

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED OCT 7 1976
DATE ENTERED OCT 1976

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
Alexander Clark House
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
203 West Third Street
CITY, TOWN
Muscatine
STATE
Iowa
VICINITY OF
CODE
COUNTY
Muscatine
CODE
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
NOT FOR PUBLICATION

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
City of Muscatine
STREET & NUMBER
City Hall
CITY, TOWN
Muscatine
STATE
Iowa
VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Muscatine County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN
STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
DATE
DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN
STATE
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE 1975

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The original Alexander Clark property consisted of a sloping area of land (approximately 120' x 60') bound by an alley (west), Chestnut Street (south), West Third Street (east), and a parking lot (north). Three structures, one brick (123-125 West Third) and the others frame (307,307 Chestnut) occupied the property in what is fast becoming a more heavily commercial than residential area. (This encroachment eventually necessitated moving the brick house in order to preserve it.) Still intact on the east and west sides of the lot was a handsome sidewalk composed of 6" square glazed brick with incised patterns on each face. The landscaping for all three buildings was simple: small areas of grass for the frame structures; fir hedges grass and one concrete and one stone retaining wall for the brick.

The brick double house is a two and one-half story gable-roofed rectangle, six bays wide with a front porch and two flat-roofed rear ells. It rests on a gentle slope behind a short concrete retaining wall with its ridge parallel to nearby West Third Street. Masonry and millwork distinguish the building with modest Italianate and classical details: pairs of small brackets and cornice returns at each corner; dentillation (or abbreviated brackets) under the eaves at each gable end; segmental and round arches of brick above 2/2 double hung sash windows. On the front these arches actually "protrude" into the cornice. The bay windows appear on the ground floor of the north and south sides.

The stone window sills are simple dressed and painted white. Today one brick chimney rises from the composite shingle roof. The front porch (added sometime between 1905 and 1919) consists of a pent roof overhang, three heavy square pilasters with capitals, a clapboard rail, and a lower range of lattice work. It is attached at the center of the building and serves to shelter the two central doorways and their flanking windows. Each doorway is topped with segmental arched transoms at the same height as the windows.

The two frame houses originally on the Clark property were two story gable roofed rectangles joined at right angles by a narrow frame addition and a full concrete and wood porch. Each was essentially three bays wide although an additional bya was created at some time by joining the two buildings and installing an extra window. Both buildings were covered by a thick asbestos shingle siding material. Aside from the overall shape and sitting, neither of these frame buildings bore any resemblance to its original clapboard wood shingle roofed appearance.

In May of 1975 the brick structure at 123-125 West Third was moved to 203 West Third. This move was necessitated by the City of Muscatine's plans for the construction of a H. U. D. elderly housing project on the original site of the house. The move, then, was the only means by which the building could be preserved following discussions among the various federal agencies involved including the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Advisory Council.

In addition, great care was taken to assure that the new site for this handsome structure would be compatible with it. Less than one half block from the original site, the new location is residential in use. The house now stands between two residences of similar scale and material and even period of architectural style. In fact, the new location is perhaps more suited to the building due to its high elevation; the building will be used as a museum house and vandalism will be less likely.

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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" 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				

SPECIFIC DATES

1874

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Alexander Clark (1826 - 1891) was an Afro-American political figure, orator, editor, and Mason of broad state and national importance. Historian L. N. Bergmann identifies him as being "the most prominent Negro in Iowa from Civil War days almost to the close of the century."

This historic significance derives to a substantial degree from the pronounced role he played on behalf of Black civil rights. Two activities stand out in particular. First, he vigorously pressed for the enactment of a state Black suffrage amendment when in 1868 he was the guiding spirit in the "Colored Convention" that was called in Des Moines to promote their cause. Second, it was Alexander Clark who successfully led the fight for the admission of Black children in all public schools in Iowa. In 1868, as a consequence of appeals arising from Clark's suit brought against the Muscatine school board for refusing to admit his twelve year old daughter to grammar school, the Supreme Court of Iowa ruled that a pupil could not be excluded from any common school on account of race, nationality, religion, or any other distinctions which would deny equality of educational opportunity.

Of equal significance was Alexander Clark's political prominence. Stumping the state of Iowa as well as most of the Southern states during the Reconstruction Era, his eloquent and powerful oratory for Negro rights and the Republican party soon gained him a reputation as "the colored orator of the West." He served as a delegate to the National Colored Convention held in Washington, D. C. in 1869. This body appointed him chairman of the committee to lay before Congress the bounty and pension claims of colored soldiers and seamen. Furthermore, the designated him to act as the spokesman of the committee that called upon President Grant and Vice President Colfax to extend to them the congratulations of the nation's Black citizens on their election. Along more strictly partisan lines, Clark participated actively in the State conventions of the Republican party. He was vice president of the Republican State Convention of 1869 as well as a delegate at large to the national convention of 1872. In 1873 President U. S. Grant appointed him consul to Aux Cayes, Haiti, a position he declined because of insufficient salary. He later accepted President Harrison's appointment in 1890 to be Minister Resident and Consul General to Liberia, and served there until his death the following year.

Clark's vigorous social leadership also left its imprint on Black communities across the country. As a worker in benevolent organizations, Alexander Clark had few equals. He held the position of Grand Master in the Masonic Order throughout the 1870's over the states of Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, and Colorado. It was Clark who organized all

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

I Primary Sources

A. City Directories

Mahin, John, Muscatine City Directory and Advertiser for 1856. Muscatine: Printed at the "Enquirer" Office, 1856, page 55.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	15	663120	4587150
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

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

Mrs. Robert Veerhusen

ORGANIZATION

DATE

March 17, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

207 Broadway Street

TELEPHONE

(319) 263-6379

CITY OR TOWN

Muscatine

STATE

Iowa

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 D. Anderson

TITLE

Director, Division of Historic Preservation

DATE

10/11/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

ACTING

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

10/14/76

ATTEST

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

10/18/76

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CONTINUATION SHEET Clark House ITEM NUMBER Eight PAGE One

the subordinate lodges in Tennessee, Arkansas and Mississippi and assisted in organizing their Grand Lodges. During most of the 1880's Clark also edited and owned the Chicago Conservator, a boldly written newspaper in support of Black rights.

The principal residence of Alexander Clark throughout his productive life was located on his property (Lot 1, Block 55) at West Third and Chestnut Streets in Muscatine. Muscatine County Tax List and Deed records establish that he owned and paid taxes on this lot from 1849 until his death. Prior to mid-1879, Clark and his family lived in a frame dwelling situated on the southeast corner of the lot facing West Third: a building that had existed there since 1839. In June 1878 this home was devastated by fire suspected to have been ignited by arsonists. Within less than a month, however, it was reported that the charred remains were being torn down and that there would be "a handsome new house put up on the site this fall." By December 1878, \$4,000.00 had been put into construction of the new double brick residence and minor repairs made to the older residence on the lot. In the meantime the Clarks lived at 309 Chestnut on the far west corner of their lot. (Figures 6, 7) Evidently, Clark did not move immediately from this spot into what became his new brick house, for two contemporary city directories (Owen's Gazetter and Directory of Muscatine County [1879]; A. H. Holland, Directory and Business Record of the City of Muscatine for 1883-1886) list Clark's residence as being 309 Chestnut. It seems likely that the family did eventually return to the southeast corner of the lot, however, for the brick building (Figures 3-5) was far superior to the frame structure in materials and appearance. This inference is supported by the signed statements of Mr. Harold Fuller and Mrs. Mable Motier referred to in the attached list of bibliographic sources.

Although the architectural significance of the frame structures which are included in this application might be considered slim, that, of the later double brick house is fairly strong. For the City of Muscatine and for the State of Iowa, this building is a fine and well-preserved example of a vernacular treatment of the Italianate style as it was interpreted by late nineteenth century builders and designers. Italianate segmental arched windows project into the frieze; classical but curved dentilation appears under the eaves; and scroll brackets drop from the corners. The birck Clark house is also one of few double brick houses remaining in Muscatine. With really two houses under one roof, the double nature of the building is revealed by the two adjacent entryways at the front.

In addition to being the property of a prominent citizen the entire Clark property is subtly bounded as a unit by its adjacent ornamental brick walkway. All three Clark residences are on the fringes of what is fast becoming a modern and semi-modern commercial, public facility area of Muscatine.

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Williams' Muscatine Directory, City Guide and Business Mirror Volume I 1859-1860. Muscatine: R. M. Burnett, 1859, page 37.

Root, O. E., Root's Muscatine City Directory. Davenport: Luse & Griggs Publishing House, 1866, page 34.

Holland's Muscatine City Directory for 1869-1870. Chicago: Western Publishing Company, 1869, page 48.

VanPatten's Muscatine City Directory 1877-1878. Muscatine: Tribune Job Office Printers, page 32.

Owen's Gazetter and Directory of Muscatine County, 1879. page 53

Holland, A. H., Directory and Business Record of the City of Muscatine from 1883-1886. Ottumwa, Iowa: Branch Publication Office, page 55.

B. Official Muscatine Courthouse Records

Tax Lists for the City of Muscatine for the years 1854-1891.

Registered Deeds, Volume C, page 61; Volume J, page 107.

Mortgage Register Book, Volume 20, page 133.

C. Newspapers

Muscatine Daily Journal on the following dates:

July 1, 1878, page 4

July 22, 1878, page

December 31, 1878

August 12, 1890

August 25, 1890

October 3, 1890

May 31, 1940

Muscatine Evening Journal, September 18, 1893, page 3.

D. Recollections, Pamphlets, Scrapbooks

Signed statements by Mr. Harold Fuller and Mrs. Mable Motier testifying that their father (Anthony Fuller) stated he carried bricks at age 10 or 12 (1877-1879) for the brick house on Chestnut and Third Street and that he remembered Alexander Clark lived there. In Review Committee file for County 70, Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Department of Iowa, B-13 MacLean Hall, Iowa City, Iowa 52242.

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Photograph of Alexander Clark residence prior to June 30, 1878, with brief history of same, in scrapbook prepared for P. M. Musser Library by C. L. Graham, 1908-1910, entitled "Views of Early Muscatine, Pt. #1."

Rev. J. W. Laws, "Oration on the Life of Hon. Alexander Clark," with introductory statement by T. S. Parvin. Pamphlet at Division of Historical Society, State Historical Department of Iowa, 402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa 52240.

II SECONDARY SOURCES

Bergmann, Leola Nelson, "The Negro in Iowa," Iowa Journal of History and Politics. 46 (January, 1948), 50-53, 82.

Simmons, Rev. William J., Men of Mark: Eminent Progressive and Rising, 1887; reprint ed., New York: Arno Press, 1968, pages 1097-100.

Gallaher, Ruth A., "A Colored Convention," The Palimpsest 2:6 (June, 1921), 178-181.

The United States Biographical Dictionary and Portrait Gallery of Eminent and Self-Made Men, Iowa Volume. American Biographical Publishing Company, 1878, pages 536-541.

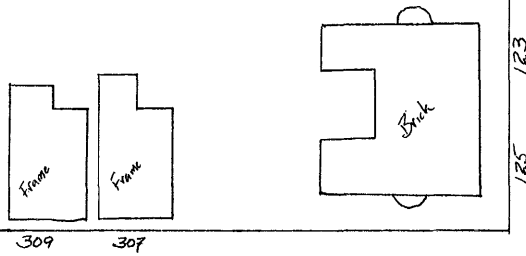
The History of Muscatine County, Iowa. Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1879, pages 597-598.

Briggs, John E., "Iowa and the Diplomatic Service," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, 19:3 (July, 1921), 321-365.

Comment by the editor, "The Inalienable Right of Education," Palimpsest 8:5 (May, 1927), 183.

Alley

Original location of
Clark Buildings

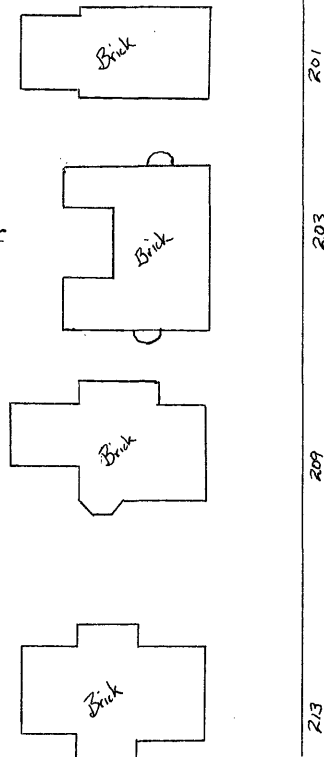


Chestnut Street

West Third Street

Alley

New site for
Clark House



MUSCATINE, IOWA
 Building outlines from
 1919 Sanborn Fire Maps
 Scale 1"=50'

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