

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Franklin County G.A.R. Soldiers' Memorial Hall  
other names/site number Soldiers' Memorial Hall

**2. Location**

street & number 3 Federal Street North not for publication  
city, towns/site number Hampton vicinity  
state Iowa code IA county Franklin code 069 zip code 50441

**3. Classification**

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>        </u> buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u> Total
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

[Signature]  
Signature of certifying official

10/31/91  
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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this 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 for the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

[Signature] entered in the National Register

12/13/91

[Signature] for Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions

Current Functions

Social/Meeting Hall

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Social/Meeting Hall

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

Materials

Mid 19th Century Gothic revival,

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Octagon Mode

---

---

foundation limestone

---

walls brick

---

roof asphalt

---

other 

---

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Built in 1889, Soldiers' Memorial Hall is a single story brick structure with a limestone foundation. The hall is located on a corner lot in the downtown area of Hampton, Iowa, and the main entrance faces west toward the Franklin county court house (1890-1892) which is directly across the street. On the corner to the south is the public library (Carnegie, 1905), and the corner opposite the hall to the southwest is the city park. The former county jail (1880-1988) stands vacant to the east. The hall is in a highly visible area because a main highway leading to Interstate 35 runs adjacent to the building.

Memorial Hall is included in the Main Street Hampton project area, a state supported revitalization and historic preservation program begun in March, 1991. It sits alone on the lot and its entrance is 54' from the street curb. commercial buildings, which are north in a row are all located within 15' of the street curb. Although the structure is relatively small (12x16x18), its unique shape stands out, but still relates well to the other older buildings that surround it.

The Gothic Revival style is octagonally shaped with four projecting crossed gables on alternating sides. The shingled roof is steeply pitched with a statue of a Union Civil War soldier on top, at the point where the eight sides meet and form an octagonal pedestal. The statue is made of white zinc, is painted, and was purchased in 1889 from the Graves Registration Bureau in Washington, D.C. for \$170.

Roof cresting is decorative, wooden and painted white. Gable trim and cornices are broad and simple in the classical manner. All exterior trim is painted white.

The east and south facing gabled ends hold tall windows with gothic arches, and foil windows above. The west facing end contains a vestibule entry with gothic arch above the exterior door. Inset into the brick above this arch is a cross form, with the words "1889 Memorial Hall" cut in the stone. The north facing gabled end houses the chimney and, therefore, has no windows.

|X| See continuation sheet

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally       statewide       locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A

Period of Significance

1890

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1890

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

Edward Carl Keifer, Builder

\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Franklin County G.A.R. Soldiers' Memorial Hall is architecturally significant because it is one of the few examples of this type of Gothic Revival style in the area, the prototype of which is a memorial chapel with a cross-shaped plan topped by an octagonal cupola with a dedicatory figure on top. The Soldiers' Memorial Hall is historically significant under National Register Criteria A because it was the first G.A.R. Memorial Hall built in the State of Iowa, dedicated solely to honor Civil War veterans.

During the time of the civil War, the town of Hampton had a population of 300 people and a total of 1200 people lived in Franklin County. These were people trying to establish homes and businesses in an undeveloped area. Yet, 169 men chose to interrupt their lives and leave their homes and families to fight in a war that was important to them. Some years after the war was ended, feelings still ran strongly within the state of Iowa, that those who served should be honored by some memorial in the form of a monument or statue.

In 1884 the Iowa legislature passed a bill to allow the counties to levy a tax for this purpose. However, a group of people in Franklin county, headed by Captain Rufus S. Benson, had the idea that its memorial should take the form of a building where the G.A.R. McKenzie Post No. 81 could meet. As a representative to the state legislature from the area in 1886, Captain Benson was instrumental in persuading the state legislature to amend the law to include the building of a memorial hall.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Stuart, I. L., History of Franklin county, Iowa, Vol. I, S. J. Clarke, Chicago, 1914

Minutes of J. W. McKenzie No. 81 Women's Relief Corps, 1889-1890.

Franklin county Recorder, June 17, 1885; Nov. 17, 1886; March 20, 1889; May 8, 15, 1889; June 26, 1889; Feb. 19, 1890; March 19, 1890; July 30, 1890; Sept. 3, 1890; Jan. 5, 1892

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual additional data:

Primary location of

listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested preservation office

State historic

previously listed in the National Register

Other State agency

previously determined eligible by the National Register

Federal agency

designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

Local government

University

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property less than one

UTM References

A                 
Zone Easting Northing

B                 
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Gilletts Addition, Lot 5 and the South 20-4/5' of Lot 6, Blk. 13, Hampton, Iowa

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries encompass the area historically associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Shirley Pitsor

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date October 21, 1991

street & number 913 1st Avenue SE telephone 515-456-3994

city or town Hampton state Iowa zip code 50441

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Four additional gothic arched windows are located between the walls intersecting the crossed gabled ends. This makes for a total of six windows, all the same size, on the first floor. An inlaid horizontal line of exterior decorative brickwork visually connects the windows to each other, enhancing the overall unity of the building design.

All six window arches and the door arch contain original stained glass. Each window has a different motif, incorporating Civil War themes relating to weaponry and soldier's gear. The entryway arch has the words "Soldiers Memorial Hall" included in its pattern. Basement windows (6) are located directly below the first floor windows. They have rounded arch tops and red bricks in a simple design above them.

The only known exterior landscape elements (non-extant) included a fountain placed in the southwest portion of the lot by the Women's Relief corps in 1892, and two cannons that flanked the front steps. In later years, the fountain fell into disrepair, but it was vowed by the American Legion that it would not be removed as long as a Civil War veteran lived. A photo taken in 1937 shows a fir tree in the location of the fountain. The fir tree stands today. It and a flagpole to the north of the entrance are the existing landscape features. The fate of the cannons is not known.

Significant original features on the first floor are two inch wide, oak flooring, tongue and groove wainscoting, and ten marble tablets with the names of men from Franklin county who served and died during the Civil War and also those who served and died after its close. Woodwork is dark brown and in good condition. Walls are painted plaster and also in good condition. The original enclosed staircase leading to the basement is narrow, with two landings, and is closed by a door at the basement level.

The following list gives dates and descriptions of known building alterations:

- 1914 Steps and sidewalk rebuilt.
- 1920 Original ground level basement access was converted into a sheltered doorway with shingled roof and stucco walls. This made the basement more accessible and is still used today.

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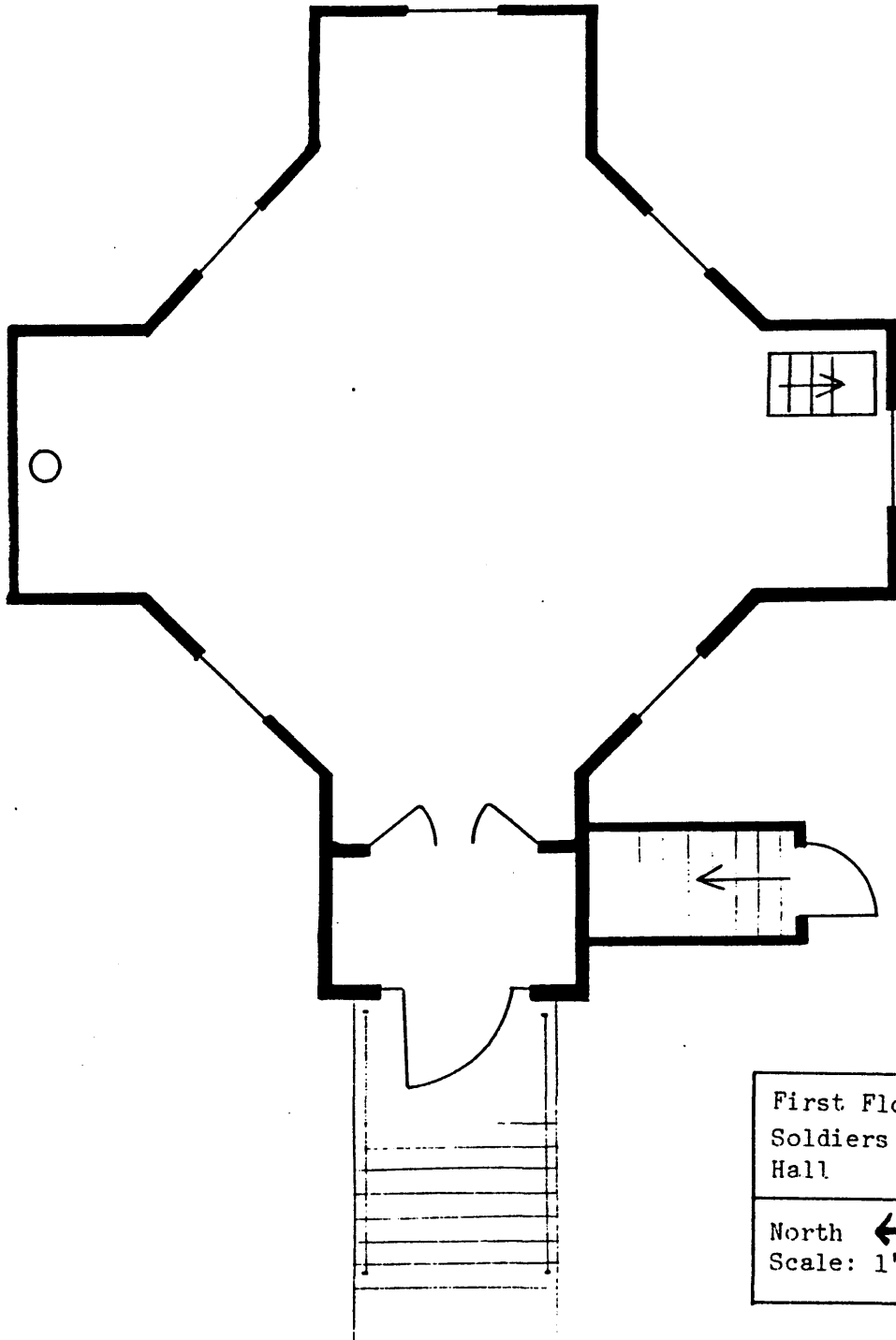
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- 1921-38 Basement kitchen added during this time.
- 1940s Lowered, false fiberboard ceiling added on first floor. Ceiling contains five decorative insignias. They represent 1)WRC - 1883; 2)American Legion; 3)American Legion Auxiliary; 4)Spanish War Veterans; and 5)G.A.R. star. This false ceiling covered over the original eight-sided dome ceiling and foil windows. Condition of the dome ceiling is not known.
- 1967 Hands and gun of redwood attached to soldier statue on the roof.
- 1977 Repair of stained glass windows.
- 1981 Basement walls were waterproofed and covered with sheetrock.
- 1983 Acrylic covers installed over exterior sides of stained glass windows; front steps rebuilt.
- 1987 Flagpole reset.
- 1988 New section on bottom portion of windows added. Air conditioning installed. Statue repaired to reattach head.

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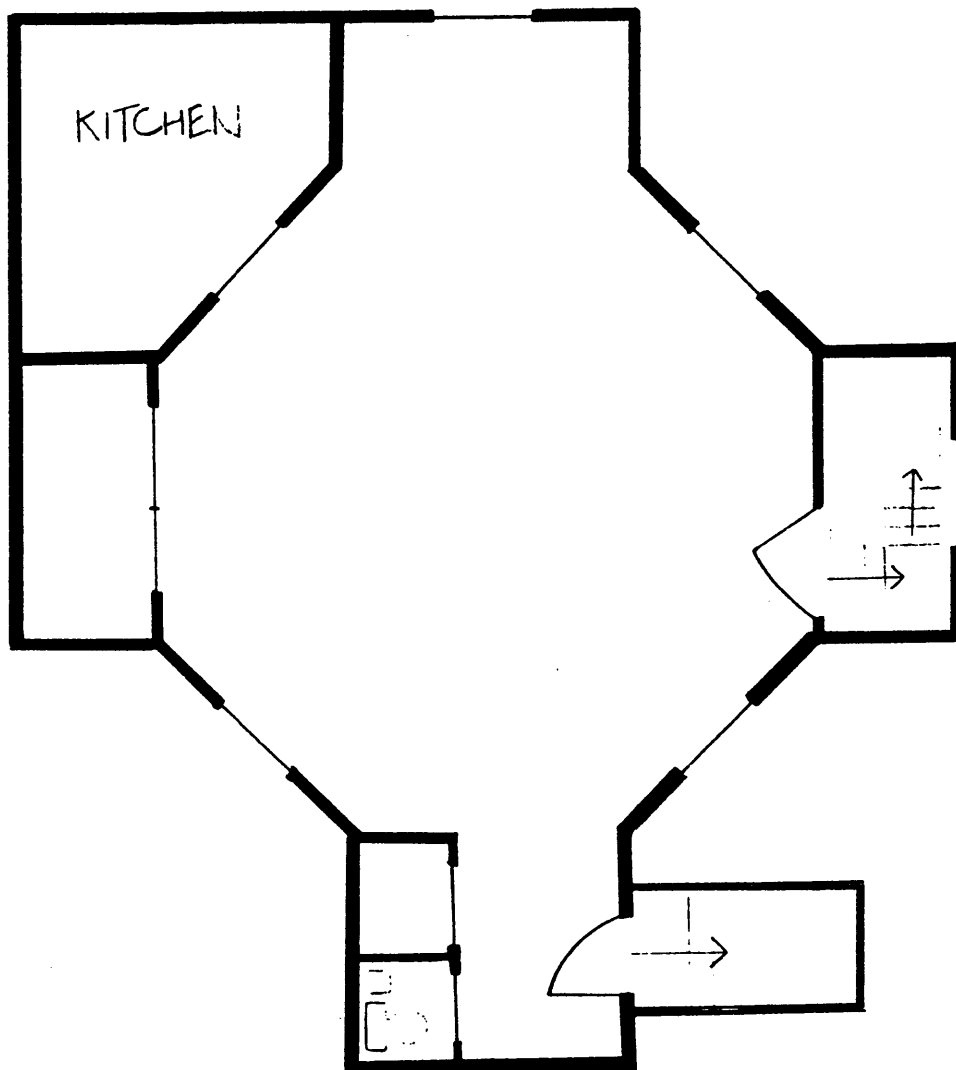


First Floor Soldiers Memorial Hall
North ← Scale: 1' = 1/8"

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Basement Soldiers Memorial Hall
North ← Scale: 1' = 1/8"



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In 1888 citizens of the county voted to build a hall and a lot located near the town's center was donated by the city of Hampton. Bids were received and a local builder, Edward Carl Keifer, was awarded the contract. Current research to locate specific information about an architect, blueprints and construction details has been unsuccessful.

Although this time period was 25 years after the civil War, the honor of having answered President Lincoln's call in person on the battle field was still very important in the lives of the citizens. These men were greatly respected and were influential in the upcoming growth and prosperity of the community. A building boom was taking place in Hampton. Construction on the Franklin county Court House, now on the National Register of Historic Places, was begun in 1890, to be followed by many commercial establishments and residences.

Construction was completed in January, 1890 and the J. W. McKenzie Post No. 81 took possession at that time. McKenzie served in the signal core during the war and was a resident of Hampton when he died. The first Post commander was Captain Rufus S. Benson. It became the first G.A.R. Soldiers' Memorial Hall honoring only Civil War veterans. At this period in history, the G.A.R. veteran's organization was an important and influential part of the life of the community of Hampton, having 224 members at the height of its membership. The Post lasted until the death of its last member in 1937.

The McKenzie Women's Relief Corps No. 81 was organized in 1886. These women assisted the needy families in the community, raised funds for installing the basement floor and several of the marble tablets inside the Memorial Hall. They held dinners and social functions for the G.A.R. and helped provide needed supplies for the Soldier's Home at Marshalltown, Iowa. The Soldiers' Memorial Hall has been used as a meeting place by the American Legion, American Legion Auxilary, D.A.R., Scouts, 4-H Clubs, Service Clubs and the general public for reunions and social gatherings.

The building today is under the auspices of the Veterans' Affairs office and has been kept in repair with many improvements made in the past ten years with concern for maintaining the architectural integrity. Fundraising is presently underway for the restoration of the Union soldier statue which stands atop the Soldiers' Memorial Hall.

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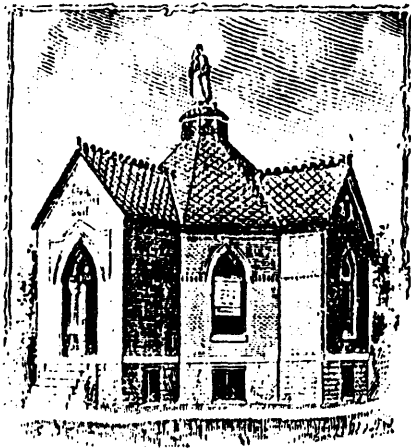
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# BOYS IN BLUE

## GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC.

J. W. McKenzie Post, No. 81.



SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL HALL.

Hampton had a post of the Grand Army as long ago as 1867, but it lived only about two years, when the interest in it reached so low an ebb that its meetings were discontinued. So far as we know, there are but four members of the present post who were members then: R. S. Benson, L. B. Raymond, D. W. Dow and W. A. Franklin. In June, 1882, a revival of interest took place, and a post was organized with about twenty-five charter members, and named J. W. McKenzie Post, No. 81, Department of Iowa. The name was in honor of J. W. McKenzie, who served in the signal corps during the war, and was a resident of Hampton at the time of his death. The post now has about 100 members, and meets at the Memorial Hall on the first and third Saturday evenings of each month. The hall was built in 1889, by tax voted upon the property of Franklin county, and upon a site at the corner of Main and Fifth streets, donated by the town council of Hampton.

Franklin County Recorder  
January, 1892

Captain Rufus S. Benson was the first commander of the post. His army service is given elsewhere in this issue, as well as his portrait. He was one of the charter members of the post, and he was always thoroughly imbued with the true spirit of Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty.

Colonel C. W. Boutin was the second commander, and his army record and portrait are given under the head, "The Sixth Regiment, I. N. G.," in another column. In 1888 he was chief of staff for the Department of Iowa under the administration of Colonel E. A. Consigny, and as such had charge of the Iowa division of the grand parade at the National Encampment at Columbus, Ohio.

L. B. Raymond was the third commander. He has served as a member of the council of administration for the Department of Iowa; was an aid on the staff of National Commander Fairchild, and is now serving his third term as the member of the national council of administration for Iowa, and the second term as a member of the executive council thereof. Portrait under head of "The Sixth Regt., I. N. G."

Louis Elaeffer was the fourth commander. He enlisted from Cedar county in 1861, in Company B, 11th Iowa Infantry, and served until July, 1865.

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Franklin county G.A.R. Soldiers' Memorial Hall  
Hampton, Iowa  
Photographer: Birdell Butson  
Date: February 7, 1991  
Negatives: Hampton Publishing company

1. Front entrance, E
2. South exposure, N
3. East exposure, W
4. Photographer: Shirley Pitsor  
Date: March 8, 1991  
Front entrance, West exposure, E
5. Northwest window arch, NW
6. NE window arch, NE
7. East window arch, E
8. SE window arch, SE
9. South window arch, S
10. SW window arch, SW
11. Northeast marble tablet, NE
12. Southeast marble tablet, SE
13. NE window and marble tablet, NE