

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **MAY 30 1985**  
date entered **JUN 27 1985**

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

**1. Name**

historic Wesley West House

and or common

**2. Location**

street & number Palisades Road not for publication

city, town Mt. Vernon vicinity of

state Iowa code 019 county Linn code 113

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Estate of Gail Hull, deceased, Arthur M. Hull, Executor

street & number 3201 Sweetbriar Lane

city, town Ft. Worth vicinity of state Texas 76109

**5. Location of Legal Description**

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

street & number Linn County Courthouse

city, town Cedar Rapids state Iowa 52401

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title N/A has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Wesley West House (1877) is an excellent example of the Italianate style, and exemplifies the craftsmanship of local builder Marsden Keyes. The house combines brick, limestone, and ornate detail work on its porches and eaves with an elaborate overall plan.

This two story load bearing brick building, square in plan (30' by 30') with an offset rear one and a half story kitchen wing (20' x 15') is Italianate in design due to its ornate brick facade, its bracketed cornices, and its detailed entry porches. Its foundation consists of coursed ashlar limestone, while the main building mass consists of a brick veneer over a wood frame. The hipped roof has a slight ridge which runs parallel with the facade. Straight brick flues project from the main roof mass (west end of the ridge) and from the rear center of the rear wing.

Fenestration is symmetrical on the front and sides of the main house, and consists on the sidewalls of two broadly spaced full sized (double hung 1/1, originally 2/2) windows on each floor. The east wall has a centered single width door and entry porch. The facade has a centered double entrance with a single window above. The entrance is flanked by chamfered two story bays, each bay having three windows per floor. Stone string courses break each bay visually between the floors. The limestone treatment for each window is constant throughout the house, projecting stone sills and slightly pointed broader stone headings set flush with the wall, define each window. The rear addition lacks the limestone sills and lintels used on the original block. The brick used in both is identical however. Elaborate porches with carpenter gothic treatment survive on the front and east side. Turned balusters on the ground floor, and a pattern of intersecting ovals on the upper balcony, are elements of interest. The support columns are square cut and paneled, and decorative urns cap the tops. A broadly projecting eavesline is supported by widely spaced scrolled brackets.

Basement windows are located on the west and rearmost wall only. The rear kitchen wing has half windows on the second floor. Side porches flank the rear wing. That on the east has a brick porch with concrete floor. A hand pump is set on the porch floor. The west side porch has a concrete block foundation, is partially incorporated into an added bathroom. A steeply pitched cellar entrance is on the west rear and a gabled basement entrance is located at the northwest rear of the main building.

The interior plan allows for four rooms on the main floor. The eastern rooms, living room and dining room, are larger. The living room includes both front and side entrance, and a centered doglet stairway. The kitchen is a single room with rear pantry and a straight stairwell. On the second floor a central hall in front with bath behind (north) allows for a bath (also reachable from the two bedrooms in the rear wing) and the hall is flanked by two bedrooms on each side.

An eight foot square brick smoke house (c. 1880) with pyramidal roof is the only remaining outbuilding, standing northeast of the house. A brick chimney projects from the northwest corner.

Alterations to the house are minimal. The original 1877 construction created a through hall on the lower floor, with a front straight walnut stairway leading upstairs. The 1897 remodeling eliminated the hall and added a dogleg oak floor, executed in Eastlake style. Undated changes include the replacement of the front doors, the elimination of one chimney on the main mass, and the corbelled caps from all the chimneys, the loss of the functional blinds, and the replacement of most of the 2/2 Italianate windows with 1/1 modern sash. A

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brick gabled exterior basement entrance was added in the northwest rear of the main block. The adjoining side porch is of recent date, its foundation being made up of concrete block with a bath room built in above. The east side porch floor is probably raised above its original stone floor. The porch itself is undersized and the exposed porch end is fast deteriorating, being exposed to the weather. Apparently a small shed roofed extension of the porch roof is missing. The house has an ornamental cast iron fence which is now gone, and originally the foundation had no plantings in proximity to it. In recent years the outbuildings, including two barns, were demolished. Shutters were removed prior to 1920.

The West house was originally a farmstead home, and its acreage was adjacent to the city limits of Mount Vernon. The hay barn and hog house were demolished c. 1972, the machine shed, corn crib and rent house in 1984. The hay barn was the oldest of these, dating to 1900, the rest dated from 1920-50. The rent house was last occupied by a tenant farmer in 1969. Today, the house retains its basic rural character. All buildings within four blocks of the house date from the 1950's. Mount Vernon's early housing is typically red brick, as is this structure.

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Historical image, Wesley West House, dated November 1900  
Reproduced courtesy Arthur M. Hull, 3201 Sweetbriar Lane,  
Fort Worth, Texas 76109.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1877 **Builder/Architect** Marsden Keyes, Builder.

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Wesley West House (1877) is an excellent example of the Italianate style, and exemplifies the craftsmanship of local builder Marsden Keyes.

Wesley West (1808-1894) was by 1878 the owner of six hundred acres of farmland near Mount Vernon. The homestead itself, included one hundred and seventy one acres and adjoined that city on its northern boundary. He settled in the community in 1859 with his wife Polly A. McKay West. In the fall of 1877 West erected "a handsome and commodious brick residence" (History of Linn County, Chicago: The Pioneer Publishing Company, 1911, p. 288). The Mt. Vernon Hawkeye noted "Westley West is building a very fine dwelling house on his farm southwest of town. When completed it will be one of the best farm houses in this part of the country" (12 October 1877, p. 3). West hired local carpenter Marsden Keyes (1832- ? ), an individual who had during the late 1850's constructed bridges and depots for the Cedar Rapids and Missouri Railroad. He descended from a family of carpenters in New York. Keys had settled in Mt. Vernon in 1858, and during his house building career was responsible for building a number of local substantial brick residences.

West's son David McKay West (1856-1906), farmer and raiser of stock, purchased the house after his father's death, and was responsible for the remodeling of the house in 1897. The Mt. Vernon Remarker noted the work on 20 March 1897, stating "D. M. West has hauled the materials for re-roofing his house, just west of town, and is talking of following this with other improvements, including a new stairway, casings, etc." The house was occupied by family members through 1982 and has been vacant since that time.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Refer to Continuation Sheet 9-2

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Mt. Vernon

Quadrangle scale 1/24,000

UTM References

A 

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

B 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Beg. at the SW corner of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$  SE $\frac{1}{4}$  Sec. 9 Twp. 82N R-5W, 5th P.M., thence north from the right of way 140', thence east 164', thence S17 $^{\circ}$ 0'0"E 149' following an existing wire fence, thence west along same north right of way 210'. Includes only subject house and smoke house.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title James E. Jacobsen, National Register Coordinator  
Iowa State Historical Department  
 organization Office of Historic Preservation date 30 April 1985  
 street & number E. 12th & Grand Ave. telephone 515-281-4137  
 city or town Des Moines state Iowa 50319

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Towell G. Locke*

title Deputy Historic Preservation Officer date May 9, 1985

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

*Melous Byers* Entered in the National Register date 6-27-85  
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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The Biographical Record of Linn County, Iowa. Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1901, pp. 846-7.

History of Linn County, Iowa, Containing A History of the County, its Cities, Towns, &c., Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1878, pp. 287-8.

History of Linn County Iowa From Its Earliest Settlement to the Present Time, Chicago: The Pioneer Publishing Company, 1911.

A Centennial History of Mount Vernon, Iowa. Evansville, Ind.: Unigraphics, 1947, reprinted 1976.

Works Progress Administration, Graves Registration Book, Linn County Iowa, Des Moines, 1939.

Linn County Abstract Company, Transfer Book, volumes 1, 1-B.

Mt. Vernon Hawkeye, 12 October 1877, p. 3.

Mt. Vernon Hawkeye, 18 May 1894.

Mt. Vernon Remarker, 20 March 1897, p. 3.

Keyes, Margaret N. "He Left a Legacy in Landmarks." Iowan, Fall 1971, pp. 2-7, 55.

Letter, Arthur Hull to Janet Dumbaugh, Fort Worth, 15 March 1985.

Interviews:

Mark Graber, Interview with Miss Grace West and Mrs. Gail Hull, Mount Vernon, Fall 1976.

Janet Dumbaugh, Interview with Dr. Richard M. Thomas, Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, 4 November 1983.