

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions 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 HOTEL BURLINGTON  
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 206 NORTH THIRD STREET  not for publication  
city, town BURLINGTON  vicinity  
state IOWA code 019 county DES MOINES code 057 zip code 52601

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	1	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		objects
		1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

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 set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.  
Signature of certifying official *James S. Jacob* Date 12/1/87  
Bureau of Historic Preservation  
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.  
 determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.  
 determined not eligible for the National Register.  
 removed from the National Register.  
 other, (explain:)

*Alanna Byrne* Entered in the National Register 12-31-87

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Hotel \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
work in progress

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

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Second Renaissance Revival \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete \_\_\_\_\_  
walls \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof \_\_\_\_\_  
other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The Hotel Burlington (1910-11) stands in the heart of the central business district located in the Hawkeye Creek Valley. Built as the tallest building in town, the hotel dominated the scene from the surrounding hills and all directions of travel. It is still the largest building in the downtown. The electric sign on top of the building and new system of street lights made the building highly visible even at night. The hotel was designed in the Renaissance Revival style with major facades on Third and Valley (west and south facing). The design was for a seven story building in a "U" plan above a two story main block. The major facades were built to seven stories in an "L" plan during 1910-11. The east wing which runs along the alley and completes the "U" shaped design was constructed in 1923. Expansion in 1931 increased the building height to nine stories.

**STYLE**

Hotel Burlington is an excellent example of how the Renaissance Revival style was applied to the design of commercial buildings. The style had its beginning in America when architect John Notman designed the Philadelphia Athenaeum in 1845. At the end of the nineteenth century a second wave of Renaissance Revival architecture became popular to satisfy the desire for simplicity and order created by the exuberant qualities of the High Victorian period. Renaissance Revival building showed a studied formalism. They are straight fronted, symmetrical cubic blocks with no major projections from the main mass. Richness was attained by emphasizing the numerous windows used, frequently separating the lower floors with stringcourses. Details of the style are derived from early 16th century Italian elements: second story windows are often more elaborately treated, windows are normally tripartite, and balustraded balconies are common.

Hotel Burlington gives the impression of a cubic block as its "U" shape

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is not discernible except from interior rooms. The three sides visible from the street rise straight up for nine stories and the fourth side is enclosed by adjacent buildings. The only projection from the main mass is the entry portico on Third Street with balustraded balcony above. Uniform rows of trabeated windows are the most noticeable treatment on the facade masses. The second floor, with its decorative brickwork, is separated from the first by changes in building color and material. A stringcourse above the second floor sets it apart from the upper floors. The most pure examples of the Second Renaissance Revival period are built entirely of smooth cut ashlar or marble; however, many commercial buildings in the style used brick on the upper floors for economic reasons. In the case of Hotel Burlington, the dark red brick was used as a rich base to contrast the cut stone trim and terra cotta details.

Another integral part of the style was a large cornice with the roof behind it low and invisible from the street below. The hotel's original cornice and low parapet hide the flat roof. The decorative work between the windows on the seventh floor level and the slight offset of bricks at the corners are minor variations of the Renaissance Revival theme. The completed appearance of the hotel in 1911 appears to completely match the architects' perspective sketch done c. 1909. Corner quoins, also common to the style, were added to the 1931 two story addition and the original cornice was retained.

**Massing, Scale and Materials**

The building is a 118' x 120' rectangle on the first two floors. Above this the original "L" shaped wings extend along the street fronts, each 41' deep, giving every room and hall direct outside light and air. The height of the building is accented by a slight offset of the building corners to create the impression of massive columns. Windows in these columns are paired instead of single as in the remainder of the facades. The first story of the building is faced on the street fronts with buff Bedford stone. Terra cotta medallions separate the large paneled windows along both facades.

Entrances are located in the center of each facade. However, the principal entrance is on the west or Third Street side under a portico with stone piers and columns. It is 44' long and 12' wide. A balustraded balcony is reached by a series of three French doors from the parlors on the second

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floor. Those doors are flanked by torch style, cast iron lights. Second through sixth floors are of "tapestry or red matte brick"<sup>1</sup> with stone lintels and sills for the 1 x 1, single windows. There is a small coping on the lintels. The second floor is separated from those above by a stone stringcourse and has horizontal banding in the brick with every fourth row projecting.

The seventh floor repeats the buff Bedford stone with pilasters and ornamental trim between the windows in basketweave brick and terra cotta. On the Third Street facade, seventh floor windows in the corners are triple and are flanked by the stone pilasters. The original cornice features modillion blocks above rows of egg and dart and dentil work. The flat roof is hidden by a low brick parapet with shallow, triangular stone pediments on the corners.

A part of the original design, twelve electroliers (street standards) fitted with a cluster of globe lights lines both of the facades. Original iron fire escapes are located toward the western end of the Valley Street facade, on the east end of the original building, and on the interior court. These are equipped with pipe and fire hose fittings.

#### Structural

Hotel Burlington was the first building in Burlington of steel frame construction throughout, making it the first to be entirely fireproof. The concrete footings and foundation support a completely steel skeleton with curtain walls and floors of reinforced concrete. The main stairs from the basement to the second floor are marble on a steel frame, and above that the stairs are of steel and concrete. The two story main block was built to accommodate the five story wing added in 1923. The largest spaces in the hotel are on the second floor interior of the "U", currently the second floor lobby and ballroom. There are no columns in these areas because there is no major weight above them to be supported. The columns supporting the recurring pattern of guest rooms above are evident on the first two floors in the main lobby and dining rooms. The main stairway and two public elevators are located next to each other in a central core at the intersection of the two main lobby entrances. (See floor plan sketch for locations of secondary

<sup>1</sup> "The New 'Burlington' Hotel," The Hawkeye, May 15, 1910.

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stairways.)

**Plans**

Original plans have not been located, although the original architects' perspective sketch is very available since it was used for early postcard views of the hotel. Detailed descriptions of both the interior and exterior of the building are given in newspaper accounts of the construction process and grand opening in 1911.

The layout of Hotel Burlington was similar to other large hotels of the era. The first floor lobby was surrounded by the main dining room, parlors, smoking room, writing rooms, barbershop, vault, check room, cigar stand, offices, and public phone booths. In the Burlington Hotel, the Valley Street entrance was flanked by the bar on one side and the grill on the other. The rear of the first floor contained the kitchen, baking room, freight elevator and other services. On the second floor were located a 40' square banquet room, two private dining rooms, more parlors, servants' quarters, some guest and sample rooms and other service facilities. In the basement were the billiard room, boiler and coal rooms, electric plant, laundry, locker and dining rooms for the help, and storage.

**Interior Features**

Original descriptions and early postcards of the Hotel show elaborate interior finishings throughout the building. The main dining room was done in mahogany and the grill in Circassian walnut to a height of five feet. Marble and white oak were used extensively in other first floor rooms. Notable features of the lobby remain. The 30' x 40' space with 14' ceiling is in the center of the building on the first floor. The elevators and columns have undergone some change but are still present in their original locations. The main stairway is marble on steel to the second floor with a decorative bronze rail. Above the second floor it is the same as secondary stairways--steel and concrete with ornate cast iron newels and balusters. The white ceramic tile floors are intact throughout the main floor and show a variety of patterns.

Innovations for Burlington were the fireproof steel construction and the electric plant which ran the three elevators (two passenger, one service), refrigeration, and an extensive lighting system. Other features, well

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publicized at the time, were the large, well lighted sample rooms for salesmen, the novelty of a mail chute, and the luxurious interior, especially the costly Axminster carpets used throughout the building.

During the 1931 renovation (or possibly sometime after), new interior features were done in the simplified lines of the International Style. Ceilings were lowered and given great sweeping curves by applying plaster over a wire frame. Where this has come loose in the main dining room, the original ceiling is visible above. The original egg and dart moulding along the ceiling edge appears to be basically intact.

**Alterations and Additions**

The greatest changes to the hotel occurred during the historically significant period of its commercial success. The east wing was added in 1923 and the eighth and ninth floors were constructed in 1931.

In 1923 the final arm of the original "U" shaped design was constructed along the alley. It followed the original fenestration and was built of common brick. without exterior decoration, as it was not visible from the street. It raised the total number of guest rooms from 125 to 200. With some remodeling, now all rooms had private baths. Nineteen Hundred Twenty-three also saw major interior refurbishing, necessary because of the heavy use the hotel received during its first 12 years of operation. Because of the demand, more dining facilities were created on the second floor.

By 1931 it was necessary to expand and refit the hotel again. The renovation increased the building height from seven to nine stories, increasing the total number of rooms to 240 by adding 40 new guest rooms on the 8th floor and 17 complete apartments on the 9th. Fortunately, because the original cornice and parapet were replaced on the building, its integrity was retained. Fenestration is the same as the seventh floor. This phase included an updated electrical system and a ballroom was created on the second floor.

With the exception of raising the roof two stories, changes made to the exterior of the hotel have been minor. The window openings on the main floor remain, and on the left side of the Third Street entrance the two large paneled windows are intact. Others have been blocked down, some changed to larger panes of glass. One has been altered to make a new doorway on the

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corner of Third Street to serve a hotel shop. A lighted strip sign with the simple block letters "Hotel Burlington" was run across the frieze of the portico and a 1931 era neon trimmed canopy is still over the Valley Street entrance. Of the three French doors leading to the balcony, one remains intact and two have been converted to windows. Iron light fixtures in a torch style and balustrade rail remain. Several picture windows with river views were added to the east wing 5th, 6th, and 7th floors, probably in the 1960's when the tall building on the east side of the hotel was torn down.

### Context

Articles in the various newspapers of the time all declared the Hotel Burlington to be the tallest and largest building in the city when built, as well as the first entirely of steel construction. This is generally borne out by the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, but because the dates for Burlington skip from 1900 to 1930, not a great deal of specific information can be gleaned about the time of the hotel construction 1910. Hotel Burlington was the last hotel constructed in the city and the only one done in the Renaissance Revival style. The building site is the largest in the main retail section of the CBD, comprised of two full lots. The hotel has more floor space than any other individual commercial building, 107,532 square feet. A general comparison of floor space has been based on outside building dimensions and building configurations. The following is a description of three large commercial buildings in the Renaissance Revival style which are near the hotel.

1. The Tama Building (1895-96). Gray brick, five stories, does not cover a full two lots, and has only partial steel construction. The stairways in the building are still wooden. 39,600 square feet.

2. The F & M Bank Building (1912-13). Yellow brick, eight stories, steel construction. This is a dramatic Renaissance Revival building immediately adjacent to the hotel. However, their appearances are quite different since the Bank is a long narrow building in light brick. 34,560 square feet.

3. The Medical Arts Building (1926). Dark red brick, seven stories, a generally smaller building. 21,105 square feet.

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The area surveyed is the entire City of Burlington, Iowa. See the Historic Sites Survey of Burlington, Iowa. prepared by Marlys Svendsen-Roesler for the Iowa State Historical Department, 1977. Also of help were panoramic photos and Bird's Eye Perspectives.

**Methodology**

The effort to nominate Hotel Burlington to the National Register of Historic Places was generated by Main Street of Burlington, Inc. In December of 1986, they hired Steve Brower to suggest and prepare background information on possible sites and/or districts. It was decided that Hotel Burlington would be the first nomination prepared because the recognition would bring favorable publicity to the effort to find a redeveloper for the hotel.

The first thing done was to check Marlys Svendsen-Roesler's 1977 Survey of Burlington--only sketchy information was found. No other effort to compile information on Hotel Burlington is known. Therefore a newspaper search was begun based on the construction dates and dates of expansion.

Susie Guest, reference librarian at the Burlington Public Library, and Barbara Popek were volunteers who assisted in newspaper searches. Biographical research on key individuals followed, along with reviewing the Des Moines County Historical Society's photograph collection. No photographs were found at the State Historical Society's Archives. For historical context, early hotels in Burlington were researched to determine their role in the development of Burlington's commercial history.

**8. Statement of Significance**

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

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Architecture

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1910-11

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

Architects: Seth E. Temple and Parke

T. Burrows; Builder: Westlake Construction Co.

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

Architecture

The construction of Hotel Burlington in 1910 provided Burlington with the largest, tallest, and most modern building of the city and region. It is a good example of how the style elements of the Second Renaissance Revival were applied to large commercial structures. The luxurious interior appointments, coupled with the new building techniques which allowed for the size and scale of the building, made the hotel unique to the area. The fireproof construction method utilizing an entirely steel skeleton with reinforced concrete curtain walls was a new technique for Burlington. This necessitated bringing in architects and a general contractor experienced in this building process. The twelve electric street light standards, which were a part of the architects' original design, became so important to the street scene around the hotel that they were used to establish an expanded system leading from the C.B.&Q. Depot. More street lights of the same design were installed for 10-12 blocks of the downtown. It was touted as being the most excellent system in the region.

Commerce

The construction of Hotel Burlington was the grand culmination of an effort to create a visual and commercial hub for the downtown. As a manufacturing town, Burlington grew up as a center for commercial travelers. Burlington businessmen had spent several years planning for the hotel and the accomplishment of financing the hotel entirely with local money was a benchmark in Burlington's effort to remain a leading commercial city in Iowa. The hotel project was necessary to maintain and strengthen the business ties between travelers and local manufacturing, wholesale, and retail concerns, as well as provide for convention and tourist use. The hotel was so popular and heavily used that it had to be expanded twice -- the projects following and utilizing the original design. A change in economic and traffic patterns had created the need for this facility. It became the largest, most luxurious and the last hotel constructed in Burlington due to further changes in traffic and commercial patterns.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Antrobus, Augustine, History of Des Moines County, Iowa and Its People.  
Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., Vols. I & II, 1915, P. 175.

Blumenson, John, Identifying American Architecture. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1977, 118 pp.

Brower, Steven, "The Durable Buildings of Burlington." The Palimpsest, Vol. 61, No. 3, May-June 1980. (Re. Commerce and Civic Pride.)

Brower, Steven, National Register Nomination for Heritage Hill Historic District, March 1981. (Re. MacMillan House pp. 7-46, and Ed. P. Eastman pp. 7-47 and pp. 8-26 through 8-29).

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 Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property less than one acre

**UTM References**

A 

1	5	6	5	9	9	1	8	1	5	4	5	1	1	9	1	1	0	1	0
Zone					Easting					Northing									

C 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B 

Zone					Easting					Northing									

D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Lots 255 and 256 original city

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The hotel building and the grounds around the building which are historically associated with the Hotel Burlington.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By** typed by: Christopher A. Wilde, Iowa Bureau of Historic Preservation  
name/title Steven Brower, Landscape Architect and Historic Preservation Planner  
organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date November 12, 1987  
street & number Capitol Complex, State Historical Society telephone (515) 281-5111  
city or town Des Moines state Iowa zip code 50319

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## Architectural Significance

A building intended to have such a visual and commercial impact had to be designed by architects familiar with the latest structural techniques. Size and modern convenience were key factors in attracting business at the beginning of the century. The task of designing Burlington's first tall building was given to Temple, Burrows & McLane of Davenport, Iowa. The firm had enjoyed a good working relationship with the Burlington School Board in 1908-09, completing the new high school. In addition, Temple & Burrows had designed the Davenport Hotel in 1907 which had been proclaimed the best in Iowa to date. Architect Burrows announced the new Burlington hotel would utilize "many improvements since, which will make the Burlington the very best in the state".<sup>1</sup>

Seth H. Temple (1867-1949) and Parke T. Burrows (1871-1953) met through their association with the architecture department at the University of Illinois. Burrows, a native of Davenport, Iowa, graduated from the University of Illinois shortly before Temple started teaching there. Temple, a native of Minnesota, was a graduate of Columbia University. He traveled in Europe as a Columbia University Fellow and attended the American Academy in Rome before returning to the Midwest. In 1904 Burrows left the Davenport architectural firm he had been with since graduation to form a partnership with Temple and Cyrus McLane. McLane was a partner in the firm only from 1904-1910.

The completion of the Burlington Hotel was reported as a tremendous and popular success in the newspapers of the day, and the structure was proclaimed to be the best hotel in Iowa and the Upper Mississippi Valley. Due to the swelling economy of the times and rapidly increasing technology, many hotels would challenge that claim in the near future. Temple & Burrows proceeded to add to their reserve of hotel experience after the Burlington project just as they had after the Davenport project. Consequently, the firm became well known for their hotel work. An indication of their standing in the regional architectural scene can be noted by Temple's presidency of the Iowa AIA chapter at the time of the Hotel Burlington project. In 1915 they designed the well known and recently restored Blackhawk Hotel in Davenport, which bears a striking resemblance in its Renaissance Revival style to the earlier Burlington project.

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A measure of Temple & Burrows' success with Hotel Burlington can be demonstrated through other subsequent projects they worked on in town: the office building for the Burlington Water Company (1916), a six story warehouse and sales room for the Chittenden & Eastman Furniture Company (1923), the Hotel Burlington expansion of 1923, and the McMillan Residence (1925). The firm dissolved in 1925.

Architects and general contractors came from out of town, as this was a new building technology in which the local contractors probably had little experience. The general contractor for the Burlington Hotel project was Westlake Construction Company of St. Louis. However, several local contractors and suppliers were involved, such as subcontractor Ewinger Plumbing & Heating (still in operation) and the Buettner Furniture Company (closed 1985) which supplied the furnishings and carpets.

Burlington prided itself in saying this is the "most elaborately finished hotel in the state."<sup>1</sup> The first two floors of the building covered the entire site of one quarter block. The arrangement of the top five floors in the "L" plan allowed for air and light to all the rooms and a river view for 75% of the rooms. However, even more interesting is the provision in the plans for future expansion of the "L" into a "U" plan on top of the main two floors. The electric system of the hotel was something new for Burlington. In addition to the two electric public elevators and kitchen service elevator, there were lights and more lights. All the guest rooms, public areas, and sample rooms were well lighted with 1,500 incandescent bulbs (at the time the largest shipment of bulbs ever sent to the state of Iowa). Just in case a businessman might be arriving at night, the building's electric plant lighted the way by use of giant rooftop sign and twelve cast iron sidewalk electroliers with clustered globes. These electroliers were the first of their kind in Burlington, initiating a dramatic street lighting system which linked the Hotel with the Depot and were then used throughout the business district.

<sup>1</sup> "The New 'Burlington' Hotel," The Hawkeye, May 15, 1910

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The hotel was fortunate to have two expansion projects done in harmony with the original building. The 1923 construction of the east wing, filling out the "U" plan, was handled by Temple & Burrows shortly before the partnership disbanded. The general contractor for the east wing was J. H. Hunzinger & Company of Davenport, Iowa. The 1931 expansion took care to replace the original cornice line at the 9th floor and repeated the basic fenestration, color, and texture of the materials. The work was planned by the Federal Engineering Company of Burlington and Davenport and supervised by Ira Coyne. Carl Nelson Company, a local firm still in operation, was the general contractor.

### Commercial Significance

Traditionally, Burlington was a city of travelers, a crossroads of transportation. Businessmen had always realized the image of the city was important in attracting travelers and enticing them to stay. Her doors were always wide open, and the hotels offered much needed housing until new citizens could get established. Continually increasing railroad traffic on the famous Burlington Route had proven Burlington as a gateway to the West-- the task at hand was to get the traffic to stop off for awhile. Burlington had worked hard to present itself as a prosperous and permanent community during the boom years. Coordinated building projects encouraged a diverse and concentrated display of downtown churches, public halls and business blocks. Indeed, Burlington prided itself on its Victorian architecture and European background.

However, shortly after the turn of the century Burlington's local growth leveled off in comparison to earlier boom years, and traffic patterns were changing. Steamboat traffic had reduced to primarily local excursion travel; raft lumber traffic had all but stopped due to the exhausted timberlands; westward immigration had slowed; corporate offices of the recently merged C. B. & Q. Railroad were relocating; and the early steamboat and railroad hotels which were heavily depended upon to house these transients were in decline. Of the 40-plus nineteenth century hotels, thirteen remained in operation; and all were over twenty years old, though some had been refurbished.

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At the turn of the century, Burlington was still a thriving manufacturing center and a regional nucleus for wholesale distribution. The upper floors of downtown buildings were filled with goods and regional sales offices for local and distant companies. Consequently, there was a great deal of modern business travel. At the same time, however, society was becoming accustomed to a higher quality and the most up-to-date accommodations. Agents were inviting customers to visit them at their sample rooms in hotels, and salesmen particularly wanted to spend their Sunday layover at the best hotel in the region. The lack of available modern rooms weighed on Burlington leaders. There was a consensus that a modern hotel was necessary to house the new business transients, serve as a convention center, and attract tourists.

In the middle 1890's the Barret House was razed for a new commercial block. In earlier years it was widely known as one of the foremost hotels of the Middle West. It had been built in 1845 by Dr. Richard F. Barret, a St. Louis speculator who invested heavily in Burlington. When the Barret House was in its heyday through the 1870's, it was the pride of Burlington. However, in its declining years nothing but complaints and reminiscences about the good old days were heard in the street and in the newspapers. The fact that the outside money was no longer interested proved to be a thorn in Burlington's side.

Clamor for a new hotel was loud. In 1902 after ten years of false starts, Edward P. Eastman (1860-1925) was drafted by the Commercial Exchange (a forerunner to the Chamber of Commerce) to lead the campaign.

Eastman had come to Burlington in 1877 from Ohio at the age of seventeen. With some early business training he had landed a job as bookkeeper with the furniture manufacturing company of Pollock, Granger & Chittenden. In 1883, the year Eastman became a partner, the company was the largest furniture jobber in the Midwest. He had worked his way up through the company and was highly respected for his business ability and various successful building projects. When he became associated with the hotel project in the early 1900's, he had just finished reorganizing the Citizen's Waterworks; and as Vice President and General Manager of Chittenden & Eastman, he was busy building the furniture company into the world's largest.

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Burlington businessmen worked hard to guarantee their success at focusing regional travel on the new hotel. For a project leader and fund raiser, they chose Eastman, a businessman with a proven track record. They called on the successful and popular architectural firm of Temple & Burrows that had recently worked so well with local parties. They leased the management of the hotel to one of the most widely known hotel men of the West - Mr. Chris Neipp, of the Roubidoux Hotel in St. Joseph, Missouri, who was also a principal owner of the new Hotel Davenport. Most of Neipp's staff were experienced hotel men from such establishments as the Kaiserhoff and Knickerbocker in New York and the Roubidoux. The businessmen raised the entire amount needed for initial construction locally. This \$350,000 took from 1902-1909 to raise, but no one wanted a repeat of the Barret House disinterest and decline. The total local support for the Hotel Burlington sets it apart from most other Mississippi Valley hotels of the era, as they commonly had at least some outside financing.

The building was opened to the public in a gala celebration on the evening of February 6, 1911. The hotel had been constructed to be the most modern and luxurious in the Midwest. It boasted over 75 employees and 125 guest rooms, all with telephone and running water, most with private bath. A large electric sign spelling out "Hotel Burlington" was placed atop the building so to be visible from the railroad depot several blocks away and by approaching trains and boats still miles away. The success of the hotel was phenomenal. Estimates were that at least fifty extra businessmen a day were staying in the city. Salesmen and other travelers were delighted with the luxurious interiors, modern baths, sumptuous dining, and experienced staff. Conventions and tourists were also bringing in large amounts of business, as had been originally hoped.

Use was so great that the east wing was added in 1923 at a cost of \$100,000 and the upper two stories were built in 1931 for about \$300,000, (again, all with local money). The hotel had grown from 125 rooms in 1911, 200 rooms in 1923, and 240 rooms and 17 apartments in 1931. The total investment at that time was over three quarters of a million dollars.

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Prospects looked so bright, that at the time of the two story addition, a Chicago businessman arrived in the city scouting locations in the downtown for the ten story hotel he planned to build as competition. It's not surprising that the project never materialized, but it's interesting that the success of Hotel Burlington attracted this attention.

The structure was built and owned by Hotel Burlington, Inc. from 1910-1954. Although the hotel concession had originally been developed by Christian Neipp, during most of its years the concession was owned and run by R. E. Pettigrew. He had begun as the assistant manager when the hotel opened, and in 1918 purchased the concession from Neipp. He became a principal stockholder in the corporation owning the building, managing the hotel for the next 36 years.

As time progressed, traffic patterns changed yet another time. A second large sign replaced the original on top of the hotel--this one shifted so that auto as well as rail traffic could see it. The hotel had been well served under the management of R. E. Pettigrew, but now even his business interests turned toward the autos streaming through. In 1953 he announced plans to build a large motor lodge on the west side of town. The economic boom years for the hotel had quietly passed as they had for most Mississippi Valley towns.

Shortly after Pettigrew's death in 1954, the building and concession were sold to the Boss Hotels Company, then owner of 27 hotels in Iowa. After the Boss organization experienced problems, the hotel was purchased from Mississippi Valley Savings & Loan by Duncan Brothers (the Lad Company) in 1974. They operated the hotel on a marginal basis until it went into receivership and the doors were closed in 1980. Two local businessmen, Jack Archer & Arnold Arledge, have owned the building since 1981. Currently efforts are being made to put together a package for the redevelopment of the building. Hotel Burlington still remains a dominant physical presence in the central business district, hoping to open its doors again.

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- Five Construction Photos, at Des Moines County Historical Society, 1910.
- Postcard view, at Burlington Public Library, c. 1911.
- Interior postcard views, at Burlington Public Library, c. 1911. (four views)
- Photographs of Hotel Roubidoux, St. Joseph, MO, c. 1928, interior and exterior views, located at St. Joseph Public Library.

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Postcard view, at Burlington Public Library, c. 1932.

MAPS

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