

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
State Historical Society of Iowa
Iowa Site Inventory Form
Continuation Sheet

Site Number __ 82-05319 _____
Related District Number _____

Page ____ 1 ____

Name of Property _____ G.F. Knostman & Son Building _____ County _____ Scott _____

Address _____ 207 (207-209) E. 2nd Street _____ City _____ Davenport _____

SITE DESCRIPTION

The G.F. Knostman & Son building, located at 207 E. 2nd Street, is situated on part of Lot 9, Block 62 of LeClaire's Second Addition.

The structure is sited on the south side of E. 2nd Street, near the middle of its block; its primary façade faces north. Historically, the building was part of a contiguous line of commercial structures. Today, the three-story structure to the west remains, but a narrow opening where a small, unidentified structure once stood (demolished some time after 1984), adjoins the Knostman building on the east. An east-west alley is located immediately south of the building.

A public sidewalk runs the perimeter of the block and flush to the Knostman building on the north, providing access to the building's primary entrances.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The G.F. Knostman & Son building is a doublewide, three-story brick structure constructed on a stone foundation. The structure is rectangular in form, with the flat roof typical of commercial structures. The façade of the building has been painted.

Also typical of commercial structures, the façade is broken into three basic parts: the storefront, the upper wall and the cornice. In this building, the historic storefront is has been recently restored; a comparison to a historic images indicates the rehabilitation is quite accurate although some change to the transom area has been made. It should be said that the condition of the storefront at the time of the rehabilitation is unknown; meaning, the original storefront may have been intact and repaired rather than reconstructed.

Windows dominate the upper stories of this structure. Both floors feature six, double-hung windows per floor, set into the wall plane at even intervals. The window lights of the second floor are arranged in a 6/9 configuration. The lights of the third floor arranged in a 6/6 configuration. Each window features a heavily ornate hood; delicately arched and deeply carved. The windows appear to be original. Certainly, the openings are intact and the original light configuration retained.

As illustrated in a historic image, the original cornice of this building was lost along the way. Nothing has been constructed to replace the original.

Despite the loss of the cornice, the Knostman building has a beautiful façade with a very high level of historic integrity.

Condition

As a masonry structure, the greatest concern for this building is the condition of its brick. A visual inspection from street level reveals joint loss and evidence of spalling across the face of the upper stories. This condition is somewhat disguised by the application of paint, but nonetheless detrimental to the masonry.

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The secondary (east) elevation has large areas of significant spalling and joint loss. This condition is common to structures that lose an adjoining building with a common wall. The windows of this wall have been retrofitted.

As noted previously, the retention of the storefront and upper story windows result the retention of a high level of historic integrity in this lovely structure.

PROPERTY HISTORY

The G.F. Knostman building was constructed c.1880, confirmed by a listing in the August of 1891 "Schmidt & Jacobsen's Davenport City Directory. Huebinger's 1887 publication, "First Album of the City of Davenport", provides a look at the early structure (see continuation page 6.) The 1892 Sanborn map indicates that a "Furniture W. Rm." (wholesale room) was located at this address. In this year, a manufacturing plant known as Knostman, Peterson & Co. has an extensive facility, including a lumberyard, planing mill, and storage space, on E. Front Street.

By 1910, the furniture maker was no longer doing business out of the storefront on East 2nd Street. The building remained vacant in 1911. Mace Chemical & Supply Co. is known to have occupied the building in the 1940s.

The building is currently vacant.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The G.F. Knostman & Son building at 205 E. 2nd Street is considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C as an example of Late Victorian Italianate architecture in a commercial structure. The structure is also considered eligible under Criterion A in association with the history of commerce in the Davenport Central Business District.

The property would be considered a contributing resource to a historic district, should a case could be made for such a district.

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View of the primary (north) elevation, looking southwest across E. 2nd Street.

(SOURCE: AKAY Consulting – November 2004)

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View of the Knostman building, looking southeast across E. 2nd Street.

(SOURCE: AKAY Consulting – November 2004)

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Detail view of the storefronts and first story fenestration. Note that the window configuration remains intact, as do the ornate window hoods.

(SOURCE: AKAY Consulting – November 2004)

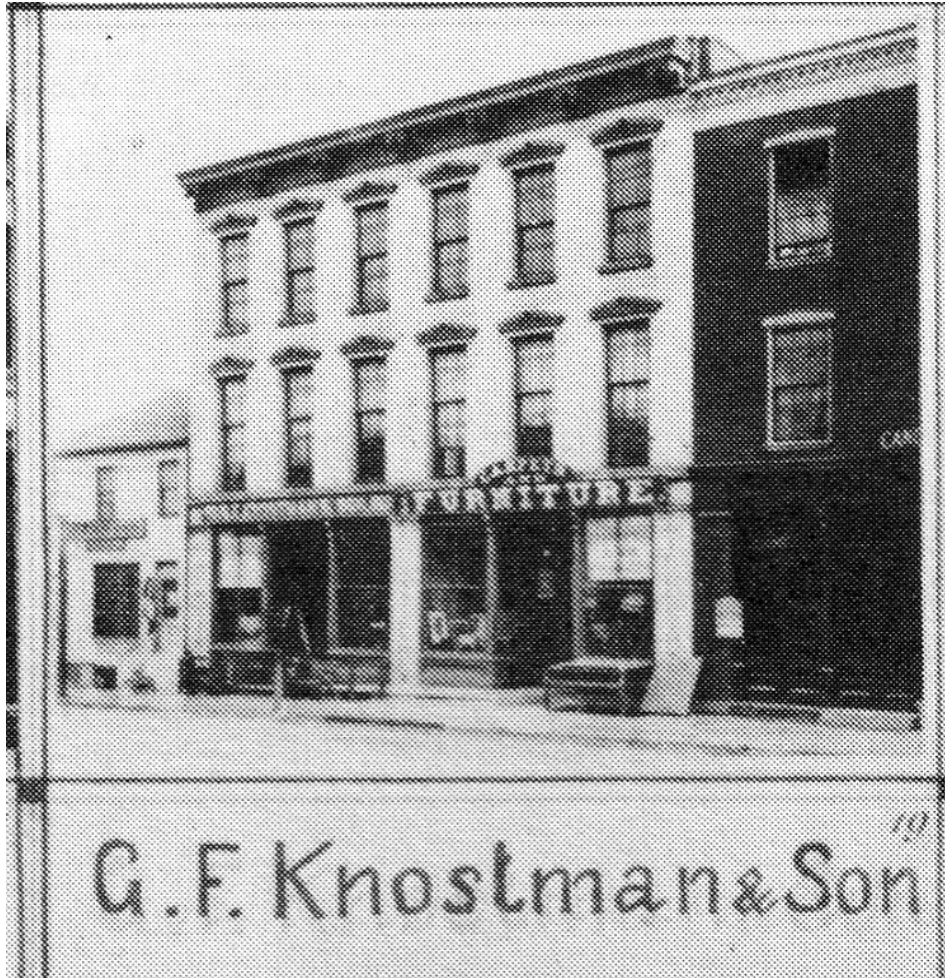
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This image of the G.F. Knostman & Son building dates to the 1887 Huebinger publication, "First Album of the City of Davenport, Iowa." The image confirms the high level of historic integrity retained in the building's facade.

(SOURCE: Huebinger, 1887. Putnam Museum of History and Natural Science. Davenport, Iowa.)

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This 1940s view of East Second Street, looking southeast from between Brady and Perry Streets, documents the Knostman building within the context of its mid-century streetscape.

(SOURCE: Putnam Museum of History and Natural Science. Davenport, Iowa.)

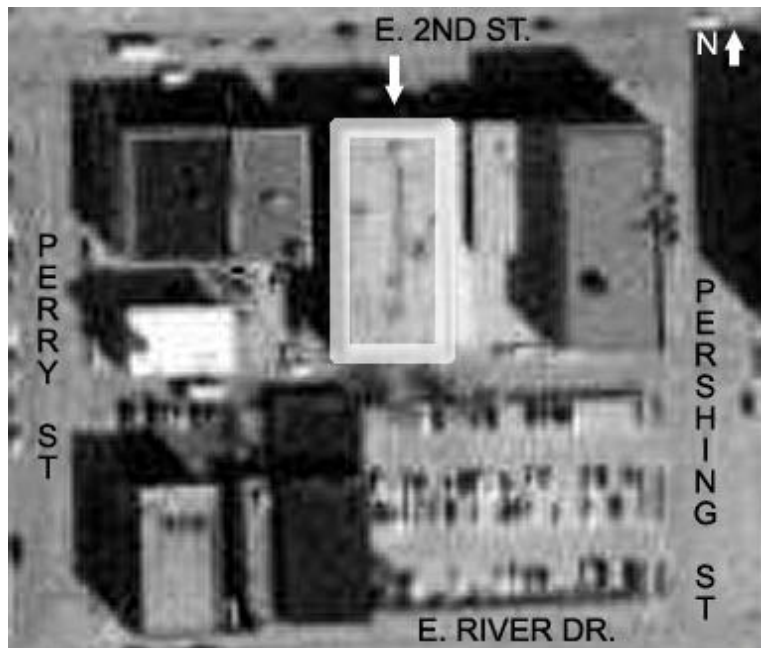
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The arrow indicates the location of the Knostman building.

(SOURCE: City of Davenport – Planning Department – 1/2005)

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BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Special Collections

Davenport Public Library; Richardson-Sloane Special Collections
Davenport City Directory Collection 1890-1940
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Collection
Quad Cities Photograph Collection

Putnam Museum of History and Natural Science. Davenport, Iowa.

Local Publications

Huebinger, Adam. "First Album of the City of Davenport, Iowa". Davenport, IA. 1887.

Svendsen, Marlys. "Davenport, Where the River Runs West: A Survey of Davenport History & Architecture". ND.

Internet Resources

www.scottcountyiowa.com/assessor. Scott County Assessor.