

Site Inventory Form
State Historical Society of Iowa
 (November 2005)

State Inventory No. 50-01628 New Supplemental
 Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) 50-01703
 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 Skiff Block
 other names/site number Coast to Coast Hardware, Spurgeon's Department Store

2. Location

street & number 115-117 1st Ave. W.
 city or town Newton vicinity, county Jasper
 Legal Description: (If Rural) Township Name _____ Township No. _____ Range No. _____ Section _____ Quarter of Quarter _____
 (If Urban) Subdivision Original Town Block(s) 20 Lot(s) 3

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)	Number of Resources within Property	
	If Non-Eligible Property Enter number of:	If Eligible Property, enter number of: Contributing Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	_____ buildings	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____ sites	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____ structures	_____ structures
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____ objects	_____ objects
<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____ Total	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related project report or multiple property study (Enter "N/A" if the property is not part of a multiple property examination).
 Title Downtown Newton, Iowa Historical Architectural Data Base Number 50-010

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>02E09 COMMERCE/TRADE/furniture</u>	<u>02E COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty</u>
<u>02E05 COMMERCE/TRADE/hardware store</u>	_____
_____	_____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>08 MODERN MOVEMENT</u>	foundation <u>03 BRICK</u>
_____	walls (visible material) <u>03 BRICK</u>
_____	roof _____
_____	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)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	A Property is associated with significant events.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	B Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	C Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	D Property yields significant information in archaeology or history.

County Jasper
City Newton

Address 115-117 1st Ave. W.

Site Number 50-01628
District Number 50-01703

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

Significant Dates

Construction date
1889 check if circa or estimated date
Other dates, including renovation
1911, 1945, c.1955

Significant Person

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

Architect/Builder

Architect

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 Ferdinand J. Chabot, Commissioner
organization Newton Historic Preservation Commission
street & number 101 W. 4th St. S.
city or town Newton state IA date 06-01-12
telephone 641-792-2787 zip code 50208

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: _____

Page 1

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

5. Classification, cont'd.

The Skiff Block is considered a building and a contributing resource to the Newton Downtown Historic District.

7. Description

Site Description

The Skiff Block is located at the midpoint of the 100 block of 1st Ave. W.; its façade faces north. It is adjoined on the east and west by two-story commercial buildings. It is located on the south side of the city square in the historic downtown of Newton, Iowa in Jasper County. The building is sited on a tight parcel of land at 115/117 1st Ave. W. Its 66-foot wide façade extends 132 feet to the south. On-street parking is located on the north side of the building and a public sidewalk runs flush to the building on the north, providing access to the primary entrance.

Property Description

The Skiff Block is a two-story brick building constructed on a brick and poured concrete foundation. The building is visually defined by its mass and its modern era commercial fenestration. The storefront has historically been divided into three separate businesses each with a single door in the middle of its north façade and large display windows on both sides. There are nine small second floor windows of industrial steel frame and mullion construction on the north façade of the structure. A non-historic fixed awning of aluminum and steel construction is attached to the lower level of the north façade.

Integrity Considerations

The Skiff Block retains a good level of historic integrity related to a significant modernization movement of the mid-twentieth century which drastically altered the facades of many downtown Newton buildings. The level of integrity as it relates to design, workmanship, and materials used for the 1950's alteration of the façade is good. As it relates to location, association, and setting, the building retains a good level of integrity and contributes to the integrity of feeling created by the generally intact commercial district found in Newton.

8. Statement of Significance

The Skiff Block is considered a contributing resource to the Newton Downtown Historic District. The building is eligible under Criterion A in association with the history of Newton commerce, significant in its ability to contribute to our understanding of the evolution of the business district and its impact on the economic success of the community of Newton.

Page 2

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

8. Statement of Significance, cont'd.

Historical Background

Newton was platted as the Jasper County seat in 1847. The commercial district grew up around the courthouse square with the earliest buildings, which commonly housed both commerce and dwellings, constructed of wood. The development of the downtown from its platting in 1846 to c.1890 is tied to its status as the county seat and the 1867 arrival of the Mississippi-Missouri Railroad. The character of the commercial downtown is recorded in images of the contiguous brick commercial Italianate buildings surrounding the courthouse square.

Beginning in the 1890s, it was industry, specifically the washing machine industry, that drove Newton's economy and the commercial success of its downtown. Due to the success and longevity of the Maytag Company, its history presents the greatest impact on Newton's downtown commercial district. From 1890-1920, a period in Maytag history marked by the company's incorporation and the development of the first electrically powered washing machine, a number of significant buildings were constructed in the Newton Downtown District. The addition of these buildings (and others) introduced a 20th century architectural sensibility to the district; moving the visual character away from the Late Victorian era Italianate style that had previously dominated the streetscapes.

During the decade of 1920 to 1930, Newton's population nearly doubled. The period is marked by the Maytag Company's ascension to the nation's leading manufacturer of washing machines. The economic prosperity brought by the company's success is reflected in the Newton Downtown Historic District with the construction of some of its most important buildings including the First Newton National Bank (1920) and the Maytag Hotel (1926). Both buildings lend a sense of importance to the downtown district.

The visual character and composition of the downtown district remained generally constant through the Depression era and war years – a period when industry and commerce (including the Maytag Company) were focused on surviving and on supporting the war effort. The boom that came in the wake of Maytag's 1946 introduction of the automatic washing machine was apparent in the Newton Downtown Historic District by the mid-1950s. Between about 1954 and 1963 the downtown buildings (including the Southern Utilities property) underwent dramatic alteration, a nearly wholesale removal of the Italianate façades and replacement with those reflecting a mid-20th century Modern aesthetic. Buildings altered during that period line the streetscapes of the district. In addition to the Victorian era buildings that were re-faced during this time, a number of new buildings were constructed, their stylistic character reflective of the era.

Although the washing machine industry in Newton is now a thing of the past, its mark on the Newton Downtown Historic District is undeniable.

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Page 3

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

8. Statement of Significance, cont'd.

Property History

Early Newton was served by a number of fine hotels of that day. One of them was The Phelps House which was constructed in 1856 on the west side of the alley in the 100 block on 1 Ave. W. The Phelps House had a very good reputation as described by A.K. Campbell in his *Early Life in Newton (1915)*, "This hotel was noted all over the state and to the west." In 1871, The Phelps House was known as the "Jasper Ho" and stood on that site until the mid-1870s. Mssrs. J.A. Dunham and J.W. Hartzell were the owners of the property. The next structure built on the property at 113 1 Ave. W. was a two-story building with a 28 foot frontage that stretched south for 80 feet. It housed a dry goods and grocery business on the first floor owned by R.A. Sankey and J.M. Rodgers with offices on the second floor. The building was torn down in the mid-1880s.

In 1887 R.A. Sankey sold the entire 66-foot-wide Lot 3 of Block 20 (113, 115, and 117 1st Ave. W.) to Vernon W. Skiff, a well-to-do local merchant. The construction of the triple-wide building, the Skiff Block, began in 1888. The initial construction was a 100 foot building north to south. The first tenants of the east third of the newly completed Skiff Block from 1889 to 1910 were various dry goods stores. Mr. Skiff sold the west two-thirds of the property on July 5, 1906, to Mssrs. Baum and McLaughlin. Skiff sold the east one-third of the property on July 17, 1906, to Mssrs. M.A. (Milt) and W.A. Carrier. Mr. and Mrs. Skiff moved to the Oak Park neighborhood in Chicago in 1909 to be near their grown children and extended family. Recounting Mr. Skiff's generosity to the city, after his wife Mary Francis Skiff died in 1918, Mr. Skiff endowed a new hospital, The Mary Francis Skiff Memorial Hospital, to the city of Newton. The hospital still serves Newton and Jasper County today as the much larger Skiff Medical Center.

The Skiff Block was given a major alteration in 1900 when the west two-thirds of the building were extended 32 feet south to the alley. In 1910 the east third of the Skiff Block was also extended 32 feet to the alley. M. A. Carrier Dry Goods set up business on the first floor of the east third of the building that year and the Iowa Telephone Company began operating out of the second floor. In 1920, Ed Bollhoefer Dry Goods leased the east third of the Skiff Block and began business that same year. In 1929 the east third of the Skiff Block was leased to Heurst and Toombs Department Store.

In 1935 Coast to Coast Hardware, headquarters in Minneapolis, began the longest lease of the east third of the Skiff Block, 49 years in all. From 1935 to 1941 it was known as the Nelson Coast to Coast Store; the franchise was owned and operated by George Nelson who with five employees operated the store until the franchise was purchased by Edgar T. Sersland. Mr. Sersland opened his newly-acquired franchise on August 4, 1941. Over the history of Coast to Coast Hardware in Newton, the franchise's owners sold toys, paints, a full inventory of hardware, automobile accessories, large household appliances, small kitchen appliances, dishware, and sporting goods. In the mid-1940s the exterior of the building was altered with the removal of the pediment that contained the Skiff name and the original construction year of 1889. The long-time owners of the property, the Carrier family, sold the east 22 feet of the Skiff Block on February 25, 1958, to Edgar and Gerda Sersland. In the mid-1950's, the

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Page 4

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

8. Statement of Significance, cont'd.

exterior was extensively altered to modernize the façade and give it the look retained to the present time. On December 10, 1979, Robert J. McLaughlin and his wife Maxine sold the west two-thirds of the Skiff Block to Edgar and Gerda Sersland. Coast to Coast Hardware operated in the east third of the Skiff Block through 1980. In early 1980, Mr. Sersland sold his franchise to two gentlemen who had worked for him there, Bob Marshall and Ivan Dimon. That same year the new franchise owners moved the business from the east third of the Skiff Block to the west two-thirds of the Skiff Block in order to expand their product lines. In 1993, Mr. Dimon sold his interest in the franchise to Bob Marshall and Bob's son Jim Marshall. Bob and Jim Marshall operated their Coast to Coast Hardware franchise business until 1997.

From 1910 to 1945, the west two-thirds of the Skiff Block was home to Baum and McLaughlin Furniture and Undertakers (1910 to 1920); Meurer, Murdoch and Toedt Furniture (1920 to 1929); Townsend Furniture (1929 to 1933); and Reliable Department Store (1933 to 1945). In 1945, the Spurgeon's Department Store opened for business at 115/117 1 Ave. W. It was an important retail store on the Newton City Square for almost 35 years. In the mid-1950's, the façade was markedly altered as part of the twentieth century modernization movement in downtown Newton. This alteration was undertaken by the property owners at that time – Charles H. and W.H. Carrier (east third) and Robert J. McLaughlin (west two-thirds). The remnants of the Italianate window caps and all other original masonry were removed. They were replaced with a modern modular brick façade with small steel frame and mullion windows installed in the original second floor window openings. This is the façade that exists to the present day. In 1980, Spurgeon's Department Store moved from the west two-thirds of the Skiff Block to the new Newton Shopping Center on the east side of town. As stated above, Coast to Coast Hardware moved into the west two-thirds of the building. After Bob and Jim Marshall closed the Coast to Coast Hardware franchise in 1997, the west two-thirds of the Skiff Block sat vacant for just a short time. Brown's Shoe Fit Company began leasing the space in late 1997 and remains in the building to the present. Before opening the business, the shoe company franchise owner had the commercial storefront changed from two entry doors to one entry door.

Nollens' Hallmark Shop, State Farm Insurance, Family Time Rent-to-Own, and Klassy Kids leased the east third of the Skiff Block successively between 1980 and 1997. Gerda Sersland sold the property to lone Vasquez on November 14, 1995. H&R Block began leasing the building in 1997.

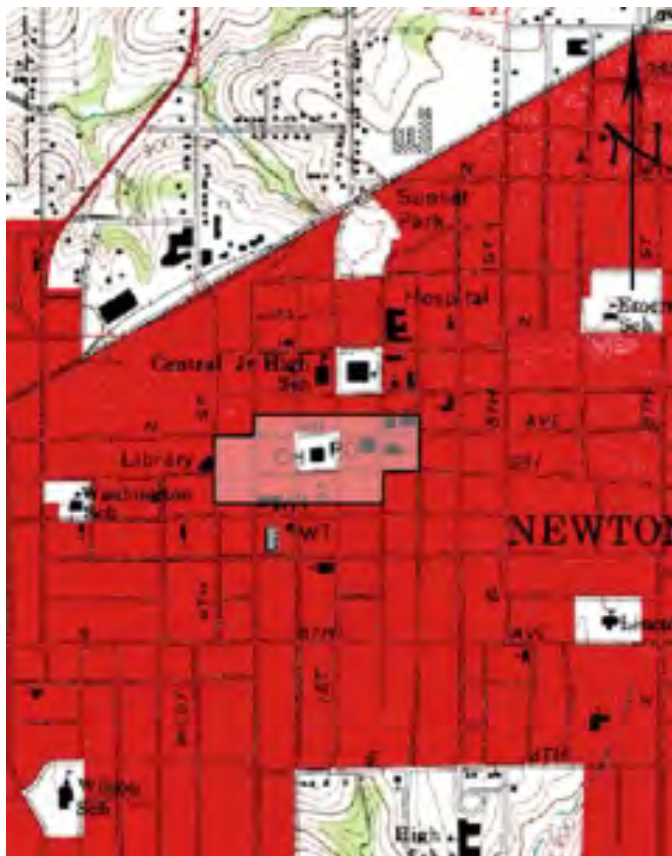
In 1984, the alley to the east of 113 1st Ave. W. was filled in with an 18-foot-wide two-story building that extended 132 feet south to the alley. This new property houses the Newton Development Corporation and Newton Chamber of Commerce. The new property was given the address 113 1st Ave. W. The Coast to Coast Hardware building became 115 1st Ave. W. and the Spurgeon's Department Store building became 117 1st Ave. W. Sersland family trusts continue to own the west two-thirds of the Skiff Block to the present time.

Page 5

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional Documentation - Maps

USGS 7.5 MINUTE TOPOGRAPHIC MAP - NEWTON – 1965



(MAP SOURCE: www.trails.com)

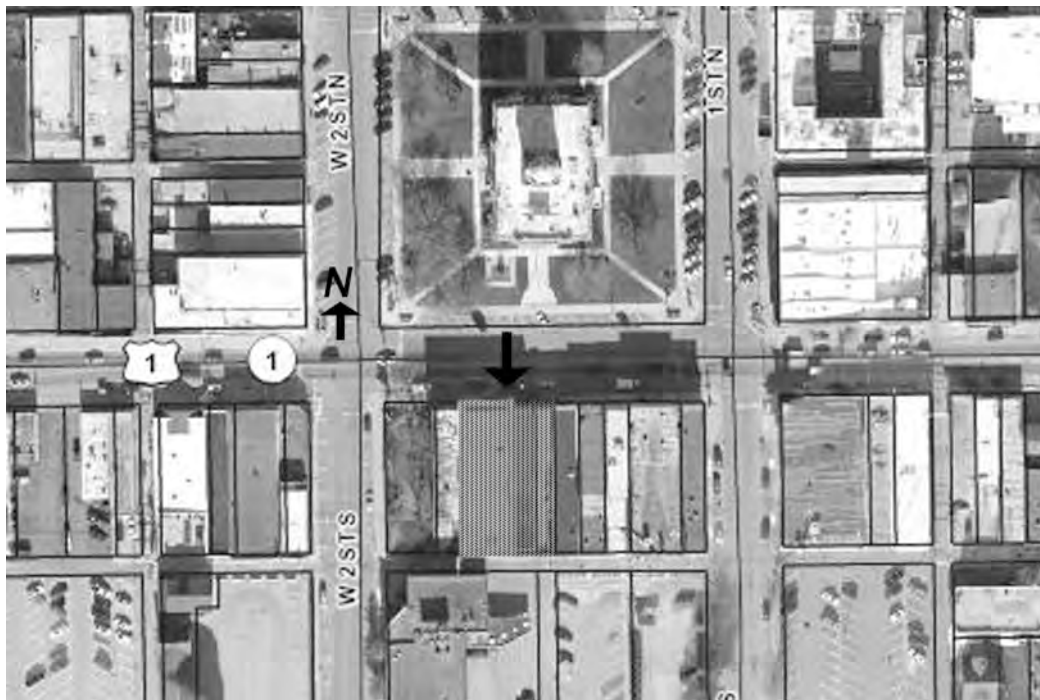
The approximate location of the proposed historic preservation district is indicated by the outlined and highlighted area.

Page 6

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional Documentation – Maps

PARCEL MAP - AERIAL VIEW - 2011



(MAP SOURCE: Jasper County Assessor)

The location of the building is marked with a downward arrow and shading.

Page 7

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional documentation, cont'd.

PHOTOGRAPHS



(IMAGE SOURCE: Sue Smith – 2011)

The main entrances (north façade) of the Coast-to-Coast Store and Spurgeon's Department Store are shown in this photo in their present day iterations as H&R Block and Brown's Shoe Fit Company, respectively.

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

Site Number **50-01628**
Related District Number 50-01703

Page 8

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional documentation, cont'd.

PHOTOGRAPHS



(IMAGE SOURCE: Sue Smith – 2011)

The resource appears as the second and third businesses from the right in this photograph of the south side of the downtown square in Newton.

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

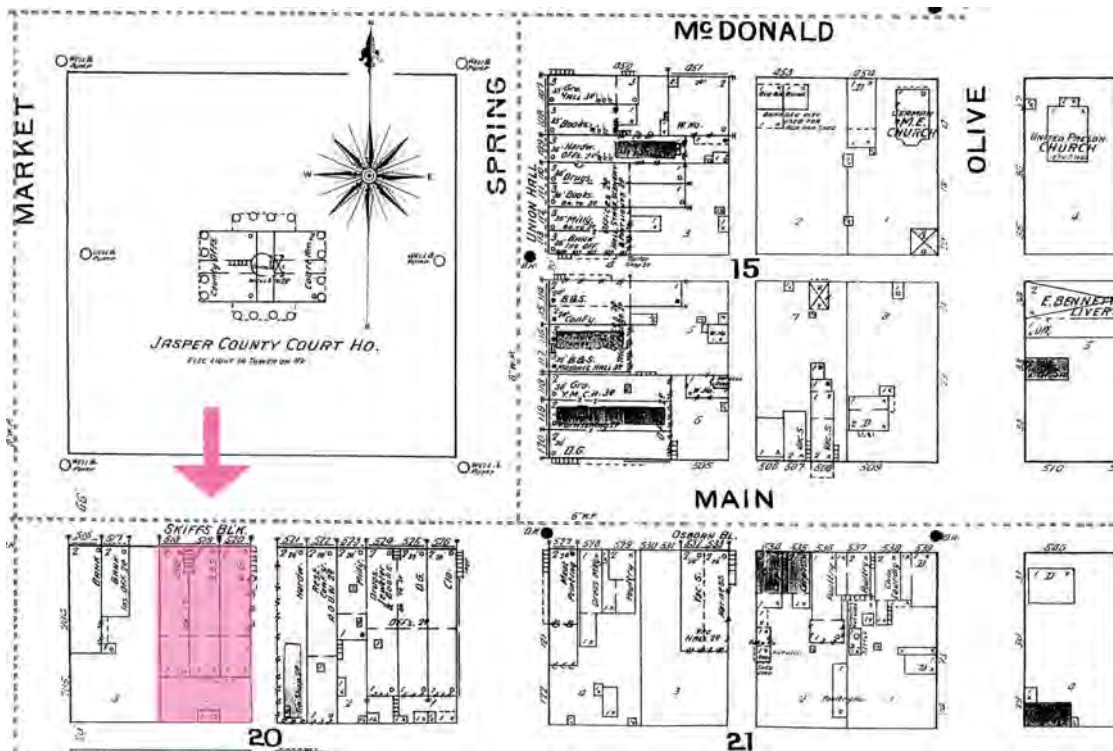
Site Number **50-01628**
Related District Number **50-01703**

Page 9

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional documentation, cont'd.

FIRE INSURANCE MAP – 1894



(MAP SOURCE: Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Map, 1894)

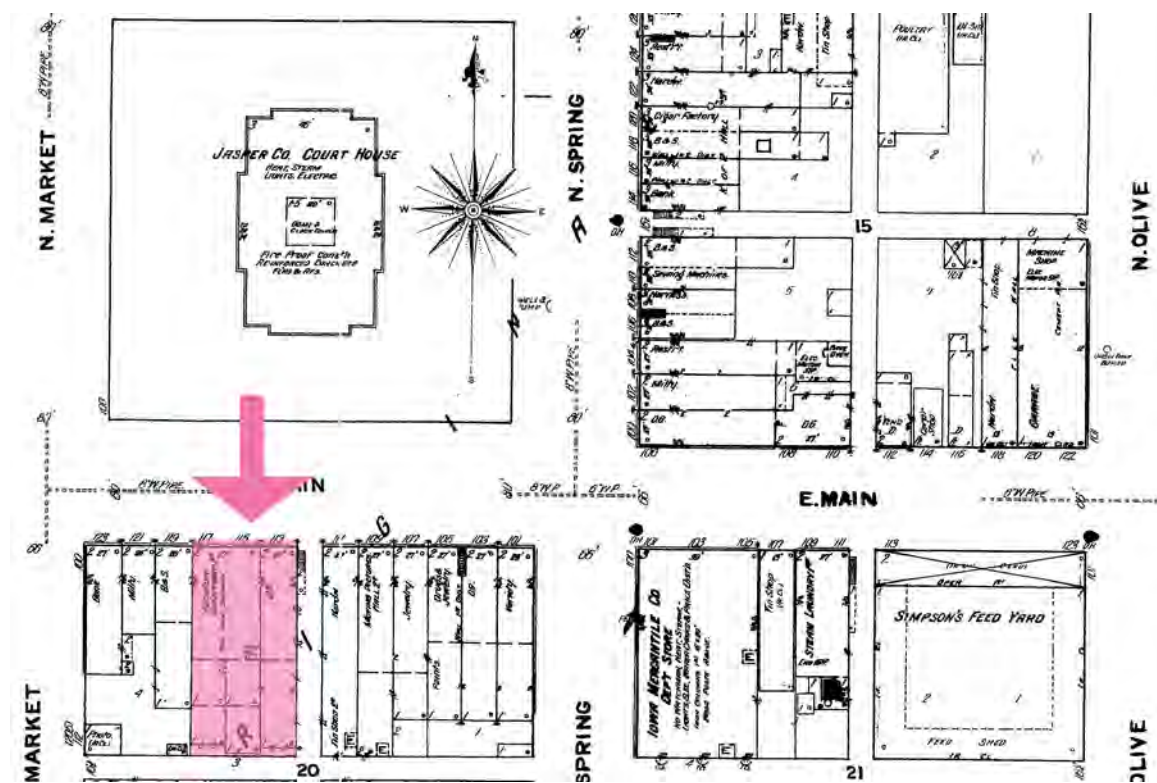
The location of the resource is indicated by the downward arrow.

Page 10

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional documentation, cont'd.

FIRE INSURANCE MAP – 1911



(MAP SOURCE: Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Map, 1911)

The location of the resource is indicated by the arrow. The building is the two-story, triple-wide Skiff Block that was constructed in 1889. The alterations that extended the Skiff Block to the east-west alley were completed in 1910.

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

Site Number **50-01628**
Related District Number 50-01703

Page 11

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional documentation, cont'd

HISTORIC IMAGES – ca. 1914



(IMAGE SOURCE: Dorothy Watson)

The Skiff Block consists of the fourth through sixth businesses from the right in this photograph.

Page 12

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional documentation, cont'd.

HISTORIC IMAGES – ca. 1929



(IMAGE SOURCE: Jasper County Historical Society)

The Skiff Block is the third building from the right in this photograph. The triple-wide building has a peaked pediment with flagpole. The pediment has the inscription "V.W. Skiff" and the date 1889.

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

Site Number **50-01628**
Related District Number 50-01703

Page 13

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional documentation, cont'd.

HISTORIC IMAGES – ca. 1948



(IMAGE SOURCE: Avery Wilson Collection, Newton Public Library)

Coast-to-Coast Hardware and Spurgeon's Department Store can be seen in this photograph of the south side of the city square. This view shows the north façade of the building after its mid-1940's remodeling to remove a portion of the pediment.

Page 14

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional documentation, cont'd.

HISTORIC IMAGES – 1960



(IMAGE SOURCE: Jasper County Historical Society)

The resource is seen just to the left of the Jasper County Courthouse in this photograph looking southwest at the south side of the city square. This image shows the north façade changes to the Skiff Block made in the mid-1950's. The photograph is from the 1960 edition of the *Newtonia*, the Newton Senior High School annual.

Page 15

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional documentation, cont'd.

HISTORIC IMAGES – 1980



(IMAGE SOURCE: Bob Marshal Collection)

In this October, 1980 photograph the triple-wide Skiff Block is shown. The Coast to Coast Hardware store had just been relocated from the east one-third of the Skiff Block to the west two-thirds of the Skiff Block. The General Lee hot rod from the television show, The Dukes of Hazard, is shown racing east on 1st Ave. W.

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

Site Number **50-01628**
Related District Number 50-01703

Page 16

Skiff Block	Jasper
Name of Property	County
115-117 1st Ave. W.	Newton
Address	City

9. Major Bibliographic References

A.K. Campbell, comp. and ed., *Early Life in Newton* (1915).

Interview with Bob Marshall and Jim Marshall, March 19, 2012.

Jasper County Auditor property transfer records.

Larry Ray Hurto, comp. and ed., *A History of Newton, Iowa* (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1992), pp. 255-56.

Newton Daily News, May 2, 1952.

Newtonia, 1960 edition, Inter-Collegiate Press, Kansas City.

Internet resources

Jasper County Assessor www.iowaassessors.com

National Register of Historic Places www.nps.gov

Iowa State Historic Preservation Office

Database of Iowa resources www.iowahistory.org
Berry Bennett, Inventory & Information Management

Topographic Maps

Source for USGS Topographic maps www.beaonschneidercorp.com