

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

*826*



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" on the appropriate line or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name VANDER WILT, DIRK AND CORNELIA J., COTTAGE

other names/site number Vermeer House, Wayne D. Stienstra House

2. Location

street & number 925 Broadway Street N/A not for publication

city or town Pella N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Marion code 125 zip code 50219

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ( nomination  request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ( meets  does not meet) the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ( nationally  statewide  locally). (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Rowell J. Love*  
Signature of certifying official/Title

*June 27, 2001*  
Date

**STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA**  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ( meets  does not meet) the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is :
- entered in the National Register.  
See continuation sheet.
  - determined eligible for the National Register  
See continuation sheet
  - determined not eligible for the National Register
  - removed from the National Register.
  - Other, (Explain)

*Elsa K. Beall*  
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage  
Name of Property

Marion County, Iowa  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many lines as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one line)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources  
previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone  
walls Brick  
roof Wood  
other Glass

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage  
Name of Property

Marion County, Iowa  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" on one or more lines for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" on all the lines that apply)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

Circa 1854

**Significant Dates**

Circa 1854

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance** - (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

**9. Major Bibliography References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- previous determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Record
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historical Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository \_\_\_\_\_

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage  
Name of Property

Marion County, Iowa  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 5	5 0 6 8 3 0	4 5 8 3 9 3 5	
---	-----	-------------	---------------	--

Zone Easting Northing

2	---	---	---	
---	-----	-----	-----	--

Zone Easting Northing

3	---	---	---	
---	-----	-----	-----	--

Zone Easting Northing

4	---	---	---	
---	-----	-----	-----	--

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title William C. Page, Public Historian; Joanne R. Page, Project Associate  
organization Wayne D. Stienstra date January 31, 2001  
street & number 520 East Sheridan Avenue (Page) telephone 515-243-5740; FAX 515-243-7285  
city or town Des Moines state Iowa zip code 50313-5017

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** - Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items** - (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Wayne D. Stienstra  
street & number 175 Delft Drive telephone 515-232-5121  
city or town Pella state Iowa zip code 50219

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage is a brick and wood frame, 1.5-story, single-family dwelling, built circa 1854. It remains one of the handful of surviving, first generation dwellings built in Pella.

**COTTAGE**

The Vander Wilt Cottage possesses three units. The largest unit is its "U"-shaped main block. The second unit is the area between the arms of the "U." The third unit is the back porch. (See Continuation Sheet 7-12.)

Main Block

The main block is "U"-shaped and constructed of brick. The main block measures approximately 34' x 26'. A side gable roof, clad with cedar shingles with a 5" lap, covers it. Plaster finishes clad most of the interior walls, and the cottage features soft wood floors.

The main block features 2/4 double-hung sash and 2/2 double-hung sash. All of these windows are replacements. They were specially milled in Eldridge, Iowa, for the property and conform in their configuration to those commonly employed in early dwellings in Pella. This design can be seen in the Willem Van Asch House-Huibert DeBooy Commercial Room (NRHP) at 1105-1109 West Washington Street in Pella, which retains its original fenestration. These windows at the Vander Wilt Cottage replaced earlier replacement windows, which had deteriorated. Featuring a 1/1 double-hung sash design, they had been installed in the cottage in the late Nineteenth or early Twentieth Century.

The main block rests on a stone foundation. The main block's floor plan is two rooms wide by two rooms deep. The front two rooms flank a central hall. (See Continuation Sheet 7-12.)

The central hall measures 4.4' x 14'. The south and north walls of the central hall are load-bearing and constructed of brick. Many years ago, the original opening to the second floor was accessed through a hole in the floor by a ladder. The rooms flanking the central hall each measures 13' x 14'. Each of the rear rooms measures 9.8' x 10.2'.

The upstairs contains a landing at the top of the stairs and two small bedrooms. The ceilings of the bedrooms conform to the slope of the main block's roof. Each bedroom possesses one window, situated in the gable end of the cottage.

The woodwork is generally plain and simple. Some original (or early) doors remain intact, including the one between the central hall and the old porch. These doors feature 2-panel construction and are unusually wide and short. They measure about 72" x 36".

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 2

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

The transom over the front door is notable. This fixed window consists of three segments, a central pane of vertical glass flanked by two squares each possessing four diamond-shaped panes. This transom is made of Walnut.

A partial basement is located under the main block. It is now accessed by stairs in the back porch. When the old porch was extant, the basement could be accessed by three different doors: a door in the floor in each part of the "U" and a cellar door in the southeast corner of the old porch. The basement has two spaces, one under the north portion of the main block and one under the south portion of the main block, including the central hall. (Neither of these spaces extends under the wing's of the main block's "U.") A chute, constructed of brick and situated in the south wing of the "U," provides an easy way to put storage in the basement. Originally, one could not access the south and the north spaces in the basement except through the first floor. An early remodeling built a door between these two spaces. That door used baseboard from the upstairs as side trim. The basement floor is now concrete. The basement originally featured a dirt floor, with brick laid on top. Later, a footing was installed on the inside of the foundation. This allowed the basement floor to be lowered by a foot, and a concrete floor was poured.

The brick used for the main block is soft and of local manufacture. The brick bonding system consists of five courses of stretcher bricks alternately laid with one course of header bricks. The original mortar employed in the building was a lime and sand mix. During the restoration project, some portions of the exterior and interior brick walls were rebuilt. To accomplish this, the original brick was salvaged. Additional brick, salvaged from a house of comparable age located east of Knoxville, Iowa, was also used. This brick was slightly smaller but of the same color and softness. These materials were used to rebuild portions of the interior walls, while brick salvaged from the Vander Wilt Cottage itself was used for the exterior work. A mix of mostly lime mortar was used for the interior brickwork, while lime mortar was used for the soft, exterior brick.

Second Unit

The second unit began its life as an unenclosed porch, located within the arms of the main block. Around the turn of the Twentieth Century, this unit was enclosed and remodeled as interior space for the cottage. The second unit measures about 10' x 10'.

Originally, the second unit was a porch covered with a shed roof and floored with a partial deck of wood resting directly on the earth. Doors from this porch accessed both of the rear rooms and the central hall of the main block. Around the turn of the Twentieth Century, the cottage was enlarged by enclosing this porch. A new floor was built over the partial deck to raise its height to the level of the main block. (Previously, one stepped up from the porch to access the cottage's interior.) A wall was constructed to enclose the west end of the porch. These efforts converted this porch into an integral part of the cottage's interior. Then, in the 1950s, the original brick walls of this porch were furred out, lathed and plastered.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 3

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Comelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

This physical description of the second unit was gained through examination of its construction during restoration efforts undertaken in 1999 and 2000. (See below.) During this project, many household artifacts were found in the earth alongside the partial deck.

Back Porch

The back porch is the cottage's third unit. It is attached to the rear of the building, measures about 5' x 21', and is enclosed. A shed roof, clad with asphalt roll roofing, covers the back porch.

The back porch was not original to the cottage but constructed sometime before 1911. A 1911 fire insurance map of Pella pictures this enlarged footprint of the cottage. (See Continuation Sheet 7-10.) Unfortunately, the 1906 fire insurance map pictures only a portion of the cottage, and earlier maps do not map the area. The portion of the cottage pictured on the 1906 map suggests that the back porch was not in place at that time.

Originally, the back porch was set on limestone chunks or brick laid directly in the dirt. When the present owner purchased the cottage, these footings had settled, the supporting framing of the porch rested on the dirt, and was badly rotted. As a result, the back porch was virtually reconstructed and set on concrete footings and a concrete block foundation. The rear plate of the second unit was raised at the same time to bring it into alignment with the main block.

Turn of Century Remodeling

Sometime around the turn of the Twentieth Century, the Vander Wilt Cottage was remodeled to enlarge it, as mentioned above. These changes were concentrated at the rear of the building and in its interior. They did not alter its east facade.

Also as noted above, the second unit was rebuilt as a room integral to the main block, and the back porch was constructed. A standing seam roof was installed over the west side of the house. These remodeling efforts also replaced the floor joists for the first floor of the main block, except the center hall and the southeast room, where the original joists remained intact. The first set of stairs to access the second floor was added in the northeast room of the main block, accessed through a door cut in the brick load-bearing wall on the north side of the central hall. (This might date to an earlier time.)

Another change occurred between 1906 and 1911. A wooden deck was constructed across the entire east facade of the cottage. This deck was not original to the cottage, and it had been removed by 1931. We know this because neither the 1869 bird's eye view of Pella nor the 1931 fire insurance map pictures it. We know that the deck existed because its footprint is shown in the 1906 fire insurance map. A notable feature of the deck was its shallow depth, also depicted on the 1906 map. (See Continuation Sheet 7-9.) Numerous historic dwellings in Pella featured decks like this. They served the purpose of a simple porch.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 4

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

Restoration

In the 1930s, the Vander Wilt Cottage had been used as a residential rental. The Groenendyk family subsequently purchased the property, and it remained as an owner-occupied residence for them until 1991. Bob Groenendyk decided to sell the house to its present owner because he wanted to put it in the hands of someone who would restore it. There were several developers who wished to redevelop the property because of its close proximity to downtown Pella. An attempt by the present owner to rezone the property for commercial use as a rental shop was fought by the neighbors and denied by the Pella city council. Because this source of revenue to finance the restoration was denied, the present owner maintained the vacant property until he was able to self-finance its restoration.

The restoration included the repair of the cornice along the facade of the building, rebuilding a portion of the north wall of the main block, where structural failure had occurred, and the replacement of one window in the south elevation of the main block. The jack lintels over the windows and door were dismantled and rebuilt with a steel lintel installed under the interior brick to carry the roof and floor load. The rotted 3" thick walnut window sills were replaced throughout the house with new ones, also made of walnut. The bottoms of the side jambs, which had rotted, were repaired with an epoxy wood replacement and hardener. The walnut exterior window stop was replaced to match the original and new window sash were built to match the original, but with insulated glass. The roof cladding over the main block and old porch was removed, and some of the rotted sheathing and rafters were replaced. The old sheathing was covered with 1" solid insulation, an air space was created, new sheathing was installed, and new cedar shingles were laid on top. A hidden vent was created in the soffit and in the peak of the roof for ventilation. The back porch was rebuilt. The white paint, which covered the exterior walls, was removed using a mild stripper, then neutralized, and removed with a lower power rinse of hot water.

During the restoration project, cover-up materials were removed from the ceilings of the front two rooms on the first floor. This revealed exposed joists of the second floor. The flooring of the second floor is laid directly on top of these floor joists, a construction technique discussed in Section 8 of this document. The removal of the cover-up materials also revealed the original paint on the ceilings of the front rooms. This paint is colored a forest green and possesses an old and rich patina.

**OUTBUILDINGS**

No outbuildings remain extant on the property today.

A 1906 fire insurance map pictures a 1-story barn located at the southwest edge of the property. (See Continuation Sheet 7-9.) A 1931 map pictures a 1.5-story automobile garage at the same location. (See Continuation Sheet 7-11.) An historic photograph pictures this structure as clad with board and batten. All three images are most likely of the same building. This outbuilding is nonextant today.

A 1-story, one-car garage, measuring 18' x 18' stood on the property in the 1980s but is nonextant. (Marion County Assessor's Office)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 5

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

The locations of privies or other nonextant outbuildings on the site are not known at the present time.

### SITE

The Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage is situated on fractional portion of Lot 1 in Block 16 of the original plat of Pella, Iowa. This parcel measures approximately 50' x 100' and comprises the south five-eighths of Lot 1.

According to the Marion County Assessor's Office records, the cottage is situated less than one foot from the public right-of-way. This is a negligible measurement, and the earliest Sanborn maps of the property also show it abutting the public right-of-way. (See Continuation Sheet 7-9.)

Although the surrounding land slopes slightly downward from Washington Street to the north, Lot 1 is generally level. A very old soft Maple tree is situated in the front dooryard of the property and stands slightly to the south of the front door itself.

The property stands on the west side of Broadway between Washington and Columbus Streets. An east-west alley is situated directly south of the cottage. As originally laid out, Broadway varied in its width. South of Washington, Broadway measured 100', while north of Washington, it measured 70'. A difference in these widths continues to the present day.

Broadway serves as a collector corridor for vehicular traffic in Pella and connects the southern and the northern portions of the city with town center. Pella's Central Park, or public square, is situated about one-half block from the cottage, and the Dominie Henry P. Scholte House (NRHP) stands diagonally southeast from it at 739 Washington Street. The surroundings of the cottage to the north are residential, while those to the south are mostly commercial in character.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

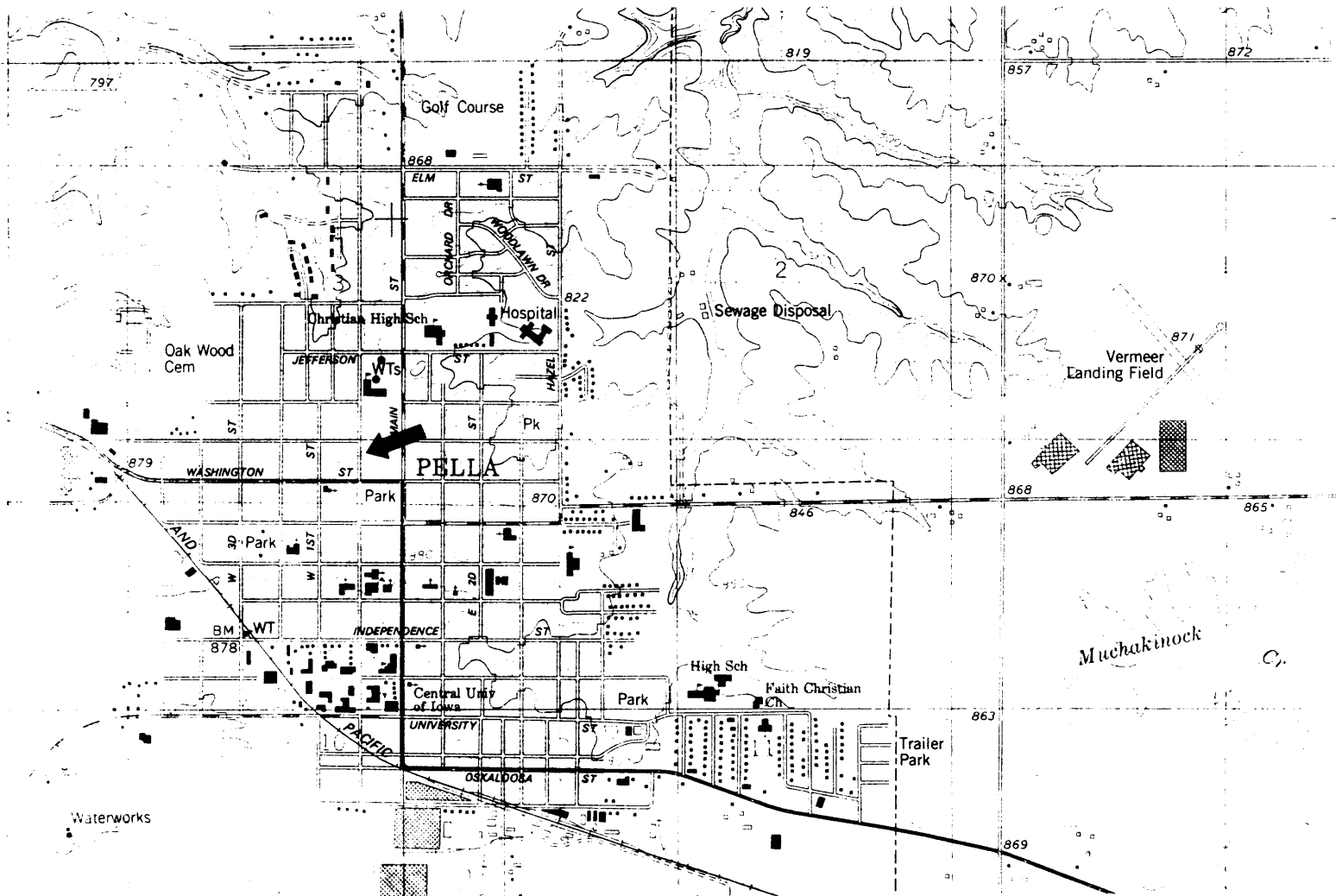
Section number 7 Page 6

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Comelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

## SITE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



Source: U.S.G.S. Map (7.5 Minute Series), Pella, Iowa, Quadrangle, 1980.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

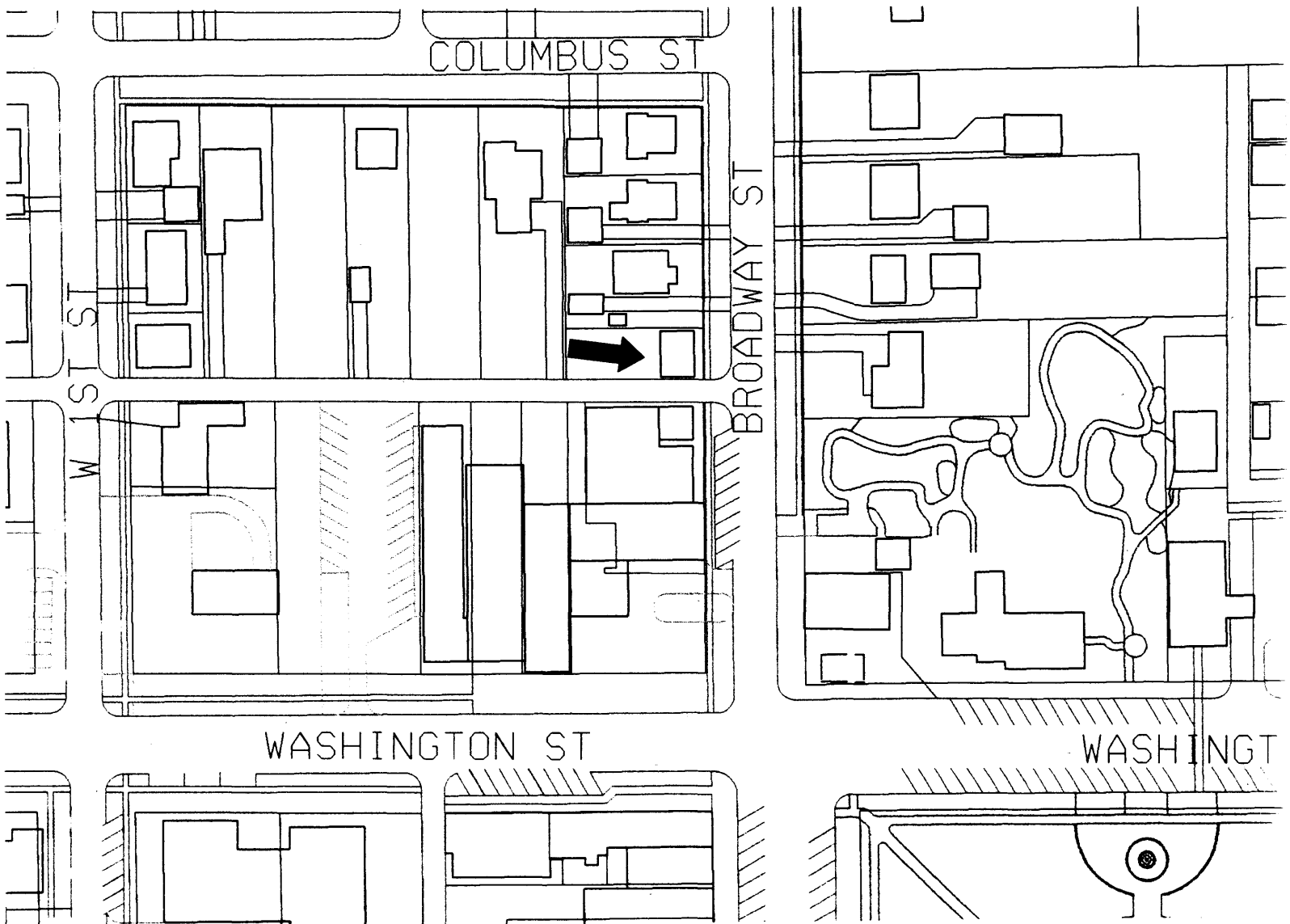
Section number 7 Page 7

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

## PLANEMETRIC MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



Source: City of Pella, Iowa, 2001.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 8

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

## PELLA IN 1869

### ARROW LOCATES COTTAGE



This bird's eye view of Pella looks to the northwest. The Scholte House stands at the north end of the middle stand of trees in Central Park. The Vander Wilt Cottage, like many other dwellings, is shown with a small dooryard, but a number of houses and cottages abut the public right-of-way directly.

Source: Pella Historical Society.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

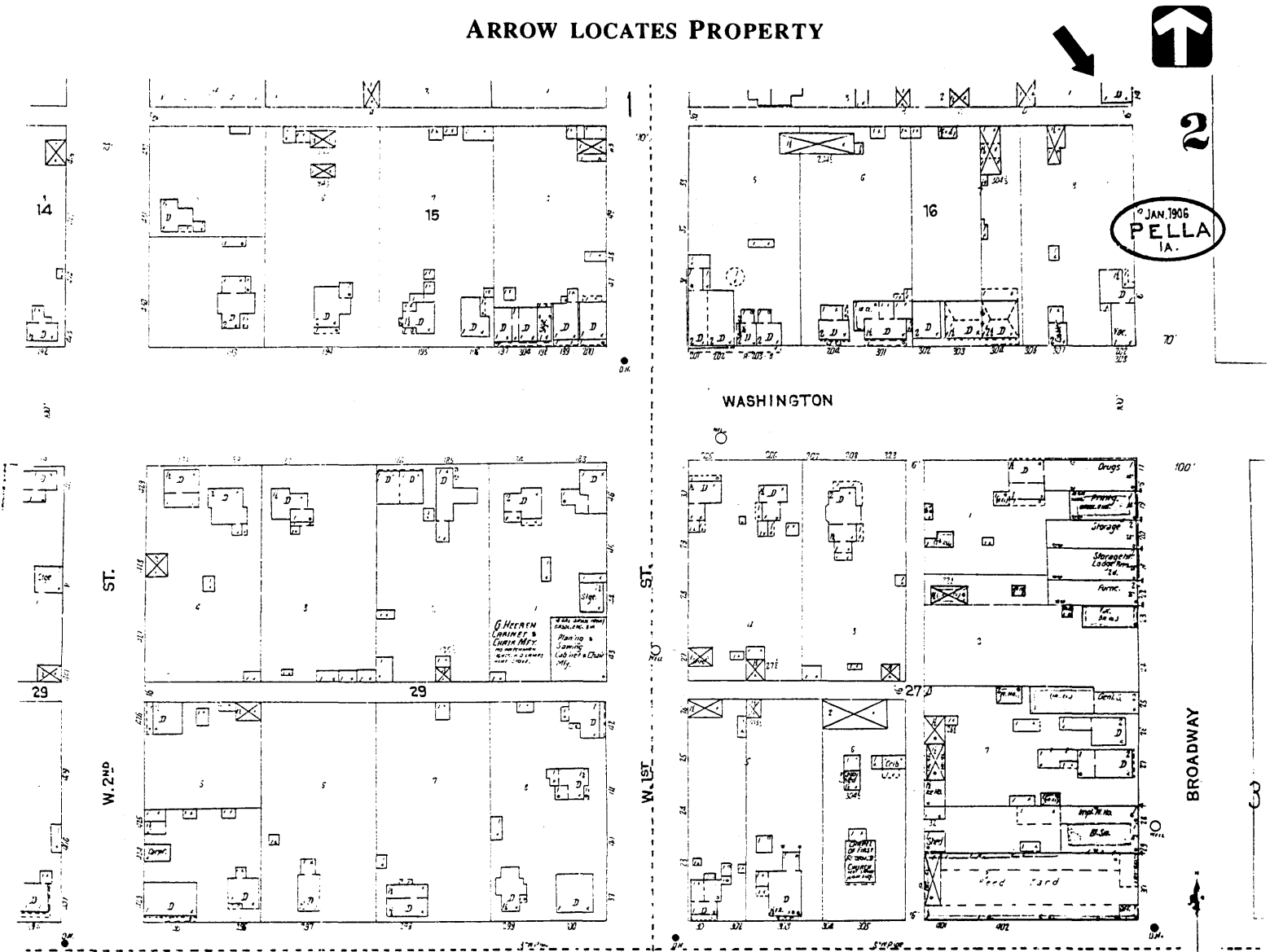
Section number 7 Page 9

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

## 1906 FIRE INSURANCE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



A portion of Lot 1 in Block 16 is shown, including a portion of the Vander Wilt Cottage. An outbuilding is pictured at the southwest corner of the property. Note the buildings along the north side of Washington Street that, like the Vander Wilt Cottage, directly abut the right-of-way.

Source: Sanborn Map Company, Pella, 1906, p. 2.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

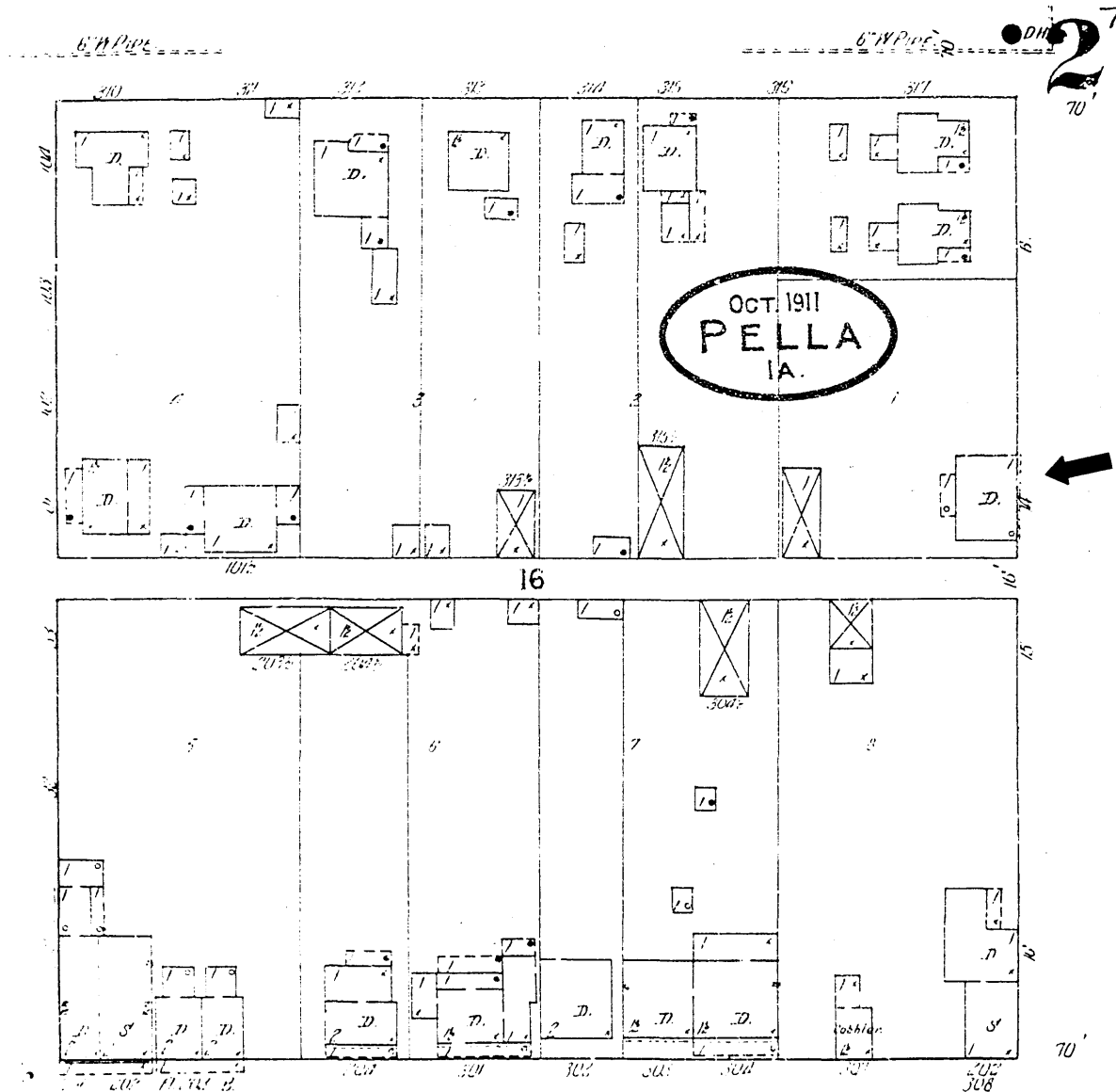
Section number 7 Page 10

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

## 1911 FIRE INSURANCE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



This map pictures a dotted line paralleling the facade of the Vander Wilt Cottage, indicating the presence of a shallow front porch. No physical evidence of that porch survives. The house numbers shown on this map were changed subsequently.

Source: Sanborn Map Company, Pella, 1911, p. 2.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 11

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

# 1931 FIRE INSURANCE MAP

## ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



This map pictures some of the changes which took place between 1911 and 1931. The front porch has been removed. The rear porch, is shown more detail, consists of two areas. The barn has been converted into an automobile garage, and the house numbers shown on this map are those in current use.

Source: Sanborn Map Company, Pella, 1931, p. 3.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

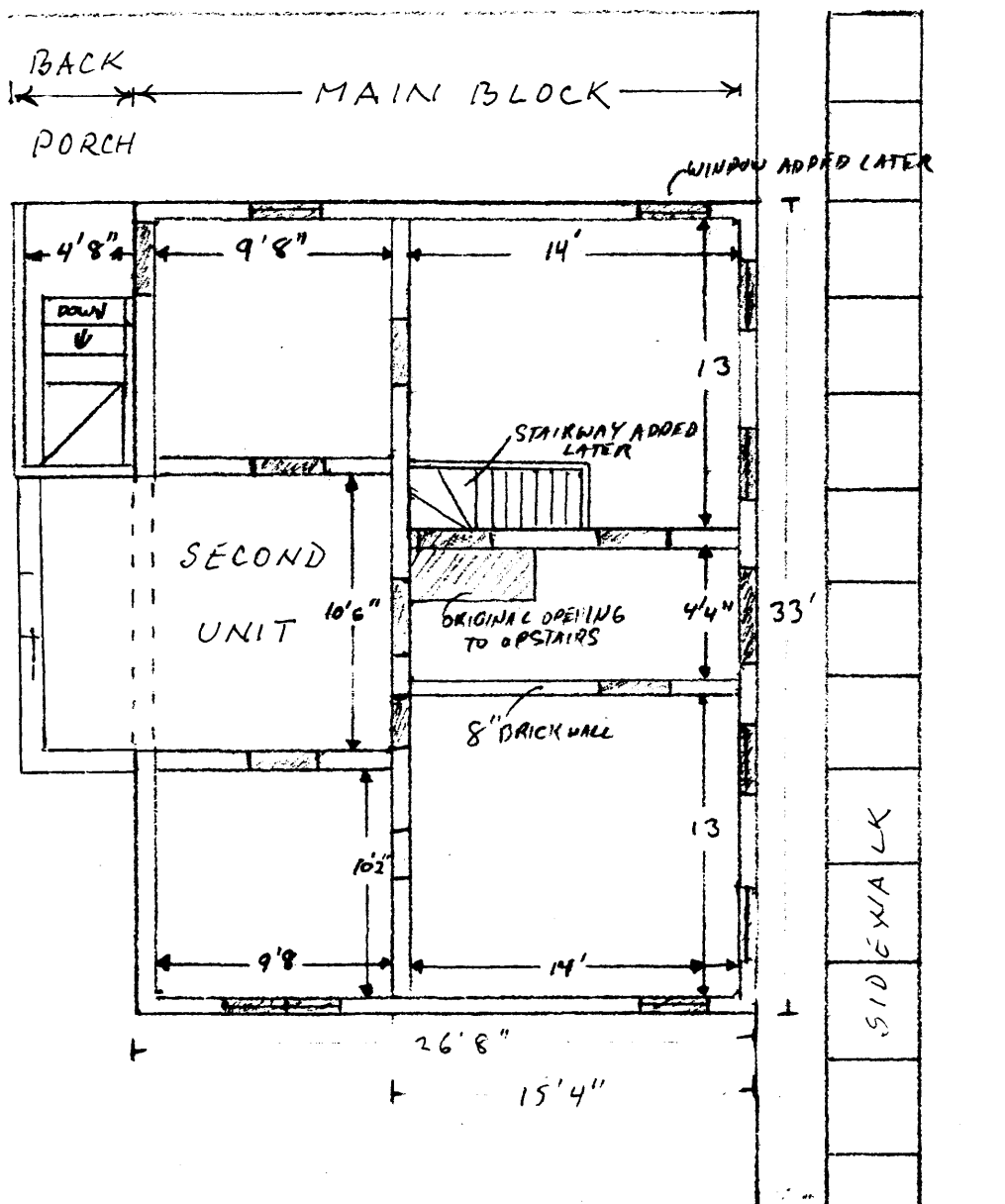
Section number 7 Page 12

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

## FIRST FLOOR PLAN

2000





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

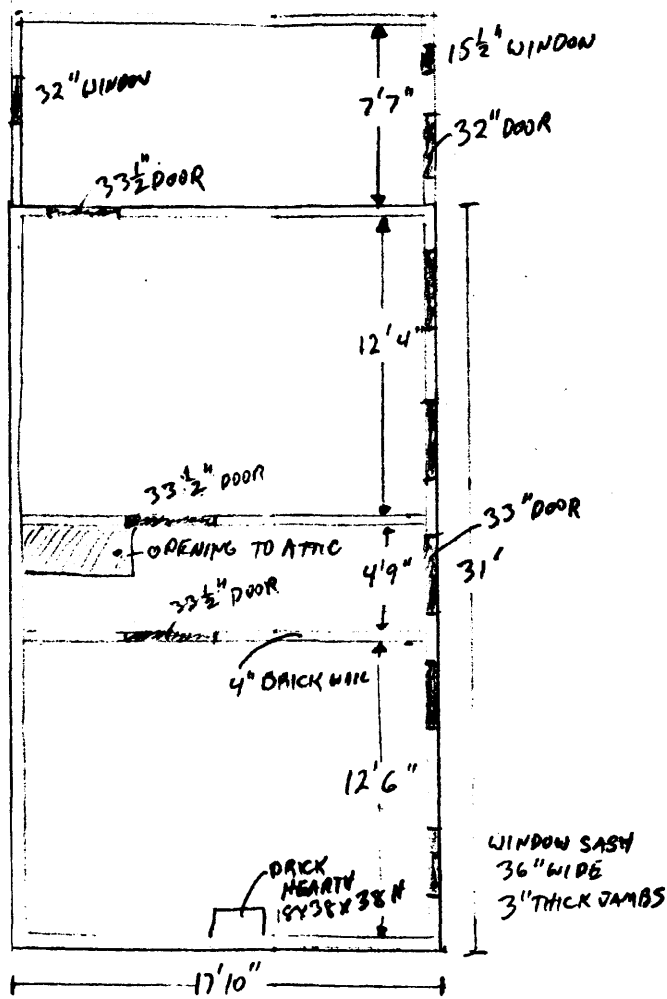
Section number 7 Page 13

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Comelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

## SECOND FLOOR PLAN

2000



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 14

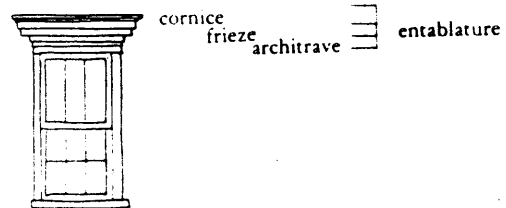
CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

## LINTEL TREATMENT



WINDOWS



The brickworked lintels of the Vander Wilt Cottage are shaped like the entablature of classical architecture.

Source: Wayne D. Stienstra photo (top), Virginia & Lee McAlester (bottom), p. 61.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 15

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

**SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Completed and first occupied circa 1854, the Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage is locally significant, under National Register Criterion C. The building is representative of the first generation of residential structures constructed in Pella, Iowa, and calls attention to the architectural influence of Holland, the homeland of Pella's settlers. Only a handful of these early brick cottages remains extant in the community.

The period of significance, under Criterion C, is circa 1854, the time when the building was constructed and first occupied

The property contains two resources for this nomination--the cottage, which is counted as building, and the site, which is counted as a site. Both resources are contributing.

**BACKGROUND**

Emigrating to escape religious persecution, several succeeding bands of Dutch immigrants in the 1840s settled in Marion County, Iowa, under the leadership of Domine Henry P. Scholte, their religious and political leader. Scholte continued throughout his life to lead their spiritual and secular life.

On April 6, 1854, Scholte and M. H. E. Scholte, his wife, as the proprietors of Pella, conveyed the title to "the South Five-Eighth part of Lot No. one 91 in Block No. Sixteen 16" to Dirk Vander Wilt. The price for this property was \$37.50. (Marion County Recorder's Office:Book F, page 132)

Dirk's name has been spelled in various ways, including "Vander Wilt," "Van der Wilt," and probably others. This nomination has chosen the former spelling, as it appeared in this form towards the end of his life and reflects the family's most mature usage.

**ARCHITECTURE**

The Vander Wilt Cottage is architecturally significant because of associations in building technique and form and in vernacular design with domestic architecture as practiced in Holland at the time the Pella settlers emigrated from their homeland.

Building Technique and Form

The Vander Wilt Cottage illustrates a series of Dutch building techniques employed by the Pella settlers in the New World and a form of architecture brought with them.

The employment of beam anchors is a diagnostic characteristic of Dutch architecture in Pella. (Page 1987 and 1989a) Similar to tie rods, beam anchors provide support to a building's exterior walls and

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 15

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

### SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

Completed and first occupied circa 1854, the Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage is locally significant, under National Register Criterion C. The building is representative of the first generation of residential structures constructed in Pella, Iowa, and calls attention to the architectural influence of Holland, the homeland of Pella's settlers. Only a handful of these early brick cottages remains extant in the community.

The period of significance, under Criterion C, is circa 1854, the time when the building was constructed and first occupied

The property contains one contributing resource for this nomination--the cottage itself, which is classified as a building.

### BACKGROUND

Emigrating to escape religious persecution, several succeeding bands of Dutch immigrants in the 1840s settled in Marion County, Iowa, under the leadership of Domine Henry P. Scholte, their religious and political leader. Scholte continued throughout his life to lead their spiritual and secular life.

On April 6, 1854, Scholte and M. H. E. Scholte, his wife, as the proprietors of Pella, conveyed the title to "the South Five-Eighth part of Lot No. one 91 in Block No. Sixteen 16" to Dirk Vander Wilt. The price for this property was \$37.50. (Marion County Recorder's Office:Book F, page 132)

Dirk's name has been spelled in various ways, including "Vander Wilt," "Van der Wilt," and probably others. This nomination has chosen the former spelling, as it appeared in this form towards the end of his life and reflects the family's most mature usage.

### ARCHITECTURE

The Vander Wilt Cottage is architecturally significant because of associations in building technique and form and in vernacular design with domestic architecture as practiced in Holland at the time the Pella settlers emigrated from their homeland.

#### Building Technique and Form

The Vander Wilt Cottage illustrates a series of Dutch building techniques employed by the Pella settlers in the New World and a form of architecture brought with them.

The employment of beam anchors is a diagnostic characteristic of Dutch architecture in Pella. (Page 1987 and 1989a) Similar to tie rods, beam anchors provide support to a building's exterior walls and

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 16

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

help prevent outward bulge. (Unlike tie rods, beam anchors do not extend to the full width of the building.) Beam anchors consist of iron pins, extending horizontally through exterior brick walls and driven into ceiling beams. The iron pins have eyes extending through the exterior wall. These eyes are crimped onto vertical bars. The pins anchor together the ceiling beams and the walls, and the bars provide a purchase on the exterior. The Vander Wilt Cottage possesses a series of four beam anchors on its front facade. These anchors are located between each of its five bays.

The interior floor system of the Vander Wilt Cottage displays a peculiar floor-framing technique. Dutch building practices in the Netherlands and in portions of the Delaware River Valley in the United States employed such a system in the Eighteenth Century (Shank). The Dutch emigrants to Pella brought this diagnostic characteristic of Dutch building practice with them. (Page 1987 and 1989a) This technique employs floor joists to clear-span interior space without intermediary supports and places flooring directly on top without intermediary sheathing.

Economy of space was an architectural desideratum in land-scarce Holland. The construction of steep stairs contributed to the conservation of this precious commodity. The staircase from the first to the second floor of the Vander Wilt Cottage is steep. This angle is achieved through the use of treads measuring only seven inches in depth. (A standard depth today in America is nine inches.) The narrow tread depth uses less space to climb the required height. The replication of this building technique in Pella calls attention to the transmigration of Dutch cultural values to the New World.

The scale of the Vander Wilt Cottage is thought to be based on that of contemporary cottages in Holland. The outside measurements of the cottage--33' x 27'--are closely related to the outside dimensions of cottages found in Holland. The Vander Wilt Cottage's current owner states that his grandmother's historic cottage in Holland possesses similar dimensions. (Wayne D. Stienstra informant interview. Stienstra is a building contractor by trade.). Apparently the scale of the Vander Wilt Cottage relates to that of Dutch cottages as known to Pella settlers before their emigration. Further research and comparison of cottages in Pella and in Holland will corroborate or refute this similarity.

### Design

The design of Vander Wilt Cottage is a vernacular interpretation of Dutch neoclassical styling as applied to domestic architecture and brought to Pella by immigrants from their homeland in Holland. Although declining in fashion at the time in Europe, it remained current in the vernacular tradition, a phenomenon common for stylistic influence in America as well.

The front facade of the cottage illustrates the neoclassical influence most clearly. This facade--the most architecturally developed element of the cottage--exhibits strong symmetry in its five-ranked alignment of bays. This design allows for a centrally-placed entrance flanked on each side by two windows, a clear and forceful expression of the neoclassical ideal of symmetry. The simple horizontal plane of the cottage's side-gable roof further emphasizes the linear quality of the facade. This five-

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 17

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

ranked alignment arrangement of bays is a common design for historic cottages in Holland. (Wayne D. Stienstra)

The front facade features brickworked lintels over its fenestration. These lintels flare outward as they rise from the window openings. Although simple and planar, the resulting pattern is redolent of the classical entablature and its ordering of cornice, frieze, and architrave. (See Continuation Sheet 7-14.) As such, these lintels represent a vernacular interpretation of neoclassical styling. While architectural detailing similar to this became popular in America during the Classical Revival period of the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries, it was not common in Iowa before that time. The Vander Wilt Cottage's decorative lintels must be understood, instead, within the context of a vernacular tradition brought to the Pella community by its Dutch settlers.

A principal architectural detail on the front facade of the Vander Wilt Cottage is the pattern-paned transom window over the entrance. This transom--with mullions in x-patterns flanking a central vertical element--shows the influence of neoclassical styling on its design. The interest in geometric patterns, vertical emphasis, and delicate detailing are hallmarks of the style. Although simple in design, the presence of this transom and its detailing provides a striking decorative note and emphasizes the front door as the focal point of the facade. The transom also accents the strongly horizontal feeling of the facade by introducing a vertical element into it, yet conforms in height with the facade's other four bays, thus asserting the dominance of symmetry over the design.

Shallow Front Facade Setback and Parcelized City Lot

The setback of the Vander Wilt Cottage front facade is exceedingly shallow, and the land on which the cottage is situated is a parcelized city lot. Both these characteristics call attention to the careful husbanding of land, evidenced by the Dutch settlers of Pella in a carry-over of cultural values from their Old World homeland.

The front facade of the Vander Wilt Cottage nearly abuts the public right-of-way. (See Continuation Sheet 7-10.) This is an unusual residential practice in Iowa but common in the Vander Wilt homeland. A visit to any Dutch city or village today confirms this claim. Indeed, many of the first generation cottages and houses in Pella were built without a front facade setback or with a shallow one. A bird's eye view of Pella from 1869 and a 1911 fire insurance map illustrates this pattern. (See Continuation Sheets 7-8 and 7-10.) The map, for example, shows that single-family dwellings along the north side of Washington Street directly abut the street or have very shallow setbacks. In Pella today, few of these dwellings remain extant. Within this context, the Vander Wilt Cottage is a rare, surviving example of this once common pattern of community development in Pella.

The Vander Wilt Cottage is situated on a small parcel of land and calls attention to a careful husbanding of that commodity. When originally sold to Dirk Vander Wilt, this parcel was a fractional portion of a standard-sized Pella city lot. Pella's plat, as laid out, was entered into the public record on June 12, 1848. A city lot within this plat typically measured 50' x 192'. Vander Wilt purchased only five-eighths of a city lot.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 18

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

This careful husbanding of land stems from its precious scarcity in Vander Wilt's homeland. That county's dense population and its lack of dry land engendered a great respect for land, no matter how small. This respect was transferred from the Old to the New World by Pella's settlers, even in the face of the vast and open Iowa prairielands they traveled before reaching their new home.

Vander Wilt's agreement to purchase a smaller than usual parcel of land and the Scholtes' willingness to divide a city lot to sell it suggest a pattern of community development in Pella reflective of perceptions brought from their homeland.

The land the Vander Wilts purchased is located diagonally across the street from the Domine and Maria Scholte House. The proximity of these two dwellings might obtain significance for the social history of Pella. The Scholte House, located at 739 Washington Street, was the center of Pella's social life during its early years, a showplace residence, and the largest house in the city. Certainly the Scholtes recognized that a smaller than standard-sized building lot--such as the one the Vander Wilts negotiated and purchased--predetermined a small dwelling, yet this premier family in the community was willing to live in a neighborhood of cottages. A 1869 bird's eye view of Pella pictures the Scholte House as well as the Vander Wilt and other nearby cottages. Clearly the Scholtes felt no social or economic motivation to control or influence the size of dwellings constructed near their own home.

#### **REPRESENTATION IN OTHER CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEYS**

In 1978, the Central Iowa Regional Association of Governments (CIRALG) conducted an historic resources survey of Pella. This survey did not identify and evaluate the Vander Wilt Cottage.

In 1989, William C. Page of the Dunbar/Jones Partnership surveyed Pella's central business district. This historical survey was restricted to commercial buildings. No residential properties were included.

Several National Register nominations have evaluated individual properties in Pella (see Section 9); but, in spite of its historical significance as a premier ethnic settlement in Iowa, Pella still lacks a comprehensive survey of its historic and architectural resources. Such a survey should include as many identified property types as possible.

In the meantime, Pella's early residential architecture is threatened. With the community's strong economy and pressure for new home construction, modest cottages such as the Vander Wilt property are seen as candidates for demolition and redevelopment.

#### **POTENTIAL FOR HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY**

The site's potential for archaeological significance is, as yet, unevaluated. Historical archaeological investigations may uncover traces of previous construction on the site--such as privies or other nonextant outbuildings, for example, the barn shown on the 1911 Sanborn map.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

## **NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 19

CFN-259-1116

---

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND REGISTRATION**

Many opportunities exist for further research and registering. A few suggestions follow:

- As the history of Pella, Iowa, is further studied and researched, a focus on town building practices might reveal other instances of the parcelization of city lots. This theme calls attention to the ethnic background of the city's original settlers; and, although the Vander Wilt Cottage provides an outstanding illustration, the identification and analysis of additional such examples might further elucidate the building traditions these Dutch emigrants brought to Iowa from their Old World homeland.
- Building on this research, further study might also lead to new interpretations about the design of Pella's original plat. Why, for example, did Domine Scholte lay out the city's original plat in such big lots--100' x 192' in size? By contrast, those originally laid out in nearby Knoxville measured 60' x 120'.
- More research will confirm or contradict the statement that the footprint dimensions of the Vander Wilt Cottage are based on those of contemporary cottages in Holland.
- Further research might also confirm the likelihood that, as time advanced, the facade setbacks of cottages and houses in Pella increased, while the traditional practice of no setback or shallow setback decreased. If true, this suspicion should be interpreted as a sign in the declining influence of ethnic characteristics on the community's development and the increasing adaptation of practices and traditions to the American, and specifically Midwestern, pattern.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 20

CFN-259-1116

---

Dirk and Comelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

#### PRIMARY

- Koch, Augustus  
1869 "Bird's Eye View of Pella, Marion County, Iowa, 1869." Chicago Lithographing Company, Chicago.
- Marion County Recorder's Office  
1854 Deed filed in the public record on November 18m 1854. Book F, p. 132.
- Marion County Recorder's Office  
1876 Warranty deed filed in the public record on January 28, 1876. Book 8, p. 330.
- Marion County Assessor's Office  
N.d. Property Record Card.

#### SECONDARY

##### CIRALG

- 1978 "Historic Resources in Central Iowa; Architecture." Survey report of Central Iowa Regional Association of Local Government, Des Moines, Iowa.
- Donnel, William  
1872 *Pioneers of Marion County, Iowa*; Republican Steam Printing Company; Des Moines, Iowa. (Reprinted 1976 [?])
- McAlester, Virginia and Lee  
1984 *A Field Guide to American Houses*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.
- Page, William C.  
1987 "William Van Asch House-Huibert De Booy Commercial Room." National Register of Historic Places Nomination. On file at the State Historical Society of Iowa.
- Page, William C.  
1989a "The B. H. and J. H. H. Van Spanckeren Row Houses." National Register of Historic Places Nomination. On file at the State Historical Society of Iowa.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 9 Page 21

CFN-259-1116

---

Dirk and Comelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

Page, William C.

1989b "The Upbuilding of Pella's Town Center as a Commercial Node, 1847-1941."  
Prepared for the Community Development Committee of Pella, Iowa, and on file in  
Pella and at the State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa.

Pella Historical Society

1988 *History of Pella, Iowa, 1847-1987*; Curtis Media Corporation.

Shank, Wesley I.

1972 "Eighteenth-Century Architecture of the Upper Delaware River Valley of New  
Jersey and Pennsylvania." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol.  
XXXI, Number 2, May 1972, pp. 137-144.

Shank, Wesley I.

1986 Letter of correspondence to William C. Page. October 1986. Discusses Dutch  
floor construction techniques, other Dutch building characteristics, and some  
nonextant examples in Pella.

*Souvenir History of Pella, Iowa*

1922 Private printed, The Booster Press, Pella, Iowa.

Union Historical Company

1881 *History of Marion County, Iowa*; Union Historical Company; Des Moines.

Wright, John

1915 *History of Marion County, Iowa*; S. J. Clarke Publishing Co.; Chicago. Two  
volumes.

Yerbury, F. R., editor

1924 *Old Domestic Architecture of Holland*. The Architectural Press, London.

## MAPS

Marion County Assessor's Office

N.d. GIS maps of Pella and Knoxville, Iowa.

Marion County Genealogical Society

*Atlases of Marion County, Iowa*; 1875, 1901, 1909, 1917, 1937, 1946; Various  
publishers. Reprinted in 1982 and all bound in one volume.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number        9                      Page    22

CFN-259-1116

---

Dirk and Comelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

**Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Pella, Iowa.**

- 1883, December, p. 1. (Cottage not mapped.)
- 1888, June 1888, pages 1 and 2. (Cottage not mapped.)
- 1906, January, page 2.
- 1911, October, page 2.
- 1931, January, page 3.

United States Geological Survey; Pella Quadrangle; 1976.

**ORAL HISTORY**

Stienstra, Wayne D., with William C. Page, various times during the fall and winter of 2000. Stienstra shared information about the restoration of the Vander Wilt Cottage and observations about his grandmother's house in Holland.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10 Page 23

CFN-259-1116

---

Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The south 50 feet of Lot 1 in Block 16 in the Original Town of Pella, Iowa.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

Contains all land associated originally with the resource.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10 Page 24

CFN-259-1116

Dirk and Cornelia J. Van der Wilk Cottage, Marion County, Iowa.

**LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS**

1. Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage  
925 Broadway  
Pella, IA 50219  
Looking WSW  
William C. Page, Photographer  
March 22, 2001
2. Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage  
925 Broadway  
Pella, IA 50219  
Looking NW  
William C. Page, Photographer  
March 22, 2001
3. Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage  
925 Broadway  
Pella, IA 50219  
Looking NE  
William C. Page, Photographer  
March 22, 2001
4. Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage  
925 Broadway  
Pella, IA 50219  
Looking SW  
William C. Page, Photographer  
March 22, 2001
5. Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage  
925 Broadway  
Pella, IA 50219  
Detail of first floor window looking W  
William C. Page, Photographer  
March 22, 2001
6. Dirk and Cornelia J. Vander Wilt Cottage  
925 Broadway  
Pella, IA 50219  
Detail of second floor window looking NE  
William C. Page, Photographer  
March 22, 2001