

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation 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 James C. Fellows House  
and/or common \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**

street & number Main Street \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication  
city, town Riceville \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district 3  
state Iowa code 19 county Howard code 089

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Esther Asfahl  
street & number General Delivery  
city, town Riceville \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Iowa

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register's Office  
street & number Howard County Courthouse  
city, town Cresco \_\_\_\_\_ state Iowa

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title None has this property been determined eligible? No yes \_\_\_\_\_ no  
date N.A. \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local  
depository for survey records \_\_\_\_\_  
city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved      date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The over seventeen acre grounds of the James C. Fellows House help retain some of the feeling of the original setting for this local landmark. It is reportedly the only such Italianate brick residence in town. A circular drive connects the south-facing house with the highway and the sparsely built-up residential area. In the back, a wooded area drops off to a lower level and Watson's Creek. Fellows used clay from the creekbed to make the bricks for his house. A country club and railroad tracks flank either side of the property.

The Fellows House is a handsome example of the Italianate Style applied to a simple and commodious farmhouse. The roofline, its low-pitched, hipped roof, broad eaves and regularly placed wood brackets, provide Italianate features. The segmental arches of the long and slender windows are additional Italianate characteristics. The house did not originally have the porch with elongated brackets over the main entrance. It does not appear in an 1875 photograph, but the porch is present in a 1934 photograph as is a simple, wood widow's walk. The pendants of the porch brackets felicitously complement those of the eaves.

The plan is a modified L-shape, with the square living quarters on the west dominating. The original two rooms of this portion have been enlarged to one with the removal of a connecting wall. A small open porch, its columns removed, is tucked against the entry hall with the dining room just behind it and the kitchen to the east.

Five generations of Fellows have naturally made modifications to the original house, but they have not seriously marred the integrity of the building. Among the additions are shutters, a small screen porch on the west, bathrooms, and the iron porch railings. Modifications include a new front porch without columns, an east kitchen window, new basement entry roof, enclosed back porch, and enlarged living room. The roof is wood shingle. The dining room and one second floor room retain the original wide wood flooring, but the major rooms have narrow hardwood floors.

## 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	<input checked="" 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** ca. 1870–present **Builder/Architect** ~~XXXXXX~~ James C. Fellows

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Although the significance of the Fellows House is primarily as a local architectural landmark, the James C. Fellows family also calls attention to the earliest settlement of Riceville and to the Fellows' family role in establishing early commercial ventures.

James C. Fellows, a brick mason by trade, apparently came to the newly settled Riceville vicinity with his physician brother, Harris, in 1856. In that year the first store in town, Kerr & Fellows, opened. The Fellows family also build and operated a hotel in town in later years.

By 1871 Fellows had begun to make bricks from the clay on his property at Watson's Creek. As mentioned in his daily diary, the bricks for his house came from his own brickyard. It is unlikely the brickworks were a large scale business, especially since a fire in 1901 consumed most of the woodframe Riceville commercial district, including the wood Hotel Fellows. If Fellows had been busily supplying bricks since his arrival in 1856, it seems that more of Riceville would have been built of that fire resistant material. Fellows did not live to see his adopted town burn, for he died in 1898.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Fellows, James C. Portions of his diary. In possession of Mary Jane Johnson, Riceville.  
History of Mitchell County, Iowa. Reprint of portion of The History of Iowa, Mitchell County and Worth County (Springfield: Union Publishing Co., 1883). (Mason City:

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 17 acres  
Quadrangle name Riceville Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A	11.5	536140	4810.1800	B	11.5	536530	4810.1790
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	11.5	5361380	4810.0850	D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification See continuation sheet

### 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 Division of Historic Preservation date April 1982

street & number 26 East Market Street telephone 319/353-4186

city or town Iowa City 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Adrian A. Anderson

title Director date April 14, 1982

For HCPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register of Historic Places.

Adrian A. Anderson  
Keeper of the National Register

date 6/2/82

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 1

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Major Bibliographical References cont.

Klipto Printing, 1975.

Mitchell County Historical Society. The Story of Mitchell County, 1851-1973.  
(Mason City: Klipto Printing, c. 1973).

Photographs dating from 1875 in possession of Mary Jane Johnson, Riceville.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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**CONTINUATION SHEET** Geographic Data ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

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Legal Description

Lot 2, fellows subdivision of Lot 3, irregular survey SW $\frac{1}{4}$  NW $\frac{1}{4}$  section 30-99-14, Howard County, Iowa, except the east 4 rods thereof,

and further excepting therefrom:

The West 99 feet of said Lot 2 that lies South of the center of the stream known as Watson's Creek,

and further excepting therefrom:

Beginning at the Northeast corner Lot 1, Irregular Survey said SW $\frac{1}{4}$  NW $\frac{1}{4}$ ; thence West to the West line said Lot 1; thence North to a point directly West of the North line of Lot 1, said Fellows Subdivision; thence East to said line; thence South along the West line said Lot 2, Fellows Subdivision, to point of beginning,

and further excepting therefrom:

The South 190 feet of the East 198 feet thereof, except the East 66 feet of said East 198 feet,

EXCEPT THE RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY,

AND EXCEPT THE PUBLIC HIGHWAYS,

(from March 10, 1902, at 5:00p.m.)

AND

LOT 2 IRREGULAR SURVEY SW $\frac{1}{4}$  NW $\frac{1}{4}$  SECTION 30-99-14, HOWARD COUNTY, IOWA,

(from December 31, 1929, at 8:00 a.m.)