

524 Ludington Street

Before



After

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United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Escanaba Central Historic District

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This is a two-story rectangular plan brick building whose symmetrical façade is distinguished by a slightly projecting central entry bay. The street level consists of double entry doors slightly recessed in corbelled brick, flanked by triple windows with transoms. A pair of now-infilled windows occur above the entry doors, flanked on each side by three infilled window voids. A pair of small infilled windows occurs in the central bay above the second story. Masonry is employed in continuous lintels beneath all windows and in corner blocks in the first story and in continuous lintels and sills in the second story. Decorative brick work occurs beneath the building frieze, in the form of alternating triple header and stretcher bond in panels between piers supporting a bracketed tile-clad pent roof that extends to the building parapet. Masonry coping terminates each of the building's corner piers and notable Flemish gable capping the central bay. The building's central bay is further distinguished by a masonry panel with corner blocks that is inscribed "B.P.O.E." that occurs above the second story and a smaller masonry date stone beneath the Flemish gable inscribed "1925." A single story functional concrete block addition extends from the west elevation; the rear and upper story elevations are otherwise sheathed in vertical metal panels. The single story concrete block bay extending from the west elevation was added after 1929 and before 1950.

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (BPOE) No. 354 Chapter was established in Escanaba between 1890 and 1900 (Ellis 1910: vi). Sanborn maps reveal that a building housing the Elks Club replaced an earlier structure on the site between 1921 and 1929. The Elks had occupied a second story hall in the building that previously occupied the site, which had been built between 1884 and 1888. Although this building was constructed with a second story hall, this space is not identified until the 1906 Sanborn edition that states, "Club Room 2nd", while the first specific mention of the Elks Lodge occupying this space does not occur until the 1921 edition. City directories reveal the Elks Temple was addressed as 512-514 Ludington in 1907-08 and as 508-510 Ludington in 1911-12; In 1924-25 508 is listed as the Elks Temple, but 510 as Vacant. By 1929 and through 1963, Elks Temple BPOE Hall is addressed as 508-510.

524. Post Office Building/Federal Building (1910, 1932)

The building at 524 Ludington Street is one of the best examples of high style architecture in the downtown district. This three story, rectangular plan, limestone-trimmed brick building is constructed employing Flemish bond brick, and rises from a masonry water table through a massive masonry cornice above the second story to a simple masonry cornice at the parapeted roof. This rather unusual composition results from the addition of the third story decades after original construction. Each of the elevations are five-bay symmetrical compositions of recessed wall planes enframed by piers composed of brick quoins beneath the massive second story cornice. The third story repeats this treatment in simpler execution, lacking the brick quoins.

The character of the impressive façade is anchored by the three central slightly recessed entry bays distinguished by the treatment of the paired entry doors. These are flanked by limestone tabbing and massive limestone Ionic pilasters supporting a segmented pediment. The original entry doors and transom have been replaced by aluminum doors. Fenestration consists of paired double-hung sash windows in the ground floor corner bays and single double-hung sash elsewhere, all displaying masonry sills. The lintels of ground floor windows are distinguished by slant-bonded brick anchored by limestone keystones, while the second floor lintels are incorporated into the outscaled masonry frieze. The third story window lintels are similar to those of the first story, but lack the keystones. The façade culminates in an unadorned masonry cornice. All of these design elements carry over to the five bay deep side elevations.

The interior of the building has been repurposed to accommodate office suites. The entry lobby now consists of a

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small vestibule, although the tile floors remain intact. Original interior walls featuring marble detailing now link to partition walls that divide the formerly public open lobby. The original post office building was completed as a two-story building in 1910 and was remodeled with the addition of a third floor to house federal agencies in 1932 (Dunathan 1963: 107). The bays that extended the rear elevation and the northeast corner of the building may also date to that time.

Unfortunately, no architect had been identified for this building. It is a good example of Classical Revival architecture so favored in federally-sponsored public architecture during the Great Depression. The Classical Revival style is recognizable through the rigid symmetry, projecting entrance portico, and classically-inspired ornamentation. These federal projects were meant to inspire allusions to the great democracies of Greece and Rome. They employed general references to both Roman and Greek-inspired elements, combining them into a single product designed to express dignity, strength and permanency.

The US Congress appropriated \$50,000 for a new US Post Office in Escanaba in 1906 (USCSS 1906: 428). The contract limited the cost of site and building, including fireproof vaults, heating and ventilating apparatus, and approaches, to \$50,000, but in 1908, this was increased from \$50,000 to \$64,000, which was appropriated for site and completion of the building (US Post Office 1910: 100-101). Through the years the city directories reveal that in addition to Post Office this building has been identified as Government Building and Federal Building, and has housed agencies such as Customs, Recruiting Office, Internal Revenue, Weather Bureau, Income Tax Collector, Post Office Inspector, US Forest Service, Social Security, Railroad Retirement Office, Weather Bureau, Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, Extension Service, FHA, Soil Conservation Service, and Civil Service Commission.

600. Fogarty Block/Escanaba Daily Press Building (1893-1899)

Two-story, rectangular plan, flat-roofed, two-part commercial block whose street level is clad in synthetic masonry and second story in vertical metal panels. The fenestration is symmetrical, with the five bays of the first story composed of a center entry flanked on each side by two fixed-pane windows, while the second story piercing pattern consists of five fixed-pane windows. The surface treatment and fenestration carries around the corner of the building to the seven bay deep side elevation, which displays an entry door at the rear (southwest) corner. All ground floor windows are set with masonry sills, the side elevation windows are glass block, and all second story windows are covered with recent vintage ornamental grills.

This building was originally known as the Fogarty Block in the early 1900s (Stiles 1903: 8). A 1916 trade journal reported that the E.J. French Overland Agency had located at 600 Ludington Street (Automobile Topics 1916: 512). A few years later, in 1919 a trade journal reported that the *Escanaba Morning Press* had bought the building it occupied at 600-602 Ludington, which it had occupied for several years. The Press immediately occupied both buildings, moving its business office and editorial rooms one door west, and reserving the entire floor space at 600 Ludington for the operating departments (Fourth Estate 1919: 24). The *Escanaba Daily Press* traces its lineage back to the *Morning Press*, which was established in 1909.

Sanborn maps reveal this building was constructed between 1893 and 1899, when it is addressed as 600-602 Ludington. In 1899, the east half was occupied by a Bicycle and Jewelry Store, while 602 housed a Bakery and a Hall was in the second floor. The 1906 Sanborn indicates a Jewelry store continued in 600 while the west half of the building was occupied by an Auto Garage. In 1913 a Printing concern was in 600 but 602 was Vacant. By 1921 the entire building was occupied by the printers, identified as Escanaba Morning Press, with 600 labeled as

Historic Photos

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