

# Iowa Site Inventory

Office of Historic Preservation  
Iowa State Historical Department  
East 12th & Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Site Number 75 N 29 W - 5.1  
District Name Legacy In Stone TR  
Map Reference # 25

## Identification

1. Site Name John and Amanda Bigler Drake House
2. Village/Town/City Vic. Winterset Township Webster County Madison
3. Street Address 11 Miles West of Winterset on Highway 92
4. Legal Location 75N 29W 5 SW1/4 SW1/4 \*  
Urban: subdivision Rural: township block range parcel section subparcel 1/4 section of 1/4 section
- (Map 4)
5. UTM Location: zone 15 easting 397,680 northing 4,574,340; Acreage less than one acre
6. Owner(s) Name Mrs. Loraine J. Drake and son Joe D. Drake
7. Owner(s) Address 110 E. Court Winterset IA 50273  
(Street address) (City) (State) (Zip)
8. Use: Present Vacant house Original Residence

## Description

9. Date of Construction c. 1856 Architect/Builder uncertain
10. Building Type:  
 single-family dwelling  industrial  other institutional  religious  
 multiple-family dwelling  educational  public  agricultural  
 commercial
11. Exterior Walls:  clapboard  stone  brick  board and batten  shingles  stucco  
 other \_\_\_\_\_
12. Structural System:  wood frame with interlocking joints  wood frame with light members (balloon frame)  
 masonry load-bearing walls  iron frame  steel frame with curtain walls  reinforced concrete  
 other Native limestone
13. Condition:  excellent  good  fair  deteriorated
14. Integrity:  original site  moved—if so, when? \_\_\_\_\_  
Notes on alterations, additions (with dates and architect, if known) and any other notable features of building and site:
15. Related Outbuildings and Property:  barn  other farm structures  carriage house  garage  privy  
 other \_\_\_\_\_
16. Is the building endangered?  no  yes—if so, why? \_\_\_\_\_
17. Surroundings of the building:  open land  woodland  scattered outbuildings  densely built-up  commercial  
 industrial  residential  other farmstead

18. Map



19. Photo

Roll \_\_\_\_\_ Frame \_\_\_\_\_ View \_\_\_\_\_

\*Nomination boundary:

A circle, 150' diameter, with center point located at center point of house. Excludes outbuildings.

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

### **20. Architectural Significance**

—a. Key structure/individually may qualify for the National Register

—b. Contributing structure

Theme(s): Vernacular Architecture

Subtheme(s): Function: Residential

The John R. and Amanda Bigler Drake House is an early example of a vernacular farm residence built of limestone. It is one of few extant two story linear rectangles with entrance and flanking windows centered under the eaves. Notable features include a lintel course, protruding water table, a door with elaborate transoms and sidelights, and stone chimneys at each gable end.

The 20' x 33' two story gabled house with 12' x 12' two story addition is constructed of locally quarried ashlar and rubble. The roof line of the addition is lower than that of the main house. The main public facade on the west with a normal road setback has a door centered under the eaves with four flanking windows. At the second floor there are windows over each of the four first floor windows and the door. The south facade has only an entrance to the basement. The east facade has a centered door with two windows one above the other on the left and the stone addition of the right. The north gable facade has no windows, but the stone addition has a door on the right next to the main house and a window on the left with a second floor window above each. The east facade of the addition has no openings, and the south facade has a door on the left next to the main house and a window on the left with a second floor window above each.

The house is built of limestone with a large amount of shell fragments in it.  
(Information deleted on request of owner of site 93.)

The most probable source of the stone seems to be the quarry along Middle River in Seciton 5.

The main west facade is constructed of ashlar with draft lines and finished with a square ended tool. Stonework is coursed with random bond and very close, slightly depressed joints. Above the first floor windows is a lintel course of ashlar with draft lines and finished with a square ended tool. A protruding water table on the west and north forms the door sills. Quoins and jambs on the west facade are of the same ashlar with draft lines and texturing that is used for the rest of the facade.

The other facades are constructed of rubble and some very roughly squared stone with wide variation in size and finish. Stonework is sometimes brought up to course and there is grapevine tooling. The north secondary facade, also oriented toward the road, has a double grapevine tooling with a raised bead between the lines. Jambs on the north facade are finished like the main facade, but less carefully so. Jambs on the east and south facades have draft lines. On other than the main facade lintels and sills are dimension stone with axed finish.

Splayed window recesses are paneled with undecorated wood. The recessed doors have cabinet paneling. The public entrance has two section paneling at the top and each side of the reveal. The transom has five narrow panes, and each sidelight has three. The overhanging eaves and verges are closed with mitred soffits and boards against the stone with coving where they join. The flues are within each of the three gable walls and there is a stone chimney at the end of each gable ridge.

### **21. Historical Significance**

—a. Key structure/individually may qualify for the National Register

--b. Contributing Structure  
Theme(s): Early Settlement

In 1853, the Drakes were among the first to settle in the western part of the county. By 1858, Drake and purchased 560 acres. The fact that the farm is still owned by the Drake family is an indication that they were permanent settlers. Drake was a noted stock raiser. A significant aspect of the house is a section of the south wall that is laid with two against one broken bond like David Harris used. It appears that Harris built this insignificant portion of the house. This suggests that he may have joined the work crew in 1855 when he moved to the county and before he started his own business in 1856. This may well be Harris's first work in the county. It suggests a probable building date of 1855.

Atlas of Madison Co., Iowa Philadelphia: Harrison & Warner, 1875.

Courthouse Records. Winterset, Iowa: Madison County Records' Office.

Davies, J. J. History and Business Directory of Madison Co., Ia. Des Moines; Mills and Co. Printers and Publishers, 1869.

Houlette, William D. "Madison County's Wonderful Stone Houses," The Iowan Vol.2, No.6 (August - September 1954) pp. 30 - 35.

22. **Sources**

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