

# Iowa Site Inventory Form

State Historic Preservation Office

(January 2016)

State Inventory Number: 44-00331  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: Colonial Apartments

B) Other names: Asbury M.E. Church, Colonial Theater, 2023 downtown survey # DT-102

• **Location**

A) Street address: 115 E. Monroe 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): 9 Lot(s): 8

• **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>	
Contributing	Noncontributing		
<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>	<b>Total</b>	<u>—</u>	<b>Total</b>

**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**

06A01: RELIGION / church

08A: RECREATION/CULTURE / theater

01B02: DOMESTIC / apartment building

**B) Current functions**

01B02: DOMESTIC / apartment building

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

**A) Architectural classification**

04A: MID-19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY / Greek Revival

**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**

Site Number: 44-00331 Address: 115 E. Monroe St City: Mt Pleasant County: IA District Number: 44-02280

• **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 page or  
 D: A cemetery. achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**C) Areas of significance**

*Enter categories from instructions*

05: Commerce

**D) Period(s) of significance**

**E) Significant dates**

*Construction date*

1856  *check if circa or estimated date*

*Other dates, including renovations*

1884, 1909, 1938, 1953, 1980

**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 Martha Wiley & Pat White Date: May 8, 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 is a three-story brick building with Greek Revival features on the original building that were reflected in the later additions. The core of the building was constructed in 1856 as Asbury Chapel, Methodist Episcopal Church. Additions were constructed to flank the south portions of the east and west sides in 1884, with a steeple added at the southeast corner. The details of these additions reflected the original building design. In 1909, the church moved to a new location, and the building was remodeled as an auditorium. An addition was constructed on the west side for a stage, with the interior remodeled to face this direction. The details of the addition reflect more restrained versions of the original design. The auditorium became Colonial Theater in 1938. The building was also remodeled for apartments in 1938, with a third story floor added and earlier tall windows modified to second story windows. Some third story windows were included in this remodel, located in the upper portion of the original windows. The third story was unfinished space into the 1970s, though further remodeling for additional apartments and offices occurred in the 1950s on the lower levels after the theater closed in 1953. Restoration work of the exterior occurred in 1976 to 1979, restoring the red brick appearance of the building. An elevator was constructed on the east side in 1980, with the third story then finished for additional apartments. Thus, these various periods of remodeling were all completed within the period of significance for the potential historic district. The building primarily reflects historic integrity as Colonial Apartments, though elements of the earlier designs and uses remain.

The center portion of the façade (south elevation) is the front of the original 1856 Greek Revival church. This section is divided into three bays by brick pilasters with stone caps, and it has a full pediment on the gable at the top. The double-door entry is recessed, part of the 1909 remain for the auditorium. The window openings to either side have stone lintels and sills, with the original sashes replaced by movie placards replaced by 12-over-one-light double-hung windows and finally replaced by the current six-over-one-light double-hung vinyl windows. The second and third story windows were originally tall windows that spanned both stories, with a stone lintel with brackets above the third story windows and a stone sill with brackets under the second story windows. The brick has been patched in between the current openings. The second story openings were widened slightly for paired double-hung windows, with the center window having replacement sashes and the other two pairs of windows retaining six-over-one-light double-hung sashes. The third story has paired six-over-one-light double-hung windows in the center. The other two openings were added in the earlier openings in the 1977 exterior work, and they have one-over-one-light double-hung sashes. Each side of the original building is flanked by the 1884 side additions, which are setback slightly from the original façade. Both originally had tall windows, which have been divided into second and third story windows with six-over-one-light double-hung sashes. The base of each section has a secondary entry with sidelights, transom, and a hood with brackets. The east and west sides of these additions originally had two bays divided by brick pilasters with a lower window and tall upper window (now divided into two windows). These side bays also have six-over-one-light double-hung windows on each side, with similar stone lintels and stone sill as the façade.

The east elevation consists of the two bays of the 1884 side addition, the 1980 elevator addition, and three bays of the original side of the 1856 building. The elevator addition was constructed at the junction of the original building and the earlier addition, with brick similar in color to the original building. It has two six-over-one-light double-hung windows with simple brick sills on the east side and an entry on the north side. The three bays of the east side of the original building reflect similar remodeling as the façade. The upper tall windows have been divided into windows for each story, with the second story window

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opening widened into paired six-over-one-light double-hung windows. The third story windows were added as part of the later remodeling, with one-over-one-light double-hung sashes. The north bay has an exit at the third story level, leading to a balcony and spiral metal fire escape. The left/south bay on the first story has a six-over-one-light double-hung window, while the other two bays had side entries. These entries have wood doors and flared hoods with brackets. There is a window added to the north of the entry on the center bay.

The west side of the original building is covered by the two-story 1909 side addition, which extends into one bay of the 1884 side addition. The south side of this addition has two pilasters with stone tops that reflect simplified versions of the original building, which divide this elevation into three bays. The right/east bay has a single-door entry with flared hood with brackets on the first story and paired six-over-one-light double-hung windows on the second story with a brick sill that were added likely as part of the 1938 remodel. The middle bay has a six-over-one-light double-hung window with brick sill on each story. The upper window retains a stone hood that is a simplified version of the façade windows, suggesting that this was perhaps a tall window to reflect those windows originally. The left/west bay has a six-over-one-light double-hung window with brick sill on each story. The west side of the addition has an exterior chimney that divides this side in a front/south half and rear/north half. The front/south half has a six-over-one-light double-hung window with brick sill on the first and second stories. Three narrower double-hung windows with brick sills are located to the north, south of the chimney. The north side of the chimney has a set of three windows with a shared brick sill on the first and second stories. The north/left bay has paired six-over-one-light double-hung windows with brick sills on each story.

**8. Narrative Statement of Significance**

Colonial Apartments 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 was one of the earlier churches constructed to the east/north of the public square, and it was remodeled as an auditorium/theater with an addition in 1909. The building served as Auditorium Theatre from 1910 to 1938, and it then operated as Colonial Theater from 1938 to 1953, with apartments also added in the building. A beauty shop, offices, and apartments were located in the building from the 1950s to 1970s. Colonial Apartments contributes to the historic character of the downtown, and it has been a noteworthy building on E. Monroe St for over 150 years. 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 likely be individually eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Assessment of the interior features and modifications would be required for a full evaluation of the individual eligibility of the building.

*Developmental history of property*

The core of the Colonial Apartments is the brick “Asbury” church constructed for the Methodist Episcopal church in 1857, with a west addition to convert it into the Auditorium in 1919 and remodeling to convert it to apartments in the 1930s and 1980s. Thus, the current form best reflects its history as Colonial Apartments.

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Early settlers in Mt Pleasant included several members of the Methodist Episcopal church, influencing church organization not just in town but throughout Henry County. The society formed in 1837 under the Burlington circuit, with services held in the Henry County Courthouse starting in 1839. Two circuits were set off in Henry County in 1842 from the Burlington circuit, the Mt. Pleasant circuit and the New London circuit. Circuit riders for the Methodist church served multiple congregations within a rural area, bringing the message to various rural neighborhoods. In March 1843, Samuel Dickey and wife deeded the site to the east of the square at the northwest corner of Monroe and Adams (Block 9, Lot 8) to the church, with a frame church already under construction at the west end of the lot. In September 1843, the first Quarterly Meeting for the Mt Pleasant circuit in the Burlington district was held in the frame church. The church was dedicated at the Quarterly Meeting in December (*History of Henry County* 1879: 517, 519; *Portrait and Biographical Album of Henry County* 1888: 670). In 1849, the collegiate institute, which was then renamed Iowa Wesleyan University, became sponsored by the Iowa Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (*History of Henry County* 1879: 418). This move further reinforced the Methodist Episcopal element in Mt Pleasant.

The initial frame church was moved off of the lot for the construction of a larger brick church in 1856. This new church was known as Asbury Chapel. The profile of the Methodist Episcopal churches in the 1867 city directory for Mt Pleasant notes that the present church was built in 1856 at the corner of Monroe and Adams St. Rev. M.H. Hare and H.W. Thomas served the church. It has average daily attendance of 325. College Chapel had also been organized in 1856, with services in the university chapel at Iowa Wesleyan University (*Mt Pleasant Directory* 1867: 30). The 1856 Map of Mount Pleasant (McBride & Waite, Civil Engineers, St. Louis, MO) shows the "Methodist Church" in lot 8 of block 9. This church is situated on the west part of the lot. The 1859 Map of Mount Pleasant (Wm Schuchman, Lith., Pittsburgh, PA) now shows a large building in the center of lot 8 block 9. The *Keokuk Daily Gate City* notes in October 1856 that M.H. Hare was assigned by the Iowa Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church to Asbury Chapel in Mt Pleasant. Wesley Dennett was assigned to University Chapel, and Michael See was assigned to the Mt Pleasant circuit ("Appointments of the Iowa Conference of the M.E. Church," *Keokuk Daily Gate City*, October 9, 1856, 2). The editor of the *Burlington Weekly Hawk-Eye and Telegraph* visited Mt Pleasant in January 1857, noting that he was surprised to see such fine public and private buildings in so young an inland town. The town had large and substantial churches, fine and commodious hotels, good business houses, Iowa Wesleyan University, and evidence of wealth and cultivated taste in appearance of private residences and their surroundings. There were two fine brick churches – Methodist and Presbyterian – both of which were large in size and correct in architectural proportions and taste ("Mt Pleasant," *Burlington Weekly Hawk-Eye and Telegraph*, January 14, 1857, 2). The 1859-60 county directory lists Asbury Chapel at the corner of Monroe and Adams, with Rev. P.P. Ingalls as the pastor.

The original design of Asbury Chapel was large front gable brick building of a height of a two-story building and with a center steeple on the roof. The Iowa Conference of Methodist Episcopal churches reported a total of 121 churches in November 1861, valued at a total around \$175,000. The most valuable church was noted as Asbury Chapel at Mt Pleasant, valued at \$14,000. It was followed by churches in Keokuk and Burlington, each valued at \$12,000 ("Religious Statistics in Iowa," *Buchanan County Guardian*, November 16, 1861, 4). The 1869 *Birds-Eye View of the City of Mount Pleasant* cleared shows the original church building. The narrow gable-roof building has five windows on each side and a tall steeple. The 1870 city directory lists the Asbury Church, built in 1856, on Monroe St, northwest corner with Adams

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St, with Rev. W. Dennett. Two other Methodist Episcopal churches operated in town, both noted as organized in 1868. The Main Street Church, located on the west side of Main between Henry and Saunders, was in proximity to Iowa Wesleyan University to the north, and Henry Street Church on E. Henry served the northeast portion of town (Annewalt 1870: 24). In 1876, the Main Street church merged with Asbury church, which then became known officially as First Methodist Episcopal Church. The Main Street building was retained ("United Methodist Church's Heritage," 1994 pamphlet). The 1879 county history notes that the Methodist Episcopal church worshipping in the Asbury building, with Henry Street Church still operating and the Main Street Church property retained. The present membership of the churches was around 600, and it had a large Sunday School. Several other Methodist organizations in the county had been formed from the church in Mt Pleasant (*History of Henry County* 1879: 520).

In June 1882, a tornado hit Mt Pleasant, damaging buildings on the north side of the square and within a block to the north, as well as on the blocks to the east and west. While the Baptist Church was completely destroyed, the winds knocked over the high steeples on the Presbyterian Church and the Asbury church, with the latter falling to the south and blocking the whole street. The church also lost about half of its roof ("Terrible Tornado!" *Mount Pleasant Free Press*, June 22, 1882, 3). The roof was repaired after the tornado, and the church then undertook a more major remodeling project in 1884. The upper portion of the church was closed for the work in spring 1884, with only the basement utilized during this period. Stairs were moved to new side towers, with the steeple placed on the southeast corner. The gallery at the south end was removed and reconfigured, increasing seating capacity. The new auditorium was noted as one of the finest in the west, with a great organ occupying space at the north end. Work was completed under the building committee consisting of Charles Snider, Henry Ambler, and E. Baines. The entire cost of the remodeling and additions (including the organ at \$1,325) was \$8,236, all of which is about provided for, \$315 being received at last Sunday's collection. At the time of the dedication of the remodeled church in October 1884, the newspaper noted: This, now remodeled church, was first built in 1856, and long known as 'Asbury,' and for over a quarter of a century, has been a great central point in Iowa Methodism, whose walls have resounded with the eloquence of many able divines, including the celebrated Dr. Elliot, Dr. Thomas, and others, passed away, or yet famous in different fields ("The Remodeled M.E. Church," *The Free Press*", October 23, 1884, 3). The 1886 Sanborn fire insurance maps show this large brick building, with the core rectangular form flanked by additions on the south half of the east and west side. It is 36 feet in height to the eaves, faces Monroe St to the south, and situated in the center of the lot. There is a spire shown on the southeast corner of the building. The building is labeled "M.E. Church." The same footprint is shown on the 1892 Sanborn map.

The 1888 *Portrait and Biographical Album of Henry County* notes that the First Methodist Episcopal Church worshipped in the Asbury Church, which had been remodeled and enlarged at a cost of \$8,200 in early 1880s under Rev. J.B. Blakeney. The value of property and parsonage in 1888 was \$25,000. The large membership of the church included some of the best and most influential citizens, and it had a large and flourishing Sabbath school. Rev. J.W. McDonald had served the church since September 1885 (*Portrait and Biographical Album of Henry County* 1888: 670). The 1893 city directory lists Asbury M.E. Church at the corner of Adams and Monroe, with Rev. W.G. Thorne as pastor. The only other Methodist church in town is the German M.E. Church at German College on N. Main St. The 1899 Sanborn fire insurance map shows the same footprint as the previous maps. The building uses hot air for heat and gas for lighting.

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The *Mt Pleasant Daily News* noted in June 1905: "Time and again the cornices and the steeple of the Methodist church burst out in flames and again and again the fire men were obliged to exert every effort to save the structure..." The recent fire had caused damage to the Methodist church of around \$500, which was chiefly from water. The main audience room had little damage, but the immense stream of water thrown in through the cupola soaked the eastern entrance and caused the plaster to fall. The outside also sustained some heat damage (*Mt. Pleasant Daily News*, Thursday, June 29, 1905, 3-4). The 1909 Sanborn fire insurance map shows the same footprint as the previous maps. It indicates that the spire on the southeast corner of the building is 50' in height.

On December 12, 1905, a fire began in the frame Grand Opera House on the west side of the 200 block of N. Main St, located to the north of the Baptist Church at the corner. Both buildings were destroyed, with a new brick church constructed at the corner in 1906-07 (HCBC 1982: 16). The demolition of the opera house left Mt Pleasant without an opera house or other theater. The Lincoln Theater operated in the Harlan House periodically from January 1908 to May 1909, with the former dining room noted as a theater on the 1909 Sanborn map. While it was noted as better than no theater or moving picture house, the space was not ideally suited for this use. Carl Stith, the last operator of the Lincoln Theater, moved the scenery and equipment to the south storefront in the Schliep building on the east side of the square, opening The Pastime Theatre in this space around May 15, 1909 (*Mt Pleasant Daily News*, January 24, 1908, 6; "Will Be Pastime Theater," *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, May 5, 1909, 3; "10 Years Ago Today," *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, April 3, 1922, 3). In March 1909, a committee of the Athenian Club started to raise funds for a new opera house. They organized the Mount Pleasant Auditorium Association, and president C.G. Gloeckler and the board of directors worked to locate a site for the new opera house ("Auditorium is Finished," *Mount Pleasant Journal*, December 28, 1909, 2).

With plans for First Methodist Episcopal Church to move to a new location two blocks to the north on N. Main St, the Mount Pleasant Auditorium Association worked on plans with architect Orren A. Hoagland of Chariton on plans to remodel the building into an auditorium in May 1909. The Methodists planned their last service in the church, intending to hold services at the college chapel for a year or two while their new church was constructed. The cost of the addition and remodeling was estimated at \$11,500. The final auditorium would have a seating capacity of 680, a balcony, four boxes, a large stage, the latest opera chairs, and dressing rooms ("The Auditorium," *Mount Pleasant Journal*, May 28, 1909, 1; "The Auditorium," *Mount Pleasant Journal*, May 28, 1909, 1, 3). On June 11, 1909, the Board of Trustees of the First M.E. Church of Mt Pleasant sold the church property (Lot 8, Block 9) to the Mount Pleasant Auditorium Company for \$4,500. The contract for the work was let to contractors Whitney & Bergdahl of Mt Pleasant. The final cost of the project was \$15,000, with money still needed to be raised to reduce the debt of the company in December 1909 when the construction was completed. A contract for management of the auditorium for three years had been made with C.F. Irwin, who was working on programming for the space ("Auditorium is Finished," *Mount Pleasant Journal*, December 28, 1909, 2). The 1911-12 Henry County Directory lists the Mt Pleasant Auditorium at 113 E. Monroe, the northwest corner of Monroe and Adams. George T. Hill is listed as the manager. The Methodist Episcopal Church is listed in their new building at the southwest corner of N. Main and Saunders streets.

In March 1912, the Mount Pleasant Auditorium Association transferred the property to John F. Myers, who immediately transferred it to local real estate agent Dennis Morony. The deal was a farm trade, with the directors receiving the Cammack farm of 120 acres near Salem in return. The sale was authorized to assist with the directors satisfying the debt on the property. Morony leased the building to J.D. King of

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Muscatine, who had recently sold his theater business there and planned to move to town. It was expected that he would put in a moving picture theatre with vaudeville. Morony planned to have the building painted on the outside, and he offered it for sale or trade ("Auditorium Has Been Sold," *Mt Pleasant Journal*, March 26, 1912, 3). In August 1912, Dennis Morony sold the property to F.H. Long. In June 1915, F.H. Long sold the property to W.H. Benner. Through this period, the auditorium was used for traveling shows, public meetings, high school plays, programs, and graduations (Donald Young, "Mt. Pleasant opera houses, theatres, and meeting halls," *Mt Pleasant News*, April 21, 2000, 5). A photograph of E. Monroe St in 1915 shows the building painted white and without the steeple on the southeast corner. The steeple was likely removed as part of the remodel in 1909, though it may have been removed a few years later as the building operated as a theater.

Telephone directories from 1917 to 1921 list the Auditorium Theatre (Theater) on E. Monroe. In March 1916, E.H. Helmts of Atlantic opened the Auditorium as a moving picture house. He had experience in the moving picture business, operating a string of houses. The house would be the home of the Paramount pictures ("Playhouse Leased," *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, March 9, 1916, 4). By July 1916, the Auditorium Theatre advertised as the home of Paramount Pictures, with a matinee every day. They were "the coolest place in town" as well. Prices were 5 cents, 10 cents, and 15 cents, depending on the show (*Mt Pleasant Daily News*, July 7, 1916, 4). In December 1917, Pauline Beckwith purchased the Pastime Theater on the east side of the square (*Mt Pleasant Daily News*, December 17, 1917, 4). In May 1918, E.H. Helmts sold the Auditorium Theatre to Pauline Beckwith as well (*Mt Pleasant Daily News*, May 31, 1918, 4). Work was completed to redecorate and improve the Auditorium Theater in June, with a modern ladies rest room or parlor added on the main level. The lobby was also redecorated into a gold, blue, and white scheme, with manager Miss Pauline Beckwith congratulated by the newspaper for her efforts ("Auditorium in Summer Attire," *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, June 29, 1918, 3). A new large pipe organ was installed in the Auditorium Theatre in November 1918 by manager Pauline Beckwith. It was noted as the largest and most expensive in the county, other than the one in the college chapel. The Auditorium reopened with a new schedule of prices, with 20 cents for main level seats, 15 cents for balcony seats, and 10 cents for children ("A New Pipe Organ," *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, November 15, 1918, 3). In February 1919, Pauline Beckwith secured the services of Chicago organist George Goldketty, who would come to Mt Pleasant in the next week. She had made a policy to show only the best pictures in the Auditorium, and she had also made arrangements for several big productions for the theater while in Chicago (*Mt Pleasant Daily News*, February 5, 1919, 4). On May 1, 1919, she sold the Auditorium to D. Earls Combs of Chariton, Iowa, who also operated a dozen other houses under a company known as the Southeastern Iowa Picture Theater Corporation ("The Auditorium Sold," *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, April 29, 1919, 4). The Southern Iowa Theater Company, which was operating the Auditorium Theater, purchased the Pastime Theater on the east side of the square in June 1919, with the theater expected to reopen when cooler weather returned. They also announced that Professor Goldketty, organist at the Auditorium Theater would have charge over the entire circuit of houses operated by the company, remaining at each place for a week or so. Miss Pauline Beckwith had been hired to manage the Pastime Theater ("Pastime is Sold," *Mt Pleasant Weekly News*, June 11, 1919, 6). Throughout this period, the Auditorium operated as the premiere theater in Mt Pleasant.

The 1920 Sanborn fire insurance map shows a large addition that was built on the west side of the building in 1909, extending the building nearly to the alley. The addition is noted as tile block with brick face. The addition has the stage and scenery, with a balcony to the east within the original portion of the building. There is a seating capacity of 650 people. The building now has steam heat and electric lights.

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The building is labeled "Auditorium Theatre – Vaudeville & Moving Pictures". The 50' spire is still shown on the southeast corner of the building.

In September 1922, Karl Hoaglin sold the lease of the Auditorium Theatre and the business with it to D.E. Arries and M.L. Dickson, both of Omaha. The young men sold a motion picture house at La Mars and another town to secure this moving picture house to be managed by one of them. They intended to open another motion picture house to be managed by the other. They had been friends for a long time and served in the army together in the air service. They had been in the motion picture business since the war. They planned to put on programs of character that would please the old patrons of the house and add to the clientele ("Auditorium is Sold," *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, September 13, 1922, 4).

A new theater opened in Mt Pleasant in 1924. The Masons purchased and remodeled the Kaster Block at 115 N. Main St in 1923-24, with a rear addition built for a modern motion picture theater and upper story space remodeled for the Masonic Lodge. The Masons moved into their new space on May 19, 1924, and the Temple Theater was also opened on the same day (*Mt Pleasant Daily News*, April 5, 1924, 1; *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, May 19, 1924, 1; "Masonic Temple is Dedicated with Great Solemnity," *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, May 20, 1924, 1). The Temple Theatre was sold by William Ferguson to D.E. Arries and M.L. Dickson on September 1, 1924, with several improvements completed. With the acquisition of the newer theater, the Auditorium Theatre was then operated fewer days each week. M.L. Dickson became sole manager of both theaters in 1926. New releases were shown at the Temple Theatre, with the Auditorium Theatre showing older movies for several years ("Temple Theatre Changes Hands," *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, August 22, 1924, 1; "Heartland Buys Two Local Theaters," *Mt Pleasant News*, March 7, 1970, 1).

The property (Lot 8, Block 9) associated with the Auditorium Theatre was sold by Mable Benner to Edward and Elma J. Heather on September 5, 1927. Elma J. Heather then sold the property to Marion L. Dickson on April 19, 1930. Thus, he owned both the theater and the property.

M.L. Dickson continued to operate the Auditorium Theatre in this location through the 1930s. He then remodeled the building in 1938. The building became known as the Colonial Building, with the name of the theater changed from the Auditorium to the Colonial Theatre in May 1938. A new sign was installed on the front of the building. The west portion of the building was remodeled for several apartments. The Colonial Apartments in the Colonial building, formerly the Auditorium, just east of the square and owned by M.L. Dickson, was opened to the public for inspection on May 29, with the inside of the building almost finished and painting and landscaping in progress ("Theater Name Becomes 'Colonial,'" *Mt Pleasant News*, May 23, 1938, 1; "New Apartments Open for Inspection *Mt. Pleasant News*, May 27, 1938, page 1).

The 1938 city directory lists the Colonial Theatre on E. Monroe. It is listed as both a theater and a moving picture theater. Colonial Apartments are also listed on E. Monroe. F.C. Ackerman & Co is listed in the Colonial Building as well. They are listed under electrician, electrical contractor, heating, air conditioning, furnace, stoves, and electrical appliances. The company is also listed under clubs. The Temple Theater is the only other movie theater in Mt Pleasant.

The 1942 Sanborn fire insurance map shows the same footprint as the 1920 map, with the interior layout not updated from the 1920 map. Movies are shown and the building is labeled "Colonial Theatre".

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Telephone directories from 1939, 1941, 1944, and 1948 continue to list the Colonial Theater and F.C. Ackerman & Co in this building. By 1948, the Colonial Beauty Shop is also listed in the Colonial Building. The 1950 and 1952 telephone directories then list the Colonial Theater and Colonial Beauty Shop.

M.L. Dickson constructed a new type of movie theater in spring 1953, about one mile to the west on Highway 34. The Ridge Drive-In operated during the warm months, offering an alternative to the traditional movie theater in an era where television was increasingly popular. He closed the Colonial Theater with the opening of the drive-in, while continuing to run the Temple Theater (Jaynes 1976: 146, 163). The building for Colonial Theater had been partially remodeled for apartments previously, and Colonial Apartments continue to operate in this building at 115 E. Monroe St.

The 1955 city directory lists the Colonial Apartments. Colonial Beauty Shop continues to be listed in the building. An article in January 1959 notes that the remodeling of the former Colonial Theater for offices is moving towards completion. Three agricultural organization offices planned to move into the space – the ASC office, Soil District office, and Farmers Home Administration Office (“Will Move Three Farm Offices,” *Mt Pleasant News*, January 7, 1959, 1). The 1960 city directory list Colonial Beauty at 117 E. Monroe, with the Colonial Apartments at 117 ½ E. Monroe. Both continue to be listed here at these addresses in the 1966 city directory. The Colonial Building is listed at 119 E. Monroe St, with the Henry County Soil Conservation District and USDA Farmers Home Administration at this address.

M.L. Dickson retained ownership of the property at the time of his death in August 1969. He had been in the theater business continually in Mt Pleasant since 1922, still active manager of the Temple Theater and Ridge Drive-In at the time of his death (“M.L. Dickson, Theater Owner, Passes Away,” *Mt Pleasant News*, August 13, 1969, 1).

In October 1971, Mrs. M.L. Dickson announced the sale of the Colonial Apartments building at 117-119 E. Monroe St to Dr. and Mrs. Ledru Kauffman. The Kauffmans planned to add more apartments to the 12 units already there. The building was once the Methodist Church and then a theater for many years. It was noted as remodeled into apartments and offices in the early 1950s (“Colonial apartments sold,” *Mt Pleasant News*, October 6, 1971, 1). The property was officially sold to Ledru and Lola Kauffman on November 9, 1971. A building permit was issued in February 1972 for Dr. Ledru Kauffman for remodeling of the Colonial Apartments (*Mt Pleasant News*, February 3, 1972, 1).

On March 27, 1974, Ledru and Lola Kauffman sold the property to Edwin and Mary Longanecker. In March 1976, a multi-phase renovation project was started by Ed and Mary Longanecker for the Colonial Apartment building. The first phase of the project consisted of sandblasting and tuckpointing the west side. The second phase in 1977 was planned to be the front / south side of the building. Then the third phase in 1978 would be the east side and the rear / north. After the exterior was completed, the Longaneckers planned interior remodeling. The building was constructed as a Methodist Church, converted to a theater, and then remodeled into an apartment building (“Colonial apartments renovation,” *Mt Pleasant News*, March 13, 1976, 1). Work for the year in 1979 included continued to include the end of sandblasting and tuckpointing of the Colonial Apartments (“Year marked by weather contrasts,” *Mt Pleasant News*, December 19, 1979, 1).

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Apartments were then added on the third story of the Colonial Apartments in 1980-81. In February 1980, the Mt Pleasant Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of a special use permit for Ed Longanecker to construct eight apartments on the unused third floor of the Colonial Apartments building at 119 E. Monroe St. A variance for the parking requirement was also recommended ("Planning, zoning board acts on many requests," *Mt Pleasant News*, February 27, 1980, 1). A public hearing was held in June 1980 on the request by Ed Longanecker for approximately \$200,000 in urban revitalization funds for the addition of six apartments at the Colonial Apartments, which was granted. He also provided information on his plans for more parking in the area of the building ("City to apply for paving funds," *Mt Pleasant News*, June 5, 1980, 1). A photograph appeared in December 1980 in the *Mt Pleasant News* showing the construction of the elevator on the east side of the building, noting that the construction of eight apartments on the third story of the building was underway. Applications were currently being taken for the new apartments by Ed and Mary Longanecker. Don Wiley was the contractor for the apartment work, and H. Eugene Smith Construction Company was in charge of the elevator construction. The building would contain a total of 22 apartments and a beauty shop when it was completed ("Construction underway," *Mt Pleasant News*, December 4, 1980, 1).

The 1981 city directory lists five tenants in seven apartments at 115 E. Monroe St (west entrance, E.L. Devol at 117 E. Monroe St, the Colonial Beauty Shop at 119 E. Monroe St, and four tenants in five apartments at 121 E. Monroe St (east entrance). The Colonial Beauty Shop was operated by Jo Pooch. The 1986 city directory lists three tenants in apartments at 115 E. Monroe St (west entrance), no info for 117 E. Monroe St, Colonial Beauty Shop at 119 E. Monroe St, and seven tenants in apartments at 121 E. Monroe St (east entrance).

The Colonial Beauty Shop was sold by Jo Pooch in October 1991 (*Mt Pleasant News*, October 17, 1991, 9). A permit was approved for Kevin R. Wagler for Headlines Hair Design Studio, located at the former Colonial Beauty Shop, 119 E Monroe, in November 1991 (*Mt Pleasant News*, November 5, 1991, 2).

The 1993 city directory lists four tenants in apartments at 115 E. Monroe St (west entrance), Martha Robertson at 117 E. Monroe St and Tamara Martin at 117 ½ E. Monroe St, Headlines Hair Design Studio at 119 E. Monroe St, and 11 tenants in apartments at 121 E. Monroe St (east entrance).

The 2001 city directory lists six tenants in apartments at 115 E. Monroe St (west entrance) as well as Regional Home Health Care, no info for 117 E. Monroe St or 119 E. Monroe St, and three tenants in apartments at 121 E. Monroe St (east entrance).

The 2011 city directory lists the building simply as 115 E. Monroe St. The Wellness Connection is listed here, along with nine tenants in apartments.

Mary Longanecker died in June 2020. The property was transferred in July 2020 from Edwin S. Longanecker to the Edwin S. Longanecker Revocable Trust. The building continues to operate as Colonial Apartments.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Building and sign permits, City of Mount Pleasant, Iowa

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**Location map**



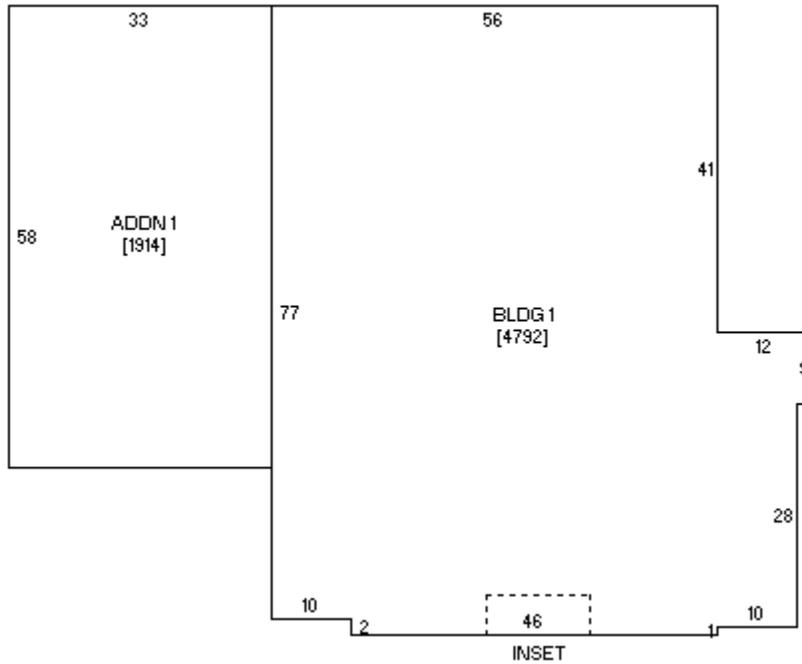
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**Building footprint**



Sketch by [www.camavision.com](http://www.camavision.com)

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

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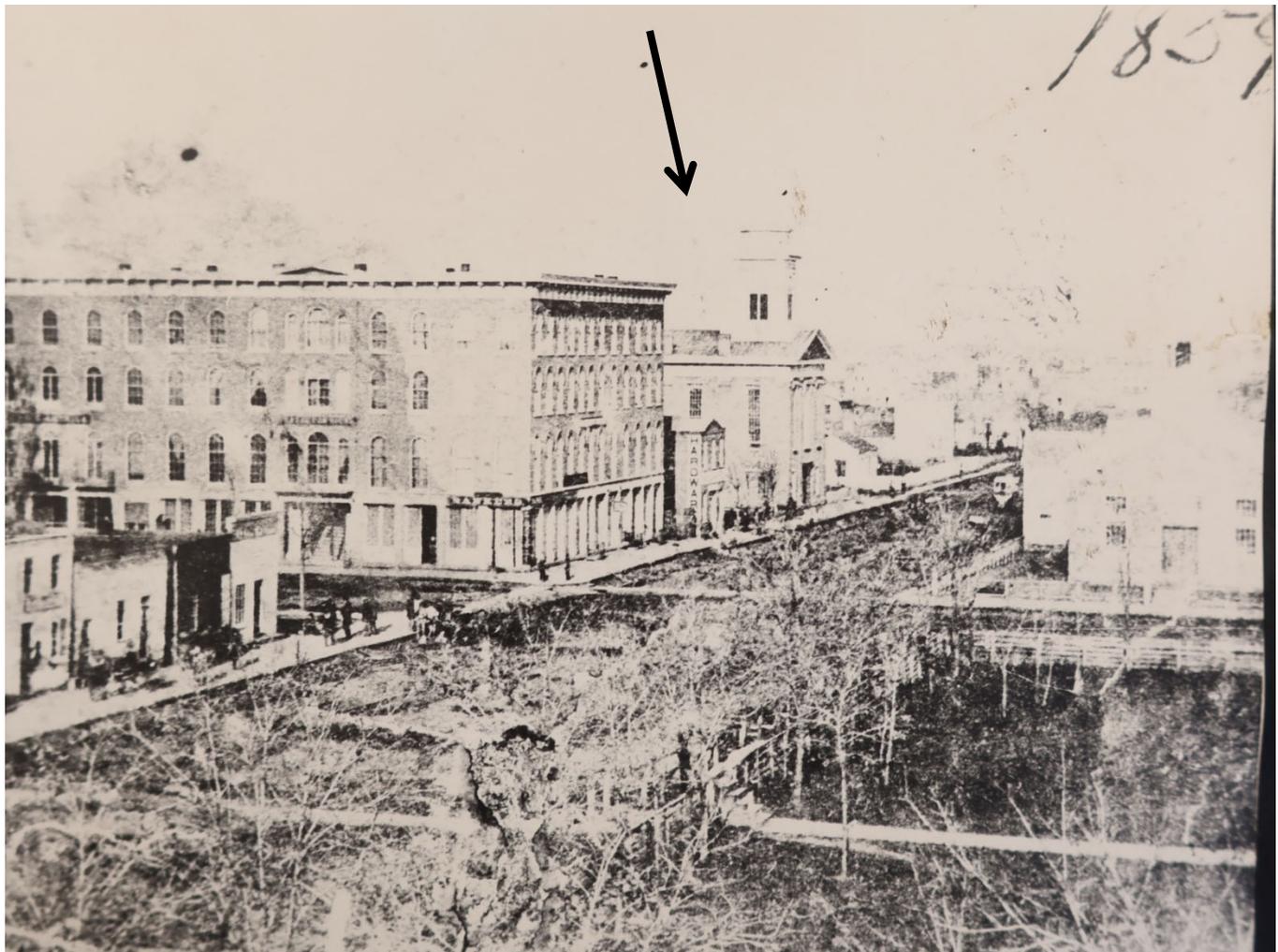
115 E. Monroe St

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**Historic images**



1859 image showing Methodist Church on E. Monroe (HCHS files, Mt Pleasant Library)

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**Postcard of First M.E. Church around 1900**

(Hayes collection, HCHT files; also printed in *Cornerstones* 1991: 79)

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**View looking west on Monroe St around 1915, with Methodist Church at right  
(Hayes collection, HCHT files; *Cornerstones* 1991: 77)**

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**Former Methodist Church around 1915 (SHSI image printed in *Cornerstones* 1991: 79)**

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**Colonial Theater around 1946 (HCHT Facebook album)**

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**Building in July 1965 (HCHT files)**

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*Restoration continues*

4-12-77

In the second of the four years scheduled by owners Ed and Mary Longanecker for the restoration of the Colonial apartment building, the front of the structure is being sandblasted by the Richard Schoonover company of Vinton. The east wall will be restored next spring, the back the following year, according to the plan. The structure was built as a church; it later contained a movie theater.

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**1990 survey photograph (Naumann 1991)**

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1990 survey photograph (Naumann 1991)

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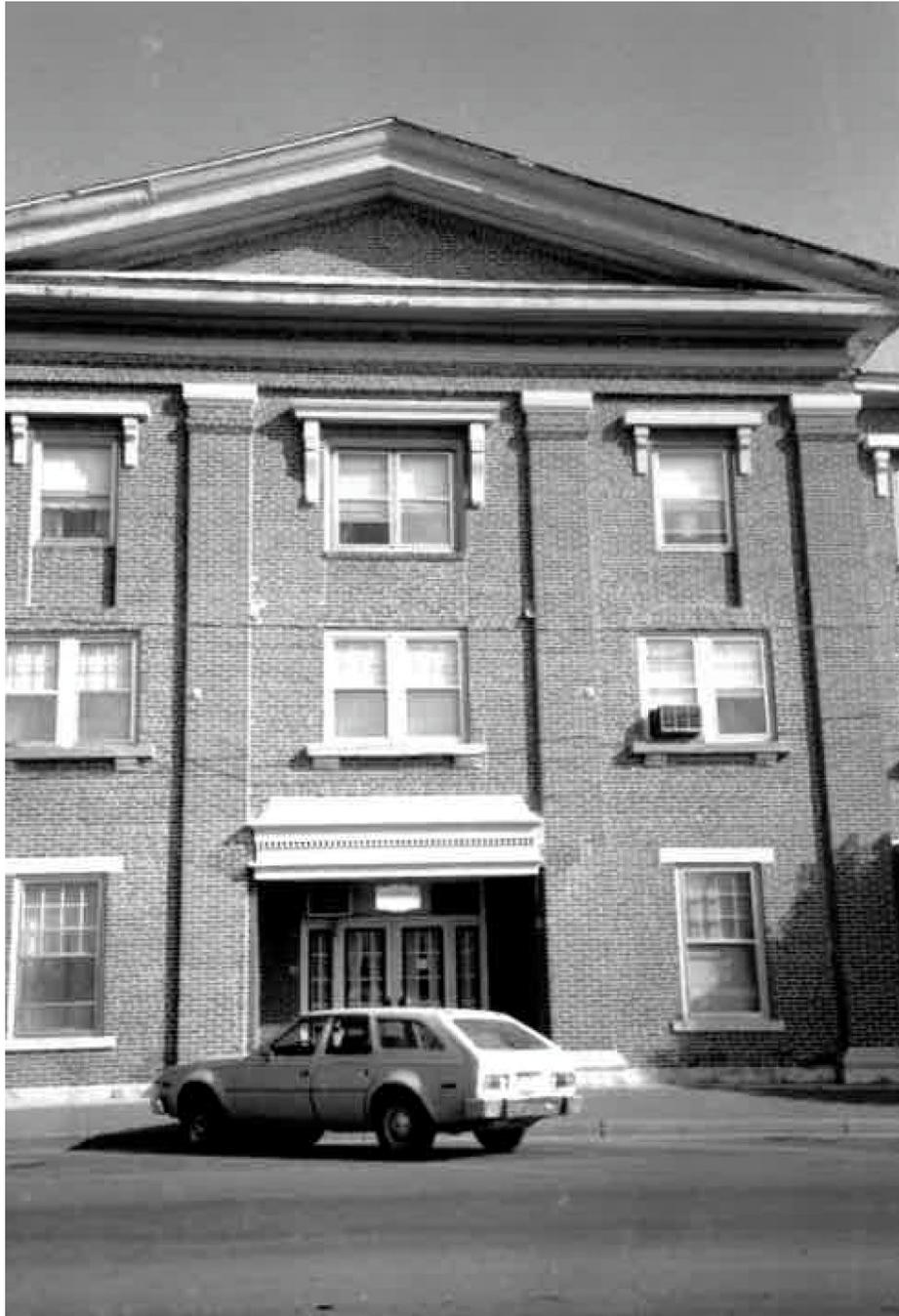
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1990 survey photograph (Naumann 1991)

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**Digital photographs**



**Photograph 44-00331-001. South elevation, looking northwest (October 2023)**

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**Photograph 44-00331-002. South elevation, looking northeast (October 2023)**

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**Photograph 44-00331-003. West elevation, looking northeast (October 2023)**

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**Photograph 44-00331-004. North elevation, looking south (October 2023)**