Iowa Site Inventory Form

State Inventory Number: HP-00145031, 96-0025660

☐x New ☐Supplemental

State Historic Preservation Office

(January 2016)

9-Digit SHPO Review & Compliance (R&C) Number: ____

☐ Non-extant Year: ____

***Read the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions carefully**, to ensure accuracy and completeness before completing this form. The instructions are available on our website.*

● Property Name

A) Historic name: **Immaculate Conception Academy**

B) Other names: **Academy of the Immaculate Conception, The Sisters School, Old St. Benedict's School**

● Location

A) Street address: **408 John Street, Building #1 (Note: There are two buildings included as part of this address.)**

B) City or town: **Decorah** (☐ Vicinity) County: **Winneshiek**

C) Legal description:

Rural: Township Name:____ Township No.: **98** Range No.: **8** Section: **15** Qtr:____ of Qtr: ____

Urban: Subdivision: **Otis & Stevens Addn to Decorah** Block(s)**: 7** Lot(s)**: Lots 6,7,and W33' L 8, S37'L 5, S37' of W23' L4, W139' Vacated Alley & W139' L13**

● Classification

A) Property category: *Check only one*

x☐ Building(s)

☐ District

☐ Site

☐ Structure

☐ Object

B) Number of resources (within property):

If eligible property, enter number of: Contributing	Noncontributing		*If non-eligible enter number of:*
__	1	Buildings	1
__	__	Sites	__
__	__	Structures	__
__	__	Objects	__
__	1	**Total**	1

C) For properties listed in the National Register:

National Register status: ☐ Listed ☐ De-listed ☐ NHL ☐ NPS DOE

D) For properties within a historic district:

☐ Property contributes to a National Register or local certified historic district.

☐ Property contributes to a potential historic district, based on professional historic/architectural survey and evaluation.

☐ Property *does not* contribute to the historic district in which it is located.

Historic district name: ____ Historic district site inventory number: ____

E) Name of related project report or multiple property study, *if applicable:*

MPD title *Historical Architectural*

Data Base #

____ ____

● Function or Use *Enter categories (codes and terms) from the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions*

A) Historic functions.

06C01 - Religious Academy or School

B) Current functions

01B02 Apartment building

● Description *Enter categories (codes and terms) from the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions*

A) Architectural classification: 1885 wood frame Immaculate Conception Academy, remodeling completed in 1972: 01 No Style, non-contributing

B) Materials

Foundation (visible exterior): **04C- Limestone**

Walls (visible exterior): **02- Wood**

Roof: **08A - Composite shingles**

Other: **None**

C) Narrative description ☒ *SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED*

Two wood frame buildings at 408 John Street housed the original 1885 Immaculate Conception Academy and Convent. This site inventory focuses on the 1885 school building, which is currently "hidden" due to extensive remodeling, creating an apartment building which is non-contributing (Photo 1 and remodeling information and photos in Continuation Sheet 1). The convent next door burned in 1907 and was replaced in 1908 (fully completed in 1909) by a three story brick structure, used initially as a convent and later as additional classrooms (Photo 2).

A second floor passageway connected the 1885 wood frame school to the original wood frame convent/inn and also the 1908-1909 brick convent. (*Ossian Bee,* August 14, 1885*; Decorah Republican,* September 3, 1885; *Decorah Republican*, May 28, 1908; *Decorah Public Opinion*, October 13, 1909)

Location and Neighborhood Character
The 1885 original Immaculate Conception Academy, modernized and remodeled into apartments in 1972, is located in the fourth block of south John Street in the Otis & Stevens Addition to Decorah, facing west. It is approximately 4 blocks east of Fareway Meat & Grocery, 4 blocks west of the Winneshiek County Fairgrounds, 5 blocks east of the commercial district, and approximately 4 blocks south of Water Street.

The two story, wood framed building is on the north side of the property and divided into four apartments, with a parking lot on the north side. Located to the south is the 1908-1909 three story brick convent building, currently four apartments and a third floor short-term rental.

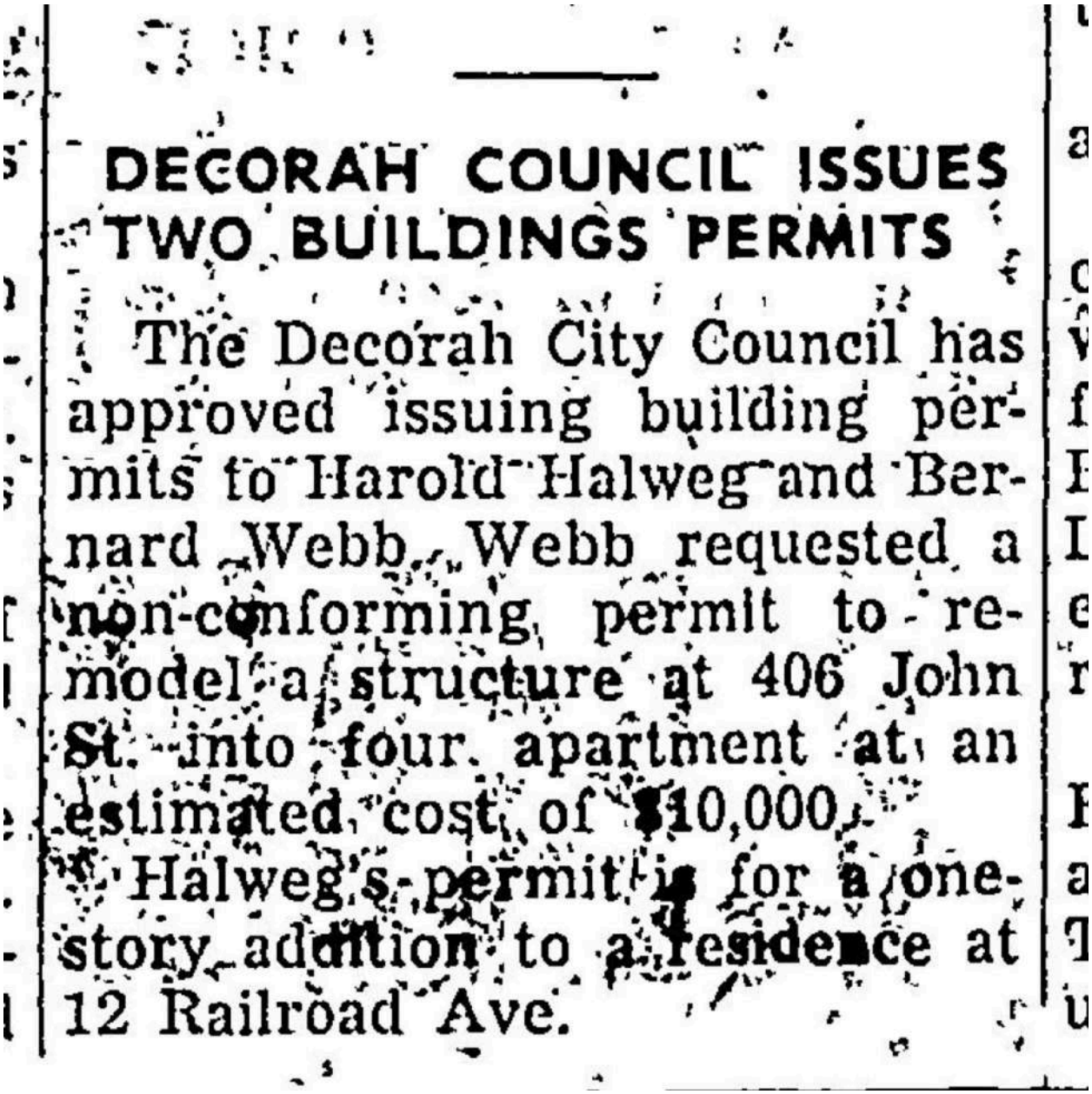
The neighborhood is a mixture of older vernacular houses, American Four Square, and a few houses built within the last 10 years.

Site
The site is located at the base of Pleasant Hill on a steep slope and measures approximately 0.65 Acres, or 28,352 square feet. There are a few mature trees on the property, with a sidewalk running the entire length of the property on the west side and a wooded area to the northeast.

According to title records in the Winneshiek County Assessor's Office, the land was originally owned by M.H. (or M.E.?) Howard, Edwin Adams, and John Finn. The property transferred to M.E. Howard and her husband, who sold it to Chas. G. Howard on February 24, 1880. Chas. G. Howard and his wife sold the property to Peter Garrahan (sic) (Father Peter Garraghan) in 1882, and in 1885, Garrahan sold the property to John Hennessy as "church property". Archbishop James J. Keene sold the property to St. Benedict's Church on March 29, 1912.

A portion of the property was sold by St. Benedict's Church to Arthur E. and Ruth E. Smith on November 12, 1948, with the majority of the property, including the 2 parochial school buildings, sold to Bernard Webb and Curtis Nordheim on November 26, 1965, after the new St. Benedict's School opened in 1964. In 1967, Curtis A. and Eileen W. Nordheim sold their share of the property to Bernard and Clara A. Webb. The City of Decorah vacated an alley on the property to the Webbs in 1992.

Decorah Public Opinion, February 12, 1968

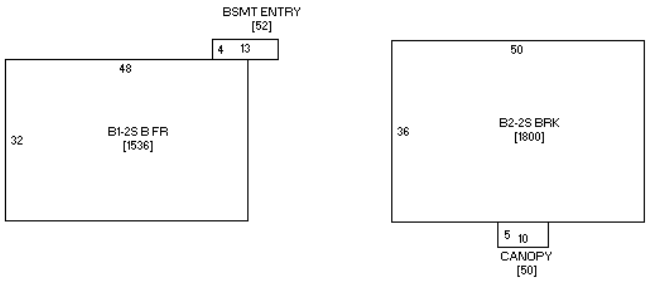


DECORAH COUNCIL ISSUES TWO BUILDINGS PERMITS

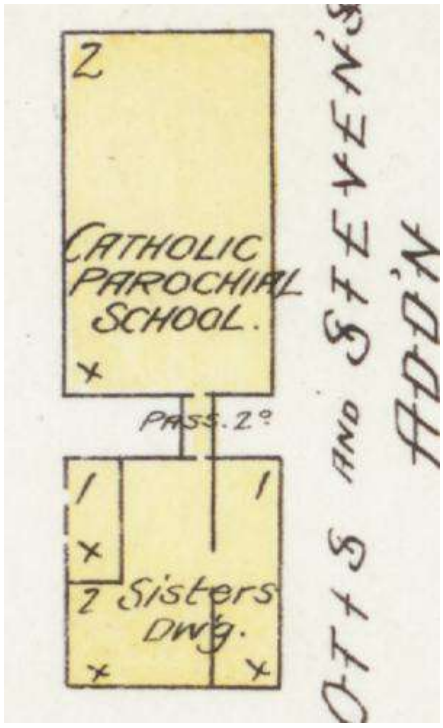
The Decorah City Council has approved issuing building permits to Harold Halweg and Bernard Webb. Webb requested a non-conforming permit to remodel a structure at 406 John St. into four apartment at an estimated cost of $10,000.

Halweg's permit is for a one-story addition to a residence at 12 Railroad Ave.

The Webbs sold the property to James J. and Nancy A. Ulring on April 30, 2002, with the Ulrings selling the property to Janet M. and Jon B. Christianson on June 1, 2017. The Christiansons sold the property to Dustin D. and Kathy J. Hager on February 18, 2022, and the current owners are Dustin D. and Kathy J. Hager and Mitchel A. Luttchens, effective March 1, 2022.



The building on the left is the original 1885 Immaculate Conception Academy, remodeled in 1972 into four apartments (noncontributing). The building on the right is the 1908-1909 brick Immaculate Conception Academy, remodeled in 1968 into five apartments, but retaining the original exterior and much of the interior central staircase.



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Decorah, Winneshiek County, Iowa, January, 1894 (each building is wood frame, denoted by yellow color)

Documented 1885 Building Alterations

The second story passageway between the original 1885 wooden frame school building on the north and the 1908-1909 brick convent/school no longer exists. See Continuation Sheet 1 for interview with Mark Webb, son of owners Bernard and Clara Webb, regarding the alterations of the 1885 building into apartments. Webb lived with his family in a house on Oak Street and helped his parents convert the building into apartments in 1972.

Site Number: ___ Address: ___ City: ___ County:

- **Statement of Significance**

A) Applicable National Register Criteria: *Mark your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria*

Criterion A: Property is associated with significant events. ☐x Yes ☐ No ☐ More research recommended

Criterion B: Property is associated with the lives of significant persons. ☐x Yes ☐ No ☐ More research recommended

Criterion C: Property has distinctive architectural characteristics. ☐ Yes ☐x No ☐ More research recommended

Criterion D: Property yields significant information in archaeology/history. ☐ Yes ☐x No ☐ More research recommended

B) Special criteria considerations: *Mark any special considerations; leave blank if none*

☐**X** 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: Property less than 50 years of page or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

C) Areas of significance *Enter categories from instructions*

27B - Catholic

D) Period(s) of significance

1885 - 1972

E) Significant dates *Construction date* *Complete if Criterion B is marked above*

1885 ☐ *check if circa or estimated date* ____

Other dates, including renovations

1972

F) Significant persons

The Sisters of Mercy teachers, Sister Mary Patricia Smith, Sister Mary Teresa Salmon, Sister Mary Bernardine Goulding (novice), Sister Mary Andrew Fallon, and Sister Mary Zita Murphy, who in 1885 established the first Sisters of Mercy parochial school outside of Cedar Rapids, at the direction of Mother Superior Sister Mary Agatha Mullaney.

G) Cultural affiliation

Complete if Criterion D is marked above

H) Architect/Builder

Architect: unknown *Builder/contractor:* unknown

I) Narrative statement of significance ☒ *SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED*

In September of 1885, the Sisters of Mercy opened their first school outside of Cedar Rapids, Iowa on John Street, at the invitation of Father Peter Garraghan, fifth pastor of St. Benedict Church in Decorah. Five sisters were sent to Decorah: Sister Mary Patricia Smith, local superior and music teacher; Sister Mary Teresa Salmon, sole high school instructor; Sister Mary Andrew Fallon and Sister Mary Bernadine Goulding (novice), who jointly taught the elementary grades; and Sister Mary Zita Murphy, who was in charge of the kitchen, according to the current St. Benedict's School website. However, *The Ossian Bee* article below indicates there were six Sisters, and the first day of school was August 31, 1885.

The original 1885 frame school building had four square rooms, two on the first floor and two directly above, with each room having light and air on three sides. There were 3 grades in each classroom. The building was connected to the wood frame convent, a converted inn just south of the original school, by a walkway affectionately known by students as "The Bridge of Sighs".

The 1885 school building was converted into four apartments by owners Bernard and Clara Webb, who removed the cupola, lowered the roof, rebuilt the second floor, dug out part of the basement, and used skids to move the building approximately 12 feet to the north during the remodeling process, according to their son Mark Webb. The remodeled building, completed in 1972, is a non-contributing building, since the building has been significantly altered. (See Continuation Sheet 1 on the remodeling of the 1885 and 1908-1909 Immaculate Conception Academy buildings.)

The Ossian Bee, August 14, 1885

The Sister's School.

That Institution Completed, and Preparations Being Made to Open it on August 31st.

Monday afternoon a representative of this paper availed himself of the opportunity to visit the new Catholic school recently finished and take a look over the premises. He found the genial pastor, Rev. Father Garraban, ready and willing to pilot him through and give all the necessary information.

The property is situated in the south eastern part of the city at the base of pleasant Hill, and in one of the nicest residential portions of the town. The street and school property are heavily studded with the best variety of shade trees, and its close proximity to Pleasant Hill makes it the best location for an institution of this kind to be found in the city.

The lot, or properly the block, contains the school building, Sisters residence and the necessary outbuildings The size of the school building is 48x32, two stories high with cupola. The building contains four class rooms—two up stairs and two down, each one 21x30 feet, ceiling fourteen feet high. They are well lighted and ventilated, and are neatly finished and painted. The Sisters residence stands close by, a three story building that had been on the lot, and is being thoroughly renovated and repaired Besides the six Sisters who will live here, there will be ample accommodation for at least thirty boarders, for it is to be a boarding and day school, and everything will be done to make it comfortable for those coming from abroad

The school will be under the management of the Sisters of Mercy, six in number, from the convent at Cedar Rapids They are all experienced teachers, well versed in the different branches of practical and ornamental knowledge Among their number is a skillfull music teacher with over fifteen years experience in the principal cities of this

experience in the principal cities of this state

It is also a parochial school, for the benefit of the Catholic children of this parish, and it is the teaching of that church, that whenever there is such an institution, it is obligatory on the part of communicants to send their children to that school. This Reverend Father Garrahan is determined to carry out to the letter On the whole, it is an institution that the city of Decorah may well feel proud of in addition to our already excellent educational facilities, and Father Garrahan is deserving of much credit for his enterprise in materializing such a worthy project.

Everything is being made ready. the sisters will be here and the school opened on August 31st, 1885.—Journal & Press.

Decorah Republican, September 3, 1885

Opening of the Immaculate Conception School.

The new school recently built by Rev. Father Garrahan commenced its first session Monday morning, under the direction of the Sisters of Mercy. All the English branches, from the elementary to the highest, are to be taught; and special attention will be given to book-keeping and higher mathematics. Piano, Guitar, Harmony and Voice lessons; also Painting, Drawing and Fancy Work will be taught. A boarding department for young ladies, where every home comfort will be found, is another advantage of the school. Under the mild vigilence of the Sisters, young ladies will be as safe as under the paternal roof. They will be taught to cultivate those virtues which make happy homes, and aided to acquire those accomplishments which will render them ornaments to society.

All irrespective of religious belief will be most cordially received. 4t

The Ossian Bee article above states that the actual 1885 school building was 48 x 32, or 1536 square feet, the exact footage mentioned in the BeaconSchneider entry for the current wood frame apartment building north of the 1908-1909 brick Immaculate Conception Academy building.

In 1885, there were 200 students enrolled in the Immaculate Conception Academy, with education provided to students in Grades 1-12. The enrollment plummeted to around 100 students by 1919. Because of low numbers of high school students, the high school was discontinued in 1919. School enrollment among younger students increased, and the

Sisters eventually relocated to a new convent at 303 West Broadway in the early 1950s, near St. Benedict Catholic Church.

The 1908-1909 brick convent, which also contained a chapel and music instruction and practice rooms, was remodeled in the early 1950s for use as classrooms. Improvements were also made to the hillside playground to the east. Ten years later, the lack of adequate space was again a problem due to increased enrollment, and plans were made to build a new school.

Undeveloped property was purchased on the southern edge of Decorah, with construction of the new facility completed in 1964. The new St. Benedict School was dedicated on August 11, 1964 by the Most Reverend Archbishop James J. Byrne of Dubuque, and the first day of class was September 1, 1964 (*Decorah Public Opinion*, August 10, 1964). The school, designed by Decorah architectural firm Altfillisch, Olson, Gray, and Thompson, is located at 402 Rural Avenue and currently remains in operation. The original split-level building included eight classrooms, a multi-purpose room, chapel, library, music room, kitchen, and offices. The total cost of the original project was $268,000.

- **Bibliography** ☒ *See continuation sheets for the list research sources used in preparing this form*

Bibliography

Beacon Schneider website: https://beacon.schneidercorp.com/Application.aspx?AppID=110&LayerID=1180&PageTypeID=4&PageID=668&Q=172068744&KeyValue=111535500800

Decorah Republican, *Decorah Public Opinion,* and *The Ossian Bee* newspapers

Encyclopedia Dubuque: www.encyclopediadubuque.org/index.php/HEER,_Fridolin

Holland, Sister Mary Ildephonse *Lengthened Shadows: A History of the Sisters of Mercy,* Bookman Associates, 1952, pages 136 and 137.

Kath, Ruth R., Ph.D. *A History of St. Benedict Parish*, 1992; information about the five Sisters of Mercy who opened the Immaculate Conception Academy and the Mother Superior of the Sisters of Mercy in Cedar Rapids, who commissioned them; information about Bessie Carolan O'Brien and students in Immaculate Conception Academy dining room photo; newspaper articles about the Immaculate Conception Academy.

Mosorjak, Therese. Photo of front west entrance of 1885 Immaculate Conception Academy, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Archives, Belmont, North Carolina, www.sistersofmercy.org/heritage/.

Mullen, Father William P. "St. Benedict's School, Decorah, 1885", a report to Archbishop of Dubuque James Joseph Byrne, 1965.

Poppeliers, John C., Chambers, Jr., S. Allen, Schwartz, Nancy B. *What Style is it? A Guide to American Architecture*, The Preservation Press, National Trust for Historic Preservation,1983.

Price, Lucile. Broadway-Phelps Park Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, June, 1976.

St. Benedict Catholic Parish. "In the beginning, there were eleven…" St. Benedict's (sic) Improvement Fund brochure, Autumn,1984.

St. Benedict School website: https://st-ben.pvt.k12.ia.us/history

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Decorah, Winneshiek County, Iowa, January, 1894.

United States Library of Congress Prints and Photographs division. Panoramic View of Decorah taken from Pleasant Hill, September 28, 1908 by Brunt and Parman, Decorah drug and jewelry store, Digital ID pan.6a05165.

Webb, Mark. Photos and remodeling information of the 1885 and 1908-1909 Immaculate Conception Academy buildings by parents Bernard and Clara Webb, May 1, 2025 interview

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● **Geographic Data** *Optional UTM references* ☐ *See continuation sheet for additional UTM or comments*

	Zone	Easting	Northing	NAD		Zone	Easting	Northing	NAD
1	__	_____	_____	_____	2	__	_____	_____	_____
3	__	_____	_____	_____	4	__	_____	_____	_____

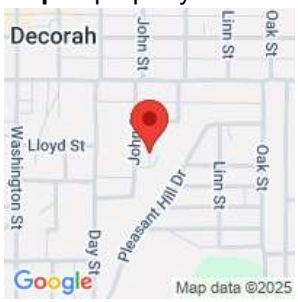
● **Form Preparation**

Name and Title: **Kathy Buzza, Decorah Historic Preservation Commission** Date: **November 23, 2025**
Organization/firm: **Decorah Historic Preservation Commission, City of Decorah** E-mail: **historicpreservation@decorahia.org**
Street address: **400 Claiborne Drive** Telephone: **563-382-3631**
City or Town: **Decorah** State: **IA** Zip code: **52101**

● **ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION** *Submit the following items with the completed form*

A) ***For all properties, attach the following,*** *as specified in the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions:*

1. Map of property's location within the community.



https://maps.app.goo.gl/t7YgqR2S26JYfVvd9?g_st=ic

2. Glossy color 4x6 photos labeled on back with property/building name, address, date taken, view shown, and unique photo number.

Photo 1: Originally the 1885 Immaculate Conception Academy, west elevation. BeaconSchneider website

Photo 2: **Originally the 1908-1909 Immaculate Conception Convent**, west elevation. BeaconSchneider website

Photo 3: Full Panorama of Decorah, September 28, 1908. Photo by Brunt and Parman, Decorah drug and jewelry store, from the United States Library of Congress Prints and Photographs division, Digital ID pan.6a05165.

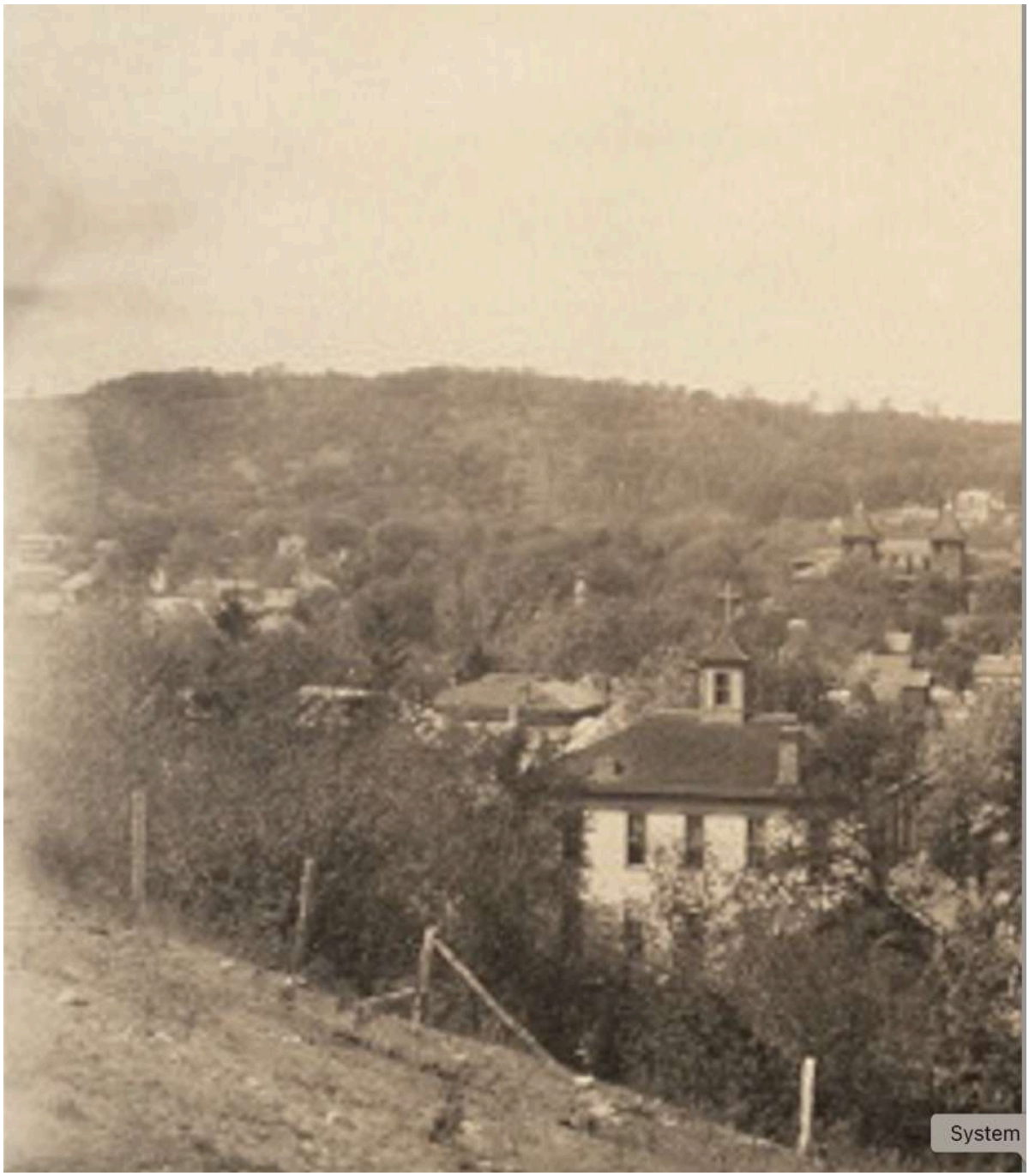


Photo 4: Portion of Panorama of Decorah taken September 28, 1908 from Pleasant Hill, showing east side of 1885 Immaculate Conception Academy in foreground and towers of 1896 Eastside School in background. Photo by Brunt and Parman, Decorah drug and jewelry store, from the United States Library of Congress Prints and Photographs division, Digital ID pan.6a05165.

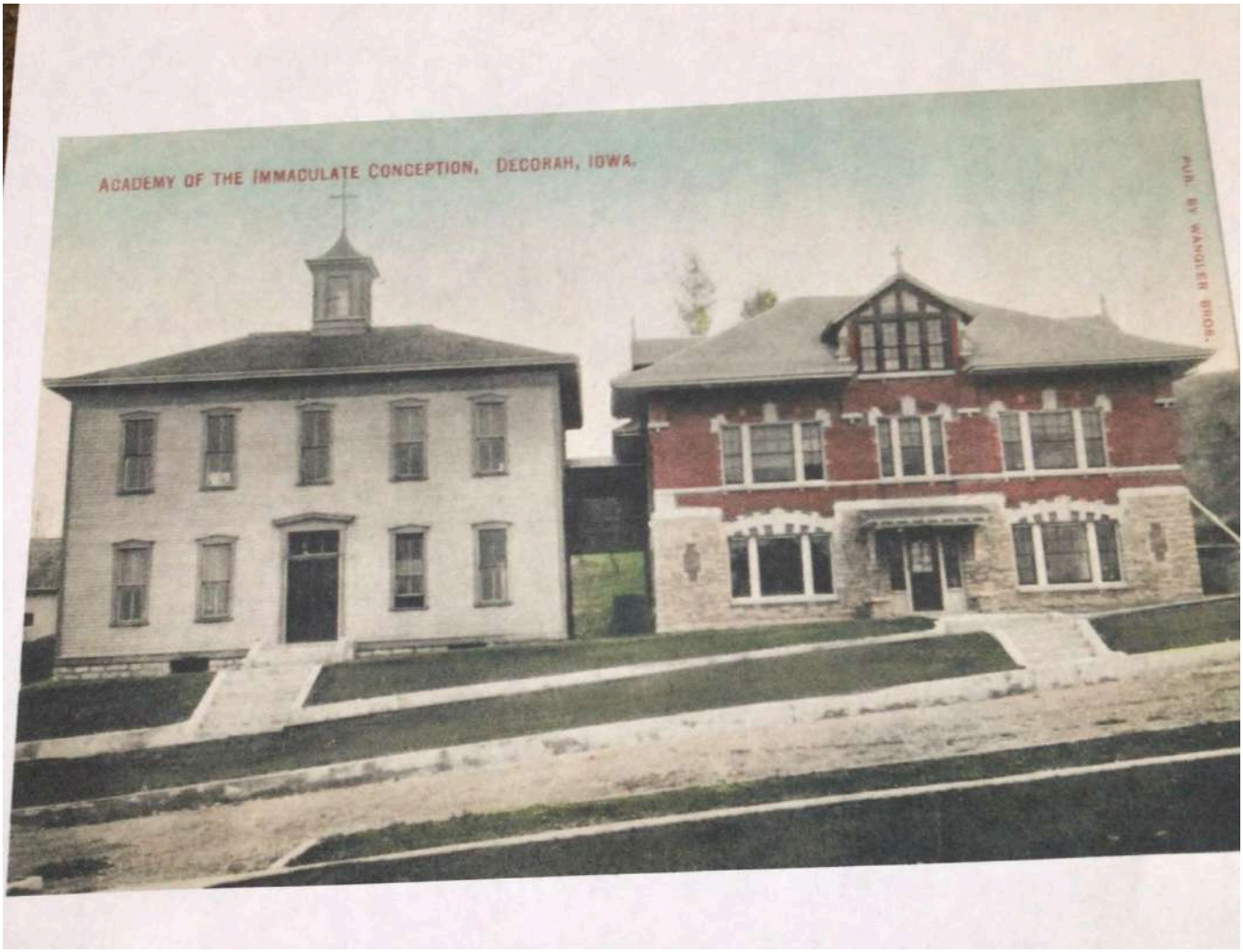


Photo 5: Postcard of Academy of the Immaculate Conception, Decorah, Iowa, published by Wangler Brothers Drug Store, circa 1930s. (Note the second story passageway between the two buildings.)

Photo 6: Front west entrance of 1885 Immaculate Conception Academy, unknown date and photographer. From Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Archives, Belmont, North Carolina, www.sistersofmercy.org/heritage/.

3. Photo key showing each photo number on a map and/or floor plan, using arrows next top each photo number to indicate the location and directional view of each photograph. Not provided.

4. Site plan of buildings/structures on site, identifying boundaries, public roads, and building/structure footprints.

Immaculate Conception Academy, photo from BeaconSchneider website. Total GBA is 6,672 SF. The north building at the top of the property is the wood frame two story, remodeled 1885 Immaculate Conception Academy, now a four unit apartment building,1536 SF. The south building is the three story 1908-1909 brick Immaculate Conception Academy Convent/School, 1800 SF, now a four unit apartment building plus third floor short-term rental.

B) ***For State Historic Tax Credit Part 1 Applications, historic districts and farmsteads, and barns:***
See lists of special requirements and attachments in the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions.

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Use Only Below This Line

The SHPO has reviewed the Site Inventory and concurs with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility:

☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *More research recommended*

☐ *This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.*

*Comments:*_____

SHPO authorized signature:_____ *Date:* _____

Continuation Sheet 1 - Remodeling of the 1885 and 1908-1909 Immaculate Conception buildings into apartments, based on May 1, 2025 interview with Mark Webb, son of Bernard and Clara Webb, previous owners of 408 John Street.

According to Winneshiek County records, the two Immaculate Conception Academy buildings and property at 408 John Street were sold to Bernard Webb and Curtis Nordheim in November,1965. In 1967, Curtis A. and Eileen W. Nordheim sold their share of the property to Bernard and Clara A. Webb.

In a May 1, 2025 interview with Mark Webb, son of Bernard and Clara Webb, he stated his parents always planned to remodel the two buildings into apartments. They started with the 1908-1909 brick Immaculate Conception Academy in the late 1960s. Bernard Webb was a carpenter, construction supervisor, and self-taught engineer, who did cement work, foundations, roofing, and remodeling in the Decorah area, He built three houses on the south side of Terrace Street, at the base of the Immaculate Conception Academy property.

Webb remembers attending first and second grade at the 1908-1909 brick building, prior to the opening of the new St. Benedict School at 402 Rural Avenue in 1964. When his family started remodeling the 1909 brick building in 1966, the entire family, including Mark and his three siblings, worked on the remodeling. Eventually all five apartments were completed in early 1968. Each classroom became a one or two bedroom apartment, and a fifth, larger apartment was created on the third floor.

Webb has photos from February, 1968 of the remodeling of the 1885 wood frame school building into apartments (photos 25-32). The building was about twelve feet higher than the current twenty foot high apartment building. The roof was removed and second story lowered, reducing the original twelve foot ceilings to nine feet, with a second floor stub wall, smaller windows, and new roof added. The eight foot long second story walkway between the 1885 and 1908-1909 buildings was removed.

While remodeling the first floor, the Webbs discovered a wooden gym floor complete with markings for a basketball court. The first floor also had twelve foot high ceilings, which were lowered.

The basement was dug out on the north side, removing the coal chute and boiler, to create space for tuck under garages. The building was then jacked up and put on skids, with a cable secured around the building, to move it twelve feet to the north. The move created more space and better drainage between the 1885 and 1908-1909 buildings.

In 1969, the Webb family moved from their house on Oak Street to the 1885 building, living in the building while working on each apartment. Clara Webb finished woodwork, painted rooms, and supervised both apartment buildings. The remodeling was completed in 1972. Bernard Webb designed and built a house on the south side of Terrace Street, and the family moved there in 1975. Webb also built two other houses on the south side of Terrace Street.

Webb hired an excavator to level the steep slope to the east of the Immaculate Conception Academy buildings, creating fill for the houses he built on Terrace Street and removing the school playground and softball field.

Webb stated that his dad grew up during the Depression and never wanted to throw anything away. He would take down buildings to salvage the materials, obtaining a lot of useful building supplies. Webb thinks the roof materials from the 1885 building were reused during the building's remodeling. "My dad was a very practical person. He wanted to do things in a conservative and smart way."

Renters were often school teachers, and Webb said his parents wanted to keep rent reasonable for them. He remembers rent at one point was $75 per month.

The City of Decorah vacated an alley on the property to the Webbs in 1992.

Photos of 1885 Immaculate Conception Academy during and after remodeling.

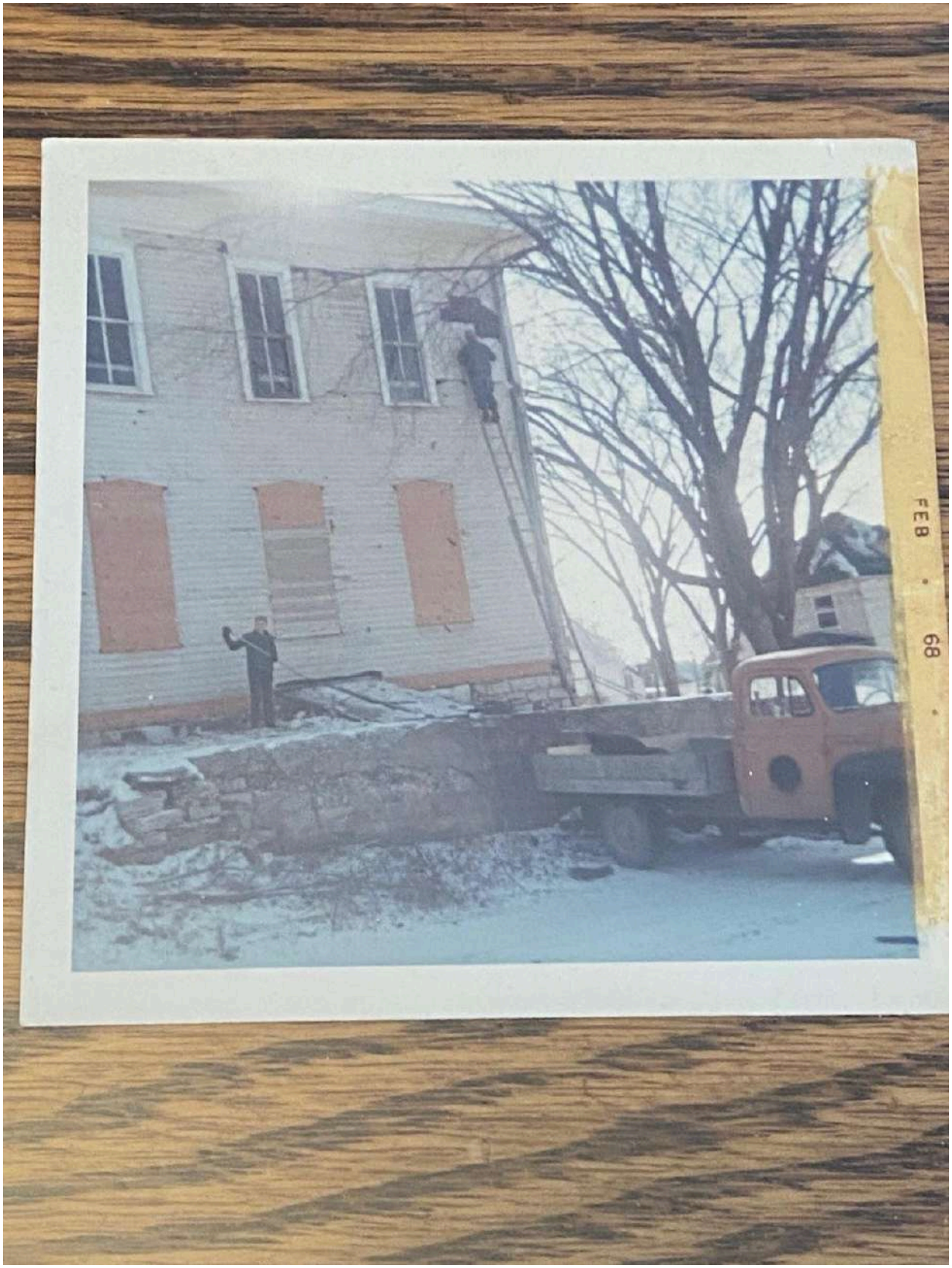


Photo 7: View of north elevation, with Bernard Webb on ladder and Mark Webb with raised hand, February, 1968, unknown photographer.

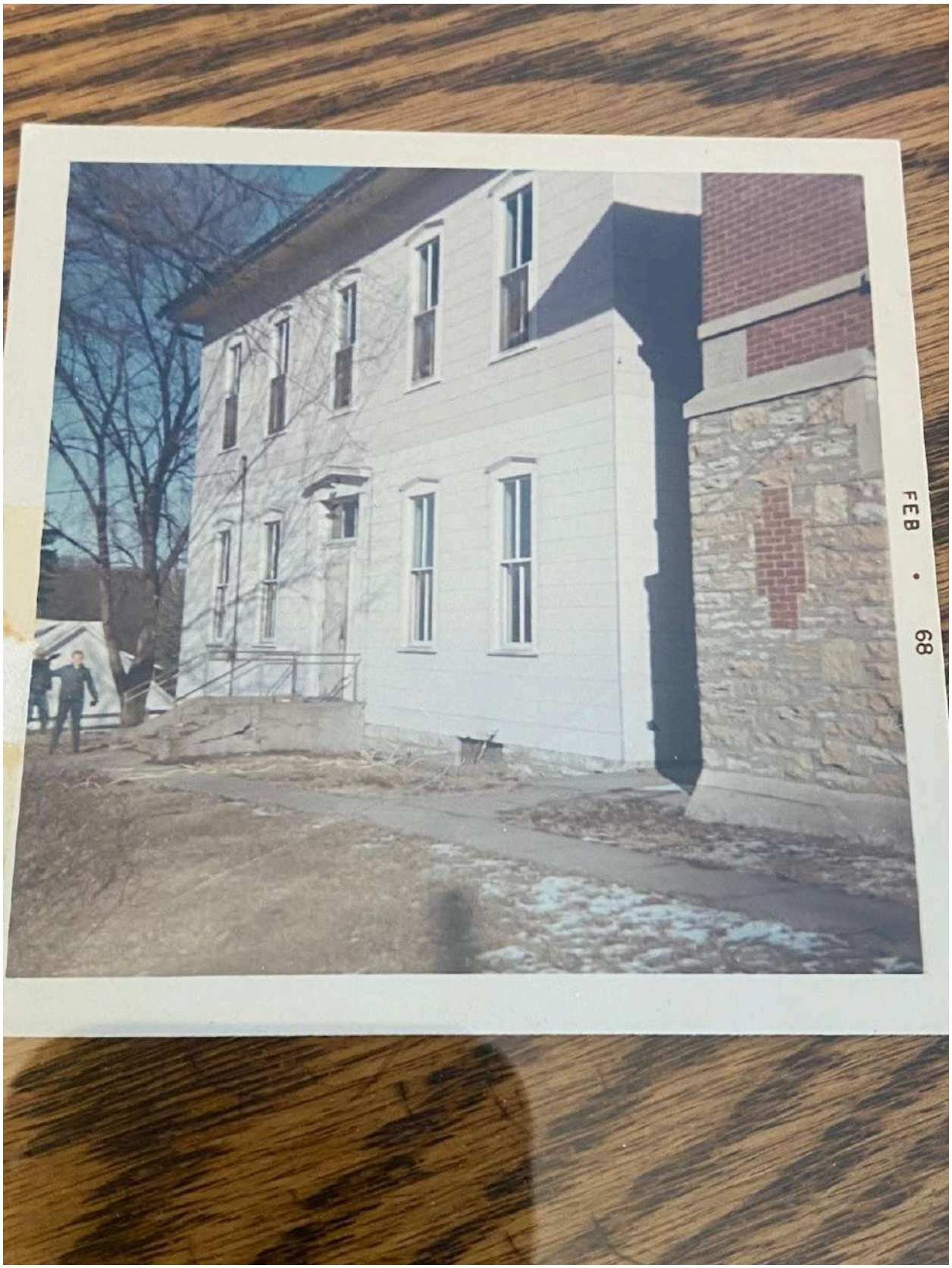


Photo 8: View of west elevation, showing narrow walkway between 1885 building and 1908-1909 brick building, February 1968, unknown photographer.

Photo 9: View of sidewalk between 1885 building and 1908-1909 building, taken from west elevation looking east, after removal of connecting second floor walkway, February, 1968, unknown photographer.

Photo 10: View of west elevation, with Mark Webb crawling out of basement access, February, 1968, unknown photographer.

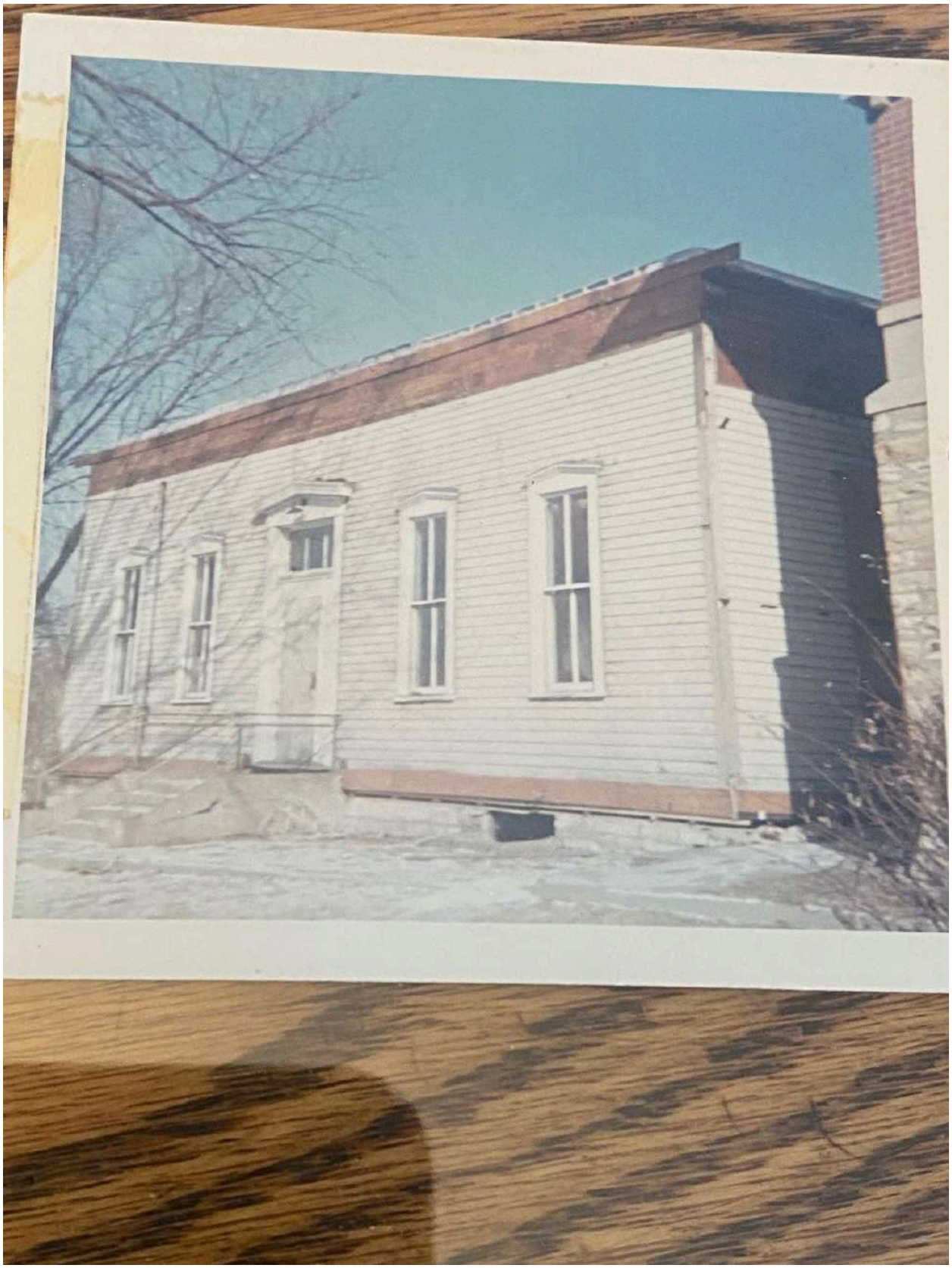


Photo 11: View of west elevation, after removal of roof and second story, February, 1968, unknown photographer.

Photo 12: View of area between 1885 and 1908-1909 buildings, after 1885 building was moved twelve feet to the north, February, 1968, unknown photographer.

Photo 13: View of west elevation, featuring completed exterior remodeling, July, 1972, unknown photographer.

Photo 14: View of north elevation, featuring parking garage after completed remodeling, July, 1972, unknown photographer.

Continuation Sheet 2 - Sisters of Mercy–1885 Pioneers of Immaculate Conception Academy, Decorah, Iowa

Sister Mary Patricia Smith, (1856-1940) Superior and music
Sister Mary Teresa Salmon, (1860-1928) high school grades (sole teacher)
Sister Mary Bernardine Goulding (novice),(1860-1921) elementary grades and painting
Sister Mary Andrew Fallon, (1854-1932) elementary grades
Sister Mary Zita Murphy, (1845-1921) kitchen / cook

Photo added by Bonnie

Add Photos Request Photo

Sr Mary Patricia Smith RSM

BIRTH 1856

DEATH 14 Mar 1940 (aged 83–84)

BURIAL Sacred Heart Cemetery
Davenport, Scott County, Iowa, USA *Add to Map*

PLOT Row M, Grave 16

MEMORIAL ID 15322541 · View Source

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Inscription

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Sr Mary Teresa "Mary M" Salmon

BIRTH 6 Nov 1860
Ganges, Allegan County, Michigan, USA

DEATH 27 Apr 1928 (aged 67)
Manchester, Delaware County, Iowa, USA

BURIAL Mount Calvary Cemetery
Cedar Rapids, Linn County, Iowa, USA *Add to Map*

PLOT Sisters' Circle

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Former Mother Superior Here Dies In Manchester

Sister Mary Theresa, formerly mother superior of the Sisters of Mercy, Cedar Rapids, died at Manchester about 9 a.m. today following a week's illness of pneumonia. She was formerly Mary Margaret Salmon and was born Nov. 6, 1860 in Plumerville, Mich. She entered the Sisters of Mercy Oct. 6, 1881 at Cedar Rapids and from 1910 to 1913 was mother superior. Since that time she had been teaching in various schools of the order. Surviving are five sisters, one of whom is Sister Mary Francis, Charles City, and a brother. The body will be brought to Cedar Rapids for services. Announcements will be made later.

Added by rsmk

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Family Members

Parents

Owen Salmon
1821–1886

Ellen Salmon
1835–1915

Siblings

Sr Mary Frances "Ellen F" Salmon
1863–1930

William Owen Salmon
1872–1932

Emma Jane Salmon
1875–1960

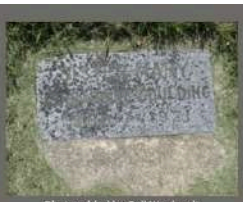

Photo added by Gail Wenhardt

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Sr Mary Bernardine "Maria" Goulding

BIRTH 1860
New York, USA

DEATH 25 Mar 1921 (aged 60–61)
Cedar Rapids, Linn County, Iowa, USA

BURIAL Mount Calvary Cemetery
Cedar Rapids, Linn County, Iowa, USA Add to Map

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SISTER MARY BERNARDINE IS DEAD FROM PNEUMONIA

Sister Mary Bernardine died, at 3:20 a. m. today at Mercy hospital, of pneumonia contracted some time ago, which was complicated by other illness. She was nearly sixty years old. She had been a sister since 1893, and was instrumental in starting schools at De Witt, Decorah, Manchester, Charles City, Marion and other Iowa cities. Her name originally was Goulding, and she is survived by two brothers H. A. and W. B. Goulding, and a sister Lillie in Luzerne, and a brother L. R. Goulding in Denver. Another brother, P. J., died in 1918. He was chairman of the Oklahoma state capital commission.

The funeral will take place Monday at 9 a. m. from Sacred Heart Academy.

The Rev. J. J. Toomey will conduct the services and burial will be in Mt. Calvary cemetery.

Added by rsmk

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Family Members

Parents

James Goulding
unknown–1895

Anna F. *McGlaw* Goulding
1840–1918

Siblings

Patrick J Goulding
1862–1918

Patrick J Goulding
1862–1918

sr Mary Evangelist "Anna" Goulding
1865–1907

Amelia E Goulding
1870–1952

Henry A Goulding
1874–1942

Flowers

In their memory

See more Goulding memorials in:

- Mount Calvary Cemetery
- Cedar Rapids
- Linn County
- Iowa
- USA
- Find a Grave

Flower Delivery

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Records on Ancestry

Iowa, U.S., Death Records, 1880-1968

Iowa, U.S., State Census Collection, 1836-1925

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U.S., Find a Grave® Index, 1600 | Sr Mary Andrew "Ellen" Fallon (1

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Photo added by Gail Wenhardt

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sr Mary Andrew "Ellen" Fallon

BIRTH 1854
New York, USA

DEATH 17 Sep 1932 (aged 77–78)
Cedar Rapids, Linn County, Iowa, USA

BURIAL Mount Calvary Cemetery
Cedar Rapids, Linn County, Iowa, USA Add to Map

PLOT Sisters' Circle

MEMORIAL ID 70065226 · View Source

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MEMORIAL | PHOTOS 1 | FLOWERS 0

Beloved Sister of Mercy Dies at Cedar Rapids

September 17 brought to a close the life of a well beloved member of the Order of Mercy in Cedar Rapids. In April 1893, Sister Mary Andrew Fallon pronounced the vows which bound her to the Spouse she so faithfully served for more than fifty years. The first Sister of Mercy professed in the Cedar Rapids mother house of the Order, she was identified with its interests until her saintly soul was released.

For more than twenty years Sister Mary Andrew bore acute suffering with unfailing patience, even with real joy. Her memory will long be an incentive to higher and better living. Incapacitated for active duty, her fingers were never idle, and the beautiful altar linens and vestments she wrought contribute much to the beauty of the chapels she so dearly loved.

The Solemn Requiem was celebrated in the college chapel at Mount Mercy, 9 o'clock Monday morning. The celebrant was Rev. P. Behan, Cedar Rapids; deacon, Rev. Francis Churchill, Cedar Rapids; subdeacon, Rev. Dorrance Noonan, Marion; master of ceremonies, Rev. Francis Houlihan, S.T.D., Cedar Rapids. In attendance were Rev. A. Vojacek, Rev. D. J. Lenihan, Rev. J. Peters, Cedar Rapids; Rev. T. McElliott, Marion; Rev. Eugene Lorenz, S.T.D., Sioux City; Rev. J. M. Courtney, Victor, Iowa.

At the conclusion of the Mass, Father Courtney, a former pupil of the deceased religious, preached the sermon.

Added by rsmk

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Family Members

Parents

John Fallon
1805–1892

Margaret *McCune* Fallon
1822–1883

Siblings

James A. Fallen
1843–1914

Bridget Agnes *Fallon* Gardiner
1845–1923

Anna Maria *Fallon* Donelan
1845–1935

Margaret *Fallon* Donelan
1852–1935

Flowers

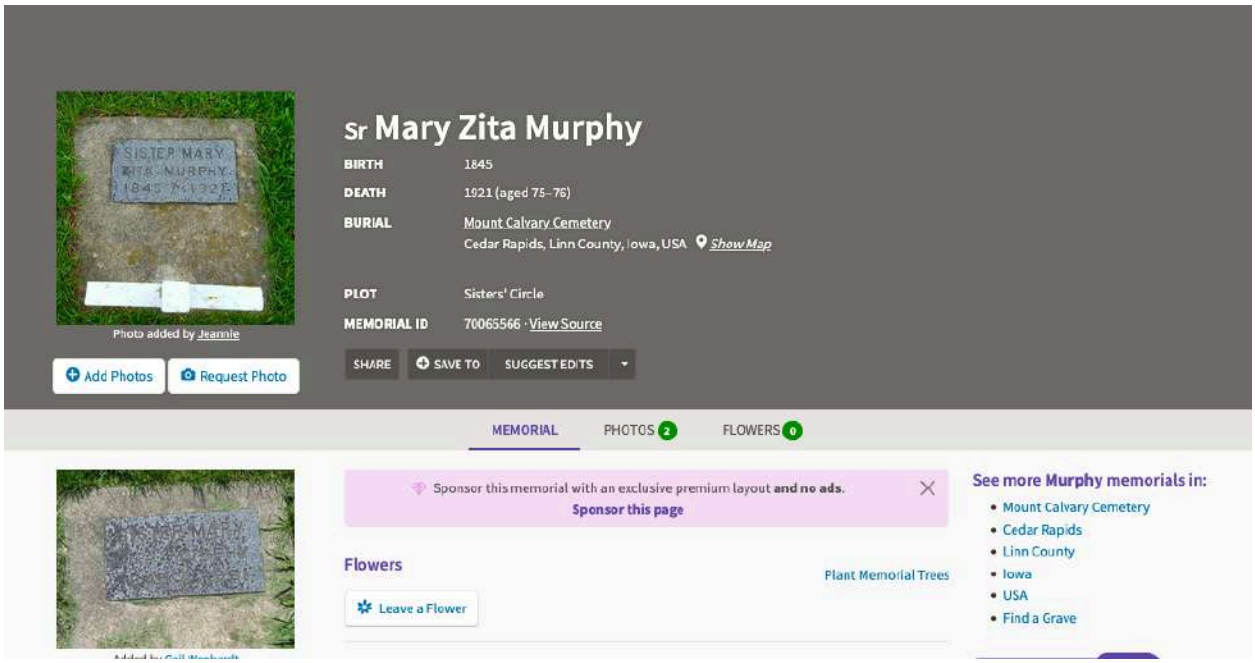
Plant Memorial Trees

Leave a Flower

We Remember by ancestry

COLLECT & SHARE MEMORIES OF MARY

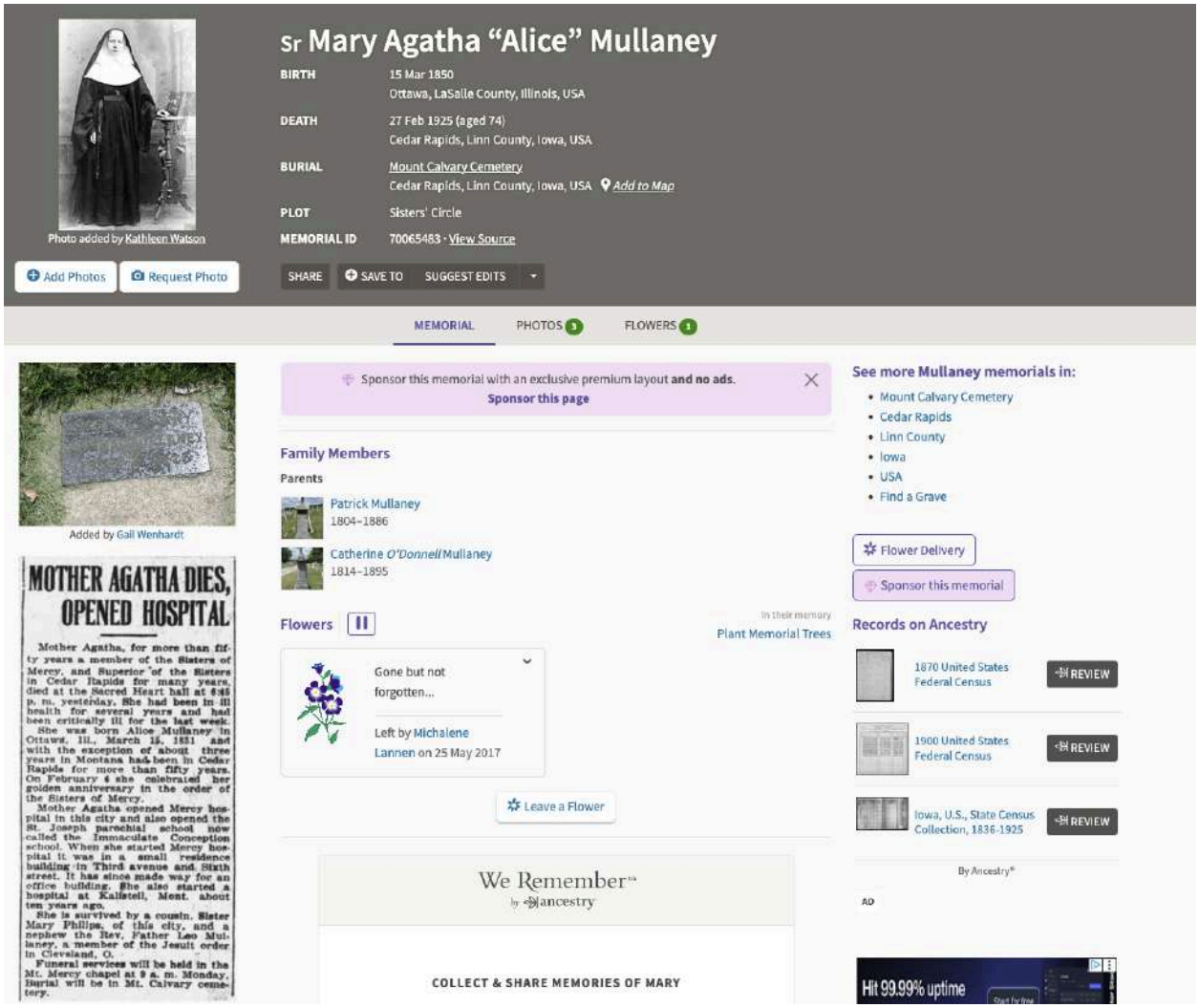
What's one thing you'll always remember



The above information, provided by researcher Dr. Ruth R. Kath, is from the Find-A-Grave website.

SISTER MARY AGATHA — The first mother superior in Cedar Rapids, Sister Mary Agatha of the Sisters of Mercy, helped start some 16 schools and three hospitals. Remembered in eastern Iowa for her 40 years of selfless work, she was especially helpful to poor children.

A clearer photo above of Sister Mary Agatha Mullaney.



Sister Mary Agatha "Alice"Mullany, Mother Superior of the Sisters of Mercy in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, commissioned the five Sisters of Mercy, whose Find-A-Grave entries are included above, to the Immaculate Conception Academy in Decorah in 1885. The article about Mother Agatha is from the *Cedar Rapids Gazette,* July 16, 1950, on the 75th anniversary of the Religious Sisters of Mercy (RSM). Information provided by researcher Dr. Ruth R. Kath.

Continuation Sheet 3 - Excerpt from *Lengthened Shadows: A History of the Sisters of Mercy, Cedar Rapids, Iowa* by Sister Mary Ildephonse Holland, Bookman Associates, 1952, that include references to the Immaculate Conception Academy in Decorah.

Excerpt, Page One

Then one day there came to the chapel to say Mass, the Assistant, short and slight of build. He continued to come several days in succession which led the sacristan to believe that the pastor had given the small assistant charge of saying Mass for the Sisters indefinitely. So she remodelled the alb to fit the smaller man.

The very next morning after she had shortened the religious garment and otherwise reduced it in size, the pastor appeared at the convent to say the Community Mass. He went into the sacristy to vest. Everyone in the chapel knew that things were not going too smoothly within but they waited to see what would happen.

Presently he emerged looking very uncomfortable and, no doubt, feeling more so. He stood for a moment at the foot of the altar, then beckoned the sacristan toward him. Sister Mary Benedict knelt straight and tall on her prie-dieu. He beckoned again, this time more forcibly. Still no response! Again the arm was crooked in a decidedly imperative gesture. This time she moved toward the altar step; she stood before him still very straight and tall. Then, "Who cut down this alb?"

"I did, Father."

"You – had – no right – to – In – Nomine – Patris – et – Filii – et – Spiritus – Sancti."

"Amen," answered the sacristan as she returned to her place in the chapel, to continue her role of acolyte.

The following occurrence happened on a Sunday morning. The members of the St. Benedict congregation were fulfilling their Sunday obligations. The Sisters were hearing Mass from the gallery, the place usually assigned them. After the Gospel everyone sat back for the announcements. What was the surprise of that gathering when they heard a plea being made for the congregation to contribute to the support of the Sisters.

Those good nuns needed money all right but they could very well be spared the humiliating experience that was now in store for them. Finishing his plea, the well-intentioned pastor called up to the gallery, "The Mother Superior up there will now take up a collection."

Sister Mary Andrew, the Superior, looked bewildered! What was she to do! She dared not disobey, and yet, how could she face that congregation with the collection box alone! She looked helplessly from one Sister to another. Finally Sister Mary Nicholas Scallon arose, stepped forward, and together the two Sisters went forth to pass the plate.

Another event that somewhat disturbed the even tenor of life in Decorah was the fire of 1907. Quietly the children were poring over

their books one bright autumn day when suddenly the siren sounded and the usual hook-and-ladder array shot up Pleasant Hill. Strange to say the only reaction on the part of the children was a general questioning glance directed toward each other over their books.

Presently Sister Mary de Sales, the principal of the school, appeared at each door in succession and said in a quiet voice, "The difficulty seems to be here. You better dismiss the children for recess." Quietly the pupils filed out to enjoy an out-of-season recreation, only to find as they reached the playground that the firemen were fighting a blaze in the adjacent convent.

Eventually the fire was extinguished but not until the building was damaged beyond use. Not long after this the ruined convent—the old time inn, with all its mysterious nooks and corners—was moved away, and in its place was erected the beautiful convent which has since been converted into an up-to-date grade school.

The "Decorah fire" and the subsequent erecting of the new building took place during the pastorate of Father John Hawe whose assistant at the time was Father T. R. Collins.

Decorah has had many pastors in its long history, but here we shall only mention those who have been directly associated with St. Benedict's School since its opening. Father Garrahan, who was responsible for bringing the Sisters of Mercy to Decorah in 1885, remained pastor of St. Benedict Parish until 1897, when he was succeeded by Father John Hawe whose term of pastorship lasted until 1916.

In July of that year, Father Hawe was succeeded by Father Martin Hogan, who remained pastor until his death in 1933. While he was in charge of the parish, the new church was erected on the corner of Main and Court Streets. Father M. E. Nolan succeeded Father Hogan in January, 1934 and ministered to the Catholic people of Decorah until his sudden death in July, 1946.

Father Daniel O'Sullivan, the present pastor of Decorah, is most active in the interests of the school. He has purchased a home for the Sisters nearer to the Church and has remodelled the spacious convent, built in 1908, and made it into an up-to-date grade school; the old frame building which served so unpretentiously as a hall of learning for sixty-five years is no longer adequate for present needs.

In 1919, St. Benedict's High School, always small, was discontinued, but the grade school continues its spendid work in the cause of Catholic elementary education. Many men and women of fine calibre have gone forth from St. Benedict's School since its opening in 1885, and not a few have chosen to follow a little more closely their Leader