

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received AUG 31 1983
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Liberty Hall

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Main Street _____ not for publication

city, town _____ vicinity of West of Lamoni

state Iowa code 019 county Decatur code 053

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

street & number The Auditorium, Box 1059

city, town Independence _____ vicinity of _____ state Missouri 64051

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Clerk's Office

street & number Decatur County Courthouse

city, town Leon _____ state Iowa 50144

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title n/a has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes _____ no

date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records

city, town _____ state

7. Description

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

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Liberty Hall (1881) is a large and intact example of a Victorian-era rural residence, constructed to meet the needs of its owners and to serve as the headquarters for an important religious body, the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints.

The house originally consisted of a two story "T" plan, with gable roof. A centered side wing (the base of the "T") is oriented to the east. Built on a stone foundation, three first floor chamfered bay windows, and a front portico and connecting porch project beyond the houses' basic plan.

The house was built without plans by local carpenter Thomas Jacobs, and vernacular traits are mixed freely with standardized features and ornamentation. The broad front gabled portion of the main facade (the south end of the cap of the "T") has an asymmetrical fenestration pattern. A paired window grouping on the second floor is centered above a similar paired window on the floor below which is the center of a projecting bay. On the right-hand side of the front, a double door with transom (two rectangular lights) is placed below a single double hung window (2/2 sash) on the second floor. The remainder of the main facade is generally more symmetrically balanced. Three evenly spaced windows on the second floor originally matched a window, door and bay window below. The right-hand window is a pair of narrow windows, which being slightly wider matches the paired window in the bay. Originally, a recessed porch area to the left of this bay contained a side entrance into the main hall and a south side entrance into the side wing. About 1890 a series of four twelve light windows replaced filled in the recessed porch and formed a conservatory. Two years later, a connecting porch, flush with the front of the bay, was added to the front, providing a means by which solar heat in the conservatory could be moderated throughout the year. A very thin porch with ornate balustrade was set just in front of the conservatory windows as a decorative touch. The bracketed entry portico was altered into a broader porch with support posts, and was connected to the front porch. Unusual 'stepped' decorative brackets were added to the porch posts.

On the east facade, two double hung windows (2/2 lights) are paired near each corner. On the north face of the side wing two windows on each floor (6/6 lights) are not matched vertically between floors. A single window (6/6 lights) on the second floor and a corner door were originally on the east side of the north end of the "T". The two story rear addition which now obscures the original house at this point represents a 1907 addition of two second story rooms to a single story existing addition of unknown date. Another single story rear addition continues the thrust of this rear wing. A separate coal shed with lean-to roof is located ten feet behind this last addition and is included in the nomination.

The west side of the house presents a symmetrical window pattern on the original portion of the house. A first floor bay, and second floor double window on the left-hand side are balanced by two vertical lines of double hung windows (2/2 lights) on each floor. The distances between corners and windows and between the windows themselves vary. The two story addition contains two windows (2/2 lights upstairs, 6/6 lights downstairs). The rearmost addition contains a door and small window (2/2 lights).

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 checked="" 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 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 1881–1906 **Builder/Architect** Thomas Jacobs (builder)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Liberty Hall (1881) served as the residence of Joseph Smith III, President and prophet of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints from 1881 until 1906 when the church headquarters left the state and moved to Independence, Missouri. The house derives its historical significance from its association with Smith, from its use as church headquarters, and for its close association with the town of Lamoni, the long-time focal point of RLDS development and maturation as an organized faith. The house is an important example in its restored state of a large scale vernacular rural late Victorian-era residence, constructed to meet the needs of a large household as well as ongoing church related needs.

The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints was the strongest rival Mormon rival splinter group to challenge the claim of Brigham Young to the overall leadership of the real Mormon faith as established by the original prophet, Joseph Smith II. The RLDS group was one of many which were established following the breaking up and dispersion of the Mormons from Nauvoo, Illinois. Officially organized in 1852, the "Young Joseph Movement" awaited the leadership of then nineteen year old Joseph Smith III. This church rejected polygamy, the plurality of gods, baptism for the dead, and many other central components of the still evolving Mormon faith. In time the RLDS evolved to a position which bridged Protestantism and the Utah Mormonism. By the 1970's RLDS had 220,000 members, mostly in the Midwest.

Joseph Smith III (1832-1914), son of the original Mormon prophet and church founder, Joseph Smith, accepted the presidency of the RLDS at Amboy, Illinois in 1860 and was named its prophet. In 1865 he moved to Plano, Illinois and that same year became editor of the True Latter Day Saints Herald, the official church organ, a role which he was to fill until his death. In 1881 he moved the church headquarters to Lamoni, in Decatur County, Iowa where he remained until the church relocated in 1906. The subject house was constructed during the summer of 1881 by carpenter Thomas Jacobs to house Smith. The house was then on a forty acre parcel of land. It served as residence for Smith's family (Smith survived two of his three wives and fathered seventeen children, eleven of whom lived to adulthood), served as a lodging place for visitors on church business, and as a meeting and conference center for church affairs. Smith was locally esteemed for his living according to the church's principles of good citizenship, social consciousness and temperance. Three of his sons would succeed his role as church president. Smith played a central role in the founding in 1895 of Graceland College, a non-sectarian school in Lamoni. The RLDS church founded Lamoni and their many other institutions were based there, some of which remained following the move to Independence in 1906. The church printing office, the college, and a rest home for church members all were built there. During its stay in Lamoni, the RLDS enjoyed its greatest period of growth and expansion, under Smith's leadership.

Liberty Hall served after 1906 as one of two church homes for aged members, and the building's name was changed to "Liberty Home" when it changed uses. Between 1926 and 1932 the house was associated with a church owned Holstein dairy operation which was a victim of the depression. During the depression years the house served as a Civilian

9. Major Bibliographical References

Refer to Continuation Sheet 9-2

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property ~~less than one acre~~

Quadrangle name Lamoni South

Quadrangle scale 1/24,000

UTM References

A

1	5	4	1	9	4	9	0	4	4	9	7	3	6	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

C

Zone		Easting						Northing						

E

Zone		Easting						Northing						

G

Zone		Easting						Northing						

B

Zone		Easting						Northing						

D

Zone		Easting						Northing						

F

Zone		Easting						Northing						

H

Zone		Easting						Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification A part of the SW quarter of the southeast quarter of the southwest quarter of Sec. 3, Twp. 67 N, R-27W. Being a rectangular parcel, with its eastern boundary line located 49'4" east of the east side of the rear coal shed. This same line begins in the center of West Main St., runs 221' north, 100'9" west, south 221', and

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries east 100'9" to pt. of beg.

state	n/a	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James E. Jacobsen, National Register Coordinator

organization Iowa SHPO

date 24 August 1983

street & number Historical Building
E. 12th & Grand Ave.

telephone 281-515-4137

city or town Des Moines

state Iowa 50319

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

Adrian A. Anderson

title Executive Director Iowa State Historical Department

date 8/25/83

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 9/29/83

for *Allores Byers*
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Physical Description Item number 7 Page 2

All of the windows have lade caps. Two types of double hung windows, 2/2 and 6/6 sash are found, yet all have the same segmental arch. Several pairs of single light double hung sash have the same arches, and are separated by a mullion. All windows have the same heavy wooden surrounds.

The house has been faithfully restored to its 1890 appearance. Clapboard is largely original. A 1978 archeological dig provided information about the original house including the finding of part of the original fireplace mantle. Historic research and an overall stripping of the interior yielded additional data for restoration efforts. The noted additions post date the Smith occupancy and reflect the home's institutional uses. Surviving out buildings date from the same later period. Significant interior remodelings took place in 1906-07, 1917, 1920, and 1940. These alterations were eliminated by restoration efforts in the late 1970's. All three chimneys were reconstructed. The basement and exterior cellar entrance were added in 1940. The original gutter system has been modified, and apparently originally converged to supply a cistern at the northeast corner of the house. A fireproof wood shingle roof has been added following hail damage in the summer of 1982. A ventilator was added to the east gable end.

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Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number 8

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Conservation Corps office and thereafter it once again housed elderly church members. This function was rendered obsolete by the construction of Resthaven (no date) in Independence, Missouri. The house has continued in church ownership and use to the present time, and suffered a ten year vacancy and deterioration prior to the recent restoration effort. It currently houses a RLDS museum which depicts the period during which Smith lived in the house.

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Continuation sheet Bibliography

Item number 9

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1. The Memoirs of President Joseph Smith III (1832-1914)
A photo-reprint edition of the original Serial Publication as edited by Mary Audentia Smith Anderson and appearing in The Saints Herald (Nov. 6, 1934-July 31, 1937)
Richard P. Howard, Editor
Herald Publishing House, Independence, Mo., 1979
Re: Liberty Hall: p. 57b, 61a, 196b, 430, 210a, 218b, 443b, 451a
2. R.L.D.S. Library and Archives, Independence, Mo.
Joseph Smith III Photograph Collection
3. Alma R. Blair, Graceland College, Lamoni, Iowa
Liberty Hall Photograph Collection
4. Alma R. Blair, Graceland College, Lamoni, Iowa
Oral Interview, Doris Anderson Fredricks April 14, 1973.
Includes pencil sketches which she made of original room arrangement. Mrs. Fredricks lived at Liberty Hall as a young teen-ager from 1896-1898. She was a granddaughter of Bertha and Joseph Smith III.
5. Decatur County History, V.S.J. Clarke Publishing Co.
Chicago, Ill. p.p. 90-94.
6. Library and Archives, R.L.D.S. Auditorium Independence, Missouri: Diary and Letters of Joseph Smith III:
 1. Diary entry Sept. 18, 1879-Letterbook #8 p. 79
 2. Letter to: David Dancer-Oct. 10, 1879 Letterbook Reel 1-a
 3. Letter to Moses McHarness-December 17, 1879 Letterbook #8 p. 182
 4. Letter to: Sherman S. Flavin Dec. 17, 1882, Letterbook #8 p. 72-73
 5. Letter to: C.A. Beebe and Co. Council Bluffs, Iowa-Feb. 16, 1884 Letterbook #8 p. 97