

PH0506761

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED NOV 14 1977
DATE ENTERED DEC 19 1977

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

McElhinny House

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

300 North Court Street

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fairfield

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Iowa

Jefferson

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
- OTHER: Women's Club

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Fairfield Women's Club

STREET & NUMBER

300 North Court Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Fairfield

__ VICINITY OF

Iowa

52556

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Fairfield

Iowa 52556

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		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The McElhinny House was built about 1850. It is of frame construction on a stone and brick foundation, with an L-shaped plan, located very near the downtown area of Fairfield. The main block is 45' wide, with a gable roof and narrow, plain cornice. The front elevation is divided into five bays, with center entrances on both stories. Windows are plain, with 6/6 sash, and shuttered. The entrances are framed by sidelights and multi-light head windows, set within cornice-topped, dog-eared wooden surrounds. A hipped-roof, two-story porch extends across the three center bays. It is supported by square wooden columns and has a carved balustrade on the upper level. The end walls contain two closely-spaced windows on first and second floors, and a single window beneath the eaves.

The rear wing is also two stories, with a gable roof. The narrow cornice is continued on this section, which is otherwise quite plain. A small one-story kitchen was attached to the end of this wing in 1965.

The interior plan is arranged around a center hall and open staircase, with one large room off each side. Several interior walls have been removed to create these large areas. The original woodwork is well-kept, rooms plastered and papered. Several of the rooms have plaster decoration around ceiling light fixtures.

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 ca. 1850

BUILDER/ARCHITECT ~~XXXXXX~~ John Lind and Sons.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The McElhinny House is a well-preserved example of vernacular domestic architecture, dating from the early decades of Fairfield history. Its first owner, Robert McElhinny (1805-1878) was a native of Pennsylvania, who came to Fairfield in the early 1840's. McElhinny's contributions to community life were primarily in the area of education. In 1853 he was elected president of the newly-created Jefferson County Library Association (among Iowa's earliest such groups). He was on the board of Fairfield University at its founding in 1854. Twenty years later, Fairfield University closed, but McElhinny was a contributor to its successor, Parsons College. Today the house is a local historic landmark and the home of the Fairfield Women's Club.

The date of the house has not been conclusively established, but from information available appears to be about 1850. Robert McElhinny purchased the two lots on which the house now sits in 1846.¹ County marriage records² note that on 12 February, 1850, James Eckhart and Leanna Wise were married "at the house of Robert McElhaney (sic)". Local tradition maintains that the house may have been begun as early as 1846, and built over a period of five years, with timber cut in winter, and construction occurring during the summer months.

¹Indenture dated 21 February 1846, Fairfield County Recorder, Book C, p. 388.

²Extracts from Jefferson County Records (Orville and Mary Prill, comp.), Vol. 2, p. 29 (MS in Public Library of Fairfield, Iowa)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Fairfield Daily Ledger, October 2, 1939.
 Jefferson County Records (Orville and Mary Prill, comp.), Vol. 5,
 pp. 173-74
 Welty, Susan Fulton. A Fair Field. Detroit: Harlo Press, 1968,
 pp. 80, 82, 159, 162, 338
 History of Jefferson County, Iowa. Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1879
 p. 511.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 5	5 8 4 8 5 0	4 5 4 0 3 0 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 1 and 2, Block 4, New Plat of Fairfield, Iowa.

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

Karen A. Rubey, Ruth Kirchwehm

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Fairfield Women's Club

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

300 North Court St.

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Fairfield

Iowa 52556

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

Adrian D. Anderson

TITLE Director, Division of Historic Preservation

DATE 11.7.77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

Charles Anderson

DATE 12/19/77

DATE 12-19-77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER