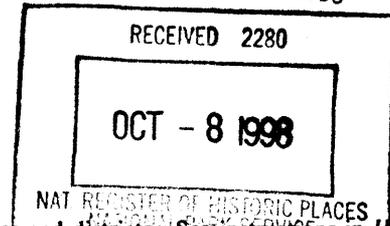


SEP 23 1998

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



1326

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" on the appropriate line 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 BENHAM, F. A., HOUSE

other names/site number Stoner House, Barquist House

2. Location

street & number 716 19th Street N/A not for publication

city or town Des Moines N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Polk code 153 zip code 50314

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 Ostermyr, DSHPD 9-29-98
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

State or 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 Keeper

11.5.98
Date of Action

F. A. Benham House
Name of Property

Polk County, Iowa
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many lines as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one line)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
<u>1</u>		objects
<u>2</u>		Total

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

Towards a Greater Des Moines

**Number of contributing resources
previously listed in the National Register**

0

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)

LATE VICTORIAN/Stick/Eastlake

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
walls Wood

roof Wood
other Glass
Metal

Narrative Description

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

E. A. Benham House
Name of Property

Polk County, Iowa
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" on one or more lines for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

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

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" on all the lines that apply)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1884

Significant Dates

1884

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

9. Major Bibliography References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository

F. A. Benham House
Name of Property

Polk County, Iowa
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 15 | 4 4 6 4 5 0 | 4 6 0 4 2 5 0 |

Zone Easting Northing

2 | --- | --- | --- |

Zone Easting Northing

3 | --- | --- | --- |

Zone Easting Northing

4 | --- | --- | --- |

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 William C. Page, Public Historian; Joanne R. Page, Project Associate

organization _____ date May 10, 1998

street & number 520 East Sheridan Avenue telephone 515-243-5740; FAX 515-243-7285

city or town Des Moines state Iowa zip code 50313-5017

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 John M. Beard and Steven L. Schawl

street & number 716 - 19th Street telephone 515-280-7844

city or town Des Moines state Iowa zip code 50314

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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1

CFN-259-1116

F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

This is a 2-story, frame building clad with clapboard wood siding. Completed and first occupied in 1884, this single-family dwelling features a brick foundation, wood frame construction, and architectural detailing influenced by the Stick Style of architecture. The integrity of this building is fine.

HOUSE

Roughly speaking, the footprint of this house consists of a rectangle, which measures approximately 30' x 32' (width by depth). A small extension of this rectangle stands on the east, and a small extension stands on the south. An open porch is situated to the east of this rectangle, including a portion situated within the el-shape of the small extension and main block noted above. A wood deck is situated at the rear of the building. The first floor, second floor, and basement of this house each contains a total area of approximately 1,048 square feet. In addition, the front porch contains 137 square feet in total.

The building rests on a brick foundation. Of balloon frame construction, the building is clad with narrow wood clapboard siding. A wooden watertable surrounds the house. Numerous details lend a complexity to the building's exterior surfaces. Belt courses of wood surround the house above the first floor windows and below the second floor windows. A cornice, constructed of narrow vertical strips of wood, also surrounds the house. This cornice also features brackets on the corners of the building under the eaves. A bay window is situated on the first floor of south elevation. This bay window is formed by the clipped corners of the south extension of the building's main block, described above. The second floor of this extension does not possess these clipped corners and is supported visually by heavy brackets situated where the first floor and second floor meet. All of these architectural details add a richness of surface texture to the exterior of the building.

The building's fenestration generally features 1/1 double hung sash, but numerous other types of windows can also be found. Paired windows are employed on the second floor of the facade and on the north elevation. The gable ends of the house also possess a variety of window designs. The facade gable, for example features a triangular-shaped window, while the north elevation features a Palladian-type window. The facade of the building features large, plate glass windows on the first floor in the parlor.

The main roof features a hip roof and deck configuration with lower cross gables. One lower-pitched gable intersects on the facade, and two lower-pitched gables intersect on the south. The pitch of these roofs is steep. The roof is covered with wood shingles and the deck with rubber membrane. Metal cresting surrounds the deck, and metal flashing with ball terminals caps the ridges of the roof. Two brick chimneys are situated on the main roof. These chimneys are capped with brick crowns. A dormer window, covered with a front gable roof, is situated on the north elevation.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 2

CFN-259-1116

F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

The front porch is situated on brick footings and features a wood deck. Heavy spindleworked columns support the hip roof. The balustrade features wood millwork of lattice and half-circle designs. The front porch is surmounted by a pedimented entryway over the front entrance. The rear deck is of recent construction. It runs across the west elevation of the house at the level of the first floor and stands above grade because the lot slopes to the west. The deck is constructed of painted wood and features railings of a compatible design with the trimwork of the house.

Two additions were made to the second floor of this house, probably in the first quarter of the Twentieth Century. They included the construction of a bedroom on the southeast corner and a closet on the southwest corner. Compatible building materials were used, so that these additions blend into the main block of the house. In 1936, Robert Q. Mills, a sales engineer for the Van Dyke Furnace Company of Des Moines (City Directory 1942:573), prepared floorplan drawings for the first floor, second floor, and basement of this house. (See Continuation Sheets 7-10, 7-11, and 7-12.) Although these drawings picture the two added rooms, they are not captioned like the other rooms.

The first and second floors of this house have hardwood floors and plaster walls. The basement features a poured concrete floor. Each of its six rooms is unfinished. The house possesses an attic accessed by a flight of stairs from the second floor. The attic features soft wood floors and extends the full extent of the building's footprint. The walls and ceiling of the attic are unfinished.

The F. A. Benham House has been well maintained since its construction. It retains a high degree of its integrity and is in fine condition. A minor alteration to the building involved the construction of a small addition on the southeast corner of the second floor as a bedroom.

BARN

A frame, 1-1/2 story barn is situated at the northwest corner of the property. The barn measures approximately 22'x16'. Of wood frame construction, this barn is clad with board and batten on the exterior. It is covered with a side-gable roof of moderately steep pitch and finished off with wood shingles. This barn was converted many years ago into an automobile garage by the addition of an entrance wing on the east elevation of the building. A front gable roof covers this wing. This building now contains one automobile bay. A loft is situated on its upper level.

The history of this barn is a study. The Des Moines City Assessor's Office dates the barn's construction as "1900 +/-". As can be seen from its physical description above, its building materials and design correspond to such a construction date. On the other hand, this barn is not pictured on a 1901 fire insurance map at its present site. (See Continuation Sheet 7-7.) This map pictures a similar building located a little to the south. By contrast, the 1920 Sanborn fire insurance does picture this building and identifies it as "Auto." (See Continuation Sheet 7-8.) Perhaps the answer to these discrepancies is that the barn was relocated from the location pictured in 1901 to its present location.

**United States Department of the Interior
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 3

CFN-259-1116

F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

The barn is classified as contributing to this nomination because its building materials and design are compatible and contemporary in time with the construction of the F. A. Benham House.

SITE

This house is situated on Lot 13 and the south five feet of Lot 14 in T. E. Brown's Second Addition to Des Moines, Iowa. This parcel measures approximately 135'x125' (width by depth). The property stands on the west side of 19th Street about 120 feet north of its intersection with Pleasant Street. The house faces east.

A cast iron fence is situated between the public pedestrian walk and the front yard of the house. This fence runs the entire length of the lot's frontage and extends about twenty feet on either side of the front yard. Of Victorian provenance and design, this fence possesses an entrance gate to serve the pedestrian walk to the front porch of the house. According to an embossed signature in the crest above the gate, the fence and gate were manufactured by the Champion Iron Fence Company of Kenton, Ohio. The fence and gate are classified as an object and are counted as one contributing resource to this nomination because their date of installation is contemporary with that of the house.

Several restoration projects have recently been completed, including the removal of a concrete driveway on the north side of the property. These projects are gradually reversing the few alterations the property sustained since its period of significance. The construction of the concrete driveway occurred circa 1924. Vehicular traffic originally accessed the barn by the alley at the rear of the property. The present property owners have re-established this historic access as the primary one for vehicles.

NEIGHBORHOOD

The F. A. Benham House is located within the Sherman Hill Historic District of Des Moines, Iowa. This historic district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and designated by the City of Des Moines as a local historic district. Local designation protects historic districts by a design review process, which requires approval by the Des Moines Historic District Commission before significant alterations can be made to properties. Several properties in the Sherman Hill Historic District are listed individually on the National Register. They include an apartment building, The Lexington, at 1721 Pleasant Street, the Maish House at 1623 Center Street, Hoyt Sherman Place at 1501 Woodland Avenue, and the Henry Wallace House at 756 16th Street. The first three properties were listed before the Sherman Hill Historic District. The Wallace House was listed after the historic district.

Sherman Hill is situated on a slope between the flood plain of the Raccoon River and upland areas to the north. Although downtown Des Moines is located only a few blocks to the east, the feeling of Sherman Hill is that of a separate, residential section of the inner-city. Single-family and multiple-family dwellings are mixed with one another throughout the neighborhood and contribute to the feeling of an urban living environment.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

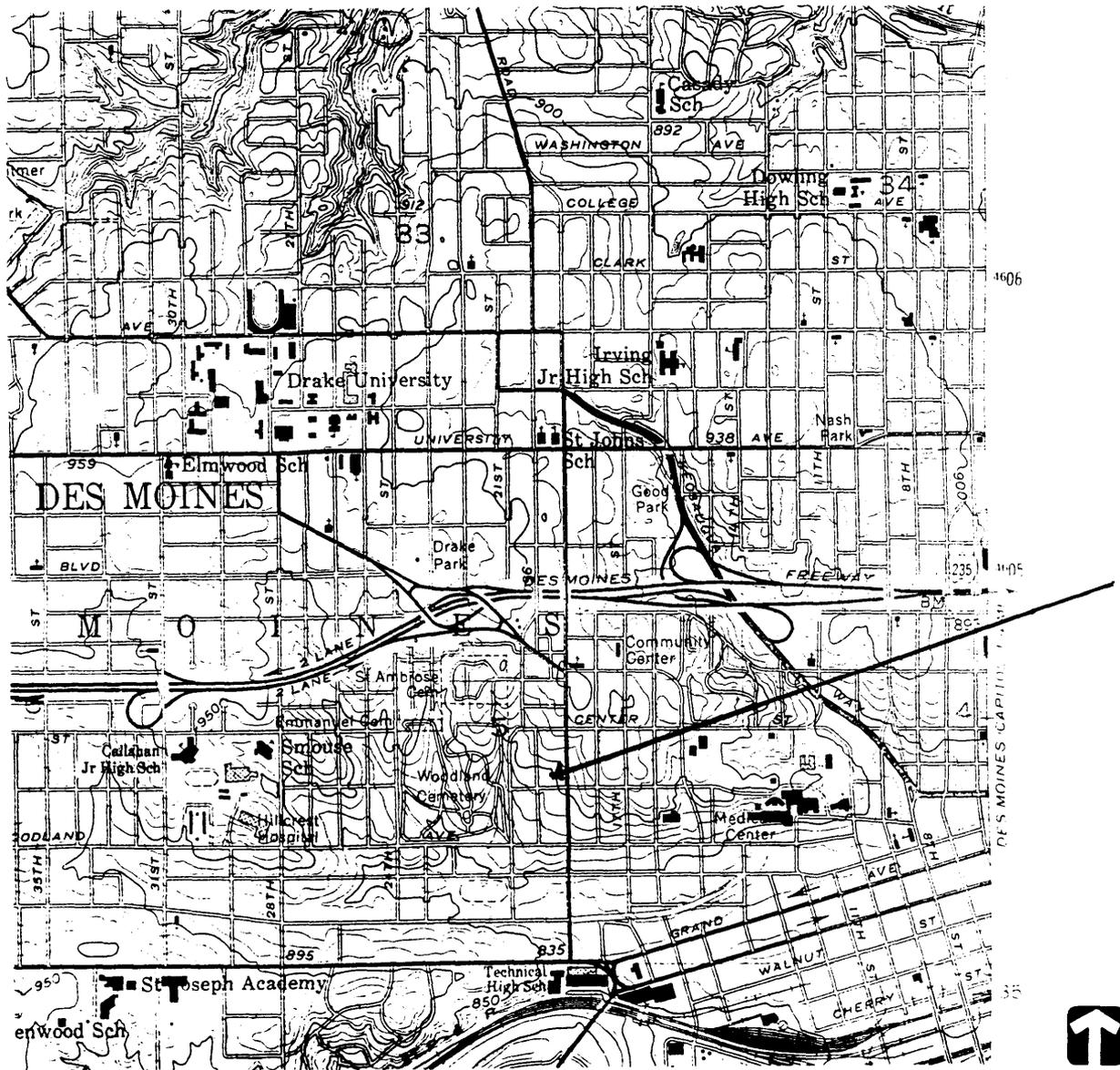
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F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

SITE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



Source: U.S.G.S. Map (7.5 Minute Series), Des Moines SW Quadrangle, 1956, Photorevised 1976.

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National Park Service

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CFN-259-1116

F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANIMETRIC MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



Source: City of Des Moines Community Development Department.



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National Park Service

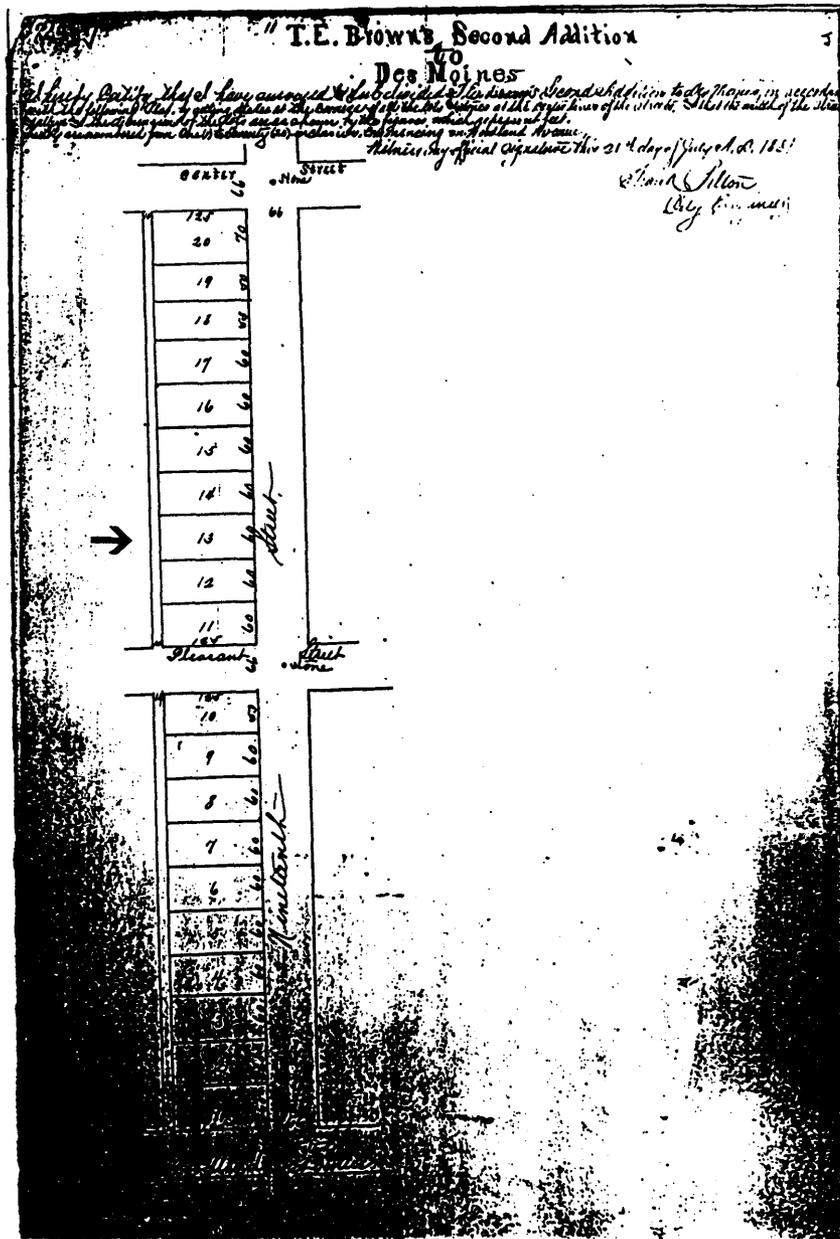
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CONTINUATION SHEET

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CFN-259-1116

F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

T. E. BROWN'S 2ND ADDITION



Arrow locates the site of the F. A. Benham House.

Source: Polk County Recorder's Office, Plat Book C-24.



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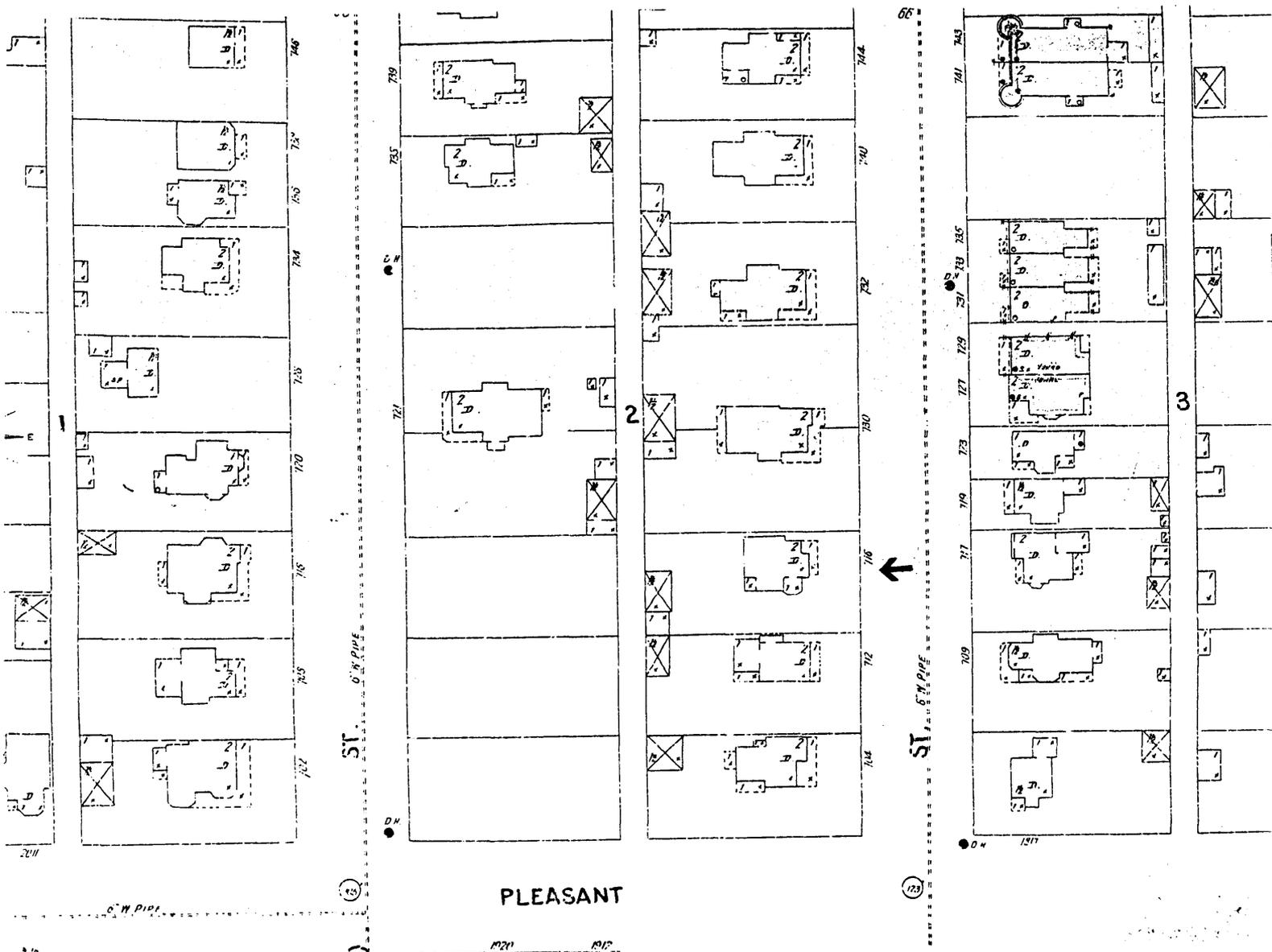
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F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

1901 FIRE INSURANCE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



Source: Sanborn Map Company, Des Moines, 1901, p. 20.



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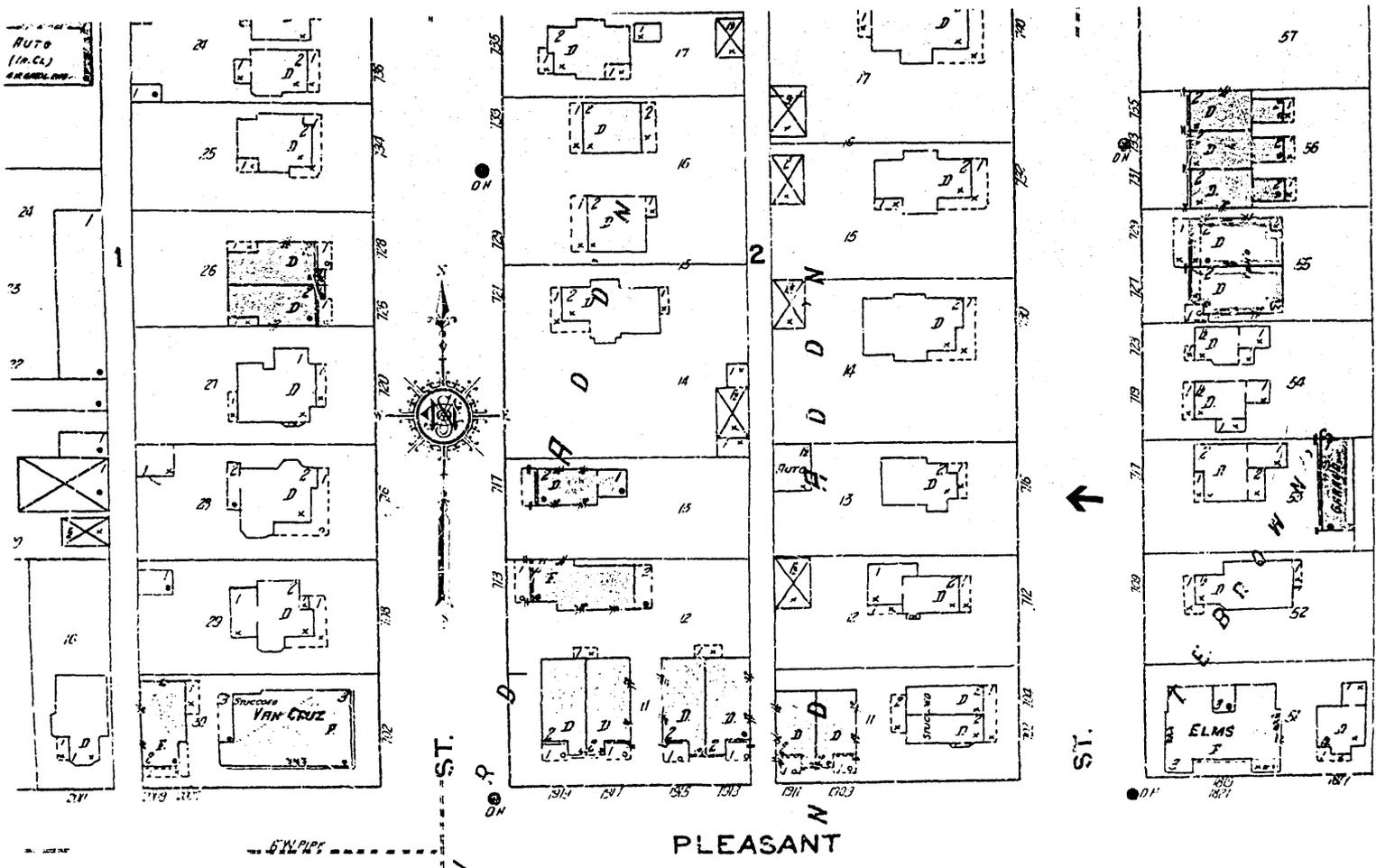
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CFN-259-1116

F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

1920 FIRE INSURANCE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY WITH PRESENT OUTBUILDING IN THE REAR



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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

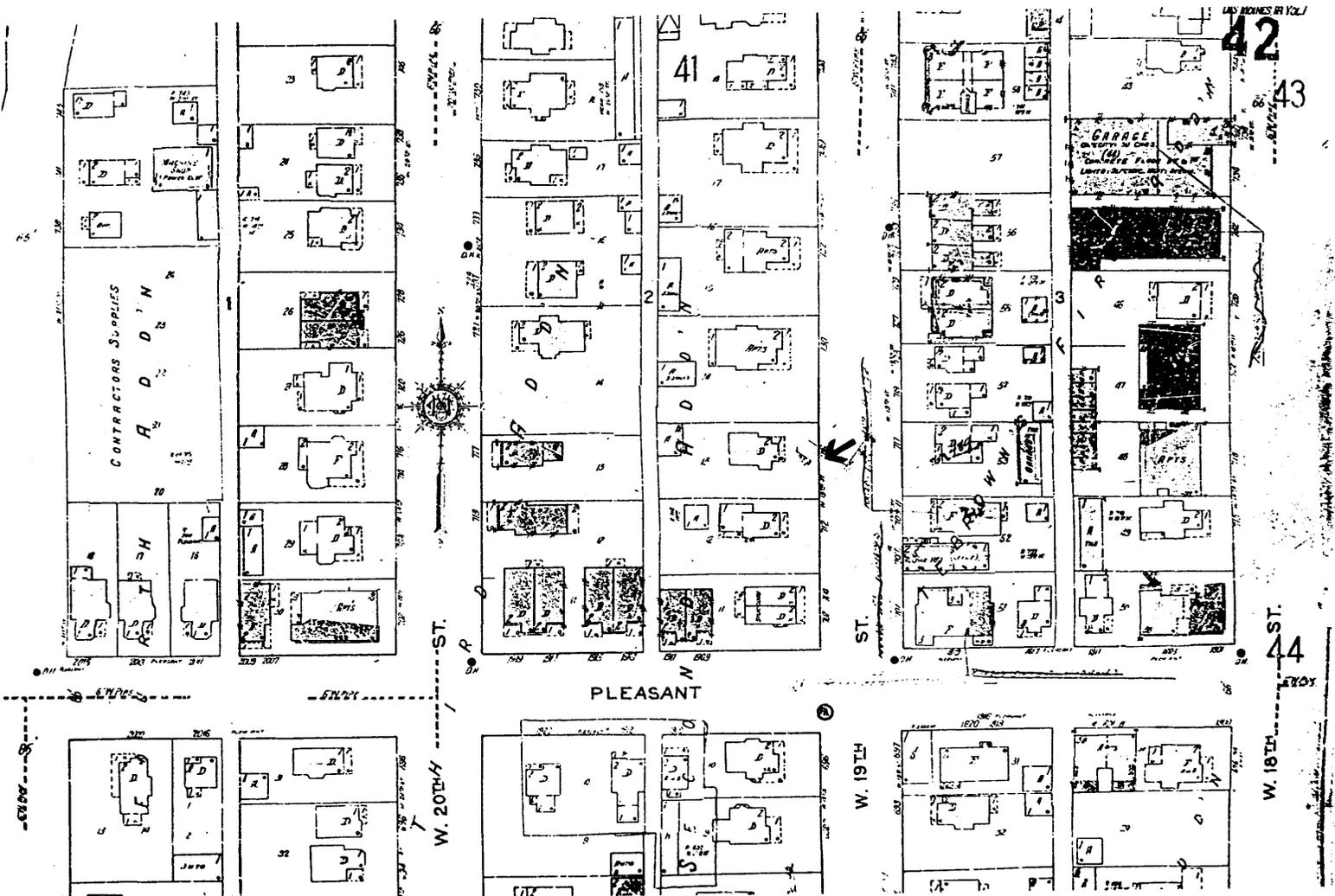
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F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

1920-1943 FIRE INSURANCE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



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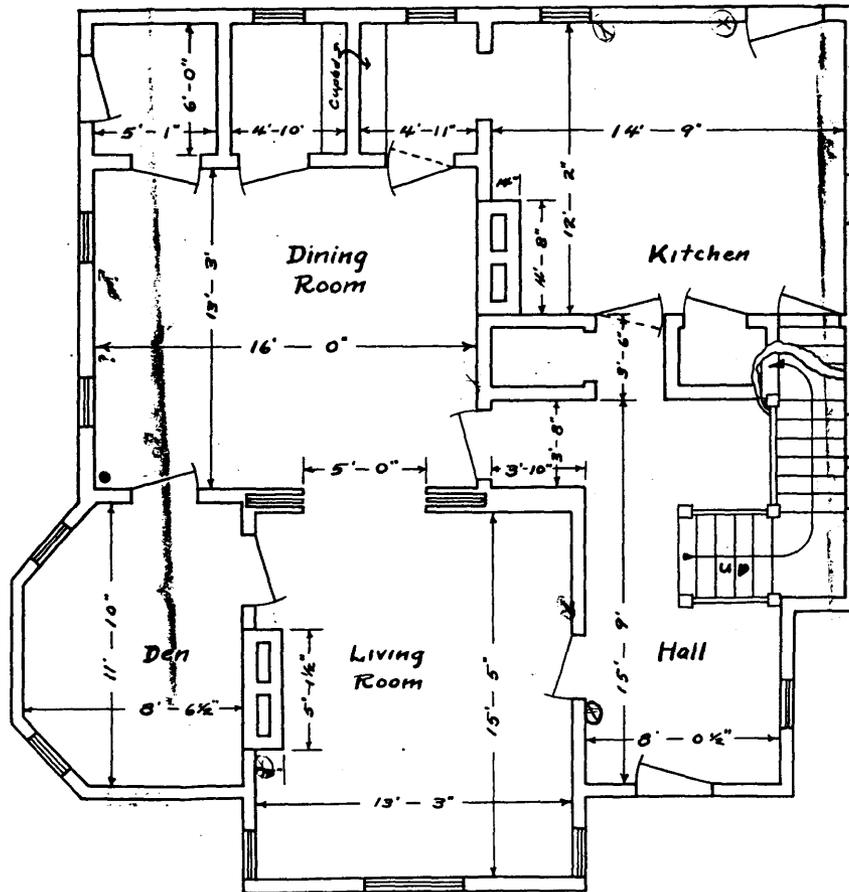
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CFN-259-1116

F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

DATED OCTOBER 1936



First Floor



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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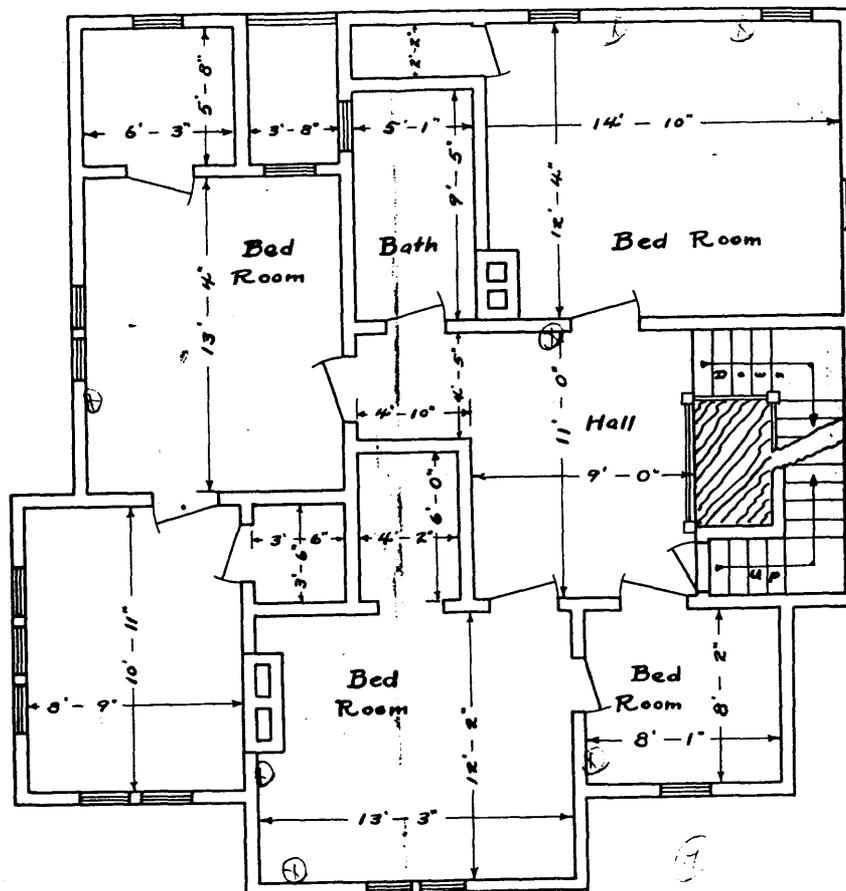
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CFN-259-1116

F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

DATED OCTOBER 1936



Second Floor

SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"
OCT. 1936
Rob't Q. Mills



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National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

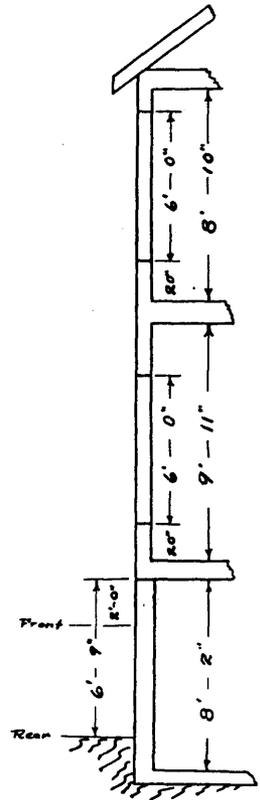
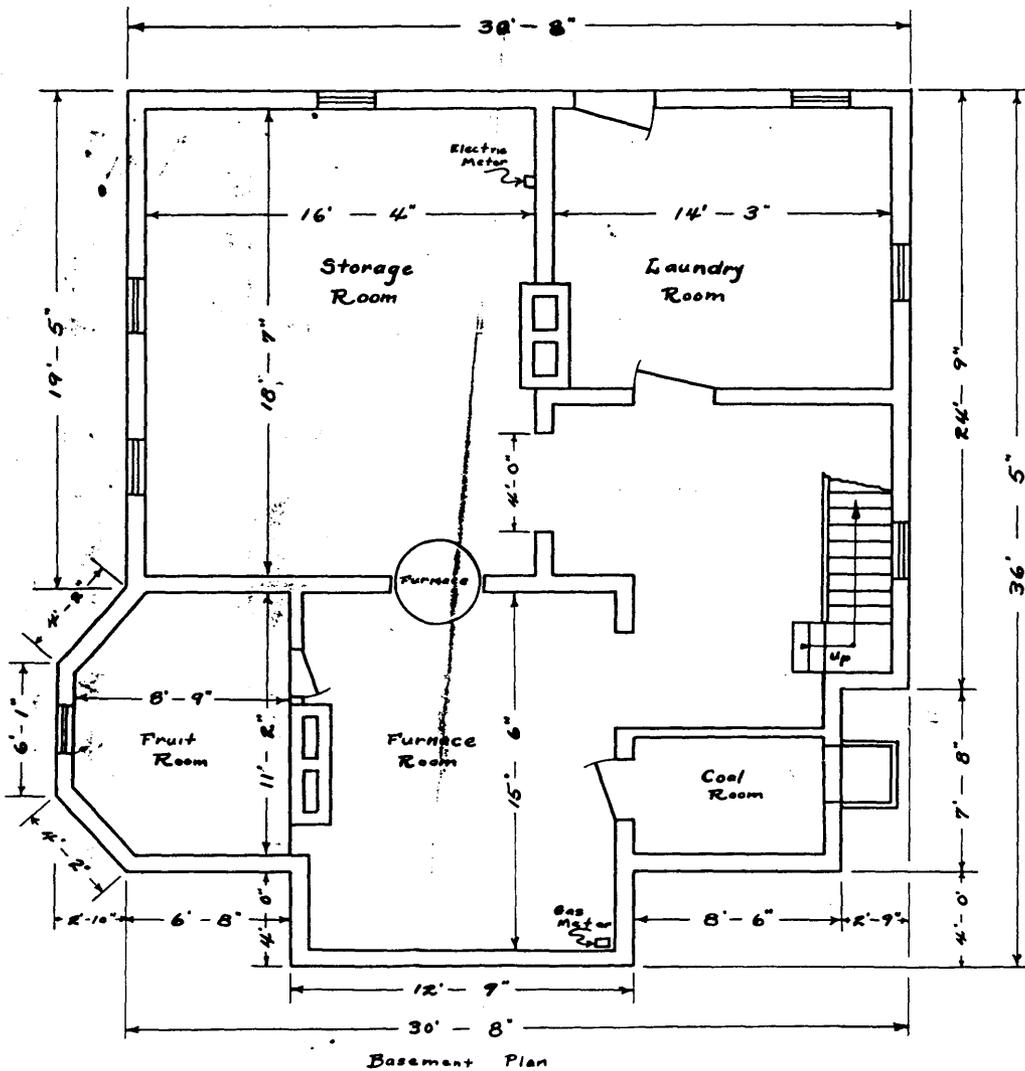
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F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

SECTION AND BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

DATED OCTOBER 1936



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National Park Service

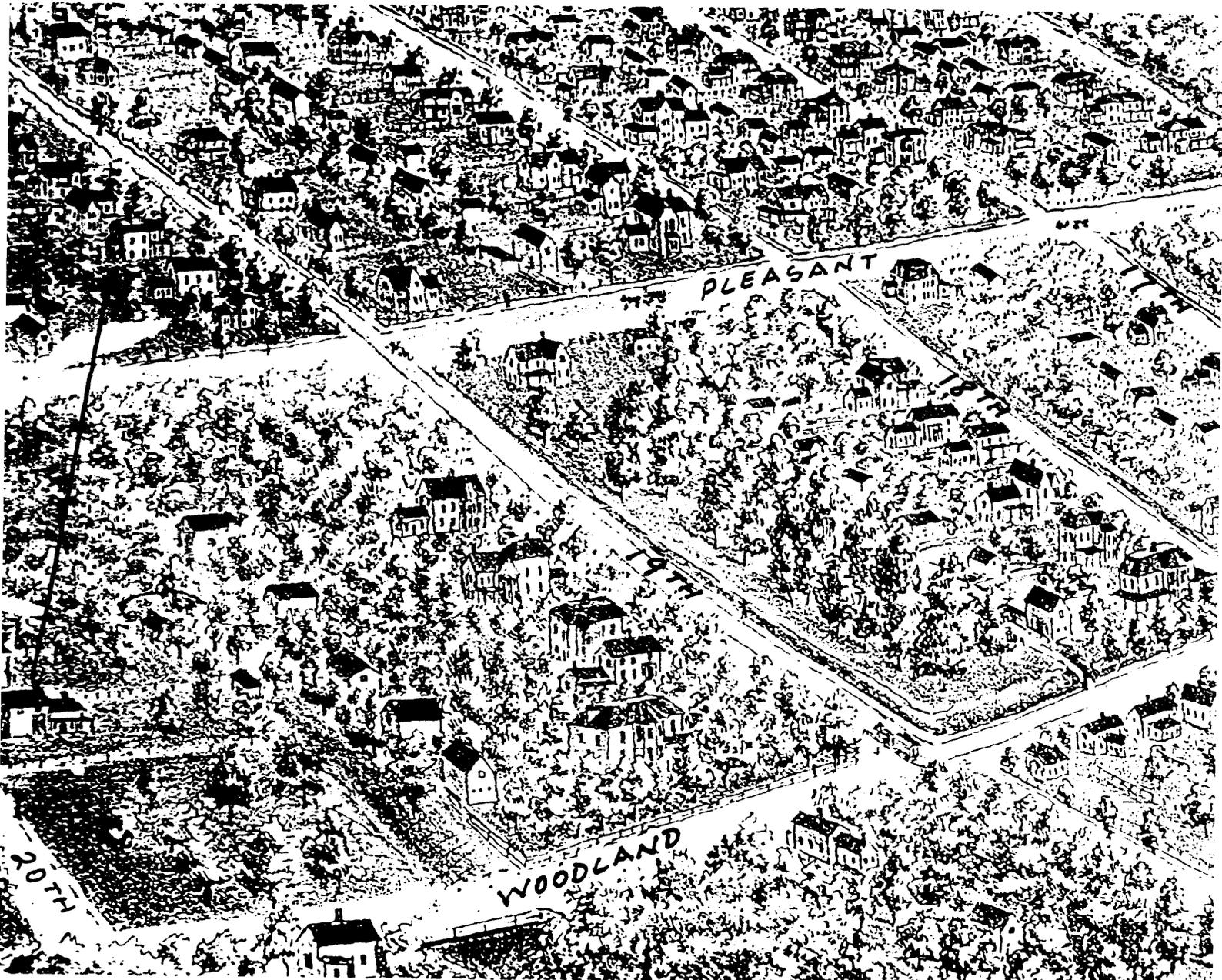
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CFN-259-1116

F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF NEIGHBORHOOD IN 1885



Arrow locates the F. A. Benham House.

Note also the horse-drawn streetcar heading north from the intersection of 19th Street and Woodland Avenue.

Source: *Persinger Times*, December 26, 1885..



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National Park Service

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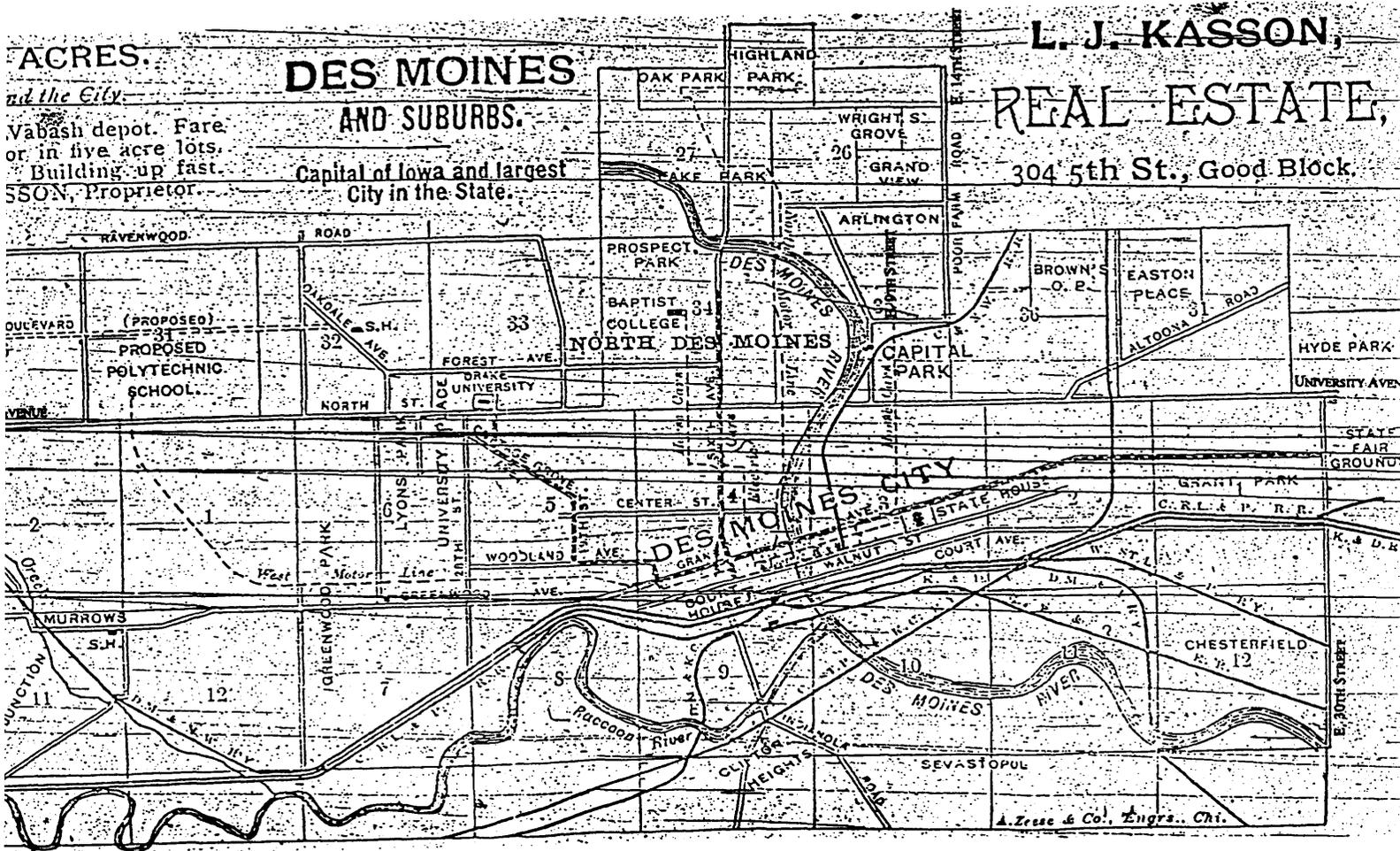
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F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

STREETCAR ROUTES IN DES MOINES

1889-1890



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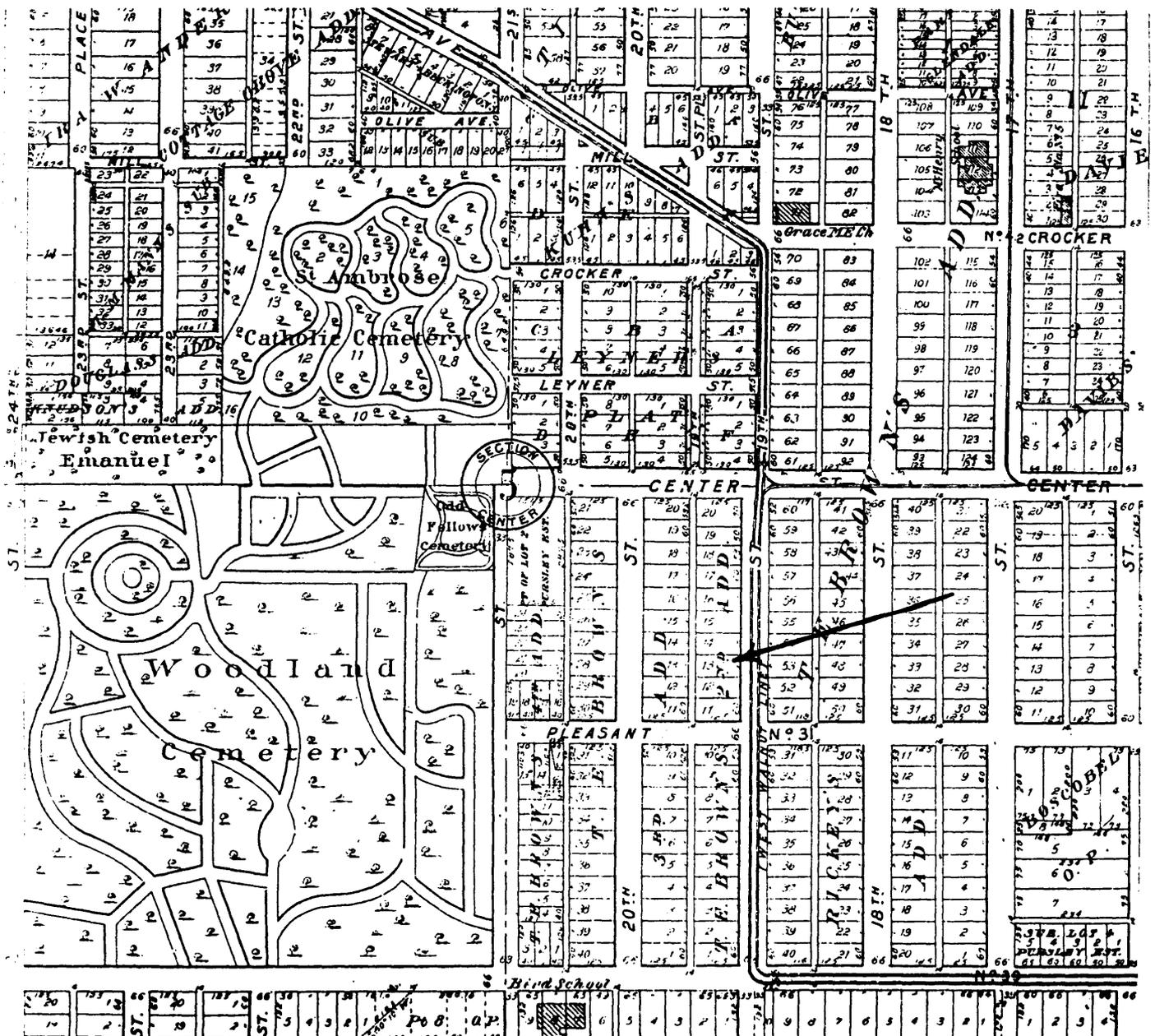
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CFN-259-1116

F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

“WEST WALNUT LINE” STREETCAR IN 1909

Arrow locates the F. A. Benham House



Source: M. Huebinger, *Map of the City of Des Moines, 1909.*



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National Park Service

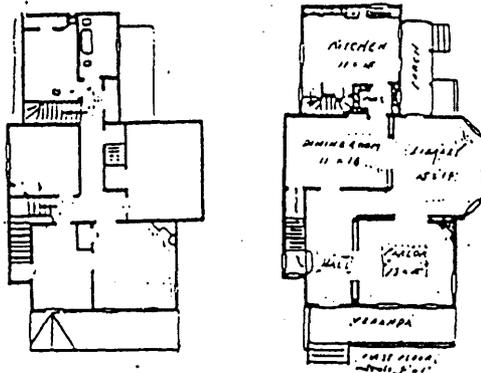
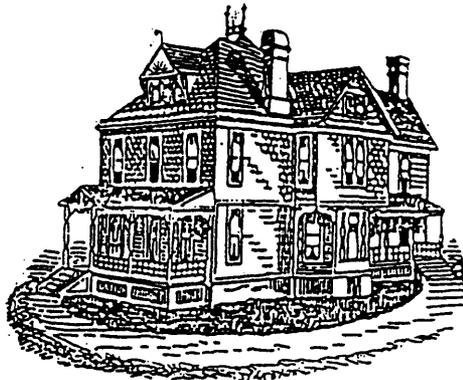
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 16

CFN-259-1116

F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

HOUSE ON 16TH STREET CARPENTER & KEELER, CONTRACTOR-BUILDERS



The above Cut and Floor Plans represent one of our NEW HOUSES on Sixteenth street, between Center and Crocker streets, now almost ready for occupancy. If you want to buy a well-built and convenient house, with all modern improvements and in good locality, come and see us.

CARPENTER & KEELER,
ROOM 217, IOWA LOAN AND TRUST CO'S BUILDING.

This Queen Anne-influence dwelling in Sherman Hill is no longer extant.

Source: [Des Moines] Mail and Times, March 29, 1890.

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 17

CFN-259-1116

F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built and first occupied in 1884, the F. A. Benham House is locally significant, under National Register Criterion C, as a fine example of Late Victorian architecture in Des Moines as exemplified in its Eastlake design. Its exterior exhibits that influence in its massing, steeply pitched roof, and spindleworked front porch. Its interior possesses elaborate woodwork with original finishes, fireplaces, and dining room cabinetry--all possessing a high degree of integrity and illustrating the influence of Eastlake styling on its design. A barn, contemporary in time with the construction of the house and located at the rear of the property, contributes to this resource's significance as a representative example of a once wide-spread but now uncommon property type in the neighborhood.

The F. A. Benham House is significant for its landscape architecture under National Register Criterion C. A cast iron fence and gate separate the front yard of the house from the street. These amenities show how landscape architecture contributed to the formal Victorian lifestyle by separating public spaces from private spaces.

The F. A. Benham House is located in the Sherman Hill Historic District of Des Moines. Already listed on the National Register, that district's nomination classified the Benham House as a contributing resource. Recent research and analysis have shown that the building possesses greater significance than hitherto recognized. The primary purpose of this nomination is to record that significance and list the F. A. Benham House individually on the National Register. Another purpose is to flesh out the story of Sherman Hill's development with the new information this project has brought to light.

The period of significance, under Criterion C, for the F. A. Benham House is 1884, the year in which the property was completed and first occupied.

The property contains three resources for this nomination--the house; barn; and iron fence and gate. Each is counted as contributing. The house and barn are classified as buildings. The iron fence and gate are classified as an object.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The F. A. Benham House calls attention to community development in Des Moines during the city's Victorian housing boom of the 1880s. The building illustrates the rapid turn-over of home ownership, which characterized the frenzy of real estate speculation during the period.

Research into the history of the F. A. Benham House also uncovered new information about the development of the Sherman Hill Historic District. T. E. Brown, the proprietor of much of this land, was largely responsible for a series of plats, which shaped Sherman Hill's development. The immediate surroundings of the F. A. Benham House illustrate how the population density of the neighborhood increased over the years. The presence of a streetcar route through Sherman Hill encouraged its development. Information about these topics is also included in this section, although it

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 18

CFN-259-1116

F. A. Benham House, Polk County, Iowa.

addresses the wider context of Sherman Hill as a neighborhood rather than that of the F. A. Benham House specifically.

Rapid Turn-Over of Home Ownership

The F. A. Benham House calls attention to the rapid turn-over of home ownership in Des Moines during the 1880s--a common real estate practice at the time. Within the space of four years, the Benham House was owned by three different parties:

<u>Owner's Name</u>	<u>Date of Occupancy</u>
F. A. Benham	1884-1885
Carrie and Edward W. Chambers	1885-1888
William H. Stoner	1888-1899

F. A. Benham owned this property from 1883 to 1885, improving Lot 13 by constructing the present single-family dwelling in 1884. (This construction is discussed below.) Carrie and Edward W. Chambers purchased this property in 1885 and owned it until 1888. In that year, William H. Stoner bought the property and lived there until 1899. This rapid succession of owners illustrates the frenzy of speculation in Des Moines' real estate at the time. Home owners relocated from one house to another, encouraged by rising home values to sell, reap profit, and purchase a more comfortable dwelling.

Later owners of the property included the following:

M. Crahan and wife	1899-1899
J. P. Farmer and wife	1899-
M. Crahan	1899-1902
W. C. Ginn and wife	1902-1902
Grant Hornaday	1902-1904
J. R. Field	1904-
Roy B. Barquist	1936-
Helen P. Hart and John James Hart, Jr.	

Source: Polk County Auditor's Office, Deed Transfer Books.

During the Great Depression, financial difficulties clouded the title to this property. The property was transferred in 1936 by a Referee's Deed to Roy B. Barquist. (*Ibid.*)

Unimproved building lots also provided an opportunity for speculation in real estate. The F. A. Benham property also calls attention to this phenomenon. Within ten months of its platting,

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unimproved Lot 13 (on which the house would be subsequently built) changed hands three times! In 1882, T. E. Brown sold Lots 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17 in his second addition to Martha E. Sandford and Frances A. Smith. Martha's husband, L. M. Sandford, was a real estate broker. (City Directory 1886-87:545) Less than ten months later, the Sanfords sold Lot 13 to F. A. Benham and Lots 14 and 15 to James N. Hollister and J. N. Patton (Book C-3, pp. 197-198). The Sanfords' pattern of purchase and sale provides a good example of real estate speculation. Buyers would purchase one or more lots, hold them for a time, sell them, and reap a profit during this period of frenzied speculation. (The role of Frances A. Smith, who was a co-title-holder with the Sanfords in these transactions, is not presently known.) Although Lot 13 on which the F. A. Benham House is situated calls attention to this phenomenon, historical significance is not claimed for it in this regard since there is no associated physical improvement.

T. E. Brown

The F. A. Benham House is located within T. E. Brown's Second Addition to Des Moines, a section of the neighborhood platted in 1881. All sections of Des Moines experienced rapid growth between 1880 and 1890, a period of time in which the city's population more than doubled (Goudy:6). Numerous suburbs also sprang up on the outskirts of the city. Within this context, the Sherman Hill Historic District illustrates a city neighborhood, which burgeoned during this period. The Lowry Goode Bust, a result of the financial Panic of 1893 sweeping the Eastern and Midwestern states, subsequently depressed Des Moines' housing boom. Still, the fact that city streetcar lines ran through Sherman Hill and that it was located near the central business district preserved that neighborhood's attraction as a residential section of the city. A number of multiple-family dwellings were later constructed there.

Throughout this period, the tenets of laissez faire dominated town building practices in Des Moines. Unfettered by municipal restrictions and driven largely by economic dictates, real estate interests laid out new plats with little regard to good urban planning. The frenzied housing boom in Des Moines, discussed above, further aggravated these tendencies. Big real estate holders often sold parcels of land to smaller capitalists, who subdivided it yet again. The parcelization of land resulted. This, too, handicapped good urban planning because a uniformity of design was often lacking among the many plats springing up all over the city.

T. E. Brown is significant within this context because he developed an important tract of land in the inner-city, which subsequently became Sherman Hill. This involvement occurred at the time when others were concentrating on developing Des Moines' suburbs.

A native of New York State, Tallmadge E. Brown (1830-1891) studied law there and relocated to Des Moines in 1854. He subsequently became associated with J. C. Savery, James Callanan, and other local capitalists in land dealings, including the acquisition and subsequent resale of government swamp lands then being transferred from public to private ownership. Brown continued to acquire land. By the time of his death in 1891, Brown "was probably the largest owner of city lots in the city." (*Iowa State Register* May 7, 1891)

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In the 1860s, Brown acquired a portion of the Hugh Pursley Estate, a large tract of land on Des Moines near west side. Brown held this property as an investment for more than a decade. He subsequently platted portions of it and placed the building lots on the market for sale. T. E. Brown's Addition, the first of plat, was filed in the public record in 1877. It:

comprised that part of the city embraced between Sixteenth and Twenty-first streets, and Pleasant and Crocker streets. He graded the streets and in general beautified the property, holding out such inducements that it became, as it remains, one of the most attractive portions of the entire city. (*Iowa State Register*, May 7, 1891)

Brown subsequently employed Frank Pelton, city engineer of Des Moines, to layout a second addition. Platted in 1881 as T. E. Brown's 2nd Addition, it contained twenty city lots. (See Continuation Sheet 7-6.) The design of this plat is a narrow linear strip, one city lot in depth, running north-to-south.

T. E. Brown's 2nd Addition exploited the westward push of residential development in Des Moines by making new city lots available for development. But Brown limited the number of lots available at any one time, thus controlling the pace of development and avoiding a glut on the real estate market. Brown subsequently platted the remaining acreage of his property from the Pursley Estate in chronological order east-to-west. These plats included Brown's 3rd Addition (1882) and Brown's 4th Addition (1882).

Increased Density in Sherman Hill

The research in the history of the F. A. Benham House has also helped flesh out the increasing population density in the Sherman Hill neighborhood--an important pattern in its development. An analysis of historic maps and drawings in the 700 block of 19th Street documents this evolution from a neighborhood of single-family dwellings into one of mixed single- and multiple-family dwellings. For example, the *Persinger Times* bird's eye view of Des Moines in 1885 (see Continuation Sheet 7-13) shows few multiple-family dwellings in Sherman Hill. By contrast, the 1901 Sanborn fire insurance map (see Continuation Sheet 7-7) pictures double houses at 727-729 and 741-743 19th Street and a three-unit row house stood at 731-733-735 19th Street. By 1920, this one-block area had been developed with even more multiple-family dwellings. (See Continuation Sheet 7-8.) They included double houses at 702-704 19th Street and 1909-1911, 1913-1915, and 1917-1919 Pleasant Street. "The Elms" apartment building also had been constructed at 1819-1821 Pleasant Street.

Transportation

The research in the history of the F. A. Benham House has also brought new information to light concerning public transportation in Sherman Hill. Even before the electrification of streetcars in Des Moines, horse-drawn public transportation served the neighborhood. This ready accessibility to

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downtown Des Moines encouraged residents to leave the more crowded sections of the "walking city," where people walked to and from work, and to live in the less densely-populated outlying areas.

Within the context of streetcar routes in Des Moines, the line along 19th Street was significant. A streetcar route map from the years 1889-1890 illustrates its course from University Place and Drake University in the northwest to downtown Des Moines. (See Continuation Sheet 7-14.) Other major routes shown on this map include the Sixth Avenue and West 9th Street lines on the west side and the East 9th Street and the East Grand Avenue routes on the east side. The route to University Place provided the only public transportation to the populated areas of this suburb. Strategically situated along this route, the Sherman Hill neighborhood was assured of growth because of its convenient location. A drawing of the neighborhood in 1885 points to the importance of public transportation for the neighborhood. This illustration pictures a horse-drawn streetcar and a passenger either embarking or disembarking from it. (See Continuation Sheet 7-13.) Still today, the Des Moines Metropolitan Transit Authority operates motored public transportation along this route, helping preserve Sherman Hill as a readily accessible residential location.

Commerce

The F. A. Benham House calls attention to the "commercial traveler," a new occupation necessitated by the growth of American manufacturing and its distribution networks in the fourth quarter of the Nineteenth Century. During this period, Des Moines rose as a wholesaling center in Central Iowa. The architectural pretension of the Benham House qualifies it as an upper-middle class dwelling and illustrates the financial capabilities of such a commercial traveler. William H. Stoner lived many years of his productive life as a traveling salesman in this dwelling, between 1888 and 1899.

Des Moines had greatly expanded as a wholesale distribution center during the nation's prosperity in the late 1870s and 1880s. Serving primarily Central Iowa, Des Moines benefited by the network of railroad lines, which provided ready access to all parts of the region and beyond. The need for wholesale representatives expanded as this network facilitated the distribution of the nation's burgeoning supply of manufactured goods. As the local Commercial Exchange of Des Moines summarized it at the time:

A GROWING JOBBING BUSINESS.

As with manufacturing, so it is with the jobbing [wholesaling] trade. The record is one of large increases in the aggregate in a majority of the lines. The Des Moines jobbing houses turn a goodly number of millions of dollars over every year, give employment to many men on the road and in the houses and do a great deal for our city in many ways, and in none more than through the good words that the knights of the grip loyally speak for it as they go up and down the land. (*The Iowa State Register* 1889)

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Stoner's employment in this occupation provided a comfortable living for him and his family, as attested by his ability to own and maintain the 19th Street property. In 1889, he enlarged the site of this house by the purchase of the south five feet of Lot 14. This transfer of title was granted by Amanda J. Smith, a single woman perhaps related by blood to Frances A. Smith, an earlier owner. Although Stoner subsequently sold this house, he remained in the Sherman Hill neighborhood. In 1899, for example, he was living at 692 17th Street. (City Directory 1899:685). At this time, Stoner served as an agent of the American Book Company. (*Ibid.*)

ARCHITECTURE

The F. A. Benham House is a fine example of Late Victorian architecture as practiced in Des Moines during the 1880s, particularly as exemplified in its Eastlake design. Its exterior serves as a benchmark for this architectural taste in the Sherman Hill section of Des Moines. Its interior possesses elaborate woodwork with original finishes, fireplaces, flooring, and dining room cabinetry--all possessing a high degree of integrity and illustrating the influence of the Eastlake taste. Although "LATE VICTORIAN/Stick/Eastlake" is indicated at the beginning of Section 7 as the architectural classification of this property, the Eastlake influence is the dominant. The presence of a contemporary barn of wood frame construction and located at the rear of the house contributes to the architectural significance of the property. It stands as a representative example of a once wide-spread but now uncommon property type in the neighborhood.

Exterior

The Benham House is architecturally significant for Des Moines as a fine example of Eastlake styling. It illustrates the close relationship between that taste and Queen Anne styling as practiced in the city. Although these two architectural influences are difficult to separate because their detailing is so similar, they can best be distinguished by a comparison of the core structure, or footprint. In the former, the core is essentially a square or rectangle and the stylistic category is defined by its multi-textured wall surfaces and decorative trimwork. In the latter, the footprint is irregular and the visual exuberance of the mode is conveyed as much by asymmetrical form and massing as by decorative detailing.

A comparison of the Benham House and a house which formerly stood on 16th Street illustrates these distinctions. The Benham House possesses what is essentially a square footprint, emphasized by its hip roof with deck and metal cresting. In contrast, the footprint of the latter house--constructed in 1890 by the contractor-builders Carpenter & Keeler of Des Moines--is more irregular. A bay window and a complex roof--which features a hip roof intersected by side gables--emphasizes the asymmetry of the footprint. (See Continuation Sheet 7-16.)

The exuberant treatment of the front porch at the Benham House is notable. Its design--with a railing of scallops and latticework and spindleworked columns and frieze--is light and airy and acts as a foil to the heavy massing of the house itself. Front porches played an important role in the architectural design of residential housing in Victorian Sherman Hill. Porches provided the opportunity for families

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to pass their leisure time, to socialize with neighbors, and to express their financial capability through architectural design.

Interior

The interior of the F. A. Benham House is significant because of its Eastlake influence on its design and has remained largely unchanged since its original construction. The staircase in the reception room, for example, features an oak newel post with an incised floral design carved on its sides. The fireplace in the parlor features black marble surrounds with similar designs picked out in gold. The woodwork finishes are almost all original, with the bathroom being the only exception. That has now been returned to a natural finish after having been painted many years ago.

Definitive comparisons between this interior and that of other contemporary interiors in Des Moines cannot be made at this time. There is a lack of survey information concerning such interiors in the city. Nonetheless, long-time residents of Sherman Hill, who are familiar with interiors in the neighborhood, have vouched for the fact that the interior of the F. A. Benham House has retained a much higher degree of integrity than most others in Sherman Hill. (Personal communication with John M. Beard and Steven L. Schawl). It should be noted that many of the quality Victorian houses constructed in Des Moines were large in size and located in and around the inner city. Many of these have since been converted from single-family into multiple-family dwellings. Such conversions often impair the historic fabric of interiors. Although other houses from the Victorian period in Des Moines undoubtedly retain similar high levels of interior integrity, their number must be limited for this reason.

Date of Construction

The date of construction for the F. A. Benham House--the year 1884--is documented by a number of sources. In 1885, the *Persinger Times* published a bird's eye view of Des Moines. This document pictures the F. A. Benham House in place. (See Continuation Sheet 7-13.) The property record card for 716 19th Street in local assessment records lists "1884" as the "age" of the building. (Des Moines City Assessor's Office) Deed transfer titles in the Polk County Auditor's Deed Transfer Books show F. A. Benham's purchase of Lot 13 in 1883.

Barn

The F. A. Benham House Barn is significant as a rare survivor in Sherman Hill of a once common architectural type. The barn was a prominent feature of many Victorian residential properties. Sometimes called stables, these resources were usually located at the rear of building lots, accessed by alleys, and served a variety of household needs. Few remain extant in Sherman Hill today.

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A map, which dates from 1885 and pictures the Sherman Hill Historic District, proves how common barns were in the neighborhood. (See Continuation Sheet 8-13.) Few of these barns remain extant. The table on the following page lists them:

VICTORIAN BARNs IN SHERMAN HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

<u>Address</u>	<u>Materials</u>	<u>Notes</u>
685 20th St.	Brick	1-1/2 story, steep pitched roof, double door entrance
716 19th St.	Frame	1-1/2 story, board & batten
744 19th St.	Frame	1 story, garage-type building
911 18th St.	Frame	1-1/2 story, steep roof, board & batten
744 17th St.	Frame	1-1/2 story, steep roof, board & batten, wing on north
1701 Woodland Ave.	Brick	1-1/2 story, large & richly detailed
818 15th St.	Frame	1-1/2 story, steep roof

Source: William C. and Joanne R. Page windshield survey, May 31, 1998.

Of these barns, two are constructed of brick, and five are constructed of wood frame. It is presumed that many more frame than brick barns originally stood in Sherman Hill because they were less expensive to build. The fragile nature of wood has decreased the survival rate of these barns. This increases the significance of the Benham Barn as a representative example of a once wide-spread but now uncommon property type in the neighborhood.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

The F. A. Benham House is significant for its landscape architecture. Historic drawings of Victorian residences in Des Moines prove that iron fences were popular amenities. Few remain intact today. The iron fence and gate at the Benham House are representative of such Victorian amenities. They visually define the front yard, help protect the property from unwanted intrusion, and facilitate the formal Victorian lifestyle frequently attributed to the period. The iron fence and gate enrich the architectural design of the site. The lacy design of the fence and gate, shown in their delicate rails and

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stiles, is repeated in the spindlework of the front porch and the metal cresting, which surrounds the deck of the roof. These light and airy elements provide a foil to the heavy massing of the house itself.

This fence and gate are additionally significant because of their integrity. The entire length of the fence, as well as its original gate and locking mechanism, remain intact, in working order, and fine condition. They were manufactured by the Champion Iron Fence Company of Kenton, Ohio. That company's signature appears embossed in cast iron on the crest of the gate.

The importance of landscaping for this property is suggested by the fact that in 1889 an additional five foot strip of land was added to this site through the purchase of a parcel of the adjacent lot.

REPRESENTATION IN OTHER CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEYS

The Sherman Hill Historic District has benefited by its listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The City of Des Moines subsequently designated it a local historic district, an action which brought with it a design review process by the Des Moines Historic District Commission for proposed alterations to its resources. The Sherman Hill Historic District now stands as a model for design review within the preservation movement in Iowa.

The Sherman Hill Historic District was listed on the National Register in 1979 during the early days of the program in Iowa. The level of research, analysis, and interpretation for this historic district nomination was limited. Although this nomination touched the "high points" of the neighborhood's history and significance, this brief application is lacking by today's standards.

POTENTIAL FOR HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Although the site's potential for archaeological research is, as yet, unevaluated, a modest potential exists. The site of a nonextant barn and a nonextant shed, located in the southwest corner of Lot 13 and shown in the 1901 Sanborn fire insurance map, might yield data, as well as a privy or privies, whose locations are presently unknown.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND REGISTRATION

Real estate speculation in Des Moines during the 1880s and early 1890s is an important topic in local history. Further research into the rapid turn-over sales of new homes--a little studied phenomenon--is encouraged to flesh out this story.

Author Joseph Purtell has noted a somewhat similar phenomenon in New York City:

If there was one custom indigenous to New Yorkers, until rent controls and the lure of the suburbs changed the pattern of years, it was the annual move, so puzzling to outsiders. A

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year after the move back to New York, the Tiffanys were uptown on Tenth Street, in the area made fashionable after the Astors had built on Astor Place. The Tiffanys moved twice on Tenth Street, until 1860, when their address is given as Madison Avenue "between 38th and 39th Street." (Purtell:30)

Perhaps the "annual move," which featured so prominently in that city's life, was prompted by similar motivations later in Des Moines.

Further research might also provide more information about L. M. Sandford and an assessment of his real estate firm--Sandford & Company--in local real estate.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 13 and the south 5 feet of Lot 14 in T. E. Brown's 2nd Addition to the City of Des Moines, Iowa.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

Contains all land associated originally with the resource, as well as an additional five feet of ground in Lot 14 historically associated with the property since 1889. Another strip of five feet in Lot 14, present attached to the title of 716 19th Street and located directly north of the five foot strip noted above, is excluded because the date of its purchase falls outside the period of significance for this resources.

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Looking southwest
William C. Page, Photographer
May 11, 1998

2. F. A. Benham House
716 19th Street
Des Moines, IA 50314
Looking northeast
William C. Page, Photographer
May 11, 1998

3. F. A. Benham House
716 19th Street
Des Moines, IA 50314
Barn
Looking southwest
William C. Page, Photographer
May 11, 1998

4. F. A. Benham Barn
716 19th Street
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Interior detail of reception hall and staircase
William C. Page, Photographer
May 11, 1998