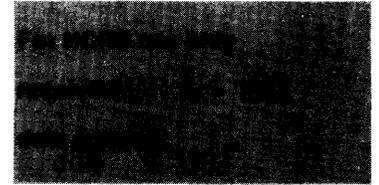


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Earlham Public School

and/or common Masonic Temple

**2. Location**

street & number 809 Main Street not for publication

city, town Earlham vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district 5

state Iowa code 19 county Madison code 121

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Madison Lodge #568, A.F. & A.M.

street & number 809 Main Street

city, town Earlham vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Iowa

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office, Madison Courthouse

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

city, town Winterset state Iowa

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title CIRALG Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1979  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Division of Historic Preservation

city, town Iowa City state Iowa

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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 \_\_\_\_\_

---

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

The Earlham Public School, located on Main Street east of the business section, is one of that town's oldest extant buildings and a well-preserved example of vernacular architecture that exhibits traces of the Greek Revival and Italianate styles. Local builder Jennings P. Osborn constructed the northern portion of this two-story edifice in 1871, and its southern section was added shortly afterwards. The walls of the older section are constructed of smooth-faced limestone and rest on rusticated foundations of the same material. Windows here are generally of the one-over-one sash variety and are set in rectangular surrounds. First floor windows feature pedimented heads while cornice type heads are used on the second floor. The south addition is constructed of reddish orange brick and like the older portion has a rusticated stone foundation. Windows here are similar to those in the older section, but are set in arched surrounds with radiating brick voussoirs. Both sections are capped with medium pitched gable roofs that feature plain cornices with overhanging eaves and pairs of elaborately carved brackets.

Inside, each section of the building contains one large room on each floor except in the upstairs portion of the southern wing, which has been divided into several smaller rooms. Although the original hallway has been converted into a kitchen, much of the original fabric remains. Most interior woodwork is still here, including a walnut staircase.

The school building appears to have undergone little major exterior alteration over the years. Several years ago, the stone chimney at the north end was removed, and recently the slate roof and stone steps on the east side were replaced due to deterioration. Generally, the building appears to be in very good condition, and probably looks much as it did in the late nineteenth century.

## 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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** 1871–present

**Builder/Architect** \*\*\*\*\*

Jennings P. Osborn

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Earlham Public School is a striking reminder of that town's early commitment to quality education and its aspirations to become a major college town and educational center. The origins of Earlham can be traced back to 1868 when Benjamin F. Allen, the prominent Des Moines financial baron and builder of Terrace Hill, purchased a townsite in Madison County. The following year Allen had a town platted in the belief that its location along the line of the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad destined it for future greatness. At the time, Earlham was the only town in Madison County with rail connections, and many believed it would become one of the largest towns between Des Moines and Council Bluffs.

The Quakers, who comprised the largest single group of early settlers, selected the name Earlham for the new town because of their intention to establish a college here like Earlham College in Indiana. A stock company was organized to build a college, and by 1869 a campaign was underway to raise the \$10,000 deemed necessary to launch this new educational institution. During the first five months of that year, \$5,000 in stock was subscribed for the college, and town development continued apace with thirty-five new buildings being erected. In 1870 the town was incorporated, and planning got underway for substantial school building befitting a future college town. Completed in 1871, the Earlham public school opened that fall with J.W. Johnson as principal and teacher for the upper grades and his wife as teacher for the primary grades. Soon, however, this structure proved inadequate, and it was enlarged to accommodate more pupils.

Despite its auspicious beginnings, Earlham never achieved the big city status its founders had believed inevitable. Although it became a rather thriving small village, its early growth and prosperity proved to be fictitious. The plan for founding a major college had to be abandoned due to difficulties in raising the necessary money. In 1892 the Quakers established Earlham Academy in the hope that it might eventually achieve college status, but by 1900, they had sold it to the local school board which utilized it as a high school. At that time, the old public school began to be utilized solely as an elementary school. In 1920 a consolidation of school districts led to the construction of a much larger building that could house both elementary and high school students. At that time, the old public school was sold to the Earlham Masonic Lodge which has utilized it as its temple ever since.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

(See Continuation sheet, Item Number 9)

# 10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acres of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Omaha NK-

Quadrangle scale 1:250,000

### UMT References

A 15 406300 459300  
 Zone Easting Northing

B           
 Zone Easting Northing

C         

D         

E         

F         

G         

H         

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Town of Earlham, Iowa

Lots 6 and 7 and 48' of Lot 8, Block 2, Original

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

state	code	county	code
N.A.			

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ralph J. Christian, Architectural Historian

organization Division of Historic Preservation date October 1980

street & number 26 East Market Street telephone 319-353-6949 or 353-4186

city or town Iowa City state Iowa, 52240

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Adrian A. Anderson

title Archivist date February 22, 1982

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	Entered in the
<u>Melona Byers</u>	National Register
Keeper of the National Register	date <u>6/2/82</u>
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE one

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