

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 23 1975

DATE ENTERED JUL 10 1975

**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

Allen House

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

515 First Avenue West

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Dyersville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

___ VICINITY OF

Second

STATE

Iowa

CODE

14

COUNTY

Dubuque

CODE

061

CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY** DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT**OWNERSHIP** PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION** IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS** OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE** YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO**PRESENT USE** AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER:**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Linus Showalter

STREET & NUMBER

515 First Avenue West

CITY, TOWN

Dubuque

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Iowa

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Dubuque County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Central Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Dubuque

STATE

Iowa

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" 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

Although the interior of the Allen House has been extensively remodeled, its exterior has been well preserved and stabilized in what appears to be its original appearance. A two story brick building of three bays at the front and two on the sides, the Allen House shows traits of both Italianate and Federal styles. A low pitched hip roof expands into a four foot overhang (without brackets). Federal type metal lintels and sills adorn each window. A transom of small lights appear above the central doorway and nearly full front porch with heavy square wood posts stretches across the street side.

The original portion of the house has a central hall plan with rooms of equal size and height arranged symmetrically on either side. A splendid straight and narrow staircase rises to the second floor where rooms are of the same size and arrangement. The banister and newel post are elaborately carved elements central to the overall elaborate character of the house. The downstairs rooms have fairly formal mill work mouldings, windows that are taller and narrower than those of the upper story, eleven foot ceilings with central rosettes or medallions for chandeliers. Each room has a fireplace, one of which is shared by two back-to-back rooms.

Early twentieth century additions to the Allen House include a two story wing at the rear and a carriage house, a reconstruction of 1973 not included in this application.

The setting of the Allen House contributes much to its prominence in the memory and in the present day viewing of Dyersville residents. It rests some 80 feet from the street on a grassy hill.

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

1857 ??

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Allen House is primarily of architectural significance as a well preserved example of mid-nineteenth century affluent taste in architectural (domestic) styles. Built by an active entrepreneur, it reflects his awareness of contemporary trends and continues to enjoy good care.

In 1857 Dyersville was at the peak of its town building phase, a year not to be equalled again in its history. Having doubled her population in four years, and currently benefiting from being the western-most terminal on the Dubuque and Pacific Railway, Dyersville was enjoying a spree of business and industrial activity. Thirty residences were under construction with many more under contract to begin the following year. It was in this heady boomtown atmosphere that T. F. Allen, a land speculator and developer, completed his brick residence at the corner of West Main and South Allen Streets. It was no small source of pride that the house was considered the model house of Dyersville.

Within a year, however, the town's over-developed framework was suffering under a paralyzing depression. No longer a railroad terminus, Dyersville had become just another station along the line that now reached Nottingham. Its faltering economic life was further aggravated by the nation-wide Panic of 1857. As one Dyersville resident later recalled, "There was no business, no building, no nothing, but weeping and swearing and gnashing of teeth" (History of Dubuque County [1880], page 706). At a time when many land speculators faced financial ruin, Mr. T. F. Allen's fortunes perhaps succumbed to bankruptcy. For the Federal census of 1860 fails to record either his name or that of his wife and two children.

This ancient brick residence thus stands as an important reminder of Dyersville's year in the sun. The town was yet to triple her population and greatly increase its per capita wealth, but in terms of sheer prosperity and high hopes for the future of Dyersville in 1857, the Allen House continues to provide its citizens with a visible connection to this zenith period of her history.

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CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER	PAGE
ALLEN HOUSE	Number Nine	Page Two.

Manuscript census schedules for New Wine Township, Dubuque County in the Federal census of the United States (or microfilm) for the year 1856, 1860, 1870.