

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED **JAN 4 1980**
DATE ENTERED **FEB 8 1980**

**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

St. Mary of the Assumption Church

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1031 Avenue E

CITY, TOWN

Fort Madison

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

CODE

COUNTY

Lee County

CODE

STATE
Iowa

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Congregation of St. Mary's Church

STREET & NUMBER

1031 Avenue E

CITY, TOWN

Fort Madison

VICINITY OF

STATE

Iowa 52627

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Lee County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Fort Madison

STATE
Iowa

6 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 type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. Mary of the Assumption is a large Gothic Revival church begun in 1865 and completed in 1870. It is arranged on the basilican plan, with exterior walls of brick laid in 7-course English header bond with limestone trim. The building is dominated by an immense (212') full-length tower which, rather than being integrated into the front facade, stands almost as a separate unit.

Brick buttresses divide the nave walls into 7 bays, each bay with a tall lancet-arched tracery window. The front corner buttresses culminate in pinnacles with small gables on each side of the base. The main entrance is recessed within a large pointed arch. The side portals are similarly shaped, but are set within brick enframements with triangular tops.

The tower is divided into zones of varying height by narrow bands of limestone. It culminates in four corner pinnacles and pairs of pointed gables which top the lancet-shaped, louvred openings of the bellchamber. The octagonal wooden spire is shingled, and has small louvred lancet openings beneath small pointed roofs on four sides. Other features of the tower include small lancet arcades on the fifth stage and large blind medallions, set in simple square frames of limestone, on the fourth stage. Pairs of lancet windows are found on each side of the second and third stages, and above the main entrance is a niche with statue.

The high gable roof has three small dormers with finials on each side, each dormer with a single window set within short engaged "columns".

The vaulted ceiling of the nave is 60' high, those of the side aisles 50', the arches springing from 12 cluster columns. The capitals of the columns are hand carved with grape and oak leaf designs and covered with gold leaf. The main and side altars are carved of butternut, and feature elaborate pinnacles and statues covered with polychrome and gold leaf. The pipe organ was made by Georg Heinrich Pfeffer of St. Louis, and installed in 1879.

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 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

1865-1870

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Walch & Schmidt, St. Louis.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This church is a very fine example of Gothic Revival ecclesiastical architecture. Most noteworthy is the immense, full-height tower, centered at the front facade and appearing almost to stand apart from the building itself. This tower treatment is most often found in smaller parish churches; thus its appearance on such a large building is of interest.

The church was designed by the architectural firm of Walch and Schmidt, of St. Louis. The cornerstone was laid in 1865, and was dedicated in January, 1871. A storm in 1876 did some damage to the tower, which was then rebuilt with a bellchamber and a spire slightly shorter than the original. The church has historically been associated with the German community in Fort Madison, which was concentrated between 9th and 18th Streets. As in many of Iowa's other Mississippi River towns, German immigrants were a prominent ethnic element in Fort Madison, beginning about 1850, and they made substantial contributions to the social and commercial life of the community.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Tragesor, Rupert (comp.). "The Diamond Jubilee of the Completion and Dedication of the Church . . . ", privately printed, St. Mary's Church, 1946.

Koch, L.P. "Reminiscences of St. Mary's Church and School", Ms. Letters of Mrs. G.H. Wilmesmeier (deceased) Abernathy, Texas (property of L.P. Koch), 1968.

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 1

QUADRANGLE NAME Fort Madison, Iowa; III.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,5 6,4,2,3,5,0 4,4,9,9,2,0,0

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot on NE corner of 11th Street and Avenue E, Fort Madison, Iowa.

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

M. H. Bowers, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Division of Historic Preservation

DATE

September, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

26 East Market Street

TELEPHONE

319-353-6949

CITY OR TOWN

Iowa City

STATE

Iowa 52240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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 A. Fulsom

TITLE

Director, Division of Historic Preservation

DATE

December 3, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Carol O. Skell

DATE

2-8-80

ATTEST:

William H. Graham

DATE

2-4-80

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION