

PH036133X

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
APR 27 1976
DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

** McCollister, James, Farmstead

AND/OR COMMON

Old Charlie Showers Place

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Rural Route 5, Box 7

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Iowa City

VICINITY OF

First

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Iowa

Johnson

103

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

William H. and Linda K. Norton

STREET & NUMBER

Rural Route 5, Box 7

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Iowa City

VICINITY OF

Iowa

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder's Office

STREET & NUMBER

Johnson County Court House

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Iowa City

Iowa

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Physical Appearance of the Site

I. Overview

The site consists of a brick house in Anglo-Italian style and a large 45' x 80' barn. Both are largely unmodified and reasonably well-preserved examples of Victorian architecture during the late 1800's when this was a leading farm in the community. They are located on the original Clark claim that was the first settlement in Johnson County. Restoration work now underway on both the house and barn is currently directed toward making the buildings weather-proof.

The house is located on a wooded slope in the hills rising from the Iowa River bottom. The first 1½ story section of the house was built in 1864 using local orange-red brick and limestone. As the farm prospered the McCollisters added a fancier front section (1880) and made the original section two stories high. The use of Italiante windows added a degree of elegance to the basic brick house with white Victorian ornamentation. We recently found that the house windows were barn red with white frames thus giving the place a consistent rural color scheme.

The barn still has the old horse stalls and wooden milking stanchions. Strangely it was never modernized to accept recent mechanized farming methods. Nor was it used so extensively that it is worn out. Rather the original seven carloads of lumber have acquired a rich patina on the inside and a weathered maturity on the outside. Its size and unusual tack room with adjoining porch resulted in it being recorded in the 1912 Johnson County History. Repair parts are readily available from other old barns being torn down in this vicinity.

II. Physical Description

A. General Description: The site is an example of a rural homestead of a prosperous cattle farmer in the nineteenth century. Buildings to be restored are the house, main barn, and smokehouse.

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The house and barn are in reasonably good condition with few modifications and on their original sites. Restoration work is well underway with the primary goal of weatherproofing against further deterioration mostly accomplished. The prospect of the original settlement of Napoleon being restored as part of a park project across the highway looks very good at this point. The two sites would then complement each other providing historical prospective to the settlement of this region.

B. Description of the House Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The house is in the form of a T with major dimensions of 38 x 70 feet. It is two stories high.
2. Foundation: Native limestone about two feet thick.
3. Wall construction: Native brick; three bricks thick on the first story and two bricks thick for the upper story. It is in reasonably good condition and will be repointed in the near future. The orange color of the brick contrasts nicely with the white trim and surrounding evergreens.
4. Structural system: Masonry walls with wood interior framing. The wood framing is in good condition but sagging with age. The sag is being remedied and insulation installed.
5. Porches: The original front porch was modified to a screened in form. It is now nearly back to its original form. A side porch on the north side was also screened. Its disposition has not been finalized. The back porch and woodshed were added when the back section was raised to two stories.

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6. Chimneys: There were several original chimneys for room heaters. These have mostly been removed to below the roof line. Disposition has not been finalized.
7. Doorways: The front door is capped with a segmental arch matching those of the windows. The windows are frosted with a floral design. The side and back doors are not particularly noteworthy.
8. Windows: The windows with the exception of those in the older first story are Italianate with curved tops, sills of limestone, and ornate galvanized metal caps. Bay windows on both stories overlook the river valley.
9. Roof: The gable framed roof has a unusually wide frieze with an ornamental design cut into it. Brackets add an air of Victorian elegance to it. Roof trim is painted white. Roof cover is currently asbestos but I would like to install old metal roofing similar to the original.

C. Description of the House Interior:

1. Floor plans are included in the Appendix.
 - a. Basement: There is a full cellar with a cement floor under the house. It contains two gas forced air furnaces and an old brick cordwood furnace.
 - b. First floor: The house has three entrances. The main entrance was through tulip doors to the large parlor. There is a side entrance and vestibule with access to both sections and a door to the kitchen off the back porch. The original house

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- had a kitchen-dining area, living room, pantry, and side porch. The parlors, music room, vestibule, woodshed, and back porch were added in 1880-1881. The living room was then used as a dining room.
- c. Second floor: The room divisions are similar to the first floor with five bedrooms occupying this level. There is a small sitting room off the large bedroom which has a bay window.
- d. Attic: The attic has a floor in the newer section.
2. Stairways: There is a central stairway going upstairs and one going downstairs. The entranceway, stairway, and hall have an interesting original color combination of red, yellow, and brownish tan that will be restored.
3. Flooring: The living room in the old section has a beautiful parquet floor of alternating walnut and ash boards. The other floors are of painted, wide, hard pine. They are in good condition and will be retained.
4. Walls: The exterior walls are mostly plaster on brick and plaster on lathe for interior walls. We are putting Blocbond and heavy insulation on some walls to make the place livable. Ceilings are plaster on lathe. The older section has wainscoting. We have preserved the original wallpaper we have found and will try to have it reproduced.
5. Doorways and doors: Paneled wooden doorways were used throughout. Doors in the older section have transoms above them. The newer section has ornate wood moulding around doors and windows and on the baseboards. The older section has plain wooden frames and baseboards.

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6. Trim: We found the original gold leaf paint on the window mouldings and will keep that against an ivory paint background. The living room wainscoting and storage closets have been stippled. The kitchen features its original wainscot board ceiling.
 7. Hardware: Door hinges and window locks in the new section are elaborately Victorian. The handles on the tulip doors are also ornate. Interior door knobs are white porcelain.
 8. Lighting: The house was originally lighted with gas. This was later converted to electricity. We are replacing the old wiring with a modern conduit system using old gas fixtures converted to electricity where possible. The main parlor has a nice electrical fixture that will be kept.
 9. Mechanical: The house was originally heated with a huge cordwood furnace that still exists in the basement. Current heating is gas forced air. We are removing a fireplace added in 1929 and replacing it with a Franklin stove. The flue pipes indicate that metal stoves were a primary original source of heat. We are using urban renewal plumbing fixtures in restoration of the bathrooms.
- D. Outbuildings:
1. The foundation and fire pit exists for the original smokehouse. We found out that it was brick so using this information and drawings of other smokehouses it will be rebuilt and perhaps used.

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2. Barn: The barn is a thing of beauty. It is practically original inside! Complete with horse stalls, wooden milking stanchions, wooden hay handling equipment and all. The roof has deteriorated and consequently some parts are not in good shape. But other barns of the same vintage are coming down so I can get repair parts. Windows had unique trim and the porch was certainly unusual. Someone took great pride in building it and James McCollister had its photograph included in the 1912 Johnson County History.

The foundation is of native limestone. The framing is of seven carloads of lumber using large beams all hand-pegged. It has withstood many a windstorm so it has to be strong. The original roof was wooden shingles which was later covered by galvanized metal. I am trying to repair the metal roofing although it is a hard, dangerous job.

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 checked="" 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 1864
1880

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Borts, Lenz, and Gruber
J. J. Hotz

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historical Significance

I. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Site

The site is important historically for two reasons: 1) it is part of the Philip Clark homestead that played an important role in early Johnson County and Iowa history and 2) it features rich soil, timber, and water necessary to make it the basis for an outstanding pioneer family who made significant community contributions. Fortunately there has been enough interest in the history of the community that many details of the early pioneers have been recorded. In addition many documents relating to the operations of this farm during the 1800's and construction of the house and barn have been saved. Thus both the buildings and the records of the activities that occurred about them are reasonably well-preserved.

Philip Clark, the initial homesteader of this site, came to this area about 1836 at the invitation of John Gilbert, a fur trader who settled here in 1826. The site was opened for homesteading by the Second Black Hawk Purchase of land from the Indians in 1837. Clark's claim was protected by The Claim Association of Johnson County until the land was first offered for sale on August 3rd of 1840 in Dubuque, Iowa. He was one of 57 men to make the first purchase of land in this county at \$1.25 per acre. He retained the land until the McCollister bought it from him in 1863. There was a slight problem of lynching of a man in 1859 who settled on the land while Clark was in California for the gold rush. On the basis of Philip Clark's early claim, the site is listed as the first farm in Johnson County.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Arthur, Eric and Dudley Witney. The Barn: A Vanishing Landmark in North America. Toronto, Canada: M. F. Feheley Arts Company Limited, 1972.

Aurner, Charles (Clarence) Ray. Leading Events in Johnson County, Iowa, History. Vol. 1: Historical, 1912; Vol. 2: Biographical, 1913. Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Western Historical Press.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 10

UTM REFERENCES

DA	15	6223160	4610080	A	15	622625	4610080
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
BA	15	6226125	4609100	CA	15	6224610	4609100
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION A part of Government Lot 3 of Sec. 22, Twp. 79 N., R. 6 West of the 5th P.M., more particularly described as follows: Beginning at the center of said Section 22; thence West, a distance of 292.70 feet to the center of Sand Road; thence South 28°00' East, a distance of 622.91 feet; thence East, a distance of 645.90 feet; thence North, a distance of 550.0 feet to the North line of S. E. ¼ of said Section 22; thence West, a distance of 645.65 feet to the point of beginning, containing 10.0 acres, subject to the right of way of the road.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Iowa		Johnson	
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Linda and William Norton

ORGANIZATION

DATE

January 15, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Rural Route 5, Box 7

319-351-1987

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Iowa City

Iowa

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

Adrian P. Anderson

TITLE

Director, Div. of Historic Reservations

DATE 4-22-76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DATE

10/8/76

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

10/7/76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Clark tried to start a town named Napoleon on his claim just across the road from this site. It served as the location of the county seat, first post office, and district court in 1839. The county was officially organized there in March of 1839. Napoleon was nominated to be the capitol of Iowa in 1838, but failing in that bid, was designated as the meeting site for a committee that was to select a site for the future capitol of Iowa. That committee met on May 1st, 1839 and selected a nearby site that was to become Iowa City. The city is considering purchasing the site of Napoleon for a park and may resurrect it.

Philip Clark sold the farm to James McCollister starting in 1863. We have the deed for this transaction. During the late 1800's this farm grew to about 750 acres. James' father, father-in-law, and son also had farms in this valley. During this time the family prospered, becoming a leading cattle shipper courted by Chicago grain, cattle and stock markets. The Chicago railroad link came to Iowa City in 1855 making Iowa City a major railroad terminal until it moved on west in the 1860's. McCollister had the capital and resources necessary to take good advantage of these factors. He built a large and elaborate barn to house the cattle operation and a fine Victorian mansion to reflect his prosperity. The records of the farming activities indicate that McCollister was a leader in using new farming techniques and in seeking better markets for his produce. He was also active in several community organizations and the Democratic Party.

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II. Physical History of the Site

A. Owners of Site: Philip Clark owned these acres from 1837 to 1863. The McCollister family retained them until September, 1974 when they were sold to William and Linda Norton, the present occupants. James McCollister lived here until his death in 1927 at which time his grandson, Charles Showers, moved into the house and took over the operations of the farm. After his death in 1973 the farm was put up for sale.

B. Date of Erection: The papers found in the house show payment for bricks and building the house in August, 1864. Subsequent receipts for the new section are dated 1880. Bills for materials for the barn indicate that it was built in the early 1880's.

C. Builder: The old section receipt shows the names of David Borts, A. Lenz and John Gruber. J.J. Hotz, a contractor who had worked in Chicago and New York, possibly designed as well as built the new section of the house. He is also the contractor for the raising of the roof to two stories on the old part and the addition of the woodshed and backporch in 1880-1.

D. Alterations and Additions: The only changes were made in 1929 when Charles Showers made some improvements. They removed the stairway in the kitchen to install a bathroom and put a stairway to the basement in the old section. They had a fireplace built in the living room which is being removed to put in a Franklin stove. Also they enlarged the front porch and screened in it and the side porch.

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Keyes, Margaret N. Nineteenth Century Home Architecture of Iowa City. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1966.

Labine, R. A. Clem. The Old-House Journal. Brooklyn: The Old-House Journal Publishing Company, monthly since October, 1973.

Lokken, Roscoe L. Iowa Public Land Disposal. Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1942.

McKee, Harley J. Recording Historic Buildings. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1970.

Shambaugh, Benj. F. The Old Stone Capitol Remembers. Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1939.

Weber, Irving. Iowa City Press-Citizen. Sept. 19, 1973 (article about the house and farm), page 4A. April 16, 1975, page 1C has an article about Philip Clark and Napoleon.

We have talked with Mrs. Charles Showers and her daughter Mrs. Portia Cooper, both of Iowa City at some length about the house. We have also talked to Mr. James Showers of Cedar Rapids about the place.