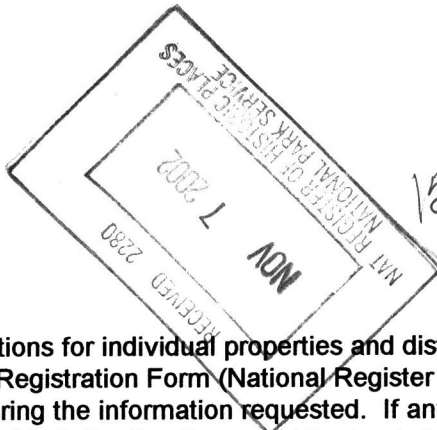


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Hotel Lester / Lester Cafe

other names/site number Dodge House / Long Branch

**2. Location**

street & number 408-410 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NW not for publication N/A  
city or town Mason City vicinity N/A  
state Iowa code IA county Cerro Gordo code 033 zip code 50401

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Howell J. Soike*

*November 4, 2002*

Signature of certifying official

Date

**STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA**

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

---

**4. National Park Service Certification**

---

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register  
    \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  
    \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

*for Carson W. Beall*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

*12/20/02*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

---

**5. Classification**

---

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>  1  </u>	<u>      </u> buildings
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> sites
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> objects
<u>  1  </u>	<u>      </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register   0  

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)  
NA

---



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

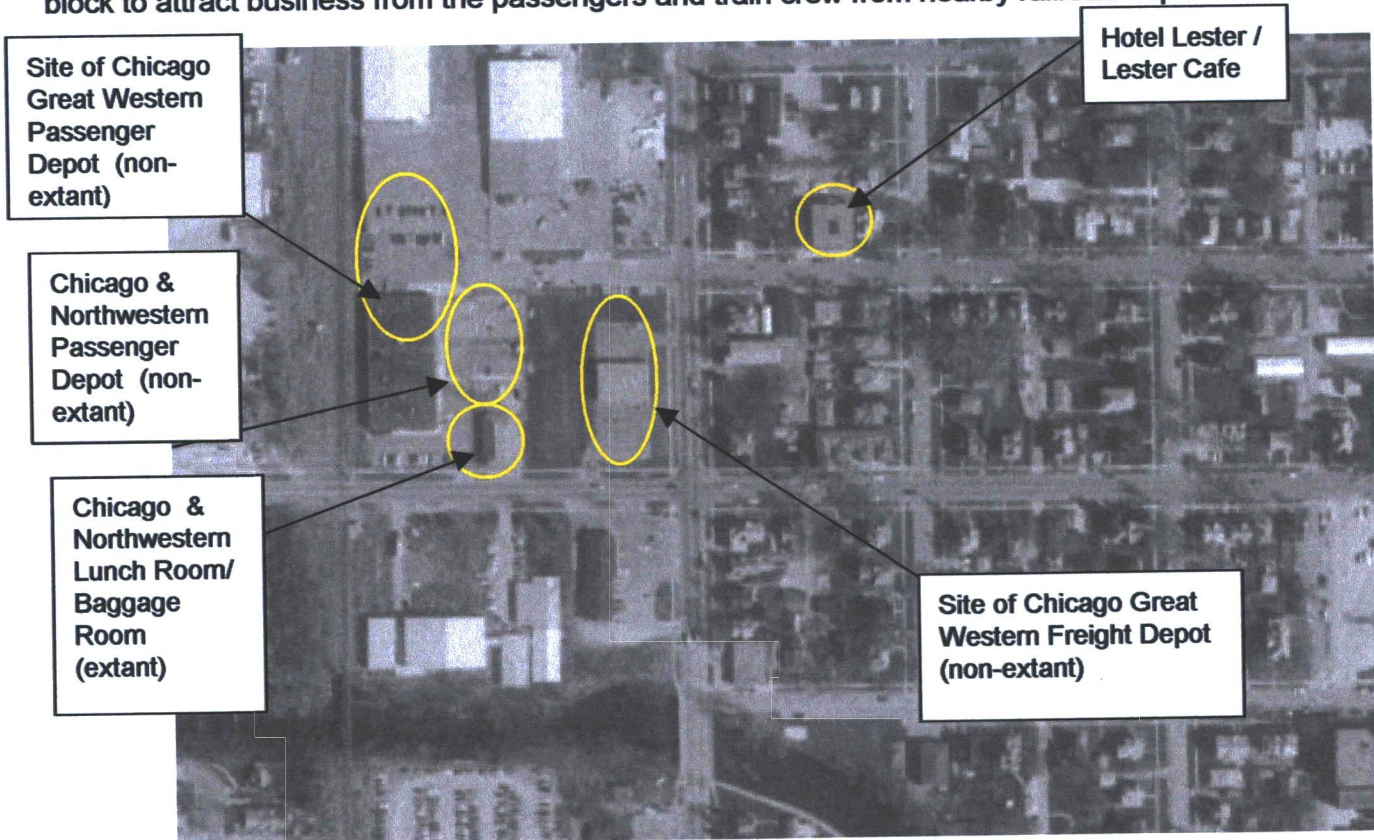
Section 7 Page 1

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The Hotel Lester / Lester Café is a 70' x 66' 2-story structure located at 408-410 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NW immediately west of downtown Mason City, Iowa. The architecture and construction materials are typical of "commercial business blocks" in the early 1900's. The architect and construction contractor are unknown at this time although as indicated by the building identification block on the facade (see page 8), the property was developed by owner, Mier Wolf and construction was completed in the fall of 1915. Upon completion, Mier Wolf developed by owner, Mier Wolf and construction was completed in the fall of 1915. Upon completion, Mier Wolf leased the space and the building housed a 29-room hotel, restaurant and grocery store. By 1925 a barbershop occupied the basement area in the center of the building which was accessed from street level.

Successful businessman and insightful property developer Mier Wolf strategically located this commercial block to attract business from the passengers and train crew from nearby railroad depots.



1994 Official Tax Map

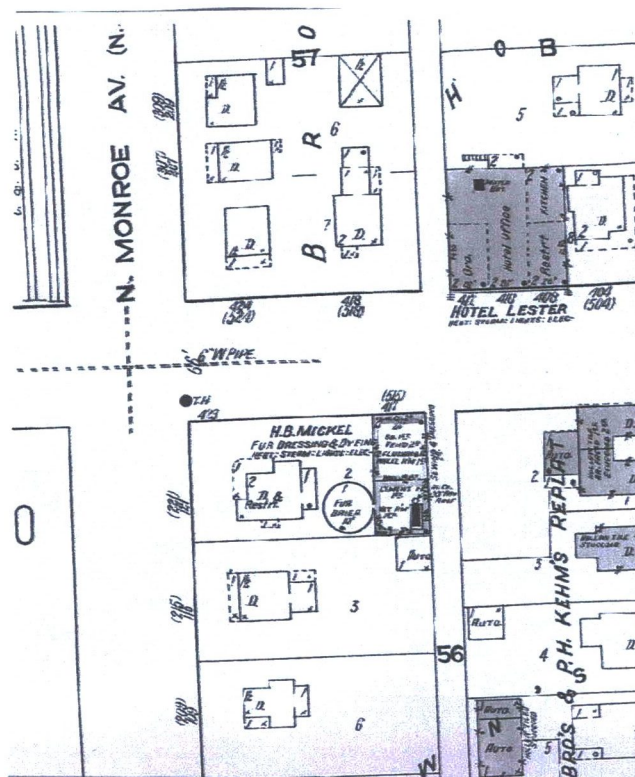
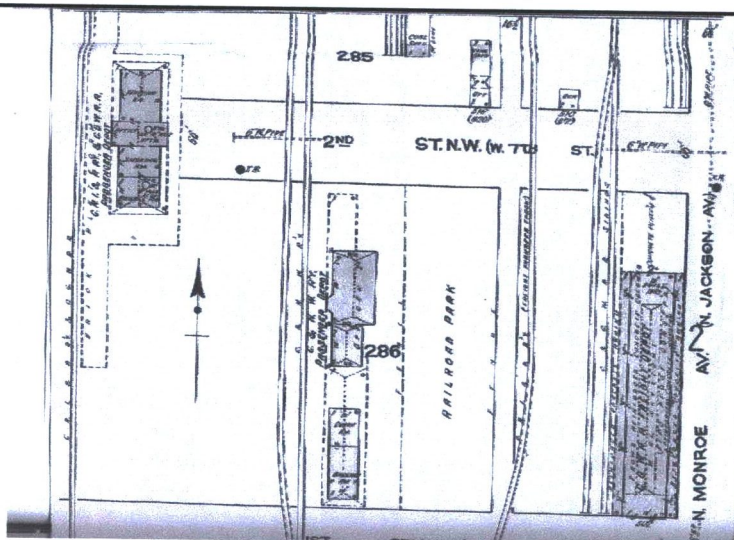


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa



1918 Fire Insurance Maps



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 3

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa



The building is constructed of solid brick on a clay tile with brick veneer concrete foundation. The hotel rooms are located on the second level and are situated around a central skylight located over the first floor lobby area. There is basement area under only the hotel (center) portion of the building that has exterior access from the street level at the front of the building and interior access from the restaurant (east side of the building) area. The business fronts on either side of the hotel lobby are accessed at street level. The original brick façade has been covered over with fiberboard paneling and painted; the original facade appears to be in tact. The west business front (former grocery area) has been altered, most likely at the time it was remodeled into an apartment; it most probably mirrored the east business front

(former café area).

The hotel lobby is accessed by the front center exterior stairway. The lobby's original tin ceiling (in good condition) and skylight structure (blocked off) remain intact.



Lobby Ceiling



Skylight Courtyard (from Second Floor)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   4  

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa

The building is steam heated; the boiler and system appear to be original to date of construction and are in very poor condition. The original plaster finish on first and second level interior walls is in poor condition. It appears the original woodwork is intact and no alterations have been made to the hotel room and lobby configurations. The original grocery and restaurant areas have been altered to accommodate most recent uses.



Hotel Rooms on Second Floor



Hallway on Second Floor

The most recent use of the building was a residence (former grocery area), boarding house (former hotel area), and tavern (former café area). The boarding house occupants included "overflow" from the men's homeless shelter. The entire building has been vacant since November 2001. The overall structure is in poor condition and the City's Chief Building Official and Fire Marshall had noted several deficiencies prior to the building being vacated.

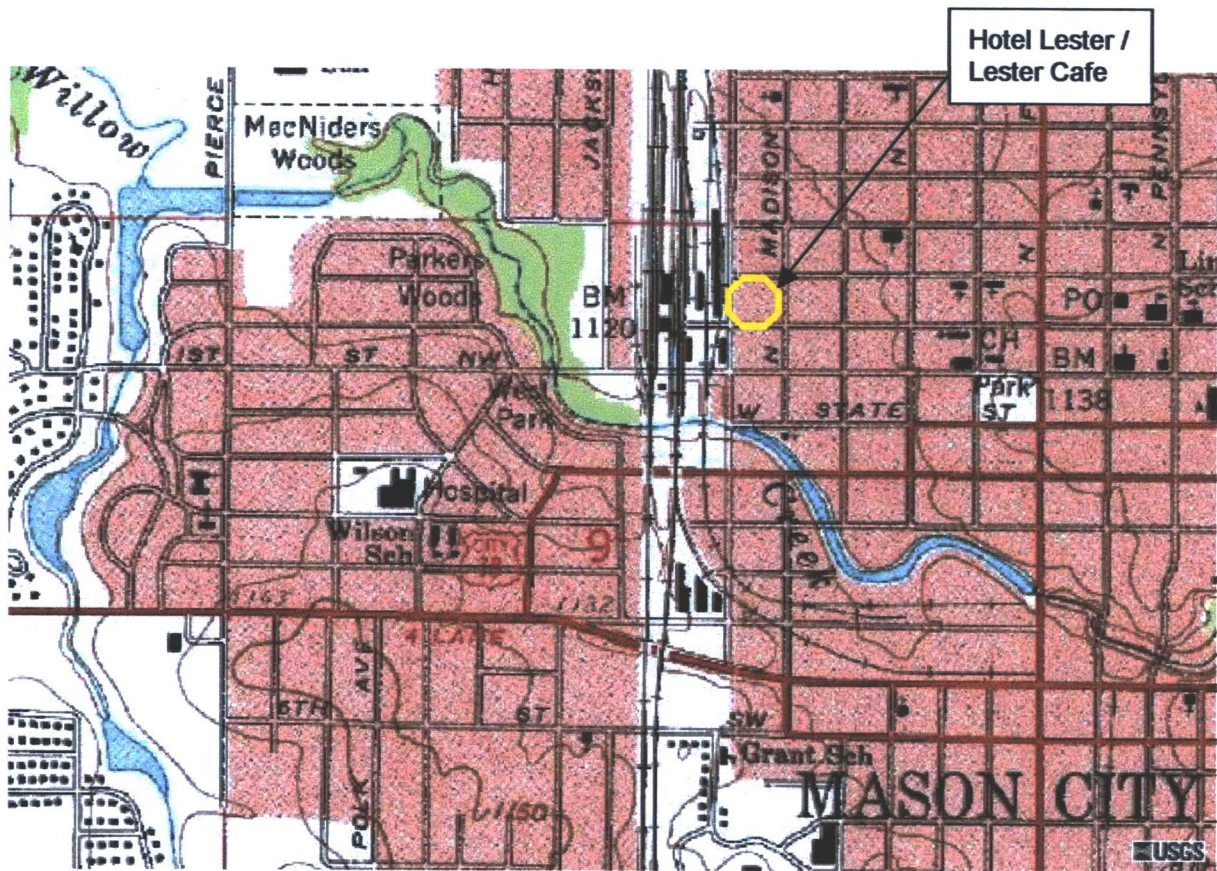
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 5

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa

SITE MAP



USGS 7.5 Minutes Series Map  
(Not to Scale – For Reference Only)



Hotel Lester / Lester Café  
408-410 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NW  
Mason City, IA 50401

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   6  

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa

---

The east elevation of the structure evidences probably more than three ads:  
"Wolf....."  
"..... Ladies & Men's Wear"  
"Long Branch"



West Elevation



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   7  

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa

---



**Building Identification Plaque on Facade**



**Concrete Storefront Ornamentation is in tact behind false storefront.**

---

**8. Statement of Significance**

---

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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)

Services related to Transportation

---

---

Period of Significance 1915-1952

Significant Dates 1915

---

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) NA

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

---

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property Less than One

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing	
1	15	483060	477720	3	_____
2	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 8

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa

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**SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Hotel Lester / Lester Café is locally significant under National Register Criterion A as the only known surviving railroad hotel in Mason City. The building appears to have been designed and constructed primarily to provide temporary housing and other services for railroad employees and passengers, specifically for the Northwestern Railroad. This is substantiated by newspaper articles during construction which initially refer to it as the "new Northwestern hotel." In addition, the hotel was constructed on the trolley train route which ran along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NW linking the railroad with the downtown. Prior to its construction, railroad employees and passengers would travel 6 to 8 blocks further to stay at one of three other hotels in the downtown at the time (Park Inn Hotel, Hotel Cerro Gordo and the Wilson Hotel).

Railroad as a means of transportation and shipping was introduced to Mason City in the spring of 1869 with the arrival of the Iowa Central (later the Minneapolis and St. Louis) Railroad from southern Iowa. Travelers could then board the Milwaukee train to Clear Lake for a round trip fare of \$1.00. Tama resident Lew Ong, after missing a connection to Clear Lake, was forced to hire a livery rig to take him to Clear Lake. He noted that the highway was busy with horses and buggies and decided it would be an ideal place for an electric line. He decided to start the Mason City and Clear Lake Railroad. In July 1896 Mr. Ong was joined by W.E. Brice at a Mason City City Council meeting where they presented their plan. The Council approved their proposal and by June 1897 the electric line from Mason City to Clear Lake was completed.

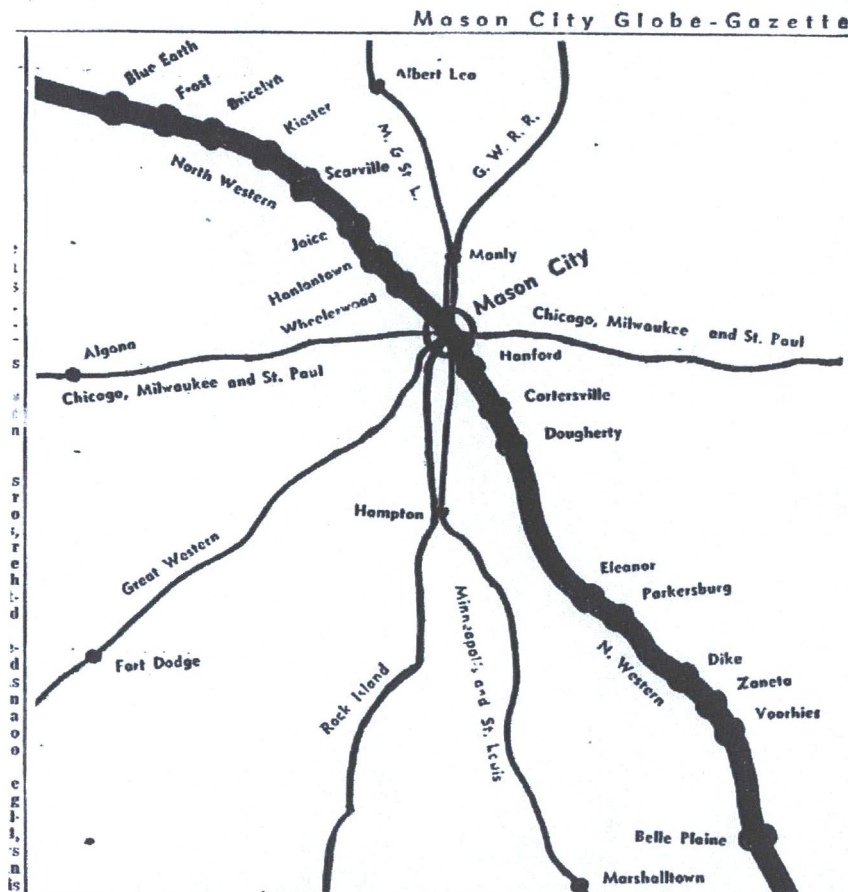
More extensive connections to the Mason City and Clear Lake Railroad were needed in order to complete financing of the original project. With financial assistance from Mason City native C.H. MacNider the Iowa, Minnesota and Northwestern Railway Company was begun. As a result, the Mason City and Clear Lake Railroad was connected with railway lines north through Lake Mills and on to Blue Earth, Minnesota an area from 35 to 40 square miles previously without a railroad. Under an agreement, Mr. Brice was to have the town sites and sell lots in order to extend the railroad southeasterly to Cedar Rapids connecting to the Northern (Rock Island) Railroad. The stations along this line were named after Brice and his associates: Bricelyn for Brice, Wheelerwood for J.S. Wheeler, Hanlontown for F.J. Hanlon (secretary of the company), Scarville for Ole Scar (merchant from Lake Mills who pointed out the area north of Lake Mills not served by rail service), Joice for P.M. Joice (Lake Mills banker), Voorhies for W.H. Voorhies (Iowa Central conductor), Hanford for Mrs. C.H. MacNider, Eleanor for Mrs. J.E. McDonald, Keister for Jacob Keister, Frost for Frost of Chicago, Zaneta for Zaneta Eager (daughter of a bookkeeper of the new railroad), Cartersville for the North Western chief engineer), Dougherty for the Dougherty family, and Dike for C.T. Dike (chief engineer).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 9

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa



**NORTH IOWANS HONORED—Residents of Mason City and other North Iowa points  
Railroad Transportation Routes 1869-1899**  
From *Mason City Globe Gazette* – Centennial Edition (June 1, 1953)

With the North Western under construction to provide additional outlets, Mr. Brice was able to sell bonds to pay his indebtedness on the Mason City and Clear Lake Railroad. In August 1900 the North Western line was completed. The building of this railroad line set the stage for a huge business and industrial expansion for Mason City in the following years. The railroad industry grew, bringing more and more passengers and railroad workers to Mason City. In December 1914, the new Great Western depot was completed on West 7<sup>th</sup> Street (now 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NW), just west of N. Jackson Ave. (now N. Monroe Ave.) joining the Chicago Northwestern in Railroad Park.

Recognizing the potential for a lucrative business block, successful businessman and real estate developer, Mier Wolf purchased the 66' x 82' property located just one block east of Railroad Park in March 1915. Construction began soon after and the building was completed in the Fall of 1915.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 10

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa

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**BACKGROUND - MIER WOLF**

Mier Wolf was a prominent and successful Mason City businessman. He was born in Russia on June 16, 1871. He attended schools in Russia and married (Zesol) Cecil Gass. He settled first in Cedar Rapids, Iowa relocating to Mason City in 1898. His first home was at the southeast corner of Sherman at Drummond (now 509 S Washington Ave). From this location he started a hide and fur and metal business with a capital of about \$500. Advertisements for this business read "Mier Wolf, Wholesale and Retail Dealer in Scrap Iron, Rags, Rubbers, Metal, Hides, Fur, Wool, Etc. – Also all kinds of Second Hand Machinery for Sale." Gradually he built up his business and invested in real estate until he was able to start Mier Wolf and Sons (a furniture store) in 1902 with his nephew, Joe Wolf at 305 S Federal Ave. The business rapidly grew and in 1904 he bought out Joe's share and moved the store to 408 S Federal Ave. Again in 1905, increased business forced him to seek a larger building and the store relocated to 226 S Federal Ave. In 1914 the business moved to 214-216 S Federal and one horse and wagon took care of deliveries. In 1923 Mier Wolf built a new 3-story store located at 309-313 S Federal Ave. Four new departments (radio, draperies, luggage and house furnishing) were added in 1926. By 1928 Mier Wolf and Sons was "one of the largest furniture stores in north Iowa" and built additional stores in Albert Lea and Austin, Minnesota. In 1928 the Mason City store employed 30 persons and had a fleet of five delivery trucks (deliveries made within a radius of 125 miles from Mason City). Associated in the furniture business with Mr. Wolf were his sons Louis Wolf (general manager), George Wolf (secretary and manager of credits), Abbott Wolf, and William B. Wolf. In a January 2, 1923 correspondence, Mier Wolf was listed among the city's wealthiest men being worth over \$100,000. In 1926 Mier and Cecil Wolf moved to 811 N Adams Ave. This is a Prairie School designed home (listed on National Register of Historic Places 1/29/80). Mier Wolf served as a City Councilman from 1928-1932.

The 1929 Who's Who – Mason City, Iowa directory stated that Mier Wolf "did own and operate a Hide and Fur Business, Real Estate, and Metal Business. Now director, organizer and Charter member of Northwest Savings Bank; Director of MC Building and Loan Association; Member of City Council; President of Mier Wolf and Sons Furniture Store; President of Temple since its organization; lives at 811 N Adams; has 6 children- Mrs. Charles Coddon, Louis, George, Abbott, William and Robert; hobbies-bridge and pinochle."

The arrival of the Mier Wolf family in 1898 was the beginning of the Jewish settlement in Mason City. In 1902 the Frank Kropman, Sam Woldman, Morris Shulman and William Larger families followed. By 1908 there were enough families to support a rabbi; Rabbi Isaac Schultz came from Chicago and the Adas Israel congregation was formally organized. In 1910 a small synagogue was built at 621 S Adams Ave.; charter members were Mier Wolf, Frank Kropman, Sam Woldman, Morris Shulman, William Lerner, Morris Miller, T. Benblit, Sam Kitsis, Herman Goldstein, Louis Tokman, Sam Garfin, J. Friedman and William Alter. Rabbi Schultz was succeeded by Rabbi Simon Levinson in 1915. In 1920 Rabbi Schultz returned finding the Jewish community had increased by 35 families.

Incidentally, the Meir Wolf House was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on January 29, 1980 as a part of the 'Prairie School Architecture in Mason City' context. The home is located at 811 N. Adams Ave. and was built in 1909.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 11

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa

---

Mier Wolf died of heart disease on October 19, 1938 in Mason City. He was buried in the Eben Israel Cemetery in Cedar Rapids. It is believed that Cecil Wolf died in 1953 and was buried in Cedar Rapids. Records state that Mier and Cecil Wolf were reinterred at Elmwood Cemetery in Mason City October 25, 1954.

The Lester Hotel had one famous guest - track legend Jesse Owens. After Mr. Owens captured four gold medals for the United States in the 1936 Olympics, he organized and starred in basketball exhibitions throughout the country. In December 1937 one such event was held at the Mason City YMCA with spectators driving from miles around.

Despite Jesse Owen's celebrity-status, he was not allowed to stay in the "better" hotels because of his race. The following picture was taken by local photographer Safford Lock in Mr. Owens' room at the then Lester Hotel and appeared with Mason City Globe Gazette article detailing Mr. Owens' visit.



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 12

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa

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A 1916 newspaper article recapping new construction in the community stated, "Mier Wolf has added a good-looking hotel on West Seventh near the Northwestern depot, and various other store buildings have been constructed." The article related that the Hotel Lester was constructed at a cost of \$40,000.

Upon completion this commercial block housed a 29-room hotel, grocery store and restaurant. Original occupant businesses were: 408 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NW – James W. Thompson Restaurant; 410 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NW – Lester Hotel (Lester Sundell, Proprietor); and 412 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NW – Jacob Kropman Grocery

The Hotel boasted steam heat, electric lights, and hot and cold running water. The rates were consistent with other respected hotels in Mason City at the time .50¢, .75¢ and \$1.00 per night. It can be assumed that the hotel was named for its original proprietor, Lester Sundell. Mr. Sundell was the son of John Sundell, the original proprietor of the historic and architecturally significant Park Inn Hotel. Lester Sundell lived at the Hotel. Restaurateur James W. Thompson and his wife Minnie lived in the house at 404 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NW located immediately east of the café. Grocer Jacob Kropman and his wife Ida lived above the store.

Although never a "first rate" establishment, the Hotel Lester became even less appealing to train passengers and other visitors to the community by the late 1940's. According to notes in available hotel registers some guests left shortly after checking in, complaining of being "unsatisfied" with the accommodations. Also by that time the majority of hotel guests were the train crews working the North Western line between Blue Earth, Minnesota and Belle Plaine, Iowa.



1968 Aerial Photo  
(Earliest Photo Found To Date)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 13

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa

The Hotel and adjoining storefronts have had many proprietors over the years. From city directories:

Year	408 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street NW	410 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street NW	412 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street NW
1916	JW Thompson Restaurant	Hotel Lester, Lester Sundell, prop.	Jacob Kropman Grocery
1918	Willis Woodward Restaurant	Hotel Lester, Lester Sundell, prop.	Fred Magath Grocery
1920	WC Woodward Restaurant	Hotel Lester, EE Arnold, prop.	Fred Magath Grocery
1925	FJ Robinson Restaurant	Lester Hotel, SN Bayless, prop. Chas. Gilbert, barber	Sutcliff & Tangeman, grocers
1929	Benjamin M. Nelson Restaurant	Lester Hotel, Cyrus H. Major, prop.	John L. Chapman Grocery
1935	Bess Bayless Restaurant	Lester Hotel, Lena Donnelson, mgr. Lawson O. Porter, barber	Barney H. Dirksen, grocer
1940	Lester Cafe	Lester Hotel, Lena Donnelson, mgr. Milton Thompson, barber	Herbert O. Lomen, grocer
1945	King's Place Restaurant, Lester King, prop.	Lester Hotel, Lena Donnelson, mgr. Milton Thompson, barber	Herbert O. Lomen, grocer
1950	Kleckner's Café, Earl Klecker, prop.	Lester Hotel, Mrs. Marie Hall, mgr. Lester Barber Shop, J.R. White	Warner's Grocery, Walter L. Warner, prop.
1955	Kleckner's Café, Earl Klecker, prop.	Lester Hotel, Mrs. FA Patterson, mgr. Lester Barber Shop, J.R. White	Warner's Grocery, Walter L. Warner, prop.
1960	Lee's Café, Lee Seeberger, prop.	Lester Hotel, Mrs. Fern Olthoff, mgr. Lester Barber Shop, John R. White	Vacant
1965	George's Café, Cleo McCloud, prop.	Lester Hotel, Mrs. Fern Olthoff, mgr. Lester Barber Shop, John R. White	Vacant
1970	George's Café, Cleo McCloud, prop.	Lester Hotel, Mary McGrew, mgr. Lester Barber Shop, Ervin P. Bartelt	Harold & Dorothy Ealy (Made into apartment)
1975	Long Branch Saloon, James Dallas, mgr.	Dodge House, LeRoy/Mary McGrew Lester Barbers, Ervin P. Bartelt	LeRoy/Mary McGrew residence

Records from the Cerro Gordo County Recorder's office show the property had only a handful of owners:

- 1915 Mier Wolf
- 1935 Louis E. Wolf (son of Mier Wolf)
- 1938 Mier Wolf Inc.
- 1980 L.A. and Mary P. McGrew
- 1986 Leon V. Todd
- 1991 Darin L. Todd (son of Leon V. Todd)
- 2002 Russell J. Hardy

The period of significance encompasses the date of construction (1915) through 1952.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   9   Page  14 

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Who's Who – Mason City, Iowa, 1929

Cerro Gordo County Recorder's Office

1918 Fire Insurance Maps

City directories

Mason City Globe Gazette

December 31, 1914

August 6, 1915

August 13, 1915

August 23, 1915

January 1, 1916

October 19, 1938

June 16, 1938 (75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition)

June 1, 1953 (Centennial Edition)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   10   Page   15  

Lester Hotel / Lester Café  
Cerro Gordo, Iowa

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**Boundary Description** of Parcel No. 07-09-205-010: S 16' of W 66' L5 & W 66' Lot 9, Block 9 H.G. Parker's Addition

**Boundary Justification:** The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Hotel Lester/Lester Café.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

---

name/title Beth Enright/Grant Administrator e-mail address benright@masoncity.net  
organization City of Mason City date July 2, 2002  
street & number 10 1<sup>st</sup> Street NW telephone (641) 421-3626  
city or town Mason City state IA zip code 50401

---

**Additional Documentation**

---

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

---

**Property Owner**

---

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Russell J. Hardy  
street & number 524 2<sup>nd</sup> Street SW telephone (641) 424-2376  
city or town Mason City state IA zip code 50401

---

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Hotel Lester--Lester Cafe  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: IOWA, Cerro Gordo

DATE RECEIVED: 11/07/02 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/22/02  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/08/02 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/22/02  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 02001543

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 12/20/02 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the  
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLG NATIONAL REGISTER REVIEW

SEP 19 2002

CLG Name City of Mason City Date of Public Meeting 9/5/02

Property Name Hotel Lester, 408-410 2nd Street NW, Mason City, Cerro Gordo County

1. For Historic Preservation Commission:

- Recommendation of National Register eligibility
- Recommendation of National Register ineligibility

Signature *Peggy L. Bang* Date 9/5/02

Reason(s) for recommendation:

The Commission noted that the structure is the last remaining railroad hotel in the community and is associated with significant personalities.

2. For Chief Elected Local Official:

- Recommendation of National Register eligibility
- Recommendation of National Register ineligibility

Signature *Bill Schultze* Date 9/18/02

Reason(s) for recommendation:

*(SEE ABOVE)*

3. Professional Evaluation Name *RALPH J. CHRISTIAN*

- Recommendation of National Register eligibility
- Recommendation of National Register ineligibility

Signature *Ralph J. Christian* Date 9/23/02

Reason(s) for recommendation:

RETURN TO: State Historical Society of Iowa, ATTN: National Register Coordinator, 600 E. Locust, Des Moines, IA 50319



Hotel Lester / Lester Cafe

408-412 2nd St NW

Mason City, Cerro Gordo County, Iowa

Photo by MCPH Historical Photo Collections

May 2002

Negative at MCPH-Archive

Front facade - facing north



Hotel Lester / Lester Cafe  
408-412 2nd St NW  
Mason City, Cerro Gordo County, Iowa  
Photo by MACPC Historical Photo Collections  
May, 2002

Negative at MACPC-Archive  
First floor - lobby



Hotel Lester / Lester Cafe  
408-412 2nd St NW  
Mason City, Cerro Gordo County, Iowa  
Photo by MCPL Historical Photo Collections  
May, 2002  
Negative at MCPL - Archive  
First floor - manager's apt.



Hotel Lester / Lester Cafe  
408-412 2nd St NW  
Mason City, Cerro Gordo County, Iowa  
Photo by MCPH Historical Photo Collections  
May 2002

Negative at MCPH Archive  
First floor - manager's apt.



Hotel Lester / Lester Cafe  
408-412 2nd St. NW  
Mason City, Cerro Gordo County, Iowa  
Photo by MCPL Historical Photo Collections  
May, 2002  
Negative at MCPL - Archive  
Second Floor Room



Hotel Lester / Lester Cafe'

408-417 2nd St NW

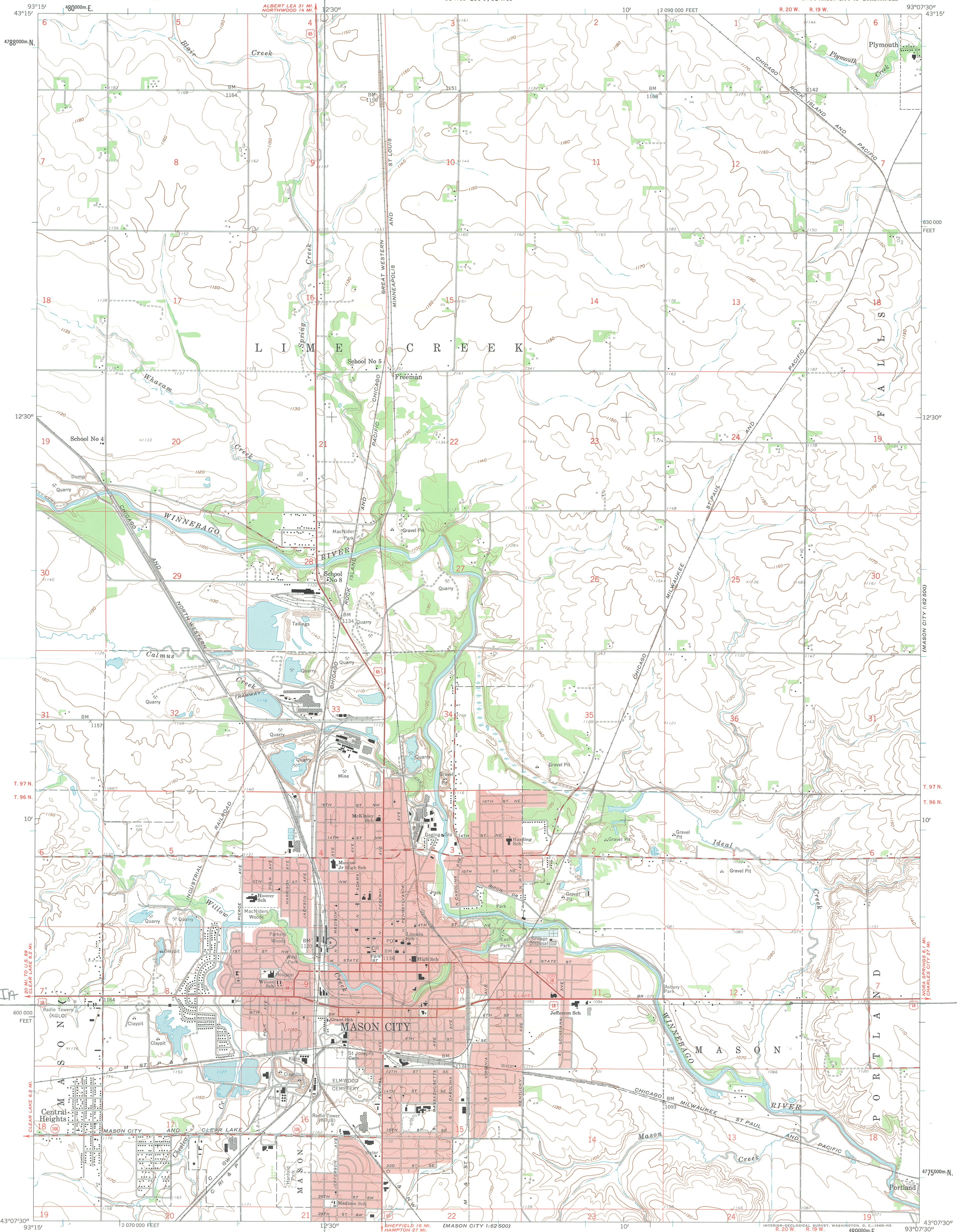
Mason City, Cerro Gordo County, Iowa

Photo by MCPL Historical Photo Collections

May, 2002

Negative at MCPL - Archive

Second floor hallway



Hotel Lester  
Cerro Gordo Co., IA  
Zone 15  
E 483060  
N 477720

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods  
Aerial photographs taken 1957. Field check 1959  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Iowa coordinate system, north zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 15, shown in blue  
Red tint indicates areas in which only  
landmark buildings are shown

TRUE NORTH  
MAGNETIC NORTH  
APPROXIMATE MEAN  
DECLINATION, 1959

SCALE 1:24,000  
1 MILE  
1 KILOMETER  
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 5-FOOT CONTOURS  
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———  
U.S. Route ——— State Route ———



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER 25, COLORADO OR WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  
AND BY THE IOWA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, IOWA CITY, IOWA  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

MASON CITY, IOWA  
NW/4 MASON CITY 15' QUADRANGLE  
N 4307.5—W 9307.5/7.5

1959