

7-9-73

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Form 10-300  
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	IOWA
COUNTY:	JOHNSON
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	MAY 7 1973

#### 1. NAME

COMMON: Plum Grove, home of Robert Lucas

AND/OR HISTORIC: Lucas Home

#### 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 1030 Carroll Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Iowa City CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: First

STATE: Iowa 52240 CODE: 14 COUNTY: Johnson CODE: 103

#### 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

#### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: State of Iowa, Administered by Iowa State Conservation Commission

STREET AND NUMBER: 300 Fourth Street

CITY OR TOWN: Des Moines STATE: Iowa 50319 CODE: 14

#### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Johnson County Courthouse (County Recorder's Office)

STREET AND NUMBER: South Clinton Street

CITY OR TOWN: Iowa City STATE: Iowa 52240 CODE: 14

#### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Outdoor Recreation in Iowa

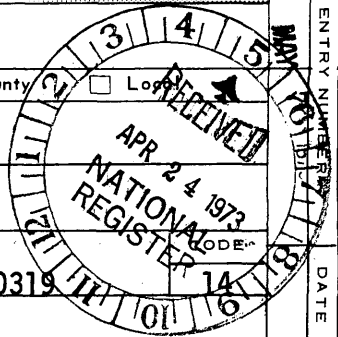
DATE OF SURVEY: 1972  Federal  State  County  Log

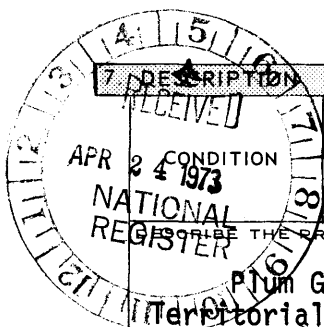
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Iowa State Conservation Commission

STREET AND NUMBER: 300 Fourth Street

CITY OR TOWN: Des Moines STATE: Iowa 50319

SEE INSTRUCTIONS





7. DESCRIPTION

(Check One)

Excellent     Good     Fair     Deteriorated     Ruins     Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered     Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved     Original Site

THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Plum Grove was built in 1844 by Robert Lucas, who was the first Territorial Governor of Iowa (1838-1840). It was located on a farm of 80 acres just south of Iowa City, Iowa. The two-story house was built in the Greek Revival style, of locally made brick. Interior woodwork was of native Iowa walnut and oak.

Following the death of Robert Lucas in 1853, his wife lived in the house until it was sold in 1866. Through succeeding years it passed through the hands of several owners and a front porch and frame wing were added and interior partitions changed and fireplaces plastered over. The house and 4.283 acres of grounds were purchased by the State of Iowa in 1941 for the State Conservation Committee. It was restored to what was believed the original appearance and plan and was opened to the public as a museum house in 1946.

Exterior

The main part of the house consists today, as it did originally, of a two-story structure, about 30 x 30 feet in dimensions, with a one-story kitchen, 14 x 14 feet, projected to the rear. The house faces north, with a north-south ridge roof. The one-story kitchen also has a north-south ridge roof, the west slope of which covers an open porch.

The gable is in the front of the house, characteristic of the Greek Revival style of architecture which was popular in the area when this house was built. The gable area gives the effect of a pediment due to the cornice returns. (P.32 Margaret N. Keyes, "Nineteenth Century Architecture of Iowa City", University of Iowa Press, 1966). A round window in the tympanum of the gable has eight triangular panes.

The exterior is of the original soft, pink brick, manufactured locally. The wood trim on doors, eaves, and 16-pane windows is painted white. Over the doorways and the windows, the bricks are laid vertically to form lintels. All windows have louvered shutters.

The house has four chimneys serving 7 fireplaces. There are two on the west, one on the east and one on the kitchen ell. Those in the main block serve a fireplace on each floor. There is a back door from the kitchen to the back porch and an outside cellar-way to a one-room stone-walled cellar under the front of the house.

The homestead was named Plum Grove by Governor Lucas because of the surrounding grove of native wild plum trees. The original trees have died out but have been re-planted as part of the restoration.

Interior

The house is square in plan, with a square kitchen at the rear. The narrow entrance hall has a curving staircase. Other rooms on the first floor are a parlor, a back parlor or study, a dining room, and a buttery or pantry, opening from the kitchen. The four main rooms have fireplaces.

The floors are random width white oak and the mantels and other woodwork are walnut. All woodwork was re-created in 1941-1946 except the stair railing, which is original.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Continuation Sheet)

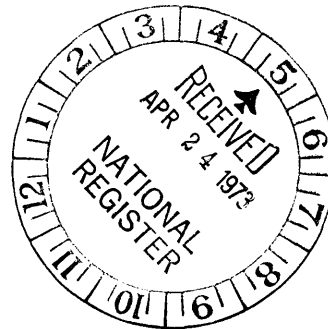
STATE	IOWA	
COUNTY	JOHNSON	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	7	DATE
	MAY	1973

(Number all entries)

**7. Description**

The second floor has three bedrooms, each with a fireplace. A closet opens from the master bedroom. All rooms have been papered with wallpaper of authentic design for the period during which Robert Lucas lived here (1844-1853). The house is also completely furnished with items appropriate for this period. Several pieces are authenticated as having belonged to Lucas. The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America has cooperation with the Iowa Conservation Commission in the furnishing of the house.

For the past ten years there has been trouble with dampness on the interior walls. Several measures have been taken but the problem has decidedly worsened in the past two years. Wallpaper is water-stained in all the first-floor rooms and the wallpaper and plaster have sluffed off the east wall in the dining room. A builder and an architect who have been consulted believe it is caused by washed out mortar on the exterior of the house and lack of ventilation in the air space of the double exterior walls.



3. SIGNIFICANCE

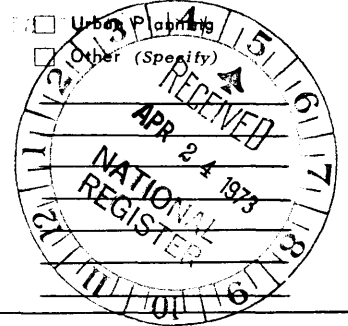
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1844 ✓

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic     | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                             |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |  |   |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

✓ Plum Grove is historically significant as the home of Robert Lucas, first Territorial Governor of Iowa (1838-1840). He was an outstanding pioneer leader, frontier soldier and statesman, a man of great integrity, energy and ability with a background of political and executive experience that proved invaluable in providing timely leadership in a crucial period of Iowa history.

He was born in Virginia in 1781 and moved with his family to Ohio where he eventually married and settled in Piketon. He had great natural abilities as a soldier and rose through the ranks of the Ohio Militia to become a Brigadier General. He served in this capacity in the Hull campaign in the War of 1812. He was also an officer in the U. S. Army and was commissioned a colonel in 1813. (John C. Parish, Robert Lucas, 1907, P. 61).

He was elected to the Ohio legislature as a representative in 1808. In 1814 he was elected a state senator and continued in the senate until 1822. In 1832 he presided over the first Democratic National Convention ever held. He was twice elected governor of Ohio, 1832-1834 and 1834-1836.

In addition to his political activities Lucas was a nationally prominent leader in the Temperance Movement (Parish, Robert Lucas, P. 286).

He was a strong supporter of the development of the common school system in Iowa, and served as president of an important state convention of teachers and friends of education in Iowa City, Iowa in 1848.

Lucas also participated as a leader in conventions and organizations promoting the development of railroads in Iowa (Parish, Robert Lucas, P. 287-288).

In 1838 he was appointed by President VanBuren to be governor of the new territory of Iowa. His term was a turbulent one, marked by internal conflicts with the legislature and a border dispute with Missouri but Lucas proved to be a very firm and capable executive. He was replaced in office at the end of his term because of a Whig presidential victory in 1840. (John C. Parish, Robert Lucas, 1907, P. 262).

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Robert Lucas by John C. Parish, Published by the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, 1907.

Nineteenth Century Home Architecture of Iowa City by Margaret N. Keyes, University of Iowa Press, Iowa City, Iowa, 1966.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

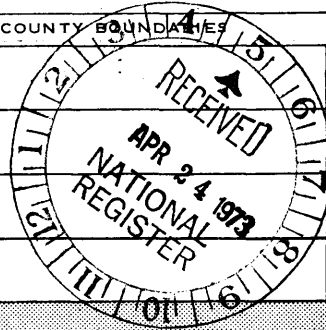
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		41 38 53	91 31 29	
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

UTM  
15/622890  
4611510  
CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 4.283 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: K. M. Madden, Board Ecologist

ORGANIZATION: Iowa State Preserves Advisory Board DATE: January 30, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER: P. O. Box 424

CITY OR TOWN: Indianola STATE: Iowa CODE: 50125  
14

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name Adrian D. Anderson

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date 4/18/73

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert Keyes  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 5/7/73

ATTEST: [Signature]  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 5 2 73

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE IOWA	
COUNTY JOHNSON	
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(Number all entries)

**8. Significance**

He chose to spend his remaining years in Iowa and after settling his affairs in Ohio, he returned to build Plum Grove for his wife, Friendly, and their three children who still lived at home. During his years at Plum Grove, Lucas continued to be an active leader in several phases of Iowa's growth. As a member of Iowa's Constitutional Convention in 1844 he rendered wise and valuable service in the drawing up of Iowa's constitution. He presided as chairman of the Executive Department of the convention and was responsible through the State Boundaries Committee for extending Iowa's western boundary to the Missouri river, instead of a line short of the Missouri prescribed by Congress (John C. Parish, Robert Lucas, 1907, P. 270). He was also a forceful member of the convention committee on state revenue.

As the home of this great man, Plum Grove is one of Iowa's most important historic shrines.

