

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0684473

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED SEP 19 1978  
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**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

C.S. Stearns House

AND/OR COMMON

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Garden Grove

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF  
CODE

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fifth

STATE

Iowa

COUNTY  
Decatur

CODE

053

**CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- \_\_\_ DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- \_\_\_ STRUCTURE
- \_\_\_ SITE
- \_\_\_ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- \_\_\_ PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- \_\_\_ BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

- \_\_\_ IN PROCESS
- \_\_\_ BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- \_\_\_ UNOCCUPIED
- \_\_\_ WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- \_\_\_ YES: UNRESTRICTED
- \_\_\_ NO

**PRESENT USE**

- \_\_\_ AGRICULTURE
- \_\_\_ COMMERCIAL
- \_\_\_ EDUCATIONAL
- \_\_\_ ENTERTAINMENT
- \_\_\_ GOVERNMENT
- \_\_\_ INDUSTRIAL
- \_\_\_ MILITARY
- \_\_\_ MUSEUM
- \_\_\_ PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- \_\_\_ RELIGIOUS
- \_\_\_ SCIENTIFIC
- \_\_\_ TRANSPORTATION
- \_\_\_ OTHER:

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

James and Sarah Buckingham

STREET & NUMBER

5630 SE 19th Street

CITY, TOWN

Des Moines

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Iowa 50320

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Decatur County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Leon

STATE

Iowa

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> _EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> _DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> _UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> _GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> _RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> _MOVED      DATE_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> _UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Stearns house is a 2½ story frame residence on a rock-faced stone foundation. Overall dimensions are 44' x 54'. The main roof is a high hip, with an assortment of gabled projections and small, jerkin-head dormers. A principal feature is the very large, semicircular bay on the north side, with a bell-shaped roof and a first story constructed of rock-faced stone. Exterior surfaces exhibit a variety of textures and patterns: narrow clapboarding, scalloped shingling, and patterned slate on the roof. Curved "strapwork" appears in the large gable ends on east and west sides. On the north side, what would have been one long porch across the entire facade is broken into two segments by the protruding semicircular bay. (This front porch originally ended, at the east side, in a portecochere, with gable roof perpendicular to the main porch roof). The front porch repeats the denticular cornice of the main roof, and is supported by short Ionic columns on high stone pedestals. There is a small, second-story recessed porch on the northeast corner, with paneled posts and spindle "frieze"; and much simpler, recessed porches on the southeast and southwest corners, sheltering rear entrances. Windows are for the most part 1/1 sash in simple frame surrounds; the small windows in dormers and gable ends have small, diamond-shaped lights, and there is some stained glass. There are two tall brick chimneys with corbelled caps. Finials and portions of the roof cresting are extant, but the balustrade on the main roof deck has been replaced.

The main entrance (on the northeast corner) opens into a large living hall running parallel to the front of the house. All principal rooms open onto this hall. Walls are mostly plastered, floors are oak, some with patterned inlay. Woodwork (including four sets of sliding doors) and much interior hardware is intact.

South and slightly east of the house is a carriage house, which is contemporary with the main structure. It is formed by the intersection of two hipped-roof masses set at right angles to one another, one long and narrow, the other short and somewhat taller. These masses are enlivened by wall dormers with gable roofs. The exterior of this structure is finished with narrow clapboarding on the ground story, and scalloped shingling above. There are four sliding doors on the north side, hung from a metal rail, and panelled with boards set in a herringbone pattern.

The Stearns house is located on a large corner lot on the main street of this small (pop. 275) rural community. It has recently been repainted a buff color, with light brown trim.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input 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 c. 1885

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Stearns house in Garden Grove is a nice example of the vernacular expression of American Queen Anne residential architecture popular among Iowa's small-town "prominent citizens" toward the end of the 19th century. Distinguishing features include the irregular plan around a large living hall, cluttered roofscape, and variety of surface textures (shingling, clapboards, "strapwork" and rock-faced stone). The tall chimneys, with their decorative brickwork, and the semicircular bay that dominates the front facade, are also noteworthy. The carriage house, whose exterior treatment is similar to that of the house itself, serves as a good "companion piece".

The house is believed to have been built for C.S. Stearns about 1885. Stearns was a local merchant and banker whose uncles, A.B. and Dan Stearn, were early settlers and entrepreneurs in Garden Grove. Among C.S. Stearns' activities were C.S. Stearns & Bros., a mercantile establishment begun in 1883, and the First National Bank, est. 1900.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Howell, J.M. and Heman C. Smith (eds.) History of Decatur County, Iowa. Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1915. Vol. I, pp. 157, 159, 160.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 2 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Garden Grove, Iowa

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 449180 4519480

B               

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C               

D               

E               

F               

G               

H               

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Lot 185' x 450': Lots One (1) through Fourteen (14) and Lots (180) through (185) inclusive, Railroad Addition to town of Garden Grove.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

James R. Buckingham

ORGANIZATION

Decatur County Historical Society

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

5630 SE 19th St.

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Des Moines

STATE

Iowa 50320

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE     

LOCAL X

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

*John H. Johnson*

TITLE

Director, Division of Historic Preservation

DATE

11 Sept '78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

11-28-78

ATTEST:

*Charles [Signature]*  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

William H. Brasham

11-27-78