

PH036115X

# DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 27 1976

DATE ENTERED JUN 22 1976

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

### NAME

HISTORIC

\* Davis, Timothy House

AND/OR COMMON

Witt Funeral Home

### LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

405 1st Street, N.W.

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Elkader

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Iowa

CODE

COUNTY

Clayton

CODE

### CLASSIFICATION

#### CATEGORY

\_\_DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

\_\_STRUCTURE

\_\_SITE

\_\_OBJECT

#### OWNERSHIP

\_\_PUBLIC

PRIVATE

\_\_BOTH

#### PUBLIC ACQUISITION

\_\_IN PROCESS

\_\_BEING CONSIDERED

#### STATUS

OCCUPIED

\_\_UNOCCUPIED

\_\_WORK IN PROGRESS

#### ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

\_\_YES: UNRESTRICTED

\_\_NO

#### PRESENT USE

\_\_AGRICULTURE

COMMERCIAL

\_\_EDUCATIONAL

\_\_ENTERTAINMENT

\_\_GOVERNMENT

\_\_INDUSTRIAL

\_\_MILITARY

\_\_MUSEUM

\_\_PARK

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

\_\_RELIGIOUS

\_\_SCIENTIFIC

\_\_TRANSPORTATION

\_\_OTHER:

### OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

William Witt

STREET & NUMBER

405 1/2 1st Street, N.W.

CITY, TOWN

Elkader

\_\_ VICINITY OF

Iowa

STATE

### LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Clayton County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Elkader

STATE

Iowa

### REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

\_\_FEDERAL \_\_STATE \_\_COUNTY \_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Witt Funeral Home is a three bay, two and one-half story brick town house. The main block measures approximately 32' x 40'. There is an attached story-and-three-quarter service wing to the rear. Built in a vernacular late Federal style, the house sits on a dressed stone foundation, and has walls 18" thick throughout. It is ornamented with simple lintels, windowsills, and front entry surround of like stone. Most of the windows are original 6 over 6 double hung sash and those that have been replaced date from the early part of this century. The present front porch, a recent addition, generally duplicates the original porch in scale and mass. However, despite the reuse of some original materials such as the segmental brackets, the detailing is generally simplified. Based on visual evidence it seems likely that the original porch, though quite early, did not date from the construction of the house. The level of architectural sophistication of the porch as revealed by the profile "ghosts" on the brick seems to be much greater than that of this very simple house. When the house was converted into a funeral home, a small addition was attached to the rear which has not detrimentally affected the structure's historic integrity.

The interior plan is typical of houses of this type. There is a side stair and entry hall with one room behind on one side of the house, and a large double parlor on the other. The woodwork throughout is original and of a simple Greek Revival form. This includes wide, three-part baseboards, and door and window surrounds in attenuated dogear with block course cresting. The fireplace mantels have symmetrical architraves and bulls-eye corner blocks. Interior changes have been minor; two of the original six fireplaces have been closed and the remaining four reworked for coal during the late 19th century. No significant interior physical changes were required when the house was converted to its present use as a funeral home with the proprietor's quarters upstairs.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      ca.1860

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This structure is a well-preserved example of the vernacular Federal style as it was manifested in Iowa during the mid-19th century. It is also significant as the home of Timothy Davis, prominent in Elkader as a businessman, attorney and town speculator, who took an active interest in its design and construction.

During the mid 1840's, Davis (then a resident of Dubuque), John Thompson and Chester Sage laid out the town of Elkader, and, perhaps as a lure to prospective settlers in their new town erected a saw- and grist mill there. The grist mill was said to be the largest stone mill west of the Mississippi at the time.

The period of Davis' residence in Elkader (and thus the date of the construction of his home) is uncertain. The 1882 Clayton County History reports Davis living in Elkader from 1854 to 1857. He returned to Dubuque in 1857, but "a few years after", Davis moved back to Elkader, where "he built himself a fine residence and passed his last years". Upon Davis' death, both home and the "Elkader Flouring Mill" passed to his son, L.V. Davis, and thereafter out of the family.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

History of Clayton County, Iowa (1882), pp. 577-580, 638.  
 Dubuque Telegraph-Herald, 28 Feb. 1965  
 Clayton County Register  
 Swisher, Jacob. Iowa, Land of Many Mills. Iowa City: State Historical Society, 1940.  
 Andreas, A.T. Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa, Chicago, 1875

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 5	6 3 0 0 4 0	4 7 4 5 8 7 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Patricia Koehn

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Elkader

Iowa

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Adrian S. Anderson*

TITLE

Director, Div. of Historic Preservation

DATE

4.22.76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*W. M. [Signature]*

DATE

6/22/76

ACTING DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

*Charles [Signature]*

DATE

6.18.76

ACTING KEOPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER