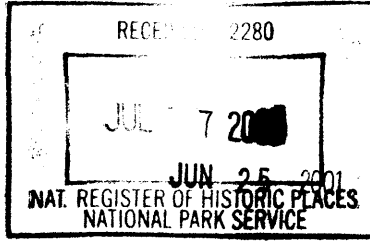


Bennett Building  
Name of Property

Pottawattamie County, Iowa  
County and State

NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 10-90)



861

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

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

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Bennett Building  
other names/site number Ervin Building

**2. Location**

street & number 405 West Broadway N/A not for publication [ ]  
city or town Council Bluffs N/A vicinity [ ]  
state Iowa code IA county Pottawattamie code 155 zip code 51503

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

*Howell Soike*  
Signature of certifying official

June 26, 2001  
Date

**STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA**

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. 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 from the National Register

other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

*Edson H. Beall*  
Signature of Keeper

8/8/01  
Date of Action

*ban*  
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>  1  </u>	<u>      </u>	buildings
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	sites
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	objects
<u>  1  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	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)

Cat:   Commerce/Trade   Sub:   Business    
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:   Vacant/Not in Use   Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

  Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American    
  Movements – Commercial Style    
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation   Concrete    
roof   Asphalt    
walls   Brick    
  Metal/Steel    
other   Stone/Limestone    
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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



Bennett Building  
Name of Property

Pottawattamie 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)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	15	261300	4571400	3	—	—	—
2	—	—	—	4	—	—	—

   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 Jennifer K. Honebrink, Project Manager  
organization Alley Poyner Architecture date October 30, 2000  
street & number 1213 Jones Street telephone (402) 342-1544  
city or town Omaha state NE zip code 68102

**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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name/title 405 West Broadway Limited Liability Company  
street & number 1025 Leavenworth Street telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Omaha state NE zip code 68102

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Bennett Building  
Name of Property  
Pottawattamie County, Iowa  
County and State

Section 7 Page 1

**Narrative Description**

The Bennett Building at 405 West Broadway in Council Bluffs, Pottawattamie County, Iowa, is located two blocks north of Council Bluff's historic downtown, along Highway 6. The building was completed in 1924 in the Commercial style. It stands seven stories tall, with a full basement and flat roof. Measuring 51'x90', it has a rectangular plan in the basement and first floors, but switches to an "L" shaped plan for floors two through seven to accommodate a light well on the west side. Constructed of reinforced concrete and steel, the building is clad in limestone on the north and west facades of the first floor. A five-story brick body is capped by a one-story combination brick and limestone cornice.

In December of 1922, a fire destroyed the three story, Victorian style Woolworth 5 and 10 cent store at the corner of Fourth and Broadway in Council Bluffs. The owner, Mr. Wollman, quickly decided to replace the building, which was considered a total loss, with a larger office building or hotel.<sup>1</sup> However, having let the insurance lapse on the Woolworth store, he could not fund the construction himself. After discussing the matter with several local businessmen, the Bennett Building Corporation was formed in March, 1923.<sup>2</sup> Soon after, the local architectural firm, Jensen and Larson, was hired, in addition to the Omaha, Nebraska firm of McDonald and McDonald as consulting architects. On June 30, 1923, the contract for general construction was awarded to E.A. Wickham and Co., of Council Bluffs. At that time, the building was predicted to cost \$200,000 and be ready for tenants by February, 1924. When it was finished, this seven story building was equal in size to the tallest building in town. Constructed of reinforced concrete and steel, it was considered "completely fireproof". For added safety, wireglass was used in the windows adjacent to the alley and above the neighboring building.

On the interior, the building was planned to appeal to doctors, dentists, and their patients.<sup>3</sup> For doctors and dentists, the building was equipped with gas and compressed air, and each suite was provided with a lavatory with hot and cold water. All of the rooms were designed with generous proportions, so that they could be easily sub-divided or reorganized. Flexibility and cleanliness were also planned into the electrical and telephone lines, which were installed with flexible wiring and concealed. For the patients, two of the latest high speed elevators were installed to handle the expected traffic and toilets were installed on each floor, alternating men's and women's. Marble floors and baseboards in the corridors gave the building a rich appearance. Retail on the first floor gave residents an additional reason for visiting the building. These design efforts were clearly successful. Soon after it opened, the retail space on the first floor was occupied by Benjamin Ross Ladies Ready to Wear. The upper floors of the building contained the offices of nine doctors, seven dentists, five insurance agents, four real estate agents, two hairstylists, the Council Bluffs Chamber of Commerce, Council Bluffs Service Bureau (colrs) [sic], the Iowa State Motorists Association, the Retail Merchants Association, and other miscellaneous businesses.<sup>4</sup>

On the exterior, the Bennett Building embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Commercial Style. Standing seven stories tall, the two and three story neighboring buildings only serve to emphasize this building's height. The 'L' shape of the Bennett building is a slight deviation from the traditional rectangle, but worked functionally to create a light well on the west side of the building. The traditional three-part division of the exterior is clear. In this case, a one-story limestone base surrounds the storefronts and entrance to the lobby for the offices above. The five-story brick body contains large, regularly spaced areas of glass. Together the brick and glass create a grid-like exterior that mimics the steel skeleton within. The body is capped by a modest one-story brick and limestone crown. The lack of ornate detailing on the cap and the base adds to the suggestion of a modern skyscraper and helps emphasize the door to the lobby for the offices, which is marked by a broken pediment over the door.

The function and appearance of the Bennett Building remained much the same through all four owners. The building was sold in 1971 to Mr. Ervin. He renamed it the Ervin Building and updated the offices, primarily with fresh paint and carpet. At some point the storefront display

<sup>1</sup> "Owner of Building Not Told of Fire," *the Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) December 15, 1922, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> "New Building Co. is Incorporated," *the Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) March 22, 1923, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> "Wickham to Erect Bennett Building," *the Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) June 30, 1923, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> R.L. Polk and Co., *Polk's Council Bluffs City Directory, 1925*, Council Bluffs, Iowa: R.L. Polk and Co. Pubs., 1925.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Bennett Building  
Name of Property  
Pottawattamie County, Iowa  
County and State

Section 7 Page 2

---

**Narrative Description (Continued)**

windows and transoms were replaced with aluminum windows of the same proportions. In 1988, the building was sold for the second time to the KAK Partnership. They installed new aluminum double hung windows in the north façade and updated the offices. The Bennett Building was sold for a third time in 1993 to the Bennett Towers Corporation, who proposed renovating the building into thirty apartments on the second through seventh floors and retaining retail space on the first floor. However, these plans were abandoned before work was begun.

Today the key features of the building retain a significant amount of integrity. On the exterior, the broken pediment and door surround is completely intact, and the name of the building has been preserved over the door. The street address is still clearly carved into the pilaster on the corner of the building. The limestone base retains six of the seven pilasters. The brick body and limestone trim have only a few small sections of spauling. All windows, except those on the north façade, are original, including the wireglass windows on the west façade. On the interior, the lobby to the offices appears much the same as it did when the building opened. The marble lining the walls and ceiling is in excellent condition. The original elevators have been well maintained and are in good working order. The display cases built into the west wall are completely intact. The original fire stair behind the elevators has some plaster damage, but retains the painted concrete treads and risers, and the wooden handrail and newel post caps. All of the corridors on floors two through seven have been well preserved. Although some paint is peeling, the marble floors and baseboards are in excellent condition. The wooden chair rail and crown moldings are in good condition, and most of the doors and transom windows have their original glass. Altogether, the majority of the materials and stylistic characteristics of the Bennett Building have been well maintained and preserved.

The current owners plan on continuing to preserve the key features of the building. While converting the office space into apartments for the elderly, the historic corridors and elevator lobbies will be preserved. The facades will be cleaned and repaired as necessary, maintaining the historic materials and appearance. The retail space will be restored where possible and converted for use as a community space for the residents.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Bennett Building  
Name of Property  
Pottawattamie County, Iowa  
County and State

Section 8 Page 3

**Statement of Significance**

Completed in 1924, the Bennett building is locally significant under criterion A for its contribution to the role of women in the medical profession. During the period from 1900-1950, few women were able to become physicians. Those who did often went into public health positions. The few who practiced in private offices, such as the three women in the Bennett building, were rare. Such women typically worked in family related areas, such as pediatrics. Women physicians who chose to marry tended to remain active professionally, unlike most other women who trained in professions during this period. Married women physicians in particular were "a small, exceptional, and highly motivated group..."<sup>5</sup> Within the Bennett building Charlotte McCuskey and Bernice DeConly each had their own office and worked as osteopaths, an area of medicine many men were leaving in order to enter one of the new specialties. Harriett S. Hamilton, the third woman, stands apart since she was a "regular" physician, which was very uncommon, and because she practiced the longest in the building, from 1925 to 1933.

The Bennett Building is also locally important under criterion C, as a significant example of the Commercial Style of architecture and the design skills of several local architects and contractors. The local firm of Jensen and Larson stamped the plans as the architect of record, and listed the Omaha firm of McDonald and McDonald as consulting architects. Jensen and Larson are responsible for the design of over 700 structures including many well known local buildings, such as the City Hall, Y.M.C.A., and "most of the stores and office buildings in Council Bluffs"<sup>6</sup> McDonald and McDonald are significant local architects in Omaha, Nebraska. John McDonald developed his firm through commissions from wealthy Omahans and both McDonalds practiced architecture in a wide variety of building types and styles over the course of twenty-four years. Additionally, E.A. Wickham & Co., of Council Bluffs, constructed the building. They were an important construction firm in the late 1890s and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, working not only in Council Bluffs, Iowa, but also in Omaha, Nebraska, and Denver, Colorado.<sup>7</sup>

The period from 1900-1950 was known as the "Dark Years" for women in the medical profession. In the 1890s, women had finally gained equal footing in many areas of the medical profession with men. They were attending the same medical schools as men and enjoyed the same opportunities to open their own practice, in any area of medicine they chose. However, just when they were enjoying their success, women began to lose the advantages they had gained. In the late 1890s, the discovery of bacteria led to a new scientific approach to medicine, which women were considered incapable of understanding. When this combined with the professionalization of the medical community in the early nineteen hundreds, men were able to inhibit women entering the medical profession by preventing them from obtaining internships, joining medical societies, or presenting papers. This created a social pressure that discouraged many women from entering the profession altogether. In fact, "the percentage of women physicians nationally peaked in 1910 at 6 percent. ...As late as 1940, the 7,708 women physicians in the nation was actually a smaller *numerical* total than it was some thirty years earlier,"<sup>8</sup> and by 1976 women were still not able to match the earlier percentages.<sup>9</sup>

Women who entered the medical field often did so with the idea of improving the standard of living for families. Many women, and some men, at the turn of the century were concerned with the growing trend of specialization in medicine. This group believed that the new focus on symptoms and treatment took the human aspect out of the practice of medicine. Osteopathy, with its focus on the proper relationships among the various parts of the body, maintained the tradition of holistic medicine and caught the interest of many women. Many doctors in this field practiced in one of the primary care areas, such as pediatrics, or obstetrics. Women who became regular doctors also often found themselves focusing on female health, family life, child development, and social work.<sup>10</sup> This occurred both because women were interested in improving the standard of living for their communities, and because many built their practices on patient referrals from male colleagues, who typically sent women cases involving female diseases and childhood illnesses.

<sup>5</sup> Regina Markell Morantz-Sanchez, *Sympathy and Science: Women Physicians in American Medicine*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985, p. 264.

<sup>6</sup> "J. Chris Jensen Looks at Life: Has had an active career in city," *The Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) September 23, 1944, in the Council Bluffs Clippings File - Biography: J-Je, Council Bluffs Public Library.

<sup>7</sup> "Biographical History of Pottawattamie County, Iowa." Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1891, p. 648-649.

<sup>8</sup> Mary Roth Walsh, *Doctors Wanted: No Women Need Apply: Sexual Barriers in the Medical Profession, 1835-1975*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977, p. 185, italics by the author.

<sup>9</sup> Mary Roth Walsh, *Doctors Wanted: No Women Need Apply: Sexual Barriers in the Medical Profession, 1835-1975*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977, p. 185.

<sup>10</sup> Ruth J Abram, "Send Us a Lady Physician", *Women Doctors in America, 1835-1920*, New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1985, p. 238-239.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Bennett Building  
Name of Property  
Pottawattamie County, Iowa  
County and State

Section 8 Page 4

**Statement of Significance (Continued)**

From 1900-1950, most women who became professionals left their chosen careers when they married. Women physicians were the exception. They were especially devoted to their jobs and women's issues, and tended to marry men who were supportive of their work and women's causes. Women physicians' husbands "took pride in their spouses' achievements and showed a willingness to aid both materially and practically in their unorthodox aspirations."<sup>11</sup> Many supported wives through school, or took an equal role in child-rearing to allow their spouse to work. Other husbands were active in the women's suffrage movement.

In Council Bluffs, the social situation was very similar to these national trends, although statistically women were better represented in the profession. Of the fifty doctors in Council Bluffs in 1925, twenty percent had offices in the Bennett Building, making it the second most popular office building for doctors in 1925. Fourteen percent of the doctors in Council Bluffs were women (five regular physicians and two osteopaths), and of these, thirty percent had offices in the Bennett Building.

Like many of the women concerned with treating the whole person and not just symptoms of a disease, two of the women in the Bennett Building went into osteopathy. Charlotte McCuskey opened her office in the Bennett building in 1925 and practiced there until 1928. Bernice DeConly opened a second osteopathic office in 1927. After one year in the Bennett Building, she moved her office from the fifth floor to the sixth floor, where she maintained her practice until 1932, when she moved to the City National Bank Building.

Reflecting society's disapproval of women physicians, listings in Polk's City Directory for Council Bluffs make it very clear which physicians were men and which were women, as well as which women were married and which were not. Two married women practiced in the Bennett Building, Bernice DeConly and Harriett Hamilton. Harriett Hamilton was born Harriett Spera and married before graduating from medical school in 1912, at the age of 42. Not only did her husband support her through medical school, but he also shared an office with her in the Bennett Building for several years, practicing dentistry beside her. Harriet Hamilton maintained her office in the Bennett Building until she retired in 1933.

In addition to practicing medicine, Harriett Hamilton was also active in several local professional groups who focused their efforts on improving the standard of living in Council Bluffs. She was a member of the Altrusa Club, a society of professional and business women dedicated to increasing literacy. Late in her career and through her retirement, she was also a member of the Pottawattamie County Medical Society.

"The life stories of individual women physicians are at once unique and representative. Women entered medicine for a wide variety of personal reasons, but once they committed themselves to its pursuit, their lives were shaped by social options and conventions that moved well beyond personal preferences."<sup>12</sup> The three women in the Bennett Building exemplify this. Each of these women reveals many of the national trends and personal characteristics of women physicians practicing in private offices in the nineteen twenties.

The Bennett Building is also significant as a representative work of several local masters, including the architectural firms of Jensen and Larson, and McDonald and McDonald, and the construction company, E.A. Wickham & Co.

The Bennett Building is one of the earliest buildings by Jensen and Larson as partners. Jocheis Chris Jensen, a native of Denmark, moved to Council Bluffs with his parents when he was eight. He worked as an apprentice in the H.P. Wind planing mill from the age of 13 until he was 17. He then moved briefly to the West Coast to seek his fortune in the lumber mills there, but soon came back to Council Bluffs. It appears that he had no formal education in architecture and was apprenticeship trained. "In 1894 and 1895 he worked for Charles Driscoll in Omaha, Nebraska, and started independent practice in 1900 in Council Bluffs."<sup>13</sup> At first, he was in the firm of Jensen Brothers, where he practiced

<sup>11</sup> Regina Markell Morantz-Sanchez, *Sympathy and Science: Women Physicians in American Medicine*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985, p. 138.

<sup>12</sup> Regina Markell Morantz-Sanchez, *Sympathy and Science: Women Physicians in American Medicine*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985, p. 92.

<sup>13</sup> Wesley I. Shank, *Iowa's Historic Architects: A Biographical Dictionary*, Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1999, p. 87.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Bennett Building  
Name of Property  
Pottawattamie County, Iowa  
County and State

Section 8 Page 5

**Statement of Significance (Continued)**

architecture and construction. However, by the mid-nineteen twenties he was partnering with G.B. Larson, as the firm Jensen and Larson. Buildings in Council Bluffs attributed to Jensen include the Woodward Candy Factory, the Jennie Edmundson Hospital, Bloomer School, Longfellow School, the Peoples store, the Water Works, the Y.M.C.A. addition, the Kontinental Kompond Co. Building, the new City Hall and "most of the stores and office buildings in Council Bluffs."<sup>14</sup> Jensen also maintained an active role in both his community and profession. He was a "member of the Council Bluffs Waterworks board for 21 years; the architectural board of examiners; Council Bluffs Elks No. 531; Bluff City A.F. and A.M. No. 71; Star Chapter 47, R.A.M.; Joppa Council 15, R.S.M.; Ivanhoe Commandery 17, K.T.; and First Congregational church" as well as the director of the Citizens Power Company and the Council Bluffs Gas Company.<sup>15</sup> He was well known in Council Bluffs as an honest and opinionated man who often aroused opposition, "but today [1946] the buildings which were designed in his office are [considered] among the best in the city."<sup>16</sup> He died in 1946 of heart failure.

Jensen's partner, George Bernard Larson was originally from Portland, North Dakota. A veteran of World War I, he moved to Omaha after the war. Little is known of his career, until his partnership with J. Chris Jensen. While working with Jensen, Larson continued to live in Omaha, Nebraska, but was active in the Council Bluffs Elks and Rotary Clubs. He is credited with the design of "many schools and business buildings," including the "Washington, Edison, Rue, Tinley, Walnut Grove and Roosevelt Schools, ... Thomas Jefferson Field House, Cogley Clinic, and the First Federal Savings and Loan building."<sup>17</sup> Larson took over the practice when Jensen died. He continued to practice until 1953, when he became sick. He passed away in November, 1956.

It is unclear why the McDonalds were consulting architects on the Bennett Building project and how much they were involved. Jensen and Larson could have decided that the project was too complex for them to handle alone, and invited the McDonalds to partner with them. McDonald and McDonald had experience with office buildings of this scale, having designed the seven-story Western Newspaper Union office building, in 1915. Another theory is that since the Jensen and Larson firm appears to be fairly new, Jensen and Larson may have asked the more established firm of McDonald and McDonald to partner with them to gain the confidence of the Bennett Building Corporation. In either case, publicity of the project credits only Jensen and Larson, making it likely that most of the design work was done by Jensen and Larson, and that the McDonalds assisted with design advise and technical details.

The McDonalds were popular local architects in Omaha, Nebraska, who were able to adapt to the latest architectural trends. John McDonald was born on Prince Edward Island, Canada and studied Applied Science at McGill University in Montreal, where he graduated in 1884. He moved to Omaha and founded his firm in the 1890s through commissions from several wealthy local families. One of his first notable commissions was the design of the Joslyn's mansion in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1903. McDonald married and had a son, Alan, who followed his father's footsteps. After graduating from Harvard's School of Architecture in 1915, Alan joined John in 1916 and they renamed the firm McDonald and McDonald. Together they designed many buildings in Omaha, including the First Unitarian Church, the Joslyn Art Museum, and the Grossman Apartments. They were also finalists in the selection of the design for Nebraska's new State Capitol Building in 1919. Each of their buildings reveals their flexibility both in style and type of structure, making it difficult to establish what, if any, influence they had on the design of the Bennett Building.

The Bennett Building was built by the E.A. Wickham and Co., a local construction company responsible for erecting, and later also designing, many Council Bluffs buildings. Founded by the son of James Wickham, co-owner of the successful construction firm, Wickham Brothers, E.A. Wickham and Co, was a separate company. Wickham Brothers was founded in 1865 by Irish immigrant brothers James and Owen P. Wickham. Each trained in the brick and stone masonry trade. As a firm, they focused their work in Council Bluffs and the surrounding area employing 200 people in 1891 and doing business worth \$150,000. In contrast, E.A. Wickham and Co. was owned by Edward E. Wickham and J.E. Riley. Edward was the son of James Wickham and grew up in Council Bluffs. He attended Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas,

<sup>14</sup> "J. Chris Jensen Looks at Life: Has had an Active Career in City," *the Daily Nonpareil*, (Council Bluffs, Iowa) September 23, 1944.

<sup>15</sup> "J. Chris Jensen Dies Suddenly: Noted Local Architect Long a Resident," *the Daily Nonpareil*, (Council Bluffs, Iowa) August 19, 1946.

<sup>16</sup> "J. Chris Jensen," Council Bluffs, Iowa: *the Daily Nonpareil*, August 24, 1946.

<sup>17</sup> "Long Illness is Fatal to Larson: Architect Designed Many Building Here," *the Daily Nonpareil*, (Council Bluffs, Iowa) November 15, 1956, in Council Bluffs Public Library Clippings Files, Biography L-Lev.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Bennett Building  
Name of Property  
Pottawattamie County, Iowa  
County and State

Section 8 Page 6

---

**Statement of Significance (Continued)**

where he graduated in 1884. In 1890 Wickham and Riley owned three offices: E.A. Wickham and Co., in Council Bluffs, Iowa; J.E. Riley and Co., in Omaha Nebraska; and J.E. Riley and Co., in Denver, Colorado. In 1891 they did an annual business worth \$550,000 and employed 400 people.

E.A. Wickham and J.E. Riley were shrewd businessmen. When bids came in for the Bennett building the first time, Walter Peterson, of Omaha, Nebraska, was the low bidder. He soon announced that he had made a mathematical error, and asked to add \$10,000 to his bid. Instead, the project was rebid. Most of the contractors did not change their figures, but Wickham and Co. altered theirs enough to come in as the low bidder.

Taken as a whole, the Bennett building is a significant landmark in Council Bluffs. It represents the role of women in the medical profession in Council Bluffs in the mid-nineteen twenties, as well the work of several local architects and contractors at various stages in their careers.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Bennett Building  
Name of Property  
Pottawattamie County, Iowa  
County and State

Section 9 Page 7

---

**Books**

- Abram, Ruth J. "Send Us a Lady Physician," *Women Doctors in America, 1835-1920.* New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1985.
- Federal Writer's Project, Iowa. *Iowa: A Guide to the Hawkeye State.* New York: Viking Press, 1938.
- "James Wickham" in *Biographical History of Pottawattamie County, Iowa.* Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1891, p. 648-649.
- Luchetti, Cathy. *Medicine Women: The Story of Early American Women Doctors.* New York: Crown Publishing, Inc., 1998.
- Morantz-Sanchez, Regina Markell. *Sympathy and Science: Women Physicians in American Medicine.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- "O.P. Wickham" in *Biographical History of Pottawattamie County, Iowa.* Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1891, p. 642-643.
- Peterson, William J. "Chapter XXIV Medicine in Iowa" in *The Story of Iowa: The Progress of an American State.* Volume II. (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., Inc., 1952), p. 756-799.
- Schwieder, Dorothy. *Iowa: The Middle Land.* Ames Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1996.
- Shank, Wesley I. *The Iowa Catalogue Historic American Buildings Survey.* Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1979.
- Shank, Wesley I. *Iowa's Historic Architects: A Biographical Dictionary.* Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1999.
- U S National Park Service. *National Register of Historic Places, 1966-1994.* Washington D.C. National Park Service Preservation Press, 1994.
- Wall, Joseph Frazier. *Iowa: A Bicentennial History.* New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1978.

**Journal Articles**

- Marrett, Cora Bagley, M.A. PhD. "Nineteenth Century Associations of Medical Women: The Beginning of a Movement." *Journal of the American Medical Women's Association.* Volume 32. Number 12. (December 1977): 469-474.
- More, Ellen S., PhD. "The American Medical Women's Association and the Role of the Woman Physician, 1915-1990." *Journal of the American Medical Women's Association.* Volume 45. Number 5. (September/October 1990): 165-180.

**Other Sources**

- R.L. Polk and Co. *Polk's Council Bluffs City Directory.* Kansas City, MO: R.L. Polk and Co., 1921, 1923/1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933.
- R.L. Polk and Co. *Polk's Iowa State Gazetteer.* Kansas City, MO: R.L. Polk and Co., 18, 1923, 1924.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Bennett Building  
Name of Property  
Pottawattamie County, Iowa  
County and State

Section 9 Page 8

---

**Newspaper Articles**

“Council Bluffs Changing Scene.” [photos and captions] *The Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) in Council Bluffs Public Library Clippings File – Council Bluffs Photos/Stories, Early-1955.

“Death Takes Dean of Local Dentists: Dr. Hamilton, 77, Succumbs at His Home.” *The Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) April 27, 1943.

“The Ervin Building...” [photo and caption] *The Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) March 1, 1994 in Council Bluffs Public Library Clippings File – Construction, A-Z.

“Harriett Hamilton, Physician, is Dead.” *The Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) May 29, 1952.

“Hold Funeral for J.Chris Jensen.” *The Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) August 22, 1946 in Council Bluffs Public Library Clippings File – Biography J-Je.

“J. Chris Jensen.” *The Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) August 24, 1946 in Council Bluffs Public Library Clippings File – Biography J-Je.

“J Chris Jensen Dies Suddenly. Noted Local Architect Long a Resident.” *The Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) August 19, 1946 in Council Bluffs Public Library Clippings File – Biography J-Je.

“J.Chris Jensen Looks at Life. Has Had an Active Career in City.” *The Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) September 23, 1944 in Council Bluffs Public Library Clippings File – Biography J-Je.

“Long Illness is Fatal to Larson. Architect Designed Many Buildings Here.” *The Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) November 15, 1956 in Council Bluffs Public Library Clippings File – Biography L-Lev.

Leu, Jon. “Ervin Building May Get New Life.” *The Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) November 7, 1993 in Council Bluffs Public Library Clippings File – Construction, General.

Leu, Jon. “Ervin Building Sold to KAK Partnership.” *The Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) December 27, 1988 in Council Bluffs Public Library Clippings File – Construction A-Z.

Leu, Jon. “Ervin Debate on Conflicts.” *The Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) March 1, 1994 in Council Bluffs Public Library Clippings File – Construction, A-Z.

“New Building Co. is Incorporated.” *The Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) March 22, 1923, p. 7.

“Old Bluffs Resident Dies Suddenly. Owen P. Wickham Lived Here 66 years – Dies at Age of 79.” *The Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) February 28, 1924 in Council Bluffs Public Library Clippings File – Biography U-Z.

“Owner of Building Not Told of Fire.” *The Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) December 15, 1922, p. 7.

“Sketch of New Bennett Building.” *The Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) June 25, 1923, p. 1

“To the Buying Public of Council Bluffs and Vicinity.” [advertisement] *The Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) April 24, 1923, p. 3.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Bennett Building  
Name of Property  
Pottawattamie County, Iowa  
County and State

Section   9   Page   9  

---

**Newspaper Articles (Continued)**

“Today...” [photo and caption] *The Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) September 2, 1954 in Council Bluffs Public Library Clippings File – Council Bluffs Photos/Stories, Early-1955.

“Wickham to Erect the Bennett Building.” *The Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) June 30, 1923, p. 7

“The Woolworth Store Building as it Looks Now.” [photo and caption] *The Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) December 18, 1922, p. 6.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Bennett Building  
Name of Property  
Pottawattamie County, Iowa  
County and State

Section 10 Page 10

---

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of the nominated property includes Lots 1 and 2 in Keller and Bennett's Subdivision of Lot 176 in the Original Plat of Council Bluffs, Iowa, and the Westerly 4 Inches of Fourth Street between the Southerly line of Broadway and the Northerly line of the alley in rear of Keller and Bennett's Subdivision, being the same strip of ground as vacated by the City Council of the City of Council Bluffs, Iowa; An ordinance vacating the Westerly 4 Inches of Fourth Street from the Southerly line of Broadway to the Northerly line of first alley South of Keller and Bennett's Subdivision and granting the same to the owners of Lot 1, Keller and Bennett's Subdivision.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes all of the land historically associated with the Bennett Building.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Bennett Building  
Name of Property  
Pottawattamie County, Iowa  
County and State

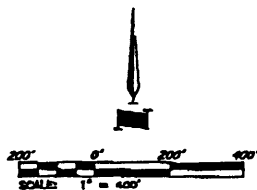
Section Maps Page 11

NE 1/4 36 75-44

CITY OF <b>COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA</b> BASE MAP	DATE: 10/24/98
	SCALE: 1"=400'
<b>GBA</b> GEORGE BUTLER ASSOCIATES, INC.	QUARTER-QUARTER SECTION NO.
	<b>345</b>



KEY  
■ BENNETT BUILDING



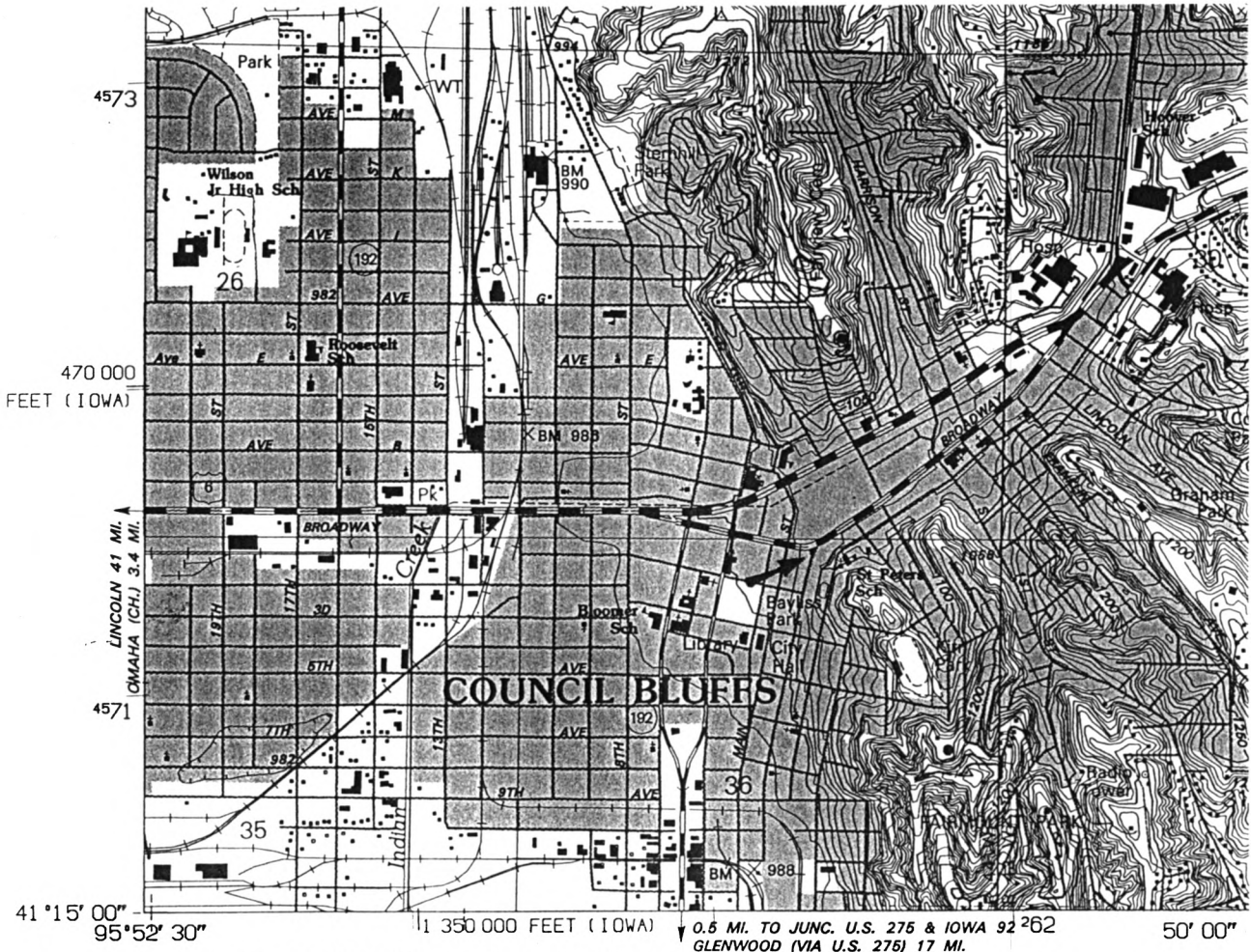
299  
344 345 346  
391

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Bennett Building  
Name of Property  
Pottawattamie County, Iowa  
County and State

Section Maps Page 12



Produced by the United States Geological Survey

Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and USCE

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1952. Field checked 1956. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1990. Field checked 1992. Map edited 1994

North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and blue 1000-meter ticks: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 15  
10,000-foot grid ticks: Iowa coordinate system and Nebraska coordinate system, south zones

North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software

Gray tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown visible on aerial photographs

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked