

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JUL 18 1986
date entered AUG 6 1986

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

1. Name

historic Saints Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church

and/or common SS Peter and Paul, Clear Creek

2. Location

street & number Off County W-15 _____ not for publication

city, town Clear Creek Township vicinity of Harper, Iowa

state Iowa code 019 county Keokuk code 107

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"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> in process | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| | N/A | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> park |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name Saints Peter and Paul Parish

street & number 6/o Saint Elizabeth Rectory

city, town Harper _____ vicinity of _____ state Iowa 52231

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number Keokuk County Courthouse

city, town Sigourney _____ state Iowa 52591

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 | | Check one | Check one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input 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

The present building dates from 1898/99 after architectural plans by Ferdinand S. Borgolte (Rock Island, IL). Contractor was Harry Schroeder (Washington, IA). Brickmakers were Fuller & Schumacher (Muscatine, IA).

The main block measures 42' x 76'. There is a tower on north facade which extends from main block and forms front entry. On south elevation, an apse and two sacristies extend from main block. The one story sacristies are placed symmetrically on south-east and southwest corners. Each has a bay window. Rectangle between sacristies rises into polygonal apse. On west elevation, a small addition (1963) provides access to basement parish hall.

Brick walls are laid in common bond and are load-bearing. Brickwork features pilasters and mock cornice with denticulation which surrounds the building. There are two brick colors, orange comprising majority and dark orange finishing off upper portion of walls. (In sufficient brick was originally fired. Darker color reflects larger firings). Color variation is evident on each elevation. Brick buttresses are laid diagonally to each corner of tower.

Foundation is rock-faced stone laid regular ashlar. Stucco faces the stone foundation around sacristies and south elevation. A stone water table surrounds entire building. It is directly above foundation on main block and separated by a portion of brick wall from foundation around sacristies and south elevation.

The nave and sanctuary have 14-windows. They feature brick Gothic arches, cast stone sills, and fixed sash with stained glass. Sash are inset one width. Windows in facade, apse, and tower also have brick hoods. Windows in sacristies have segmental arches with hoods, cast stone sills, and 1/1 sash.

The grey, composition shingle roof is steeply pitched. Roof is gabled with polygonal configuration at south for apse. A brick chimney stands where apse joins main block at southwest. Roof systems for the sacristies is hipped with low pitch.

The tower is cross-gabled. A smaller cross-gable, laid diagonally, joins this system and provides base for spire. Spire is octagonal with grey slate laid plain. Ridge coping is painted white and divides spire facets. A decorative band occurs mid-height. Spire cross measures 5' high.

Parish cemetery and rectory (now a farmhouse rental) also stand on church grounds. The Rectory is excluded from this nomination. The cemetery is visually distinguished by the presence of an iron fence with stone base along two of its sides. Many of the stones bear inscriptions in German, being indicative of the ethnic original of the church congregation. The neighborhood is rural. Land is rolling and nearby Clear Creek flows into the North Skunk River about three miles south. Roads are gravel and dirt. Nearest pavement is 2-1/2 miles east.

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/ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900– | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

Specific dates 1900

Builder/Architect Ferdinand S. Borgolte, Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Saints Peter and Paul Church (1898/99) is a fine example of vernacular architecture employing late Victorian Gothic stylistic details. The scale of the building is unusually large for rural churches in Iowa. The building's verticality dominates the landscape. Interior features three alter pieces of particular exuberance carved in Victorian Gothic style.

Exterior brickwork demonstrates a competent craftsmanship and design. Decoration and practicality are linked, the structural pilasters, for example, add vertical line to wall surfaces. Other brickwork is purely ornamental, as the inset panels of facade and tower and inset window openings in nave and sanctuary. Each elevation of the building employs brick denticulation which unifies the composition.

Local materials were employed wherever possible. Foundation stone was quarried nearby and brick claypit was directly south of the building. Wall surfaces achieve an interesting texture, constraint of materials notwithstanding. Sills, string courses, and buttress coping were manufactured.

Little is known about Ferdinand S. Borgolte. He practiced architecture in the Quad Cities 1895-1909 but no local buildings are currently ascribed to him. Borgolte's architectural plans for Saints Peter and Paul are not at Clear Creek.

The three alter pieces are notable. High altars are increasingly unusual in Catholic churches in the wake of liturgical renewal. Those at Clear Creek appear unsigned. They are attributed to Nickolas Juhl (Davenport, IA) and date circa 1899. Juhl was an accomplished woodcarver, a native-born German, and a Jew. He carved altars for several Catholic churches in Davenport. Attribution of the Clear Creek altars is made through Juhl's association with Borgolte.

Background:

Germans were among the original settlers of Keokuk County. They centered particularly in Clear Creek and German Townships. Population peaked for the community (as for the county) between 1890-95. In politics the Germans were independent, and, as a result, the most important swing vote in Keokuk County.*

The Clear Creek community has always been rural. Saints Peter and Paul has provided focus for the religious, social, educational, and cultural life of the community. The parish dates from 1862. The present church was built during the Golden Age of German culture in America which coincided with the nation's Golden Age of farming. The incident surrounding brick fabrication (told above) is a vivid illustration of frugality. Xenophobia during World War I devastated German culture in Keokuk County as in the nation. German language services ceased. Clear Creek and German Township was carbed into two townships and renamed.

A cultural resources historic survey exists for Keokuk County and provides context. Two Catholic parishes served Clear Creek and German Townships. Saint

9. Major Bibliographical References

Refer to Continuation Sheet 9-2

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Harper IA.

Quadrangle scale 1/24,000

UTM References

A 1 5 | 5 8 3 2 5 0 | 4 1 5 7 1 2 9 1 2 1 0
Zone Easting Northing

B | |
Zone Easting Northing

C | |

D | |

E | |

F | |

G | |

H | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

Subdivision Lot No. 2, South one half of Northeast one-fourth of Section 16, Township 75 North, Range 10 West. The subdivided lot measures 324' north and south, 674' east and west. The church alone is included with a 30' perimeter

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries on the east, west and south and a frontage of 102' in width, running to the local road in front of the church

state N/A code county

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Text: By William C. Page, Public Historian

Form: James E. Jacobsen, National Register Coordinator

organization State Historical Society of Iowa

Community Programs Bureau, Office of date July 10, 1986

Historic Preservation Section

street & number E. 12th & Grand Ave. telephone 515-281-4137

city or town Des Moines state IA 50319

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national state XXX 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 David [Signature]

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 7/14/86

For NPS use only

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

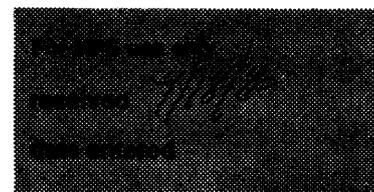
[Signature] date 8/6/86
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number 8

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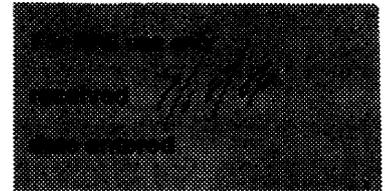
Elizabeth Roman Catholic Church, built in 1883 (Harper, Iowa) is the only other Catholic church extant in the area. This church is in an urban setting. Saints Peter and Paul calls more direct attention to German settlement because of its rural environment and the agrarian emphasis of German settlers. Protestant Germans were a minority in the area.

Saints Peter and Paul retains a high degree of architectural integrity. The parish has carefully maintained the church's fabric over the years. Sandblasting in the 1960's has resulted in the spalling of some brick. The spire is original to the building, surviving a tower fire in 1950 caused by lightning.

The cemetery gained its decorative partial fence in 1919 following the First World War, apparently in thanks for the survival of all eighteen of the parish's servicemen and the lack of any deaths to the influenza epidemic which followed the war.

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Continuation sheet Bibliography

Item number 9

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PRIMARY

Abstract of Title: Property: Saints Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church, Rural Route, Harper, Iowa.

Atlas of Keokuk County, Iowa; Harrison and Warner; Clinton, IA 1874; p. 9.

*History of Keokuk County, Iowa; Union Historical Company; Des Moines; 1880; "The people in the county at the time of the organization (1844) were mostly Germans, or native born Americans, and from that time to the present the population has been mostly of that character" (p 333). Also p. 567.

Rock Island (Illinois) City Directories. Re: Ferdinand S. Borgolte:

| | |
|---------|---|
| 1895 | Ferdinand S. Borgolte, architect (first appearance) |
| 1897-98 | Ferdinand S. Borgolte, architect |
| 1901-02 | Borgolte & (William) Wells, architects |
| 1907-08 | Ferdinand S. Borgolte, architect |
| 1908-09 | Ferdinand S. Borgolte, architect (last appearance) |
| 1909-10 | No entry |

Research courtesy Davenport Public Library which also provided information re: Nickolas Juhl, woodcarver, and landlord of Ferdinand S. Borgolte.

The Census of Iowa as Returned in the Year 1875; Des Moines; State Printer, 1875; p. 37 (Keokuk County).

Census of Iowa for the Year 1895; Des Moines; State Printer; 1896; p. 43.

Census of Iowa for the Year 1905; Des Moines; State Printer; 1905; pp. 199-201.

S E C O N D A R Y

McAleer, Rev. Fr. Robert T: Saints Peter & Paul; CPD Corporation; Chicago; 1982. Contains historical sketch in this 125th anniversary picture booklet.

Page, W. C.' Keokuk County, Iowa; An Historical Survey of Buildings; Area XV Cultural Resources Surveys Program; Ottumwa, IA: 1984; Unpublished report for Office of Historic Preservation; Iowa State Historical Department.

Weibler, Rev. Fr. William F.; A Centennial Historical Sketch of Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Clear Creek, Iowa; compiled from primary sources, previous histories and contemporary accounts; Privately printed; 1958. Contains reproductions of antique photography.

O R A L H I S T O R Y
M A T E R I A L C U L T U R E

Telephone communication; Rev. Fr. William F. Wiebler (former parish pastor) with W. C. Page; January, 1985. Fr. Wiebler believes Borgolte's architectural plans were returned to the Quad Cities after church construction.

Direct measurements of building; W. C. Page; January, 1985.

Letters of Correspondence; Rock Island Public Library with W. C. Page; Fall 1985.
Grace Heller (retired rectory housekeeper) with W. C. Page; January, 1985.