NPS Form 10-900
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(Rev. 10-90)

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

924

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Sexton Hotel

other names/site number Sexton House; Hotel Stuart; Stuart Hotel

2. Location

street & number 203 East Front St. not for publication N/A
city or town Stuart vicinity ___
state Iowa code IA county Guthrie code 077 zip code 50250

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant __ nationally __ statewide X locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Terry M Brandt 10/31/2013
Signature of certifying official Date
Iowa DSHPO
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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): _____

for
Signature of Keeper Date of Action
Edson H. Beall 12.18.13

Sexton Hotel
Name of Property

Guthrie County, Iowa
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)
X private
___ public-local
___ public-State
___ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)
X building(s)
___ district
___ site
___ structure
___ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	___	buildings
___	___	sites
___	___	structures
___	___	objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC/hotel
COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS /
Classical Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)
foundation BRICK
BRICK
roof ASPHALT
walls BRICK
CONCRETE
other

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

Sexton Hotel
Name of Property

Guthrie County, Iowa
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

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

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

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

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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE
TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance
1907-1963

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)
Property is:

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

____ **B** removed from its original location.

____ **C** a birthplace or a grave.

____ **D** a cemetery.

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

____ **F** a commemorative property.

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

Significant Dates
1907

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS)
___ 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
__X__ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other
Name of repository:

Sexton Hotel
Name of Property

Guthrie County, Iowa
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	15	390103	4595523	3			
2				4			

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jan Olive Full /Historian

organization Tallgrass Historians L.C. date March 2013

street & number 2460 S. Riverside Drive telephone 319.354.6722

city or town Iowa City state IA zip code 52246

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

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

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

Property Owner

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

name Ai Properties, LLC

street & number 319 East 5th, Ste. 3 telephone 515-280-7234

city or town Des Moines state IA zip code 50309

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.0. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

7. Description

Summary Paragraph

Sexton Hotel is located at the southern edge of the small town[1] of Stuart in southeastern Guthrie County, which is in central Iowa. Guthrie County is bordered on the south by Adair County. Stuart lies across the shared county line, fully half of it north of the county line in Guthrie County and half south of the line in Adair County. This awkward location was dictated by the sinuous line of the town's *raison d'être*, the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad, whose rail line was surveyed in the 1850s following landscape features rather than jurisdictional borders. The 1868-69 brick Rock Island passenger depot (NRHP, 1980) is located directly across the street from the Sexton Hotel. In addition to strong rail transportation connections, the town and hotel were also favored with good early highway associations. In 1914, the new Iowa State Highway Commission registered the east/west road through Stuart as the "Great White Way" (also commonly known as the "White Pole Road"), the first registered route in the state. This road is called Front Street through town and runs between the Sexton Hotel and the Rock Island depot. Division railroad shops once were located just east of the depot and hotel but are gone now. The trackage is still in active use by the Iowa Interstate Railroad. Front Street—the White Pole Road—has been downgraded to a county road and made obsolete for speedy cross-country travel by nearby Interstate 80. The town's historic downtown retail center is located along N. 2nd St., a block north of the hotel building. Situated on a level corner lot, the Sexton Hotel is an L-shaped brick and brick veneer building that essentially fills its lot except for an informal north side dirt drive to a small grassy yard in the northeast corner of the lot. The primary entry to the hotel lobby is located in the heavily decorated two-story canted entrance bay at the southwest corner of the building. The long south block of the hotel lies along East Front Street and is marked by several large, ground floor windows and a secondary entrance for hotel guests to the east of the southwest corner lobby. The larger south block of the hotel was constructed of solid brick between late 1906 and early 1907, after an existing wood-frame building on the corner was moved back on the lot. This frame building, constructed by the same owner, John P. Sexton, in 1893 as a "restaurant and eating house," became the hotel's north wing and was veneered with the same brick, leaving it indistinguishable from the newer hotel block.[2] The north wing, which has another secondary entrance to the public dining hall inside, lies along N. Fremont Street (formerly Tremont St.). Brickwork on the two public facades of the building is decoratively patterned and topped by an ornate pressed-metal cornice. Generous use of classical details at the main corner entrance and along the cornice area gives the overall hotel a Classical Revival style. The more private walls at the east end of the 1906-07 block and those facing the interior of the lot, are of common red brick. A small, 1-story, single-room wing (the original kitchen) on the inside of the L-shape dates to the 1893 construction and is now clad in vinyl siding. Portions of the upper story of the north wing over this small wing have lost their brick veneer (if it ever existed) to expose the wood framing. Likewise, the brick on the narrow north end wall of the north wing lost its brick at some point and is now clad in concrete blocks. Most windows throughout the building appear to retain their original sashes except where vandals have smashed them.

Public Elevations: South and West

The foundations on these two sides are brick, but smeared with a thin coat of pebbly concrete, which was scored to resemble stone blocks. Basement window wells in the foundation have segmental arched brick headers also covered with concrete. Above this foundation is a cast stone water table painted dark green. Similar material and paint forms the sills of the windows on these two public elevations as well as the bases for the southwest corner entrance pilasters that surround the formal recessed entrance to the main hotel lobby.[3] Brick walls that rise from the water table are highly decorative and were laid with a thin

[1] Stuart's population in 2010 was 1,648 (U.S. Census, 2010). Its twentieth century population has typically hovered around this number.
[2] *Stuart Herald*, June 28, 1907.
[3] No native or natural stone was observed anywhere in the building.

reddish mortar that minimizes the horizontal lines.[4] The iron spot brick surfaces are dark red, somewhat shiny, and flecked with small black spots. The brick pattern is a modified American or common bond, in that every five courses of stretchers is broken by a 3-course band of header-stretcher-header, instead of the typical single course of headers. Bricks that form the flat first- and second-story window headers (suggesting a heavy timber or steel plate inside actually carrying the load) are laid in three courses, described from bottom to top as a single soldier course, topped by a header course, and finished by a rowlock course. Above the second-story windows is a beltcourse consisting of a soldier course, topped by a header course that protrudes slightly from the wall surface. Above this beltcourse is a wide flat surface formed by seven stretcher courses decorated with regularly spaced, diamond like designs made of headers laid on the diagonal. A deeply incised cast-concrete bead and reel band tops this wide brick space and terminates the masonry wall. At the very top of the building, the sheet metal cornice overhanging the brick walls is wide, heavy looking, and extremely decorative. Classical in style, the cornice has another bead-and-reel band (though with less profile and lacking the deep shadows of the cast-stone band below it), and a crown molding.

Windows on both the first and second floors lack the symmetry expected in classically inspired architecture and primarily reflect the interior functions. All windows have wooden sashes and some are covered by white-metal storm windows. On the primary south side, ground floor windows are of irregular sizes and have large glass transoms divided by wood mullions and muntins. Only two of the five windows on the south side ground floor are similar and are filled with what appear to be quite old casement windows. At the far west end of the south elevation a large plate glass window allows generous amounts of light into the lobby. Next to it to the east is the secondary doorway into the hotel's interior and staircase to the upper floor. This opening has a transom also and a flat classical lintel supported by heavy brackets, all of cast-stone. Next is a large three-part bay window supported by a brick bulkhead, then one of the two identical narrow windows, then a larger three-part window, and finally at the east end, the other identical window. Upper floor windows on the south side are smaller and all the same size, with double hung sashes, the upper sash of which is divided into three vertical lights.

Around the corner, on the west side, it is fairly easy to discern by window placement and size where the 1906-07 brick block ends and the 1893 frame wing begins. From south to north, the first ground floor window is another large lobby window, but this one is divided by stout wood mullions. Next is a tall, narrow window that also illuminates the lobby. Overhead are two second-floor windows that are similar to those found on the south elevation. However, beyond these openings, there is a wider expanse of brick wall (the juncture of the two types and vintages of construction) and beyond that the fenestration becomes quite dissimilar. Two ground floor windows are tall and narrow. Overhead, the upper level windows are narrower and taller than their 1906-07 counterparts. Evidence of the building's two construction methods is also suggested in the apparent settling of the north wing, resulting in brick and mortar cracks in several spots.

Main Hotel Entrance – Southwest Corner

The outstanding feature of the two public facades, and of the hotel in general, is the remarkable canted entrance located at the southwest corner of the building—a prominent entry probably intended to attract the attention of disembarking train passengers at the Rock Island depot across the road to the southwest. This location would have less import for auto travelers coming into town (especially from the east) on the While Pole Road, but a prominent neon sign (extant but under restoration and not currently installed) later was hung over the Front Street sidewalk to attract these potential guests.[5] The entrance is approached by three rounded concrete steps leading to a recess within a "temple" surround composed of brick pilasters resting on cast-stone

[4] Despite the decorative brickwork and the obvious care with which the masonry design for the public elevations was planned, the hotel seems to have been painted yellow at a relatively early decade, perhaps to make it more obvious to the passing highway travelers (the rail passengers had little choice in closer accommodations) or to enhance its classical "temple" appearance. The yellow paint is quickly wearing off at this point, and the bricks on these two sides are in very good condition.

[5] This neon sign advertizing the "Hotel Stuart" as it was later called, was on the building by the 1940s (historic photos) but likely was installed many years before that. It was removed by a prior owner, but was retrieved and will be rehung.

plinths and supporting a cast stone lintel and, above the lintel, a cast stone pediment with a brick-infilled tympanum. The brick wall above the pediment is rounded to the roof line and holds a large curved window opening on the second floor (probably the most desirable interior room since it had good cross ventilation and was much bigger than the rest of the guest rooms). Brick pilasters continue on either side of this window to the ornate roofline. Brickwork, the bead-and-reel cast stone course, and the sheet metal cornice on the corner entrance repeat the design on both long side walls to the south and west. The hotel main door and its wood framework are located within the sheltering recess of the corner entrance. Glass in the wide, angled side lights and the overscale transom above the door has been broken out and is currently covered by plywood.

Private Elevations: North and East

The east end of the 1906-07 hotel was not intended to be as visible as it is now and its construction materials reflect that. At the time of its construction, a wood-frame house sat next to the new building. Soon after, another two-story hotel, called the Pilgrim Hotel, existed next to the east wall of Sexton Hotel.[6] This second hotel building was gone by 1931, replaced by a small frees-standing filling station. Windows on the Sexton Hotel on this east elevation are currently limited to the three on the upper floor, where two guest room windows flank a smaller bathroom window. Below these on the ground floor, there is evidence in the soft red brick walls of two taller windows that were bricked in a long time ago. Discoloration on the ground level of this east wall suggests either ghost signage or a single story addition. What appears to be a tar line even lower suggests the possible shed roof line of small addition. All bricks on this side are soft red common bricks. Fenestration sills and segmental-arch headers are of the same brick.

Around the corner to the north, the north wall of the 1906-07 block has symmetrical and balanced fenestration with brick headers and sills, reflecting the small guest rooms within. One window on the ground floor appears to have been converted to a back door. The wooden bulkhead for an entrance to the basement, perhaps for the delivery of coal for the boiler (boiler nonextant) and other necessities is located on this wall also.

The inside corner of the 1906-07 brick block and the earlier 1893 frame wing is obscured at ground level by a small brick storage room that dates to the 1906-07 period This brick storage room spans the space between the 1906-07 brick block and the single-story, frame kitchen wing on the back (east side) of the north wing. Sanborn fire insurance maps indicate this is Sexton's original kitchen for the frame "restaurant and eating house."[7] It has a flattened hipped roof and is now clad on two sides with vinyl siding and on the north side by a concrete block veneer. It does, however, sit on an old, common brick foundation. Overhead above these single-story structures, the second floor of the north wing is largely devoid of any siding leaving the old wood sheathing exposed.

The final wall of the hotel to be described is the narrow north wall of the frame wing. This wall is now concrete block with four windows in it, an obvious replacement wall added to cover and perhaps support a failing wooden wall at this end. The four windows as well as the north window on the old kitchen wing are more modern.

Hotel Interior

Refer to the floor plans in the Additional Documentation pages. The ground floor contains the large lobby, the central staircase to the upper hotel rooms, a large room on the north side of the 1906-07 block that was once divided into a few hotel guest rooms and a bathroom (partition walls nonextant), and the south rooms along the Front Street side of the 1906-07 block. The south rooms east of the lobby and facing Front St. were used (at least in the 1960s) as the operator's quarters and consist of a large parlor or living room nearest the lobby, a small bedroom at the opposite east end, and two rooms in between, one of which

[6] Sanborn Map Company, fire insurance map of Stuart, Iowa, 1909 (hereafter Sanborn or Sanborns).
[7] *Stuart Herald*, June 28, 1907.

is a bathroom. Overhead on the second floor of the1906-07 block there is a central hall running from the central staircase to the east end wall, off of which are many small rooms. At the end of this hall was the single bathroom for these guest rooms.

Behind the 1906-07 block on the ground floor the frame wing held the large dining room with its smaller kitchen wing. The dining room is a single large space divided by structural square columns supporting a ceiling beam that spans the north and south end walls. Sanborn insurance maps from 1909 confirm this was the original dining room for the hotel and the public. To the east of this room is the single-story, single-room hotel kitchen.[8] Above on the second floor of the frame wing is another central hallway (narrower that the 1906-07 hallway) off of which are more small rooms. An exterior staircase once was located outside the north end wall to serve guests of this north wing.[9]

The basement is only found under the 1906-07 building and there is a crawl space under the north wing. The basement is divided by brick walls into four rooms with brick supporting pillars and concrete floors. The original boiler is absent and no equipment or fixtures are present.

Since its last private owner left, the interior of the hotel has been cleaned out and most interior second-floor partition walls have been stripped of their lath and plaster leaving only stud walls to indicate the floor plan of guest rooms in both the main hotel block and its north wing. The lobby and ground floor are more intact, except in the rear/north half of the 1906-07 block, which is one large open space now having had its modern apartment walls, kitchen, and bath fixtures removed. Removal of the apartment walls had the serendipitous effect of exposing where the older, original hotel guest rooms and the end-of-the-hall bathroom had been in this area of the hotel. The east wall of the north wing at the ceiling displays serious water damage. This is roughly where the brick veneer is missing on the outside wall and the stud framing is exposed to the elements.

Original interior features are found in the lobby and front south rooms, where there are lath and plaster walls, and painted door and window trim with crown moldings. The floors on both levels are wooden, probably pine, and are composed of 3 ½ inch boards. The main guest staircase and upstairs halls and rooms are missing many molding and trim pieces but where present, they appear to be yellow pine stained or aged to a dark finish. Original ceilings throughout are very high and there is evidence on the lower floor that modern dropped panel ceilings were installed at some point. These modern ceilings are now gone, revealing, in various places, either plaster ceilings, stamped-metal ceilings (ground floor of north wing), or the wood slats to which the decorative metal ceiling panels would have been attached (lobby).

Integrity

Except for the missing lath and plaster interior surfaces, broken glazing in some windows, and rear north wall replacement materials, the building is intact with good historic integrity:

(1) location: the hotel building as configured by John P. Sexton in 1906-07 remains the same;

(2) design: the exterior is unchanged except for missing glazing and a few smaller window sashes that appear to be replacements, especially on the north and northeast; the interior floor plan is intact except for the northeast, ground floor guest rooms; important classical design details are intact and suggest the care with which the public facades were planned;

(3) setting: the critical elements of the setting are intact, those being the streets in front and to the side of the building and the historic railroad depot and trackage to the south. These elements reflect the historic transportation associations;

[8] Sanborn, 1909.
[9] Roy Stetzel, telephone interview by author, February 28, 2013. Mr. Stetzel's parents owned the hotel in the 1960s.

(4) materials: the majority of the extant materials throughout the building are original;

(5) workmanship: the workmanship employed in building the Sexton Hotel is best reflected in the skillful masonry, which is intact;

(6) feeling: intact and improved by the removal of modern apartment fixtures;

(7) association: relatively intact, with the exception of the several changes to the property immediately east of the hotel. The nineteenth-century frame dwelling adjacent to the hotel when it was constructed was replaced by 1909 with a small hotel, which itself was replaced by 1917 by a small filling station with a canopy. The building now there is a modern metal clad structure used by the city for its fire department. To the west, across Fremont St., is Stuart's new city hall, which replaced the historic city hall and the town's Carnegie library.

8. Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph

The Sexton Hotel, constructed of brick in 1906-07, and incorporating an earlier frame building as a dining room wing, is locally significant under Criterion A for its strong associations with commerce and the provision of lodging and dining services, and with two major chapters in transportation history. By twice locating his businesses in Stuart, Iowa, across the street from the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific's tracks and its 1879 brick depot, hotel owner John P. Sexton aimed to capture the passenger trade from the trains that daily rumbled through town as well as serve the general public in his dining room. Through its public spaces—its lobby, parlors, dining room, and sample rooms—the hotel served as a *de facto* community center and a venue for interaction between and among Stuart residents and travelers. In doing so, the hotel linked this small country town with a larger urban culture and ideas from distant places. As the rail passenger industry declined and motor vehicle travel increased early in the twentieth century, the Sexton Hotel, rechristened Hotel Stuart, adapted successfully, if temporarily, to the changing demands and needs of travelers. Unable to fully compete with the modern accoutrements or convenient physical layouts of automobile-oriented motels and motor hotels, and dealt the final mortal blow by the opening of nearby Interstate 80, Hotel Stuart's owners first closed its dining room and then ceased renting its rooms, eventually converting the building to apartments in the 1970s. The period of significance runs from the initial construction of the hotel, commenced in 1906, to the arbitrary 50-year term of National Register guidelines. The significant date of 1907 recognizes the hotel's grand opening for business.

Founding of Stuart as a Railroad Division Point

While the exact relationship of "Captain" Charles Stuart to the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific is obscure, early in 1868 Stuart arrived in Iowa and began purchasing parcels of land surrounding the future route of the railroad through this area. This route had been surveyed in 1853, but construction was delayed by a nationwide financial panic in 1857 and then by the Civil War.[1] The long lag between survey and construction left plenty of time for the proposed route location to become known to land speculators and Stuart was probably hoping to make his fortune through land sales rather than the back-breaking work of prairie farming. Land typically increased in value anywhere near a railroad's future route and could have skyrocketed in the lucky towns located along the route. As early as 1857 another local land owner, A.L. McPherson, had suggested a town here but it failed to materialize, probably because it coincided with the financial panic. A decade later the Rock Island resumed construction across Iowa and the road reached Des Moines in 1867. With construction west of Des Moines imminent, Captain Stuart's aggressive land purchases early in 1868 permitted him to both plat out his namesake town along the Rock Island's route and offer strong inducements to the railroad to designate his new town as a division station. Together with McPherson and other smaller landowners, at least 120 acres and several thousands of dollars successfully persuaded the company to do so when its construction trains and crews arrived later in the same year. Thus for better or worse the fortunes of the nascent town were linked, optimistically but fragilely, to the corporate decisions of the new railroad.[2]

The "better" fortunes were immediately apparent to the handful of Stuart residents. In July, 1869, barely six months after the town's founding and the railroad's arrival, a frame passenger depot was constructed along the tracks.[3] By December of the

[1] Frank P. Donovan, "The Rock Island in Iowa," *The Palimpsest* 44 (September 1963) 9: 381-444.
[2] S[adie]. B. Maxwell, *Centennial History of Guthrie County, Iowa* (Des Moines: Carter, Hussey & Curl, 1876), 109. Maxwell was the State Librarian of Iowa from 1878 to 1888, the second women to hold the post. Karon S. King, "State Librarians of Iowa, 1837-2008" (accessed at www.publications.iowa.gov/ on February 26, 2013).
[3] *Centennial History of Guthrie County*, 115.

same year, wooden shop buildings also were constructed and the railroad's 15 to 20 workmen moved into somewhat makeshift quarters. Merchants arrived on the heels of the railroad to set up shops, saloons, and hotels. New residents lived in small shanties, lodged as boarders in the handful of homes standing by that time, and, occasionally, resided in "boarding cars" sitting on side tracks.[4] According to one local historian who observed the pace of growth first hand, "occasionally, when you looked out in the morning, you would see a dwelling which had sprung up in the night, mushroom like, at least so it seemed, they went up so rapidly."[5] The wooden shop buildings were replaced by more substantial brick shops in 1874 that included a machine shop, blacksmith, boiler shop, and a round house planned with 38 stalls. At least 123 men were employed in the shops just five or six years after the town was established. The original "old dingy depot" frame depot was converted to freight purposes in 1879 when a substantial new brick passenger depot, the pride of Stuart, was built.[6]

As the town's important rail-related facilities grew, so too did the need and number of lodging establishments. Stuart's first hotel opened in May, 1869 along what would grow into the town's retail center, a block north of the present site of Sexton Hotel. A second hotel and livery stable opened about at the same time by pioneer A.L. McPherson on what today is the town's main retail street. McPherson's hotel, called Stuart House (one of several lodging establishments to be so named over the years), was operated by others. In February, 1870, a third hotel was built by Captain Stuart but sold to Charlie Dean who operated it for many years. In the summer of 1870 a man named Dunham built yet another hotel called the Carrol House. These "hotels" were unlikely to be buildings wholly dedicated to the rental of guest rooms like the Sexton Hotel; rather most were probably frame buildings that housed commercial shops and the odd saloon at the street level with guest, boarder, and/or lodger rooms on the second floor. By 1875, Dean House was the only "pioneer hotel" still operating and it had been improved with a "sample room" wherein commercial travelers coming in and out of town on the railroad could temporarily set up their wares for the town's shopkeepers to peruse.[7] During the heady 1870s, Dean House could accommodate 40 guests, but had regular boarders as well.[8]

Dean House , on the downtown intersection of Nassau (now 2nd) and Main streets, was still standing when John P. Sexton moved to town in 1881. About 1889, he bought or leased the building and began to operate it as the Sexton House. Born in New Hampshire in 1864, Sexton had arrived in Adair County as a teenager with his parents in 1879. At 17 the entrepreneurial Sexton left the farm and moved to Stuart where he found work as a clerk and learned the lodging business at two different hotels then in operation, the Wesley House and the Arlington. Eight years later he was operating his own hotel.[9] In 1893, drawn south from the main commercial district by the business the railroad facilities could offer, Sexton bought the corner lots at Front and Fremont streets and erected a frame 'restaurant and eating house." This building's location put Sexton directly across the street from the railroad's brick passenger depot and in competition with the nearby, much larger Arlington hotel's dining room. The 1894 Sanborn fire insurance map labels Sexton's new corner building simply as "lunch" leaving no doubt about Mr. Sexton's intentions; however, the building had a second floor, which was surely not a part of the restaurant business. This two-story frame building, which later became the north wing of the present Sexton Hotel, appears to have been fitted out with a few guest rooms on the second floor. This would seem confirmed by a newspaper notice three years later that announced a new operator for Sexton's establishment, referred to as both a lunch counter *and boarding house*. The new operator was necessary because Sexton was relocating to Rock Island, Illinois.[10]

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[4] Ibid., 112.
[5] Ibid., 113.
[6] M[artha] H. Bowers, "Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad: Stuart Passenger Station," National Register of Historic Places nomination form (1979; listed 1980); *Stuart Locomotive*, January 28, 1879. The erroneous date of construction in the nomination, 1868-69, appears to come from an 1884 county historic publication.
[7] *Centennial History of Guthrie County*, 115.
[8] Ibid.
[9] *Stuart Herald*, June 28, 1907.
[10] *Stuart Locomotive,* July 6, 1894, as cited in Iowa Site Inventory Form No. 39-00234 (2004; revised 2012).

The Arlington, where Sexton learned the hotel trade, was located just a block to the west. Thought it faced the railroad tracks across Front Street, both the passenger and freight depots as well as the railroad shops were a block or more to the east. This was probably a bit of a selling point for the large hotel because it could offer relatively quieter sleeping rooms. The hotel was a three-story building with a two-story dining room telescoping off its rear north wall and a kitchen wing off the dining room. Its two-story "sample rooms" wing along the east side nearly doubled the space of the hotel, proper.[11] The Arlington's all-in-one service of lodging, meals, and generous sales space meant that transient guests and commercial travelers need not leave the hotel or venture the block north to the town's main shopping district. In locating his lunch counter and restaurant on Front and Fremont Streets, Sexton was closer to the depots and shops than the Arlington and may have been trying to attract community residents and railroad workers to a more informal setting than the Arlington's. Upstairs, Sexton's boarding rooms were likely rented to the railroad workers employed across the street. Sexton's new location also brought him in close proximity to another small hotel, the "Stuart Hotel," several lots to the east.[12]

In 1896, Sexton sold or leased his lunch counter in order to relocate to Rock Island, Illinois, and establish another "hotel business."[13] Census records suggest this was not a hotel like the Arlington, which accommodated travelers, but another boarding house like his Front Street business in Stuart. In 1900, census records for Rock Island recorded Sexton's occupation as "hotel proprietor." Along with his immediate family and sister-in-law, Sexton resided in the boarding house with 12 male "lodgers," ranging in age from 20 to 49. Among these men were five day laborers, two plumbers, a tailor, a cigar maker, and a teamster. The establishment was called the "Commercial Hotel."[14] Sexton became active in Rock Island Democratic party politics, as he had been earlier in Stuart, eventually becoming chairman of the Democratic county central committee and a ward alderman. He also was promoted as a Rock Island mayoral candidate in 1904.

Construction of the Sexton House on Front Street

Though John P. Sexton had permanently relocated to Rock Island, in 1906 he returned to Stuart to enlarge his Front Street business into a proper hotel, perhaps motivated in part by the Arlington's fiery destruction in 1903.[15] The Rock Island railroad's activity along the south side of Front Street, across the street from Sexton's lunch counter, had quieted considerably following the company's abrupt removal of its division shops from the town in 1897.[16] Still, the passenger trains rumbled through Stuart and the passenger depot remained a busy place. With the town's refocus toward an agricultural rather than a railroad economy, the passenger trains likely brought even more traveling salesmen to town, largely men who needed overnight accommodations and sales rooms.[17] Unbeknownst to Stuart residents, Sexton's new venture – the stylish brick hotel he named after himself – was built on eve of the arrival of the automobile and with it, a sea change for small-town life.

The first announcement of Sexton's plans for a new hotel appeared in the *Stuart Herald* on June 6, 1906: "John Sexton, of Rock Island, formerly of this city, promises to come to the assistance of his old home and supply a long felt want," the article proclaimed. "He is preparing to build a new modern brick hotel on the corner of Front and Fremont streets just north of the passenger depot…the plan is to move the frame building, now occupying the front of the lot, back and veneer it with the

[11] Sanborn, 1901.
[12] Ibid., 1894.
[13] *Stuart Herald*, June 28, 1907.
[14] *Tri City Evening Star*, October 10, 1904.
[15] *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, August 3, 1903.
[16] *The Stuart Herald Centennial Edition, 1870-1970* (1970), not paginated.
[17] John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels: Transiency and Community in the Early Auto Age* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2009), see especially "Hotel Life," 97-117.

brick and make of it the Fremont street wing…We hear that the hotel is already leased to a first-class hotel man…" A rail car load of bricks was already on the site and by July 20, another 60,000 bricks had been delivered. Lumber began to arrive for the project in August but the frame building was just then being prepared for its short trip north.[18] The city itself was planning to excavate the basement for Sexton in order to obtain the dirt, with which it planned to raise the grade of the sidewalk along Fremont Street.[19] With materials and a building plan in place, the project then proceeded rapidly and by December, 1906, the hotel was approaching completion. Spring, 1907, saw the town working hard on city streets with a King road drag trying to smooth out the rough dirt roads and Sexton was busy about town buying furnishings for the hotel.[20] In early May, the local newspaper alerted its readers that Sexton's new hotel would soon be open.[21] Indeed, a detailed opening announcement ran in the paper on June 28, 1907.

Though construction work on the building was not quite finished—a Front Street verandah was still planned (but never built)—the hotel commenced business on May 27th. And while 38 guest rooms had been announced earlier, the hotel actually opened with 28. With an enthusiastic booster voice, the local paper described the city's newest business: "On the lower [floor] are two large parlors with parlor bedroom, connected with folding doors…; an office room, 24x33 feet, with corner entrance [into the lobby], two large windows, one on either side, with steel ceiling and equipped with comfortable furniture; also a dining room 24x33 feet, complete in all its appointments. Both the lower and upper floors are provided with bath and toilet [note only one per floor]. The rooms are richly furnished with Brussels carpets and rugs, iron bedsteads of the latest patterns and floors polished. They are of comfortable size, each provided with an electric call bell, and well lighted and ventilated." Lit by electric lights and heated by steam (which also produced the hotel's hot water) the "house presents a fine exterior and its interior is a beauty. It is a hotel of which any town three times the size of Stuart might well be proud. It is modern throughout with nothing omitted with could in any way add to the comfort of the traveling public. The owner has spared no expense to make it a building that he could feel proud of and the community perfectly satisfied with."[22] The hotel would continue to be advertised as "modern" throughout its long operation in one way or another, even though its accommodations slowly declined in comparison to rising industry standards.

With landlord Sexton living in Rock Island, the issue of hiring an experienced and careful local operator was always paramount for the hotel's success. Sexton continued to improve his building, putting down new linoleum in the dining room soon after the hotel opened, and repapering the hotel throughout within a few years, but by June, 1910, he was also trying to sell it.[23] Perhaps owning the hotel in a remote town had simply proved too difficult; however, census records suggest a more personal reason. The 1910 federal census lists 53-year-old Mary Sexton[24] as both the head of household and proprietor of a hotel in Stuart. Her 46 year-old sister, Rhoda Dillman and Dillman's children were living at the hotel also. Rhoda gave her occupation as "clerk" at the hotel. Mary Sexton had moved to Rock Island with her husband according to 1900 census records, but clearly returned to Stuart to run the hotel, at least on a temporary basis.

Late that year, in November 1910, the Sexton Hotel was leased to L. E. Johnson, an experienced "hotel man" late of Boone, Iowa," and to Johnson's unnamed wife.[25] In a small-town hotel such as the Sexton Hotel, married couples offered a ready

[18] *Stuart Herald,* August 24, 1906.
[19] Ibid.
[20] *Stuart Herald,* March 22, 1907.
[21] Ibid., May 3, 1907.
[22] *Stuart Herald,* June 28, 1907.
[23] *Stuart Herald,* June 24, 1910.
[24] John Sexton married Mary Dillman in 1889. *Stuart Herald,* June 28, 1907. The 1910 manuscript census page is blurry and the marital status column may be "m" for married but also appears to be written over. It is definitely not "s" for single. It is very unclear what her marital status was from this document.
[25] *Stuart Herald,* November 11, 1910.

partnership of skills and needed labor with, typically, the husband deemed "proprietor" while the wife was in charge of the dining room. During the Johnsons' tenure (and it is unclear how long this was) a souvenir photograph book of Stuart called *Stuart Views* was published. While it lacks a date of publication, there is a photo of the hotel that suggests a 1910s date and reveals a few details from that time period. Captioned "Sexton Hotel, L.E. Johnstone [sic], Prop."[26], the photograph shows the hotel, apparently as yet unpainted, with a horse and buggy in front of the south side of the building. A large round clock hangs over the front entrance (to better keep track of the railroad's arrivals and departures?) and the streets are still dirt. Landscaping in front of the hotel includes several spindly young specimen trees about the height of the top of the first floor windows. Telephone poles in front of the building are clearly painted white on their lower third. This white paint was the roadway marking of "White Pole" enthusiasts, an early organization in Iowa's good roads movement. Historically speaking, these white poles also mark the arrival of the next significant association of the Sexton Hotel with transportation – the advent of automobile travel—and the beginning of the hotel's transition from serving railroad passengers to motorists.

The White Pole Road (also called the Great White Way) was named in 1910 by the Southwestern Iowa Auto Club, which then changed its name to the White Pole Auto Club.[27] The route largely followed the Rock Island railroad tracks across the western half of the state, linking Des Moines in central Iowa to Council Bluffs on the Missouri River. Stuart lay about a third of the way west from Des Moines. Like all booster-driven early automobile routes in the state, the White Pole Road was privately promoted in order to both enhance the traveling experience for growing numbers of affluent motorists[28] and to foster the economies of the small towns located every five or six miles along the route. Between 1910 and 1914, the route was extended east from Des Moines to the Mississippi River and successfully registered as the first state-certified highway route in Iowa. Though it would take some time for routes such as the White Pole to be surfaced with anything more than mud alternating with dust, the persistently rising number of cars, trucks, and buses on the roads meant large numbers of new potential customer driving by the Sexton Hotel every day and even, potentially, at night.[29]

Little is known about the operators of the Sexton Hotel in the 1920s or early 30s, but sometime during the 1920s its name evolved into the Stuart Hotel or Hotel Stuart. The name change may have been prompted by a change of owners, since in early 1920 a woman named Mrs. L.W. Hansen (sometimes spelled Hanson) purchased the hotel and began to operate it.[30] Her place as a hotel owner seems more paradoxical than Mary Sexton's earlier role as surrogate for John Sexton in that, according to authors John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle, "hotels were thought to be, in general, male places" subject to "boisterous male behavior."[31] Railroad era hotels, through their association with drummers and salesmen lounging in the lobby waiting for trains or occupying the sample rooms, could be seen especially as male bastions. And for fear of losing the hotel's respectable reputation, "unescorted" women were often unwelcome as guests. In larger cities and hotels, they might even be restricted to their own floors and dining rooms.[32] Still, because a hotel's essential service is domestic in nature, women operators certainly had the necessary skills and then some to house and feed their guests. Stuart's hotel appears to have never

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[26] The correct spelling may Johnstone rather than Johnson. No L.E. Johnson or Johnstone was located in census records in either Guthrie or Adair County, though there are a number of Johnstones living in the Boone, Iowa, area in the twentieth century.
[27] *Iowa Registered Routes – Iowa Department of Transportation* (accessed at http://www.iowadot.gov/autotrails/autoroutes_registered.htm on February 20, 2013; *The White Pole Road* (accessed at http://whitepoleroad.com/history.html on February 20, 2013.
[28] *America's Main Street Hotels*, xiii.
[29] Ibid., 45.Shifting property uses along Front Street early in the last century verify the impact of motor vehicles on small-town Stuart. A smaller, less well appointed hotel next door to the east side of the Sexton Hotel seen on 1909 Sanborn fire insurance maps (Pilgrim Hotel), which the Sexton Hotel later used for overflow and then as sample rooms, was torn down and replaced by a small filling station about 1917. Dr. Wayne Cook, email to author, March 4, 2013.
[30] "Exira Woman to Conduct Stuart Hotel," *Atlantic News Telegraph*, January 28, 1920.
[31] *America's Main Street Hotels*, 43, 40.
[32] Ibid., 40.

had a respectability problem, either from male or female behavior. Its public spaces were often and regularly used for events like the 1930 "Junior-Senior [High School] Banquet" held in the "Hotel Stuart."[33] Professional men from the much bigger capital city nearby, Des Moines, also regularly offered medical, dental, and other needed services to Stuart residents by taking appointments at the hotel. In 1913, for example, one Dr. A.H. Weber, was at the hotel looking to "fit" new glasses for customers and in 1927 Dr. Karl D. Fisk, optometrist, made regular visits to the town for the same purpose, setting up at the "Stuart Hotel."[34] Through activities such as these, as well as its public dining room, the hotel in Stuart clearly assumed the role of community gathering place and public space.

In January, 1920, when Mrs. Hansen purchased the hotel and moved to Stuart, she already had lodging experience and had earned a reputation as a "good hotel woman" in Exira, a small town one county, or about 30 miles, to the west.[35] She brought her family with her to help operate the business, including daughter, Gladys. Years later, in 1937, Gladys and her husband Richard Wood, a former school superintendent in northwest Iowa, returned to Stuart to buy the hotel. In order to gain possession, however, they had to extricate it from multiple layers of operator leases. Once that was accomplished, the Woods then would operate the hotel for the next several decades, providing the improvements and stability that the business needed in an era of slowly declining fortunes for small-town hostelries.[36] They would not have known it, but by the 1930s, the golden age of centrally located, small town hotels had already passed.[37]

The Woods' arrival back in Stuart in the later 1930s was noticed and welcomed by the local newspaper. The new hotel owners, the paper said, "expected to repaper and paint the whole interior of the hotel and will close the dining room while the work is being done."[38] According to newspaper accounts, the Woods hired individual women or married couples to operate the dining room, secured the status of bus depot for the hotel,[39] and hung the now iconic "Strictly Modern Hotel Stuart" neon sign on the Front Street elevation. Michael J. Auer, of the National Park Service, indicates "neon first appeared in signs in the 1920s, and reached its height of popularity in the 1940s," however the earliest neon signs were costly.[40] The Stuart sign is sleek and has Moderne styling suggesting its origins are in the 30s, once the price of such commercial signage was within reach. But the sign's purpose was clear—to attract as many motor vehicles off the road as possible. The problem was that, in addition to the decline and then cessation of passenger rail service across the street in the late 1950s, the number of automobiles and trucks passing by the hotel on Front Street/White Pole Road/later U.S. 6 was also declining. Interstate 80, which opened just a mile to the south of Stuart in 1960, certainly dealt the last blow. But even before 1960, railroad era hotels like the Sexton Hotel had effectively lost their attractiveness for travelers. They were simply unable to compete with the air conditioning, the private bathrooms, and the convenient parking of new motor hotels and motels. The motor-oriented lodging types were more casual and better fit the informality of auto travel.

The Woods' long, stable tenure at the hotel probably was the main reason the hotel business survived into the 1960s at all. They leased out the dining room to others, ensuring it was upgraded when necessary. An ad in the local paper from April 12, 1951 contains a picture of the newly refurbished "Hotel Stuart Coffee Shop" operated by Mr. and Mrs. Laverne Palmitier. This room has the formal dining room appearance typical of older hotels, with high ceilings, long draperies covering the tall

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[33] Souvenir program in the collection of Tom Smull.
[34] Ads from 1913 and 1927 from the Stuart newspaper (n.d., collection of Dr. Wayne Cook); Bob Cook, email to author, March 4, 2013.
[35] *Atlantic News Telegraph,* January 28, 1920.
[36] "Stuart Hotel's Managers Change," n.p., n.d., but 1937 (collection of Dr. Wayne Cook). Dating is confirmed through other records.
[37] *America's Main Street Hotels*, 157.
[38] "Stuart Hotel's Managers Change," n.p., n.d., but 1937 (collection of Dr. Wayne Cook).
[39] *Stuart Herald*, December 1, 1938.
[40] *The Preservation of Historic Signs, Preservation Brief #25* (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service); accessed at http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief25.htm on March 7, 2013. Most online sources suggest the first signs in the early 1920s, as new technology, were very expensive.

windows of the 1893 frame dining room wing, and tables set covered by white linen table cloths and napkins surrounded by straight-backed dark wood dining chairs. But just as the golden age for the small-town hotel had passed, the dining rooms within these hotels – once the venue of social events and daily community diners – were atrophying by the 1950s, unable to sustain the revenues the hotels needed to run them.[41]

Acting as agent for the bus line from 1938 on would have brought in more revenue for the hotel too, though perhaps not a significant amount. As many as eight Greyhound buses rolled through Stuart daily, half headed east, half west, operating from early morning until well into the night. However, bus travelers "tended to be less affluent than motorists."[42] According to transportation historians, "in the early 1920s, when intercity bus travel initially became widespread, many hotels agreed to become de facto bus terminals. Bus operators set up offices in rented hotel storefronts, often loading and unloading buses at curbside under a hotel canopy. Such practice seemingly offered logical business symbiosis. The hotel became a destination for a new kind of traveler. Bus operators were able to forego the expenses of opening terminals. However, it quickly became evident that bus passengers and traditional hotel guests, especially motorists, did not mix well. Of differing social backgrounds, they felt 'out of place' among one another."[43]

One of the most famous of itinerant bus passengers bought his ticket and boarded his bus at the Stuart Hotel in 1947. Author and icon of the "Beat Generation," Jack Kerouac was out of the service after the war and looking for writer's experience by heading out on the open road. Aiming for the West Coast, he hitchhiked west from Chicago on U.S. 6.[44] Temporarily stranded in Davenport on the Iowa side of the Mississippi River, Kerouac was picked up by a truck driver who took him to Iowa City and then other rides got him to Des Moines where he rested up for a day at a cheap hotel. "I wandered down to the railroad tracks—and there's a lot of them in Des Moines—and wound up in a gloomy old Plains inn of a hotel by the locomotive roundhouse…"[45] Finding a ride to Adel, Kerouac met and started traveling with another hitchhiker named Eddie.

> He said we ought to hitch together. I should have said no, because he looked pretty awful on the road. But we stuck together and got a ride with taciturn man to Stuart, Iowa, a town in which we were really stranded. We stood in front of the railroad-ticket shack in Stuart, waiting for the westbound traffic till the sun went down…We got bored. I decided to spend a buck on beer; we went to an old saloon in Stuart and had a few…We got back on the road in the darkness, and of course nobody stopped and nobody came by much. That went on till three o'clock in the morning. We spent some time trying to sleep on the bench at the railroad ticket office, but the telegraph clicked all night and we couldn't sleep, and big freights were slamming around outside. We didn't know how to hop a proper chain gang…So when the Omaha bus came through just before dawn we hopped on it and joined the sleeping passengers….We arrived at Council Bluffs at dawn.[46]

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[41] *America's Main Street Hotels*, 136.
[42] *America's Main Street Hotels*, 45.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Jack Kerouac, *On the Road* (New York: Viking Compass, 1959; reprinted Penguin Books, 1976; reprint used), see for example, 7. The Iowa route of U.S. 6, which followed the White Pole Road/Great White Way/Whteway-7-Highway from Des Moines to Council Bluffs, was designated in the late 1920s as part of the transcontinental U.S. 6. About the same time Kerouac was traveling on it in 1947, the federal government "announced the general location of 37,000 miles of the Interstate System. The System would include U.S. 6 as the route for the Interstate segment that became I-80." While much of I-80 in Iowa followed and destroyed the actual grade of the earlier U.S. 6," the route a few miles west of Des Moines was a "new relocation by-passing the towns of Anita, Adair, Casey, Menlo, Stuart and Dexter…" Richard F. Weingroff, "U.S. 6 in Iowa," unpubl. t.s., 1989. Weingroff is a transportation historian with the Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation. Copy provided to author by Lyell Henry, Iowa State Nomination Review Committee, 2012.
[45] *On the Road*, 14-15.
[46] Ibid., 16.

Thus, while it was just for a brief visit, the highway that followed the Rock Island line across Iowa—the road that started out as the White Pole Road and later became part of the transcontinental U.S. 6—brought to Stuart one of the "most celebrated writers" and cultural icons of the twentieth century.[47] Kerouac would forever memorialize Stuart's role in both railroad history and the romance of the "road" at mid-century. Though it was 1957 before Kerouac finally saw his book published, the celebrity it brought the author could hardly help the declining fortunes of the Hotel Stuart.

In 1962, two years after the new Interstate 80 opened just south of town,[48] the Hotel Stuart was purchased by Frank and Helen Stetzel, the last owners to operate it as a hotel. Their son, Roy, lived in the building from 1962 until 1967. The family's quarters were in the sunny south ground-floor rooms east of the lobby, though they also used the old hotel kitchen and his parents slept in the first ground-floor guest room on the north side from which they could monitor the lobby at night. According to Roy, the dining room had stopped operating by the time his parents took over the hotel and the room mostly was used for storage. The laundry and mangle were in there also according to Roy's contemporary, Joan Brookings, who, as a high school student in the early 1960s, worked as a housekeeper in the hotel.[49]

The family finally stopped renting rooms in the 1970s, according to Stetzel, and the building was purchased by his sister, Norma, who converted it to apartments. The apartments were occupied until 1999 according to another Stuart resident, Sara Elizabeth Kalbach.[50] Today, the building is owned by developers who intend to rehabilitate it for both residential and commercial purposes and apply for historic preservation state and federal tax credits.

[47] Ibid., front matter.
[48] *Stuart Herald*, September 1, 1960.
[49] Letter to the editor, [probably] *Stuart Herald*, June 6, 2012; in the collection of Dr. Wayne Cook.
[50] Letter to the editor, [probably] *Stuart Herald*, n.d. but late May, 2012; in the collection of Dr. Wayne Cook.

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nomination includes Lots 17, 18, and 19 in Block 17 of the Original Town plat of Stuart, Iowa, on which the hotel building is located. The building sits close to the northeast corner of the intersection of East Front and North Fremont Streets, with the main brick block extending east along East Front to the point just short of the next door neighbor's parking lot. A narrow grassy strip of 5 feet or less separates the east wall of the hotel from the west edge of the parking lot. The brick-veneered north wing of the building extends north from the intersection along North Freemont Street for 69 feet to a dirt drive that enters the back yard of the nominated property, with the grassy side yard extending approximately 40 feet more feet until near the south wall of the next door building on the north, 1920s tile block building. The property includes the grassy back yard of the L-shaped hotel building and there are no other buildings or structures on the property.

Boundary Justification

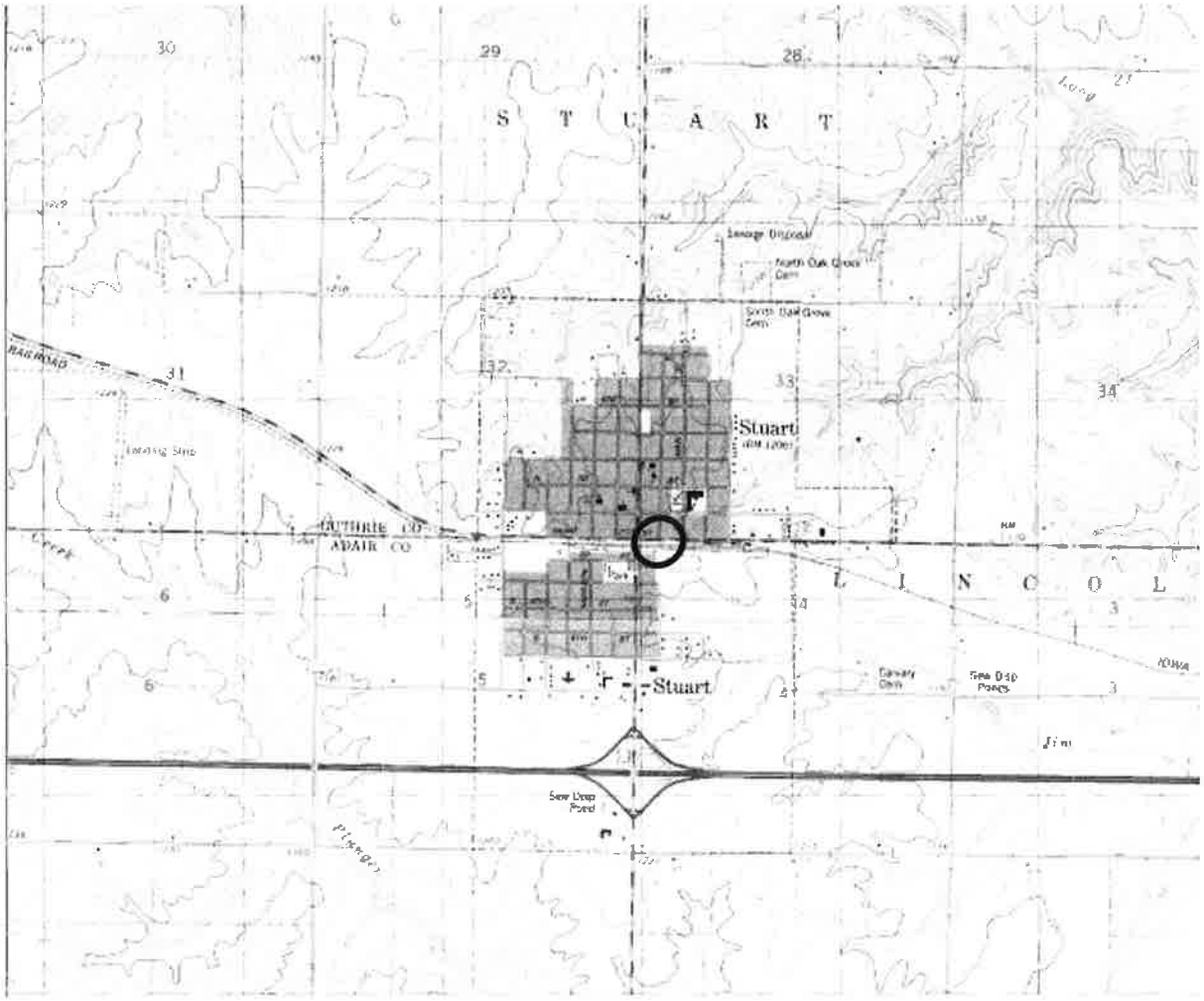
The boundary includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Sexton Hotel during the period of significance.

Northern part of Stuart in southern Guthrie County, Iowa, with the location of the nominated property circled.

(detail from U.S.G.S. 7.5' topographic maps, "Stuart North")

N

1 mile

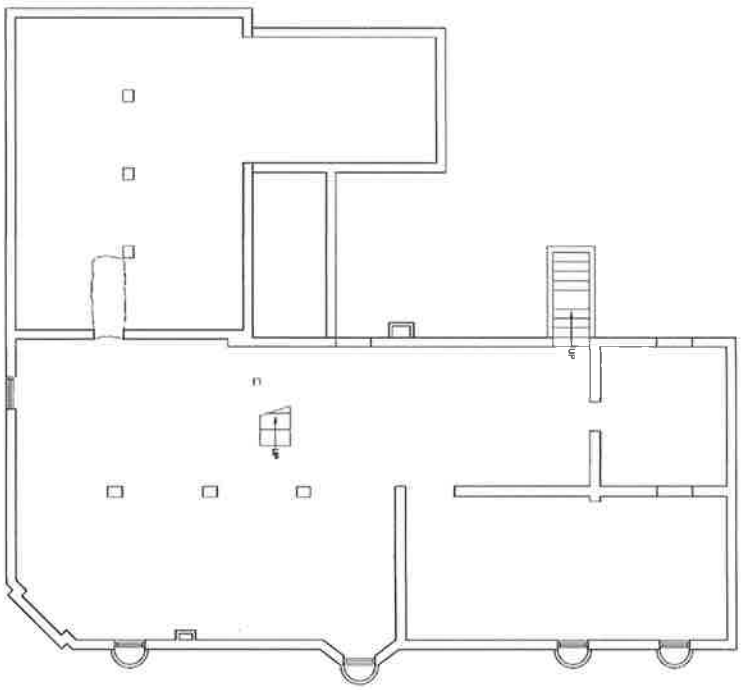


Site Plan

(sketch map by Tallgrass Historians L.C., 2013)

Floor Plans *(base plans by kbARCHITECTURE, 2007, not scaled)*

N ^

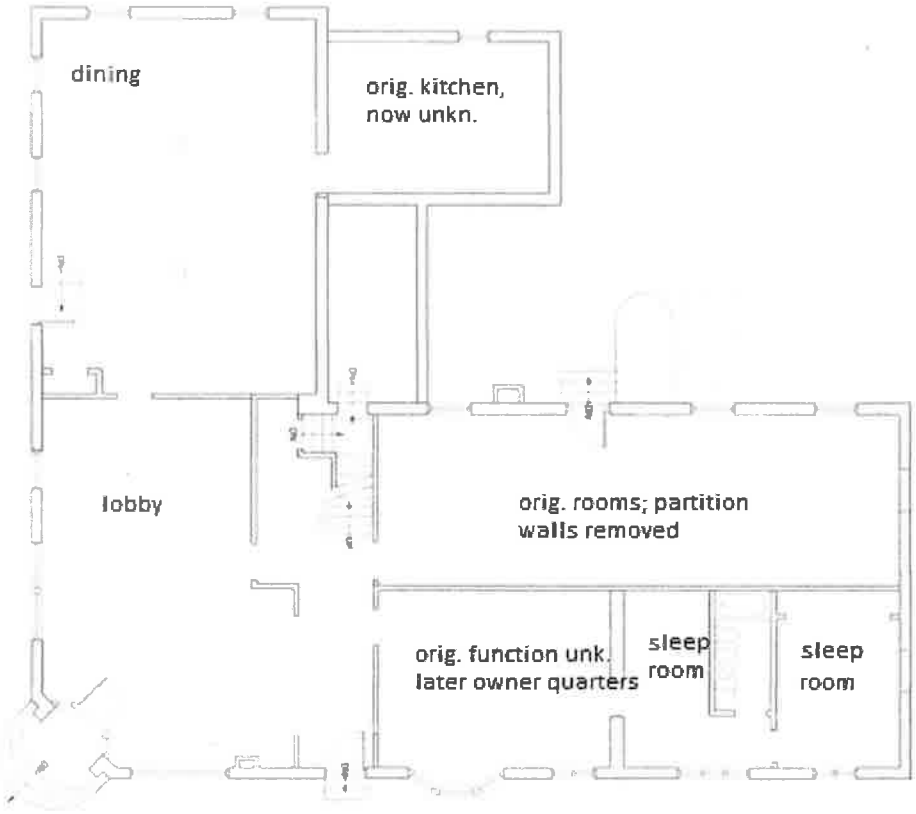


Rooms are all open. Original functions unknown but presumed to be primarily for storage.

Basement

Floor Plans *(base plans by kbARCHITECTURE 2007, not scaled)*

N ^



First Floor

Floor Plans *(base plans by kbARCHITECTURE,2007, not scaled)*

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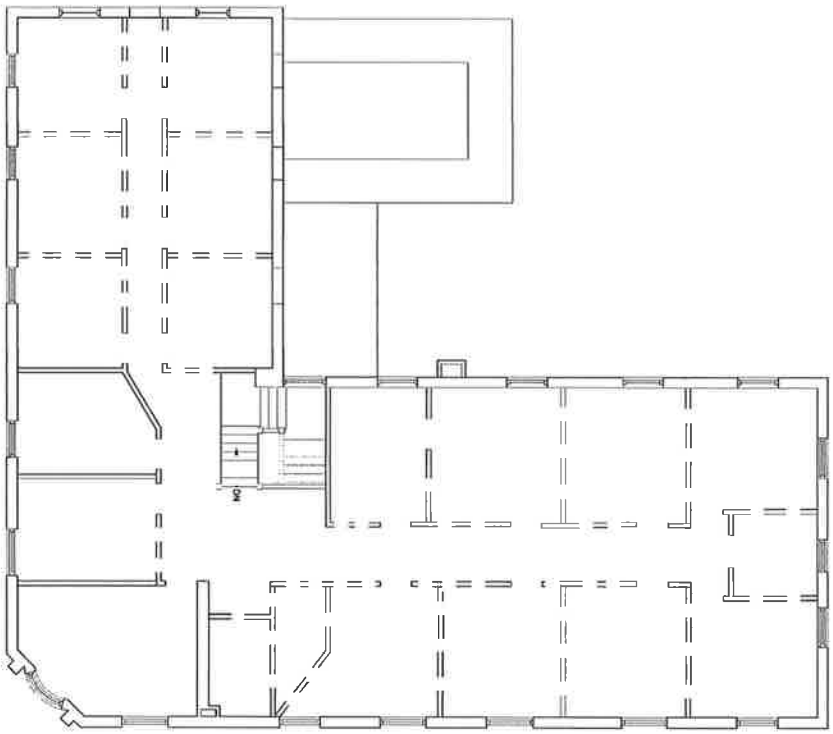
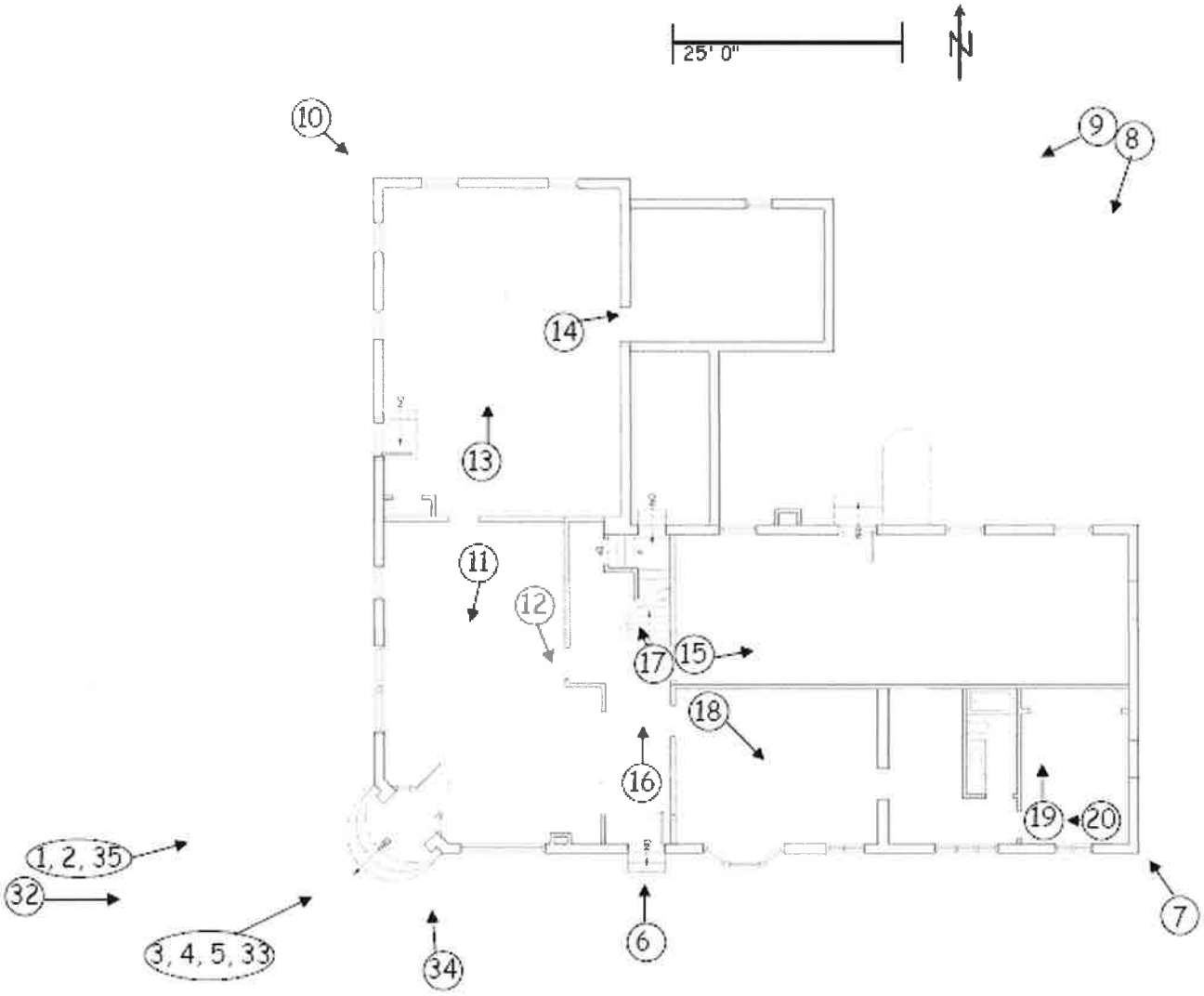


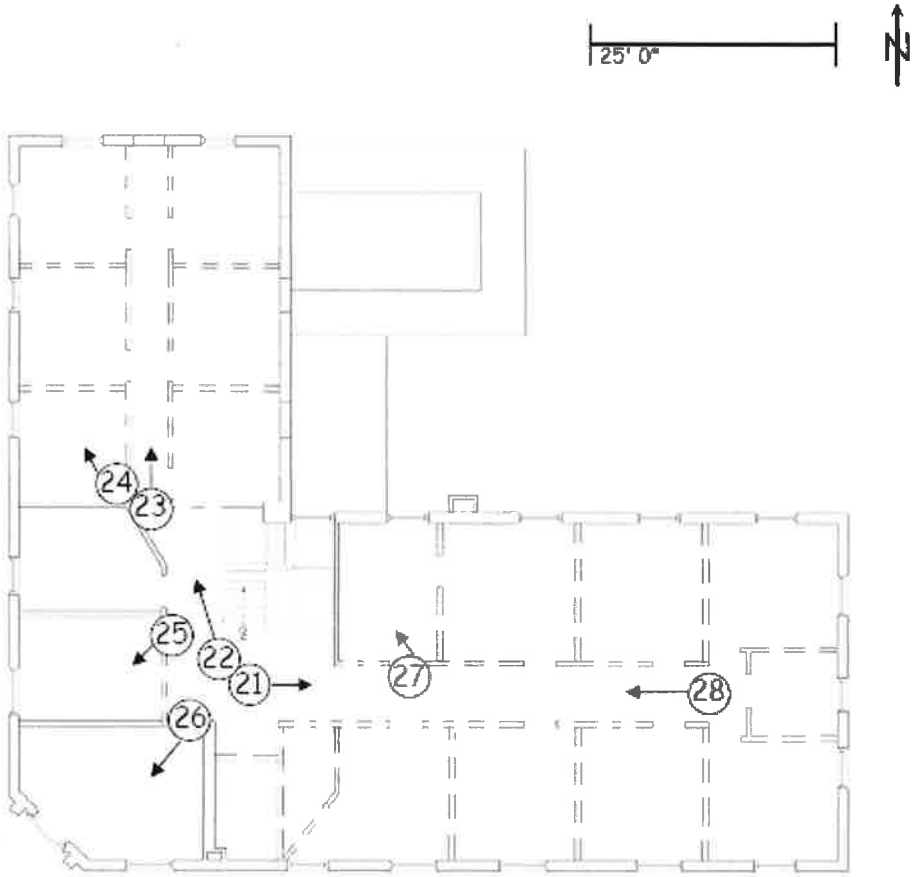
Second Floor – sleeping rooms except small room at far right, which is the bathroom
(dashed lines indicate where stud walls are exposed)

Photograph Locations



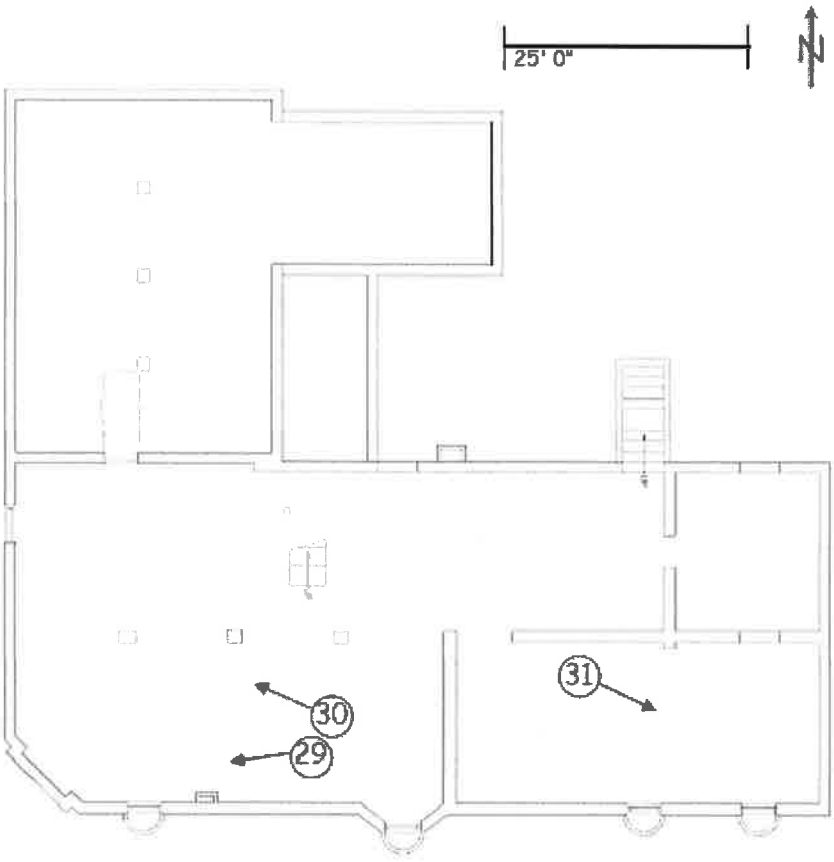
Exterior and First Floor
(##32-35 are historic views included on Additional Documentation pages only)

Photograph Locations



Second Floor

Photograph Locations



Basement

Photograph Label Information

Nos. 1, 2, and 7 are written on the photographs; Nos. 3, 4, & 5 share information. Historic views (##32-35) are not printed on photo paper but are included below in Additional Documentation)

3. Tallgrass Historians L.C., Jan Olive Full; except #11, by Tom Smull
4. February, 2013; except #11 taken May, 2012
5. n/a digital files
6. Photograph #1: Exterior, Sexton Hotel, facing E down E. Front (former White Pole Road)
   Photograph #2: Exterior, Sexton Hotel at left; Rock Island Passenger Depot and historic tracks at left, facing ENE
   Photograph #3: Exterior, Sexton Hotel, west side and south side, and municipal water tower, facing NE
   Photograph #4: Exterior, Sexton Hotel, closer view of SW corner entrance, west side and south side, facing NE
   Photograph #5: Detail of Exterior SW corner with main hotel entrance, facing NE
   Photograph #6: Detail of Exterior, S side hall entrance, facing N
   Photograph #7: Exterior, Sexton Hotel, S side and E end wall, facing NW
   Photograph #8: Exterior, Sexton Hotel, rear of building, N wall (left), kitchen wing (center), E wall of north wing (above kitchen wing), facing SSW
   Photograph #9: Exterior, Sexton Hotel, rear of building, kitchen wing at center, and N wing (east side and north end wall), facing SW
   Photograph #10: Exterior, Sexton Hotel, W side wall and N end wall, facing SE
   Photograph #11: Interior first floor, lobby (prior to clean out) at SW corner, facing S
   Photograph #12: Interior first floor, lobby with S hall entrance in background, facing SE
   Photograph #13: Interior first floor, north wing dining room, facing N
   Photograph #14: Interior first floor, looking into kitchen wing from dining room, facing NE

   Photograph #15: Interior first floor, north room of main brick building, facing ENE
   Photograph #16: Interior first floor, main staircase to second floor, facing N
   Photograph #17: Interior first floor, detail of main staircase, facing NW
   Photograph #18: Interior first floor, south rooms of main brick building, east of lobby), facing SE
   Photograph #19: Interior first floor, south rooms of main brick building, far east room, facing N
   Photograph #20: Interior first floor, south rooms of main brick building, from far east bedroom looking through rooms toward lobby, facing W
   Photograph #21: Interior second floor, central hall of main brick building, facing E
   Photograph #22: Interior second floor, west side guest room and hall to north wing, from top of main staircase, facing NNW
   Photograph #23: Interior second floor, north wing, facing N
   Photograph #24: Interior second floor guest room, north wing facing NW
   Photograph #25: Interior second floor, guest room, west end of main brick building, facing SW
   Photograph #26: Interior second floor, double guest room, SW corner, facing SW
   Photograph #27: Interior second floor, guest room, facing N
   Photograph #28: Interior second floor, central hall of main brick building, facing W
   Photograph #29: Interior basement, SW room, facing W
   Photograph #30: Interior basement, SW room, facing NW toward door to crawl space under N wing
   Photograph #31: Interior basement, SE room, facing E

Additional Photographs

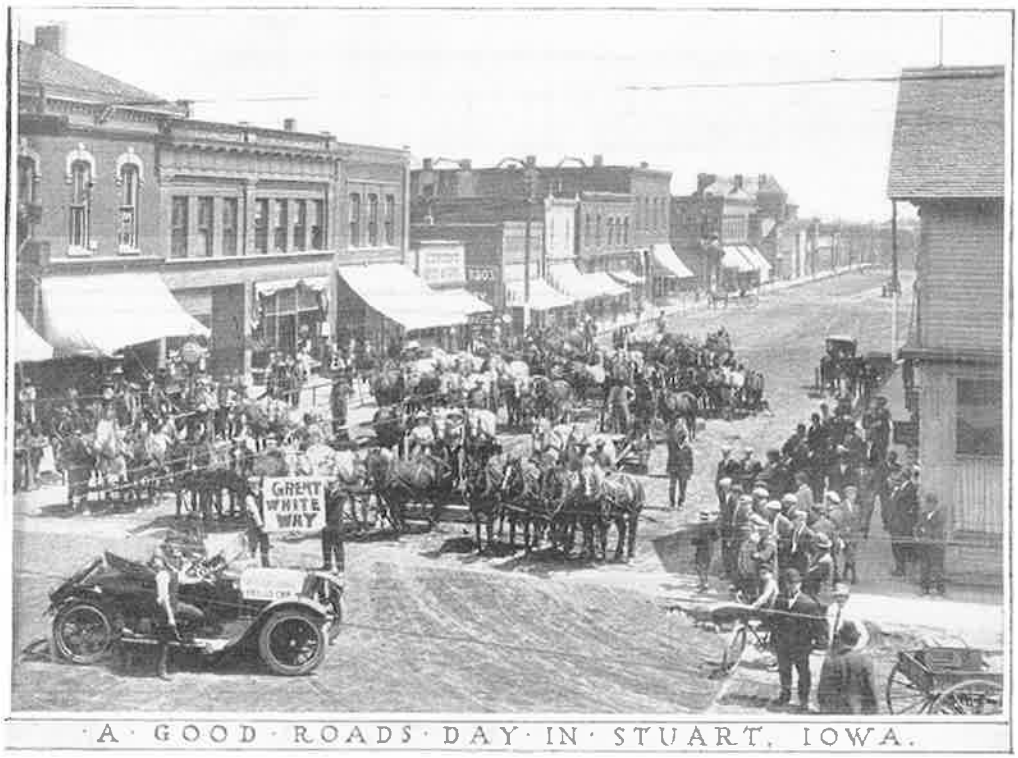
(Photo location #32) In this 1909 postcard captioned "watering the cavalry horses" the Sexton Hotel is on the left; the brick Rock Island passenger depot on the right and in between are the frame freight depot and behind it another, unidentified railroad shops building. This view looks east. The telephone poles along the dirt E. Front St. are not yet painted white but this view was taken just before the White Pole Road organization became active. (Received from Tom Smull)

(Photo location #33) Circa 1910 image. Debris around the ground suggests this was taken soon after construction. The scale of the horse seems too

small, perhaps indicating a darkroom addition. (Received from Tom Smull)

Additional Photographs

(Photo location #34) Circa 1914 image fro *Stuart Views*. The telephone poles are now painted white to designate the early highway trail. (State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City)



Undated photograph road dragging activity along Nassau St. (now 2nd), Stuart's historic main street shopping district located one block north of the Sexton Hotel. This view looks east. (Iowa Department of Transportation. Accessed at http://historicalphotos.iowadot.gov/)

Additional Photographs

(Photo location #35) 1940 view of long time hotel owner, Robert Wood, with hotel, bus, and old wooden freight depot in background. (Dr. Wayne Cook Collection)

(Photo location #35) 1949 view of the hotel with the Moderne "Hotel Stuart" signage hanging from the south elevation and a small Greyhound bus sign over the front entrance. The panel truck has a Kansas license dated 1949. (Received from Tom Smull)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

STATE OF IOWA
IOWA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

STUART NORTH QUADRANGLE
IOWA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SE/4 PANORA 15' QUADRANGLE

7167 III NW (GUTHRIE CENTER EAST)
7167 II NW (ADEL NW)
7167 III NE (PANORA)
PANORA 4.8 MI.
7167 II SW (REDFIELD)
REDFIELD 2.7 MI.
7167 III SW (MENLO)
MENLO 1.4 MI.
(ROSSERDALE) 7166 IV NW
(STUART SOUTH) 7166 IV NE
(EARLHAM WEST) 7166 I NW

94°22′30″ — 41°37′30″ — 94°15′ — 41°30′
1 770 000 FEET — 590 000 FEET — 550 000 FEET
20′ — 17′30″
R 31 W — R 30 W — R 29 W

C A S S
L I N N
J A C K S O N
P E N N
B E A V E R
S T U A R T
J E F F E R S O N
L I N C O L N

T 79 N
T 78 N
T 77 N

DALLAS CO
GUTHRIE CO
GUTHRIE CO
ADAIR CO
GUTHRIE CO
ADAIR CO

BM 1153 Morrisburg Ch
Gravel Pits
Gravel Pit
Sandpit
Gravel Pit
Quarry
Morrisburg Cem
Dale
Campground
Nations Bridge County Park
Sewage Disposal Ponds
Diamondhead Landing Strip
Diamondhead Lake
SPILLWAY 973
Sewage Disposal
North Oak Grove Cem
South Oak Grove Cem
Stuart (BM 1206)
Park
Landing Strip
BM 1170
BM 1164

RACCOON RIVER
MIDDLE RACCOON RIVER
SOUTH RACCOON RIVER
Beaver Creek
Deer Creek
Long Branch
Plunger Creek
Jim Creek

IOWA RAILROAD

BR 1014 — BR 975 — BR 943 — BR 1030 — BR 988 — BR 962 — BR 953 — BR 1102 — BR 1098 — BR 1235

15 MI. TO INTERSTATE 80
3.2 MI. TO INTERSTATE 80
DEXTER 1 MI.

Sexton Hotel
Stuart
Guthrie Co.
IA
UTM References:
15/390103/4595523

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey in cooperation with the Iowa Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1979. Field checked 1980. Map edited 1982

Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Iowa coordinate system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic)
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 15
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 4 meters north and 20 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

UTM GRID AND 1982 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET
MN — GN — 0°52′ 15 MILS — 5° 89 MILS

SCALE 1:24 000
1 MILE — 1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET — 1 KILOMETER

CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND BY THE IOWA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, IOWA CITY, IOWA 52240
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

IOWA
QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route — U. S. Route — State Route

INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1983

STUART NORTH, IOWA
SE/4 PANORA 15' QUADRANGLE
N4130—W9415/7.5

1982

DMA 7167 III SE—SERIES V876

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

STATE OF IOWA
IOWA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

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IOWA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
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CASS — JACKSON — LINN — JEFFERSON — PENN — LINCOLN — STUART
DALLAS CO — GUTHRIE CO — ADAIR CO

RACCOON RIVER — SOUTH RACCOON RIVER — MIDDLE RACCOON RIVER
Beaver Creek — Deer Creek — Plunger Creek — Long Branch — Jim Creek

Gravel Pits — Gravel Pit — Sandpit — Quarry — Morrisburg Ch — BM 1153 — Morrisburg Cem — Dale
Campground — Nations Bridge County Park
Sewage Disposal Ponds — Diamondhead Landing Strip — SPILLWAY 973 — Diamondhead Lake
Sewage Disposal — North Oak Grove Cem — South Oak Grove Cem — Stuart (BM 1206) — Landing Strip — Park — BM 1170 — BM 1164

IOWA RAILROAD

BR 1014 — BR 975 — BR 943 — BR 1030 — BR 988 — BR 962 — BR 953 — BR 1008 — BR 1102 — BR 1235

Sexton Hotel
Stuart
Guthrie Co.
IA
UTM Refererres:
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INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1983

STUART NORTH, IOWA
SE/4 PANORA 15' QUADRANGLE
N4130—W9415/7.5

1982

DMA 7167 III SE—SERIES V876

Stuart

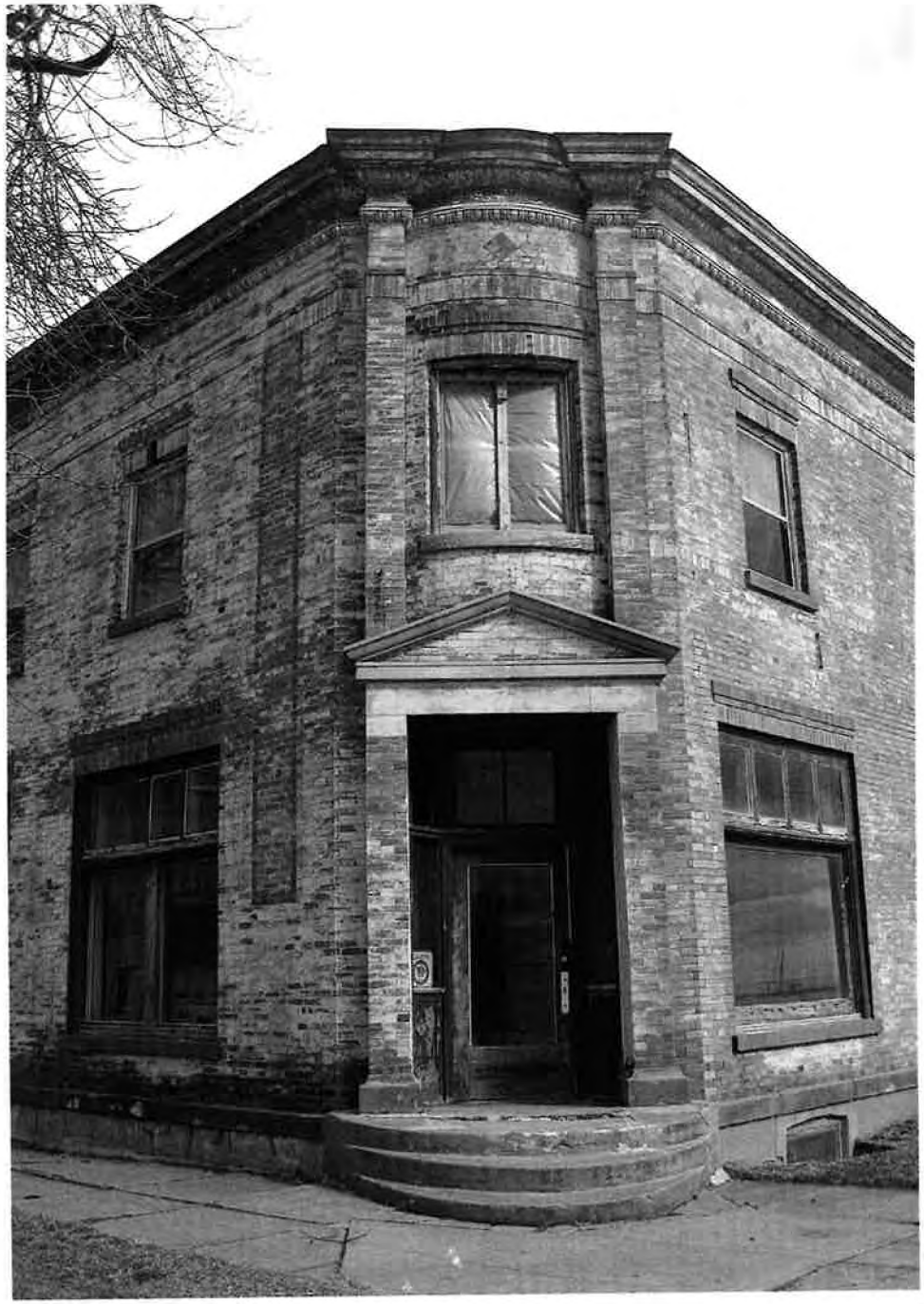
1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #1

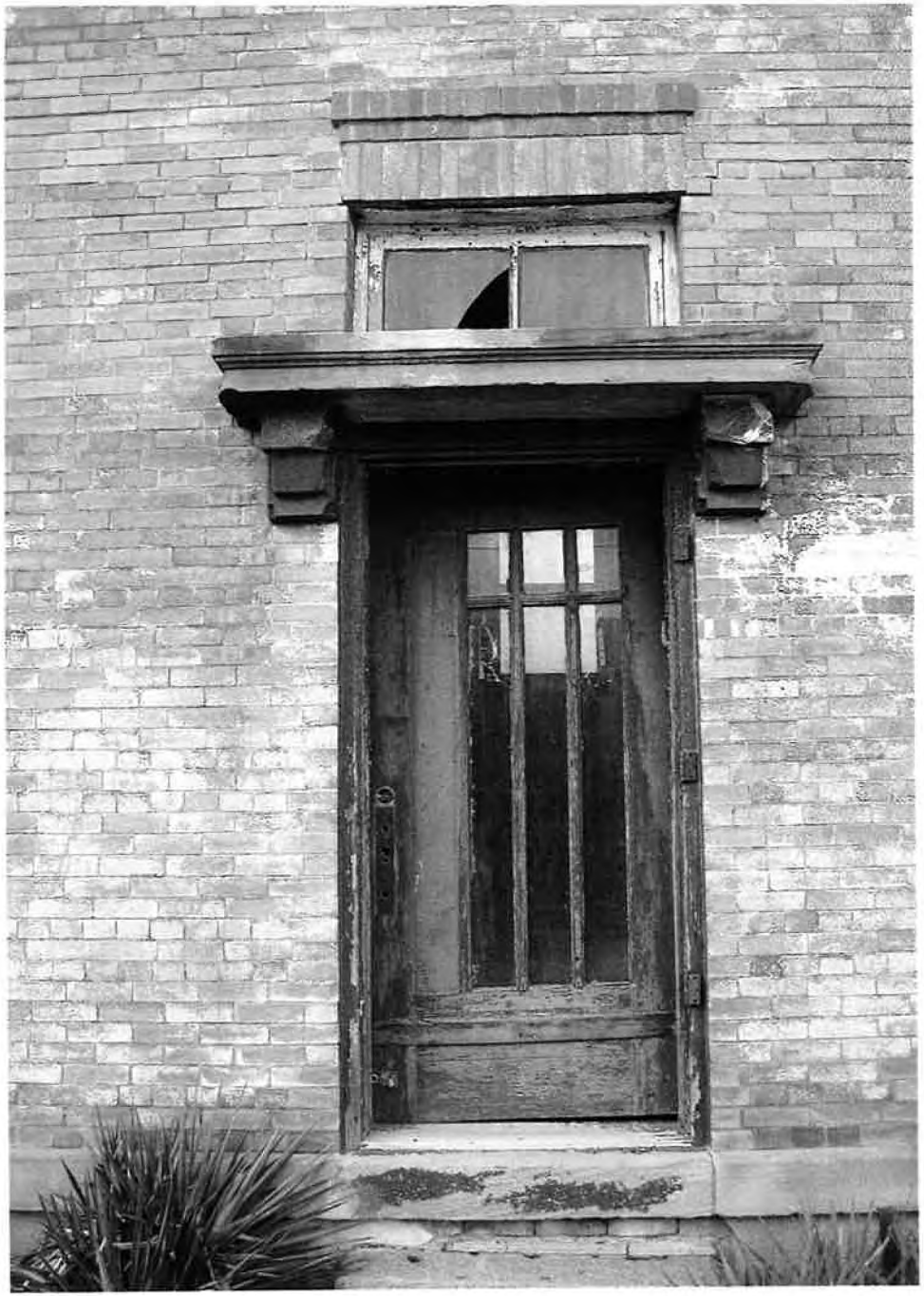
1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #2

Stuart

1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #3

1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #4





1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #6

1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #5

1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #7

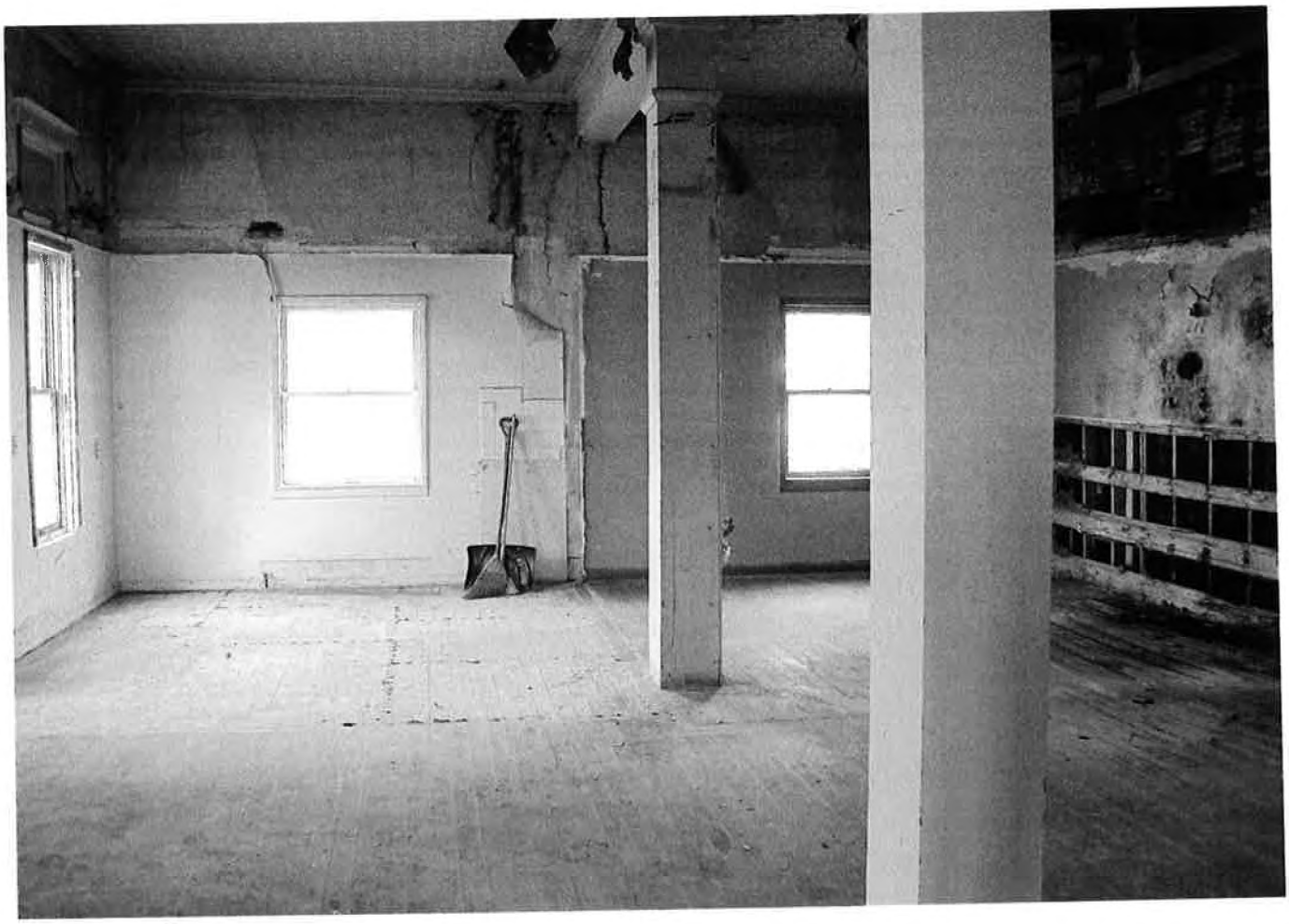
1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #8

1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #9

1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #10

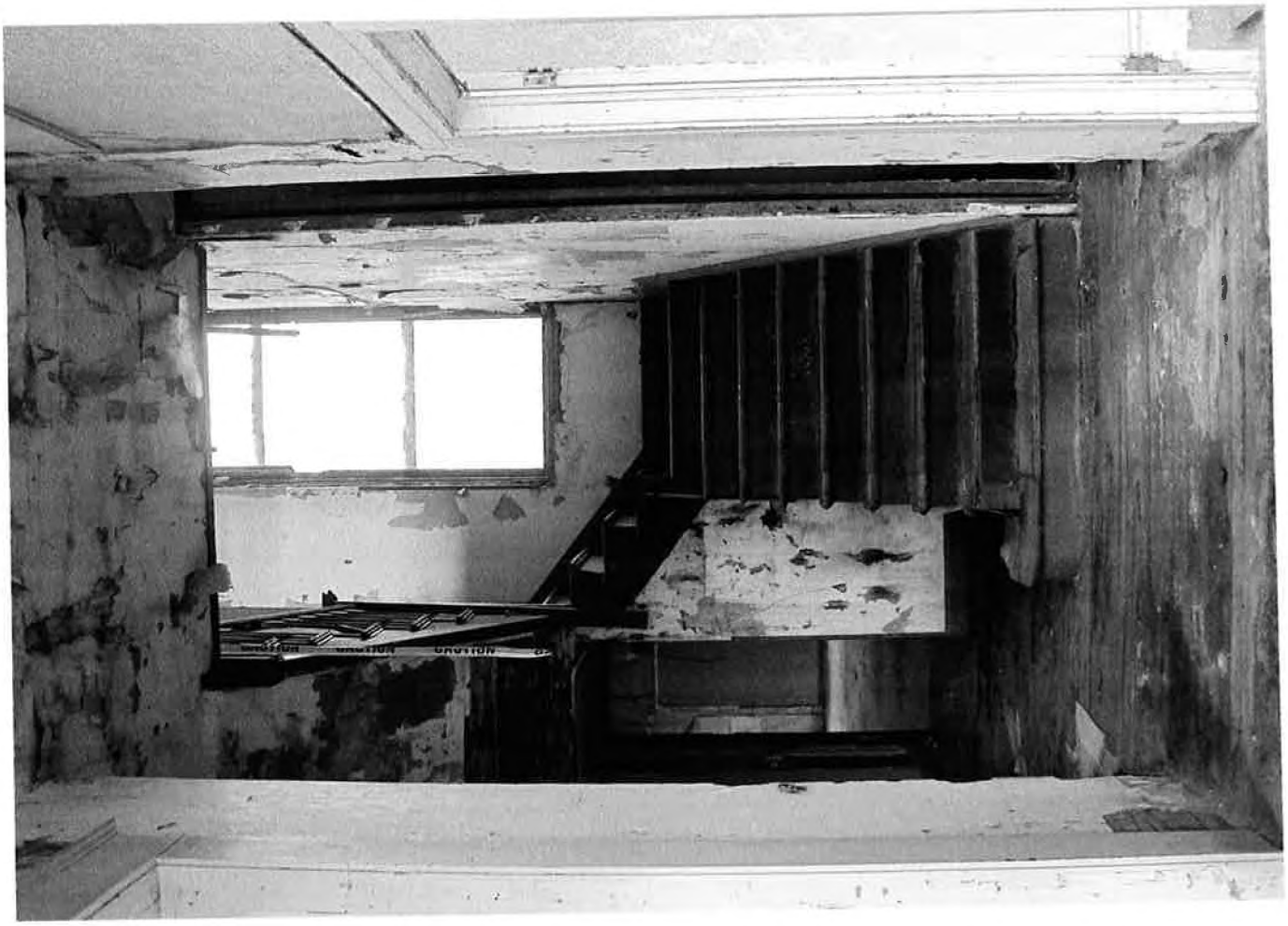
1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
3. #11

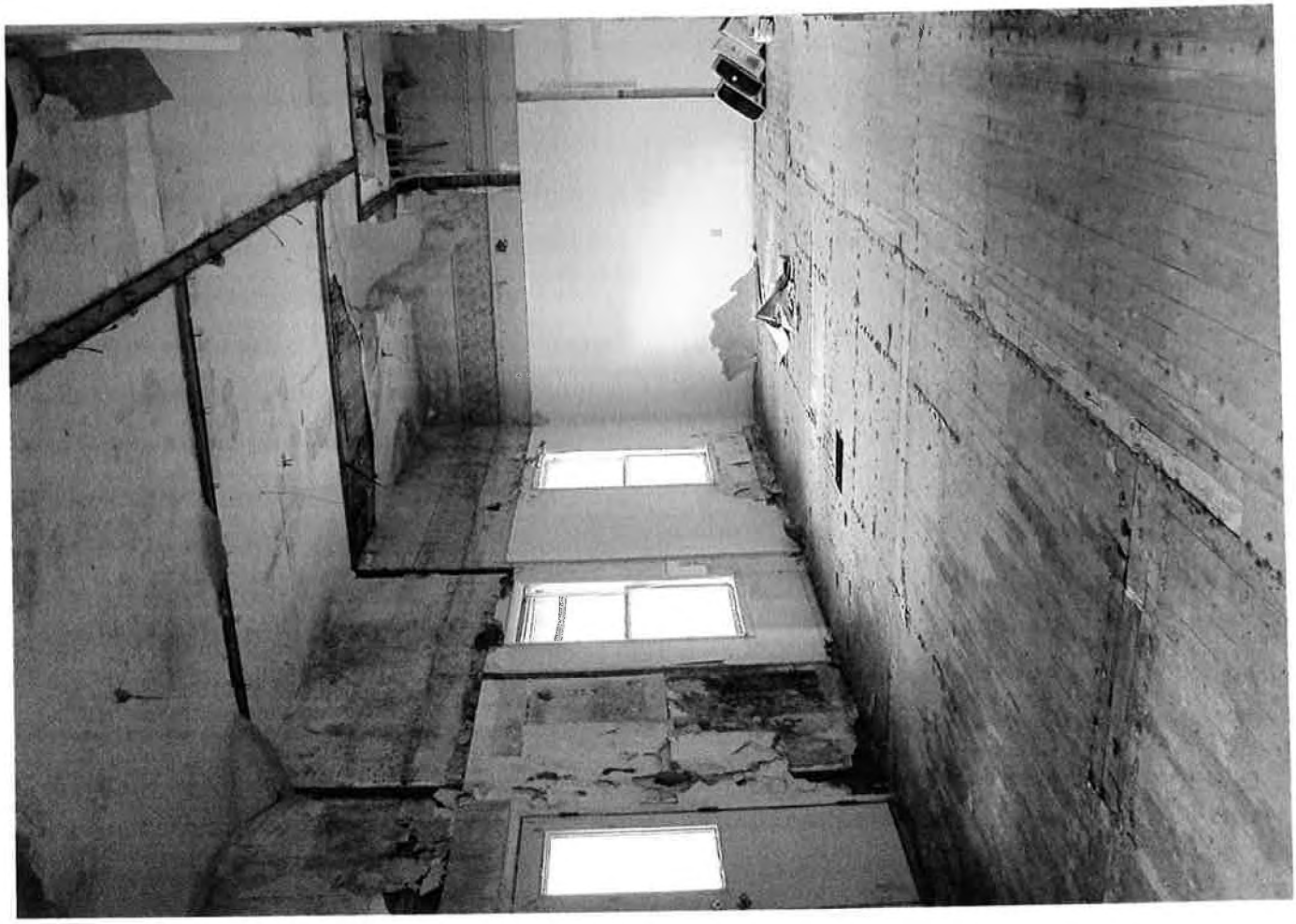
1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #12



1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #13

1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #14





1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #16

1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. #15

1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. # 17

1. Sexton Hotel
2. Stuart, Guthrie Co., IA
7. # 18

watering
Cavalry
Horse

The Sexton House

HOTEL
STUART
HOTEL STUART STUART, IA. P293