

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

State Inventory No. 70-00185 New Supplemental
 Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) 70-01005
 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 Rothschild-Cohn House
 other names/site number Field Site #: WH-027

2. Location

street & number 507 W. Second
 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) 38 Lot(s) E 1/2 Lot 3 & W. 1/2 Lot 4

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 Enter number of:	If Eligible Property, enter number of: Contributing Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	_____ buildings	<u>2</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____ sites	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____ structures	_____ structures
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____ objects	_____ objects
<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____ Total	<u>2</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 A Historical and Architectural Survey of the "West Hill" neighborhood, Muscatine, Iowa Historical Architectural Data Base Number 70-016

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>01A01: Domestic / Single residence</u>	<u>01A01: Domestic / Single residence</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>05C: Late Victorian/Second Empire</u>	foundation <u>03: Brick</u>
_____	walls <u>03: Brick</u>
_____	roof <u>08A: Asphalt/Shingle</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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input 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 507 W. Second

Site Number 70-00185
District Number 70-01005

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)

31: Other/Neighborhood Development

02: Architecture

Significant Dates

Construction date

1875 check if circa or estimated date

Other dates

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 Jim Rudisill (R.L. McCarley, consultant)

organization Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission date February 19, 2006

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 two-story, two-bay, Second Empire house. The house sets on a brick foundation. The walls are brick. The mansard roof is clad in slate shingles. A brick garage at the rear of the lot has been resided with metal siding. The buildings set on a slightly elevated interior lot. All the windows and doors appear to be historic. All the windows contain stone sills.

The front (south) elevation contains a partially screened open front porch with a flat roof that is supported in the front by three round, wood columns. The porch replaced an earlier entry porch between 1905 and 1912, according to the Sanborn maps. Each column rests on a pier of rusticated cement blocks. A series of dentils extends along the cornice, beneath a wide roof overhang. The porch access is located on the left corner of the porch front. A fourth block pier, which does not support any column, sets to the right of the access. A wood railing with turned balusters connects each non-access support pier. Two first-story openings are present under the porch roof. A slightly projected entry vestibule is located directly in front of the porch access. It includes an entablature and door surround that contains a flush-mounted solid wood door and a twelve-light, wood storm door. Two six-light sidelights flank the doors. The other first-story opening is centered in the right half of the wall, which is located behind the screened portion of the porch. It features a pair of multi-light French doors or windows with sidelights on each side and a transom. A bay window was shown in this location through the 1919 Sanborn map. It is not depicted on the 1928 Sanborn map, but it may just be a simplification of the façade. Three second-story windows are evenly spaced across the wall. Each window contains two-over-two-light, double-hung sashes. The top sashes are rounded at the top. A segmental arch window crown with keystone is located above each opening. Three segmental arch dormers are present in the mansard roof and aligned with the second-story windows. Each dormer contains a two-over-two-light, double-hung window. The eave is supported by eight single brackets equally spaced across the cornice. A rectangular insert is located between each bracket on the fascia.

The west side elevation contains a short wing projection from a rear addition. This extension appears on the 1888 Sanborn map, and it appears to be original. The projection's south-facing wall includes a first-story entry that contains a flush-mounted, eight-light, wood storm door and a solid wood interior door. An original fanlight has been removed and the opening is blocked by a wood insert. A segmental arch hood is attached above the opening. A second-story window with a two-over-two-light, double-hung round top window is located above the entry. A segmental arch hood is also present over the window. The west wall of the wing extension contains two first-story and two second-story, two-over-two-light, double-hung windows. Each window is centered on half of the wall, with the first- and second-story windows aligned with each other. All the windows have the typical segmental arch hood over them. The overhang of the wing's roof is supported by single brackets attached along the cornice. The remaining openings on the west elevation are located on the main house section. Three typical two-over-two-light, double-hung windows are present on the second story. The two windows on the right include the segmental arch crown, but not the left window. There are also three first-story openings, but they differ from the typical windows present around the rest of the house. A single opening is located on the right side of the wall,

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slightly off-center from the second-story's far right window. This opening contains two eight-light sashes, which appear to be fixed. There is no segmental arch crown over the opening. There are also two small windows located near the back of the wall. Both windows contain one-over-one-light, double-hung sashes with stone sills, but no hoods. The rear window matches the building's typical windows in size, but the second window is only about half that size. It also appears to be a frosted window. Brackets are also present along this cornice. The mansard roof contains two segmental arch dormers. Each dormer contains the typical two-over-two-light, double-hung window.

The rear section that is projected on the west side is slightly recessed on the east side elevation. Two chimneys extend through the lower roof and curve up along the mansard roofline on the east side. A third chimney is located in the corner of the main house section where the recessed wing is attached. It also extends through the lower roof and curve up along the mansard roof. There are six second-story windows present on the wall of both the main house and the rear addition. Four of the windows are located on the main house wall. The two center windows are paired, although they are slightly apart from each other, and centered on the main wall. The two outside windows are both centered between the center windows and the end of the wall. Each of the windows contains the typical two-over-two-light, double-hung sashes with segmental arch crowns and stone sills. Two similar windows are located on the rear extension's east wall. The two windows are centered on the wall. Each contains a segmental arch and stone sill. The first-story windows of the rear extension are aligned directly below the second-story windows and are of the same design and size with a similar crown. The first-story fenestration of the main house section differs slightly. A group of three windows, each containing one-over-one-light, double-hung sashes, is centered on the main house wall. The group does not have any crown, but does contain a stone sill. A single one-over-one-light, double-hung window is located on each side of the center group. Those windows do contain the segmental arch, as well as the stone sill. The bracketed eaves are also present on this side. Unlike the west elevation, only one segmental arch dormer with similar windows as the other dormers is centered on the mansard roof and between the two chimneys.

The rear elevation contains a one-story, hip roof, frame addition that is attached to the back wall of the original rear section. All rear additions are present on the 1888 Sanborn map. The block does not appear on the 1883 map. The original rear section appears to have also included an additional narrow extension that projected out from the larger extension's northeast corner. A typical two-over-two-light, double-hung window with a segmental arch crown is centered in the narrow extension's north wall. The small frame addition fits into the angle created at the connection of the larger extension with the narrower extension. The frame enclosure features an entry in its northwest corner. It contains a flush-mounted eight-light, wood storm door with a wood interior door. The interior door has a single light in its upper half. Two one-over-one-light, double-hung, possibly non-historic windows are located to the right of the entry. The east wall of the frame enclosure features a small one-over-one-light, double-hung, possibly non-historic window. The remaining openings on the rear elevation are all located on the original rear extension or main house walls. Four additional openings are located on the extension's rear wall. Three of the openings contain typical two-over-two-light, double-hung windows. One is located on the first story directly to the right of the frame addition. The other two are both on the second-story. The right window is aligned with the first-story window to the right of the frame addition. The left window is aligned with the first-story window

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located in the original narrow extension, which is attached to the east wall of the frame addition. The only rear openings exposed on the main house is a group of segmental arch dormers. Only the far left and right dormers are visible, but it is assumed the elevation contains three dormers to match the number on the house's front elevation. There is also a chimney located in the northwest corner of the original house that matches the chimney on the northeast corner.

In addition to the house, a gable-roof garage is located at the rear of the lot. The garage is covered with metal cladding, but a foundation of brick is visible. It is assumed the remainder is frame. The front (east) elevation of the garage contains three openings, including a vehicle entry that contains a metal overhead door. A flush-mount, solid metal personal entry door is located in the southeast corner of the elevation. The remaining opening is a single six-light, fixed sash window that is centered in the upper gable. The north side elevation contains two openings that are covered by slatted boards. These might have originally been windows. The south side elevation features similar slatted covers over two openings that appear to be directly across from the north side openings. The rear of the garage contains two openings, both with slatted covers. The taller opening is a centered feature that extends to the ground and appears to have been an original entry. The second opening is smaller and centered in the upper gable.

8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The Rothschild-Cohn House appears to be individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. It also appears to be a contributing building in a potential "West Hill" neighborhood historic district.

Israel Rothschild, a dry goods merchant, likely built this house between 1875 and 1880. Rothschild was a dry good merchant, who opened a store with his brother David. It was one of nine dry goods stores operating in Muscatine around the time Rothschild likely built the house. An 1874 birds-eye map of Muscatine indicates Rothschild demolished an earlier house that had built by F.A. Drake, another dry goods merchant, before constructing his new house. Samuel Cohn, who owned the S & L Cohn Clothing Store with his brother Louie, later acquired the property. Sanborn maps show it was during Cohn's ownership that the front porch was constructed and he might have also built the rear additions, although Sanborn maps do not go far enough back to confirm that. Despite the business and social success the families appear to have enjoyed, none of them appear to have significantly impacted the community. No significant event is known to have occurred on the property. However, the house is an especially attractive example of the Second Empire style. It has several features typically associated with this style, including the overall form, Mansard roof, two-over-two-light double-hung windows with hoods, and brackets. Its integrity is excellent, with historic windows and doors intact. It provides a good comparison to 503 W. Second, another Second Empire house located next door. Although both are the same style, the Rothschild-Cohn House projects a more pure example of the Second Empire style, without the later additions and modifications seen in the neighboring house, or the house across the street at 510 W. Second. This is an interesting collection of three Second Empire houses in one block, the only three houses of this style found in the 200+ house West Hill neighborhood. Thus, the Rothschild-Cohn House

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appears to be individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C and also contributes significantly to the history and architecture of this potential historic district.

The Rothschild-Cohn House also appears to be a contributing building in a potential "West Hill" neighborhood historic district. Although there are other Second Empire houses in the neighborhood, including one next door at 503 W. Second, many of these houses were constructed by well-established families and individuals who had come to Muscatine at a relatively early age and established some of the initial industrial operations in the community. The Rothschild-Cohn House was constructed by a second wave of arrivals who quickly focused on the retail side of the economy. Construction of this house by these newer, upper middle-class residents differentiates this house from many of the more aristocratic established residents. It also appears, based on the surnames, that Cohn and Rothschild were likely members of Muscatine's Jewish community, which significantly impacted the community in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The construction of the Rothschild-Cohn house demonstrated to others the opportunities and rewards available in the community, regardless of social, religious or ethnic status. Such developments strongly influenced neighborhood developments in both the 19th and 20th century. This house significantly influences the history and architecture of this potential historic district.

The earlier gable-front house shown on the 1874 birds-eye view of Muscatine appears to have been built by F.A. (Francis) Drake. He built this house in the late 1860s or early 1870s, after acquiring the property. Drake acquired the E ½ of Lot 3 and the W ½ of Lot 4, both in Block 38, formally on March 23, 1872 for \$38 at a tax sale (Book A of Tax Sales, Page 220). The record indicates the sale was held in 1864, but the actual transfer was not formalized until 1872. Property sale documents suggest Drake built a substantial and valuable building after he acquired the property in the initial 1864 sale. According to that transfer record, Israel Rothschild, another Muscatine dry goods store owner, paid \$2700 for the property on June 16, 1875 (Lots Book 10: 367). The 1866 and 1869-70 city directories identify Drake at 187 Second, which likely is not the current address. In the 1874-75 directory Drake is located at the "sw cor Sycamore and 2nd," which is several blocks from the current 507 W. Second location. Obviously, if Drake built the house, he was not living there when he sold it to Rothschild.

Despite local tradition, which states Samuel Cohn built the house at 507 W. Second, it appears more likely that Israel Rothschild was the builder, following his purchase of the Drake property. Rothchild bought the property on June 16, 1875 for \$2,700 (Lots Book 10: 367) and then sold it to Cohn on March 24, 1880 for \$4,200 (Lots Book 12: 737). While the property may have significantly increased in value over these five years, it is more likely that Rothchild built a new house. The trigger for the new construction may be related to the adjacent house. In 1872, William Webster bought the neighboring house at 503 W. 2nd Street (also for \$2,700), and he built a new Second Empire brick house in 1873. Rothschild, buying the earlier house shown on the 1874 birds-eye view, quite possibly built a new house in 1875 similar to Webster's to replace the earlier house on his property as well. In the 1876-77 directory, Rothschild is identified as living at 100 W. Second, which appears to be this house. The 1877-78 directory does show Rothschild living at "ns 2d 2 w of Spruce," a description that does match the current location. Rothschild was born in Baden, Germany around 1826 and immigrated to America about 1852. He arrived in Muscatine about one year later and continued to live in the community until shortly

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before his death in Kansas in 1882. Rothschild was a dry good merchant, who opened a store with his brother David. It was one of nine dry goods stores operating in Muscatine around the time Rothschild likely built the house.

As previously reported, Rothschild sold the property to Samuel Cohn, who was also a dry goods storeowner, on March 24, 1880 for \$4,200. Rothschild's wife had died in 1872, and after he sold the house to Cohn, Rothschild apparently moved to Kansas, where he died in 1882 (Muscatine Journal, April 25, 1882, 2). The legal description of both Cohn's and Rothschild's purchase is the same and it seems unlikely Cohn would have spent that much for a building and then immediately tear it down to build another. Both Samuel and Eliza Cohn are listed as residents through the 1908-09 directory. During this time, Samuel is identified as president of the Cohn Mercantile Company. Following Samuel's death on June 14, 1910, Eliza continued to be listed as the resident, including the 1911 directory when she is identified as the widow of Samuel for the first time. Mrs. Eliza Cohn (wid Samuel) was last listed in the 1919 directory. Hy Wasserman, president of Cohn Mercantile Company was also listed as a resident in the 1913 city directory. In the 1916 directory, Mrs. Helen C. Wasserman (wid Henry) is recorded as a resident. No occupations for either Eliza Cohn or Helen Wasserman was recorded. The 1900 census lists Samuel (head, age 60) as a clothing dealer who immigrated to the United States from Germany in 1855. His household includes his wife Elisa (49), daughter Helen (27), son Walter S. (25, salesman at clothing store), and a servant, Minnie Missed (17). The 1910 census lists Samuel Cohn (70, stock holder of clothing company) with his wife Eliza (59), and his daughter Helen Wesserman (37) and her husband Henry (38, clothing company). A domestic servant, Mary McKillip (25) was also listed with them. The 1920 census lists Eliza Cohn as a 68-year-old widow with her daughter Helen Wasserman, a 47-year-old widow.

On June 1, 1920, Eliza Cohn sold the property to Henry D. Folsom, president of Batterson Stores (Lots Book 56: 238). Folsom and his wife Elda are listed as the residents of 507 W. Second through the 1927 city directory. They are also listed in the 1920 census as tenants at 611 W. Second. The census records his age as 59 and his wife's as 56. Both are shown as Illinois natives. Their 32-year-old son Shirley is also listed at that address, along with Lola, 30, a daughter-in-law and grandchild Lola, 1. Henry Folsom is listed as the manager of a department store, while his son is identified as a physician and surgeon. Elda Folsom is listed as the widow of Henry D. in the 1929 directory.

Elda Folsom sold the property to Charles H. and Gertrude H. Halling on July 11, 1930 (Special Forms Book 8, Page 17). The Hallings however sold it a few weeks later, on July 25, 1930, to Helen Layton (Lots Book 72: 460). Helen was the wife of Byron B. Layton, a civic engineer. The Laytons are listed as the residents from the 1931 directory through the 1940-41 directories. The 1938-39 directory also identifies James and Pauline Burge as the residents of 507-½ W. Second in those years. It appears Chas A. and Irene Meerdink also share the house with the Burges and the Laytons. Bradford and Ruth Barber are then listed in the 1940-41 directory as the residents of 507½. Burge is listed as an assistant manager of S.S. Kresge, while Barber is a high school teacher. Meerdink is an assistant manager of Meerdink Clothing. The 1943 city directory lists Helen Layton, widow of Byron, as a resident of 507 W. Second. She is also listed as an office secretary for Jackson & Jackson. Layton apparently continued to

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rent out a portion of the house to tenants. Edward P. and Inez P. Comferb are listed at 507-½ W. Second, along with Adrian and Caroline Norris. Comferb is listed as a draftsman for Carver Pump and Norris was a defense worker at the Rock Island Arsenal. Helen Layton is the only resident listed in the 1946 directory.

Helen Layton sold the property on February 1, 1947 to Pauline F. Imel (Book 120, Page 304). The 1949 through the 1954 directories list Harry and Pauline Imel as the residents. He was president of Hawkeye Sales and later worked as a grain broker. They also continued to rent a portion of the house. The 1949 city directory listed Lee and Helen Dearing and Arthur and Sarah Stanley as residents. Dearing's occupation was unlisted while Stanley worked at Stanley Engineering. The 1952 directory also listed tenants. Ray and Natalia Dean were listed as residents, along with Thomas and Mary Price. Dean was a sports promoter, while Price providing bookkeeping services. Although the Imels apparently sold the property on June 28, 1952 to Jesse Stein, they apparently continued to live in the house through the 1954 directory. The change in ownership also did not apparently affect the rental arrangements, although the Deans were replaced. The Prices continued to live there as residents, but the Deans were replaced with Ralph and Ruth Ryan. Ryan operated Ryan Hardware.

The current owners, John and Ann Parks purchased the property from the heirs of Jesse Stein on December 29, 1959 and have lived in the house since then (Book 190, Page 147).

9. Major Bibliographical References

Census Records, United States Census Bureau, 1860, 1870, 1900, 1910, 1920.

City Directories, Muscatine. Various publishers, 1856-1959. Available as the Musser Public Library.

"Death of Israel Rothschild," *Muscatine Journal*, April 25, 1882, page 2.

Deed/Abstract Records, Recorder's Office, Muscatine County Courthouse, Muscatine, Iowa.

Koch, Augustus. *Bird's-eye View of the City of Muscatine, Muscatine County, Iowa*. Koch, 1874. In the collections of the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

"Samuel Cohn Dies At Home In City," *Muscatine Journal*, June 15, 1910, page 6.

Sanborn Map Company. "Muscatine, Iowa," Sanborn fire insurance maps. Pelham, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 1883, 1888, 1892, 1899, 1907, 1912, 1919, 1928. Accessed online at: Sanborn.umi.com.

"Sudden Death of Mrs. Rothschild," *Muscatine Journal*, October 14, 1872, page 4.

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
 State Historical Society of Iowa
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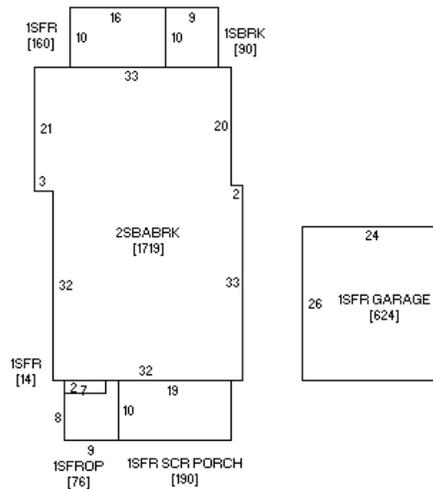
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Location Map



Plans of buildings on site (from assessor's office)



(front – W. 2nd Street)

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Photograph of building (digital image)

