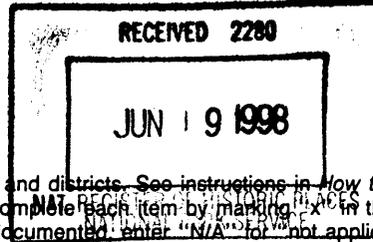


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Burkam, Elzy G., House

other names/site number Stackerl House, English Mansion

2. Location

street & number 1525 Douglas Street N/A not for publication

city or town Sioux City N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Woodbury code 193 zip code 51105

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Patricia Chenbury DS/ADP 6-2-98
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 7-15-98

Burkam House
Name of Property

Woodbury County, Iowa
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

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

N/A

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

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

WOOD

roof ASPHALT

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1894

Significant Dates

1894

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

McLaughlin, William D.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical 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):

- 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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Burkam House
Name of Property

Woodbury County, Iowa
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 14 713120 4709040
Zone Easting Northing
2

3
Zone Easting Northing
4
 See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Timothy T. Orwig
organization SiouxLandmark Corp. date 11 January 1998
street & number 30 Stewart Ave. telephone 712-274-5333
city or town Sioux City state Iowa zip code 51104

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name George and Cynthia Wakeman III
street & number 1525 Douglas St. telephone 712-255-1346
city or town Sioux City state Iowa zip code 51105

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Burkam, Elzy G., House
Woodbury County, Iowa

Section number 7 Page 1

7. Narrative Description

Descriptive Summary The Elzy G. Burkam House is a 2 1/2 story brick and frame building, designed predominantly in Colonial Revival style by Sioux City architect William D. McLaughlin and built in 1894. The building has an asymmetrical floor plan, although it is generally rectangular, 36 feet by 60 feet. The foundation, porch and first floor exterior walls are brick, while the second floor is of frame construction with clapboard siding; the floors are separated by an overwide clapboard belt course. A 1-story front porch, with an entry portico and Ionic columns, ties to an uncovered porch extension which runs the length of the front facade, connecting to a projecting half-circle enclosed conservatory. Windows on the first floor are mostly round-arched, while second-story windows are mostly rectangular. The roof is of moderate pitch with extended eaves and exposed rafters. The house has large roof dormers. The interior of the home is very well-preserved, and features exceptional oak woodwork, paneling, wainscoting, columns, coved and hand-painted ceilings, pocket doors, and numerous cherrywood fireplace mantles. The interior has changed little during the conversion from single family dwelling to apartments and then conversion back to single family dwelling. The house sits on three prominent corner lots and fronts east onto Douglas Street, a busy two-lane one-way street which carries traffic north from downtown. The north facade faces Sixteenth Street. At the southwest corner of the property is a plain two-story frame carriage house which is probably contemporary with the house and is complementary in style. This carriage house features a cross-gabled roof, a large sliding door, and 2/2 double hung windows. Both buildings on the property retain much of their historic features, appearance, and integrity. The home is in the heart of the Rose Hill residential neighborhood just north of downtown, a 21-square-block area of homes in Queen Anne, Richardsonian Romanesque, Colonial Revival, and Prairie styles, built between 1885 and 1925. The neighborhood is currently being surveyed as a likely historic district, but no individual building within the district is yet listed on the National Register. The Burkam House is in exceptionally good shape for a house of its vintage, has had little alteration since its construction, and is serving as a leading example in the movement to rehabilitate its neighborhood.

Architectural Description The Elzy G. Burkam House is slightly raised above the streets which front its north and east facades, emphasizing its height and massing, and allowing light into its half-basement. It is reached from the street by two flights of steps. The immediate neighborhood of the building is residential; the other three corners are a historic residence, a modern apartment flat, and a former synagogue converted into a Baptist church. Close to downtown and in transition, this neighborhood was once one of Sioux City's finest subdivisions. Today many of the existing large residences in Rose Hill have been divided into apartments. Although at one time the Burkam House, too, contained apartments, today it is one of the few homes in Rose Hill that is a single family residence. The building has an asymmetrical floor plan, although it is generally rectangular, 36 by 60 feet. The longest facades are north and south. The foundation, porch and first floor exterior walls

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**Burkam, Elzy G., House
Woodbury County, Iowa**

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are brick, while the second floor is of frame construction with clapboard siding; the floors are visually separated by an overwide clapboard belt course.

The east (front) facade has two bays, representing the basic two-unit wide organization of the house. The recessed bay has two grouped windows on the first and second level. The projecting northern bay has a large arched fixed window next to the wide front door, with paired windows on the second floor. The third floor roof dormer, five-sided, straddles the two bays. The front door has a fanlight and a rectangular flat-roofed portico porch supported on the east side by triple fluted thin Ionic columns on square brick pedestals. This raised porch with a solid brick porch wall extends across the facade of the house and connects with a semicircular one-story conservatory attached to the south side of the house, flush with the east facade. This was initially a portico, enclosed to become a conservatory in the 1940s. A undated photo of the Stackerl house, taken and published in a newspaper prior to 1913, shows that both porticos had open balustrades, probably wooden, above the roofline, and they were tied together on the ground floor with a continuous open balustrade. The balustrades are gone on both levels today, at the ground floor level replaced by a solid brick wall.¹

The Burkam House was designed “in the colonial style,” according to a contemporary account.² According to the McAlesters, Colonial Revival began around 1880, and although nationally only 10% of houses in the style have asymmetrical facades, a full third of those constructed before 1900 have this facade.³ Colonial Revival became the dominant style for residences in the first half of the 1900s, but was relatively uncommon prior to 1900, and shared characteristics with transitional free classic Queen Anne.

¹ This image, a photograph from a newspaper, was pasted into a scrapbook by the English family. The current owners have only a photocopy of this image. Because of the blurriness of the image, it was not reproducible for this nomination. The image can be dated as prior to 1913 because it is labeled, in newsprint type, “Home of J. Stackerl, 1449 Douglas Street.” Although it sits on the corner of 16th and Douglas, Burkam House was addressed 1449 Douglas until addresses citywide were regularized in 1913. There is no break for 15th Street in this long block between 14th and 16th, which explains the earlier numbering. Furthermore, an examination of neighboring names and addresses in the 1912 and 1913 City Directories indicates that it is the same house, and it has not been moved. Other changes evident from the pre-1913 photo include neighboring houses which have been cleared for an apartment flat, and the small saplings in the neighborhood, which are fully mature or have been removed today. The Burkam House, with the exception of the missing balustrades and enclosed conservatory, is largely unchanged today.

² “Some Notable Residences,” *Sioux City Tribune*, 31 December 1894, Holiday Supplement pg. 11. Independent confirmation to Colonial Revival was made by architectural historian Richard Guy Wilson, University of Virginia, who stayed there overnight while on a speaking engagement in Sioux City, 13 September 1997.

³ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Knopf, 1991), pg. 321.

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**Burkam, Elzy G., House
Woodbury County, Iowa**

The south facade is dominated by the conservatory and a side door with steps. The windows on the second floor are single or paired. A square hipped roof dormer is flanked by a patterned brick chimney with a corbeled cap and tie-rod, and a plain chimney toward the alley. The west facade, like the east, also has a two part organization; the recessed southern bay has 1 pair of windows but otherwise is nearly blank. The projecting northern bay of the west facade has a back door and a small porch. The north facade, which faces Sixteenth Street, has a side door with fanlight next to a narrow projecting central bay. This bay is rounded on first floor with exaggerated thick stone lintels on the basement and first floor, squared with paired windows on the second floor, and topped by a square roof dormer with three windows in the ballroom. On the second floor, three tall ribbon windows break the line of the belt course, and provide light to the interior grand staircase. The side door on the north facade was probably fashioned from an existing window in the 1940's, when the Englishes converted the upstairs to apartments and the back stairway became an apartment entrance.

The ground floor windows of the Burkam House are all round-arched, with the exception of the rectangular windows (added later) in the projecting conservatory, and are reminiscent of Romanesque. With the exception of two small arched windows on the north and south facades, the windows on the second and third floors are rectangular. The second floor single, paired, and ribbon windows are double hung 1/1, and the third floor/attic dormer windows are double hung 9/1. The first floor window arches are highlighted by two courses of radiating bricks, while the second floor windows are topped with a simple lipped lintel or crown molding. The first floor north facade features an oval window highlighted with decorative radiating brickwork and four rough stone keystones (one each at top, bottom, and sides).

The hipped (with a ridge) roof is of moderate pitch with extended eaves and exposed rafters. The original roof may have had cedar shingles, but the house has been roofed in asphalt shingles for 50 years. A new set of patterned asphalt shingles was added in 1997. The house has deep eaves with exposed rafters, reminiscent of Stick Style. At the cornice beneath most of the rafters is a band of dentil molding. Finials mark ridge ends.

The Burkam House has a number of interesting applied architectural details. The entablature of the front porch and the conservatory feature single and paired foliate festoons. The first-story front-porch portico is tied to the house with applied pilaster columns and the portico is topped by applied urns on pedestals. The downspouts are attached to the walls of the house with long foliate decorative metal brackets. The south facade of the east chimney has a large cast iron "S."

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**Burkam, Elzy G., House
Woodbury County, Iowa**

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The interior of the home is very well-preserved, and features exceptional oak woodwork, paneling, tall wainscoting, columns, coved and hand-painted ceilings, pocket doors, and numerous cherrywood fireplace mantles. The interior has changed some during the conversion from single family dwelling to apartments and then conversion back to single family dwelling. The current occupants operate the home as a bed and breakfast, and are continually sensitively restoring it.

At the southwest corner of the property is a plain two-story frame carriage house which is probably contemporary with the house and is complementary in style. This carriage house features a cross-gabled roof, a large sliding door, and 2/2 double hung windows. An overhead garage door has been cut into the north facade.

To the south, across the lawn from the conservatory, was a large gazebo (of uncertain date) with a fish pond behind it. The flagstone path which led to the gazebo is all that remains of this landscaping unit. Both buildings on the property retain most of their historic features, appearance, and integrity.

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**Burkam, Elzy G., House
Woodbury County, Iowa**

8. Statement of Significance

The Elzy G. Burkam House is of local significance under Criterion C as one of the earliest, largest, and best-preserved examples of Colonial Revival architecture in Sioux City. With its asymmetrical Colonial Revival form and traces of Romanesque and Queen Anne free classic styles, it is an important milestone of the transition between Nineteenth Century building styles and the predominant residential building style of the early Twentieth Century, Colonial Revival. The interior details of the home are very well-preserved, and include exceptional oak woodwork, paneling, wainscoting, columns, pocket doors, and several cherrywood fireplace mantles, vintage interior details which have been lost in many Sioux City homes built at the same time. No other house in Sioux City is known to have as many of the elaborate hand-painted ceiling murals as survive in Burkam House. The house sits on three prominent corner lots and fronts east onto Douglas Street, a busy one-way street which carries traffic north from downtown. At the southwest corner of the property is a plain two-story frame carriage house which is probably contemporary with the house and is complementary in style. Both buildings retain much of their historic features, appearance, and integrity. The house is in the heart of the Rose Hill residential neighborhood just north of downtown, a 21-square-block area of homes in Queen Anne, Richardsonian Romanesque, Colonial Revival, and Prairie styles, built between 1885 and 1925. The neighborhood is currently being surveyed as a likely historic district, but no individual building within the district is yet listed on the National Register. The Burkam House is in exceptionally good shape for a house of its vintage, has had very little alteration since its construction, and is serving as a leader in the movement to rehabilitate its neighborhood. It is further significant under Criterion C as one of the two known remaining examples of residential architecture by locally-important architect William D. McLaughlin, who contributed a number of significant buildings to Sioux City's architecture before his untimely death. The period of significance and significant date are both 1894, the date of construction.

Colonial Revival Style in Sioux City The Burkam House was designed "in the colonial style," according to a contemporary account.⁴ According to the McAlesters, Colonial Revival began in the Northeast around 1880, after the Philadelphia Centennial. Although nationally only 10% of houses in the style have asymmetrical facades, a full third of those constructed before 1900 have this facade.⁵ Colonial Revival became the dominant style for residences in the first half of the 1900s, but was relatively uncommon prior to 1900, and shared characteristics with transitional free classic

⁴ "Some Notable Residences," *Sioux City Tribune*, 31 December 1894, Holiday Supplement pg. 11.

⁵ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Knopf, 1991), pg. 321.

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**Burkam, Elzy G., House
Woodbury County, Iowa**

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Queen Anne. What became known as Colonial Revival became especially popular in the Midwest in 1893 and after, with its use in several pavilions at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.⁶

Although no comprehensive survey of the residential building styles in Sioux City exists, there is no known example of an earlier Colonial Revival house. The predominant style for older areas of Rose Hill is Queen Anne, with a single Richardsonian Romanesque. These predominate in the slightly older residential area between downtown and Rose Hill, mixed with Second Empire, Stick, and Shingle styles. Other Colonial Revival homes exist in newer sections of Rose Hill, but they are intermixed with Prairie, Craftsman, and newer styles. Colonial Revival homes, in more historically correct styles, are more common in neighborhoods built after 1910. While more high-style houses would be expected in a city, Colonial Revival style was quite uncommon in the Iowa and other upper Midwest towns surveyed by Jakle, Bastian, and Meyer: "Dwellings decorated in a Colonial Revival mode are most common in study towns located in the Northeast and the Shenandoah Valley."⁷ Perhaps the clearest context for Colonial Revival's appearance and metamorphosis in Iowa, and particularly in Sioux City, is provided by Gebhard and Mansheim in their *Buildings of Iowa*:

In the seventies the Eastlake mode entered the scene, its features often combined with one of the earlier styles, or with the emerging Queen Anne. Though brief, the predilection for the masonry monumentalism of the domestic Richardsonian Romanesque was a vigorous trend within the larger cities, especially in Sioux City and Dubuque. The final decade of the century witnessed the gradual triumph of the Colonial Revival, first combined with the Queen Anne, and then on its own. . . . The preference during the first two decades of the [twentieth] century was for the Colonial or English Tudor styles.⁸

Burkam House, with its asymmetrical Colonial Revival form and elements of Romanesque and transitional free classic Queen Anne styles, is an important milestone of this transition in residential building styles.

⁶ Alan Gowans, *Styles and Types of North American Architecture: Social Function and Cultural Expression* (New York: Icon/HarperCollins, 1992), pg. 241.

⁷ John A. Jakle, Robert W. Bastian, and Douglas K. Meyer, *Common Houses in America's Small Towns: The Atlantic Seaboard to the Mississippi Valley* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989), pg. 97.

⁸ David Gebhard and Gerald Mansheim, *Buildings of Iowa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 29, 34.

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Burkam, Elzy G., House
Woodbury County, Iowa

The History of Burkam House Burkam House was designed by William D. McLaughlin for Elzy G. Burkam and built in 1894.⁹ It cost \$15,000.¹⁰ An account of the construction of Burkam House comes from the *Tribune*:

The E.G. Burkam residence is situated at the corner of Sixteenth and Douglas streets. It is designed in the colonial style, the first story being of pressed brick with stone trimmings. The second story is finished with narrow sidings with white trimmings. The interior is finished in hard wood highly polished and the flooring is polished hard wood. The house is heated with steam, the plumbing fixtures being all nickel plate.¹¹

Little is known of Burkam, an early Sioux City speculator and dealer in real estate. For example, he doesn't appear in the City Directory in 1894 or any later year, and the name of his wife is unknown. Burkam served on the board of directors for the Merchant's National Bank in 1890, and left Sioux City for St. Louis in 1898. Whether he actually ever resided in Burkam House is not known for certain. The exact date of the ownership change of the house is known, though, due to a small untitled paragraph in the Sioux City Tribune, September 17, 1898:

The handsome residence of E.G. Burkam at the corner of Sixteenth and Douglas streets was sold yesterday to Jacob Stackerl of this city for a large consideration. Mr. Burkam and family contemplate removing from the city for several years, and Mr. Stackerl will occupy his new home shortly.

Jacob Stackerl, according to the directories, lived at 1216 Pierce from 1895 to 1898. Beginning in 1898-99, he is listed every year as living at 1449 Douglas, until 1913, when the house's address is changed to 1525.

Jacob (1843-1935) and Abbie (1849-1911) Stackerl, and their children Lilian, Estella, Charles, and Catherine, came to Sioux City in the mid 1890s. Jacob was born in Bavaria, and married Abbie Scott Dillon in Dyersville, Iowa in 1865, where Catherine was born in 1888. Charles Stackerl, 19, died in 1899. Both Stackerl parents lived in Burkam House until their deaths.

⁹ "William D. McLaughlin," *Sioux City Tribune*, 31 December 1894, Holiday Supplement pg. 7.

¹⁰ "Improvements of the Year," *Sioux City Tribune*, 31 December 1894, Holiday Supplement pg. 10.

¹¹ "Some Notable Residences" *Sioux City Tribune*, 31 December 1894, Holiday Supplement pg. 11.

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**Burkam, Elzy G., House
Woodbury County, Iowa**

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A view of the social life of the Stackerls in Burkam House comes from an untitled society page clipping, dated 29 August 1903, and preserved in the English family scrapbook:

On Tuesday evening of this week Miss Catherine Stackerl gave a large dancing party at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. Stackerl, 1449 Douglas street, at which time near fifty of the "buds" and "younger beaux" of Sioux City were delightfully entertained. . . . The rooms in the spacious and beautiful home presented a festive scene, being lavishly decorated with flowers and the floors cleared for dancing. Little Abbie Kneeder, a sweet and pretty fairy in blue dimity, was stationed at the front door, while Master Jacob Counsell had the dressing rooms in charge. Miss Catherine and Miss Bouquette received in the drawing room. . . . Dancing was kept up throughout the evening, yet for those who wished to "sit out" a period, the veranda and the lawn were decorated with Japanese lanterns, fitted up cozily with rugs, couches, and hammocks, and afforded delightful retreat. Delicious "frappe" was served in the dining room.

Catherine Stackerl married Odil R. English at the Cathedral of the Epiphany on June 7, 1913, with a wedding breakfast and reception following at their home.¹²

Odil English was a department manager for Armour,¹³ and a salesman and lubricating engineer for Standard Oil. The Odil Englishes spent the rest of their married lives in the home, throwing an open house for their golden wedding anniversary in 1963.¹⁴ Odil English died in 1968¹⁵ and Catherine Stackerl English in 1982 (after a brief time in a retirement home).¹⁶ Their son Edward English retained ownership of the home until 1994. The Burkam House is still popularly referred to in Sioux City as the English Mansion.

¹² "English-Stackerl Wedding Event of Month of Brides," *Sioux City Journal* 8 June 1913, pg. (S)2.

¹³ 1913 City Directory.

¹⁴ "Odil Englishes to Celebrate Anniversary," *Sioux City Journal* 2 June 1963, B6.

¹⁵ "Odil R. English," Obituary, *Sioux City Journal* 7 December 1968.

¹⁶ "Catherine English," Obituary, *Sioux City Journal* 15 July 1982, pg. A16.

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Burkam, Elzy G., House
Woodbury County, Iowa

The current owners of the home, George III and Cynthia Wakeman, live in the Burkam House and operate it as a bed and breakfast, The English Mansion.

William D. McLaughlin On Friday night, January 29, 1897, at 6:30, William D. McLaughlin, Sioux City's preeminent architect, sat down to a last supper with his friends. Well-respected, at the top of his profession, a young family man with a young daughter, he seemed to have everything going for him. By the end of the evening, he would be dead by poison, in a mystery which remains unsolved today.¹⁷

He had just finished a busy time. As the supervising architect for the Federal Building (today's City Hall) for the previous three years, McLaughlin had implemented the plans of the federal architects who designed the building. McLaughlin had demanded, and succeeded, in getting the federal government to put in a stronger foundation for the building than they intended. On Wednesday, January 27, two days earlier, he had finally finished the project, and move-in had begun.

McLaughlin was born in Baltimore, Maryland, May 11, 1864.¹⁸ He married a Miss Finney of Baltimore on July 10, 1883. He was Catholic, while his wife was Episcopalian. After apprenticing in Baltimore for architect E.G. Lind, he worked in the engineering department of the Great Northern

¹⁷ This life of McLaughlin was pieced together from a number of primary sources: articles gathered from searching microfilm of Sioux City newspapers. The most important source is the *Sioux City Tribune* Holiday Supplement, 31 December 1894, which has a feature article on McLaughlin and numerous other references. Chronologically, the other sources are: "Obituary: The Death Yesterday Afternoon of E.W. Loft, the Well-Known Architect," *Sioux City Journal* 19 July 1890, pg. 8; "To Continue the Business," *Sioux City Journal* 22 July 1890, pg. 8; "Building Notes," *Sioux City Journal* 31 August 1890, pg. 5; "May Return to Sioux City: C.P. Brown Has Recovered His Mental Health and Is Likely to Come Back," *Sioux City Journal* 4 February 1895; "Death of W.D. M'Laughlin," *Sioux City Tribune* 30 January 1897, pg. 3; "W.D. M'Laughlin Is Dead," *Sioux City Journal* 30 January 1897, pg. 4; "Obituary," *Sioux City Journal* 31 January 1897; "The funeral of W.D. McLaughlin . . ." *Sioux City Journal* 2 February 1897, pg. 8; "Many Friends at Funeral," *Sioux City Tribune* 2 February 1897, pg. 3; "W.D. M'Laughlin's Funeral," *Sioux City Journal* 3 February 1897, pg. 5; "It Will Soon Be Occupied: New and Beautiful Sioux City Federal Building," *Sioux City Tribune* 6 February 1897, pg. 1; "The Government Building," *Sioux City Journal* 14 February 1897, pg. 10; "New St. Joseph's Church," *Sioux City Journal* 3 Sept. 1899, pg. 12.

¹⁸ "Death of W.D. M'Laughlin," *Sioux City Tribune* 30 January 1897, pg. 3. However, "William D. McLaughlin," *Sioux City Tribune* 31 Dec. 1894, Holiday Supplement, pg. 7, puts McLaughlin's age at 32, which would argue for a birthdate two years earlier, 1862, particularly if he left Baltimore to work in St. Paul in 1879.

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Burkam, Elzy G., House
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Railroad. In 1879 he left for St. Paul and Minneapolis, working in the offices of the most noted architects of the Twin Cities: A.M. Radcliffe, L.S. Buffington, and J.W. Stevens.¹⁹

McLaughlin weathered a number of calamities and reversals during his Sioux City career, a time quite unkind to architects. He came to Sioux City in 1890 to partner with E.W. Loft, the city's leading architect and designer of the first three Corn Palaces. Within a few weeks, Loft died of catarrhal consumption, and McLaughlin took over his business, putting the finishing touches to Loft's buildings under construction on 4th Street: the Bay State, Boston and Plymouth blocks.

With Loft's death, Charles P. Brown became the leading architect in Sioux City. Brown was designer of the last two Corn Palaces, the Krummann and Evans blocks on 4th Street, Augustana Lutheran, St. Mary's Church (The Cathedral of the Epiphany), and the buildings of the University of the Northwest (Morningside College). But Brown's business disappeared in the Panic of 1893, a wing of a hospital that he had designed collapsed, and Brown was last seen in an asylum in Salt Lake City. McLaughlin took over his designs, too.

McLaughlin survived the 1893 Panic and became acknowledged as Sioux City's leading architect. The 1894 year-end supplement to the *Sioux City Tribune* featured an article on McLaughlin and page after page of drawings and pictures of his buildings. By 1897, the economy in Sioux City was rebounding well, and building was on the upswing.

McLaughlin was 35, handsome, with a strong jaw and a clear gaze. One observer wrote, "He was an artist, of poetic temperament and possessing the brilliant quality of mind, which masters all subjects at a glance."²⁰ His home, at 2746 Virginia, was well appointed, "filled with beautiful pictures, furnishings, and valuable books."²¹

¹⁹ Further information on all three of these architects can be found in David Gebhard and Tom Martinson, *A Guide to the Architecture of Minnesota* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), and H.F. Koeper, *Historic St. Paul Buildings* (St. Paul: City Planning Board, 1964). Radcliffe is noted for the Dakota County Courthouse in Hastings; LeRoy S. Buffington for the Pillsbury A Mill, Eddy and Burton Hall, U. of Minnesota (all in Minneapolis). J. Walter Stevens designed a number of prominent Romanesque structures during McLaughlin's time at the firm, including the Germania Bank/St. Paul Building and the Noyes Brothers and Cutler Wholesale Drug Building in St. Paul, and possibly Goodsell Observatory on the Carleton College campus in Northfield.

²⁰ "Death of W.D. M'Laughlin," *Sioux City Tribune* 30 January 1897, pg. 3.

²¹ "Death of W.D. M'Laughlin," *Sioux City Tribune* 30 January 1897, pg. 3.

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McLaughlin built some of the most imposing and substantial buildings in the city, including the Interstate Fair buildings, Hanford Produce, the Lindholm block, Longfellow School, the seven-story Security Bank building, Shepard Flats, the facade for the T. S. Martin store, the magnificent stone St. Joseph's Catholic Church, and the Union Stock Yards Exchange Building. He also built a number of the grandest homes of the era, for Howard S. Baker, W.H. Beck, E.G. Burkam, T.R. Galbraith, T.S. Martin, and Charles S. Mylius.

In 1896, his little daughter became ill, and was treated with aconite until she recovered. The half-filled bottle was left in the medicine chest. Aconite is made from the dried roots of the poisonous herbs in the genus *Aconitum*, or monkshood.

After completing his work on the Federal Building, W.D. McLaughlin had been ill for a day or two with "neuralgia of the stomach," but had recovered and had seemed in good spirits. Dr. E.H. Spalding, his neighbor, had spent the day with McLaughlin, and Mrs. Spalding joined her husband and the McLaughlins for supper. W.D. McLaughlin ate heartily, enjoying two helpings of meat, and seemed fine.

Shortly before 9:00, McLaughlin became ill, vomiting and retching. He went to his room, accompanied by Dr. Spalding. He passed into convulsions, and expired in the arms of his friend. By 9:15, he was dead.

The aconite bottle, empty, was found in McLaughlin's pocket. Had McLaughlin accidentally overdosed, deliberately overdosed, or been poisoned by a third party? "If he took it, it must have been by accident, for there was nothing in his life to justify a thought of suicide," editorialized the *Sioux City Tribune*.²²

Drs. Bailey and Remington soon arrived, but were unable to revive him. Coroner Hoyt was called, and after consulting with his three colleagues, decided not to hold an inquest. The doctors agreed that the cause of death was aconite poisoning. Hoyt probably guessed it was a suicide, but officially left it open and let people draw their own conclusions. Although McLaughlin left no note and gave no hint to his family, several friends who had encountered McLaughlin the previous evening recalled him hinting that they might not see him again. They had shrugged it off, however, "as they thought him in a particularly nervous state, and he was subject to moods."²³

²² "Death of W.D. M'Laughlin," *Sioux City Tribune* 30 January 1897, pg. 3.

²³ "W.D. M'Laughlin Is Dead," *Sioux City Journal* 30 January 1897, pg. 4.

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Despite his apparent suicide, a full funeral mass was held on February 2 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. At the time, suicides were not usually allowed a funeral under Catholic canonical law, so this exception is another indication of the high esteem accorded McLaughlin. He was, after all, the architect of the new St. Joseph's Church, which was then under construction. The *Tribune* reported, "The beautiful Catholic ceremony held the audience in wrapped (probably meaning "rapt"! attention."²⁴ The Rev. Father E.W. Fowler preached the sermon, and the pallbearers were the captains of Sioux City finance and industry: E.H. Hubbard, L.M. Kean, Wm. Gordon, Alex Gordon, H.D. Booge, Jr., and McLaughlin's friend and neighbor Dr. Spalding. The body was shipped to Baltimore for interment.

A *Tribune* reporter wrote, "In his youth he had obtained the foremost place in his profession, and art and the profession lose by his most untimely death. But his brilliant qualities of mind, his gentleness, affability, and keen wit will remain forever in the memory of his friends, hiding the sad place in their hearts caused by his departure, like the playing of sunlight upon shadows."²⁵

Did McLaughlin commit suicide? A *Sioux City Journal* reporter summed up the mystery: "He was a man of culture, a lover of home and family, and it seemed as if he stood in an open doorway leading to fame and distinction in his much loved profession. It is the old, old, question of why? Death seals lips, locks up mysteries, and the world goes on questioning as before."²⁶

McLaughlin was a friend of another *Journal* reporter, who subtitled parts of his long column on McLaughlin, "A Leader in His Profession," "Newspaper Men's Friend," "A Student and Worker," and "Had the Heart of a Poet." McLaughlin loved the poetry of Robert Burns and especially Tom Moore, whose "Lalla Rookh" was his favorite poem. "He had memorized this most wonderful piece of Oriental imagery and recited it with dramatic effect,"²⁷ the journalist recalled, particularly this passage:

²⁴ "Many Friends at Funeral," *Sioux City Tribune* 2 February 1897, pg. 3.

²⁵ "Death of W.D. M'Laughlin," *Sioux City Tribune* 30 January 1897, pg. 3.

²⁶ "Obituary," *Sioux City Journal* 31 January 1897.

²⁷ "W.D. M'Laughlin Is Dead," *Sioux City Journal* 30 January 1897, pg. 4.

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“Oh, I am tired of toiling and planning
in the crowded hives of men;
I am weary of building and spoiling
and spoiling and building again;
And I long for the dear old river
where I dreamed my youth away--
For a dreamer lives forever,
and a toiler dies in a day.”

Several of McLaughlin's buildings have stood for over a century since the death of their designer: The Federal Building (City Hall), Longfellow School, the Stockyards Exchange Building, Mylius (Eaton/Palmer) House,²⁸ Burkam House (The English Mansion), and the new St. Joseph Catholic Church (completed according to McLaughlin's plans in 1899, two years after his death). Those known to have been razed include the Interstate Fair buildings, Lindholm Block, Security Bank, Shepard Flats, and the Beck and Galbraith houses.

Note: According to the city directories (where McLaughlin first appears in 1890-91), McLaughlin lived at 2202 Jackson Street until 1892-93, when the family moved to 2746 Virginia Street. His offices were in 614 Iowa Savings Bank Building until 1894, when he moved his offices to his own Security Bank Building, Room 505. In 1891-92 only, the firm is listed as McLaughlin & Stevens (possibly a brief renewal of his partnership with J. Walter Stevens?). In 1895-96 and 1896-97, he is listed as “Architect and Supt. of Construction, U.S. Courthouse, P.O. and Custom House.”

²⁸ *Sioux City, Iowa: An Architectural View* (Sioux City: Sioux City Art Center, 1983), pg. 26.

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Sioux City Journal and *Sioux City Sunday Journal*: "Obituary: The Death Yesterday Afternoon of E.W. Loft, the Well-Known Architect," 19 July 1890; "To Continue the Business," 22 July 1890; "Building Notes," 31 August 1890; "Boston Investment Company," 23 March 1891; "May Return to Sioux City: C.P. Brown Has Recovered His Mental Health and Is Likely to Come Back," 4 February 1895; "W.D. M'Laughlin is Dead," 30 January 1897; "Obituary," 31 January 1897; "The funeral of W.D. McLaughlin . . ." 2 February 1897, "W.D. M'Laughlin's Funeral," 3 February 1897; "The Government Building," 14 February 1897; "New St. Joseph's Church," 3 September 1899; "English-Stackerl Wedding Event of Month of Brides," 8 June 1913; "Odil Englishes to Celebrate Anniversary," 2 June 1963; "Odil R. English," Obituary, 7 December 1968; "Catherine English," Obituary, 15 July 1982.

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10. Verbal Boundary Description Lots 1-3, Block 2, Rose Hill Addition, Sioux City, Woodbury County, Iowa.

Boundary Justification The property included in this nomination is the property that is historically associated with this house and its carriage house.

11. Photographs Tim Orwig was the photographer for all the photographs and has the negatives. All photos date from 30 November 1997, and depict the Elzy G. Burkam House, 1525 Douglas Street, Sioux City, Woodbury County, Iowa.

1. North and east facades. Looking southwest.
2. East (front) facade. Looking west.
3. South facade. Looking north.
4. West facade. Looking east.
5. North facade. Looking south.
6. Front porch. Detail. Looking northwest.
7. Interior detail: Original painting on ceiling.
8. Carriage House: North facade. Looking south.
9. Carriage House: East facade. Looking west.

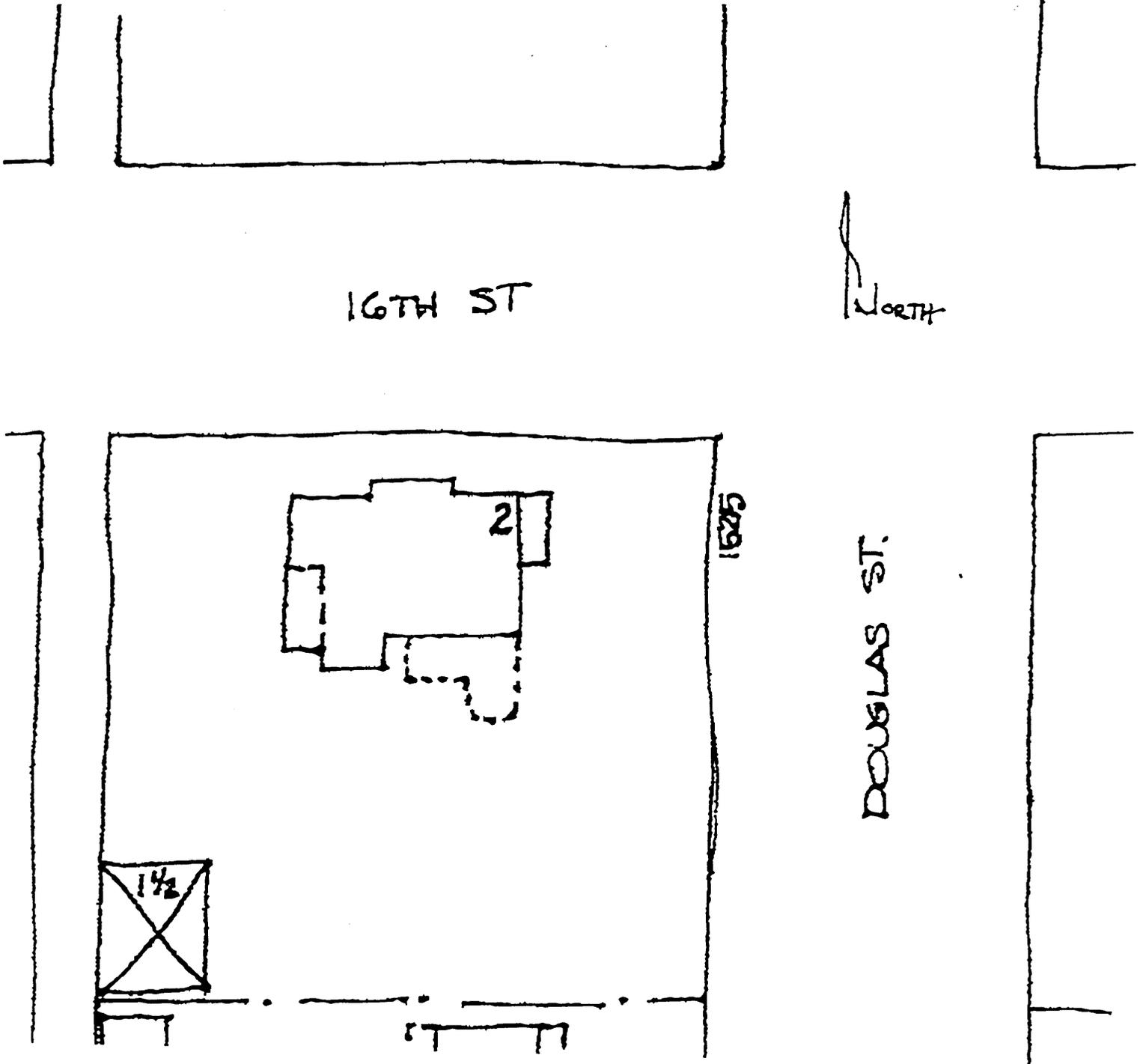
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Burkam House, 1525 Douglas: pg. 66 from
Insurance Maps of Sioux City, Iowa Vol. 1.
Sanborn Map Company of New York, 1924 (Rpt. 1952).



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Floor Plan Sketch For the Burkam House

Drawn by Jim Wilson, December 1996

Left: first floor; right: second floor.

