

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received 6-27-85  
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See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Historic Resources of Guttenberg, A Multiple Resource Area Nomination

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number The Corporate limits of Guttenberg not for publication

city, town Guttenberg vicinity of

state Iowa code 019 county Clayton code 043

## 3. Classification

|   |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Category</b>                                 | <b>Ownership</b>                            | <b>Status</b>   | <b>Present Use</b>                             |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied          | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture           | <input type="checkbox"/> museum                       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> both               | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress             | <input type="checkbox"/> educational           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                   | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                   | <b>Accessible</b>                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                 | <input type="checkbox"/> in process         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific                   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation    |
|   | N/A   | <input type="checkbox"/> no                           | <input type="checkbox"/> military              | <input type="checkbox"/> other:                       |

## 4. Owner of Property

name Multiple, refer to individual site sheets.

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Recorder's Office

street & number Clayton County Courthouse

city, town Elkader state Iowa 52043

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Guttenberg Survey has this property been determined eligible? ☒ yes ☐ no

date October–November 1979 federal state county ☒ local

depository for survey records Iowa HPO

city, town E. 12th & Grand Ave., Des Moines state Iowa 50319

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## 7. Description

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### Condition

☒ excellent

☒ good

☒ fair

☒ deteriorated

☐ ruins

☐ unexposed

### Check one

☒ unaltered

☒ altered

### Check one

☒ original site

☐ moved

date \_\_\_\_\_

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### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

#### General Description:

Guttenberg is a small community on the Mississippi River in northeast Iowa, much of its population of some 3,000 still descended from German immigrants who established a town here, on the site of an earlier village, in 1845. Strong physical features delineate the town's boundaries: the Mississippi River on the east and high, wooded limestone bluffs on the north, south and west. The town is situated on a narrow plain that extends about 3 miles north-south through the community along Fifth Street, parallel to a railroad line occupying the former Third Street. West of the highway, and extending nearly to the base of the western bluffs, the plain forms a shallow depression that flooded regularly in the 19th century with the spring rise on the Mississippi, and thus experienced almost no development. As a ponding area, part of the Corps of Engineers' flood control program, it is still largely unimproved.

These elements, rail line, highway, and floodplain, effectively divide Guttenberg into two parts. The larger, more intensively built-up area lies to the east, between the river and the rail line. Here are concentrated the business district, most remnants of former industrial activity, and most residential construction. Beyond the railroad, highway and floodplain is a narrow shelf of sloping ground, bounded on the east by Bluff Street and on the west by the bluffs themselves. In many places only a hundred feet wide, this 1 1/2-mile-long shelf forms a discrete residential district, with houses irregularly-spaced along its length and set close beneath the looming bluffs.

The linear character of Guttenberg is further expressed in the arrangement of activity within the eastern section of the community. The riverbank, once built up with sawmills, lumber yards, wharves and warehouses, is now a long, narrow city park and site of a federal fish hatchery, public school, three enormous stone warehouses, and Lock and Dam No. 10. "Main Street" is River Park Drive, and most commercial activity, facing the river, between Pearl and Lessing Streets, and to a more limited extent along First Street. Although residential construction extends both north of Pearl and south of Lessing, these streets form rough limits to the northern and southern extent of concentrated building. The western edge is defined by the railroad tracks, but not strongly, as Guttenberg's inhabitants had nearly 30 years to build on both sides of third Street before the railroad arrived in 1871.

The overall character of Guttenberg is not unlike that of small Iowa towns. Streets are pleasantly tree-shaded, houses are fairly close together (particularly toward the center) yet with sufficient space for small or medium-sized front and side yards. The scale is low--few buildings are over two stories high--and most of the "intrusive" construction is located along the highway. While the grid-like town plat has been largely followed in the commercial and adjacent residential areas, the fringes (to the north, south and west) in particular show oddities of siting, with houses fronting alleys or the railroad tracks, or located with scant regard for official block and parcel lines.

Several buildings, principally by virtue of their size, are important visual landmarks of the community, although none serves as a strong focus of orientation for surrounding structures. Three are the mid-19th century stone warehouses along the river (81, 93 and 104) that terminate the eastern ends of Herder, Schiller and Lessing streets, respectively. The other landmark is St. Marys Roman Catholic Church built in 1902 in a late Gothic Revival style. Twin spires flank a tripartite entrance portal, and rise to a height (146 feet) well above any other structure in the community.

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Wood, brick and limestone comprise the principal materials of construction in Guttenberg. Wood was used in all types of structures, from houses and outbuildings to commercial blocks. A number of early houses and commercial blocks are of brick (which was locally available by 1854) as are a small group of turn of the century residences and many commercial structures.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Guttenberg's architectural landscape, is the relatively large number of limestone structures, ranging from the great warehouses to small cottage or cabin forms, nearly all of which were built between 1845 and 1870, and which at one time numbered over 100. The stone, obtained from the surrounding bluffs, varies from cut and coursed quarry-faced block to rubble, the more elaborately-dressed stone used mostly for the warehouses and commercial blocks. The largest commercial buildings are built on top of deep vaulted basements, some with several levels, while a number of residences contain vaulted root cellars and spring houses. Massive interlocking timbers, hand-hewn, still support the floors and roofs of these structures. Originally, many of the basements had excavated exteriors, with full sized windows, doors and stairways. Exterior cellar entrances with wooden doors are sometimes associated with these structures.

Stucco was applied to the vast majority of the stone structures about 1890-1900, and in some cases much later. Sometimes, the exteriors were then decorated with a large simulated block pattern in black or red. The coating probably prevented weak rock from flaking and served as a minimal insulation. Integrity, as defined by the presence or absence of this stucco, must be determined on a case by case basis using the following general guidelines:

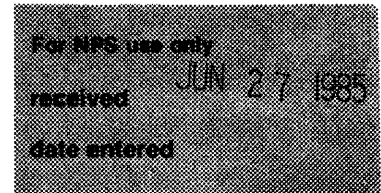
Architecturally based nominations can potentially claim adequate integrity if they have exposed stone or stucco. Clearly, a well preserved stone building, never stuccoed, retains its integrity (at least to the extent that exterior walls are concerned). Similarly, a building nominated because of its original stone construction can be listed if its stucco has been removed in a proper manner. If architectural merit is based upon the overall history of a stone building, including its stucco period, then it might be claimed that the stucco represents the expected evolution of that building within a local context wherein most stone buildings were uniformly stuccoed. This is especially true if the stucco retains the original scoring and mortar line coloration which sought to emulate ashlar stone. At any event, justification must be made on a case by case basis.

Historically based nominations involving stone buildings must visually retain the appearance which existed during the claimed period of significance. Thus, an 1850 stone warehouse, not stuccoed, is eligible for nomination only in its unstuccoed state. Again, if the stucco was removed, it must have been accomplished without destroying the appearance of the underlying stonework and mortar joints. A turn of the century hotel, stuccoed during its significance period, has an integrity which is defined by the presence of the stucco. Loss of the stucco would eliminate integrity for that particular association.

Within a district context, component buildings naturally must conform with any generalizations made in the overview summary. If the district treats the stuccoing of stone buildings from an evolutionary standpoint, a mixture of exposed stone and stuccoed exteriors could be justified. If the district restricts its significance to the original period of stone construction, then exposed stone would constitute the requisite level of integrity.

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It is generally thought that stone construction stopped by the late 1860's, being replaced by brick as a preferred material. Stuccoing, to the extent that it can be documented, appears to date from the 1890's on. Buildings which are stuccoed therefore have spent the majority of their years with that cladding. The largest stone commercial buildings and warehouses appear to have avoided the stuccoing altogether. The use of fanciful "ashlar-like" scoring and coloration indicates that to some extent stucco was an attempt to modernize or regularize the appearance of the building while not fully abandoning the original stone feeling.

Porches are an integral part of the significance and the integrity of Guttenberg homes. Two story open verandahs with exterior stairs, reminiscent of the Louisiana delta, are often associated with two story stone residences. Examples include 1015 South Second, 602-6 North Bluff, and the Moser Stone House, 211 S. 1st (NHRP), the Eckert House, 413 S. 1st (NHRP, the double porch in this instance is actually bricked in on both ends) These are most striking when associated with the several pairs of identical houses which front each other across alleys or streets. An example of this double porch arrangement can be found at 1121 and 1127 N. 1st. Occasional two story porches are found associated with the rear portions of commercial buildings. An enclosed example is found at 3 Goethe, in the Front Street District. In terms of determining significance and integrity, the use of a full two story porch in a building plan, along the full length and height of one two story side open on one side and both ends, or open on the long side only with bricked in ends, constitutes an identifiable Guttenberg building tradition. Integrity is present if the porches are open or only temporarily enclosed on one or both levels and if the original structural materials and lines are retained.

While many buildings in Guttenberg retain a high degree of exterior integrity, modernization and additions are not uncommon. Typically, the most radical alterations have affected commercial blocks, among the unfortunate being the application of a supermarket front to one of the stone warehouses along the river. Frame houses, in particular, have experienced additions and application of aluminum or asbestos siding. A common method of gaining more living space has been enclosure of porches, many of them two stories high, obscuring a number of potentially interesting facades. Another, earlier, siding material, found principally on commercial blocks, is sheet metal pressed to resemble brick and painted silver. Rather oddly, this material (and also modern aluminum siding) sometimes covers stone and brick structures as well as those of frame construction.

Early outbuildings are relatively rare in town center. Their numbers tend to increase with distance from town proper. Tile and concrete-block sheds and garages, dating from the 1920's and 1930's predominate in the commercial area. Houses along the western bluffs offer a fine collection of vaulted cellars, pumps and wells, spring houses and carriage houses. Houses in the north end of town often retain early garages, pumps and summer kitchens. An interesting feature is the "flying buttress" eavespout, in which an eavespipe extension is braced to carry water over the sidewalk and empty into the street.

Along with the more common threats to historic and architectural resources, such as neglect, insensitive modernization and demolition, Guttenberg is faced with several others. First, much of the town is built on ground that is largely silt and sand, which is not only unstable but holds water after floods like a sponge. This dampness threatens

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many of the oldest buildings in the community, which were built of limestone, a rather porous material. In this regard, recent local "restoration" projects may in the long run have done more harm than good, because many of them have involved total removal of stucco and application of masonry sealants. Finally, barges create noticeable physical vibrations as they pass through the river locks, which may be contributing significantly to the number of sagging walls along River Park Drive.

Guttenberg's architectural landscape is unpretentious, stressing simplicity of form and avoidance of decoration. Elaborate surfaces characteristic of the Gilded Age romantic revivals are largely absent from Guttenberg, chief exceptions being a small number of commercial fronts, a handful of c. 1900 brick houses in the late Queen Anne/Colonial Revival style, and St. Marys church. The earliest style found in Guttenberg is the Greek Revival, but never in pure form; rather, aspects of the style, such as frontal symmetry, pedimented window heads, and cornic treatment, have been adapted to vernacular building forms.

The well-preserved nature of a number of early commercial blocks is an important feature of Guttenberg's architecture, as such buildings in many Iowa communities were altered or modernized periodically over the course of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Most of the remaining examples are, not surprisingly, of masonry construction. Most notable are two-story blocks with steep side-gable roofs, many with parapet gable ends. The fronts are three or more bays wide, with first floor storefront windows larger than those above. A few have cast-iron fronts, but only at ground floor level; the material is also employed for cornice and window hoods.

Guttenberg's commercial architecture also includes an assortment of late 19th and early 20th century examples, from small town commercial Italianate, with front parapet and bracketed cornice, to diminutive pressed-brick storefronts and a Romanesque Revival bank with corner turret, from the early 1900's. Housing from this period is more varied than was the case earlier in the 19th century. Forms include the two story L or T plain wooden "farmhouse", the four-square, hipped roof box with wide eaves, and Craftsman houses. This period also saw construction of several large, fairly elaborate brick houses for local businessmen, characterised by tall intersecting masses, one gable fronting prominently toward the street, variously embellished with cornice returns, columned porches, bay windows, brackets or vergeboards. Characteristically, such decoration is used with restraint: ostentation in architecture has been, throughout its history, almost wholly absent from this solidly German community.

Scattered throughout Guttenberg are remains of 19th century industrial activity, although many have been greatly altered or simply neglected for many years. Most visible are the three stone warehouses along the river, built originally to serve the steamboat and local general merchandise trade, and to store grain brought to town by area farmers. Other early industries are represented along Bluff Street, where remains of distilling and brewing operations may still be seen. From the early 20th century, is a complex of brick and wood structures originally built as a canning factory, located toward the north end of town on 3rd street near the railroad tracks.

Identified Themes of Significance

Two main and one subordinate theme of significance were identified by the Guttenberg

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Multiple Resource Area Survey. The former are "The architecture of an early Iowa immigrant community, 1845-1875" and the variety of community commercial and industrial pursuits which were significant in the town's period of initial growth and its struggle to survive, 1845-1935. The minor theme deals with those visual exceptions in Guttenberg which post date the settlement era and which reflect the influence of academic architecture and the arrival of the railroad, an event which to some extent ended the provincial isolation of the community. Local wealth, generated during periods of growth, resulted in the construction of some large and notable buildings. These serve as local landmarks in the community today, but they also betray the subtle influence of a close community distrustful of ostentatious display in architecture. Each of these themes speaks to both residential and non-residential resources. Each theme will be applied to each set of resources.

Residential Properties:

Major Theme: The Architecture of an Early Iowa Immigrant Community, 1845-70.

Guttenberg's most important historic resources represent two important themes in its history, the first of which is that of the architecture of an early Iowa immigrant community, with its heavy reliance on use of local materials. The community contains many very good examples of vernacular architecture from the immediate pre- and post-Civil War periods, including houses and outbuildings, commercial blocks and even a few industrial complexes. Perhaps the most striking feature of Guttenberg's architectural landscape is the large number of limestone structures, the majority dating from before the Civil War and some perhaps built as early as the mid-1840's. They represent a rather extensive use of a locally-available but unwieldy, building material, possibly even in preference to equally-available timber. Examples of stone construction include not only industrial and commercial buildings (where the material's load-bearing and fire-retardant qualities would have been most appreciated) but also houses, large and small. Use of limestone is not unique to Guttenberg: it is found in many eastern and central Iowa communities, and as in Guttenberg was most commonly used in the 1845-70 period, but the high proportion and variety of stone structures remaining in Guttenberg sets this community apart from many towns of its age in the state.

The buildings of Guttenberg's "formative" period (1845-70) set a tone of functional simplicity in local architecture than remained strong throughout the 19th century, despite increasing use of milled lumber and other manufactured materials such as stock decorative elements (metal cornices and storefronts), which if not necessarily cheaper than stone were far easier to use. Simplicity of massing and surface treatment continued to be a hallmark of Guttenberg's architecture, however, whether due to cultural influences or simply lack of wherewithal to fully exploit the late 19th century American enthusiasm for picturesque surface elaboration.

Individual Nominations: Significant types/sub-styles:

1. "Limestone, Side gable"
2. "Saltbox"
3. "Wide gable"
4. "Stone Cabin"
5. "Front gable"
6. "Other local themes"

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7. "High Style" exceptions.

The individually eligible properties scattered throughout the community were built during the initial settlement period or in the subsequent two decades of town growth (1845-75). Most are of stone construction, with a much smaller number built of brick or wood. Materials for the stone houses were quarried from the nearby limestone bluffs. Eligible style/type groupings in the area include those listed above.

1. Perhaps most distinctive is the "Limestone, Side-gabled House." Two stories high, often with single-pile plan, their five- or six-bay fronts are often but not always symmetrical. Roofs are shallow-pitched with narrow to nonexistent eaves; a few have partially-turned cornices. In a number of cases, one or two story porches extend the full width of the main facade; nearly all have been fully enclosed. In general these porches are distinct appendages, but in a few instances, the front wall of the house is recessed, and the porch subsumed under the main roof without altering the symmetry of the gable. Although few construction dates have been confirmed for houses of this type, all available evidence points to their being among the oldest buildings in Guttenberg, with some dating perhaps to the late 1840's and early 1850's. Examples of this house type include the Ihm (23), Kuempel (24), Borrett (25), Moser (26), Spaeth (32A), Wessell (34), Berns (3), and Bolsinger (47) houses. The Felder (37) and Matt-Bahls (43) houses are particularly noteworthy because their 2-story porches, with exterior staircases, are intact and unenclosed.

2. "Saltbox": Various of stone, brick and wood-frame construction, houses of this type are characterized by side-gable orientation, lack of a front porch, and an addition across the rear generally covered by an extension of the main roof to create a local version of New England saltbox. The largest example of this type is the Nieland house (32), of stone construction with a 5-bay main facade. The symmetry of this 1 1/2 story house is rather oddly altered by the insertion of three very small windows beneath the eaves on the north end of the front. The wood frame house at 11 Herder (51) and the brick Parker house (40) have symmetrical 3-bay fronts and are also 1 1/2 stories. The Eglseder house (22) has two full stories, entrance to the left side of its 3-bay facade, and very shallow wood pediments over the front windows and door.

3. "Wide gable." Houses of this type have 3 or 5 bay fronts and are as deep or deeper than they are wide. Their side-gable roofs are quite broad, rising to accommodate a narrow second story beneath the peak. Examples of this style include the stone Bauer house (42) and the Kappen house (46); the Kolker (50) and Wehmer (53) houses, both of brick; and the wood-frame Kann house (38) which features four very small attic windows tucked beneath the narrow eaves.

4. "Stone Cabin." These little houses are the least pretentious examples of Guttenberg's very unpretentious architecture. With side-gable orientation and a single story, they make no attempt toward symmetry of refinement in use of materials. This group includes the Ulrich (36), Kottke (35), Breiman (41), Schrunk (45), Kasper (44) and Stone Barn (49) houses.

5. "Front Gable." The two-story front gable house, a vernacular adaptation of the temple form Greek Revival, has several representatives in Guttenberg. The best examples are the stone Winkler house (29), with a partially returned cornice and stuccoed exterior; the wood framed Luther house which although sided with asbestos retains original window

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surrounds with shallow triangular pediments with a Greek Revival entrance framed with sidelights and rectangular transom; and the large brick Fuerste house (30), four bays wide and five deep, with segmental-arched window and door openings.

6. "Other local themes." Stone houses dating from the 1845-1875 period are generally judged to be potentially eligible if well preserved and if a sufficient documentation is available. These buildings reflect the local dominance of the use of stone in the construction of both main buildings and outbuildings. Central to the argument of integrity is that of stucco. This has been addressed above to some extent. Generally speaking, a stone building without stucco or with the stucco carefully removed is eligible on architectural grounds as being a representation of that original period of settlement and development. Those stone buildings which were stuccoed, assuming that the stucco was added well within the range of the accepted historical period, are eligible as examples of the later evolution of stone buildings, reflecting a desire to stabilize and modernize the earlier buildings. The best stuccoed examples are those which retain their ashlar scoring and red or black scoring colorations.

Other materials uses also exemplify the vernacular origins of many Guttenberg homes. These materials include heavy timber with nogging or infill (usually bricks and mortar), heavy timber framing with mortise and tenon joinery, using wooden pegs, the use of soft brick in combination with "mousetoothing" of the parapets, side-gable parapet walls, or metal tie rods, and lastly stone foundations or cellars which employ basement cellars or vaults. Stone spring houses and cellars are often set into bluff lines, as are basement extensions.

Other significant local building traits include the dominance of simple, utilitarian building forms, in which the side gable house with long side to the street, predominates. This may be read as an influence from the Georgian colonial and Greek Revival styles, particularly the latter, which was still popular in the 1840's and 1850's. The form may also be interpreted, at least in part, as a vestige of traditional German forms, particularly when expressed in stone. The stark austerity of buildings, a tradition which continued well into the present century is a defining characteristic of Guttenberg. Embellishments were limited to painting stucco in various colors, and the discrete use of Greek Revival, principally pedimented window hoods, a few partial cornice returns, and occasional insertion of small attic windows in the frieze.

Lastly, the construction of off-square buildings, seeking to maximize the square footage of odd shaped and off-square lots, creates yet another uncommon yet typically Guttenberg building type.

7. There were exceptions in terms of plan or styling which which today stand out visually when compared with the early architecture. Also with the subsequent growth of the community from an isolated "colony" before the coming of the railroad and concomitant decline in water transportation forced a retrenchment of the local economy.

Several houses, fall into this grouping in the period 1845-75. The Weber house (52), long associated with local lumbering interests, has a T-plan main block of brick dating from the 1850's, with a later veranda wrapped around the stem of the T. This house features one of the handful of examples of late 19th century jigsaw work remaining in Guttenberg, in the porch brackets and sunburst apron at the front gable end. The Schute



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house (39), constructed of locally-manufactured brick with stone sills and segmented arches at window and door openings, may have been built in two phases: an original one story L-plan house, followed by a rectangular, two story block set along the north wall of the L. The Schwaller house is a 1 1/2 story, front-gable dwelling with long, wooden, shed-roofed addition and porch on the east side. The house is not strictly rectangular, due to the irregular shape of its lot. Stuccoed on the exterior, the house is of timber frame construction with brick nogging. One of Guttenberg's handsomest early residences is the McClainie house (27), a two story, nearly square building with a flat (or nearly flat) roof and plain cornice enhanced by modillion blocks. This local expression of an urban dwelling in the Greek Revival style also features shallow, rather slab-like triangular pediments over windows and door. The main facade is symmetrical, but is divided into three bays on the first floor, and four bays above. Adjoining the McClainie house on the south is the 1 1/2 story, front gable brick Friedlein house (28) with a five bay symmetrical front and shallow, molded triangular pediments over openings.

Minor Significance Theme; Post-settlement era "high-style" residences;

There were exceptions in terms of plan or styling which which today stand out visually when compared with the early architecture. Also with the subsequent growth of the community from an isolated "colony" before the coming of the railroad and concomitant decline in water transportation forced a retrenchment of the local economy. Around the turn of the century, a number of large brick houses were constructed which constituted the "high Victorian" portion of Guttenberg's architecture. These fairly elaborate brick houses for local businessmen, characterised by tall intersecting masses, one gable fronting prominently toward the street, variously embellished with cornice returns, columned porches, bay windows, brackets or vergeboards. Characteristically, such decoration is used with restraint: ostentation in architecture has been, throughout its history, almost wholly absent from this solidly German community.

Non-residential Resources:

Major Significance Theme: (Historical) The variety of community commercial and industrial pursuits which were significant in the town's period of initial growth and its struggle to survive, 1845-1935.

The dominant significance theme applicable to industrial/commercial resources concerns the variety of commercial and industrial building forms which are representative of the ways which this community attempted to exploit its Mississippi River location in its struggle to grow and survive over time. Guttenberg's business establishments also reflected this conservatism, in which many of the early blocks were retained despite the tremendous popularity in Iowa of the "commercial Italianate" style and the equally popular false front so common on America's late 19th century frontiers.

In the areas of commerce and industry, Guttenberg combined activities common to most small 19th century American towns with enterprises distinctly reflective of its location on the Mississippi. Standard offerings included dry goods and "general merchandise" stores, blacksmiths, and hardware and building suppliers. Among these responses to economic activities of northeast Iowa were wharves, cooperages, flour mills and grain elevators, and warehouses, the later built to handle farmers' grain and other commodities, and to ready them for shipment on the river. Other agriculture-based industries were breweries, winemaking and dairying. The Mississippi also encouraged construction of

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sawmills, and toward the end of the 19th century provided raw material, in the form of clam-shells, for pearl button factories. Guttenberg's location on the river, with the attendant flow of traffic and travelers, gave local hotels a special prominence and substantial business. Benefits of location continued into the 1930's when river-oriented federal projects, such as the lock, dam and fish hatchery, brought a measure of stability in economically precarious times. The diversity and river orientation of Guttenberg's economic history are notably illustrated in the variety of buildings remaining from these activities, some housing functions similar to the original, others long since converted to new and different uses.

No less important were hotels serving river travelers, farmers in town to sell grain and meat and to buy goods. All these buildings, built before the Civil War although used as hotels at various periods, are of limestone, well-built in the vernacular and modified Greek Revival forms in favor in Guttenberg at the time, and are still among the more substantial structures in the community. Among the former hotels remaining in Guttenberg are the Albertus Building (American Hotel, 1858) on Front Street, the Chicago House, c. 1857, on Goethe (115) and its associated billiard parlor and saloon (54), the Union Hotel, 1858, on First Street (107), the Jefferson Hotel, on Schiller, 1870, (121), and Beutel's boarding house, built in 1859, also on Schiller, in the early 1880's. Another, known as the Fridlein Hotel (110) and boasting its own bakery, was unfortunately located far from the center of business activity on Third Street. The extent of operations here has not been determined, but it may have experienced a modest business once the railroad was built through Guttenberg, and near the hotel, in 1871.

Three other commercial structures, all off Front Street, also deserve mention on architectural grounds. Well preserved (despite additions which now threaten to overwhelm it) is a wood frame, two-story building, originally John Dubbel's harness shop (109), which retains its early storefront and pedimented window surrounds. On Herder is a two-story, front-gabled brick block, with stone keystones in flat window arches, and a round-arched window in the gable end (117). Built in 1876, this building, like many others in Guttenberg, combined residential and business uses, including the town's first movie house around 1910. Vividly expressing this dual function is the Eckert building (116), which from the front appears to be a flat-roofed, two-story, commercial block with metal cornice, but from the rear is a gable-roofed house that once had a two-story porch across the long south side: an example of the Bluff Street type described above.

Although much of Guttenberg's economy stemmed from its role as a wholesaling and commercial service center, industries have played important roles as well. Of the sawmill industry, no directly associated structures remain, but the later pearl button factories are presented by the warehouses that sheltered them around the turn of the century. Also extant is the brick complex of the Guttenberg Corn Canning Company (111), built in 1912 and still serving industrial uses. Of particular interest, are the remains of several of the town's earliest industries, in structures dating from the 1850's, all of which were agriculturally based. Alcohol was manufactured at several locations: beer and liquor at the Vanstaden Distillery (114) and Jungt Brewery (9), and wine and vinegar on the blufftop property known as "Dunker's Winery" (113) which still retains trace of vineyard terrace to the south. North of Dunker's is a farmstead (112) which has produced dairy products and honey since the 1930's. Little is known about this farm, but the complex includes a weathered frame house of the local "saltbox" type, suggesting an early date of occupancy. Well to the south, on Miners' Creek Road, lie the ruins of B. H. Pelzer's four story flour mill, built in 1849 and dynamited 100 years later. A barn was built over the

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foundation. Extant but needing repair is Pelzer's stone house with brick addition and remains of a mill pond. The original functions of these properties are no longer easily discernable, but archeological investigation could potentially reveal many interesting aspects of these pioneered industrial complexes.

Major Theme: (Architecture) The Architecture of an Early Iowa Immigrant Community, 1845-75.

The early settlement and development of Guttenberg includes commercial and industrial resources in addition to residential types. This theme emphasizes the heavy reliance placed upon the use of locally available building materials. Perhaps the most striking feature of Guttenberg's architectural landscape is the large number of limestone structures, the majority dating from before the Civil War and some perhaps built as early as the mid-1840's. They represent a rather extensive use of a locally-available but unwieldy, building material, possibly even in preference to equally-available timber. Stone construction offered strength and fire-retardant qualities required for non-residential uses. Again, the high proportion and variety of stone structures remaining in Guttenberg comprise the vast majority of settlement era non-residential buildings.

**Stone Buildings:**

Large commercial or mixed use of limestone buildings are among the most notable of the large numbers of stone buildings in Guttenberg. Rubble walls, usually with corners of more regular ashlar; these buildings combine the use of stone with vaulted basement spaces and heavy timber interior frameworks. Significant stone and brick examples include the following:

1. Side gabled two and three story blocks.
2. Front gabled blocks with a broad plan.
3. Unusual stone buildings and a small number of well designed Victorian-era brick buildings.

1. "Side gabled Stone Building" This type occurs in two and three story versions. The Albertus Building (#56 NHRP) is an outstanding example with its seven bay front, central hall and basement vaults. The Aulwes Bakery (#63) is a two story example as is the Chicago House (#115) at 5 Goethe. The latter is a duplexed version having vernacular fenestration (irregular vertical arrangement with a half sized set on the 3rd floor) and a trapezoidal plan. The Friedlein Hotel (#110) at 310 N 3rd is an ashlar stone example. The Ihm Store (#62) at 306 South River Park Drive combines side gable with a four story massing and deep narrow plan.

2. "Front gabled Stone Building" The Stuffelmeir House (#120) at 11 Schiller illustrates the combination of a broad plan with front and rear gable.

3. Other Stone Building Types The Dubpernell Store (#59) at 300 South River Park Drive is a two story square plan with an ashlar stone front, a corner location and a hip-roof and single off center front dormer. Three stone warehouses of stone survive. The Fleck Warehouse (#93) at 531 South River Park Drive and the Wiest-Class Warehouse at 703 South River Park Drive are the best preserved having a broad rectangular plan with differing entrance levels at each end. Gambrel roofs, centered doors on each level with a half-moon window in the upper gable typify the buildings. The Wiest-Class Building (#103) at 700 South River Park Drive is a narrow, long, rectangular plan with combination gable and flat roof. The Union Hotel-Farmer's Home Guest House (#107) is a "L" plan with

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gabled roof and a cut corner entrance. The Fleck Warehouse (#119) at 10 Schiller has a square plan with ashlar walls and a flat roof. Lastly the Falkenheiner-Kuempel-Lake Building (#80) at 430 South River Park Drive combines a deep, narrow, three story, rectangular plan with cut corner with a flat roof.

**Brick Buildings:**

Basically these buildings mirror their stone cousins, having the same lines. 224 South River Park Drive (#56A) features a well preserved first floor store front, and side gabled two story massing. The Central Meat Market (#70A) at 402 South River Park Drive, the Ben Lake Building (#84) at 508 South River Park Drive and the Walter House (#99) at 618 South River Park Drive are true examples of a two story gabled, brick version, with side parapet walls which combine store and residence in a single vaulted building. Minor Architectural Theme, Later Date "High Style" Non-residential Architecture;

Guttenberg's non-residential architecture also includes an assortment of late 19th and early 20th century examples, from small town commercial Italianate, with front parapet and bracketted cornice, to diminutive pressed-brick storefronts and a Romanesque Revival bank with corner turret, from the early 1900's. St. Mary's Church, dating from the turn of the century, reflects a broader movement to replace simpler church buildings with prominent double-spired edifices. The City Hall, of art deco design, and the lock and dam buildings reflect an even later phase of externally imposed design.

The Cassuth Building (#79) at 402 South River Park Drive offers the only extant 19th Century example of an elaborate commercial cornice and decorative pediment on a flat roofed two story massing. This is also the only inscribed commercial building. The Eckert House (#108) at 413 South First is a two story, square plan brick, with elaborate sawtoothed cornice and flat roof. It incorporates a second front entrance and window above with an otherwise symmetrical front. The Guttenberg State Bank (#116) at 15 Goethe is like #79, one of a few elaborate commercial buildings to be found in Guttenberg. This 1902 bank is off square and has a long narrow trapezoidal plan. A corner turret with cornical roof dominate the scheme along with decorative cornice and filled brick segmental arches with cap the lintel line above the second story windows.

**Multiple-Property Nominations:**

**Front Street-(River Park Drive) Historic District:**

Guttenberg's commercial and industrial history is represented by the River Park Drive district, two properties in Bluff Street, and 16 individual properties. The District is a 4 1/2 block long segment of River Park Drive which has historically been the commercial center of Guttenberg. Forty-five buildings are located on the west side of the street, facing the river and nine more buildings are set at intervals along the bank. The northern boundary of the district is established with an abrupt change from residential to commercial architecture, about midway along the block between Prince and Pearl Streets. From this point (beginning with #55) commercial structures, mostly sharing party walls, extend south to Herder. Below Herder, commercial blocks are mixed with turn of the century houses to Lessing Street. The Fleck warehouse and store, facing one another across River Park Drive, mark the southern boundary of the district, as they did according to an 1869 bird's-eye of the community. The river bank east of River Park Drive, is, as the name suggests, basically a long public park. Its grassy expanse is punctuated by

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three large stone warehouses, a fishmarket and collection of fishermen's shanties, a small late-Victorian house, and a group of buildings associated with the government fish hatchery. The north end of the park is decisively terminated by the Guttenberg public school complex and the adjacent Lock and Dam No. 10.

The resources of this district are fairly even divided among outstanding, contributing and intrusive structures. Fires, and several instances of rather unsympathetic modernization account for the relatively large number of intrusions. In some cases, the modernization may be reversible (i.e. alterations are superficial) which could warrant reclassifying such "contributing." The same applies to several "contributing" structures, which have potential to become much stronger elements with appropriate restoration measures (see List of Intrusions).

In general, the district resembles many small town Iowa commercial centers, in its preponderance of one and two story business blocks of brick and wood-frame construction. The buildings date from at least the early 1850's to the present, and within certain limits, represent the styles of commercial architecture popular in American small towns over this 130-year interval. The most distinctive features of the district are the buildings of fair to excellent integrity that remain from the 1850's. Built of stone or brick, these structures are local expressions of the urban Greek Revival, with high-pitches, side-gable roofs with end parapets, three- or four-bay facades embellished with little more than shallow pedimented window hoods, and uncluttered ground floor shop fronts. Local versions of "commercial Italianate" also appear in the district, but most have lost the decorative elements (bracketted metal cornices, in particular) normally associated with this style. Turn of the century blocks, with the exception of the IOOF hall (77) are usually of brick, with a small amount of decorative corbelling at the cornice line. Several buildings from the 1920's and 1930's blend reasonably well with older structures, as they are brick and of a scale appropriate to the streetscape. As is often the case in commercial districts, artificial siding has been used in Guttenberg to the detriment of buildings to which it has been applied. Also, the frontier style "false front", which has a few examples here, seems slightly out of place, whether the building is quite large or very small, of recent vintage or from the turn of the century. However simple the false front appears pretentious in a community in which the prevailing architectural statement, residential, commercial, or industrial, has since 1845 been "what you see is what you get."

Although the focus of commercial and industry in Guttenberg has historically been centered along River Park Drive (originally called Front Street), remains of 19th and early 20th century economic activities can be found throughout the community. As early as the 1860's, the business district was not exclusively confined to the river front. It extended west, principally along Goethe and Schiller streets to First Street, and today a number of notable commercial blocks remain on these streets. Industrial properties are more widely scattered, with an early 20th century corn canning plant well to the north, a small cigar factory on Prince, and the remains of the giant Fleck mill and warehouse on Schiller (93). Other vestiges of early industry are located well to the West, along the bluffs and in narrow valleys opening onto the plain: the Pelzer flour mill (118), Van Staden distillery (114) and the Dunker Wintery (113).

Commercial and industrial buildings, of any age, must continually meet challenges of utility and profitability if they are to survive; and even when they do survive, it is

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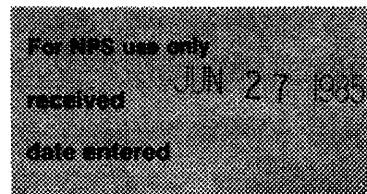
often in a form far different from the original. The relatively large number of well preserved commercial and industrial buildings from Guttenberg's formative years thus presents a somewhat unusual opportunity to view and appreciate functional architecture from northeast Iowa's pioneer and early development period. Equally important, the original and many subsequent, activities associated with these buildings include representatives from the state's earliest settlement period, and also those particular to a river-oriented community. In addition, there are those that simple illustrate the myriad of enterprises once the foundation of any prosperous town in 19th century midwest. As with Guttenberg's residential architecture, none of these resources is unique, but the fact that the town remains small makes their number more notable, and the individual examples can be more easily appreciated and related to their historical context than is possible in many larger Iowa communities of the same age.

Established when the Mississippi was still an uncontested avenue of transportation and commerce, Guttenberg's commercial center was appropriately river oriented. As in many other river towns, Guttenberg's business district stretched along the river bank, with River Park Drive's original name, Front Street, emphasizing the true orientation of the community. As with their houses, Guttenberg's German settlers quickly adopted limestone as a preferred medium of construction, with the more expensive brick, locally available by 1854, a close second. By the early 1850's substantial business blocks were rising along Front Street, many combining ground-floor commercial space with proprietors' living quarters above. A popular building form was the 3 or 4 bay steep-roofed, side gable block, sharing parapetted party walls with similiary built neighbors. They displayed regular fenestration, and narrow cornices, clean simple lines, and occasional use of cast iron for shop fronts (see Fleck Store 105). Among the best examples of this type in Guttenberg are 55 and 56A, which flank the highly idiosyncratic Albertus building (56). The later is considerable larger building dated to 1852 that features the Gothic-deprived pointed arch at all openings of the main facade. South of this group are 60, and Ihm & Weiner's Dry Goods store (62), opened for business in early 1857. Departing from the generally narrow proportions of many business blocks, and thus having a more domestic character, are 71, divided into 6 bays at street level and 7 above, and the five bay 64, originally housing a millinery shop.

Most of these early establishments were two stories high, but several merchants were more ambitious. Charles Falkenheimer's hardware store (80), 3 stories with a cut corner, was built in 1856, with Ihm and Weiner's 3-story block opening a year later. Anchoring the south end of the business district was another "tall building," George Wiest's hardware and tin shop (103), opened in 1856. By far the largest of Guttenberg's early business buildings were the riverbank warehouses, three of the original four still remaining. Rising nearly four floors at the water's edge, these stone structures (81, 93, 104) have wide double-pitched or gambrel roofs and flat slab lintels of dressed stone; all were built by 1858.

A corner location often required more consideration than mid-block sites, where only one facade of a building needed to be "presentable." In two cases, Wiest's hardware (103) and Henry Dubpernell's butcher shop (59), the traditional side gable roof sloped down to near flatness above the two street facades, which were then finished off with neat molded cornices.

As the 19th century moved beyond the Civil War, changing fashions in commercial

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architecture found expression along Guttenberg's Front Street, principally in the form of bracketted metal cornices (such as those now gone from (70A), and (82), but still to be seen on (61) and (66), or decoratively-corbelled brick parapets (79). The false front appeared late in the century, on small buildings of frame, rather than the traditional masonry construction. (82), (86). On the whole, the later buildings are less impressive in size, substance and workmanship, than those from Guttenberg's pre-Civil War years and reflected both the continuing usefulness of the early structures and the later decades' more reduced economic circumstances that may have discouraged new construction.

Throughout its history, Front Street has been the scene of a rich variety of enterprises, most buildings experiencing several different uses over the years (see individual inventory sheets). Among the earliest businesses were dry goods and "general merchandise" stores, such as Ihm & Weiner's (62), the Fleck Brothers' (105) and many specialty quarters with a printer (71), a millinery shop and leather goods emporium (64), butcher shop and meat market (59), drug store (66), and baker (63) -- all in operation before 1860. Small scale manufacture was not limited to furniture, but included a brewery (95), and, toward the end of the century, several cigar factories (on Front Street, the Albertus Building (56), in 1886, and the building to the south (66) in 1894; and Meyers (106) (on First Street). In 1905 the H.B. Glover Overall Company occupied half the ground floor space of the 100F hall (77). Perhaps due to the availability of lumber sawmills--carpentry and furniture making was a small but active industry, with operations located in various buildings on Front Street during the 19th century (see inventory sheets, 56A and 71). Two of Guttenberg's more notable early economic activities involved the housing of commodities in transit: people, and grain and merchandise. Thus, hotels and warehouses were particularly important in the community. Dominating the scene were the four river warehouses, the three remaining owned by George Wiest (103, 104), the Fleck Brothers (93, 105) and John Shmees (81). The fourth was owned by Herman Ihm of Ihm & Weiner's (62). These warehouses were transfer points for manufactured goods coming into Guttenberg by river steamer, and for locally grown or made commodities going out such as grain, hides, pig lead, and meat. Even these large spaces were insufficient to meet the need, however. For example, the Fleck Brothers had a large mill and warehouse on Schiller, a portion of which still stands (93).

## Front Street (River Park Drive) Historic District, Technical Data:

## Location:

Those properties located between and including 216 South River Park Drive and 700 South River Park Drive which are east of the alley which bisects 1 and 2 of the Prairies LaPorte Plat, and Blocks 1, 14, 15, and 26 of the Original Town of Guttenberg Plat, and west of the western shoreline of the Mississippi River, with the exception of the Public School and Lock and Dam complex.

## Acreage:

10 acres.

## Verbal Boundary Description and Justification:

Beginning at west shoreline of Mississippi River at point 90' south of south edge of Lessing Street, thence north along same shoreline to point where the extension of the southern edge of Prince Street to the east intersects, thence west along same south edge



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of Prince Street to point where that line intersects with center line of South River Park Drive (formerly Fronter Street), thence north along same center line of South River Park Drive approximately 318' to point where an eastern extension of the north boundary line of Parcel 5, Block 2 (PLP) intersects with same center line of South River Park Drive, thence west along same north boundary of Parcel 5 to point where same intersects with center line of alley o Block 2 (PLP), thence southeast and south along same center line of alley through Blocks 1 (PLP), and 1, 14, and 15 (Guttenberg) continuing across Lessing to the point where a western extension of the south boundary line of Parcel 8, Block 26 (Guttenberg) intersects with same center line of alley, thence east along same south boundary line to point where same intersects with center line of South River Park Drive, thence south along same center line 40' thence east to point of beginning. This district is bow shaped, being a chain of half blocks which front the Mississippi River and which include the majority of Guttenberg's earliest stone and brick commercial buildings. Excluded are the public school lot and the Lock and Dam complex. Included are the Conservation Commission buildings, and all buildings located on leased land to the east of South River Park Drive.

## UTM References: (all within Zone 15)

- A E655,690 N4,738,460
- B E655,900 N4,738,460
- C E655,920 N4,737,770
- D E655,860 N4,737,770

## List of District Intrusions And Justification for Their Inclusion:

In the case of the Front Street (River Park Drive) Historic District, intrusive structures were included in the process of producing workable district boundaries. An effort was made to minimize the number of intrusive structures. The majority of intrusive structures still contribute visually in terms of their overall scale and setback, but these are judged as intrusive due to the presence of inappropriate siding, or porch alterations or loss, etc. In many instances, these alterations are reversible and restoration efforts could make the building a contributing structure (this is addressed on the intrusive list). Certain materials such as the use of vertical siding were deemed to be so inappropriate visually as to render the building intrusive regardless of how much or little of the building was so covered by that material.

Intrusions ("C" Category of Buildings) List  
Front Street (River Park Drive) Historic District

| Nomination | Reason For Intrusive Rating                                    |
|------------|--|
| * #54      | Vertical Roughboard (1st Floor)<br>Aluminum Siding (2nd Floor) |
| * #61      | Aluminum Facade  |
| #68        | Original front walls demolished                                |
| #69        | 1938 Date of Construction                                      |
| #70        | 1938 Date of Construction                                      |
| #73        | Integrity has been altered                                     |
| * #75      | Aluminum Facade  |



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|                    |             | 7                             | 16   |
|                    | #76         | 1951 Date of Construction     |      |
| *                  | #81         | Modern Store Facade           |      |
|                    | #82         | Integrity has been altered    |      |
|                    | #83         | Integrity has been altered    |      |
|                    | #85         | 1925-8 Date of Construction   |      |
|                    |             | Visual Intrusion              |      |
| *                  | #88         | Porches, First and Second     |      |
|                    |             | Enclosed with aluminum siding |      |
|                    | #89         | 1965 Date of Construction     |      |
|                    | #90         | 1947 Date of Construction     |      |
| *                  | #91         | Aluminum Siding               |      |
| *                  | #92         | Colonial Style Facade         |      |
|                    | #94         | 1960 Date of Construction     |      |
|                    | #95         | Integrity has been altered    |      |
| *                  | #97         | Aluminum Siding               |      |
|                    | #10         | Recent Date of Construction   |      |

\*Indicates that building with alteration could be restored to a contributing status.

#### Survey Methodology, and Technical Matters Pertaining to This Nomination;

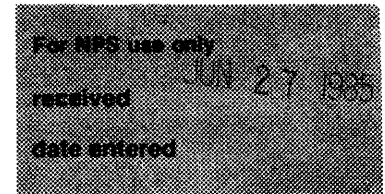
A limited survey of Guttenberg was conducted over a period of 8 weeks during the summer of 1979. The principal focus of the survey was on the historical, rather than architectural, aspects of the town, and extensive research was conducted on two major themes: commerce and transportation. With documentary evidence very limited, personal interviews with town residents proved an important source of information on many aspects of the community's history. Historical research covered the entire town, but structure-by-structure inventory was limited to two areas: One bounded by the river, Lessing and Pearl, and (roughly) Second Streets, which contains the entire commercial district and the bulk of early residential construction; and Bluff Street. In addition, an effort was made to record all stone buildings and structures in the community, including those located outside the two areas of concentration, because they were collectively one of the most distinctive features of the Guttenberg's architectural heritage.

The main reason for limiting the survey was financial: there was simply not enough funds, and thus time, to permit a comprehensive inventory of the entire town. However, the two areas covered were found to contain these district comprise another group of important resources. Generally speaking, it is believed that the survey probably identified all but a few of Guttenberg's potential National Register candidates.

The survey was conducted by James E. Jacobsen of Iowa City, under the direction of Lowell Soike and Martha Bowers of the Office of Historic Preservation, with the final report submitted to the SHPO in the fall of 1979. Revision of the report was completed by

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Stephen C. Boss in July of 1984. The cover document for the MRA was redrafted in June 1985 by SHPO staff and resubmitted.

**Explanation Of Site Maps:**

Two site maps are included in this nomination. The larger map of Guttenberg locates the individual nomination sites and the Front Street-South River Park Drive Historic District. The boundaries of that district are traced on this map. The remaining map identifies the component properties which are located within the Front Street-South River Park Drive Historic District and is keyed to indicate contributing and non-contributing structures for Tax Act purposes.

**Note on Photographs;**

Included in this report are many of the previous photographs used in the preceeding nomination form. Any changes having occurred since the filing and return of the first report have been addressed. The photos as they stand are current and up to date.

**Note Concerning Included Nominations:**

Nominations originally submitted in 1984 are underlined in this document. This system is retained for this resubmission to facilitate the making of a distinction between listed properties, likely candidates for listing, and other historic properties which are not expected to be nominated for some time.

**Historical Name Changes for Certain Individual Nominations:**

The original Guttenberg MRA submission lacked suggested titles for some individual nominations. The following were either suggested by NPS or were generated by Iowa SHPO for the fall 1984 resubmission. To avoid possible confusion, this list is once again included.

**COMMON NAMES**

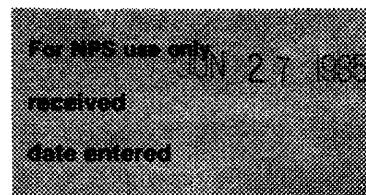
**HISTORICAL NAMES**

107 John's Radio and T.V.  
31 Hess House  
109 Hess Furniture Company  
32A Jaeger House  
39 Mikota House  
111 Kann Manufacturing Co.  
42 Parker House  
46 Moser House  
115 Degnan Building  
48 Kann House and Barn  
49 Kann Stone House  
116 Security State Bank  
51 Nading Beauty Shop  
117 Agnes Tap  
118 Freeman House  
52 Freidlein House  
53 Lake House

Union Hotel-Farmer's Home Guest House  
Luther House  
Dubbels Harness Shop  
Spaeth House  
Schute House  
Guttenberg Corn Canning Company  
Bauer House  
Kappen House  
Chicago House  
Schwaller House  
Stone Barn  
Guttenberg State Bank  
Fahlings Boot and Shoe Shop  
Huene Building  
Pelzer House  
Weber House  
Wehmer House

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|                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 119 Guttenberg Press     | Fleck Warehouse           |
| 120 Klaes-Barnhard House | Stuffelmeir House         |
| 121 Hefel's Lounge       | Jefferson-Freidlein Hotel |

**Multiple Resource Area Nomination Considerations:**

The original 1979 Guttenberg survey was comprehensive in its treatment of the original part of the city. In addition, the Bluff Street area, the Miner's Creek Valley, and the blufftop overlooking the city were systematically researched and surveyed. The more recently developed parts of the city, now incorporating a number of scattered early homes, was more generally inventoried. Given this coverage, Iowa SHPO can with some confidence claim that potential themes of significance are comprehensively addressed in this nomination and their related resources are inventoried.

The first successful submission of nominations was made in August 1984, resulting in the listing of the Front Street District and a small number of individual properties (refer to 6-2 for list of same). A large number of properties, submitted in 1984, and not listed, will be eventually resubmitted. A still larger number of potential nominations, not submitted last fall, will be considered for submission following the acceptance of this cover document. The Bluff Street District, is included in this last grouping.

## 8. Significance

| Period          | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below |                            |                            |                     |
|-----------------|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| ___ prehistoric | ___ archeology-prehistoric                    | ___ community planning     | ___ landscape architecture | ___ religion        |
| ___ 1400–1499   | ___ archeology-historic                       | ___ conservation           | ___ law                    | ___ science         |
| ___ 1500–1599   | ___ agriculture                               | ___ economics              | ___ literature             | ___ sculpture       |
| ___ 1600–1699   | xx architecture                               | ___ education              | ___ military               | ___ social/         |
| ___ 1700–1799   | ___ art                                       | ___ engineering            | ___ music                  | ___ humanitarian    |
| xx 1800–1899    | ___ commerce                                  | ___ exploration/settlement | ___ philosophy             | ___ theater         |
| xx 1900–        | ___ communications                            | ___ industry               | ___ politics/government    | ___ transportation  |
|                 |   | ___ invention              |                            | ___ other (specify) |

**Specific dates** 1844–1940

**Builder/Architect** Multiple, refer to site sheets

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) History of Guttenberg

Earliest Euro-American occupation of the narrow floodplain along the Mississippi is not well documented but probably occurred shortly before or after eastern Iowa was opened to white settlement by the Black Hawk Treaty of 1833. A seasonal campground of the Sauk and Mesquakie tribes in the 1820's this area may have hosted Indian traders in those years, who viewed the plain, with narrow creek valleys opening into it from between high limestone bluffs, as a good place from which to conduct business and gain access to the prairie interior to the west. The tiny settlement which grew up on the plain was called Prairie la Poste, and as the largest population center in newly established Clayton County, was designated county seat in 1838. This status was not long retained, however, as movement of settlers into western portions of the county resulted in removal of the county seat to more centrally-located Garnaville in 1843. Within a few years, Prairie la Porte was almost totally abandoned.

The Western Settlement Society of Cincinnati was a semi-charitable organization founded to aid German immigrants who wished to settle in the American midwest. In 1844, the Society purchased three hundred acres to the north, and 160 acres to the south, of the Prairie la Porte plat, and the next year acquired the plat as well. Five German families arrived in March 1845, the most determined of an original band of 200 souls, most of whom had remained behind in Burlington, Iowa. By 1851 the town had grown to nearly 300 people, and by 1856 to over 1500, only a few of whom were no German immigrants. The new settlement was appropriately renamed "Guttenberg", and the name was accepted by the State Legislature. Additional streets were laid out, from the south Hermann, Wieland, Lessing, Schiller, Herder and Goethe; and, above the original plat, Mozart and Haydn. Prairie la Porte survived in county records as a subdivision within the larger plat.

With the coming of the Germans, settlement on the narrow plain began a period of sustained growth. By 1860 over 100 substantial stone houses, commercial blocks and small industrial plants were in existence, augmented by buildings of locally manufactured brick, timber from nearby bluffs, and dressed lumber from area mills. Much early economic activity resulted, logically enough, from Guttenberg's location on one of the nation's principal arteries of transportation--the Mississippi. Wharves and warehouses handled a variety of products brought out of the northeastern Iowa interior: pig lead from the region's small lead mines, wheat and other grains from the farms. In addition, Guttenberg developed a number of small industries, among them barrel manufacture, lumber and grain milling, leather, brewing, dairying, and even winemaking, with grapes from vineyards planted on the bluffs above the town. Steamboat travellers and area farmers also provided brisk business for local entrepreneurs: grocers, dry-goods merchants, and hoteliers.

As was the case with many of Iowa's Mississippi River towns, the coming of the railroad to Guttenberg in 1871, and its extension into many northeast Iowa counties, coupled with a national decline in river traffic, required adjustment of local economic activities. Ferries and packet boats no longer brought travellers, and the railroad took over transport of goods and produce. Grist mills stood idle, as area farmers converted operations from grain to dairying. For a time, however, the Mississippi continued to provide a livelihood, as the medium of transport of log rafts floated downriver from

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Continuation sheet      Significance

Item number 8

Page 2

Wisconsin and Minnesota forests. In the late 1870's, local sawmills offered opportunity for employment that was sustained until just before World War I.

Anticipating the depletion of northern forests, Guttenberg's town council in the 1890's began a program to attract new industries. A second period of economic opportunity resulted from this effort, which brought in an excelsior plant, an overall manufacturing plant, three pearl button factories, and a corn canning operation. The attendant prosperity resulted in modernization and new construction in the business district, and the building of several fairly imposing brick residences that expressed, albeit with discretion, the improving fortunes of the town's entrepreneurs.

Since the early 20th century, Guttenberg has managed to maintain a small, but viable economy. The period 1910-1917 was one of full employment. In fact, the town drew in young men from outlying towns and farms to work in the button plants. Guttenberg continued to serve as a collection point for farm produce (the coming of the railroad had altered the town's role from that of supplying the farms and smaller communities, to the role of merely collecting farm products from a smaller area. A creamery was opened in 1920. A new north-south highway connection in 1929 (US52) provided bus service and further reduced isolation.

The Depression does not appear to have closed many significant firms in Guttenberg. Both banks (founded in 1887 and 1900) survived while other towns lost their only banks. The Federal Government's public works programs provided a financial blessing. Lock and Dam No. 10 (1934-1937) provided jobs and money, as did the construction of a new municipal building and a fish hatchery (1938). An influx of workers greatly changed a previously insular and conservative community into a more "friendly town". State support of the sole surviving pearl button plant returned it to full production (employing women for the first time).

In more recent years, new companies have included Iowa Food Products Co. (1942), the Guttenberg Locker Plant (1949), a mobile home company later reorganized as Tradmark Modular Homes, and the Clinton Pallet Co. Tourism, especially in the fall, thrived following the development of color photography on a commercial basis and improvements in highway transportation. A small private airport on Abel's nearby has served to benefit the community generally as well.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Referto Continuation Sheet 9-2

## 10. Geographical Data Refer to Descriptive Section Continuation Sheets 14-15

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Refer to Continuation Sheet 7-14-15.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

| state | N/A | code | county | code |
|-------|-----|------|--------|------|
|-------|-----|------|--------|------|

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Original Nomination written by Martha M. Bowers, re-edited by Stephen Boss and James E. Jacobsen. This submission prepared by James E. Jacobsen, Nat.Reg.Coordinator

organization Iowa State Historical Department

Office of Historic Preservation

date 12 June 1985

street & number E. 12th & Grand Ave.

telephone 515-281-4137

city or town Des Moines

state Iowa 50319

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☒ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Towell J. Locke*

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date 12 June 1985

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*Beth Grover*  
Keeper of the National Register

date 8/5/85

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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| Box | File  | Title             | Critique   |
|-----|-------|-------------------|--|
| 8   | 379   | Schools           | No data concerning Guttenberg.                               |
| 8   | 379.1 | Schools           | No data concerning Guttenberg.                               |
| 8   | 385   | Railroads         | No data concerning Guttenberg.                               |
| 8   | 386   | Mississippi River | No data concerning Guttenberg.                               |
| 9   | 386   | Mississippi River | Good for history of log rafting.                             |
| 9   | 400   | Foreign Languages | No data.   |
| 12  | 623.8 | Log Rafting and   | General information  |
| 12  |       | "Normandie"       |  |
| 12  | 625   | Roads             | No data.   |
| 13a | 656   | Transportation    | General information, river traffic                           |
| 15  | 352   | Clayton County    | Little information, probably used by Jacobs for his history. |
| 3   | 312   | Census            | Some information   |
| 3   | 321   | Abandoned Towns   | Lists Prairie La Porte in index.                             |

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Item number

dnr-11

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Historic Resources of Guttenberg MRA

State Iowa

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Bluff Street Historic District

Keeper

Attest

2. Front Street (River Park Drive)  
Historic District

Keeper

Attest

3. Bauer House

Keeper

Attest

4. Berns House

Keeper

Attest

5. Bolsinger House

Keeper

Attest

6. Borrett Stone House

Keeper

Attest

7. Breiman House

Keeper

Attest

8. Chicago House

Keeper

Attest

9. Dubbel's Harness Shop

Keeper

Attest

10. Dunker's Winery

Keeper

Attest

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Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 2 of 6

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Historic Resources of Guttenberg MRA

State Iowa

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. Eckert House  
(411 S. 1st St.)

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

12. Eckert House  
(413 S. 1st St.)

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

13. Eglseider House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

14. Fahlings Boot and Shoe Shop

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

15. Felder House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

16. Fleck Warehouse

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

17. Friedlein Hotel

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

18. Freidline House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

19. Fuerste House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

20. Guttenberg Corn Canning Co.

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

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Continuation sheet

Item number

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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Historic Resources of Guttenberg MRA  
State Iowa

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

21. Guttenberg State Bank ✓

Substantive Review

Keeper

B.H. Grover 9/24/89

Attest

22. Huene Building

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

23. Ihm House

Substantive Review

Attest

Keeper

Attest

24. Jefferson-Freidlein Hotel

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

Attest

25. Kann House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

Attest

131 26. Kappen House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

Attest

12 27. Kasper House ✓

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

Attest

28. Kolker House ✓

Substantive Review

Keeper

B.H. Grover 9/24/89

Attest

29. Kottke House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

Attest

30. Kuempel Stone House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

Attest

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Continuation sheet

Item number

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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Historic Resources of Guttenberg MRA

State Iowa

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

31. Luther House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

32. Matt-Bahls House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

33. McClaine House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

34. Meyer Cigar Factory

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

35. Moser Stone House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

36. Nieland House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

37. Parker House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

38. Patzner, Charles, Dairy

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

39. Pelzer House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

40. Saeugling House

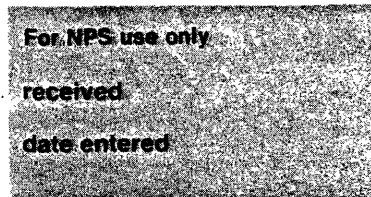
Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Historic Resources of Guttenberg MRA  
State Iowa

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

41. Schrunk House

Substantive Review

Keeper

[Signature] 75

Attest

42. Schute House

Substantive Review

Keeper

[Signature] 75

Attest

43. Spaeth House

Substantive Review

Keeper

[Signature] 75

Attest

44. Stufflemeir House

Substantive Review

Keeper

[Signature] 75

Attest

45. Ulrich House

Substantive Review

Keeper

[Signature] 75

Attest

46. Union Hotel-Farmers Home  
Guest House

Substantive Review

Keeper

[Signature] 75

Attest

47. Vanstaden Distillery

Substantive Review

Keeper

[Signature] 75

Attest

48. Weber House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Beth Grosvenor 9/24/84

Attest

49. Wehmer House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Beth Grosvenor 9/24/84

Attest

50. Wessell House

Substantive Review

Keeper

[Signature]

Attest

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Continuation sheet

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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Historic Resources of Guttenberg MRA  
State Iowa

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

51. Schwaller House

Keeper

Attest

52. Stone Barn  
(12 Goethe St.)

Keeper

Attest

Keeper

Attest

Keeper

Attest

Keeper

Attest

Keeper

Attest

Keeper

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Keeper

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Keeper

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