

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic James Brown House

and/or common Riverview Farm

**2. Location**

street & number 424 State Street \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Riverdale \_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district 1

state Iowa code 19 county Scott code 163

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b> ___ district <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) ___ structure ___ site ___ object	<b>Ownership</b> ___ public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private ___ both <b>Public Acquisition</b> ___ in process ___ being considered	<b>Status</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied ___ unoccupied ___ work in progress <b>Accessible</b> ___ yes: restricted ___ yes: unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<b>Present Use</b> ___ agriculture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial ___ educational ___ entertainment ___ government ___ industrial ___ military ___ other:	___ museum ___ park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence ___ religious ___ scientific ___ transportation
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**4. Owner of Property**

name Aluminum Corporation of America

street & number P.O. Box 356

city, town Davenport \_\_\_ vicinity of state Iowa

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office

street & number Scott County Courthouse

city, town Davenport \_\_\_ vicinity of state Iowa

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Iowa Survey of Historic Resources has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no

date 1972 \_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Division of Historic Preservation

city, town Iowa City \_\_\_ vicinity of state Iowa

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## 7. Description

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**Condition** excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved

date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Attractively sited at the base of a ridge paralleling the Mississippi River, the James Brown House is located a short distance off U.S. 67 and east of Davenport. Architecturally, this two-story stone edifice, erected in the 1840's is a vernacular interpretation of the Greek Revival mode, but it has overtones of Roman or Jeffersonian Classicism as well with its four columned raised portico, raised basement, and tall chimney stacks. Exterior walls are of locally quarried, coursed rubble stone and rest on foundations of similar material. Windows are generally of the six-over-six wood sash variety, are set in rectangular surrounds, and feature stone lintels and lugsills. The structure is capped with a hipped roof of medium pitch sheathed in seamed tin.

In addition to its white painted portico with carved balustrades, the house has several other decorative exterior features. In typical Greek Revival fashion, the front doorway boasts a rectangular transom broken by two engaged piers and flanked by side lights. Additional ornamentation is provided by its plain frieze and overhanging boxed cornice; single gabled dormers that pierce the roof on its north and south sides; and two tall, stone, inside end, chimney stacks on the east and west ends of the house.

Inside, the house follows a central hall floor plan with two rooms on each side. Although some modifications have been made over the years, most of the original woodwork remains, including a walnut staircase with an open string stairway and featuring ornamental brackets. On the second floor, the original wide pine plank flooring remains in use, but on the first floor, it has been replaced by diagonally laid oak flooring.

Except for the removal of a captain's walk from the peak of the hip roof, exterior alteration to this structure appears to have been minimal. The one-and-one-half story clapboard addition at the rear was added at a later date. Utilized variously as a blacksmith shop and summer kitchen, it appears to predate the twentieth century. The house is sited on 5.8 acres and is surrounded by a variety of trees and shrubs. Outbuildings include a stone ice house, believed to be of the same vintage as the residence, and a barn-carriage house of relatively recent construction.

At present, this house stands vacant. Until recently, ALCOA utilized it both as rental property and as temporary housing for company executives. The firm has discussed rehabilitating the property and making it a place for business, social, and public meetings.

## 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 checked="" 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** Approx. 1840's-Present **Builder/Architect** Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The James Brown House possesses a twofold significance. Architecturally, it is one of the finest stone houses of its size and scale in Iowa and its combination of elements of Greek Revival and Roman Classicism is rather rare in the state. In fact, it is more representative of the stone houses seen in Kentucky and Ohio than in Iowa. Secondly, this fine old home helps illustrate the early patterns of settlement in Scott County and represents the attempts of early settlers to reestablish the lifestyles they had enjoyed in their former homes.

The exact date this house was constructed has been the subject of much conjecture and will probably never be determined with any degree of certainty. Descendants of James Brown, the structure's first known resident, believe it dates from the early 1840's. In an 1844 letter to his wife from Davenport, Brown mentions that he has leased a house in the area, and his great-granddaughter Frances H. Hansen believes this is the house referred to. According to family tradition, says Mrs. Hansen, her grandmother was born in this house in 1848. John Welch, the owner of a neighboring house constructed in 1846 and occupied continuously by his family, has stated that the Brown House was erected two to three years earlier. James Brown, however, did not purchase the property where the house stands until 1854. Unless Brown took a chance and built a house on leased land, the builder of this residence was either Amasa Doolittle or Aaron Moss, who owned the property prior to 1854. There is also some evidence that the house was erected at a later date. Several years ago, a penciled inscription was found behind the dining room mantel listing the carpenters who built the mantel and listing its completion date as February 15, 1855. This evidence indicates either that the house was just being completed or simply that Brown wanted new mantels put in place.

The Brown family occupied the house until around 1865. For the next thirty-five years, this property which had become known as River View Farm had a succession of owners. In 1900 James R. Nutting, prominent Davenport businessman and close friend of Buffalo Bill Cody, purchased the house, and it remained in his family until 1920. In the 1920's, the property passed into the hands of the Universal Atlas Portland Cement Company. In 1937, however, this firm sold the house and the land around it to John Crissey, who during the next thirty years carefully restored and maintained it. Since 1967 the house and grounds have belonged to the Aluminum Corporation of America.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 5.8 acres

Quadrangle name Silvis, Ill.-Iowa

Quadrangle scale 7.5'

### UMT References

A 15 0111070 4601190  
Zone Easting Northing

B           
Zone Easting Northing

C         

D         

E         

F         

G         

H         

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	n. a	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ralph J. Christian, Architectural Historian

organization Division of Historic Preservation date January 12, 1981

street & number 26 East Market Street telephone 353-6949/353-4186

city or town Iowa City state 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Adrian A. Anderson

title Director date January 25, 1982

**For HCRS use only**  
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Adelaine Byers  
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the National Register date 3/5/82

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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RECEIVED	FEB 5 - 1982
DATE ENTERED	MAR 5 1982

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE one

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BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Abstract of Title, copy in Division of Historic Preservation files.

Davenport Times-Democrat, March 12, 1967.

Interviews with John Welch, August 29 and November 20, 1979 by Randy Brockway

James Brown to wife, September 11, 1844, copy in Division of Historic Preservation files.

North Scott Press, May 1, 1974.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10

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All of a parcel of land situated in Section Twentysix (26) of Township Seventy-eight (78) North, Range Four (4) East of the Fifth Principal Meridian, in Scott County, Iowa, more particularly described as Follows:

Starting at the monument marking a common section corner of Sections Twenty-two (22), Twenty-three (23), Twenty-six (26) and Twenty-seven (27); thence South Fifty-two degrees (52<sup>0</sup>) Thirty-seven minutes (37') East Eleven Hundred Forty-eight and nine tenths (1148.9) feet to a concrete monument at the point of beginning; thence North Sixty-three degrees (63<sup>0</sup>) Fifteen minutes (15') East Three hundred eighty and seventy-six hundredths (380.76) feet to about Thirty (30) feet from the center of the highway South Forty-six degrees (46<sup>0</sup>) Fifty-one minutes (51') Thirteen seconds (13") East Three hundred fifty-five and three tenths (353.3) feet to a point in the center line of the Davenport-LeClaire Road; thence South Forty-eight degrees (48<sup>0</sup>) Thirty-eight minutes (38') West Seven hundred twenty-four and thirty-nine hundredths (724.39) feet along the center line of the Davenport-LeClaire Road to a point; thence North Forty degrees (40<sup>0</sup>) Nine minutes (9') Thirty-four seconds (34") West Three hundred eighty-four and four tenths (384.4) feet, more or less, to a point; thence North Fifty-four degrees (54<sup>0</sup>) Thirty-two minutes (32') East Three hundred thirty-nine and forty-one hundredths (339.41) feet to a point; thence North Fifty-two degrees (52<sup>0</sup>) Thirty-seven minutes (37') West One hundred (100) feet to the concret monument marking the point of beginning containing Five and eight tenths (5.8) acres, more or less.