

# Site Inventory Form

State Historical Society of Iowa

(November 2005)

State Inventory No. 92-00493

New  Supplemental

Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) 92-00349

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 Central Park

other names/site number Downtown Survey Map # DT- 100

## 2. Location

street & number 100 W. Washington (bounded by Washington, Iowa, Main, and Marion)

city or town Washington

vicinity, county Washington

Legal Description: (If Rural) Township Name \_\_\_\_\_ Township No. \_\_\_\_\_ Range No. \_\_\_\_\_ Section \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter \_\_\_\_\_ of Quarter \_\_\_\_\_

(If Urban) Subdivision Original Plat Block(s) 13 Lot(s) \_\_\_\_\_

## 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

building(s)

district

site

structure

object

If Non-Eligible Property

Enter number of:

— buildings

— sites

— structures

— objects

— Total

If Eligible Property, enter number of:

Contributing

Noncontributing

—

1

1

1

3

1

—

1

1

3

buildings

sites

structures

objects

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

Historical Architectural Data Base Number

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

13B01 City Park

13B01 City Park

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation \_\_\_\_\_

walls (visible material) \_\_\_\_\_

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)

Yes  No  More Research Recommended

Yes  No  More Research Recommended

Yes  No  More Research Recommended

Yes  No  More Research Recommended

A Property is associated with significant events.

B Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.

C Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.

D Property yields significant information in archeology or history.

County Washington Address Central Park  
City Washington

Site Number 92-00493  
District Number 92-00349

**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)

**Significant Dates**

Construction date 1839  check if circa or estimated date  
Other dates, including renovation 1931 - memorial, 1939 - fountain

**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 Michael Kramme, commission member Rebecca L. McCarley, consultant, Davenport  
organization Washington Historic Preservation Commission date May 28, 2012  
street & number City Hall – 215 E. Washington St telephone 319-653-6584  
city or town Washington state Iowa zip code 52353

**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
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

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: \_\_\_\_\_

# Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

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<u>Central Park</u>	<u>Washington</u>
Name of Property	County
<u>100 W. Washington</u>	<u>Washington</u>
Address	City

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*This form was prepared as part of a research/survey/nomination project in 2011-2012 funded by a HRDP grant from the State Historical Society of Iowa for the nomination of the Washington Downtown Historic District. The project was primarily structured to develop the nomination for the downtown, with additional research on each building documented on an Iowa Site Inventory form. The information below is taken from the table in the August 2012 draft of the nomination, with additional information documented on the property and photographs in the following sections.*

**Central Park - 100 W. Washington** - State #92-00493 - Map #100 ~ 1 contributing site, 2 contributing objects, 1 non-contributing building, 1 non-contributing structure, 1 non-contributing object

Historic information:

- 1839 - Block 13 designated as public square in original plat
- 1880s - improvements for park
- 1931 - monument dedicated to Civil War veterans by Women's Relief Corps
- 1939 - Centennial Fountain installed in center of park (replaced earlier fountain)
- 1952 - Ralph M. Smith Memorial Bandstand built
- 1976 - statue of George Washington placed for bicentennial
- 1984 - restrooms built
- 2010 - bandstand rebuilt (reused back wall)
- 2012 - Central Park

## 7. Narrative Description

Central Park has three contributing features - the park itself as the central public square in the downtown, the Centennial Fountain, and the Civil War monument. The public square was designated in the plat of 1839. The Centennial Fountain was built in the center of the park on the site of the second courthouse and later a bandstand. It was part of the centennial celebration of the founding of the city, and was dedicated on August 7, 1939. It is hexagonal with two layers. The design is Art Deco with several triple grooves on each panel. It features a multi-colored light show and changing patterns of water jets. The Civil War memorial is a granite marker (southeast corner) with a bronze plaque reading "1861 1865 Dedicated in Honor of the Civil War Veterans of Washington County by the I.C. White Womans Relief Corps. No.45 Washington, Iowa - Nov. 11, 1931".

The park contains a non-contributing structure, non-contributing object, and non-contributing building: The Ralph M. Smith Memorial Bandstand (in the southwest corner) (described separately as well in State # 92-00490 DT 100b), George Washington bust (southeast corner), and a public rest room building (northeast corner). The George Washington bust was placed on an aggregate stone pedestal as part of the 1976 Bicentennial celebration. The original bust was made of fiberglass. In 2012, it was replaced by a bronze one paid for by private donations. The rest room building was erected by the Jaycees in 1984. It is made of a buff colored brick to match the brick of the bandstand.

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Several light posts and permanent park benches are not tabulated. The historic lamp posts were refitted with new, energy efficient lights and new globes in 2007. There are 24 historic posts, and all of them were moved from their original locations on street corners. They are sited within the park and long the four sides of the park. The lamp posts on the corners are new, but the others along the edges of the park are historic ones.

## 8. Narrative Statement of Significance

Central Park appears to contribute historically to the Washington Downtown Historic District. The park, fountain, and Civil War memorial are counted as contributing features within the park and historic district.

The one square block in the center of Washington's business district is known as Central Park. It was reserved as a public square in the original city plat of 1839. It has also been called the Public Park and the Public Square. The county's second courthouse was in the center of the lot from 1847 until 1868. The 1885 Sanborn map shows a large cistern in the northwest corner of the square and four other wells on the square, including two noted as "fire wells" for the new fire department. The 1892 and 1897 maps show the same wells and cistern on the public square. Nothing is shown in the park on the 1902 map. A small bandstands appears towards the northeast corner on the 1909 map. This bandstand was removed with a new larger bandstand toward the southwest corner on the 1917 and 1931 maps. The 1943 Sanborn map shows this same bandstand, with no other detail in the park. Per local history, the first bandstand was built near the center of the park. It was moved to northeast of center so that a metal fountain could then be built in the center. After several years, it was removed and replaced with a concrete fountain, which remained here until 1939. Three of the wells were filled in, one left in the southeast corner ("Washington's Central Park First Called 'Commons,'" Centennial Edition, *Evening Journal*, 86).

H.A. Burrell described the public square in 1909 as complete with green grass, healthy trees, fountains, music stand, iron seats, cement walks, a circle of flowers by Elmer Keck (greenhouse and florist), and electric lights. The band played here on Saturday nights (Burrell 1909, Vol. 1: 433). An article on the park in *Evening Journal*, April 3, 1926, page 8 notes that Central Park, or the public square, was a thing of joy and beauty. Band concerts were held here in summer months, and a fountain was in the center of the park. The park commissioners and Washington Improvement League worked to maintain the park, and they had placed flower boxes in lamp posts in the past few years. The fountain in the center of the park had flowers around the basin. The park and shade of the trees was enjoyed by thousands each year.

Two memorials were installed in the park in this period, followed by a new fountain in 1939. An elm tree was planted in 1924 and dedicated to Civil War veterans by Women's Relief Corps. They followed this effort with a granite monument with bronze plate for Civil War soldiers in 1931. The iron railing around

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park installed in 1881 and used as a hitching post was taken down in 1934 ("Washington's Central Park First Called 'Commons,'" Centennial Edition, *Evening Journal*, 86).

In 1938, the chairman of park board, J.E. Lemmon, saw a fountain with colored lights in Missouri and thought to install a similar one in Washington as part of the centennial celebration in 1939. They announced plans in January and researched many other fountains in other cities before settling on one identical to one in University City in St. Louis, MO. It was bought from the Brenner Electric Company of St. Louis with funds from the city, Chamber of Commerce, and donations to meet the \$2,500 cost. The old fountain was then torn out and new fountain installed ("Fountain Idea Conceived Over Year Ago," Centennial Celebration, *Evening Journal*, August 1939, 5)

In 1952, the Ralph M. Smith Memorial Band Stand was built in the southwest quarter of the park. It was a brick and concrete structure, with a curved back wall. The 1952 bandstand was demolished in 2008, except the back wall. A new one was built incorporating the original back wall in 2010. The new bandstand has a much larger performance area, off stage storage and dressing areas and a roof over the performing area. The front panel replicates the architectural base of the Centennial Fountain. The columns supporting the roof match the brickwork of the rest of the structure.

A number of other improvements have occurred over the last few decades in the park. The bust of George Washington was placed in the southeast quarter in 1976, with a time capsule to be opened in 2076. New sidewalks have been installed, along with new handrails. A restroom building was constructed in 1984 in the northeast quarter as a project of the Washington Jaycees (*Souvenir History of Washington* 1989: 20).

Since its inception it has remained the center of community life and celebrations. Numerous public events and band concerts take place in the park each year.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

City/Telephone Directories, Washington. Various publishers, various dates. Available at the Washington Public Library.

Deed Records, Transfer Books, Auditor's Office, Washington County Courthouse, Washington, Iowa.

Newspaper advertisements, various years/dates, on microfilm at Washington Public Library:

*Washington Evening Journal*  
*Washington Gazette*  
*Washington Press*

Sanborn Map Company. "Washington, Iowa," Sanborn fire insurance maps. Pelham, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 1885, 1892, 1897, 1902, 1909, 1917, 1931, 1943.

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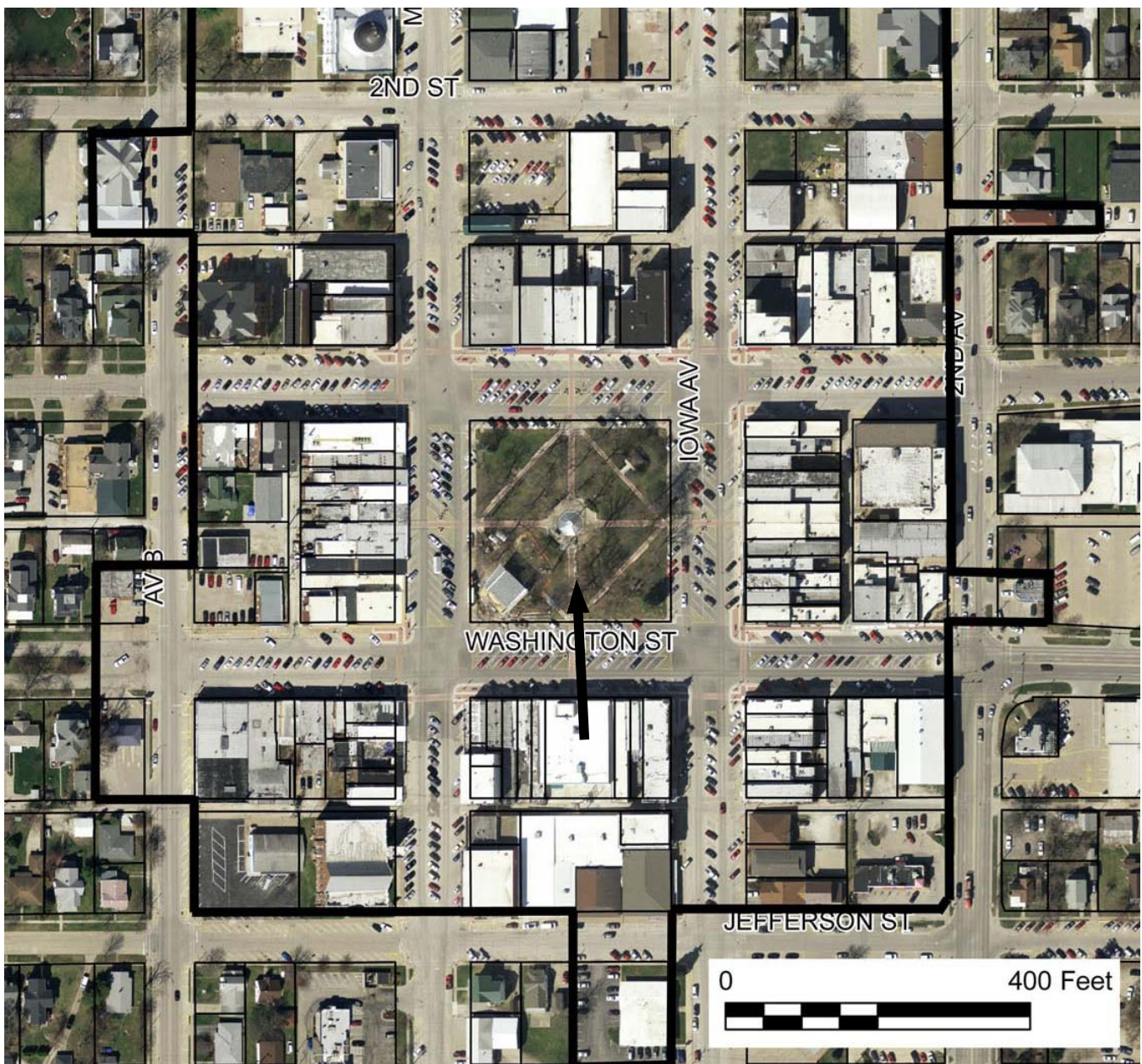
Central Park  
Name of Property

Washington  
County

100 W. Washington  
Address

Washington  
City

## Location map



*2009 aerial photograph (Washington County) – line indicates survey/research area boundary*



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Site plan (from assessor's website)



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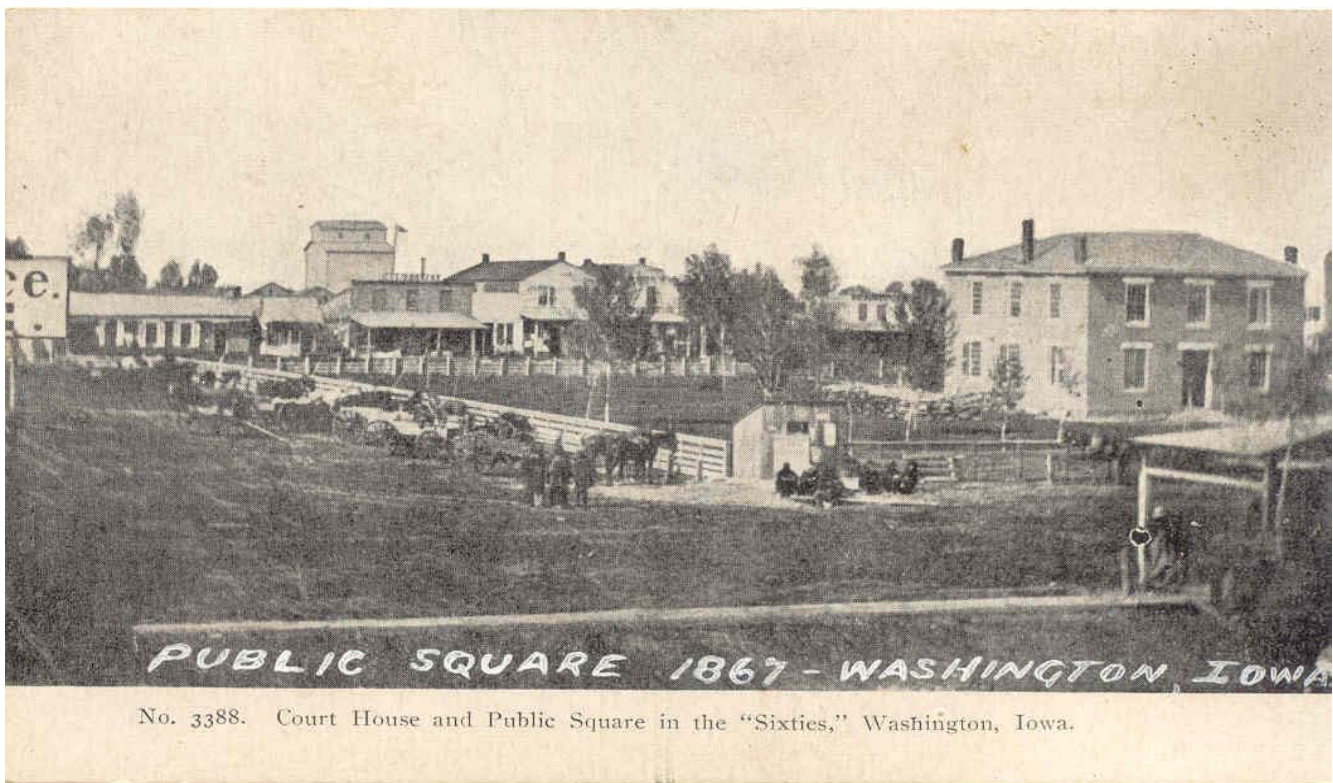
Central Park  
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## Historic images



**Public square in 1860s with courthouse (Patterson collection)**



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Central Park, looking south in 1890s (Patterson collection)

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Central Park in early 1900s (Patterson collection)



# Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

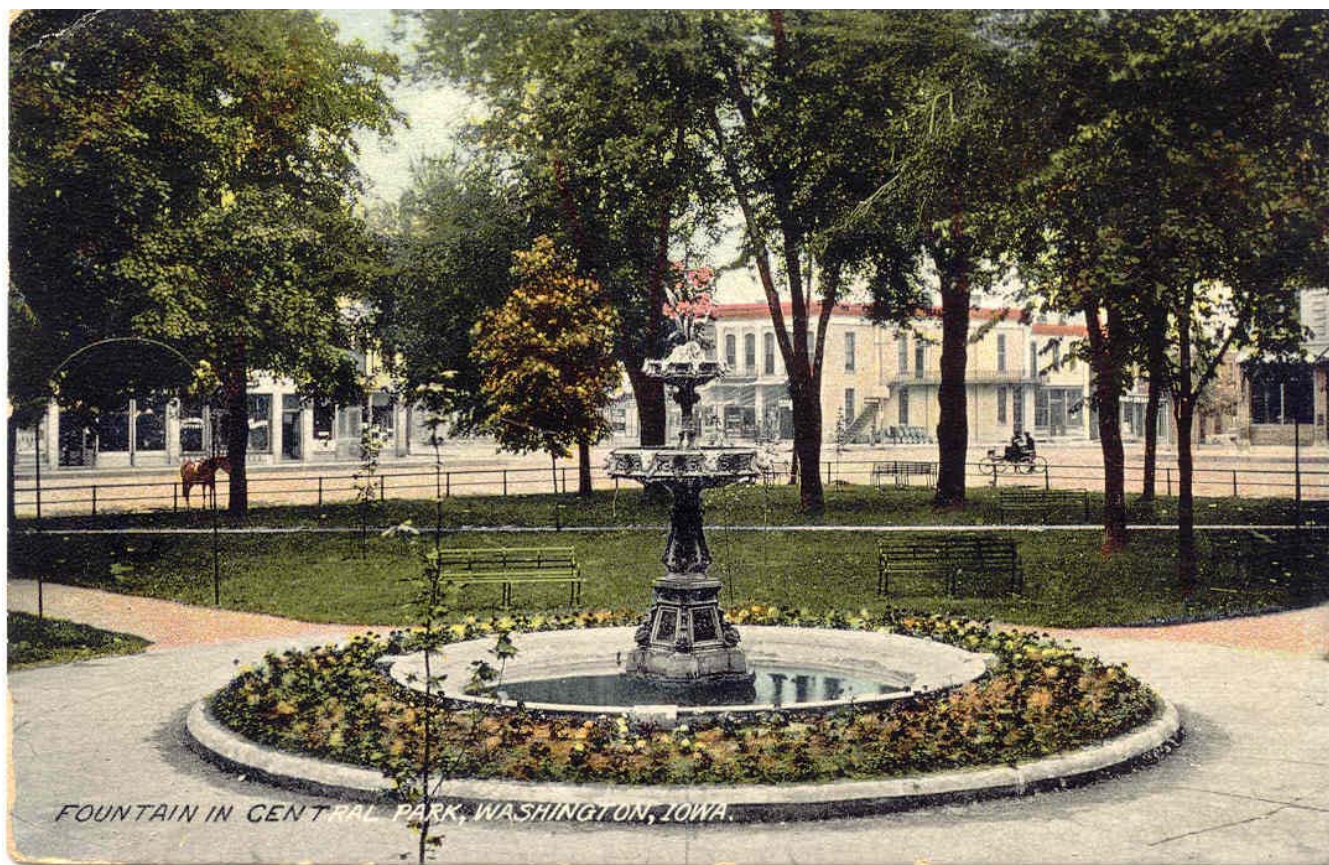
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Earlier fountain in Central Park, c.1910 (Patterson collection)

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View of northwest corner of Central Park in 1910s (Patterson collection)



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## Digital photographs



Photograph 92-00493-001 - Central Park, looking northeast from southwest quadrant (McCarley, September 20, 2011)



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Photograph 92-00493-002 - 1939 centennial fountain in Central Park, looking northeast (McCarley, September 20, 2011)



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Photograph 92-00493-003 - Civil War memorial with George Washington bust in background in southeast corner of Central Park, looking northwest from near corner (McCarley, September 20, 2011)

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Photograph 92-00493-004 - Central Park, looking northeast (McCarley, September 20, 2011)



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Photograph 92-00493-005 - Historic lamp post and rebuilt bandstand at southwest corner of Central Park, looking northeast (McCarley, September 20, 2011)

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**Photograph 92-00493-006 - Rest room building in Central Park, looking northeast  
(McCarley, September 20, 2011)**