

County Muscatine
City Muscatine

Address 205 Cherry Street

Site Number 70-00370
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)

02: Architecture

31: Other – neighborhood development

Significant Dates

Construction date

1852-54 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 Maryrose and John Peterschmidt (Member and Volunteer) (R.L. McCarley, consultant)

organization Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission date January 7, 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

The J.C.B. Warde house is a Greek Revival style house, situated on a high bluff overlooking the Mississippi River. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. The house was begun by Warde in 1852, and was completed after 1854 by John G. Gordon. Additions at the rear were made in 1905 and 1938 and were a part of the Bellevue Hospital. The brick has been painted white, with details executed in limestone, wood, and metal. Centered on the main roof ridge is an octagonal belvedere with two-over-two light, double-hung windows on each face and a narrow cornice above. Four tall brick chimneys are seen near the gable end walls.

The house is two stories, with five bays along the front, or south façade, which overlooks the river. The bays are divided by pilasters, which support a full entablature that runs continuously around the house. The first story floor level is about eight feet above grade. The dominant feature of the front elevation is a two-story portico, with four fluted wooden Corinthian columns on high pedestals supporting a triangular pediment. An early feature of the portico was a large balcony at the second story level, which was above the centered entry, between the four columns (Grossheim photograph #OG-3122, c.1927). This historic balcony had been enclosed by the owners of the Bellevue Hospital, likely in 1938. (Muscatine Clippings File photo, 1942). The entire balcony was removed by the current owner after 1980. A single entry is centered on the first story of the building. Two windows are found on either side of the entry, and five are across the second story. The windows of the house have narrow stone sills and flat lintels finished with cast metal pediments and six-over-six light, double-hung sashes.

The west gable end of the building reveals four six-over-six-light, double-hung windows on each story and on the basement level, near grade. Pilasters with Doric capitals are seen between each window, rising to the full entablature. Above the entablature are two smaller six-over-six-light, double-hung windows in the gable. All windows on the first story or above on this elevation have simple stone sills and decorative crowns, as well as exterior shutters. The lower windows are framed into the brick foundation wall. The configuration of the east elevation of the main building is identical to the west elevation in all respects.

The rear, or north elevation of the main building shows a symmetrical arrangement of building openings. From the left is seen two six-over-six-light, double-hung windows on each story. Then, at the center of this façade is found a shuttered, enclosed opening on the second story, where a double entry to the hospital north wing was located. A similar opening is seen on the first story below, except that a new, wooden, double entry door with two light transom has been installed in that space. To the right on this elevation there are two six-over-six-light, double-hung windows on each story. At the lower level, below grade, is a single entry, located in the center of the building, below the double entry described above. A concrete slab above this lower entry projects about 6 feet to the north from the building and is supported by two brick clad columns. This slab appears to be located to provide future access to the double entry on the first story.

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The rear, or north elevation of the historic hospital had a three-story addition built in 1938, which is seen on the 1946 Sanborn map. This addition was described in the 1979 nomination, indicating that it has been removed after 1979. The early Sanborn maps show a two-bay rear ell on the east side of the rear, and the addition with its main axis was parallel to the roof ridge of the main house was connected to this rear addition. Both of these additions have been removed after 1980 by the current owner as part of an effort to restore the house to its original appearance.

The current owner has constructed a two-story, two car garage along the north property line. It is sited and constructed in a manner that is sensitive to the historic significance of the house. The garage is board and batten siding on a simple gable end building that is located a maximum distance from Cherry Street and is accessed from the alley. The north and west sides of the property are identified by a white picket fence surrounding an abundance of shrubs, plants and trees. A two feet thick limestone block retaining wall is laid in running bond, sloping along the north property line from the garage upward to the northwest corner of the property, which is at grade. It is adjacent to the alley.

8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The 1979 nomination notes that "The J.C.B. Warde house is one of Muscatine's finest early residences, and one of the supreme examples of the residential Greek Revival style in Iowa, a state which was being settled at a time when the Greek Revival was at it's height in popularity. Iowa can claim relatively few remaining examples of this architectural style. The house is architecturally very fine, and exhibits an educated understanding on the part of the architect or builder of the elements of Greek architecture, as used by American architects in the first half of the 19th century." The house was individually listed under Criterion C for its architecture.

Additionally, the J.C.B. Warde house does appear to be a contributing building in a potential "West Hill" neighborhood historic district. This house not only contributes to a potential "West Hill" neighborhood historic district, it is one of the main attractions. At the peak of west hill, it commands the river view like no other house. The Greek Revival style of its architecture stands in interesting contrast to the three closest neighbors. Across Cherry Street is the Clark-Blackwell House, a large red brick Queen Anne house, also on the register. The Henry Waterman Moore House, a fine example of Italianate style, is across the alley to the north, and to the northwest is the Dr. Trueman Wigim House. It is an excellent Prairie School house.

John C.B. Warde, a local attorney, purchased lots 1 and 2 of block 40 from Abraham Smalley on April 20, 1852 (Deeds / Abstracts, Book K, page 429). Warde proceeded with construction of the house shortly thereafter. Little is known about Warde, except for his abrupt departure from Muscatine, creditors at his heels, in the fall of 1852. The house was put up for auction at a sheriff's sale the following year, and purchased by John G. Gordon. Mr. Gordon was born in Baltimore, Maryland on February 16, 1810. As a young man he served an apprenticeship for the mercantile business in York, Pennsylvania and then traveled to Louisville, Kentucky to open a general store. While at Louisville he married Sarah Rienard,

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who eventually bore him five daughters and one son. ("Old Settler's Register", Muscatine Journal obituary, 72) The Gordon family moved west and became residents of Muscatine County in 1844. He opened a general store, J.G. Gordon & Co., which remained in business for many years. His wife Sarah, died around 1850. He bought this house in 1852, and finished the construction. John Gordon married Mary Klein in 1856 and, by her, had one daughter and one son. The 1860 Census shows that John G. Gordon was a 48-year-old merchant with real estate valued at \$16,000 and personal estate valued at \$12,000. His wife, Mary was 30 years old. The children listed are Susan (20), Mary C. (19), Maria G. (16), John G. (12) and Anna (11). He was a highly respected businessman and an influential man in the state. The Governor of Iowa, Ansel Briggs, bestowed the title of general on John G. Gordon in 1874 and appointed him to the command of the Second Division of the Iowa Militia. The 1874 birds-eye view of Muscatine clearly shows the house as a prominent feature of West Hill. General John G. Gordon put finishing touches on the house, and lived there until his death in 1877 (Richman 1911: 207).

On September 5, 1878, Mary A. Gordon, widow of Gen. Gordon, sold the property to Charles and Helen Chaplin and their daughter, Cora Chaplin Weed (Deeds / Abstracts, Book 12, page 406). Cora Chaplin Weed was a young Muscatine woman who had married Chester Weed in 1873. Weed died at 55 years of age in 1874, leaving a substantial fortune acquired through various dry goods, insurance and wholesale enterprises. Cora Weed moved into the house with her parents sometime after the death of her husband and remained there until about 1904, as indicated by city directories. Cora Chaplin was born in Quincy, Illinois on July 31, 1844 to Charles and Helen Marr (Sherman) Chaplin and was brought to Muscatine at about age 1 by her parents. According to the 1860 Census, Cora was 16 and had a brother, Levi (12) and two younger sisters, Mary (4) and Kate (1). Cora Chaplin was a vocalist, a musician and a linguist. She was instrumental in organizing a community orchestra, as well as being a prominent member of cultural groups, such as the Fortnightly Club. She was also a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution ("Mrs. Cora C. Weed Has Passed Away", Muscatine Journal obituary, August 3, 1910, 5). The 1900 Census reveals that Cora C. Weed, age 55, and her father Charles Chaplin, age 84, were living at 205 Cherry Street. Mrs. Weed referred to her house on Cherry Street as the "Eyrie."

Drs. John L. Klein Sr. and A.J. Weaver purchased the house from Cora C. Weed on April 12, 1904, (Lots Book 36, page 680) and converted it into a private hospital (Bellevue Hospital). The Sanborn map of 1905 shows the building to be a large, main house, centered on lots 1 and 2, with a short wing to the north and a garage on lot 3. This configuration remains unchanged on subsequent maps until the 1946 map, which shows a long, rectangular addition, parallel to the alley and connected to the wing of the house. The Sanborn maps seem to indicate that an early remodeling in 1905 was likely to be internal. The addition of 1938 was a much larger undertaking. The house served as one of two hospitals in Muscatine until 1960, at which time it became the Riverview Heights Nursing Home until 1977.

The architectural integrity of the J.C.B. Warde House is intact. Portions of the Bellevue Hospital that were added in 1905 and 1938 have been removed. The current owner, who purchased the property in 1981, has spent nearly twenty years in restoration of the original building into a home and has lived there for five years.

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The J.C.B. Warde House has had two significant periods in its 150 year history. The first, as a residence for citizens of the young city, such as General John G. Gordon, Cora Weed, and Charles Chaplin, engineer. The second as a private hospital, in which capacity it served for over fifty years. With the recent restoration efforts, it reflects this first period of its history, rather than its history as Bellevue Hospital. It is now, again a private residence.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Census Records, United States Census Bureau, 1860, 1880, 1900

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

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

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

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.

"Mrs. Cora C. Weed Has Passed Away", Muscatine Journal obituary, August 3, 1910, page 5

National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form #PHO699446. Date entered: April 3, 1979

"OG-690," 1907. Historic Photograph, Oscar Grossheim Photography Collection, Musser Public Library, Muscatine, Iowa.

"OG-3122," 1927. Historic Photograph, Oscar Grossheim Photography Collection, Musser Public Library, Muscatine, Iowa.

Portrait and Biographical Album of Muscatine County, Iowa. Chicago: Acme Publishing, 1889.

Richman, Irving B. *History of Muscatine County, Iowa*. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1911.

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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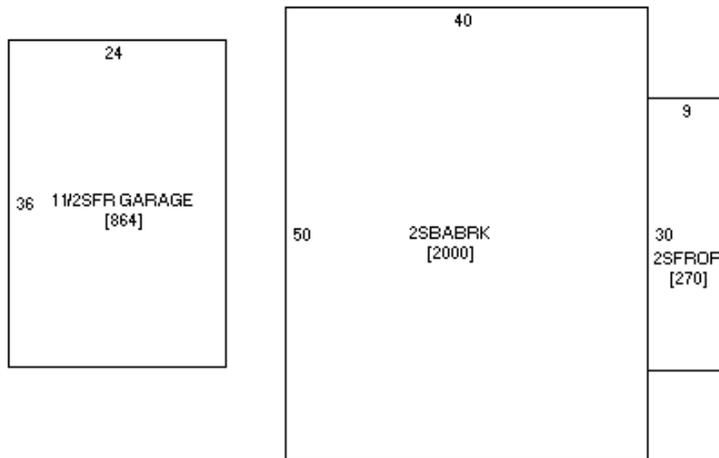
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Location Map



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



(side - Cherry Street)

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Photograph of building (digital image)

