

Prof. J. L., Martha M., and Etta Budd House
Name of Property

Story County, Iowa
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" on one or more lines 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" on all the lines 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE

EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1885-1904

Significant Dates

1885

1904

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Budd, J. L.

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance - (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

9. Major Bibliography References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historical Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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CFN-259-1116

Prof. J. L., Sarah M., and Etta Budd House, Story County, Iowa.

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

Completed and first occupied in 1885, the Prof. J. L., Sarah M., and Etta Budd House (subsequently referred to herein as the Budd House) is locally significant, under National Register Criterion B. The building calls attention to J. L. Budd, a botanist of national prominence, whose contributions to horticulture included the introduction to the United States of nonindigenous plant material, as well as service to higher and public education.

The House also has connections to Etta Budd, a local artist and is also associated with the early student days of George Washington Carver, whose influence led him to study plant science. The Budd House calls attention to the early career of George Washington Carver. Carver's work in botany at Tuskegee Institute subsequently earned him international fame. As a new student at Iowa Agricultural College in 1891, Carver resided briefly at the Budd House. The association of this house with these two figures, however, appears insufficient to claim Criterion B for them.

The period of significance for the Budd House is 1885-1904, the time Prof. Budd resided in the building.

Significant dates include 1885, the first year Budd occupied the building and 1904, the last year he resided there.

The property contains two resources for this nomination--the Budd House, which is classified as a building and counted as contributing; and the cottage, which is classified as a building and counted as noncontributing.

PROFESSOR J. L. BUDD

Joseph Lancaster Budd (1835-1904) was one of Iowa State University's most notable faculty members during its early years. He helped establish the institution's national prominence in horticulture. Budd was appointed professor of horticulture at Iowa Agriculture College (later Iowa State College and now Iowa State University) in 1877, a position he held until his retirement in 1899. Budd was largely responsible for the establishment of Arbor Day in Iowa.

About his professorial tenure, Iowa State historian Earle D. Ross has written that "his two decades of service were to bring the department to national recognition." (Ross:73) Budd traveled extensively around the world to study plants and identify appropriate species for introduction to North America. The Russian Olive tree is perhaps the mostly widely recognized of these nonindigenous species. *American Horticultural Manual*, Budd's chief scholarly publication--published near the end of his life by J. Wiley & Sons of New York in 1902-1903, became the standard work of its kind.

Born in Peekskill, New York, Budd studied three years at Union College in Schenectady and two years at the State Normal School of New York. Subsequently relocating to Rockford, Illinois, Budd

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Budd helped make Iowa State renowned. When he was appointed professor of horticulture:

that department was then in its infancy, and his experiments were conducted in a small frame building to which was attached a small greenhouse, and as it became inadequate for the work other buildings were provided from time to time, until his department had acquired a world-wide reputation. (*Ibid.*:31-32)

Like so many of his Victorian contemporaries, Budd actively pursued the accumulation of capital. In 1891 Budd invested in a one-half interest in the construction of a commercial block at 231-233 Main Street in Downtown Ames. (See Continuation Sheet 7-13.) His partner in this venture was Judge J. L. Stevens. This was a prominent improvement to Ames. The block stood on the northeast corner of Main Street and Kellogg Avenue, one of the downtown's most strategic commercial intersections. Its first floor featured commercial use, and was variously used over the years to house Carr Hardware Company, Davis Hardware Store, and the J. C. Penney Company. The second floor served as an opera house, a use which continued until 1905, when the construction of the Ames Armory provided a more up to date facility for public entertainment. Unfortunately, this commercial block cannot call attention to the aspect of J. L. Budd's career as a Victorian capitalist. The Nineteenth Century integrity of the property has been compromised. The 233 portion of the block was stuccoed over during the early Twentieth Century. Following World War II, the facade of the 231 unit was entirely face-lifted. (Page 1992:I-032) Budd also invested in the construction of at least one other commercial property in Ames. (See Continuation Sheet 7-14.)

ETTA BUDD

The Budd House calls attention to the career of Etta May Budd (d. 1952), the only daughter of J. L. and Sarah M. Budd. Etta Budd was the motivating force, who brought George Washington Carver to Iowa State College for undergraduate education. Carver's subsequent national prominence as a botanist can be at least partially credited to Etta Budd. An artist and educator by training and profession, Miss Budd became a local legend in Ames.

Etta Budd was a 1882 graduate of Iowa Agricultural College. A student of art, she taught for one year--between 1884 and 1885--at her alma mater and then relocated to Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, where she also taught art as an instructor. Budd subsequently resigned this position to study art at the Boston Museum of Fine Art. Budd's later teaching career found her in Des Moines, Indianola, and Ames. When her father became ill in the early 1900s, she helped care for him and accompanied her parents to Arizona, where it was hoped her father's health would improve. It is likely that, following his death in 1904, Etta Budd remained in Ames. She cared for her mother in 1915 during her final illness (*Ames Intelligencer* 1915) and resided in the family home until 1940 (Romendahl).

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While at Simpson College, Budd's art class included George Washington Carver. She quickly became his mentor:

Etta Budd became not only his teacher but his friend. Under her tutelage his talent blossomed, for she was soon content to let him paint what he liked most: flowers and plants. Some of his work done in her studio was later exhibited, and one of this paintings won an honorable mention award at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Today twenty-seven of the paintings Carver did while he studied art with Etta Budd at Simpson hang in the Carver Museum at Tuskegee. (Walt:148)

It soon became clear to Budd that Carver's future as an artist was limited:

Miss Budd was delighted with Carver's progress in art. He was surely her best student, for as she put it, "painting is in him." Yet she was troubled. What future could there be for Carver as a painter? Could a black man make a living as an artist? The more she thought about it, the more she noticed that Carver was fascinated not only with painting plants and flowers; he loved them and nurtured them in their natural state. Why should not he perhaps study botany? Or agriculture? He could still paint as an avocation, but he could do much more for himself--and his race--in science. Therefore she urged Carver to leave Simpson, to transfer to Iowa State, the agricultural college at Ames, where her father, Dr. Joseph Lancaster Budd, was professor of horticulture. (*Ibid.*:149)

Carver accepted Budd's advice and made this transfer in 1891. (See below.)

Also while at Simpson, Budd was instrumental in establishing Tridelta as a national sorority. As one historian explains:

Why a New England sorority would plant its second chapter way out in Iowa is explained by the remarkable career of an unusual young woman, Etta May Budd. She was a graduate of Iowa Agricultural College in Ames (1881), where she had founded a society which she hoped would establish chapters in other colleges. She had corresponded with a number of local societies, including the L. F. V. at Simpson, but her project languished while she went off to study painting at the Boston Museum of Art. While resident there during the 1888-89 academic year, she encountered one of the freshman initiates of the months-old Delta Delta Delta, who introduced her to the Tridelta founders. Soon it was agreed that Budd's Ames local group and the L.F.V. would join Tridelta, and as an earnest of their intention, the Boston Tridelts initiated Budd in early March 1889. The Simpson chapter flourished, especially when Etta May Budd joined the faculty of the College in the fall of 1890." (Walt:138)

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Budd's efforts to establish these organizations for young women illustrate her concern for the advancement of gender equality and the development of self-esteem for women.

Etta Budd subsequently became a legend in Ames. This college community, with its esteem for education, respected her intellectual pursuits, personality quirks, and contributions to George Washington Carver's career. Both Budd's own accomplishments and her family background contributed to her status. The following sketch evokes a sense of time and place within this context :

MARY ELLEN BROWN
One Ednam Village
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903-4636

Oct. 23, 1999

Dear YSS,

Some time ago I saw an article about Etta Budd's house in an ISU publication. I'm sure she would be happy to know how her old home is being used today.

She was a close friend of my mother's. We lived at 1004 Kellogg. Some of my earliest memories are of walking down to Miss Budd's because she had called us about a radio broadcast. In the years of 1922-23 she had one of the few radios in Ames with a large square superstructure (of wires I think) and a large horn for the sound. A broadcast might consist of a man's heart beating in some Caribbean island! Radio was a miracle.

The house was indeed filled with heavy, dark but rather elegant rugs and furniture--and books and paintings.

As I grew older, I learned about George Washington Carver and other interests of Miss Budd. She was a student of theosophy. Also a devoted member of the college sorority Delta Delta Delta, as was my mother who had also gone to Simpson.

Miss Budd had a big old sedan, a Buick I think. I remember going to Des Moines with her one time. As I recall she went in second gear the entire way.

She was a character, I suppose, but widely respected and admired for her intellectual pursuits, and also for her background--her professor father and evident air of being well off financially.

I'm glad this historic house is well used. Very best wishes for your fine programs.

Mary Ellen Brown,
ISU 1938
My parents:
C. J. and Jessie Lynch

(Source: Youth & Shelter Services, Inc.)

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This letter suggests Etta Budd's wide-ranging interests--new technology, unconventional religious thought, society, cultural pursuit, and intellectual activity. The Budd House became an active participant in this story. Its substantial size and architectural quality conferred status on Miss Budd and acted as a reminder of her family's position in the community.

In 1940 Etta Budd relocated to the Order of the Eastern Star retirement home in Boone, Iowa. Although impoverished at the end of her life, she remained an avid reader. Etta Budd died in Boone in July 1952.

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

Born in Diamond, Missouri, the son of a slave, George Washington Carver (1865-1943) was educated in a public school, where his outstanding intellectual abilities came to the fore. In 1890 he enrolled in Simpson College at Indianola, Iowa, with the intention of becoming an artist.

As one of Carver's teachers at Simpson, Etta Budd urged him to transfer to Iowa State College and continue his education in plant science, as outlined above. Carver matriculated there in 1891.

As an undergraduate at I.S.C., Carver worked closely with Profs. Budd and Louis Pammel in the Botany Department. Carver graduated in 1894, Iowa State's first black. These two mentors were so impressed with Carver's ability that they asked him to continue graduate work, join the staff of the school's experiment station staff, teach botany, and manage the school's greenhouse. Carver received his M.S. from the school in 1896, and, in that year, accepted Booker T. Washington's invitation to take charge of the agricultural department at Tuskegee Institute. (Walt:150). Carver's subsequent work in plant science earned him international fame.

Carver later recalled his years at Iowa State:

I have no words to adequately express my impressions of dear old I.S.C. I am and all I hope to be, I owe in a very large measure to this blessed institution. (Quoted in Crosbie)

Carver's first days in Ames were uneasy. When he had first applied to Highland University in Kansas, he was rejected because of the school's policy of racial barrier. Although Carver had encountered no difficulties at Simpson, his experience in Ames started on the wrong foot. He was told that he could not sit in the dining hall with the other students but had to eat with field hands in the basement. Carver also had an initial difficulty in finding housing, so accepted the invitation of Prof. Budd to reside in his home, according to local traditions. By the strength of his character and obvious ability, Carver soon overcame these obstacles and was quickly accepted in the Ames community. He continued to visit the Budd House throughout his years at Iowa State.

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According to Carver, Budd was:

my professor of Horticulture. . . kind, considerate, loving and lovable; a great teacher,
and he made of his students his personal friends. (Quoted in Zanish-Belcher)

Carver retained his deep personal regard for Budd throughout his life.

REPRESENTATION IN OTHER CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEYS

J. L. Budd was identified as among the notables of Ames in a survey conducted in 1992 by William C. Page for the Department of Planning and Housing of the City of Ames. That project included a reconnaissance survey of the city's corporate limits as of 1943 and an intensive survey of its central business district. The three-volume work explored a number of historic contexts and completed numerous Iowa Site Inventory Forms for individual properties. (Page 1992:II-61)

POTENTIAL FOR HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

The site's potential for archaeological significance is, as yet, unevaluated. Historical archaeological investigations may uncover traces of previous construction on the site--such as privies or other nonextant outbuildings. There is also the potential for data recovery at these locations. Traces of Budd's historic, nonextant plantings on the site might also remain for identification.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND REGISTRATION

The Budd House is likely eligible for nomination to the National Register under Criterion C. The edifice is one of the few Victorian residences influenced by Italianate styling and constructed of brick in Ames. The building is moreover a large and prominent example of it. Still, a case needs to be made for the building's eligibility under this criterion. Because the front facade porch of the Budd House is a reconstruction, it raises a question about the building's integrity. It is recommended that research and survey of the Old Town Historic District in Ames be undertaken to develop the architectural context of this area. This background information will facilitate a more accurate evaluation of the Budd House's architectural merit. The City of Ames is presently discussing the possibility of sponsoring such a survey.

The Budd House stands near the southern boundary of the Old Town Historic District in Ames. The City of Ames has designed this neighborhood as an historic district under local ordinance. This neighborhood appears to be eligible for nomination to the National Register as an historic district, and the Budd House would provide a contributing resource of great merit to it.

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HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPH

1897



This photographic of the Budd House appeared in a souvenir Iowa State College issue of the *Ames Intelligencer* in 1897. Looking to the north, it pictures the original warp-around porch and a lawn heavily landscaped with plantings.

Source: Farwell T. Brown Photographic Archive, Ames Public Library.