

Iowa Site Inventory Form

State Historic Preservation Office

(January 2016)

State Inventory Number: 44-00210 New Supplemental

9-Digit SHPO Review & Compliance (R&C) Number: _____

Non-extant Year: _____

Read the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions carefully, to ensure accuracy and completeness before completing this form. The instructions are available on our website.

• **Property Name**

A) Historic name: Ruby Dry Cleaners

B) Other names: 2023 downtown survey # DT-019

• **Location**

A) Street address: 117 S. Jefferson St

B) City or town: Mount Pleasant (Vicinity) County: Henry

C) Legal description:

Rural: Township Name: _____ Township No.: _____ Range No.: _____ Section: _____ Quarter: _____ of Quarter: _____

Urban: Subdivision: Original Block(s): 5 Lot(s): Lot 7 - S 1/2 of N 1/2 (20')

• **Classification**

A) Property category: *Check only one*

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

B) Number of resources (within property):

<i>If eligible property, enter number of:</i>		<i>If non-eligible property, enter number of:</i>	
<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>		
<u>1</u>	Buildings	<u>—</u>	Buildings
<u>—</u>	Sites	<u>—</u>	Sites
<u>—</u>	Structures	<u>—</u>	Structures
<u>—</u>	Objects	<u>—</u>	Objects
<u>1</u>	Total	<u>—</u>	Total

C) For properties listed in the National Register:

National Register status: Listed De-listed NHL NPS DOE

D) For properties within a historic district:

- Property contributes to a National Register or local certified historic district.
- Property contributes to a potential historic district, based on professional historic/architectural survey and evaluation.
- Property *does not* contribute to the historic district in which it is located.

Historic district name: Mt Pleasant Downtown Historic District Historic district site inventory number: 44-02280

E) Name of related project report or multiple property study, if applicable:

MPD title Intensive Level Historical and Architectural Survey of Downtown Mt Pleasant, Iowa Historical Architectural Data Base # HADB-02986

• **Function or Use** *Enter categories (codes and terms) from the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions*

A) Historic functions

02A08: COMMERCE/TRADE / business / laundry

B) Current functions

02G02: COMMERCE/TRADE / restaurant/bar

• **Description** *Enter categories (codes and terms) from the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions*

A) Architectural classification

09F05: Commercial / brick front

B) Materials

Foundation (visible exterior): 04C: Limestone

Walls (visible exterior): 03: Brick

Roof: 15C: Rubber

Other: _____

C) Narrative description *SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED*

• **Statement of Significance**

A) Applicable National Register Criteria: *Mark your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria*

- Criterion A: Property is associated with significant events. Yes No More research recommended
Criterion B: Property is associated with the lives of significant persons. Yes No More research recommended
Criterion C: Property has distinctive architectural characteristics. Yes No More research recommended
Criterion D: Property yields significant information in archaeology/history. Yes No More research recommended

B) Special criteria considerations: *Mark any special considerations; leave blank if none*

- A: Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes. E: A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
 B: Removed from its original location. F: A commemorative property.
 C: A birthplace or grave. G: Property less than 50 years of age or
 D: A cemetery. achieved significance within the past 50 years.

C) Areas of significance

Enter categories from instructions

05: Commerce

02: Architecture

D) Period(s) of significance

E) Significant dates

Construction date

1850s *check if circa or estimated date*

Other dates, including renovations

1957, 2015

F) Significant person

Complete if Criterion B is marked above

G) Cultural affiliation

Complete if Criterion D is marked above

H) Architect/Builder

Architect

Builder/contractor

I) Narrative statement of significance **SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED**

• **Bibliography** *See continuation sheets for the list research sources used in preparing this form*

• **Geographic Data** *Optional UTM references* *See continuation sheet for additional UTM or comments*

Zone	Easting	Northing	NAD	Zone	Easting	Northing	NAD
1				2			
3				4			

• **Form Preparation**

Name and Title: Rebecca Lawin McCarley / research by Pat White Date: March 4, 2024

Organization/firm: SPARK Consulting / Mt Pleasant HPC E-mail: sparkconsulting@octaspark.com

Street address: 1630 Park Ave SE Telephone: 319-200-9767

City or Town: Cedar Rapids State: IA Zip code: 52403

• **ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION** *Submit the following items with the completed form*

A) For all properties, attach the following, as specified in the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions:

- 1. Map** of property's location within the community.
- 2. Glossy color 4x6 photos labeled** on back with property/building name, address, date taken, view shown, and unique photo number.
- 3. Photo key showing each photo number on a map and/or floor plan, using arrows next to each photo number to indicate the location and directional view of each photograph.**
- 4. Site plan** of buildings/structures on site, identifying boundaries, public roads, and building/structure footprints.

B) For State Historic Tax Credit Part 1 Applications, historic districts and farmsteads, and barns:

See lists of special requirements and attachments in the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions.

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Use Only Below This Line

The SHPO has reviewed the Site Inventory and concurs with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility:

- Yes No More research recommended
 This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.

Comments: _____

SHPO authorized signature: _____ Date: _____

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7. Narrative Description

This two-story building was built in the 1850s, with the façade remodel completed in 1957. Thus, the exterior of the building has historic integrity dating to this period. The façade remodel was one of three in 1957 on the west side of the square, which included a new deeply recessed storefront and new brick on the second story. The storefront retains this configuration from the 1957 remodel, which originally had the second story entry at the left/south with the remainder as a large rectangular inset area with glass door and large aluminum windows with low black bulkhead. This configuration/design was typical for this period. The current storefront dates to remodeling in 2015, which reduced the amount of glass though retained this configuration. The lower half of the recessed area was clad in brick and the upper with wood, with a smaller window installed. The tall metal-clad transom area above the storefront remains, utilized for signage. The second story is a simple buff brick façade, typically of the 1950s. The paired double-hung windows have been replaced with single-light windows. The rear (west) elevation has a one-story rear addition that extends to the alley. This rear addition and the second story of the main portion of the building are clad in vinyl siding. A rear entry is found on the rear addition, and older wood windows remain in place on the second story.

8. Narrative Statement of Significance

Ruby Dry Cleaners appears to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building within the potential Mount Pleasant Downtown Historic District. The building contributes to the historic commercial character of the downtown, and it reflects the period of downtown development in the 1950s. This period was characterized by façade remodeling projects, updating older buildings to a “modern” appearance. The historic integrity of the building reflects the significant work completed in 1957, one of three buildings remodeled on the west side in this year. The building retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance as a historic commercial building in a historic district.

Based on research and evaluation conducted to date, this building does not appear to be potentially individually eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Developmental history of property

The core of this brick commercial building appears to have been built in the 1850s. The façade was remodeled in 1957 to the current brick and window configuration, with the storefront again later remodeled.

This brick commercial building appears to have been built in the 1850s, during a period of intense construction in Mt Pleasant related to the arrival of the railroad. Buildings were originally numbered from the south corner of this block, with this building as the seventh storefront. “W.H. Davis, fruit and confectionary, No. 7 Jefferson, west side Public Square” appears in the 1859-1860 Henry County Directory (page 44) alphabetical listing of residents. However, the W.H. Davis fruit/confectionary business does not appear in the Advertisers Index of the directory.

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Rebecca Higgins acquired the S ½ of the N ½ of lot 7 in block 5, original Mount Pleasant (Transfer Book "A" – 1867-1884, page 6). On 16 May 1868, J.N.? Gardner and W. & R.A. Higgins (relationships unknown) transfer this same property to David Drummond (Transfer Book "A").

In the 1867 Mount Pleasant Directory, under the heading of Apothecaries and Druggists, F.C. Pitcher & Brother operate a business at #7 Jefferson. F.C. and A.O. Pitcher are listed a second time in the directory at the same #7 address, under the category "Physicians and Surgeons". A circa 1865 photo of the west side of the square clearly shows a two-story brick building in this location. Signage at the top of the building reads "Drugs & Medicines". Over the entryway is a sign that reads "F.C. Pitcher & Bro". Newspaper ads from May 5, 1865 and May 3, 1867 list F. C. Pitcher & Bro, drug store, at No. 7 Jefferson St. Dr. F. C. Pitcher & Dr. A. O. Pitcher are listed with offices above the store. The drug store was then operated as Pitcher & Bereman in a May 7, 1869 ad. The 1870 Mount Pleasant Business Directory advertises Pitcher & Bereman, No. 7, west side square in two categories: "Apothecaries & Chemists" and "Druggists." After the drug store appears to have closed, Dr. A.O. Pitcher continues to be listed on the west side on Jefferson in newspaper ads through 1889.

The 1886 Sanborn fire insurance map shows this 2-story brick building with no additions and an open frame porch attached at the rear. The address is #7 and there is a stairway along the south wall. The building is used for jewelry. There is a small, 1-story frame stable at the rear of the lot at the alleyway, with #7 ½ as an address. No jewelry stores have been identified on the west side of the square in this period.

The 1892 Sanborn fire insurance map shows this 2-story brick building with two addresses: #7 and also 129-131. There continues to be stairs along the south wall. The building now houses a queens ware store (dishes). There is an open frame porch attached to the rear of the building, but there is no longer a stable by the alleyway. The Eliza Ross' Queens Ware Store is advertised in the 1893 Mount Pleasant City Directory (Mrs. E. Ross {widow}, with Ella Ross and Fannie Ross, managers). The address is 129 South Jefferson. Miss Lydia Prince is also listed as a dressmaker at 129 S. Jefferson.

On 10 August 1897, Thomas J. Drummond & wife transfer the S ½ of the N ½ of lot 7 to Susan P. Drummond, via Quit Claim Deed (Transfer Book "B", page 13).

The 1899 Sanborn fire insurance map shows this 2-story brick building to be 25' in height. The frame porch is gone from the rear of the building and there are no longer stairs adjoining the building to the south. 129-131 South Jefferson is the address, and the building is now used for billiards.

On 22 February 1901, S.P. Drummond et al, sell the property to Theo. Waibel (Transfer Book "B", page 18). After this 22 February 1901 transaction, it has been difficult (after searching transfer books "B", "C" and Book "1"), to determine how this Theo. Waible (1861-1937) property came into the hands of the Short family, and then was sold on 8 October 1948 (see transaction below). Theodore Waibel's sister, Rose Waibel (1863-1948), married into the Short family and this is probably the connection. An article in the *Mount Pleasant News-Journal* (15 September 1914, page 1) reports "Theo. Waibel and Linch & Rocky" were ordered to remove a "dilapidated wooden shed at the rear of the billiard parlors occupied by the latter". The billiard parlors were located to the south at 119 S. Jefferson.

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The 1909 Sanborn fire insurance map shows this 2-story brick building used for moving pictures shows. It is 24' in height, with a 1-story brick addition (accessed through an open doorway). A frame stairway is at the far rear. The address is 129 S Jefferson.

A theater operated in this building for several years. In April 1908, a penny arcade show was installed on the west side of the square (*Mt Pleasant Daily News*, April 29, 1908, 4). In July 1908, the rooms on the west side of the square formerly occupied by the Penny Arcade Show were being painted and remodeled. Carl Stith and Harry Virden planned to open a moving picture show (*Mt Pleasant Journal*, July 21, 1908, 1). In August 1908, Carl Stith, one of the proprietors of the Electrical Theater, was ill (*Mt Pleasant Journal*, August 14, 1908, 2). In October 1908, the Strawn Brothers, managers of the Electrical Theater, placed their graphophone in front of the building where it could be better heard, noted as quite an advertising attraction (*Mt Pleasant Journal*, October 2, 1908, 6). In December 1908, Carl Stith (formerly of the Electric Theater) and Fred Cooper bought the Electric Theater on the west side of the square from the Strawn Brothers. Stith was noted as having inaugurated the moving picture business in this city, with years of experience in this line ("The Electric Changes Hands," *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, December 11, 1908, 5). In April 1909, Carl Stith took over operations of the Lincoln Theater in the Harlan House from William Jericho, who returned to focus on his jewelry business. Stith was noted as being employed for several months by Fred Cooper on his machine at the Electrical Theater ("Has Bought Theater," *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, April 19, 1909, 3).

The new Princess Moving Picture Theater opened on the west side of the square in December 1913. Motion pictures would be shown every night except Sunday with admission 5 and 10 cents (*Mt Pleasant Daily News*, December 19, 1913, 2). In a *Mount Pleasant News-Journal* article on September 15, 1914 (page 1), "Mr. Frank O'Connor who operates the Princess Moving Picture Theatre, was charged with having the rear exit not as accessible as it should be". A profile of the business in February 1916 noted that it had operated for about two years on the west side of the square by Frank O'Connor and Will Woline. The success had resulted in the addition of 100 seats, with "Universal" pictures shown on multiple days ("At the Princess Theatre," *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, February 4, 1916, 4). On February 28, 1917, the Princess Theater was badly damaged by fire (*Mount Pleasant Daily News*, 28 February 28, 1917, 3).

In May 1917, Linch & Rockey, who operated a pool room and cigar stand on the west side, were noted to have rented the building formerly occupied by Princess Theater. They would move about June 1. The owner of building was planning to put in new front and other improvements (*Mt Pleasant Daily News*, May 4, 1917, 4). The building to the south at 119 S. Jefferson was later bought by Oscar Rockey (Rokey) on January 29, 1920, and his business continued in that space.

The 1920 Sanborn fire insurance map shows this 2-story brick building to be 24' in height, with a 1-story brick addition, accessed through an open doorway and a frame stairway at the rear of the building. By the alleyway is a brick/tile shed. The front of the building is now used for battery charging; the back addition is labeled auto. The address is 129 South Jefferson. In the June 1919, May 1921, June 1923, June 1925, and July 1927 telephone directories, the Mt. Pleasant Battery Station is listed in the Auto Services category on the west side of the square. The Rukgaber family was associated with the business. H.E. Rukgaber advertised in March 1930 that his unsold stock from his garage would be available at the Mt Pleasant Battery Station on the west side of the square (*Mt Pleasant News*, March 7, 1930, 4). Newspaper references to the Mt Pleasant Battery Station continue into 1934.

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The 1938 Mount Pleasant City Directory shows the West Side Barber Shop operating at 129 South Jefferson; Boyd E. Anderson is the owner. The West Side Barber Shop is also listed in the 1941 Mount Pleasant City Directory at the same address. An ad for Dewein's Repair Shop in March 1937 notes that they operated repairing and upholstering furniture in the back of the West Side Barber Shop (*Mt Pleasant News*, March 23, 1937, 4).

The 1942 Sanborn fire insurance map shows the same footprint for the building as the 1920 map and the address continues to be 129 South Jefferson. No specific use is indicated for the front of the building; the rear addition is used for autos.

On 8 October 1948, Evelyn M. (Short) & Charles Kellems (probably Evelyn Short's husband) transfer their undivided $\frac{1}{2}$ interest in the S $\frac{1}{2}$ of the N $\frac{1}{2}$ of lot 7 to George A. Short. George A. & May Short sell their undivided $\frac{1}{2}$ interest in the property to George & May Drewer, on 3 January 1949. The Short family relationships are unknown; these transactions are recorded in Transfer Book "2", page 2.

By 1954, the Mount Pleasant Skelgas Service is shown at 129 South Jefferson, per the 1954 & 1955 Mount Pleasant City Directories. In 1955, Wm Donald is shown as the manager; the business is listed in the "Gas Stoves" category of the business directory.

George & May June Drewer then sell this building (S $\frac{1}{2}$ of the N $\frac{1}{2}$ of lot 7, block 5) to Joseph C. Ruby on 29 December 1956. An article in July 1957 on Ruby Dry Cleaning noted that they would move from their location on N. Jefferson to their new location on the west side of square. Joe Ruby purchased the building several months ago. A new front will be installed on the building, and a new floor in building. This would be the third new front on west side – work that was "rapidly changing the appearance of that side of the square." Others had been installed further north on the block by Wilfred Hoaglin for Libby's Steak House and by Dr. Stewart Jackson for Kennedy Dairy ("Ruby to Remodel West Side Building and Move to Site," *Mt Pleasant News*, July 2, 1957). The new front for the new Ruby Cleaners location installed by Joe Ruby, owner of building and business, was completed by October. The newspaper noted that the attractive new front along with two others greatly improved the appearance of the west side ("Third New Front on West Side," *Mt Pleasant News*, October 28, 1957, 1).

By 1957, the address for this building has changed to 117 South Jefferson; Ruby's Dry Cleaners is the business at this address; and Joseph Ruby is the manager of the business. The business is listed as Ruby Dry Cleaners in 1960, Ruby's Dry Cleaning in 1962 and 1964, and then Ruby Cleaners 1966, 1968, and 1970.

On 3 June 1970, Joseph C. Ruby and June L. Ruby sell the building (S $\frac{1}{2}$ of the N $\frac{1}{2}$ of lot 7) to Bernhard & Kate I./J. Andresen (Transfer Book "2", page 6), who own the property until 11 July 1984, when they sell the parcel to Larry Wayne & Marianne Williams (Transfer Book "3", page 6).

Bernhard Andresen continued Ruby Cleaners here through 1974, and it was run by Patrick E. Fountain then in 1976.

The Front Porch opened in October 1978 at 117 S. Jefferson. In 1979, The Front Porch, gift shop, Robert & Barbara Leffel, partners, operated here. In city directories from 1983-1990, Marianne's Photography (Marianne Williams, owner) is shown at this address.

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Rumors was established in 1996, per the 2011 city directory which lists the business here.

This commercial building is currently occupied in 2023 by Rumors, a bar and lounge. The building has been owned since September 2002, by Steven Schleif.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Building and sign permits, City of Mount Pleasant, Iowa

City and telephone directories, Mt Pleasant:

Bowron, Watson. *Henry County Directory for 1859-60*. Burlington, IA: Watson Bowron, 1859.

Annawalt & Lawrence's Bi-ennial Mt Pleasant Directory. Burlington, IA: Hawk-Eye Steam Printing House, 1867.

Annewalt, E.H., compiler. *Mount Pleasant City Directory*. Burlington: Daily Gazette, 1870.

Mount Pleasant City Directory for 1893. Mt. Pleasant, IA: Francis D. Craig, 1893.

Mason, George T. *Directory of Henry County, Iowa, 1911-12*. Mt. Pleasant, IA: The News, 1911.

Mount Pleasant Telephone Company. Telephone directories issued in 1913, 1915, 1918, 1921, 1925, 1927, 1937, 1939, 1944, 1948, 1950, 1952.

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Johnson Publishing Co. *Mt Pleasant, Iowa*. City directories issued in 1955, 1957, 1960, 1964, 1966, 1968, 1970, 1973, 1976, 1981, 1986, 1993, 2001, 2011. Manitowoc, WI: Johnson Publishing Co.

Cornerstones. Mt Pleasant: Mt. Pleasant Beautiful Committee, 1991.

Henry County Bicentennial Commission (HCBC). *The History of Henry County*. Dallas, TX: National ShareGraphics, Inc., 1982.

Henry County Historical Society. Vertical files and albums in files at Mt Pleasant Public Library.

Henry County Heritage Trust. Collection of historic images, in files and posted in Facebook albums. Collection in former Saunders School, Mount Pleasant, Iowa.

Henry County Recorder's Office / Henry County Auditor's Office. Property records, transfer books, and deed records. Henry County Courthouse, Mt Pleasant, Iowa

History of Henry County, Iowa. Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1879.

Jaynes, Peter H., ed. *Highlights of Henry County History 1833-1976*. Burlington, IA: Doran & Ward Lithographing Co., 1977.

Koch, Augustus. *Birds-Eye View of the City of Mount Pleasant, Henry County, Iowa*. Chicago, IL: Merchants Lithographing Co, 1869. In collection of Henry County Heritage Trust and Mount Pleasant Public Library, Mount Pleasant, Iowa.

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Mount Pleasant Beautiful. Mt Pleasant: Mt Pleasant News Company, 1909. Reprint issued in 1988.

Mount Pleasant, Iowa, Sesquicentennial, 1835-1985 (MPS). Mt Pleasant, IA: The Committee, 1985

Naumann, Molly Myers. *Architectural and Historical Resources of Mount Pleasant, IA.* National Register of Historic Places Multiple Documentation Form, May 1991. On file with the State Historic Preservation Office, Des Moines, IA.

Portrait and Biographical Album of Henry County, Iowa. Chicago: Acme Publishing Co., 1888.

Sanborn Map Company. *Mount Pleasant, Iowa.* Fire insurance maps for 1886, 1892, 1899, 1909, 1920, 1942. Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Sanborn Maps Collection.

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Location map



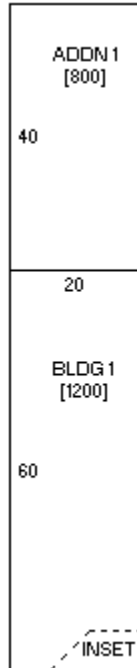
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Building footprint



Sketch by www.camavision.com

Henry County Assessor (<https://beacon.schneidercorp.com>)

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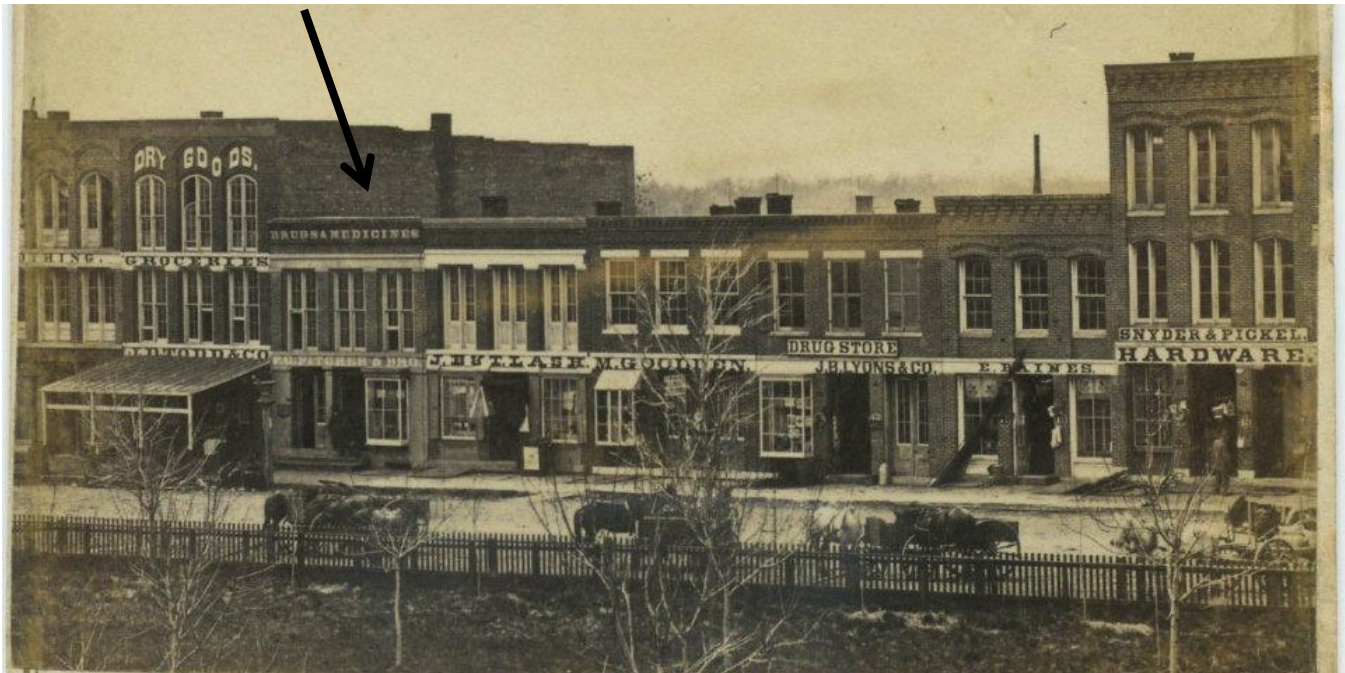
117 S. Jefferson St

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Historic images



West side of square (100 block S. Jefferson St) in 1860s (HCHT Facebook album)



West side of square (100 block S. Jefferson St) around 1910 (HCHT Facebook album)

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West side of square (100 block S. Jefferson St) around 1918 (HCHT Facebook album)



West side of square (100 block S. Jefferson St) in 1950s (HCHT Facebook album)

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West side of square (100 block S. Jefferson St) in 1965 (HCHT collection)

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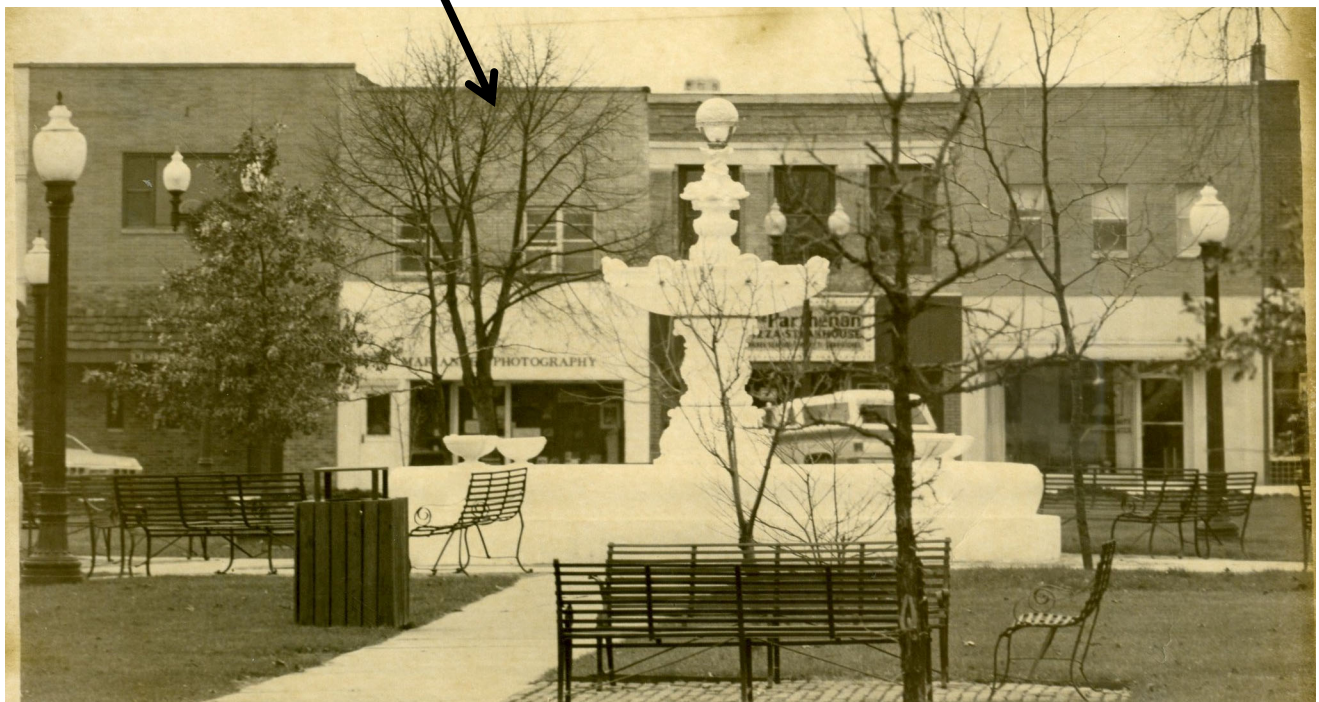
County

Mount Pleasant

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West side of square (100 block S. Jefferson St) around 1978 (HCHT Facebook album)



West side of square (100 block S. Jefferson St) in 1980s (HCHT Facebook album)

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1990 survey photograph (Naumann 1991)

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Building at time of storefront remodel in 2015 (City of Mt Pleasant building permits)

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Digital photographs



Photograph 44-00210-001. West elevation, looking east (October 2023)

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Photograph 44-00210-002. West elevation, looking east (October 2023)