

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

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

For NPS use only

received **DEC 27 1982**
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Crawford House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 2203 Grand Avenue not for publication

city, town Des Moines vicinity of

state Iowa code 19 county Polk code 153

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input 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 Bruce Gerleman

street & number 3126 - 40th Place

city, town Des Moines vicinity of state Iowa 50310

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Polk County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Des Moines state Iowa 50309

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

7. Description

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

Built in 1896, the Crawford House is located on a major traffic artery west of the Des Moines downtown business district and southwest of the Sherman Hill historic district. Once lined with houses of similar grandeur, the street is presently zoned commercial, a number of houses were replaced by commercial structures and those still standing contain offices and retail businesses. Across the street from the Crawford House is the Governor's home, Terrace Hill; nearby is Herndon Hall, and the Albert Cummins House, all of which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

This 2½ story brick building was designed by Liebbe, Nourse, and Rasmussen of Des Moines and exhibits a combination of the Queen Anne and Neoclassical styles. The dimensions are 76' wide x 40' tall x 36' deep. The facade features alternating terra cotta and cream colored brick on the first floor with limestone double stringcourse separating cream colored brick on the second floor. This masonry pattern is continued around the entire exterior. A one-story porch is supported by limestone columns with simple brackets at the eaves. The front door is made of ornately carved wood with a beveled glass oval window. On the second floor over the porch is a shallow bay window flanked by round arched windows. Both corners of the facade are accented by two-story round towers with conical roofs and brackets at the eaves. The tile roof is hipped with a large central dormer. The east side of the building has a one-story, two bay porch of a design similar to the front porch, connecting an addition constructed in 1945.

In 1945, the house was remodeled for use as a funeral home. The original porch which extended around both the main facade and east side was reduced to its present configuration and a porch on the west side was removed. An elevator shaft was added on the northwest corner.

The interior plan is symmetrical, with a large central entrance stairhall with an ornately carved tile fireplace and beamed ceiling. On either side of the stairhall are parlours which are incorporated in the corner tower sections. Both rooms originally had tile fireplaces, but the one on the east was removed in 1945. Behind the east parlour was the dining room. A den, sidehall, and vestibule are placed behind the west parlour. In the rear were the kitchen and pantry, with the 1945 addition west of the pantry. The second floor plan is similar to the first, with a central hall surrounded by bedrooms, a bath in the northwest corner and a children's room at the rear. Ornate carved fireplaces are located in the hall and front bedrooms. In 1954, a stairway from the original kitchen to the basement was removed and relocated to expand the room. At the same time, the oak and fir floors were covered with floor tile. This tile has been removed and the floors refinished. The wallpaper has been stripped, the plaster repaired, and the woodwork refinished.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1896 **Builder/Architect** Liebbe, Nourse and Rasmussen, Des Moines Architects

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Crawford House represents the type of architecture built for the successful "self-made man" at the turn of the century. During this period of economic expansion, imposing structures were constructed exhibiting the wealth, and often modernity, of the individual. R.A. Crawford was such a man, as President of the Valley Bank in Des Moines, and hiring one of the leading architectural firms in the city, Liebbe, Nourse, and Rasmussen.

Crawford's house, however, was just one of a group of large residences built along Grant Avenue at this time. Between 2200 and 2400 Grand was the area of the rising elite, as was the Sherman Hill area in the previous generation. A conglomeration of styles was predominant, possibly each new house outdoing the next in size and ornamentation. Since Crawford's time, however, these houses have become increasingly difficult to maintain, economically, and the commercial potential of Grand Avenue, as a main artery connecting Des Moines with West Des Moines, forced owners to sell during times of economic hardship. A few of these houses exist today with most of their architectural integrity in tact. Despite the numerous changes to the building over the years, the Crawford House still reflects its original grandeur.

The Crawford House was featured in the November, 1907 issue of The Midwestern magazine. The article was entitled "A Peep Into the Private Libraries of Des Moines." Four interior and two exterior views were included.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see Continuation Sheet, Item #9, page 1.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Des Moines SW

Quadrangle scale 1/24,000

UTM References

A

1	5	4	4	6	0	4	0	4	6	0	3	6	6	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

The north 161' of the south 168' of the east 110' of west 145.3' of Lot 11, an official plat of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 5, Twp. 78, Range 24, Des Moines, Iowa.

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

state Iowa code 19 county Polk code 153

state _____ code _____ county _____ code _____

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James E. Jacobsen, National Register Coordinator

organization Iowa SHPO date 14 December 1982

Historical Building

street & number East 12th and Grand Ave. telephone 515-281-4137

city or town Des Moines state Iowa 50309

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 *John A. Anderson*

title Executive Director Iowa State Historical Department date 24 November 1982

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the National Register date 1/27/83

John A. Anderson
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET BIBLIOGRAPHY ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

"A Peep Into the Private Libraries of Des Moines," The Midwestern, November, 1907,
pp. 25, 74-75.

Des Moines Register, 14 October 1930, 8 August 1937.

Schroder, Alan M., Directory of 19th Century Iowa Architects, Iowa City: Iowa
State Historical Department, Division of the State Historical Society, 1982,
p. 31.