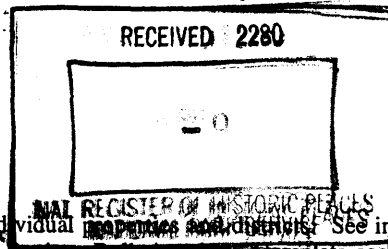


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



JUL 28 2006  
859

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" on the appropriate line or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name ELY SCHOOL HOUSE

other names/site number Ely Schoolhouse, Ely School

2. Location

street & number 1570 Rowley Street N/A not for publication

city or town Ely N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Linn code 113 zip code 52227

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ( nomination  request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ( meets  does not meet) the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ( nationally  statewide  locally). (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Donald A. Soule, Deputy SHPO August 3, 2006  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
**STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA**  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ( meets  does not meet) the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is :  
 entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  
 See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register.
- Other, (Explain)

Edson H. Beall 9.20.06  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

Ely School House  
Name of Property

Linn County, Iowa  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many lines as apply)

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

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one line)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>		Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/city hall

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> & 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/

Tudor Revival

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Stone/Slate

other Concrete

**Narrative Description**

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

Ely School House  
Name of Property

Linn County, Iowa  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" on one or more lines for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

**A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

**B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

**C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

**D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" on all the lines that apply)

Property is:

**A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

**B** removed from its original location.

**C** a birthplace or grave.

**D** a cemetery.

**E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

**F** a commemorative property.

**G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION

**Period of Significance**

1923-1958

**Significant Dates**

1923

1929

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Hatton, Norman

Banks, William

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

**9. Major Bibliography References**

**Bibliography**

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository

\_\_\_\_\_

Ely School House  
Name of Property

Linn County, Iowa  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreege of Property Less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 15 | 6 | 17 | 450 | 4 | 63 | 6265

Zone Easting Northing

2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | -

Zone Easting Northing

3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | -

Zone Easting Northing

4 | - | - | - | - | - | - | -

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title William C. Page, Public Historian; Clary Illian

organization Ely Historic Preservation Commission date February 2, 2006

street & number 520 East Sheridan Ave. (Page) telephone 515-243-5740

city or town Des Moines state IA zip code 50313-5017

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** - Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items** - (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Ely, Iowa

street & number 1570 Rowley Street telephone 319-848-4103

city or town Ely state IA zip code 52227

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

**SITE AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

Ely is a small, rural town located in the southeast corner of Linn County, Iowa. It nestles in the flood plain of Hoosier's Creek with farms surrounding in the uplands. Ely's population in 2000 numbered 1,149; in 1920, about the time the Ely School House was constructed, it stood at 174. Much of this population increase has occurred since the 1980s, when the community began to grow as a bedroom community for nearby Cedar Rapids, the county seat of Linn County and a major city and manufacturing center in Iowa.

Two frame school houses previously sat on the western edge of what was to become the present site of the Ely School House. An historic map pictures these two buildings. (See Continuation Sheet 7-6.) The north building was built in the fall of 1876 and the south building in 1885 or 1886. Both remained in use until the construction of the present building in 1923. The site for the new school was located east of these two earlier, nonextant buildings, which were later relocated a block and a half from this site. The Ely American Legion Quentin Post had been organized in 1921 in Ely. They purchased the two old buildings from the school district and subsequently relocated and used them as their meeting hall.

The Ely School House is built with its footprint skewed to the cardinal points of the compass. This orientation conforms, however, to the skewed orientation of Ely's original plat to these points. (See Continuation Sheet 7-7.)

Ely School House is set back from the public right-of-way and faces Rowley Street in a residential section of the town. The remaining portion of the site is given over to yard. A collection of outdoor play apparatus is situated to the southwest of the building and tennis courts are located to the west of the building. Hoosier's Creek is situated a little south of the property.

Originally constructed in 1923 and enlarged in 1929 with an addition, the Ely School House is a 2-story, brick veneer, public school building designed by Cedar Rapids architect Norman Hatton. The building is covered with a side gable roof and features a centrally placed, 1-story entryway. As originally erected, the building featured five classrooms. The 1929 addition enlarged the building with several new ones.

**EXTERIOR**

The Ely School House has two components. Its main block measures 53 x 41.5 feet with an enclosed, 1-story entry situated on the north elevation. The entry measures 12 x 6 feet. The second component, an addition attached to the west elevation of the main block, measures 21 x 28 feet.

The school house rests on a poured concrete and stone foundation. The walls of the building are frame covered with brownish-colored, striated brick. A steeply pitched, side-gable roof, clad with black slate, covers the main block. The entryway is covered with a flat roof.

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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

The addition repeats many of the architectural features of the main block, including poured concrete foundation, decorative brick bonding system for the exterior walls, side-gable, steeply pitched roof clad with black slate, and side gable parapet capped with cast concrete coping. The addition's roof intersects the west wall of the main block.

The exterior walls feature a system of American (or common) bonding, where five courses of stretcher rows alternate between one course of header rows. This system results in a solid wall, two stretcher rows thick without an intervening air cavity. All four walls of the main block feature this bonding technique. When the west wing was added to the building, this bonding system was repeated. The color of the mortar is natural throughout the building.

The front facade of the building features symmetrical fenestration. A pair of windows on the upper level stand at the center of the composition, flanked on each side by two single windows. The lower level of the building features two single windows flanking the centrally situated front entryway. The east and south elevations of the main block feature asymmetrical fenestration arrangements, as does the addition to the building. Originally, the building possessed 6/1, wood, double-hung sash. They have been replaced with 1/1 double-hung, vinyl sash. The original multi-pane transom above the front entrance remains intact. A louvered air vent is situated in both gable ends of the building. The window sills are of cast concrete, and the window lintels feature face brick laid in soldier courses.

The front entryway is the most architecturally developed exterior feature. It features a Tudor-arched double doorway surmounted by a multi-paned transom contained within cast concrete trim edged with header brick. The doorway is flanked by a pair of buttresses topped with cast concrete caps with beveled profiles. A cast concrete cornerstone, situated in the eastern buttress, records the names of the school board members at the time, the architect, and the contractor. A cast concrete belt course surrounds the entryway above the doorway. This in turn is surmounted with a crenellated parapet. A cast concrete name plaque, reading "Ely School" is centrally placed on this parapet. The building's present metal, double doors are replacements, but they repeat the divided-light doors similar in appearance to the original doors shown in historic photographs.

### **INTERIOR**

The interior of the Ely School features two floors, accessed by a foyer and central stairwell. The ground floor is situated partially below grade with an upper floor, sometimes called the "second floor," above it. (See Continuation Sheets 7-12 and 7-13.) There is no basement.

Although the foyer, stairwell, and general room configurations of the Ely School remain intact, the interior has been substantially altered. Some rooms have been divided with partitions, ceilings have been dropped, and original wall surfaces have been replastered. According to a 1975 newspaper account on the following page:

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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

young people in the community cleaned the building and nailed wire mesh to the walls before the plasterers began working, and the rest of the community has pitched in and painted, cleaned and helped wherever possible.

Plasterer and Steamfitter's union local 125 in Cedar Rapids did the plastering work for a 'very minimal fee,' Tjelmeland said. And, Dick Harger, employed by a contractor, lowered the ceilings in the building with volunteer help and materials furnished below cost by a Cedar Rapids firm. (Florence Winkler)

Virtually no original light or plumbing fixtures remain in place. The wooden door casements and doors are replacements. The original septic tank system for the building was later replaced with a public water system.

Double doors in the foyer stand between it and the stairwell. From the foyer, one walks into the open stairwell and its landing and proceeds either down a short flight of stairs to the ground floor or up a flight of doglegged stairs to the second floor.

The floor plan of the ground floor originally featured a hall, two classrooms, a furnace room, and boys and girls restrooms. When the west wing was added in 1929, one of the classrooms was enlarged. When the school was converted into a municipal building in the 1970s, a cloakroom off the west classroom was converted into a kitchen. The east classroom was subdivided into a hallway and a smaller room, and its cloakroom was converted into men and women's restrooms. The furnace room continues to function in that capacity today, although the building's original coal-burning furnace was replaced with natural gas. Ceilings are generally dropped with acoustical tile.

The upper floor originally contained three classrooms. When the building was enlarged, a fourth room, used as a classroom, was added on the west. A partition of folding wooden doors originally separated two of the rooms on the second floor, or they could be opened to convert the area into an assembly hall for the school. These wooden doors have been removed, and this area today is used as the chambers of the Ely city council. The Ely Community History Society now uses the northeast room as an archival depository. The west room houses the City Clerk's office.

The building is heated by an electrical system and is air-conditioned. Floors are generally softwood, covered with wall-to-wall carpeting.

Although the Ely school district actively sponsored boys and girls sports teams, the school house did not possess a gymnasium. Instead, the school used the American Legion Hall for practice. This facility was located one and a half blocks from the school building.

**RECENT USE**

Later occupants of the building included the College Community School District, which subsequently vacated the building in 1969. It remained unoccupied for two years. Then in 1971, the City of Ely

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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

explored the idea of converting the building into a multi-functional community center. The city acquired the property in 1972, when the community celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of its founding. Interior remodeling followed. The renovation was dedicated in August 1975 during a three-day celebration. Today, the Ely School House is used as a community and senior center, city office and council chambers, and archive room of the Ely Community History Society.

The community center is situated on the ground floor of the building. It houses a senior citizens room, a kitchen, the community center advisory board office, and restrooms. The Ely Optimists and Jaycees used the space for a while. Now, the Ely Rotary, 4-H, Girl Scouts and Cub Scouts use the building on a regular basis and, on occasion, the building is rented out for private parties and meetings. (Florence Winkler, Clary Illian) Offices for the City of Ely, including its council chamber, are located on the upper floor.

Following the conversion of the building in the 1970s, it housed the Ely Public Library on the upper floor. Recently, the city completed a new building on Dows Street for the public library as well as alterations in the Ely School House. The former library space in the Ely School House was reduced somewhat in size and converted into city council chambers. The Ely Community History Society now uses the northeast room on the upper floor as an archive room. The society plans to use walls throughout the building for museum displays.

## **INTEGRITY AND CONDITION**

### Integrity

The Ely School House possesses fine integrity. The building is located on its original site and its setting has been preserved without a reduction in size of the property or the construction of intrusive buildings. The land in front of the property remains an open lawn, as originally designed. The building's materials and workmanship remain substantially original, including exterior brickwork, black slate roof, and cast stone trim. Although the present 1/1 window light configuration does not conform to the building's original 6/1 design, the new windows match its double-hung sash and original window cavities. The floor plan of the building also retains the original layout of its public spaces, although that of the rooms themselves has been somewhat altered. The property's feeling and association with its historic events remain intact. Those individuals involved in these events would immediately recognize the building as it appears today.

### Condition

The Ely School House has been well maintained over the years and is in excellent condition. The building continues to fulfill its historic role as the center of the community's public life and remains a symbol of civic pride.



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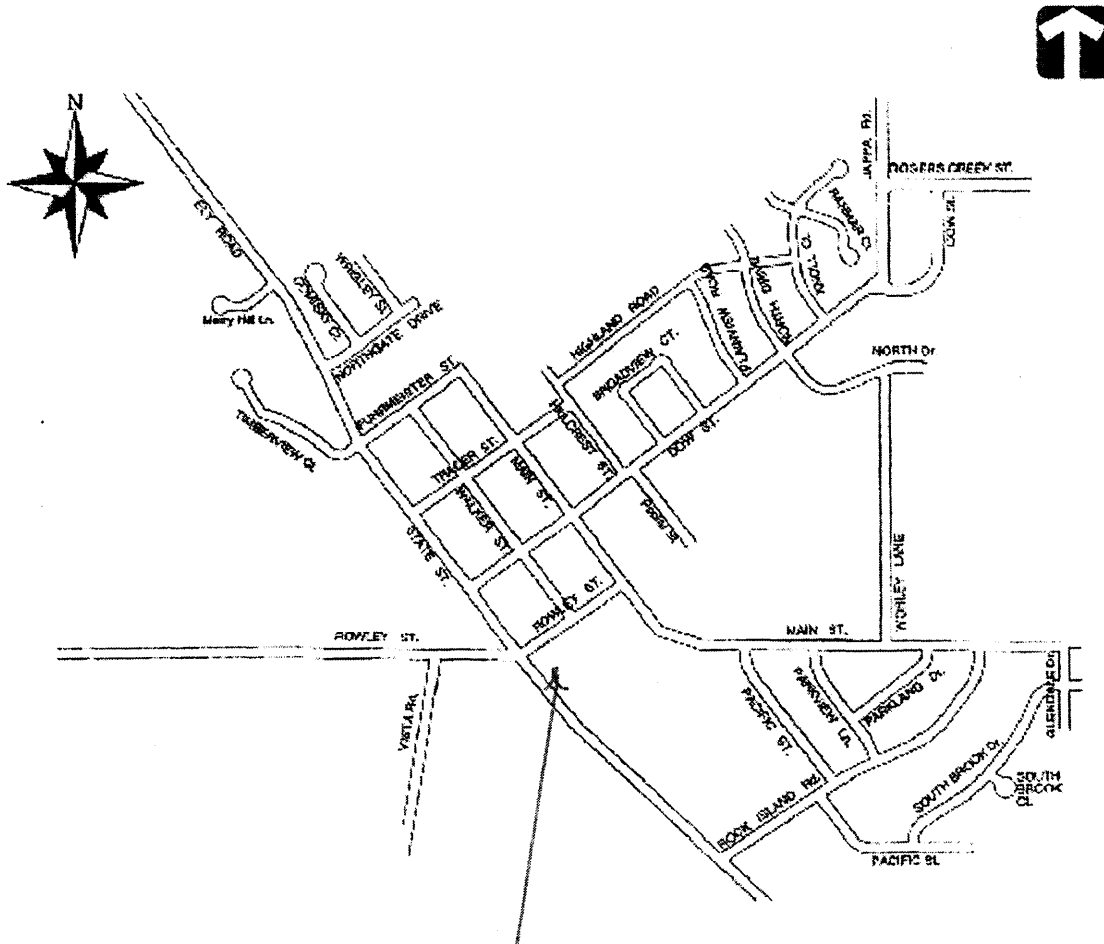
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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

## LOCATION MAP ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



Source: [www.southslope.com/ely.htm](http://www.southslope.com/ely.htm), Viewed February 1, 2006.

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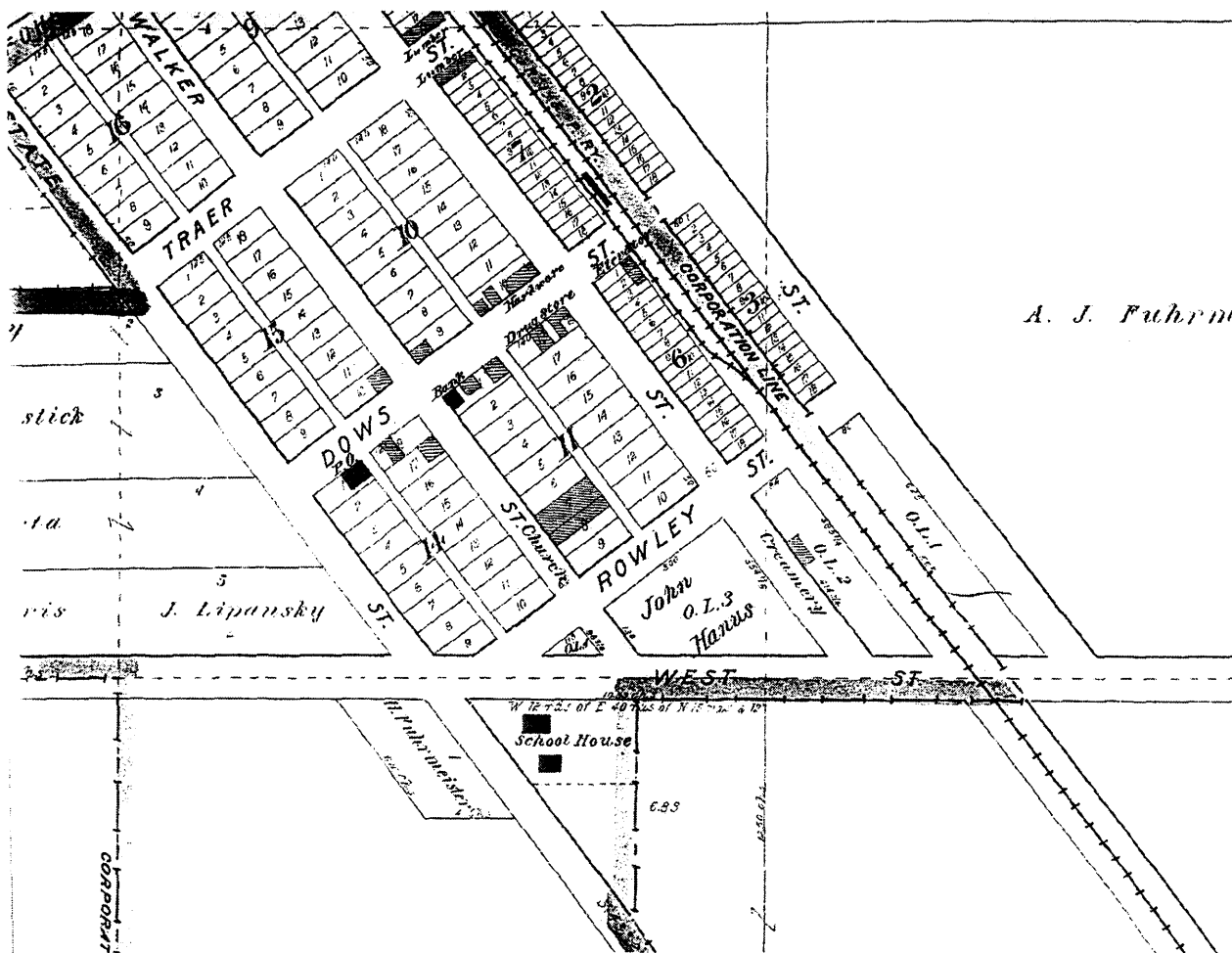
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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

# SITE MAP

1907



Solid arrow locates Outlot 4 and site of school house, showing the two earlier school houses which stood on the site.

Source: *Atlas of Linn County, Iowa, 1907.*

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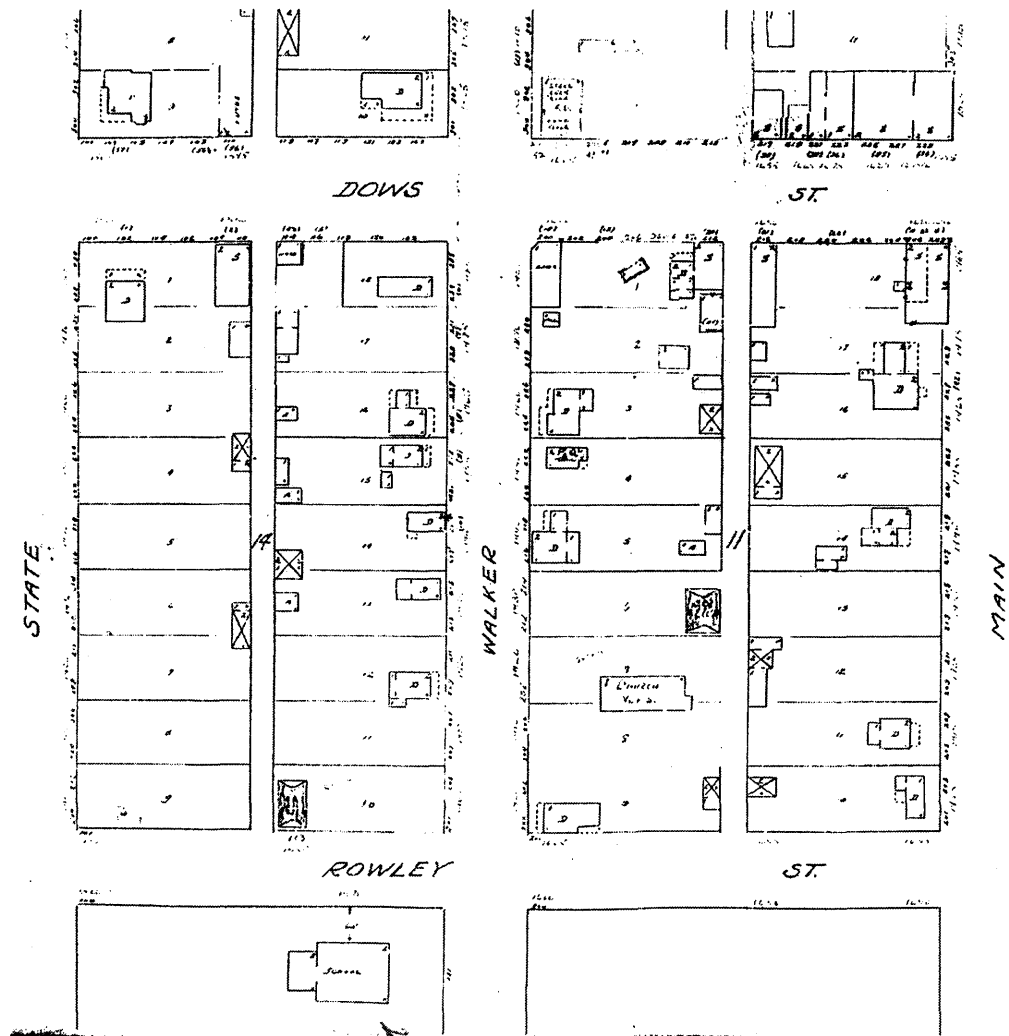
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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

## FIRE INSURANCE MAP

1934



Solid arrow locates Ely School House.

Source: Sanborn Map Company, Ely, Iowa, 1934.



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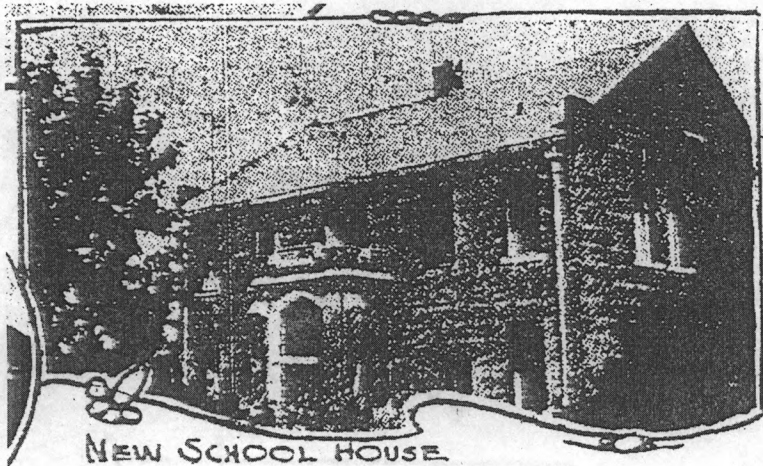
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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

**HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPH**

1923



Source: *The Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette*, August 4, 1923.

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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

**HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPH CIRCA 1925**



Source: Ely Historic Preservation Commission.

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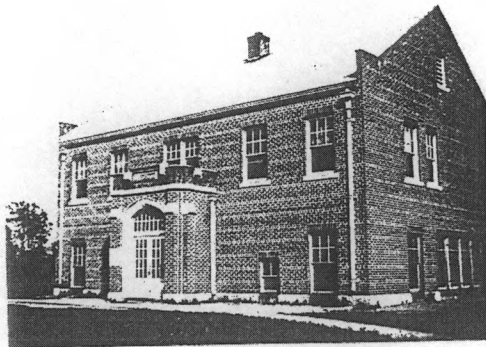
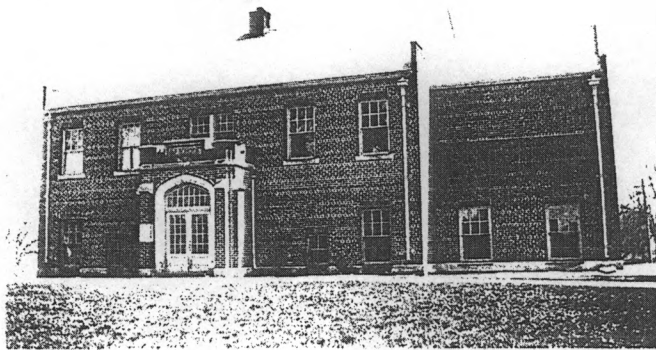
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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

## HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS



Ely School House with 1929 addition (top) and without it (bottom).

Source: Ely Historic Preservation Commission.

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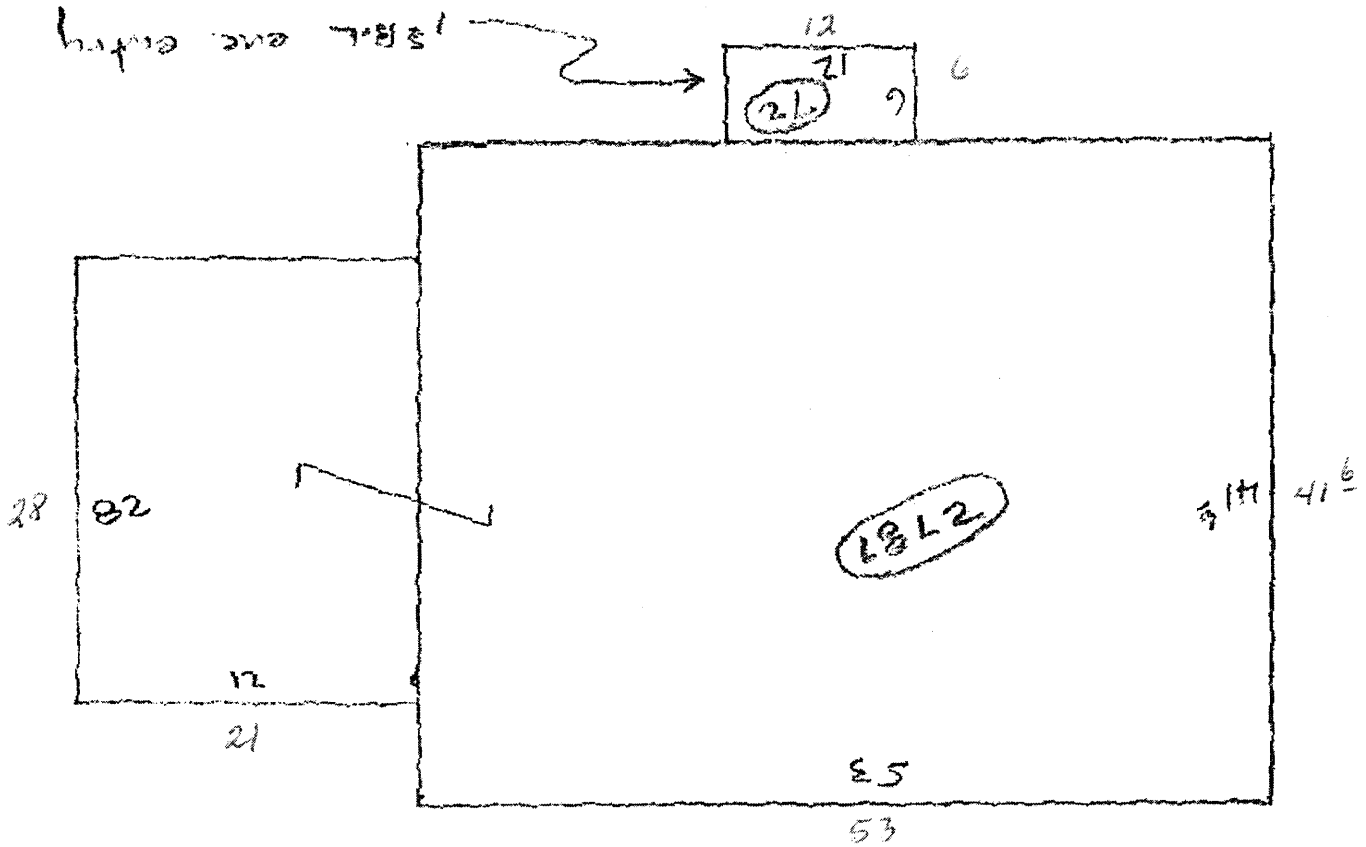
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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

FOOTPRINT



The entryway to the building is centrally situated on the north facade,  
not slightly skewed to the west as on this sketch.

Source: Linn County Assessor's Office, 2006



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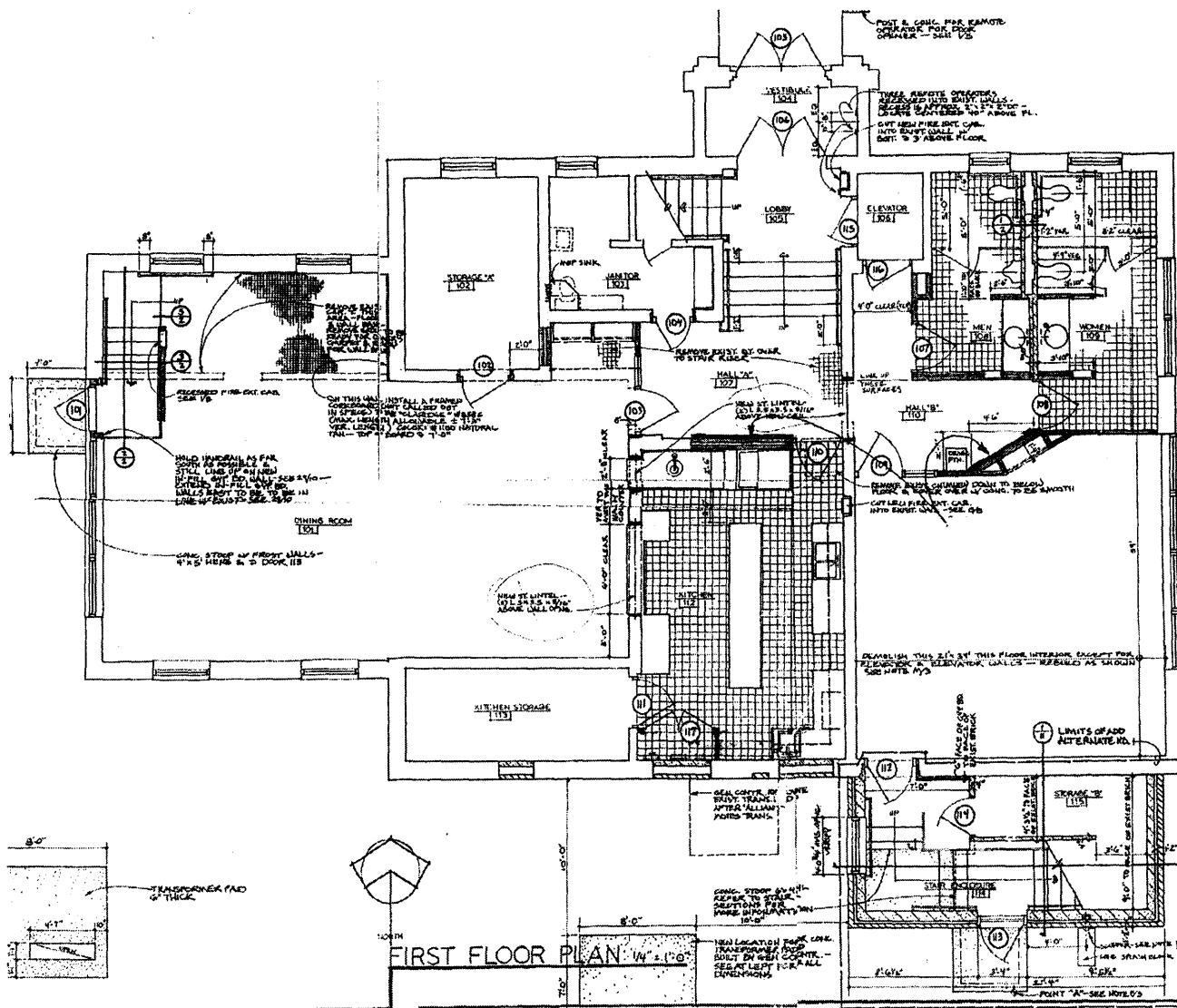
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## LOWER FLOOR SKETCH



The stair tower, shown in the lower right on this plan, was not built.





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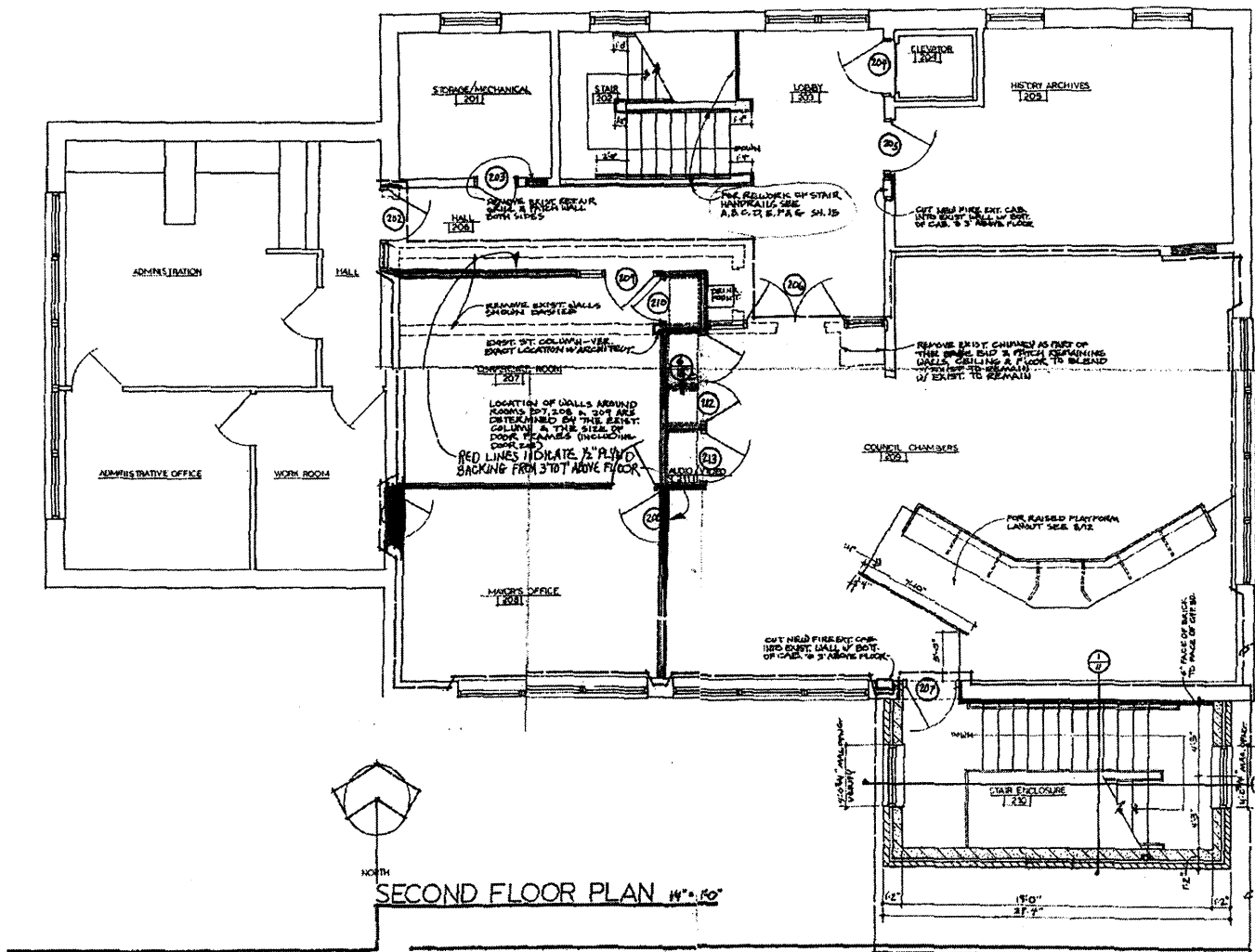
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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

## UPPER FLOOR SKETCH



The stair tower, shown in the lower right on this plan, was not built.

Source: Ely Historic Preservation Commission, 2005

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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

**SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Built in 1923 and enlarged in 1929, the Ely School House is National Register eligible, under Criterion A, as a tangible expression of community development and education in Ely. The building remains the most significant reminder of the town's early 20th century civic boosterism, when, through the initiative and support of local business leaders, Ely flowered as a "wide awake" and Progressive community.

The Ely School House is locally significant, under National Register Criterion C. Norman Hatton, an Englishman by birth and education who relocated to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, designed the building. The edifice calls attention to Hatton's use of Tudor Revival styling for the construction of a small school house and to his ability in efficient architectural design, both redolent of his British roots.

The period of significance, under Criterion A, is 1923 through 1958, the time when boosterism stimulated the erection of the building and it functioned as a school house before consolidation rendered that use redundant in 1958. This extension of the National Register 50-year rule by two years is justified because it avoids an otherwise arbitrary cut-off date. The period of significance, under Criterion C, is 1923 through 1929, the time when the building was completed.

The property contains one resource for this nomination, the school house itself, which is contributing and classified as a building.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Boosterism

The passage of a bond referendum for the construction of the Ely School House was largely the result of boosterism by local entrepreneurs; and, as such, the Ely School House stands as a tangible reminder of the civic spirit of Ely's business community during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Originally platted in 1872 by the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern Railroad and settled as a town soon thereafter, largely by Bohemian immigrants, Ely prospered as a small market center for the surrounding countryside. The business acumen of the Bohemians played an important role in this prosperity. During the Golden Age of Agriculture at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a spirit of cooperation among Ely's local businessmen further fueled the community's economic and social prosperity. (Page 2002a: 21-27, 30-32)

Boosterism among Ely's business leaders moved through several phases in the community's history. A National Register nomination of the Dows Street Historic District in 2002 pointed out an early phase, which focused on commercial improvement. During the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Ely witnessed commercial expansion and new construction in its commercial center. (*Ibid.*: Page 2002b: E-9 – E-17)

In the 1920s, boosterism in Ely manifested itself in another phase. Business leaders expanded the scope of their efforts to promote civic betterment in other areas. The establishment of a local telephone

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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

company and a municipal light and power plant circa 1920 illustrates this spirit as applied to public utilities. The construction of the Ely School House shows this spirit as applied to public education. This spirit of civic betterment exemplifies on the local level the broader context of reform and improvement, now known as Progressive Movement, which swept the country led by the Midwest.

Ely was known as "wide awake." A feature story, liberally illustrated with photographs and published by the *Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette* in 1923, showcased the town's "New School House" as a prime example.

With a good school, three lodges, the Odd Fellows, C.S.P.S. and Z.C.B.J., the American Legion and a loyal and public spirited group of business men, Ely and its community proves to be wide awake, progressive and filling well its place as one of the smaller towns of the county. (*The Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette*, August 4, 1923)

The story further noted that:

Ely is also going to be rightfully proud of its new school house which is now under construction with prospects of being completed early in September in time for the opening of the regular school year. A \$22,000 bond issue was voted by the people of the district last January and the cost of the building, including equipment, will come well within that figure, possibly \$20,000, according to Mr. Stanek, president of the board.

Norman Hatton of Cedar Rapids is the architect and engineer of the building, and William Banks of Durant the general contractor. Work was started in May.

The school is for this district only and will house the grades and junior high school, the course here going only through the tenth grade.

Members of the school board in addition to Mr. Stanek and Mr. Krob already mentioned, are Charles Sladek, George Lorenc and James Smyth, Joseph Holets is secretary of the board. (*Ibid.*)

The feature also contained vignette photographs of the school house (see Continuation Sheet 8) and portraits of Samuel Fackler and Mrs. Chris Fuhrmeister, pioneer residents of the area; Mayor F. J. Krob; J. C. Dvorak, a hardware and equipment merchant and former mayor of the community; the business street in Ely; and the grain elevator and Woitishek Commercial Block; and the first building in Ely. *The Gazette* emphasized that the town possessed its own public electrical light plant, another indication of Ely as "wide awake" and prosperous in 1923.

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**EDUCATION**

The Ely School House provides a fine example of how a local, predominantly Czech community educated its children. This story is particularly interesting because most Czech settlers in Iowa were Roman Catholic by faith and supported parochial schools. In contrast, the Czechs in Ely and the surrounding countryside were Protestant. (Rogers and Page: 2-14 – 2-15) This explains their support for public schools. Established in 1856, St. John's Lutheran Church is the major church in the area today, although other Protestant churches in the countryside have served the rural community historically. (*Ibid.*) There is no Catholic parish. St. John's grew during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries as Czech settlers emigrated from Protestant strongholds in Bohemia to Ely. Pockets of Protestantism remained in Bohemia since its conversion to Protestantism during the Reformation in spite of the Counter Reformation, which subsequently returned most of that land to Rome.

This historic context explains why lay leadership in Ely played such an important role in the construction of the Ely School House in the 1920s. American Protestants traditionally have supported public education, and the residents of Ely followed this pattern. Had the community been Catholic, a parochial school system would likely have evolved, as in nearby Cedar Rapids and Iowa City.

The 1923 Ely School House replaced several earlier buildings. The first school in the area had been erected in 1850, followed by another rural school in 1854. After the establishment of Ely as a town in 1872, a new, one-room, frame building was built in 1876 near the site of the present school building. A second one-room, frame building followed in 1886. These two buildings continued to provide public education in Ely into the early 1920s. (*Ely Centennial Book*: 48)

By the early 1920s, these facilities had become outmoded and insufficient for the school district's needs. As noted above, a bond referendum in 1923 approved the construction of a new building. According to one account:

The summer of 1923 found the Ely school district awaiting completion of the new school house. Construction was completed in time for the opening of the regular school year in early September. A \$22,000 bond issue was voted by the people of the district in January 1923. This included the cost of the building and equipment. Norman Hatton of Cedar Rapids, was the architect and engineer of the building with William Banks of Durant [Iowa] the general contractor. Work was started on the new building in May of 1923. The new school was two story of brick and concrete construction. (*Ibid.*: 50)

William Banks of Durant, Iowa, served as the general contractor for the building. His \$14,338.00 bid was the lowest for the specified worked and one among 12 bidders for it.

An historic photograph pictures 48 students and teachers lined up in front of the new building. (See Continuation Sheet 7-9.)

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Following the erecting of the addition to the building in 1929, Ely expanded its curriculum to include the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. According to a 1928 newspaper account:

The Ely Board of Education wish to announce to the Ely Community that the 11<sup>th</sup> grade will be added to our present high school and every good indication of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade the following year. All we ask of our community is to boast and support our school with their students. We will see that the school meets all requirements in A-1 shape and be a credit to our community. The Ely Board of Education. (*Solon Economist*)

The school board fulfilled its pledge, the community responded, and Ely High School held its first commencement exercises in 1930.

Ely continued as a four year high school system until May 1946 when it graduated its last class. The high school was closed and the Ely district continued to provide education through the eighth grade. In 1958 the Ely school district consolidated with Swisher, Shueyville and several other area districts, forming College Community Schools with its campus near the south edge of Cedar Rapids. (*Ibid.*: 51)

Although outside the period of significance for this nomination, the contemporary history of the Ely School House attests to its continued significance for the development of the community. Following its closing as a school, the building stood vacant and subsequently was placed on the market for sale:

A businessman from Iowa City named Glyde Miller bought the building from College Community School District at auction on January 7, 1972. The City of Ely bid against him but decided during the auction that they would exercise the right of eminent domain to condemn and acquire the property. Further bidding participation by the city would have established an acknowledgement of a specific value so they stopped bidding. Miller paid \$10,500 for the building. The city did condemn and acquire the building, ultimately paying \$17,500 for the building and \$4,000 to \$5,000 in legal fees. The city bought the building on December 20<sup>th</sup>, 1973. (Tom Tjelmeland informant interview)

The city subsequently formed the Ely Community Center Advisory Board, which held its first meeting on August 23, 1973. It was responsible in cooperation with the Ely City Council to develop and implement plans to convert the school into a community center. During the 1972 Ely Centennial Celebration, the community raised initial funding for the project. The board kept scrupulous records, including minutes of their meetings and work project records.

As can be seen from this account, the renovation of the Ely School House in the early 1970s rekindled the spirit, whose force was largely responsible for the original construction of the building. As then-mayor Tom Tjelmeland later recounted:

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But more than just a building, the volunteerism and the center have had a real impact on the people getting to know one another. There's something about working together to build a better community which uplifts everybody's spirits. (Winkler)

Following the renovation of the Ely School House, local residents formed Jaycee and Optimist organizations, and Tjelmeland credited the school renovation project for helping stimulate their establishment. Although both of these organizations are now defunct in Ely, a local Rotary club was organized circa 2000.

**NORMAN HATTON**

Designed by British-trained architect Norman Hatton, the Ely School House shows the influence of his training at the Manchester School of Technology in Manchester, England. The Ely School House calls attention to Hatton's historicism, his British heritage, and Tudor Revival styling used in an unusual way for a school building.

Background

Norman Hatton (1885-1962) was born in Buxton, England. (See Continuation Sheet 8-24.) Hatton studied at the Manchester School of Technology from 1902 to 1906, a time when Arts and Crafts and industrial design flourished in this North of England manufacturing center. Hatton subsequently emigrated to Canada and worked there from 1911 to 1914. (Iowa Architects Files) He later worked in New York and Ohio and in Chicago from 1914 to 1919. (Shank: 79)

Architectural historian Wesley I. Shank has noted that, upon relocating to Cedar Rapids, Iowa:

Hatton formed the firm of Hatton, Klein & Holmes (William J. Klein, S. E. Holmes) in Cedar Rapids on March 15, 1919. The firm dealt with general engineering, architecture, machinery layouts, heating and ventilating, and industrial engineering. On January 1, 1920, Klein withdrew, and in May 1921 C. B. Anthony was added, making the firm Hatton, Holmes & Anthony. This firm was dissolved on August 17, 1922, when Hatton bought out his partners' interests. Except for a short association with H. E. Hunter from 1924 to 1925, Hatton practiced alone afterward. He was registered to practice by exemption in 1927 and maintained his registration until 1957. (*Ibid.*)

Hatton died in Avon Lake, Ohio, in 1962. His obituary read:

Norman Hatton, 76, former Cedar Rapids resident and an architect for more than 35 years, died Saturday at Avon Lake, Ohio, where he and his wife had resided since 1957. Surviving are his wife, a daughter, and a granddaughter. He was a life member of the

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Cedar Rapids Stamp club and was founder of the Iowa Postal History Society. He was affiliated with St. John's Episcopal church. Services will be Tuesday at Avon Lake. (*Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 1962)

Norman Hatton's oeuvre in Iowa includes the following designs. All of them remain extant except as noted.

Name	Location	Building Type	Construction Date	Notes
Cherry-Burrell Corp.	Cedar Rapids 325 Tenth Ave. SE	factory	1927	See Continuation Sheet 8-26
Universal Crusher Co.	Cedar Rapids	factory		Extant
Wenceslas Hall St. Wenceslas R. C. Church	Cedar Rapids	social hall		Bohemian client
Ideal Yeast Co.	Cedar Rapids	factory		Nonextant
Hutchinson Co.	Cedar Rapids	ice cream plant		Extant
Petersen Baking Co.	Cedar Rapids 300 block Sixth Ave. SE	bakery		See Continuation Sheet 8-27
Penick & Ford Ltd.	Cedar Rapids	industrial bldgs.		5 building complex
Reservoir	Cedar Rapids	public works		More research required
Economy Advertising Co.	Iowa City 119-123 N. Linn	printing plant		NRHP (1986)
St. Wenceslas High School & Gymnasium	Cedar Rapids	educational		Bohemian client, extant
Ely School House	Ely 1570 Rowley St.	educational	1923	Tudor Revival brick, extant
Commonwealth Apartments	Cedar Rapids	residential	1924-25	Hatton & Hunter design
House & Office	320 North Main Sigourney	mixed use	undetermined	Designed as a doctor's office & residence

Source: Iowa Architects Files, Iowa State Inventory, and National Register reports, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

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Additional research discovered additional Hatton commissions. In the late 1920s, Hatton designed St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Anamosa, Iowa. (See Continuation Sheet 8-25.) This design gained national attention. In 1930, the design won a competition, sponsored by *The Christian Herald*, to tour the United States in an exhibit of church architecture. (Cummins) Hatton's design also gained local attention. In 1944, St. Luke's Methodist Church in the nearby rival town of Monticello, Iowa, commissioned Cram & Ferguson of New York City, one of the nation's premier architectural firms, to design a new church. (Page 2001) The result resembled Hatton's in Anamosa in scale, style, and materials. The Monticello Methodists wanted in spades what the Anamosa Episcopalians already had, and they got it.

In 1949, Hatton designed Kenwood Elementary School. (See Continuation Sheet 8-28.) Located at 3700 E Avenue NE in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, this building was the fourth local school house to bear the Kenwood name. It remains in operation to the present day as a facility of the Cedar Rapids Community School System. Hatton's work for the Kenwood building included its design and overseeing its construction. His fee for the work totaled \$38,069.20. (Lundine email 2006) Much different in design from the Ely School House, the Kenwood building is a large, steel frame structure with brick curtain walls, and flat roof—more like his industrial rather than his period revival designs.

Industrial design figures prominently in Hatton's oeuvre, as the above list shows. It seems likely that Hatton's training, experience, and ability in this field attracted him to Cedar Rapids, where architects could find fertile opportunity to develop new practices. Cedar Rapids experienced a manufacturing boom following World War I, and the demand for new factory buildings burgeoned. Within a few years of his arrival in 1919, Hatton had made his mark in Cedar Rapids as a talented industrial designer.

Ely School House

Within the context of Norman Hatton's designs, the Ely School House is a fine example of his work as applied to a small school. The building's emphasis on efficiency reveals Hatton's training at the Manchester School of Technology, and his idiosyncratic manipulation of Tudor Revival styling calls additional attention to his British background.

Hatton's floor plan for the school features a compact and efficient layout. Rather than a double-loaded hall, which might be presupposed viewing the building's exterior, this floor plan avoids wasted space by combining the building's central stairwell and hall into one unit. This design remains extant, although some of the room partitions on the lower and upper stories have been rearranged.

To add further efficiency to the building, Hatton designed combined rooms on the upper floor. The large space on the south side of the building could be used for two classrooms, or folding wooden doors between them could be opened for use as an auditorium. Camilla Deiber and Peggy Beedle have described how nationally-prominent architects in the 1920s popularized the concept of combined rooms for school houses in small towns (*Town Schools for Iowa*: 13), so Hatton's design for Ely shows the application of a progressive architectural principle emerging in America, as well as his concern for and



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ability to achieve cost and spatial economy, two hallmarks of industrial design in England at the time of his training.

The Ely School House shows the influence of Tudor Revival styling in its steeply pitched, side gable roof and in its parapets, and brick bonding. But Hatton's employment of a steeply pitched roof for the Ely School House is quite dissimilar to the multitude of other Tudor Revival-influenced schools erected in Iowa during the 1920s. While Tudor Revival residences commonly feature steep roofs, Tudor Revival schools in Iowa usually feature flat roofs. The Ely School House is unusual in this respect, and Hatton's British background can be seen in its design. English schools before World War II tended to look like residences. American schools tended to look like public buildings and still do.

The parapets, which flank the side gable roof of the Ely School House, also show the influence of Tudor Revival styling as practiced in Britain in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Each gable end of the Ely School House features a parapet. Surmounted with cast concrete coping, these parapets add height to the design and accent the steep pitch of the roof. Although parapeted gables are a recognized motif of Tudor Revival styling for American buildings, the gable ends of most of them are plain or feature vergeboards. According to Virginia and Lee McAlester:

PARAPETED GABLES—This distinctive subtype [of eclectic Tudor] is based on the more formal English building traditions of Late Medieval times. In these, the walls of the characteristic front-facing gables rise in a parapet above the roof behind. In side-gabled examples the principle gables are usually similarly parapeted. (McAlester: 356)

Hatton's employment for parapets at Ely seems to reflect his British heritage.

Patterned brickwork is a hallmark of Medieval architecture. During the 1920s, various Flemish, English, and other decorative brick bonding techniques became popular in the United States to imitate Tudor architecture. For the Ely School House, Hatton chose a modified English bonding system. Known as American or common bond, this variant alternates one row of header brick with five rows of stretcher brick, rather than the English system of header and stretcher rows alternating one by one. (McAlester: 39) Although popular in America during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, American Common Bond, as it was also known, had become old-fashioned by the 1920s. Hence, Hatton's use of this bonding technique not only adds visual texture to the wall surfaces and breaks up its massing, it also lends an historicist touch to the building. A photograph of the school, taken soon after its completion, clearly pictures the decorative effect of this brickwork. (See Continuation Sheet 7-9.)

Hatton's original design for the building included fenestration with 6/1 double-hung sash. These windows added visual interest to the walls and relieved them of any feeling of heaviness. Regrettably, these windows have been replaced with 1/1 sash. Perhaps a future generation will see them reconstructed. Fortunately, the multi-paned transom above the main entrance to the building remains intact.

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Finally, Hatton's commission for the Ely Independent School District reveals his close connection with the Bohemian community in Linn County. His two commissions for St. Wenceslas Roman Catholic Church in Cedar Rapids and his commission in Ely evidence a respect for his work among his Bohemian clients. As a thrifty people and business-minded, the Bohemians are known to expect value for their money; and, to his credit, Hatton seems to have provided it.

Dates of Construction

Multiple sources document the construction date of the Ely School House main block, including a newspaper article and school board minutes, as outlined above.

Dating the construction of the addition was more difficult to pinpoint. Initial research located a newspaper article, dated April 12, 1928, in which the Ely Board of Education announced the addition of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade to the school's curriculum in 1928 and that of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade in 1929. Ely School records were then discovered, which documented the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades meeting in the building for the first time in September 1929. (*Attendance Record Book #575*)

Further attempts to document the addition's construction came to dead-end. No records were found about a bond issue election for the new addition. No school board minutes were found for the years in question. No information was found in the *Cedar Rapids Gazette* for the warm months (logical building months) of the years in question. Then, an unsigned document, entitled "Ely Community and Friendship Club," was discovered in the papers of former Ely mayor Nevin Duffe. This response to a request for information by the Linn County Task Force stated that:

In 1923 the Ely Independent School District built a new school and added an addition in 1929. (Anonymous)

This unexpected discovery confirmed what we had supposed; and, although written by an unnamed source, its other historical information was accurate and gave further credence to the 1929 date. The State Historical Society of Iowa in Iowa City has ordered microfilm of the *Hawkeye Record* from Mount Vernon, Iowa, for 1928 and 1929. Perhaps this newspaper, which published stories about nearby Ely, will contain additional information about the construction of the addition.

Historic Name

Although modern preference favors "schoolhouse" for the spelling of this term, the historical record documenting the Ely building usually spells it "school house." This nomination uses that spelling.

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**REPRESENTATION IN OTHER CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEYS AND METHODOLOGY**

In 2004, William C. Page, Public Historian, in conjunction with the Ely Historic Preservation Commission undertook a Technical Advisory Network (TAN) consultation focused on the Ely School House. This consultation included an inspection of the building by Page on December 13, 2003. Clary Illian, chair of the Ely Historic Preservation Commission, and Michael Murray assisted in it. This TAN consultation followed-up an intensive survey of Ely undertaken by Page in 1996 with the assistance of consultant Leah D. Rogers. That survey determined that the Ely School House was potentially eligible for nomination to the National Register under Criteria A and C.

Ralph J. Christian, Historian, and Barbara A. Mitchell, Architectural Historian of the State Historical Society of Iowa, reviewed in preliminary fashion the results of the TAN consultation on January 6, 2004 and concurred that the Ely School House was National Register eligible under Criteria A and C. Elizabeth Foster Hill, National Register Coordinator, issued a Determination of Eligibility Certification for the building that same day.

Then, in 2005, the Ely Historic Preservation Commission received a grant from the Historic Resources Development Program (HRDP) of the State Historical Society of Iowa to underwrite the cost to prepare a National Register nomination of the property. The commission subsequently contracted with Page for the work.

**POTENTIAL FOR HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY**

The site's potential for archaeological significance is, as yet, unevaluated. Historical archaeological investigations may uncover traces of previous construction on the site—such as privies for the earlier school houses or, indeed, those buildings themselves. Such sites may remain intact, since later construction has not disturbed the site.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND REGISTRATION**

Additional research is recommended to discover the architect who designed the addition to the Ely School House. Although Norman Hatton might have been responsible for it, this has yet to be proven.

Norman Hatton deserves further research into his life and work with the potential for many additional National Register nominations in Linn County and elsewhere in Iowa.

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**NORMAN HATTON**

**1931**



**NORMAN HATTON.**

Source: *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, [unknown date] 1931.

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**ST. MARK'S PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
ANAMOSA**

**BUILT IN 1929**



Hardendorf photo; Tru-Art cut

**ST. MARK'S PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH AT ANAMOSA.**

*The Cedar Rapids Gazette* featured Norman Hatton and his work, when a "mount," or display board, of this church designed by him was selected in 1931 by the *Christian Herald* to tour the nation as a prize display. *The Gazette* headlined this feature "St. Mark's Church At Anamosa Recognized As Distinctive Design In National Exhibit."

Source: *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, [unknown date] 1931.

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### INDUSTRIAL DESIGN BY HATTON



CHERRY-BURRELL BUILDINGS,  
(LEFT) WAREHOUSE, (RIGHT) FACTORY

Hatton designed five buildings for the Cherry-Burrell Corporation. The firm manufactured equipment and supplies for the dairy industry. Its factory in Cedar Rapids (above) was located at 325 Tenth Avenue SE.

Source: "Owned and Leased Properties," Collins Radio Pamphlet, c. 1934.



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## INDUSTRIAL DESIGN BY HATTON

CIRCA 1925



Peter Pan bread trucks are lined up in front of the bakery in the 300 block of Sixth Avenue SE. (Photo from Fred Patten, Cedar Rapids)

Hatton's design for the Petersen Baking Company in Cedar Rapids features prominent, cast concrete detailing on the front facade (building on right), as on the facade of the Cherry-Burrell Corporation factory. (See previous page.)

Source: Ely Historic Preservation Commission.

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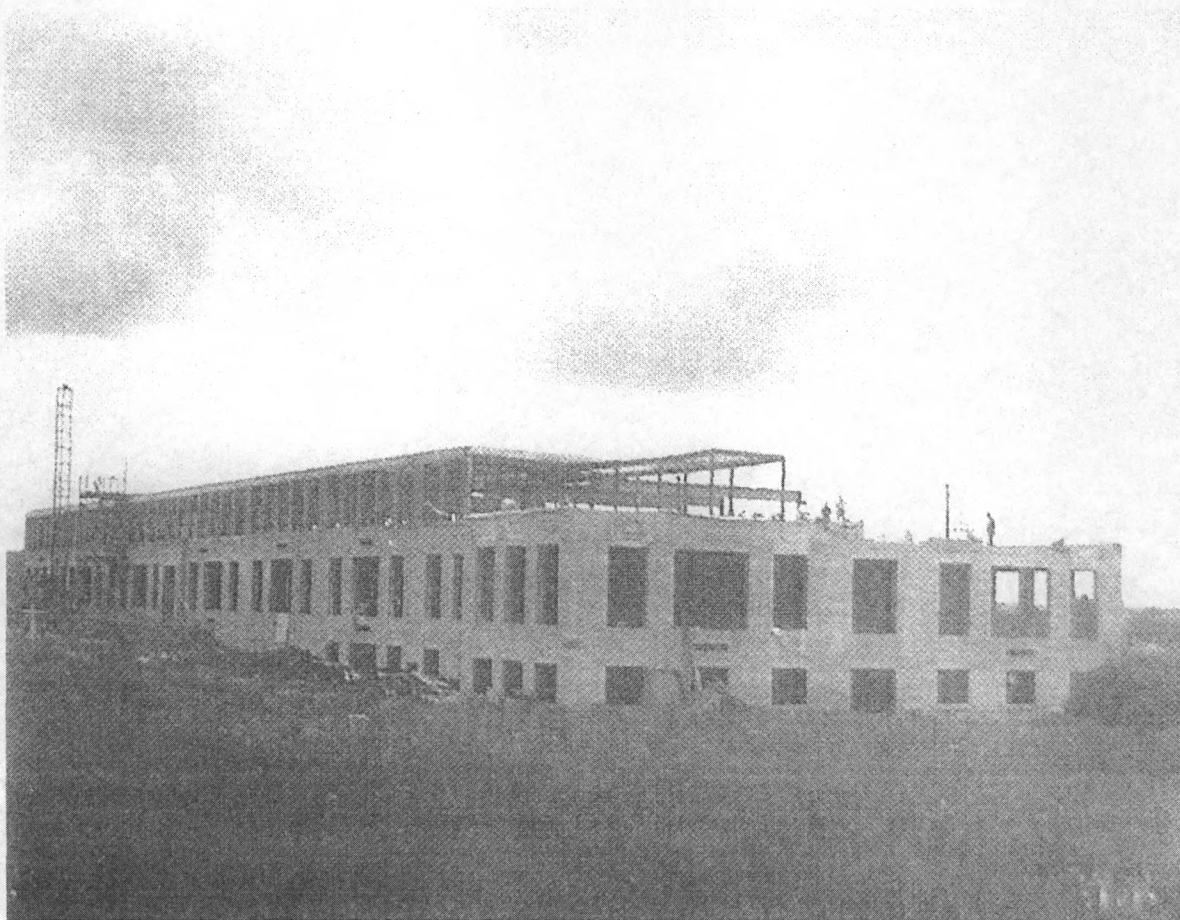
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**EDUCATIONAL DESIGN BY HATTON**



Designed by Norman Hatton, Kenwood Elementary School is shown here under construction in 1949. Hatton designed and oversaw the construction of the building for the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, school district. Located at 3700 E Avenue NE in Cedar Rapids, the building remains in use to the present day.

Source: Courtesy Cindy Lundine, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.



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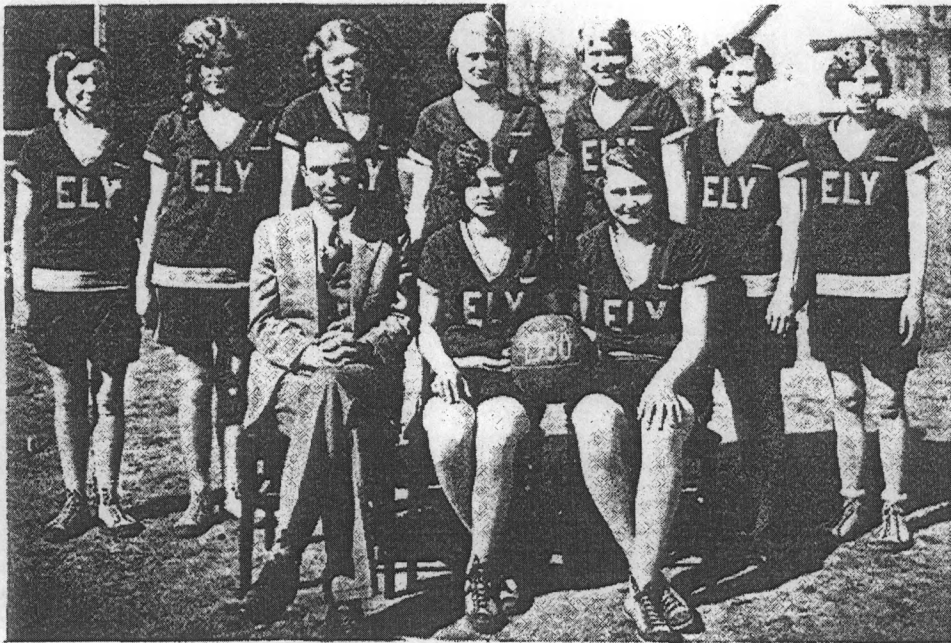
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### ELY HIGH SCHOOL

1929-1930



GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM 1930

The names captioned for this picture—Florence Netolicky, Gladys Holets, Helen Sladek, Alma Netolicky, Lillian Swenka, Kathryn Netolicky, Adelaide Swenka, Georgia Jirasek, and Adeline Horak—tell of Ely's heavily Bohemian population, but the parents of these young women have selected standard American names for their daughters, indicative of a desire to assimilate.

“Team record for 1929-1930 was eight wins and four losses.”

Source: *Ely Centennial Book*, p. 51.

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**ORAL HISTORY**

Illian, Clary, with William C. Page, 2005-2006. Illian, who is chair of the Ely Historic Preservation Commission, shared information about the school house and her knowledge of it.

Tjelmeland, Tom, with Clary Illian, June 6, 2005. Tjelmeland, who was mayor of Ely in the 1970s, shared information about the manner in which the City of Ely acquired the Ely School House in 1973.

Miller, Jim, Orville Meskinen, and Dick Harger, with Clary Illian, June 19, 2002. Miller, as chair of the construction committee and Meskinen and Harger as members of its, shared information about the adaptive reuse of the Ely School House as a city hall and community building.

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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

**MAPS**

Andreas, A. T.

1875 *Andreas Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa.* Chicago. A. T. Andreas  
Atlas Company.

Iowa Publishing Company

1907 *Atlas of Linn County, Iowa.* Davenport, Iowa.

Sanborn Map Company

1934 "Ely, Iowa." New York City.

United States Geological Survey (USGS)

1976 "Ely Quadrangle Topographic Map." Washington, D.C.; 1956 map photorevised in  
1976.

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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Ely Out Lot 4 in the Town of Ely, Iowa.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

Contains all land historically associated with the school house.

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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

## LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Ely School House  
1570 Rowley Street  
Ely, IA 52227  
Looking south  
Clary Illian, Photographer  
March 10, 2006
2. Ely School House  
1570 Rowley Street  
Ely, IA 52227  
Looking west  
Clary Illian, Photographer  
March 10, 2006
3. Ely School House  
1570 Rowley Street  
Ely, IA 52227  
Looking north  
Clary Illian, Photographer  
March 10, 2006
4. Ely School House  
1570 Rowley Street  
Ely, IA 52227  
Looking east  
Clary Illian, Photographer  
March 10, 2006
5. Ely School House  
1570 Rowley Street  
Ely, IA 52227  
Detail of front entrance  
Looking southwest  
Clary Illian, Photographer  
March 10, 2006
6. Ely School House  
1570 Rowley Street  
Ely, IA 52227  
Interior detail, stairwell at grade looking south west  
Clary Illian, Photographer  
March 10, 2006

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Ely School House, Linn County, Iowa.

7. Ely School House  
1570 Rowley Street  
Ely, IA 52227  
Interior detail, stairwell at grade looking northeast  
Clary Illian, Photographer  
March 10, 2006