

## 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 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 checked="" 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** 1897–present **Builder/Architect** Anson Marston

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Marston Water Tower is believed to be one of the earliest, if not the first, steel water tower constructed west of the Mississippi River. Professor Anson Marston, first dean of Iowa State's College of Engineering, was the person most responsible for the tower's erection. After the college's wells began drying up in 1892, Marston prepared plans for a waterworks system, but the legislature turned a deaf ear. Four years later, however, when the college closed due to water shortages, enough money was appropriated to begin construction of Marston's system.

Professor Marston was design engineer for the water tower, and he planned it to "serve as an object lesson, both to citizens of the state and to hundreds of young engineers." Its height and capacity were monumental for that time, but were considered necessary for a thriving campus. To provide a durable structure Marston built the tank of steel instead of the wood usually used at that time, and he doubled the minimum strength of the tower for stability. All materials and methods used in construction were subjected to complete testing before, during, and after erection to permit excellence in performance. In order to prevent freezeups, Marston designed a frostproofing apparatus for the inlet pipe to the tower, which was considered quite an innovation for the time.

Marston was assisted on the project by C. W. McMeekin, who acted as consulting engineer. Crellin & Lovell of Des Moines were contractors for the foundation which cost \$1,150.42. The King Bridge Company of Cleveland, Ohio, contracted for the rest of the work, for which they received \$8,966.