

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

Site Number __ 82-00262 ____
Related District Number _____

Page __ 1 __

Name of Property _____ Schmidt Block _____ County _____ Scott _____

Address _____ 115 E. 3rd Street _____ City _____ Davenport _____

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Schmidt Block, located at 115 E. 3rd Street, is situated in Block 59 of LeClaire's Second Addition.

The structure is sited on the south side of E. 3rd Street, near the center the block; its primary façade faces north. Historically, the building was part of a line of contiguous commercial structures that stretched the length of this block of East 3rd Street. Today, the Schmidt Block marks the end of the historic streetscape; it is adjoined by the Union Savings Bank & Trust on the west and an open courtyard that gives way to the modern River Centre on the east.

A public sidewalk runs the length of the block and flush to the building, providing access to the building's primary entrance.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The property at 115 E. 3rd Street is a three-plus story commercial structure built of red stone on what has been previously described as a brick foundation (1983 MRA). The primary (north) façade of this singlewide structure presents a solid, impenetrable character; typical of structures built in the Romanesque style. In the Schmidt Block, the Romanesque is seen in the use of rusticated stone, round window heads with tuned-stone surrounds, and the stunted columns of the attic level arcade.

The storefront of the Schmidt Block has been rehabilitated, but, through the retention of certain historic elements, (i.e. recessed primary entrance and transom signage), maintains a reasonable sense of historic character. The upper levels of the structure retain a very high level of historic integrity. Of particular importance is the retention of window openings and light configuration. In addition, it appears that the window sashes of the upper story windows are wood and so, possibly original.

The building's east wall, once shared with an adjacent neighbor, is now exposed. A small sheltered area has been constructed at street level.

Condition

As a masonry structure, the greatest concern for this building is the condition of its stone and brick. Generally speaking, the masonry of the façade appears to be sound; there are no obvious areas of significant deterioration. The east wall (formerly a shared partition) does show damage resulting from the removal of the adjacent structure. The wall is currently painted.

As noted previously, the building's storefront has been modernized, but does not detract from the overall level of integrity.

PROPERTY HISTORY

Fritz T. Schmidt constructed the Schmidt Block in 1896 to accommodate his family's wine and liquor business, known as Fritz T. Schmidt and Sons.

An upscale restaurant, Duck City, currently occupies the Schmidt Block.

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

Site Number __ 82-00262 _____
Related District Number _____

Page __ 2 __

Name of Property _____ Schmidt Block _____ County _____ Scott _____

Address _____ 115 E. 3rd Street _____ City _____ Davenport _____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The structure at 115 E. 3rd Street was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. At that time, as today, the Schmidt Block was considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C as an example of the Romanesque in commercial architecture.

In addition, the Schmidt Block is considered significant under Criterion A in its association with the early history of commerce in the city of Davenport.

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

Site Number __ 82-00262 ____
Related District Number _____

Page ____ 3 ____

Name of Property _____ Schmidt Block _____ County _____ Scott _____

Address _____ 115 E. 3rd Street _____ City _____ Davenport _____



View of the primary (north) and east elevations, looking south across East Third Street.

(SOURCE: AKAY Consulting – November 2004)

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

Site Number __ 82-00262 ____
Related District Number _____

Page __ 4 ____

Name of Property _____ Schmidt Block _____ County _____ Scott _____

Address _____ 115 E. 3rd Street _____ City _____ Davenport _____



This undated historic streetscape looking east on Third Street from Brady, documents the view prior to the turn of the nineteenth century. By 1915 the streetscape had change dramatically with the construction of the Union Savings Bank & Trust on the southeast corner of the intersection (at right). When the bank was built, the buildings from the corner of the block east to the Schmidt Block were demolished to accommodate the much larger structure. This historic image provides just a glimpse of the Schmidt Block, the last of the three-story buildings in the line, and indicated by an arrowhead.

(SOURCE: Davenport Public Library; Sloane-Richardson Special Collections)

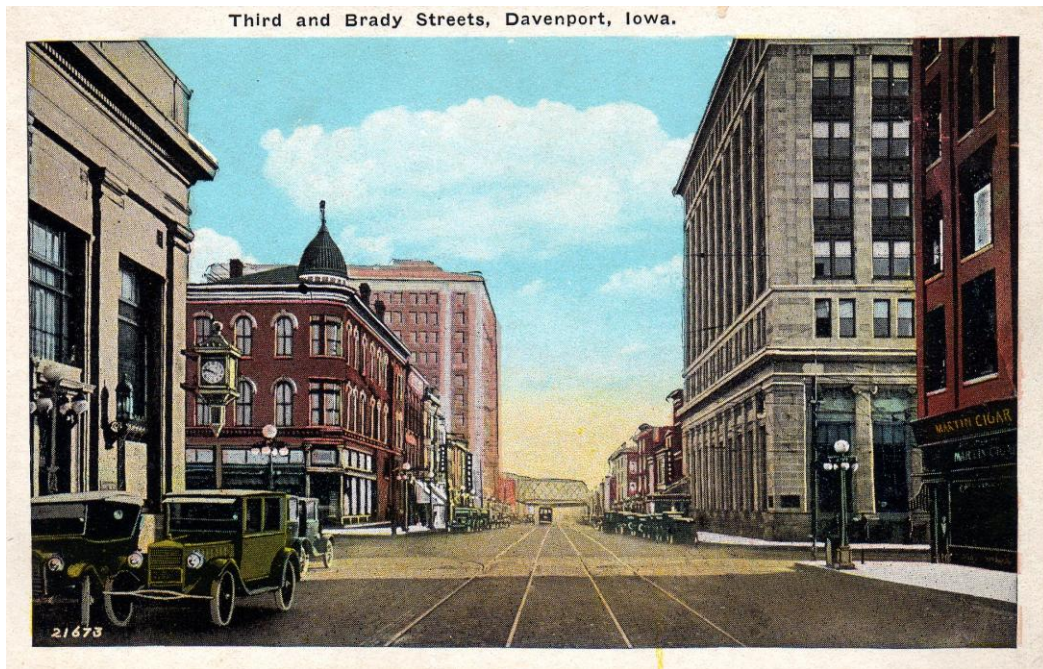
Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
State Historical Society of Iowa
Iowa Site Inventory Form
Continuation Sheet

Site Number 82-00262
Related District Number _____

Page 5

Name of Property _____ Schmidt Block _____ County _____ Scott _____

Address _____ 115 E. 3rd Street _____ City _____ Davenport _____



This postcard image dates to after the addition of the Union Savings Bank & Trust's upper stories (at right) in 1924 and before the construction of the Hotel Mississippi (at left) in 1931. The image illustrates the enormous impact made to the streetscape with the loss of the earlier, contiguous line of three-story commercial buildings and the introduction of the seven-story bank. The Schmidt Block, sited immediately east of the bank, stands as a remnant of the 1875-1900 streetscape.

(SOURCE: AKAY Consulting Postcard Collection; Image #08200-010524)

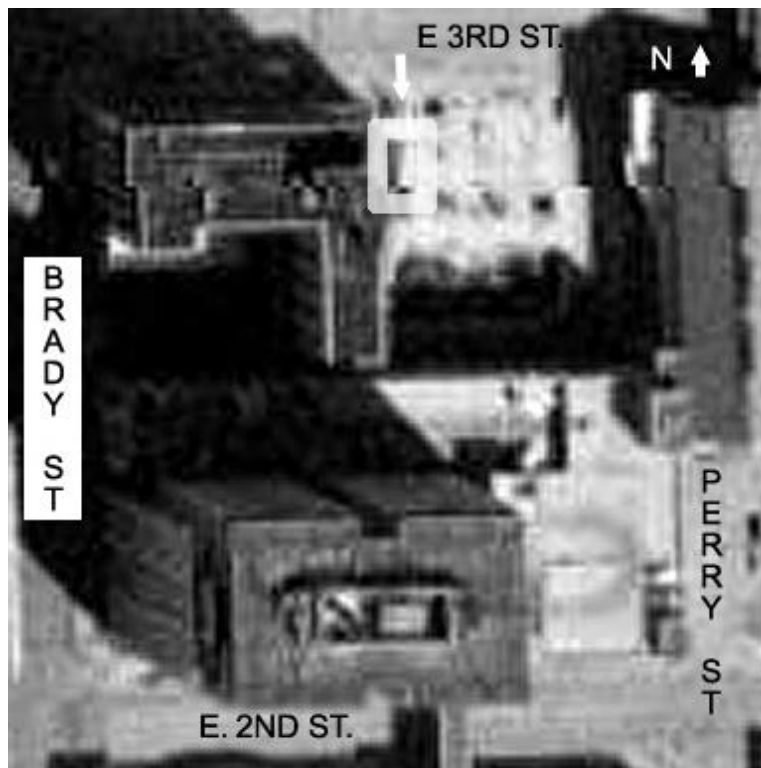
Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
State Historical Society of Iowa
Iowa Site Inventory Form
Continuation Sheet

Site Number __ 82-00262 ____
Related District Number _____

Page __ 6 __

Name of Property _____ Schmidt Block _____ County _____ Scott _____

Address _____ 115 E. 3rd Street _____ City _____ Davenport _____



The arrow indicates the location of the Schmidt Block.

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

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

Site Number __ 82-00262 ____
Related District Number _____

Page __ 7 __

Name of Property _____ Schmidt Block _____ County _____ Scott _____

Address _____ 115 E. 3rd Street _____ City _____ Davenport _____

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Special Collections

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

Svendsen, Marlys. "Davenport 1836-1986: A Pictorial History". G. Bradley Publishing, Inc. 1985.

Internet Resources

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