

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

For NPS use only

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

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Paxton Water Tower and Pump House

and or common Old Paxton Water Tower

2. Location

street & number 145 South Market Street N/A not for publication

city, town Paxton N/A vicinity of

state Illinois code 012 county Ford code 053

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name City of Paxton

street & number

city, town Paxton N/A vicinity of state Illinois

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Ford County Courthouse

street & number 200 West State Street

city, town Paxton state Illinois

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title (1) Historic American Building Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records HABS/HAER (429) Library of Congress

city, town Washington, DC 20240 state

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-
- (2) Illinois Historic Landmarks Survey - Ford County
1974
Illinois Department of Conservation
Springfield, Illinois
- (3) Illinois Historic Structures Survey - Ford County
1973
Illinois Department of Conservation
Springfield, Illinois

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Paxton Water Tower and Pump House are physically connected masonry structures which once housed the primary water system for this Central Illinois community. (Photograph #1)

The 80 foot high tower was built to support an 18 foot high cypress wood tank which had a capacity of 60,000 gallons. (Photo 2,3,4,7,10) The walls of the tower are solid brick, more than 30 inches thick at the base. The structure is octagonal in plan, battered on the exterior, with 1 3/4 inch deep shelves at each "floor" level. Brick detailing includes corbeling on the exterior approximately 6 feet from the top, at the level where a door on the south allowed access, via an exterior stair, to the balcony around the wood tank. Fenestration (Photograph #11) on the south and west faces of the tower in the form of lancet-type double-hung, 6 over 6, windows with corbeled brick hoods, allowed light to enter the tower. At the base of the tower, two similar Gothic openings on the north and west faces served as door openings, and square-topped openings with wood lintels served as doorway into the pump house and a south window.

The tower encloses a wood structure (Photo #12,13,14) which served both as support for the water tank and an interior wood stairway up to the balcony. This structure consists of four, 12" X 12", wood columns, laterally supported at each "floor" level by four wood beams which frame into pockets in the masonry walls above the shelves. Each column consists of two 40' lengths, joined end to end with a double flanged cast iron seat-plate and metal rod anchors. (Photograph #13) These columns are supported on a stone base projecting two inches above the floor of the tower. A deteriorated wood stair runs up the east side of the tower interior, with 3/4 inch thick tongue and groove decking at each "floor". The floor is concrete, apparently poured over a brick floor with a 2' X 5' opening on the south portion where a large cast iron pipe (flanged) protrudes.

The pump house is immediately to the east of the tower, and is a 1 1/2 story, masonry wall and wood truss roofed structure. It is rectangular in plan, approximately 25' X 75' and incorporates a square, battered, masonry chimney of approximately 64' in height.

The gabled roof is supported by an improvised wood truss (Photograph #5) on 24" centers with king post and intermediate horizontal chord in addition to the bottom chord. This truss is constructed of 1 3/4 inch (approx.) thick boards and supports 3/4 inch board roof deck.

Interior partitions and some contemporary materials divide the east portion of the pump house. The west and southwest walls show evidence of plaster with stencilled ornament. A portion of beaded wood board ceiling remains in this area.

The pump house originally housed a steam-powered pump engine, described as a two cylinder horizontal Corliss-type design with two 6' flywheels and governor which were in use until 1934, when electric pumps were installed to replace the deteriorated steam equipment. The area also housed a cage for local offenders. In the 1950's, the brick tower and wooden tank were replaced by a metal water tower located on the west side of the city.

The tower is connected to the nearby City Hall building by a breezeway roof. (Photograph 10) This area and the adjacent City Hall are of later construction and of minor significance to the tower and pump house.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input 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 1887 Builder Architect Fairbanks Morse

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Paxton Water Tower and Pump House, located in the heart of this Central Illinois community, are two of its oldest structures and symbolize a major turning point in the development of Paxton. Originally part of the federal land grant given to the Illinois Central Railroad, Paxton lies upon a low hill, the summit of a large glacial terminal moraine cut deeply by the railroad north to south. It was originally developed by land speculators, hired by the railroad, who attracted immigrants (primarily Swedish) by promises of good climate, rich soil, and agreeable prices. Paxton thrived as a center for agricultural business in the region, and as the original home of Augustana Lutheran College (from 1868 to 1875).

In 1865, the town was incorporated and had some 50 commercial establishments and some industry. In 1867, the Nickel Plate Railroad was built through Paxton, linking it to the markets in the East, through Cincinnati. By 1870, the population was 1500 and a simple water system of wells and public watering tanks supplied nearly every business and manufacturing shop, as well as several residences.

This system was barely adequate for supplying the need for domestic water, but its real limitation was in terms of fire protection. In 1870, its residents were recovering from a devastating fire which destroyed a substantial portion of the business district. The fire equipment, a hand-operated pump with a 100 gallon tank, had proved wholly inadequate to fight the blaze and the fire was left to the spectators. The disaster was greater than the immediate loss of property, due to the lack of insurance coverage for many of the businesses.

In 1872, Paxton became chartered as a city and elected its first mayor (John Brady). It was also the year that the city embarked on a futile attempt to improve its water supply by drilling an artesian well, a project that, by 1896 (when notes were paid), had cost the city over \$42,000 and not produced any positive results. In 1885, after the artesian well was known to be a failure, the city embarked upon plans for a more conventional water system, employing gravity and steam power, and built the Water Tower and Pump House on city-owned land.

According to verbal and printed accounts, bids were taken by the city upon the guidance of a committee headed by then-Mayor J. P. Middlecoff and a contract awarded to Fairbanks, Morse & Co. at a cost of \$8,000 in bonds to the city. The bricks for the construction were locally made, products of the Paxton Brick & Tile Yard which was located at the present site of Meridian Park. The steam powered pump and engine were manufactured by Fairbanks Morse in Beloit, Wisconsin. The machinery was a regular attraction to school children who toured the water works until 1934, when the steam equipment was replaced by electric pumps. In the 1950's a new metal water tower was constructed on the west side of Paxton and the old tower's equipment and wood tank were removed.

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The masonry portion of the Tower remains in sound though deteriorated condition, as a clearly visible landmark to both residents and travelers on the nearby rail lines and highways. This type of utilitarian masonry structure is one of only a few examples still existing in Illinois. The Tower is an early example distinguished by its octagonal form and simple use of brick and understated Gothic ornament. Other remaining examples in Illinois and Michigan incorporate the use of stone in more highly ornamented designs, more often circular in plan and surmounted by steel tanks. This Tower appears to be a precursor and more characteristic of the building skills and raw materials of the region at the time of its construction. The use of brick rather than the wood supports common at railroad water tanks, stems partly from the height required to give pressure adequate for fire protection, the availability of locally produced brick, and the desire for a permanent structure.

The city had entered into its second generation and had the economic base and prestige necessary to prosper as the seat of Ford County and as trade center at an intersection of two major railroads. The Water Tower and Pump House were the first of several major public works projects in the years from 1887 through 1894, which included construction of a \$30,000 high school building, a \$25,000 electric light plant, and paving of the principal business street (Market) with brick at a cost of \$22,500. Had this Tower not been built, it is unlikely that Paxton would have continued to grow and prosper as a regional social and business center, despite its other assets.

Recent attempts to have these structures demolished have been reversed by public outcry, and planning is now underway to adopt and reuse both Tower and Pump House for a community and visitors' center. Both structures have been measured and drawn for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) and were subjects of a graduate architectural design studio at the University of Illinois at Champaign.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References

A
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

A portion of the area encompassed by the North 22 feet of Lot 7 and all of Lot 6 except the North 32 feet, of Block 2 in the original Town of Prospect City, now City of Paxton, west of the Illinois Central Railroad, not including the area occupied by the Paxton City Hall.

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

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Leslie H. Kenyon/Larry D. Davis, Architects

organization Kenyon and Associates, Architects date July, 1984

street & number 735 North Knoxville Avenue telephone (309) 674-7121

city or town Peoria state Illinois 61602

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____ date _____

For NPS 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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Major Bibliographical References

E. A. Gardner; History of Ford County, Illinois From its Earliest Settlement in 1908; 1908; Chicago; S. J. Clarke Publishing Co.

Illustrated Historical Atlas of Ford County; 1884; Chicago; J. H. Beers & Co.

Howard Gray Brownson; History of the Illinois Central Railroad to 1870; 1915; Urbana University of Illinois (Phd. Thesis); Studies in Social Sciences.

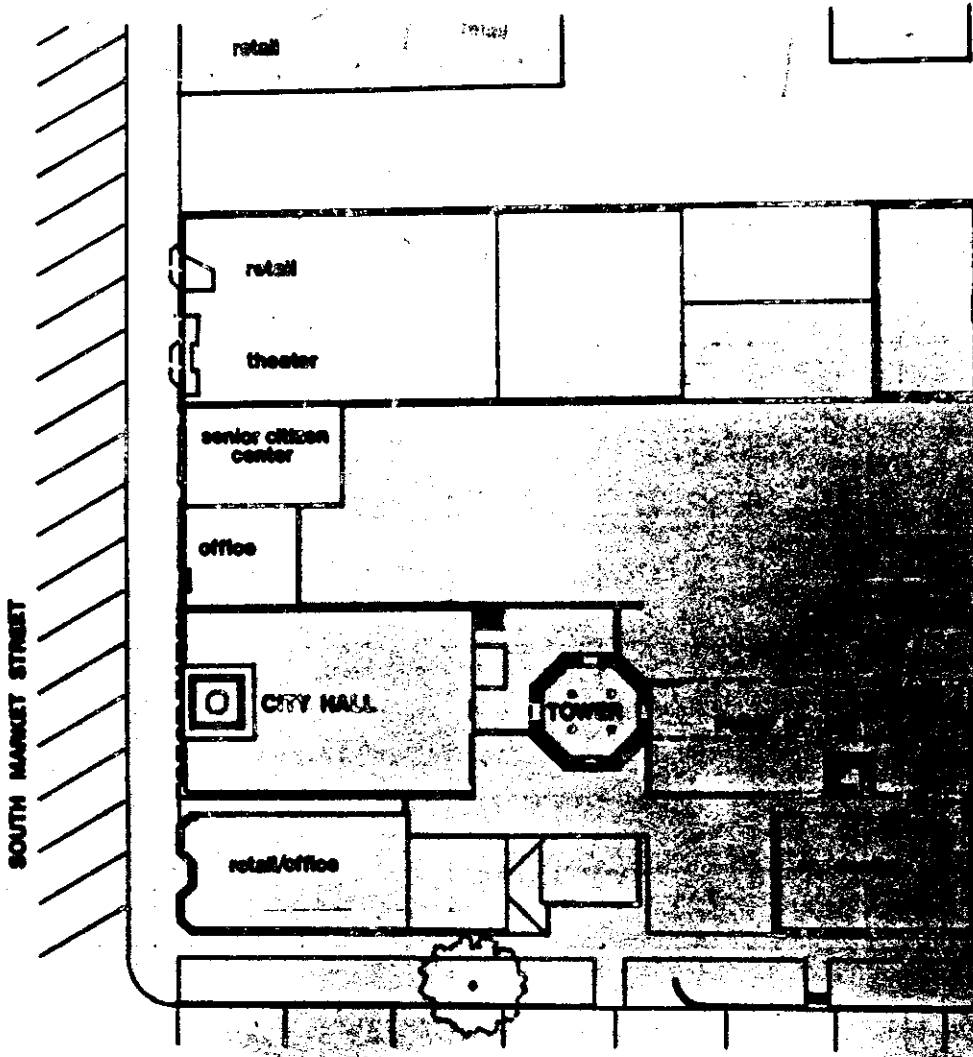
Paul W. Gates; The Illinois Central Railroad and its Colonization Work; No. 42 of Harvard Economic Studies; Harvard University Press; Cambridge.

John A. Rebor; The Nickel Plate Story; 1965; Kalmbach Publishing Co., Milwaukee.

Paxton Record; Ford County Centennial Edition, 6/11/1959.

Percy T. Walton; Design for a System of Water Works for the City of Paxton, Illinois; 1894; Champaign; University of Illinois (B.S.C.E. Thesis).

Elizabeth Scanlan; The Paxton Water Tower; 1981; University of Illinois at Champaign, report for Arch. 301, Prof. J. Garner.



SOUTH MARKET STREET

EAST CENTER STREET

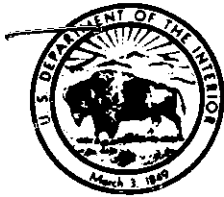
EXISTING
SITE PLAN

0 5 15 feet



NORTH

PAXTON, ILLINOIS WATER TOWER
AND PUMPHOUSE



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior -

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

NOV 23 1984

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 beginning November 11, 1984 and ending November 17, 1984. For further information call (202) 343-9552.

STATE, County, Vicinity, Property, Address, (Date Listed)

ARKANSAS, Mississippi County, Chickasawba Mound (3M55), (11/16/84)

ARKANSAS, Pulaski County, Little Rock, Williamson House (Thompson, Charles L., Design Collection TR), 325 Fairfax St. (11/15/84)

COLORADO, Grand County, Estes Park vicinity, Trail Ridge Road, Rocky Mountain National Park (also in Larimer County) (11/14/84)

HAWAII, Honolulu County, Honolulu, Hocking, Alfred, House, 1302 Nehoa St. (11/15/84)

HAWAII, Honolulu County, Honolulu, Oakley, George D., House, 2110 Kakela Pl. (11/15/84)

HAWAII, Honolulu County, Kailua vicinity, Kukuipilau Heiau, Kalaniana'ole Hwy (11/16/84)

HAWAII, Kauai County, Hanalei vicinity, Haena Archeological Complex, Kuhio Hwy (11/16/84)

HAWAII, Kauai County, Hanalei vicinity, Na Pali Coast Archeological District, Na Pali Coast (11/16/84)

HAWAII, Kauai County, Waimea, Kikiaola, Waimea Rd. (11/16/84)

ILLINOIS, Cook County, Chicago, Cook County Criminal Court Building, 54 W. Hubbard St. (11/13/84)

ILLINOIS, Cook County, Chicago, Emmel Building, 1357 N. Wells St. (11/13/84)

ILLINOIS, Cook County, Chicago, Lake-Side Terrace Apartments, 7425-7427 South Shore Dr. (11/13/84)

ILLINOIS, Cook County, Chicago, Peoples Gas Building, 122 S. Michigan Ave. (11/13/84)

ILLINOIS, Cook County, Chicago, Yondorf Block and Hall, 758 W. North Ave. (11/13/84)

ILLINOIS, Ford County, Paxton, Paxton Water Tower and Pump House, 145 S. Market St. (11/13/84)

ILLINOIS, Hancock County, Niota vicinity, Cambre House and Farm, SW of Niota (11/13/84)

ILLINOIS, Jackson County, Murphysboro, Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot, 1701 Walnut St. (11/13/84)

ILLINOIS, Lee County, Dixon, Brookner, Christopher, House, 222 N. Dixon Ave. (11/13/84)

ILLINOIS, Rock Island County, Rock Island, Fort Armstrong Hotel, 3rd Ave. and 19th St. (11/13/84)

ILLINOIS, Sangamon County, Springfield, Camp Lincoln Commissary Building, 1301 N. MacArthur Blvd. (11/13/84)

ILLINOIS, Sangamon County, Springfield, Hickox Apartments, 4th and Cook Sts. (11/13/84)

ILLINOIS, Will County, Plainfield, Standard Oil Gasoline Station, 600 W. Lockport St. (11/13/84)

INDIANA, Allen County, Fort Wayne, West End Historic District, Roughly bounded by Main, Webster, Jefferson, Broadway, Jones, and St. Mary's River (11/15/84)

INDIANA, Marion County, Indianapolis, Indianapolis Chair Manufacturing Company, 330 W. New York St. (11/15/84)