

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 98001323

Property Name: Fillmore Block

County: Wright State: Iowa

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

November 20, 1998
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8. Significance:

The period of significance is, hereby, amended to read "1894" to reflect the date of construction and to correspond to the property's significance under Criterion C.

Beth Foster of the Iowa State Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

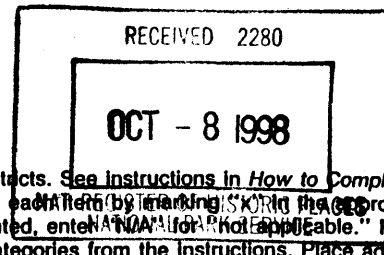
DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

1323

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 entering the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "Not Applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Fillmore Block

other names/site number Dows Mercantile Store

2. Location

street & number Ellsworth and Garfield N/A not for publication

city or town Dows N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Wright code 197 zip code 50071

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 Christy DSHR 9-29-98
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

State of 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 official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Anna McCullard 11/20/98

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

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

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

Contributing Noncontributing
1 buildings
sites
structures
objects
1 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)

Commerce/Trade

Current Functions (Enter categories from Instructions)

Commerce/Trade/Specialty Store

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from Instructions)

Late Victorian/Romanesque

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick

Terra Cotta

roof Synthetics/Rubber

other

Narrative Description

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

Fillmore Block
Name of Property

Wright, Iowa
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

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

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

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

Property is:

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

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1894-1948

Significant Dates

1894

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Conner;

Dougherty

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Dows Mercantile

Fillmore Block
Name of Property

Wright, Iowa
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 115 45910410 471225610
Zone Easting Northing
2

3
Zone Easting Northing
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 James C. White, President Dows Historical Society

organization Wright County Historical Society, Dows Chapter date May 1998

street & number 300 S. Eskridge Street telephone (515) 852-3879

city or town Dows state Iowa zip code 50071

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 Wright County Historical Society, Dows Chapter

street & number 122 East Ellsworth telephone (515) 852-3533

city or town Dows, state Iowa zip code 50071

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**

Fillmore Block
Dows Mercantile Store
Wright County, Dows, Iowa

Section number 7 Page 1

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Fillmore Block building is located on the east corner, facing the north, at the intersection of Ellsworth and Garfield Street, and is surrounded by other business establishments in downtown Dows, Iowa.

The commercial area of Dows was destroyed by a disastrous fire in 1894. The Exchange Block built in 1890, (prior to the fire) sat on the north side of the street. This building was severely damaged in the fire, rebuilt, but later destroyed after several years. In accordance with the town council's decree, all new business places will be constructed of brick and architecturally patterned in the Victorian Romanesque style of the "Exchange Block".

The architect of the Exchange Block, A.H. Conner, was called upon to design the structures for the entire rebuilding project in the same Victorian Romanesque style. The Fillmore Block, built in 1894-95, at a cost of \$12,000.00 was among the first 17 stores to be built in the commercial area.

The two story 44 X 80 feet Fillmore Block was constructed throughout in a very sound manner with native limestone 18 inch thick walls to the ground level. The basement walls built on the concrete floor are seven (7) feet high and 18 inches thick. Triple brick walls consisted of two courses common exterior and one course of facing brick. Floor joists are full 2 X 12 inch spaced 12 inches on center. All floors are solid with no visible sagging, 2x2 inch bridging every eight (8) feet. Ceilings in the basement are seven (7) feet high. The main floor was originally 13 feet floor to ceiling, as was the second floor ceilings.

The ground floor had several doors and windows. On the south were four (4) windows measuring 4 X 8 feet, and two doors 4 X 10 feet. Two doors on the east side of the building measured 4 X 10 feet and 5 1/2 X 10 feet, two transom windows for ventilation, and a 4 X 10 feet display window which joined the front windows. The north side, the front of the building, contained two store-front size windows (divided) measuring 10 X 10 feet. Leading to the entry of the store were two 2 1/2 X 10 feet windows connecting to the doors measuring 4 X 8 feet. Between these doors is an upper staircase opening five feet wide.

The second floor 13 windows facing east, south and west at 8' X 4' and the six (6) facing north are 5' X 10'. The offices and apartments on the second floor are of various sizes interconnecting with single door or french doors as well as entries from the master hallway. The flat roof, with slight pitch to the rear of the building, was recovered with rubber on three-fourths of the surface in 1991. Other areas did not need to be recovered at that time. The wooden back upper staircase was removed because of its deteriorating condition in 1990.

The arched stone, brick and terra-cotta entrance to the double sided front gave easy access to both sides of its stores as well as the staircase to the offices and apartments on the second floor. This is truly an impressive structure.

In the past 100 years the Fillmore Block housed many diverse business enterprises. It served as a clothing store, restaurant, furniture store, "variety store" (considered one of the first in the Midwest), and a hardware store. Currently a combination of crafts, antiques store and coffee/ice cream parlor occupies the two main floor stores, basement and balconies.

The building had been vacant for several years before the Dows Historical Society purchased it in 1990. The second floor is closed at present with the possibility of again being open for offices and apartments as it was in the past. Having been soundly built, the Fillmore Block building is still in good condition but in need of some brick repairs and tuckpointing. The second floor windows are boarded up but plans are being made to restore them.

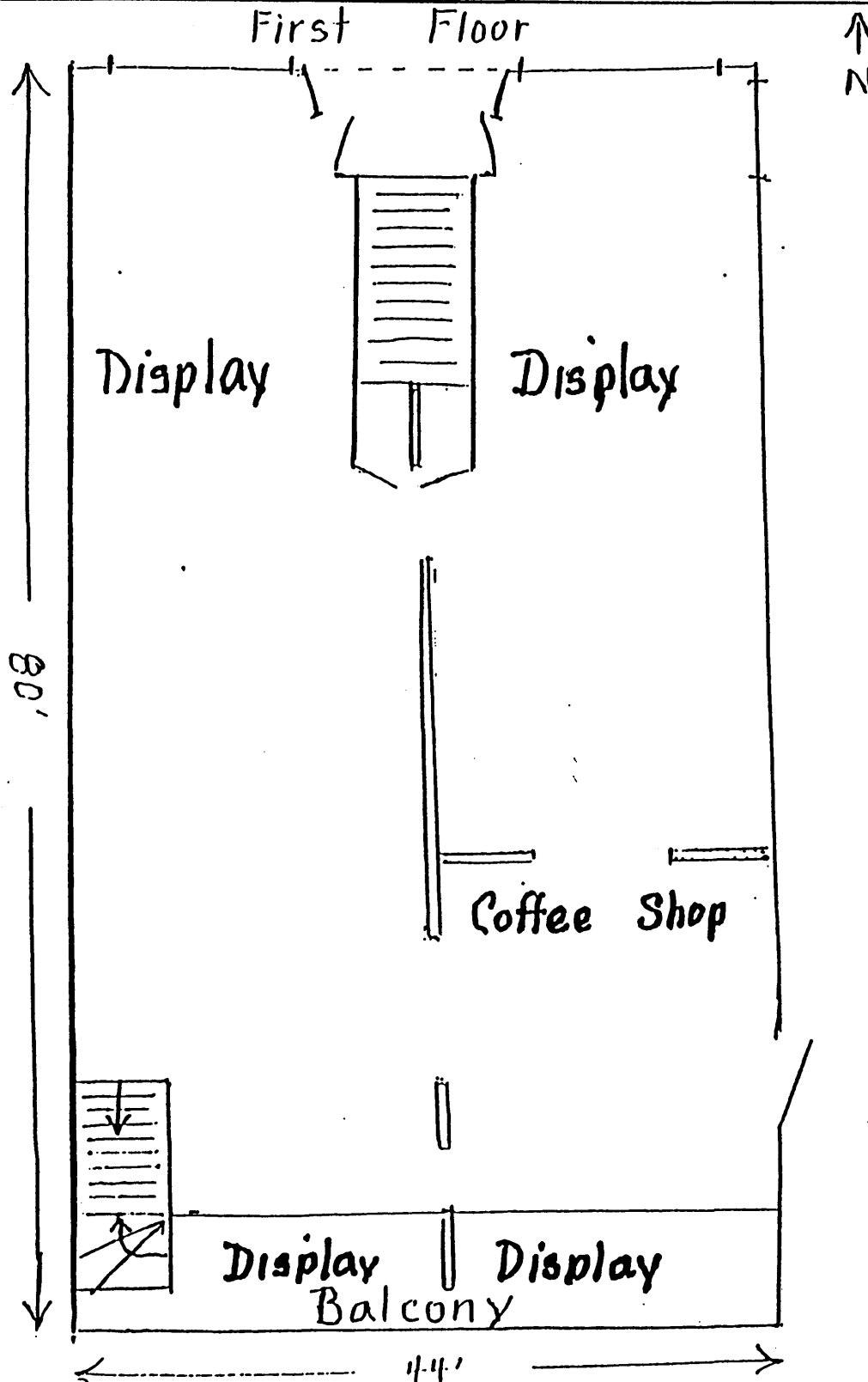
In the early 1920's high winds dangerously weakened the center parapet of this building to the degree that it had to be removed. The round finials were lowered in conjunction with additional necessary structural changes to make the general appearance symmetrical. All this was important since all of the other 16 brick original building constructed in the downtown business area had been built in the same Romanesque Revival Style.

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Fillmore Block
Dows Mercantile Store
Wright County, Dows, Iowa

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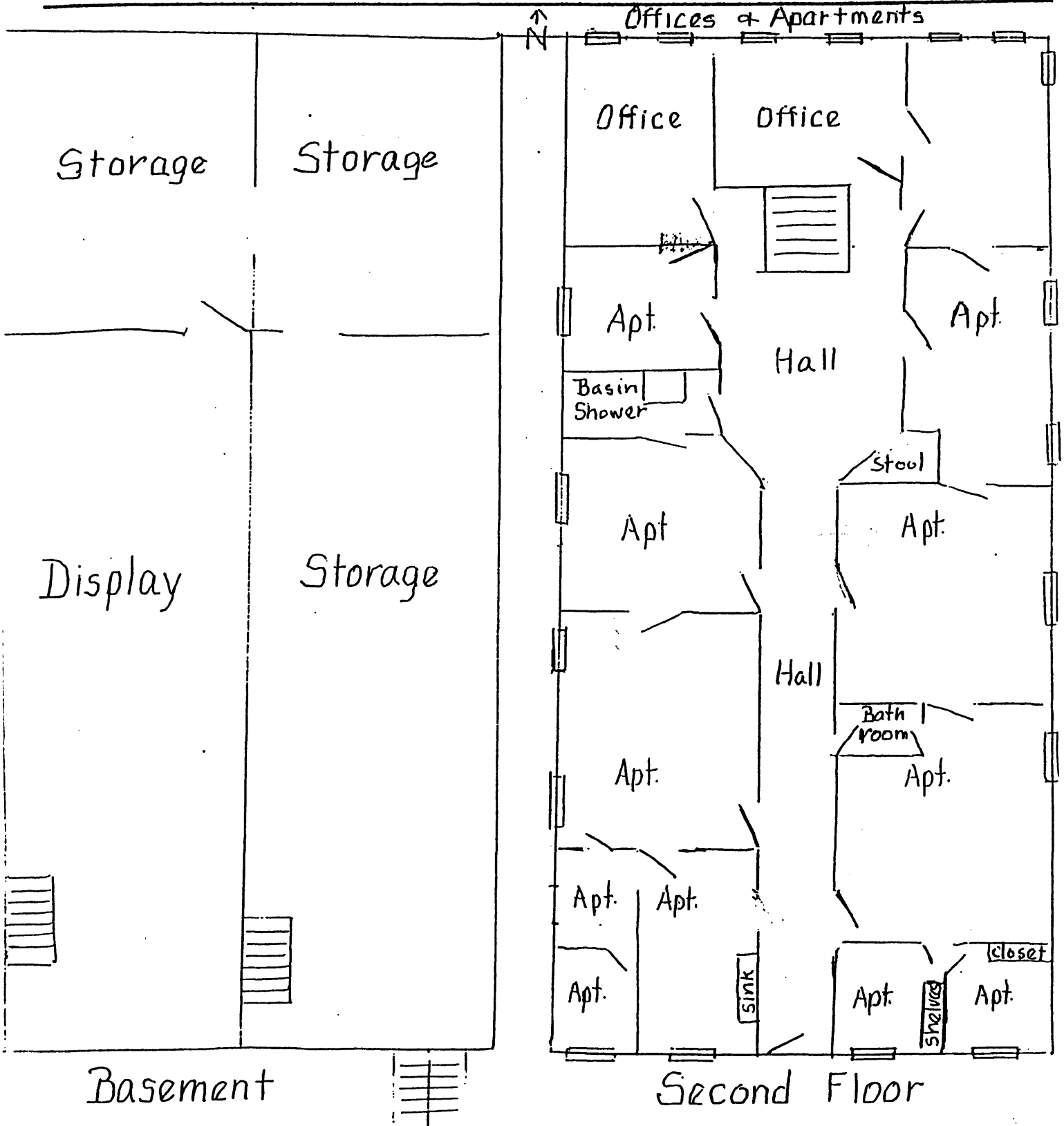


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Fillmore Block
Dows Mercantile Store
Wright County, Dows, Iowa

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Fillmore Block
Dows Mercantile Store
Wright County, Dows, Iowa

Section number 8 Page 4

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Fillmore Block building is locally significant under National Register Criteria C, as a well preserved example of a Late Victorian Romanesque style commercial and office/apartment building, and the largest of the 17 buildings built in the aftermath of the 1894 fire. It was constructed in 1894 in block #5 at the corners of Ellsworth and Garfield on lot #1 (previously vacant) and lot #2 (replacing a burnt out framed structure).

The two story building was constructed for D.H. Fillmore, whose family was prominent in both business and other community activities. In addition to housing a restaurant, over the past 100 years, folks could buy ladies clothing and dress goods, boots and shoes, notions, groceries, flour as well as hardware, furniture, etc. Dows had two passenger trains daily, two hotels (one owned by the Fillmore's). Dows was a bee hive of activities and shopping.

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Fillmore Block
Dows Mercantile Store
Wright County, Dows, Iowa

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**RE: Fillmore Block
Excerpts from Dows Advocate
October 12, 1894**

RISING FROM THE ASHES

Seventeen brick buildings is the job A.H. Conner & Co. have in their hands in this town. Fifteen of them are to be eighty feet long and eleven of them one story buildings, the other six, two story buildings. The men who are building are, Schultz and Bowen, one story brick covering two lots between State Bank and E. C. Burrows store building just east of Wesenberg's. H.E. Schultz one story; then the following order, A.W. Sergeant, one story; B.H. Huffman, one story; S. Maryhew, one story; J.H. Carlston, one story; F.A. Peterson, one story; Wm. Meister, one story; D.H. Fillmore, two story, marble front. On the north side of the street, Exchange Block, four stores, two story; and post office, one story. The cellars have nearly all be excavated, and all will be by the first of next week. The stone work on the Schultz-Bowen building is completed and they are now laying the walls on the south side bricks. In the Exchange Block, the joists and first floor are laid to the bank building. The post office building is completed so far as brick work is concerned. The asbestos roofing is finished and the plaster is going on. The brick work on the Advocate office will be done in about two weeks or more.

About two hundred men are at work on these various buildings, and in connection

with the buildings, twenty five teams are hauling brick, stone, sand and excavating the cellars. About one hundred more men will commence work next week and things will move along lively. It makes the town look like a veritable bee hive.

While the fire was hard on individuals, it was the best thing for the town that could have happened. The way it is being built up it will be a model of beauty, and draw twice the trade it did before. Dows with its corps of energetic, enterprising business men, which no city in the United States contains more or better, will be the best town for trade in this part of the country. It has always been noted for the large amount of business done. But the future will see it doubled and tripled. Those who are looking for desirable farms will find no better town to buy new land than Dows. And if you are looking for a business location, no other place can be found than here.

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Fillmore Block
Dows Mercantile Store
Wright County, Dows, Iowa

Section number 8 Page 6

**RE: Fillmore Block
Excerpts from Dows Advocate**

October 26, 1894

At this writing, the many walls of the brick stores on the east of Wesenberg Bros. are nearly all laid. The Schultz-Bowen stores on the lots next to the State Bank are receiving the finishing touches. They are beauties and for one story buildings are extra high. The stone work on all the building from Wesenberg's to the corner is finished. And by Saturday night we believe the brick walls will nearly all be up. The rapidity with which the work is carried on has surprised everyone, and convinced all that A.H. Conner and Co. are hustlers and know their business thoroughly.

November 23, 1894

The brick work on the Fillmore and Exchange Blocks is all finished, and the carpenters and plasterers are hard at work putting on the finishing touches in their part of the work.

February 8, 1895

Conner and Dougherty have at last completed their contract here and everything was settled up this week to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned. Conner & Co. are excellent business managers and when they contract to do certain things, you may rest assured that everything will be done in a business-like workman-like manner. The men in their employ were everyone gentlemen and the surprising things about it is that though so large a force was at work, yet they were a comparatively quiet gentlemanly set of men who attended to their business. Our businessmen can certainly recommend Conner & Co. as being gentlemen of their word and men who thoroughly understand their business.

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Fillmore Block
Dows Mercantile Store
Wright County, Dows, Iowa

THE FILLMORE FAMILY RECORD DATES FROM 1797 TO 1996

JOHN AND SARAH FILLMORE were of English descent. He was a shipbuilder in Canada. He fought in the War of 1812. Gave birth to a son, David.

DAVID HORACE FILLMORE (1838-1915), married Anna Louisa Dobson. Of their seven children, Floyd was the only one to survive to adulthood. David came from Illinois to Dows and then to Cedar Rapids, Iowa. During the Civil War he was wounded as a cavalry volunteer in Company A-8th regiment. In 1908 David wrote a book of memories "Fillmore Family Record." He died in 1915 at the age of 77.

FLOYD D. FILLMORE (1877-1971), married Evelyn Kane (Cain). Their only son, Paul, died in an auto accident. Two daughters were born, Pauline and Patricia Nadine Fillmore (1925-), Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Nadine developed the "Read-More Spell-More Sound Charts and Books" that were used throughout the country. She now lives in Cedar Rapids in a nursing home.

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Fillmore Block
Dows Mercantile Store
Wright County, Dows, Iowa

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Peterson, Fay. The History of Dows, Iowa, 1880-1980, Iowa:
Ackley Publishing, 1980 PP 7, 10, 28, 31.

Peterson, Fay, August 1996 Oral History Interview (resident of Dows Care Center)

Remember Our Heritage: A Pictorial History of the Cities, Towns and Communities in Wright
County, Iowa. 1976-1976. Iowa: Goldfield Publishing, 1976. PP 124, 130, 136.

October 12, 1894	<u>Dows Advocate</u>
September 27, 1895	<u>Dows Advocate</u>
July 6, 1896	<u>Dows Advocate</u>
1908	Fillmore Family Record
1915	<u>Wright County - Illustrated</u>
June 26, 1930	<u>Wright County Reporter</u>

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

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Section number 10 Page 9

Fillmore Block
Dows Mercantile Store
Wright County, Dows, Iowa

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The property is located in Block 5, lots 1 and 2 of the original town of Dows, Iowa.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

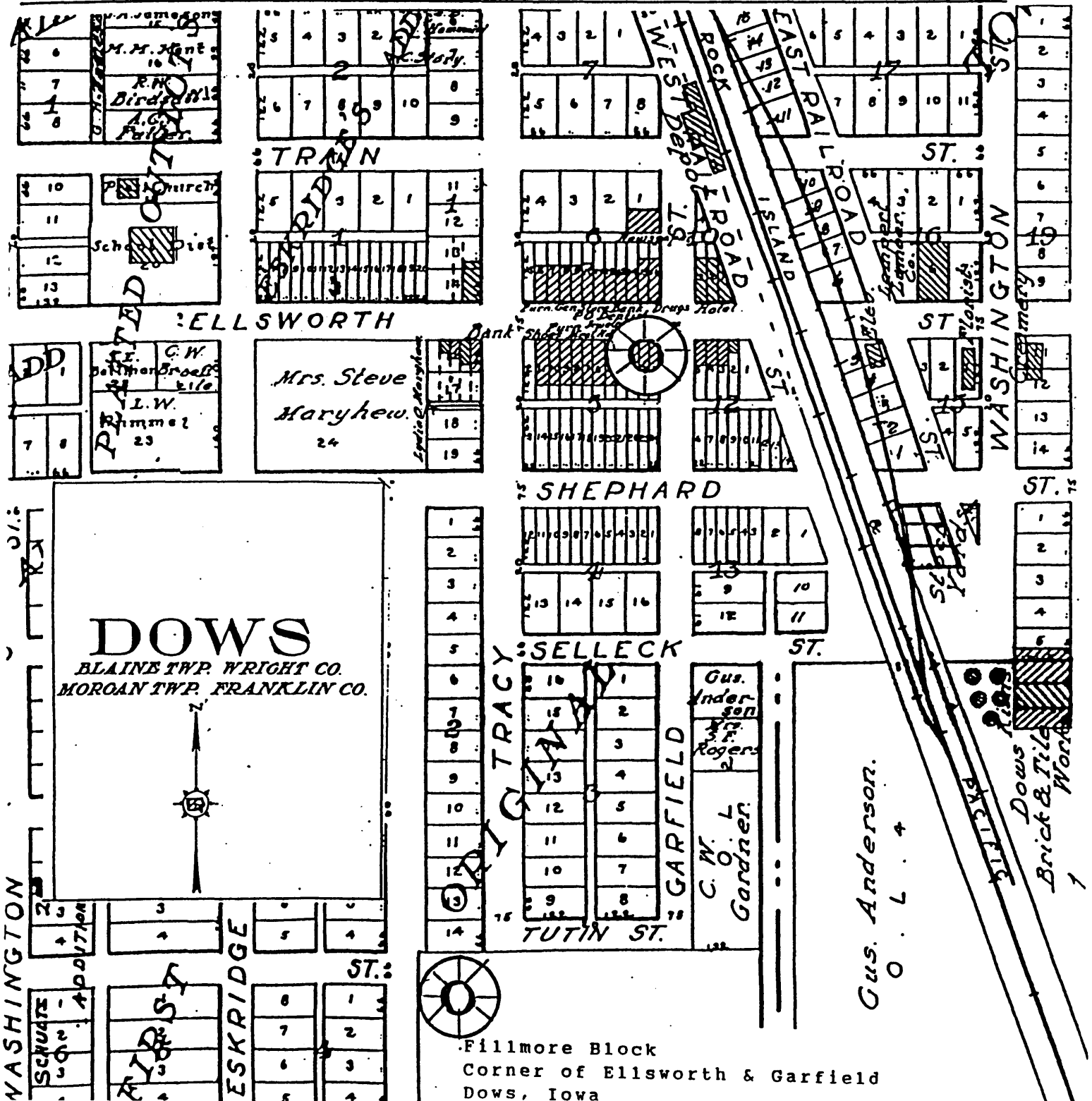
The boundary includes property historically associated with commercial retail district of Dows.

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Fillmore Block
Dows Mercantile Store
Wright County, Dows, Iowa

Section number 10 Page 10 May, 1998



Fillmore Block
Corner of Ellsworth & Garfield
Dows, Iowa

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

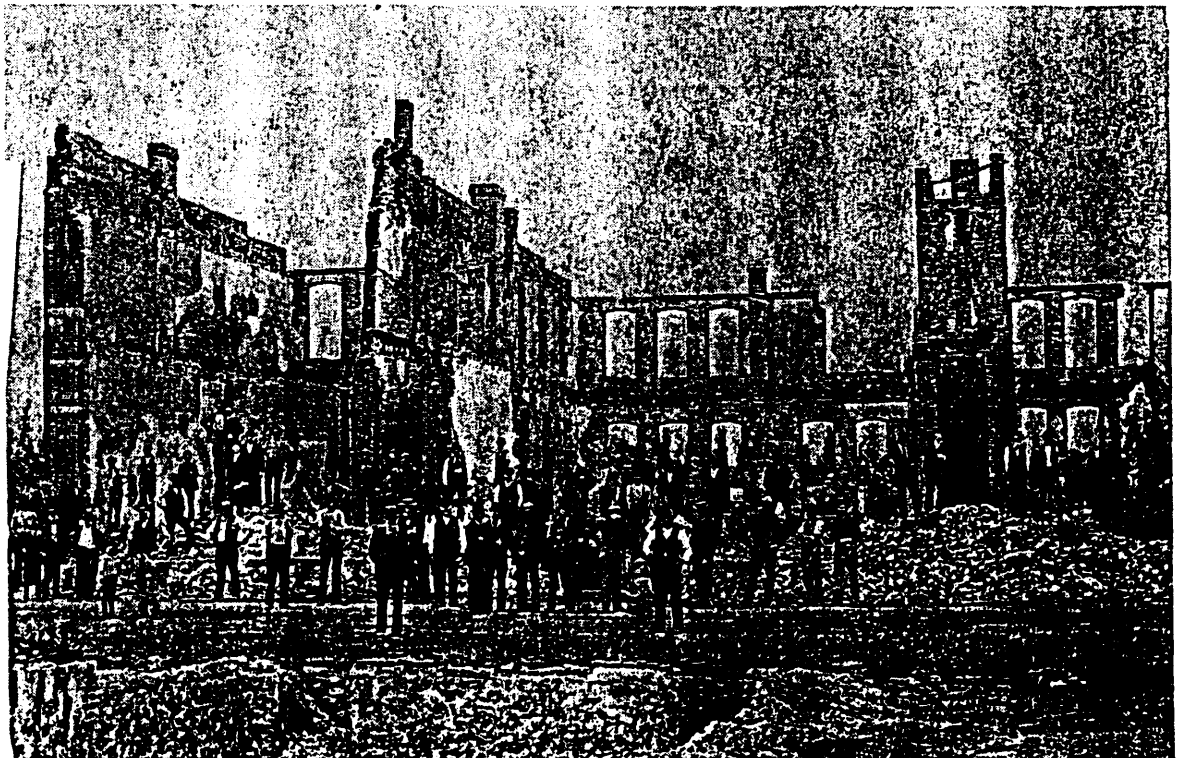
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The History of Dows, Iowa, 1880-1980



The Exchange Block as it looked in the 1890's



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The History of Dows
1880-1980

South side of Main Street 1910

