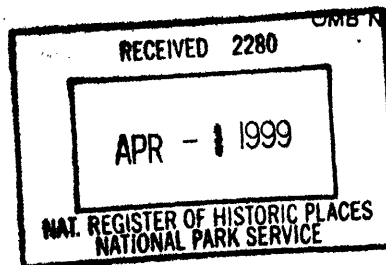


MAR 19 1999

NPS Form 10-900-b
(June 1991)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form



OMB No. 1024-0018

COVER

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 18B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historical & Architectural Resources of Sigourney, Iowa

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

The Social & Economic Impact of County Seat Designation: 1844-c.1945

C. Form Prepared by

name/title Molly Myers Naumann, Consultant

organization Sigourney Historic Preservation Commission date 11/98

street & number 167 West Alta Vista telephone (515) 682-2743

city or town Ottumwa state IA zip code 52501-1437

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Tom Morain 3/24/99
Signature and title of certifying official Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA
State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Edson H. Beall 4-29-99
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Historical & Architectural Resources
Of Sigourney, Iowa
Keokuk County, IA

Section number E Page 1

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

INTRODUCTION

The Sigourney Historic Preservation Commission received a Certified Local Government Grant to conduct a Planning for Survey project during 1991-92. That project identified three historic contexts that have been significant in the community's development. The recommendation from the planning project was to conduct an intensive level architectural and historical survey of the buildings around the Public Square under the two contexts "The Social & Economic Impact of County Seat Designation, 1859-c.1945"; and, "Architecture, c.1840-c.1940". As the intensive survey was conducted in 1995-96 (with the assistance of another C.L.G. grant) the decision was made to combine the two contexts. This Multiple Property Documentation Form and the National Register nomination submitted with it are the result of that intensive survey. Additional information about this project is included in Section H.

THE SOCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COUNTY SEAT
DESIGNATION: 1844-c.1945

Keokuk County is located in the third tier of counties north of the Missouri border and is the third county west of the Mississippi River. Although the far southeast corner of the county was opened to settlers in October 1838, the main part of the county was included in the Treaty of 1842 which allowed settlement of the "New Purchase" on 1 May 1843. The county was named for Keokuk, the principal chief representing the Indians at the treaty signing. It is said that Aaron Miller was the first settler, arriving in Richland Township in the spring of 1838, but he was soon followed by others.

The county was officially organized in 1844 and a three man commission was charged with locating the county seat. After five days of riding through the new county they selected a site just one mile from the geographic center, drove a stake to mark it, and named it Sigourney. (One of the commissioners, George H. Stone, was a great admirer of the writings of the poet, Mrs. Lydia H. Sigourney.¹) When the residents of Richland and Newton (towns in the southeast corner of the county) learned of the decision they were outraged and tried to get the commission to change its mind. However, the county clerk, S.A. James, took his job quite seriously, and he rode to the center of the county, located the stake driven by the commissioners and built his cabin at the site. This 12' x 16' building was to serve as the seat of county business until a true courthouse could be constructed.² A plat was soon made of the town, centering around a Public Square. In October 1844 the first sale of town lots took place, with only one lot selling. This was located southwest of the Square (block 3, lot 3) and sold for \$12 (to be paid in two equal payments of \$6).

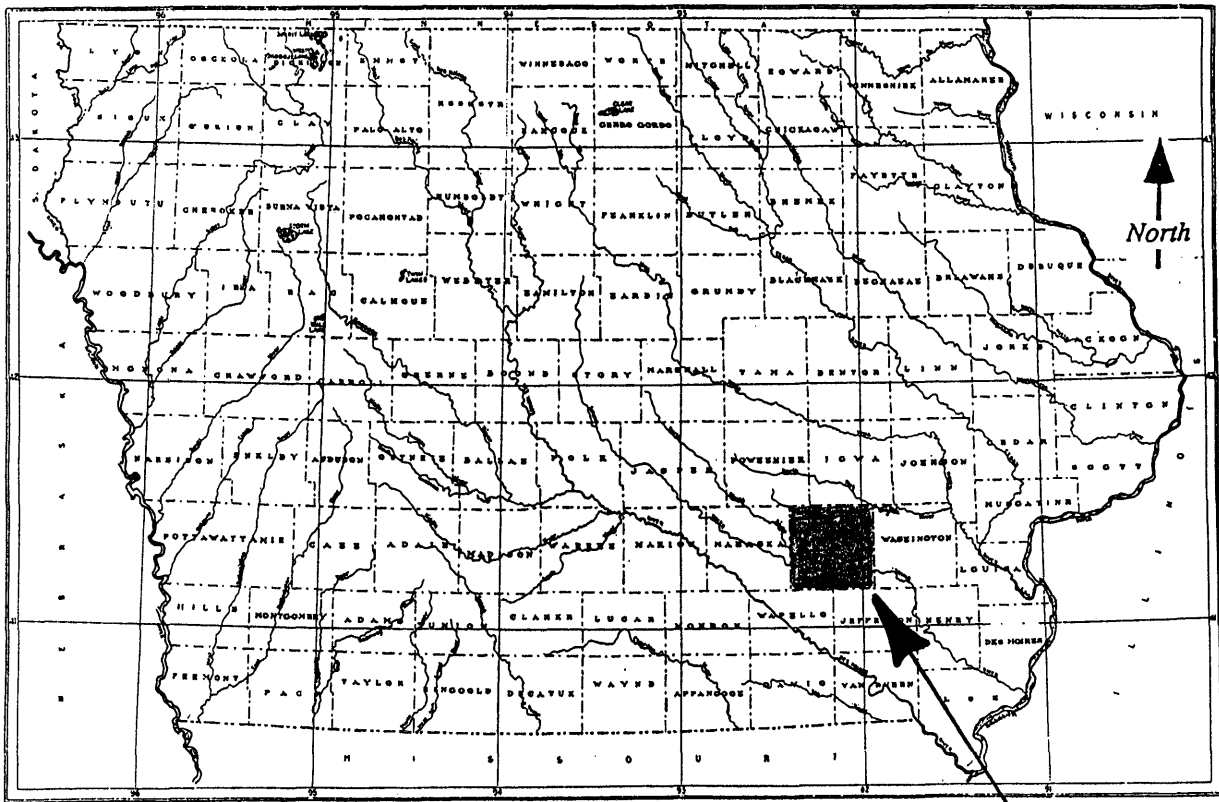
The county commissioners prepared specifications for a courthouse and awarded the building contract to W.H. Thompson for \$218. The hewn log building was to measure 20' x 24' "with thirteen sleepers, and as many joists; rafters and shingle roof, and weather-boarded gable ends." A door, windows and floor were added to the original

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MAP OF IOWA

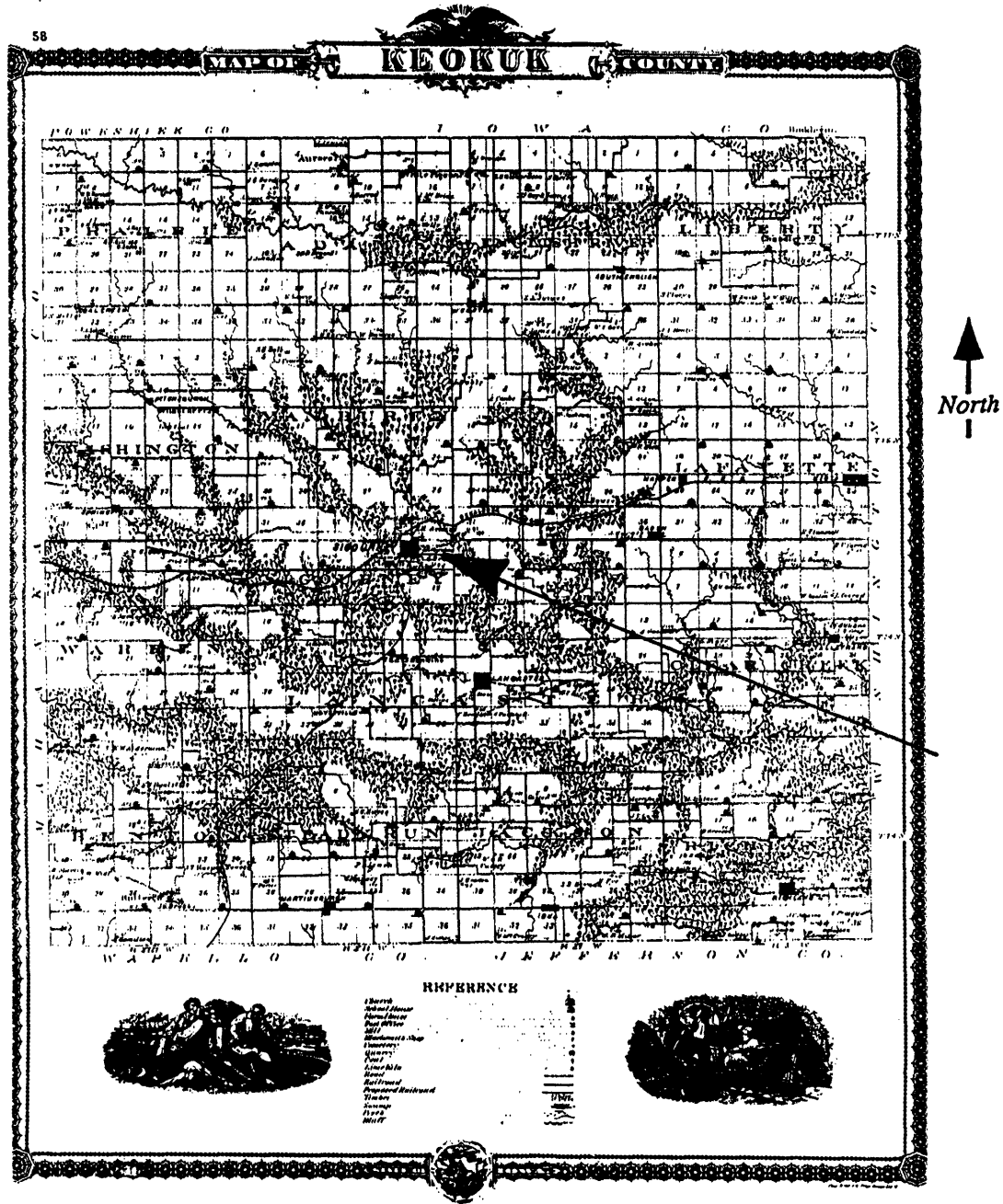
Map of Iowa with arrow indicating location
of Keokuk County.

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Historical & Architectural Resources
Of Sigourney, Iowa
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Map of Keokuk County from the 1875 Andreas Atlas with the location of Sigourney indicated by arrow.

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Historical & Architectural Resources
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specifications. When the first courthouse was completed and occupied in January 1845 there were only three or four families in the Sigourney area. In April 1845, after the town had been surveyed by Wapello County Surveyor George Stump, lots were again offered for sale. This time the lots around the Square sold for \$50 while the outlying lots ranged from \$5 to \$10 each.³

1845 was the year of many "firsts" for Sigourney. Not only was the new courthouse opened, but a post office was established, and the first church, Methodist in denomination, was organized and a building constructed. The controversy over the location of the county seat was not finished. The southeastern part of the county continued to argue that it should be located near the center of population, not the geographic center of the county. Finally, in 1846 the commissioners were told to relocate the county seat. They designated a more central site and named it Lancaster. It then became necessary to build another courthouse. It was located in the southeast corner of the Lancaster Public Square, and cost \$609 when it was completed in 1848. The building was two stories, measuring 20' x 30', with a jail erected nearby.

With the seat of county government removed from the small community, Sigourney grew very slowly over the next few years. As people became more settled in their community, new needs arose. To socialize, the women of the town met in each other's homes or at church functions. However, the men were eager to form their own societies. Hogin Lodge #32 of the Masonic order was chartered in June 1852, followed by the Sigourney Lodge #98 of the I.O.O.F. (Oddfellows) in 1856.

Discussion continued about the logical location for the county seat, and in April 1856 another election was held to determine this. The majority voted in favor of Sigourney, and the county seat was soon relocated there. Again, moving the county seat necessitated the building of a new courthouse. It was built in the center of the Public Square in Sigourney at a cost of \$17,200. A local newspaper from 12 May 1859 described the dedication of the new building.

On Monday evening the new court house was dedicated by a Grand Levee, gotten up by Mr. Lehman, the principal contractor and foreman of the job, assisted by the citizens.brilliantly illuminatedGoddess of Justice behind the Judge's stand.....refreshments served at nine.....a series of toasts.⁴

The courthouse basement was used for storage of fuel and the temporary detention of prisoners. The first floor held offices (five "commodius" rooms plus two fireproof vaults), while the second floor housed the courtroom and two jury rooms. The courtroom, with its gallery, was said to seat 1,000 people.⁵ The block on which the courthouse was built measures 276' square, the same size as others in the original plat. In the spring of 1860 this Public Square was enclosed by a "substantial board fence" and, under the direction and expense of Mrs. Lydia H. Sigourney of Hartford, Conn., was planted with a border of ornamental trees.⁶

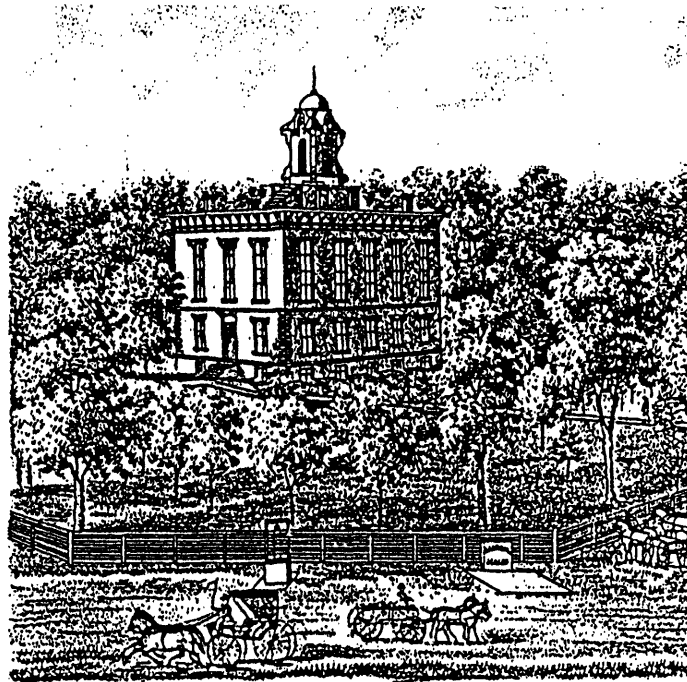
It is said that there were only twelve businesses around the Public Square when the courthouse was dedicated (including 6 general stores, 2 drug stores, 2 groceries, 1

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COURT HOUSE, in SIGOURNEY,
KEOKUK Co. IOWA.

Lithograph of Keokuk County Courthouse
From 1875 Andreas Atlas.

bookstore, and 1 hardware store). A grocer by the name of C.A. Archard, set up the first bakery in 1856 and put up ice in the winter of 1857, which allowed him to serve the first ice cream in town the following summer.⁷ In 1859 all but two of the buildings around the Square were of frame construction. It has not been determined when the first brick building was constructed, or which building it might have been. With the new courthouse in the center, the Public Square continued to develop as the commercial focus of the community. In the spring of 1860 the *Iowa Democrat* said, "Business is looking up now, the merchants are confident of making heavy sales of goods this spring, mechanics have the assurance of employment at fair wages, buildings are already in process of erection, and we are gradually gaining." Much of this growth and development can undoubtedly be laid to the re-designation as the Keokuk county seat. However, travelers wishing to go to Chicago evidently caught the train in Washington (the next county seat to the east) and traveled through Iowa City, Muscatine, and Davenport before crossing the Mississippi. It would be several more years before the railroad arrived in Sigourney.

There were at least three newspapers in the early decades of Sigourney's history: *Life in the West*, the *Iowa (Weekly) Democrat*, and, somewhat later, the *Keokuk County*

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News. The county superintendent of schools advertised for "persons desiring to procure certificates for teaching school in Keokuk County to meet in his office" and the subjects offered in the Sigourney Public School, as well as the tuition for each subject, were published in the newspaper. The Sigourney Literary and Historical Society was evidently starting a small museum because they "tendered their thanks to Messrs. B. Franken and I.B. Parker for donations of valuable mineral specimens."⁸ Note was made that "The Fourth (of July) was celebrated in this place with becoming decency."⁹ An ambrotype artist had set up business on the square, and there was talk of an ordinance to provide for sidewalks. Despite all of these civilized and cultured activities taking place in the county seat in 1859, the pioneer years were not far behind. "A party of twenty or twenty-five Musquaque (sic) Indans (sic) is encamped on a stream about seven miles west of town. They design remaining in this part of the country during the winter."¹⁰

In October 1860 the *Keokuk County News* said, "We will take wood, meat, flour, butter, eggs, etc. on subscriptions to the *News*. Will someone bring us a load of wood immediately?" In the 1860 election Lincoln carried the county with a majority of 136 votes, and the entire front page of the *Keokuk County News* on 14 December 1860 was devoted to President Lincoln's message to Congress. The *News* moved its operations into the basement of the courthouse for a few months in 1861. (This seems like an unusual blend of public and private enterprises.) Shortly after the move was accomplished the basement was flooded due to poor construction, and within a few weeks the Grand Jury reported that the basement was unfit for jail use and a new jail would have to be constructed. The *News* also found the basement to be unfit.

Mrs. Lydia H. Sigourney, patroness of the city, wrote a poem "expressly for this paper" (the *News*), entitled "We're Brothers All" which was published in February 1861. In April of that year the paper carried the news (on page 2) that Fort Sumter had fallen. Immediately there were notices of companies being raised to fight against the Confederacy. The newspaper decided that "in these days of excitement every man wants to read the news" and reduced the price of the paper "so low that it will be within the reach of all. We propose to send it for 3 months for 25 cents payable in advance." While this was an admirable idea, within a few months the *News* had to suspend publication for several weeks due to a lack of money. Printing resumed in December 1861 with a plea to subscribers to pay at least part of what they owed.

During the Civil War the papers carried news of the various battles, sometimes noting (as in the case of Vicksburg) that quite certainly some of the local soldiers had been involved. Schooling continued to be of great importance to the community, and several articles discussed establishing a local school district as well as the county district. School space was scarce and in 1861 a storage room had to be converted for classroom use. The decision was made to draft a plan and specifications for a new schoolhouse. Ultimately this became an addition to an existing building.

Newspaper coverage is missing from the years immediately following the Civil War. However, other sources provide information about Sigourney during that period. Several buildings were constructed around the Square, and in 1872 a new form of transportation arrived in town. On 9 April 1872 the first Rock Island train arrived in Sigourney from Washington. This ushered in a whole new period in Sigourney's

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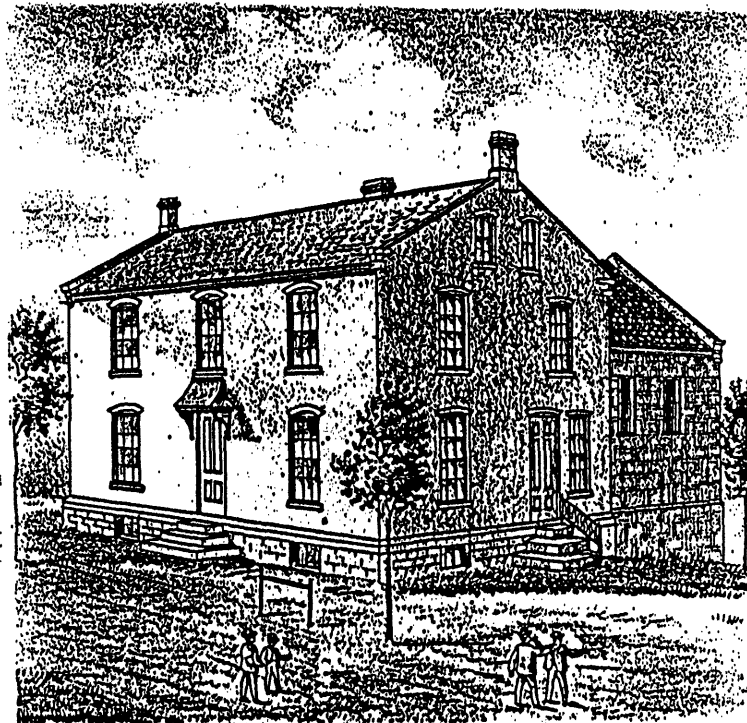
National Register of Historic Places
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Historical & Architectural Resources
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development. It opened new markets for the goods and agricultural products produced in Keokuk County, and brought in supplies and materials that had been hard to get previously. This attracted new businesses to the community and caused a population boom, from 992 people in 1870 to 1377 by 1875.¹¹

It was probably a combination of this growth in population and the wet basement in the courthouse that caused the Board of Supervisors to build a county jail and sheriff's residence in 1875. Located two blocks west of the Public Square, this brick building stood until the early 1990s. The Keokuk County Sheriff's Residence and Jail consisted of a two story brick residence on the front with a limestone wing to the rear which housed the jail proper. This combination type of building was the most common type of jail facility constructed in the state between the 1840's and c.1950. There are 52 extant examples of this jail type in Iowa, including the Appanoose County Sheriff's Residence and Jail which is similar to the Sigourney building.



KEOKUK COUNTY JAIL, SIGOURNEY IOWA.
FARRELL & HANCOCK, BUILDERS & CONTRACTORS
N.C. TERRELL, KANKAKEE ILL. B.A. HAYCOCK, RICHLAND, IOWA.

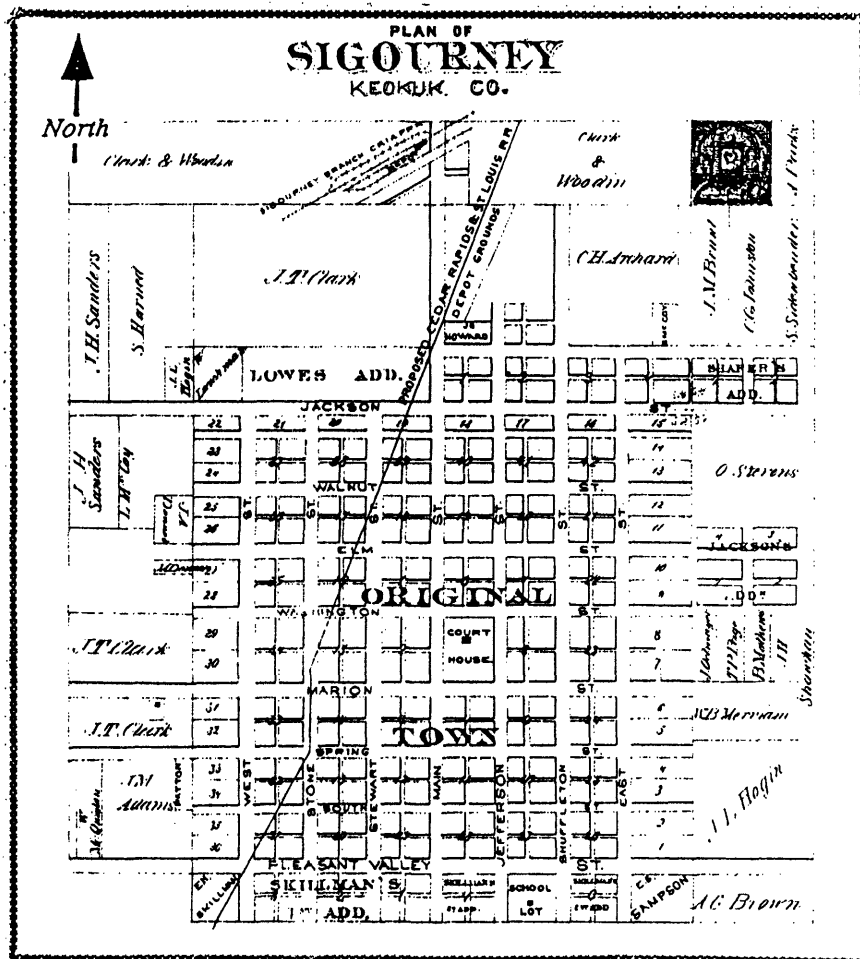
Lithograph of the Keokuk County Jail & Sheriff's Residence
From the 1875 Andreas Atlas.

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Map of Sigourney from the
1875 Andreas Atlas.

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Newspaper coverage picks up again in 1876. Across the county the year 1876 seems to have been one of major commercial development. While the nation was celebrating its 100th birthday, communities were "dressing up" their Main Streets with elaborate new business blocks. In Sigourney it appears that construction was taking place on at least three sides of the Square (north, east, and west). The decades of the 1870s and 1880s represented a period of expansion for the community. The original North and South Ward schools were built during this period, along with the construction of Catholic, Christian, Evangelical, Presbyterian, and Seventh Day Adventist churches. Industrial growth included two wagon manufactories, a woolen mill, a button factory, and an agricultural implement factory.

In 1883 a second rail line arrived when the Milwaukee Railroad began service to the community. Both railroad depots were located north of the commercial area around the Public Square, with the Rock Island in the north central part of town, and the Milwaukee in the northeast part. A separate business district, including rooming houses and small hotels for travelers, grew up between these two depots. There is nothing left of this commercial area (known as "Brushtown") today.¹²

Changes were also being made on the Public Square. A band stand was constructed northwest of the courthouse in the late 1880s. By 1893 more space was needed in the county courthouse, and an addition was made to the east side. The new hitching rack that was installed in the summer of 1895 was called "a grand improvement."¹³

Residential development was also noted in the newspapers. They mentioned the sale or exchange of residences as well as the construction of new houses (probably just the large ones). There does not seem to have been a specific area that was developing faster than other parts of town. George D. Woodin chose to build his brick Second Empire style house one block west of the courthouse, a logical decision for an attorney. On the other hand, James Harvey Sanders had his large brick Italianate residence built on the far north edge of town. Businessmen in the Schipfer family built their houses of frame construction in neighborhoods east of the Public Square. In November 1893 the newspaper noted that J.S. White's brick and tile factory had been experimenting with different sizes and shapes of brick suitable for sidewalks and had finally produced one that Smith had enough faith in to use for a sidewalk in front of his own home.¹⁴

Modern conveniences started arriving in Sigourney in the latter part of the 19th century. Voters approved construction of a waterworks system by a vote 377 to 58 in the fall of 1894. The first telephone exchange was operated by Clcero Dobie in a building on the east side of the Public Square, and the first electric power plant was located a block north of the Square at the corner of Jefferson and Elm in 1895.

In January 1900 the *Sigourney Review* noted that the county had some unexpected revenue and perhaps should start considering a new courthouse. By 1909 the 1859 brick courthouse was demolished and construction began on a modern county facility. The new courthouse was designed by the distinguished Des Moines architectural firm of Wetherell & Gage. It was Neo-classical in design, reflecting the influence of the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The exterior was of ashlar block of Bedford

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limestone (considered to be the most appropriate material for a building in this style). Located in the center of the courtyard (as the citizens of Sigourney refer to the block



Keokuk County Courthouse (NRHP)

containing the courthouse), the building features entrances on all four sides with monumental Ionic columns stretching between the second and third floors above each entrance. The Keokuk County building is one of a number of Iowa courthouses designed by this firm. When the new courthouse was completed in 1911, Sigourney had reached a population of 2,032.

In many Iowa communities, the years following the turn of the century were a period when the towns began to build a new image. The towns were now firmly established and for the first time there was interest in public buildings other than courthouses and schools. In Sigourney a library committee was formed to consider construction of a free public library building for the community. In January 1912 the committee purchased the lot at the northeast corner of Jefferson and Elm (one block north of the Public Square) as a building site, and was eagerly awaiting word from "Mr. Carnegie" about funding for the project. In February the committee received the following letter:

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Dear Sir:

Responding to your communication on behalf of Sigourney, Iowa, if the City agrees by resolution of council to maintain a Free Public Library at a cost of not less than \$1,000 per year and provide a suitable site for the building, Carnegie Corporation of New York will be glad to give \$10,000 to erect a Free Public Library building for Sigourney, Iowa.

It should be noted that the amount indicated is to cover the cost of the library building complete, ready for occupancy and for intended use.

Before any expenditure on building or plans is incurred, the approval of proposed plans by Carnegie Corporation of New York should be secured. To obtain which (approval) please send sketch plans for inspection.

Very Truly Yours,
Carnegie Corporation of New York¹⁵

The plans selected by the library committee, and approved by the Carnegie Corporation, were drawn by a Chicago architectural firm well versed in library design, Patton, Homes, and Flynn. The building is of brick construction (typical for such buildings in the smaller county seat communities), resting on a high foundation, with a symmetrical façade. It features a tile hip roof, and the main entrance projects slightly. Although the symmetrical façade adds a formal element, the broad eaves with exposed rafter ends provide a distinctly Craftsman feeling. Dedicated in May 1914, this building is one of 101 public libraries in the state of Iowa built with assistance from the Carnegie Corporation and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Sigourney Public Library (NRHP)

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A new, locally produced, building material became popular in Sigourney in the early years of the 20th century, concrete blocks. Manufactured by the Hoffman Cement Product Co., these concrete blocks were used in the construction of the Kendall-Friday building (Friday's Hall) just off the southwest corner of the Square at 210 S. Main.

No date has been established for the arrival of the first automobile in Sigourney, but this new form of transportation soon made a visual impact on the community. With the popularity of the automobile several new building types were needed. One of these is the auto garage. In most communities the auto garages (both sales and service) were built just off the Square. Sigourney is the exception to this. Around 1915 a Ford dealership opened on the west side of the Square, just south of the alley. This was a very important retail location and illustrates the importance of this new form of transportation.

In addition to the garage as a new building type, the oil (service) station developed. In many small towns each general store installed a gas pump out in front, and that met the needs of the citizens. In larger communities like Sigourney, buildings were constructed specifically to serve the purpose. Since these were a new building type there was no model for what they should look like. The station at the south east corner of Main and Jackson is a good example of an early station, complete with canopy to shelter the attendant while pumping gas.

The first mention of a Memorial Building to honor Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Nurses of the first World War was a petition that was presented to the Board of Supervisors in November 1919.¹⁶ The request was for a Memorial Hospital Building, and an election was called for 29 December 1919 to vote on the \$100,000 facility. In February 1920 local groups met with an unidentified architect about plans for such a building, but evidently no action was taken. The following month the newspaper again noted the need for a Memorial Building, and even published a proposed drawing. Evidently plans for a hospital were dropped and the building was designed as a public meeting place and municipal building. In March 1921 bonds were offered for the construction of the present Memorial Building which was dedicated in April 1923. Designed by Des Moines architect Burdette Higgins, the brick building is a Renaissance Revival design. A few years later (1929) a statue of a Union soldier was placed on the lawn of the courthouse in memory of those who fought in the Civil War. Sigourney is one of the few towns in which the WW I veterans were honored before those of the Civil War.

In 1920 an Iowa National Guard Cavalry troop was formed in Sigourney. Sixty-seven men were sworn in in June, and thirty-two head of horses arrived in August. A glazed hollow tile cavalry barn (80' x 100') was erected north of the business district at 305 N. Main.¹⁷ (The building is currently used as an auto supply business.)

The Merchants Hotel on the south side of the Square was sold in 1921 to Dr. William Pfannebecker and Dr. C.L. Heald of Cedar Rapids for conversion into an up-to-date hospital. Under various owners, the hospital served the citizens of Sigourney and Keokuk County until the present facility on the south edge of town was built in 1954.

It was during the 1920s and '30s that new brick facades started being applied to the front of Italianate buildings around the Square. These simplified designs offered a far different appearance. Business was so good that problems arose. There were so many cars being parked around the Square, and on side streets, that spaces had to be marked

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to show people how to park, thereby providing as much space as possible. New businesses such as the motion picture theaters accounted for much of this growth.

The late 1920s were a period of growth in Sigourney. The population was just over 2,200 people and there was a need for an addition to the high school which was completed in 1928. In the fall of 1928 another great transportation revolution came to Sigourney. Concrete paving was completed between Washington and Sigourney on present Iowa Highway 92, providing a hard surface highway all the way to Chicago. That same year present Iowa Highway 149 linking Ottumwa and Cedar Rapids was paved through Sigourney. Hard surface roads allowed those in the far corners of Keokuk County to make the trip to Sigourney in relative ease. Shopping that had once been done in their near-by farm service towns now was done in the county seat. Businesses in Sigourney, especially those around the Square, profited greatly from these changes.

During the years of the Great Depression Sigourney experienced the same problems as other communities across the state. The only major construction taking place during this time was a federally funded project to build a new post office. In almost all communities the post office was originally located in a storefront along Main Street or facing the Public Square. In many towns the post office moved with great frequency, but in Sigourney that was not true. In 1881 the postal facility moved into the building on the northeast eyetooth corner of the Square and remained there until the new building opened in 1938. The new U.S. Post Office was located one block west of the Square on Washington Street (the former site of a lumberyard). This single story brick building features a symmetrical façade of highly simplified design. The only decorative element is a vertical emphasis at the recessed central entrance which gives the building an Art Deco feeling. It was constructed according to Treasury Department standards, and like many post offices built during the Depression Years, it features a mural on the interior.

With the advent of World War II, construction halted due to the need for war material. Following the war, the mid-century brought more new construction around the community, with several new churches, a new elementary school erected in 1955, and a new high school in 1969.

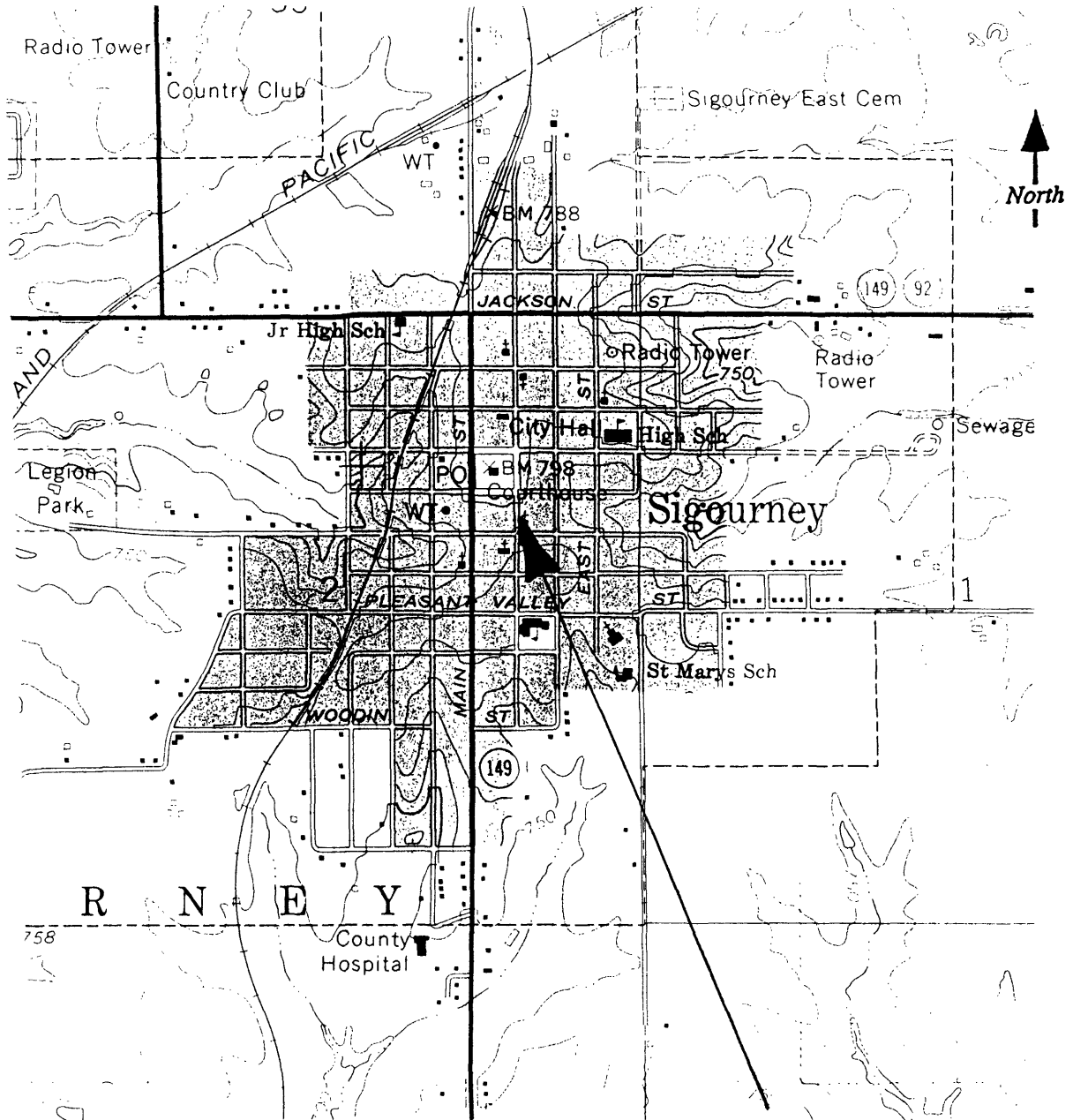
Sigourney's population grew as the town grew physically in the 20th century, from 1,950 people in 1900, to a peak of 2,400 in 1940, to the present 2,111. Today the courthouse continues to function as the seat of county government and people continue to come to town to conduct their legal business, and stay to shop. The business district around the Public Square remains strong, and participation in the Main Street program has encouraged preservation of their architectural heritage.

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U.S.G.S. Map of Sigourney (enlarged)
Public Square with Courthouse is indicated by arrow.

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NOTES

¹ Poet Lydia Huntley Sigourney was born in Norwich, Conn., 1 Sept 1791 and died in June 1865. She was a noted author of highly sentimental and moral poetry, with thousands of elegy poems to her credit. Said to be the most widely known authoress in America, her poems were first published in magazines such as *Godey's Ladies Book*, and then reprinted in book form. She showed her appreciation for having the county seat named in her honor by writing poems for the community, and providing landscaping for the Public Square. Our Place in History. (125th Anniversary Publication of the Keokuk County Historical Society, 1969), p 2.

² A.T. Andreas, Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa. (Chicago: Andreas Atlas Co., 1875), p 453.

³ James T. Hair, Iowa State Gazetteer. (Chicago: Bailey & Hair, 1865), p 244.

⁴ Courthouse Dedication, *Life in the West*, 12 May 1859, p 2, c 1.

⁵ Hair, p 245.

⁶ *The Iowa Democrat*, 13 April 1860, p 3, c 1.

⁷ C.A. Archard, *The Iowa Democrat*, 1 June 1860, p 3, c 2.

⁸ *Iowa Weekly Democrat*, 10 June 1859, p 2, c 2.

⁹ *Life in the West*, 7 July 1859, p 2, c 2.

¹⁰ *Iowa Weekly Democrat*, 4 November 1859, p 3, c 1.

¹¹ Census of the State of Iowa, 1875.

¹² Our Place in History, p 39.

¹³ *Keokuk County News*, 29 August 1895, p 3, c 2.

¹⁴ Ibid., 23 November 1893, p 3, c 6.

¹⁵ *Keokuk County News*, 23 January 1913, p 1, c 6.
6 February 1913, p 1, c 3, 4, 5.
15 May 1913, p 1, c 4.
21 May 1913, p 1, c 1.

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¹⁶ ibid., 27 November 1919, p 1, c 5.

¹⁷ ibid., 22 January 1920, p 1, c 4.
3 June 1920, p 1, c 3.
23 July 1920, p 1, c 1.
19 August 1920, p 1, c 3.

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ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES:

THE SOCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPACT OF
COUNTY SEAT DESIGNATION: 1844-c.1945

I. Name: The buildings, structures, objects, and districts representing "The Social & Economic Impact of County Seat Designation: 1844-c.1945."

II. Description:

The resources (a collective term for the above named categories) in this property type are somewhat varied in terms of use, size, building material, and location (although many will be located around the Public Square). The unifying factor is that each is directly related to the development of Sigourney because of its designation as the Keokuk County seat. It appears that none of the earliest buildings are extant. If examples from the earliest period should be identified in the future, these should be carefully evaluated for National Register eligibility. The earliest buildings would have been of log construction, followed in a few years by wood frame buildings. These were replaced as the community grew, and because of natural disasters such as fire. Brick appears to have become a popular building material in the 1860s. Stone was used primarily for foundations until the early 20th century when it became popular for Neo-classical designs.

Public Buildings. This will be an important property type for this context. As the seat of county government, most county offices were located here. As a rule, public buildings will be larger and of more impressive material than privately owned buildings. These are the symbols of local government and power. In some cases these will be architect designed structures. The 1875 sheriff's residence and jail was unexpectedly demolished in 1994. Located two blocks west of the Square, this two story brick gable roof house featured a rear wing of stone to house the jail. This combined residence/jail was the most popular local jail type in Iowa from c.1860-c.1920. The 1911 Keokuk County Courthouse (NRHP) in the center of the Square is the second one on that site, replacing a two story brick building from 1859. Designed by the Des Moines architectural firm of Wetherell and Gage, the limestone building is typical of early 20th century design featuring Neo-classical details. The Sigourney Public Library (NRHP) from 1914 is located one block north of the Square. Designed by the Chicago firm of Patton, Holmes & Flynn this building is typical of Carnegie funded libraries in smaller county seat towns, being of brick, rather than stone, construction. It is an eclectic blend of Neo-classical formality and Craftsman details. Memorial Hall (1923) is located diagonally across the street from the library. This two story brick municipal building features a symmetrical façade with jack-arched windows and keystones. The U.S. Post Office, one block west of the Square, is also a brick building with symmetrical façade. Dating from the mid-1930s, this building is a restrained example of Art Deco design. The Square itself is considered to be a public structure. This was laid

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out and designed for this specific purpose and has been treated as such over the decades.

Objects. The fountain, the Civil War monument, and the Veterans monument on the Square are considered to be individual public resources.

Structures. This includes the brick bandstand just southwest of the courthouse on the Square.

Commercial Buildings. The commercial buildings which face the Square can be considered a development that occurred as the result of county seat designation. The economic climate created by being the seat of local justice encouraged (necessitated) retail growth. These buildings are primarily two or three story brick rectangles with flat roofs sloping gently to the rear (alley). Most are a single storefront in width, although double and triple storefront buildings are not unusual. Brick is the common building material, but trim may be of stone, metal, terra cotta, or concrete. The earliest commercial buildings remaining retain elements of the early Italianate style, while the majority of the buildings reflect the later High Victorian Italianate designs. With the 20th century, facades became more simplified and the color of the bricks more varied. Some of the commercial buildings may have been architect designed, but no documentation to that effect has yet been located.

Residences. Some residences in the community can be related to the social and economic development which occurred due to county seat designation. These will be primarily the homes of certain business and professional people who were drawn to the community because it was the county seat. As a rule, these residences will be larger than the average Sigourney dwelling and a few may have been architect designed. These will illustrate the popular residential styles of the various periods, and will be of either wood frame or brick construction. These will be located outside of the Square proper.

Churches and Schools. No churches or schools have been surveyed to this point due to their location outside of the area around the Public Square.

II. Significance:

The resources that make up this property type are outstanding examples of the types of buildings, structures, objects, and districts constructed between 1844 and c.1945 as a result of Sigourney being the seat of Keokuk County government. These illustrate the importance of county seat designation in terms of economic, social, and commercial development. Public buildings are symbols of a community's importance and demonstrate local pride. While courthouses and jails are indigenous to county seats, libraries and post offices were only built in towns considered to be important and large enough to support them. Commercial and residential development then occurred as a ripple effect.

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III. Registration Requirements:

1. Significance (use or form) relates to the context "The Social and Economic Impact of County Seat Designation: 1844-c.1945."

Criterion A: properties that are directly associated with Sigourney's position as the seat of justice of Keokuk County.

Criterion B: properties that are significantly associated with persons who were directly involved with Sigourney's role as county seat.

Criterion C: properties that best illustrate the important building and structural types, styles and building materials associated with the community's role as the county seat, and properties designed by well known architects.

Criterion D: properties that have the potential to yield information important to the development of Sigourney as the county seat.

2. Qualifying building use will include: public, commercial, fraternal, industrial, residential, religious, and educational.

Qualifying building materials will include: brick, stone, wood, metal, terra cotta, and concrete.

3. If a building has been moved, the move should have taken place more than 50 years ago, and the integrity should not have been impaired to a great extent. Specifically, there should be limited loss of architectural elements, limited alterations due to the move, and the new site must be appropriate.

4. Integrity Considerations:

In all cases, the most important integrity consideration is that the building retain sufficient elements of the original design, materials, and setting, that the owner during the period of significance would recognize it.

Public Buildings. These resources must retain a sense of their original function while also maintaining the visual elements of their original design and construction material. The shape and proportion of the building should be intact. Windows and doors should not have been moved or substantially changed. Any additions should not obscure the primary façade, while additions to side elevations should be of sympathetic design and construction material.

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Objects. The original design and construction material must be readily apparent. Any alterations must not obscure basic elements of the object.

Structures. The original design and construction material must be readily apparent. Any alterations must not obscure basic elements of the structure.

Commercial Buildings. Such resources should retain their historic shape and proportion while reflecting their original function. It is expected that street levels may have been altered, and it is very possible that entire facades have been altered as well. Alterations to the street level entrances should not preclude a property from eligibility if changes are reversible and the upper level retains much of its historic character. Additions should be of sympathetic design, proportion, and construction material. If a building received a new façade during the period of significance, the building should be evaluated in terms of the style and period of the new façade. A building which is sheathed in modern materials (fiberglass, metal, stucco, etc.) will be considered intrusive. If such material is removed at some point in the future, the building should be re-evaluated.

Residences. The basic shape and proportion of the house should be intact. Windows and doors should not have been moved or substantially changed. Porches should be sympathetic if not original. Alterations made during the period of significance may be accepted if made to side or rear elevations and of a scale and material sympathetic to the original design. Application of modern non-wood siding will generally not be acceptable.

Churches and Schools. Since no examples were recorded of either of these building types, no specific integrity considerations have been developed. In general, the basic shape and proportion of the building should be intact, with doors and windows not substantially altered. Some minor changes and/or additions may be acceptable if they do not obscure the primary façade, and are of sympathetic design, proportion, and material.

Districts. These areas must possess a sense of time and place, must relate to the building types, styles, and materials of the period of significance, have relatively few intrusions, and not have been altered to a high degree. Key structures will have few if any alterations, while contributing structures may have a somewhat lesser level of integrity. A new street level entrance on a commercial building, or new siding on a residence, does not automatically negate eligibility as a contributing structure.

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4. Eligible Properties (** denotes resources being nominated with this submission)

An intensive level survey was conducted of the area around the Public Square, focusing on public and commercial buildings. A potential historic district was identified which includes the following:

- ** Keokuk County Courthouse (NRHP)
- ** Objects & structures in the Courtyard
- ** 101-120 N. Jefferson
- ** 101-207 S. Jefferson
- ** 100-111 N. Main
- ** 100-210 S. Main
- ** 101-123 E. Marion
- ** 101-111 W. Marion
- ** 100-120 E. Washington
- ** 115 W. Washington

The Sigourney Public Library, already listed on the NRHP, would also be an eligible property under this Multiple Property Document.

The rest of the city of Sigourney has received only a windshield survey. Potentially eligible resources have not been specifically identified.

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GEOGRAPHIC DATA:

The geographic area covered in this project is bounded by the alleys located one-half block off the Public Square in all four directions, plus the south side of West Washington one-half block west to Stuart, and both sides of North Jefferson one-half block north to Elm. This area contains 11.9 acres.

SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS:

This Sigourney preservation project is part of a long range program to identify, evaluate, register, and protect, the cultural resources of the State of Iowa. The Sigourney Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) received a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant to conduct a Planning for Preservation project during 1991-92. That project identified three historic contexts which have been significant in the community's development. Due to the interest expressed concerning the buildings around the Public Square, and the endangered status of several of these buildings, the first priority recommended in the Planning for Preservation report was to conduct an intensive level architectural and historical survey of the buildings around the Public Square.

In 1995-96 the HPC applied for, and received, another CLG grant to assist with this intensive survey. The goal was to identify properties which reflect and represent the historical events and people which have shaped the community. There are currently two sites in Sigourney which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP):

Keokuk County Courthouse	Public Square
Sigourney Public Library	203 N. Jefferson

Objectives:

The objectives of the 1995-96 survey were to develop the three historic contexts identified during the Planning for Preservation project and to define the significant property types within each of these contexts (The Social and Economic Impact of County Seat Designation, 1859-1940; Architecture, 1840-1940; and, Transportation, 1840-1940). Although "Transportation" had been identified in the planning report, it had also noted that due to the lack of sufficient extant resources, perhaps development of this context should be deferred. As this project progressed, it became apparent that the Transportation context was not of primary importance for the area around the Square and it was not pursued. During the research and evaluation phase of the survey project it was decided to treat "Architecture" as a subdivision of "County Seat" rather than a separate context.

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Area:

The geographic area included in the intensive survey included all buildings facing the Public Square and those located within a block of the Square. This includes buildings on Washington, Marion, Main, and Jefferson streets. The survey area extended north on Main to Jackson (the intersection of Iowa highways 92 and 149) because Main Street has always been an important thoroughfare through the business district. The surveyed area encompasses approximately 24.2 acres.

Methodology:

The Historic Preservation Commission contracted with a consultant, Molly Myers Naumann of Ottumwa, to serve as the principal investigator, to organize and coordinate the survey activities, to define the historic contexts, evaluate the properties, and prepare the final report. Naumann had previously served as the consultant on the Planning for Preservation project and was familiar with the community. She worked with local volunteers, training them for the various tasks. Orientation workshops were conducted for each phase of the project. The volunteers were responsible for the fieldwork, photography and mapping, archival and legal research, and the typing and collating of the final project.

The photography was accomplished by a team composed of a professional photographer and the project director. Every lot in the designated area was photographed. The purpose was to create a record of the entire commercial area around the Square, not just the potentially significant buildings. All necessary information was recorded on the photo log sheet. The photographs and information for each site were then recorded on Iowa Site Inventory forms.

Archival research was conducted at the Ottumwa Public Library, Sigourney Public Library, the *Sigourney News-Review* offices, State Historical Society libraries in both Iowa City and Des Moines, and the library of the Keokuk County Historical Society. Resources included county and local histories and directories, state gazetteers, plat books and atlases, historic photographs, and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. Volunteers read microfilm of selected Sigourney newspapers from 1859 through 1940. Legal research was conducted at the Keokuk County Courthouse.

The information gained through this research was used in the development of the historic context. The principal investigator then evaluated each of the inventoried sites, and each was determined to be individually eligible for the National Register, not eligible for the National Register, or eligible as part of a potential historic district. A total of 86 resources were recorded and evaluated.

In 1998 the Sigourney Historic Preservation Commission and the City of Sigourney decided to pursue a National Register Historic District listing for the buildings around the Public Square. The City agreed to fund this project, with the HPC providing volunteers. No grant money was involved. Molly Myers Naumann was hired as the consultant to prepare a Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPD) and the National Register nomination form for the Public Square Historic District. Working with local volunteers

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additional photography was accomplished and information gathered. The resources in this historic district illustrate the importance of being the county seat. The Public Square has a strong sense of time and place, as well as the cohesive quality necessary for a historic district. The focus of this survey has been solely on exteriors.

From the beginning, this preservation project has dealt only with architectural and historical resources. No attempt has been made to identify potential archeological sites. At some point in the future the Sigourney Historic Preservation Commission should consider conducting an archeological survey.

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Iowa Weekly Democrat, (1859 & 1860)

Keokuk County News (September 1860-May 1863)
(March 1876-January 1881)
(January 1891-December 1895)
(June 1903-August 1905)
(November 1912-February 1915)
(November 1991-December 1921)

Sigourney News-Review (November 1899-June 1902)
(October 1927-December 1940)

Historic Photographs

Collections of the Keokuk County Historical Society and Main Street Sigourney.

Private Collections: Dorothy Beasley, Jim Eversmeyer, Herb Mohr, and Harrison Seip.