**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**
**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**
**INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

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### 1 NAME

**HISTORIC**

**AND/OR COMMON**

Stewart Library or Stewart Public Library

### 2 LOCATION

**STREET & NUMBER**

926 Broad Street

**CITY, TOWN**

Grinnell

**STATE**

Iowa

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### 3 CLASSIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>PRESENT USE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DISTRICT</td>
<td>X PUBLIC</td>
<td>X OCCUPIED</td>
<td>AGRICULTURE</td>
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<tr>
<td>BUILDING(S)</td>
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<td>UNOCCUPIED</td>
<td>COMMERCIAL</td>
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<tr>
<td>STRUCTURE</td>
<td>BOTH</td>
<td>WORK IN PROGRESS</td>
<td>PARK</td>
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<td>SITE</td>
<td>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</td>
<td>IN PROCESS</td>
<td>EDUCATIONAL</td>
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<tr>
<td>OBJECT</td>
<td>IN PROCESS</td>
<td>ACCESSIBLE</td>
<td>ENTERTAINMENT</td>
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<td></td>
<td>BEING CONSIDERED</td>
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<td>GOVERNMENT</td>
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<td>YES: UNRESTRICTED</td>
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<td>OTHER</td>
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</table>

### 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

**NAME**

City of Grinnell

**STREET & NUMBER**

819 Broad Street

**CITY, TOWN**

Grinnell

**STATE**

Iowa

### 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

(Courthouse, Registry of Deeds, etc.)

**Poweshiek County Courthouse**

Original plat of Grinnell, NW-NW, Sec. 16, Twp. 80, Range 16, West of the 5th P.M.

**STREET & NUMBER**

302 East Main

**CITY, TOWN**

Montezuma

**STATE**

Iowa

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### 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

**TITLE**

History of Poweshiek County, Iowa

**DATE**

1911

**DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS**

Copies of the survey are available at the Stewart Library

**CITY, TOWN**

Grinnell

**STATE**

Iowa
The Stewart Library is a three story building with a basement, which has housed the public library since 1902. Its dimensions are 65' x 37' with a wing in the center back 23' x 30'. The height of the building in the tallest spot is 29', the majority being 21'. The interior of the building for library use which includes all floor space except for a few work room areas and restrooms covers 5,458.8 square feet. The exterior displays buff brick masonry with sandstone lintels and sills used in many window openings, some arched in Romanesque appearance, others in plain openings to hold wood jambs for double hung windows. The entry to the structure is up a rather massive, two flight stonework stairway. There is also an entry to an octagonal tower housing a solid oak spiral stairway to the attic room. Window treatment of the entrance pavilion resembles the "widow's-watch" era of a hundred years ago or more. A steep pitch hip roof design is used to top off the structure.

The first floor of the library has a balcony which is counted as the second floor. There is also an attic (3rd floor) which at one time was a meeting room, but presently is in need of complete restoration and has been closed. The areas, then, in use today are the basement, first and second floors.

The interior main floor is an interesting variety of architectural themes. The stack area is Victorian in its iron stairs and railings. The balcony flooring consists of thick frosted glass set into steel joists. This feature, with the stacks themselves, are integral structural aspects of the building. Rather large diameter columns displaying Ionic classicism set off the circulation area from the reading and reference sections of the main floor. Plain brick front, arched opening fireplaces face each other across the main floor.

The front entranceway was altered five years ago with the addition of aluminum and glass doors to replace the deteriorating wooden entrance. No other changes have been made in the exterior.

The original tile floor on the first level was covered with indoor-outdoor carpeting in 1970. In one area of stacks, however, the original tile can be seen. The addition of carpeting was a matter of practicality, because the floor was very noisy and drafty in the winter. The balcony glass floor has had two pieces of glass replaced by wood, but the majority of the glass is in excellent condition.

The basement is used as the children's room. No major changes have been made in this room.

The library is located downtown, close to the main shopping district. It is stationed between the Post Office and the United Church of Christ, Congregational.
The Stewart Public Library is an interesting local adaptation of the Romanesque Revival style. Its Romanesque character is typified by the window shapes, arched entry, and massive form. Decorative brickwork and the unusual tower highlight the design.

All through his varied career as farmer, banker, and state legislator, Joel Stewart (1833-1918) found time for philanthropic activities, chief among them the organization and building of a library for the town of Grinnell. He "made the contract for the building, superintended the work of construction, and turned it over to the city a completed structure, free from all encumbrances."\(^1\) Dedicated in 1902, the library bearing his name is an enduring tribute to this energetic and well-remembered man.

(The architect for the Stewart Library is unknown. Research by the library staff has produced no information. It is known, however, that Stewart himself was deeply involved in the planning and execution of the structure. He made several trips around Iowa, looking at other libraries; perhaps he brought the ideas thus derived to an architect, who then drew the plans.)

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"All Grinnell Mourns Death of Joel Stewart," The Grinnell Herald, April 30, 1918.
Parker, Prof. L. F. History of Poweshiek County Iowa; a Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress and Achievement, Vol. I. Chicago: S. J. Clarke, 1911.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/2 acre

UTM REFERENCES

ZONE EASTING NORTHING
A 15 528300 46201300
C

ZONE EASTING NORTHING
B

D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Virginia S. Cameron, Librarian

ORGANIZATION
Stewart Public Library

STREET & NUMBER
926 Broad Street

CITY OR TOWN
Grinnell

STATE
Iowa

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL X

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

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE August 10, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER.

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 11/21/76

DATE 11/15/76