

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1853
OCT 7 1990

**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 Harker House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 328 Lake Avenue

not for publication N/A

city, town Storm Lake

vicinity N/A

state Iowa code IA county Buena Vista code 021

zip code 50588

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

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 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

David [Signature]

Signature of certifying official

10/23/90
Date

State Historical Society of Iowa

State or Federal agency and bureau

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:

- 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]

12/6/90

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use
 Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
 DOMESTIC/single dwelling

 Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
 RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum
7. Description
 Architectural Classification
 (enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

 LATE VICTORIAN:
 Second Empire

foundation STONE/Granite

walls BRICK

roof WOOD/Shingle

other WOOD

STONE/Sandstone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Situated on a double corner lot south of the Storm Lake business district, the James Harker House is the only residence at an intersection that features three churches. Constructed in 1875, this building consists of a two-story, rectangular-shaped main block flanked by 1 1/2-story wings. Exterior walls are constructed of locally manufactured brick and they rest on stone foundations made from boulders taken from the shores of Storm Lake. Stylistically, this house is virtually a textbook example of the Second Empire mode, and it features the mansard roof, mansarded tower, dormer windows in roof, bracketed cornice, hooded windows and doors, projecting bays, and highly decorative one-story porches that are synonymous with the style. In addition, the house has a largely intact interior and contains a large quantity of furniture, artwork, books, and other objects owned by the Harker family. Except for the addition of an attached garage at the rear and some minor rearrangement of service area rooms in the 1950's, the house has changed little.

The Harker House was built for the family of James Harker as a private residence in 1875. A newspaper article dated March 3, 1875 tells of the proposed building. The family moved in prior to the birth of son Truman Harker on September 25. Lawns surround the house as is typical of the neighborhood. The house faces east on the southwest corner of the intersection of Third Street and Lake Avenue. To the west of the house was an orchard and carriage house. Two apple trees still stand but are not included in the present property boundaries.

The east side facing Lake Avenue is the front of the house. Four exterior doors enter the three east rooms on the front. A fifth exterior door enters the northeast room from the north. All of these are shuttered, as are all of the windows in the house. The northeast room with exterior doors on the east and north was originally the home office of James Harker. After his death in 1883 the room became a reception hall. Sometime before 1930 the dining room was relocated from the northwest room to this northeast room.

The main parlor, the central room on the east side, connects to the northeast reception hall by an arched doorway containing

8. Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1875

Significant Dates
1875

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
unknown
Russell, J.M.

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

The James Harker House is locally significant under Criterion C because it is virtually a textbook example of the Second Empire style, and is the only example of this mode remaining in Storm Lake that has not been demolished or extensively altered. With its mansard roofs, mansarded tower, dormer windows in roof, bracketed cornice, hooded windows and doors, projecting bays, and highly decorative, one-story porches, it has virtually all the identifiers associated with the style. According to Harker family tradition, the plans for the house were drawn by a Fort Dodge architect, to whom James Harker had provided sketches of the design he wanted. Constructed in 1875 of locally produced brick, it has been documented as the first residence in the town and the county to utilize this material and the only house in town erected prior to 1880 that retains any substantial degree of original integrity.

After the location of the railroad was announced in 1870, the Original Town of Storm Lake was platted and then incorporated in 1873. Lake Avenue was the main street north and south through town, U.S. Highway 71 in later years. Third Street and Fifth Street were the main east-west avenues, the latter through the business district and the former through the residential section. Locally these intersections with Lake Avenue are known as "the bank corner" and "the church corner". The bank corner with three banks is the center of the business district; the church corner with three churches and the Harker House is halfway between the business section to the north and the lake to the south. Two blocks east of the church corner are two more churches, the original school site, which is now occupied by one of the four elementary schools and the junior high school, and the parochial school. Five blocks west of the church corner is Buena Vista College, built on the site of the town common. The entire lakeshore is city park.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

"Harker Mansion First Brick in Storm Lake" Des Moines Register,
Sep 18 '22
Powell, Johnnie. "The Harker House" Iowan Magazine vol. 15
no. 2, Jan 15 '67
Lee, W.D. "The Harker Residence of Storm Lake" Annals of Iowa
vol. 38 no. 8, Mar 15 '67
Johnson, Mark C. "Landmark house to be public" Sioux City Journal,
Nov 10 '84
Cullen, John. "A history showcase" Storm Lake Pilot Tribune
vol. 116 no. 1, Jan 1 '85
Johnson, Mark C. "Wall design, 111 years old, is uncovered"
Sioux City Journal, Jul 26 '86

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A 15 | 319550 | 4723060
Zone Easting Northing

B _____ | _____ | _____
Zone Easting Northing

C _____ | _____ | _____

D _____ | _____ | _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is the east ninety-five feet (95') of
Lots 1 and 2, Block 39, in the Original City of Storm Lake, Iowa,
and is roughly 160' x 95' in size.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the part of the two city lots that have
historically been associated with the property and that maintains
historical integrity. The western part of Lots 1 and 2 has been
excluded because it has been sold, and a house and duplex have
been built there.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Alan Bridge
organization Prichard Law Firm date January 1, 1990
street & number 109 W. 5th Street telephone 712-732-5680
city or town Storm Lake state IA zip code 50588

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sliding double pocket doors. On the east end this room projects into a bay with five windows side-by-side. Just west of this bay, one on the north wall and one on the south, occur two of the exterior doors, one from each of the matching front porches. The south wall mirrors the north with pocket doors to the music room. The west wall of this main parlor has a fireplace flanked on the south by a door to the master bedroom and on the north by a door to the enclosed stairway to the second story.

The music room is the southeast room of the main floor. It connects only with the main parlor via pocket doors, but has an exterior door to the east. The west wall of the music room has the only other fireplace in the house.

The master bedroom is the central room of the three on the west side of the main floor. There are four doors to this room. At the south end of the east wall is the door to the main parlor. The north wall has two doors: the one to the east connects with the enclosed stairway and then by a second door to the reception hall (dining room). So the stairway can be entered from three different rooms, each doorway having a windowed transom. The western doorway on the north wall connects with the northwest room of the house via a short passageway. Originally there was a dumbwaiter on the west side of this passage and a basement stairway on the east. These were both removed in the 1950s and made into closet storage.

The northwest room, originally the dining room, connects by doorways to the bedroom on the south and the reception room on the east. In addition there is an exterior door on the west end of the south wall. This makes a total of six exterior doors on the main floor. In the 1950s a kitchen was installed in this northwest room. Prior to that time the kitchen was in the basement just below it. Two windows were partially covered on the inside to allow for cabinets.

The fourth doorway in the master bedroom occurs at the west end of the south wall and leads to a dressing room. This southwest room of the house was partitioned across the east end in the 1950s for the installation of a downstairs bathroom.

On the second floor of the house are three bedrooms and a bathroom. The bedrooms are all on the east side of the house above the reception hall, main parlor, and music room. There is an L shaped hall from the top of the stair east past the bath and then north and south to the bedrooms. The upstairs bath was originally trunk storage. Indoor plumbing was probably added prior to 1930. Mrs. James Harker died in 1927 and her unmarried daughter Mae lived in and maintained the house until granddaughter Marie Harker bought the home from her aunt Mae in 1951 and began restoration.

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An attic occurs above the central bedroom, hallway, and upstairs bath. A stairway leads from the west side of the hall. Under this stair is a linen closet. From the attic one can climb a step ladder and pass through a hatch in the roof to stand atop the house. A railing around the central part of the flat portion of the Mansard roof lends itself to a lookout area. Two shuttered windows at the east side of the north and south walls of the attic suggest a third story or tower on the front of the house.

Windows at the second story project through the shingled sides of the Mansard roof. The bay in the center of the east facade makes a window box outside the second story windows.

Two one-story wooden porches on the east side provide balconies outside the north and south bedroom windows. These porches feature spindle railings, arched posts, brackets, and a solid wood rail above the roof.

A bracketed cornice with depending finials encircles the entire house just below the Mansard roofs. It is broken where the attic pushes the roofline higher. The balloon framing is covered with locally fired brick, the first residence in Storm Lake and probably the county so constructed. The contract still exists for painting the exterior brick in 1886 to protect against weathering. The second story dormer windows are hooded and ornamented with wood. First story windows have painted sandstone sills and caps on the east and north sides. On the south and west the caps are arched brick with sandstone accents. The north and east walls rest on a band of sandstone at the level of the main floor. On the south and west sides this band is brick.

The basement consists of five rooms. These are directly below the rooms of the first floor, with the central hall broken by a furnace and chimney instead of a wall as occurs between the main parlor and bedroom above. The two basement rooms on the south were maids' quarters. The two north rooms were kitchen and storage. The floors of these four basement rooms are nearly a foot higher than that of the central hall. In addition, the thresholds to these rooms are a few inches higher than the room floors. These provide a footing for the interior basement walls. Originally the four corner basement rooms had pine boards inlaid into the center of the poured concrete floors. These were made flush in the 1950s by filling the center depressions with cement. Exterior walls of the basement are stone taken from the lakeshore, mostly granite. These were plastered on the inside in the 1950s.

During the restoration of the 1950s access to the basement was made through the west wall when the single car attached garage was added. The garage addition also provided a patio entrance outside the exterior door on the west side of the house. The

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only other structural change was the placement of a window in the west wall of the southwest dressing room on the main floor. This was originally a solid wall.

The house was originally heated by the two fireplaces and the basement kitchen stove. In 1878 the central furnace was installed. Space heaters were used later on the first floor. In the 1950s hot water baseboard heat was installed in both first and second floors.

Kerosene lamps on chandeliers originally lit the main parlor and music room. A photograph taken in the 1930s shows an electric light in the main parlor ceiling. The globes from some of the kerosene lamps were made into electric table lamps. In the 1950s crystal chandeliers were installed.

Heavy walnut bedroom suites in three of the four bedrooms were original when the house was built. Walnut dining room furniture is also original. The original horsehair furniture in the main parlor and music rooms was recovered in the 1950s with damasks and brocades. The 85 key rosewood piano remains in the music room along with Marie Harker's grand piano purchased in 1915. Haviland china, silver service, artwork, books and other Harker possessions have never been removed from the house and are in excellent condition.

From boxes of photographs, letters, clothing, and clippings it is possible to determine the personalities and lifestyles of the Harkers.

After the house was given to the Harker Foundation in 1986 to be opened to the public as a museum, the garage was carpeted and made into a lounge where tours are organized.

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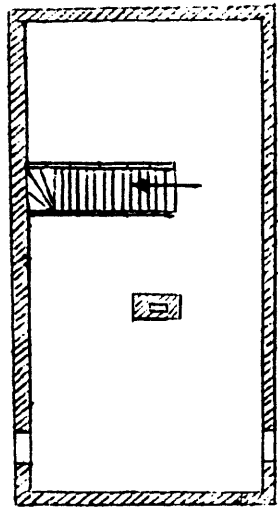
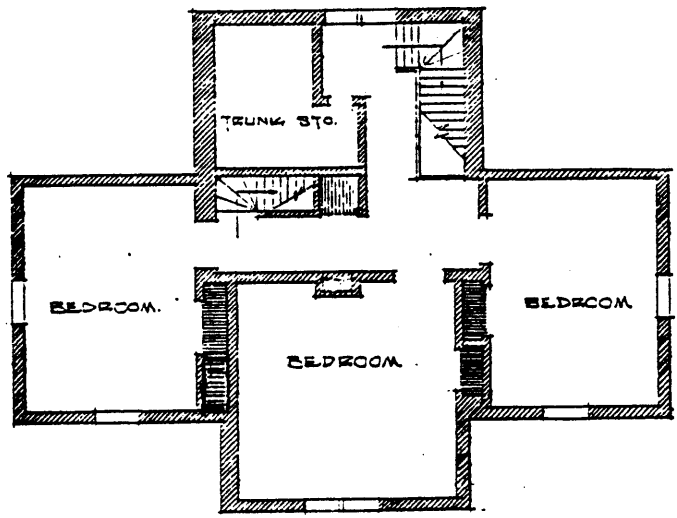
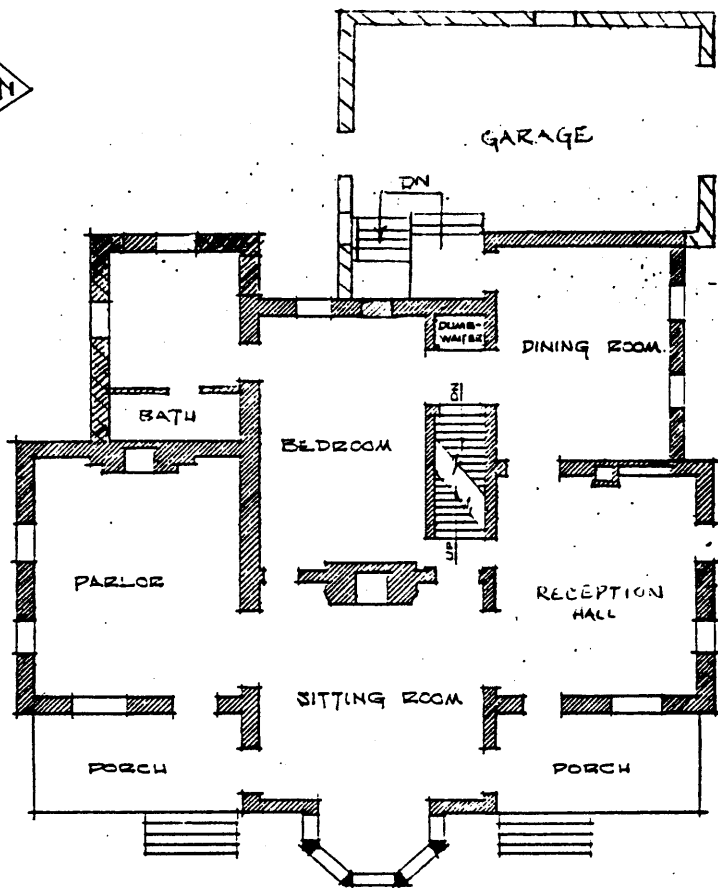
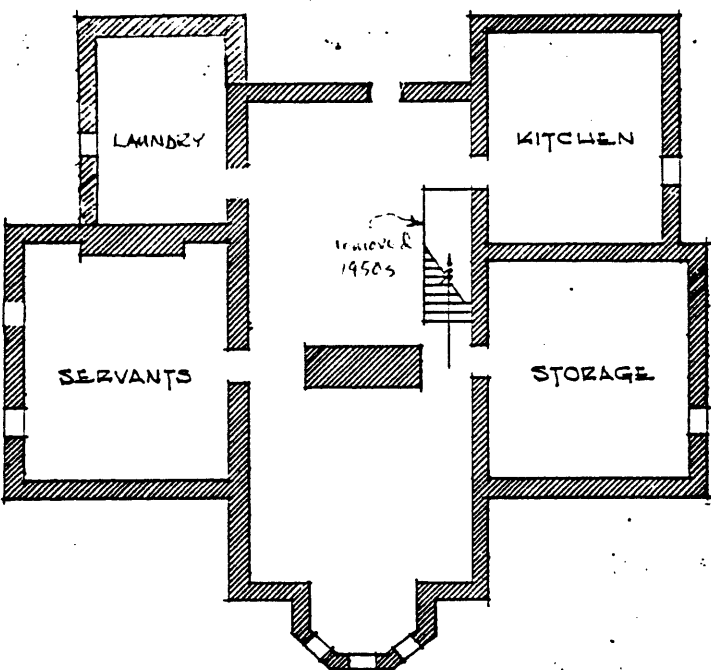
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FLOOR PLANS 1" = 12'0"

Basement First Floor
Second Floor Attic



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The house was owned and occupied by a member of the James Harker family from 1875 when it was built, until 1983 when it was given to the Harker Foundation to be opened to public tours. Because of this direct line of ownership, the house retains its original character and furnishings.

James Harker lived in the house from the time it was constructed in 1875 until his death in 1883. After that his widow Mary A. Harker raised five children to adulthood. She died in 1927, leaving an unmarried daughter Mae, who had lived outside the home only for a few years of college, to maintain the home until 1951. Then Mae's niece Marie Harker moved in and began restoration.

J.M. Russell built the house in 1875 for \$500 plus materials. He later built other homes and commercial buildings in Storm Lake, all of exceptional quality, but of later style than the Harker House. No blueprints or design sketches have been located, leading one to speculate that Mr. Russell might have designed the house himself. It is known that he designed and built the counters in one of the local banks, and they were reputed to be the finest in Northwest Iowa.

The house is in its original location and retains its original appearance. Part of the lot that once contained stables and an orchard has been sold for residential development. The wooden picket fence has been removed and trees have continued to grow.

The garage was designed by Marie Harker Marshall, granddaughter of the original owners, as was the installation of the present kitchen and the downstairs bath.

The exterior of the home is striking, due to its working shutters, porches, roofline, and ornamental cornice, but the inside gives a feeling for the history of Storm Lake. Restoration in every case has been faithfully accurate. Deteriorating wood and brickwork was replaced with exact copies of the originals which were in place.

From the roof one can still see the lake three blocks away and imagine the neighborhood with no other buildings and no trees to obstruct the view.

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photographs

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Harker House
Storm Lake, Iowa
John Cullen, photographer
January 5, 1990
Prichard Law Firm, Storm lake, Iowa

The above information is the same for all 12 black and white photographs.

1. Entire house, looking southwest
2. Bay window and north front porch, looking west
3. Main entrance, north front porch
4. Window above north front porch, looking west
5. Roofline, showing two upstairs windows, attic window, and widow's walk, looking south
6. Garage, kitchen windows, north entrance, looking southeast
7. Detail of kitchen windows, foundation, stone ornaments, and brickwork, looking south
8. Detail of music room window, (less stone ornamentation than kitchen windows), looking north
9. South elevation, looking north
10. Detail of cornice brackets above music room windows, looking northwest
11. Rear entrance and upstairs hall windows, looking northeast
12. South front porch with attic window, looking northwest