

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

The Congregational Church of Blair

(WN02-2)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

16th & Colfax

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Blair

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Second

STATE

Nebraska

CODE

031

COUNTY

Washington

CODE

097

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERICAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Board of Trustees, Congregational Church of Blair

STREET & NUMBER

16th & Colfax

CITY, TOWN

Blair

VICINITY OF

STATE

Nebraska

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

County Clerk, Washington County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

16th & Colfax

CITY, TOWN

Blair

STATE

Nebraska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

A Survey of Historic, Architectural and Archeological Sites of the
Eleven County Eastern Nebraska Urban Region

DATE

July, 1971

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Nebraska State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Congregational Church of Blair is a small Carpenter Gothic style church built in 1874 to the designs of Charles F. Driscoll, an Omaha architect, by George Sutherland, a local builder. Several of the elements of the Carpenter Gothic style are present in the building, i.e. board and batten siding and simple lancet windows which are free of tracery except in the front door fanlight. The details at the cornice line are quite elaborate. A series of pointed arches spring from the top of the battens and encircle the building. The cornice of the east and vestibule gables are decorated with wooden fretwork in a geometric pattern (see photo #4). A small belfry is atop the front (east) gable.

The character of the church has been maintained in the later additions to the structure by the board and batten siding and lancet windows in each addition. The lecture room extension to the south was built in 1884 and used primarily for Sunday School space. In 1908, a choir loft was added behind the pulpit. At the same time, the basement was excavated and a concrete block foundation installed which raised the building 27 inches. The exterior entrance to the basement was also installed. Rooms behind the choir loft were added in 1957 as Sunday School rooms (two on first floor and two in the basement).

The exposed scissors-truss roof of the nave was reinforced in 1969 with tie rods at the two center spans. The sanctuary retains its simplicity even though it has been remodelled several times and few, if any, original furnishings remain.

A historical marker honoring the church was placed on the east lawn by the congregation and the Nebraska State Historical Society.

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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1874

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Architect: C.F. Driscoll, Omaha
Builder: George Sutherland, Blair

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Congregational Church of Blair is architecturally significant to Nebraska as one of the few Carpenter Gothic style churches known in the State. It is the only non-Episcopalian church in the style currently known, which is not surprising, because of architect Richard Upjohn's encouragement of Carpenter Gothic chapels for small Episcopal congregations through his book, Rural Architecture (1852). However, in light of the historical religious differences between the Congregationalists and the Episcopalian/Anglicans, it is somewhat unusual, but not unknown, for the church to use the style. The building exhibits several characteristics (the board and batten siding, lancet windows and fretwork decoration) of the Carpenter Gothic style which is the wooden version of the Early Gothic Revival style.

Eight charter members organized the church on February 10, 1870, eleven months after the town was platted and lots sold. In 1874, the congregation requested that two architects, A. Roberts and C. F. Driscoll, submit plans for a building and each were paid 25 dollars. Driscoll's plans were accepted and George Sutherland erected the building. It was dedicated November 22, 1874. Little is known about the architect, Charles F. Driscoll. A native of New Jersey, he practiced in Omaha from 1872-97 and designed many buildings in surrounding towns, including the Ideal Steam Laundry, Fremont, (National Register of Historic Places).

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME Blair, Nebraska

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 14 73891010 461025610

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME, TITLE

Penelope Chatfield, Preservation Historian

ORGANIZATION

Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

December, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

1500 "R" Street

TELEPHONE

402/432-2793

CITY OR TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Martin O. Kuntz

12/11/78

TITLE

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTENT:

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Blair Congregational Church, Board of Trustees Minutes. Manuscript filed with State Archives, Nebraska State Historical Society (MS. 545).

Buss, Reverend William H. and Thomas T. Osterman, editors. History of Dodge and Washington Counties, Nebraska and Their People. (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1921) page I-370.

O'Hanlon, Lozein Rhoades. "The First Congregational Church, Blair, Nebraska." Centennial Celebration of the Blair Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. Blair, Nebraska, 1970.

Jipp, Edwin T. "A Footnote to History" *ibid.*

Poppeliers, John, S. Allen Chambers, Nancy B. Schwartz. What Style Is It? Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1976-77.



View to the west – Photo by D. Murphy, NSHS, Feb 1977 (7702/3:7)



View to the north – Photo by D. Murphy, NSHS, Feb 1977 (7702/3:12)



Detail of gables on east façade looking west – Photo by D. Murphy, NSHS, Feb 1977 (7702/3:17)



View to the northeast – Photo by D. Murphy, NSHS, Feb 1977 (7702/3:20)