

Iowa Site Inventory

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

Site Number 75N 29W - 13
District Name Legacy In Stone TR
Map Reference # 27

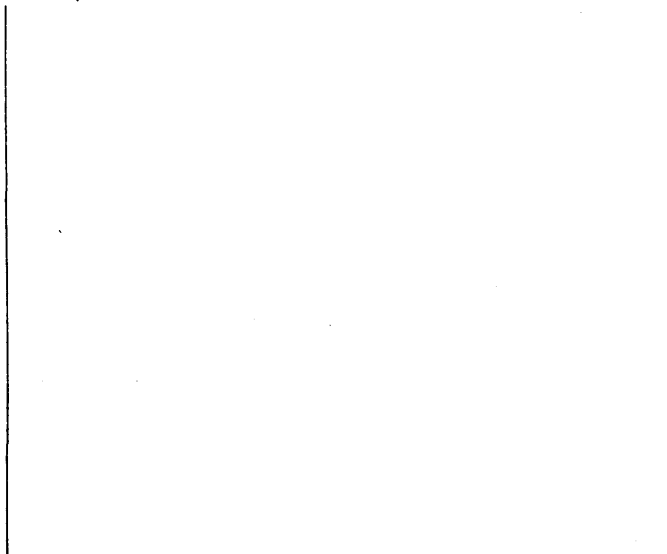
Identification

1. Site Name John and Fredericka Meyer Schnellbacher House
2. Village/Town/City _____ Township Webster County Madison
3. Street Address on G47, 1 1/2 mi. east of intersection with P53, section 13
4. Legal Location 75N 29W 13 NW1/4 SW1/4 *
Urban: subdivision block parcel subparcel
Rural: township range section 1/4 section of 1/4 section
- (Map 4)
5. UTM Location: zone 15 easting 404,200 northing 4,571,430; Acreage less than one acre
6. Owner(s) Name Dennis F. Rolek
7. Owner(s) Address 7014 Washington Des Moines IA 50311
(Street address) (City) (State) (Zip)
8. Use: Present Vacant Original Residence

Description

9. Date of Construction c. 1856 Architect/Builder unknown
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 Native limestone
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 _____
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:
Changes to porches
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 farmsted

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): Identified Master Designer/Builder: Clark; Function: Residential.

The John and Fredericka Meyer Schnellbacher House is an early example of a vernacular farm residence built of limestone. It is one of two extant two and one-half story linear rectangle houses with split level aspect. Notable features include unique window and door surrounds on the main entrance facade, a stone chimney and split level aspect with siting at a distance from the road overlooking a creek and hills.

The 26' x 30' two and one-half story gabled house is constructed of locally quarried almost ashlar finished and rubble limestone. The south main entrance facade has a second story ground level entrance centered entrance under the eaves with flanking windows. There are small "basement" windows below the two windows. The east gable facade has a first floor centered entrance with flanking windows. There are three windows directly above in the second story and two third story windows above and between the windows of the second floor. The west gabled facade which faces the road has two widely spaced second floor windows with two third story windows above and between them. The north facade has a door centered under the eaves with a window to the left.

The south main entrance facade is constructed of squared, almost ashlar limestone with exaggerated quarry face. The stonework is coursed with random bond and beaded joints. Quoins are ashlar with draft lines, margin lines, and textured with a square ended tool. The windows and door on this facade have unusual surrounds. There is a vertical stone at each side of the windows that serves in place of jambs. The vertical members rest on the sill and have a lintel lying across them. All members have axed texturing. The door lintel has axed texturing with draft lines on the ends. There is a vertical stone at each side of the door. There are long shoulder-like stones above the vertical stones and short plinth-like stones below. The "shoulder", vertical, and "plinth" stones have horizontal axed texturing to give the appearance of a column at each side of the door. The "shoulder" and "plinth" extensions are random tooled. The sill below the door is a dimension stone with draft lines and margin lines. The door surround is similar to that of the Schoenenberger House and the window surrounds are similar to those of the nonextant Kate Guiberson House. There is a water table on this facade which is chamfered along the top.

The east first floor entrance facade is constructed of finished cut stone with exaggerated quarry face. Stonework is coursed with random bond. The north and west facades are built of coursed rubble. There are grapevine joints tooled with a square ended implement. Some lintels have axed surface texturing. Some have margin lines, draft lines, and a face pointed in lines with a small round ended tool. The other type of sill has draft lines, margin lines, and the face textured to resemble stucco. Quoins and jambs are finished cut stone with exaggerated quarry face. Windows are splayed and have undecorated wood paneling. The recessed doors have paneled reveals. The south door has a transom with four panes; the east, with three panes; and the north door has no transom. The main south entrance has surface textured stone steps. The overhanging eaves and verges have closed mitred soffits, mitred wood against the stone and coving where they join. There is a square stone chimney at the gable peak of the west end.

The split level aspect with centered first floor gable entrance with flanking windows and centered second floor under eaves ground level entrances with flanking windows is very similar to the Schoenenberger House (74N27W-7). This and the similar main entrance surround indicate that the two houses were built by the same mason. The window surrounds are similar to those of the Kate Guiberson House (W-00-1-X). The houses show many of the characteristics of Caleb Clark's work. Further, Clark is known to have worked for Judge

Guiberson who contracted to have the Kate Guiberson House built. These circumstances and similarities seem to point to Caleb Clark and his sons as the builders of this house.

21. Historical Significance

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

—b. Contributing Structure _____
Theme(s): Early Settlement

John and Fredericka Meyer Schnellbacher were Germans who settled in Madison Co. in 1855. These early settlers owned 240 acres and were known as a large and wealthy farm family. They had nine children. He was a preacher with the Evangelical Association of Ohio. He held various township offices. Nicholas Schoenenberger and John Schnellbacher were born in Germany about the same time and arrived in Madison county in the same year. Their similar ages and backgrounds might have resulted in friendship and a similar choice of houses. The houses were probably built about the same time, and it is not known which was first.

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

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

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

History of Madison County, Iowa. Des Moines: Union Historical Co., 1879.

22. Sources

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