

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Iowa Federation Home for Colored Girls

other names/site number Sue M. Brown Hall; Heckart Apartments; State Inventory Number 52-02013

Name of Multiple Property Listing N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

street & number 942 Iowa Avenue

☐

not for publication

city or town Iowa City

☐

vicinity

state Iowa

county Johnson

zip code 52240

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:    national x statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria: x A    B    C    D

Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

State Historical Society of Iowa

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

   entered in the National Register

   determined eligible for the National Register

   determined not eligible for the National Register

   removed from the National Register

   other (explain:)   

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- |                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | private          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - Local   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - State   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - Federal |

### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- |                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | district    |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | site        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | structure   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | object      |

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
1	0	<b>Total</b>

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE

walls: WOOD/weatherboard

roof: ASPHALT

other: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Narrative Description**

**Summary Paragraph** (Briefly describe the current, general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

The Iowa Federation Home for Colored Girls, located at 942 Iowa Avenue in Iowa City, is a two-story vernacular Queen Anne-style residence, probably built in the early 1890s, and now used as an apartment and rooming house. The frame house has a stone foundation, clapboard siding, and a complex roof covered in composition shingles. The house is located near the east end of Iowa Avenue, a boulevard that extends due east from Clinton Street, a block east of the Old Capitol, Iowa's former territorial and early state capitol building. In the vicinity of the Iowa Federation Home, Iowa Avenue was built up primarily with one-story to two-story residences, ranging from small brick residences from the 1850s to Foursquare houses from the early twentieth century. Aside from two modern apartment buildings across the street from the Iowa Federation Home, its setting remains much as it was during the period of significance. The house retains a moderate to high degree of period integrity, with the loss of the original front and side porches and some alterations to gable windows the principal changes. The Iowa Federation Home contains one contributing resource, the house.

**Narrative Description** (Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable.)

(**Iowa SHPO Additional Instructions:** After the main **Narrative Description**, discuss any physical alterations since the period of significance under the subheading **Alterations**, the seven aspects of integrity as it applies to the property in a **Statement of Integrity**, and any future plans for the property under the subheading **Future Plans**.)

The Iowa Federation Home for Colored Girls, generally called the Iowa Federation Home, is located at 942 Iowa Avenue in Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa (Figures 1–2). It is located near the east end of Iowa Avenue, a boulevard with center median that extends due east from Clinton Street, a block east of the Old Capitol, Iowa's former territorial and early state capitol building. Iowa Avenue was envisioned as a grand boulevard visible from the capitol building at the time that Iowa City was platted in 1839. Over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Iowa Avenue was built up primarily with one-story to two-story residences, ranging from small brick residences from the 1850s to Foursquare houses from the early twentieth century. In recent decades, many of these houses have been replaced by large modern apartment buildings, including two on the south side of the 900 block, across the street and west from the Iowa Federation Home. The setting otherwise remains much as it was at the time the Iowa Federation Home operated, with the house surrounded by residential buildings dating from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century. This includes the small residential neighborhood of Woodlawn, now a locally designated and National Register Historic District, located at the east end of Iowa Avenue just east of the Iowa Federation Home. The Iowa Federation Home contains one resource, the house.

*House.* This two-and-one-half story house faces south onto Iowa Avenue (Figures 3–7). It is situated on a slope, which allows a walk-out basement on the rear (north side) of the house. The house exhibits the complex massing and multiple gables characteristic of the Stick and related Queen Anne styles. Although it is classified here as a vernacular Queen Anne-style house based on its overall massing and some architectural details, the house also displays elements of the Stick Style, particularly in the wall surface treatment of the front-facing gable end and in the frieze band that extends under the eaves on the three principal sides of the house. Each of the four sides displays one prominent gabled projection, while the facade also displays a secondary recessed gable over the front entrance to the west of the principal gabled projection. The massing is a variation of the so-called pinwheel plan common among Queen Anne-style houses, which is characterized by a hip-roofed core and multiple cross-gabled wings. In this case, the hip-roofed core is almost entirely lost among the larger cross-gabled projections, and the hip is also capped by a small gable-roofed ridge. The front section of the house is two-and-one-half stories tall, while the rear gabled projection is one-and-one-half stories tall, and a shed-roofed wing in the northwest corner of the house is only one story above the foundation.

The house sits on a coursed stone foundation except in the northwest corner of the house, where the foundation appears to be constructed of concrete blocks. The exterior of the foundation throughout the house has a thin cementitious parge coat, so the building materials are not always clearly evident. The house is clad in clapboards except in the gable

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fields, which, with one exception, are clad in imbricated shingles. The exception is the secondary gable on the facade, which is clad in clapboards. The roof throughout the house is covered in composition shingles. The windows throughout the house are typically tall single or paired 1/1-light windows. Most of the 1/1-light windows appear to be modern replacements, probably either vinyl or metal-clad wood. It is not clear whether they are double-hung or single-hung. The most prominent exceptions are three wood windows located on the first story: the cottage window on the front-facing gable projection, the window on the south face of the west-facing gabled projection, and the window on the east side of the house just south of the east-facing gabled projection. Other windows are described below. A decorative frieze band extends under the second-story eaves around all sides of the house. Where the gables do not contain imbricated shingles, the frieze band also outlines the eaves of the gables.

The facade, which faces south, is divided into the principal front-gabled projection on the east and a recessed section on the west. The projection has a cottage window on the first story with a decorative leaded glass upper sash that appears to be original. The second story has a pair of 1/1-light windows. A small 1/1-light window in the gable field is a later replacement; earlier photographs show a semi-circular window in this location (Figure 8). In addition to the imbricated shingles, decorations in the gable include bargeboard with bull's-eye decorations and ornamental spindlework. Similar decorative woodwork is found in all other gables aside from the rear-facing gable and the two minor gables in the gable-on-hipped roof, none of which displays either bargeboard or spindlework.

The recessed section of the facade has a broad entrance that contains a front door and sidelights. The front door has a grid of eight small lights above and panels below. Each of the two sidelights has four small lights above a panel. A seven-light transom extends across both the door and the sidelights. The entire entrance is framed by a pair of decorative pilasters capped by a heavy drip molding. A small, modern, one-story front porch with simple square posts and a shed roof has replaced an earlier wraparound porch that formerly extended around to the west side of the house. Above the front entrance is a rectangular bay window on the second story that projects out slightly from the main wall plane. This bay window contains a pair of 1/1-light windows. Above it is a small gabled wall dormer that projects from the hipped roof. Its front and side faces are flush with those of the bay window beneath it. Although this wall dormer lacks the decorative bargeboard found in the larger gables, it has a pair of decorative boards on the wall surface set directly beneath and parallel to the slope of the gabled roof. The dormer contains a single-light rectangular window. The window has been reduced in size, with the part of the former window opening below the present window filled with what appears to be horizontal car siding. It is not clear whether the window is operable or fixed.

The east face of the house is divided into three sections. At the front is a broad expanse of wall forming the east side of the front-facing gabled projection. This face has one tall 1/1-light window on the first floor and a shorter 1/1-light window above it on the second floor, both close to the central gabled projection. The central cross-gabled projection has fenestration and gable ornamentation similar to that on the principal front-facing gabled projection on the upper stories. On the first story, instead of a cottage window, is a shallow rectangular bay window with a hipped roof. The bay window has a ribbon of three windows on the front (east) face and one window each on the north and south, all of them tall, narrow, 1/1-light windows. On the south side of the gabled projection are a door opening on the first floor and a 1/1-light window on the second. The door, which formerly opened onto a non-extant side porch, appears to have either been reduced in height or had a transom window covered, based on the clapboards placed above the door and within the door surround. The door appears once to have displayed a single large light over three panels, but the glass pane has been replaced by what is likely a plywood panel, and the doorknob has been removed. Above the hipped roof of the bay window on the east side of the east-facing projection are a pair of 1/1-light windows on the second story and a gable field clad in imbricated shingles and featuring an egress window. A modern metal fire escape ladder extends from the gable window to the roof of the bay window, and a second ladder is attached to the front (east) face of the bay window to provide access to the ground.

The only fenestration on the north side of the east-facing gabled projection is a door on the first floor that exits onto a porch in the northeast corner of the house. The decorative woodwork on this porch may be original, since it appears to display the same pattern seen on the porches shown in historical photographs of this house. The other elements of the porch, in particular the railing and steps, are probably more recent replacements, but the jigsaw-cut work below the eaves and possibly the porch posts and knee-brace brackets may be original, or at least modeled after the original. Entering onto this porch from the east face of the rear wing are one door with a transom window and a 1/1-light



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window, both on the first floor. Above the hipped roof of the porch are two small 1/1-light windows that extend into the decorative frieze band. Below the porch is a 1/1-light basement window.

The rear-facing gabled projection is just one-and-one-half stories above the foundation, but the foundation is a full story in height. The rear gable end has a basement door opening, a single 1/1-light window on the first story, and a 1/1-light egress window in the gable field. A modern metal fire escape ladder extends from this window down to the basement level. The foundation under the rear-facing gabled projection only extends up a few inches above grade level, with the rest of the north gable end clad in clapboards, including the gable field. To the west of the gabled wing is a one-story shed-roofed wing above the foundation. Unlike the foundation of the gabled projection to the east, the foundation under the one-story wing extends up to the first-floor level and is covered in cementitious parging. The parged surface is smooth, and probably covers a relatively modern smooth-faced concrete block foundation rather than the stone foundation found elsewhere in the house. The basement windows and doors all appear to be modern, probably dating to within the past 50 years, though possibly slightly older. The one-story shed-roofed wing appears to be original to the house, based on tall paired 1/1-light windows on the rear (north) face. The only other window on the rear is a smaller 1/1-light window to the east of the paired window. Above the roof of this wing are two small windows on the second story, one in the west face of the rear-facing projection and one in the north face of the west-facing projection. Both windows are located near the angle between the rear-facing and west-facing projections.

The west side of the house is dominated by a gabled projection over the modern parged foundation, which slopes upwards to the south. Aside from the modern windows in the foundation, this face has a broad 1/1-light window on the first story and a smaller 1/1-light window on the second story. A small 1/1-light window surrounded by imbricated shingles is located in the gable field. On the south face of the west-facing projection are a tall 1/1-light window on the first story and a shorter 1/1-light window on the second story.

The interior of the house appears to retain substantially the floor plan it likely had during the building's period of significance, although the uses of some of the rooms have changed. The front door opens into a small entry hall with a door to the right (east), a door straight ahead (north) and a dogleg staircase extending up to the left (west). The two rooms on the first floor were originally a parlor (east) and dining room (north), but both have since been converted to apartments. These formerly public rooms have decorative corner blocks in the door surrounds, while the less public areas of the house have simpler corner blocks. The staircase appears to be the same one shown in historical views of the Iowa Federation Home. The square newel post has inset panels, chamfered corners, and an X-shaped design near the top on all four sides. The railing has a thick handrail and turned balusters that are somewhat more robust than those typically seen in Queen Anne-style houses. A small door opens into a small storage area beneath the stairs.

The second story is divided into a hallway, living rooms on both sides of the hallway, and a communal kitchen at the rear of the house. A staircase to the attic is also accessible from the hallway. Most of the doors in the house are modern slab replacements, but a few are four-panel doors that may be original. The four-panel doors include that of Apartment 3 at the top of the stairs, a closet door located in the upstairs hallway just north of the door to Apartment 5, and the small door in the entry hall that leads to a small storage area beneath the staircase. All of the doorknobs and locks are modern replacements. Transoms above the doors on the second story have been sealed.

Not every room in the building was visited during the research for the present nomination, so the following descriptions of materials are based on the hallways and communal rooms on both floors, as well as on Apartments 1 and 2 on the first floor. In these areas, the floors are typically wood, probably original, in all but the kitchen and bathroom areas. In those areas, which include the rear (north) section of the upstairs hall near the communal kitchen, the floors are covered in a type of resilient flooring, probably vinyl but possibly linoleum. The walls and ceilings throughout the building appear to be lath and plaster, although it is possible that in some cases original plaster finishes may have been replaced by drywall. The wooden baseboards in the first and second story halls and in the downstairs apartments appear to be original. These baseboards are capped by a simple and relatively robust molding. In the entry hall and in the second-story kitchen area, the lower half of the baseboard has been covered in vinyl strips for protection.

*Alterations.* The principal changes made to this house since the earliest available photograph was taken in 1919 have been the loss of two original porches on the front of the house and the alteration of some gable window openings. Aside from three original wood windows on the first story, most or all of the 1/1-light windows on the house appear to be modern replacements, although they are similar to the 1/1-light windows present in 1919. The concrete block foundation

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under the one-story wing on the northwest corner of the house also appears to date to the mid-twentieth century, possibly after the building's period of significance. Other changes to the exterior have been minor and are reversible, such as the installation of metal fire escape ladders. The interior has been divided into rooms and apartments, including two apartments on the first floor that were originally used as the dining room and parlor. Most of the interior doors have been replaced by modern slab doors. The house otherwise appears to retain a high degree of period integrity.

*Statement of integrity.* This house retains good to excellent integrity for all seven aspects of integrity.

Because the house is situated on its original site, the house retains excellent integrity of *location*.

The building's integrity of *setting* also remains high. It remains located near the east end of a broad avenue with center median, and it is surrounded on most sides by the same buildings that surrounded it during its period of significance. The only modern intrusions within a block of the nominated property are two large apartment buildings located on the south side of Iowa Avenue, across the street from the Iowa Federation Home and further west along the block.

The house retains a high degree of integrity of *design*. The massing, roofline, and fenestration pattern are essentially unchanged from the period of significance, aside from the loss of the southeast porch and the replacement of the original wraparound porch at the front entrance by a smaller modern porch. The removal of some of the decorative woodwork in the gable fields has also reduced the building's integrity of design. The other minor changes to the exterior and interior described above have not diminished the building's integrity of design significantly.

The building's integrity of *materials* remains high. It retains its original foundation (except where a section has been replaced on the northwest corner of the house), original clapboard siding, and much of its original exterior decorative woodwork. The original wood siding is now exposed again, having been covered by rolled asphalt siding with an imitation brick pattern during the mid-twentieth century. Although most of the windows on the house are modern replacements, one original cottage window with a leaded glass upper sash survives on the facade, and two other 1/1-light wood windows survive on the first story. The replacement windows are similar in appearance to the original windows, in most cases in the original openings. The rear porch retains some decorative woodwork that appears to be original, and which could be used to replicate the original porches on the front of the house. Much of the woodwork on the interior is also original, including the newel post, railings, and balusters of the staircase; baseboards; and most of the door and window moldings. Only the doors themselves have in most cases been replaced by modern slab doors.

The building's integrity of *workmanship* also remains high. As described above, the massing, roofline, door and window openings, and much of the original decorative woodwork on the exterior and interior remain essentially unchanged from the period of significance. Only the few features described above that have been replaced or modified no longer retain integrity of workmanship.

Because the house has not been altered significantly on the exterior since its period of significance, the house retains excellent integrity of *feeling*.

Because the house remains in use as an apartment and rooming house, essentially its historic function during its period of significance, it retains excellent integrity of *association*.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ETHNIC HERITAGE/BLACK

SOCIAL HISTORY

### Period of Significance

1919–1951

### Significant Dates

1919

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

### Architect/Builder

unknown

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### Statement of Significance

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

The Iowa Federation Home is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the areas of Education, Black Ethnic Heritage, and Social History, for its importance in illustrating African American responses to racial segregation in university student housing in Iowa City during the early to mid-twentieth century. The home provided housing to black female students at the University of Iowa when other housing options for black students in Iowa City were extremely limited. This allowed more black women to attend the University of Iowa during this period than might otherwise have been possible. The Iowa Federation Home is also significant under Criterion A as the building most closely associated with the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs (IFCWC), a significant statewide social, educational, cultural, and political organization of African American women in Iowa in the early to mid-twentieth century. The IFCWC never had a central home of its own, instead holding annual meetings in different cities in Iowa where its member clubs were located. Because the Iowa Federation Home is the only extant building significantly associated with this important statewide organization, the building's significance is at the state level. With more research, the property may also be found to be eligible under Criterion B for its association with African American community activist and civil rights leader Sue M. Brown. The period of significance of the property extends from 1919, when the IFCWC opened the Iowa Federation Home, to 1951, when the last students lived in the home under IFCWC ownership. Although the black students who occupied the house during the 1950–1951 academic year were male rather than female, their residence in the house during its final year of ownership by the IFCWC continued the building's use as a dormitory for black university students. The building's period of significance is therefore considered to end in 1951 rather than in 1950, the last year that black female students resided in the building. The house is a contributing resource in the College Hill Conservation District, a locally designated district in Iowa City.

### Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

(Iowa SHPO Additional Instructions: For properties not nominated under Criterion D, include a statement about whether any archaeological remains within or beyond the footprint of the property were assessed as part of this nomination under the subheading **Archaeological Assessment**.)

#### *History of Iowa City*

Iowa City was established in 1839 as Iowa's territorial capital, and a year later it also became the county seat of Johnson County. It served as the territorial and later state capital until the capital was moved to Des Moines in 1857. Iowa City continued to thrive after the state government left, in part because it remained the county seat of Johnson County, and in part because the State University of Iowa (now the University of Iowa) remained in the city. A railroad linking Iowa City with the Mississippi River and points east was completed to Iowa City in 1855, further integrating Iowa City's economy with the regional and national economies. Iowa City's economy in its early years was based in part on the commerce and industry that developed from the city's role as a shipping point for farm products from the surrounding agricultural areas, and in part on its role as the seat of county and state government. Although some industries thrived for a time, the city never attracted as much industry as the city leaders had hoped, and most of the city's factories were abandoned during the mid-twentieth century. However, the presence of the University of Iowa, in particular, has continued to attract both residents and wealth to Iowa City, allowing its economy to weather economic recessions more successfully than many other areas.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a general overview of the development of Iowa City focusing on its historic architectural resources, see Marlys A. Svendsen, "Historic Resources of Iowa City, Iowa," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Listing, 1992; copy on file, State Historic Preservation Office, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

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*Black Students at the University of Iowa, ca. 1875–1930*

The University of Iowa was established in 1847, but the first classes were not held until 1855. The University of Iowa was the first state university in the United States to admit men and women on an equal basis.<sup>2</sup> The university may also have admitted non-white students from the outset, although the first known African American student enrolled at the university was Alexander Clark, Jr., who received his law degree from the university in 1879.<sup>3</sup> By the early twentieth century, the university was divided into several colleges. Most undergraduates entered either the Liberal Arts or Applied Science college, but students that met certain additional requirements had the option of seeking degrees in one of several other colleges. The university's black students who entered colleges other than Liberal Arts or Applied Science during the first decades of the twentieth century most often studied in the colleges of Law, Medicine, Dentistry, or Pharmacy.

The university reportedly began keeping a record of the racial demographics of its students in 1922, but these early records appear no longer to be available. Currently available records at the university identify enrolled students by ethnicity only beginning in 1977.<sup>4</sup> For this reason, sources other than the university registrar's records have been consulted to estimate the number of black students attending the university prior to 1922.<sup>5</sup>

Based on the list of black students at the university compiled for the present nomination, no more than one black student is known to have been enrolled at the university in any given year between the 1870s and the mid-1890s. Two black students were enrolled in the 1895–1896 school year, and four in the following year, but the number of black students appears to have remained below five until 1907, when eight black students were enrolled.<sup>6</sup> The number of black students appears to have remained at around ten for the next several years, but it had increased to 16 in 1913. The number then grew quickly and fairly steadily until 1930, when 145 black students were recorded.<sup>7</sup>

The increase in the number of black students roughly paralleled the increase in the total student population at the university during this period. The total enrollment at the university remained between about 400 and 600 from the mid-1860s to the late 1880s. Starting in 1887, the number of students began increasing rapidly, reaching over 1,500 by 1900. The rate of growth increased further after the turn of the twentieth century. The student population increased fairly steadily from about 1,400 in 1903 to over 11,000 in 1940.<sup>8</sup> Although the rise in black student enrollment during the first

<sup>2</sup> John C. Gerber, *A Pictorial History of the University of Iowa* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988), pp. 6–11; Dorothy Schwieder, "Iowa: The Middle Land," in Marvin Bergman (editor), *Iowa History Reader* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2008), p. 9. The University of Iowa was originally, and officially still is, known as the State University of Iowa (abbreviated SUI), but this name began falling out of favor in the 1930s and 1940s, and it has not been used officially since 1964, when the board of regents adopted "The University of Iowa" as an official shorthand name for the university; see Jon Van, "SUI No More: Regents Okay Change to U. of I.," *The Daily Iowan* (Iowa City, Iowa), October 24, 1964, p. 1. The present nomination uses the modern shortened name.

<sup>3</sup> Hal S. Chase, "'You Live What You Learn': The African-American Experience in Iowa Education, 1839–2000," in Bill Silag, Susan Koch-Bridgeford, and Hal Chase (editors), *Outside In: African-American History in Iowa, 1838–2000* (Des Moines, Iowa: State Historical Society of Iowa, 2001), p. 140.

<sup>4</sup> Herbert Crawford Jenkins, *The Negro Student at the University of Iowa: A Sociological Study* (unpublished Master of Arts thesis, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, 1933), pp. 4–5; personal communication with Michelle Davenport, University of Iowa Office of the Registrar, November 13, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Two main sources have been used to compile these estimates. First, the *Iowa State Bystander* (later renamed *The Bystander*), an African American newspaper published in Des Moines, Iowa, beginning in 1894, often mentioned individual black students and occasionally published lists of black students attending the university. Second, University of Iowa student directories, available in the University of Iowa Libraries Special Collections, include one directory published by a private publisher in 1904, and a nearly continuous run of directories published by the university starting in Spring 1911. Student directories do not identify students by race, but they list local addresses. Local addresses can often be used to identify black students because racial segregation in housing led to certain addresses being occupied by black students for multiple years. A comprehensive, but not exhaustive, list of black female students at the university for most years between 1907 and 1946 was compiled in 1999 by Richard Breaux for his research on the women of the Iowa Federation Home; see Richard Breaux, "Women of 942 Iowa Avenue and other African-American Women at the University of Iowa before 1947," folder 1, Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs collection, Iowa Women's Archives, The University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.

<sup>6</sup> "Race Echoes," *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, Iowa), December 20, 1907, p. [8].

<sup>7</sup> In December 1913, the *Iowa State Bystander* reported that "[n]ever in the history of the State University of Iowa has there been so many colored students in attendance as is the case this year," although no number was specified; see "Colored Students in the State University of Iowa," *Iowa State Bystander*, December 19, 1913, p. 1. At least 16 black students were enrolled that year, based on the other sources cited above. The number of black students enrolled each year from 1922–1923 through 1932–1933 is included in Jenkins, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> "University of Iowa Enrollment Chart, 1856–1942," University of Iowa Office of the Registrar, available on the University of Iowa Libraries Special Collections web site, <http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/sc/archives/faq/enroll1856-1942/>, accessed November 14, 2017. The otherwise steady rate of increase was punctuated by occasional declines in the number of students enrolled, particularly during World War I and in the early years of the

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three decades of the twentieth century roughly paralleled the rise in overall enrollment, the rate of increase was somewhat greater for black students. Black students, who comprised a negligible percentage of the total student population at the turn of the twentieth century, represented about one percent of the total student population by 1921, and nearly 1.5 percent by 1930.

*Black Student Housing at the University of Iowa*

Iowa City, like most northern cities, has no history of municipal ordinances requiring racial segregation in housing. Instead, it has a long and continuing history of both *de jure* and *de facto* racial segregation stemming from the dominant American culture of white supremacy. This culture has informed numerous individual decisions by white property owners and real estate agents; written and unwritten policies of institutions such as mortgage lenders and the University of Iowa; and zoning laws, racial covenants in deeds, federal housing and mortgage insurance policies, and other local, state, and federal laws and policies that actively encouraged racially segregated housing during much of the twentieth century.<sup>9</sup>

Until the University of Iowa completed construction of its first student residence halls in the second decade of the twentieth century—Currier Residence Hall for women in 1913 and Quadrangle Residence Hall for men in 1920—all university students were expected to find housing through the local private housing market in Iowa City.<sup>10</sup> Black students at the University of Iowa entered the same housing market, but found their options severely limited by the practices of local white landlords and other property owners. Moreover, the university's construction of its first two residence halls was of no help to black students, since unwritten policies barred black students from residing in university dormitories until after World War II.<sup>11</sup>

When only a handful of black students attended the university, the limited number of housing options available to them in Iowa City were sufficient. Black male students typically lived either in their places of employment—hotels, commercial buildings, or racially segregated white fraternity houses—or else lived with one of the few African American families living in Iowa City. Black female students generally lived in the households of university professors or other members of the Iowa City community, typically working as domestic servants for those families.<sup>12</sup> Prior to the 1920s, only two local black families are known to have opened their doors to black university students.<sup>13</sup> One was the family of Ella Moore, who lived at 219 E. College Street with her daughter, hair weaver Daisy Lemme, from approximately 1907

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Great Depression.

<sup>9</sup> The literature describing this history is extensive. Important recent works that have attempted to push this “hidden” history into the mainstream include Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York: Liverwright Publishing Corp., a division of W. W. Norton & Co., 2017); Ira Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America* (New York, W. W. Norton & Co., 2005); and James W. Loewen, *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism* (New York: The New Press, 2005). Rothstein, in particular, argues that much of what we think of today as *de facto* segregation actually has a strong *de jure* component.

<sup>10</sup> For information on Currier and Quadrangle residence halls, see John Beldon Scott and Rodney P. Lehnertz, *The University of Iowa Guide to Campus Architecture* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2006), pp. 66–67, 150–151.

<sup>11</sup> Jenkins, p. 29. Currier Hall was “officially” desegregated in 1946 by five African American women—Esther Walls, Virginia Harper, Nancy Henry, Gwen Davis, and Leanne Howard—although Harper has stated that “the first African American women to live in the dorms went unacknowledged because they were ‘light-skinned’”; see Richard M. Breaux, “‘Maintaining a Home for Girls’: The Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs at the University of Iowa, 1919–1950,” *The Journal of African American History*, Volume 87, Cultural Capital and African American Education (Spring 2002), p. 249. The men’s dormitories—Quadrangle and later Hillcrest—presumably ended their unwritten policy of racial segregation at around the same time, although no published sources have been located that identify the date these dorms were desegregated. It should also be noted that according to one source, a clause in the 1919 Quadrangle constitution explicitly restricted that dormitory to white students, but this claim has not been corroborated elsewhere; see Larry Perl, “Jessup Era Good as (Old) Gold,” *The Daily Iowan* (Iowa City, Iowa), March 9, 1977, p. 8.

<sup>12</sup> These conclusions are based on a comparison of addresses of black students in University of Iowa student directories published in 1904 and 1910–1915 with the same addresses listed in the six Iowa City city directories published between 1901 and 1915. For information on black female students’ domestic work, see “Tag Day. Tag Day,” *The Bystander*, July 11, 1919, p. [4].

<sup>13</sup> The following discussion is derived from two databases compiled by the present author: Richard J. Carlson (compiler), “Addresses of Black Residents of Iowa City in the Early to Mid-Twentieth Century,” database compiled from federal and state census records and Iowa City city directories, 1900–1959 (copy on file, Office of the State Archaeologist, University of Iowa, Iowa City); Richard J. Carlson (compiler), “Black Students at SUI and their Addresses from Student Directories,” database of black students at the State University of Iowa, 1904–1927, compiled from student directories (copy on file, Office of the State Archaeologist, University of Iowa, Iowa City).

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to 1920.<sup>14</sup> The other was that of Charles and Lottie Donnegan, who lived at three different addresses during their time in Iowa City: 331 S. Madison Street (1910–1912), 637 S. Dodge Street (1913–1920), and 318–320 E. Benton Street (1921–ca. 1943).<sup>15</sup> Other black individuals or families rented rooms to university students in the 1920s and later. One was Charles Alberts, who operated a rooming house for African American lodgers at 914 S. Dubuque Street starting in 1914. He rented rooms to university students from 1920 to about 1926, and he was succeeded at the same address by other black individuals or families who rented to students into the 1960s.<sup>16</sup> Black male students who worked as shoe shiners at Short's Shoe Shine, operated by local black businessman Haywood D. Short, were able to rent rooms in Short's building at 18½ S. Dubuque Street.<sup>17</sup>

When the number of black students at the university began to grow in the first decade of the twentieth century, and especially in the 1910s and 1920s, the traditional housing options for black students became insufficient. Black male students, who comprised the majority of black students at the university in the first decades of the twentieth century, responded in 1914 by forming a chapter of a Greek-letter society, Kappa Alpha Psi (originally named Kappa Alpha Nu) fraternity, and renting a succession of buildings as fraternity houses. A second black fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha, established a chapter at the University of Iowa in 1922, during a period of rapid growth in the university's black student population.<sup>18</sup>

*Black Female Students and the Need for Rooming Houses/Dormitories*

The first black woman to enter the University of Iowa enrolled in the last full academic year of the nineteenth century, 1899–1900. Henrietta Jones of Albia, Iowa, was identified at the time of her enrollment as “the first colored female student to enter the University.”<sup>19</sup> Henrietta Jones does not appear to have returned for her second year to the university.<sup>20</sup> Another black female student, Beulah Winifred Burton of Red Oak, Iowa, reportedly attended during the 1907–1908 academic year, but died in the summer of 1908.<sup>21</sup>

The first black women who graduated from the university entered as freshmen in the fall of 1908. The two women, Adah Frances Hyde and Letta Cary, were residents of Des Moines, Iowa. Both took the four-year liberal arts course and graduated in the spring of 1912.<sup>22</sup> After graduation, Letta Cary was hired as Professor of Modern Languages at Bishop College, a historically black college in Marshall, Texas.<sup>23</sup> Adah Hyde was hired as a public school teacher in Ogden, Iowa.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Daisy Lemme was the mother of Allyn Lemme, who, with his wife Helen, rented their house on E. Prentiss Street to black university students and other black tenants during the mid-twentieth century. A biographical sketch of Helen Lemme is presented below. City directories show that the house at 219 E. College Street continued to be rented to African American tenants until the late 1940s, when the house appears to have been removed.

<sup>15</sup> Charles Donnegan was black and his wife Lottie was white. All of their known tenants whose race has been identified were black.

<sup>16</sup> Charles Alberts had operated a rooming house at this address since the house was built in 1914, but he is not known to have rented to university students until 1920. The best known of Alberts' successors were Elizabeth and Junious Tate, who operated the Tate Arms rooming house at this address from 1940 to 1961.

<sup>17</sup> For more on Haywood Short and his shoe shine business, see Julia Davis, “Short's Shoe Shine,” *The Negro History Bulletin* (January 1940), p. 54; Jean C. Florman, “Traces: Personal Accounts of a History Nearly Lost,” *Iowa City Magazine* (January 1995), pp. 14–18.

<sup>18</sup> A brief history of the formation of black Greek-letter societies in the United States and at the University of Iowa, including the formation of these two fraternity chapters, is presented below.

<sup>19</sup> “Iowa City Brieflets,” *Iowa State Bystander*, October 20, 1899, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> She is not listed in the “Students in All the Colleges” section of the 1900–1901 University Catalogue for the University of Iowa; see State University of Iowa, *The State University of Iowa Calendar, 1900–1901* (Iowa City: State University of Iowa, 1901), pp. 389–410. However, her entry in the 1925 Iowa State Census states that she had attended college or university for two years, so it is possible that she attended another college or university for a year (1925 Iowa State Census, Monroe County, Wayne Township [Henrietta Lobbins entry]), in the All Iowa, State Census Collection, 1836–1925, available on Ancestry.com (<https://www.ancestry.com/>); accessed 2018.

<sup>21</sup> Breaux, “Women of 942 Iowa Avenue and other African-American Women at the University of Iowa before 1947.”

<sup>22</sup> *Iowa State Bystander*, July 26, 1912, p. 1; captioned photographs and “Iowa City Notes,” *Iowa State Bystander*, August 2, 1912, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> “Des Moines Girl Appointed,” *Iowa State Bystander*, September 13, 1912, p. 1. She was hired in part through the influence of Des Moines attorney S. Joe Brown, who was formerly Chair of Ancient Languages at Bishop College. Brown was a University of Iowa alumnus and husband of Sue M. Brown, who took an active role in the establishment and operation of the Iowa Federation Home.

<sup>24</sup> “City News,” *Iowa State Bystander*, May 16, 1913, p. 1; “Ogden, Iowa,” *Iowa State Bystander*, May 16, 1913, p. [4]. The racially segregated black public school at which Hyde was hired was established by order of the state attorney general to accommodate the children of black coal miners in the Ogden area, after the local school district refused to allow these children to attend the area's regular public schools. The right of black students to attend the same public schools as white students had been affirmed by the state supreme court multiple times between 1868 and 1875,

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It is not known where the very first black female students at the University of Iowa lived while attending the university. The earliest places of residence that have been identified are those of Adah Hyde and Letta Cary. Letta Cary spent at least her final two years at the university living at 1011 Woodlawn in the household of university professor Elbert W. Rockwood, Professor of Chemistry and Toxicology and Head of the consolidated Department of Chemistry in the College of Liberal Arts from 1904 to 1920. Rockwood went on to house at least three other black female students through the 1916–1917 academic year: Iva J. McClain (1913–1915), Ola E. Calhoun (1915–1916), and Mildred I. Griffin (1916–1917).<sup>25</sup> Adah Hyde lived during her senior year, and likely also her freshman year, in the household of retired university librarian Joseph W. Rich at 427 N. Dubuque Street.<sup>26</sup> During her junior year, at least, she was living at 219 E. College Street, home of Ella Moore and Daisy Lemme. As mentioned above, they were one of only two black families in Iowa City at the time who rented rooms to black university students.

The number of black female students at the university rose from two in 1911–1912, the year that Adah Hyde and Letta Cary graduated, to at least five in Fall 1913, eight in 1914, ten in 1915, and 16 in 1916.<sup>27</sup> The number of black and white families in Iowa City willing and able to house black female students was sufficient so long as the number of such students remained low. By the fall of 1916, however, the number of black female students appeared to be increasing at an exponential rate, with double their number compared to just two years earlier.

The search for housing for black female students in 1916 must have strained all available resources, although all 16 students managed to find lodgings in Iowa City during that academic year. As a result of the 1916 housing crisis, however, the students began a search for a permanent home for the university's black female students that continued until the Iowa Federation Home was established in September 1919. Of particular concern to the black female students was their isolation, since most lived as the only black person in a white household. It is notable that none of the 16 black female students who were listed in the university's student directory in 1916–1917 are known to have lived together at the same address that year. Two students had no address listed, and the remaining 14 were listed at 14 different addresses. Only one student in that year was living with a local black family: Emily E. Gross, who lived at 219 E. College Street with Ella Moore. With the exception of one woman who lived in a hotel across the street from the university campus, all of the remaining black women enrolled in 1916–1917 appear to have lodged with white families—many but not all of them affiliated with the university—although it is possible that a few rented rooms from white landlords.<sup>28</sup>

The difficulty of these living arrangements was recorded in an appeal made by the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs in 1919 to raise funds for what became the Iowa Federation Home. This appeal detailed the difficulties faced by black female students at the university that compelled them to seek funds to acquire a home for their use:

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but this established law was ignored when the separate school for black children was established in Ogden. For more on the supreme court cases, see Richard, Lord Acton, and Patricia Nassif Acton, "A Legal History of African-Americans," in Silag, et al. (eds.), pp. 72–73.

<sup>25</sup> Carlson, "Black Students at SUI and their Addresses from Student Directories"; "City Locals," *The Bystander*, February 2, 1917, p. [3]. Rockwood's career is discussed in Clarence P. Berg, *The University of Iowa and Biochemistry: From their Beginnings* (Iowa City: The University of Iowa, 1980), pp. 38–47.

<sup>26</sup> In the 1909 city directory, Adah F. Hyde's address was given as 421 N. Dubuque Street, but Sanborn fire insurance maps published in 1906 and 1912 depict no building between 419 and 427 N. Dubuque Street, so "421" is most likely an error for "427"; see Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Maps of Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1906), p. 2; and Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Maps of Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1912), p. 2.

<sup>27</sup> Carlson, "Black Students at SUI and their Addresses from Student Directories." A few of the students in this database were identified as black in sources such the *Iowa State Bystander* (later *The Bystander*). However, by far the largest number of black students included in the database were identified based on their addresses listed in University of Iowa student directories. If a student was listed in at least one year at an address known to have been occupied by one or more black students or black residents in that year or an adjacent year, an attempt was made to locate that student in census records to identify their racial classification. In nearly all cases where such a student was identified in census records, they were found to be black. The only exception discovered is Ella Moore's house at 219 E. College Street, which appears to have been rented on at least one occasion to a white student: Julius R. Hecker in 1909. It should be noted that this method does not identify any black students who lived in Iowa City only in houses not typically occupied by black residents. The number of black students reported here therefore most likely underestimates the total number of black students at the university in any given year. Given the level of racial segregation common in Iowa City housing in the early to mid-twentieth century, however, it is believed that the number of black students reported here is close to the total number enrolled, at least for the years under consideration here.

<sup>28</sup> These conclusions are based on a comparison of the list of students' addresses in Carlson, "Black Students at SUI and their Addresses from Student Directories," with the entries for the same addresses in the 1915 and 1918 Iowa City city directories.



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The history of the school life of our girls at Iowa City has been one of struggles and humiliation. There are but few of our people in Iowa City and to get a place to stay the girls have gone into the homes of the other race to work—running to scho[o]l in the mornings without a chance to glance in the glass, hurrying back at noon to help with the mid-day meal, then another run to school. When the evening work was done, they were to[o] tired to study. There was no social life for these girls, when sick they were homeless and friendless.<sup>29</sup>

One possible solution might have been for black female students to live in Currier Hall, a university residence hall for female students that had opened in 1912. However, an unwritten policy prohibited black students from living there. Faced with limited housing options, and the difficulty of carrying out both school work and domestic work even when housing was available, the university's black female students began searching for other alternatives. By the spring semester of 1917, it appears that five of the students had found a common house to rent, although the location of this building is not known. The newspaper *The Bystander* reported in March 1917 that a visitor to Iowa City "was entertained at the home of the five university girls, who are as follows: Mayme [sic] Diggs, Helen Dameron, Alma [sic] Calhoun, Mabel Morgan and Helen Lucas."<sup>30</sup> This is the first time that any of the university women who would go on to help establish the Iowa Federation Home are known to have lived together in the same house, although the pattern continued for the next two-and-a-half years until the Iowa Federation Home was established in 1919. Diggs, Dameron, and Lucas, all of them freshmen in 1916–1917, were seniors in 1919–1920 when the Iowa Federation Home first went into operation.

Between Spring 1917 and Fall 1919, a group of students worked tirelessly to find a permanent home for black female students at the university. Iva Joiner McClain, who received her undergraduate degree from the university in 1917 and went on to attend graduate school at the same university, persuaded Mrs. Greta Knighton, a member of Iowa City's small African American community, to house a group of black female students in her house at 826 S. Dubuque Street during the fall semester of 1917.<sup>31</sup> The 1917 university student directory lists at least seven black female students at 826 S. Dubuque Street, representing all but two of the nine black female students who are known to have been enrolled that year.<sup>32</sup>

The arrangement with Mrs. Knighton was short-lived, however. Only a month after students arrived on campus, the residents of Mrs. Knighton's house made the following announcement in *The Bystander*:

The university girls, due to the inability to find a suitable place, have decided to start a home on a modest plan for university girls. The home will not only be this year, but for all time. Anyone who wishes to help this project along will be doing something for the higher education of Negro girls in Iowa. House furnishings or donations of any sort would be appreciated. We plan to move October 12, Saturday, to 432 [sic] E. Market street. . . . Do you know of a woman who would come and live with us and be our matron? That is one of our great needs.<sup>33</sup>

The address, given in the announcement as 432 E. Market Street, was an error for 932 E. Market Street.<sup>34</sup> A month after this announcement was made, *The Bystander* reported that:

<sup>29</sup> "Tag Day. Tag Day." *The Bystander*, July 11, 1919, p. [4].

<sup>30</sup> "City Locals," *The Bystander*, March 30, 1917, p. [4].

<sup>31</sup> "Iowa City Notes," *The Bystander*, September 21, 1917, p. 1. This note mistakenly gives Knighton's address as 821 S. Dubuque Street, but gives the correct address for one of the students living there, Iva Joiner McClain.

<sup>32</sup> Carlson, "Black Students at SUI and their Addresses from Student Directories."

<sup>33</sup> "Iowa City," *The Bystander*, October 12, 1917, p. [3].

<sup>34</sup> The correct address is given in both the 1918 student directory (for two students) and the 1918 Iowa City city directory (for seven students); see *Directory of Faculty and Students, 1918-1919* (Iowa City: The State University of Iowa, no date [Fall 1918]), pp. 14 and 15; and *Smith's Directory of Iowa City and Johnson County for 1909* (Rock Island, Illinois: Edgar Smith, 1909), pp. 55, 68, 69, 73, 99, 141, 142. The only other person listed in the 1918 city directory at this address was Marjory McClain, who was identified as an assistant at Klein Beauty Culture. She was most likely the younger sister of university student and house resident Iva Joiner McClain, based on the 1910 census of Sully County, South Dakota (*Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910—Population*, South Dakota, Sully County, Pearl Township, Enumeration District 405, Sheet 4A [John A. Joiner entry]).

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The colored women of the university have succeeded in getting a house. It is nicely located on Market street. Nine girls make their residence here and they have organized themselves [sic] on a club basis, with th[e] following officers: Miss Iva McClain, president; Miss Ola Calhoun, secretary. Miss Mamie Diggs, treasurer, and Miss Helen Dameron, business manager. The name of the club is the Alpha. The young women of the club are very grateful to their many friends, both white and colored, for their timely assistance. Especial note is due the club women of Des Moines for their help and encouragement. . . .

Miss Sweet of Des Moines arrived in Iowa City a week ago to take up her duties as matron of the Alpha house.<sup>35</sup>

In a history of the university students' efforts to establish a home for black female students published in 1919, it was reported that the money to rent this house came from the students' parents, and the furniture was donated by the university faculty.<sup>36</sup> In February or March 1918, Mrs. Sweet was replaced as house mother by Mrs. Mattie W. Dameron of Indiana, the mother of house resident Helen Dameron.<sup>37</sup>

Although the house at 932 E. Market Street was initially proclaimed to be a home "for all time," it appears to have been occupied by members of the Alpha Club only during the 1917–1918 academic year, and probably also through the summer of 1918. The student directory published in Fall 1918 lists only two students at that address—Mamie Diggs and Golda Crutcher—and the directory published in Spring 1919 lists none. It is not clear whether Diggs and Crutcher were actually still living at 932 E. Market Street after all other members of the Alpha Club had moved elsewhere, or whether they simply did not report their new address to the university in time for publication in the Fall 1918 directory. During the 1918–1919 academic year, the members of the Alpha Club (with the possible exceptions of Diggs and Crutcher in the fall semester) were living at 603 S. Lucas Street. This house had been rented by members of Kappa Alpha Psi, the University of Iowa's first black fraternity, during the previous three years, since the fall of 1915.<sup>38</sup> The original intention appears to have been for the women to occupy the fraternity house for the 1918–1919 academic year, then have the Kappa Alpha Psi members return to the house for the 1919–1920 academic year.<sup>39</sup> It is not clear why the fraternity members were willing or able to relinquish their house for a year. It may be that few fraternity members were living on campus at the time because many were serving in World War I, which ended in November 1918. In any case, as things turned out, the fraternity did not return to 603 S. Lucas Street in 1919, but instead rented a different house in 1919–1920.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>35</sup> "Iowa City Notes," *The Bystander*, November 23, 1917, p. 1. "Miss Sweet" has not been identified with certainty. In 1917, the Des Moines city directory listed only one person surnamed Sweet who was identified as black: Mary Sweet, a cook at 2910 Grand Avenue—the home of Helen Garver, widow of Garver Hardware Co. founder John A. Garver—who lived at 1064 11th Street; see *R. L. Polk & Co.'s Des Moines City and Valley Junction Directory, 1919* (Des Moines, Iowa: R. L. Polk & Co., 1919), pp. 453, 1115. The reference to the "club women of Des Moines" probably refers to one or more individual women's clubs of that city—and perhaps only to the Mary B. Talbert Club, mentioned in the following footnote—rather than to the statewide umbrella organization, the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs. The statewide organization does not appear to have become involved in the push for a permanent home for black female students at the university until 1919.

<sup>36</sup> "Tag Day. Tag Day," *The Bystander*, July 11, 1919, p. [4]. Some support also came from at least one women's club, the Mary B. Talbert Club in Des Moines, which sent \$5.00 to the university women in October 1917 ("City Locals," *The Bystander*, October 19, 1917, p. [3]).

<sup>37</sup> "Notes from Iowa City," *The Bystander*, March 1, 1918, p. [2]. Mattie Dameron's first name, not given in this source, is known from census records and city directories. She was the wife of James L. Dameron, a student at the University of Iowa in the 1890s who became a school teacher and later assistant principal at the segregated black high school in Madison, Indiana. James Dameron returned to complete his undergraduate degree at the University of Iowa in the late 1910s, when he was in his 50s; see Edgar Smith, *Smith's Directory of Iowa City and Johnson County, Iowa, for 1919–20* (Dorchester, Massachusetts: Edgar Smith, 1919), p. 77; *Iowa State Bystander*, November 27, 1896, p. [4]; "City News," *Iowa State Bystander*, August 7, 1914, p. 1; "Negro, Aged 50, Iowa Student," *The Bystander*, November 7, 1919, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup> The first black fraternity chapter formed at the University of Iowa was the Delta Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi (named Kappa Alpha Nu from its founding at Indiana University in 1911 until the name was changed in 1915), which was established on March 7, 1914; see "Iowa Negroes Organize College Fraternity," *Iowa State Bystander*, March 13, 1914, pp. 1 and 3. It is not clear whether this fraternity had a chapter house in 1914–1915. The student directory from that year lists the fraternity's known members at multiple addresses—none of them at 603 S. Lucas Street—but two are listed at Kappa Alpha Nu house, for which no address was specified. Oddly, the 1919 history of the efforts of the black female students to secure permanent living quarters for themselves states that the previous year "the boys of the other race rented their home to our girls;" see "Tag Day. Tag Day," *The Bystander*, July 11, 1919, p. [4]. The fraternity house occupied by the female students was that of the university's only black fraternity at that time, however, not a white fraternity.

<sup>39</sup> "Tag Day. Tag Day," *The Bystander*, July 11, 1919, p. [4].

<sup>40</sup> Iowa City city directories do not identify the occupants of the house at 603 S. Lucas Street in either 1919 or 1922. The house was destroyed by fire in January 1922, at which time it was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Sentman; see "Fire Wrecks Sentman Home," *Iowa City [Iowa] Press-*

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It is not known whether any appeal was made to the University of Iowa administration during this time to assist in securing a permanent home for black students, male or female. As described below, the first known appeals to the university in this regard did not come until after the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs began its fundraising drive in 1919. Between 1916 and 1919, the push to secure a permanent dormitory for black female students appears to have come almost entirely from the students themselves, with assistance from their families, university faculty, black alumni of the university, Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity, and one or more black women's clubs. Through these resources, the university women were able to stay together in a single building for the two-and-one-half years before their dreams were realized in 1919 with the establishment of the Iowa Federation Home.

*Black Sororities and the Delta Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta*

The university students' push to secure a permanent dormitory for black female students was part of a larger effort to increase social bonds among African American students at the university through social organizations. In particular, the unity shown by the women in trying to secure a dormitory for their use also reinforced the social bonds that led to the establishment of the first chapter of a black sorority at the University of Iowa.

The first fraternities and sororities for African American undergraduate students on university campuses in the United States were established in the first decade of the twentieth century. The earliest black fraternities were Alpha Phi Alpha (founded in 1906 at Cornell University) and Kappa Alpha Psi (originally Kappa Alpha Nu) (1911, Indiana University), while the earliest sororities were Alpha Kappa Alpha (1908, Howard University) and Delta Sigma Theta (1913, Howard University). The basic goals of these fraternities and sororities, like all Greek-letter organizations, were to form social bonds between students and to provide an academic and social support system while in college and a potential employment network upon graduation. Historically black fraternities and sororities, most of which were founded during the depths of the Jim Crow era of racial segregation in the early twentieth century, also served functions unique or of particular importance to the African American community. They provided social and academic networks to black students who would likely have been denied full access to these opportunities at predominantly white universities. They were able to provide housing to African American students at a time when those students were denied access to most of the student housing available to white students. Finally, their focus on scholarship and achievement made them closer to honor societies such as Phi Beta Kappa than to the more socially oriented white fraternities and sororities. This helped to prepare black students for future leadership positions at a time when black students had far fewer opportunities for success than their white counterparts.<sup>41</sup>

Delta Sigma Theta sorority was formed in 1913 at Howard University, a historically black university in Washington, D.C. The next chapter of the sorority opened in 1914 at Wilberforce University in Ohio, also a historically black university. The next three chapters opened at predominantly white universities: the University of Pennsylvania in 1918, and the University of Iowa and Ohio State University in 1919.<sup>42</sup> The formation of the Delta Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta at the University of Iowa was closely intertwined with the black female students' search for a permanent dormitory.

The Alpha Club, mentioned above as the organization of black female students at the time they moved into 932 E. Market Street in the fall of 1917, led directly to the formation of the Delta Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta sorority. The

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*Citizen*, January 24, 1922, p. 1. Based on the addresses of known Kappa Alpha Psi members listed in university student directories, it appears that members of the fraternity rented 630 S. Johnson Street in 1919, no single house in 1920, and 110 E. Burlington Street in 1921. Only in 1922 were they able to rent a home for any longer period. This was 301 S. Dubuque Street, which the fraternity occupied until the mid-1930s. The difficulties of Kappa Alpha Psi members to rent or purchase a chapter house during this period are described in a November 1921 letter from fraternity member William Edwin Taylor to the Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). As Taylor explains, "No one [in Iowa City] will rent to colored fraternities; and no one will sell in livable localities. It is almost impossible in the whole city to find a decent room to live in. The fraternity of which I am a member, to take advantage of this situation, bought a house on contract of sale last summer. The moment it became known that we had bought, a powerful but sinister organization, raised money to keep us from gaining possession. The old tenant, whose lease was up Sept. 1, has refused to move" (William Edwin Taylor, letter of November 2, 1921, to James Weldon Johnson, Secretary NAACP, New York, in NAACP Branch Files, Des Moines, Iowa, 1916-1924, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress; digital image available on the ProQuest History Vault web site, at <https://hv.proquest.com/historyvault/>).

<sup>41</sup> Paula Giddings, *In Search of Sisterhood: Delta Sigma Theta and the Challenge of the Black Sorority Movement* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1988), pp. 15-19.

<sup>42</sup> Giddings, pp. 69-77.

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Alpha Club, in turn, was only the latest in a succession of organizations formed by the university's black female students for their own academic and social betterment. The first, the Mary Church Terrell Club, was formed in the fall of 1913, which was either the first or second year that more than two black women attended the university.<sup>43</sup> At the time the university's Mary Church Terrell Club was formed, its stated purpose was to "inculcate high ideals in the girls. The work will be along literary lines, with emphasis placed upon the achievements among Negroes."<sup>44</sup>

This club is not known to have lasted beyond the 1913–1914 academic year, but it was succeeded in the fall of 1914, with essentially the same officers, by the G. S. U. I. Historian Richard Breaux has interpreted "G. S. U. I." to stand for "Girls of the State University of Iowa," although this could not be confirmed from contemporary sources.<sup>45</sup> The G. S. U. I. may have functioned more as a social club than did the Mary Church Terrell Club, since the references to the club in the *Iowa State Bystander* (later *The Bystander*) referred far more often to dinners, parties, and other social events than to lectures or other more academically oriented activities. The club did, however, send its members to an Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs (IFCWC) meeting as early as 1915, three years before the first known appeal by the university women to the IFCWC for help in establishing a permanent dormitory.<sup>46</sup> The G. S. U. I. apparently operated for three years, through the 1916–1917 academic year, but no reference to it was found in *The Bystander* after installation of new officers in December 1916.<sup>47</sup>

The Alpha Club, formed by the university's black female students in the fall of 1917 at the time the women moved to 932 E. Market Street, appears to have been a successor organization to the G. S. U. I. The Alpha Club may have been formed with the express intention of later joining a black sorority. A university rule in force three years later, at the time the Theta Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity was formed at the University of Iowa, stated that "a group desiring to become affiliated with a Greek letter society should first be formed as a club and remain together for one year."<sup>48</sup> Whether or not the Alpha Club was formed expressly for this purpose, all members of the Alpha Club who attended the university in April 1919 were charter members of the Delta Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta. As described in *The Bystander*:

The Alpha Club of Negro Student women, an outgrowth of S. U. I. formed some six [sic] years ago, are pledged to the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and will become full members during the second week of April and nine student women and one alumnus, Miss Adah Hyde, will be initiated on that date. The girls at the University to join are Eliazbeth [sic] Gross, Ola Calhoun, seniors; Helen Dameron-Beshears, Helen Lucas, Mamie Diggs, juniors; Golda Crutcher, sophomore; Harriet Alexander and Imogene Wilson, freshmen.<sup>49</sup>

The list of women who were charter members of the Delta Chapter varies slightly depending on the source. A history of Delta Sigma Theta published in 1988 includes the names of only eight women rather than the nine listed

<sup>43</sup> As mentioned below, Mary Church Terrell was the first president of the National Association of Colored Women (later the National Federation of Colored Women's Clubs), and the namesake of many black women's clubs throughout the country.

<sup>44</sup> "Colored Students in the State University of Iowa," *Iowa State Bystander*, December 19, 1913, p. [5].

<sup>45</sup> Breaux, "Maintaining a Home for Girls," p. 243.

<sup>46</sup> "Iowa City, Iowa," *Iowa State Bystander*, June 4, 1915, p. [4]. At the 1915 meeting, the club president spoke briefly to the IFCWC about the university, but no contemporary evidence suggests that financial or other appeals were made at that time. Although no contemporary source records such an appeal, a booklet published in 1929 states that at the 1915 IFCWC meeting, the university women "plead [sic] with these [IFCWC] women to give them some assistance in the procuring of a dormitory;" see *Iowa Federation Home Operated by Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs* (no place of publication [Des Moines, Iowa?]: Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, 1929), p. [1]. If an appeal was made in 1915, nothing came of it for another four years, as described in greater detail below.

<sup>47</sup> "Iowa City," *The Bystander*, December 29, 1916, p. [2].

<sup>48</sup> Jenkins, p. 6. An article published in the University of Iowa student newspaper at the time the Alpha Phi Alpha chapter was formed in 1922 stated that a local chapter of a Greek-letter organization had to be established for two years before it could join a national organization; see "Social Committee Limits the Senior Hop Committee to Sixteen Members; Approves Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity and 2 Clubs," *The Daily Iowan* (Iowa City, Iowa), February 22, 1922, p. 1. It is not clear which requirement was correct in 1922, and whether either was in effect in 1919, when the Delta Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta was formed.

<sup>49</sup> "Clubs. New Sorority at State University," *The Bystander*, April 4, 1919, p. [3]. Since the Alpha Club had been formed only during the previous academic year, the reference to "S. U. I." (perhaps a mistake for G. S. U. I.?) having been formed six years earlier may indicate that all of the social organizations for black female students, from the Mary Church Terrell Club through the Alpha Club, were considered to be a single continuous organization.

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above, omitting Golda Crutcher and Elizabeth Imogene Wilson, but including a second alumna, “Violetta (London) Fields.” Fields was presumably the same person recorded in student directories as Vaeletta London, who appears to have graduated in 1916.<sup>50</sup> The eight women who joined the Delta Chapter in April 1919 appear to have included every undergraduate black woman then enrolled at the university. Most of these women are shown in a photograph of the university students published during the fund drive for the Iowa Federation Home in 1919 (Figure 9).

*Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs*

Having tried for a year without success to secure a permanent home for the university’s black female students, a student representative attended a meeting of the Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs (IFCWC) in 1918 in an attempt to attract financial and other assistance for their cause. The IFCWC (originally named the Iowa State Federation of Afro-American Women’s Clubs) was established in Ottumwa, Iowa, in 1902 as an umbrella organization to coordinate the efforts of individual African American women’s organizations around the state.

The IFCWC was part of a more general women’s club movement that had grown dramatically over the second half of the nineteenth century,

as middle-class women of all races acquired more leisure time and more education than their mothers had. At first, they offered their talents to their churches, raising money and carrying out charitable work. . . . Many women, wishing to continue their education in an informal setting, organized clubs focused on literature, art, or music. Others formed clubs to discuss timely issues or civic concerns. Expanding their focus and interest beyond home and family, these clubs often tackled local social problems, founding settlement houses, homes for the indigent and elderly, and orphanages. They campaigned for better treatment for the mentally ill, for a more humane approach to problems of poverty, and—though sometimes in a quiet way—for political issues such as women’s suffrage and prohibition. Women discovered that participation in clubs provided an arena in which they could develop leadership skills.

The urge for social betterment and self-improvement motivated both white and black women, of course, but black women were spurred on by the need to disprove negative images of black women that were widely accepted in American white society. While white women functioned under the popular belief that they were pure, moral, and uniquely designed by nature to provide a civilizing influence on society, black women were often portrayed as the opposite of their white counterparts: immoral, unintelligent, and unable to rise above the so-called “primitive” culture from which their ancestors had been exported as slaves. As more black women acquired education and moved into the American middle classes, they sought to demonstrate that they themselves did not conform to this racist stereotype, and to help their less affluent sisters rise above it as well. Like their white counterparts, these women formed clubs and organizations and looked around for ways in which they could help their communities.

Likewise, in the final decades of the 19th century, Jim Crow attitudes and practices led to the founding of black schools and colleges, where, as W. E. B. Du Bois termed it, a “Talented Tenth” would be educated and equipped to uplift the entire race. Urban black communities banded together to found institutions for social services; many of these were funded—and at times administered—by African American women’s clubs.<sup>51</sup>

A national umbrella organization, the National Association of Colored Women (later known as the National Association of Colored Women’s Clubs), was formed in 1896 with the merger of two smaller associations. Its first president was Mary Church Terrell, for whom many black women’s clubs were named in the early twentieth century,

<sup>50</sup> Giddings, p. 74; Carlson, “Black Students at SUI and their Addresses from Student Directories.”

<sup>51</sup> Anne Beiser Allen, “Sowing Seeds of Kindness—and Change: A History of the Iowa Association of Colored Women’s Clubs,” *Iowa Heritage Illustrated*, Vol. 83, No. 1 (Spring 2002), pp. 3–4.

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including one at the University of Iowa mentioned above. The Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs became a member of the national organization in 1910.<sup>52</sup>

Before it took the lead in the drive to acquire a permanent home for black female students at the University of Iowa, the IFCWC was involved in other related initiatives. First, starting in 1912, the Federation had taken steps to establish a home for young working black women and elderly black women in Des Moines. They purchased a home on contract for \$2,000 in 1915 or 1916, but the project ran into legal difficulties over ownership and had been abandoned by 1917.<sup>53</sup> Second, in 1918, on the recommendation of outgoing Federation president Sue M. Brown, the IFCWC established a Scholarship Loan Fund Committee, often called simply the "Scholarship Committee." Its primary purpose was to establish a scholarship fund "available for worthy Negro boys and girls desiring to secure a college education."<sup>54</sup> But, as described below, the same committee also took the lead a year later in raising funds and purchasing the Iowa Federation Home.

At the same annual meeting of the IFCWC in May 1918 in which the Scholarship Fund was established, a communication was read "from the colored girl student [sic] at the Iowa State University, asking Mrs. Joe Brown and the Federation to help them establish a permanent home for colored students."<sup>55</sup> University student Iva McClain read an "[i]nteresting paper" immediately afterwards, but its subject was not identified, and it does not appear to have been directly related to the appeal for assistance for a dormitory. The IFCWC had no recorded response to the appeal at this time, nor to a similar appeal made nine months later in February 1919. The IFCWC Scholarship Committee later identified lack of funds as their reason for not responding to the February 1919 request.<sup>56</sup>

At the annual meeting of the IFCWC three months later, in May 1919, a presentation to the Federation by Mamie Diggs, a student at the university, on the need for a home was supported by Adah Hyde, the university alumna mentioned above as taking an active role in trying to find the university women a permanent home. This time, the IFCWC "decided that it be left to the scholarship committee to take definite steps to help these girls."<sup>57</sup>

Barely a week later, the Scholarship Committee announced a statewide campaign to raise funds for the university students' home. Appeals were made to individual clubs and their members, as well as to black University of Iowa alumni and other individuals of means. Individuals could also contribute through a statewide tag day sale held July 18–

<sup>52</sup> Allen, pp. 4, 6; Breaux, "Maintaining a Home for Girls," p. 238.

<sup>53</sup> An article to establish an Industrial School for Girls, which soon morphed into a call for a home for young working women and older women, first appeared in the IFCWC's by-laws in 1912; see *Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Session of the Iowa State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs* (1912), p. 7; *Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Session of the Iowa State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs* (1913), p. 6; *Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Session of the Iowa State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs* (1914), pp. 7, 10; *Proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Session of the Iowa State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs* (1915), pp. 10, 16; *Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Session of the Iowa State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs* (1916), pp. 9, 11, 13, 15–16, 18; and *Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Session of the Iowa State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs* (1917), p. 13 (all of these IFCWC proceedings, as well as the ones cited below, are arranged chronologically and housed in Box 1, Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs Papers, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa). See also Allen, p. 10. According to Allen, "financial problems and organizational details had stymied the project."

<sup>54</sup> "Report of the 17th Annual Session of the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs," *The Bystander*, June 14, 1918, p. 1. It is not clear whether the Scholarship Committee was created in May 1918 or whether only the scholarship fund was created then. The 1929 Iowa Federation Home booklet states that in May 1917, outgoing president Sue M. Brown "appointed a committee to devise some means of assisting the Negro young women at the university" (*Iowa Federation Home Operated by Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs*, p. [3]). This appears to refer to the Scholarship Committee, although there is no other indication that the assistance was intended only for women or that it was made in direct response to the University of Iowa students' request for a home for black female students, as the booklet implies.

<sup>55</sup> *Proceedings of the Seventeenth Annual Session of the Iowa State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs* (1918), p. 11; located in Box 1, Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs Papers. Mrs. Joe Brown was Sue M. Brown.

<sup>56</sup> Roberta M. Bailey (compiler), *Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Session of the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs Held in Odd Fellows Hall, Marshalltown, Iowa, May 26, 27, 28 Inclusive, 1919* (no publisher or place of publication [Des Moines: Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs?], no date of publication [ca. 1919]), p. 10; located in Box 1, Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs Papers.

<sup>57</sup> Roberta M. Bailey (compiler), *Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Session of the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs Held in Odd Fellows Hall, Marshalltown, Iowa, May 26, 27, 28 Inclusive, 1919* (no publisher or place of publication [Des Moines: Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs?], no date of publication [ca. 1919]), pp. 10, 14–15; located in Box 1, Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs Papers. It is clear from the chronology presented here that the chain of events from the 1915 IFCWC meeting at which the university women first made a presentation, through the establishment of the Scholarship Committee in 1918, to the establishment of the Iowa Federation Home in 1919, was not a straightforward progression towards the ultimate goal of establishing a permanent dormitory for university women, as it is presented in the 1929 Iowa Federation Home booklet, and in other sources relying on that account, such as Breaux, "Maintaining a Home for Girls," p. 239–240. Instead, the initiative came almost exclusively from the university women until May 1919, and the efforts of the IFCWC towards helping black university students in Iowa prior to that time were not focused on the goal of establishing a home for university women in Iowa City.

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19, with the proceeds going towards the home fund.<sup>58</sup> The appeals focused on improving the condition of the “Negro race” in Iowa. “Would you better the condition of the Negro race, make it stronger intellectually, morally and socially,” urged one appeal, “then educate the girl of today, the mother of tomorrow.”<sup>59</sup>

The University of Iowa was not involved in this fundraising campaign, although it played an indirect role. On July 25, 1919, at the request of Helen Dameron-Beshears, University President Walter A. Jessup wrote to Helen Downey, chair of the Scholarship Committee, endorsing the IFCWC’s fundraising efforts to secure money for a black women’s dormitory. Three weeks later, Helen Downey wrote again to President Jessup saying that the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce had blocked the IFCWC’s attempts to raise funds. It is not clear what objection the Chamber of Commerce had to the fund drive, or what authority it had to forbid the drive. The Chamber reportedly asked the university to buy a home for the black female students, a course of action that the IFCWC endorsed. If that wasn’t possible, Downey said, she requested that the university use its influence with the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce to allow the IFCWC to continue with its fundraising campaign. Since the university president was then on vacation, the university’s Dean of Women, Nellie Aurner, responded by saying that the university could not purchase a home for the black female students since the state legislature had not appropriated funds for additional dormitories. This letter was apparently sufficient to convince the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce that its preferred option would not take place, so by August 25, the Chamber allowed the IFCWC to proceed with their fund drive.<sup>60</sup>

In August 1919, the Scholarship Committee had identified a house in Iowa City that met their needs and which the owner was willing to sell to an African American organization for occupancy by black students. The fundraising campaign raised \$2,047, of which \$1,000 was used for a down payment on the house and another \$1,000 on furnishings and other expenses. The deed was signed on September 3, 1919. As reported the following year by the chair of the Scholarship Committee:

The place has nine large rooms, bath, hard wood floors, good attic, cellar, furnaces, etc. It had gas for illumination but we installed electricity at a cost of \$25. Had the necessary plumbing done and spent two weeks and moved the furniture the young ladies had into the home and bought other furniture and made it as comfortable as our limited means would allow. . . .

I need not tell you the struggle we had to secure a place in Iowa City, but I might say we grabbed this place as our last chance, an ideal place on the avenue.<sup>61</sup>

According to historian Richard Breaux, the Iowa Federation Home was “one of the very few women’s dormitories in the nation owned and operated by a formal group of African American women.”<sup>62</sup> It is certainly the only one known in Iowa, although no information was discovered during the research for the present nomination on whether other black women’s dormitories were established in other states, and, if so, how they were funded.

<sup>58</sup> “Women’s Clubs Begin Drive,” *The Bystander*, June 6, 1919, p. 1; “Tag Day. Tag Day,” *The Bystander*, July 11, 1919, p. [4].

<sup>59</sup> *Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs \$10,000 Drive for Girls’ Home at Iowa City* (no author, publisher, or place of publication [Des Moines: Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs?], no date of publication [1919]), in the Walter A. Jessup Papers at the University of Iowa, available in the University of Iowa Libraries’ Iowa Digital Library, at <http://digital.lib.uiowa.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/aawiowa/id/2044/rec/5>; accessed January 21, 2018.

<sup>60</sup> Correspondence between Helen Downey and University of Iowa Administration, 1919, in the Walter A. Jessup Papers, 1916–1934, University of Iowa Libraries, University Archives. Also available in the African American Women in Iowa Digital Collection, at <http://digital.lib.uiowa.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/aawiowa/id/2039/rec/42>; accessed April 29, 2018.

<sup>61</sup> Mrs. Selby Johnson (compiler), *Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Session of the Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs Held in Bethel A. M. E. Church, Davenport, Iowa, May 24–26 Inclusive, 1920* (no publisher or place of publication [Des Moines: Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs?], no date of publication [ca. 1920]), pp. 8, 9, 16; *Minutes of the Twentieth Annual Convention of the Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs Held at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, May, 1921* (no publisher or place of publication [Des Moines: Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs?], no date of publication [ca. 1921]); *\$10,000, Students’ Home Drive*, undated (1919) IFCWC brochure filed together with the 1921 Minutes; all located in Box 1, Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs Papers.

<sup>62</sup> Richard M. Breaux, “Facing Hostility, Finding Housing: African American Students at the University of Iowa, 1920s–1950s,” *Iowa Heritage Illustrated*, Vol. 83, No. 1 (Spring 2002), p. 14.

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*The Iowa Federation Home at 942 Iowa Avenue*

The house selected for the student dormitory by the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs was a former single-family home located at 942 Iowa Avenue. The date of construction of the house is not known. Stylistically it appears to date to the 1880s or 1890s, based on its stone foundation, complex massing with multiple gables, tall and narrow windows, cottage window with leaded glass upper sash, and turned and jigsaw-cut gable ornamentation.<sup>63</sup> The property was owned and occupied by the family of Joseph Warren (J. W.) Clark and his wife Sophia Clark from the 1860s or earlier until 1891, when it was sold to farmer William H. Wait (or Waite). The Wait family, which included William's wife Abigail and at least three adult children recorded in the 1900 census, owned the property until 1907. The present house may have been built for a member of the Clark family, but it was more likely built in or shortly after 1891 for the Waits. The sales price of the property more than doubled between 1891 and 1907, from \$2,000 to \$4,500, a period during which the national inflation rate was essentially zero.<sup>64</sup>

In 1907, William H. Wait's heirs sold the property to Susanne Sunier, widow of Iowa City watchmaker and jeweler Aime Sunier, who died the same year. She lived at 942 Iowa Avenue with at least six of her adult and minor children and step-children until 1919, when she sold the property to the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs.<sup>65</sup> It is not known why Susanne Sunier, unlike most other landowners in Iowa City, was willing to sell her property in an otherwise white neighborhood to an African American organization for use by black students. Her status as an immigrant may have been a factor. According to census records, she was born and raised in Switzerland, and only came to the United States in 1881, when she was in her twenties.

For the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, and for the university students who had fought for years to establish a permanent home, the acquisition of this house in September 1919 was a major victory. However, the funds raised through the efforts of the IFCWC were able to pay only for the \$1,000 down payment on the \$5,300 property, as well as the first year's principal and interest. The Iowa Federation Home ran into financial difficulties in 1922 and 1923. Iowa's governor at the time, Nathan E. Kendall, saved the Home from foreclosure by purchasing the mortgage, canceling the interest, and donating about one-sixth of the principal.<sup>66</sup>

The racial attitudes of the neighboring property owners also added to the difficulty in purchasing the Home and to the financial cost to the IFCWC. In particular, a group described as a "white neighborhood group" objected to the purchase. According to the IFCWC, as they attempted to close the deal on the Home, "they found there was a tax

<sup>63</sup> No evidence was uncovered during the research for the present nomination to support the claim given in one source that the house was a farmhouse in 1852; see Peter Boylan, "This Old House: An Isle of Pride, Acceptance," *The Daily Iowan* (Iowa City, Iowa), April 18, 2001, p. 1A. A 1½-story front-gabled house is shown on or near the site of the present house on a bird's-eye view map of Iowa City published in 1868, but that house was either substantially remodeled into—or more likely completely replaced by—the present house in the 1880s or 1890s; see A. Ruger, *Bird's Eye View of Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa* (Chicago: Chicago Lithographing Company, 1868).

<sup>64</sup> For the inflation rate between 1891 and 1907, based on the Consumer Price Index, see Morgan Friedman, The Inflation Calculator, at <https://westegg.com/inflation/>; accessed January 19, 2018. For information on the Clark and Wait families and their ownership of this property, see "Charles Clapp Clark" in *The Story of Iowa: The Progress of an American State*, Volume III: Family and Personal History (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1952), pp. 319–320; Johnson County, Iowa, Auditor's Office, Transfer Books; Johnson County, Iowa, Recorder's Office, Deed Book 53, p. 514, Book 58, p. 461, Book 65, p. 472, Book 93, pp. 134–135, and Book 126, p. 466; Johnson County, Iowa, Recorder's Office, Mortgage Book 26, p. 375; *Twelfth Census of the United States* (1900), Schedule No. 1—Population, Iowa, Johnson County, Iowa City, Ward 4, Supervisor's District 2, Enumeration District 85, Sheet 8B (William H. Waite entry). The house was possibly built for J. W. Clark's widow Sophia, who died in 1884, or for her son Charles C. Clark, who bought the property from Sophia Clark's heirs in 1885, but that would not explain the great jump in sales price between 1891 and 1907. Moreover, some of the architectural features of the house, particularly the cottage window, would have been unusual before the mid-1880s, suggesting that the house was most likely not built for Sophia Clark. Charles C. Clark moved to Burlington, Iowa, after earning his law degree from the University of Iowa in 1886, so he is also unlikely to have had a new house built between 1886 and 1891. Sophia Clark sold a half interest in the property in 1883 to Eliza D. Wright, who was evidently living on the site with Sophia Clark's son Harold W. Clark at the time of the 1885 Iowa state census (Iowa State Census [1885], Statistics of Population, Johnson County, Iowa City, Ward 4, p. 170 [Eliza D. Wright entry]); see All Iowa, State Census Collection, 1836–1925, database on Ancestry.com; accessed 2018. The property was not reunited under a single owner until it was sold to W. H. Wait in 1891.

<sup>65</sup> Iowa State Census (1885), Statistics of Population, Johnson County, Iowa City, Ward 3, p. 170 (Amy [sic] Sunier entry); *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910—Population*, Iowa, Johnson County, Iowa City, Ward 4, Supervisor's District 2, Enumeration District 90, Sheet 10B (Susanna [sic] Sunier entry); Aime Sunier entry, Oakland Cemetery, Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa, on Find A Grave internet web site, at <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/144330542/aime-sunier>; accessed January 19, 2018; Johnson County, Iowa, Recorder's Office, Deed Book 93, p. 134, Book 126, p. 466.

<sup>66</sup> Breaux, "Maintaining a Home for Girls," p. 242. Breaux suggests that the governor's interest stemmed from his connection to Albia, Iowa, near Buxton, a coal-mining area with a large African American population.



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assessment pending on an extra lot. This they thought would not come up. But angry because we bought, neighbors began to ask a reassessment of this lot and were successful in getting it through court, and it was reassessed [at] \$179, which is to be paid for in four payments.”<sup>67</sup>

It is not clear when the IFCWC finally paid off the mortgage on the home. The final payment must have been made sometime between 1924, when the IFCWC launched a campaign to raise additional funds for that purpose, and 1929, when a booklet describing the Iowa Federation Home describes the home as “fully paid for.”<sup>68</sup> The final payment was most likely made in or shortly after 1924. As reported following the June 1924 IFCWC annual meeting in Iowa City, “The year opened with \$2,600 still due on the home. At the convention here, this week, \$1,400 was ‘laid on the table,’ for the good cause, and when pledges are paid, the indebtedness will be wiped out.”<sup>69</sup>

After the Home was fully paid for in the mid- to late 1920s, it was “remodeled and beautified” by Archie A. Alexander, the first African American graduate of the University of Iowa’s College of Engineering. Alexander worked as an engineering contractor after graduating in 1912, and was best known for his work on municipal bridges and sewer systems.<sup>70</sup> He was also, not coincidentally, the husband of IFCWC member Audra A. Alexander, who served on the board of trustees of the Iowa Federation Home and later, from 1930 to 1932, served as the Federation’s state president.<sup>71</sup> No account appears to have been preserved describing the changes made to the Iowa Federation Home by Archie Alexander. The home was again “renovated and re-decorated within and without” during the summer of 1929, but again, the specifics of this renovation are not known.<sup>72</sup>

No full record of the changes that were made to the house under the ownership of the IFCWC is available. One change that altered the appearance of the house but did not significantly affect its historic integrity was the introduction, probably in the 1940s, of asphalt sheet siding with an imitation brick pattern.<sup>73</sup> This siding is shown in photographs of the house taken in the late 1940s and 1950s, but it was removed sometime after the IFCWC sold the property in 1951.

*The Iowa Federation Home, 1919–1951*

Although the IFCWC’s dormitory for black women at the University of Iowa is generally referred to as the “Iowa Federation Home” or simply the “Federation Home,” the formal name appears to have been the “Iowa Federation Home for Colored Girls.”<sup>74</sup> This last name has therefore been adopted here as the property’s historic name. The IFCWC operated the home at 942 Iowa Avenue for 32 years, from the 1919–1920 academic year until 1950–1951. For most of its history, the Iowa Federation Home fulfilled its original purpose of housing black female students at the University of

<sup>67</sup> Breaux, “‘Maintaining a Home for Girls,’” p. 242, quoting 1920 IFCWC Minutes. Brackets in Breaux.

<sup>68</sup> Breaux, “‘Maintaining a Home for Girls,’” p. 244; *Iowa Federation Home Operated by Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs*, p. [3].

<sup>69</sup> “Colored Girls’ Home Dedicated Here Last Night,” *Iowa City [Iowa] Press-Citizen*, June 5, 1924, p. 12. One source states that the announcement that the home’s mortgage had been paid off came at the 1924 meeting; see Allen, p. 11. This claim is at odds with the reporting in the newspaper article cited here. The only source cited by Allen that might have included this information are the minutes of the 1924 annual meeting of the IFCWC. However, the 1924 minutes are not included in the IFCWC collection in the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI) Research Center in Des Moines. It is not clear how Allen was able to view these minutes if they are not in the SHSI’s collection. For the sources used in Allen’s article, see the production file devoted to the Spring 2002 issue of *Iowa Heritage Illustrated* in the SHSI Research Center in Iowa City.

<sup>70</sup> *Iowa Federation Home Operated by Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs*, p. [3]; “Biographical Note” in Manuscript Register, Papers of Archie Alphonse Alexander, MsC 304, in the University of Iowa Libraries Special Collections, University of Iowa, Iowa City, at [http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/scua/msc/tomsc350/msc304\\_alexanderaa/alexander.html](http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/scua/msc/tomsc350/msc304_alexanderaa/alexander.html), accessed January 19, 2018. Archie Alexander ended up a University of Iowa graduate after his initial choice, Highland Park College in Des Moines, which he had attended as a freshman in 1907–1908, changed its policy in September 1908 and refused to admit black students. The reason given by the college president, Dr. Oliver H. Longwell, was that “as they [the college] draw a large number of their students from the south, these students objected to go with Colored students and they lost those southern students”; see “Highland Park College Closed Against Negro,” *Iowa State Bystander*, September 11, 1908, p. 1.

<sup>71</sup> Lenola Allen-Sommerville, *Historical Reflection: A Millennium Update* (Des Moines: Iowa Association of Colored Women’s Clubs, Inc., 2004).

<sup>72</sup> *Iowa Federation Home Operated by Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs*, p. [3].

<sup>73</sup> A photograph of the Iowa Federation Home with its original siding was shown as the cover image in the published minutes of the IFCWC annual meeting as late as 1938, but a photograph showing the imitation brick siding is included on the cover of the published minutes of the 1948 annual meeting; see Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs, *Proceedings of the Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs, 37th and 38th Annual Sessions* [1938 and 1939] (no publisher or place of publication [Des Moines, Iowa: Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs?]), no date of publication [ca. 1939]; Iowa Association of Colored Women, *45th Annual State Convention, Iowa Association of Colored Women* [1948], convention program (no publisher or place of publication [Des Moines, Iowa: Iowa Association of Colored Women?]), no date of publication [ca. 1948]; all available in Boxes 1 and 2, Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs Papers.

<sup>74</sup> *Iowa Federation Home Operated by Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs*, p. [13].

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Iowa, although for several years, as described below, the number of residents was too small to support the Home financially. The Iowa Federation Home was not an official residence hall of the university, but, as described in 1929, the Home was “approved by the Dean of Women of the University, [and] is now operated under practically the same regulations as the regular University Dormitories.”<sup>75</sup> Like a fraternity or sorority house, the Iowa Federation Home had a matron or house mother. In some cases the matron was a married woman whose husband also lived in the house and acted as house manager.<sup>76</sup> City directories indicate that house mothers were often married women living without a husband, sometimes, but not necessarily, as widows. They also rarely stayed at the Iowa Federation Home for more than a year or two.<sup>77</sup> As of 1929, the matron prepared one meal a day, while the students prepared their own breakfast and lunch. As in a university residence hall of that time, “except where excused for some special reason, all residents of the Home are required to take all their meals at the common table which is provided by the Matron.”<sup>78</sup> Other rules of the Iowa Federation Home included university-wide social regulations, such as that women were not permitted to entertain guests in their sleeping rooms, as well as house-specific rules regarding study hours, curfews, and other matters.<sup>79</sup>

While the need for a dormitory for black female students seemed acute in the 1916–1917 school year, when the drive to acquire permanent living quarters began in earnest, in fact the number of black female students enrolled in 1916 was the high water mark for the next dozen years. The black student population, both male and female, declined to the low 20s during World War I, but began to increase rapidly after the war. From 1918 to 1926, the total number of black students grew from 21 to 124, but male students accounted for nearly all of this increase. The number of black female students, for whom the Iowa Federation Home was established, typically varied between eight and twelve during the same period.<sup>80</sup> Only in the two years preceding the stock market crash of 1929 and the ensuing Great Depression did the number of black female students at the university increase substantially, to at least 18 in 1928 and 25 in 1929. Nearly all of these female students were housed in the Iowa Federation Home.<sup>81</sup> The house was described in 1920 as having nine rooms, but in 1929 as having twelve rooms, which presumably included rooms other than bedrooms.<sup>82</sup> While this was sufficient to house the typical number of residents, it must have seemed crowded in the peak years of 1928 and 1929. Photographs of several of the rooms as they appeared ca. 1929 are provided in the 1929 booklet on the Iowa Federation Home (Figures 10–11).

For the first nine years that the Iowa Federation Home operated, the number of students in residence stayed fairly constant, varying between nine and twelve students in all years except for 1922–1923, when only five students lived at the home.<sup>83</sup> During this time, only a single black female student at the University of Iowa is known to have lived at a different address.<sup>84</sup> A group of women who lived in the house around 1925 or 1926 is shown in Figure 12.

<sup>75</sup> *Iowa Federation Home Operated by Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs*, pp. [3, 5]. This 1929 booklet is a rich source of information on the Iowa Federation Home at the time, including its history, function, rules, one photograph of the exterior, and several photographs of different interior rooms.

<sup>76</sup> Breaux, “‘Maintaining a Home for Girls,’” pp. 242, 245.

<sup>77</sup> Carlson, “Addresses of Black Residents of Iowa City in the Early to Mid-Twentieth Century.”

<sup>78</sup> *Iowa Federation Home Operated by Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs*, p. [5].

<sup>79</sup> *Iowa Federation Home Operated by Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs*, pp. [9, 11].

<sup>80</sup> Carlson, “Black Students at SUI and their Addresses from Student Directories.”

<sup>81</sup> Richard Breaux has identified 18 black female students in 1928 and 19 in 1929, although the IFCWC booklet published in Fall 1929 gives the number at that time as 25; see Breaux, “Women of 942 Iowa Avenue and other African-American Women at the University of Iowa before 1947”; *Iowa Federation Home Operated by Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs*, p. [7]. Only one of the students identified by Breaux in 1928 or 1929 did not live at 942 Iowa Avenue, although the 1929 booklet states that only 17 of the 25 black female students then attending the university were housed in the Iowa Federation Home.

<sup>82</sup> *Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Session of the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs* (1920), p. 16, available in Box 1, Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs Papers; *Iowa Federation Home Operated by Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs*, p. [3]. The description in the 1929 booklet (p. [5]) identifies the rooms as follows: one parlor or drawing room, one dining room, one kitchen, and one bathroom, probably all on the first floor; a second bathroom and an unknown number of bedrooms, probably all on the second floor; and a laundry room in the basement. Depending on whether the basement laundry room was included in the total of twelve rooms, that would suggest that either six or seven bedrooms were located on the second floor.

<sup>83</sup> Carlson, “Black Students at SUI and their Addresses from Student Directories”; Breaux, “Women of 942 Iowa Avenue and other African-American Women at the University of Iowa before 1947.”

<sup>84</sup> The exception was Marie Whaley Wooldridge, who had married fellow University of Iowa student Clifton J. Wooldridge in 1924. In 1925–1926, Marie Wooldridge was living with her husband and mother at a different address in Iowa City, which they shared with the family of another black University of Iowa student, Cecil H. Brewton; see 1925 Iowa State Census, Johnson County, Iowa City, Ward 1 (Clifton Wooldridge entry); Iowa, Marriage Records, 1880–1940, database available on Ancestry.com, accessed March 8, 2018.

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During the Depression, the total number of black students at the university dropped slightly, from a high of 145 in 1930 to 119 in 1932. The decline in the number of black female students was more pronounced. From a high of 25 in 1929, the number dropped quickly to around five through most of the 1930s. Moreover, while during the 1920s nearly every black female student at the university had resided in the Iowa Federation Home, during the 1930s at least one, and sometimes several, black female students lived elsewhere, even when the Iowa Federation Home was struggling to get by with just two or three students in residence.<sup>85</sup>

For two years, from 1937 to 1939, the need of the IFCWC to maintain sufficient income from the Iowa Federation Home despite low black female enrollment at the university was met by the black fraternity Kappa Alpha Psi, which had no chapter house at the University of Iowa by 1937. Members of the fraternity rented the Iowa Federation Home for two academic years, in 1937–1938 and 1938–1939 (Figure 13). For reasons that are not known, but likely include at least in part financial difficulties relating to low fraternity membership during the Great Depression, the fraternity had given up its long-time chapter house at 301 S. Dubuque Street after the 1934–1935 academic year. University of Iowa student directories list the address of this fraternity as 213½ S. Clinton Street for one year in 1935–1936. It was not included in the list of men’s organizations at the university in 1936–1937, although it apparently remained active, since it rented the Iowa Federation Home for the subsequent two years, with five fraternity members listed in each year.<sup>86</sup> After Kappa Alpha Psi had spent two years in the Iowa Federation Home, the university’s black female enrollment increased to the point where nine women were able to live in the home in 1939–1940, so in that year the home was returned to its original function. It is not clear how active Kappa Alpha Psi remained during the following decade, but it was not listed again in student directories as a university men’s organization until 1950. In the 1950–1951 academic year—the last year that the IFCWC owned the Iowa Federation Home—Kappa Alpha Psi was again identified in the student directory as located at 942 Iowa Avenue, and two Kappa Alpha Psi members were listed in the student directory at this address.<sup>87</sup>

The Kappa Alpha Psi members were not the only men who ever lived in the Iowa Federation Home, although, with one exception, no more than one man is known to have lived in the house in any given year when the primary occupants were female students.<sup>88</sup> The men who lived in the Iowa Federation Home were typically married graduate students who worked as house managers of the Home. In some cases, their wives served as house matrons.<sup>89</sup> The enrollment of black women more than black men appears to have fluctuated with the national economy. The number of black women enrolled as students reached about ten in 1939 and 14 in 1940, only to fall back again to the

<sup>85</sup> Breaux, “Women of 942 Iowa Avenue and other African-American Women at the University of Iowa before 1947.” Most notably, the largest number of black female students recorded in Breaux’s list between 1933 and 1938 was in Summer 1934, when seven women were recorded. All seven lived at 15 E. Prentiss Street rather than in the Iowa Federation Home. For a discussion of the financial hardships faced by students during the Depression, and the efforts of the IFCWC to attract students whose rent was necessary to keep the Iowa Federation Home operating, see Breaux, “Maintaining a Home for Girls,” pp. 244–245.

<sup>86</sup> Richard Breaux has stated that the members of Kappa Alpha Psi “gave up their house” in 1937 to help the Iowa Federation Home financially, but the fraternity no longer had a chapter house by 1937. Known members of the fraternity were listed in student directories as living at five different addresses in Iowa City in 1935–36, and at a group of four different addresses in 1936–1937 that largely overlapped those of the previous year. In both years, several members of the fraternity were living in the household of Elizabeth Saulsbury (later Elizabeth Tate) at 9 E. Prentiss Street. In 1940, she and her husband, Junious Tate, established the Tate Arms rooming house for black male university students at 914 S. Dubuque Street; see Carlson, “Black Students at SUI and their Addresses from Student Directories”; Carlson, “Addresses of Black Residents of Iowa City in the Early to Mid-Twentieth Century.”

<sup>87</sup> Breaux, “Women of 942 Iowa Avenue and other African-American Women at the University of Iowa before 1947”; lists of Men’s Organizations in University of Iowa student directories, 1927–1952, in the University of Iowa Libraries, Special Collections, Iowa City. Unfortunately, for the years 1937–1939, when the fraternity members occupied the Iowa Federation Home, the pages listing the Men’s Organizations have been removed from the student directories in the university’s collection, so it is not clear whether the university recognized Kappa Alpha Psi as a fraternity during those years. The university’s other black fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha, was listed in the same directories through 1940–1941, then was no longer listed until some time after 1951–1952. Of the three known Kappa Alpha Psi members who had lived at 942 Iowa Avenue and who also were listed in the 1939–1940 student directory, one had moved to 329 Church Street to the household of Charles Gross, while two others moved to 116 E. Burlington Street, home at the time of John W. Ware, an African American automobile service attendant; see University of Iowa student directories and Carlson, “Addresses of Black Residents of Iowa City in the Early to Mid-Twentieth Century.” The two Kappa Alpha Psi members listed in the 1950–1951 student directory were Edwin Foster and William H. McAdams (University of Iowa, *University Directory, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, 1950–1951* (Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa, n.d. [ca. 1950]), pp. 44, 92). No others listed at 942 Iowa Avenue were identified in this student directory.

<sup>88</sup> The exception was 1920–1921, when, in addition to house manager James L. Dameron, a first-year medical student, Isaac G. Hill, also lived in the Iowa Federation Home, together with 10 women; see Carlson, “Black Students at SUI and their Addresses from Student Directories.”

<sup>89</sup> Breaux, “Maintaining a Home for Girls,” pp. 242, 245.

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single digits during World War II. From just two known black female students in 1945, the number jumped back to at least 14 during the 1946–1947 academic year, the first year in which black women were officially allowed to reside in Currier Hall, the university’s women’s dormitory. In that year, five of the 14 known students lived in the Iowa Federation Home, another five lived in Currier Hall, and the remaining four lived elsewhere in Iowa City or neighboring Coralville (Figure 14).<sup>90</sup>

The Iowa Federation Home was rededicated in 1943 as Sue M. Brown Hall, in honor of the IFCWC president who reportedly first recommended establishment of the Iowa Federation Home in the 1910s, and who served as the chair of the board of trustees of the home for 20 years until her death in 1941 (Figure 15).<sup>91</sup> The Home continued to be operated for four years after the university dormitories were desegregated. The Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs, at this time named the Iowa Association of Colored Women, held annual “tag day” sales to benefit the Home through the 1940s, but the last one of which any record has been found was in June 1949.<sup>92</sup> By the following year, it appears that the Association no longer found it necessary to raise funds to maintain the Home, which they sold in March 1951.

The Iowa Federation Home in Iowa City is the only building significantly associated with the Iowa Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs. The IFCWC never had a central office, instead meeting annually in different locations, typically in cities where their member organizations were located. An attempt to purchase and operate a home for women and girls in Des Moines in 1915 was unsuccessful, as described above. An attempt to raise money in the early 1960s to build a federation headquarters, which would also serve as a “center dedicated to interpreting minority problems and improving race relations,” also appears never to have raised the funds necessary to construct a building.<sup>93</sup> By the late 1960s, women’s clubs in general, and black women’s clubs in particular, were in decline. As described by Anne Beiser Allen:

Much of the work previously done by African American women’s clubs—assisting the needy, promoting black culture, challenging the white community on civil rights and discrimination—had been taken over by more narrowly focused groups and by the government. Across the nation, black women were joining parent-teacher associations and the League of Women Voters in local communities, working alongside white women for social change.

These changes were part of a nationwide trend among women’s clubs in general. As employment opportunities increased, and as the number of organizations devoted to specific political or social welfare projects mushroomed, American women had much wider choices about how and where to direct their energies. As organizations restricted to white males gradually dropped barriers based on race and sex, many women opted to join these groups. Society had changed to the extent that women no longer believed their voices would not be heard in a gathering of men. . . .

Women’s energies were clearly not diminished, but the women’s club movement was. By 1969 only eight clubs remained active in the Iowa Association of Colored Women[’s Clubs]. Some of the clubs that

<sup>90</sup> Breaux, “Women of 942 Iowa Avenue and other African-American Women at the University of Iowa before 1947.”

<sup>91</sup> “Mrs. Brown’s Rites Tuesday,” *The Des Moines [Iowa] Register*, November 30, 1941, Iowa News section, p. 5; “War Topic of Women Here,” *The Des Moines [Iowa] Register*, June 29, 1943, p. 9. The latter article states that Sue Brown “as president of the association 26 years ago recommended establishment of such an institution.” As described above, this is not quite accurate based on the evidence from contemporary sources; outgoing president Sue Brown recommended establishment of the Scholarship Fund in 1918, and a year later the Scholarship Fund Committee took the lead in the Iowa Federation Home fund drive. More research is recommended to establish whether or not the Iowa Federation Home is eligible under Criterion B for its association with Sue M. Brown. While the evidence presented here suggests that the Iowa Federation Home is significantly associated with her, other buildings in her home city of Des Moines or elsewhere may even better represent her significance in Iowa’s African American civil rights history.

<sup>92</sup> “\$800 Collected for Negro Dormitory,” *Des Moines [Iowa] Sunday Register*, June 5, 1949, p. 10-L.

<sup>93</sup> The initiative to build this headquarters was mentioned briefly in a section on the events of 1961 in a history of the IFCWC, but the same history provides no further information, including any evidence that the headquarters was ever built; see Allen-Sommerville. Similarly, the fundraising effort to build a headquarters building was mentioned occasionally in Des Moines newspapers, with the latest reference to it found in August 1963; see “Plan Center for Service,” *Des Moines [Iowa] Tribune*, August 2, 1963, p. 9. No mention of the proposed headquarters after August 1963 has been found by searching for the relevant terms in issues of Des Moines newspapers from the 1960s to the 2010s available on Newspapers.com (accessed March 12, 2018).

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belonged to the state organization had simply died out; others had disaffiliated but remained active locally. Although clubs continued to discuss topics such as international relations, civil rights, equal employment, and urban renewal, their main purpose had become more social.<sup>94</sup>

No evidence was discovered during the research for the present nomination that the IFCWC ever owned other real estate that was significantly associated with the organization. For this reason, the Iowa Federation Home in Iowa City, which was associated with the IFCWC for more than 30 years, and which was viewed by the Federation as one of its major accomplishments, is believed to be the only building in Iowa significantly associated with this organization. Statewide significance is therefore claimed for this building.

*The Women of 942 Iowa Avenue*

The Iowa Federation Home served not only as a place of residence, but as a training ground to help prepare the undergraduate and graduate women who lived there for a life of professional accomplishment and service after they left the university. Many remarkable black women attended the University of Iowa as students during the three decades the Iowa Federation Home operated. Most of them, particularly during the 1920s, lived in the Iowa Federation Home and were shaped by the personal and academic support that the Home helped to foster.

Academic trailblazers who lived in the Iowa Federation Home included Beulah Wheeler, the first black female graduate of the College of Law in 1924, and Lorena Suggs, the first black female graduate of the College of Pharmacy in 1921. The second and third black female pharmacy students also lived in the Iowa Federation Home: Gwendolyn Wilson, who transferred after one year to the pharmacy school at Des Moines College (later Drake University) in Des Moines to complete her degree in 1929, and Marie A. Brown, who earned her degree from the University of Iowa in 1930.<sup>95</sup> Wilson went on to become one of the first licensed African American female pharmacists in Iowa, despite a 15-year diversion into teaching school in Mississippi because racial discrimination prevented her from finding employment in her field. She worked as a pharmacist clerk and chemist for the state of Iowa and later served four and one-half years in Vietnam before she retired in 1974.<sup>96</sup>

In 1941, when Lulu Merle Johnson, another resident of the Iowa Federation Home, received her Ph.D. in American history, she became the first African American woman in the state of Iowa to earn a doctorate.<sup>97</sup> Other former residents of the Iowa Federation Home went on to successful professional careers, with careers in education perhaps the most common. For most of the period the Iowa Federation Home was in operation, however, no public school district, college, or university in Iowa hired black teachers, so black graduates who wanted to become school teachers or university professors typically taught in schools—often segregated schools—in other states.<sup>98</sup>

One short-term resident of the Iowa Federation Home was Elizabeth Catlett, an artist who in 1940 became the first student at the University of Iowa to earn a Master of Fine Arts degree in a studio art.<sup>99</sup> Near the end of her time at the University of Iowa, the head of the art department decided that she would earn the traditional Master of Arts degree, not the new Master of Fine Arts degree. Renowned regionalist artist Grant Wood, who was also a member of Catlett's thesis committee, fought for her to receive the MFA. In 1999, Elizabeth Catlett (then Elizabeth Catlett Mora) recalled the events as follows:

<sup>94</sup> Allen, pp. 12–13.

<sup>95</sup> Breaux, "Maintaining a Home for Girls," pp. 246–247; Carlson, "Black Students at SUI and their Addresses from Student Directories."

<sup>96</sup> Breaux, "Maintaining a Home for Girls," pp. 246–247.

<sup>97</sup> "Lulu Merle Johnson: A Pioneer in Higher Education," on the University of Iowa Graduate College internet web site, at <https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/news/lulu-merle-johnson-a-pioneer-in-higher-education-at-ui>; accessed March 14, 2018.

<sup>98</sup> Breaux, "Maintaining a Home for Girls," p. 248. The first African American teacher hired for a full-time position at a public school in Iowa was Harriette Curley, hired in 1946 as a kindergarten teacher in Des Moines. No other black teachers in the state were hired until the early 1950s. The first known African American professor hired full-time at a college or university in Iowa was Madeline Clarke Foreman, hired by William Penn College in 1945 to teach biology. Neither woman was a graduate of the University of Iowa. See Chase, in Silag, et al. (eds.), pp. 148 and 151.

<sup>99</sup> The same year, a non-student instructor also received an MFA in sculpture, and a student received an MFA in music. At the time, the University of Iowa's MFA programs was one of the few such programs in the United States; see Kathleen A. Edwards, "The Fine Art of Representing Black Heritage: Elizabeth Catlett and Iowa, 1938–1940," in Lena M. Hill and Michael D. Hill (editors), *Invisible Hawkeyes: African Americans at the University of Iowa During the Long Civil Rights Era* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2016), pp. 51, 196, n. 2.

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The head of the art dept., Dr. Lester Longman[,] offered me no opportunities and made me apply for an MA degree when I went two years for an MFA. Grant Wood called me at the Girl's [sic] House (black) and asked me to come to the Dept. to try for an MFA as it had never been given. The five profs. gave me one along with the sculpture prof., Henry Stinson.<sup>100</sup>

Catlett went on to a successful career as an artist and university professor of fine arts, specializing in African American themes. She moved to Mexico in 1946, and taught at the National Autonomous University of Mexico's School of Fine Arts in Mexico City from 1958 to 1975.<sup>101</sup> A new residence hall at the University of Iowa completed in 2017 was named Elizabeth Catlett Hall in her honor.<sup>102</sup>

Other residents of the Iowa Federation Home pioneered in other areas. While at the university, several of the residents participated in sports that were, as Richard Breaux describes, "virtually closed to African American men." Harriette Alexander appears to have been the first African American woman at the university to participate on an athletic team, when she played field ball (field hockey) in 1919. Other such women included Lorraine Crawford, who played on the women's volleyball team in 1923, and M. Corine Mathis, who played on the women's baseball, track, volleyball, and basketball teams, as well as participated in track and field events.<sup>103</sup> As Breaux observes, "reports of African American women students' achievements added weight to the argument to maintain the [Iowa Federation] [H]ome and helped African Americans across the state feel as if their financial contributions benefited the race."<sup>104</sup>

Some of the residents of the Iowa Federation Home went on to play significant roles in the civil rights movement of the mid-twentieth century. Perhaps the best known in Iowa City is Frances Helen Renfrow, better known by her married name of Helen Lemme. A 1928 graduate of the College of Liberal Arts, she worked as a research technician in the university's Department of Internal Medicine and raised two children with her husband, Allyn Lemme. According to one biographical sketch:

Helen Lemme . . . devoted her life to the rights of African Americans and women, and she was an active member of the Democratic Party. She served as a precinct committeewoman, a delegate at state and county conventions, and member of the Democratic Party Black Caucus. She also advocated for greater representation of Black voters at the 1944 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Locally, she was involved in the Human Rights Commission and the Iowa City Area Council of Churches. She served as secretary of the Johnson County Advisory Board of the Hawkeye Area Community Action Program. She also held seats on the board of the Iowa City League of Women's Voters, the YMCA and the Girl Scouts. She was elected President of the Iowa City League of Women Voters in 1946 and Iowa City Woman of the Year in 1955. A few years later, she was the first Black woman in Iowa City to be awarded the Best Citizen of the Year.

At a time when there was reluctant acceptance of black students in the University of Iowa dormitories,

<sup>100</sup> Elizabeth Catlett Mora, response to questionnaire from Richard M. Breaux for his dissertation research at the University of Iowa, January 16, 1999. Copy of questionnaire provided to the present author by Richard Breaux, April 30, 2018. Although sources universally identify her as Elizabeth Catlett, she identified herself as Elizabeth Catlett Mora in her 1999 letter to Breaux. Student directories from the 1938–1940 period do not identify Catlett's residence as the Iowa Federation Home. They confirm only that Catlett lived at 808 S. Dubuque Street in 1938–1939, and at 713 S. Capitol Street in 1939–1940. If Grant Wood called her at the "Girl's House (black)"—presumably a reference to the Iowa Federation Home—shortly before she received her degree, she evidently lived there only at the end of her two years at the University of Iowa.

<sup>101</sup> Karen Rosenberg, "Elizabeth Catlett, Sculptor With Eye on Social Issues, Is Dead at 96," *The New York [NY] Times*, April 3, 2012; available online at <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/04/arts/design/elizabeth-catlett-sculptor-with-eye-on-social-issues-dies-at-96.html>; accessed April 30, 2018.

<sup>102</sup> Jeff Charis-Carlson, "UI to Name New Residence Hall After Sculptor, Printmaker Elizabeth Catlett," *Iowa City [IA] Press-Citizen*, September 8, 2016; Catlett Hall, University of Iowa Housing web site, at <https://housing.uiowa.edu/residence-halls/catlett-hall>; accessed April 30, 2018. Despite Catlett's fame, the Iowa Federation Home is probably not eligible under Criterion B for its association with her, since the same historic context—Catlett's pursuit of an MFA degree at the University of Iowa between 1938 and 1940—is better represented by the old University of Iowa Art Building, completed in 1936. This building has not been occupied since it was flooded in 2008, but it remains standing; see "Historical Timeline: School of Art and Art History," University of Iowa School of Art and Art History web site, <https://art.uiowa.edu/about/historical-timeline-school-art-and-art-history>, accessed April 7, 2019.

<sup>103</sup> Breaux, "'Maintaining a Home for Girls,'" p. 247.

<sup>104</sup> Breaux, "'Maintaining a Home for Girls,'" p. 247.

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Mr. and Mrs. Lemme provided room and board for numerous black students and athletes who came to Iowa City from nearly everywhere in the United States. Some of the students lived in the upstairs of the Lemme's [sic] huge five bedroom house which was located at 603 South Capitol Street. In addition, there were approximately a dozen students who lived in an adjoining structure called the Annex.

Helen Renfrow Lemme died on December 15, 1968, from inhaling smoke during a fire in her home. She died at the age of 64.

In 1970, a new elementary school [in Iowa City] was named after Helen Lemme for her outstanding achievements.<sup>105</sup>

Two decades later, Virginia Harper, another resident of the Iowa Federation Home, attended the University of Iowa for three years before transferring, eventually graduating from the College of Medical Technology in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Her experiences with racism in Iowa and elsewhere "led her to the presidency of the Fort Madison [Iowa] chapter of the NAACP and membership in the Fort Madison Human Rights Commission."<sup>106</sup>

Finally, the importance of the Iowa Federation Home to its residents by providing an oasis from white racism, an opportunity for social bonding, and a site of African American cultural expression, was described by several former residents quoted in a newspaper article on the home published in 2001:

"It was a nice place for companionship," said Arlene Morris, who lived at the house from 1947–1949. "As a black group, we didn't feel accepted by the university. The house brought us together on a campus where generally we were not accepted."

... "We had our meals together, did stuff with the men together," she said. "It was a known gathering place for black girls. We had men come around constantly. Occasionally, a woman from the Colored Women's Association came to ask you how you were doing. It was a comforting environment."

... "They tried to make it as nice as they could," said Yvonne Smith Sims, a 942 [Iowa Avenue] resident from 1947–1948. "A lot of the guys would come over and hangout [sic]. They would congregate downstairs and play jazz music until really late at night. It's where I first learned about jazz."

... "That house is where I did the courting of my husband, Louis James," said [Barbara Brown] James, the recently widowed former resident [from 1944–1947, and niece of Mamie Diggs, one of the first students to live in the house in 1919]. "On that front porch, we talked of our dreams, laid out future plans, told each other how many kids we wanted to have. I spent a lot of time with my husband there; I won't ever forget that house."<sup>107</sup>

*History of 942 Iowa Avenue Since 1951*

After the university's dormitories were "officially" desegregated in 1946, the need for a separate home for black female students waned. The number of black female students in the university had been low during the Depression and World War II. Their numbers appear to have begun to rise again after the end of the war, based on the 1946–1947 figures compiled by Richard Breaux, although no specific enrollment numbers for the period after 1946 have been

<sup>105</sup> Helen Renfrow Lemme entry, Memory Gardens Cemetery, Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa, on the Find A Grave internet web site, at <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/92539652/helen-lemme>; accessed March 14, 2018. One source states that she was the president of the Johnson County League of Women Voters rather than the Iowa City League of Women Voters; see Kathryn M. Neal, "Unsung Heroines: African-American Women in Iowa," in Silag, et al. (eds.), p. 375. Neal claims that Helen Lemme School was the first school in Iowa City to bear a woman's name, but that honor goes to the Clara Louise Kellogg School, completed in 1917 on Woolf Avenue and demolished in 1948 for a Department of Veterans Affairs Hospital; see "Kellogg School in West Iowa City First of System to [sic] be Completed," *Iowa City [Iowa] Citizen*, September 25, 1917, p. 3; "3 Buildings to be Removed from V.A. Site," *Iowa City [Iowa] Press-Citizen*, May 5, 1948, p. 11.

<sup>106</sup> Breaux, "Maintaining a Home for Girls," p. 248.

<sup>107</sup> Boylan, p. 4A.

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discovered. It is therefore not known how many black female students attended the university, and how many lived in the newly integrated dorms as opposed to off-campus. The number of students living in the Iowa Federation Home during its final year of service as a women's dormitory, 1949–1950, was eight, similar to the number of women who had occupied the home during much of the early to mid-twentieth century.<sup>108</sup>

As a result of the national civil rights movement that gained momentum during the 1950s and 1960s, an increasing number of white landlords in Iowa City were willing to rent to black students. As late as 1960, however, it was still common for white landlords to refuse to rent to black student tenants.<sup>109</sup> In 1961, the university adopted an off-campus housing policy that prohibited discrimination on the basis of race or religion. Landlords who rented to undergraduate students had to agree to practice nondiscrimination in order to remain on the list of university-approved undergraduate housing.<sup>110</sup> Landlords were legally required to rent to tenants regardless of race only after the passage of a fair-housing amendment to the Iowa Civil Rights Act in 1967.<sup>111</sup>

While these laws and policies were still more than a decade away in the late 1940s, shifting racial attitudes in white society coupled with the continuing relatively low number of black women students at the University of Iowa made the Iowa Federation Home less necessary by the late 1940s. In 1951, the Federation, at that point named the Iowa Association of Colored Women, sold the house at 942 Iowa Avenue to a couple who sold it a week later to Jacob and Muriel Blumer. The Blumers owned the property from 1951 to 1968.<sup>112</sup> Based on Iowa City city directories, the Blumers occupied the house as a single-family residence until about 1956. By 1958 it had been divided into four apartments and was operating as Heckart Apartments under Darrell Heckart. In 1959, it had been divided into eight units and was operating as Ring Apartments under Donald W. Ring. It has most likely functioned as an apartment house or rooming house continuously since the late 1950s. In the 50 years since the Blumers sold the property in 1968, the house has passed through several different owners. At present, the former parlor and dining room on the first floor have been converted to two apartments, while the second floor houses additional rooms for rent and a communal kitchen. The attic has also been converted to a living unit.

Although the former Iowa Federation Home has not been used as a black women's dormitory for nearly 70 years, its importance is still recognized by black students and alumnae of the University of Iowa. In April 2019, a march to the Iowa Federation Home was included as part of a 100th anniversary celebration of the establishment of the Delta Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta sorority.<sup>113</sup>

*Archaeological Assessment.* No archaeological remains within or beyond the footprint of the property were assessed as part of this nomination.

*Acknowledgements.* This nomination was funded by an African American Civil Rights Grant administered by the National Park Service. This material was produced with assistance from the Historic Preservation Fund, administered by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior.

<sup>108</sup> University of Iowa, *University Directory, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, 1949–1950* (Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa, n.d. [ca. 1949]), pp. 8, 23, 41, 61, 115, 121, 145, 148). The following year, 1950–1951, the only residents of 942 Iowa Avenue identified in student directories were two members of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity: Edwin Foster and William H. McAdams; see University of Iowa, *University Directory, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, 1950–1951* (Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa, n.d. [ca. 1950]), pp. 44, 92.

<sup>109</sup> "Racial Problems in Housing Told," *The Daily Iowan*, December 7, 1960, p. 1.

<sup>110</sup> Harold Hatfield, "SUI's Discrimination Policy Revealed," *The Daily Iowan*, March 1, 1961, p. 1.

<sup>111</sup> Richard, Lord Acton, and Patricia Nassif Acton, "A Legal History of African-Americans," in Silag, et al. (eds.), pp. 80–81. This was followed a year later at the national level by the passage of the Fair Housing Act, part of the Civil Rights Act of 1968.

<sup>112</sup> Johnson County, Iowa, Recorder's Office, Deed Book 206, p. 420, Book 208, p. 77, and Book 316, p. 278. Iowa City city directories from the 1950s identify Jacob Blumer as a house painter.

<sup>113</sup> E-mail of April 10, 2019, from Stefanie Bowers, Equity Director for the City of Iowa City, to Richard Carlson and others. Copy on file, Office of the State Archaeologist, The University of Iowa, Iowa City.



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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested	
previously listed in the National Register	
previously determined eligible by the National Register	
designated a National Historic Landmark	
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey	#
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record	#
recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey	#

Primary location of additional data:

X	State Historic Preservation Office
X	Other State Agency
	Federal Agency
X	Local Government
X	University
	Other

Name of repository: Iowa Women's Archives at the University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City; State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City; Office of the State Archaeologist at the University of Iowa, Iowa City; City of Iowa City Urban Planning Office

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84:  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	41.661428 N	91.521116 W	3		
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
2			4		
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude

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**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated property is a rectangular parcel located in Lot 3, Block 4, of J. W. Clark's Addition to Iowa City. The parcel measures 60.5 feet east-west by 102 feet north-south, with Iowa Avenue marking the south boundary of the parcel and the west side of the house at 942 Iowa Avenue marking the west boundary.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes all of the land that has been associated with the house at 942 Iowa Avenue since 1924. During the first few years that the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs owned this property (1919–1924), the property included additional land that extended from the northeast corner of the present parcel. This parcel contained a building identified variously as a garage or barn. The IFCWC sold this parcel in 1924. The loss of this additional land does not diminish the historic integrity of the remaining parcel, since (a) the property is significant for the house located on the main parcel, not for anything relating to the earlier garage parcel, and (b) the property had its present boundaries during most of its period of significance.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title	Richard J. Carlson/Architectural Historian	date	March 15, 2018
organization	Office of the State Archaeologist	telephone	(319) 384-0732
street & number	700 Clinton Street Building	email	richard-j-carlson@uiowa.edu
city or town	Iowa City	state	IA
		zip code	52242-1030

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).



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### Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

**Name of Property:** Iowa Federation Home for Colored Girls

**City or Vicinity:** Iowa City

**County:** Johnson **State:** Iowa

**Photographer:** Richard J. Carlson

**Date Photographed:** February 2, 2018, and March 13, 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

IA\_Johnson County\_Iowa Federation Home\_0001

General view, north side of Iowa Avenue showing the Iowa Federation Home for Colored Girls as second house from the right, camera facing west-northwest. Photograph taken March 13, 2018.

IA\_Johnson County\_Iowa Federation Home\_0002

South side (right) and west side (left), camera facing northeast. Photograph taken March 13, 2018.

IA\_Johnson County\_Iowa Federation Home\_0003

South side (left) and east side (right), camera facing northwest. Photograph taken March 13, 2018.

IA\_Johnson County\_Iowa Federation Home\_0004

East side (left) and north (rear) side (right), camera facing southwest. Photograph taken March 13, 2018.

IA\_Johnson County\_Iowa Federation Home\_0005

North side (left) and west side (right), camera facing southeast. Photograph taken March 13, 2018.

IA\_Johnson County\_Iowa Federation Home\_0006

Detail of front door on south side, camera facing north. Photograph taken March 13, 2018.

IA\_Johnson County\_Iowa Federation Home\_0007

Detail of leaded glass in cottage window on south side, camera facing north. Photograph taken March 13, 2018.

IA\_Johnson County\_Iowa Federation Home\_0008

Interior, staircase from front hall, camera facing northwest. Photograph taken February 2, 2018.

IA\_Johnson County\_Iowa Federation Home\_0009

Interior, detail of door frame molding in former dining room (now Apartment 2), facing south. Photograph taken February 2, 2018.

IA\_Johnson County\_Iowa Federation Home\_0010

Interior, rooms on second floor, facing northeast. Photograph taken February 2, 2018.

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- Figure 14. Women who “officially” desegregated Currier Hall in 1947.
- Figure 15. Iowa Federation Home house mother Margaret M. Lowry, shown on the front porch of the home, probably in the early to mid-1940s.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Iowa Federation Home for Colored Girls

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

County and State



Figure 1. Center part of Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa, showing location of Iowa Federation Home for Colored Girls.  
Source: U.S.G.S. Iowa City West, Iowa, 1994, 7.5 Series Quadrangle Map.



Iowa Federation Home for Colored Girls

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

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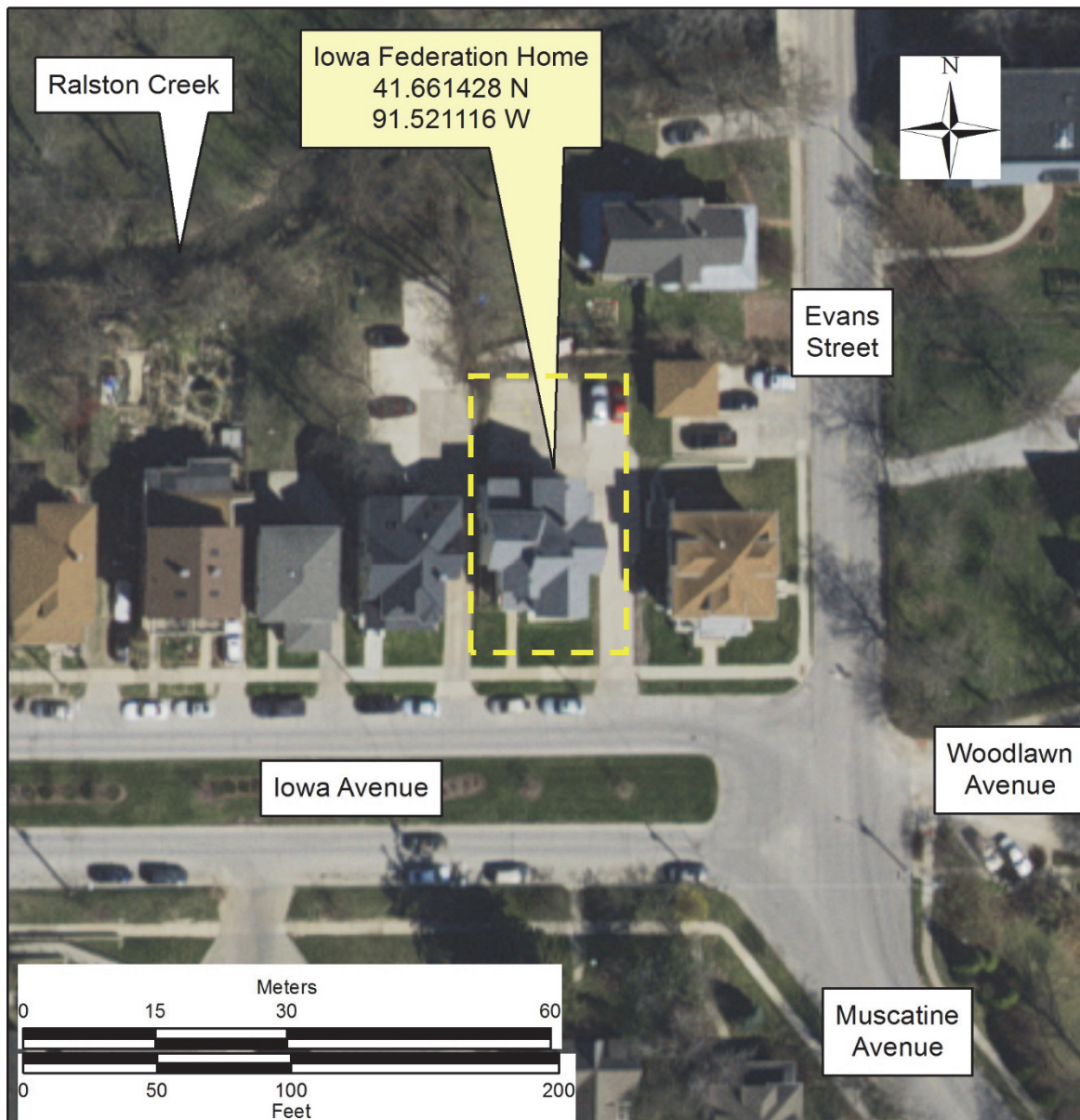


Figure 2. Location of the Iowa Federation Home. Dashed line shows the boundary of the nominated property. Base aerial photograph: 2016 aerial photograph (ISUGISSRF).

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Figure 3. Key to photos 1–7 of the Iowa Federation Home, 942 Iowa Avenue. Base aerial photograph: 2016 aerial photograph (ISUGISSRF).

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Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

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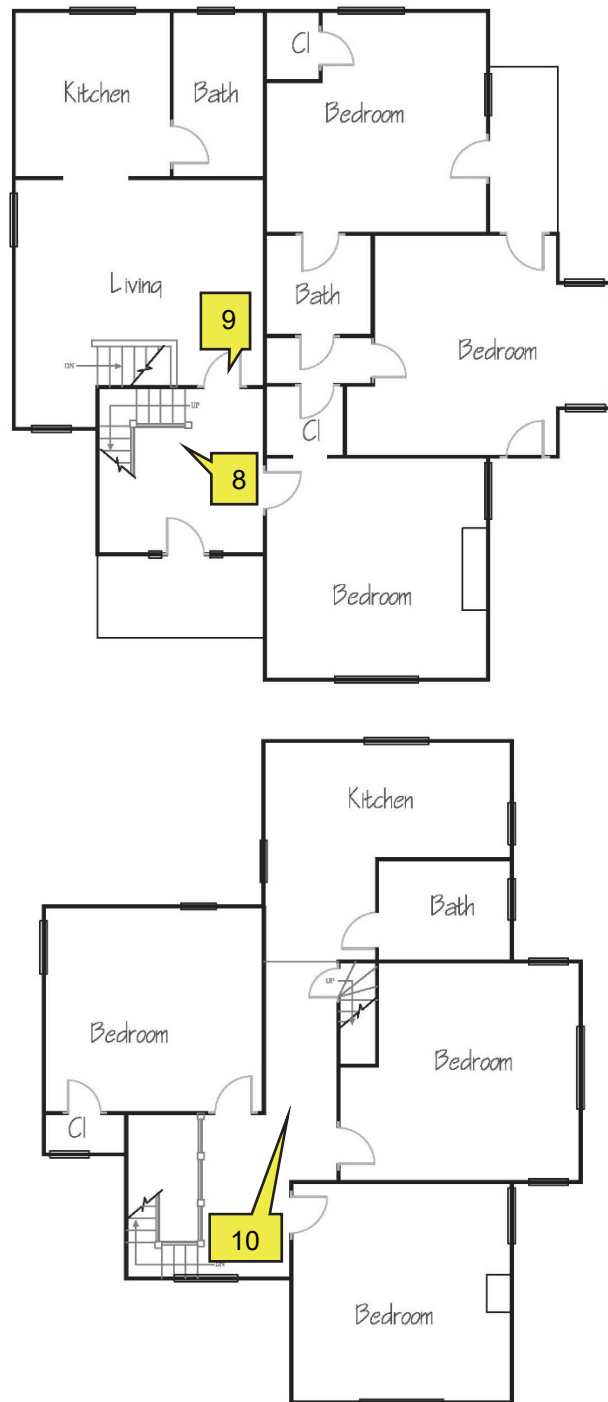


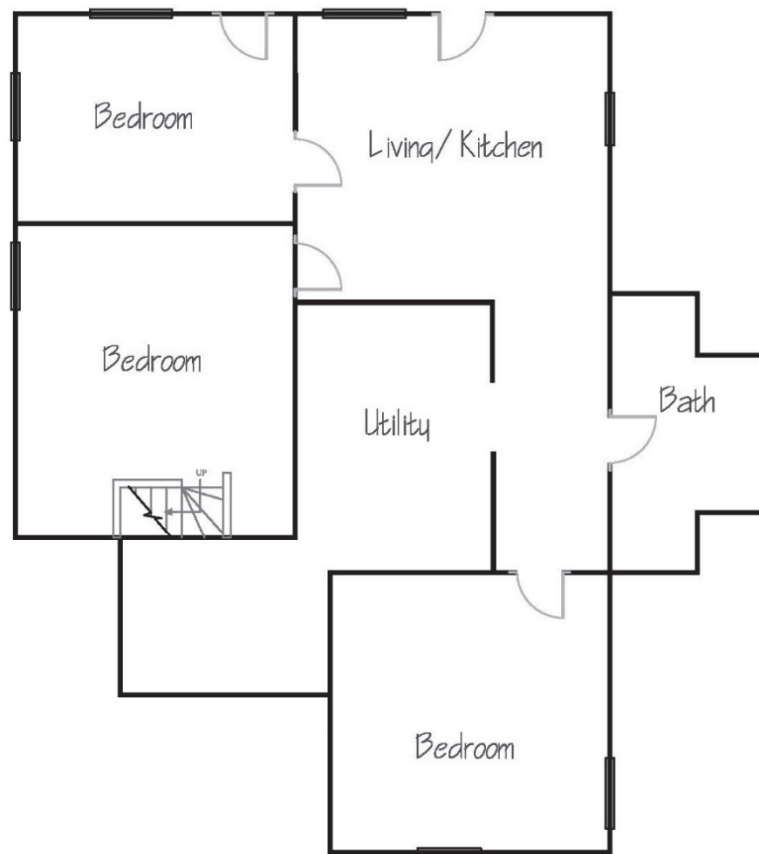
Figure 4. Key to photos 8–10 of the Iowa Federation Home, 942 Iowa Avenue. Top: first-story floor plan. Bottom: second-story floor plan. North is up in both floor plans. Floor plans prepared by Jessica Bristow, City of Iowa City Historic Preservation Planner, based on rental inspector sketches by Steve Faga, October 30, 1986, available in the files of the City of Iowa City Neighborhood and Development Services.

Iowa Federation Home for Colored Girls

Johnson County, Iowa

Name of Property

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942 Iowa Avenue  
Simple Plan  
Basement



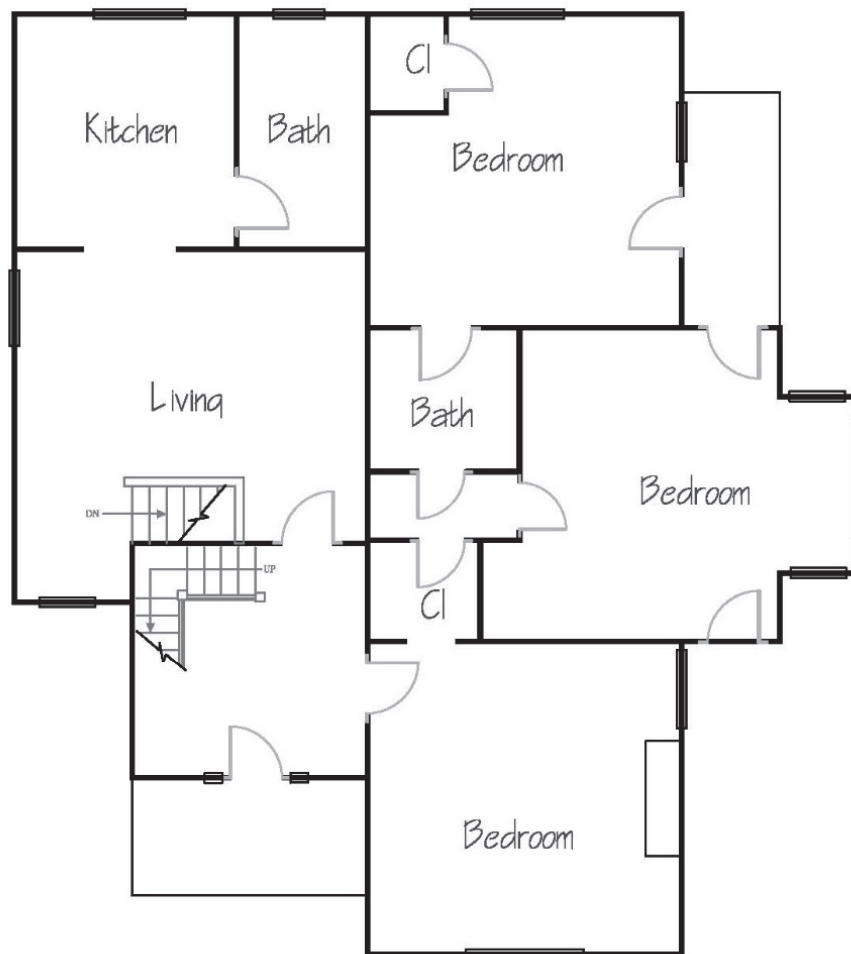
*Figure 5. Current floor plan of Iowa Federation Home, basement level. Floor plan prepared by Jessica Bristow, City of Iowa City Historic Preservation Planner, based on rental inspector sketches by Steve Faga, October 30, 1986, available in the files of the City of Iowa City Neighborhood and Development Services.*

Iowa Federation Home for Colored Girls

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942 Iowa Avenue  
Simple Plan  
First Floor



Figure 6. Current floor plan of Iowa Federation Home, first floor level. Floor plan prepared by Jessica Bristow, City of Iowa City Historic Preservation Planner, based on rental inspector sketches by Steve Faga, October 30, 1986, available in the files of the City of Iowa City Neighborhood and Development Services.

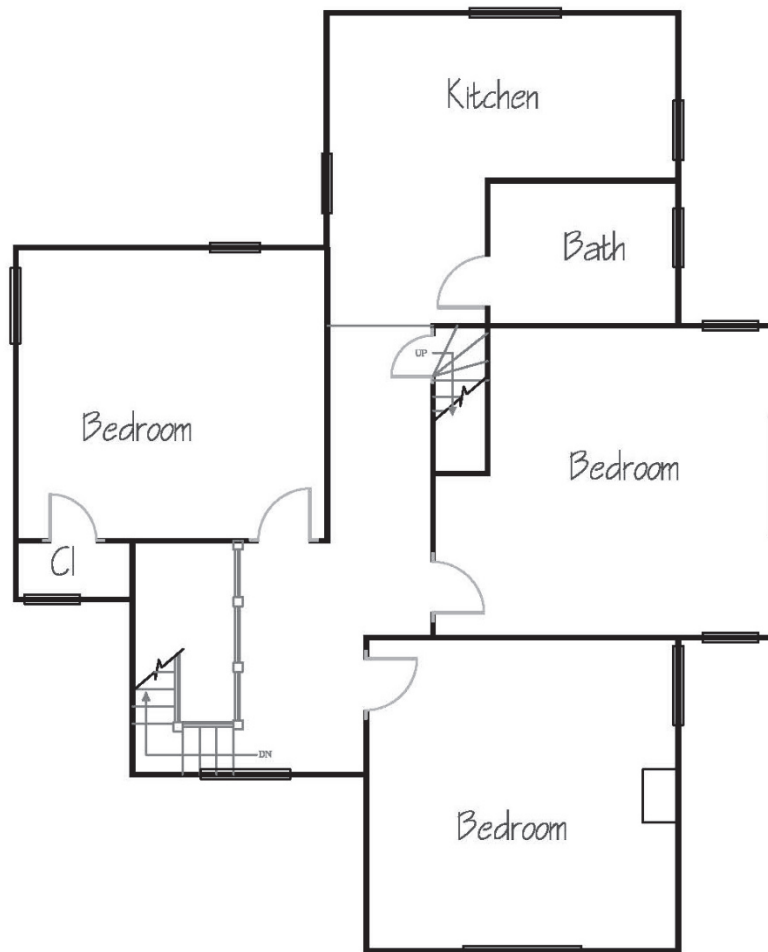


Iowa Federation Home for Colored Girls

Name of Property

Johnson County, Iowa

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942 Iowa Avenue  
Simple Plan  
Second Floor



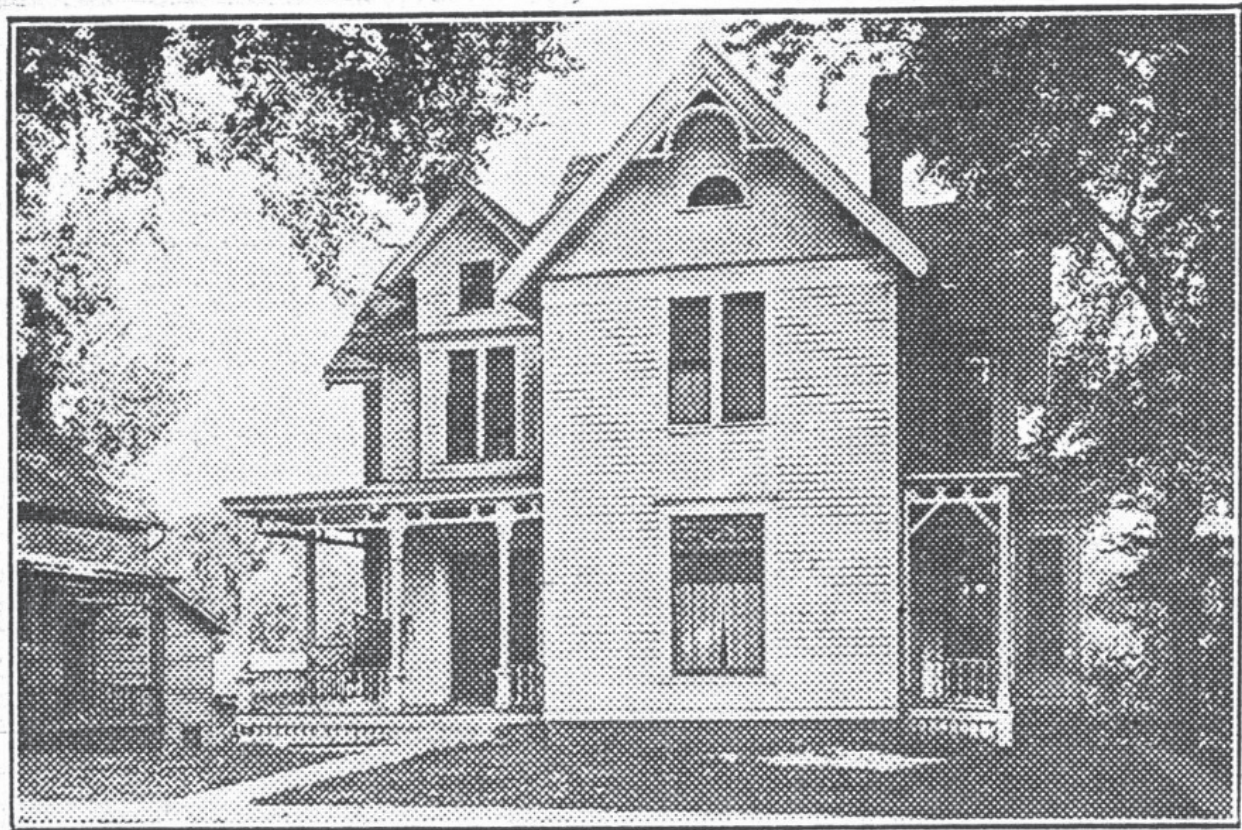
Figure 7. Current floor plan of Iowa Federation Home, second floor level. Floor plan prepared by Jessica Bristow, City of Iowa City Historic Preservation Planner, based on rental inspector sketches by Steve Faga, October 30, 1986, available in the files of the City of Iowa City Neighborhood and Development Services.

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*Figure 8. Historic view of Iowa Federation Home, ca. 1919, facing north-northwest. This photograph shows the original front and side porches, brick chimney, and semi-circular gable window in the principal gabled wing, all of which have since been removed or replaced. Otherwise the house appears today much as it did in 1919. Source: Bailey, Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Session of the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs [1919], p. 15, in Box 1, Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs Papers, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.*



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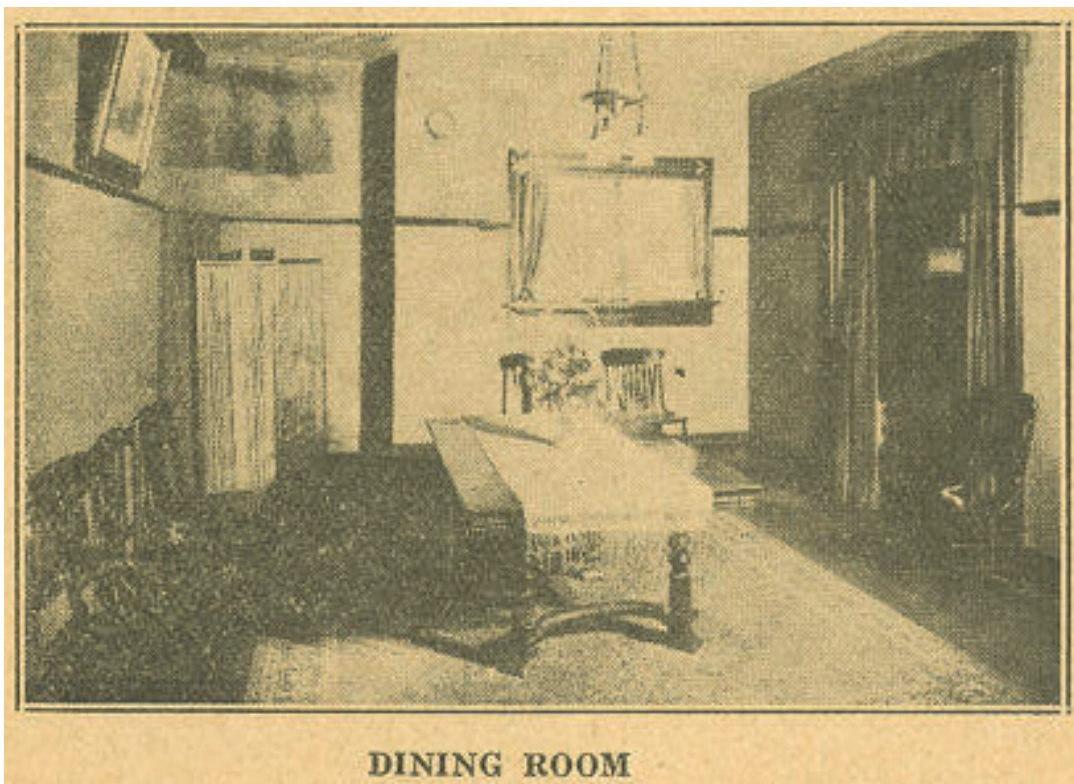
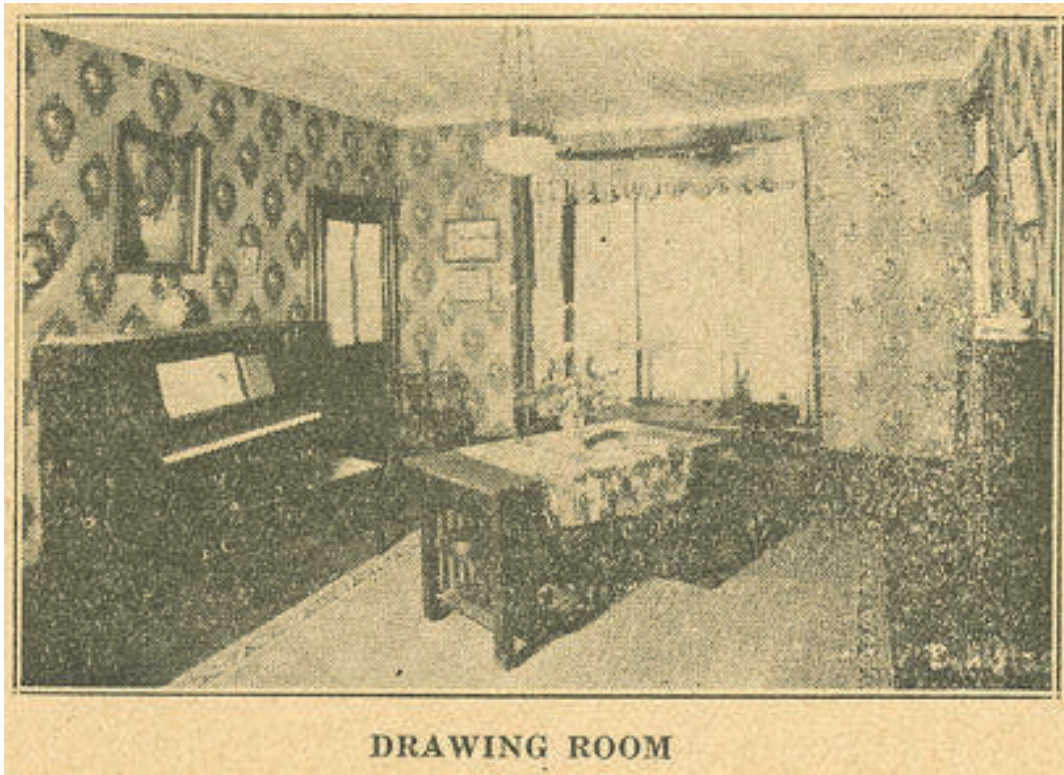
Figure 9. Photograph of the University of Iowa women who led the efforts to establish a dormitory for black women at the university. Back row, from left to right, Naomi Azalia Harper, Elizabeth Imogene Wilson, Harriet (or Harriette) Louise Alexander, Ruth W. Southall, Martha Helen Lucas. Front row: Iva Joiner McClain, Minerva J. Graves, Ola Elinor Calhoun, Mamie Diggs, Helen M. W. (Dameron) Beshears, and Emily Elizabeth Gross. Richard Breau identified the names of these women based on their photographs in other sources (see Allen, p. 10, and Ginalie Swaim, e-mail of September 21, 2002, to Anne Allen, in the production files relating to Allen's article, in the Iowa Heritage Illustrated Spring 2002 production files, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City). The names given above are the fullest names available based on University of Iowa student directories (Carlson, "Black Students at SUI and their Addresses from Student Directories"). This photograph was taken sometime between fall semester 1918, when Alexander and Wilson started at the university as freshmen, and August 1919, when this photograph was published in *The Bystander* (Des Moines, Iowa, August 22, 1919, p. 1), with the caption "A Group of State University Girls Looking for a Home." The photograph was most likely taken in connection with the IFCWC fundraising campaign for the Iowa Federation Home in the summer of 1919. Two of the women pictured, Minerva Graves and Ruth Southall, had earlier been involved in the campaign to secure a dormitory for black women at the university, but both had graduated from the university in 1917. They joined the nine current students in 1919 pictured here. Only one black woman at the University of Iowa in 1919 is not pictured here: Golda Estelle Crutcher, who entered as a freshman in 1917 and graduated in 1921. Source of image: Lynda C. Walker-Webster, "Social, Fraternal, Cultural, and Civic Organizations," in Silag, et al. (eds.), *Outside In: African-American History in Iowa, 1838–2000*, p. 421.

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*Figure 10. Interior views of the Iowa Federation Home, ca. 1929. Source: Iowa Federation Home Operated by Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, pp. [6] and [8].*



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*Figure 11. Interior views of the Iowa Federation Home, ca. 1929. Source: Iowa Federation Home Operated by Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, pp. [10] and [12].*



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Figure 12. Photograph of residents of 942 Iowa Avenue in the mid-1920s. From the scrapbook of Altheda Beatrice Moore in the African American Historical Museum and Cultural Center of Iowa, Cedar Rapids; digital image available online in the University of Iowa Libraries' African American Women in Iowa Digital Collection, at <http://digital.lib.uiowa.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/aawiowa/id/720/rec/89>. The photograph is labeled "The Old Gang" and "The 'Frosh.'" A comparison of the names shown in the photograph caption and information from University of Iowa student directories suggests that the women pictured are most likely: Alice Algee, Lulu Merle Johnson, (unidentified), Marie Reed, Helen Jeanne Alexander, and either Emily Louise Johnson (freshman in Fall 1924) or Ellen Louise Martin (freshman in Fall 1925). The photograph was probably taken during the 1925–1926 academic year, since both Alice Algee and Lulu M. Johnson entered the university as freshmen in Fall 1925, and Alice Algee did not return to the university the following year. Both Marie Reed and Helen Alexander had first entered the university as freshmen earlier (Reed in 1923 and Alexander in 1924), but each repeated their freshman year in Fall 1925. Only the scrapbook owner, Altheda Moore, was not a freshman in 1925–1926. See Carlson, "Black Students at SUI and their Addresses from Student Directories."

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Figure 13. Group of men standing outside the Iowa Federation Home, 1938. The men are identified on the back of the photograph as Hillary, Fred Smith, and Braddie. “Braddie” was James B. Morris, Jr., whose photo album of his years at the University of Iowa contains this photograph. All three were probably members of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity. The Iowa Federation Home housed members of the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity for two years, from 1937 to 1939, and again in the year 1950–1951, the last year that the IFCWC owned this building. Source: James B. Morris, Jr., Photo Album, 1937–1941, University of Iowa Libraries, Special Collections, Iowa City. Digital image available online in the University of Iowa Libraries’ James Morris Digital Collection, at <http://digital.lib.uiowa.edu/cdm/ref/collection/jamesmorris/id/31>; accessed June 4, 2018.

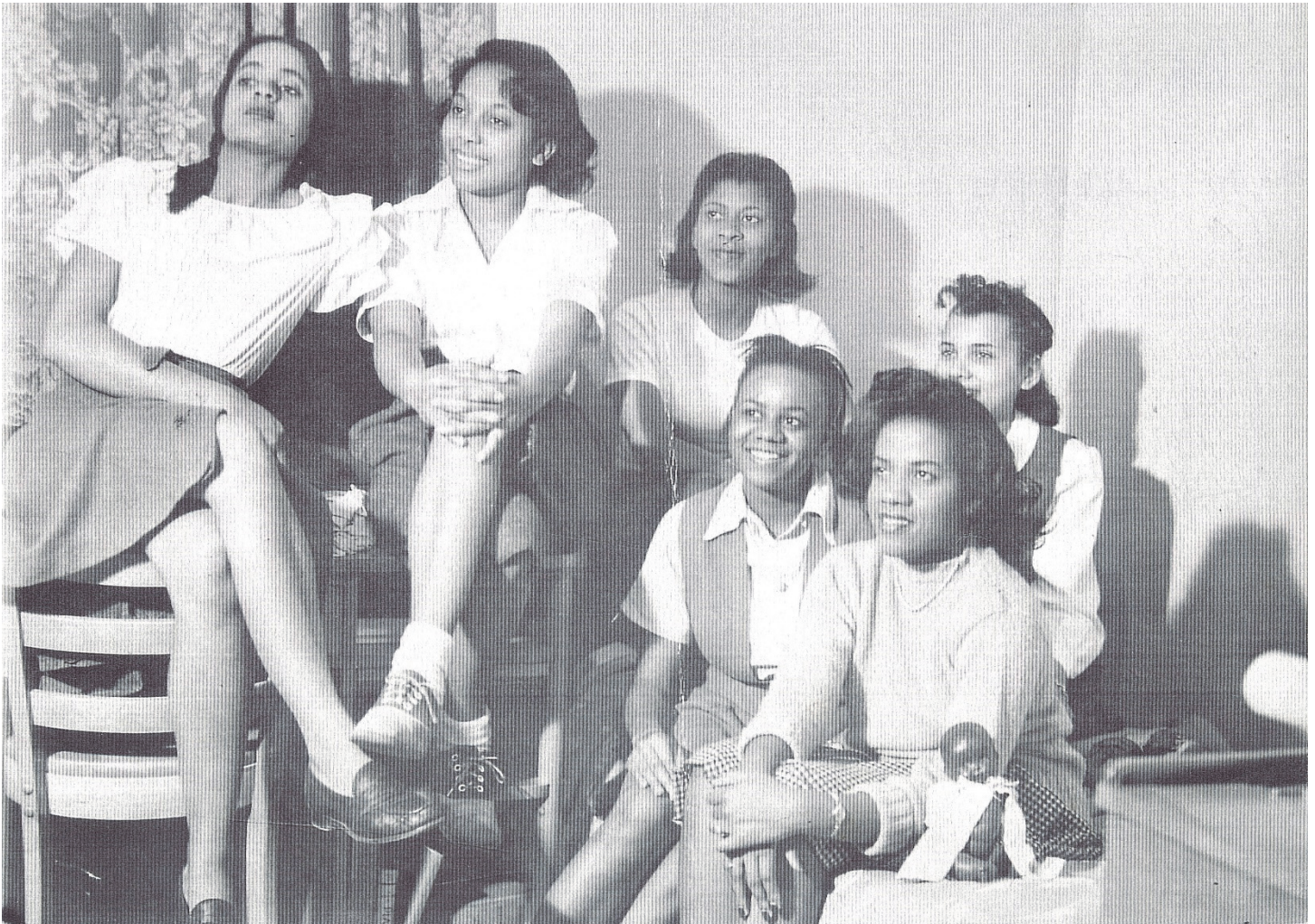


Iowa Federation Home for Colored Girls

Name of Property

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University of Iowa. Libraries. Iowa Women's Archives

*Figure 14. The five African American women who “officially” desegregated Currier Hall in 1946, and one guest. From left: Leanne Howard, Esther Walls, Nancy Henry, Gwen Davis, guest Pat Smith, and Virginia Harper. Image appears in the 1947 University of Iowa yearbook (p. 339) and a copy is held in the Esther J. Walls Papers, Iowa Women's Archives, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City.*



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*Figure 15. Iowa Federation Home house mother Margaret M. Lowry, shown on the front porch of the home, probably in the early to mid-1940s. This photograph was in the possession of Phillip G. Hubbard, the first African American faculty member at the University of Iowa, and later Dean of Academic Affairs and Vice President for Student Services at the university (Philip G. Hubbard, My Iowa Journey: The Life Story of the University of Iowa's First African American Professor [Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1999], pp. 40–43). This photograph likely dates to Hubbard's period as an undergraduate student at the university (1940–1943 and 1945–1947, with a gap for service in World War II). Iowa City city directories list Margaret M. Lowry as the house mother for the Iowa Federation Home in 1942 and 1943, but not in 1940 or 1946, the nearest years in which directories were also published. The imitation brick siding had been added to the house by this time. Note that the post shown here is different from the ones shown in earlier photographs of the house in the 1910s and 1920s, and it is also different from the current posts. Source: Charline J. Barnes and Floyd Bumpers, Iowa's Black Legacy (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2000), p. 76.*