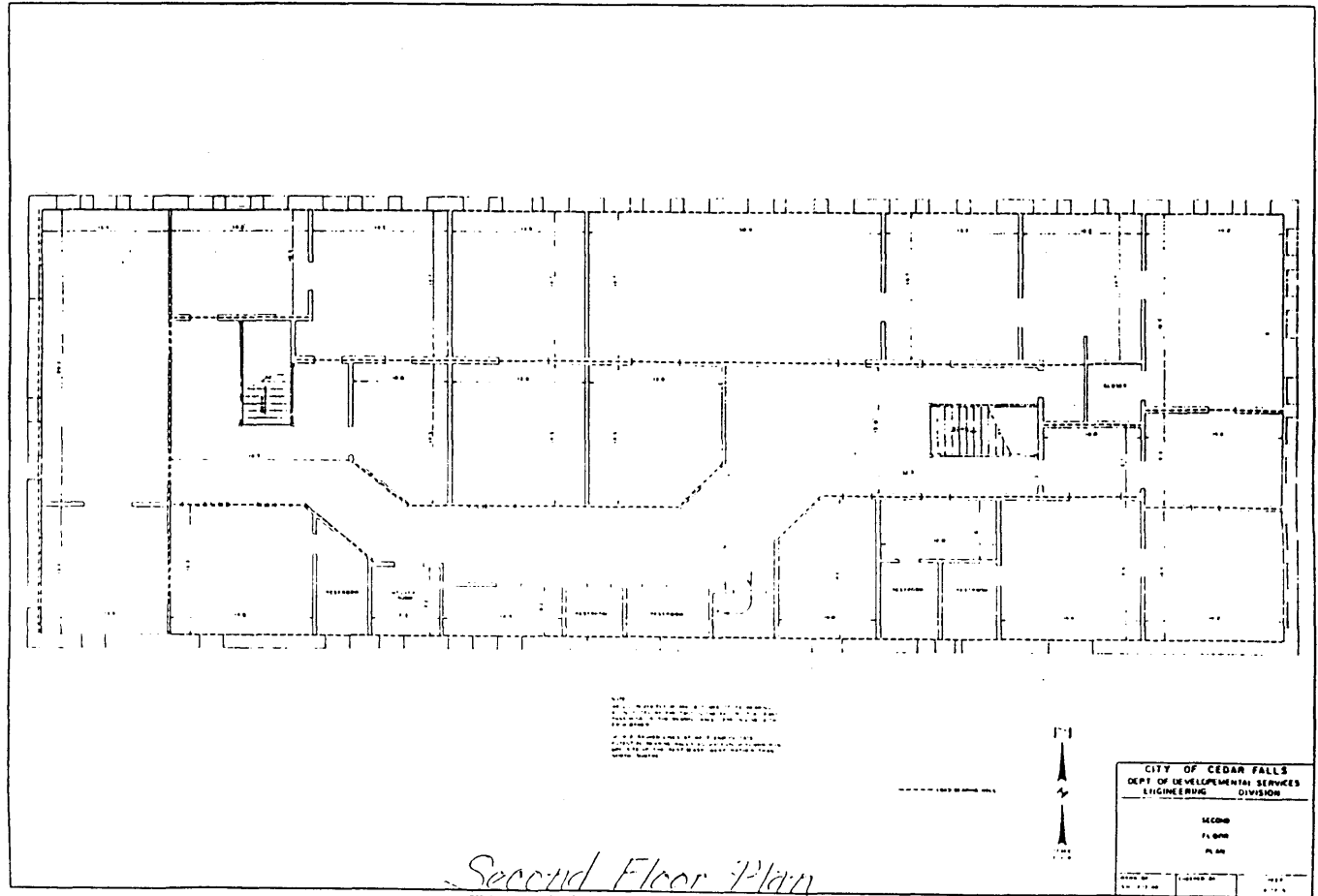
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CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

MODERN CONFIGURATION



Source: Department of Developmental Services, Engineering Division, City of Cedar Falls, Iowa, circa 1990.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

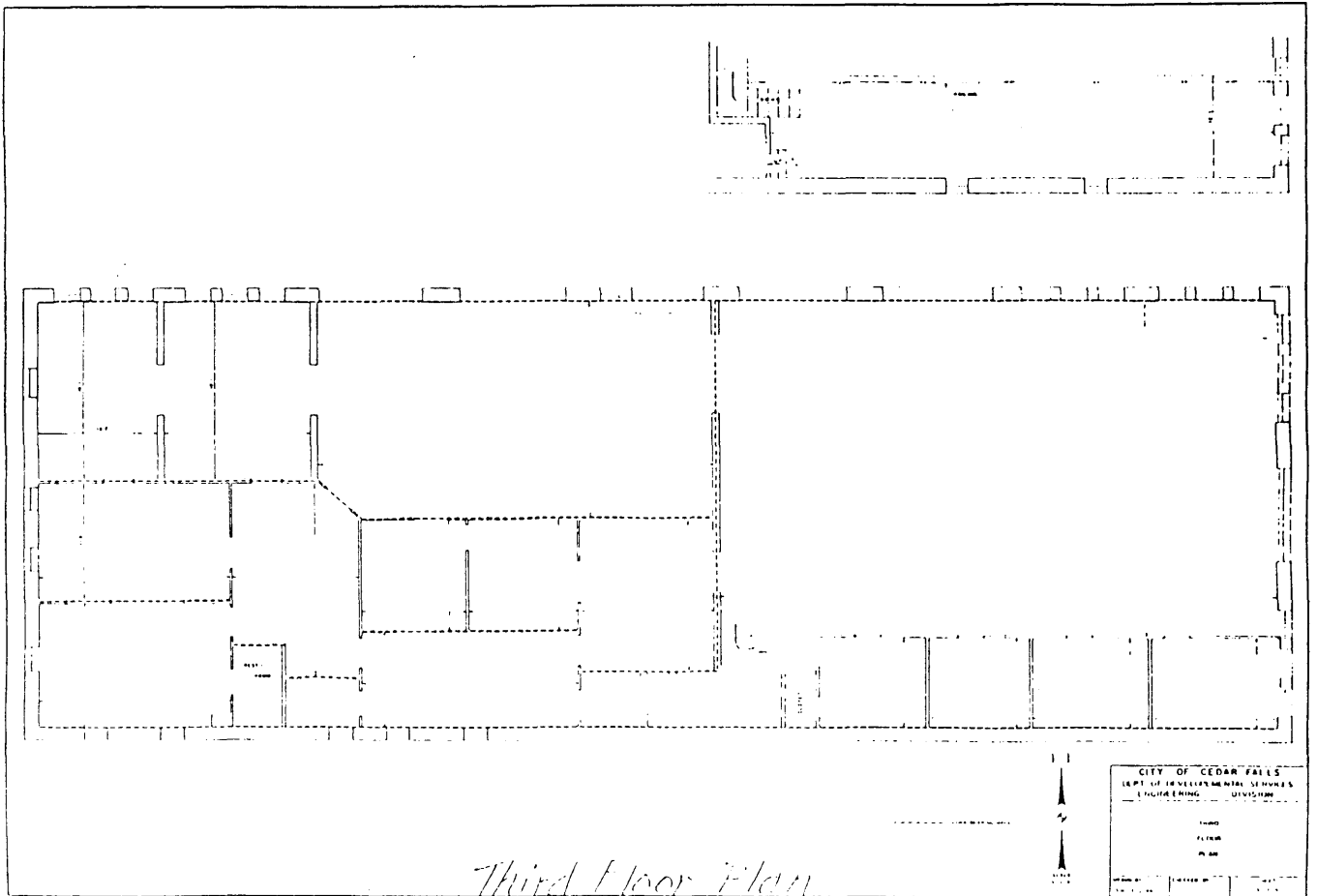
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CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

THIRD FLOOR PLAN

MODERN CONFIGURATION



Source: Department of Developmental Services, Engineering Division, City of Cedar Falls, Iowa, circa 1990

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

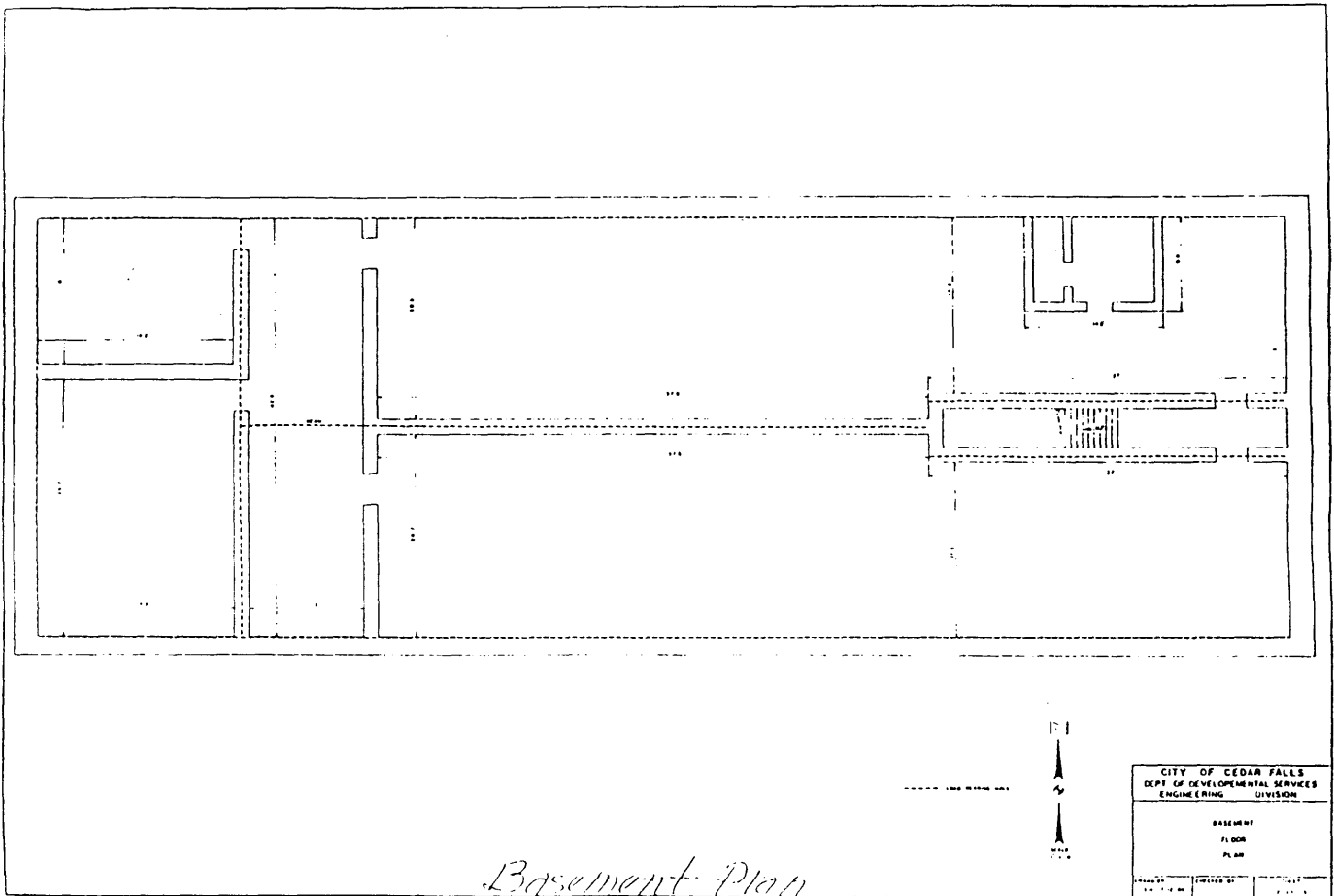
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CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

MODERN CONFIGURATION



Basement Plan



Source: Department of Developmental Services, Engineering Division, City of Cedar Falls, Iowa, circa 1990.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 14

CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

Erected between 1901 and 1902 by James E. Robinson, a general building contractor of Cedar Falls, the Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple is significant, under National Register Criterion A, because it calls attention to the important role the Odd Fellows played locally during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries in the social history of the community. As a fraternal organization, the Odd Fellows provided benevolence to members' widows and orphans at a time before life insurance was wide-spread. This significant social function of fraternal organizations is now largely forgotten.

The Cedar Falls Odd Fellows Temple is also locally significant, under National Register Criterion C, for several reasons. As one of the largest edifices in Cedar Falls' central business district, it calls attention to a new type of architecture emerging in Iowa during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries--the fraternal-commercial building. The building was only partially constructed to house the organization's fraternal rites and social activities, the first two stories of the building serving as a commercial rental property. Built by James E. Robinson, it illustrates his considerable skills as a general contractor. The Odd Fellows Temple also calls attention to the influence of late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century revival styling on its design.

The period of significance, under Criterion A, for this building is 1902, the time in which the Cedar Falls Odd Fellows Temple exerted influence over social history in Cedar Falls. The period of significance, under Criterion C, is also 1902, the year in which the building was completed and first occupied.

The property contains one contributing resource for this nomination, which is classified as a building.

SOCIAL HISTORY

The Odd Fellows Temple is significant to the social history of Cedar Falls because it calls attention to the role that organization played in providing benevolent services to members and their families prior to the wide-spread commercial purchase of life insurance.

Established in the United States in 1819 as an off-shoot of an English organization, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) stressed in America "the democratic virtues of friendship, loyalty, unity, charity, and education." (Franco:10) The organization also founded a beneficiary program for members and their families. According to a recent monograph in this emerging field of scholarship:

The Odd Fellows eventually added a more specific beneficiary program in which members systematically contributed to a fund from which sick or distressed members, their widows, and orphans could be paid. By the end of the 19th century, in part due to its beneficiary aspects, Odd Fellowship equaled or even outstripped Freemasonry in membership. Many men belonged to both organizations. (*Ibid.*)

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

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CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

The Cedar Falls I.O.O.F. provides an example of these national trends. A charming poem, published in a local newspaper in 1856 and excerpted below, points to this purpose:

ORIGINAL POETRY.

Written for the Banner.

Ode to Odd Fellowship.

DEDICATED TO CEDAR FALLS LODGE.

A friend unto the needy,
A friend that's kind and true,
A father to the fatherless,
And the widow's guardian too.

To guard and protect her,
And shield her from the storm
Of this cold world's oppression
In all and every form.

To educate the orphan,
And act a father's part,
Of counsel and protector
To the young and guileless heart. . .

Cedar Falls, Feb. 13th, 1856. E. C. M.

(The Cedar Falls Banner 1856a)

On the national level, the Odd Fellows' leadership in providing fraternal beneficence helped lead the way to numerous other fraternal programs of mutual insurance, including the Ancient Order of United Workmen, Knights of Pythias, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Modern Woodmen of American, Loyal Order of Moose, Knights of Columbus, and others. (Franco:15-16)

Cedar Falls possessed several fraternal organizations from an early time. In 1856, for example, the city boasted the Black Hawk Lodge, No. 65, of the Masons and the Cedar Falls Lodge No. 71, of the Odd Fellows. Both met at the local Masonic Hall on Main Street. It should be noted that Presbyterian, Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, and Second Adventists religious organizations were in Cedar Falls at this time. (*Ibid.*)

The Cedar Falls Odd Fellows was originally chartered in 1855 (Western Historical Company:429). Its members pledged to help one another by providing benevolent services against life's uncertainties, as well as fostering religious activities and social intercourse.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 16

CFN-259-1116

Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

By 1874, the number of fraternal organizations in Cedar Falls had grown. The city directory of that year lists two Independent Order of Odd Fellows lodges in the area. Cedar Falls Lodge No. 71 met every Thursday evening and the Cedar Valley Lodge No. 233, met every Wednesday evening. In addition to these Odd Fellows lodges, the Black Hawk Lodge No. 65 of the Masons met Mondays on or before full moon. (*Cedar Falls City Directory 1874*)

In 1878, a county history noted that:

The Lodge [I.O.O.F. No. 71] has maintained a healthy though not rapid growth. A few years ago, the furniture and other property of the Lodge were destroyed by fire. This loss has been replaced and the Lodge is now comfortably placed in the third story of the building one door south of Phoenix Block. (*History of Black Hawk County 1898:429*)

Over the years, this lodge experienced substantial growth. Many of its members were business and industrial leaders in the community, whose financial capability, experience in business, and bonds of fraternal cooperation facilitated the construction of the large and impressive Odd Fellows Temple in 1902.

A full history of this organization--as well as the history of fraternal organizations in Iowa--has yet to be written. Even on the national level, scholarship on this topic has been restricted. Historian Lewis Atherton, for example, devoted only a few pages of his insightful *Main Street on the Middle Border* to lodges and their activities. (Atherton:173-74, 186, 189-90, 300) At the present, it appears that by the time of the Great Depression, the social importance of fraternal lodges in Iowa had declined. By then, the nation's insurance industry had expanded and now provided many of the services formerly provided by benevolent societies; the many social programs of the New Deal attempted to deal with such problems on a national level; and other organizations--such as local commercial clubs and chambers of commerce--had arisen with the specific mission of boosting local business interests, as well as stimulating social intercourse. This trend is also evident in Cedar Falls. Already by 1915, for example, fraternal organizations in Cedar Falls, and in Black Hawk County, had declined to such an extent that a discussion of their history was excluded from Hartman's *History of Black Hawk County, Iowa, and Its People*, published that year. Fraternal organizations survive to the present day because they provide social links within communities, but they have never regained the significant role they played in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries.

ARCHITECTURE

The Odd Fellows Temple is architecturally significant because it illustrates the fraternal-commercial building, a form of architecture emerging in Iowa during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries; because it calls attention to James E. Robinson, its designer and general contractor; and because it shows how late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century architectural designs influenced a large building in Cedar Falls.

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Fraternal-Commercial Building

The Cedar Falls Odd Fellows Temple stands as an outstanding example of an architectural form emerging in Iowa during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries--the fraternal-commercial building. This architectural form was significant locally in the state because it posed new challenges to architects and designers, because it added architectural richness to the commercial streetscape, and because these buildings introduced or helped introduce new architectural styles into localities. Like opera houses, another architectural form emerging during the same period, fraternal buildings were large in scale and highly visible.

During the Nineteenth Century, many benevolent societies, such as the Odd Fellows, organized in Iowa to help protect members against life's uncertainties. Members of such societies were often among the most financially capable in these communities. As Iowa entered the Golden Age of Agriculture during the last decades of the Nineteenth Century and the state's economy prospered, many of these benevolent societies undertook the construction of new lodge halls. Frequently these projects featured commercial rooms, designed as rental property, on the lower floors with the lodge hall situated on the upper floor. These buildings were often funded in-house by member contributions or, more frequently, by the selling of shares in the building to lodge members. As the rental receipts came in, the members' shares were paid.

The multi-purpose function of these buildings required new architectural designs to meet these new needs. For example, the lodge hall on the upper floor required more visual presence than a standard commercial facade. The Odd Fellows Temple in Cedar Falls shows one solution to this problem. James E. Robinson used a rhythmic series of ribbon windows with repeating arches to call visual attention to the lodge floor. The multi-purpose entrances to these lodge buildings also posed problems. Architects needed to distinguish between the exterior doors to the lodge hall and the commercial rooms. The Odd Fellows Temple in Cedar Falls solved this problem by providing an open vestibule with three separate exterior doors into the building's east elevation.

The new fraternal-commercial buildings usually became highly visible on Main Street. They contributed not only to the architectural richness and variety of the streetscape, they also became landmarks in the community because of their large size. Because members were respected residents of the community and possessed considerable financial capability, the buildings constructed to house their fraternal activities were designed to reflect this status. In Cedar Falls, the construction of the Odd Fellows Temple at the southern extremity of Cedar Falls' central business district also helped anchor further commercial improvements between it and the more densely built-up commercial blocks of Main Street to the north.

Most prevalent during the fourth quarter of the Nineteenth Century through the 1920s, the construction of fraternal-commercial buildings fell from favor in Iowa with the Great Depression. By this time, many of the state's communities had already constructed facilities to meet their needs.

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Within this context, the Odd Fellows Temple in Cedar Falls is a fine example of a fraternal hall in Iowa. Although the fraternal-commercial building can be found in almost every community in the state, the Cedar Falls Odd Fellows Temple is a notable example of this type. This is because of the large size of the building (most Iowa fraternal halls possess only two floors), its rich architectural detailing, and the quality building materials employed in its construction.

James E. Robinson

James Edwin Robinson is significant within the architectural history of Cedar Falls for several reasons. He served as general contractor for the erection of numerous buildings locally, as well as superintendent of construction at the Iowa State Normal School in Cedar Falls. The question remains open if Robinson also designed buildings. The Cedar Falls Odd Fellows Temple calls attention to Robinson as a building contractor. Only a few buildings have been documented to date as having been constructed by him. Among them, the Cedar Falls Odd Fellows Hall stands out as exceptional because of its large size, its quality building materials, and its ambitious architectural concept.

Robinson's professional career is in the tradition of the carpenter-builder, learning his trade as a carpenter's apprentice and advancing through self-education to positions of greater responsibility. He was born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1858 and relocated to Cedar Falls, Iowa, with his parents in 1862. Peter S. Robinson, his father, was a carpenter by trade and constructed many early dwellings in Cedar Falls. (Hartman:326) James attended public school in Cedar Falls, graduating from the local high school. He then entered employment with his father, where he learned the carpenter's trade. A county history describes Robinson's later career:

For fifteen years he worked at his trade as a journeyman and then engaged in the contracting and building business, which he followed for fourteen years. He built the Methodist church of Cedar Falls, the M. N. Dayton home, the residence of M. N. Harris and many other of the finest homes of Cedar Falls. Most of the store buildings of the city have either been erected by his father or by himself. For several years he did all of the building of the state college [Iowa State Normal School] and in 1901 he was persuaded by President Seerley to accept the position of superintendent of construction, buildings and grounds, since which time he has had absolute jurisdiction over all construction work. (*Ibid.*:329)

The above biographical sketch continues by emphasizing Robinson's economy with state money and concluding that "he is familiar with every phase of practical and scientific building and is constantly studying and thinking out along the line of his chosen vocation, so that the value of his work increases." (*Ibid.*)

The Cedar Falls Odd Fellows Temple demonstrates Robinson's considerable abilities as a general contractor. The lodge entrusted to him one of the largest privately-funded construction projects in

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Cedar Falls' history. Robinson's local reputation was aided no doubt by his family's history in the business. A local newspaper article also implies that Robinson actually prepared the plans and specifications for the Odd Fellows Temple (*Semi-Weekly Gazette* 1901b). Such credit cannot be made, however, with certainty at this time because Robinson might also have been acting for an unidentified architect. Unfortunately, the minute books of the Cedar Falls I.O.O.F. from this period, which might have supplied additional information about the building committee's deliberations and possible selection of an architect, have been lost (Kathy Green and Dallas Hurlbut informant interviews). No buildings outside Cedar Falls have been identified as Robinson designs to date (Iowa Architects Files).

James E. Robinson and Martha Davis of Richmond, Indiana, were united in marriage in 1884. They had three children. James was active in the Modern Woodmen lodge and was a Republican in politics. The research for this project did not discover if Robinson also belonged to the Cedar Falls Odd Fellows. Mr. and Mrs. Robinson belonged to the Presbyterian Church of Cedar Falls. (Hartman:329) James died in Baltimore, Maryland, in September, 1934. His body was returned to Cedar Falls, where it was buried in Fairview Cemetery.

Design

The Cedar Falls Odd Fellows Temple shows how an eclectic selection of revival architectural styles could influence the architectural design of a large, multi-purpose building. The first two floors illustrate the influence of Beaux-Arts Classicism on its design. Its grandiose concept includes a variety of stone finishes (smooth and rusticated), monumental columns with heavy pedestals, enriched cornice, and shell motif keystones in the arches over the three bays on the facade. In contrast to this, the third floor illustrates a conventional Victorian design for a commercial building. Triplet windows, Chicago commercial style windows, and parapets embellished with brick caps show this influence. The rhythm provided by the third floor's fenestration with its repeated arches above the windows is particularly effective.

The design of the third floor lodge hall is also notable in Cedar Falls because of its large, open space and the clear-span structural engineering of its roof.

The design of this edifice employed quality of building materials and set standards for subsequent commercial buildings in the community to emulate. These materials included gray brick from the Hydraulic Brick Company of St. Louis, Missouri, for the walls (*The Semi-Weekly Gazette* 1901g), cut stone and brickwork by Arthur E. Watson of Cedar Falls (*Ibid.* 1901i), and polished granite pillars from the State of Vermont (*Ibid.* 1901o).

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Additional Information

Incidental to its significance for architectural history and included here as additional informational is the fact that the construction of the Cedar Falls Odd Fellows Temple made a substantial contribution to the commercial development of the city's central business district. Originally clustering along Main Street near 1st Street and the Cedar River, this business district expanded along Main Street to the south as the city grew. The construction of the Rock Island Railroad depot at Main Street and 5th Street and the construction of the Odd Fellows Temple in 1902 on the corner of 4th and Main Street encouraged this expansion. By 1902, this section of the business district had become a hub of activity. A night-time view of Main Street pictures this streetscape. The depot and a stationary locomotive are shown in the foreground and the lighted windows of the Odd Fellows Temple suggest that a meeting is in session. The feeling of commercial vitality is further heightened by many electric lights burning throughout this area, powered by the utility poles, which are also prominently featured. The Cedar River bridge can be seen in the background, marking the northern terminus of the central business district.

REPRESENTATION IN OTHER CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEYS

In 1991-1992, the Black Hawk and Bremer Counties Preservation Partnership surveyed the Cedar Falls Odd Fellows Temple as one resource within that study's reconnaissance survey of Cedar Falls' central business district. To assess the potential of an historic district along Main Street in Cedar Falls, the following individuals conducted a pedestrian survey of that area: William C. Page, Principal Investigator for the survey; Karen Bode Baxter, Main Street Manager of Grinnell, Iowa; Michelle Langenwaller, Program Manager of the Cedar Falls Community Main Street program; and Rosemary Beach, Director of the Cedar Falls Historical Society. Although this group reached the consensus that insufficient integrity remained in this area for a potential historic district, the final report for the Black Hawk and Bremer Counties Preservation Partnership concluded that the Odd Fellows Temple was individually eligible for nomination to the National Register. (*Ibid.*:16)

During this project, William C. Page conducted an intensive survey of the building at the request of Wayne McGee, contractor-builder of Cedar Falls, who had an ownership interest in the property. A tour of the building concluded that its interior also possessed architectural significance. The third floor lodge hall is notable for its large size and features a high, barrel-vaulted ceiling.

POTENTIAL FOR HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

The site's potential for archaeological significance is, as yet, unevaluated. Although historical archaeological investigations may uncover traces of previous construction on the site, this is unlikely because the construction of this building affected radical change upon it.

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Although the fraternal building plays a significant role on Main Streets all across Iowa, an architectural typology for its design has not yet been developed. A statewide survey of these buildings and the development of an architectural typology for them is recommended. Such a survey should also place these resources in historic context. Professional architects were often employed to prepare designs for these buildings and to ensure that the lodge hall would conform to good architectural standards. These architects often selected up-to-date architectural styles for these buildings and often specified quality building materials to reflect their clients' status in the community. As a result, fraternal buildings offer rich potential for National Register nominations. Such a survey project has already been undertaken for opera houses in Iowa, resulting in many National Register listings within a thematic format.

The activities of the Cedar Falls I.O.O.F. lodge deserve further research and investigation. Membership rolls, minute books, newspaper articles, and other documentary sources might reveal how this fraternal organization operated and contributed to the social life of Cedar Falls.

Further research is also recommended to identify other works constructed and/or designed by James E. Robinson (and Peter S. Robinson) in Cedar Falls. According to James' biographical sketch (Hartman:326), many residences and commercial buildings were erected by them. The Cedar Falls' Methodist Church was specially mentioned in this context.

The development and redevelopment of city lots located on the corners of strategic intersections in Iowa's central business districts stimulated additional commercial improvements in the vicinity. Future research in the history of urban design in Iowa should focus on this phenomenon. This research will help prove (or disprove) the theory that notable improvements on such street intersections--like the Cedar Falls Odd Fellows Temple--stimulated changing patterns of commercial development.

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PRIMARY

Cedar Falls City Directories

Various 1874; 1894; 1897-1898; 1901-1902; 1909-1910; 1915; and 1919.

Cedar Falls Banner, The

1856a *Ode to Odd Fellowship*. Original poetry by E.C.M. February 23, 1856, p. 1.

Cedar Falls Banner, The

1856b *Cedar Falls--and the Business done there*. February 23, 1856, p. 1.

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1915 *History of Black Hawk County, Iowa, and its People*. Chicago, The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company. Two volumes.

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Atherton, Lewis

1954 *Main Street on the Middle Border*. Bloomington, Indiana, Indiana University Press.

Franco, Barbara

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State Historical Society of Iowa

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Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

NEWSPAPERS

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1900a "Cedar Falls has been steadily growing and constantly improving." December 11, 1900.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1900b "Cedar Falls in 1900. Substantial Growth and Some Splendid Improvements." December 18, 1900.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901a "The Odd Fellows' Temple." January 4, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901b The building Committee appointed by the Odd Fellows for their new building to be erected the coming season, had a meeting Tuesday night and accepted the plans and specifications submitted by our fellow townsman, Mr. James Robinson." January 25, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901c "Mr. James E. Robinson and daughter, Miss Lillian, were in Iowa City Monday and Tuesday of this week, the guests of a cousin, Mr. Gilbert Irish. Mr. Robinson combined business with pleasure, as he was inspecting one of the University Buildings." February 1, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901d "New Building." February 1, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901e "There will be quite a number of changes among the business firms of our city as to location, in the near future." February 15, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901f "Plans and arrangements are all perfected for the erection of the grand Odd Fellows' Temple to be built this summer." March 19, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901g "The buildings are being taken down and the space corner of Main and 4th Sts., is being prepared for the erection of the Odd Fellows Temple." March 29, 1901.

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Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901h "The buildings on the south corner of Main and Fourth streets have been torn down and when the balance of the debris has been removed, the erection of the Odd Fellows' Temple will be commenced." April 12, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901i "Arrangements for the erection of the Odd Fellows Temple are progressing finely." May 21, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901j "W. M. Burton, proprietor of the Cedar Falls Marble works has been given the contract for furnishing the columns for the Odd Fellows Block." June 7, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901k "Some of the output of brick from the new brickyard at Cedar Falls will be used in the walls of the Odd Fellows Temple." September 6, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901l "There may be a hitch in the work on the Odd Fellows building." September 10, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901m "The contractors are going ahead with the Odd Fellows building corner of 4th and Main Streets, according to the original plans." September 17, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901n "As the workmen in the Odd Fellows building, corner of 4th and Main streets, were hoisting one of the large stones, Saturday morning, the tackle gave way letting the stone crash to the ground." October 1, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901o "A Fortunate Accident." November 1, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1901p "The committee in charge of the Odd Fellows' Temple held a meeting Monday evening and voted to permit the contractor to continue his work on the beautiful structure, as the broken granite columns could easily be repaired so that the break would not be perceptible placing them on the north side." November 8, 1901.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902a "Cedar Falls takes great pride in the Odd Fellows Temple which is nearing completion." January 21, 1902.

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Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902b "The Odd Fellows Temple is closed from public gaze, but workmen are making good progress in the furnishings." February 7, 1902.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902c "The Beloit orchestra will furnish music at the opening of the new clothing store in the Odd Fellows temple March 15." February 28, 1902.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902d "The young men who have rented the corner store in the Odd Fellows' Temple are full of enterprise, and mean to let Cedar Falls and vicinity know that they are here for business." March 11, 1902.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902e "Grand Spring Opening" [advertisement for "The Hub," a men's clothing store]. March 11, 1902.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902f "Grand Spring Opening" [advertisement for "The Hub Clothing House]. March 14, 1902.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902g "Dr. F. N. Meade will occupy the north suite of rooms in the Second Floor of the Odd Fellows Temple for his office and will take possession about May 1st." March 14, 1902.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902h "The boards have been removed from the entrance to the Odd Fellows Temple revealing one of the prettiest vestibules seen in a public building, the Floor is tiled and there is a metal ceiling." March 14, 1902.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902i "The proprietors of the Hub clothing house are very much pleased with their opening sales Saturday, although they were disappointed in receiving some of their goods and all the souvenirs ordered." March 18, 1902.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902j "Odd Fellows Attention." April 4, 1902.

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Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902k "Tonight the hall in the Odd Fellows' Temple will be the scene of a brilliant social event." April 8, 1902.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902l "Odd Fellows Temple Opened with a Brilliant Banquet." April 11, 1902.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902m "Appropriately Banqueted." May 2, 1902.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902n "The Knights of Pythias have an opening program to-night in their new hall in the Odd Fellows' Temple." May 2, 1902.

Semi-Weekly Gazette, The [Cedar Falls]

1902o "Dr. F. N. Mead has moved into his new office in the Odd Fellows Temple." May 9, 1902.

MAPS

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Cedar Falls, Iowa

November 1900.

February 1909.

"Birdseye View of Cedar Falls Black Hawk County Iowa 1868." Reproduction of antique map courtesy of the Cedar Falls Historical Society.

Hageboeck, A.; "Bird's Eye View of Cedar Falls, Black Hawk Co., Iowa 1880;"
Davenport, Iowa. This map has been reproduced by courtesy of the Cedar Falls
Historical Society.

ORAL HISTORY

Green, Kathy, with William C. Page, August 19, 1996. Green is Executive Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Iowa I.O.O.F., Urbandale, Iowa. She discussed the archival records available in that office and recommended other potential oral informants.

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Hurlbut, Dallas, with William C. Page, August 19, 1996. Hurlbut, a member of the Cedar Falls I.O.O.F. since 1941, discussed the loss of the local lodge's minutes books.

Mandt, Erick, and Wes Owen with William C. Page, April 4, 1996. Mandt and Owen discussed the structural engineering and physical condition of the Cedar Falls Odd Fellows Temple and provided architectural drawings of it.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

That part of Fractional Lot No. One (1) in Fractional Block East of Block No. Eleven (11) in the Village (now City) of Cedar Falls, Black Hawk County, Iowa, and that part of Fractional Lot No. One (1) in Fractional Row in Garrison and Dean's Addition to Cedar Falls, Iowa, lying within the following described boundaries:

Commencing at the Northeast corner of Fractional Lot 1 in Fractional Row in Garrison & Deans Addition to the City of Cedar Falls, running thence South along the east line of said lot to the center line of the wall and foundation, located on the South 22 feet of said lots, thence west along the center line of said wall and foundation to the west line of Fractional Lot 1 in said Fractional Block east of Block 11, thence north along the west line of said last described Fractional Lot 1 to the northwest corner thereof, thence east along the north line of said Fractional Lots to the place of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

Contains all land associated historically with the resource.

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Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple, Black Hawk County, Iowa.

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple
401-403 Main Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
Looking southwest
William C. Page, Photographer
February 7, 1996

2. Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple
401-403 Main Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
Looking southwest
William C. Page, Photographer
February 7, 1996

3. Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple
401-403 Main Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
Looking northeast
William C. Page, Photographer
February 7, 1996

4. Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple
401-403 Main Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
Looking northwest
William C. Page, Photographer
February 7, 1996

5. Cedar Falls Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple
401-403 Main Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
Detail of facade
William C. Page, Photographer
February 7, 1996