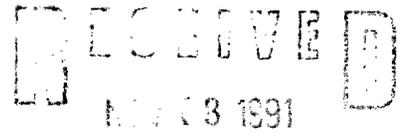


1837

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bohumil Shimek House
other names/site number none

2. Location

street & number 529 Brown Street not for publication
city, town Iowa City vicinity
state Iowa code IA county Johnson code 103 zip code 52245

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>2</u>	<u> </u> objects
			<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
The Conservation Movement in Iowa, 1857-1942
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

David Signature of certifying official 10/31/91 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.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. *Belk Boland* 10/23/91
 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:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Same

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/Folk Victorian

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls wood

roof metal

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Conservation
Education
Ethnic Heritage/European

Period of Significance

1899-1937

Significant Dates

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

Bohumil Shimek (1861-1937)

Architect/Builder

unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Iowa Bureau of Historic Preservation

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	5	6	2	2	6	3	0	4	6	1	3	9	4	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

legal boundaries

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rebecca Conard with assistance by Steven VanderWoude
organization PHR Associates date May 29, 1991
street & number 275 Crescent Park Dr. telephone 712/657-3347
city or town Lake View state Iowa zip code 51450

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Section 7: Physical Description

The Bohumil Shimek house is a two-story Folk Victorian front-gable-and-wing house with a large, one-story Neoclassical style open porch. The house appears to have been constructed ca. 1890 judging from the style and materials, while the porch is a ca. 1918 alteration. A photograph of the house published in a 1913 county history reveals that the original porch was much smaller and of Victorian detailing, running the length of the front ell and wrapping around to cover the front entrance. An intersecting gable roof is of medium pitch with moderately overhanging eaves. It was recovered with a standing seam metal roof in 1990, restoring what is believed to have been the original appearance. Wide, plain fascia boards accentuate the roofline under the eaves. One-light over one-light wood-sash windows are spaced asymmetrically along all four facades. Square Queen Anne attic windows are located in the gable peak of the north front and south rear. Two interior chimneys of brick are located along the ridge line, one at the gable intersection, the other at the far east side. Exterior walls are covered with narrow clapboard siding. A small, flat-roofed service porch appears to have been added to the southeast side of the rear facade. This addition, though undated, is visible in the same 1913 photograph, and the exterior walls are covered with the same narrow-width clapboard as the house proper.

A small concrete block building is located southwest of the house. Its gable roof also has been recovered with a standing seam metal roof, and a new overhead garage door has recently been added to the east side. Shimek constructed this building prior to 1920 in order to house some of his collections. After his death, new owners converted it to a garage. A brick sidewalk runs along the east side of the house, one of several brick sidewalks and streets which add to the character of the Northside residential district.

During the time of Shimek's ownership and residency, the property was approximately twice the size it is today, encompassing the residential lot which lies to the south. A two-story barn was located behind the house, and between the barn and the house a large garden was planted on one side while wildflowers grew on the other. None of these features remains.

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Section 8: Statement of Significance

Summary Significance Statement

The Bohumil Shimek House is significant under National Register Criterion B for its association with Bohumil Shimek, one of the leaders in the Iowa Conservation Movement from the time it emerged in the late 1890s until his death in 1937. Shimek's contributions to the movement are discussed in Section E, particularly in connection with the American School of Wild Life Protection and the Upper Mississippi Valley Wildlife and Fish Refuge (Subsection II, "Wildlife Conservation"), the establishment of a state park system (Subsection IV, "Parks"), , and Iowa Lakeside Laboratory (Subsection V, "Conservation of Native Flora")* City directories indicate that Bohumil Shimek lived at this address from 1899 until his death, thus his residence here coincides with his professional career. Shimek also distinguished himself as a leader among Czech Americans in Iowa, which also contributes to the building's significance under Criterion B. He lived here with his first wife, Anna Konvalinka until she died in 1922. His second wife, Marjorie Meerdink, also lived here until she died in 1937 shortly after her husband. The house may also be significant under Criterion C as a contributing structure to the Northside district of Iowa City, a historic residential area which has not yet been nominated to the National Register.

Bohumil Shimek's contributions to the Conservation Movement in Iowa are legion, for he was involved in almost every aspect of the movement throughout his professional career. He was born on a farm near Shueyville in 1861 and attended Iowa City schools, graduating from the State University of Iowa with a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering in 1883 and a Master of Science degree in 1902. After working as a county surveyor, teaching in local elementary and high schools, and serving as an instructor in zoology at the State University of Nebraska from 1888-1890, Shimek returned to Iowa City in 1890 to accept a position as instructor of botany with the State University of Iowa. From there he rose to the rank of full professor, serving as head of the department of botany from 1914-1919. From 1931 until 1937 he was professor emeritus of the department. During his career, he published nearly 190 scholarly books and articles.

Though initially trained as a civil engineer, Shimek was a true natural scientist of the old school, equally proficient in botany, zoology, geology, and paleontology. Some of his most enduring contributions to the science of conservation came through his scholarly work. His

* within the Conservation Movement in Iowa MPS

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vast collection of loess fossils formed the basis for his theory of the origin of the Loess Hills. The preponderance of land-dwelling snail fossils in the loess deposits led him to conclude that the loess had been carried and slowly deposited by wind, overturning an earlier theory that the hills had been formed by erosion. The Smithsonian Institution purchased Shimek's shell collection, which numbered about 2,400,000 specimens at the time of his death in 1937. About half of the collection comprised loess fossils, which Dr. Paul Bartsch, then curator of the Division of Mollusks and Cenozoic Invertebrates described as "the finest gathering that has ever been brought together in that field anywhere in the world." Shimek's aeolian theory of loess formation is considered to be one of the outstanding scientific contributions to Iowa geology, and his continuing geological research brought him many honors. In 1904 he became a member of the Iowa State Geological Board, on which he served in various capacities until 1929. In 1911 he was chairman of the Geological Section and vice president of the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences, and in 1914 he served as honorary chairman of the Geological Section of the International Scientific Congress in Europe.

Shimek (along with Pammel, MacBride, and Calvin) was also among the first to undertake systematic studies of plant communities. During his lifetime, he collected specimens from every county in Iowa, all but nine of the 48 states, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Mexico, Manitoba, and Czechoslovakia. His research in botany earned him international recognition when he was invited to the University of Prague as exchange professor of botany in 1914, and that institution conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Shimek's plant collections from Iowa date from 1880 to 1934; his plant notes date from 1889 to 1934. All of his plant collections, which number over 200,000 specimens, are housed in the University of Iowa herbarium, of which he was the curator from 1895 until 1937. These collections, which remained largely unarranged and classified at the time of his death, were to have been the basis of a comprehensive plant geography of Iowa. His mentor and lifelong friend, Thomas MacBride, wrote in 1934 that "the story of Dr. Shimek is largely wrought in the taxonomic work of the University Botanic collections. He is...a famous collector and is an authority wherever named; his labels in the Herbarium will, it is believed, bear the test of time." Shimek named several species of plants, and one was named in his honor: *Pyramidula Shimekii* (Pilsbry). During his lifetime Shimek's botanical research contributed greatly to the understanding of plant ecology in several regions of the state, particularly the ecology of prairies.

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Shimek was a founder of and instructor at the Iowa Lakeside Laboratory. Even before there was a field laboratory, Shimek took students on collecting trips to the northern lakes region. He wholeheartedly supported MacBride's action to secure an option on land for a laboratory site, and when ownership passed to a stock company comprised of University of Iowa alumni in 1910, Shimek became a stockholder. For nearly every summer between 1909 and 1934, he was present as an instructor or investigator; and he served as director in the summers of 1912, 1916, and 1918. From 1928 to 1936 he served as vice president of the laboratory's board of directors. Shimek Library, constructed during the 1935-36 expansion, was named in his honor.

Shimek was also intimately involved with the American School of Wild Life Protection at McGregor. For many summers, he served as an instructor, without pay, gladly taking each opportunity to encourage students toward a better understanding of the natural world and an appreciation for resource conservation values. Writing to Fred G. Bell in September of 1923, Shimek summed up his respect for the wildlife school in these words:

For more than forty years I have been trying to bring young people (and often their elders) into contact with the living world, and the purpose and plan of the School appealed to me from the first, for I regard it as the best effort of its kind.

In his writings and his many speeches, Shimek vigorously urged a statewide program of conservation that was ecological in approach, combining the preservation of scenic areas with protection of plant communities, wildlife, and scientifically interesting geologic formations; and combining soil conservation with forest restoration and flood control. His view of the natural world was holistic, and he understood the interdependencies of resource conservation as few other scientists did at the time. He advanced the mission of conservation through his involvement in many, many professional organizations. This list is too long to catalogue, but among his affiliations the following stand out: the Iowa Academy of Science, of which he was president 1904-05; the Iowa Park and Forestry Association (later the Iowa Forestry and Conservation Association, and still later the Iowa Conservation Association), of which he was a founding member; and the Iowa chapter of the Izaak Walton League, of which he served as a state director and one-time president. Through the Iowa Park and Forestry Association and its successor organizations, Shimek lobbied to secure passage of the 1907 forestry legislation and the 1917 Holdoegel Act authorizing the creation of a state park system. By virtue of his affiliation with the Izaak Walton League, Shimek was asked to testify at Congressional hearings in Washington, D.C. in support of the 1924 bill to set aside the upper Mississippi River

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bottoms as a wildlife and fish refuge. However, Shimek resigned as president of the Iowa chapter in 1927, criticizing the organization for catering to sportsmen, and proceeded to form the rival Will H. Dilg League (Dilg founded the Izaak Walton League). Although not a member of the State Board of Conservation, he frequently appeared at board meetings, where his advice was always welcome. Several areas recommended by him as preserves were acquired and incorporated into the state park and preserve system.

In a 1947 tribute to him by Walter F. Loehwing, the author wrote:

Although Professor Shimek is best known as a scientist, he never sacrificed the duties and obligations of citizenship upon the altar of science.... His practical application of knowledge made him not only a great scientist and a great teacher, but an outstanding citizen of the community, of the commonwealth, of the nation, and of the world.

Under Criterion B, the house would also be eligible under a context (as yet undeveloped) that recognizes the contributions to the state of Iowa made by members of various cultural and ethnic groups. Shimek was born to Czech immigrants who left Bohemia and came to the United States in 1848 in order to escape persecution by the Hapsburgs for their political activities. As the son of revolutionary "Forty-Eighters", Shimek vigorously supported the movement to free Czechs from the Austrian Empire during World War I. In 1915 he became president of the Iowa branch of the Bohemian National Alliance, an organization which gave financial support to the independence movement. He also became a member of the Executive Council of the Czecho-Slovak National Alliance, presided at the National Council of the organization at Chicago, and traveled extensively to lecture and distribute literature in support of the cause. Under Shimek's leadership, Czechs in Iowa raised over \$100,000 to sustain the freedom movement, which ultimately succeeded in establishing the independent nation of Czechoslovakia in December of 1918. Shimek also helped to organize the Czecho-Slovakian Council of Higher Education, and served as its president for over 22 years. In recognition of his services in the nationalist movement and in education, the Czechoslovakian government presented him with a special medal of honor in 1927.

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Section 9: Bibliography

Aurner, Clarence Ray. *Leading Events in Johnson County, Iowa, History*, Vol. 2. Iowa City, 1913.

Conard, Henry S. Notes for a Biography of Bohumil Shimek, 1946. TSS located at the University of Iowa Library and in the Bohumil Shimek Papers, UI Special Collections, Iowa City.

Fisher, Frank. Telephone conversation with Rebecca Conard, February 10, 1991. Mr. Fisher grew up in the house adjacent to the Shimeks and still lives in the neighborhood at 523 Brown Street.

Loehwing, Walter F. *Bohumil Shimek*. Centennial Memoirs. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1947.

MacBride, Thomas H. Correspondence with Bohumil Shimek in his collected papers. University of Iowa Special Collections, Iowa City.

Mutel, Cornelia F. *Fragile Giants: A Natural History of the Loess Hills*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989.

Shimek, Bohumil. Collected works and papers. University of Iowa Special Collections, Iowa City.

Shimek, Bohumil. Collected works and papers. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Vander Woude, Steven. Personal conversation with Rebecca Conard, December 28, 1991. Mr. VanderWoude currently owns the property and has collected many details about the history of the house.

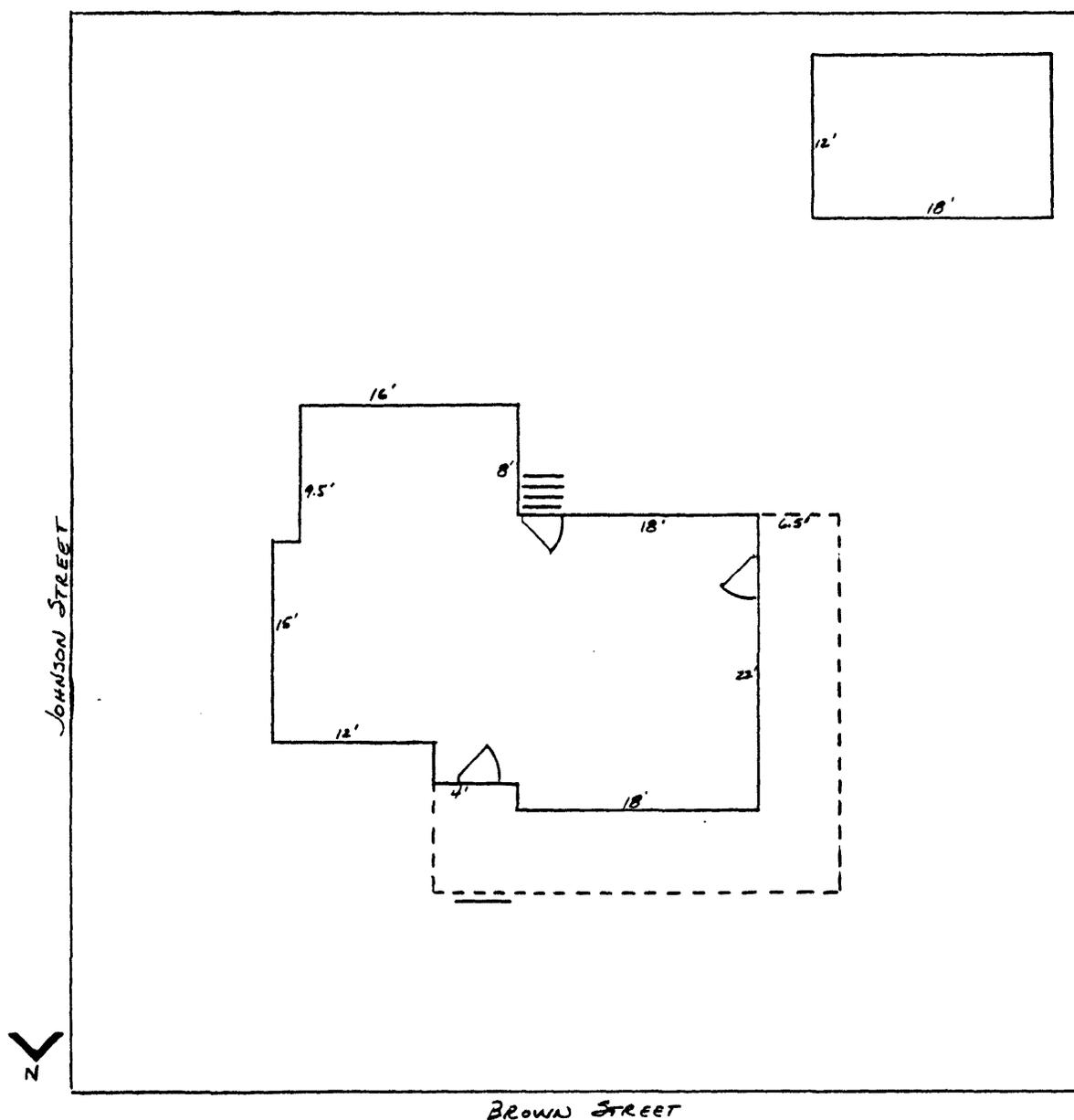
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*Bohumil Shimek House, 529 Brown Street, Iowa City
Site Plan Sketch Map*



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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 91001837

Date Listed: 12/23/91

Shimek, Bohumil, House
Property Name

Johnson
County

IA
State

Conservation Movement in Iowa MPS
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Beth Boland
Signature of the Keeper

1/23/92
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

The house is significant under criterion B, but has not been justified under A. Only the criterion B box should have been checked; the criterion A box should be blank.

This was discussed with Lisa Linhart of the IA SHPO staff.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)