

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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 McMahon, Thomas and Bridget Shanahan, House other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 603 Division Street E city, town Faribault state Minnesota code MN county Rice code 131 zip code 55021

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: [X] private, [ ] public-local, [ ] public-State, [ ] public-Federal. Category of Property: [X] building(s), [ ] district, [ ] site, [ ] structure, [ ] object. Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 1 buildings, 1 sites, 1 structures, 1 objects, Total 1.

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 [X] 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 [X] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. [ ] See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official Ian R. Stewart, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Minnesota Historical Society. Date 6/12/90

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: [X] entered in the National Register. [ ] 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:). Entered in the National Register. Signature of the Keeper: Meloua Byers, Date of Action: 7/19/90

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single family

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single family

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Faribault stone architecture

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation limestone

walls limestone

roof asphalt

other limestone sills, lintels

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See continuation sheet

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The McMahon House is a detached one and a half story dwelling constructed of locally quarried limestone. It is rectangular in plan with a stone addition on the southeast corner. Both masses have asphalt shingled gabled roofs. Built in 1871, it is characteristic of the type of vernacular stone house built in Faribault with its simple massing, random ashlar masonry, and stone sills and lintels. Fenestration is regular and consists of double hung wood windows set into beveled window openings with flush stone lintels and projecting sills. A first story window on the east elevation has been infilled with well-matched stone (date unknown). A centrally located raised and recessed front entry rests on a stone threshold that would have met the height of the former Victorian era frame porch. The earliest available Sanborn (1909) and a turn-of-the century photograph of the front facade, corroborate the existence of a frame porch across the front facade as well as a second porch along the south elevation in the "L" created by the rear addition. The exact dates of construction and removal of the porches are not known.

The rear addition to the house appears to be early due to the matched stone, the masonry, and the similar construction of a raised and recessed entry on the addition's east elevation. The addition appears on the 1909 Sanborn map. Although window framing and configuration on the addition match the main house, the windows are smaller.

The historic photograph also indicates two corbelled brick chimneys on either of the gable ends. A single brick chimney (date unknown) now exists on the west gable end. The photograph also indicates louvered shutters on six-over-six light windows and bracketed eaves.

More recent alterations to the house (dates unknown) include the installation of wood frame and shingled shed dormers on the gable slopes of the main house, the addition of nine-over-nine mullion inserts in the present one-over-one windows,

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and the construction of a frame and glass porch in the rear "L." This porch encloses the original rear entry.

None of the major alternations, such as: the early construction of the rear addition; the removal of the front facade Victorian style porch; or the addition of shed roof dormers to the front and rear gable slopes, greatly compromises the true vernacular sensibilities of the house. Those sensibilities are still evident in the general unaltered simple configuration of the house's thick stone walls, its stone sills and lintels, and fine masonry.

The property contains a non-contributing wood frame garage structure of later construction on the south end of the site.

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    N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1871  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1871  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

McMahon, Thomas, builder  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

See continuation sheet.

See continuation sheet

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The Thomas and Bridget Shanahan McMahon House is significant within the context of the period of early settlement (ca.1855-1875) in Faribault. This period encompasses roughly the first twenty years of settlement and corresponds to the Minnesota State Historical Society's *Early Agriculture and River Settlement* context. Within that broad context, the McMahon House is specifically significant as a particularly well preserved example of the type of vernacular native stone housing built by Faribault's working class during the early settlement days.

Faribault's early settlement period was marked by the rapid influx of a variety of ethnic groups, both Yankee and European, and the establishment of the early local economy. That economy included a mix of local businesses including drygoods and hardware stores, clothing stores, meat and grocery markets, drug stores, boot and shoe shops, a wagon and sleigh building shop, furniture stores, restaurants and saloons, livery stables and blacksmith shops. This period also witnessed the development and the decline of the highly competitive milling (lumber, wool, and flour) industry along the Straight River Valley. Another of Faribault's earliest industries was the quarrying of stone. The variety of limestone that was quarried in this locale was eventually shipped throughout the region and was used for homes, churches and public buildings. The stone also comprises the building material of some of Faribault's earliest buildings. Faribault's later role in the regional economy was nurtured with the arrival of the first railroad in 1865 and the beginning expansion of trade outside the immediate vicinity of Faribault.

The rapid immigration to and formation of an economy in Faribault was owed to a location that initially brought settlers into Rice County via steam travel up the river valleys. As early as 1855, Faribault found itself at the intersection of an early network of roads including the Lake Pepin, Spirit Lake, Dodd (and St. Paul), and Hastings roads that brought immigrants from all directions. Faribault's strategic location on the Straight River and at the intersection of new roads, combined itself with an

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environment of bountiful waterways, hardwood forests, and farmland, and drew settlers who saw the potential for entrepreneurship and a better life.

The arrival of many ethnic laborers in Faribault, among them Irish and German stonemasons, influenced the design and material of many of Faribault's earliest buildings. Having come from areas in Europe with stone building traditions, these local builders continued to use their masonry skills and sense of design in many of Faribault's most handsome and well-built buildings.

The simple plan, modest size and minimal decoration of the McMahon House is typical of the type of early settlement housing built by early masons with their vernacular sensibilities. Because the house was built eleven years after McMahon settled in Faribault, the design, though simple, probably represents the kind of house McMahon aspired to. There are twelve other extant stone vernacular houses in Faribault, all built by working class families after an initial period of establishment within the Faribault economy. All exhibit simple plans, minimal stylistic embellishment, and labor intensive building techniques. They are distinctive for their flush stone lintels, protruding door and window sills, interior beveled window openings, and approximately twelve inch deep walls.

Little is known about Thomas McMahon except that he was an early settler in the city and was the owner of local stone quarries that yielded a blue limestone. McMahon immigrated to Iowa from County Clare, Ireland, with his parents in 1834. In 1852, at the age of 30, McMahon and his bride moved to Waseca County in Minnesota, and in 1859, moved to Faribault. He built the family residence on Division Street in 1870-71 at a cost of \$2,200 and lived there until his death in 1900. The McMahons raised nine children while living in Faribault. No record of McMahon's other buildings have been found.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository:

Fort Snelling History Center  
Saint Paul, Minnesota

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A 115 | 4793810 | 4903930  
 Zone Easting Northing

C \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_

B \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zone Easting Northing

D \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies Lot 5, Block 1, Faribault's Addition.

N/A  See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the city lot that has historically been associated with the property. City legal description.

N/A  See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Thomas R. Zahn, Jacqueline Sluss

organization Thomas R. Zahn & Associates, Inc. date July 31, 1989

street & number 420 Summit Avenue telephone (612) 221-9765

city or town Saint Paul state Minnesota zip code 55102



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