

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED OCT 21 1976  
DATE ENTERED APR 11 1977

**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  Elmhurst

AND/OR COMMON

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER *3rd of Connerville* outside Connerville(S) on Grand Ave. (IN121)

CITY, TOWN Indiana S.R. 121  NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE Connersville  VICINITY OF 9th

INDIANA CODE 018 COUNTY Fayette CODE 041

**CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Masonic

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Masonic Temple Corporation

STREET & NUMBER Indiana S.R. 121

CITY, TOWN Connersville  VICINITY OF STATE Indiana

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Fayette County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER 401 Central

CITY, TOWN Connersville STATE Indiana

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey  
Indiana Catalog

DATE 1971  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service

CITY, TOWN Washington, D.C. STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## 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

Wilbur D. Peat called Elmhurst the most imposing and stately of the Federal Mode in Indiana. The porch which was added later, is an example of the colonnade-entablature style of classic architecture. Although the two storied, flat-roofed porch became a popular feature in southern states during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, there were relatively few in this region. The doric columns have altered the style of the original central unit from Federal to Greek Revival.

The structure is brick with a five-bay main block and three-bay wings at the north and south ends. It is two stories with a two-story hexa-style portico on the east. It has a gable roof.

The central unit was erected in 1831 for Oliver H. Smith. This was a Federal structure consisting principally of four rooms with massive chimneys on the north and south ends. About 1850 Samuel Parker beautified the grounds and added cherry panels to the lower front rooms. In 1881 James N. Huston extensively remodeled the building, using the White House in Washington as a guide. At this time the massive porch columns and wings on north and south ends were added. Huston continued the paneling begun by Parker; he added oak panels in upper rooms and oak stairways. Huge fireplaces were installed in the lower and upper hallways; the fireplace in the lower hall is of red sandstone and polished granite. In 1901 Dr. Andrew H. Daum added an annex to the north wing; this consisted of 26 rooms which were used as a sanatorium.

After being used for some 20 years as a girls school and then standing idle for about another decade, the structure was acquired in 1940 by Warren Lodge #15, F. & A.M. The Lodge remodeled and restored Elmhurst's interior to its grandeur of the past.

# 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

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SPECIFIC DATES 1831, 1850, 1881, 1901  
1940 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Oliver Hampton Smith

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Few buildings in the Midwest have as much heritage as Elmhurst. For over 140 years it has been the home of four significant political figures and a girls school of national stature.

Oliver Hampton Smith arrived as a young lawyer in Connersville seven years after it had been platted and recorded by John Conner in 1813. Smith served as a member of the state House of Representatives from 1822 to 1824, was appointed prosecuting attorney for the Third Judicial District in 1824, and served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1827 to 1829. On January 3, 1831, he purchased the 160 acre Elm Farm for \$9.00 per acre and built a four room house which became the nucleus of Elmhurst. Smith served in the United States Senate from 1837 to 1843 when he moved to Indianapolis to practice law. He was president of an Indiana railroad company at the time of his death in 1859.

Caleb Blood Smith arrived in Connersville after graduation from Miami University in 1827. He studied law with Oliver H. Smith, and in 1833, 1837, 1840, and 1841 he was a member of the Indiana House of Representatives, serving as speaker in 1836. He was a presidential elector from Indiana for the Whig ticket of Harrison and Tyler in 1840. In 1843 he purchased the old Elm Farm from his former mentor Oliver H. Smith. Following Congressional service from 1843 to 1849, he was appointed by President Zachary Taylor to be a member of a board to investigate claims of American citizens against Mexico. In 1851 he became President of the Cincinnati and Chicago Railroad Company and in 1856 was a presidential elector for the Republican ticket of Fremont and Dayton. As a member of the Indiana delegation to the Republican National Convention in Chicago in 1860, he was influential in the nomination of Abraham Lincoln. Smith served as President Lincoln's Secretary of the Interior from March 5, 1861, until January 1, 1863, when he resigned to become Judge of the U.S. District Court for Indiana. His term on the bench was cut short by his death on January 7, 1864.

Samuel Wilson Parker graduated from Miami University in 1828 and came to Connersville to open a private school while studying law under Oliver H. Smith. After a term as prosecuting attorney of Fayette County from 1836 to 1838, Parker sat in the state legislature as a Representative in 1839 and 1843 and a Senator from 1841 to 1843. In 1850 Parker acquired the old Elm Farm, beautified the grounds, and paneled the lower front rooms with solid cherry. He served in the Congress from 1851 to 1855 and spent the last four years of his life as President of the Whitewater Valley Canal Company and the Junction Railroad Company. He died February 1, 1859, and is buried on the grounds of Elmhurst.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"See attached Continuation Sheet"

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approx. 1

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	6	6	5	9	1	2	0	140	4	3	8	8	2	8	0
ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING									

B 

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING	

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

Henry H. Blommel

5/27/76

ORGANIZATION

Warren Lodge #15 F. & A.M.

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

Route #5

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Connersville

STATE

Indiana

## 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

*[Handwritten Signature]*

10/14-76

TITLE Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

CHIEF

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

4/11/77

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

3-18-77

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James Nelson Huston purchased the farm in 1881 and extensively remodeled the house along the lines of the White House in Washington. Massive porch columns and wings at both north and south ends of the original structure were added, and paneling started by Parker was continued at a cost of about \$44,000. Huston was political manager for Benjamin Harrison, and when Harrison became President, Huston became Treasurer of the United States. Harrison and his wife made frequent visits to Elmhurst, and an upstairs room was decorated and reserved for them.

In 1909 the Elmhurst School for Girls was established and for twenty years gave Midwestern girls educational opportunities equal to those in Eastern private schools. Utilizing the tillable land around Elmhurst, the school developed a combined agricultural-domestic science course which was unusual for a private girls school.

Several efforts to establish schools after 1929 failed and the building stood idle until 1940 when Warren Lodge #15, F. & A.M. purchased and restored it.

Elmhurst's architectural excellence adds to its strong historical associations. Each of the additions adds to the stature of the building without destroying its classical balance. Detail is used carefully to compliment its overall form. It represents the best in workmanship for several periods of construction during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

A well known landmark in Indiana, Elmhurst is architecturally important as well as having ties to several historic figures.

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Major Bibliographical References

Johnson, Glen A. "Memorial to the New Temple", 1941.

Barrows, Frederick Irving. History of Fayette County, Indiana: Her People, Industries, and Institutions. Indianapolis: B.F. Bowen & Company, Inc., 1917.

Biographical and Genealogical History of Wayne, Fayette, Union and Franklin Counties, Indiana. 2 vols., Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1899.

History of Fayette County, Indiana. Chicago: Warner, Beers & Co., 1885.

Sesquicentennial Book Committee. The Book of the 150th Year of Connersville, Indiana. Shelbyville, Indiana: Tippecanoe Press, Inc., 1964.

Smith, Lowell J. "150 Years of Masonry in Connersville." 1971.

Peat, Wilbur D. Indiana Houses of the Nineteenth Century. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1962.