

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received SEP 30 1982  
date entered

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

1. Name

historic William Sturgis Residence House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 821 East 17th Street not for publication

city, town Cheyenne vicinity of

state Wyoming code 56 county Laramie code 021

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 type="checkbox"/> n/a in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a being considered	<input checked="" 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 Elton R. and Gretchen L. Lovelett

street & number 821 East 17th Street

city, town Cheyenne vicinity of state Wyoming 82001

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Laramie County Courthouse

street & number 19th and Carey Avenue

city, town Cheyenne state Wyoming 82001

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title City of Cheyenne Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1980 federal state county  local

depository for survey records Wyoming Recreation Commission 1920 Thomas Avenue

city, town Cheyenne state Wyoming 82002

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

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

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

Located in an older Cheyenne residential area, the Sturgis house is a dominant feature in George Rainsford's neighborhood. The Sturgis house represents architect Rainsford's interpretation of the shingle style. The Sturgis house is a 2½ story residence with an L shaped plan; the corner of the L is located on the southwest portion of the property. Originally the structure had a brick exterior on the first story and fishscale shingles on the second and third stories. Years ago stucco was applied in a fan-like manner over the first story bricks. The structure's architectural integrity has remained intact even though a large addition was constructed on the east facade. The addition was probably constructed at the turn of the century.

The house is roofed with Keylock asphalt shingles. Chimneys with brick corbelling accent the roofline. Basically the roof is gabled and various gables and dormers intersect the main north-south gable. The windows are original and most are double-hung. The fenestration on each facade is irregular.

The west facade is the primary facade. The facade on the southwest corner has a slightly advanced section flanked by two segmented archs over double-hung windows. Continuing to the north of the facade, is an entry surrounded by a series of double hung windows. The first story is stucco while the second and third stories are fishscale shingles and clapboard siding. The second floor section consists of rectangular, double hung windows. Two gables frame this facade. On the north end of the west facade is a single story section containing a large picture window with an eyelid dormer above.

The north facade is the same as the others with a stuccoed first story and fish-scale shingles on the second and third stories. On the west corner of the north facade is a bay window with pointed roof. The east corner of the facade has a glassed-in porch addition which curves around to the east facade. In between the bay window and porch is an oriel window with a conical roof and base.

The east facade consists of original construction and a large gable addition. One large gable and two smaller gables intersect the main north-south gable. The inside of the L, which is the center of the east facade, consists of irregular fenestration and three entrances.

On the south facade the main north-south gable is intersected by a large, second story, pent shaped dormer. A one story projection, as a bay window, accents the south facade.

The Sturgis house appears to be a large rambling structure but the stucco and fishscale shingles act as a unifying element.

The interior of the structure has a living hall in lieu of the front and back parlors found in some Victorian dwellings. The heavily paneled living hall has retained its integrity and fishscale shingles ornament the wall above the dado. George Rainsford's designs frequently reflect his interest in angles. The Sturgis house is asymmetrical and complex and is definitely Victorian in orientation.

## 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 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			

<b>Specific dates</b>	1884–present	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	George D. Rainsford
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### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Sturgis home is significant because of its association both with its owner-builder, William Sturgis, and its architect, George D. Rainsford. Sturgis, one of Wyoming's early cattle barons, was deeply involved in the commercial development of Cheyenne. With his brother, Thomas, Sturgis was a founding member of the Wyoming Stock Growers' Association, an organization of great importance in the state's early history. George D. Rainsford, a rancher and architect, helped to introduce a variety of architectural styles to Wyoming. The Sturgis house is an extremely well-preserved example of Wyoming's adaptation of the shingle style, a symbol of the era of the cattle baron on the high plains.

### ADDENDUM

William Sturgis, a New York native and Civil War veteran, arrived in Cheyenne in 1873. With his brother, Thomas, Sturgis operated the Northwestern Cattle Company, as well as the more famous Union Cattle Company, one of the largest ranch operations in Wyoming at that time.

William Sturgis was a man of many interests. In addition to his ranch holdings, he was director of the Stockgrowers' National Bank in Cheyenne, and was also involved in the creation of the Cheyenne Electric Light Company. Both Sturgis brothers helped found the influential Wyoming Stock Growers' Association: Thomas was Secretary of the group, and William was Assistant Secretary for several years, editing the Association's brand book. William was one of the first officers of the famed Cheyenne Club, and also had extensive iron and copper holdings in the state.

When the Union Cattle Company failed in the disastrous winter of 1886–1887, Sturgis sold his home to John Whitaker, another prominent Wyoming rancher, and a founder of the Stock Growers' Association. The home was later owned by Charles Carey, an influential Cheyenne citizen and WSGA officer in the 1920's and 1930's.

George D. Rainsford, another New York native, was educated in Europe, then practiced architecture in New York City with W.A. Bates. He came to Wyoming to enter the range cattle industry; on the Diamond Ranch, near Chugwater, Rainsford bred world-famous Morgan and Clydesdale horses, which commanded top prices on the international market. In Wyoming, Rainsford continued to practice architecture as a hobby. He is perhaps best-remembered for his distinctive Cheyenne houses inspired by the Victorian styles of the day.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Addendum, Item #9

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Cheyenne, North, Wyoming

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 

1	3
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 Zone 

5	1	6	3	2	10
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 Easting 

4	5	5	3	7	9	10
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 Northing

B 

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 Zone 

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 Easting 

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 Northing

C 

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 Zone 

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 Easting 

--	--	--	--	--	--

 Northing

D 

--	--

 Zone 

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 Easting 

--	--	--	--	--	--

 Northing

E 

--	--

 Zone 

--	--	--	--

 Easting 

--	--	--	--	--	--

 Northing

F 

--	--

 Zone 

--	--	--	--

 Easting 

--	--	--	--	--	--

 Northing

G 

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 Zone 

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 Easting 

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 Northing

H 

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 Zone 

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 Easting 

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 Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated area includes only the Sturgis house which is located on lot 1, and the east 16' of lot 2, block 381, Cheyenne Wyoming.

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

state n/a code n/a county n/a code n/a

state n/a code n/a county n/a code n/a

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title William H. Barton, Senior Historian

organization Wyoming State Archives, Museums & Historical Dept. date November, 1980

street & number Barrett Building telephone 307-777-7518

city or town Cheyenne state Wyoming 82002

# 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 Jan H. Wilson

title State Historic Preservation Officer date September 24, 1982

For NPS use only

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

Linda McClelland  
Keeper of the National Register

date 11/8/82

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Statement of Significance Item number 8 Page 2

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Built in 1884, and having survived nearly intact, the Sturgis house is exceptional because of its historical and architectural significance. Today, the Sturgis House remains an excellent example of the shingle style home in Cheyenne, indicative of Wyoming's cattle baron days.

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Continuation sheet

Addendum

Item number 9

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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- Foley, Mary Mix, The American House, (New York: Harper and Row, 1980).
- Hamlin, Talbot, Architecture Through the Ages, (Putnam's Sons, 1940, thirteenth impression, 1953).
- Laramie County Chapter, Wyoming State Historical Society, Early Cheyenne Homes, 1880-1890, (Cheyenne: Pioneer Printing, 1962).
- Robinson, Willard, North West Architecture 1843-1893, (Houston: thesis for Rice Institute, 1960).
- Sturgis, William: letter to Hans Gautschi, Lusk, Wyoming Lions Club, March 2, 1936, photocopy, Wyoming State Archives, Museums, and Historical Department.
- Wilkerson Collection, Mss. 551, Wyoming State Archives, Museums, and Historic Department, n.d.