

WASHINGTON

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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received
date entered

See Instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Phelps, Alexis, House

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number Lot 10, Block 42

N/A not for publication

city, town Oquawka N/A vicinity of congressional district 19

state Illinois code 012 county Henderson code 071

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name 1. Henderson County Historical Society 2. Charles Wayne

2. 112 Clay Street

street & number

1. Raritan

city, town 2. Burlington

N/A vicinity of

1. Illinois

state 2. Iowa

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Henderson County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Oquawka

state Illinois

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title NONE

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date

federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	date: N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Alexis Phelps house is a two story frame building measuring approximately 40' x 36'. A one story kitchen addition dating from the mid 1800's is attached to the east end of the building. In the 1920's an enclosed porch and garage was added to the addition, bringing the house to its present configuration.

The building rests on a stone foundation, with a basement underneath the kitchen. Floor framing beneath the kitchen consists of large rough hewed logs, the bark still on many. Joists and studs are of black walnut. The interior trim is of black walnut and pine, most of which appears to be original. The original pine floorboards have been covered with linoleum. The laths are the handcut originals. The exterior drop siding is also of black walnut, which was covered by asbestos shingles in 1946. The apparently original six over six window frames remain on the second floor, though in some cases the glass has been broken. On the first floor double hung sash windows have replaced the originals.

The original entrance was located on the west facade. In the late nineteenth century it was moved to the south facade. This was done because of the shifting of the road and because of the erosion of the riverbank. (At the time the home was built, the town of Oquawka included a city block west of the home. The house is now only a few feet from the river bluffs edge.)

The interior layout is a simple arrangement of four over four rooms. A main staircase to the second floor is located in the northeast corner. Two fireplaces are located on the first floor, with one fireplace located on the second floor. The basic floor plan has had minor alterations. One of the first floor rooms has been replastered and arched openings added to the rooms. A bathroom has been added on the second floor.

A narrow enclosed stairway provides access to the attic space from the kitchen. The doorway to this stair retains its original hardware.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1833 Builder/Architect Alexis Phelps

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Alexis Phelps house predates the formation of the town of Oquawka, and therefore represents a direct link to the exploration and settlement of Henderson County. Alexis Phelps (with his brother Stephen) operated a trading post here with the Sac and Fox Indians. Together they laid out what became the town of Oquawka. Alexis Phelps also built the County Courthouse in 1841, when Henderson was split off from Warren County.

HISTORY

Alexis Phelps was born in 1800 in Palmyra, New York. In 1820 he settled with his family in Sangamon County, Illinois. By 1828 he had moved to Galena, Illinois where he was involved in lead mining. His family, in the meantime, had moved to Lewistown, Fulton County, Illinois where his father established the firm of S. Phelps and Company.

Alexis' brother Stephen, in 1828, purchased the claim of a settler named Dr. Galland, at a site on the Mississippi River known to the Indians as Yellow Banks. Operating out of Galland's log cabin, Stephen began trading with the Sac and Fox Indians for furs. Another brother, William, established an outpost in Iowa on the Des Moines River. In 1830, Alexis joined his brother at Yellow Banks, forming the trading company of A. and S. S. Phelps.

It was through this trading operation that the Phelps' became good friends of the Indian Chiefs Tama, Keokuk, and Blackhawk.

By 1836, Yellow Banks was a major port of entry to the military tract of Western Illinois. Accordingly, Alexis and Stephen plotted a town and sold lots in July of 1836. The name chosen was Oquawka, derived from the Indian name for Yellow Banks. Alexis served as the first president of the Village Board of Trustees after incorporation in 1842.

When Henderson County was split from Warren County in 1841, the Phelps brothers donated land for a courthouse, thereby earning Oquawka the county seat. Alexis built the courthouse that same year. While that building still stands, it has been extensively altered over the years.

Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln were friends of the Phelps', coming to town to participate in the circuit court proceedings. Douglas was often a guest in Alexis Phelps' home.

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Alexis Phelps died in his home on December 11, 1846 of a "congestive chill" following a trading trip to the Indians in Iowa. Since that time the home has passed through several hands. It is currently owned by the Henderson County Historical Society who hope to restore the home.

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Monmouth Atlas, 12/19/1846, Obituary of Alexis Phelps, Monmouth Public Library, Monmouth, IL
2. History of Mercer and Henderson County, 1882, H.H. Hill and Company Publishers, Chicago, IL 1882 (see continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than 1

Quadrangle name OQUAWKA, ILL- IOWA N 40° 56'

UMT References (NOT AVAILABLE) W 90° 57'

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

A	Zone	Easting	Northing	B	Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification
 Lot 10, Block 42 of the Original Town of Oquawka, measuring roughly 50' X 150'

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

1. John H. Allaman
 name/title 2. Michael Ward, National Register Assistant

1. Henderson County Historical Society
 organization 2. IL Dept. of Conservation date August/November 1980

1. Route 1
 street & number 2. 405 East Washington telephone 1. 309/627-2069
 2. 217/782-3775

1. Kirkwood
 city or town 2. Springfield state 1. Illinois
 2. Illinois

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Doris Kenny*

title *Director*

date *1/2/81*

For HCRA use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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BIBLIOGRAPHY: continued

History of Henderson County 1911, Munsell Publishing Company, James Gordon editor; reprinted by Times Record Company, Aledo, IL, 1976

Henderson County Quill, February 5, 1975, page 3; published at Stronghurst, IL

The Diary of Caroline Phelps, unpublished; (written by the wife of William Phelps, younger brother of Alexis. Begun in 1830. Excerpts were reprinted by the Monmouth Daily Review-Atlas in the 1930's)

- ILLINOIS, Henderson County, Oquawka, Phelps, Alexis, House, (4/28/82)
- IOWA, Scott County, Davenport, Iowa Soldiers' Orphans' Home, 2800 Eastern Ave. (4/26/82)
- KANSAS, Sumner County, Oxford vicinity, Old Oxford Mill, NE of Oxford (4/26/82)
- KENTUCKY, Clark County, Pine Grove vicinity, Martin, Major John, House (Clark County Multiple Resource Area) Basin Springs Rd. (4/29/82)
- KENTUCKY, Clark County, Winchester, Winchester Downtown Commercial District, (4/28/82)
- KENTUCKY, Crittenden County, Marion, Fohs Hall, 143 N. Walker St. (4/29/82)
- KENTUCKY, Jefferson County, Louisville, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite Temple, 200 E. Gray St. (4/29/82)
- KENTUCKY, Jefferson County, Louisville, Commodore Apartment Building, 2140 Bonnycastle Ave. (4/29/82)
- KENTUCKY, Knox County, Barbourville, Speed Hall, College St. (4/29/82)
- KENTUCKY, Livingston County, Smithland, Olive, Richard, House, Court St. (4/29/82)
- KENTUCKY, Mason County, Mays Lick, Mays Lick Consolidated School, U.S. 68 and KY 324 (4/29/82)
- KENTUCKY, Woodford County, Midway vicinity, Payne, Lewis, House, Lansing Lane (4/29/82)
- LOUISIANA, Calcasieu Parish, Vinton, Lyons House, 1335 Horridge St. (4/27/82)
- MARYLAND, Baltimore (independent city), Krug Iron Works, 415 W. Saratoga St. (4/29/82)
- MARYLAND, Cecil County, Earleville vicinity, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, N of Earleville on MD 282 (4/29/82)
- MICHIGAN, Berrien County, Berrien Springs, Old Berrien County Courthouse Complex, (boundary increase, previously listed as Berrien Springs Courthouse), Cass, Kimmel, Madison, and Union Sts. (4/29/82)
- MICHIGAN, Lenawee County, Adrian vicinity, Raisin Valley Friends Meetinghouse, 3552 N. Adrian Hwy. (4/28/82)
- MICHIGAN, Luce County, Newberry, Luce County Sheriff's House and Jail, 411 W. Harrie St. (4/27/82)
- MICHIGAN, St. Joseph County, Three Rivers, Downtown Three Rivers Commercial Historic District, N. Main St., Michigan and Portage Aves. (4/29/82)
- MINNESOTA, Fillmore County, Chatfield, Chatfield Public Library (Fillmore County MRA) Main St. (4/27/82)
- MINNESOTA, Fillmore County, Lanesboro, Scanlan, Michael, House (Fillmore County MRA) 708 Parkway S. (4/27/82)
- MINNESOTA, Fillmore County, Peterson, Quickstad Farm Implement Company Buildings (Fillmore County MRA) Mill St. (4/27/82)
- MINNESOTA, Fillmore County, Preston vicinity, Allis Barn (Reliance Stock Farm) (Fillmore County MRA) SR 17 (4/27/82)
- MINNESOTA, Fillmore County, Prestor vicinity, Strong, William, House at Carimona (Fillmore County MRA) Carimona Village (4/27/82)
- MINNESOTA, Fillmore County, Preston, Preston Brewery (Fillmore County MRA) Bluff St. (4/27/82)
- MINNESOTA, Fillmore County, Rushford Walker, Hiram and Valentine, Roswell H., House (Fillmore County MRA) 504 High St. (4/27/82)
- MINNESOTA, Fillmore County, Rushford vicinity, Norway Township Stone House (Fillmore County MRA) SR 10 (4/27/82)
- MINNESOTA, Fillmore County, Rushford, Rushford City Mill (D. J. Tew Mill) (Fillmore County MRA) 301 Winona St. (4/27/82)
- MINNESOTA, Fillmore County, Rushford, Rushford Wagon and Carriage Company (Fillmore County MRA) Elm St. (4/27/82)
- MINNESOTA, Fillmore County, Spring Valley vicinity, Pietenpol, Bernard H., Workshop and Garage (Fillmore County MRA) Cherry Grove Village (4/27/82)
- MINNESOTA, Fillmore County, Spring Valley, Spring Valley Mausoleum (Fillmore County MRA) Spring Valley Cemetery (4/27/82)
- MINNESOTA, Fillmore County, Spring Valley, Spring Valley Public Library (Fillmore County MRA) 201 S. Broadway (4/27/82)
- MINNESOTA, Fillmore County, Spring Valley, Steffens, Ephraim, House (Fillmore County MRA) 404 N. Broadway (4/27/82)