

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Poppleton Block (D009:2-47)

and/or common N/A

## 2. Location

street & number 1001 Farnam Street N/A not for publication

city, town Omaha N/A vicinity of congressional district Second

state Nebraska code 031 county Douglas code 55

## 3. Classification

| Category  | Ownership                                   | Status   | Present Use                                    |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district               | <input type="checkbox"/> public             | <input type="checkbox"/> occupied                    | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> both               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                   | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                   | <b>Accessible</b>                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                 | N/A in process                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted  | <input type="checkbox"/> government            |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered   | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted           | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial            |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> no                          | <input type="checkbox"/> military              |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> museum                |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> park                  |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence     |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> religious             |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific            |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation        |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> other:                |

## 4. Owner of Property

name LeDioyt Land Company, Glenn H. LeDioyt, President

street & number 345 Farm Credit Building

city, town Omaha N/A vicinity of state Nebraska 68102

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Douglas County Register of Deeds

street & number Douglas County Courthouse, 1819 Farnam

city, town Omaha state Nebraska

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Omaha City Architecture Certified Part I  
has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1977  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Omaha Landmarks, Inc.

city, town Omaha state Nebraska

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## 7. Description

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|  |                                       |   |   |                 |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------|
| <b>Condition</b>                         |                                       | <b>Check one</b>                              | <b>Check one</b>                                  |                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent       | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |                 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        | <input type="checkbox"/> altered              | <input type="checkbox"/> moved                    | date <u>N/A</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair            | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed    |   |   |                 |

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### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Poppleton Block is a three story brick commercial structure built in 1880 and divided by brick bearing walls into three, equally-sized stores. There is a one story brick extension on the rear. The front facade reflects the structural interior, being divided into three equal bays. The ground floor features elaborately detailed cast-iron elements; the second floor features triple windows in each bay with shouldered-flat arches, and the top floor reflects the second floor with stilted-segmental brick and stone arches over the windows. An elaborately detailed, pressed-metal cornice caps the building. The building is basically unaltered and is a fine example of commercial Italianate architecture, characteristic of the commercial architecture of the period in Omaha.

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The Poppleton Block was constructed in 1880 with Henry Voss serving as architect. The building is three stories with a basement and is a rectangular (66' x 100') brick loft structure. It contains wooden floor and ceiling joists which span between four bearing walls running the depth of the building, the ends of which extend beyond the plane of the facade dividing it into three vertical, equal bays which slightly overshadow the horizontal emphasis of the cornice and floor lines. The extended ends of the bearing walls are partially clad in cast-iron and appear as pilasters with stylized capitals of a geometric pattern. A cast-iron entablature above the first floor spans between the vertical lines created by the ends of the bearing walls. The three bays of the first floor are subdivided into three parts by cast-iron colonettes. The two end bays have central entrys and the original entrance at the middle bay has been glazed to carry the lines of the flanking windows. Geometric designs in cast-iron emphasize the intersection points of the grid formed by the main vertical and horizontal elements of the facade. The heavily bracketed cast-iron cornice, like all horizontal elements on the front of the building, is broken by and is subordinate to, the vertical emphasis of the bearing walls.

Three double-hung windows with two over two lights penetrate the brick wall of each bay at the second and third floors. A simple stone hood molding serves to emphasize the grouping of the three windows of each bay on the second floor. Interconnecting stilted segmental brick arches and a common sill accomplish the same purpose on the third floor.

The east elevation is a simple plan of brick penetrated by widely spaced double-hung windows that take the shape of the windows of the corresponding floor on the facade. The west elevation which butts up to the wall of the adjoining building is blank. The top two floors of the rear elevation contain three windows per bay topped with segmental arches.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

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A decorative pressed metal ceiling is in the western bay. The two eastern bays contain dropped accoustical ceilings. The building contains wood floor and ceiling joists and wood deck throughout. A wood stair serves all floors at the middle of the east wall. Two freight elevators serve the structure, one in the east and one in the west bay.

A one story red brick addition to the rear of the main structure (facing 10th Street) was built as a storefront in 1890. It is included with the main building as part of the historic structure.

## 8. Significance

| Period  | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below    |   |   |  |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric          | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric  | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning     | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic     | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation           | <input type="checkbox"/> law                    | <input type="checkbox"/> science         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599            | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> economics              | <input type="checkbox"/> literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education              | <input type="checkbox"/> military               | <input type="checkbox"/> social/         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> music                  | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce     | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy             | <input type="checkbox"/> theater         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900-                | <input type="checkbox"/> communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government    | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation  |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> invention              |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

**Specific dates** Constructed 1880      **Builder/Architect** Henry Voss, Architect

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Poppleton block is significant for its associations with Andrew Jackson Poppleton, a prominent pioneer Omaha attorney whose successful defense of Ponca Indian Chief Standing Bear set legal precedents in granting Indians status as persons under the law. It is architecturally significant as a basically unaltered and exceptionally fine example of commercial Italianate architecture which characterized the commercial architecture of the period in Omaha.

### Historical Significance

When A. J. Poppleton erected the three-story Italianate Poppleton Block in 1880, he was in the forefront of a trend toward new construction and changing land use in that section of downtown Omaha. The 1880's marked the beginning of the City's development as a metropolitan center for meatpacking, heavy industry, and wholesaling and retailing. The area surrounding the Poppleton Block became increasingly identified with the wholesaling business as Howard, Jackson and Leavenworth Streets lost favor as residential neighborhoods and were replaced by commercial structures that housed Omaha's expanding jobbers' trade.

Andrew Jackson Poppleton came to Omaha in 1854 and became the City's pioneer attorney. Nineteenth century historians claim that Poppleton had decided to leave the frontier Nebraska settlement, when he met a fellow law student from Michigan, A. J. Hanscom, who reassured Poppleton that there would be plenty of law business with land claims plus additional influence if both were elected to the Territorial Legislature. Hanscom correctly predicted their future, as both men played significant roles in drafting Territorial laws, and Poppleton's law practice flourished with cases involving land disputes and more serious offenses. Soon after the Union Pacific Railroad became established at Omaha, Poppleton was named their General Attorney, a position he held until his retirement in 1888. Perhaps the most important case in Poppleton's legal career was his successful defense of Ponca Indian Chief Standing Bear. Based on the issue of whether Indians could live outside reservations, the case set legal precedents in granting Indians status as persons under the law.

Throughout his years in Omaha, Poppleton purchased a great deal of property and invested in various business enterprises. One of his first real estate acquisitions was the lot at 1001 Farnam, purchased for \$1500 in 1856. The lot contained a frame building, reputedly the fifth house built in Omaha, in which Poppleton opened a law office. Since Farnam Street was one of the main business streets in the City, the lot undoubtedly held commercial firms for the following decades until Poppleton erected his new building.

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CONTINUATION SHEET    Significance    ITEM NUMBER 8    PAGE 2

The real estate boom, expansion of business and population increase caused Omaha's business district to move throughout the 1880's. Ninth Street had previously been the principal retail artery; by 1881, 10th Street attracted the main commercial business. The construction of the 10th Street viaduct soon after changed the character of the street, and small shops moved west to 13th and 16th Streets. Instead, 10th Street became a main artery of the developing wholesale district.

Poppleton evidently felt the Eighties was the right time to invest. Besides his building at 1001 Farnam he also built an elaborate Queen Anne residence on his estate "Elizabeth Place" at North 16th Street and Willis Avenue. In 1886 he built another Poppleton Block at 413-23 South 11th Street on a corner in the heart of today's Old Market Historic District (Douglas County, NRHP). Unlike the building on 11th Street, which held mostly wholesale fruit and produce merchants, 1001 Farnam also housed some retail merchants.

Even as the "most elegant and commodious building in the City of Omaha" was being built, the three storefronts at 10th and Farnam Street were rented. Elgutter's Clothing Store remained almost a decade, along with Peycke Brothers Commission Merchants and the Sutphen Carriage Repository. An 1890 one-story addition to the rear of the eastern third added frontage on 10th Street for a storefront or loading purposes.

Architectural Significance

The Poppleton Block is significant as a fine example of the High Victorian Italianate style of architecture popular in the Midwest during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Often employed by builders and lesser known architects, this style was considered to be the practical commercial style of the day. Details were freely borrowed from many different sources to be used in various combinations to create a final composition that was generally applied to a simple volumetric form. The major elements of High Victorian Italianate found in the 1880 Poppleton Block are the broadly projecting cornice supported by brackets, the vertical emphasis displayed in the three bays of the facade, the stilted segmental arches of the third story windows and the sharp, angular cast-iron details. The building has been declared a landmark under the city of Omaha's Landmark Heritage Preservation Ordinance.

The architect, Henry Voss, born in Germany in 1843, studied drafting and architecture in Switzerland for five years before embarking on a seven month study tour to perfect his chosen profession. After working in Germany for several years and serving in the German army as an infantry officer during the Franco-German War, Mr. Voss came to America in 1871. He worked a short time in New York, Chicago, and Rock Island, Illinois, before settling in Omaha in 1873.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

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Among Voss' work in Omaha are designs for St. Joseph Hospital (2300 South 10th Street), and several breweries including the Krug Brewery, the Anheuser-Busch Beer Depot (Douglas County, NRHP), and the Metz Brewery. Voss also designed the John Janecek house (Schuyler, Colfax County, pending NRHP).

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Omaha North, Nebr.-Iowa

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 

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| 1    | 5 | 2       | 5 | 4 | 5 | 9        | 5 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 0 |
| Zone |   | Easting |   |   |   | Northing |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

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| Zone |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| Zone |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 1, Block 134, Original City of Omaha, including all of the historically associated real estate.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lynn Meyer, Preservation Administrator; Edited by: State Historic  
Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission Bob Puschendorf, Preservation Office

organization Nebraska State Historical Society date June, 1982

street & number 1819 Farnam 1500 R Street telephone 402/ 444-7000; 471-3850

city or town Omaha Lincoln state Nebraska

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Marian O'Knecht* 8/27/82

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society date

For HCRS use only  
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

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Photo 1 of 2 — view of north façade, looking southwest.  
Photo by Lynn Meyer, 1977, Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission, Omaha



Photo 2 of 2 — view of east façade, looking northwest showing rear addition (1890).  
Photo by Lynn Meyer, 1981, Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission, Omaha