

MAY 20 1980

HISTORIC NAME: Cray, Lorin, House COUNTY: Blue Earth JUL 28 1980
 CURRENT NAME: Lorin and Lulu Cray Home for the Young Women's
 Christian Association (YWCA) CITY/TWP.: Mankato
 LEGAL DESC.: Warren's Addition ADDRESS: 603 South Second
 Lot 1
 Block 7

CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Primary <u>Architecture</u>
Structure _____	Good _____	State _____	Secondary <u>Social/Humanitar-</u>
Object _____	Fair _____	National _____	Others _____ <u>ian</u>
District _____	Deteriorated _____		

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Yes No _____ Restricted PRESENT USE: YWCA
 VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD: Yes No _____
 OCCUPIED: Yes No _____

DATE CONSTRUCTED: c.1897-99 ORIGINAL USE: Residence
 ORIGINAL OWNER: Lorin Cray ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Frank Thayer, Mankato

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Mankato YWCA 603 South Second Mankato, Minnesota 56001	ACREAGE: Less than one acre <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.: Blue Earth County Historical Society 606 South Broad Street, Mankato, MN 56001	UTM REFERENCE: Mankato Quad. 7.5 15 / 419620 / 4890140
FORM PREPARED BY: Dennis Gimmetad	
DATE: January 1980	

DESCRIPTION:

The Lorin Cray House is situated near the edge of the downtown commercial area of Mankato at South Second Street and Warren Street. Originally, the north and west (front) facades faced the streets; the recent re-routing of Warren Street has resulted in the construction of a major artery adjacent to the south facade as well. The old Warren Street to the north is now a parking area.

The two-and-one-half story Queen Anne residence with Classical and Romanesque detailing was designed by local architect Frank Thayer. The structure is of Chaska buff brick, with pink rock-faced granite utilized on the base of the building, as continuous lintels and sills, and in the voussoirs of arches on a rear porch on the south and on the solarium windows at the southwest corner of the first floor. The arch pattern is repeated in brick on the attic balconies under parapeted gables on the west and south sides. Dominating the structure are a full-height circular corner tower at the northwest and a two-story semi-circular stairwell turret on the south side; both feature bands of grouped colonnettes separated by attic windows at the third level and are capped by conical roofs. Wooden detailing also includes front and rear porches displaying columns and swag and bow relief ornamentation, a cut-out curved rail for a third story balcony over the north window bay, pilasters separating a row of windows in the front attic balcony, and tracery in the arched solarium windows.

The interior of the building has retained most original features in excellent condition, including architraves with relief garland-and-rosette detailing and perforated spandrel arches. The house also retains some pieces of furniture left by the Crays. Modifications have included some wall alteration to expand the kitchen and living room areas on the first floor and the office and study on the second floor, and the second floor bathroom has been modified.

The building was utilized as a private residence until 1927, when it became headquarters for the Mankato YWCA, which has maintained the building to the present. A one-story brick addition has been attached to the rear to accommodate YWCA activities. The only other major modification to the exterior has been the excavation of a basement stairway to the south of the front entrance. The building has been maintained in excellent condition.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Lorin Cray House is significant as one of the most distinctive elements in the domestic building stock of Mankato and for its association with the philanthropic efforts of a prominent Mankato citizen. Cray was a native of New York, born in 1844, and lived in Wisconsin before coming to Blue Earth County in 1859. He served in both the Civil War and in the 1862 Dakota War, was admitted to the bar in 1875, and moved to Mankato in 1887.

(see continuation sheet)

MAY 20 1980

Cray, Lorin, House

Blue Earth County
Mankato, Minnesota

He acted as attorney for both the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha and the Chicago and NorthWestern Railways, and in 1898 was elected Judge of the Sixth Judicial District. Mankato architect Frank Thayer designed a brick Queen Anne residence for Cray and his second wife, Lulu, in the mid-1890s. Local sources speculate that Cray's choice of a relatively ostentatious design may have been an expression of one-upmanship with his neighbor to the east, prominent flour miller Rensselaer D. Hubbard, who had constructed a French Second Empire residence in 1871. Whether or not we accept this thesis, the granite, brick, and stone materials, elaborate wood detailing, and repeated utilization of arches in the design distinguish the home as a locally notable structure. Cray was a backer of several civic and religious organizations; his prime interest was the YWCA, which he was instrumental in founding and to which he left both his home and a trust fund when he died in 1927. The home has been in public use since that date and is in exceptionally well-maintained condition.

Bibliography

Gebhard, David, and Tom Martinson. A Guide to the Architecture of Minnesota. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977. p. 241.

Mankato Free Press. August 9, 1927; November 6, 1927; November 1, 1937.

Mankato. Its First Fifty Years. Mankato: Free Press Printing Company, 1903. pp. 201-202.