

Commercial and Industrial Buildings,
Peter Even and Son Auto Company Showroom
65 Main Street
Dubuque
Dubuque County
Iowa

HABS No. IA-160-B0

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**PHOTOGRAPHS
HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

Historic American Buildings Survey
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
P.O. Box 25287
Denver Colorado 80225

Peter Even and Son Auto Company Showroom

HABS No. IA-160-B0

Site Location: 65 Main Street
Dubuque, Dubuque County, Iowa
DOT designation: Resource Site No. 5.6
Cadastral grid : SE1/4 NE1/4 S25 T89N R2E
USGS quadrangle: Dubuque South Iowa 7.5'
UTM coordinates: 15.691950.4707110
Lot dimensions : 103.9'x 118': .28 acre
Lot description: City Lots 535, 535A and 536

Present Owner: Junk Wholesale Store
Present Usage: retail store / auto service shop
Present Condition : good

Overall Dimensions: 1-story front section: 73'x 42'; rear section: 58'x 67'.
Orientation : east
Architectural Description : Plan type : rectangular open plan; 1-story.
Foundation: (below grade).
Structure : steel frame roof truss with brick masonry bearing walls.
Ext. walls: painted brick laid in common bond.
Roof : composition bowed roof over front section; shallowly pitched gable over rear section; both have brick parapet walls with ceramic tile copings.
Openings : painted wood frame, full-width store front on front, with large, fixed-light windows and single-leaf entrance and sectional garage door; painted wood 9/9 double-hung or glass block side and rear windows; (recent) metal sectional rear garage door.
Details : corbeled brick bowed pediment on front parapet.

Construction Date : 1916

Architecture Style: 20th Century Functional

Physical History : In 1916 Peter Even built this one-story brick auto showroom on the former site of his coal and wood yard to house the Peter Even and Son [Joseph P.] Auto Company. The building was designed typically for an auto dealership of the period, with an open-floor showroom located in front under the bowed roof and a slightly narrower garage area in the rear under the gabled roof. The Evens continued to sell automobiles from this structure until around 1922, when the dealership was taken over by Lange and Tscharner. After functioning briefly as a truck terminal in the late 1930s, the building was occupied in 1938 by the Central Battery and Electric Company, which operated a sales and service facility here until the early 1960s. It stood vacant briefly

and was then used by the nearby Midland Chemical Company [HABS No. IA-160-BM] as a warehouse. After Midland moved out, the building housed Johnnie's Sports Center, then Microlite and, most recently the Atlast Fluid Power Company. Throughout this time, the structure has remained virtually unchanged, featuring its original form, footprint and storefront.

Significance: Born in Jackson County, Iowa, on August 4, 1856, Peter Even moved to Dubuque in 1878. He operated a grocery store for three years before becoming a salesman and bookkeeper for Pat McCullough, an agricultural implement dealer. He worked for McCullough for thirteen years and then joined H.J. Fuchs to start a wood and coal business. In 1894 Even and Fuchs bought McCullough's implement business; ten years later Even bought out Fuchs's interest in the partnership. "His implement house is one of the largest in the state," a 1911 history stated. "The large patronage he is enjoying, both in the fuel and implement business, was acquired by honest and fair dealings." About this time Even added automobile sales to his implement business at 57 West Main Street, and in 1916 he built this brick building to house the car business exclusively. The Peter Even and Son Auto Company Showroom typifies the functionally detailed brick structures built in the early 20th century on lower Main Street to house Dubuque's automobile service and sales industry.

References: Dubuque City Directories: 1857 - 1970.
Sanborn Insurance Maps: 1879, 1884, 1891, 1909, 1972.
Iowa State Gazetteer and Business Directory: 1882-1918.
Dubuque County Assessment Record: 3-17-16-14.
Franklin T. Oldt and P.J. Quigley, *History of Dubuque County, Iowa* (Chicago: Goodspeed Historical Association, 1911), page 605.
Iowa Department of Transportation, "Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Cultural Resources Assessment."

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