

**Site Inventory Form**  
**State Historical Society of Iowa**  
 (December 1, 1999)

State Inventory No. 70-00974  **New**  **Supplemental**  
 Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Relationship:  Contributing  Noncontributing  
 Contributes to a potential district with yet unknown boundaries  
 National Register Status: (any that apply)  Listed  De-listed  NHL  DOE  
 Review & Compliance No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Non-Extant (enter year) \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Van Nostrand Horse Collar Factory  
 other names/site number S.G. & P. Stein Furniture Warehouse, Field Site #: FS-034

**2. Location**

street & number 213 Chestnut Street  
 city or town Muscatine  vicinity, county Muscatine  
 Legal Description: (If Rural) Township Name \_\_\_\_\_ Township No. \_\_\_\_\_ Range No. \_\_\_\_\_ Section \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter of Quarter \_\_\_\_\_  
 (If Urban) Subdivision Original Town Block(s) 34 Lot(s) S40'W1/2 Lot 9,S1/2S1/2 Lot10

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification [Skip this Section]**

**4. National Park Service Certification [Skip this Section]**

**5. Classification**

Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property	
	If Non-Eligible Property	If Eligible Property, enter number of:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	_____	Contributing _____ Noncontributing _____
<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____
	_____ buildings	<u>1</u> buildings
	_____ sites	_____ sites
	_____ structures	_____ structures
	_____ objects	_____ objects
	_____ Total	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related project report or multiple property study (Enter "N/A" if the property is not part of a multiple property examination).  
 Title \_\_\_\_\_ Historical Architectural Data Base Number \_\_\_\_\_

Historical and Architectural Survey and Evaluation of the Downtown Commercial District 70-013

**6. Function or Use**

<b>Historic Functions</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Current Functions</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>10A02: Industry / Factory</u>	<u>10G01: Industry / Storage</u>
<u>10G01: Industrial Storage / Warehouse</u>	_____
_____	_____

**7. Description**

<b>Architectural Classification</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Materials</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
_____	foundation _____
_____	walls <u>03: Brick</u>
_____	roof <u>08B: Asphalt Rolled</u>
_____	other _____

**Narrative Description** ( SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" representing your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	A	Property is associated with significant events.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	B	Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	C	Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	D	Property yields significant information in archaeology or history

County Muscatine  
City Muscatine

Address 213 Chestnut

Site Number 70-00974  
District Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Criteria Considerations**

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B Removed from its original location.
- C A birthplace or grave.
- D A cemetery
- E A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F A commemorative property.
- G Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

05: Commerce

**Significant Dates**

Construction date

1880  check if circa or estimated date

Other dates

1889 (fire)

**Significant Person**

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

**Architect/Builder**

Architect

Builder

**Narrative Statement of Significance**  SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Bibliography  See continuation sheet for citations of the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form

**10. Geographic Data**

**UTM References (OPTIONAL)**

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	_____	_____	2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet for additional UTM references or comments

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Jay Brady, Chair (R.L. McCarley, consultant)

organization Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission date June 10, 2005

street & number 215 Sycamore telephone 563-264-1550

city or town Muscatine state IA zip code 52761

**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION (Submit the following items with the completed form)**

**FOR ALL PROPERTIES**

- Map:** showing the property's location in a town/city or township.
- Site plan:** showing position of buildings and structures on the site in relation to public road(s).
- Photographs:** representative black and white photos. If the photos are taken as part of a survey for which the Society is to be curator of the negatives or color slides, a photo/catalog sheet needs to be included with the negatives/slides and the following needs to be provided below on this particular inventory site:

Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____

- See continuation sheet or attached **photo & slide catalog sheet** for list of photo roll or slide entries.
- Photos/illustrations without negatives are also in this site inventory file.

**FOR CERTAIN KINDS OF PROPERTIES, INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AS WELL**

- Farmstead & District:** (List of structures and buildings, known or estimated year built, and contributing or non-contributing status)
- Barn:**
  - A sketch of the frame/truss configuration in the form of drawing a typical middle bent of the barn.
  - A photograph of the loft showing the frame configuration along one side.
  - A sketch floor plan of the interior space arrangements along with the barn's exterior dimensions in feet.

**State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Use Only Below This Line**

Concur with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility:  Yes  No  More Research Recommended

This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluated by (name/title): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Narrative Description

This is a four-story brick industrial building, which appears to have been built for William Van Nostrand's horse collar factory. Early Sanborn maps indicate that a one-story frame structure originally sat in front of this building, with a small space between the buildings, and two openings were found in each story on the front (west) elevation of the four story building. The first (basement) story appears under ground from the front (west) elevation, but is clearly visible on the alley (south elevation). This west elevation is divided into three bays with the middle bay void of openings. The south bay contains three entries with segmental arch lintels that are stacked at the second, third, and fourth story levels. It appears that the north bay had the same configuration, but the entries on the third and fourth stories have been filled in with brick. The second (ground) story entry has been widened to accommodate a garage door size opening set above a loading dock. The entry consists of two doors with a nine-light window set in the south half of the opening and a blank galvanized metal face filling the north part of the opening. The doors are metal and are historic from the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A painted advertisement sets in the middle bay at the second story level and states "S.G.&P. Stein Furniture Co., Since 1854, Warehouse." This was probably added when the warehouse used this building from 1949 to 1976. Star tie-rods of two different styles line the south edge of the west elevation at the level of each floor. Two large star tie-rods are also located in a line in the middle of the elevation. A plain brick parapet with a simple cornice caps the building.

South (alley) elevation is the full four stories, with the first (basement) story elevation sitting directly on the stone foundation. On each story, there are five windows with segmental arch lintels and stone sills, with the exception of the first story that has an entry in the easternmost bay. This entry has a wood tip-up style garage door with wood frame providing access to the first (basement) level from the alley. All of the segmental brick arch windows have been sheeted over with plywood except the second window from the west on the third story and four fourth-story windows. The visible wood windows have six-over-six-light double-hung sashes. Visible built-in metal hinges remain next to each window – two top and two bottom – likely for fire shutters (Shank 2003). Two brick courses corbel out to support the thicker roof parapet. This creates a shadow line on an otherwise regular, orderly, utilitarian designed building.

North elevation is divided into six bays with only the second, third, and fourth stories visible on this side (as the west) since the building is built into a slight hill. All of the segmental brick arch windows have been sheeted over with plywood and have stone sills. The windows have visible hinge remains, similar to the south elevation. The roof parapet is built out a couple of brick courses thicker than wall below, similar to the south elevation as well.

The east (back) elevation is brick with no openings. A painted-on advertisement located at the top left of the elevation "S.G.&P. Stein Furniture Co. Since 1854 Warehouse".

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## 8. Narrative Statement of Significance

This building appears to be individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Placed under Criterion A, but not B or C. Additionally, it appears to be a contributing building in a potential downtown historic district.

The building has a long industrial factory history including the renowned Van Nostrand Saddlery Company, the Becke and Frey Pearl Button Factory, Tangley Manufacturing Co, and the SP&G Stein Furniture Warehouse. These interesting and prominent business houses and the building's use as a factory foreshadowing the strong industrial manufacturing base of modern Muscatine fall under several of the historic contexts identified for this project, including 19<sup>th</sup> Century business and industry, 20<sup>th</sup> century business and industry, and the pearl button industry. The building's architecture is utilitarian and symmetrical and the building itself dominates its older neighborhood sitting high on a hill as a prominent fixture of the city skyline. Its location fixed between the residential neighborhoods to the west and north and the commercial/industrial district to the south and east provides an interesting introspection into workday life in the late 1800s when workers walked from home to work and neighborhoods were at the human scale. It retains sufficient integrity to convey this significance. Due to these features and its prominence in the historic industrial fabric of the community, this relatively rare multi-story factory appears to be individually eligible for National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A.

In addition, the building is a contributing building in a potential downtown commercial historic district, serving as one of the support factories on the edge of this district. It falls within three of the historic contexts identified for this district: "19<sup>th</sup> century business and industry," "20<sup>th</sup> century business and industry," and the "pearl button industry." Its history contributes strongly to this potential historic district.

The 1866 city directory shows J. Rubelmann, a harness and saddle maker at 133 West 2nd Street. Mr. Rubelmann emigrated from Germany, where he learned his trade. He arrived in Muscatine in 1861 and established J. Rubelmann and Co. By 1866, William H. Van Nostrand was working with him in the business (City Directory). In 1879, they tanned leather in Tennessee, finishing it in Muscatine. Their business in Muscatine was "the leading leather, saddlery and hardware house here, doing a large and extensive trade and an exclusively jobbing business." (*History of Muscatine County, Iowa* 1879: 618). J. Rubelman and Co. continues to be listed in the 1877 city directories, but by the 1883-86 city directory, the harness and saddlery business is listed under W.H. Van Nostrand.

This business is directly associated with this industrial building at 213 Chestnut. The lot on which the factory stands was created by combining parts of two lots separately owned until September 1868. Catherine McLaughlin, who owned the front 61 feet of the property since December 1865 purchased the back 30.5 feet in September 1868 from David and Nancy Ross. The 1870 census lists Luke (58) as a laborer and his wife Kate (Catherine, 50) as keeping house. Catherine and Luke McLaughlin conveyed the property to Thomas D. Smith in 1879. Thomas D. Smith conveyed the property to William H. Van Nostrand in February 1880. Since the brick portion of the factory straddles the line that separated these two parts, construction of the building would not have been possible until this time. The 1883 Sanborn map shows this building in existence as a horse collar factory. The footprint is the same on later maps,

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even after a serious 1889 fire, so it appears that the construction was after September 1868 and by 1883. It may have been constructed soon after the consolidation of the lots, while it was owned by the McLaughlins, but it is more likely that it was constructed in 1879 by Thomas D. Smith or 1880 by Van Nostrand for the Van Nostrand Horse Collar Factory. The storefront at 133 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> probably could not do the extensive manufacturing business described in 1879, requiring Van Nostrand to seek additional space.

The 1883 Sanborn map shows hardware and leather in the front portion of 133 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, with wholesale saddlery in the rear section. A small walkway connects this building to the horse collar factory at 213 Chestnut. The four-story factory has a one-story building in front of it with a small gap between the buildings. A one-story building used as a straw barn was also associated with the factory complex, located immediately north of the four-story brick building. William H. Van Nostrand died in early January 1889. An article in the Journal on January 8, 1889 noted that J.H. Weise, the business manager, would continue the business for a while. Concern was stated about the future of this business, as his heirs were non-residents, and the article urged local businessmen to think of investing in the business. From 15 to 20 skilled workmen were regularly employed, and the business amounted to \$100,000 per year, with room for growth ("Van Nostrand Establishment," *Muscatine Journal*. January 8, 1889).

Soon after his death, the building was hit by a serious fire on February 24, 1889. Following a loud explosion, the building burst into flames beginning on the lower story. The fire was contained to the factory building. A nearby house was evacuated as a precaution. The article the following date noted: "The building contained a large amount of machinery, which is an entire loss, also much manufactured product (horse collars and strap work) and raw material in process of manufacture, none of which was saved. The loss on the building and contents is estimated at from \$16,000 to \$18,000 which however is fully covered by insurance. The force of the explosion was felt two blocks away and the noise heard for a distance of 4 or 5. The most serious feature of the fire to Muscatine is that it will probably cause the closing out of the remaining stock and the winding up of the business by the heirs of the estate of the late W.H. Van Nostrand. J.H. Weise this morning telegraphed Henry Wilson, Esq. of New York, who has recently been in the city, in the interest of the heirs, and nothing will be done until he is heard from" ("Serious Conflagration", *Muscatine Evening Journal*, February 25, 1889, 3).

Local businessmen did not want to see the profitable business leave town, and worked to find a way to keep it in Muscatine. The Van Nostrand Saddlery Co. was incorporated on February 14, 1890 (Richman 1911: Vol. 1, 474). The officers were respected Muscatine businessmen, with J. Carskaddan, president; A. Sander, vice president; and C.H. Spaethe, manager and secretary. They continued to operate at 133 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> (and apparently salvaged 213 Chestnut as the factory as it is depicted here on the 1892 Sanborn map) through 1894 when they moved to a new building, 213-215 E. Front Street (which has been demolished). The St. Louis Trade Review in August 1899 reported that Van Nostrand's was "The only manufacturer and wholesale dealers in saddlery and saddlery hardware, harness and strap work in Muscatine. Also, large dealers in leather, occupy a modern structure on Front Street. This contains their store and their perfectly equipped harness, collar and saddlery factory. The Van Nostrand Saddlery Co. manufactures and handles everything necessary to appoint a horse or adorn a mule. They make a specialty of the Brownson Metal Sewed Collar, considered by teamsters the best on the market. They

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carry an immense stock of other harness goods of the very best quality. They employ regularly sixty men and keep a force of traveling salesmen on the road. The territory covered includes Iowa and part of Illinois, and the demand for their goods shows a continued increase, as their uniformly excellent quality and fair price becomes apparent to horse owners.” (Carlson 1997: 191). The Van Nostrand Saddlery Company continued to expand in the early 20th century, opening a branch location in Sioux City.

The occupancy of the building in the late 1890s is not clear. According to the 1899 Sanborn, the Beckie & Fry Pearl Button Factory was located at 213 Chestnut, and they are noted in the 1900 city directory as George Frey & Co (George Frey, Henry Becke), listed under button blank manufacturers. The December 9, 1899 “Pearls and Prosperity Edition” of the *Muscatine Journal* noted that George Fry & Co. was “a successful and one of the notable little button factories in the city for its size run in the lower part of the old Van Nostrand Saddlery Co. building on Chestnut street.” The factory had 14 machines at this time, and fourteen men were employed in the plant. They cut small buttons only, not going over the 16 line size. Of these, the plant had a capacity for putting out 3,000 gross. The plant used about 3/12 to 4 tons of rough shells in a week. The factory worked under contract, having all its output contracted for as long as they are in business and do satisfactory work. By the terms of this contract they were supposed to furnish 3,000 gross each week, which they did not always achieve. Besides running a button factory, the owners also ran a machine shop and invented and manufactured a great labor and expense saving attachment for button sawing machines. It was known as the extended saw spool and enabled the workman to use the saw much longer and to a much shorter length (“Geo. Fry & Company,” December 9, 1899). They appear to have only operated briefly, as they are not listed in the later city directories.

The occupancy in the early 1900s is not clear, but the 1905 Sanborn map indicates use as stables with a hayloft and two vacant stories. The one-story building, used as haw storage, to the north has been demolished. A carpentry shop was located in the one-story building in front of this building, run by William Kincaid, general contractor and carpenter, as listed in the 1908 city directory. This front shop and the use of the four story building as stables with a hayloft continues to be depicted on the 1912 Sanborn map.

In 1913, 131-133 W. 2<sup>nd</sup>, a storefront often historically associated with the factory at 213 Chestnut, was occupied by Thompson Brothers Hardware, but no direct connection has been discerned. The Thompson Brother had operated in 131 since 1878, descending from their father’s business, and operated in both storefronts, 131-133, from 1900 through 1916. The 1919 Sanborn map depicts the four-story building as a hardware warehouse, and the building (former carpentry shop) in front of this building has been demolished. The nearest hardware store shown on the 1919 map is located at 123-125 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, as 131 and 133 have been converted to electrical supplies and clothing respectively. It is possible that it was serving as storage for the remaining stock of Thompson Brothers. In 1921, Frances E. Toms Co., manufacturer of chiropractic tables and supplies, was located at 213 Chestnut.

From 1923 to 1927, the Tangley Manufacturing Co., a concern of Norman Baker and maker of musical instruments, was located here. Tangley Manufacturing Company was founded in 1917 by Norman Baker and was located at 917-919 W. Front Street. The company made air caliope and musical instruments, light plants, and electrical fixtures. The company would continue to be located at 917-919 Front Street

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through 1919. By 1921 the company had moved to 100 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor. In 1923 when Tangley was located at 213 Chestnut Street, the company was listed as manufacturer of air caliopes, photo enlargements, picture frames, corresponding schools, and electrical goods. In 1927 the business store was listed at 118 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> street and the manufacturing at 808 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> St., with musical instruments, radio, merchandise, and oil filling station listed as being part of Tangley. From 1929 thorough 1936 Tangley Company was located at 900 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

The 1928 Sanborn map indicates that the building was being used as a grocery warehouse, but no associated business could be determined. Frances E. Toms Co., manufacturer of chiropractic tables and supplies, who had been located at 213 Chestnut in 1921 is again listed here in 1929 and 1931. The 1919 city directory lists Dr. Frances Toms Sanitarium, an establishment offering chiropractic and electric bath services at 122 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (in the two story flats at 122-124 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street immediately north of this building). The 1919 Sanborn map shows a doctor's office in the flats. The chiropractic and bath business appears to have ceased in a few years, and the 1921 city directory lists Frances and Lulu Toms at 122 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> St. Frances E. Toms Company, a wholesale printing company, operated at 124 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in 1919. The 1921 city directory lists the Frances E. Toms Company, manufacturer of chiropractic tables and supplies, at 213 Chestnut, then again in 1929 and 1931. It is unclear if this represents continuous operation or a return of the company, as it could have operated in part of the building even as it was used by Tangley Industries. By 1933, there were no Toms listed in Muscatine.

From 1933 through 1937, the building sat vacant according to the city directories. From 1938 through 1946, Montgomery Ward (117-121 West Second Street) used the building as a warehouse. The 1946 Sanborn indicated a hardware warehouse. On February 9, 1929, Montgomery Ward and Company opened its doors for business at 117-121 West Second Street, remodeling the facade. The new facing material of the new Montgomery Ward Department Store was glazed tile in subdued tones of green and ivory and was set in a mix of decorative styles. Montgomery Ward remained at 117-121 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street until 1968.

From 1949 through 1976, S.G. & P. Stein Furniture used this building as a warehouse. S.G. & P. Stein was a long time family-owned and operated furniture business established in 1854 and continuing into the early 1990s when the family closed the business. It was one of the earliest and most prominent furniture manufacturers in Muscatine. During this period, S.G. & P. Stein operated their retail store at 305-307 Iowa Avenue adjacent to the old Central State Bank Building on the northeast corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Iowa. This retail building (demolished) was constructed c.1914 for Sternman Clothing and S.G. & P. Stein Furniture. The early history of this company, including the manufacture and warehouse of furniture from the 1850s to c.1915, is associated with the extant building at 301 W. Mississippi Dr.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

City Directories, Muscatine, Various publishers, 1869-1959. Available at the Musser Public Library.

Carlson, JoAnn, ed. *Muscatine History Notes*. Volume 3. Muscatine: Musser Public Library, 1997, 191.

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“Geo. Fry & Co.,” “Pearls and Prosperity Edition” of the *Muscatine Journal*, December 9, 1899.

*History of Muscatine County, Iowa*. Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1879

Richman, Irving B. *History of Muscatine County, Iowa*. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing, 1911. Volume 2, P. 128.

Sanborn Map Company. “Muscatine, Iowa,” Sanborn fire insurance maps. Pelham, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 1883, 1888, 1892, 1899, 1907, 1912, 1919, 1928, 1946. Accessed online at: [sanborn.umi.com](http://sanborn.umi.com).

“Serious Conflagration”, *Muscatine Evening Journal*, February 25, 1889, P. 3.

Shank, Wesley. “Van Nostrand Horse Collar Factory, 213 Chestnut Street, Muscatine, Iowa,” Unpublished draft report for Kent Sissel, November 26, 2003.

“Van Nostrand Establishment,” *Muscatine Journal*. January 8, 1889.

## Location Map



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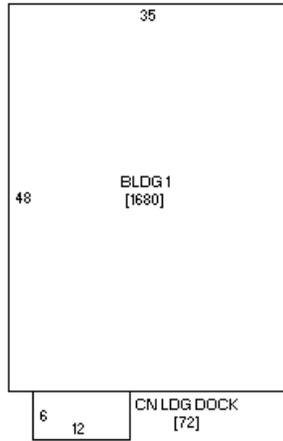
Van Nostrand Horse Collar Factory  
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## Plan (from assessor's office)



(front – Chestnut St)

## Photograph of building (digital image)

