

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Illinois</b>
COUNTY: <b>Cook</b>
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**Ida B. Wells-Barnett Home**

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**3624 S. Martin Luther King Drive**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Chicago**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE: **Illinois** CODE: COUNTY: **Cook** CODE:

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify) _____ _____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____ _____			

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Mr. William Moore**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**c/o 3624 S. King Drive**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Chicago**

STATE:  
**Illinois**

CODE:

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Cook County Recorders Office, County Building**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**118 N. Clark Street**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Chicago**

STATE:  
**Illinois**

CODE:

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

STATE: <b>Illinois</b>
COUNTY: <b>Cook</b>
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7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

During the World Columbian Exposition of 1893 and until her marriage in 1895, Ida B. Wells lived with the Brown family in a home then located in what is now the south edge of Chicago's downtown commercial area. Following her marriage to Attorney Ferdinand Lee Barnett, Mrs. Wells-Barnett and her husband lived in a residence at 3234 S. Rhodes Avenue. In 1919 (October) the growing family moved to a much more substantial home located at 3624 S. Grand Boulevard (later called South Park Boulevard, now renamed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive). The couple resided at this address raising four children until March of 1929 when they, and their one as yet unmarried daughter, sold the building and moved to smaller quarters in an apartment building located at 343 E. Garfield Boulevard. Mrs. Wells lived at this address until her death in 1931. Ida Wells-Barnett died following a brief illness in Dailey's Hospital and Sanitarium, then located on the Northwest corner of 38th Street and S. Michigan Avenue.

The residence located at 3624 King Drive is situated on the west side of the street facing east. It lies about two-thirds of a block south of the intersection of 35th Street and King Drive, which is the location of a large "Victory" monument erected to the memory of the Black Infantry Regiments which served in World War I.

This section of King Drive, from 35th Street to 51st Street on the south, was, at the time Mrs. Wells lived there, one of the finest streets in the city of Chicago. Substantial town and rowhouses interspersed with fine mansions lined the street sides. King Drive, then known as Grand Boulevard, is a very wide street with parkways on either side, and smaller residential access roads along the outermost area. The 3600 block still retains the majority of its original late 19th century homes, most of which are in good condition.

The Wells-Barnett home is a three-story rectangular building, about 28'x60'. It is of brick construction with an Ashlar cut, rock-faced Granite facade facing King Drive. The building was constructed about 1889-90 according to best estimates from property records, city directories, and stylistical references.

The style of the building is the then popular Romanesque Revival, obvious in the structure's rough cut stone facade, heavy arched entry and windows, double collonettes of the porch, and collonaded third floor windows. One of the more dominant features of the house is its two story high bay projection located in the southeast corner of the 2nd and 3rd stories; an obvious capitulation to the also popular Queen Anne Style. The structure is liberally adorned with decorative detail such as the fine dressed limestone, foliate stone carving, decorative cast panel inserts, and a small amount of classical parapet entablature.

The Ida B. Wells house floor plan is typical of the period. Main entry is into a large hallway. On the right wall is the staircase leading to second floor bedrooms and bath. On the left is the parlor, separated from the hall by sliding doors. A long narrow hallway leads directly to the back of the house ending in a kitchen. To the rear of the parlor is the library or sitting room. Immediately beyond lies the dining area and another

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |  |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal                | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric               | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        | <b>Afro-American History</b>                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture               | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture              | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 | _____   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation              |   |   | _____   |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

It is difficult to explain today why few American history texts list Ida B. Wells Barnett among the crusading journalists of the late 19th and early 20th century who through their "muckraking" laid the foundation for the reforms of the Progressive Era. Perhaps the absence of demonstrable progress in racial justice in the early decades of the 20th century shows more than any thing else how little the nation's concerns were aroused in this area.

Almost single-handedly Ida B. Wells Barnett began the fight to awaken the world's conscience to the realities of lynching. She said, "We plead not for the colored people alone, but for all victims of the terrible injustice which puts men and women to death without form of law." She deplored the growth of such "anarchy" and "unrestrained outlawry" as dangerous to any civilized government.

So much about the lynching phenomenon was unmentionable, surrounded as it was by a web of taboos, that it is difficult to fully appreciate today the clear thinking courage it took to adopt as one's goal the consistent expose of all relevant facts as the first step toward social reform. This Ida Wells did and a famous contemporary, himself a stalwart in the civil rights movement, summed up her role: "She roused the white South to vigorous and bitter defense and she began the awakening of the conscience of the nation. This work has been easily forgotten because it was afterward taken up on a much larger scale by the NAACP and carried to greater success. But our thanks are due to the pioneer . . . ."

Ida Wells Barnett characterized lynching as "our National crime." She pointed out three salient points: first, lynching was a "color line problem," second, "crimes against women [was] the excuse, not the cause" and thirdly, lynching was "a national crime" that required a "national remedy." She urged black organizations to help investigate and publish the facts, to "get expressions of opinion against lynching" and to try to influence dailies to refuse to become accessories to mob action.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Cutler, James Elbert. Lynch-law; an investigation into the history of lynching in the United States. New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969. (Reprint of 1905 ed.)

Presley, Samuel C. Negro lynching in the South. Treating of the Negro. His past and present condition; of the cause of lynching, and of the means to remedy the evil . . . Accurate accounts of many notable crimes and lynchings, . . . . Also a mass of statistics about lynching. Washington: T. W. Cadick, printer, 1899.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 ' "	0 ' "		41° 49' 47"	87° 37' 3"	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than 1 acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Marcia M. Greenlee, Historical Projects Director

ORGANIZATION: The Afro-American Bicentennial Corporation DATE: July 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1420 N Street, N. W., Suite 101

CITY OR TOWN: Washington, D. C. 20005 STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Keeper of The National Register*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**7. DESCRIPTION (cont'd.)**

bathroom. The third floor was designed as a ballroom but has now been changed into an apartment. The building originally contained 14 rooms.

Although the building is now somewhat changed inside to allow for three separate families, it nonetheless, according to neighbors, remains relatively unchanged from its original condition. The exterior of the building remains in its original condition and appears to be in very good condition.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd.) - Page Two

Often herself first on the scene after a lynching, Ida Wells Barnett kept up a ceaseless collection and expose of facts surrounding each lynching of which she learned. Through a series of publications and speeches she set out to acquaint whoever would listen, to the truth about lynching.

Ida Wells was born a slave in Holly Springs, Mississippi in 1862. Her father, a skilled carpenter, maintained his family of 8 children in a home he built and owned after emancipation. Young Ida attended Rust College recently opened in Holly Springs by northern missionaries to educate the freedmen. When both parents died in the yellow fever epidemic in 1878, Ida at 16, the eldest assumed responsibility for the surviving sisters and brothers. She took a job teaching in a rural one-room school six miles from Holly Springs to support them. In 1882 or 3 she moved to Memphis at the urging of her father's sister. There she obtained a job in rural Shelby County, enrolled in a course in primary teaching at LeMoyne Normal Institute in Memphis and studied for the Memphis Teachers' examination. In the fall of 1884, having passed the qualifying examination, Ida Wells was assigned to Saffarons School where she taught first grade for \$50 a month. In subsequent years, she was also apparently assigned to Grant School and Kortrecht School, referred to as the Clay Street School.

Ida Wells began her "crusade for justice" while teaching in Shelby County. She filed suit in 1884 against the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad when the conductor and baggagemen tried forcibly to remove her to the smoking car as the area reserved for black passengers. While she won \$500 damages in the lower court, the Supreme Court of Tennessee reversed the decision to her great disappointment in the ability of orderly government to ensure equal rights.

In writing the story of her suit for a church magazine she discovered her real career as a journalist. While still teaching she bought an interest in a small Memphis paper, Free Speech and Headlight then published on the grounds of the Beale Street Baptist Church. In 1891 following the publication of an expose on unequal conditions in the separate Memphis School system, Ida Wells found herself free of her teaching duties and able to devote herself entirely to Free Speech, now relocated on Hernando Street near Beale.

When three young men she knew were lynched in Memphis on March 9, 1892, Ida Wells was shocked into a systematic study of the actual facts on lynching. The scathing story the Free Press ran on the lynchings led to the destruction of the paper's office and the promise that Ida Wells would receive the same treatment if she returned to Memphis.

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**8 SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd.) - Page Three**

Thomas Fortune welcomed her pen on the New York Age through whose columns as well as in other papers from time to time she followed her relentless crusade.

Ida Wells made two trips to Britain carrying out her own mandate to "get expressions of opinions against it." Her efforts resulted in the creation of an Anti-Lynching Committee and in keeping the problem before the press both in Britain and the States through sympathetic comments and adverse accounts of her activities.

On her return she continued to write, lecture, and organize committees. She moved to Chicago where in 1895 she published A Red Record: Tabulated Statistics and Alleged Causes of Lynchings in the United States 1892-1893-1894, the first of several compilations of data on lynching she collected.

Upon her marriage to Ferdinand Barnett in 1895, she combined rearing two stepsons and four children of her own with a full public career. She edited the Conservator for a while, and wrote a pamphlet criticizing the Chicago World's Fair's omission of blacks from its exhibit plans. She was active in organizing women's clubs in New England and Chicago. The Ida B. Wells Women's Club (1893) in Chicago and the Alpha Suffrage Club (1913) which she formed were firsts for black women. She was an organizer of the NAACP, and an official of the Afro-American Council. She started the Negro Fellowship League, a settlement house and community center, went on statewide speaking tours for the Illinois State Republican Committee and continued to investigate and report on lynchings.

Ida Wells Barnett was outspoken with blacks and whites alike, and too militant for many of her contemporaries. She worked well with blacks and whites, however, she saw as the only means of achieving social reform in a democracy the development of a supporting public opinion. The role of the press and of free speech were essential in this process. She understood how to use both in a manner that was truly remarkable.

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (cont'd.)**

Raper, Authur. The Tragedy of Lynching. Chapel Hill, 1933.

Wells, Ida B. Crusade for Justice; the autobiography of Ida B. Wells. Edited by Alfreda M. Duster. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.

Wells, Ida B. On lynchings: Southern horrors. A real record. Mob rule in New Orleans. New York: Arno Press.

(PARTIAL LISTING)