

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received JUN 6 1986
date entered 7-3-86

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

1. Name

historic Dr. John H. Adair House

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 322 E. Vine Street N/A not for publication

city, town Owatonna N/A vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state Minnesota code 22 county Steele code 147

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 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Calvin and Magdalyn Anderson / James H. and Therese Gass

street & number 506 S. Cedar Street / 23831 Sorda Rd., Valencia, Calif. 91355

city, town Owatonna N/A vicinity of state Minnesota 55060

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Recordors Office

street & number Steele County Court House

city, town Owatonna state Minnesota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Minnesota Statewide Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office—Ft. Snelling History Center

city, town St. Paul state Minnesota 55111

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" 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	date <u> N/A </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Dr. John H. Adair House faces south on a double lot on the north side of E. Vine Street in Owatonna.

The Adair House is two-and-a-half stories with basically American Foursquare massing in Prairie style. It is sheathed in 3" clapboard up to the second story window sills with stucco above. One of its distinguishing features is a very tall hipped roof, stepped back nine times before reaching the apex. The roof is deeply overhung and has wooden eaves. It has asphalt shingles which are not original. Gables are also hipped with the stepped-back feature. On the east side is a hip-roofed porch. The grouped ribbon-type windows are typical of the Prairie style. Exterior trim is white pine painted dark brown. Decorative wood panels stand out from the exterior walls around the front projecting window in the living room on the south side of the front facade. This element is decorated with Prairie-style abstract foliated motifs painted in bright orange and yellow colors. The lot slopes toward the rear of the property and has a heated tuck-under garage in the north west corner of the basement.

The interior of the house is in virtually original condition. Oak woodwork with its original finish is found throughout the house. The living room on the southwest side of the first floor has, as a centerpiece, a round-arched Roman brick fireplace with a raised hearth. On the west wall of the living room is a built-in leaded-glass and oak bookcase with drawers and a counter. The living room and dining room have oak cornerboards and a high wainscot about 2 feet below the ceiling. French doors are leaded glass in geometric shapes between the vestibule and living room and the living room and dining room. The first floor consists of the living room, front hall, dining room, pantry, kitchen, a rear hall and toilet, and living porch on the east side. The kitchen has a maple floor and birch cabinets with glass doors painted white: in virtually original condition. The second floor consists of a master bedroom, bath and walk-in closet with a sleeping porch off the east side of the room, a second bedroom and guest room. Floors here are maple with painted birch woodwork. A second bath has been added in the second floor hallway. The third floor consists of two bedrooms under a high hipped-roofed ceiling. Light fixtures throughout the first floor and second floor bedrooms are original as designed by Elmslie.

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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" 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 1913 **Builder/Architect** Purcell, Feick, and Elmslie

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Dr. John H. Adair House is architecturally significant as an outstanding example of the residential work of Purcell, Feick, and Elmslie in southeastern Minnesota. It is as well-adapted to life today as it was when built in 1913. The house is also significant for its associations with Dr. John H. Adair, one of Owatonna's leading physicians. In the Adair House one can see the work of both of the principal designers--the high-pitched roof and side screen porch of Purcell, and the fine detailing of the elevations, the brightly painted ornament, and the interior detailing of Elmslie. The house displays unusual integrity both on the exterior and interior, except for a second floor bathroom addition. It is in virtually original condition down to the light fixtures designed by Elmslie. The Adair House is one of Purcell, Feick, and Elmslie's last commissions together as a trio, and is the most outstanding Prairie-school design in Steele County. The house is a masterpiece of the tenets of Prairie school buildings which strongly assert their visual form; honestly express structure, material and use; and moderate cost.

The house was designed in 1913 by the firm of Purcell, Feick and Elmslie. William Gray Purcell (1880-1965) worked for Louis Sullivan for a short period in Chicago and established his own firm in Minneapolis and Chicago in 1906. The firm of Purcell and Feick was formed in 1906 and Feick remained until 1913. George Grant Elmslie (1871-1952) joined the firm of Purcell and Feick in 1909 after leaving Adler and Sullivan in Chicago where he had begun in 1889 and where he had become Sullivan's chief draftsman in 1894. Elmslie left Purcell in 1921 to start his own firm and the successful collaboration of the two partners ceased.

Dr. John H. Adair was one of Owatonna's leading physicians and was known for his civic-mindedness. He was one of the first children born to settlers in Steele County in 1858 and attended Pillsbury Academy and Carlton College in Northfield, Minnesota, where he graduated in 1880. He graduated from Rush Medical College in 1883 and began his practice in Winnebago, Minnesota, returning to Owatonna in 1884. Dr. Adair was Steele County coroner for many years, was a prominent booster of civic endeavors, and an excellent surgeon. No record has survived of how or why he hired the firm of Purcell, Feick and Elmslie to design his home in 1913, but he may have been influenced by Louis Sullivan's design for the National Farmers Bank in Owatonna in 1907-08.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet # 1

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Owatonna, Minn. (1962)

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>5</u>	<u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>2</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>8</u> <u>1</u> <u>2</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>
	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

Block 2, Lots 3 and 4, and West half of Lot 5, E. Abbott Addition, City of Owatonna

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

state	N/A	code	N/A	county	N/A	code	N/A
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state	N/A	code	N/A	county	N/A	code	N/A
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dr. Norene A. Roberts

organization Historical Research, Inc. date August 10, 1985

street & number 5535 Richmond Curve telephone (612) 929-2921

city or town Minneapolis state Minnesota 55410

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 Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 6/3/86

For NPS use only

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

J. Allison Byer
Keeper of the National Register

Registered in the
National Register

date 7-2-86

Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

**United States Department of the Interior
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Dr. John H. Adair House, Owatonna, Steele County, Minnesota

Continuation sheet

Resource Count

Item number

8

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received
date entered 7-

The Dr. John H. Adair House Nomination

contains 1 contributing building.

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Dr. John H. Adair House, Owatonna, Steele County, Minnesota
Major Biblio. References # 9

Continuation sheet

Item number

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Adair House file, Job # 218. Purcell and Elmslie Papers. Northwest
Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota.

Curtiss-Wedge, Franklyn, ed. History of Rice and Steele Counties, Minnesota.
Vol. 2. (Chicago: H. C. Cooper, Jr. & Co., 1910), p. 1029.

Gebhard, David and Tom Martinson. A Guide to the Architecture of Minnesota.
(Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977) p. 303.

The Prairie School Review. First Quarter, 1965. Vol II, No. I., p. 16.