

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Nomination Form



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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Wetherby, Isaac A., House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 611 North Governor not for publication N/A

city or town Iowa City vicinity N/A

state IA code _____ county Johnson code 103 zip code 52240

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally x statewide x locally. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Barbara A. Mather / DSHPD March 6 2009
Signature of certifying official 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 for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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): _____

for
Signature of Keeper Edson H. Beall Date of Action 3.17.09

Wetherby, Isaac A., House
Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(do not include previously listed resources in count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</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>1</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

other: L-plan

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls WOOD: Weatherboard

roof ASPHALT

other BRICK

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Wetherby, Isaac A., House
Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ART
COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1860-ca. 1887

Significant Dates

1860

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Wetherby, Isaac Augustus

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Doyle, Patrick

Wetherby, Isaac Augustus

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

State Historical Society of Iowa

Wetherby, Isaac A., House
Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>15</u>	<u>622967</u>	<u>4613877</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marybeth Slonneger and Mary Bennett

organization _____ date January 30, 3008

street & number 1109 East Davenport telephone 319-354-8700

city or town Iowa City state IA zip code 52245

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps: A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs: Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Marybeth and Ken Slonneger

street & number 1109 East Davenport telephone 319-354-8700

city or town Iowa City state IA zip code 52245

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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7. Description

Locational Information

The Isaac A. Wetherby House was originally located, facing north, at 935 E. Market Street, Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa. The house had been situated at this location since its construction and had integrity of site, but when threatened with demolition by a local developer in the fall of 2007, the house was relocated in March of 2008 to 611 North Governor Street, Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa. The new location on Governor Street is four blocks north of the old site; the house stands prominently on an equally busy corner and now faces east, overlooking Oakland Cemetery, where Wetherby and his family are buried. The slope of the lot resembles the one on Market Street, though it is less steep in the back. The lot, like the original, is also in the Goosetown neighborhood with similar small-scale cottages as neighbors, and is a block away from Horace Mann Grade School, so it will be seen daily by young students.

The Isaac Augustus Wetherby House is one of the oldest extant homes in Iowa City. It is modest in scale and appearance, dating from around 1854, when a 24-year old Irish teamster named Patrick Doyle arrived in town and built the frame house on a quarry-faced limestone foundation. The building was sited on the (then) edge of town, close to the Market Street curb, a major east-west thoroughfare through the city. It was a block away from the rapidly emerging Goosetown neighborhood to the north, just undergoing settlement from Bohemian and German immigrant families during this same period.

The original frame building is two stories; the 1860 Wetherby addition is one story. The Wetherby addition across the back of the house created three new entryways: the major one is on the south side (formerly east side); a west entry to the home on the slope of a hill (originally the south side); and a newly uncovered former doorway on the north side (originally the west side) of the addition that eventually served as a window but has been restored as a doorway leading to a small garden on the north. Evidence found in an 1869 family photo of the cottage suggests a columned porch with hood-overhang on the former east side. Traces of both the columns and overhang have survived as a "ghost" outline on the wall. Ten windows lit the home; one pair of original 6-over-6 windows remains. The photograph indicates that the windows on the original portion were shuttered and will be restored to this appearance. Two windows in the formerly south foundation wall follow the same contours of their originals; the one on the north serves as an egress window as required by code. The siding is original and retains its cream-colored paint with dark brown trim. The original building consisted of one room down and a gabled room above, accessible from a wooden staircase; the chimney centered in the original 1854 house ran through both floors and probably vented a wood-burning stove on both floors.

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Illustration # 1: View of Wetherby house at original location, 935 E. Market, Iowa City, Johnson County. This carte-de-visite photograph, taken by Wetherby in 1869, documents the appearance of the house during the period of significance; the print was dated in his handwriting. It was loaned to the State Historical Society of Iowa/Iowa City by a great-great-granddaughter of Wetherby, who recently visited Iowa City, made a generous donation to the project, and has great interest in its restoration.

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Architectural Overview

The Wetherby House is an Iowa example of a vernacular building constructed by immigrant carpenter/builders. The house is consistent with the local styles of the 1840s and 1850s. Its floor plan consists of a main section oriented north to south (east to west in its original location). It is 1 and 1/2 stories with an L-plan resulting from a 1-story rear addition. The house has an end-gabled roofline, a main entrance arranged along the southern (originally eastern) side of the house rather than centrally placed in the east (originally north) wall. Its massing and plan are highlighted by its end-gabled roofline, symmetrical front window placement, and rear extension. It is a balloon-framed house type related to the Hall and Parlor form; it is a linear planned, pre-railroad building.

Architectural detailing of the Wetherby House would have been simply executed. Most of the original exterior millwork has been uncovered. Its moderately pitched gable roof and close eave overhang with an entablature board beneath are subtle yet definitive elements of the basic vernacular housing forms, with various stylistic elements, developing in Iowa from the 1830s to the 1850s. As a vernacular house type it lasted beyond the 1880s. If the gable faced the street and was built contemporaneously it might be considered a gable-front-and-wing type house. Within Iowa City there are similar extant examples that are nearby for comparison.

Materials

Lumber, Brick, and Stone. The lumber appears to have been locally manufactured. Its framing exhibits large radial sawn kerfs and no planer marks were visible. It appears that local old growth timber was used in the frame and roof. Originally, it rested, in large part, upon a stone cellar and a later brick foundation beneath the rear extension. The foundation bricks were also made locally. The brick nogging within the rear extension represents a second construction phase and its bricks appear to have been made nearby or even onsite. The use of bricks set between the vertical studs is a construction method uncommon but not unknown in early Iowa City from the 1830s to the 1860s. The quarry-faced limestone foundation material was also obtained locally. The new cement block foundation — retaining the footprint of the original house — has been faced with salvaged limestone around the exposed portion of the building and with salvaged brick around the Wetherby addition, thus mimicking the materials used on Market Street. Salvaged materials came from a home of the period in nearby North Liberty, Iowa. When available, some of the bricks and limestone from the original Market Street foundation were also incorporated into the new Governor Street foundation.

Framing. Its original hewn 8 by 8 inch sill beams are still present. The walls are vertical stud framed and use over-full-dimension lumber. This is consistent with a mid-1850s house in Iowa City. The resource's framing materials may have originated in local lumber and brickyards associated with local ethnic carpenter/builders. The balloon framing method used vertical studs that rest upon axe-hewn sill beams. This framing method is consistent with early 19th century framing and may be considered an early form of balloon-framing known as brace framing.

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Windows. The original window casings are present but the sashes have been replaced. One original window remains with six-over-six panes and with muntins having a cross-section characteristic of such window millwork dating from the 1820s to the 1850s. Their cross-section is characteristically thin and tall when compared with later examples. The top edges of the windows are often chamfered, meaning there is a beveled edge with a groove in the wood. The glass is cylinder glass and the sash's size appears original. This provides an original example for replication and has been used as a pattern by a local cabinet-maker who is duplicating this profile for the rest of the windows.

Integrity

According to Marlin Ingalls, the architectural historian, the following elements are original and extant:

- Original clapboard siding
- Window casings
- Two original door placements with their frames are retained (a third one, in the 1860 addition, was also uncovered and has been restored)
- Soft-paste, hand-struck, local bricks that make up the chimney stack and wall noggin
- The overall massing and floor plan
- There is general use of old growth timber from local sources
- Roof rafters and sub-sheathing are retained
- First and second floor ceiling and floor joists are retained
- First and second floor wall studs are retained
- First and second floor flooring is retained
- Vertical studs of over-full-dimension lumber set on irregular centers in the main section
- Vertical studs of over-full-dimension lumber with brick nogging in rear extension are retained
- There are original hewn 8 by 8 inch sill beams
- The second floor lath is intact
- Remnants of its interior and exterior paint colors which are the basis for the present owner's choice of colors

Ingalls continued with this evaluation:

1. The house retains integrity of plan and massing. Its core appears essentially intact and as it was during Wetherby's occupation.

2. The construction methods and materials along with the building's wooden framing are consistent with a mid-19th century construction date.

3. The house retains and presents a great deal of historic integrity from its period of significance.

4. The use of hewn timber sill beams, over-full-dimension lumber, hand-struck soft-paste bricks, local quarry-faced stone, and cypress siding is consistent with some of Iowa's earliest vernacular buildings employing antebellum construction.

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5. The condition of most of the framing elements is very good. The condition of the siding is exceptional. The house is solid enough to be successfully moved and retains sufficient material integrity to be restored to its original appearance.

6. The house, as it stands, is visually consistent with Wetherby's period of occupation.

Ingalls concluded:

As outlined in the above list the Wetherby House exhibits good integrity of its important original historic materials. The integrity of its original materials is important to the interpretation and preservation of its historic fabric. The loss or modification of some interior and exterior elements is to be expected and does not seriously detract from its originality. The house still retains its vernacular plan, in-ground footprint, structural framing, massing, and materials consistent with 1840s to 1860s vernacular houses. The original framing, flooring, [interior] central chimney, and roof sheathing are present.

With the help of her historic building contractor, Roger Gwinnup, the new owner has determined that the original 1860 Wetherby entryway porch (now on the south side) as seen in the 1869 photo, had disappeared, but physical evidence of its columns and roof line remained as dark "ghost" marks left on the newly exposed siding and as remaindered paint left along the porch roof line. After removing all 20th century siding from the house, it was determined that the Patrick Doyle entryway may have been on the west (originally south) side of the house facing what was then an alley. Wetherby modified this approach to the house when he built the kitchen addition. He included an exterior south (originally east door) that led to a garden path and then to Market Street, a major street in town. The original Doyle exterior doorway was then incorporated into the Wetherby interior kitchen-parlor doorway. The present owner has reconstructed this porch from visual evidence that can be gleaned and from the 1869 photo. The original door frame has survived and, as mentioned, "ghost" prints of the porch posts on the siding were used to determine the width and height of the porch: 11' 2" wide by 8' 6" high. Using these measurements and common porch dimensions of the period a new 6' deep porch was constructed. The original siding is intact and few repairs have been needed. The window frames are original; as well as one pair of 6-over-6 casements that have survived in the house. While the home's two chimneys had been cut off at sometime in the past, their original positions were discovered in the attic and two new chimneys — duplicating the rows visible in the photo — were reconstructed using salvaged brick. And on the advice of Marlin Ingalls, three circa 1860's doors were acquired from various salvage barns, refinished, and are now in place— substituting for the modern doors that had appeared in various up-grades during the rental period. Finally, the building contractor has duplicated the picture frames that had once graced the over-window treatment on the front of the house. He again used the "ghost" outlines left on the house as seen in this contemporary view. Residue of what is believed to be some kind of tar adhesive was scraped from the siding; the frame matches the original dimensions. It is the new owner's hope that reproductions of two Wetherby portraits will be installed in this unique framing device that he developed.

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Illustration #2: North (now east) façade at the original location on Market Street, with original clapboard siding revealed, photograph by Marlin Ingalls, November 2007. Note the black, tar-like substance over the front windows. It is believed that this adhesive substance was used to affix examples of Wetherby's artistic work, probably portrait paintings, as documented in 1860s photographic views of his two downtown studios. They acted as a form of self-advertisement, similar to the handmade signs and banners that he made in this same period. The owner's hope is to obtain permission to reproduce two similarly sized images that will be affixed above the windows in the same way.

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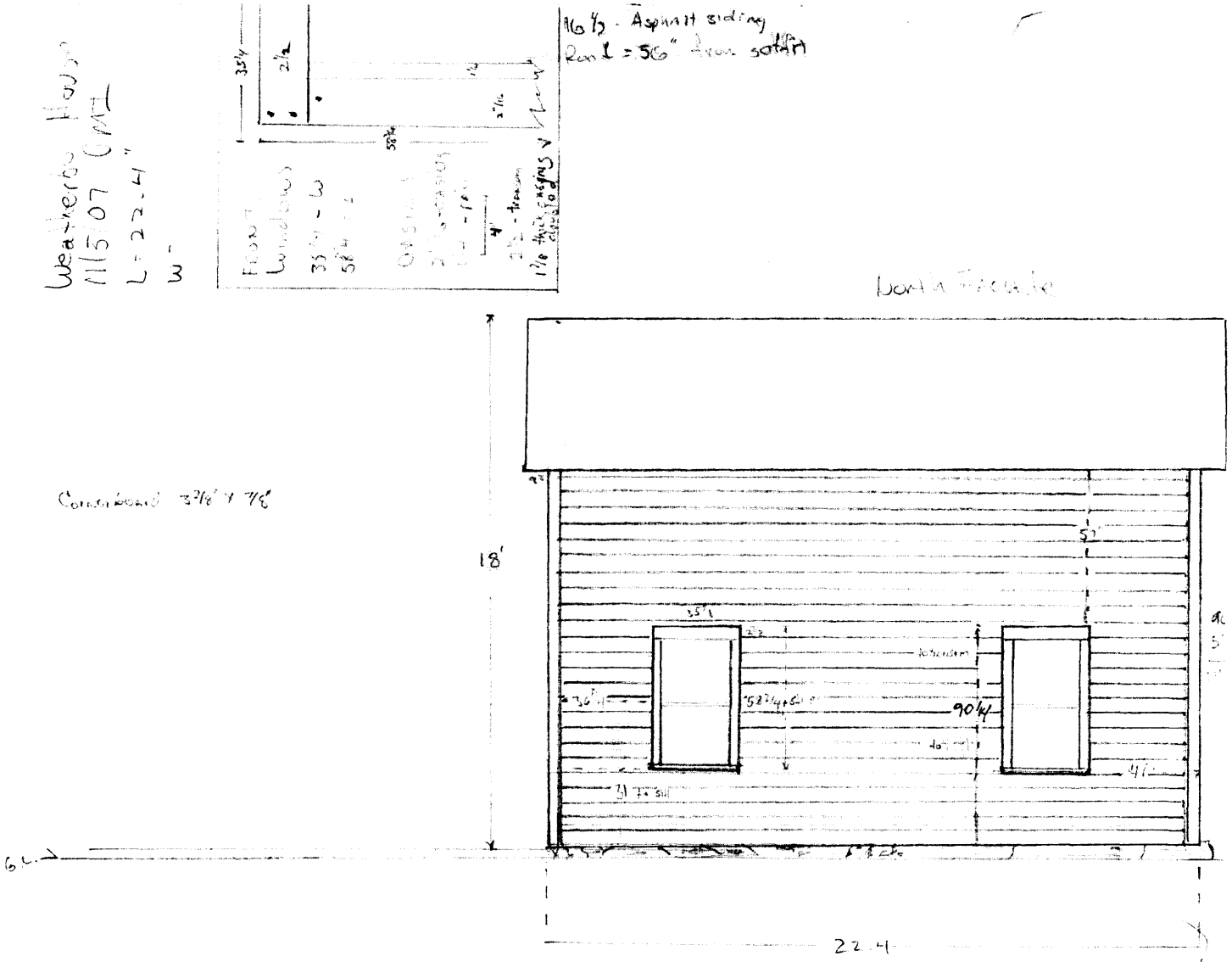


Illustration # 3: North elevation of original site drawn by Marlin Ingalls, November 2007. Drawing used a scale of 2.5 squares to represent 1 foot.

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Wetherby House
11/13/07 MIT
East Elevation
Scale:
0 44

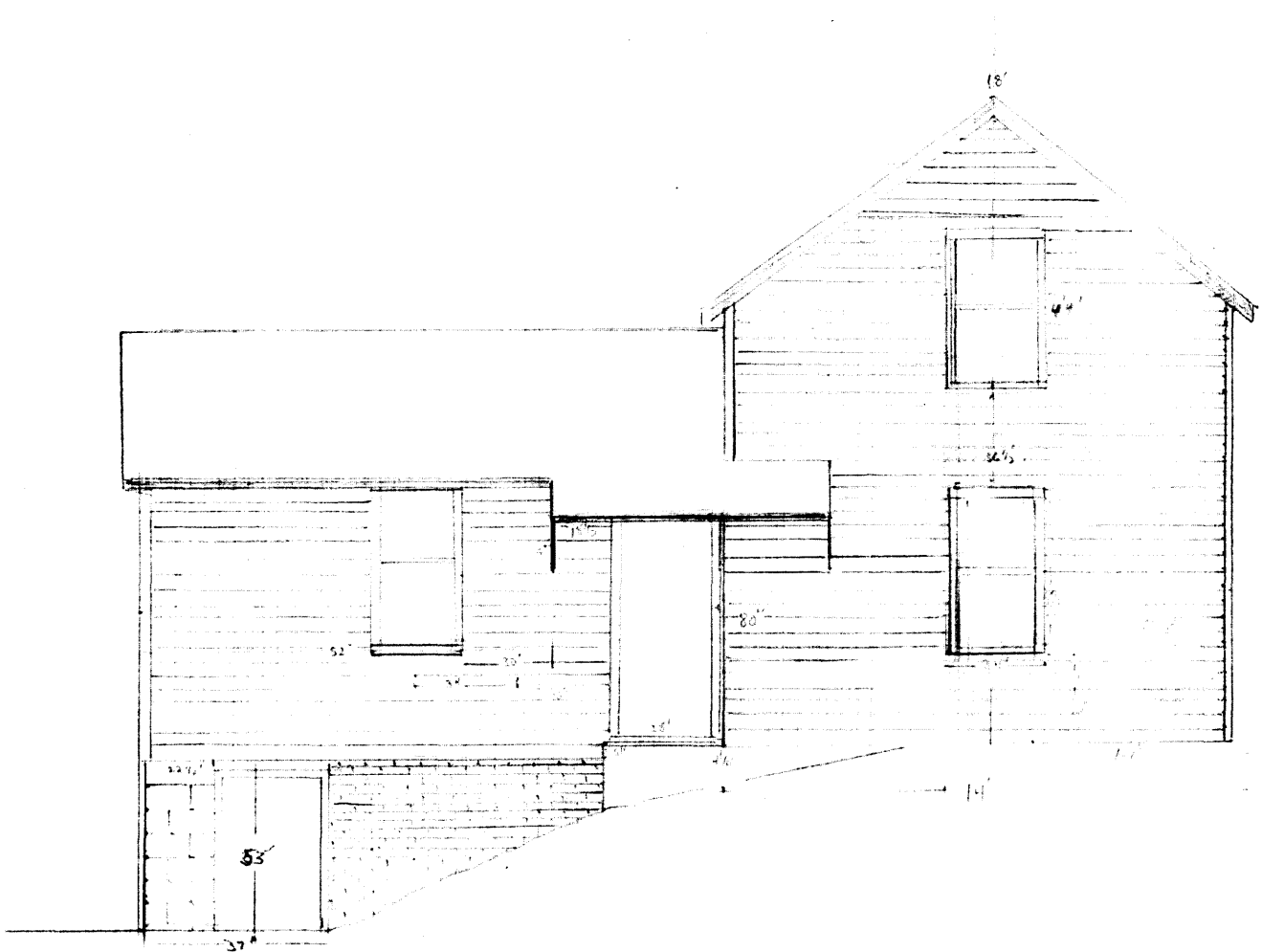


Illustration # 4: East (now south) side elevation of original site drawn by Marlin Ingalls, November 2007. Drawing used a scale of 2.5 squares to represent 1 foot.

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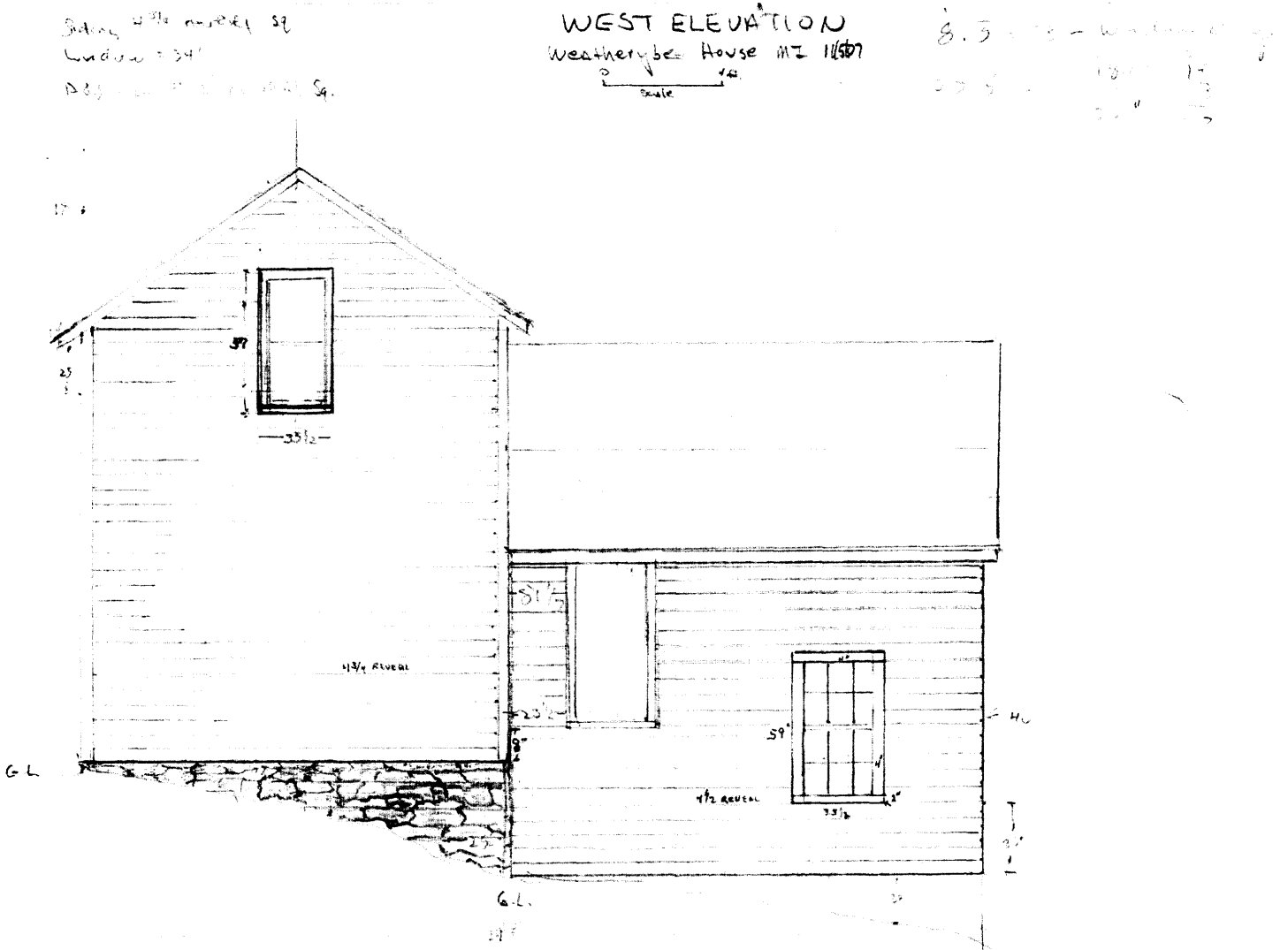


Illustration # 5: West (now north) side elevation of original site drawn by Marlin Ingalls, November 2007. Drawing used a scale of 2.5 squares to represent 1 foot.

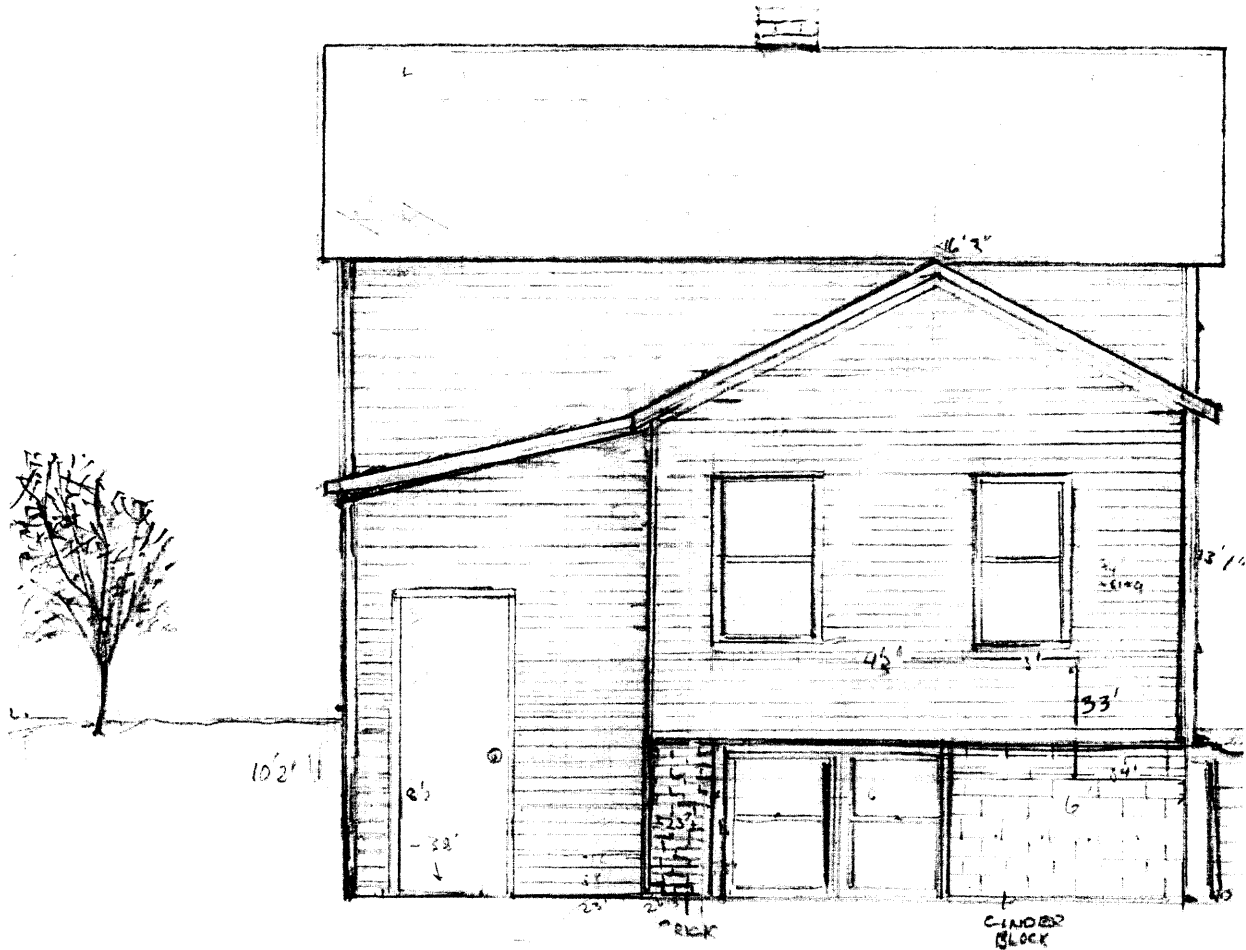
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SOUTH ELEVATION
Wetherby House
M.I. 12/3/07

Similar to original

Illustration # 6: South (now west) side elevation of original site drawn by Marlin Ingalls, November 2007. Drawing used a scale of 2.5 squares to represent 1 foot.

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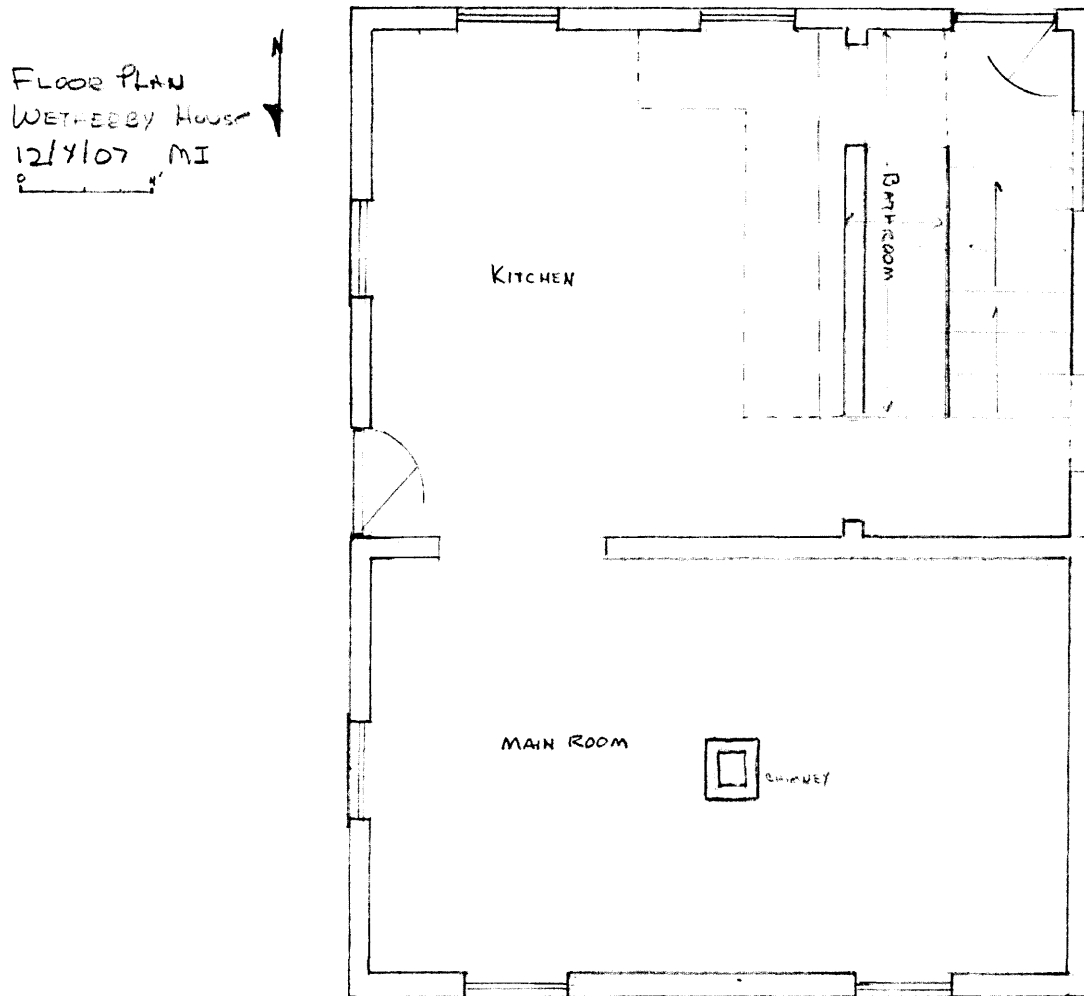


Illustration # 7: Floor plan of first floor at original site as drawn by by Marlin Ingalls, November 2007. Drawing used a scale of 2.5 squares to represent 1 foot.

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Illustration #8: East façade of Isaac A. Wetherby House at new location, 611 North Governor Street, Iowa City, Iowa, photographed by Mary Bennett, January 22, 2009.

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Future of the House

The building's continued existence helps to interpret the immigrant experience and the life of a working, middle-class artisan and early American photographer, though in recent years it had seen hard use as a rental property. A local developer acquired the property in October 2007 and had begun plans to demolish the building in order to build a pair of duplexes on the double lot. It was at that time that Marybeth Slonneger made an extensive effort to save the building, enlisting the help of Mary Bennett and other preservationists along with suggestions from city and museum staffs. Consideration was given by City Council to locating the house in City Park, but a continual overseeing of the property by the Johnson County Historical Society could not be guaranteed, nor could a possible move to Reno Street Neighborhood Park in Goosetown satisfy questions of long-term use and care without ongoing organizational support. When those options failed, the Slonnegers purchased a double lot on Church Street from the Robert Shaffer family, who had generously come forward with their offer of this site. After the decision was made to acquire the land, have the lot divided, and to enter a protracted negotiation with the developer, Mike McLaughlin, the house was donated to Friends of Historic Preservation, who, in turn, gave the building to the Slonnegers. A cold and snowy winter translated into five attempts to get the house ready and on its way to Governor Street. On the fifth try, icy roads had cleared enough for the Department of Transportation to give the go-ahead to proceed with the move, which was made without incident on the morning of March 4, 2008. The mover carefully led the house onto the excavated ground, corrected the angle to street and alley, and set the house on piers. Plumb-lines were dropped to determine the exact footprint of the house for its future foundation, which soon got underway.

The Slonnegers have restored the house to its appearance during the period of significance when Wetherby and his family occupied the house, from about 1860 to 1887. Using the 1869 photo as a basis for restoration decisions, the owners have preserved the fabric of the building and incorporated appropriate salvaged historic materials found at several salvage barns including wooden flooring, a hanging sink, and claw-foot tub. A picket fence with similar gate will lead to Governor Street. Wetherby was out in his garden planting apple trees on the day he learned that President Abraham Lincoln had been shot. In memory of that day, apple and crabapple trees, a few evergreens, and a short seed-list found amongst Wetherby's papers will be used as indicators for two small gardens on the north and south side of the house.

A portion of the lot had provided space for two 20th century garages and a garden. The older of the two garages was moved to another part of the property during the house move and then moved back into place next to the alley, to serve as a garage for the Wetherby house; the newer 1960's garage was demolished. An L-shaped porch wraps around the back of the house, connecting the 1920s Shaffer family garage on the alley with the house. This porch echoes the home's new south porch with its wainscoted ceiling, wood floor and chamfered columns and railing. It measures 22' 10" along its west/house side and 17' 8" along its north/garage side; it has a gently sloping roof reaching from just below window height (7' 3") down to 6' 10 1/2" on the front edge. While there was no evidence

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of a porch on the back of the house, the earliest information found for the house using a Sanborn map from the 1920s shows that some structure, probably a studio or summer kitchen, was located near the alley-side entryway.



Illustration #9: Isaac A. Wetherby House, showing the 1920s Shaffer garage placed on the west side of the lot at 611 North Governor Street in Iowa City, Iowa, photographed by Mary Bennett, January 22, 2009.

The purpose of the original building is being echoed in the 1920s Shaffer garage, which is being adapted as a possible artist's studio and garage space. The porch ties the two buildings together and creates more living space for this small home. The rectangular area in front of the porch will become a patio or vegetable garden. The newly discovered and restored north (originally west) entry that had been adapted into a window now has a Victorian door and porch-overhang to protect it from the elements: 3' deep from the house with a 3' 6" landing that runs east-west. The staircase that descends the slope from this landing is 3' wide by 12' long and leads into the garage doorway. There were no changes in the roofline and the silhouette of the house is the same. Minor adaptations are sympathetic to the original structure, have been incorporated to enhance livability in this relatively small home.

Though a work in progress, the Wetherby house was open to the public for a Friends of Historic Preservation House Tour in May 2008 as part of Irving B. Weber Days, an event held every year to honor a local historian. Marybeth Sloninger, Roger Gwinnup, and Marlin Ingalls spoke about the house to over 400 attendees; other such events may be in the house's future. Once restored, the Wetherby house will become a private residence. Several garden signs will honor the Shaffer family and others who have donated to its preservation.

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Illustration #10: South (formerly east) façade of Isaac A. Wetherby House at new location at 611 North Governor Street in Iowa City, Iowa, showing Oakland Cemetery across the street, photographed by Mary Bennett, January 22, 2009.

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8. Statement of Significance

The Isaac A. Wetherby House in Iowa City, Iowa, originally located at 935 East Market in 1854 and moved to 611 North Governor Street in 2008, is significant locally and statewide for the National Register of Historic Places based on Criterion B. The Isaac A. Wetherby House is the only extant building associated with an important figure in art, photography, and social history of the last half of the 19th century. All of Wetherby's studio spaces — in Boston at 12 School Street and in Tremont Row, as well as on the west and east sides of Clinton Street in Iowa City — have disappeared, as researched by Marybeth Slonneger for her book on Wetherby. Only the Market Street home from 1854 remains. Since Criterion B honors the significance of an individual associated with a building, moving The Isaac A. Wetherby House need not impair Criteria Consideration.

In order to avoid demolition of this valuable cultural resource, the building had to be moved to a new location, four blocks away from the original site. The new site did not disturb an existing historic site or cultural resource as it occupies an empty lot next to a 19th-century residence. When the excavation for the new foundation was completed, there was no archaeological evidence or artifacts present, as observed by Slonneger and Ingalls. The intention is to restore The Isaac A. Wetherby House with original or period materials, preserving the only extant physical remnant of Wetherby's life and artistic contribution in Iowa City. Restoration work and landscaping are bringing The Isaac A. Wetherby House back to life, mirroring the original carte-de-visite showing a shuttered cottage surrounded by a landscaped yard and picket fence.

Isaac Augustus Wetherby occupied this house from about 1860 until 1887 when he sought new adventures and economic opportunities elsewhere, but it is clear that he maintained communication with his family and friends (like Ruth Irish Preston) back in Iowa City. Evidence suggests he was estranged from his wife, but more likely, he was a sporadic visitor at his former residence between 1887 and 1904, the year of his death in Kansas. Records show that after he died, family members continued to own the cottage into the 1940s when his daughter Carrie, the last Wetherby in Iowa City, sold the house and made plans to retire to the Mary O. Coldren Home.

Antebellum Period, 1854-1862

Unfortunately, by 1858, the builder of the original portion of the house, Patrick Doyle, was forced to sell due to economic constraints and an inability to pay his taxes. According to his Daybook, the artist-photographer, Isaac Wetherby, was looking for an affordable home as he had moved "goods, family & all to Iowa City to educate [the] children." (All quotes are from *Wetherby's Gallery: Paintings, Daguerreotypes & Ambrotypes of an Artist* by Marybeth Slonneger, By Hand Press, Iowa City, IA, 2006.) The men exchanged properties in 1860: Doyle settled on 80 acres of Wetherby farm land along Clear Creek and Wetherby acquired the Market Street house with its barn (no longer extant, but where he painted a series of Lincoln banners) and adjoining three lots. He made preparations for the move to Iowa City after paying Doyle's back taxes. Wetherby then began to plan his improvements.

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He received lumber from the Muscatine lumber merchant, Peter Musser, in exchange for painting four Musser family portraits valued at \$35 (one portrait was recently located by the Muscatine Art Center). Then on a hot July day in 1860, when temperatures reached 100°, Wetherby framed in an additional 14' room on the back of the cottage with the help of a local immigrant carpenter, August Hazelhorst. The frame addition—which still has its brick nogging on a brick foundation—was closed in by December when Wetherby wrote that “We have had good Sleeping for three weeks or more & Steady Cold weather.” His wife and three children joined him in Iowa City soon after.

A close inspection of the 1869 photograph shows two decorative elements over the street-facing windows. As mentioned in Section 7, it is believed that Wetherby affixed two portrait paintings to the exterior of the house similar to the ones that he secured to the exterior walls of his two downtown photography studios. Mounting his work was a useful way for Wetherby to advertise to the community that he was an artist and to indicate his skill at painting. It is known that Wetherby fabricated many hand-lettered and hand-painted trade signs; he also recorded that he set glass (most likely he set glass in the cottage windows), did imitation wood graining, and constructed boxes (one of his early Boston studios was in the front room of a box factory) perhaps similar to the box-like object between the front windows in the 1869 photo. He also built furniture. His father-in-law, William Thayer, was a Boston “house wright” (builder) who moved to Iowa City. It is likely that Thayer (perhaps with Wetherby’s help) built the Thayer home on Jefferson Street, south of the original cottage, and on Wetherby land.

Early Background of the Artist/Photographer, Isaac A. Wetherby: 1819-1854

As a self-trained Boston painter and early photographer, who purchased his first camera two years after the announcement of photography, Isaac Augustus Wetherby defined himself first as a painter but soon recognized the usefulness of photographs for his portrait work. He painted and photographed in the Northeast, Kentucky, Illinois and Wisconsin, before moving permanently to Iowa to farm and to run Wetherby’s Gallery.

According to a two-volume account book that Wetherby kept during the years 1839 to 1862, known as the Daybook, Isaac (1819-1904) was born “of Poor But Respectable Parents” in Providence, Rhode Island, where his father found work as a soap and candle maker. When Isaac was around three years old, the family moved to the Boston area. His father became a rum distiller, then a grocer, night watchman, and railroad employee. The city would be the family’s primary home, but there were intermittent attempts at farming in Maine and New Hampshire.

While in Norway, Maine, fifteen-year-old Wetherby received a few drawing lessons from an itinerant folk artist, Mr. Rice, whom he called “a Yankee dudle.” It is likely that the reference is to William Rice (1777-1847), a prolific sign and decorative painter, active in the Northeast at this time. Rice’s inability to render the human face convincingly dismayed Isaac, who remarked, “I had not been with him long before I could paint better portraits than he could.”

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However, Rice's mastery of sign construction lived on in his young pupil, for Wetherby made many signs and banners throughout his lifetime.

Parallel to the influence of the itinerant Mr. Rice was another widely traveled folk painter, Rufus Porter (1792-1884), who stopped one day at the home of Wetherby's grandmother in Stow, Massachusetts, and painted a portrait of her. In later years, Wetherby copied Porter's itinerancy through rural New England communities. Observing Rice's folk painting and Porter's miniatures must have deeply influenced Wetherby because he made the decision to become an artist at an early age. On the first page of the Daybook, he said "I. [Isaac] Augustus Wetherby commenced Painting Portraits in Maine in 1834 in the spring of that year. I was about 15 years old..."

A year later, Wetherby's father drew up a remarkable legal document now in Putnam Museum of History and Natural Science in Davenport, Iowa. It granted him his independence and all the profit from his earnings, which traditionally would have returned to a parent. For an adolescent, this suggests a fair amount of confidence in his talent and belief in his ability to survive on his own. Soon after, Wetherby said that he continued to paint relatives and he secured the front room of the family home (non-extant) on Zeigler Street in Boston for his first painting studio. Isaac made what was probably his first commercial sign, one that hung outside the house (perhaps on the house, as modeled in later studios) and advertised "Wetherby, Portrait Painter."

In response to his father's decision to move the family to nearby Watertown for a new distillery position, Wetherby secured lodging with Mr. Pope, a Watertown box-maker. At other times, he boarded with his out-of-town painting clients for the week of sittings. After painting some 45 portraits, Wetherby decided to keep an account book – the Daybook - and made his first notation in April 1839 (the 2-volume Daybook is now in the Library of Congress in Washington DC). For the next fifteen years, Wetherby recorded all the portrait commissions he completed, their location, cost, and occasionally the number of sittings needed and the occupation of the sitter. The account book is particularly significant to photographic historians for recording the early transition between painting and photography by an artist working in Boston soon after the new technique was introduced.

By March of 1840, Wetherby was offering half-length, full and miniature portraits to customers in Boston. That was also the month Francois Fauvel-Gouraud introduced his array of new daguerreotypes to the city. Even though Gouraud's collection of plates highlighted landscape views, the possibilities of the new process and the interest they were generating must have caught Wetherby's attention. One of his later drawing students, Ruth Irish Preston, said that Wetherby learned the process "at once." His life-long interest in political events suggests that he read newspapers and may have perused the series of advertisements for daguerreian equipment in the *Boston Evening Transcript* beginning in June 1840. They were placed there by A. [Ari] Davis, who became an important acquaintance.

A tally of Wetherby's paintings shows that in the fall of 1841 Wetherby had already sold around 195 portraits when he made a set of 16 miniature frames "to put daguerreotype miniature in (sic)" for Mr. Ari Davis, a Boston

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instrument and lens maker. Davis paid \$5 for the frames and then ordered a "Muhiguny [mahogany] framed Lookingglass [sic]". Wetherby's talent for making daguerreotype frames and his interest in photography had likely brought him in contact with the A. [Ari] Davis, mentioned in the newspaper advertisements. Wetherby bartered with Davis for "one Daguerreotype Aparatus worth \$25.00" in exchange for a pair of portraits he was to paint of Davis and his wife, completed in October. Though Davis offered "apparatus of every variety" for \$25 a set, no lessons were mentioned in the advertisements, nor are they in the Daybook, but it is reasonable to believe that Wetherby picked up the basic technique from Davis at this time.

It is difficult to know when he began to use his new camera to assist his portrait work. However, in December 1841, Wetherby painted an after-death portrait of a Mr. Page "from a very indistinct Daguerreotype miniature." If Wetherby took this daguerreotype, it suggests that he had some difficulty perfecting his images. Although Boston directories locate his studio at 12 School Street in 1842 (non-extant), Wetherby recorded going to Medfield and Wrentham, Massachusetts, that August "on a visit with Daguerreotype aparatus did not succeed with it however." No further mention is made of daguerreotypes until January 1846. Although this does not rule out the possibility that Wetherby was taking daguerreotypes throughout this period, it seems unlikely since they are not specifically mentioned. His own illness, the death of a brother, his marriage to Catherine M. Thayer in 1845, two trips to Louisville, Kentucky, where he set up painting studios and worked for the Free Soil Party may indicate his preoccupations, but he also visited the well known Southworth & Hawes studio on March 22, 1845 and had a portrait miniature taken there for \$1.

In 1849, Wetherby, his wife Catherine, his son Charles, and his in-laws moved to Milton, south of Boston, but Wetherby must have felt the need for studio space closer to the artistic center of the city. He rented a studio at 17 1/2 Tremont Row (non-extant), which put him within reach of the artists' supplies, daguerreian studios (including Southworth & Hawes at 5 Tremont Row), and lithography presses that he used for his portrait work as well as contact with a fleet of artists who were working in the area. Forty-one portrait painters, three miniature painters, and twenty-eight daguerreotypists are listed in the 1849 Boston City Directory along with Wetherby's name. Benjamin Nutting, one of the named portraitists, gave Wetherby his only formal drawing lessons as mentioned in the Daybook.

In 1852, Wetherby commissioned a lithography project from the firm of Freeman & Cross on Washington Street, Boston. He learned the lithographic process from the printer, Mr. (perhaps John) Freeman, "a very fine man," after he painted Freeman's children and dog on one canvas. Wetherby had a political caricature of the Democrats printed in an edition of 1,100 for the upcoming Free Soil Convention in Pittsburgh. That spring, he also painted Master Dodge, his former teacher, who was:

"quite old & Feble & Could not go out to a Dagerren Gallery to have a Dagherotype taken for me to Paint Part of the time from as it was beginning to be the Custome. I made all Sittings a Study from life & is What Makes That one of my Very Best."

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Wetherby began using daguerreotypes heavily in 1853. On August 20th, Wetherby "Bot daguerreotype Aparatus of Mr. Wm. T. Anderson of Yeoman St, Roxbury, the whole outfit for \$28.00" and "Bot other Dag Stock [materials used in the production of daguerreotypes] \$5.81." Two months later, Wetherby set up an arrangement with daguerreian Walter B. Eastman at 75 Court Street. He agreed to paint Mr. Eastman's portrait "to be Paid by Daguerreotype instruction at his rooms"—no price was given. This is the first entry that mentions lessons in photography.

Within a month of this second camera purchase seven entries were made in the Daybook for daguerreotypes. Although Wetherby began taking daguerreotypes on a regular basis, he continued to think of himself as an artist rather than as a photographer competing with the growing number of studios; photographs still served him as aids.



Illustration #11: *Isaac A. Wetherby*, undated self-portrait in oil on paper; Collection of the New York Historical Society

Move to Iowa of the Artist/Photographer, Isaac A. Wetherby: 1854-1904

A year after purchasing his second camera, Wetherby and his family decided to move to the Midwest so he could begin to farm his own land. Throughout his long career, Wetherby had drawn on many skills he learned in Boston. He became knowledgeable about cameras and equipment from the important figures in photography: Ari Davis,

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Walter B. Eastman, and William T. Anderson. He made miniature frames and knew how to order stock and cases as Daybook entries and receipts indicate. He purchased lenses from William Davis and had worked with a *camera lucida* he ordered from John Temple, a lens that focused the desired image that was projected onto paper and traced by the artist. Use of the *camera lucida* fits a pattern common to many artists of the time who were exploring ways to obtain the most accurate rendering of a scene or subject and this tool was a precursor to the use of photography to capture reality. He may have learned how to outfit a studio on his visit to the Southworth & Hawes gallery and imitated the painted backdrops seen in other Boston studios of the day.

Expectations were very high in August 1854 when Wetherby arrived in Iowa City, Iowa, to register his land claim for a forty-acre farm in nearby Tama County. He said that “after I located land I opened a Daguerrian [sic] Room at Iowa City [then capital of the state] & Run it untill about the last of October.” This location (on the corner of Washington and Clinton Streets, non-extant) he chose for his first photography studio had been one that was used by several other itinerant photographers who had worked in the city as early as 1846; the early names of two, Messrs. Cook and Walter have survived.

Characteristically, Wetherby made his skills known in town and was asked to letter a “flag” for Mr. A. C. Brownlee’s daguerreian studio—the two men shared customers during their separate three-month studio rentals. The flag he made for Brownlee may have been similar to the rare surviving cloth banner in the State Historical Society of Iowa/Iowa City Special Collections. It is double-sided; each side of this banner shows the cased image of a bearded and dark-haired man, most likely the artist himself, perhaps based on the daguerreotype he had taken at the Boston studio of Southworth and Hawes in 1845.

Wetherby had just moved to Iowa City in that hot July and set up a temporary studio overlooking Capitol Square. The gallery was a trial enterprise for him in imitation of those in Boston. Although Wetherby mentioned that the weather was “hot as the d---l,” he seems to have photographed, without mishap, the one or two daily visitors who climbed to his studio on the second floor during a Midwest heat wave. Of the 76 daguerreotypes he recorded taking in Iowa during that first summer of 1854, only two are known to have survived; ironically, both are cityscapes. On October 4, 1854, Wetherby was awarded second place for an oil painting he submitted to the Johnson County Fair; his new friend, the New York-trained painter, George H. Yewell, was given first place for his painting. J.K. Hartsock and A.C. Brownlee were two local daguerreotypists who placed first and second, respectively, in the photograph category at the Fair—Wetherby probably did not enter this category.

After his lease expired that fall, Wetherby went on to establish temporary studios in Illinois and Wisconsin before returning to Iowa to farm in the late 1850s. Wetherby’s energies went into plowing and seeding in his crops rather than photography. He did not maintain a studio during this period, though he did rent rooms as photography studios in nearby towns for short periods of time to supplement his income when he was not farming. Daybook entries indicate that the economy was tightening in this period, as it was nationwide: “dull Times Great Panic in

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Money," "times geting Worse," and "No Money No Business Rain Rain & No Roads." Having barely survived an economic disaster in 1859 that obliged him to mortgage his farm (and left Patrick Doyle with an inability to pay his taxes), he arranged an auction to sell off his cattle, horses, and farming equipment. Among the articles left with neighbors in Tama were: "1 iron Dag head rest, Buff Box & 2 Buffs...Dag tools, Dag Show Case."

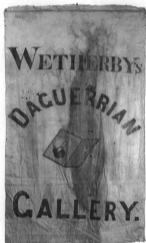


Illustration #12: Wetherby Gallery 2-sided banner on muslin, ca. 1854; Collection of the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City

He then left his farm in Eureka Grove, Tama County, Iowa, and purchased the small house in Iowa City (935 E. Market Street) where he seems to have taken some photographs and worked on a series of painted "heads" for a local phrenological doctor, George Kimball, who also came from Massachusetts. Among Kimball's wish list of notables, one finds the name Daguerre, an unusual choice for a doctor to make, but not for a photographer. Regrettably, the portraits of Daguerre, Ari Davis, Walter Eastman, and John Temple—all painted by Wetherby—apparently have not survived, though his fragile cotton banner, glass doorplate, and Daybook have. (Quoted from

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"Isaac Augustus Wetherby, Painter & Daguerreian Photographer" by Marybeth Slonneger in the *Photographic Historical Society of New England Journal*, Number 166, 2007)

Period of Commercial Studio Work of the Artist/Photographer, Isaac A. Wetherby: 1862-1874

Financial necessity, always a strong motivator for Wetherby's inventiveness, led to opening his first permanent photography studio in Iowa City in 1862, after he learned the ambrotype method. The studio continued until his retirement twelve years later. One finds a rich source of images from this period—some 1,450 glass-plate negatives—that are housed in the State Historical Society of Iowa's Special Collections in Iowa City. It seems much of Wetherby's photographic output and nearly 1,000 paintings have been lost or remain unidentified. It is hoped that the newsworthiness of restoring the Wetherby home will bring more examples of his work to light in the community.

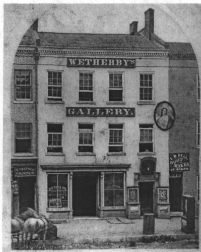


Illustration #13: *Wetherby's Gallery*, west side of Clinton Street, ca. 1862; ambrotype display cases and paintings hang around doorway (right center) and on upper wall; SHSI, IC

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Artistic Legacy of the Artist/Photographer, Isaac A. Wetherby

Historians of art and photography will discover that Isaac A. Wetherby is a perfect example for studying the visual arts in relation to popular culture, studying technological advances with cameras and film, and furthering our understanding of those who pioneered in this field. Long heralded for its scientific value and democratizing influence, photography was a new art form at the time Wetherby learned this craft. His story illustrates the cultural transmission of ideas and technology from the East coast to the Midwest and points west during the antebellum period. Wetherby's artistic endeavors literally form a bridge between the previous practice of recording the facial appearance of people via portraiture or ivory miniatures, using an imaginative approach, and the startling revolution of taking a realistic, indisputable photographic portrait.

Throughout his long career as a portrait painter and photographer, Wetherby's experiences parallel those of other well-known practitioners of his era. His portrait paintings share characteristics and similarities with other artists in terms of subject matter, compositional style, materials, and technique. More serious art historians might critique his portraits and point out flaws in his workmanship as did Professor Lee Parry of the University of Iowa's art faculty, who pointed to minor problems with proportions or a chin that seemed off balance. Unlike primitive portraits of the 1830s, Wetherby's paintings showcase finely rendered lace collars and more refined facial features. He did rely on traditions in painting like adding a Masonic ring or other occupational references to his portraits.

Known portraits include *Abraham Lincoln*, *John Brown*, *Aaron D. Stevens*, a member of Brown's force, *Taiomah*, a Meskwaki Indian chief, and many others. His work is in the collections of the New-York Historical Society (NYC), Fruitlands Museum (Harvard, MA), Beverly (MA) Historical Society, Putnam Museum of History and Natural Science in Davenport, the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, the State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, and in private collections. One of his paintings, *Sir William Blackstone*, hangs in the Johnson County Courthouse.

In terms of photographic history, Wetherby definitely followed the latest trends and familiarized himself with new techniques and equipment. According to the *Philadelphia Photographer*, he even tried to obtain patents for some of his photographic devices. Like his contemporary John Plumbe, who is famous for creating images of the U.S. Capitol under construction, Wetherby used his skills as a daguerreotypist to capture views of scenery and buildings. These images are valued because scenery shots are rather rare in an era when daguerreotypists were generally creating portraits in the studio rather than facing the challenges of outdoor photography and long exposure times. Like Plumbe, Wetherby was keen about recording important moments in American history.

Wetherby's legacy includes being the first to record Iowa City in photographs when it was the state capital, including the earliest daguerreotype image of Old Capitol, taken in 1854. Many citizens were photographed by Wetherby in his Clinton Street studio, including Governor Samuel Kirkwood, Iowa Chief Justice William Miller,

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Illustration #14: Daguerreotype view of Old Capitol created by Isaac A. Wetherby in 1854, SHSI, IC.

Civil officers and soldiers, bankers, trades people, and many others. For example, he created images of the Coppock brothers who were involved in the Harper's Ferry, Virginia, raid with John Brown, as well as pictures of their supporters in Iowa like William Maxson and his wife, or Jesse Bowen.

The priceless collection of his work is housed in the State Historical Society in both Iowa City and Des Moines, including 1,450 glass plate negatives, paintings, watercolor sketches, valuable trade cards and other ephemera.

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Among the rarities in the collection is a Wetherby picture from April 1865, showing the Lincoln Memorial service that was held on the steps of Iowa's Old Capitol while Governor Kirkwood spoke. Wetherby's canvas advertising banner (perhaps the finest in the nation) is at the State Historical Society of Iowa in Iowa City, while his colorful Lincoln political banner from the campaign of 1864 hangs in the Putnam Museum of History and Natural Science in Davenport; both are unique pieces of Americana. (The Lincoln banner reveals the name of his 1860 vice-presidential running mate Hannibal Hamlin, which was painted over with the name of [Andrew] Johnson, Lincoln's 1864 running mate.) Wetherby's life and the documentary record left behind offer unusually detailed evidence of American life on the eve of the Civil War and the decades following.

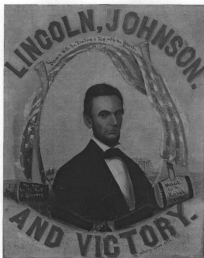


Illustration #15: *Lincoln, Johnson and Victory*; banner in oil on canvas, 1864; Collection of the Putnam Museum of History and Natural Science, Davenport, IA

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Wetherby easily fits into the pantheon of America's most well-known 19th century photographers, who pioneered in the medium and spread the word about this new innovation. In the scholarly literature relating to photographic history, Southworth and Hawes are clearly identified as one of the premiere portrait studio operators in America, and Wetherby's exposure to their studio and photography work opened up a new career for him. Like Matthew Brady, Andrew Dahl and H. H. Bennett of Wisconsin, or Solomon Butcher of Nebraska, Wetherby was breaking new ground and spreading the word about new discoveries that photographers could adapt. Although photographers in eastern seaboard cities gained most of the attention, along with a few who traveled to San Francisco to be near the gold fields, Wetherby, Dahl, and others in the Midwest were just as experimental with photography. Simply put, the art historians who began to investigate and celebrate historical photography in the 1960s and 1970s initially concentrated on collections in major institutions like the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Subsequent scholarship has looked at photography from all over America and expanded scholarly consideration to include vernacular images, even those created by amateurs. Wetherby was a well-trained professional with a clearly defined vision about how to capitalize on photography and introduce it to a frontier community as Iowa City was in the early 1850s. Like other American photographers, he created a new market for images, transferring the ideas and artistic sensibility of a portrait painter to portrait photography.

Working with the wet plate negative process was exclusively the domain of professionals as the process was rather complicated given the fact that chemicals had to be used immediately before and after the photograph was taken. In the field, wet plate photography involved the use of a portable darkroom such as a tent or wagon. Some of the more important documentation of American photographic practices can be found in the Wetherby Papers as it includes two letters about a photograph wagon or rail car that was available for sale. There are also letters about whether photographers should band together in a professional association to protect their interests. This combined with the canvas banner, advertisements, business cards, correspondence, and other items offer evidence about this burgeoning profession in the Midwest. Some of his materials show the direct connection between Wetherby and his fellow photographers or others like suppliers in Chicago who provided the materials needed for this work.

Isaac A. Wetherby was very prolific and created nearly 1,500 images using this unique process. Few institutions in America can claim such a sizeable collection of wet plate images as most repositories have the more common dry plate negatives that were created after 1880. It is very rare indeed to have physical remnants of this early period of photography as most glass plates were destroyed or discarded as the paper prints were considered most valuable. Once scholars paid attention to the creative process, they placed more value on the glass plate negatives which preserve incredible details despite their fragility. Even massive collections like the D.F. Barry collection of Native American images at the Denver Public Library are primarily composed of the later dry plate negatives. The comprehensively documented story of Wetherby offers a different perspective on American photography during the first three decades after its discovery in 1839, especially during the antebellum period before the striking Civil War imagery created by Matthew Brady, Timothy H. O'Sullivan, and others entered the American consciousness.

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Wetherby's story represents a different region of the country at the height of manifest destiny, thus adding a new dimension to existing scholarship about American photographers and artists and allowing historians to reflect on the impact of this technology on the public and historical memory.

Wetherby Timeline

- Between 1650-1670: Arrival of John Wetherbee (circa 1642-1711) in America; his son, David (1685-1758), and grandson, Silas (1727-1811) are associated with Stow and Boxborough, MA. Great-grandson, Judah (1755-1835) lived in MA and ME; his son, Isaac Sr. (1796-1868) settled for a time in Providence, RI, Norway, ME, and in Milford, NH.
- December 6, 1819: Birth of Isaac Augustus Wetherbee in Providence, RI; family returned to Boston area, circa 1822-1823. Isaac Sr. was rum distiller in Charlestown, MA. Isaac and his brother Charles attended local schools.
- Circa 1827-1830: Isaac attended Stow Academy and lived on Eveleth farm with Uncle Judah Wetherbee and then with Great Uncle Charles Whitman, Jr. in Stow, MA.
- Circa 1830-1832: Family moved to Norway, Oxford County, Maine; father farmed the Cresey farm for a few years; Isaac and Charles attended Bridgton Academy on Long Pond (Lake). While in Norway, Isaac took a few lessons from itinerant painter, Mr. Rice in the spring of 1834. He began painting portraits of relatives and locals.
- August, 1835: A legal document was set up by Isaac's father to give him his financial independence at the age of fifteen; the family moved back to Charlestown and then to Roxbury, where Isaac had his first studio in the family's front room on Zeigler Street.
- Circa 1836-1837: Family moved to Watertown; Isaac boarded at Mr. Pope's, the box maker, and at Mr. Harington, the bookbinder. Brother Charles was apprenticed to Dana Dry Goods family.
- Circa 1838-1839: Family moved to Milford, NH, to attempt farming again; it was "a bad move." Isaac had second studio—a rented space over Livermore office in town for five or six months, before he returned to Charlestown.
- 1840: Isaac received treatment at Doctor Samuel Thomson's Botanic Infirmary in Boston. Brother Charles received treatment there in 1842, but died soon after of typhoid fever.
- 1841: After learning of daguerreotype technique from "Samuel F.B. Morse," Isaac purchased his first camera in October from Ari Davis—nine months later he wrote it was not a success.
- January-August 1844: Isaac traveled to Lexington, KY, to paint Johnson Mason family and others; set up studio on Market Street, was reviewed in *Louisville Dime*. While there, he met Doctor Dioclesian Lewis, a temperance reformer. After return to Boston in late summer, he ordered a *camera lucida*.
- July 1845: Isaac painted a portrait of Catherine M. Thayer, daughter of a Boston house builder. They married in February 1846 and went on honeymoon to Louisville, KY. The couple settled in Roxbury for a time while Isaac worked in neighboring communities around Boston seeking portrait work.
- 1849: Isaac painted his first copy of Stuart's *Washington* in Fanueil Hall and did set of landscapes; he exhibited at the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanics Association the following year.
- 1851: Father's family made permanent move to Lawrence, MA.

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- 1852: Isaac did lithographic edition of *Position of Democratic Party* for Free Soil Convention held in Pittsburgh in August; he attended the convention and sold prints as far west as Rockford, IL, where he set up studio for several months.
- 1853: Isaac and Catherine moved to Lower Mills, Dorchester (near Boston), with her family; Isaac maintained studio on School Street and then on Tremont Row. Isaac bought his second daguerrian outfit and took lessons from Walter Eastman. In December, he made an inquiry for land in Tama County, IA.
- 1854: Isaac purchased a land warrant for 40 acres of farm land in Tama County; he auctioned off goods and started west on May 15 to Rockford, IL, with his family and in-laws. On August 1, he opened his first, temporary studio in Iowa City for three months. He took the first view of Old Capitol on October 23 and returned to Rockford soon after. He opened a studio in West Rockford in November 1854.
- 1855: He printed a broadside advertising his Rockford Gallery. His in-laws, wife and children moved to Monroe, WI; Isaac maintained a studio in Rockford. He purchased more land in Johnson County, IA.
- 1856: In January, Isaac went on phrenology lecture tour with Doctor E.W. Gantt in northern IL and southern WI. Isaac learned new ambrotype technique, perhaps from E.P. Huyler in October; made portable ambro-wagon for a mobile studio.
- 1857: He moved to farmland in IA in May; he plowed, began digging a cellar for a house. He took a trip to Monroe, WI, to see his family and to bring back his son and household goods.
- 1858: He sowed seed in April on fire acres; rains began. He went to WI to bring back family; rains continued. From October to April 1859, he was on a road trip with Doctor Dioclesian Lewis through IL, IN, and MI using Wetherby's painted panorama on a temperance theme.
- 1859: He auctioned off farm goods and moved to Iowa City; Catherine and the children returned to Monroe, WI. Isaac did "heads" and physiological diagrams for lectures. He stayed at rented house on north side near friends: Irish, Kimball and Calkins.
- 1860: In April, he visited Springdale in Cedar County, IA, a neighborhood of anti-slavery sympathizers; he began painting Lincoln banners. He bought the cottage at 935 E. Market Street in July. He took his first tintype in September in Tama County; also worked on committee to elect Abraham Lincoln; attended local Lincoln Ball in November celebrating the election.
- 1861: He set up temporary photography studios in neighboring Tama County in spring; crowds begin to form. Isaac enlisted in Bradley Mahan's company, but it did not form as planned. Instead, he began painting equipment for the troops in Davenport and St. Louis.
- 1862: On July 11, he began Wetherby's Gallery on W. Clinton Street, above Fleishman's Tobacco Store; within a short, unspecified time he moved the gallery directly across Clinton Street, above the Lewis Brothers Grocery Store. There were three operators in town at that time, but all had large crowds wanting to have their photos taken, due to the War. The increase in work must have contributed to a simplified accounting system, for Wetherby's Daybook ends in this period. Wetherby continued to run his Gallery until his health gave out in 1873, when the studio was taken over by his son for about five years.

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- 1887-1900: While it is not known when Isaac left Iowa City, by 1887, he had moved to the northwest corner of Iowa to start an art school/photography studio in Rock Valley, Sioux County, Iowa; Mr. Denison was his partner for awhile. Inexplicably, the 1900 Iowa City census lists Catherine Wetherby as a widow. His family had remained at the Market Street address in Iowa City while Wetherby traveled or sought employment elsewhere.
- 1900: Wetherby in Rock Valley, Iowa.
- 1902: Wetherby, an elderly 83 years of age, worked at the Quenemo Kansas Sanatorium until his death two years later.
- 1904: Isaac A. Wetherby died on February 23, 1904 in Kansas and his body was shipped to Iowa City for burial in Oakland Cemetery.
- 1911: Catherine M. Wetherby died in Wetherby home on Market Street.
- 1948: Carrie Wetherby died in Mary O. Coldren Home after giving up the Market Street house and placing her father's work in various museum collections.

Significance

Wetherby is a significant figure in the 19th-century world of photography and portrait painting, in part because his life is so well documented. Wetherby's original Daybooks in two volumes are in the Library of Congress; an early article appears in *New-York Historical Quarterly Bulletin*, Vol. 25, April 1941, "Isaac Augustus Wetherby (1819-1904) and His Account Books." Marybeth Slonneger conducted extensive research on his life for *Wetherby's Gallery: Paintings, Daguerrotypes, & Ambrotypes of An Artist* (Iowa City: By Hand Press, 2006), highlighting Wetherby's life and career. Slonneger wrote a photo essay on Wetherby, which appears in the Spring 2007 issue of the *Iowa Heritage Illustrated*. An article written by Slonneger was published in the Spring 2008 issue of the *Photographic Historical Society of New England Journal*. Wetherby has also been discussed in "The Business of an American Folk Portrait Painter: Isaac Augustus Wetherby" by Michael R. Payne and Suzanne Rudnick Payne in *Folk Art*, Winter 2007, vol. 32, No. 1. He is featured briefly in the Winter 1994 issue of *The Goldfinch*. He also appears in listings of the stereographic photographers of Iowa posted at the State Historical Society of Iowa's website: <http://www.iowahistory.org>.

Scholars and laypersons from around the nation are beginning to discover the significant role Isaac A. Wetherby played in the spread of 19th century photography to the Midwest and the importance of his artistic expression to our cultural growth as a nation, especially as the population moved westward in the 1850s and 1860s. Researchers, including teachers and historic preservationists, often consult the Wetherby collections, which are rich in photographic documentation and offer insights into the history of American painting and drawing, photography, and folk and decorative arts. Wetherby's career ambitions varied widely as he was involved in early commercial photography, painting portraits and signs, farming, and promoting entrepreneurial ideas. He befriended folks who shared his interests in horticulture, politics (he was a strong supporter of the Free Soil movement and the newly established Republican Party), phrenology, and water therapy.

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The Wetherby name has always been known in Iowa City (a park and restaurant have been named after him and his images have been published in books and newspapers). In later years, he worked in Des Moines and Perry and opened an art school in Northwest Iowa, in Rock Valley, Sioux County, extending his artistic legacy to all of Iowa. His artistic importance to the state approaches that of Grant Wood.



Illustration #16: West (formerly south) façade of Isaac A. Wetherby House at new location, 611 North Governor Street, Iowa City, Iowa, photographed by Mary Bennett, January 22, 2009.

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9. Primary Location of Additional Data

Name of repository: Library of Congress

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

In March 2008, the Isaac A. Wetherby House was moved to a new site, defined as Lot 8, located at 611 North Governor Street in Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa.

Boundary Justification

The nomination includes the Isaac A. Wetherby House and the lot it sits on. The lot is not historically associated with this house but resembles the original in setting and feeling.

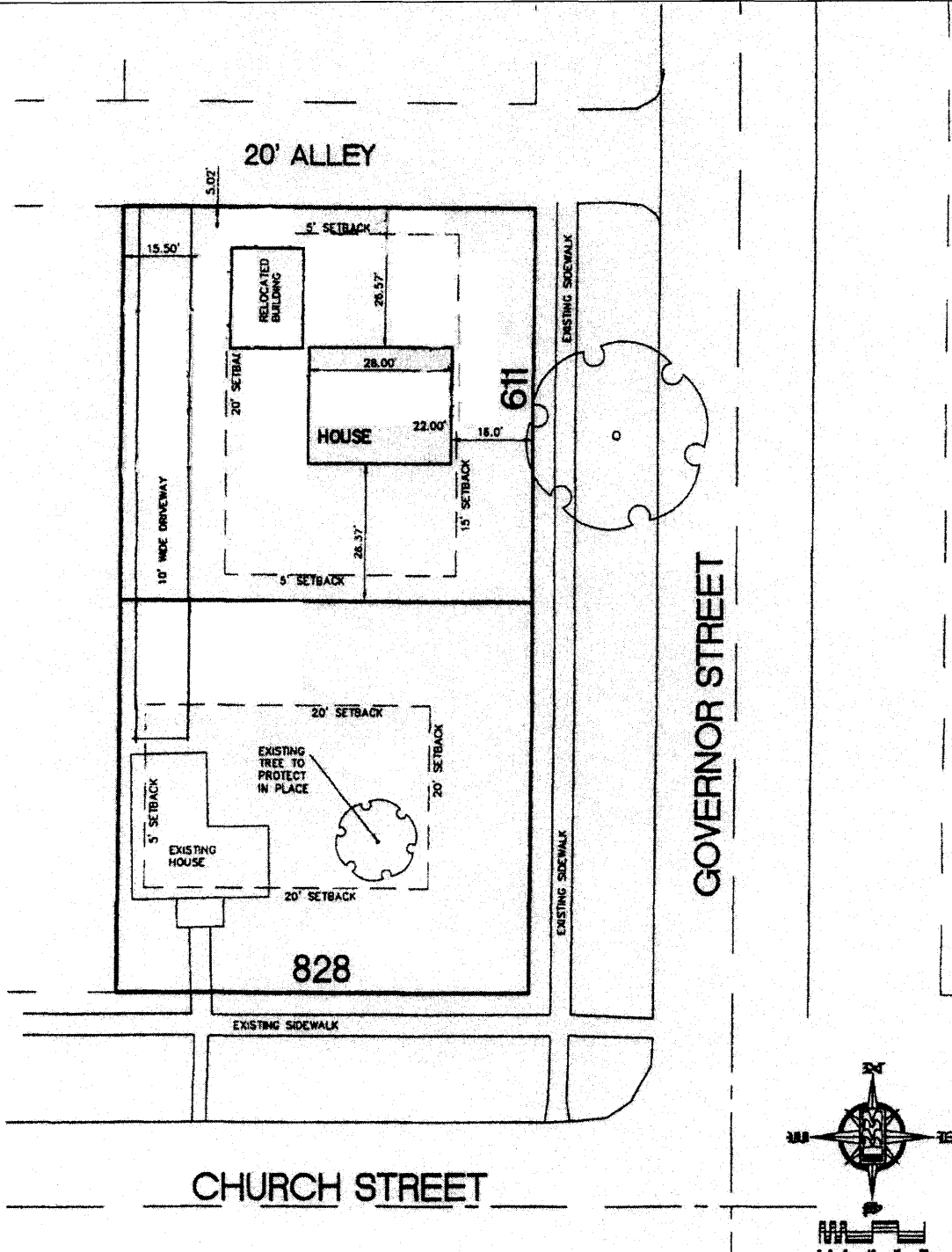
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ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION – Site Plan

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ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION - Map

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New location
611 North Governor Street



Old Location
935 East Market Street



1. *Bird's eye view of Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa, 1868*, drawn by A. Ruger and published by Chicago Lithograph Company, showing historic (East Market Street) and present location (North Governor Street) for the Isaac A. Wetherby House. Location approximate.

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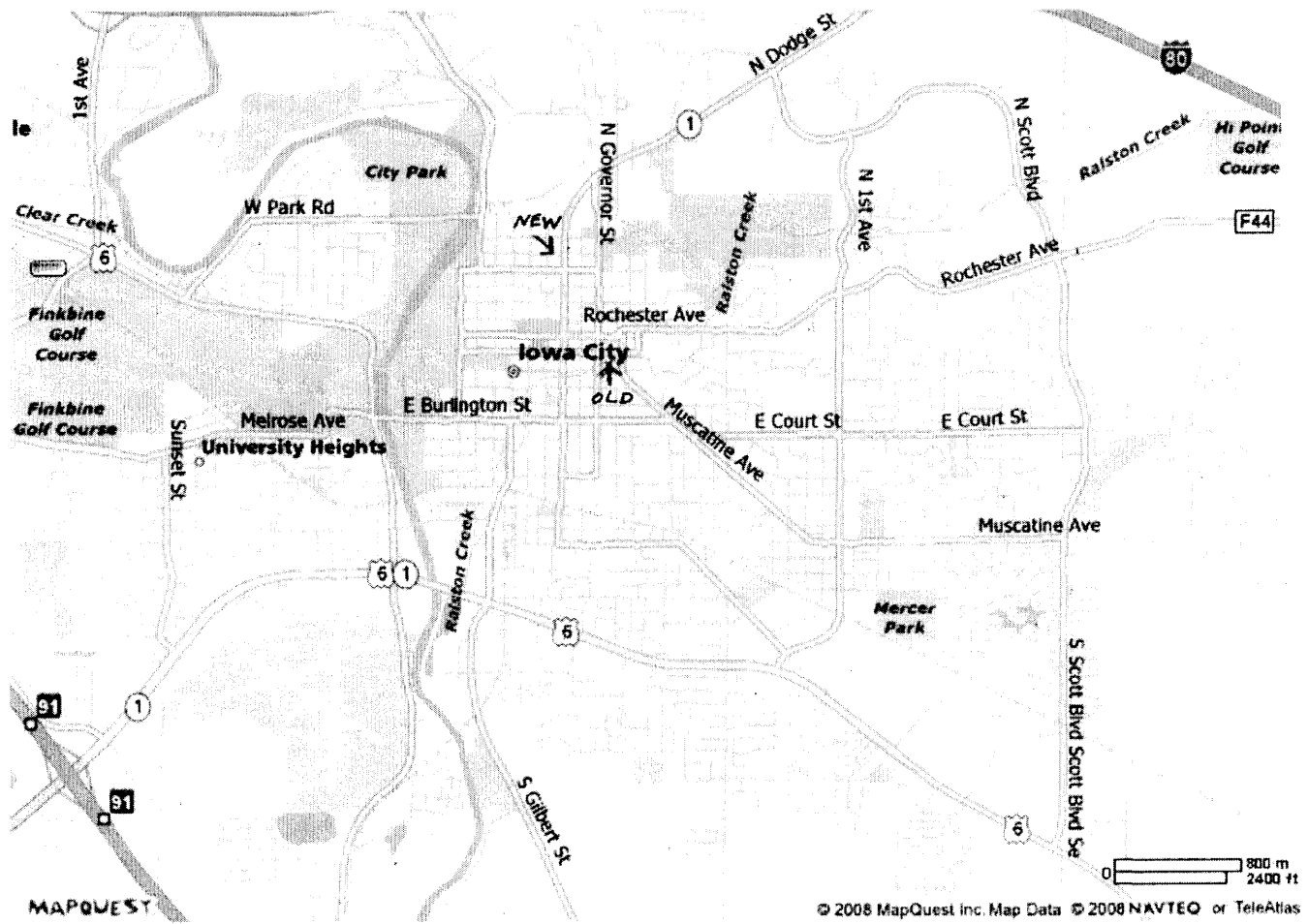
ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION - Map

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<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/Iowa+City+IA+52240/>

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2. Map of Iowa City, obtained on March 31, 2008, from Mapquest, Inc. Map Data at <http://www.mapquest.com/maps/Iowa+City+IA+52240/>, showing original location and new site of Isaac A. Wetherby House.

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ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION - Photographs

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Isaac A. Wetherby House, Johnson County, Iowa

Black and white photographs of the Isaac A. Wetherby House at the original site, 935 East Market Street,
taken by Marlin Ingalls, November 2007
35 mm negatives reside in the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City

#1 Isaac A. Wetherby House, north side entrance, looking towards south from Market Street

#2 Isaac A. Wetherby House, east side with contemporary overhang, looking towards west from sidewalk

#3 Isaac A. Wetherby House, west side of house showing 1860 addition with original window, boarded up window and back entryway, looking towards northeast

#4 Isaac A. Wetherby House, south side of house showing entryway, egress windows from basement, and slope of hill (endloader was there for demolition purposes)

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ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION - Photographs

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Isaac A. Wetherby House, Johnson County, Iowa

Black and white digital photographs of the Isaac A. Wetherby House at the new location, 611 North Governor Street, taken by Mary Bennett, January 27, 2009. Original capture in *.tiff file format with a resolution of 300 ppi and using a pixel array of 4288 x 2848 pixels. Black and white prints were printed on an HP PhotoSmart C4180 printer using Vivera HP Inks on HP Premium Photo Paper, Glossy.

#5 Isaac A. Wetherby House, east (formerly north) side of house, now facing North Governor Street

#6 Isaac A. Wetherby House, north (formerly west) side of house, showing placement of Shaffer garage on alley

#7 Isaac A. Wetherby House, west (formerly south) side of house, showing Shaffer garage and new porches

#8 Isaac A. Wetherby House, south (formerly east) side of house, showing Oakland Cemetery across the street in the distance

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ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION - Photographs

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Isaac A. Wetherby House, Johnson County, Iowa

Color digital photographs of the Isaac A. Wetherby House at the new location, 611 North Governor Street, taken by Mary Bennett, January 27, 2009. Original capture in RGB color mode in *.tiff file format with a resolution of 300 ppi and using a pixel array of 4288 x 2848 pixels.

#9 Isaac A. Wetherby House, taken from Governor Street looking west/southwest, and showing the east (formerly north) side of the house. The white house on the left was owned by the Shaffer family, who sold their double lot at 828 North Church to the Slonnegers. The lot was divided and the Wetherby House was moved to this new location, identified as 611 North Governor.

#10 Isaac A. Wetherby House, east (formerly north) side of house, taken from North Governor Street looking west.

#11 Isaac A. Wetherby House, south (formerly east) façade, showing new porch and two new chimneys.

#12 Isaac A. Wetherby House, looking east/northeast, showing the west (formerly south) façade and the new porch and overhang. Oakland Cemetery is seen across the street.

#13 Isaac A. Wetherby House, close-up of porches and overhang linking the Wetherby House to the 1920s Schaffer garage. Some of the brick and limestone from the original site of the Wetherby House was used in the restoration effort.

#14 Isaac A. Wetherby House, north (formerly west) side of house, taken from alley looking south and showing the 1920s Schaffer garage.

#15 Isaac A. Wetherby House, north (formerly west) side of house, showing the 1920s Schaffer garage and area between the house and garage.

#16 Isaac A. Wetherby House, north (formerly west) side of house, showing the entrance that was restored after construction work revealed a door where a window had been placed.