

The Congregational Church, National, Iowa

The Congregational Church located in National, Iowa was built in 1879, at a cost of \$2,114. The lot cost \$100 and the bell \$172.43. The bills for carpet, organ, etc. brought the total cost to \$2,672,26. The church was located south of the Farmersburg Cemetery along US Hwy 52 the modern name for the Dubuque, St. Paul Trail. The congregation was originally organized in a log house in September 1953. [CC Hist 1882, p 769; Gem of the Prairie p 548]

The Church, after National received its death blow when the railroad passed it by, was sold by the few remaining members of the Congregational faith to the Lutherans, who held services in it for a while, and the name became "German Lutheran Church." The Lutherans also later also abandoned the building.

When it appeared that it might be purchased and turned into a tavern, Miss Althea Sherman bought it for \$1,050 to save it from such a fate. Miss Sherman maintained the church and the cemetery over which it stood until her death. In her will she deeded the church to the Cemetery Association.

In 1952/53, the Cemetery Association auctioned off the church for \$1,160 to an area farmer, Amel Thiese. Thiese tore the church down and stored the white pine on his farm. The church organ said to have 184 pipes, said to have been the first pipe organ brought into northeast Iowa, was purchased by John Corlett, keeper of a second hand store in McGregor who also bought the walnut reed organ and the kerosene lamp fixtures. The church bell went to Thiese with the building.

[Dubuque Telegraph Herald, Florence L. Clark, article Jan 11, 1953 "*Church, Relic of Early National, Sold at Auction*," Gem of the Prairie p 549.]