

# Iowa Site Inventory Form

State Historic Preservation Office

(July 2014)

State Inventory Number: 38-00326 ☒ 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: DeSeelhorst & Morse Block

B) Other names: DeSeelhorst & Morse Furniture and Undertaking; Coffman's Furniture; Feller's Variety Store

## • Location

A) Street address: 624 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): 17 Lot(s): part of 4

## • 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:*

Contributing Noncontributing

<u>1</u>	Buildings	—
—	Sites	—
—	Structures	—
—	Objects	—
<u>1</u>	<b>Total</b>	—

*If non-eligible property, enter number of:*

—	Buildings
—	Sites
—	Structures
—	Objects
—	<b>Total</b>

**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**

02E09 COMMERCE/specialty store/furniture

07C FUNERARY/mortuary

02F01 COMMERCE/retail center/general store

**B) Current functions**

02E COMMERCE/specialty store/

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## • 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: 04 STONE

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

Site Number: 38-00326 Address: 624 G Avenue City: Grundy Center County: Grundy

• **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.

☒ 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.

☒ 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  
achieved significance within the past 50 years.

☐ D: A cemetery

**C) Areas of significance**

*Enter categories from instructions*

02 ARCHITECTURE

05 COMMERCE

**D) Period(s) of significance**

1899-1963

**E) Significant dates**

*Construction date*

1899 ☐ *check if circa or estimated date*

*Other dates, including renovations*

1961 front remodel and addition

**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*

Gardner, R. (Eldora, Iowa)

**I) Narrative statement of significance** ☒ **SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED**

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

• **Geographic Data** *Optional UTM references* ☐ *See continuation sheet for additional UTM or comments*

Zone	Easting	Northing	NAD	Zone	Easting	Northing	NAD
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: \_\_\_\_\_

# Iowa Site Inventory Form

## State Historic Preservation Office

### Continuation Sheet

Site Number: 38-00326  
Related District Number:

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DeSeelhorst & Morse Block

Grundy

Name of Property

County

624 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 624 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 two-story, full basement, flat-roofed, brick building was constructed in 1888, according to historical records and photos. The original building was destroyed by fire and rebuilt in 1900. The building is located within a commercial block which consists of similar buildings on both the north and south sides of the streets, adjacent to the "Central Block" and County Courthouse. The front doors open to the sidewalk on main street, and the back door provides access to the alley. Rectangle in shape, this building features 10 to 12 ft ceilings on the main and upper levels. There are four windows on the upper level overlooking main street. The windows are six feet tall double hung metal clad. The tops and sills of the windows are decorative limestone. The top of the façade contains an ornate cornice with stepped pressed metal.

The main level façade was altered around 1970. The storefront features metal-framed windows and recessed angled entrance door near the middle.

On the interior, the property is mostly open with 12 foot ceilings that have been lowered with grid and tile. Floors in the retail space are covered in carpet (unknown if original floors are underneath). The walls were originally brick, then plastered over, then drywall. The ceiling lights are fluorescent incorporated into the grid and tile.

On the upper level, there are two four-bedroom apartments. The ceilings and walls are plaster and drywall. Flooring is carpet and vinyl; unknown if original flooring is underneath. The building owner plans to renovate these apartments in the near future.

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

#### **8. Statement of Significance**

The DeSeelhorst & Morse Block 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 DeSeelhorst & Morse Block, built in 1899, is associated with the first phase of development in the potential Grundy Center Commercial Historic District, during which a number of architecturally significant buildings replaced older buildings that were lost in fires, in this case the fire of 1899. The ornate Italianate-style DeSeelhorst & Morse Block was made possible by the town's railroad connections via the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern Railroad (later known as the Cedar Rapids & Sioux Falls Branch of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad), which made building materials, such as the pressed brick, cut stone, and cast-iron architectural elements featured on the building easy to procure. The prosperity of the era also allowed local merchants like furniture proprietors C.F. DeSeelhorst and B.J. Morse to build and own a stylish brick building in which to conduct their business. The DeSeelhorst & Morse Block also reflects the history of the Grundy Center business community, first as the longtime location of the furniture store that began as the DeSeelhorst & Morse Furniture and Undertaking firm that operated from 1899 to the early 1930s, then as the longtime location of a series of variety stores, culminating with the popular Feller's Variety Store, in business from 1946 to 1985.

The building is also a good 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

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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 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 DeSeelhorst & Morse Block, an Italianate-style brick block with architectural embellishments confined mainly in the upper story, including tall narrow windows with cut stone crowns, and a bracketed pressed metal cornice. Although the storefront has been completely remodeled a number of times – especially in 1961 when a full storefront remodel and rear addition were built – the upper floor fenestration, window crowns, brick exterior, and cornice are intact.

The period of significance is 1899-1963, from the year the DeSeelhorst & Morse Block 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**

Ad for Feller's 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Store Remodeling, *Grundy Register*, June 8, 1961.

Downtown Revitalization Survey/Iowa Site Inventory Forms, February 2018.

"Fred Bloxham Sells Variety Store in Grundy Center," *Grundy Register*, January 3, 1946.

Grundy County Assessor Record online.

*Grundy Republican*, April 27, 1899.

*Grundy Republican*, December 15, 1904.

*Grundy Republican*, September 7, 1899.

Kerr, William G., contributor. "Grundy Center's First Settler in 1855," *Grundy Register Centennial Edition*, July 7, 1977.

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.

"Waterloo Man Will Take Over Variety Store in Grundy," *Grundy Register*, April 11, 1935.

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DeSeelhorst & Morse Block

Name of Property

624 G Avenue

Address

Grundy

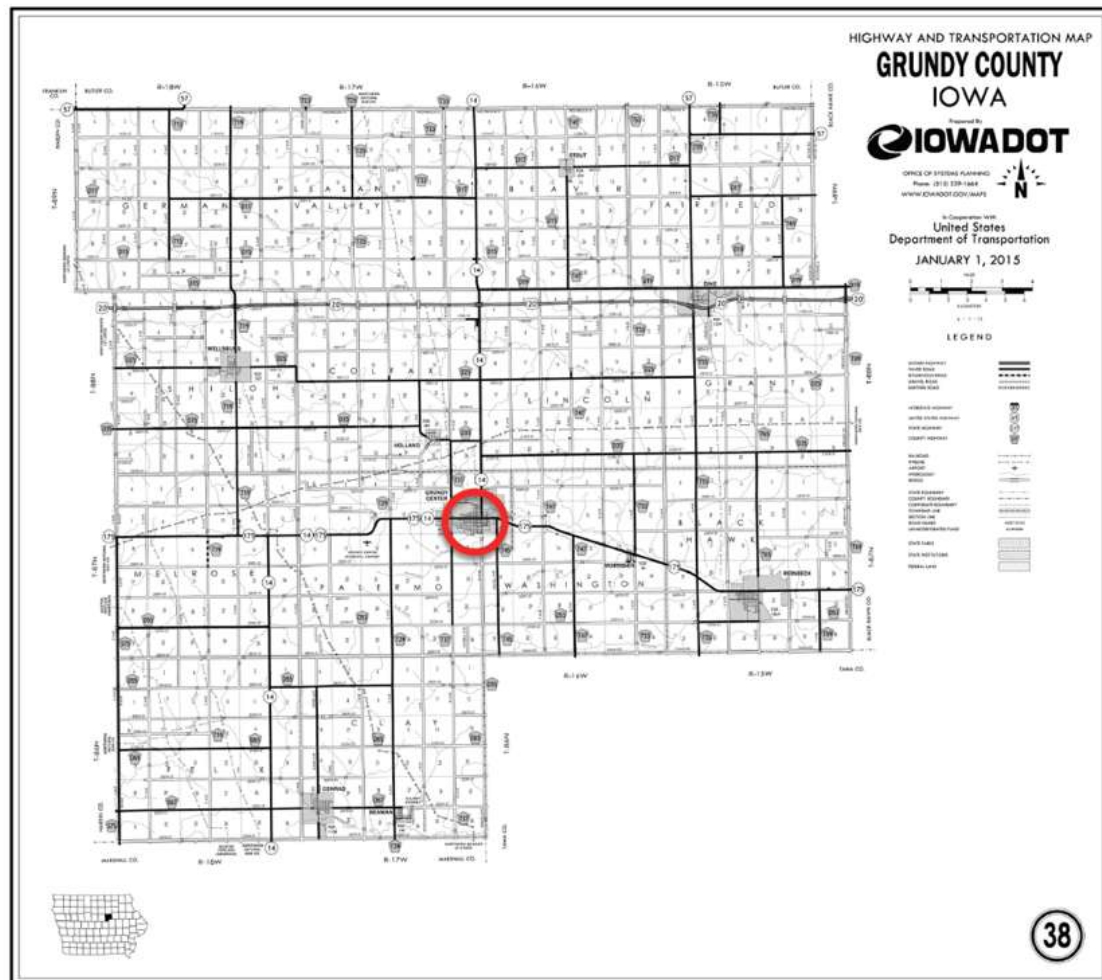
County

Grundy Center

City

**10. Additional Documentation**

**General Location Map**



Latitude: 42.361290  
Longitude: -92.772202

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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 south

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General view southeast



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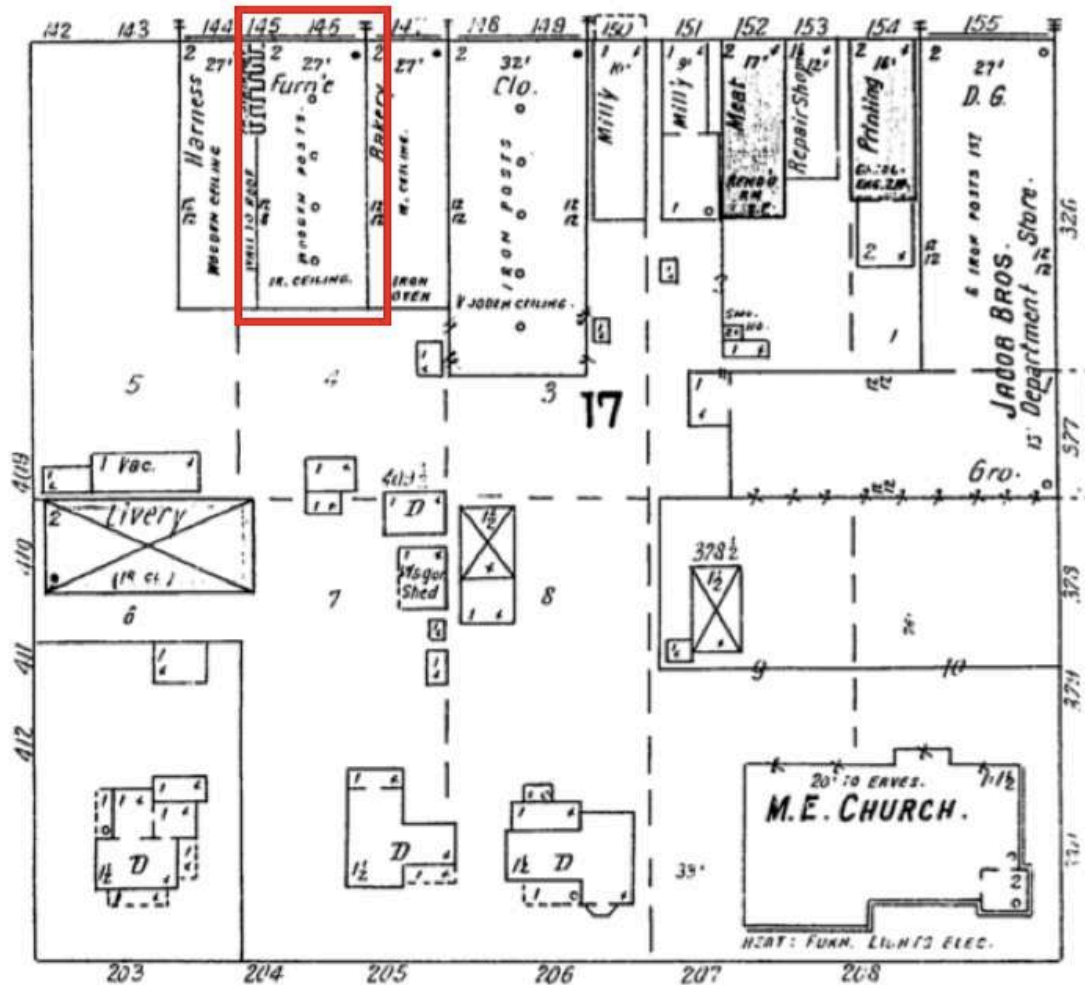
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**Historical Documentation**



N↑

Block 17 shown on the 1902 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Grundy Center with DeSeelhorst & Morse Block indicated

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Name of Property

624 G Avenue

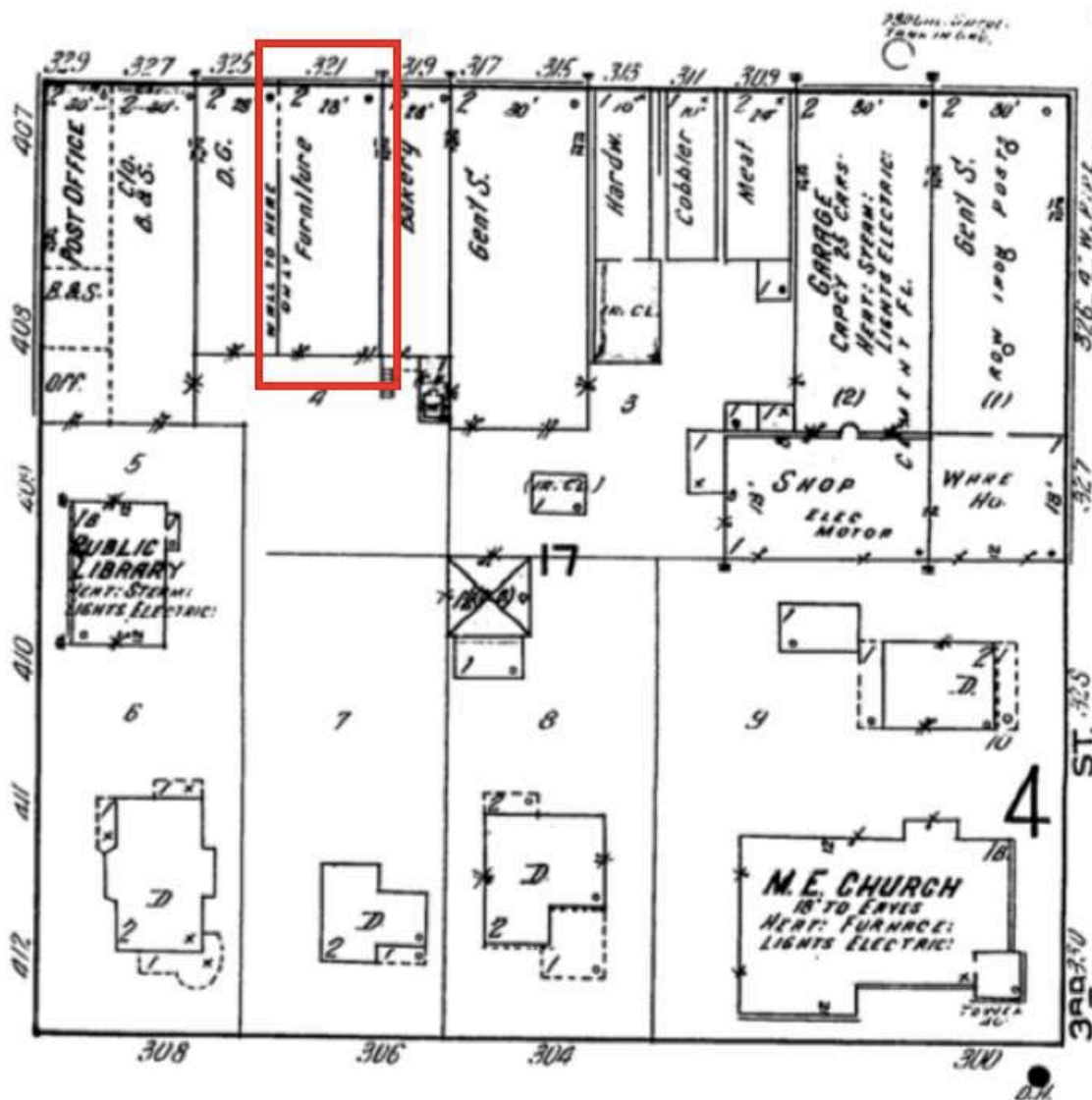
Address

Grundy

County

Grundy Center

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Block 17 shown on the 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Grundy Center with DeSeelhorst & Morse Block indicated

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View southwest of DeSeelhorst & Morse Block (arrow), c.1900

Source: Grundy County IAGenWeb

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View east on G Avenue with DeSeelhorst & Morse Block indicated (arrow), c.1920

Source: Grundy County IAGenWeb



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DeSeelhorst, Morse and McAlvin have let the contract to R. Gardiner of Eldora, for a two story brick building 24x80 feet. The building will be completed the fore part of June and will cost about \$7,000.

Contract let for DeSeelhorst & Morse Block, 1899. Note the building width reported here is incorrect.  
Source: *Grundy Republican*, April 27, 1899

DeSeelhorst & Clark have moved into their new building on the south side of Main Street and they have it crowded to the doors with all descriptions of furniture.

By the time the DeSeelhorst & Morse Block was completed, the firm had changed partners twice.  
Source: *Grundy Republican*, September 7, 1899

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In 1903, the business became DeSeelhorst & Coffman. Coffman took over in 1910 and operated the business until the early 1930s. Source: *Grundy Republican*, December 15, 1904

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DeSeelhorst & Morse Block

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## Waterloo Man Will Take Over Variety Store In Grundy

F. W. Bloxham from Waterloo will take over the Variety Store in Grundy Center on May 15th. The store has been owned and operated by Mr. and Mrs. Allard the past two years. The stock will be invoiced on May 15th after which Mr. Bloxham will take it over.

Mr. Bloxham was a former bank examiner. He was also a former post office employee. His family consists of himself and his wife, who will assist him in the management of the business.

Mr. Bloxham has rented the living apartment in the home of the Sternborg Sisters. The apartment is now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Wells, who will vacate it about June 1st. Wm. Groote and family will move May 15 into the house on East Main street now occupied by the Allards.

After Coffman's Furniture store closed, a variety store opened in the building. Fred Bloxham took over the business in 1935. Source: *Grundy Register*, April 11, 1935

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## Fred Bloxham Sells Variety Store In Grundy Center

**VINTON PARTIES BUY STORE  
AND TOOK POSSESSION  
YESTERDAY; LUMP SUM  
PAID FOR THE STORE.**

F. W. Bloxham has sold his store in Grundy Center to the Feller Store Organization in Vinton. Warren G. Feller will be the manager of the Grundy Center store. He is a young man who recently completed his military service. He is single, but expects soon to be married.

A lump sum price was paid for the Bloxham store and the stock.

A deal was made yesterday whereby R. H. Feller, one of the new owners of the store, purchased the building in which the store is located. The building was purchased from John Smith of Waterloo, who owned it during all of the time that it was occupied by Mr. Bloxham.

Mr. Bloxham began business in Grundy Center ten years ago last May. He largely expanded the stock which he took over at the time from the previous owner and he has maintained as complete a stock as it has been possible to get together during the late years of slow production of store goods. His store has had a good patronage. He sold largely because of the difficulty there has been to get sufficient help and because he wants to give more attention to his health. He has no plans for going into business elsewhere and he and Mrs. Bloxham expect to continue to make their home in Grundy Center.

In 1946, Warren G. Feller purchased the Bloxham Variety Store. Feller's was in business until 1985.

Source: Grundy Register, January 3, 1946



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# 15th ANNIVERSARY

During the 15 years which we have been in business in Grundy Center, we have endeavored to modernize our store from year to year. We have just completed one of our most complete and extensive remodeling programs in the history of our store. We cordially invite you to come in and see the many new improvements which have been made. Any resemblance between our store now and its appearance of a month ago is purely coincidental. New shelving and lighting have been added. Convenient self-service counters have been installed. Merchandise is readily accessible. **NEW LINES HAVE BEEN ADDED**, as there is now additional display room. Be our guests. Come in and see our store Friday and Saturday. We have arranged many Money-Saving Specials for you. It will be a pleasure to be of service to you.

**Anniversary SPECIAL**  
 Rack of 25  
**CHILDRENS DRESSES**  
**\$1.00 each**  
 (close out)

**RUGS**  
 Values to \$3.98  
**Anniversary Special \$1.00**



WHEN YOU ENTER the recently remodeled Feller Store, you will be amazed at the increased depth of 6th Street, the attractive lighting, and the new self-service counters which have been installed for your convenience.



DISPLAYED ATTRACTIVELY in the new section of the store is the Luggage Department. The various sizes and styles of luggage are displayed on the top shelf so that each style and size of suitcase can be chosen with ease.



MRS. and MISS HEATH GIBBONS were in the process of buying an item at Feller's when the above photo was taken Friday morning.



A new merchandise rack was added to the Feller Store in 1951.



A PART OF THE 10'10" north wall of the store is in office area, from which this photo was taken. The new addition was a complete rearrangement for more display of merchandise. New fluorescent lighting has made the new addition one of the best.

## LUGGAGE

Assorted Sizes. Any piece,  
**Special \$1.47**  
 Values to \$5.00. While 150 pieces last!



**Bargains! Bargains!**  
**Bargains!**  
 See Our  
**Odd Lots**  
**COUNTER**



THERE IS A DELICIOUS, NEW MEXICAN food that complements any barbecue dinner—stark is an important part of the Mexican fare. In the upper, A. (Starchy) Starch is just being prepared up with a wonderful Barbecue.

**7 Qt. ENAMEL CANNERS** ..... Anniversary Special, \$1.37

**Thong Sandals** - - - 39c pair

**Low TENNIS SHOES** - Red and Blue ..... 88c pair

**Ironing Board Pad & Cover Sets** 77c ea

**3' x 5' STRAW RUGS** ..... Special, \$1.27

**Beach Bags** - 99c each

→ CLOSE-OUT PRICES on 5 SWIMMING SUITS ..... \$1.00

**20 by 40 Bath Towels** - 2 for \$1.00

**LAUNDRY BASKETS** - 99c

**22 piece Plastic Picnic Set** - - 77c  
 Cups - Plates - Silverware

**Checked Kitchen Terry Towels** 3 for \$1.00

**INSULATED PLASTIC PICNIC BAG** ..... \$1.27

**NYLON HOSE** - Special - 37c pr

# FELLER'S

—Phone 143W— Grundy Center

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In 1888 fire destroyed DeSeelhorst and Company Furniture Store. It was a wooden building owned by Mr. Shaw. In 1900 a new brick double block put up by DeSeelhorst, Morse and H. H. Bluett to replace old frame building.

624 G Ave

- 1891 DeSeelhorst and Engelkes, dealers in furniture and caskets.
- 1893 Pioneer Furniture Store, DeSeelhorst and Morse
- 1898 DeSeelhorst and Clark Furniture Store
- 1900 DeSeelhorst and Coffman Furniture and Undertaking
- 1910 Furniture and Undertaking, L. C. Coffman
- 1927 Leo Reiz Variety Store
- 1933 Allard and Stapleton Variety Store
- 1937 F. W. Bloxham Variety Store
- 1946 Fellers Store, Warren and Lois Feller
- 1985 Calton's Pharmacy, owned by Lloyd Calton
- 2009 Building empty
- 2014 Craisy Daisies, owned by Connie Stickley

624 ½ G Ave

- 1900 – 1946 Drs. Thielen and McDowell, M. D.'s
- 1946 – 1956 Dr. W. O. McDowell
- 1963 – 1966 Retail Credit Company

*Building History taken from Downtown Revitalization Grant Survey site form dated February 2018*