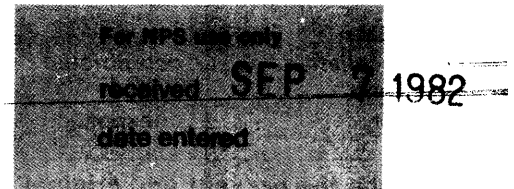


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



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

1. Name

historic Philip A. Wolff House and Carriage House

and/or common Belmont Hill

2. Location

street & number 1420 Seminole Avenue, NW not for publication

city, town Cedar Rapids vicinity of ~~congressional district~~ 2

state Iowa code 19 county Linn code 113

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Michael C. Nelsen

street & number 1420 Seminole Avenue, N.W.

city, town Cedar Rapids vicinity of state Iowa

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Linn County Recorder's Office

street & number Linn County Courthouse

city, town Cedar Rapids state Iowa

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date N.A. federal state county local

depository for survey records N. A.

city, town state

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Built of brick from the Wolff brick business on the grounds, the Wolff house and its accompanying carriage house provide a glimpse at late nineteenth century suburban life in Iowa and illustrate the vernacular Italianate style. The effect is understated and simple, but many Italianate elements are represented. Small, paired brackets that occur on projecting eaves, windows with brick arches and limestone sills, some of them in groups, the three-sided, two-story bay, and the projecting center pavilion are all simplified features of the Italianate and mark the house as an unsophisticated attempt to display the style. Other features appear to be Wolff's own creations, such as the recessed frieze below the eaves followed by a double row of slightly projecting bricks. The wood brackets appear to rest on them.

Also unusual is the treatment of the window arches, which are, again, a double band of brick headers but topped with what appear to be bricks set at an angle to emphasize the curve of the arch. The effect is especially noticeable above the double windows of the bay and the three-part windows of the front pavilion.

The nearby carriage house, also built of brick from Wolff's own brickyard, reflects some of the features of the house. Its additional side gable emphasizes the double door entrance and evokes the house's center pavilion. Also present are round-arched windows and doors and a similar limestone foundation.

When Philip Wolff purchased the 45 acres of Belmont Hill around 1883, the site was definitely suburban, lying two miles from Cedar Rapids. Because the house sits on a hill (Wolff and his brickworks and first carriage house below), much of the pastoral feeling remains today. The house and carriage house are tucked amid several varieties of mature trees, aloof from the modern homes and apartments that now surround the site on two sides. To the side and rear of the lot are undeveloped areas, some of it wooded.

The plan of the house is essentially intact. The present owners have removed some walls to provide a larger kitchen and living room, opened and altered the staircase, and added bathrooms and two decorative fireplace fronts.

The interior retains some original elements, notably a slate fireplace in the dining room, simple kitchen wainscoting, and flooring. In the basement, the foot square brick flooring and brick archways Wolff installed to house his small winery remain unchanged.

Contemporary newspaper accounts place Philip A. Wolff's arrival in Cedar Rapids at 1883, when he was 65 years old. He established his brickworks at this time and began construction of the house, continuing work on it until about 1885. The carriage house was built somewhat later, probably in the late 1890s, when Wolff reportedly tired of walking down from the house on the hill to his horses stored below.

The current owners took possession of the Wolff house after it had lain vacant and have undertaken modifications and modernizations. The most significant visual change is the two-story, colonial-type, porch/carport that has replaced the smaller, more appropriate entrance porch. Most changes are interior and not irreversible, such as the addition of shutters inside and out and new windows, although both house and carriage house have been sandblasted. In addition, it appears that at some time gabled roof was removed from over the two-story bay window of the dining room.

A fire in the 1960s damaged the carriage house, but it has been rebuilt in a manner generally consistent with the original. The sturdy, over foot thick brick walls remained standing after the fire. The owners used wood, rather than brick, to reconstruct the side

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Continuation sheet Description

Item number 7.

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gable and altered the shape of the window there from rectangular to a larger basket
arched one. They also used window panes with a diamond pattern.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1883–present **Builder/Architect** ^{**} Philip A. Wolff

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Wolff house calls attention to one of the especially thriving periods for Cedar Rapids, the 1880s, when the city enjoyed the remunerative benefits of water power and railroad connections. They shipped agricultural products, including woolens and oatmeal, in wholesale lots. The brickyards Wolff established around 1883 probably provided some of the construction material for growing city businesses as well as the bricks for his own house and carriage house.

Wolff was 65 years old when he moved to Cedar Rapids from Maquoketa to establish a brickworks with his son. Ohio-born Wolff had spent an active early life, having seen the Oklahoma Indian territory, California goldfields and the West Indies before living in several Midwest states. A man of varied interests (beekeeping, flying squirrels), Wolff built the basement of his Cedar Rapids house especially to accommodate two tiers of wine barrels. Besides the brickyard, Wolff had a winery and sold wine, three-year-old port, that was "noted throughout the eastern part of Iowa." It does not appear that either venture was on a large scale.

At age 96, Wolff was the oldest resident in Linn County when he died in 1914. Following the death of his wife, Rosina, in 1916, the property passed three years later to the Leonard Heisel family. Heisel was a successful farmer and breeder of hogs and draft horses. One of his pigs was a grand champion at the 1921 Iowa State Fair. Members of the family lived in the house until 1969.

9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.246 acres

Quadrangle name Cedar Rapids South

Quadrangle scale 1/24,000

UMT References

A

1	5	6	0	8	4	0	0	4	6	4	8	0	2	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification The South 250 feet of the East 217 feet of the North 15 acres of the SW1/4 of the SW 1/4 of Section 20-T83N-R7W, Cedar Rapids, Linn County, Iowa.

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

state N.A. code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Barbara Beving Long and Ralph J. Christian, Architectural Historians

organization Office of Historic Preservation date August 1982

street & number East 12th and Grand Avenue telephone 515/281-5111

city or town Des Moines state Iowa

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *William A. Johnson*

title Director, Iowa State Historical Department date September 1, 1982

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

date 10/7/82

William A. Johnson
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet

Bibliography

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1.

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W.H. McCoy, comp., Directory of Cedar Rapids & Linn County, 1900, pp. 296-297 and 308