A REPORT ON AN INTENSIVE LEVEL

ARCHITECTURAL & HISTORICAL SURVEY

OF THE

BUSINESS DISTRICT IN

LANSING, IOWA

Prepared for the
Allamakee County Historic Preservation Commission
Main Street Matters
HADB #03-012

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INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2011 the Allamakee County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was awarded a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant to conduct an intensive level survey and evaluation of the business district in the community of Lansing. This project was coordinated by Main Street Matters, with Bruce Palmborg serving as the project director. Allamakee County is located in the far northeast corner of Iowa, and Lansing is located on the eastern edge of the county, on the banks of the Mississippi River. (Figure 1, page 20)

There are five sites in Lansing currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

G. Kerndt & Bros Elevator & Warehouses No. 11, 12, & 13	Front Street
G. Kerndt & Bros Office Block	4th & Main Streets
Lansing Fisheries Building	County HWY X52 south of downtown Lansing
Lansing Stone School	5th & Center Streets
Old Allamakee County Courthouse	2nd Street

HISTORIC CONTEXT

"Commercial Development of Lansing, Iowa: ca. 1855-1946"

Lansing, The River Town

First and foremost, Lansing is a river town. In 1865 the Iowa State Gazetteer carried the following description:

> Lansing is situated on the Mississippi River, one hundred miles north of Dubuque, and ten miles south of the State Line of Minnesota, at the mouth of a ravine about three-fourths of a mile wide. The river here has a bold shore, making a good landing for the largest class of boats. (Hair, p 91)

Lansing was originally settled in 1848 or 1849 (fairly late for eastern Iowa where many of the settlements along the Mississippi were made in the 1830s) and was platted by John Haney and H.H. Houghton in 1851. When the first government surveys of this part of Allamakee County were made in the late 1840s, the only trail in Lansing Township that was marked was running west from Lansing toward Waukon. It appears that this trail became Main Street, with Front Street running parallel to the river. The first buildings were constructed along Front Street, with expansion along Main Street to the west. A number of businesses were started in the early 1850s including a saw mill, a grist mill, and a saloon. In 1851 Elisha Hale built a factory along the river to manufacture farm machinery. (Burke, p 12) The Nielander Company (under a variety of names over the years) was established in 1854 and became a leading mercantile merchant. 1856 saw the founding of another business that would have long lasting effect on the community, G. Kerndt and Bros. They built a warehouse along the river in 1859 and "entered the grain trade." (Ibid.) In 1861 Kerndt Bros built a three story brick building (NRHP) at the southeast corner of Main and 4th Street to house their General Store (doubling the size in 1863), and a few years later built a brick elevator (NRHP) near their warehouse on Front Street. The business district had spread quickly up Main Street from the river. (Figure 2, page 21 and Figure 3, page 22) The curious angle turn in Main Street near 3rd Street has not been explained. In 1862 a fire broke out on the south side of Main in the 200 block. The Iowa State Gazetteer noted that "…it was soon rebuilt – brick and stone taking the place of wood." (Hair, p 91).

The prevalence of limestone as a building material in Lansing is noteworthy. This is a material that was readily available in many areas along the Mississippi River and was often used for building instead of brick. Many of the Iowa counties bordering the Mississippi attracted stonemasons from Germany and neighboring areas. For example, in Jackson County, there were not only a number of German stone masons, but Luxembourgian emigrants in Tete des Morts Twp built an entire village of limestone, St. Donatus, in their traditional manner. Although nothing so concrete has been identified in the Lansing area at this time, initial census research has

shown that all three stone masons living in Lansing Township in 1860 were from Germany, and three of the six stone masons living there in 1870 were from Germany. Additional research is recommended.

The 1913 Past and Present of Allamakee County, Iowa carried the following description of the stone found in the Lansing area (Hancock, p 77):

> The lowest and consequently the oldest rock exposed in the county is that along the foot of the bluffs from Lansing to New Albin.
>
> A very fine outcrop can be seen just in the rear and to the north of the second business block from the river in Lansing. Here at the south end of a short, low and narrow ridge is a vertical section of sixty feet of sandy shales and clays of shades of dirty yellow, brown, red, gray and green. These shales are quite firmly bedded in the hill, but on exposure to the atmosphere disintegrate and fall to pieces.
>
> They have no economic value except as a surface dressing for clay roads, for which purpose they are excellent, forming a firm smooth surface. No fossils are found in this formation, which extends down to and for 700 feet below the surface of the river as shown by the record of the strata encountered in drilling the city artesian well.
>
> It rests uncomfortably on a hard crystalline quartzite. Above the formation described lies twenty-five feet of a harder bedded rock that has been quarried to some extent for building purposes.

Historic photographs show this outcrop behind the 200 block of Main. (Figures 4 & 5, page 23) The Sanborn maps also show a receding bluff behind this block. It is unfortunate that the earliest Sanborn map is from 1886 so it does not provide an idea of just how early this quarrying began. However, the maps illustrate how the bluff was being quarried when the maps from 1886, 1894, 1902 and 1912 are compared. (Figures 6 through 9, page 24) This stone was used for over two dozen buildings along Main and Front Streets as well as for a number of residences and at least two public buildings. The use of stone as a building material in Lansing continued into the early 20th century.

In a little more than a decade (1849 to 1862), Lansing became a bustling community. In 1867, Lansing was incorporated and was granted a charter as a "city of the second class." This growth was built upon several factors that changed over the decades. Logging was an important enterprise on the Mississippi and Lansing businessmen were quick to act on the availability of these logs, with saw mills, lumberyards, and sash and door companies springing up along the river bank. Fishing was an obvious way to make money, and many Lansing citizens took advantage of this. Later, the State of Iowa would establish a fish hatchery (NRHP) on the river's edge south of downtown. Kerndt Bros had anticipated the growth of farming with the establishment of their grain elevator and warehouses. It was said that even with fourteen warehouses, at times farmers were waiting in line to unload. (Hancock, p 467) Later in the 19th century many area farmers turned to raising livestock or dairy cattle. At that point, a stockyard was established in Lansing to provide yet another service. There was a brief flourish of interest in lead mining nearby, but it lasted only a short time.

Steamboats plying the Mississippi made regular stops at Lansing, discharging cargo and passengers, then taking on both cargo and passengers. Lansing was the only riverboat stop between McGregor and southern Minnesota, so Allamakee County was reliant on Lansing for goods and supplies. The Illustrated Historical Atlas of Iowa from 1875 described Lansing as "…the chief commercial town in Allamakee County." (p 431) A "battle" developed between Waukon and Lansing over the location of the county seat. This disagreement lasted almost 25 years and required ten elections before the question was finally settled in 1875 with Waukon declared the county seat. In the meantime, citizens of Lansing had led the construction in 1861 of a two story limestone courthouse (NRHP) in the Greek Revival style in what is now referred to as south Lansing. For a brief period the Allamakee County records were actually housed in that building. By the early 1860s Lansing had grown to a point that a true school building was necessary. A two story limestone Greek Revival school (NRHP) was built at the corner of 5th and Center in 1864. Just three years later a matching addition was made to accommodate the growing enrollment.

On May 8, 1872, Lansing entered the railroad era with the arrival of the first Chicago, Dubuque and Minnesota train. Although it was met with much celebration, there appears to have been some question as to

whether or not all of the people in Lansing were in favor of the railroad. It seems that several prominent businessmen held stock in various steamboat lines and weren't excited about the railroad taking over the shipping business. In terms of other transportation, roads ran along the river banks, through valleys and across ridges to connect small neighboring villages, and the road west connected with Waukon, some seventeen miles to the southwest. Lansing remained the shipping center of the county. With the advent of the automobile age, many roads were "improved" to facilitate travel between towns. In 1918 the road between Lansing and Waukon became part of the Imperial Highway which crossed the state from Lansing to Sioux Falls, SD (325 miles). (Map of "Iowa Registered Highway Routes: 1914-1925")

For eight decades (1850-1930) the Mississippi River isolated Lansing from the state of Wisconsin. The only way to reach Wisconsin from Lansing was by boat or ferry. The nearest bridge was 30 miles to the south connecting Marquette, Iowa to Prairie Du Chien, Wisconsin. The lack of a bridge at Lansing was something that people talked about for years. Two men, Tom Bakewell and J.P. Conway, have been called the "Fathers of the Black Hawk Bridge" because they not only talked about it, they started the wheels rolling on it. Although the Interstate Bridge Company was incorporated in 1914, nothing really happened until they turned their charter over to the Iowa-Wisconsin Bridge Company in 1929. Construction began on March 1 of that year with completion in June 1931. It was named the Black Hawk Bridge in honor of the Native American chief of that name. (The opening of the bridge coincided with the paving of Iowa Highway 9 between Lansing and Waukon.) The bridge has a main span of 1,735 feet, and is connected to Wisconsin by a roadway on a levee with five connecting bridges across several sloughs. It was operated as a toll bridge until March 1945 when one of the slough bridges was taken out by an ice flow. It remained closed, isolating Lansing from everything to the east, until May 1957 (12 years) when the slough bridge was repaired. (It is interesting to note that the bridge was temporarily closed during 2011 due to a potential structural problem. Lansing residents were fearful that their business would suffer greatly, but the closure turned out to be very brief.)

The Mississippi River provided another resource for the people of Lansing to capitalize on….clams. In 1899 J.M. Turner established the first pearl button factory in Lansing. The factory was located along the railroad tracks south of downtown. Turner's firm, known as the Lansing Button Company, was destined to become one of the largest employers in the community. A second button company, the Capoli Button Works was established a little farther south in south Lansing, and a third company, the New Jersey Button Company, also existed for a brief period of time. Local clammers provided clams for the companies for several decades. One longtime Lansing resident, Gerald (Jake) Sandry, recalls

> During High School Gary Stirn and I did our time in Hell. Clamming [was] lots of work with very little pay. Sold the clams in Harpers Ferry (neighboring community to the south) and clam meats for bait to the local fishermen and didn't get very many pearls. It was also fun at times. (Sandry, Jan 1, 2009)

Like many other things connected to the Mississippi, clamming changed drastically with the construction of the nine-foot channel by the United States Corps of Engineers when they completed the series of lock and dams in the late 1930s. Button factories were forced to change from making shell buttons to simply carding the buttons. This proved to be a lucrative business. Turner's nephew, L.T. Hufschmidt, invented a button-carding machine, thereby eliminating the practice of hand sewing the buttons on the cards. The carding work was moved from their factory along the railroad tracks into brick buildings on the north side of Main between 3rd and 4th Streets. In the early years of World War II Lansing Button expanded into a totally new field, wooden toys. (Wood was used because metal was not available during the war.) They produced a line called Toywood Toys which consisted of cars, trucks and trains. Following the war the company began producing metal toys (Slik Toys) in the old factory next to the railroad tracks. These were primarily scale model pieces of agricultural equipment (tractors, bailers, combines, etc.). Their primary customers were major farm implement manufacturers such as Oliver, Massey-Harris, and even Ford Motors. A single order from Oliver might consist of 400,000 toy machines, all made, packaged, and shipped from Lansing, Iowa. (Wittmer, p 2) By 1976 the Lansing Company (note name change) employed 250 people, 95% of them Lansing residents.

Lansing, the Market Town

All of the activities mentioned above caused Lansing to develop into a Market Town. This began early in the community's development. The steamboats not only carried products from Lansing to eastern markets, they brought all sorts of goods to Lansing. The earliest settlers had need of pots and pans, of fabric for clothing, shoes for the harsh winter months, medicine, food stuffs that could not be locally produced, furniture, guns & ammunition, tools and equipment that weren't produced locally. The list goes on and on. It is said that the first store was built at the corner of Main and Front in 1851 for F. D. Cowles, the first storekeeper. From there the business district expanded over the next decade, up Main Street at least as far as 4th Street, where the Kerndt Bros built their fine three story brick store building in 1861. Both sides of Main were filled with commercial buildings, many of them small frame structures.

The first of a series fires in the business district occurred in 1862 when the south side of the 200 block (between 2nd and 3rd) went up in flames. As noted earlier, this area was rapidly rebuilt, this time of brick and stone. Merchants' ads and news briefs from the 1860s demonstrate the variety of businesses along Main (and some gave their addresses referencing these new buildings):

"New Jewelry Establishment, New Stone Block, Main Street, Lansing;"
"Hersey & Brother Dry Goods, Three Story Stone Block, Main Street, Lansing."
(*North Iowa Journal*, November 11, 1862, p 1, c 2)
"J.H. Pape's New Store, Main Street, Lansing, (Opposite Kerndt & Bro's.)"
"Farmer's Home, German Hotel, Ed Ruprecht, Proprietor, Main Street corner of Fifth, Lansing"
(*The Lansing Weekly,* November 13, 1862, p1 c 1)
"Dutch Store! Established 1854, in Lansing. Nielander Schierholz & Co., Dry Goods, Boots, Shoes, Hardware, Groceries, Queensware, Farming Tools"
"Kerndt & Brothers, South-east corner of Main and Fourth Sts"
(*The Lansing Weekly*, November 27, 1862, p 3, c 5)
"New Goods at the New Drug Store! German Apothecary, Tho. Nachtwey, M.D. Physician and Surgeon, New Stone Building with Arched Windows (opposite the Liberty Pole), Main Street, Lansing" (*The Lansing Weekly*, December 11, 1862, p 3, c 4)
"*Fannie Fisk*. This is the name of the little craft which takes the place of the *Allamakee* and will ply [between] here and Prairie Du Chen [sic], Wisconsin. The Captain (Flemming) don't like the change, and we don't blame him." (*The Lansing Weekly Union*, May 7, 1863, p 3, c 1)
"New Building. We learn that R.P. Spencer, will soon commence the erection of a large stone or brick storehouse, on the vacant lots just above the new block, Main Street. The building will be three stories high and well finished up. We will report progress." (*The Lansing Weekly Union***,** May 7, 1863, p 3, c 1) (Note: Spencer's business was located at the corner of Main and Front Streets prior to the completion of the new building.)
"Fish. We had the pleasure of capturing and eating this week, some of the finest Bass & Pickerel, ever caught out of the Mississippi. Editors do live."
(*The Lansing Weekly Union*, May 29, 1863, p 3, c 1)
"Building operations have almost entirely ceased here, for want of joists. The work on the School House and Mr. Spencer's large building, cannot go ahead on account of the scarcity of this kind of material. Mr. Spencer hopes, however, to get into his new quarters by the middle of October. (*The Lansing Weekly Union*, July 30, 1863, p 3, c 1)
"Bricks, Bricks, Bricks! The undersigned would inform the public that his Brick Yard, near the Sash Factory at the west end of the town, is in full blast and that he keeps on hand a large supply of Bricks. Bernhard Winnesdorfer. (The Weekly Union, September 24, 1863, p 3, c 6)
"The weather is as warm and pleasant as one could wish to see. The river remains closed."
(*The Weekly Union*, March 8, 1864, p 3, c 1)
"Muddy Streets, Filth & Mud. Get rid of wood piles, boxes, barrels, on Main Street!" (*The Weekly Union*, March 15, 1864, p 3, c 1)
"New Goods. The Kerndt Brothers, Nielander Schierholtz & Co., Halbert, Friend & Eisen, William Lloyd, Van Winter, and in fact nearly all of our merchants have received portions of spring stocks." (*The Weekly Union*, April 12, 1864, p 3, c 3) (Evidently the Mississippi River had opened for navigation for the season.)
"Mayor S.H. Kinney noted that there are 4-5 immense piles of ice taken from the river for shipment south. The huge mountains contain about 400,000 tons of ice." (*Lansing Mirror*, April 20, 1869, p 3, c 1)
"Nielander & Brockhausen are building a substantial pier extending 40' into the river." (*Lansing Mirror*, January 18, 1870, p 3, c 1)

The advertisements and news articles noted above not only speak to the busy commercial life of Lansing, but the names illustrate the large number of Germans living in the community. In addition to Rupecht, Nielander, Schierholz, Nachtwey, and Winnesdorfer, there were ads for the Billiard Saloon of Wuest & Urmersbach, the Shoe Shop of W.J. Wettlaufer and many other German-owned businesses. Although it has not been determined at this point exactly how large the German community in Lansing was in the late 19th century, Germania Hall (non-extant), a prominent building located just north of Main Street was built in 1877. There were often notices in the newspapers about "the Germans of this place" having a Pic Nic or a Grand Ball or other social activities.

The buildings lining Main Street that housed these early businesses were primarily one and two story single storefront buildings, rectangular in shape with roofs that varied in shape, the frame buildings had gable roofs while the majority of the masonry buildings (both brick and stone) had flat roofs. An 1872 photograph taken from Mount Hosmer (Figure 10, page 25) shows the variety of roof types. One of the buildings constructed after the 1862 fire was a three story triple storefront building at the southeast corner of Main and 3rd Streets. Known as the Concert Hall, this building was constructed in 1867 for C.W. Hufschmidt at a cost of nearly $30,000 and can be seen in the 1872 photo.

By 1875 the state census showed Lansing to have a population of 2280 (the largest population the town ever achieved). The 1875 Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa devoted two paragraphs to a listing of the goods that were shipped from Lansing and those delivered to Lansing during the 1874 season of navigation (March 30 to November 18) just by the Keokuk & Northern Packet Company for which Nielander, Brockhausen & Co. were the agents. The Diamond Jo Line and the Chicago, Dubuque & Minnesota Railroad were also actively involved in transporting merchandise though numbers were not available for those. Lansing was the "principal market for produce from an extensive agricultural district lying north and west of it, which here finds an outlet to the river and railroad, large quantities of pork, beef, grain and cattle being annually shipped from this point." (Andreas, p 431) When the farmers delivered their grain or livestock to Lansing for shipping, often they were accompanied by family members who did their regular shopping, taking advantage of the goods available in the stores along Main Street. A listing of the stores occupying the buildings from the river to 4th Street in 1875 included:

9 dry goods stores	2 jewelry stores
4 grocery stores	3 harness shops
4 drug stores	2 boot & shoes stores
4 hardware stores	6 blacksmith shops
5 clothing stores	2 livery stables
4 millinery establishments	5 hotels

These retail establishments were in addition to the factories, most located along the river banks. The factories included the Iron Works & Foundry of Boeckh, Luger & Co.; Bockfinger & Boekemeyer's Wagon Works; the flouring mill of Foster, Lee & Co.; the saw mill of Hemenway, Barkly & Co.; Travers & Co.'s sash, door & blind factory; J.G. Manger's cabinet factory; and four lumberyards. Three Lansing businessmen paid to have engravings of their buildings included in the 1875 atlas: Boechkh, Luger & Co.; G. Kerndt & Bros.; and the Dudley House. (Figures 11-13, page 26)

The streetscape of Lansing's Main Street was pretty much set in stone (I couldn't resist!) by 1886 when it was documented by a plat map from the Atlas of Allamakee County (Figure 14, page 27) and the first Sanborn map was drawn. Front Street was lined with elevators and warehouses along the river side, with a few small frame commercial buildings along the west side of the street. The railroad tracks running parallel to Front Street physically separated the river-side buildings from the rest of downtown. These buildings remain a mix of frame, brick and stone construction.

The 100 block of Main was composed of a large limestone building on the north side, the Dudley House (Figure 15 page 28), a medium size stone building housing City Livery on the south side with a two story brick grocery next door on the alley. The rest of the block was filled with small frame buildings, one of which had a brick veneered façade (Figure 16, page 28). Unlike the 200 block, the 100 block never filled with substantial masonry commercial buildings. The 100 block is the first thing a visitor would see when arriving by boat or train.

(Figure 17, page 29) Commercial development extended both north and south from the intersection of Main and 2nd Streets. These buildings usually functioned as warehouses or services, and many were of limestone construction. (Figure 18, page 29)

The 200 block was, and is, the core of the business district. Another major fire had demolished the entire south side of Main between 2nd and 3rd in the spring of 1885.

Lansing's Disastrous Fire May 23, 1885

> Shortly after two o'clock, Saturday morning, our citizens were roused from sound slumber by the wild cry of fire! fire! fire! Soon the fire bells rang out upon the tranquil morning air and the people of our beautiful city came hurrying to the scene of disaster to be struck dumb by the appaling [sic] sight.
> ……..
> In brief, everything was leveled to the ground between Main and Center streets, from Second to Third except the post office. This was in the heart of the business portion of the city and comprised the very best business buildings in Lansing. (*Lansing Mirror,* May 1885, no specific date or page)

This fire wiped out all of the new brick and stone buildings that had been constructed following the fire of 1862. Some of the major buildings and businesses that were lost included the three story Concert Hall at the west end of the block, offices of both Lansing newspapers (the *Allamakee Journal* and the *Lansing Mirror*), the Bank of Lansing (next door to the post office), the photography studio of A.A. Houghton above the post office (including over 1,000 negatives), Evergreen Lodge, No. 144, A.F. & A.M., and Company E's armory in the Concert Hall, plus numerous small businesses and offices. The *Mirror* estimated the total loss to be $157,500 with insurance coverage of only $60,600. In addition to the loss of the entire south side of the block, fifteen buildings on the north side of the street were damaged, but all were covered by insurance. Figures 19 and 20 on page 30 show the post office, Bank of Lansing and part of the south side of the street before and after the fire.

Rebuilding of the south side began almost immediately and a set of two story single storefront buildings stair-stepped their way up the gentle Main Street hill. Although there is some variation in specific design details, seven of the buildings in the middle of the block are virtually identical. (Figure 21, page 31) All of these buildings exhibit characteristics of the Italianate style that was popular for commercial buildings across the country during that period. As before, both limestone and brick were used in the construction of these new buildings although none of these 1885 buildings show a limestone façade. The 1886 map of Lansing (Figure 14, page 27) shows the business district following the fire and rebuilding. Note the empty lots at the west end of the burnt block. These lots remained unoccupied until the first decade of the 20th century. Historic photographs show a three story brick free-standing building with bell tower immediately south of downtown. (Figure 22, page 32) That was the City Hall that was built sometime after 1872 and was destroyed by fire around 1900. The fire bell from that tower was then relocated to the Bluff Block and is shown in Figure 5, page 23.

Buildings on the north side of the 200 block are all two stories but do not share a common design as they were built over a period of years. Nine buildings on this side of the street are of limestone construction with brick facades. Three early frame buildings remain in use in this block, but are hidden behind faux brick facades. Originally these frame buildings were more Greek Revival than Italianate in design. Like the south side of the street, construction was complete on the north side by 1912. It is interesting that the three buildings in this block built between 1902 and 1912 were all of limestone construction, not brick. Figure 23, page 33 shows the both sides of the 200 block fully developed from 2nd Street west. Figure 24, page 33 was taken from 3rd Street looking toward the Mississippi River and shows the empty lots at the west end on the south, and some of the frame buildings on the north side.

Historic photos from the early 20th century provide a good view of both sides of the street. (Figures 25 and 26, page 34) The limestone buildings at the west end of the block were constructed between 1902 and 1912 according to the Sanborn maps. A series of historic photographs documents the construction of the building at 279 Main. (Figures 27 and 28, page 35) The stone was piled in the street in front of the building during construction. It arrived in large pieces and was evidently cut to size on site. Although no documentation has been located, it is believed that this stone was quarried across the street behind the buildings along the north side.

The 1886 plat map (Figure 14, page 27) shows that the 300 block was not as extensively built-up as the 200 block, but it was totally devoted to commerce. The intersection of Main and 3rd was known historically as Thompson's Corner and was frequently photographed. (Figure 29, page 36) The 1886 atlas and Sanborn maps show the southwest corner of Main and 3rd Street empty until 1928, when a gas station is shown there. Although the first two brick buildings at the east end of the south side of the street have been lost, the rest of the buildings on the south side of the street that were shown on the 1886 Sanborn map are still in use today. These two story buildings (Figures 30 and 31, pages 36 and 37) have simple Italianate details in the segmental arched windows, corbelled brick cornices, and, originally, simple metal cornices. These were not built to "be fashionable" but to be practical. Like many buildings in the blocks to the east, several in this block are of limestone construction with brick facades. The Kerndt Block at the west end of the 300 block (Figure 32, page 37) remained the most impressive building on the block. The 1938 W.P.A. Art Deco City Hall at 377 Main and the small post office from the 1970s fill the space between the Italianate buildings and the Kerndt Block. The only single story buildings in the block are the post office and the gas station (1990s) at the east end. Although the businesses in these buildings changed over the years, one constant was a Wagon Factory in the center of the block at 359 Main from 1886 to at least 1912. Although the 1928 Sanborn shows this building as "Implements," historic photographs exist showing it to be the Lenz-Underwood Auto Garage. (Figure 33, page 38) Not long after opening the garage on the south side of the street, Lenz moved into a new building (pre-1928) on the north side at 370 Main. (Figure 34, page 38) Around the same time, a second auto garage opened a few doors east 330 Main. (Figure 35, page 39) These two dealerships pre-dated the paving of the road to Waukon (IA Hwy 9) and the construction of the Blackhawk Bridge in 1931. The north side of the 300 block retained several empty lots over the years, and continues to do so today. At one time there was a movie theater above the garage at 330 Main, and the building at the far west end was three stories with a lodge hall on the third floor. (That building was remodeled into a two story with a new buff-colored brick façade in the 1960s.) With the exception of the building on Thompson's Corner, the buildings on the north side of the 300 block are of brick construction. In the mid-1940s the Lansing Button Co. moved their carding processing, and possibly some toy making, from buildings on Center Street into the two auto garages in the 300 block. They linked the two garages with a broad two story brick building. (Figure 36, page 39)

The 1886 plat map and the Sanborn map show the commercial development between the river and 4th Street. It appears that there were scattered commercial buildings west of 4th, including a couple of hotels, a barber, a saloon and a blacksmith, but not a true business district.

The Lansing business district changed slowly over the years after the initial flurry of construction from the 1850s through the 1880s. 1886 appears to have been the high point of development. The geographic area of the business district in 1886 was the same found in 2012. A few buildings were added, a few buildings were demolished, but there was little major construction that transpired after that. Lansing was a destination, a place that farmers came to ship their products, and a place the eastern part of Allamakee County came to do their shopping. That quiet existence changed quickly in 1931 with the construction and opening of the Blackhawk Bridge and the paving of Iowa Highways 9 between Lansing and Waukon. People now could easily cross the river to shop in Prairie de Chien or La Crosse, or head west to Waukon for the same reason. Lansing was no longer a destination, it was a pass-through. Adding to this, was the Great Depression. The construction of the nine-foot channel during the1930s provided some jobs in the area, but there was no growth. In January 1936 a local newspaper (no name cited) wrote, "The Lansing Button Company is the only factory operating in the county." The construction of a new City Hall/Memorial Hall in 1938 by the W.P.A. provided some temporary jobs in the community. In the midst of this, a new day of celebration was created…Fish Day! One day in the summer was used to celebrate the Mississippi River and the fish in it. Activities took place on Front Street "at the foot of Main" (Fish Day Program) and included swimming, diving, surf-board riding, a wash tub race, rowing race, and a Free Fish Haul. A band concert and a dance took place in the evening. There was even a Fish Day song,

You read in books
That Lansing cooks
Are famous for their dishes
Its beans
And apple pie of course,
But mostly little fishes

On March 18, 1945 the Blackhawk Bridge closed when one of the slough bridges was taken out by ice. Lansing was again isolated from the east side of the river. This situation existed for 12 years as the bridge did not

reopen until 1957. In many communities the years following World War II were a period of development and growth. This did not happen in Lansing, and that may be due to the bridge closure. Businesses did not move from Main Street to the outskirts of the community, old buildings were not torn down and replaced with more modern structures. Two new buildings were constructed along Main during this period, a two story brick building for Lansing Button at 360 Main, and a new theater on the Southwest corner of Main and 4th, both in 1946. In a strange way, the isolation allowed the business district to remain in almost original condition, something that is valued today.

When the bridge finally reopened, there was a celebration re-dedicating the bridge over Memorial Day weekend 1957. The celebration was held in conjunction with Fish Day, so there were food stands, a parade, a carnival midway, excursions on the riverboat "Lotus Queen" and a pageant, "Venetian Night," that was composed of beautifully lighted boats in dress parade, with bands and a chorus of 30 voices, capped off by fireworks. (Black Hawk Bridge Dedication Book, Program, no page)

As a river town, boating had always been part of Lansing, but following World War II, more Americans were taking part in leisure activities. The river beckoned new boat owners and water enthusiasts. In December 1958 the U.S. Corps of Engineers completed construction of a small boat harbor. Today, Lansing attracts not only boat owners, but also visitors interested in renting houseboats for a weekend or a week during the summer months.

CONCLUSION

Lansing was platted and grew as a river and market town, with a linear "Main Street" that extended up the hill from the Mississippi River. It was like many of the Iowa "towns [that] dotted the landscape, each with a length of Main Street devoted to the provision of goods and services or to the distribution of products and livestock." (Nash, E-5) The retail economy of Lansing was directly linked not only to the river, but to the rise and fall of the agricultural economy of the surrounding area. (Ibid.) River towns, for the most part, are not developed around a public square, but develop along the riverfront, and in a right angle away from it. In this case, Lansing grew up the valley between Mount Ida and Mount Hosmer.

Richard Francaviglia describes this linear Main Street plan as "…Main Street at its most functional…" (Francaviglia, p 78) A linear pattern creates a very different business district from that around a public square. John Jakle wrote that "this type of linear Main Street is tightly bounded by the architecture of the buildings lining it. (Jakle, pp 18-19) This is very true in Lansing. Main Street between Front and 4th Street is lined with two story masonry buildings, constructed at the front edge of their lots, creating a common setback, an unbroken wall on each side of the street. This becomes almost like a brick canyon with the only open space, being the sidewalks and the street itself.

From the beginning the earliest permanent buildings were constructed along Main and Front streets. Although many of the early buildings were of frame construction, the earliest that lasted any length of time at all were of limestone. The ready availability of limestone immediately north of the buildings on Main Street made this a practical building material. The number of extant limestone buildings in Lansing's business district is impressive. The majority of buildings in downtown Lansing are two story single storefront buildings, rectangular in shape, with a flat roof. Many of the limestone buildings have been given a brick façade to present a more "finished" image.

Figures 37 through 51 show Lansing's business district as it looks today, Main Street lined with 19th century buildings. From the limestone and brick warehouses and elevators on Front Street on the banks of the Mississippi River (Figures 37 and 38, page 40) to the handsome three story brick Kerndt Block at the corner of Main and 4th Streets (Figure 50, page 46), serving as the entrance to the downtown, this three block area tells the story of Lansing's commercial life. Alterations have been relatively few, and are not visually intrusive.

The driving force for commercial development changed during the years. Originally, the focus was on the river, and Front Street was developed for elevators, warehouses, fish markets, ice plants. Main Street grew away from the river, but depended on it for merchandise. The arrival of the railroad in 1872 changed the means by

which shipments were made, but did not draw focus away from the river as the tracks ran parallel to the river. Lansing remained the major market town for the eastern part of Allamakee County well into the 20th century. The advent and popularity of the automobile, along with the attendant new building types such as garages (both sales and service), oil stations, and paved highways were another major force in downtown development. The routing of Iowa Highway 9 through downtown Lansing on Main Street ensured the strong retail health of the community . Today much of Lansing's economy continues to focus on the Mississippi River, attracting tourists to the beauty of the area and all of the recreational activities it offers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The sense of time and place that is created by the visually cohesive commercial buildings along Main Street between the Mississippi River and 4th Street should be recognized by the preparation of a National Register of Historic Places nomination for a Historic Commercial District. Preliminary boundaries for such a district (Figure 52, page 48) would also include Front Street and Second Street between William and John Streets. This district would include approximately 50 buildings and would document the development of Lansing's business district from circa 1855 to 1946. During the preparation of the nomination it is hoped that additional research will be conducted on the limestone quarry behind Main Street and the stone masons who were responsible for much of Lansing's business district, as well as additional newspaper research during identified periods of construction such as the 1880s, mid-1930s and 1945-46.

The preparation of a National Register nomination for the district would take approximately 12 to 15 months and is considered to be a fundable project under both the Certified Local Government (CLG) and Historic Resource Development Program (HRDP) grant programs administered by the State Historical Society of Iowa.

PROPERTY TYPES

Commercial Development in Lansing, Iowa: ca. 1855 - 1946

NAME: The buildings and districts representing the Commercial Development in Lansing, Iowa: 1855 -1946.

The resources (a collective terms for the above named categories) associated with this context are unified by the fact that each was built in the central business district of Lansing, Iowa during this time period and each illustrates the growth and development of the business community during this period. Buildings can be sub-divided into specific types: commercial/retail, commercial/non-retail, and public.

BUILDINGS: Traditional Commercial/Retail

Description. Commercial/retail buildings make up the largest individual group of resources from this period. These buildings are rectangular in shape, varying from one to three stories in height, the majority of masonry construction with a flat roof sloping gently to the rear. These buildings fill the full width of their lot (creating party walls), and were built at the front of the lot, forming a common setback from the street. With few exceptions, these are single storefront two story buildings. While brick was the material of choice for most of these buildings, the abundance of local limestone led to the construction of many limestone buildings. In addition, Lansing still has a few frame buildings with gable roofs in the business district. These feature a “boomtown” front to create the illusion of more substantial buildings. Other building materials found in the business district include metal, cast stone, and concrete block. These buildings were rarely architect-designed, being constructed by local contractors in the popular styles of the period, influenced by catalogs or local traditions.

Visually these buildings vary the most in terms of detailing on the façade. Decorative cornices, hood molds, and other elements could be ordered from catalogs to give each building a touch of a popular style such as Italianate or Queen Anne. The details may vary, but the overall mass of the buildings remains constant. The differences are cosmetic, not structural.

Function. These buildings were built to house retail business on the first floor with the upper stories often occupied by offices or by specialty businesses such as photographers, tailors, or, in some instances, by fraternal lodges such as the Masonic and/or Odd Fellows organizations. In some cases the upper story was used for housing.

Significance. The resources in this sub-category are the core of the downtown. They represent the most popular buildings materials and styles found across Iowa in the years between 1850 and 1946.

Registration Requirements. Significance (use or form) relates directly to the Commercial Development of Lansing.

To be eligible under **Criterion A** the building must reflect the commercial development of Lansing during this period, have been constructed to serve a commercial/retail/office purpose, and add to the overall commercial life of the Community.

To be eligible under **Criterion B** the building must be directly associated with a specific person who played an important role within the community.

To be eligible under **Criterion C** the building must be a good example of its particular building type (commercial) and/or style, displaying distinct characteristics that are representative of their period of construction, and/or have been designed by a recognized architect.

No resources have been identified that might have **Criterion D** eligibility, as an archaeological survey was not part of this project.

If a building has been moved, the other six aspects of integrity must have been retained. Specifically, there should be limited loss of architectural elements, limited alterations due to the move, the original design,

material and craftsmanship should be clearly visible, and the new site must be sympathetic to the original location and setting.

Integrity considerations. In all cases, the most important integrity consideration is that the building retains sufficient elements of the original design, materials, and setting that the builder/original owner would recognize it. The resource should retain a sense of the original function as a commercial building. The basic shape and proportions of the building should be intact with little or no changes to doors and windows, or roofline. Replacement windows should match the original ones in terms of materials, size, and design. For example, if steel casement windows need to be replaced, they should be replaced by steel casement windows of the same dimensions. Additions to secondary elevations may be acceptable if they are of appropriate scale and proportion, and sympathetic materials. Most alterations to commercial buildings take place on the first floor storefront. Any changes made should be replacement, not remodeling. That is, brick in-fill of large displace windows is not acceptable. Replacement of solid wood or metal doors with glass doors is not acceptable. Signage should be sympathetic to the overall design. Buildings considered for individual eligibility will be required to have a higher level of integrity than those that are considered as contributing to a historic district.

Resources Within the Survey Area Identified as Individually Eligible
(This building is already listed on the NRHP)

391 Main	Kerndt Bros Commercial Block

BUILDINGS: Commercial/Non-Retail

Description. These buildings will be one or two stories tall, rectangular in shape with either a flat or gabled roof and will be of masonry construction, often limestone. Although there were originally a number of frame buildings in this category, these have been lost due to demolition or fire. The majority of these buildings will be along the riverbank and/or railroad tracks. For the most part, these buildings will be truly functional in design with few, if any, decorative details. Non-retail buildings are more likely to be free-standing structures. Many of these have been demolished, leaving only a handful to represent this important type of building. South Lansing was not included in the current survey area, but it originally was home to a number of buildings of this type.

Function. These buildings housed grain elevators, warehouses, mills, button factories, wagon factories, ice houses, livery stables, lumberyards, and other forgotten activities.

Significance. The resources in this sub-category illustrate the non-retail base of the local economy. As a river and railroad town, Lansing was the shipping and receiving headquarters for a large area of northeast Allamakee County throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Logs were milled into lumber that could be sold “as is” or turned into doors and windows by local factories. Fishermen sold clams to the factories to be turned into buttons. Farmers brought their grain to Lansing elevators for storage and shipment up or down the Mississippi.

Registration Requirements. Significance (use or form) relates directly to the Commercial Development of Lansing.

To be eligible under **Criterion A** the building must reflect the commercial/non-retail development of Lansing during this period, have been constructed to serve a commercial purpose, and add to the overall commercial life of the community.

To be eligible under **Criterion B** the building must be directly associated with a specific person who played an important role within the community.

To be eligible under **Criterion C** the building must be a good example of its particular building type, displaying distinct characteristics that are representative of the type and period.

No resources have been identified that might have **Criterion D** eligibility, as an archaeological survey was not part of this project.

If a building has been moved, the other six aspects of integrity must have been retained. Specifically, there should be limited loss of architectural elements, limited alterations due to the move, the original design, material and craftsmanship should be clearly visible, and the new site must be sympathetic to the original location and feeling.

Integrity considerations. In all cases, the most important integrity consideration is that the building retains sufficient elements of the original design, materials, and setting that the builder/original owner would recognize it. The resource should retain a sense of the original function. The resource should retain a sense of the original function. The basic shape and proportions of the building should be intact with few, if any, changes to doors and windows, or roofline. Additions to secondary elevations may be acceptable if they are of appropriate scale and proportion, and sympathetic materials. Brick in-fill of large display windows or garage/loading doors is not recommended. Signage should be sympathetic to the overall design. Buildings considered for individually eligibility will be required to have a higher level of integrity than those that are considered as contributing to a historic district.

BUILDINGS: Public

Description. The two public buildings located in the Lansing business district vary greatly in both date of construction and style. The Old Jail and Fire Station at 105 Main Street has had multiple additions over the years. The original two story limestone building with gable roof from ca. 1855-1865 has been given a brick façade with "boomtown" front. Its original use appears to have been as a livery stable. The City Hall at 377 Main Street from 1938 was originally built for that specific purpose. It is a two story building of buff-colored brick with limestone trim. While the Fire Station is a truly vernacular structure, the City Hall was built in the Art Deco style and was probably architect designed (though no architect has yet been identified). Both buildings share the common set-back of the commercial buildings lining Main Street.

Function. Although located in the business district, public buildings provide services rather than goods. The central location was convenient for citizens who were already downtown shopping to conduct any business they might have with the city.

Significance. City Hall serves as a symbol of the community, showing that Lansing was important enough to have a building constructed specifically for this purpose. Most smaller towns located city hall in one of the commercial buildings along Main Street. It is also significant as the only example of Art Deco design in the community.

Registration Requirements. Significance (use or form) relates directly to the Commercial Development of Lansing.

To be eligible under **Criterion A** the building must demonstrate the specific service it is providing to the community, and why that service is needed. City Hall is an architect-designed symbol of the importance of Lansing in northeast Allamakee County. It is also representative of the Depression-Era programs to rebuild the infrastructure of the country because it was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

To be eligible under **Criterion B** the building must have a direct connection with a person who played an important role in the community's development. No such connection has been established for either of the two public buildings.

To be eligible under **Criterion C** the building must be a good example of its particular building type and/or style, displaying distinct characteristics of the period and style, be a good example of the use of a specific building materials, and/or have been the work of a recognized architect.

No resources have been identified that might have **Criterion D** significance as there was no archaeological component to this project.

If a building has been moved, the other six aspects of integrity must have been retained. Specifically, there should be limited loss of architectural elements, limited alterations due to the move, the original design, material and craftsmanship should be clearly visible, and the new site must be sympathetic to the original location and feeling.

Integrity Considerations. In all cases, the most important integrity consideration is that the building retains sufficient elements of the original design, materials, and setting that the builder/original owner would recognize it. The resource should retain a sense of the original function as a public building. The basic shape and proportions of the building should be intact with little or no changes to doors and windows, or roofline. Replacement windows should match the original ones in terms of materials, size, and design. Additions to secondary elevations may be acceptable if they are of appropriate scale and proportion, and sympathetic materials. Brick in-fill of large windows or doors is not recommended. Buildings considered for individual eligibility will be required to have a high level of integrity than those that are consisered as contributing to a history district.

DISTRICTS:

Description. Districts are geographic clusters of related resources that are linked by common style, materials, builders, or use. The Lansing business district is visually cohesive and geographically well defined. It is made up of individual masonry (limestone and/or brick) buildings sharing a common set-back, similar rooflines, similar brick exteriors, first floor storefronts of glass, and upper stories with windows and cornices creating a rhythmic pattern. The majority of the buildings within a potential district should have been constructed within the identified period of significance. These buildings should share a common use of function, such as retail/office or retail/apartments, that is visible and adds to the sense of time and place.

Significance. A historic district is representative of common building types and use, in this case, commercial, and illustrates the development of the Lansing business district between ca. 1850 and 1946. The number and size of these commercial buildings demonstrate the importance of Lansing as a commercial/retail center within Allamakee County and the surrounding market area.

Registration Requirements. Significance (use or form) relates directly to the Commercial Development of Lansing.

To be eligible under **Criterion A** an historic district must reflect the importance and vitality of the business district in the Commercial Development of Lansing. The district as a whole and the individual buildings/business must illustrate the changing patterns of commercial development.

To be eligible under **Criterion B** a historic district must have a direct connection to an individual or family who played a significant role in the development of the Lansing business district.

To be eligible under **Criterion C** a historic district must contain a set of buildings which are good examples of their building type (retail/office, retail/apartments, commercial/non-retail), displaying distinct characteristics that are representative of their period of construction, style, use of materials, and/or have been designed by a recognized architect. There must be a cohesive visual element to the district.

No resources were identified that might have **Criterion D** significance because this project did not contain an archaeological component.

Integrity considerations. In all cases, the most important integrity consideration is that the buildings retain sufficient elements of the original design, materials, and setting that the builder/original owner would recognize it. The resources should retain a sense of the original function as a commercial building. The basic shape and proportions of the building should be intact with little or no changes to doors and windows, or roofline.

Replacement windows should match the original ones in terms of materials, size, and design. Additions to secondary elevations may be acceptable if they are of appropriate scale and proportion, and sympathetic materials. Brick in-fill of large display windows is not recommended. Replacement of solid wood or metal doors with glass doors is not recommended. Signage should be sympathetic to the overall design.

It is expected that the storefronts of commercial buildings may have been altered to present a more "modern" appearance. For this reason, some alterations to the first floor façade of commercial buildings may be acceptable if the upper stories of the building retain the original design and fabric. Metal cornices have often been removed to "modernize" or because of maintenance issues. While such alterations would not be acceptable for a building being considered as individually eligible (a key structure), contributing buildings in a historic district can retain a lesser degree of integrity. This integrity must include the overall size, shape, building material, and fenestration. Buildings which have been "slip-covered" with modern material must be considered non-contributing to the historic district. If the slip-cover is removed at some point in the future, the building should be re-evaluated. At least 60 per cent of the resources in a district should be individually eligible or contributing. There must be sufficient integrity of design and materials to retain a strong sense of time and place.

GEOGRAPHIC DATA

The geographic area covered in this survey and evaluation project is the core of the Lansing business district. The area focuses on Main Street, with a handful of resources located immediately north and south of Main on Front and 2nd Streets. The north and south boundaries are roughly the rear property line of buildings facing Main Street. It is bounded by the Mississippi River on the east and 4th Street on the west. It encompasses approximately eight half blocks.

METHODOGY

This Lansing preservation project is part of a long-range program to identify, evaluate, register, and protect the cultural resources of the State of Iowa. The objective of this 2011-2012 project was to record each of the resources in the central business district and to evaluate each to determine individual eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, to determine whether or not there is the potential for a historic district, and if there is, determine the boundaries for such district. There are currently five resources in the community that are individually listed on the National Register, two of which are in the current survey area (the two Kerndt properties)

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G. Kerndt & Bros Elevator & Warehouses #11, #12, and #13	Front Street Between Main and John
G. Kerndt & Bros Office Block	391 Main Street
Lansing Fisheries Building	On the River Bank in South Lansing
Lansing Stone School	Corner of Center and 5th Streets
Old Allamakee County Courthouse	Second Street between North and Valley

The Allamakee County Historic Preservation commission was the recipient of a CLG grant to conduct this project. The HPC, working with Main Street Matters in Lansing, selected architectural historian/historian Molly Myers Naumann to serve as the consultant. Naumann worked with Main Street Matters and local volunteers who were responsible for the fieldwork, photography, and archival research. Early in the project she conducted two public meetings and a training workshop for the volunteers. A third public meeting will be held in May to report on the findings of the survey and evaluation, and to make recommendations for future preservation activities.

A local photographer was responsible for photographing each building and lot within the survey area. An Iowa Site Inventory Form was completed for each historic resource, including a map indicating the location and at least one photograph. City plat maps, Sanborn Insurance maps, USGS maps and aerial photos were used to locate each of the resources.

Volunteers were involved in the research conducted primarily at the Allamakee County Historic Society Library in Waukon. Additional information was gathered through local and county histories, reminiscences, and historic photos. The most successful research activity was an all day (eight hour) session involving four scanning stations that were set up in the community building (G. Kerndt Block). Residents were encouraged to bring in old photographs, newspapers, maps, and other documents and artifacts to be scanned. Once the scanning was completed, the owner received a CD with a digital record of their artifacts. Amazingly, not all scanning could be completed in a single day and had to be finished later. This event produced a large inventory of historic resources that proved invaluable to this project. In addition to the volunteer activities, the consultant had access to previous surveys and documentation and available through the State Historical Society of Iowa: a 1988 site survey conducted by Steven Johnson and Charles Langdon; and, a 2003 reconnaissance survey that was conducted by Robert Vogel for the Iowa Department of Transportation.

The information gained through the research process was used in the development of the historic context "Commercial Development of Lansing, Iowa: ca. 1855-1946" and the associated property types. The consultant evaluated each of the intensive survey sites and a determination of National Register eligibility as made: individually eligible, not eligible, or eligible as part of a potential historic district.

Results:

Field surveyors recorded a total of 51 resources. The consultant identified the strong potential for a historic commercial district on both sides of Main Street from the Mississippi River to 4th Street, possibly including Front and 2nd Streets between William and John Street. This was strictly an architectural and historical survey as there was no archaeological component to this project.

LIST OF RESOURCES IN INTENSIVE SURVEY AREA

ADDRESS	NRHP	CONTRIBUTING	NON-CONTRIBUTING	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION
100 Main			X	Post 1960
105 Main		X		Ca. 1855-60
197 Main		X		Ca. 1855-60
200 Main		X		Ca. 1865/1902
201 Main		X		1862/1885
210 Main		X ??		Ca. 1860
214 Main		X ??		Ca. 1860 +
221 Main		X		1885
224 Main		X		Ca. 1860 +
229 Main		X		1885
231 Main		X		1885
234-238 Main		X		Ca. 1865
241 Main		X		1885
249 Main		X		1885
250 Main		X		Ca. 1855 +
253 Main		X		1885
258 Main		X		1859
261 Main		X		1885
266 Main		X		1859/1916
267 Main		X		1885
271 Main		X		1885
274 Main		X		1902-12
279 Main		X		1902-12
288 Main		X		Ca. 1855-65
298 Main			X	Non-extant
300 Main		X		Ca. 1855-65
317 Main		X		Ca. 1865-75
320 Main		X		Ca. 1865
330 Main		X		ca. 1915-20
333 Main		X		Ca. 1865-75
341-353 Main			X	Ca. 1865-75
359 Main		X		Ca. 1865-75
360 Main		X		1946
367 Main		X ??		Ca. 1865-75
370 Main			X	Ca. 1915-20
377 Main		X ??		1938
380 Main		X		Ca. 1865-75
383 Main			X	Post-1960
390 Main		X		Pre-1886 ++
391 Main (Kerndt Bldg)	X			1861 & 1863
400 Main			X	Post 1960
401 Main		X		1946

ADDRESS	NRHP	CONTRIBUTING	NON-CONTRIBUTING	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION
20 N Front		X		Ca. 1865
60-70 S Front (Kerndt Elevator & Warehouses)	X			1868 ++
100 S Front		X		Ca. 1865
20 N 2nd St		X		Ca. 1855-65
98 N 2nd St		X		Ca. 1855-65
10 S 2nd St			X	Post 1980
61 N 3rd St		X		1877 ++
190 John St		X		1860-65

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Jacqueline Everett
Karen Galema
Gerald (Jake) Sandry
Ken Becker
Aubrie Lee-Lenz
Mary Kelleher
Frank Mauss
Peter Kerndt
Charles Strub
Ralph Bartels
Mike Carroll
Gail Horton
Celia Garret
Karen Ferring
Currency Kerndt
Lois Robinson
Mary Severson
Dave Mortiz
Rick Gramlich
Rick Welsh

ILLUSTRATIONS

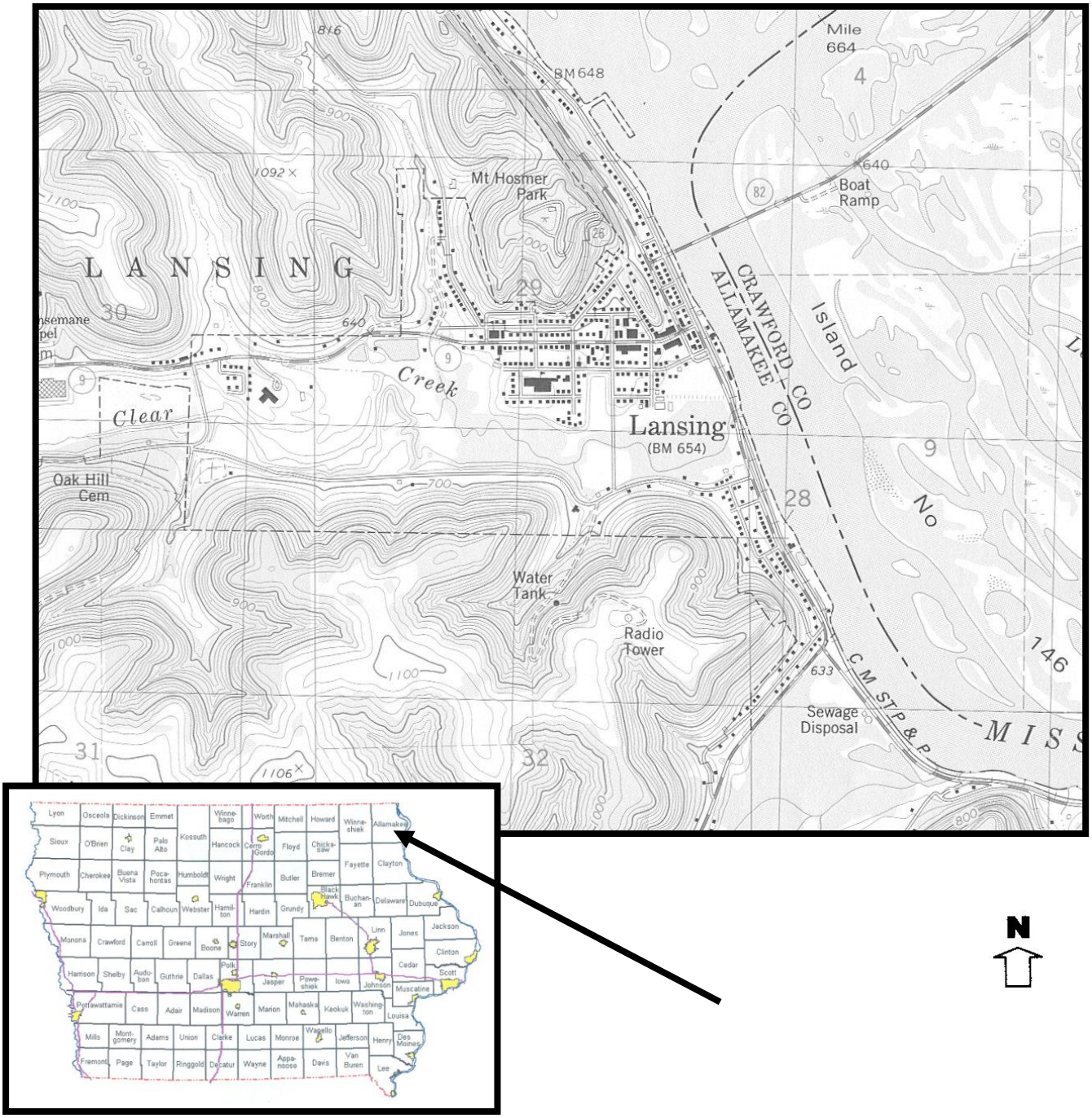

Figure 1
USGS map of Lansing (1983)
Inset map shows location of Allamakee County

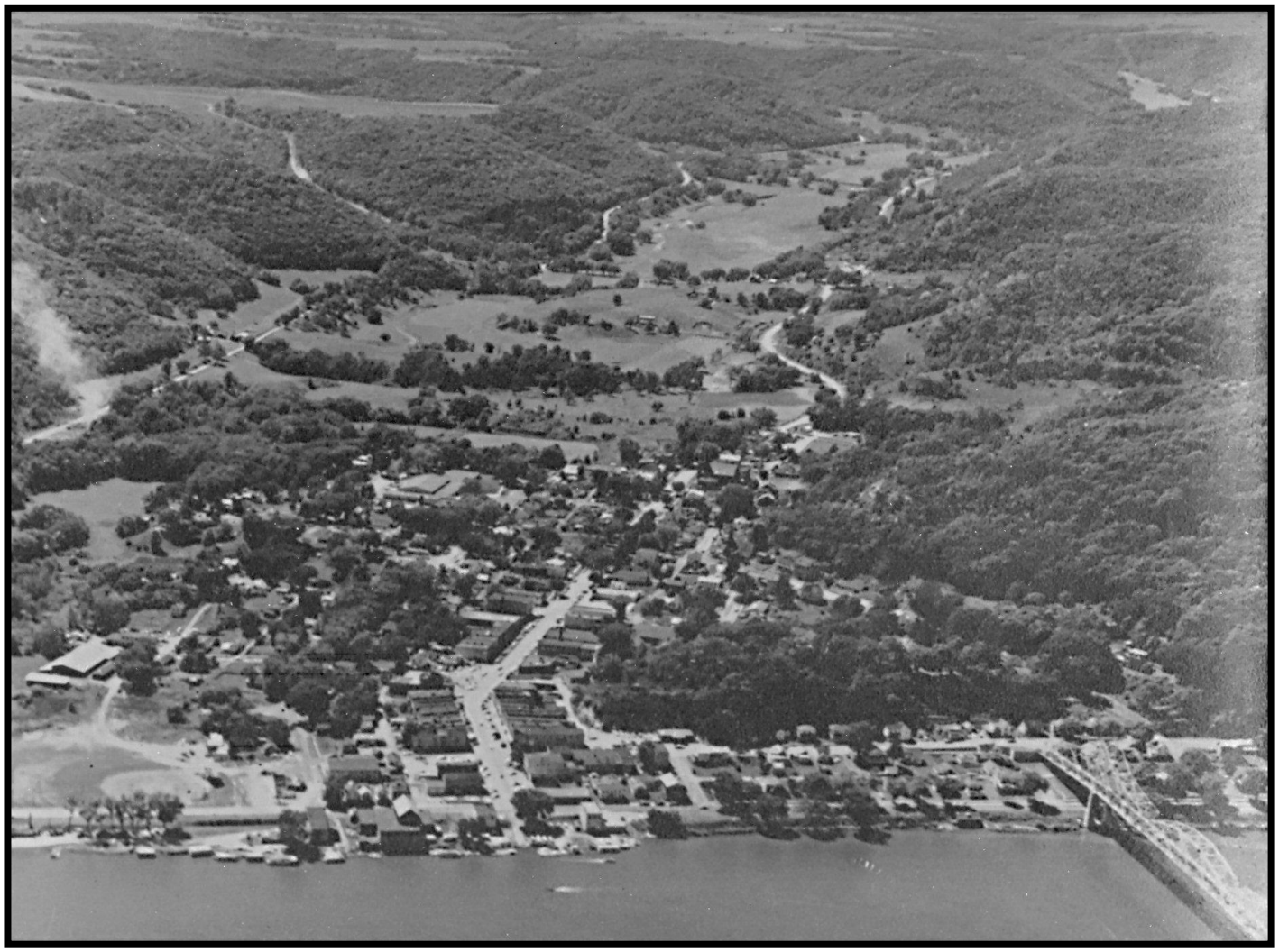

Figure 2
Undated aerial photograph, looking west, showing the location of Lansing in the valley between Mount Ida (left) and Mount Hosmer (right)
The wide street leading away from the river with the curious angle is Main Street.
(Rick Welch Collection)

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Figure 3
1886 map of Lansing, including the areas known as south Lansing and Capoli.
(Warner & Foote, Plat Book of Allamakee County, Iowa. 1886, pp 26-27)

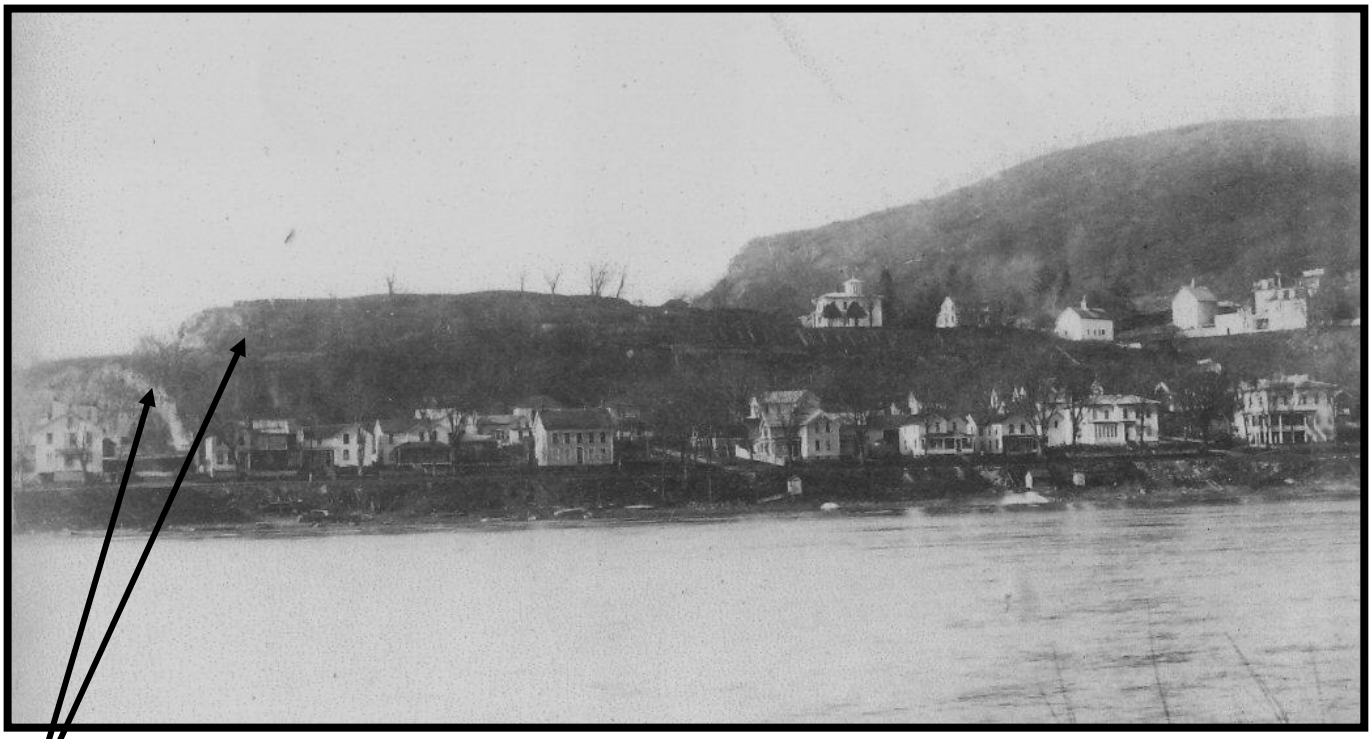
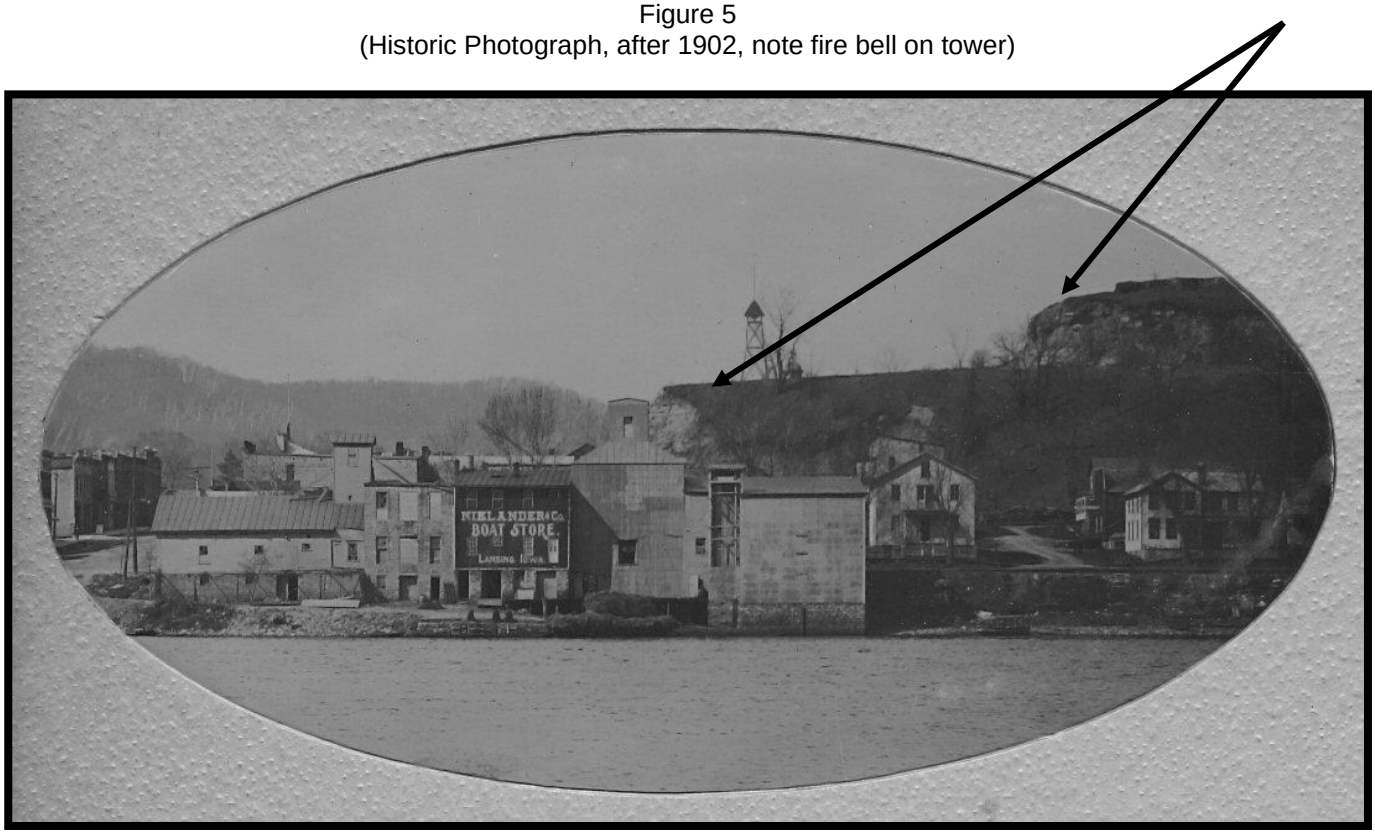


Figure 4
(Historic photograph, pre-1902)

Both photos are looking due west.
Arrows indicate the two tiers of the bluff behind Main Street that have been quarried.

Figure 5
(Historic Photograph, after 1902, note fire bell on tower)



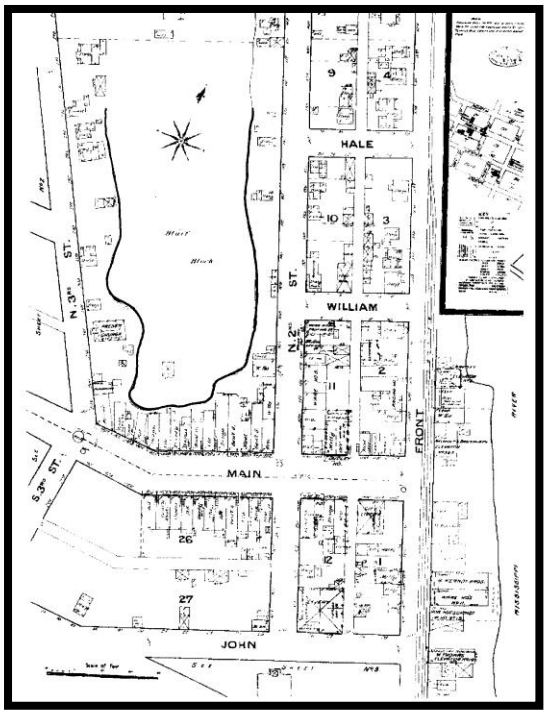


Figure 6
1886

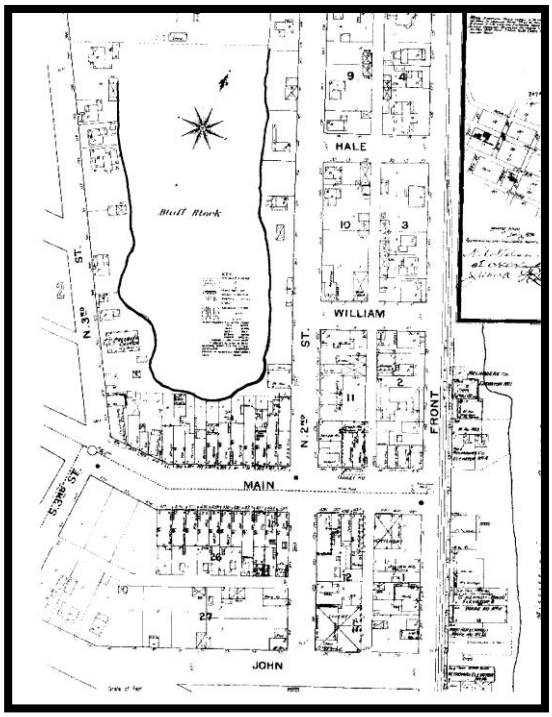


Figure 7
1894

Sanborn Insurance Maps showing gradual receding of the Bluff Block

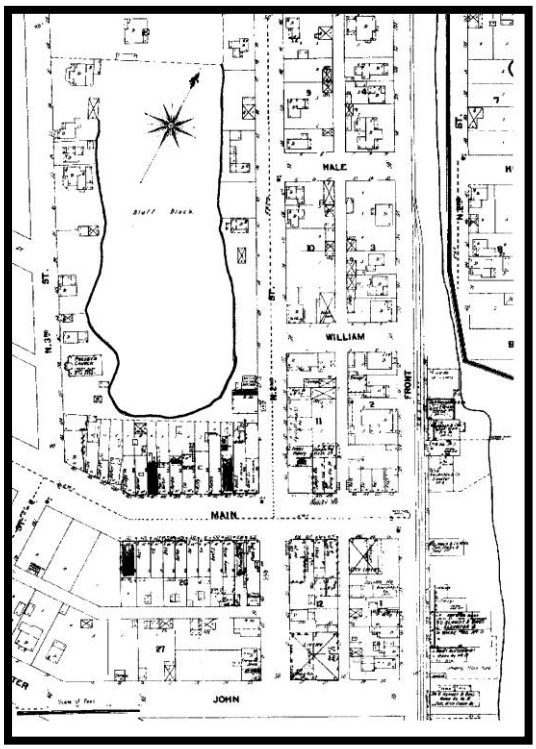


Figure 8
1902

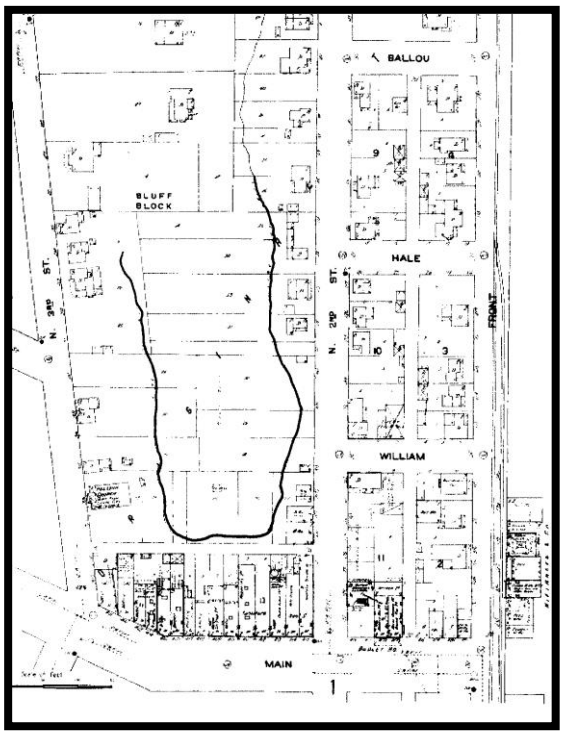


Figure 9
1912

Figure 10
1872 photograph looking SE
City Hall has not yet been built south of Main Street
The south side of the 200 block of Main is shown after the 1862 fire and before the 1885 fire.
Note three story brick Concert Hall at west end of that block.
Note quarrying that has taken place on the Bluff Block.
Note also the piles of lumber north of Main in the Triangle Block.

Figure 11

Figure 12

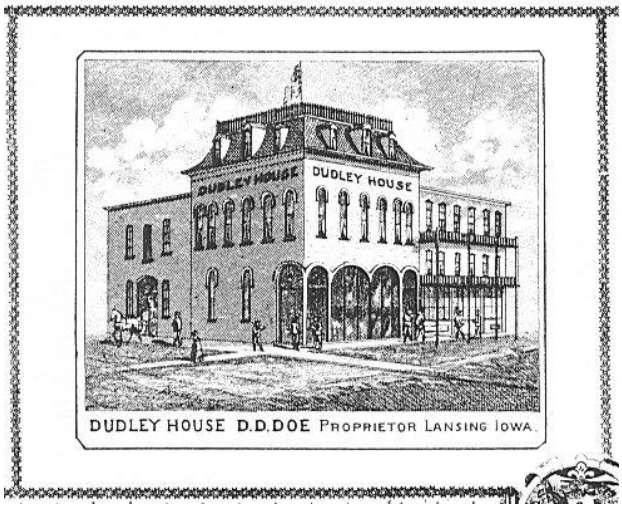


Figure 13
(Illustrated Atlas of the State of Iowa, pp 355 & 356)

Figure 14
Detail of business district
(Warner & Foote, Atlas of Allamakee County, Iowa, 1886, p 27)

Figure 15
North east corner Main and 2nd Street
Limestone Dudley House and limestone Nielander warehouse. Frame buildings on right.
(Both photos from a private collection)

Figure 16
Southeast corner Main and 2nd Street
Clothing store is brick veneer, note frame building on left

Figure 17
Main Street looking west from middle of 100 block.
Dudley House with porch in foreground
Note two limestone buildings from early 20th century at far end of south side of Main
This is the view of downtown Lansing that a traveler would have walking up from a steamboat or the train.

Figure 18
2nd Street looking north from Main

Figure 19
Post office and Bank of Lansing before the 1885 fire.
Southeast corner of Main and Second Streets

Figure 20
Post office and part of the south side of Main after the 1885 fire
(Both photos from Sandry Collection)

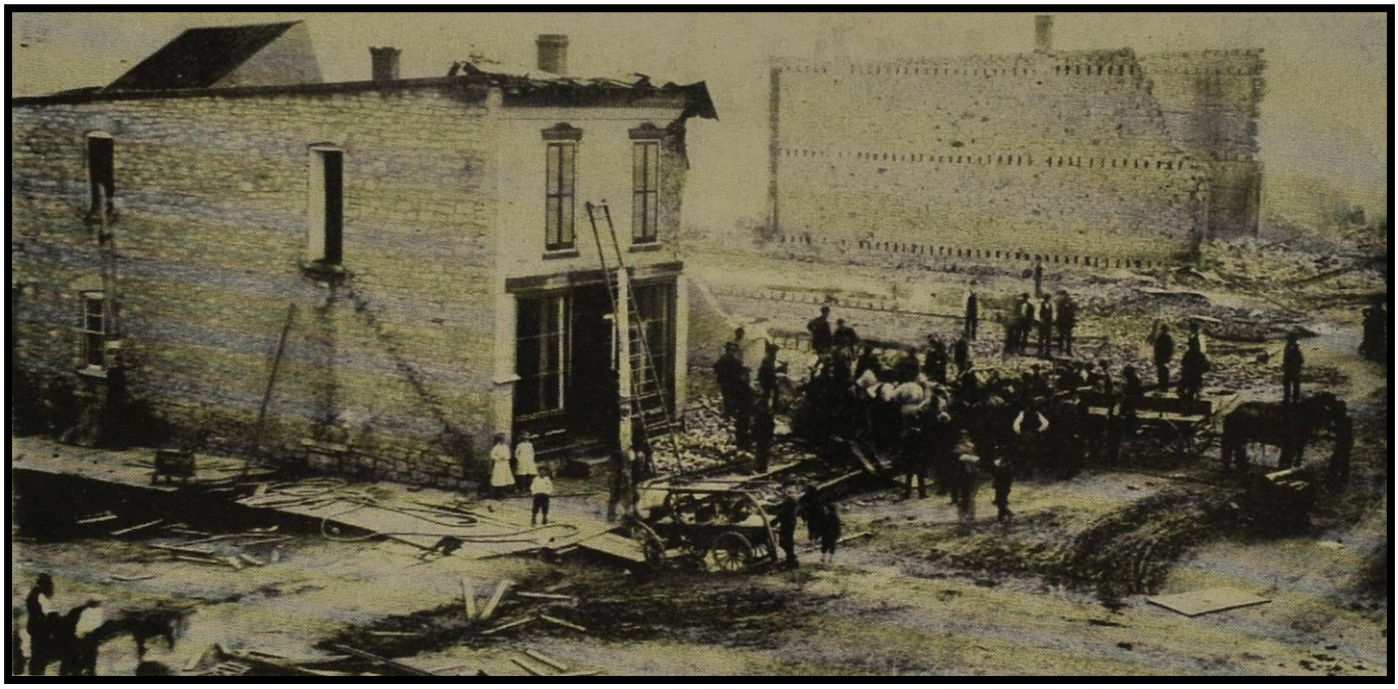


Figure 21
South side of 200 block of Main looking southeast
Shows the nine almost identical storefronts and the double storefront on the far left that were built following the 1886 fire that demolished that side of the street.

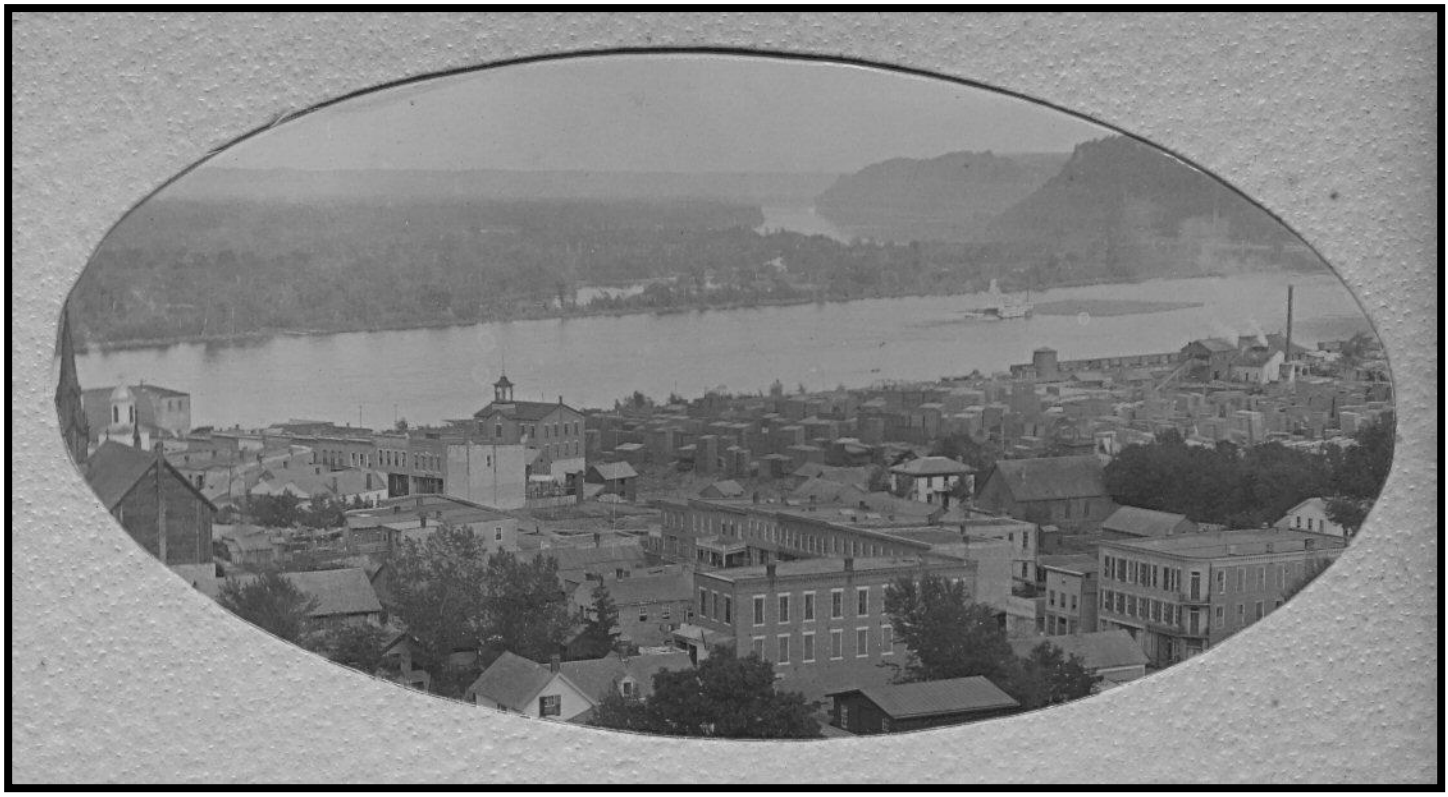


Figure 22
Looking across the business district to the SE
After the 1886 fire, before City Hall burned in 1900
Left center shows the south side of the 200 block of Main Street, note empty lots at west end (directly in front of City Hall)
In foreground is the 300 block of Main Street with the Kerndt Block in lower right.

In the background are the depot, lumber mill, and stacks of lumber south on the business district
The saw mill became Lansing Lumber Co in 1884, and closed in 1893.
(Photograph from private collection)

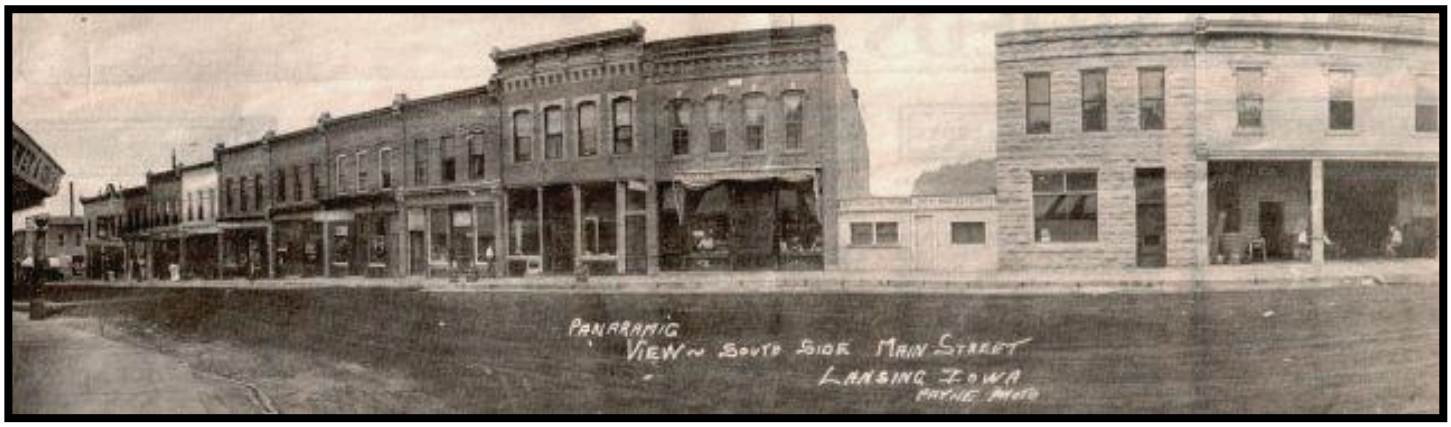
Figure 23
200 block of Main looking west from 2nd Street

Figure 24
200 block of Main Street looking east
Note empty lots in right front corner (southeast corner Main and 3rd) and
The frame buildings at the west end of the north nide.
(Both photos from a private collection)

Figure 25
North side of 200 block Main from 3rd Street (left) to 2nd Street (right)
Note two frame buildings on left side plus a c. 1910 limestone double storefront with oriel windows

(Both photos from a private collection)

Figure 26
South side of 200 block Main from 2nd Street (left) to 3rd Street (right
Note the two c. 1910 limestone buildings on the right



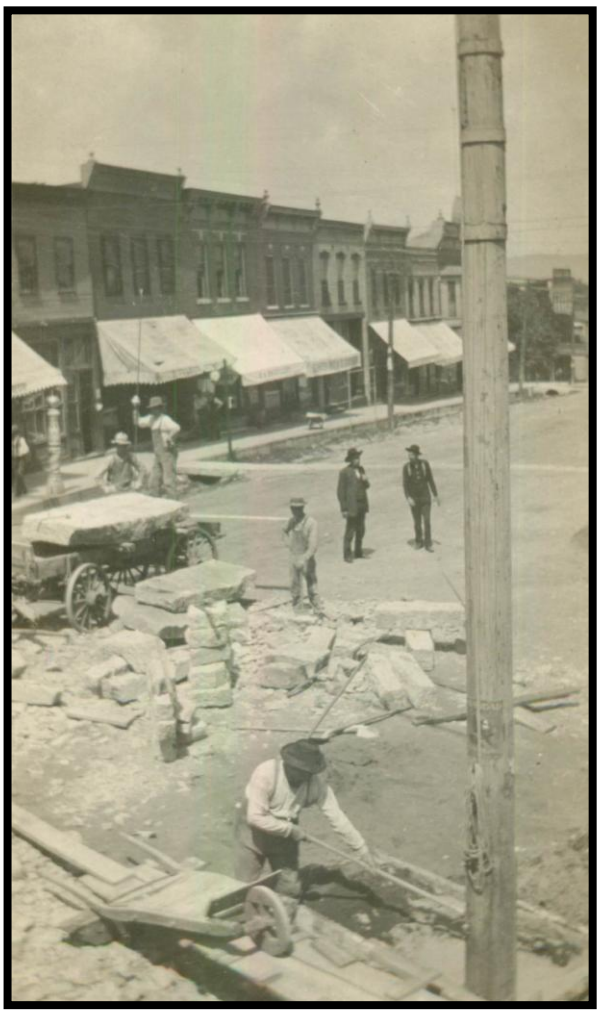


Figure 27

279 Main Street
Limestone building under construction
Note size and shape of stone blocks

Figure 28

Stone piled in front of 279 Main during construction
Note that blocks were apparently cut to size
On site.
The quarry was directly behind the
Buildings across the street.

(C. 1902-1912 photographs in private collection)

Figure 29
Thompson's Corner (Main and 3rd) looking northwest
Note frame building on right, non-extant
Building with angled wall in center of photo reflects the angle of 3rd Street

Figure 30
300 block of Main Street looking due west
(Both photographs in private collection)

Figure 31
300 block of Main Street looking east toward angled 200 block
Note Kerndt Block on right

(Both undated photos are in a private collection0

Figure 32
Kerndt & Bros Block (NRHP)

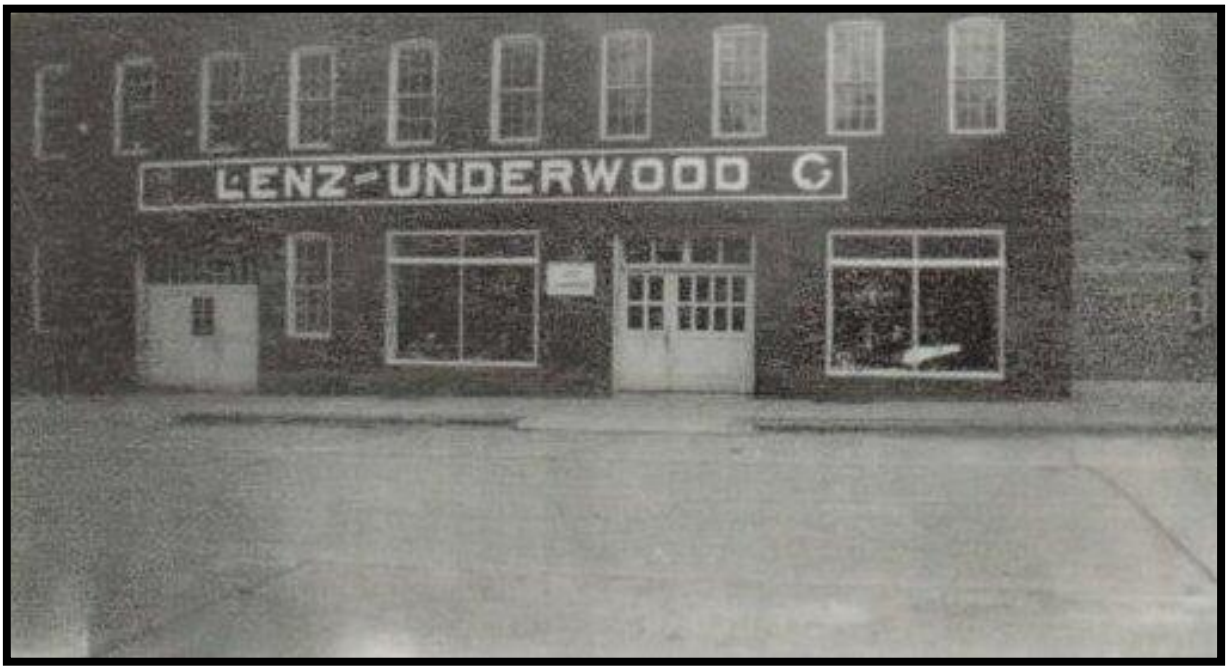


Figure 33
Undated photograph of early auto dealership
359 Main Street

(Both photographs are in a private collection)

Figure 34
“New” Lenz Auto dealership, by 1928
Across the street at 370 Main

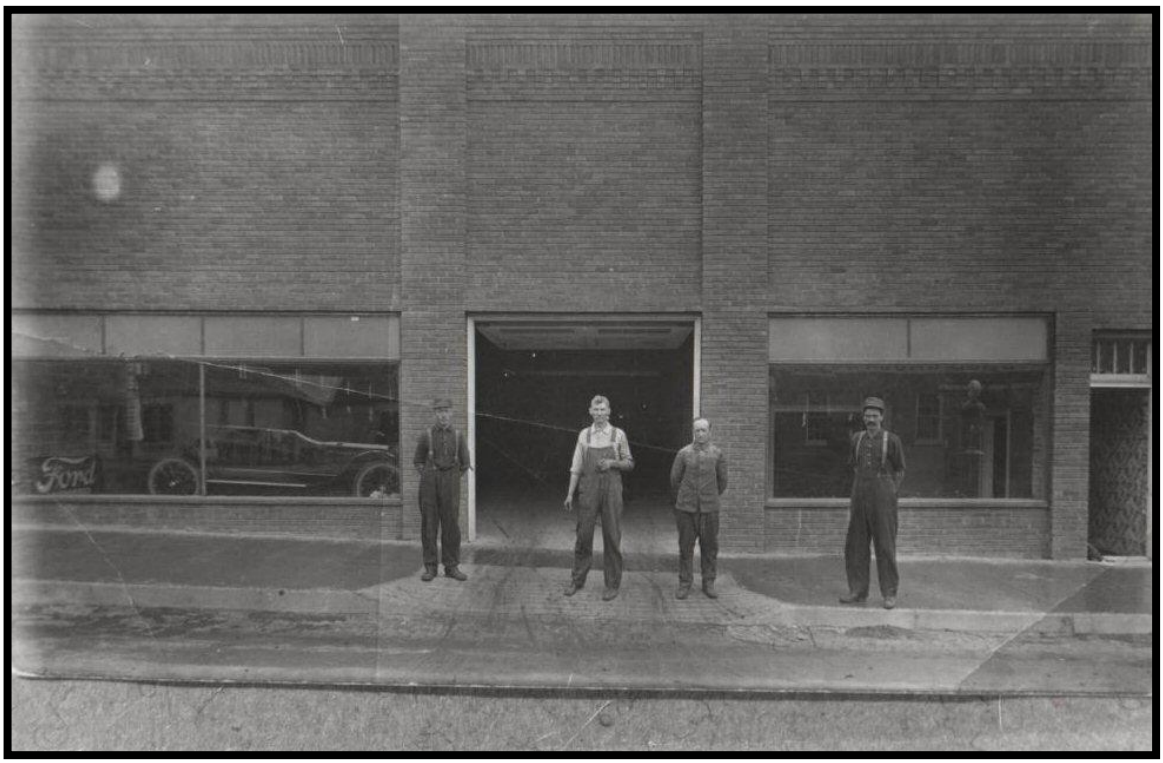


Figure 35
Unidentified auto dealership at 330 Main, by 1928

(Both photographs from a private collection)

Figure 36
Lansing Button Company on north side of 300 block of Main
In former auto garages at 330 and 370.
Building in the middle was constructed by Lansing Button Co in 1946

Figure 37
20 N. Front Street
Note river in background

Figure 38
60-70 S. Front Street
G. Kerndt & Bros Elevator & Warehouses (NRHP)

Figure 39
100 Block N. 2nd Street, East Side

Figure 40
100 Block N. 2nd Street, West Side
Quarried area of Bluff Block

Figure 41
100 Block Main, South Side
Note brick façade on limestone building on right

Figure 42
100 Block Main, North Side
Site of Dudley House (See Figure 17, page 31)

Figure 43
Looking east toward Mississippi River from 2nd Street

Figure 44
200 Block Main, South Side
Block built following 1885 fire
Compare to Figure 22, page 33

Figure 45
200 Block Main, North Side
Compare to Figure 21, page 33

Figure 46
200 Block Main, looking East
Note curve in street

Figure 47
300 Block Main, North Side
Thompson's Corner

Figure 48
300 Block Main, North Side
Lansing Company Buildings

Figure 49
300 Block Main, North Side at 4th Street

Figure 50
300 Block Main, South Side, looking SW

Figure 51
300 Block Main, South Side at 4th Street
G. Kerndt & Bros Block (NRHP)

Figure 52
Main Street Lansing
Looking East from 4th Street
The entrance to Lansing's historic downtown

Figure 53

Lansing, Iowa

1886 Map showing potential boundaries of the proposed Historic Commercial District.