

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

State Inventory No. 29-01641 New Supplemental
 Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) 29-03522
 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 John Blaul Sons Company (Wholesale Grocery)
 other names/site number John Blaul & Sons, 2009-10 Survey Field Site #WH-38

2. Location

street & number 413-425 Valley Street
 city or town Burlington vicinity, county Des Moines
 Legal Description: (If Rural) Township Name _____ Township No. _____ Range No. _____ Section _____ Quarter of Quarter _____
 (If Urban) Subdivision Original City Block(s) _____ Lot(s) 612, 613, 614

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 Intensive Level Survey of the "warehouse district" in Burlington, Des Moines County, Iowa *Historical Architectural Data Base Number* 29-029

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>02E11 - Commerce/Trade/Grocery</u>	<u>70: Vacant / Not in Use</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>05G: Victorian / Romanesque</u>	foundation <u>04: Stone</u>
_____	walls (visible material) <u>04: Stone 03: Brick</u>
_____	roof <u>08B: Asphalt / Rolled</u>
_____	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	C Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	D Property yields significant information in archaeology or history.

County Des Moines Address 413 Valley Street Site Number 29-01641
City Burlington District Number 29-03522

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
17: Industry

Significant Dates

Construction date 1892 check if circa or estimated date
Other dates, including renovation 1903 – addition

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 Inez Metzger, Volunteer Rebecca Lawin McCarley, Consultant, Davenport, IA
organization Burlington Historic Preservation Commission date March 20, 2010
street & number City Hall, 400 Washington Street telephone 319-753-8158
city or town Burlington state Iowa zip code 52601

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: _____

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Page 1

John Blaul Sons Company
Name of Property

Des Moines
County

413-425 Valley Street
Address

Burlington
City

7. Narrative Description

This brick building was constructed for John Blaul Sons' wholesale grocery business in 1892 and 1903. The three story west half and south portion were built in 1892. The first story is constructed of stone, with the upper stories built with brick. A corner turret with conical roof dominates the architecture of this Romanesque Revival building, and it is reflected with engaged turrets at the east end of the north façade of the original building and three engaged turrets along the west elevation extending south to the railroad tracks. The storefront windows have been reduced and filled in on the north side. The one-over-one-light double-hung second story windows are paired with a shared segmental arch transom. The third story windows are grouped into two sets of four one-over-one-light double-hung arch windows. Brick detailing reflecting crenellations extend along the parapet. The majority of the first story windows are also filled in and resized on the west elevation of this 1892 section. The paired segmental arch second story windows and grouped arch third story windows continue across this elevation. The south section is defined by two engaged turrets. The brick detailing on the parapet also extends across this side. The south section extended the full depth of the lot, along the railroad tracks. It has two-over-two-light double-hung segmental arch windows on the first, second, and third stories. Two large historic entries with segmental arch transom windows remain on the first story as well.

The 1903 four-story addition sits on east half of the two north lots. The façade along Valley reflects the design of the original building with stone on the first story and brick on the upper stories. Short turrets on the fourth story corners and brick detailing on the parapet wall also reflect the earlier design. Two of the large first story openings are filled with paneling and smaller windows, with the third (east) opening retained a historic vehicular door. The second story windows are also one-over-one-light double-hung paired windows with a shared segmental arch transom. The third story windows are grouped into two sets of four one-over-one-light double-hung arch windows. The continuous stone sill extends across these windows. The fourth story has smaller one-over-one-light double-hung rectangular windows with a shared stone sill. The openings on the east side of the four-story 1903 addition are concentrated on the south two-thirds of the building. Each third has three two-over-two-light double-hung windows with segmental arch brick lintels and stone sills on each of the three upper stories. The first story has similar windows with two pedestrian entries with segmental arch brick lintels.

8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The John Blaul Sons Company appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building in the Manufacturing and Wholesale Historic District. It contributes historically and architecturally to this historic district. The building is one of the wholesale businesses that opened shortly around the turn of the 20th century in this area. The Romanesque architecture of the building is unique within the district, with a stone first story, brick upper stories with arch windows, corner turret, and engage turrets on each side. John Blaul Sons Company operated here from 1892 to 1954 when the company was sold. The business was significant within the history of Burlington, and products were shipped across the country. The building also appears to be individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. The history of the company is significantly within the

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Page 2

John Blaul Sons Company

Des Moines

Name of Property

County

413-425 Valley Street

Burlington

Address

City

local history of Burlington, and the architecture of the building is unique and significant within the community.

John Blaul established a retail grocery store on Front Street in 1856. In 1874, he expanded and opened a wholesale grocery house. In 1880, he built a grocery at 113. N. 3rd Street, between Valley and Market. The 1880 census shows John (age 51) and wife Caroline (age 52) with children John (age 26), Amelia (age 21), Pauline (age 20), Charles (age 18), Theodore (age 17), and Louis (age 16). He was joined in the business by sons John, Jr. and Charles in 1882, and the business became known as John Blaul & Sons. Over the next few years, sons Theodore and Louis also joined the business, and it became one of the leading groceries in Iowa. John Blaul died on January 27, 1885, and his sons continued the family business. In 1888, they were located at 113-15 N. 3rd Street, with a main three-story building and 28 employees. The business included a large line of teas, and they had started to manufacture spices (*Portrait and Biographical Album of Des Moines County* 1888: 765; Antrobus 1915, Vol. 2: 157).

John Blaul & Sons continued to expand, and they required a larger building. They bought the land on the east side of 4th Street between Valley and Market in 1888. The 1892 Sanborn map shows a series of small buildings and other businesses along this block. It shows John Blaul & Sons continuing to operate from the three-story building at 113 N. 3rd Street (demolished) with additional storage at 115 N. 3rd Street (State Site #29-00091). County and local histories state that the sons of John Blaul built the first part of their business block in 1892, with an addition in 1903. The building was stone on the first story with brick on the upper two stories. A side track from the railroad along Market extended straight to their door. In 1895, John Blaul & Sons established a canning factory in conjunction with their wholesale grocery house (Antrobus 1915, Vol. 2: 156-57). The 1900 Sanborn map shows John Blaul & Sons, wholesale groceries, at 419-423 Valley with a three-story building on the east half of Lots 612 and 613, and a three-story section extending the full depth of Lot 614 along the railroad tracks. The first story included a receiving room, the second story included a packing and extract room, and the third story had coffee and spice mills. The office was located at the corner.

In February 1903, the business incorporated as John Blaul Sons' Company, with John Blaul as president, Charles as vice president, Theodore as treasurer, and E. G. Koonz as secretary. On March 31, 1903, this property (Lots 612-614) transferred from the brothers to the company. They then built the four story addition at 413-417 Valley. In 1906, John Blaul & Sons dealt in wholesale groceries, manufacturers, coffee roasters, and spice grinders. They had a canned goods plant on north side of town ("John Blaul's Sons Co," *Burlington Evening Gazette*, March 24, 1906, sec 3, p 2). By 1915, the company employed 150 people and 18 traveling salesmen (Antrobus 1915, Vol. 2: 156-157). The 1920 census shows that John (age 66, wife Louisa) (Jr.), Charles (age 58, wife Jessie), and Louis (age 55, wife Bertha) were living in Burlington and associated with the wholesale grocery business. Theodore, Jr. (age 29) was living in Cedar Rapids and a buyer for the wholesale grocery business. Charles died on December 3, 1924, and he was president of the Cedar Rapids branch of John Blaul Sons' Company at the time. Louis then died on January 31, 1925. Theodore died on March 4, 1926, and his son Theodore, Jr. later became president of the branch house in Cedar Rapids. John Blaul, Jr. continued to run the family business until his death on September 25, 1932. The brothers were prominent in other community organizations and businesses as well. Louis served as president of Iowa State Savings

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Page 3

<u>John Blaul Sons Company</u>	<u>Des Moines</u>
Name of Property	County
<u>413-425 Valley Street</u>	<u>Burlington</u>
Address	City

Bank and was active in the hospital association. John was past president of the Chamber of Commerce, past president of the Hotel Burlington corporation, active in the First Evangelical church, served on the board of several business organizations, and promoted the revival of transportation on the Mississippi River (Blaul family clipping file, Burlington Public Library).

John and Louisa Blaul's son Milton A. Blaul became then served as president of John Blaul Sons Company, running the company along with his brother Mark as vice president. The company continued as wholesale grocery distributors. In 1940, they were one of two companies in Burlington to roast coffee, along with the Benner Tea Company. Officers of the company were Milton Blaul, president; Mark Blaul, vice president; Theodore Blaul, treasurer, and E.G. Kuntz, secretary. Milton and Mark retired in 1954, and they sold the company to Benner Tea Company ("M.A. Blaul Dead at 78," *Hawk-Eye*, June 24, 1962, 3). The letter to their customers noted that Benner would continue to operate Blaul, integrating the company into their wholesale division, Grocers Supply Company. The brothers had reached retirement age with no one in the family to continue the business, so they had decided to sell John Blaul's Sons Company (Blaul family clipping file, Burlington Public Library).

The property at 413-425 Valley then transferred from John Blaul's Sons Company to Milton and Mark Blaul on September 30, 1954. They continued to run Burlington Warehouse Company from this location, advertising warehouse space for rent in 1954 and 1955. The building offered a railroad siding and shipping platforms for unloading trucks (*Hawk-Eye Gazette*, February 11, 1955, 14). In March 1956, Montgomery Ward moved their auto service and farm departments into the Blaul building, permitting other departments to enlarge in their main building at Main and Valley. The store opened in Burlington in 1929, and they had an increase of 12% in business in 1955. The departments in the Blaul building included a complete auto service department with a capacity of five cars that would mount tires and install accessories, seat covers, batteries, etc. The farm department included a complete line of hammer mills, feed grinders, wagons, fencing, cream separators, garden tractors, implements, chicken feeders, etc. The upper floors would be used for warehouse storage ("Montgomery Ward & Company is Expanding Here," *Burlington Hawk-Eye Gazette*, March 3, 1956, 3). They are listed here at 415 Valley in the 1960 city directory.

The Blaul family continued to own the building until November 1987 when they sold the building to MLS, Inc. MLS sold the building to Bangert Brothers LLC in May 2006. The building is currently for sale.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Antrobus, A.T. *History of Des Moines County Iowa and Its People*. Chicago, IL: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1915.

Burlington Hawk-Eye, various articles and dates. On microfilm at the Burlington Public Library.

City Directories, Burlington, Iowa, various dates. On microfiche at the Burlington Public Library

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

Site Number 29-01641
Related District Number 29-03522

Page 4

Name of Property	John Blaul Sons Company	County	Des Moines
Address	413-425 Valley Street	City	Burlington

History of Des Moines County, Iowa. Chicago, IL: Western Historical Company, 1879.

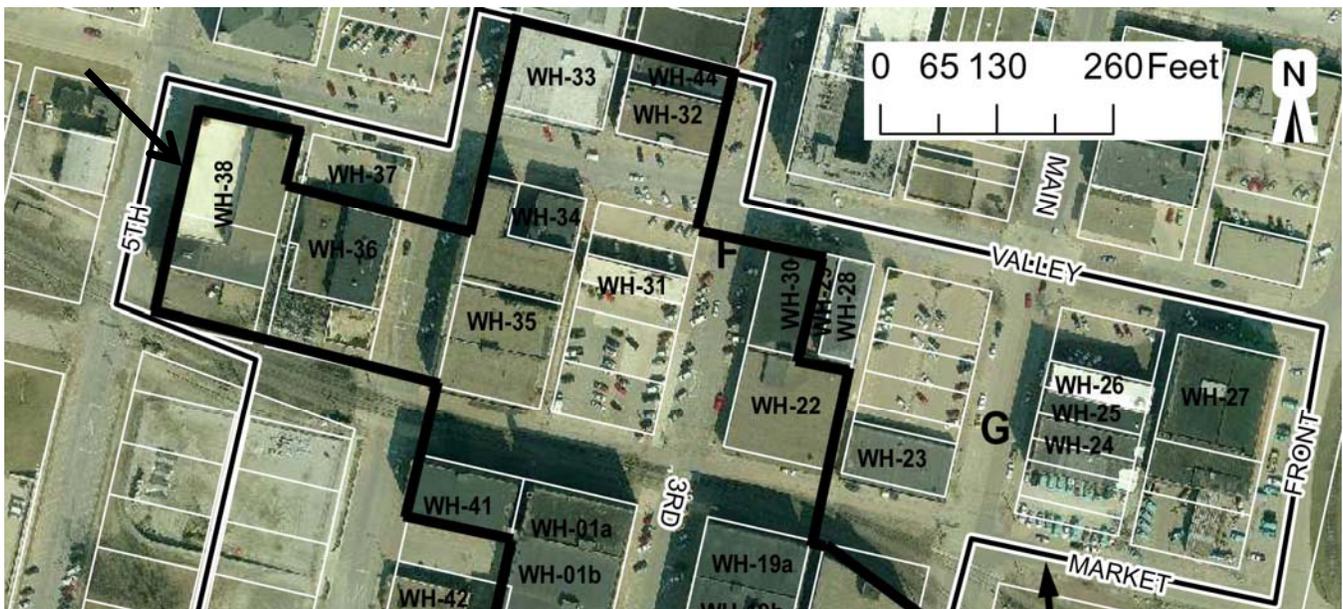
Portrait and Biographical Album of Des Moines County, Iowa. Chicago, IL: Acme Publishing Company, 1888.

Sanborn Map Company. "Burlington, Iowa," Fire Insurance Maps. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1886, 1892, 1900, 1931, 1952.

Transfer books, Des Moines County Auditor's Office, Burlington, Iowa

Vertical files, Burlington Public Library, Burlington, Iowa.

Location map



Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Site Number 29-01641

Related District Number 29-03522

Page 5

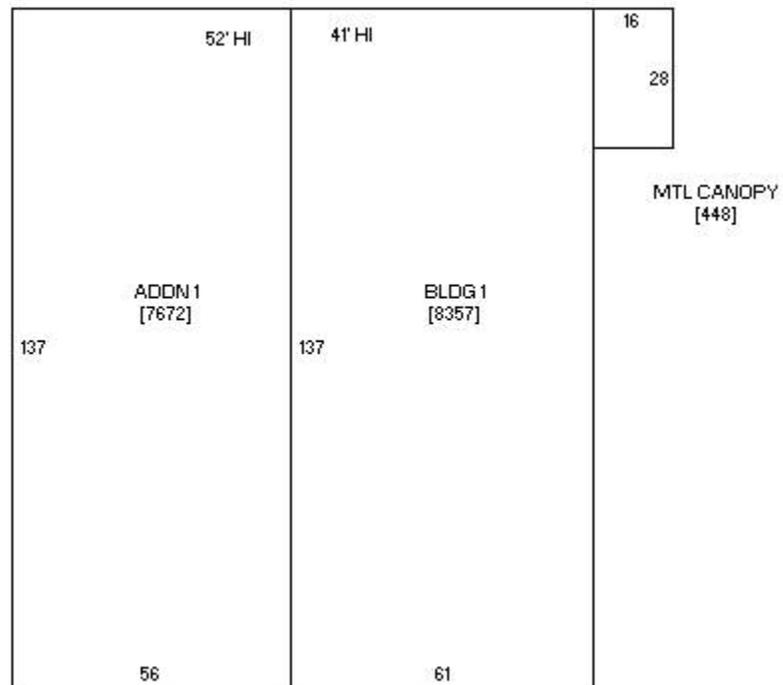
John Blaul Sons Company
Name of Property

Des Moines
County

413-425 Valley Street
Address

Burlington
City

Building plan (from assessor's website)



**Iowa Site Inventory Form
Continuation Sheet**

Page 6

John Blaul Sons Company
Name of Property

Des Moines
County

413-425 Valley Street
Address

Burlington
City

Historic images



John Blaul, *Evening Gazette*, March 24, 1906, sec 2, page 2

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

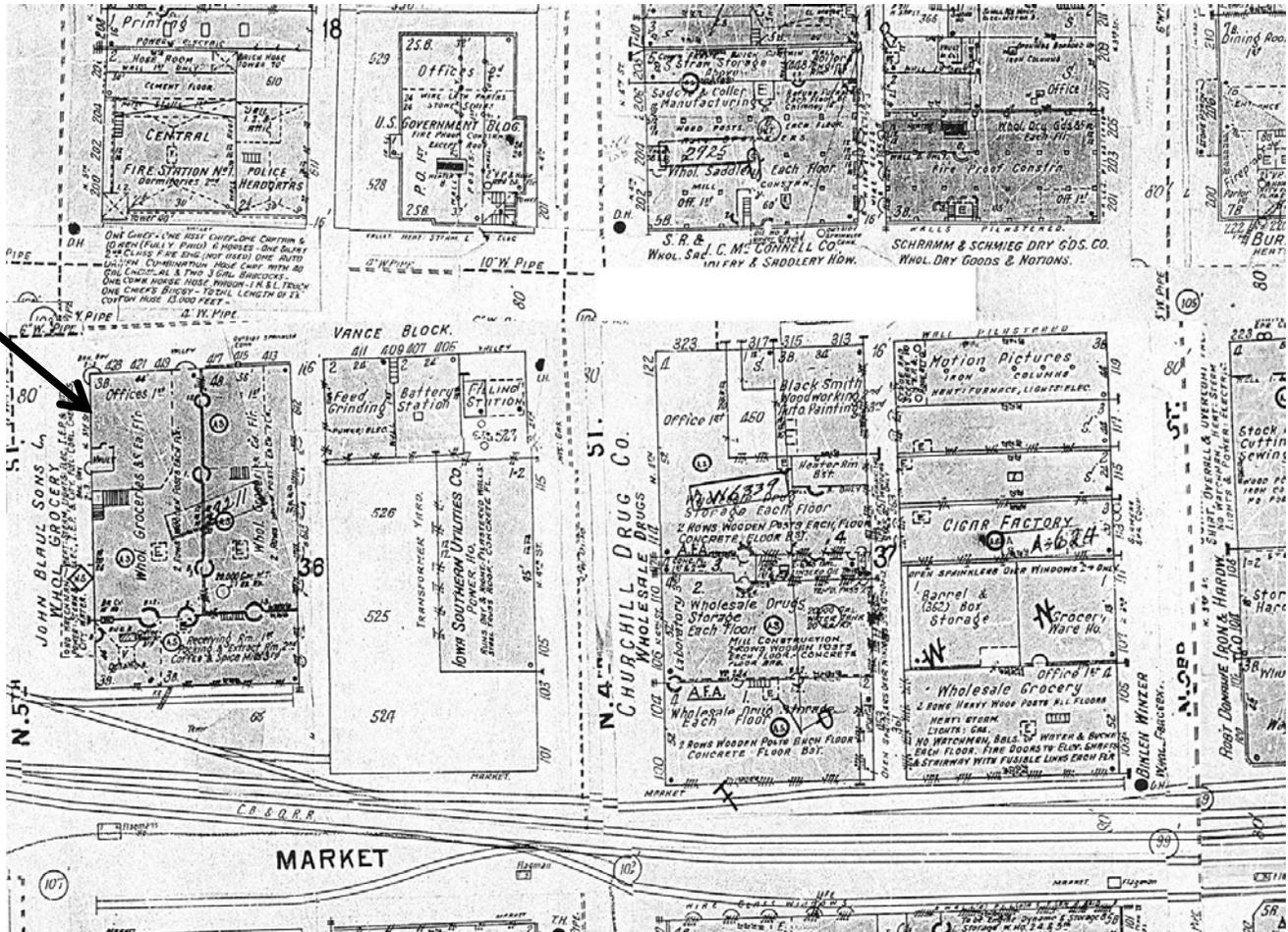
Page 7

John Blaul Sons Company
Name of Property

Des Moines
County

413-425 Valley Street
Address

Burlington
City



John Blaul Sons building on 1931 Sanborn fire insurance map (Sanborn Map Company)

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

Site Number 29-01641
Related District Number 29-03522

Page 8

John Blaul Sons Company
Name of Property

Des Moines
County

413-425 Valley Street
Address

Burlington
City

Photographs (digital images)



**Building, looking southeast
November 2, 2009
R.L. McCarley**

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

Site Number 29-01641
Related District Number 29-03522

Page 9

John Blaul Sons Company
Name of Property

Des Moines
County

413-425 Valley Street
Address

Burlington
City



**Façade of 1892 portion of building, looking southwest
November 2, 2009
R.L. McCarley**

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

Site Number 29-01641
Related District Number 29-03522

Page 10

John Blaul Sons Company
Name of Property

Des Moines
County

413-425 Valley Street
Address

Burlington
City



**West side of building, looking northeast
November 2, 2009
R.L. McCarley**

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

Site Number 29-01641
Related District Number 29-03522

Page 11

John Blaul Sons Company
Name of Property

Des Moines
County

413-425 Valley Street
Address

Burlington
City



South side of building, looking northeast
November 2, 2009
R.L. McCarley

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

Site Number 29-01641
Related District Number 29-03522

Page 12

John Blaul Sons Company
Name of Property

Des Moines
County

413-425 Valley Street
Address

Burlington
City



**Façade of 1903 addition to building, looking southwest
November 2, 2009
R.L. McCarley**

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Site Number 29-01641

Related District Number 29-03522

Page 13

John Blaul Sons Company
Name of Property

Des Moines
County

413-425 Valley Street
Address

Burlington
City



East side of building, looking southwest
November 2, 2009
R.L. McCarley