

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

SEP 15 1988

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name DR. FRANCIS B. WARNOCK HOUSE
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 201 MAPLE STREET not for publication
city, town BATTLE CREEK vicinity
state IOWA code IA county IDA code 093 zip code 51006

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

James P. [Signature] OSK/FO September 9, 1988
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. 10/13/88
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Work in progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals/
Colonial Revival; Late Victorian/
Queen Anne

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone/granite

walls wood/weatherboard

roof asphalt

other wood/shingle

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See Continuation Sheets.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1899

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Barber, George F.
Bassett and Son

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See Continuation Sheets.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Abstract. Lots 2 and 3, Block 12 in Town of Battle Creek.
Register of Physicians and Surgeons. 1868-1926. (Ida County Courthouse.)
Tax List of Battle Creek Township, Ida County, for the Year 1899, p. 114.
(Ida County Courthouse.)
Tax List of Battle Creek Township, Ida County, for the Year 1900, p. 115.
(Ida County Courthouse.)
Ida Grove Pioneer, November 16, 1899, March 5, 1922, May 27, 1957.
Alvin Bushnell Bell House. National Register nomination.
George F. Barber's Cottage Souvenir Number Two. Knoxville, Tenn:
S. B. Newman & Co., 1891; reprint ed., Watkins Glen, New York: American
Life Foundation, 1982.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Bureau of Historic Preservation

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	5
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2	8	5	7	0	0
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4	6	8	7	8	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The site is defined as lots 2 and 3 of block 12 of the City of Battle Creek, Iowa.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries are those that have historically and aesthetically been associated with the house at its construction in 1899.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Barbara Beving Long, architectural historian
organization Midwest Research date June 24, 1988
street & number 3140 Easton Blvd. telephone 515/266/4964
city or town Des Moines, state Iowa zip code 50317

United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2Dr. Francis B. Warnock House
Sec. 7, P. 2

The Dr. Francis B. Warnock House, a virtually intact example of transitional, turn-of-the-century residential design, combines elements of the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. The Colonial Revival influence is unusually strong for an 1899 design that also has Queen Anne influences. The Warnock House exhibits significant details attributable to Tennessee architect George Barber's mail order designs. Queen Anne features showing a direct Barber influence include his trademark round turret on a wraparound porch, location and use of a single, front-facing dormer, and hipped roof with large additional gables. Barber-derived Colonial Revival elements include dentils, large Palladian windows, round porch columns, and distinctive delicate ribbonwork (rather Adamesque in inspiration). The ribbonwork occurs over the porch entry, on the front door, and on one interior grill. In addition to these Colonial Revival and Queen Anne features, design elements such as a rough stone foundation and a tower above a porch turret are found both in Barber's 1899 catalog and on the Warnock House. The Warnock House is tangible evidence of Barber's far ranging influence, even in a small Iowa town such as Battle Creek.

The ample (64'1" x 38'6") 2 1/2-story house has a hipped roof with three gabled sections, resulting in an irregular rectangular plan. The main entrance opens into a large entry hall that features excellent unaltered oak woodwork and paneling, including elegant balusters and an elaborate newel. Three rooms open off the entry hall, and large sliding doors separate some of them. There are five rooms on the first floor in addition to the spacious entry hall, and six on the second floor.

The wood frame house is sheathed in clapboard, and the foundation is Sioux Falls red granite. Wood shingle is used in curving gable ends. Small cresting tops the apex of gables. The prominent towers--a round porch turret and polygonal tower behind it--dominate the composition and balance well with the massive gabled sections. Colonial Revival elements are appropriately scaled to the mass of the house. Especially notable are the two large Palladian windows having sawtooth dentils, a prominent keystone, Corinthian pilasters, and leaded glass. The delicacy of the Adamesque ribbonwork contrasts effectively with these larger elements.

Interior woodwork is varied and has escaped painting. Notable is the birdseye maple of the parlor, to the right of the entrance.

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The doctor's private room upstairs is finished in sycamore, the others are finished in pine. Distinctive original light fixtures are another important interior feature. Three remarkable grills using two patterns occur over doorways and are similar to those of Barber catalogs. The 1899 Barber catalog has examples of an entry door with Adamesque decoration, a Palladian window, staircase, interior decoration, and grilles (pp. viii, ix, x, ix) similar to or matching those of the Warnock House. The similarity is most striking for the Adamesque detailing.

The house is not an exact copy of house plans from the 1899 or 1891 patternbooks Barber issued. The Warnock House may be a Barber design specifically tailored to the needs of the Warnock family. A number of details and features are clearly based on Barber designs. House designs on pages 58, 65, and 71 of the 1899 catalog exhibit details and/or massing similar to the Warnock House.

It is also possible that the house is a local adaptation by a master builder, Bassett and Son, one based on a late 1890s Barber catalog. The Bassetts were skilled builders who are known to have had drawing boards and drafting equipment in their shop. The granddaughters of William Bassett (the son of the firm, who was in charge of the Warnock project) knew of no patternbooks or other records from Bassett and Son. They had retained a number of photographs of buildings the Bassetts constructed as well as some unusual carpenter tools. Heirs of owners of the Warnock House, including one who lived there from 1905 to 1923, were unaware of any plans for the house.

Alterations are minimal inside and out. The original wood balustrade over the porch entry as well as railings for the stairs (shown in an 1899 photograph) are gone. A chimney on the northwest or side rear corner has been removed following a fire and related deterioration of the chimney. The four-pane storm window on the south Palladian window is not original and will be replaced. The small back porch has been removed. It does not appear there have been any changes to the interior plan.

The owners are in the process of rehabilitating the house as a Tax Act project and will use the house for a restaurant and lodging place. They intend to replicate the balustrade and railings of the entry, remove the inappropriate four-pane window, and extend and enclose the back porch area by four feet, using

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appropriate materials. They also will paint the house using five historic colors. One downstairs room will become restrooms for the restaurant. Bedrooms upstairs will have their own bathrooms in former closet space.

The site formerly had a stables or small barn, but this building has long been removed. A rather unusual and apparently unaltered gable-front garage has smooth round columns in two sizes. The columns are similar to those of the house, and the overall effect is harmonious. But the more recent age (1920s) and automotive use for the garage render it a noncontributing building on the site. Landscaping is minimal and consists of mature trees on the parking, evergreens, and a clump of small trees at the side rear of the property. The original red granite hitching post still stands on the parking. A tiny triangular park is directly across the street.

Two city lots comprise the boundaries for the nomination. Dr. Warnock bought the first lot in 1883, well before construction, and added the triangular corner lot in 1894. These lots are those that have historically been associated with the property.

The Warnock House is by far the most elaborate house in the tiny community of Battle Creek. Several more modest examples also exhibit a round porch turret, and it is possible the Warnock design influenced their construction. Housing stock in the small community is primarily wood frame, and much of the original clapboard has been sided. Like the Warnock House, a number of Battle Creek houses have hipped roofs and large additional gables, a reflection of house types popular at the turn of the century in Battle Creek. In 1894 Battle Creekites organized the Battle Creek Land and Improvement Company to boost their town and to sell real estate; Dr. Francis B. Warnock served as the company's president. The turn-of-the-century period was a time of prosperity in Battle Creek.

Founded in 1877-78, Battle Creek was a speculative rail town of the Blair Town Lot and Land Company. In 1900 it was described in the Ida Grove Pioneer as a "progressive little city in the western part of Ida County on the Chicago & North Western Railroad with a population of about 800 with exceptionally good schools and churches and is a good trading point." The typical farm market businesses were represented, including two banks and the Sam Warnock's lumber yard.

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The Warnock House is among the least altered buildings in town. Located just off the small commercial section that parallels the railroad tracks, the house enjoys a quiet residential neighborhood of other late nineteenth century housing. The exception is First Presbyterian Church, a modern replacement for an 1880 church. (Mrs. Warnock and Francis' father Richard were charter members.)

When William and Heidi Bender, Holstein residents, became aware of the vacant status of the Warnock House, they were moved to purchase it, to save it from neglect. Work is underway to convert the house to a restaurant, with lodging upstairs. The Benders will operate the facility but continue to live in Holstein. There is substantial community support and enthusiasm for the venture.

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The Warnock House, an architectural landmark in Battle Creek, Iowa, is a virtually intact example of a particularly elaborate transitional, turn-of-the-century house. The house exhibits significant details (especially intricate interior detail, form of the Palladian windows, use of towers, and massing) attributable to Tennessee architect George Barber's mail order designs. Although not an exact copy of house plans shown in the 1899 or 1891 patternbooks Barber issued, the Warnock House may be a design specifically tailored to the needs of the Warnock family or an adaptation by Bassett and Son based on a late 1890s Barber catalog. Both situations were common for Barber-derived houses. Bassett and Son, contractors for the house, are known to have built a Barber house in nearby Ida Grove (house on National Register).

George Barber's mail order architectural business brought elaborate designs within reach of even the smallest and remotest community. Between 1887 and 1907 his company produced nine catalogs or "samplers" of building designs. The Warnocks could have become aware of Barber's designs through Bassett and Son, advertisements in popular magazines, or Barber's own journal established in 1895 and devoted to designs, American Homes.

The 1899 edition of Modern Dwellings, a Book of Practical Designs and Plans for Those who Wish to Build or Beautify Their Homes does not include the Warnock House, although specific motifs on the house are represented, including Adamesque swags, large Palladian windows with distinctive keystones, and grills. An 1891 Barber catalog was too early an issue to contain many elements of direct applicability to the Warnock House with its combination of classical revival and Queen Anne motifs; other issues were not available for study.

English-born Thomas Bassett and his son William, builders of the Warnock House, were master builders in Ida Grove (six miles from Battle Creek). The Bassetts had moved to Ida Grove in 1876, when it was established as a railroad stop. Thomas Bassett's obituary noted that "His handiwork as a carpenter and builder is in evidence in hundreds of residences in all parts of [Ida Grove]." Bassett and Son was the builder for the 1895 Alvin Bushnell Bell House in Ida Grove. This National Register-listed house was patterned after a design by George Barber, further evidence of the Barber influence in Ida County. An undated newspaper article about Thomas Bassett (in the possession of his great-granddaughter) noted that for over twenty-five years he "has confined his time to shop work, building

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window and door frames, and turning out all other work needed in the interior of the house by hand and foot power, using his tread power circular saws up until the time he gave up work which was late in the fall of 1917." The description gives further credence to the contention that the Bassetts adapted a Barber design for the Warnock House.

The Warnock House was built by November 16, 1899, when a photograph and article about it appeared in the Ida Grove Pioneer. It was then described in the newspaper as "by far the most costly, spacious, convenient and handsome residence in Ida county...." Tax records for Ida County reflect an increase in value on the property, for the assessment rose dramatically from \$325 in 1899 to \$1,780 the following year. The County Assessor has assigned a 1901 construction date.

It is possible the Warnock House was built as early as June 1898. Insurance maps published by H. Bennett of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, appear to show the house on both 1898 and 1909 maps of Battle Creek. However, it is crudely sketched and only shown as having one story. An adjacent house, also extant and from this period, is similarly casually and inaccurately rendered. It does not appear the Bennett maps are as faithful to reality as Sanborn fire insurance maps. The Warnock House was definitely built by 1909; there are several references to the "huge Victorian home" Dr. Warnock built.

Dr. Francis B. and Nellie Warnock bought lot 2, the house site, in 1883 from his brother Samuel. However, Dr. Warnock did not file the warranty deed until 1891, suggesting that he was buying it on contract from his brother. In 1894 Dr. Warnock bought the adjacent lot 3, a triangular lot, probably to make a more spacious setting for such a commodious house. His brother Samuel operated a lumber yard in Battle Creek during this period, a probable source of building materials for the Warnock House. Written on the back of a trim board found recently in the house is "Green Bay Lumber Company," and the Warnock family is known to have had dealings with that company.¹

Born in 1859 in Iowa, Dr. Warnock received his medical training

¹James Warnock and the Green Bay Lumber Company were named in a law suit involving the property.

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from the University of Iowa, receiving his diploma in 1882. He opened a medical practice in Battle Creek the same year and received his State Board of Health Certificate in 1886 according to records at the Ida County Courthouse.

While a Battle Creek resident Warnock wrote poetry and a historical novel about the Maple Valley area, Richard Hume. The book's characters were reportedly based on actual residents. Richard Hume was probably the first fictional work by an Ida County author.

In 1905 the Francis Warnock family sold the house and both lots to his brother James and moved to nearby Sioux City where he continued to practice medicine and write poetry. The circumstances behind the move have not been determined. Another brother, William, was a successful businessman and noted Democrat in Sioux City. The William Warnock Company built the Warnock Building there in the 1920s, a prominent six-story office building and Ford auto showroom.

The Warnock House remained in the Warnock family until 1922 when the James Warnock family lost it in bankruptcy proceedings. Active in the Republican Party, Warnock had been a farmer until 1905 when he moved to town and opened a Ford automobile dealership.

Anna L. Penniston acquired the house in 1922 and sold it to T. Edward Sprage in 1926. In 1926 an irregularity in land transfers resulted in lot 3 of block 12 (the small triangular portion of the site) apparently being returned to an 1886 purchaser. In 1929 the house returned to the Warnock family when Lowery L. Warnock acquired it. Between 1941 and 1965 there were a series of owners, including Margaret and Ralph Davis and Louis and Elsie Smith. In 1965 the Smith heirs sold to Steven Morrice who died in 1977. The present owners (Holstein Medical Clinic) acquired it in 1987 from Morrice's estate.

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Barber, George F. Modern Dwellings, a Book of Practical Designs and Plans for Those who Wish to Build or Beautify Their Homes. Knoxville, S.B. Newman & Co., 1899.

Battle Creek Centennial Book. 1965, p. 12.

Godbersson, Bruce, ed. Our Heritage. History of Ida County. Ida County: Midwest Industries, 1977, passim, including p. 13 for photograph showing porch and p. 14 for quote of "huge Victorian home."

Moorehead, Dr. G.C. "Historical Collections of Ida County." 1928.

Allen, Arthur F., ed. Northwestern Iowa. Its History and Tradition, 1804-1926. Chicago: S.J. Clark Publishing Co., 1927.

City Directories, Sioux City, 1903-1924.

1899 photograph of Warnock House in possession of Pam Turin, granddaughter of William Bassett.

"Sketches on People and Places. 1896-1912." pp. 50, 92.

"The Warnock Building." Undated clipping. Sioux City Museum.

Insurance Map, Battle Creek, Iowa. H. Bennett: Cedar Rapids, Iowa, 1898, 1909.

Interview with Pam Turin, granddaughter of William Bassett, March 14, 1988.

Interview with Isabella Smith, relative of Steven Morrice, March 13, 1988.

Interview with Mrs. Ella Hoyer, daughter of James Warnock, June 22, 1988.