

Site Inventory Form

State Historical Society of Iowa

(November 2005)

State Inventory No. 92-00167

New Supplemental

Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) 92-00349

Relationship: Contributing Noncontributing

Contributes to a potential district with yet unknown boundaries

National Register Status:(any that apply) Listed De-listed NHL DOE

9-Digit SHPO Review & Compliance (R&C) Number _____

Non-Extant (enter year) _____

1. Name of Property

historic name Graham Opera House

other names/site number State Theater, Downtown Survey Map # DT-160

2. Location

street & number 123 East Washington Street

city or town Washington

vicinity, county Washington

Legal Description: (If Rural) Township Name _____ Township No. _____ Range No. _____ Section _____ Quarter of Quarter _____

(If Urban) Subdivision Original Plat Block(s) 19 Lot(s) Lot 1

3. State/Federal Agency Certification [Skip this Section]

4. National Park Service Certification [Skip this Section]

5. Classification

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

If Non-Eligible Property

Enter number of:

— buildings
 — sites
 — structures
 — objects
 — Total

If Eligible Property, enter number of:

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	—
—	—
—	—
—	—
<u>1</u>	—

Name of related project report or multiple property study (Enter "N/A" if the property is not part of a multiple property examination).

Title _____

Historical Architectural Data Base Number _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

08A03: recreation and culture/ playhouse

02B03: commerce / law office, 02A05: newspaper,

02A01: commerce / offices, 99: other / real estate

02E09: commerce / furniture

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

08A03: recreation and culture/ movie theater

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

05G: Late Victorian / Romanesque

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation

04C: limestone

walls (visible material)

03: Brick

roof

05F: Steel

other _____

Narrative Description (SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" representing your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria)

Yes No More Research Recommended

Yes No More Research Recommended

Yes No More Research Recommended

Yes No More Research Recommended

- A Property is associated with significant events.
- B Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.
- C Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
- D Property yields significant information in archeology or history.

County Washington Address 123 East Washington Street Site Number 92-00167
City Washington District Number 92-00349

Criteria Considerations

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B Removed from its original location.
- C A birthplace or 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.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

05: Commerce
02: Architecture

Significant Dates

Construction date 1893 check if circa or estimated date
Other dates, including renovation 1926, 1931, 1950s, 2000s

Significant Person

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

Architect/Builder

Architect Foster and Liebbe / Des Moines, Iowa - 1893
Builder _____

Narrative Statement of Significance SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography See continuation sheet for citations of the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form

10. Geographic Data

UTM References (OPTIONAL)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	_____	_____	2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet for additional UTM references or comments

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Stacy A. Nielsen, volunteer Rebecca L. McCarley, consultant, Davenport
organization Washington Historic Preservation Commission date July 19, 2012
street & number City Hall – 215 E. Washington St telephone 319-653-6584
city or town Washington state Iowa zip code 52353

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION (Submit the following items with the completed form)

FOR ALL PROPERTIES

- Map:** showing the property's location in a town/city or township.
- Site plan:** showing position of buildings and structures on the site in relation to public road(s).
- Photographs:** representative black and white photos. If the photos are taken as part of a survey for which the Society is to be curator of the negatives or color slides, a photo/catalog sheet needs to be included with the negatives/slides and the following needs to be provided below on this particular inventory site:

Roll/slide sheet #	_____	Frame/slot #	_____	Date Taken	_____
Roll/slide sheet #	_____	Frame/slot #	_____	Date Taken	_____
Roll/slide sheet #	_____	Frame/slot #	_____	Date Taken	_____

See continuation sheet or attached *photo & slide catalog sheet* for list of photo roll or slide entries.

Photos/illustrations without negatives are also in this site inventory file.

FOR CERTAIN KINDS OF PROPERTIES, INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AS WELL

- Farmstead & District:** (List of structures and buildings, known or estimated year built, and contributing or noncontributing status)
- Barn:**
 - A sketch of the frame/truss configuration in the form of drawing a typical middle bent of the barn.
 - A photograph of the loft showing the frame configuration along one side.
 - A sketch floor plan of the interior space arrangements along with the barn's exterior dimensions in feet.

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Use Only Below This Line

Concur with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility: Yes No More Research Recommended

This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.

Comments: _____

Evaluated by (name/title): _____ Date: _____

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Graham Opera House

Washington

Name of Property

County

123 East Washington Street

Washington

Address

City

This form was prepared as part of a research/survey/nomination project in 2011-2012 funded by a HRDP grant from the State Historical Society of Iowa for the nomination of the Washington Downtown Historic District. The project was primarily structured to develop the nomination for the downtown, with additional research on each building documented on an Iowa Site Inventory form. The information below is taken from the table in the August 2012 draft of the nomination, with additional information documented on the property and photographs in the following sections.

Graham Opera House (State Theater) - 123 E. Washington - State #92-00167 - Map #86 ~ 1 contributing building (A) - 1893, 1931 - Romanesque

Historic information:

The Graham constructed from July-Nov 1893 - opening night on November 27, 1893 - built by Opera House Company

1893-1910s - The Graham - theater, small businesses in two front corners

1921-1929 - owned by Winfield Smouse - Pratts used for traveling shows; 1926 - interior modernized by Winfield Smouse for showing movies; 1928 - reopened as combined movie and opera house

1931 - theater leased and remodeled by Pratt family (operated Fox Theater on E. Main) - renamed State Theatre; 1932-1951 - State Theatre (and Fox) operated by Ralph Pratt

1950s - Washington Amusement Co (formed by Pratts) continued to operate State Theater here - Jessie Dougherty continued to own building until death - then sold in 1962 to theater company

1962-1979 - State Theater owned and operated by Washington Amusement Company; 1979-2001 - State Theater owned and operated by Associated Theaters - sold to R.F. Fridley in 2001

2012 - State Theater

Architectural information:

Height: 2 story

Walls: brick

Storefront: remodeled with yellow brick (1950s?)

Windows: 1/1 wood painted

Architectural details: center arch entry behind canopy, brickwork

Architect/Builder: Foster & Liebke (architects, Des Moines)

Modifications: Historic: building façade clad and recently removed; Non-historic: -

7. Narrative Description

This is a two-story brick building with a limestone foundation. The first story of the north (front) elevation has been covered with yellow brick. The centered main entry has glass/metal doors, and there is a third glass/metal door at the west end of the first story. A theater canopy was added for the State Theater, which continues to operate here. A decorative arch window is partially visible above the canopy. Fifteen windows found on the upper portion of the facade. Three one-over-one-light double-hung windows with transoms are centered on the second story above the main entrance. To either side of center, there are three segmental arch one-over-one-light double-hung windows with limestone sills. Between the first story and these upper windows are two-light wood windows with a limestone sill. The parapet includes a center square pediment, making the building appear to be three sections. Elaborate brickwork decorates the parapet/frieze, including inset square and brick "brackets" under a cornice. Windows and doors on the remaining three sides of the building have been covered. The east side faces 2nd Ave, and it has two covered side entries on the first story, and a fire escape to second story

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entry. Brick pilasters are found on this side of the building, and rows of brick are corbelled along the top of the building.

8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The Graham Opera House appears to contribute historically and architecturally to the Washington Downtown Historic District.

The original Graham Opera House Company was formed in May 1885 by John Graham and several other prominent citizens. They built an opera house at 100-104 S. Iowa, which opened in February 1886. The opera house was destroyed by fire in November 1892. In March 1893, a new Opera House Company was formed, with .D. Robinson, A.N. Alberson, C.H. Wilson, O.E. Rork, Warren Moore, C.M. Keck, W.R. Beamer, E.N. Foster, I. Klein, J.A. Young, Winfield Smouse, George W. Stewart, Frank Stewart, W.A. Wilson, and F.L. Wilson. Stock was raised of \$20,000, and architects Foster & Liebbe were hired from Des Moines for the design, adapted from their plans for the Marshalltown opera house. They chose a new site to the east of the old site, at the southwest corner of E. Washington and 2nd Street. Music Hall was located on this site, serving as a skating rink at the time (Fisher 1978: 413). The Washington Rink Co. sold the property to A.N. Alberson et al on May 9, 1893. Work on the new building began in July, and discussion on the name followed in August. "The New Graham" was chosed, and "The Graham" inscribed on the front. The opening was held on November 27, 1893, with actress Clara Morris listed on the playbill for her performance in "Odette" to a sold out audience. In a photo, taken of the Graham in 1893, there is an entrance at the northeast and northwest of the front of the building.

The 1897 Sanborn map shows the opera house, which includes stage and scenery, electric foot lights, and furnace. The northwest corner of the building has a small news office and the northeast corner has a small office indicated. Frank Brinton, of Washington, showed the first "moving pictures" at the Graham in the 1890s. An article in the *Washington Press* on May 22, 1895 notes that Brinton's new pictures are showing at the Graham on Thursday and Friday with half of the receipts to the park improvement fund. Everyone wanted fountain in park.

The 1902 Sanborn map shows The Graham here, with a dye works in the northwest corner space (117) and office in the northeast corner space (121). The 1903 City directory lists a Miss Denton, a magnetic healer at 117 and at 117 ½ a Kathryn Kennedy, student. The May 1, 1903 Washington Evening Journal advertises abstractors S.W. & J.L. Brookhart located at 117 East Washington Street.

The final undivided interest in the property, of the original 1893 businessmen group known as the "Graham Opera House Co" was sold on March 12, 1903 to "Washington Opera House Co." Photo "Band By Graham" shows details of the Northeast door of the building. This photo, showing an advertisement for the "Duncan Show on the 4th of July at the Airdome." The 1909 Sanborn Map lists both 117 & 121 as offices. The 1910 City Directory lists Brookhart Law Office and Twigg's Confectionery at 117 East Washington Street (pg 133 & 136). The Graham Opera House appears on page 144 as being at 121 East Washington Street. The 1917 Sanborn Map shows a barber at the 117

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Name of Property

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location, no directory listing or advertisement has been found for this type of business. An office is shown at the 121 location. A telephone directory lists "Hambrick & May Upholstery" at 117 E. Washington Street. An ad in the Washington Evening Journal's May 2, 1921, page 4, advertises the "Graham Theaters" with no address mentioned.

The transfer book shows "Washington Opera House" selling to "Adams Amusements Co." on May 22, 1920. Local businessman, Winfield Smouse, purchased it on August 12, 1921. He leased the space to Ralph and Clyde Pratt, operators of the Fox Theatre that they built on E. Main in 1913. They showed movies in the Graham as well periodically, and Winfield Smouse modernized the Graham Opera House in 1926 to make it more suitable for showing movies (Fisher 1978: 426). The *Evening Journal* on April 3, 1926, page 43 (K) notes that the Electric Theater Company is operated by Ralph E. Pratt, who runs both the Fox and Graham theaters. While the Fox operated six days with three shows daily, the Graham was used on special occasions for a good road show. Smouse reopened the Graham Theater in 1928 as a combined movie and opera house (*Evening Journal* – Centennial Celebration – August 1939 - page 26). County records show a Jessie S. & R.E. Dougherty buying an undivided ½ interest in the property on December 24, 1929 from Winfield Smouse.

In 1930, the Graham Theater was leased by the Pratts (Ralph Pratt, G.E. Pratt, Clyde Pratt), who closed it and completely remodeled the theater. It was reopened in 1931 as the State Theater. Ralph Pratt operated both the Fox Theater on E. Main and State Theater on E. Washington until he retired in 1951 (Fisher 1978: 426). The Sanborn map for 1931 shows 117 being used as a store and use at 121 as movies. The 1932 telephone directory, page 4, lists "Win Smouse Realty" at 121 and the "State Theater" at 123 East Washington Street. The 1935 directory lists these as the same. The 1941 city directory lists 121 as "R.E. Dougherty" and 123 as "State Theater." The Sanborn map for 1943 shows 117 as store and 121 incorporated into the main space, used for movies. The balcony configuration on the interior has changed since the 1931 map.

The history of the operations of the Pratt Brothers was outlined in a 1953 article. Clyde and Ralph Pratt were from Winfield and opened the Electric Theater there in September 1911 with 173 seats. It proved too small so they built an Airdome theatre – outdoor with canvas sides. The Pratt Bros took over Fox Theatre on January 10, 1914 in Washington, as well as using the old Graham Theatre for traveling shows. They took over The Graham in 1930 and completely remodeled it as the State Theatre. In 1940, they installed push back seats at State Theatre – first in Iowa. They added air conditioning as well. In 1952, they added gas heat and remodeled the balcony for an extra eight inches between seats for added comfort for patrons. They installed new steel beams and flooring. By eliminating the side wings, they only lost two seats. The Pratts operated as the Washington Amusement Company by 1953. At this time, the Fox was temporarily closed. In spring 1953, they opened the Waco Drive-in theatre east of Washington on Hwy 92, with spaces for 412 automobiles. Waco stood for the Washington Amusement Company. Pratt brothers retained financial interest in company, with Tommy Tompkins as manager ("Washington Theaters Known for Top-Notch Movie Entertainment," *Washington Evening Journal*, 60th Anniversary Edition, February 27, 1953, page 73).

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The 1952 and 1956 telephone directory (page 27 & 32) lists 121 as "Dougherty Real Estate" as operating on the northwest corner office. The Dougherty family owned the building through this period, with it transferring to R.E.'s heirs in 1950. Jessie Dougherty owned it until her death, and the property was sold by her estate to the Washington Amusement Company in 1962. The State Theater continued to operate here. In this period, the facade of the building was clad, as can be seen in the 1971 photograph.

The Washington Amusement Company sold the property to Associated Theaters Inc. in 1979. They sold it to R.L. Fridley Theatres in 2001, who continue to own and operate the State Theater here. The cladding on the facade was removed a few years ago. They have recently started a rehabilitation project, using federal and state rehabilitation tax credits.

9. Major Bibliographical References

City/Telephone Directories, Washington. Various publishers, various dates. Available at the Washington Public Library.

Deed Records, Transfer Books, Auditor's Office, Washington County Courthouse, Washington, Iowa.

Fisher, Kathy. *In the beginning there was land : a history of Washington County, Iowa*. Washington, Iowa: Washington County Historical Society, 1978.

Newspaper advertisements, various years/dates, on microfilm at Washington Public Library:

Washington Evening Journal

Washington Gazette

Washington Press

Patterson, Mary. Collection of historic images of Washington. Washington, IA.

Sanborn Map Company. "Washington, Iowa," Sanborn fire insurance maps. Pelham, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 1885, 1892, 1897, 1902, 1909, 1917, 1931, 1943.

Wagner, William (Des Moines architect). Photographs taken of downtown Washington in 1971. In collection of Washington Historical Society, Washington, Iowa.

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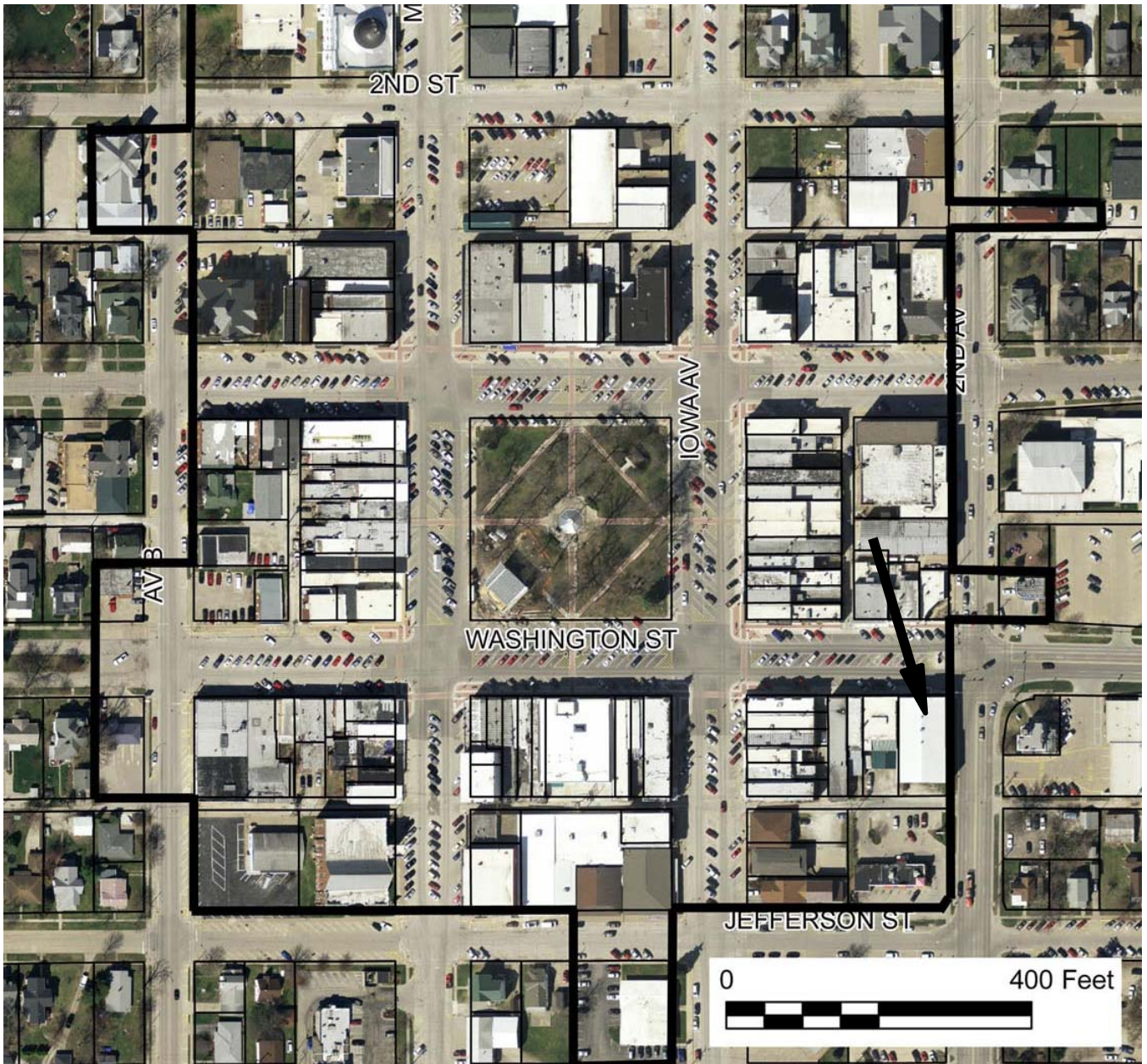
123 East Washington Street

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Location map



2009 aerial photograph (Washington County) – line indicates survey/research area boundary

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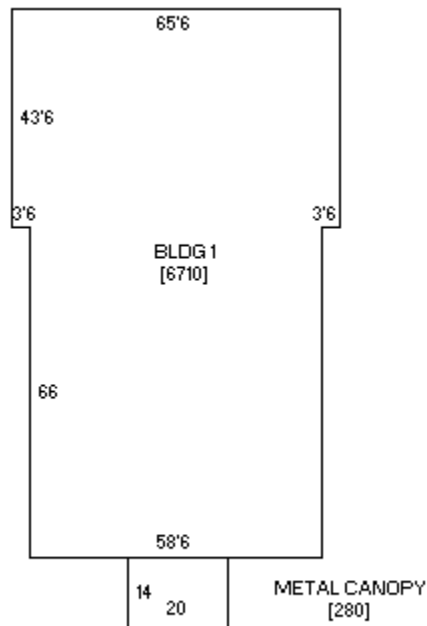
123 East Washington Street

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Building plan (from assessor's website)



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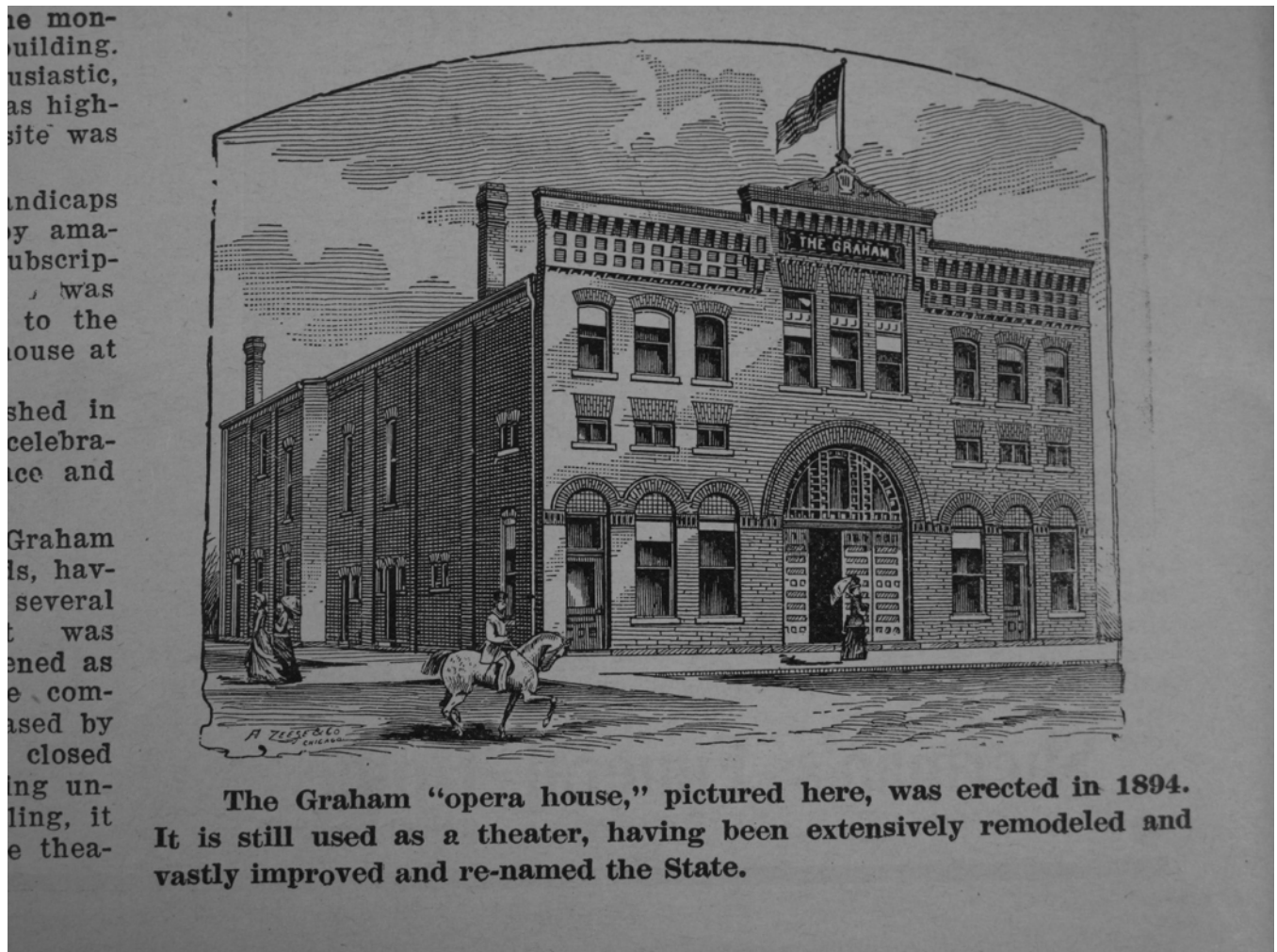
123 East Washington Street

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Historic images



Evening Journal, August 1939 centennial edition, p26

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The War Bond auction in 1943 had a crowd gathered on Washington Street near the State Theater with items for sale such as dressers and a piano.

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Building in 1971 (Wagner 1971)

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Digital photographs



Photograph 92-00167-001 - East and north elevations, looking southwest (McCarley, September 20, 2011)

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Photograph 92-00167-002 - North elevation, looking south (McCarley, September 20, 2011)

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Photograph 92-00167-003 - East elevation, looking southwest (McCarley, September 20, 2011)