

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instruction in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Former United States Post Office Building
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 110 South Court Street [] not for publication
city, town Fairfield [] vicinity
state Iowa code IA county Jefferson code 101 zip code 52556

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> objects
			<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

United States Senator James F. Wilson Historic Resources

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements sets forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheets.

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official
State Historical Society of Iowa

1/29/90
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet. Patrick Andrews

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet. _____

determined not eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet. _____

Removed from National Register. _____

Other, (explain): _____

1/24/91
Date of Action

[Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
GOVERNMENT/post office

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
COMMERCE/specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)
Italianate

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick

roof Composition

other Iron columns on facade 1st floor

Stone quoins

Pressed metal hood molds

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

This is a 2-story, brick commercial type building in almost unaltered condition and dates from circa 1876. Scale of the building is small. It stands about one-half block south of Fairfield's Central Park. An alley is directly adjacent to the building on the south.

Facade consists of 4-bays, symmetrically placed and occupied by windows on the second floor. On the first floor, the main entry is slightly off-center. Large, plate glass windows originally flanked this door. Another door, flanking the west window, gave access to the second floor and accounts for the slight asymmetry of facade. The plate glass windows and door to second floor have been filled in. (These are the main alterations to the building and they are easily reversible because little historic fabric was removed). Cast iron columns together with wood arches frame the first floor bays. The columns have decorative capitals. There is a pressed metal cornice over these columns and arches between the first and second floor. There is also a cornice above the second floor. This features five scroll brackets which are placed to define the facade's four bays. Windows on the second floor feature pressed metal hood molds in an elaborate design. Windows themselves are double-hung, 2/2 and appear to be original. Sides of the facade feature quoins worked in brick.

There is a rear addition to the building. Constructed between 1892 and 1899, it is invisible from the street and not an intrusion. An outside stairway to second floor stands on the south elevation. This is stairway is covered and was constructed sometime between 1899 and 1907. South elevation is strictly utilitarian, much in contrast to the architectural detail of the facade. Facade brick has been painted for many years.

This building should be evaluated architecturally in conjunction with the Wilson Block (106-108 South Court Street), its neighbor to the north. These buildings were built contemporaneously by James F Wilson.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

 nationally statewide locallyApplicable National Register Criteria A B C DCriteria Consideration (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1876-1895

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

U. S. Senator James F. Wilson

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Constructed in 1876 by James F. Wilson, this building calls attention to the man's business career in Fairfield. Wilson was a leader in Fairfield business and was instrumental in establishing the city's first nationally chartered bank in 1865. He served for many years as its president. Wilson also constructed several fine commercial store fronts as personal investments. The Former United States Post Office was the first building erected in Fairfield specifically for federal government purposes and calls attention to Wilson's political connections in federal government. The federal government typically rented buildings during this period for U. S. Post Office purposes as opposed to federal ownership of these facilities. The building's design features elaborate second-floor hood molds, Italianate scroll brackets at the cornice, fine cast iron columns on the facade, and brick quoins at the corners. It is a fine, local example of a vernacular interpretation of the Italianate style as applied to commercial architecture. It is eligible for nomination under Criterion B, buildings that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past. This building relates to the U. S. Senator James F. Wilson Historic Resources multiple property submission.

Wilson returned to Fairfield in 1869 after serving three full terms in Congress. In 1876 the First National Bank, of which Wilson was president, embarked on construction of a new building at the southeast corner of Fairfield's Central Park. At the same time, Wilson secured an agreement from the United States Post Office to rent space in another building which constructed as a private investment. The level of architectural detail for a vernacular commercial building is high in this example. The integrity of this building also is high and adds to its importance. Wilson also constructed the Wilson Building at 106-108 South Court as a private investment. The Former U. S. Post Office stands next door to the Wilson Building which, in turn stands next to the former First National Bank Building. The bank building occupies a corner lot and is much altered in appearance.

The U. S. Post Office was previously located at the rear of a general store in Fairfield. Its relocation into a building of its own indicates the growing stature of Fairfield as a community. This new location was the first building leased in Fairfield for governmental purposes. The present post office in Fairfield is located 1-1/4 blocks west of Central Park.

 See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A	[1]5	[5]8]7]29]5	[4]5]3]9]9]0]0	B	[]]	[]]	[]]
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	[]]	[]]	[]]	D	[]]	[]]	[]]

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Block 18, Old Plat to the City of Fairfield, Jefferson County, Iowa. Beginning at the Southeast corner of said Lot; thence running North on the East line of said lot twenty-two (22) feet; thence West parallel with the South line of said lot twenty-two (22) feet; thence South parallel with the East line twenty-two (22) feet; thence East parallel with the North line twenty-two (22) feet to the point of beginning.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries given above contain all the land associated with this resource.

See continuation sheet

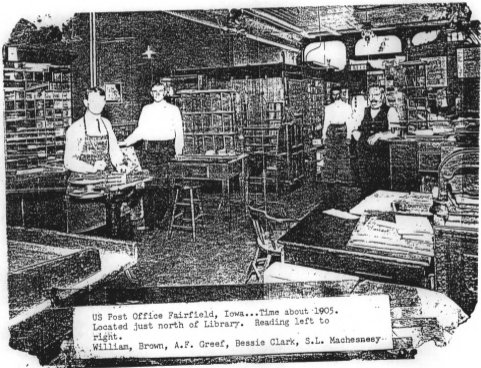
11. Form Prepared By

name/title W C Page, Public Historian
organization _____ date December 10, 1989
street & number 520 East Sheridan Avenue telephone 515/243-5740
city or town Des Moines state IA zip code 50313

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2



Interior of United States Post Office looking east with
attached typewritten information.
Photograph property Fairfield Public Library.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 2

CFN-259-1116

PRIMARY

Fairfield Ledger, 27 May 1875; p. 3, c. 5: "IMPROVEMENTS/In addition to the new buildings already mentioned on the south side another is to be erected by the First National Bank, to be used as a post office building. It is situated on the alley. Size 22x44, two stories high."

Fairfield Ledger, 22 July 1875; p. 3, c. 7. The transition to the new post office building will be on Saturday. The new building is a joint effort of James F. Wilson and the First National Bank. The new building measures 22'x44', 2-stories high with good cellar. First floor facade features iron columns.

Fairfield Weekly Ledger; 16 April 1879; p. 3: "...Mrs. Elizabeth McAllister, our only postmistress, who had her office in the rear of Clarke & Son's drug store. Jake Fox was the deputy, and together they ran the office until Jan. 15, 1875, when W. T. Burgess was appointed. In 1879, Mr. B. was reappointed, and is now our efficient official, with the office in the block south of the First National, the first building leased in Fairfield for governmental purposes."

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| October 1885: | present building shown as "P. O." |
| February 1892: | present building shown as "P. O." w/ office on second floor. |
| April 1899: | present building shown as "P. O." w/ addition at rear. |
| Nov. 1907 | present building shown as "Printing" w/addition at rear
w/usage unclear. Covered stairs shown on south elevation. |
| April 1913 | present building shown as "Printing" w/addition at rear
w/"Gasoline Engine 3hp". |
| January 1927 | Present building shown as "Express Off.", covered stairs, &
addition at rear. |

SECONDARY

Page, W. C.; Jefferson County, Iowa: An Historical Survey of Buildings; Typewritten MS; Area XV Cultural Resources Survey (Ottumwa, IA); 1980; pp. 170-2.

Architectural Survey Fairfield, Iowa; Typewritten MS; Area XV Cultural Resources Survey (Ottumwa, IA); 1981.