

Washington, DC
12/22/93

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 determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction 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 an 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 Ruebel Hotel

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 207 - 215 East Main Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Grafton [N/A] vicinity

state Illinois code IL county Jersey code 083 zip code 62037

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 [].)

William L. Wheeler / SHPO 12/20/93
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet [].
- determined eligible for the
National Register
See continuation sheet [].
- determined not eligible for the
National Register.
- removed from the
National Register
- other, explain
See continuation sheet [].

Signature of the Keeper	Date
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Ruebel Hotel
Name of Property

Jersey/Illinois
County/State

Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois
Multiple Property Submission

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
(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/hotel

COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation limestone

walls brick

roof asphalt

other metal

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Ruebel Hotel
Name of Property

Jersey/Illinois
County/State

Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois
Multiple Property Submission

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.)

Property is:

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.

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

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography
(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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Architecture

Periods of Significance

1913 - 1943

Significant Dates

1913

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository:

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Ruebel Hotel
Name of Property

Jersey/Illinois
County/State

Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois
Multiple Property Submission

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	722470	4316310			
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing
			[]	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.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Alice Edwards/Preservation Planner & Karen L. Kummer/Architectural Historian
organization The URBANA Group date November 1993
street & number 202 South Broadway, Suite 206, P.O. Box 1028 telephone (217) 344-7526
city or town Urbana state IL zip code 61801-9028

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Marlene and Paul Schneider
street & number 231 Monier telephone 618.466.4496
city or town Alton state Illinois zip code 62002

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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Ruebel Hotel; Jersey County, Illinois
Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois, c. 1830 - 1943
Section number 7

Page 1

Narrative Description

The two story Ruebel Hotel is located at 207-215 East Main Street in Grafton, Illinois, toward the eastern portion of the Grafton business district on the south or river side of Main Street. Built in 1913, the Ruebel Hotel is constructed of mottled brown brick (main facade and parts of rear elevation) and red brick (west and parts of the south elevations) laid in running bond. The first floor of the main facade consists of storefronts, almost entirely with windows; the second floor is brick with windows for the hotel rooms. The Ruebel Hotel is Commercial Style, detailed with panels outlined with raised brick and a corbelled cornice. The first floor level has subtle references to the Classical Revival style, expressed through its classically inspired metal cornice. Structural and historical integrity have been preserved. The nomination consists of one contributing building.

Exterior

The Ruebel Hotel is built with a full basement foundation; the grade of the lot drops away to the south, toward the Illinois River, thus exposing the west and south elevations of the basement. The basement level is laid with rock-faced, random coursed limestone on the west half and brick on the east half. A shed roof covers the building. Above the basement level, the hotel is U-shaped on the rear elevation. The main facade of the building is set directly on the sidewalk.

The main (north) facade has three bays with the center bay extending over the sidewalk as a projecting entry pavilion with an open first story (photo 1). Two metal columns at the sidewalk's edge support the pavilion's upper story which has two paired one-over-one light windows on the front and single one-over-one windows on the side elevations (photo 2). The corbelled cornice found in the main facade plane wraps around the pavilion. A bell-cast hip roof covers the pavilion which is slightly lower than the main roof line. The area located over the sidewalk has a decorative pressed metal ceiling consisting of a center circle and four flanking nymphs; a metal cornice encircles the ceiling area (photo 3).

Entry into the hotel is via two concrete steps that lead up into a deeply recessed vestibule area with flanking display windows; the vestibule also has a decorative metal ceiling. Wood double doors with "Ruebel Hotel" etched in the doors' beveled glass give access to the hotel's interior. A large one-light transom above the doorway is also etched with "Ruebel Hotel."

The east and west bays consist of storefronts at the first story. The west two storefronts have a center recessed vestibule with two one-light doors set on angle to each other; air-conditioners fill the transom areas. Original large fixed display windows set over wood bulkheads flank the vestibule; the storefronts' transom area is now infilled with wood. The east storefront's recessed entryway is located next to the center projecting pavilion. This entryway has a one-light door to the storefront set on angle and a door to the upper story straight ahead. The far east portion of this storefront's large fixed display windows

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Ruebel Hotel; Jersey County, Illinois
Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois, c. 1830 - 1943
Section number 7

Page 2

have been replaced with a multi-light section, although the original four-light transom extends across the storefront. A metal cornice wraps around the center projecting pavilion and continues across the east and west storefront bays.

On the second floor of the facade, four one-over-one light windows with double rowlock segmental arches and header brick sills are on each side of the center pavilion. Decorative brick panels are centered above these windows and below the corbelled brick cornice. The building's original metal cornice, once located above the corbelling, has been removed and the area is covered.

The exposed limestone basement of the west elevation is probably a remnant of the previous hotel building that burned in December, 1912. A limestone wall parallel to the street at the sidewalk edge between the hotel and its western neighbor, retains East Main Street and allows the basement to be at-grade. The basement story has three entrances interspersed between two high rectangular windows and three one-over-one windows; all the openings have limestone segmental arches. A limestone watertable divides the basement story from the upper two stories which are executed in red brick laid in five course common bond with sixth course Flemish headers. The first story has a single entry (now boarded) to the north and five windows to the south; the second story has similar openings with the addition of a single sash north of the doorway. As on the facade, the west elevation windows are one-over-one. A balcony supported on decorative metal brackets with a wood platform and decorative metal railing is located in front of the second story one-light door with transom. The parapet has been rebuilt in dark red brick (six course common bond) and a large decorative brick panel is above the upper story openings. Tile coping caps the stepped parapet and there are two furnace chimneys to the south. The east elevation is adjacent to 217-223 East Main Street.

The rear (south) elevation is basically rectangular in plan for the basement story, but the upper stories have a "U"-plan which divides the elevation into two distinct sections (photo 4). The west half has a limestone foundation and two brick upper stories. Each story has a center doorway and two flanking one-over-one windows. The basement openings have limestone segmental arches, but the windows are boarded; the upper stories have double rowlock segmental arches and one-over-one windows with concrete sills flanking the doorways. The second story has a wood and metal balcony across the western three openings with metal stairs leading down to a similar balcony across the central two openings of the first story; metal stairs continue down to grade level (photo 5). The metal support brackets and railing match the balcony on the west elevation.

The eastern half of the rear elevation has a central "light court" above the basement story giving the upper stories a "U"-plan. Four one-over-one windows are found on the side elevations of the "U," while two one-over-one windows are found on the narrower north elevation; all the fenestration has double rowlock segmental arches and header brick sills. The basement story of the "U" section contains a doorway to the east and two window openings (partially boarded) to the west. The easternmost section of the building has

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Ruebel Hotel; Jersey County, Illinois
Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois, c. 1830 - 1943
Section number 7

Page 3

a two-story (basement and first story) projecting wing attached at the rear. A garage door with flanking boarded openings is found on the lower story, while the first story has a bank of seven windows. Three one-over-one windows are located on the second story of this section above the projecting wing.

An alley is located to the rear of the property with an asphalt parking lot between the building and the alley.

Interior

The interior of the Ruebel Hotel is composed of three sections, each accessible from separate exterior entrances. The left or eastern section includes a recessed exterior vestibule with an angled entrance to the eastern storefront room and a separate entrance to the staircase to the second story. The eastern room is a broad, open space measuring approximately twenty feet wide by fifty feet deep. The west wall of this space angles into the space (approximately five feet) about thirty feet back into the room. No openings interrupt the side walls of this room. A secondary or storage space is at the rear of this room, accessible by two doors.

Double doors access the central lobby section. Shortly after entering the lobby, is an elaborate wide wood staircase leading to the basement. A staircase to the second floor is accessible to the left, by walking around the basement staircase. Partition walls divide the space into two sections past the front lobby section. The hotel's registration desk is behind a small room to the right of the main entrance.

The third or western section of the hotel has a recessed angled vestibule with access to the original saloon on the right and a small middle room on the left. A small storage room, measuring approximately nine feet by fifteen feet, now occupies the southwest corner of this western section; it is accessible from doors along the length of the room. Minimal windows illuminate this space to the west, with only three double hung windows between the bar and the rear storage room.

The configuration between the lobby and the saloon space appears to have been altered between 1914 and 1936 as evidenced from the Sanborn Maps. On the 1914 Map, the floor plan shows three equally spaced units labeled as stores, with the west unit additionally identified as a saloon. By 1936, the center and western units had been rearranged slightly, with the additional storefront (the extant small middle room) being added from the central and western units. By this time, the central space is identified as "Lobby," with the small middle room and the west room being labeled "store." Additionally, a restaurant had been added behind the lobby, using space from the rear half of the central section and a portion of the added storefront.

The basement spaces are intact, with the ornate staircase from the first floor leading to a hallway which runs east-west. Straight across from the staircase is the ballroom, measuring approximately 40 x 40 feet, complete with pressed metal ceilings and original light fixtures (some of which are gas.) Four small rooms

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Ruebel Hotel; Jersey County, Illinois
Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois, c. 1830 - 1943
Section number 7

Page 4

are off the basement hallway. An additional room, in the southeast corner of the building, was a carpenter's room or buggy room, where buggies were repaired. (From the exterior of the rear elevation, this room may now be identified by the garage door.) The basement also contains a kitchen area and bathrooms. Extending underneath the sidewalk area adjacent to Main Street are barrel vaulted cellars for storage of wine and beer. One of the cellars was used for coal, and originally had direct loading access from the sidewalk. An early walk-in cooler or ice box manufactured by Frigidaire is extant, as are remnants of the old hand-cranked electricity system which supplied the hotel. Originally, old wells were bored from the basement into the bedrock to underground aquifers to supply the hotel with water.

The second story interior of the hotel is also intact, with thirteen sleeping rooms, three bathrooms, and a general meeting space which was accessed directly from the separate staircase at the left of the main hotel entrance. The walls of this general meeting room, perhaps also a ballroom, have remnants of hand painted murals. Original woodwork and pressed metal ceilings are retained.

The character of the interior retains a high degree of integrity, with room configurations and materials such as pressed metal ceilings, woodwork, and hand-planed oak floors remaining throughout the building. The original interior staircases to the basement and second floor are also extant. Most notably, the western storefront retains the original bar, an elaborately carved mahogany unit measuring approximately eighteen feet long. The bar was reportedly from the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis; historic photographs show the bar being floated over the river on a raft-like structure.¹ One historic photo, which shows the bar in place within the hotel, shows that even the bar's foot rest was ornate, with ram's heads supporting the boot rail.²

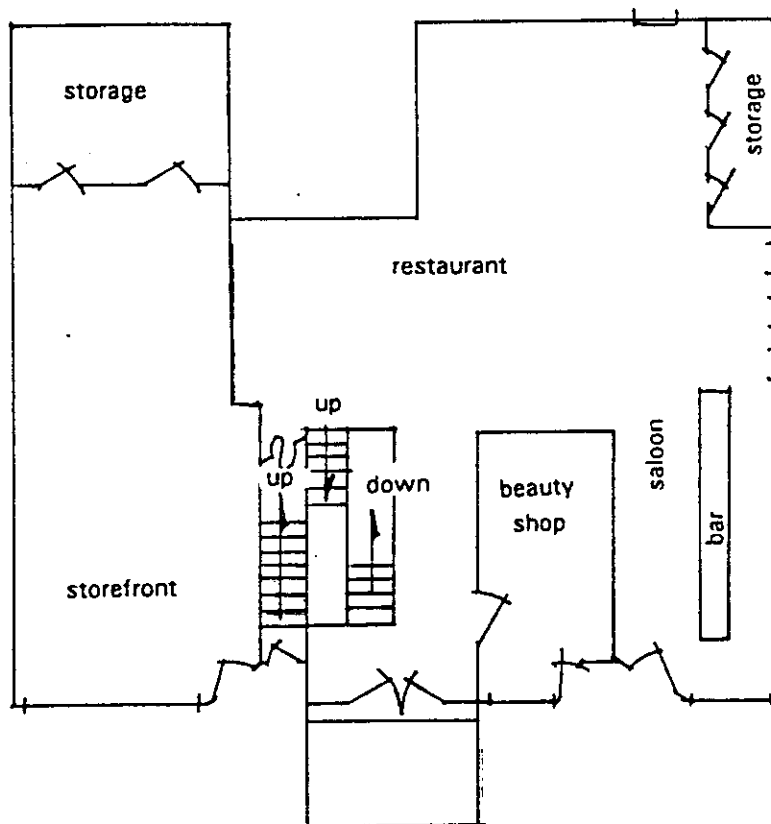
The Ruebel Hotel is currently vacant following the Great Flood of 1993.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Ruebel Hotel; Jersey County, Illinois
Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois, c. 1830 - 1943
Section number 7

Floor Plan Sketch



Not to Scale

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Ruebel Hotel; Jersey County, Illinois
Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois, c. 1830 - 1943
Section number 8

Page 6

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Ruebel Hotel is eligible to the National Register under Criterion A for Commerce and Criterion C for Architecture. Commercially, the Ruebel Hotel provided temporary housing, store space, and restaurant and saloon facilities to the community since 1879, with the original building burning in a 1912 fire and being replaced with the current building in 1913. While as many as two other hotels existed in Grafton at the same time, the Ruebel Hotel was known throughout Jersey County as the finest hotel, and is the only remaining hotel building in Grafton. Architecturally, the Ruebel Hotel is a good example of Commercial Style architecture in Grafton. Retaining a high degree of integrity, the Ruebel Hotel is subtly ornamented with brick corbelling, raised brick panels, and double rowlock segmental brick arches over its windows, all classic characteristics of early twentieth century commercial buildings, particularly in small towns. The hotel's interior spaces and materials are excellent examples of the hotel building type. The Ruebel Hotel meets the registration requirements for the property type "Resources Associated with Commerce," subtype "Commercial Building," as established in the Multiple Property Documentation form "Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois, c. 1830 - 1943." The Ruebel Hotel directly relates to the associated historic context "The Era of Modern Transportation, c. 1913 - 1943." The period of significance for the building reflects its rebuilding in 1913, and continues to the fifty year cut-off date for the National Register.

The thriving post-Civil War activities in Grafton were bringing numerous visitors and workers to the city. Following the Civil War, however, Grafton had no place to house transients. An 1867 article in the *Jersey County Democrat*, reported on the surprising variety of goods available in the "pleasant, thriving, little town," having found five stores (offering dry goods and groceries and "things usually kept in a country store"), two blacksmith shops, one drugstore, one wagon shop, one butcher shop (meat for sale every day), two shoe shops, one harness makers shop, one tin shop, one watch maker and silversmith, two large flouring mills, one large mill (for sawing rock by steam), three cooper shops, and two physicians, but no hotel.³ The quarry industry, active river traffic, and related commerce was creating a need for temporary housing in Grafton.

Grafton's first response to this void in the housing market was the Grafton House. Located on the southeast corner of Main and Vine (later Pine) streets, the Grafton House was begun in 1869 by Martin Flannigan, a native of Limerick, Ireland. The two story hotel was originally 12 x 24 feet, but was enlarged in 1872 to 24 x 38 feet.⁴ The hotel business in Grafton was apparently thriving, with Flannigan again enlarging in 1883 by building an addition measuring 26 x 38 feet which enlarged the hotel's capacity to twenty-two "sleeping apartments."⁵ Flannigan also operated a livery and feed stable located to the rear of his hotel.⁶ By 1900, the Grafton House was called Calhoun House.

William S. Dempsey established the Valley House in 1871, after opening a saloon in the Fall of 1867. Like Flannigan, Dempsey was an immigrant from Ireland. Dempsey's original Valley House was demolished and rebuilt in 1873. The two story frame building contained about twenty sleeping rooms, and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Ruebel Hotel; Jersey County, Illinois
Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois, c. 1830 - 1943
Section number 8

Page 7

was located on the northwest corner of Main and Cedar streets, at the opposite end of the block from the Methodist Church.⁷

Michael Ruebel began his hotel--the Ruebel Hotel--in 1879, after operating a saloon. While the other hotels obviously served as competition, Ruebel's handsome two story brick building was quickly noted as the finest hotel facility in the county. The 1885 *History of Greene and Jersey Counties, Illinois* summarized the fine accommodations provided by the original Ruebel Hotel building:

The Ruebel Hotel is a fine three-story brick structure, with stone foundation, 76 x 71 feet in ground area, and is operated by its founder, Michael Ruebel. It contains 32 rooms, in addition to the parlor, office, billiard, store and dining rooms, the latter being 28 x 38 feet in dimensions. There is also a kitchen 20 x 20 feet in size. . .when completed [the Ruebel] will cost about \$7,000, being the finest and largest hotel in Jersey county. A fine view of the Mississippi river is had from two verandas, parlor and several sleeping apartments. The hotel is convenient to business, newly furnished, and is also to be supplied with fire escapes upon completion. It is well kept by Mr. Ruebel, who provides abundantly for the comfort and conveniences of his guests.⁸

While the 1885 *History* refers to the original building being "commenced during the winter of 1884," historic photographs of the building show its tall cast iron central pediment displaying "1879." Given the extensive description in the 1885 *History*, the earlier date would seem accurate.

Michael Ruebel was one of numerous German immigrants who eventually settled in Grafton and established businesses. Ruebel was born in Bavaria, Germany in 1834, the son of Peter and Barbara Hoffman Ruebel.⁹ At the age of sixteen he immigrated to the United States, first settling in Green Point, Long Island where he remained for eighteen months before moving on to Zanesville, Ohio.¹⁰ Eight months later, he moved to St. Louis, finally settling in Grafton in the Spring of 1863.¹¹ During the Civil War, Ruebel served four months in the Army. Ruebel worked at the cooper's trade for three years before he began saloon management. He started his hotel and saloon in 1879, and remained in that business. Michael Ruebel and Margaret Maurer of St. Louis were married in 1855. The couple had eight children: Michael, George, Charles, Louisa, Sherman, Christian (who died at age six), and two who died in infancy.¹² The Ruebels owned twenty acres of land, the hotel and saloon property, and a residence and two lots in Grafton.¹³

One advertisement for the hotel (original building shown) notes that "Transient and Fishing Parties" are a specialty, suggesting that these may have been the main customer groups. The Ruebel Hotel was also advertising its large sample rooms for traveling salesmen, good bar, and "both phones." Launches, row boats, and vehicles could be "procured at shortest notice." In an adjacent advertisement, Clarence Wedding was announcing his barber shop services in the Ruebel Hotel; Wedding was also an agent for the Alton Steam Laundry Company.¹⁴

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Ruebel Hotel; Jersey County, Illinois
Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois, c. 1830 - 1943
Section number 8

Page 8

A great fire swept Main Street in December, 1912, destroying much of the block which included the original Ruebel Hotel. The hotel was rebuilt the following year, with the Sanborn Map of 1914 indicating the new hotel building "from plans." The rebuilding likely included use of a portion of the original building, as evidenced through Sanborn Maps and observation. The Sanborn Maps from 1900 (original building) and 1914 (new building) indicate the same dimensions and unusual U-shaped rear plan, with the only noticeable change to the form of the building being that the U-shape is enclosed on the basement level at the rear elevation. Current physical evidence that a portion of the present building is part of the original building includes the limestone basement foundation level with its limestone fenestration detailing (segmental arches with stone voussoirs), and a differentiation in the red brick, found on portions of the rear and west elevations.

The two versions of the Ruebel Hotel reflect, in a small town version, the changes in the hotel industry nationally. By the end of the nineteenth century, large city hotels had evolved into luxurious architectural derivations of the grand resort hotels and palaces of Europe. Characterized by their grand scale and magnificent ornamentation including heavy gilding and lavish use of marble, examples of this type of hotel include the Waldorf-Astoria in New York, the Brown Palace in Denver, and the Palace in San Francisco. In contrast, smaller communities usually had various basic hotels, often one or two story frame buildings, more akin to rooming houses.¹⁵ By the turn of the century, two new developments in the United States influenced the twentieth century hotel business. First, as the country's economy expanded, the commercial traveler gained prominence in the business world. As the number of business travelers increased, so too did the need for suitable hotel accommodations. Second, improvements in transportation made travel more practical, in terms of convenience and expense.¹⁶

The saloon of the Ruebel Hotel was among the twenty-six saloons operating during the middle and late nineteenth century in Grafton. The larger saloons, such as the Ruebel, were typically located in the city's hotels, including the Grafton House and the Valley House. Many of the other local saloons simply operated out of basements in houses. The hotel had a restaurant, open to the public, for much of its existence, further serving the needs of its guests and the community. In a 1941 advertisement, the hotel's restaurant was called the "Chat & Nibble Restaurant," offering a complete bar service and specializing in chicken and of course, fish dinners.¹⁷ A barber shop, a ballroom, and meeting spaces were also offered by the Ruebel Hotel.

Architecturally, the Ruebel Hotel is an excellent example of the Commercial Style in Grafton. The building's first story is consumed with storefront spaces which are topped with a classically-inspired plain cornice. The building's main entrance is covered by a second story pavilion which projects over the sidewalk, in effect creating an entrance porch. The ceiling of the porch is decorated with an ornate pressed metal ceiling displaying four nymphs. Evenly spaced one-over-one double hung windows illuminate the hotel rooms on the second floor, with the projecting pavilion having paired windows facing front. Panels of raised brick and brick corbelling adorn the top of the second story; the brick corbelling continues around

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Ruebel Hotel; Jersey County, Illinois
Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois, c. 1830 - 1943
Section number 8

Page 9

the center pavilion. A raised brick panel is also found on the west elevation. The building's well-appointed interior is particularly outstanding, with all interior spaces remaining intact on all three levels. Storefronts, a saloon, and registration lobby comprise the first floor, with an ornate wood staircase leading to the basement ballroom, buggy room, and four small supportive spaces. Barrel vaulted storage rooms are intact, extending beneath the Main Street sidewalk, and an early walk-in wood ice box remains. Staircases from the main lobby interior and directly from the sidewalk access the hotel's second story, with its thirteen sleeping rooms and a general meeting space or ballroom intact. As with the other stories, the second story's pressed metal ceilings, woodwork, and hand-planed oak floors are intact. The hotel retains a very high degree of integrity, and remains a dominating visual presence on Main Street.

The Ruebel Hotel was owned and operated by several generations of the family (including the family names of Ruebel, Amburg, and Burns), with at least the restaurant operating until around 1980 under family ownership. Charles Amburg operated the hotel for many years, including the hotel's popular restaurant. The building's current owners are only the second family to own the Ruebel Hotel since the establishment of the hotel operation in 1879.¹⁸ The hotel's saloon closed around 1991. Up until the time of the flood, a beauty salon operated on the second floor. The small room to the left of the saloon was once occupied by a beauty shop.

Endnotes

1. Telephone interview with Paul Schneider, 11 November 1993.
2. Private photo collection of Bobbie and Ed Amburg, Grafton, Illinois.
3. Ruby Postlewait, project director, *Jersey County History Sesquicentennial Edition*, (Dallas: Curtis Media Corp., 1991), p. 115.
4. *History of Greene and Jersey Counties, Illinois*, (Springfield, IL: Continental History Co., 1885); reprinted ed., (Evansville, IN: UNIGRAPHIC Inc., 1980), p. 313.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid; Sanborn Maps.
7. Mary Ann Pitchford and Carol Stephens Wallace, *Visions of the Past: Grafton, Illinois*, (Grafton: Grafton Bicentennial Committee, 1976), p. 4.
8. Postlewait, p. 312.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Ruebel Hotel; Jersey County, Illinois
Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois, c. 1830 - 1943
Section number 8

Page 10

9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid, p. 313.
14. *The Grafton News*, date unknown; from the private collection of Bobbie and Ed Amburg.
15. Gerald Lattin, *Modern Hotel and Motel Management*, (San Francisco: W.J. Freeman Company, 1977), p. 8, as cited in "Inman Hotel," National Register of Historic Places Registration form, 1989.
16. Ibid.
17. *Jersey County Democrat-News, History of Grafton and St. Patrick's Church*, (Jerseyville: *Jersey County Democrat-News Print*, 1941), n.p.
18. Anna M. Hopley, *Blood, Sweat and Grafton*, (Grafton: By the Author, 1967), p. 14.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Ruebel Hotel; Jersey County, Illinois
Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois, c. 1830 - 1943
Section number 9

Page 11

Bibliography

Private Photo Collection, Bobbie and Ed Amburg, Grafton, Illinois.

Telephone conversation with Paul Schneider, 11 November 1993.

See the Multiple Property Documentation form "Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois, c. 1830 - 1943."

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Ruebel Hotel; Jersey County, Illinois
Historic Resources of Grafton, Illinois, c. 1830 - 1943
Section number 10**

Page 12

Verbal Boundary Description

Original Town, Block 8, Lots 4, 5, 8, and 9.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire city lots which have historically been associated with the property.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Historic Resources of Grafton, IL

The following text is supplemental information on the 1993 flood damage to historic resources in Grafton, Illinois.

The flood of 1993 damaged several dozen pre-World War II buildings/structures in Grafton, and the resources were underwater for several months during the spring, summer and fall of 1993. Grafton does not have a levee and therefore resources were slowly submerged in water over the course of days or weeks. The dramatic scenes of buildings being swept away by flood waters did not occur in Grafton. The flood water depth varied depending on how elevated the buildings were above the river. In some cases only the basements filled with water, and in others the water completely submerged one-story buildings to the eaveline. In general, the flood caused more damage to modern materials than historic fabric. For the most part, building rehabilitation will involve the repair or uncovering of historic materials and the replacement of modern materials.

With the recession of flood waters, the extent of the damage became apparent. Some buildings and/or porches that were not properly anchored to permanent foundations were dislodged (and in some cases, actually floated away from their site). However, most buildings remained in place. Some masonry buildings have shown settlement cracks after the flood. Basements were flooded and the mortar in masonry walls had been leached out by the flood waters. Repointing of brick and stone walls (both foundation and first floor level) will be necessary. Some brick replacement will be required where the bricks themselves spalled or were scoured out by flood water. Modern exterior synthetic siding oftentimes became warped after drying out. All buildings were covered with river mud and debris and they all need to be cleaned. Utility systems were permanently damaged by the flood, and most buildings will need new furnaces, electrical wiring, and air conditioning units.

On the interior, wood and plaster finishes were waterlogged, and most tongue and groove floors did not dry out without warping or buckling. Modern drywall (and insulation), plasterwork, doors, window moldings, and floor coverings were submerged or became saturated and had to be removed. Many historic interior finishes, such as door and window moldings, plaster, doors, and windows dried out with little structural damage. Historic wood finishes -- varnish, graining, etc. were literally dissolved by the flood waters.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Historic Resources of Grafton, IL

Specific information on the damage to the nominated buildings in Grafton is as follows:

1. Slaten-LaMarsh House, 25 East Main Street

The Slaten-LaMarsh House was flooded approximately 3-4 feet high through the first floor of the building. Repointing of the masonry foundation is required, and utility systems must be replaced. In the recent past the interior of the building had been remodelled, and all of the modern finishes were destroyed by the flood. However, historic wainscoting, floors, and some window moldings survived on the first floor. The second floor was not damaged by the flood.

2. Grafton Bank, 225 E. Main Street

Basement flooded which caused the ash fill to settle below the first floor concrete floor. Rehabilitation will require the concrete floor to be removed and reinstalled.

3. John and Amelia McClintock House, 321 E. Main Street

Basement flooded. New furnace needed, and some repointing of concrete block foundation walls.

4. Ruebel Hotel, 207-215 E. Main Street

Basement and approximately 18 inches of first floor flooded. 1/3 of first floor flooring buckled from both flood waters and roof leaks. Water heaters, furnace, and electrical wiring must be replaced. Basement historic metal ceiling was apparently damaged, however, at this time, it is uncertain how much must be removed. Modern drywall and insulation will be removed.

5. Paris Mason House, 100 N. Springfield Street

In the recent past the house had been remodelled on the interior with drywall and modern doors and windows. All historic plaster and most of the woodworking were removed at the time of the remodelling. The building is now stripped back to the historic stud walls on the interior. The historic staircase still remains. The second floor is intact, and the integrity of the building rests on its stone and brick nogging method of construction.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Historic Resources of Grafton, :

6. Grafton Historic District

Nearly all of the buildings in the district were flooded to some extent. The properties at the east end were flooded through the first floor and at the west end only basements were flooded. Exterior synthetic siding was damaged by the flood, and modern interior finishes have been removed from approximately 1/3 of the buildings. Some foundations will need repointing, however, none of the buildings suffered major structural damage. All need to be cleaned and some will need new utility systems. The extent of the damage to the historic wharf is unknown, however, the structure appears to be in the same condition as it was before the flood. This structure is flooded almost every spring.



United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. Box 37127

Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

NOV 09 1994

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Preservation Services

The Director of the National Park Service is pleased to inform you that the following properties have been entered in the National Register of Historic Places. For further information call 202/343-9542.

NOV 4 1994

WEEKLY LIST OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON PROPERTIES: 10/24/94 THROUGH 10/28/94

KEY: State, County, Property Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number NHL Status, Action, Date, Multiple Name

COLORADO, ADAMS COUNTY, Riverside Cemetery, 5201 Brighton Blvd., Denver, 94001253, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
COLORADO, LARIMER COUNTY, Hewes--Kirkwood Inn, 465 Long Peak Rd., Estes Park vicinity, 94001254, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
FLORIDA, GADSDEN COUNTY, Nicholson, Dr. Malcolm, Farmhouse, FL 12, N side, W of Havana, Havana vicinity, 94001272, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
FLORIDA, INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, Maier Building, 1423 20th St., Vero Beach, 94001274, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
FLORIDA, INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, Smith, Archie, Wholesale Fish Company, 1740 Indian River Dr., Sebastian, 94001275, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
FLORIDA, SARASOTA COUNTY, Out of Door School, 444 Reid St., Sarasota, 94001276, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
ILLINOIS, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, Gamma Phi Beta Sorority House, 1110 W. Nevada, Urbana, 94001270, NOMINATION, 10/28/94 (Fraternity and Sorority Houses at the Urbana-Champaign Campus of the University of Illinois MPS)
ILLINOIS, DU PAGE COUNTY, Bloomington School--Village Hall, 108 E. Lake St., Bloomington, 94001263, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
ILLINOIS, DU PAGE COUNTY, Randecker's Hardware Store, 112 S. Bloomington Rd., Bloomington, 94001265, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
ILLINOIS, FULTON COUNTY, South Fulton Churchhouse, 2.2 mi. S of jct. of Astoria-Bader Rd. and US 24, Astoria vicinity, 94001264, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
ILLINOIS, JERSEY COUNTY, Grafton Bank, 225 E. Main St., Grafton, 94000016, ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION, 6/03/94 (Grafton MPS)
ILLINOIS, JERSEY COUNTY, Grafton Historic District, 105--225 and 24--214 W. Main St., and stone wharf at Maple St., Grafton, 94000020, ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION, 6/03/94 (Grafton MPS)
ILLINOIS, JERSEY COUNTY, Mason, Paris, Building, 100 N. Springfield St., Grafton, 94000017, ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION, 6/03/94 (Grafton MPS)
ILLINOIS, JERSEY COUNTY, McClintock, John and Amelia, House, 321 E. Main St., Grafton, 94000019, ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION, 6/03/94 (Grafton MPS)
ILLINOIS, JERSEY COUNTY, Ruebel Hotel, 207--215 E. Main St., Grafton, 94000015, ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION, 6/03/94 (Grafton MPS)
ILLINOIS, JERSEY COUNTY, Slaten--LaMarsh House, 25 E. Main St., Grafton, 94000018, ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION, 6/03/94 (Grafton MPS)
ILLINOIS, LAKE COUNTY, Hotel Waukegan, 102 Washington St., Waukegan, 94001269, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
ILLINOIS, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, Montgomery County Courthouse, Courthouse Sq., Hillsboro, 94001266, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
ILLINOIS, ST. CLAIR COUNTY, Marissa Academy, 610 S. Main St., Marissa, 94001267, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
IOWA, JASPER COUNTY, Byal Orchard Historic District, W. 108th St. about 1.5 mi. S of jct. with IA 223, Mingo vicinity, 94001255, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
LOUISIANA, NATCHITOCHE PARISH, Church of St. Anne, Jct. of LA 485 and Bloss Moore Rd., SW corner, Allen vicinity, 94001271, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
LOUISIANA, ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH, Graugnard House, 2292 LA 44, Reserve vicinity, 94001249, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
MAINE, AROOSTOOK COUNTY, Corriveau Mill, US 1, S side, 0.3 mi. SW of jct. with Paradis Rd., Upper Frenchville vicinity, 94001246, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
MAINE, SAGadahoc COUNTY, Heal Family House, ME 127, W side, 1.2 mi. S of jct. with Robinhood Rd., Georgetown vicinity, 94001243, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
MAINE, WASHINGTON COUNTY, Calais Residential Historic District, Roughly, area along Main St. and Calais Ave., from Calais Ave. to Swan St., Calais, 94001248, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
MAINE, WASHINGTON COUNTY, Hinckley Hill Historic District, Roughly, 305--326 Main St., Calais, 94001244, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
MASSACHUSETTS, HAMPDEN COUNTY, Longmeadow Street--North Historic District, Bounded by Longmeadow St., Springfield Town Line, Westmoreland Ave. and Colley Dr., Longmeadow, 94001262, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
MISSISSIPPI, JEFFERSON DAVIS COUNTY, Holloway, John Fielding, House, US 84, about 450 ft. E of jct. with MS 541, Mount Carmel community, Prentiss vicinity, 94001252, NOMINATION, 10/28/94
NEBRASKA, CHEYENNE COUNTY, Sioux Ordnance Depot Fire & Guard Headquarters, Jct. of 1st Ave. and Military Rd., Western Nebraska Community College, Sidney vicinity, 94001234, NOMINATION, 10/24/94
NEW JERSEY, ESSEX COUNTY, Indian and the Puritan, Opposite 5 Washington St., Newark, 94001256, NOMINATION, 10/28/94 (Public Sculpture in Newark MPS)
NEW JERSEY, ESSEX COUNTY, Wars of America, Military Park, 614--706 Broad St., Newark, 94001257, NOMINATION, 10/28/94 (Public Sculpture in Newark MPS)
TENNESSEE, GILES COUNTY, Reveille, 408 W. Madison, Pulaski, 94001273, NOMINATION, 10/28/94