



County Muscatine Address 408 W. Third Street Site Number 70-00219  
City Muscatine 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

**Significant Dates**

Construction date 1895  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 Daniel G. Clark / Jim Rudisill (R.L. McCarley, consultant)

organization Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission date January 17, 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, three-bay, side gable roof house. It sets on a brick foundation. The walls are frame, clad in aluminum siding. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles. There is no ornamentation or other decorative features on the friezes, eaves or other building surfaces. The windows and doors are historic, except for some of the windows in the more recent rear additions. A series of additions in the rear of the house has altered the original footprint, which appears on the 1899 Sanborn. That drawing shows a wide façade with a full-width open front porch. A projecting bay or gable is located on the east end and on the back of the wide front section. A projecting addition is attached to the west 3/5 of the rear wall. A full-width rear porch is attached to this addition. There is also a small open porch or stoop located at the junction of the projecting east addition and the projecting rear addition on the east side of the house. All the porches are identified on the Sanborns as one story, while the remaining portions of the house are two stories. Later additions are primarily construction of second stories over the rear porches. However, many of these "additions" are historic.

The front (north) elevation features a partially enclosed front porch that extends across nearly the entire width of the first-story façade. All the openings on the porch have been screened. An entry is located on the left side of the porch's front. It contains a flush-mounted, wood screen door. The arrangement of openings above and beside the screen door indicates the porch entry might have originally contained a transom and sidelights. Four screened openings are located to the right of the entry while two similar openings are located on each end wall of the porch. The double-door entry to the house is located inside the porch and aligned with the outside, screened entry. It has a pair of historic wood doors with glass inserts. Two one-over-one-light, double-hung wood windows are located to the right of this entry. Three second-story windows are also located on this elevation. Each contains a window with one-over-one-light, double-hung sashes. Each of these windows is aligned with its corresponding first-story opening.

The east side elevation contains one window that is centered on the gable end of the main house section. This is a single-light, fixed sash mezzanine window that likely provides natural lighting for a stairway landing. Other openings may have been covered by the non-historic siding. A rear, side-gable roof projects out from the main house for a short distance. This might be an early addition or part of the original house. It appears on the first Sanborn. Single one-over-one-light, double-hung windows are centered on both the first and second stories of the projecting end wall. There are also similar windows located on both the first and second story of the short, projecting north wall of the addition. The rear addition behind this section has an enclosed second story. This porch section appears with an enclosed second story on the 1912 Sanborn map, and is not shown in 1905. The east wall of the overhanging addition projects slightly past the east wall of the back projecting gable. There are no openings on the overhang's east wall. Six simple wood posts support the overhanging second story.

The west side elevation contains two typical one-over-one-light, double-hung wood windows on the end wall of the main house. The windows are aligned on the first and second story, and they are centered on

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the back half of the wall. A gable-roof rear wing oriented perpendicular to the main roofline extends from the left 3/5s of the main house. Two one-over-one-light, double-hung wood windows are each present in the first and second stories near the front of the rear addition. The left window of the second story is aligned with the first story's left window, while the two right windows are each aligned. A smaller one-over-one-light, double-hung, possibly non-historic, second-story window is located at the rear of the elevation. A small, non-historic casement window is located on the back half of the first story. It is left of the second-story back window.

The rear (south) elevation features a series of additions with open first stories and enclosed second stories. The east side is the rear of the porch addition between 1905 and 1912 that had an enclosed second story. It contains two windows located in the overhanging second-story of the addition. Each window contains one-over-one-light, double-hung historic sashes. The right window is located near the right edge of the wall while the left window is centered between the right window and the left edge of the wall. The left side of the first story has been enclosed. The 1919 Sanborn shows the first story of all the porches open. On the 1928 Sanborn the two rear porches are enclosed, but the front porch remains open. The front porch is also still open on the 1946 Sanborn. The right side contains a single supporting wood post. A window and an entry are located under this overhang. The entry contains a combination aluminum storm door and a wood door with a glass insert in the upper half. A one-over-one-light, double-hung wood window is located to the left of the entry. To the right of the entry is a second overhang, which has been created by the construction of an enclosed second story. This enclosed story is supported by simple wood posts that extend around the east side of the house. This overhang contains a single one-over-one-light, double-hung non-historic second-story window. Three simple wood posts support this overhang, which extends out over a single, first-story opening. The opening contains a flush-mounted, non-historic entry door. The east elevation overhang is attached to the east wall of the second overhang. The only opening on the south wall of this overhang is a non-historic one-over-one-light, double-hung window that is located in the far right edge of the wall.

## 8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The Andrew Davidson House does not appear to be individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, B, or C. However, it does appear to be a contributing building in a potential "West Hill" neighborhood historic district.

Andrew Davidson, a tanner, currier and licensed preacher in Ohio, appears to have built this house as a family residence around 1895. He originally moved to Muscatine in 1862. Despite his success as a businessman, Davidson does not appear to have made a significant contribution to the community's history. No significant event is known to have occurred at the property. In addition, new siding and non-historic windows have altered the house's appearance. There have also been major alterations on the east side, where second story overhangs have been constructed. Thus, the Andrew Davidson house does not appear to be individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, B or C.

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However, the Andrew Davidson House does appear to be a contributing building in a potential "West Hill" neighborhood historic district. Davidson was nearly 50 years old when he moved to Muscatine from Ohio in 1862. He quickly became a leading businessman in the area, eventually extending to neighboring states with his shoe and boot sales. His decision, as an important businessman, increased the status and stability of the neighborhood and helped it regain its momentum following the lean war years. Although this house has been altered, much of its front still appears to retain its original features. This house contributes historically and architecturally to this potential historic district.

Rev. Andrew Davidson constructed this house around 1895, possibly as a retirement home for himself and his wife and a future residence for his daughter Ella. Davidson purchased the E 50' of Lot 8, Block 37 from Ada Compton and her husband for \$2800 on January 19, 1865 (Book W; Page 461). When Davidson bought the property in 1865, shortly after arriving in Muscatine, an earlier house was already on the lot. However, Sanborn maps show that the older house was demolished and a new house was built between 1892 and 1899. Andrew Davidson is listed as a resident at 404 W. Third in city directories from 1865 to 1907. Davidson was originally born in Ohio in 1812. After coming to Muscatine, he started a retail and wholesale boot and shoe business. The business eventually extended to Missouri, Kansas and Illinois. He also operated a ferry and was a local preacher for the M.E. Church. The Davidson family continued to live in that house through most of the remaining 19<sup>th</sup> century. Around 1895, Davidson constructed a new house, either demolishing the original house or replacing one that could have been destroyed by fire or natural disaster. The Sanborn maps from 1892 show the original house still present, but by 1899 it is gone and the present building is shown.

Andrew Davidson sold the W 34' of the E 50' of Lot 8, Block 37 to his daughter Ella on December 10, 1895 for \$1 (Book 26; Page 651). This likely was after the new house was built and was intended to provide Ella with a secure home and inheritance. The sale was subject to a life estate use by Andrew and Rachel. A second transaction for one additional foot of property was completed October 19, 1896 (Book 30; Page 66). The original sale had failed to correctly describe all the property to be transferred and the additional foot, combined with the early parcel, apparently corresponded to the location of the house. The 1900 census confirms the family location at 408 W. Third. According to that record, Andrew, 87; wife Rachel, 79; and daughter Ella, 35, are the only members of the household. No occupations are listed for any of the residents. Davidson died in 1908. His obituary reported he had been married three times and had nine children, of whom six survived him, including Sarah Roach, the mother of William L. Roach, the president and general manager of Roach & Musser Sash & Door Company; and Ella Davidson, who continued to live at 408 W. Third until 1911. Davidson's wife Rachel also survived him, but apparently died before the 1910 census, since only Ella is listed as a resident in that record.

Ella Davidson sold the W 35' of the E 50' of Lot 8, Block 37 to Nellie S. Sawyer for \$1 on March 28, 1911 (Book 43; Page 324). It is unknown if there was any family relationship between Sawyer and Davidson that would explain the low sale price. Davidson's 1933 obituary does not identify any surviving relatives. There possibly was a trade of property completed between the two, but that is speculation. Sawyer is not listed in the street directory as living in the house, but she apparently lived there with her parents, J. A.

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and Laura Stephens. The Stephenses are recorded as residents in the 1913 through the 1923-24 city directories. The 1920 census shows J.A. Stephens, 67; his wife Laura, 60; widowed daughter Nellie Sawyer, 39; and a boarder, Sade Wilson, as the residents. Neither J.A. nor Laura are recorded in the census with an occupation, However, Nellie is identified as a librarian at the public library. Wilson is also recorded as a secretary at the Y.W.C.A. Earlier records show Stephens had formerly owned and operated a china shop.

Nellie Sawyer married LeGrand E. Morehouse in 1921, but continued to rent the house. Stephens was followed by H.H. and Martha Fitzgerald, according to city directories from 1927 to 1931. Fitzgerald was identified as the city engineer. The 1934 directory listed Aaron D. Romig and his wife Pearl as the residents. He was a station manager for Standard Oil Company. From 1936 to 1941 William D. Randall, author of *Little Known Stories of Muscatine*, was listed in the city directories as the resident. His wife's name was Margaret and he worked as an attorney.

Nellie and LeGrand Morehouse sold the house on December 10, 1941 to Lillian Nabedrick (Book 102; Page 59. No record shows if Nabedrick lived in the house.

Nabedrick sold it about two years later, on November 27, 1943, to R. Lillie Heuer (Book 108; Page 103). Everett E. Trimble and his wife Josie were only listed in the 1943 directory as the residents. Trimble was a telegraph operator for the CRI&P Railroad. Heuer was listed as the resident from the 1946 through the 1959 city directories. She worked as a helper and a dishwasher at the Manhattan Grill from 1946 to 1959.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

City Directories, Muscatine. Various publishers, 1894-1959. Available as the Musser Public Library.

"Death Claims Ella Davidson," *Muscatine Journal*, April 28, 1933, page 1.

"Death's Grim Reaper Claims A. Davidson," *Muscatine Journal*, April 6, 1908, page 2

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

*History of Muscatine County, Iowa*. Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1879, page 600

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.

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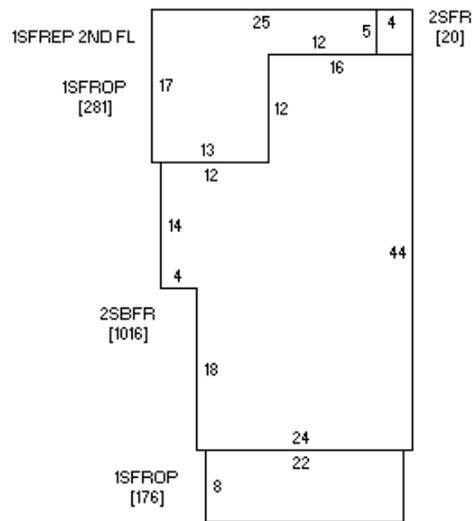
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**Location Map**



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



(front – W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street)

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## Photograph of building (digital image)

