

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

State Inventory No. 70-01070  **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 R.W.H. Brent House  
 other names/site number Field Site #: WH-157

**2. Location**

street & number 414 West 4<sup>th</sup> 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) 52 Lot(s) W 1/2 of Lot 9

**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:	
	Enter number of:	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	_____ buildings	<u>1</u>	<u>1</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>1</u>	<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 \_\_\_\_\_

A Historical and Architectural Survey of the "West Hill" neighborhood, Muscatine, Iowa 70-016

**6. Function or Use**

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

**7. Description**

<b>Architectural Classification</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Materials</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>09A01: House/Gable Front</u>	foundation <u>04B: Stone/Sandstone- 10A: Concrete B</u>
_____	walls <u>05E: Metal/Aluminum</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 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 Address 414 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street Site Number 70-01070  
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)

031: Other/ Neighborhood Development

**Significant Dates**

Construction date 1860s  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 Devin Pettit (R.L. McCarley, consultant)

organization Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission date 12/22/2005

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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R.W.H. Brent House  
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## 7. Narrative Description

This is a two story, three bay gable-front frame house. The house sits on a concrete block, and, according to the owner, sandstone foundation. The walls are clad in aluminum siding, which was done in 1964 (Muscatine Journal Year-End Edition, December 30, 1964, Sec. 2 pg.13). The gable-roof is clad in asphalt shingles.

The front (north) elevation includes four concrete steps that lead to a wood porch that has battered wood columns that rest on molded concrete block piers. According to Sanborn maps, the porch replaced an earlier porch between 1899 and 1905, perhaps in 1904 when the neighboring house was constructed. The shed roof is clad in asphalt shingles. The first story includes an entry with a metal storm door and a historic wood door in the left bay. The middle of the three bays is offset to the left. The first story also includes two windows that have one-over-one-light double-hung wood sashes, behind metal storm windows. All the windows in the house have these metal storm windows. The second story has three windows, with two windows flanking a longer window in the middle. These windows all have one-over-one-light double-hung wood sashes.

The east elevation has a casement window on the first story near the rear of the elevation. There are three one-over-one-light double-hung windows with wood sashes on the second story. One is located near the front, with the other two in the rear half of the elevation. Four casement windows are located in the west side of the one-story rear addition as well.

The west elevation has three one-over-one-light double-hung windows with wood sashes on the first story. The front window is larger than the two in that rear half of the elevation. The second story has three one-over-one-light double-hung windows with wood sashes. A casement window is located in the west side of the one-story rear addition as well.

The south elevation has one window that has one-over-one-light double-hung wood sashes on the second story of the two story section of the house. A rear one story gable-roof addition covers the first story of the main section of the house. Between 1919 and 1928 there appears to be a change in the rear addition, to a smaller footprint with a larger open porch on the east elevation of this addition, according to the Sanborn Maps. Since 1946, it appears that this addition has been changed again, specifically with the enclosing of the back porch. There is a sliding glass door on south elevation of the presently configured addition.

There is a small tool shed right behind the house on the south elevation. The shed's walls are clad in aluminum siding, and the hip-roof is clad in asphalt shingles.

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## 8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The R.W.H. Brent 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 to a potential "West Hill" historic neighborhood district.

R.W.H. Brent House appears to have been built in the 1860s. The Brent Manufacturing Company started by 1869. It was acquired by the Musser Lumber Company in 1885, which eventually became the Roach & Musser Sash & Door Company. The integrity of the house is marginal with the addition of the aluminum siding, the early 20<sup>th</sup> century porch, and replacement windows. The overall shape and form, and the basic window layout, apparently remains the same. With these changes, however, it appears that this building is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria C. While this house was part of this mid-19<sup>th</sup> century neighborhood, it does not appear to be significantly associated with the development, particularly with the alterations. It also does not appear to be associated with any other significant events. The sons of R.W.H. Brent; who started the Brent Manufacturing Company, likely all lived in this house at the launch of the company, but they soon scattered to other locations, such as Edward who is listed in the 1870 census as living next door. Other siblings began leaving the house soon after this. The house, particularly with the changes, does not appear strongly associated with the Brent brothers during the period that the mill prospered. None of the other people that have lived here appear to be made any significant contributions to the community, although some of the people have been prominent in the business and civic life in Muscatine; namely R.W.H. Brent and his sons and Justin Coe. Thus, it also appears that the R.W.H. Brent House is not individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A or B.

The R.W.H. Brent House appears to be a contributing building in a potential "West Hill" historic neighborhood district. It falls within one historic context significant for the district: "19<sup>th</sup> century residential and neighborhood development." While some alterations to the house have occurred, it retains its overall form and design, and it retains sufficient integrity as a contributing building.

This house sits on the west 2/3 (40 feet) of Lot 9. Rhoda Cannon and her siblings had inherited the west part of the lot from their father Andrew Smalley in 1843 (Lands Book D: 233). J.H. and Rhoda Cannon took out a mortgage of \$1434.10 on the west 2/3 (40 feet) of Lot 9 in 1861 (Lots Book U: 533). Peter Lofland had built an adjacent house on the east 1/3 of Lot 9 and west portion of Lot 8 in 1858 (Book of Lots T: 189; 1859 city directory). The Brent family moved to Muscatine in the 1850s, living on Muscatine Island in 1859. In 1864, R.W.H. Brent bought Lot 8 and east 1/3 of Lot 9, Lofland's house (Book of Lots W: 189). In 1869, J.H. and Rhoda Cannon sold the "west 40 feet of lot 9, block 52" to R.W.H. Brent (Lots Book 4: 627). It is possible that the house on the west part of the lot was built in 1861 when the Cannons took out the mortgage. There were no city directories between 1859 and 1866, and the Cannon's could have lived in or rented a house on the west half of the lot during this time. Or it is possible that the current house was constructed after R.W.H. bought the west 2/3 of the lot in 1869, and they moved to this location from the adjacent property, building a new home. Thus, by 1869, there appears to have been two houses offset to the west on Lots 8 and 9. The 1869 city directory lists R.W.H. Brent on the

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south side of 4<sup>th</sup> between Linn and Spruce (house on west 2/3 of Lot 9, now 414 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St), and son Theodore on the south side of 4<sup>th</sup> Street, 3 west of Linn (Lofland's house, on the lot 8/9 line).

R.W.H. Brent came to Muscatine in 1851, having been born in Virginia in 1810 and moving to Illinois as a pastor in 1841. He briefly operated a hardware store, farmed, and preached around the various schoolhouses, and eventually assigned to the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1859 he was listed as living on a farm on the Muscatine Island. In 1864 Mr. Brent moved to the house on the east portion of Lot 9 and Lot 8, where 412 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street now stands (Book of Lots W:189). Around 1865, Brent successfully campaigned for the office of postmaster. In 1869, he built or possibly simply moved into the house next door, the current 414 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The 1869 city directory lists R.W.H. as an insurance agent on the south side of 4<sup>th</sup> between Linn and Spruce with his wife Catherine, daughter, and three sons, while his son Theodore is listed on the south side of 4<sup>th</sup> 3 west of Linn. The 1869-70 directory shows T.R. and R.H. Brent as working at Brent Brothers Manufacturing, with Edward a law student and William a clerk for the Dillaway Store. The 1866 city directory does not show the Brent Brothers Manufacturing Company. The 1869-70 directory shows Theodore R. and Richard H. Brent as working at Brent Brothers Manufacturing, the first year this company is listed. The 1870 census also lists two households: R.W. Brent (60, postmaster, \$3,000 in real estate), Catherine E (wife, 58, keeping house), Theodore R. (30, manufacturer), Richard H. (28, manufacturer), Mary L. (24, clerk in post office), and William O. (22, clerk in crockery store) in one household. The next household includes Edward J. Brent (20, student), a M.E. Brent (25, keeping house), and a Huller Keardin (sp?) (14, domestic servant). The 1874 birds-eye view also shows 2 houses along this portion of 4<sup>th</sup> Street, a gable-front house near the corner and a side-gable house adjacent to it. A vacant lot is shown on the east part of Lot 8, with a space between the side-gable house and the house on Lot 7 (402 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street). (Portrait and Biographical Album; Chicago; 1889, 502-3; Walton 1899: 56, 193; Census Bureau 1870).

The Brent brothers are listed in the 1876-77 city directory under planing mills as the Brent Manufacturing Company in South Muscatine. This is the only business listing for the company, though they continued to operate until 1885. The directory lists Theodore at 51 W. 4<sup>th</sup> and Richard at 49 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street (a new third house on lots 8 and 9), with the rest of the family living at 53 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street (now 414 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street). Edward, William and Theodore are listed as working at Brent Brothers, where Richard is simply listed as working in the planing mills. Brent Brothers made windows and doors, as well as other milled wood products. The 1879 city directory continues to show Richard working at Brent Manufacturing, with no particular position mentioned and living on 4<sup>th</sup> between Linn and Spruce. Theodore (president) has moved to south end of town, and Edward (secretary) is also listed as living on the south side of 4<sup>th</sup> between Linn and Spruce. R.H.W. also continued to live on the south side of 4<sup>th</sup> between Linn and Spruce. William is shown living at 53 W. 4<sup>th</sup> and working for Dillaway again. The 1880 census shows there were two Brent households. R.W.H. Brent (70, minister), living with his wife Catherine (68), son Richard H. (38, manufacturing), daughter Mary (35), son Edmund (sic) (29, manufacturing), son William O. (32, traveling salesman), William's wife Fannie (33), and their son Waldo (6). Theodore Brent lived with his wife and two children on the south end of town. By this time, the two other houses on Brent's lots appear to have been used as rental.

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Brent Brothers Manufacturing first started by manufacturing window shades. According to J.P. Walton "they were made of small pine wood sticks about an eighth of an inch in diameter, woven together like a Rush carpet or mat and were colored to order." The company eventually added washboards and door screens, one of them called the "Jumping Rabbit". There was also a grocery store in connection with the factory run by Edward (Walton 1899:193-94). The plant was located at the south end of Muscatine, and in 1883 the Sanborn Map indicates about thirty employees. The 1883-1886 city directory lists R.W.H. Brent as working at Brent Manufacturing. Mr. Brent's son Richard is shown as living with his father at 414 W. 4<sup>th</sup>, and working at Brent Manufacturing. Son Theodore is shown as the President of Brent Manufacturing, and living at 509 First Street in South Muscatine. William Brent is shown as the superintendent of the Brent Manufacturing Company, and living at 517 Front Street in South Muscatine. Edward Brent is shown as working at Brent Manufacturing, and living at 508 Front Street in South Muscatine.

In 1885, William Roach, who was with the Musser Lumber Company, negotiated the acquisition of the Brent Manufacturing Company. The name of the company was changed to the Muscatine Manufacturing Company, and they continued to produce sash, doors and blinds. The children of R.W.H. Brent continued to work for the newly acquired company (Walton 1899: 194). The 1886-87 city directory listed R.W.H. (insurance agent) and Richard Brent (Muscatine Manufacturing Company) living at 414. Theodore, William, Edward all also worked for the Muscatine Manufacturing Company and they lived in separate households in South Muscatine. Edward is listed as being superintendent and treasurer and living opposite the company in South Muscatine. Theodore lived at 411 West 4<sup>th</sup>, and William lived at 513 Front Street in South Muscatine.

On February 20, 1886, R.W.H. Brent died, apparently leaving both lots 8 and 9 with their associated houses to his estate. This was a period of transition for the family, with most of the family moving to Pasadena around this time. The 1889 biography of R.W.H. Brent lists sons Richard and Theodore Brent as real estate partners in Pasadena, with William also working with them. Daughter Mary also lived with her mother in Pasadena. The middle house, which appears to have spanned the lot line, may have been torn down by this point or shortly thereafter. Lot 8, with the house at 410 on the east half, finally was clearly passed to William and Carrie Brent on December 15, 1887 (Sheriff's Deed Book 1: 278). All of Lot 9 with the house at 414 on the west 2/3 transferred to daughter Mary (Lots Book 14: 352). Edward continues to show up in the 1889-92 city directory as the general manager of the Muscatine Manufacturing Company. He is still listed living opposite the plant in South Muscatine. In 1889, the company become the Muscatine Sash & Door Company (*Portrait and Biographical Album of Muscatine County* 1889, 324, 502-03, Muscatine City Directories).

In 1887, Justin Coe bought this house from Mary Brent and moved in (Lots Book 21: 389). Coe moved to Muscatine in 1865, after serving in Company H in the Iowa infantry during the Civil War, and established his business as a bookseller and stationer. The 1891-92 city directory shows him working in books and stationary at 111 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and his home as being 414 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street. In 1895-96 the city directory shows that Justin is retired, and in 1899-1900 his daughter Helen is added to the listing at 414 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The 1900 census lists J.E. Coe (age 60, no occupation) with his wife Ellen (age 56), and daughter

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Helen (age 16) at 414 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The family continued to live here until 1904, when he built and moved into the house next door (412) on the east half of the lot.

After moving next door, Coe rented the house at 414. In the 1904 and 1907 city directories, Mrs J. Myers, who was a widow, lived here with her son Walter who was a student. In the 1908 and 1911 directories, a Theodore Wieter and his wife Anna lived here. Mr. Wieter was a salesman. The 1910 census shows Theodore Wieter (age 42), Anna (age 40), and their daughter Julie (age 9). Mr. Coe is listed as having moved back in 1913, and staying thru 1916. After the death of his wife Ellen, Justin Coe moved in with his son-in-law W.N. Wallace at 402 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street. He continued to rent out the house at 414. In 1919 a William Hendricks was living here, with the city directory stating he was erecting a new home at 407 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street. No occupation is listed for William Hendricks. In 1921, G.T. Macklin was living here. Mr. Macklin is listed simply as a laborer.

Justin Coe finally sold the house to George W. Frey in 1923 (Lots Book 60: 391). George is initially listed as a worker for the Barry Company, in 1923-24. In 1927 he is listed as being a machinist for Tanglely. In 1929 to 1934 he is simply listed as a machinist. In 1936-37 he is listed as a driver for the Muscatine Pearl Works, and then back to just a machinist from 1938 to 1941. Meanwhile, his son George Jr. is first listed with his parents at this address as a student in 1934. In 1936-37 George Jr. is listed as a driver with the Muscatine Pearl Works, like his father. In 1938-39 George Jr. is shown as being a shipping clerk for the Muscatine Pearl Works. In 1940-41, he is listed as a factory worker. When George Frey sold the house in 1942, he was a widower.

In 1942, George Frey sold the house to John Hubble, who did not live here (Book 103, pg.190). In 1943 Lloyd McKnight and his wife Agnes is listed as living here, and he is listed as working at Young Brothers Steel Stamp. By 1949, Merle Kopf was living here with his wife Lorraine. He is listed as a preparer for Muscatine Processing. Merle Kopf finally bought the house from John Hubble in 1960 (Book 191 of lots pg.67).

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

City Directories, Muscatine. Various publishers, 1866-1959. Available as the Musser Public Library.

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

Muscatine County, Ia. Death Records 1880-1910. pg. 16.

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

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  
**Iowa Site Inventory Form**  
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Walton, J.P. *Pioneer Papers*, 1899 - "Recollections of Business in Early Days of Muscatine", Published in the *Muscatine Saturday Mail*, May 1, 1897.

Walton, J.P. *Pioneer Papers*, 1899 - "Recollections of the Muscatine Sash and Door Company", Published in the *Muscatine Saturday Mail*, April 2, 1898.

**Location Map**



Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs  
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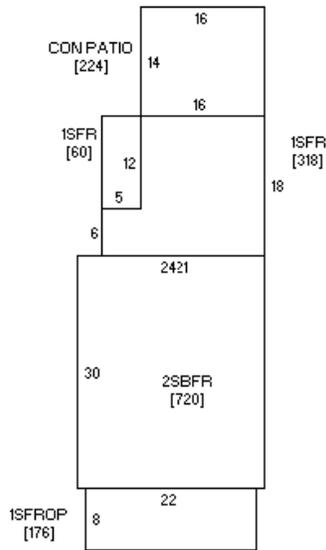
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**Plans of buildings on site (from assessor's office)**



(front – W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street)

**Photograph of building (digital image)**

