

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received DEC 6 1984

date entered JAN 3 1985

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

1. Name

historic Samuel A. and Margaret Stevenson House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 2940 Cottage Grove Avenue not for publication

city, town Des Moines vicinity of

state Iowa code 019 county Polk code 153

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
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Patrice K. Beam

street & number 2940 Cottage Grove Ave.

city, town Des Moines vicinity of state Iowa 50310

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Clerk's Office

street & number Polk County Courthouse

city, town Des Moines state Iowa 50304

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Cottage Grove District Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981, 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records Iowa SHPO

city, town Des Moines state Iowa 50319

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Prominently situated on a corner lot in one of Des Moines' oldest residential suburbs, the Samuel A. and Margaret Stevenson House is one of the city's best preserved, extant examples of a residence that combines elements of the Stick and Eastlake styles. Once a fairly common style in Des Moines and very popular with the developers of the city's late 19th century suburbs, the vast majority of this type have either been demolished, altered beyond recognition, or lost their character due to the addition of false siding. The Stevenson house also retains an unusually large amount of its original interior fabric as well.

The Stevenson house rests on brick foundations over a partially-raised full basement. Of wood frame construction, its exterior walls are sheathed with painted clapboards, featuring vertical and horizontal trim boards, and it is capped with a cross-gabled roof of medium pitch, presently covered with asbestos shingles but originally featuring wood shingles. The roof is pierced along its ridge line by plain, single, interior chimney stacks, which most likely originally featured corbelled caps. Windows are generally of the one-over-one wood sash variety and are set in rectangular wooden surrounds. Although the windows appear to be identical, a degree of variety is achieved by varying their width and height, and on the west side they are even placed asymmetrically in the wall. The three entrances, all with what appear to be original doors, are flanked by rather elaborate porches on the north, east, and west sides.

Stylistically, the Stevenson house shows the influence of the Stick and Eastlake styles. The Stick influence is most noticeable in the horizontal and vertical boards which were applied to the walls on the north, east, and west sides of the house. The influence of this style can also be seen in the large projecting gables that cap the chamfered bays on the north and east sides. As viewed from those sides, the Stevenson house is somewhat reminiscent of a Swiss chalet, a building type most architectural historians view as being a major contributing factor to the Stick style. The Stick influence can also be felt in the general asymmetrical arrangement of the house and its variety of roof forms. The Eastlake influence is clearly discernible in the house's three porches, all of which are largely intact. All three feature the large turned posts, brackets that appear to have a three dimensional quality, incised frieze work, and incised lattice work that characterize the Eastlake style.

Inside, the house consists of four rooms and a large entrance hall on the first floor, five bedrooms on the second floor, and a large floored attic. There appears to have been little change in room arrangement over the years except for the conversion of a butler's pantry adjacent to the kitchen into a half bath. Most of the original interior fabric appears to be intact, including hardwood floors, wood trim, doors and hardware, a door with colored, etched glass, two stained glass windows, an elaborately carved Eastlake staircase, and a rather elaborate mantel with colored tiles.

Currently, the house is undergoing restoration by its new owner, who is Executive Director of the Iowa Chapter, Victorian Society of America. In addition to correcting a number of problems created by deferred maintenance and painting and papering the interior, the owner is giving high priority to restoring and rebuilding the porches on the north and east sides which have deteriorated severely in recent years. The house currently served as her private residence and office space for the Iowa Chapter, Victorian Society of America.

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 1889

Builder/Architect

Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Samuel A. and Margaret Stevenson House is one of Des Moines' best preserved examples of a residence that combines elements of the Stick and Eastlake styles. Once a fairly common house type in Des Moines and especially popular with developers of the city's late 19th century suburbs, the vast majority of this type have either been demolished, altered practically beyond recognition, or lost most of their original character due to the addition of false siding. The Stevenson house also retains an unusually large amount of its original interior fabric as well.

The abstract of title indicates that Samuel A. and Margaret Stevenson purchased the site for this house from the Vermont Syndicate, developers of Kingman Place, in 1889. The fact they immediately mortgaged the property for \$2,687.50 to the syndicate most likely indicates that the Stevensons engaged that group to erect their house for them, probably choosing a design from a pattern book or stock plan. Newspaper advertisements for Kingman Place and other subdivisions in the late 1880's and 1890's often had woodcuts that featured a variety of houses with Stick and Eastlake style characteristics, and probably indicates that Des Moines developers in this era played a major role in housing design, either through the use of a particular pattern book or hiring an architect to develop several stock plans.

Stevenson, who was the ticket agent for one of the railroad lines serving Des Moines, and his family retained ownership of the house until 1894. In 1903 Florence B. and William B. Harrison purchased the house, and they and their family owned and occupied the house until 1928. In that latter year Mrs. Albert Gardner purchased it, and it remained in her family until 1970. Since the latter date it has had several owners.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Abstract of Title, copy in possession of Patrice K. Beam

Bushnell, J.P., Bushnell's Des Moines City Directory, 1889-1890. (Des Moines: Des Moines Directory Company, 1890).

Des Moines Saturday Review, June 28, 1890; April 18, 1891; May 2, 1891.

Polk, R. L., Des Moines City and Polk County Directory (Des Moines: R. L. Polk Co., 1892).

Sanborn Fire Maps.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bushnell, J. P., Bushnell's Des Moines City Directory, 1889-1890 (Des Moines: Des Moines Directory Company, 1890).
Des Moines Saturday Review, June 28, 1890; April 18, 1891; May 2, 1891.
Polk, R. L., Des Moines City and Polk County Directory (Des Moines: R. L. Polk Company 1892).

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Des Moines S.W. Quadrangle

Quadrangle scale 1/24,000

UTM References

A

1	5	4	4	5	1	1	0	4	6	0	5	1	8	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 north 90' of Lots 120 and 121, Kingman Place Addition, City of Des Moines, Polk County. This parcel includes only the house and excludes a garage which stands on the rear of the property.

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ralph Christian, Architectural Historian

organization Iowa SHPO

date 15 November 1984

street & number E. 12th & Grand Ave.

telephone 515-281-8697

city or town Des Moines

state Iowa 50319

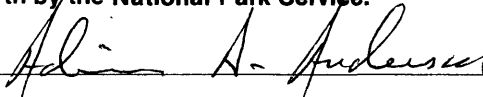
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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



title Executive Director Iowa State Historical Department

date 11/19/84

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 1-3-85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration