

Iowa Site Inventory Form

State Historic Preservation Office

(July 2014)

State Inventory Number: 38-00325 New Supplemental

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

Non-extant Year: _____

Read the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions carefully, to ensure accuracy and completeness before completing this form. The instructions are available on our website: <http://www.iowahistory.org/historic-preservation/statewide-inventory-and-collections/iowa-site-inventory-form.html>

• Property Name

A) Historic name: Schafer Garage

B) Other names: Laybourn Auto Co.; Nickerson Buick Co.; Seitsema Construction Co.

• Location

A) Street address: 805 G Avenue

B) City or town: Grundy Center (Vicinity) County: Grundy

C) Legal description:

Rural: Township Name: _____ Township No.: _____ Range No.: _____ Section: _____ Qtr: _____ of Qtr: _____

Urban: Subdivision: Original Plat Block(s): 24 Lot(s): part of 9 and 10

• Classification

A) Property category: *Check only one*

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

B) Number of resources (within property):

If eligible property, enter number of:		If non-eligible property, enter number of:	
Contributing	Noncontributing		
<u>1</u>	Buildings	—	Buildings
—	Sites	—	Sites
—	Structures	—	Structures
—	Objects	—	Objects
<u>1</u>	Total	—	Total

C) For properties listed in the National Register:

National Register status: Listed De-listed NHL NPS DOE

D) For properties within a historic district:

- Property contributes to a National Register or local certified historic district.
- Property contributes to a potential historic district, based on professional historic/architectural survey and evaluation.
- Property does not contribute to the historic district in which it is located.

Historic district name: _____ Historic district site inventory number: _____

E) Name of related project report or multiple property study, if applicable:

MPD title

See Iowa Site Inventory Form No. 38-00318

Historical Architectural Data Base #

• Function or Use *Enter categories (codes and terms) from the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions*

A) Historic functions

14D09 TRANSPORTATION/auto service or repair

02E01 COMMERCE/specialty store/auto showroom

14D07 TRANSPORTATION/gas station

B) Current functions

02E10 COMMERCE/appliance sales and service

• Description *Enter categories (codes and terms) from the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions*

A) Architectural classification

09F05 Commercial/Brick Front

05B LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate

B) Materials

Foundation (visible exterior): 10A CONCRETE/Block

Walls (visible exterior): 03 BRICK

Roof: 08A ASPHALT/Composition Tile

Other: 10A CONCRETE/Block

C) Narrative description SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED

• **Statement of Significance**

A) Applicable National Register Criteria: Mark your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria

- Criterion A: Property is associated with significant events. [X] Yes [] No [] More research recommended
Criterion B: Property is associated with the lives of significant persons. [] Yes [] No [] More research recommended
Criterion C: Property has distinctive architectural characteristics. [X] Yes [] No [] More research recommended
Criterion D: Property yields significant information in archaeology/history. [] Yes [] No [] More research recommended

B) Special criteria considerations: Mark any special considerations; leave blank if none

- [] A: Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes. [] E: A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
[] B: Removed from its original location. [] F: A commemorative property.
[] C: A birthplace or grave. [] G: Property less than 50 years of age or
[] D: A cemetery achieved significance within the past 50 years.

C) Areas of significance

Enter categories from instructions

02 ARCHITECTURE

05 COMMERCE

D) Period(s) of significance

1912-1963

E) Significant dates

Construction date

1912 [] check if circa or estimated date

Other dates, including renovations

1950s

F) Significant person

Complete if Criterion B is marked above

G) Cultural affiliation

Complete if Criterion D is marked above

H) Architect/Builder

Architect

Builder/contractor

I) Narrative statement of significance [X] SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED

• **Bibliography** [X] See continuation sheets for the list research sources used in preparing this form

• **Geographic Data** Optional UTM references [X] See continuation sheet for additional UTM or comments

Table with 8 columns: Zone, Easting, Northing, NAD, Zone, Easting, Northing, NAD. Rows 1, 2, 3, 4.

• **Form Preparation**

Name and Title: Jennifer A. Price/Consultant Date: June 2018

Organization/firm: EarthView Environmental, Inc./Impact7G E-mail: jprice@impact7G.com

Street address: 310 2nd Street Telephone: 319.594.9513

City or Town: Coralville State: IA Zip code: 52241

• **ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION** Submit the following items with the completed form

A) For all properties, attach the following, as specified in the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions:

- 1. Map of property's location within the community.
2. Glossy color 4x6 photos labeled on back with property/building name, address, date taken, view shown, and unique photo number.
3. Photo key showing each photo number on a map and/or floor plan, using arrows next to each photo number to indicate the location and directional view of each photograph.
4. Site plan of buildings/structures on site, identifying boundaries, public roads, and building/structure footprints.

B) For State Historic Tax Credit Part 1 Applications, historic districts and farmsteads, and barns:

See lists of special requirements and attachments in the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions.

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

The SHPO has reviewed the Site Inventory and concurs 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:

SHPO authorized signature:

Date:

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Continuation Sheet

Site Number: 38-00325
Related District Number:

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Schafer Garage	Grundy
Name of Property	County
805 G Avenue	Grundy Center
Address	City

This Iowa Site Inventory Form is being prepared for the City of Grundy Center as part of an Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) Downtown Revitalization Grant. The building is located in the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the grant project, and the owner of the building at 805 G Avenue is participating in the Downtown Revitalization Grant. The building is also located in a potential Grundy Center Commercial Historic District, and this site form provides an architectural/historical evaluation of the property as a contributing building in that potential historic district.

7. Narrative Description

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

This one-story, partial basement, flat-roofed, brick building constructed in 1920. The building is located on portions of two adjoining lots. It is located as part of the a combined commercial and residential block, which consists of similar commercial buildings on the both sides of main street adjacent to the block containing the "Central Block" buildings and County Courthouse. The front door opens to the sidewalk on main street. There is also an over-head door that opens to main street. The building is "L" shape, with overhead doors and driveway access to 8th St. The top of the façade contains an ornate stepped wood and metal cornice.

The main level façade has been altered multiple times. The storefront features metal and composite framed windows and entrance doors. There is also previously open areas covered in wood.

On the interior, the space is divided to accommodate office and garage space for a HVAC business. In the office area, the ceilings are dropped grid and tile with drywall and carpet. In the garage area, the ceilings are open to the rafters, with block walls and concrete floors.

There is loft space above the office for cold storage.

(Description taken from Downtown Revitalization Grant Survey site form dated February 2018)

8. Statement of Significance

The Schafer Garage is locally significant and eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building in a potential Grundy Center Commercial Historic District under Criteria A and C. The Schafer Garage, built in 1912, is not only associated the first phase of the Grundy Center commercial district development, but also with the town's adaptation to the automobile. As more people in Grundy Center became automobile owners, new businesses that sold autos and serviced the needs of these vehicles sprouted on and around G Avenue and the commercial district. Grundy Center automobile-oriented businesses were mainly grouped in the 500 block of G Avenue, but also within the commercial district, and the Schafer Garage was the second such purpose-built building. Helping to increase automobile traffic through Grundy Center was the designation in 1920 of State Highway 14, which was routed through the town along G Avenue. In 1931, the highway was paved, and the improvement undoubtedly brought more traffic along G Avenue and through the commercial district. Although the Schafer Garage was quickly purchased by the Lanbourn Auto Co. in 1914, the building continued to house a series of automobile service and showroom businesses until the 1950s.

The building is also an example of a Property Type III Main Street Commercial Building, according to typologies set forth in the National Register Multiple Property Document, *Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture* (Nash 2002). "These buildings date from the succeeding years of a town's commercial growth, with Iowa's commercial districts typically reaching a peak in the very late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. The impact of the railroad was reflected in the continued building up of the platted commercial district. Type III buildings are typically

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multi-story in height and can contain anywhere from one to a number of actual store units. Large block buildings were constructed during this period, with store units often unified along the second floor by a shared façade, cornice, and other details. Type III buildings are most often of masonry construction, usually brick either locally manufactured or shipped in by rail. Many display stylish architectural features” like the Schafer Garage, a concrete block automotive garage with an Italianate-style brick façade, complete with an ornate bracketed pressed metal lintel and cornice. A transitional building built in 1912, the Schafer Garage combined the needs of an automobile service garage with the desire to blend into the commercial district (and possibly with the Schafer brothers earlier two-story building next door) with an Italianate style commercial façade. Despite numerous storefront changes, the Schafer Garage retains enough of its historic character – including a historic front garage door – to be a contributing building in the potential historic district.

The period of significance is 1912-1963, from the year the Schafer Garage was completed to the end of the period of significance for the potential Grundy Center Commercial Historic District (see Iowa Site Form No. 38-00318).

9. Major Bibliographical References

- “Business Houses Here Make Some Changes,” *Grundy County Dispatch*, March 9, 1922.
- Downtown Revitalization Survey/Iowa Site Inventory Forms, February 2018.
- Grundy County Assessor Record online.
- “Laybourn Buys Garage,” *Grundy Republican*, August 20, 1914.
- Nash, Jan Olive. *Iowa’s Main Street Commercial Architecture*. Multiple Property Document, National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C., 2002.
- “Potential Grundy Center Commercial Historic District,” Iowa Site Inventory Form No. 38-00318, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, June 2018.
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Grundy Center, Grundy County, Iowa, 1894, 1902, 1911, 1916, 1928, and 1928, updated to 1939.
- “Schafers to Build Garage,” *Grundy Republican*, July 11, 1912.

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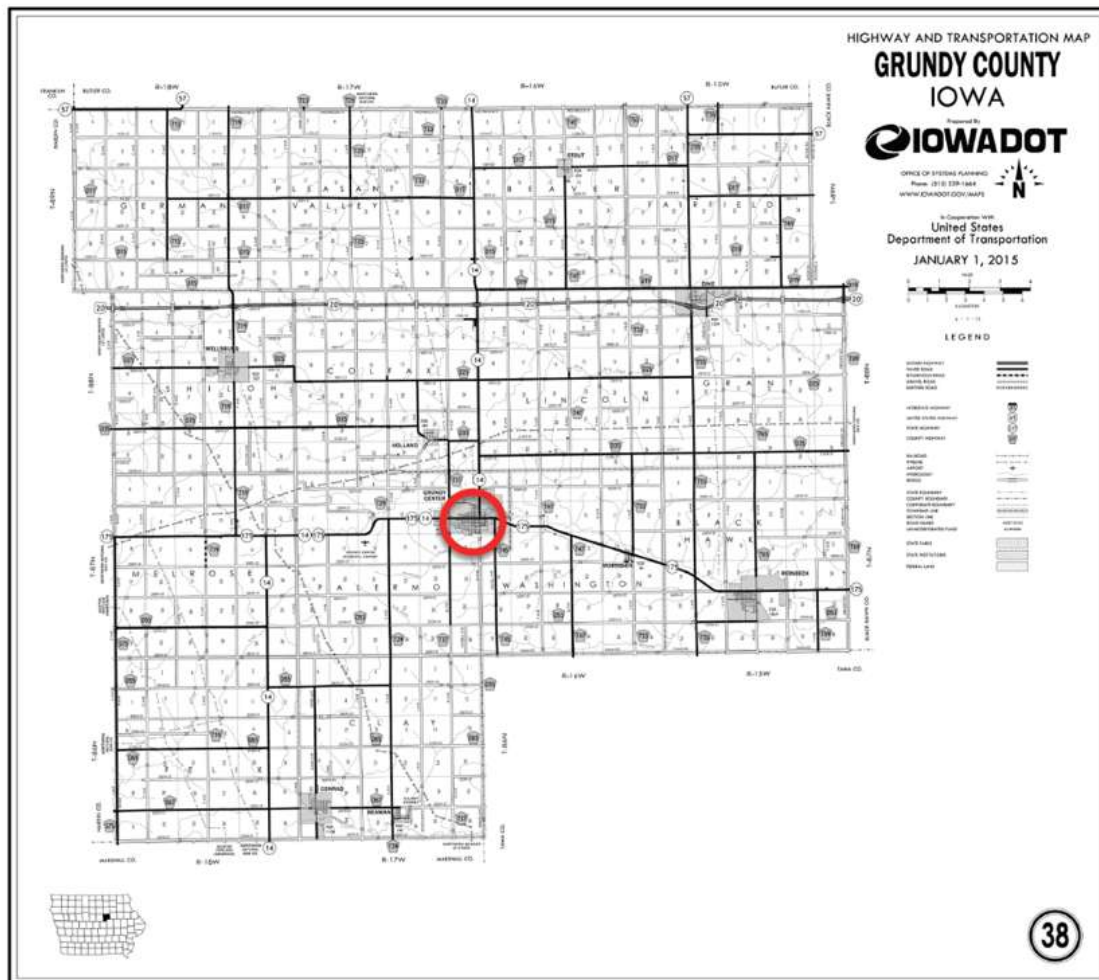
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Schafer Garage
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Address

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County
Grundy Center
City

10. Additional Documentation

General Location Map



Latitude: 42.361732
Longitude: -92.774345

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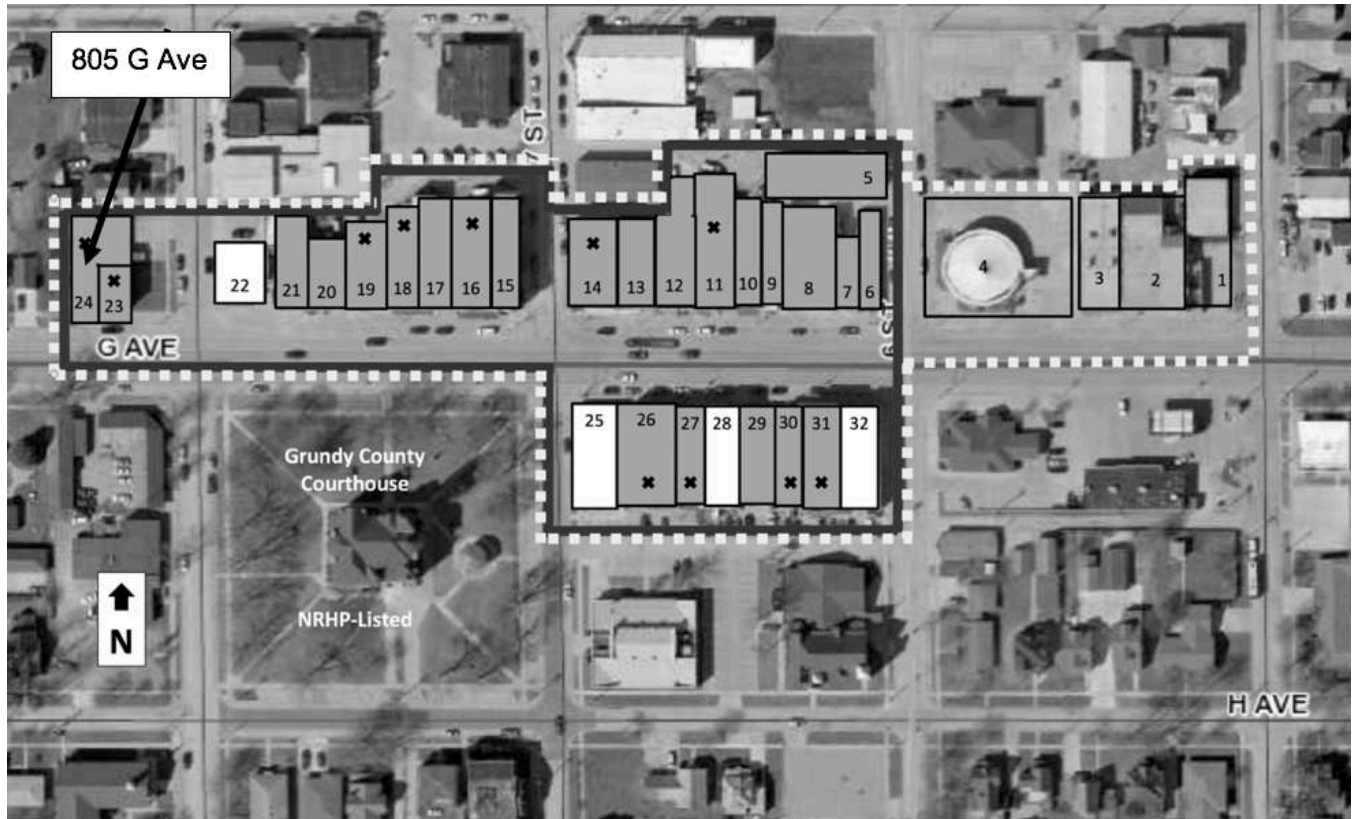
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Location in Potential Grundy Center Commercial Historic District



(dark boundary = preliminary boundary of potential historic district)

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Current Photographs

(photos by Jennifer A. Price, June 20, 2018)



View north

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View northeast

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View northwest. Note one-story concrete block building on right is part of the L-shaped 805 G Ave

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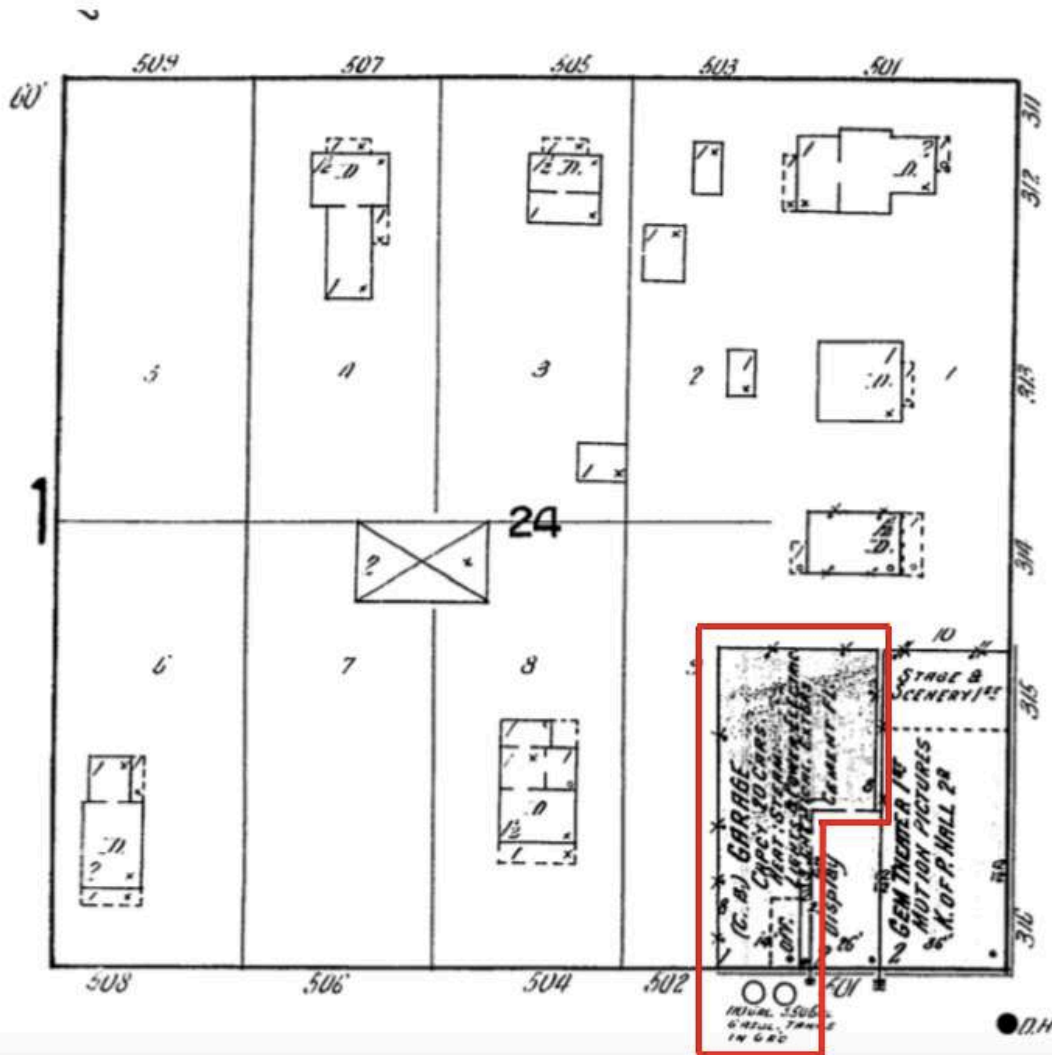
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Historical Documentation



Block 24 shown on the 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Grundy Center with Schafer Garage indicated

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SCHAFERS TO BUILD GARAGE

WILL BE OF BRICK AND CEMENT

**Garage to be Built on Main Street
Adjoining Their Music Store—Will
be Modern Throughout**

Grundy Center will have a new auto garage within the next few weeks, the plans and specifications being about ready for beginning work. The new garage will be built by Chris Schafer and sons and will join their music store on the west.

The building will be one story in height, the front being brick with cement sides and back. The dimensions will be 30x50 feet for the front part with the rear 50x50 feet. There will be a basement under part of the building and it will be modern throughout.

The repair room will be fully equipped for doing all kinds of automobile repairing, among the features being a turntable for the cars. Free air tanks will be installed as also will be several other appliances that are now considered a part of the modern garage.

A free rest room will be provided for ladies, with wash stands and modern conveniences, looking toward the comfort of those having occasion to use the garage.

When the garage is completed it will be occupied by Harry and Arend Schafer. Harry Schafer will move his repair department to the new building and a stock of automobiles will be put in. For the present they have secured the agency of the Henderson car, which is made in Indianapolis, Indiana. Other cars may be added later but that is not determined upon as yet.

The cost of the garage has not been fully determined yet as the contractor's figures are not completed. It is expected that it will require about two weeks before any work can be commenced. The location of the new garage is an ideal one, being just opposite of the hotel and on the main traveled road through the town. Having the advantage of a good location will give the new firm a good share of the business. The improvement will add much to the appearance of the town and especially this block, since the lots just east of the Schafer music store have been purchased by Chas. Johnston, who contemplates erecting a good building on them.

Source: Grundy Republican, July 11, 1912

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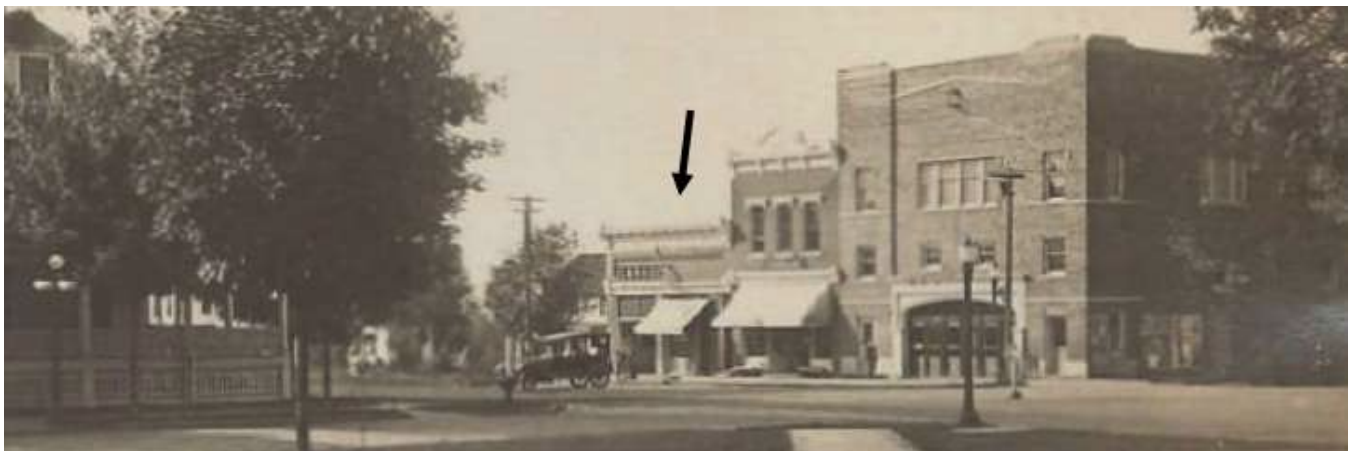
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View northwest of Schafer Garage (arrow) next to nonextant Gem Theater, 1912
Source: Grundy County IAGenWeb



View northwest of Schafer Garage/Laybourn Auto Co (arrow), c.1920
Source: Grundy County IAGenWeb

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LAYBOURN BUYS GARAGE

**W. R. Laybourn Secures Title to the
Schafer Garage and Laybourn
Auto Co. is Moving In.**

A deal was made yesterday whereby W. R. Laybourn received a quit claim deed to the old Schafer garage which was owned by a Mr. Wittee of the northern part of the state. The property was sold last fall in court and Mr. Laybourn purchased it at that time, subject to the redemption of Mr. Wittee within a year. Mr. Wittee had until October to redeem it but the deal as noted above was made yesterday.

The Laybourn Auto Co. will occupy the new building and are moving in this week. Arend Schafer will vacate as soon as possible. It is the intention of the Laybourn Auto Co. to use the old music room for a display room for their Ford and Buick cars, using the main garage for storage and repair purposes.

Source: *Grundy Republican*, August 20, 1914



The car with
the
unlimited
amount
of service

sold by
Laybourn Auto Co.
Grundy Center

Source: *Grundy Democrat*, July 30, 1940

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The Nickerson Buick Co. has taken over the stock of the Laybourn Auto Co. and leased the building on west Main street, which it will now occupy. Formerly the Nickerson garage was in the Ray Thompson building, which will now be taken over by Mr. Thompson for his own business soon. Mr. Laybourn has been in ill health for some time and has been in California. Mrs. Laybourn left last week to join him and the garage is to be operated by the Nickersons.

Source: *Grundy County Dispatch*, March 9, 1922

**Nickerson Buick
Company**
In
NEW LOCATION

WE HAVE MOVED into the Garage formerly operated by Laybourn Auto Co., and we are in a better position than ever to handle your REPAIR WORK and AUTO BUSINESS IN GENERAL.

WE WILL CARRY A COMPLETE LINE OF
**Tires, Accessories,
Oils and Greases**

WE WILL CONTINUE TO HANDLE
BUICK CARS
HAVE 4's and 6's ON THE FLOOR.—COME IN
AND SEE THEM.

—YOURS FOR BETTER SERVICE—
Nickerson Buick Co.
J. C. and H. L. NICKERSON

Source: *Grundy Republican*, March 9, 1922