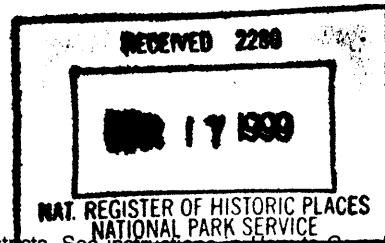


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



453

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" in the appropriate box 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 Stubbins, George E., House

other names/site number Reibsamens-Weiland, House

2. Location

street & number 248 1st Ave SW N/A  not for publication

city or town Britt N/A  vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Hancock code 081 zip code 50423

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.)

Patricia O'Leary King DSHPO 3-11-99  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of 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 commenting 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:)

Robert B. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

4/15/99  
Date of Action

Stubbins, George E., House  
Name of Property

Hancock-Iowa  
County and State

**5. Classification**

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

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

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

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	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)

Domestic/single dwelling

**7. Description**

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

Late Victorian/Queen Anne

Late Victorian/Stick/Eastlake

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Wood-weather board

roof Asphalt

other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes 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" in all the boxes 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

1886

Significant Dates

1886

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical 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):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Stubbins, George E., House  
Name of Property

Hancock-Iowa  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property less than one

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 434640 4771420  
Zone Easting Northing  
2         

3           
Zone Easting Northing  
4         

See continuation sheet

**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 James E. Mallen, Executive Director

organization Hancock County Development Group date 11-13-98

street & number 327 West 8th Street telephone 515-923-2028

city or town Garner state Iowa zip code 50438

**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 David and Susan Weiland

street & number 248 1st Avenue SW telephone 515-843-3647

city or town Britt state Iowa zip code 50423

**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 estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

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**Narrative Description**

The George E. Stubbins House is a 2 story, frame, Late Victorian, Queen Anne/Stick/Eastlake style with Gothic influences. The structure has an irregular hip roof. There is an oversized two story canted bay projecting on a 45 degree axis with a smaller rectangular two story bay projecting from it. The front porch is characterized by sawed-work detailing and is a fine example at the Eastlake style. The exterior siding is original cedar, the roof is asphalt and the foundation is stone.

Entering the house from the front entry is a small vestibule leading to a large central foyer, with a unique sawn-wood, key-hole balustrade of the open bridal staircase. A small powder room is located off the central foyer. At the entrance of the large formal parlor are 10 foot floor to ceiling hardwood pocket doors, as are all the doors on the first level. There is also a small parlor adjacent to the large parlor, which has rare bubble, bulls-eye stained glass windows.

The formal dining room features 5 foot wood wainscoting throughout and a fireplace structure hidden beneath the original wainscoting. A small hallway leads to the large kitchen, with a door to a back staircase, leading to what was formerly the servants quarters.

The second level contains 5 large bedrooms that encircle a large master bathroom. All rooms in the dwelling have walls that are built on angles. All rooms on the first level of the dwelling have hardwood floors.

There have been no major alternations to the interior of the dwelling. New cupboards were installed in the kitchen in 1950; otherwise, the interior remains original. The tower on the southeast corner of the dwelling was removed sometime in the 1940's and part of the wrap around porch was removed in the late 1930's.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2Stubbins, George E., House  
Hancock County, Iowa

## Statement of Significance

The George E. Stubbins House, a landmark home in Britt, Iowa, is a superb representation of late 19th century transitional architecture. David Gebhard and Gerald Mansheim in their book *Buildings of Iowa* (Society of Architectural Historians, 1993) characterize the home and the sawed work detailing on its front entrance porch as "one of the finest examples of the Eastlake style within the state." Strong Gothic influences, i.e. the corner oriel, original square tower with high pitched turret (to be reconstructed); gabled and bracketed small roof over the first-story bay; and decorated vergeboards, are combined with the basic hip roof, cross-gable construction of the Queen Anne mode to fully express the Stick style. Close examination reveals the intricate details of the extensive Eastlake ornamentation on all exterior surfaces. Few examples of this style, preserved so completely, survive in Iowa today. William Plymat Jr. in his book (*Victorian Architecture of Iowa*) (copyright 1997, page 77) suggests that the complexity of the design probably came from a pattern book, but may have been assembled by a local builder using standardized millwork products.

The home was originally built for George E. Stubbins, an early Britt entrepreneur who purchased land in 1878 and subsequently platted four additions to the then infant community. Stubbins served as the city's first mayor from 1891-1894. He built its first "brick block" circa 1884 which housed the community's first bank, opera house, and Stubbins' own mercantile. A portion of that building, although greatly altered, still stands on Main Avenue. Interestingly, all of Stubbins' property, including the family business and home, were owned in the name of his mother Sarah Stubbins of whom available histories reveal little. She is buried in the Britt cemetery. Typical of early settlers who left their substantial marks in many Iowa communities, Stubbins, according to newspaper accounts from 1896, suffered financial setbacks and moved on westward. Deeds to Britt properties executed by the family following Sarah's death in 1908 show George and his wife then living in Granville, North Dakota.

The Stubbins family home, prominently situated in the center of one block in Stubbins (1st) Addition to Britt, was built in 1886 to showcase the family's affluence. While widely attributed as a design of local builder John Victoria, information provided by Victoria's daughter, who survives, indicated the home's origins preceded his arrival in Britt by nearly ten years. The design of the home was more likely derived from a pattern book which to date has not been identified. The fact that the home's distinct style and ornamentation is not replicated on other area homes of the same period is consistent with a theory that it may actually have been a complete "mail order" home. Interior details which further support this idea include the unique sawn-wood, key-hole balustrade of the open bridal staircase in the large central foyer/ the rare bubble, bulls-eye stained glass windows in the oriel; full-length plate glass windows throughout the home; and the inclusion of a complete, though never used, fireplace structure hidden behind original wainscoting in the dining room. Research to identify the designer and builder continues.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Stubbins, George E., House  
Hancock County, Iowa

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The community of Britt is home to the National Hobo Convention, a celebration that has attracted thousands of visitors annually since 1933. Contemporaries of George E. Stubbins, the original owner of the Stubbins House, organized the first "convention" in 1900. E. N. Bailey, noted journalist and editor of the Britt News Tribune (1894-1909) was one of the leading promoters of the convention. He was also the Great-Great Grandfather of present co-owner Susan Weiland. Along with such events as Pella's Tulip Festival and the Iowa State Fair, the Hobo Convention ranks as one of the Iowa's best known and nationally recognized tourist attractions. Each year an increasing number of "convention" visitors are attracted by the unique architecture of the Stubbins House and want to learn more about it and its significance both to the history of the community and Iowa's History. Many Hobo Day festivities are held in City Park directly across the street from the Stubbins House.

The importance of the George E. Stubbins House to students of Iowa's historical architecture is further emphasized as it stands today in sharp contrast to its next door neighbor--an excellent rendition of the Iowa Prairie House style designed in 1918 by J.H. Jeffers, one of several local architects who contributed to the proliferation of homes of that style in nearby Mason City.

Susan Weiland, present co-owner and applicant, is a fourth generation member of the Reibsamen family that has continuously owned and resided in the home since it was purchased by Mary Reibsamen in 1922. The applicant's father, Robert Reibsamen, whose parents lived in the home from 1936 to 1990, is the primary source of information guiding the restoration and reconstruction of the relatively few original structural details obscured by alteration over the years.

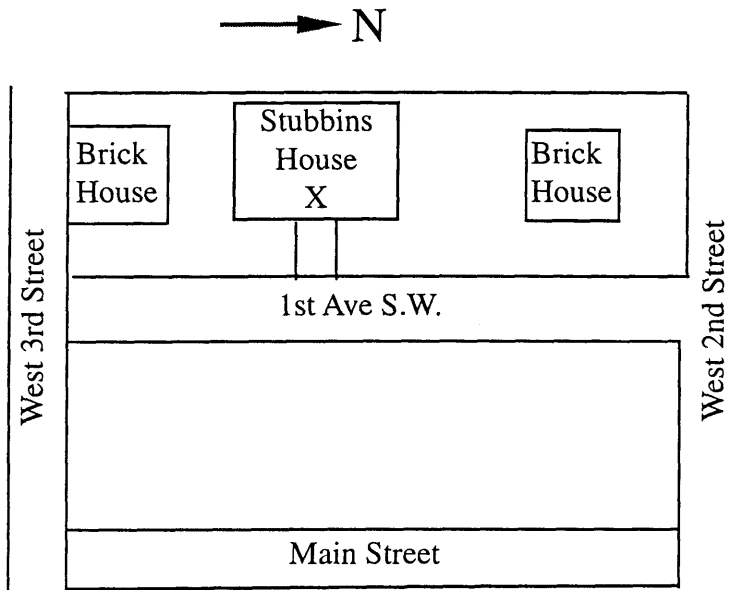
When the Stubbins House went on the auction block in 1990, David and Susan Weiland's mission, born out of respect for the loving care extended to the home by Susan's grandmother and great-grandmother, was to purchase the home and save it from conversion to low-rent apartments, a common fate of other historically-significant Victorian dwellings in rural Iowa. In addition to acquiring a home for themselves, through research the Weilands soon realized they had become caretakers of a historical resource, the preservation of which would enhance the interpretation of Iowa's architectural heritage. They assumed this responsibility by undertaking the project of completely restoring and preserving the home. Having focused their attention first on ensuring the preservation of the distinctive, character-defining exterior of the home, they are now working on the interior.

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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Stubbins, George E., House  
Hancock County, Iowa



Source-Applicant  
Date: November 16, 1998



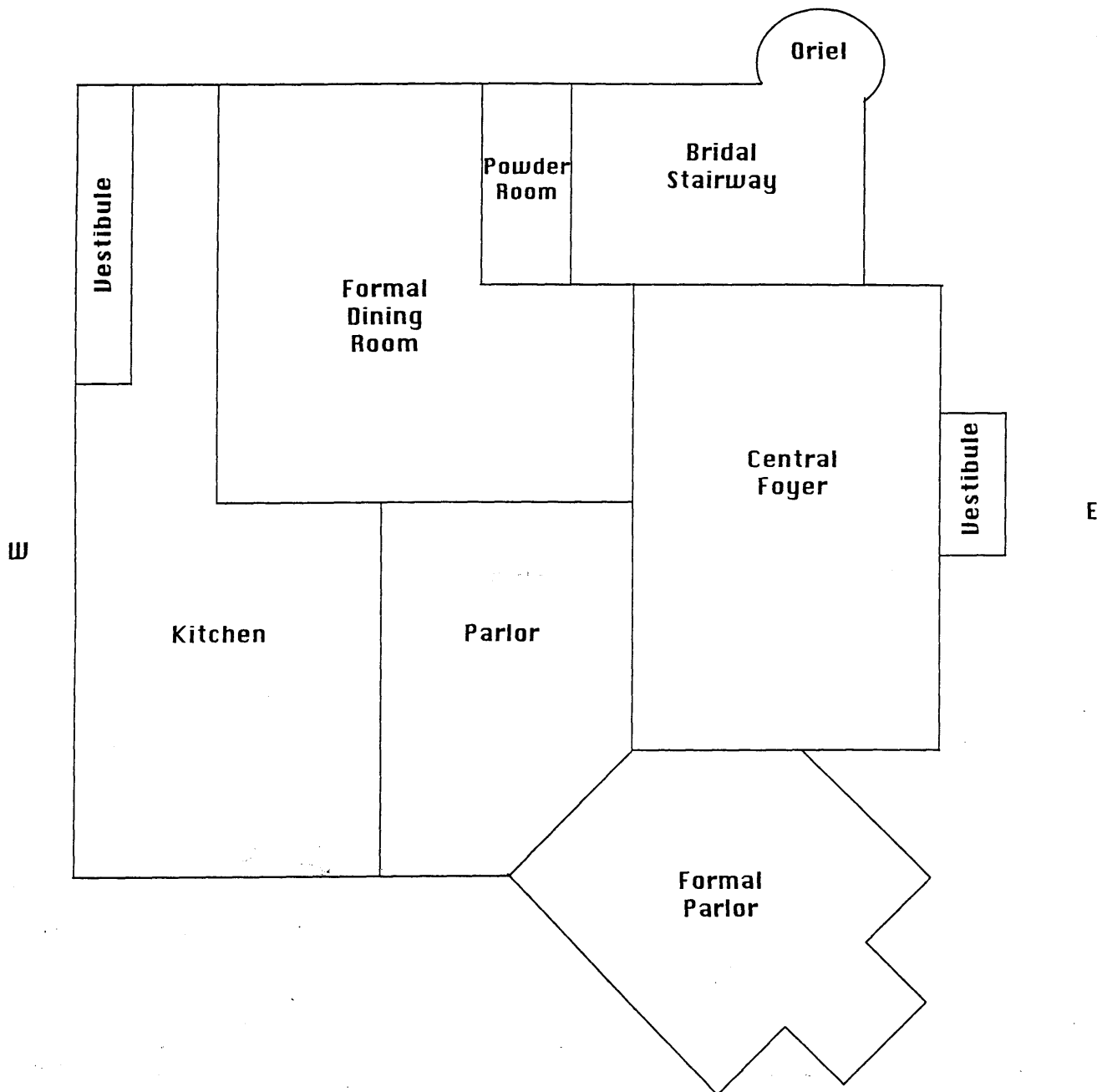
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Stubbins, George E., House  
Hancock County, Iowa

N 1st Floor



Source-Applicant  
Date-November 16, 1998

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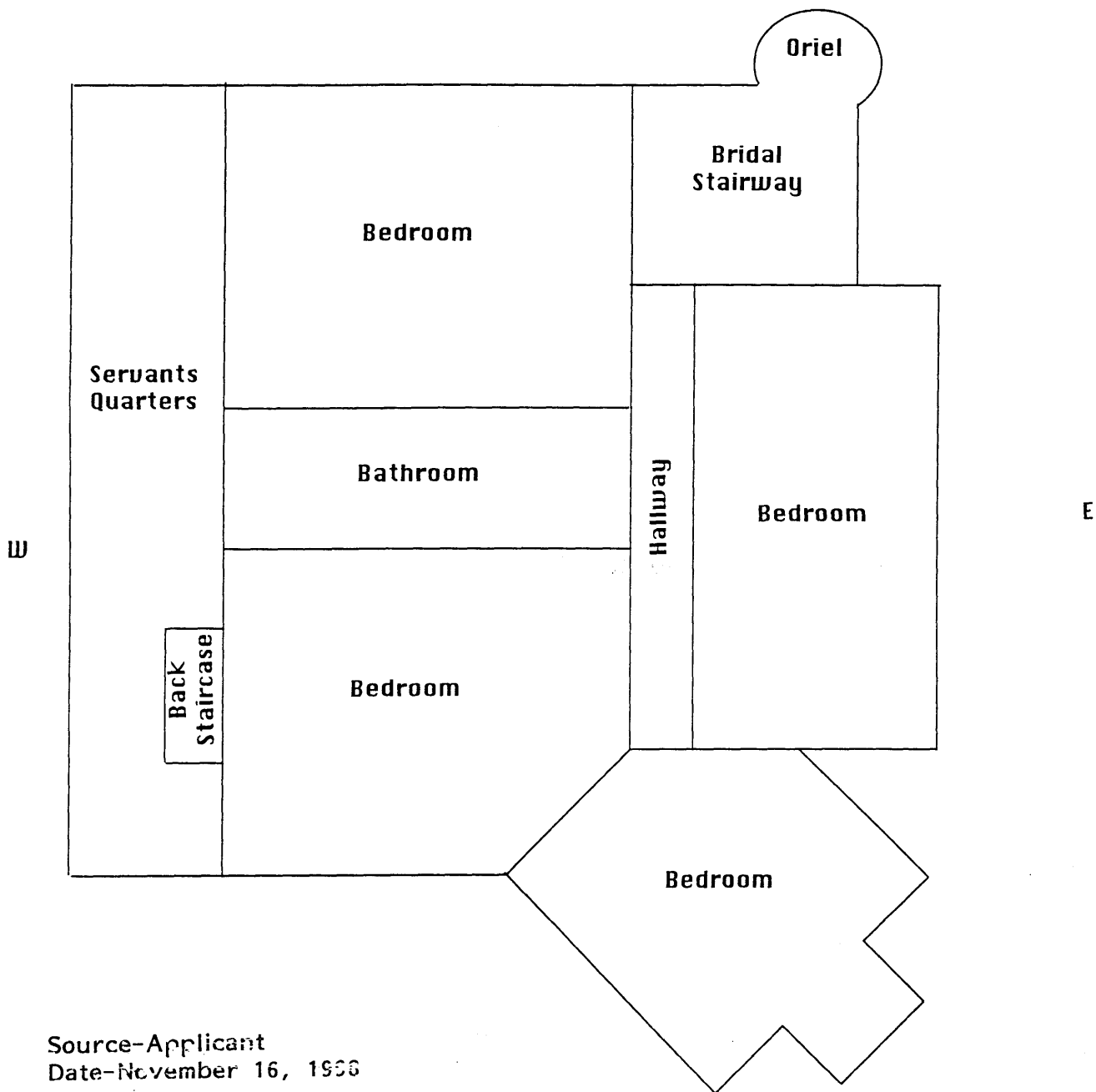
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

Stubbins, George E., House  
Hancock County, Iowa

N 2nd Floor



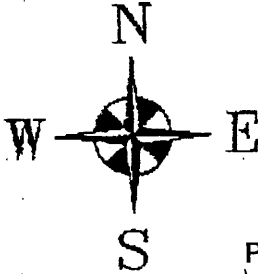
Source-Applicant  
Date-November 16, 1933

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

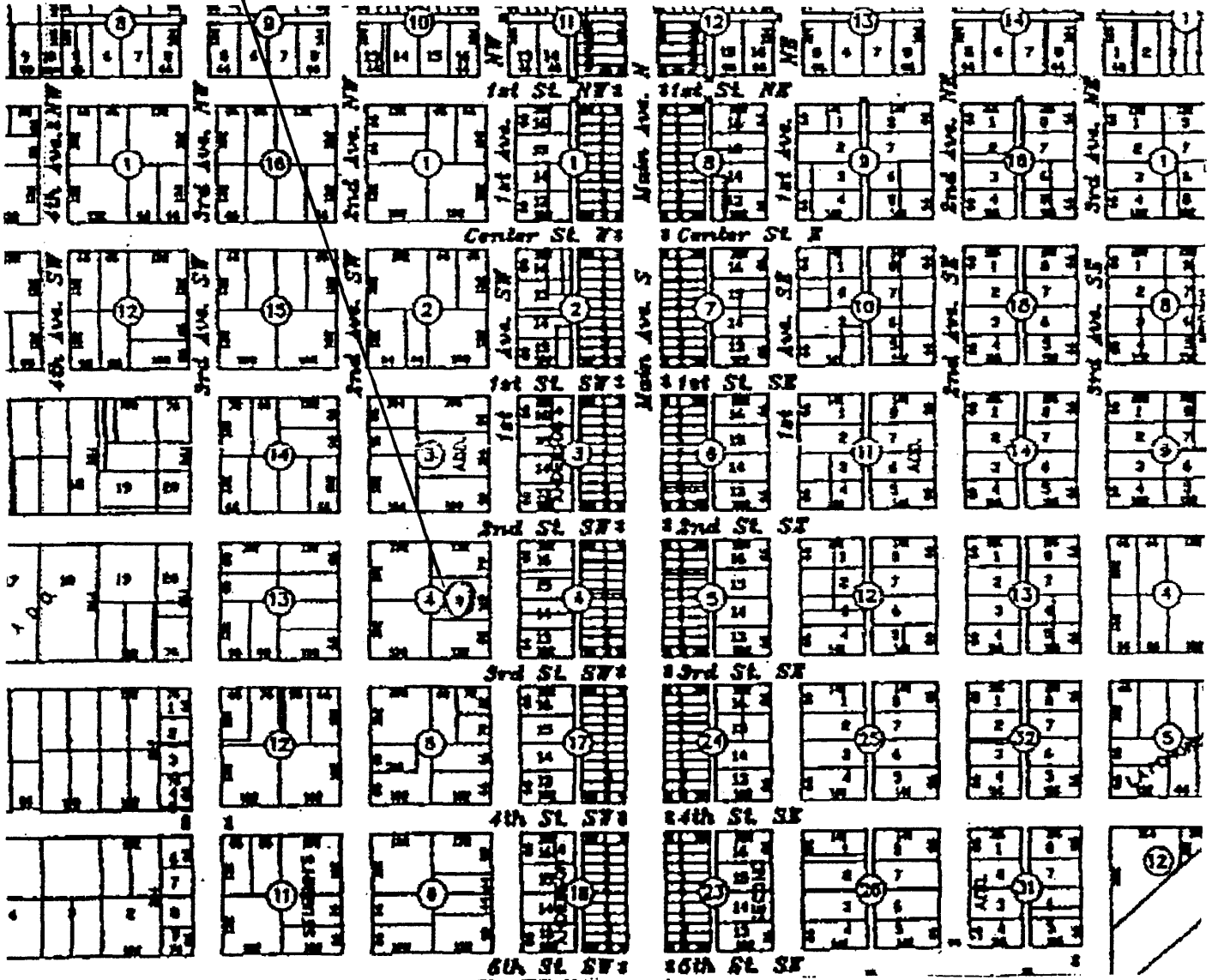
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Stubbins, George E., House  
Hancock County, Iowa



Property Location

Source-City of Britt  
Date: November 16, 1998



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Stubbins, George E., House  
Hancock County, Iowa

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### Bibliographical References

March, 1995  
Hancock County Recorders Office  
855 State Street  
Garner, Iowa 50438

Oral interviews with 96 year old Pearl Redden who resides in the Westview Care Center, Britt, Iowa, is the daughter of 1896 local builder, John Victoria. Pearl Redden was a close friend of former owners, Forrest and Fern Reibsamen.

Britt News Tribune Newspapers, dating from 1889 to the 1920's. The grandfather of Robert Reibsamen, son of former owners, Forrest and Fern Reibsamen, was the owner and editor of the Britt News Tribune and the old papers were found in the attic of his home.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 9

Stubbins, George E., House  
Hancock County, Iowa

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### Verbal Boundary Description

The North 47 feet of the Southeast quarter and the South 53 feet of the Northeast quarter of Block (4), Stubbins Addition to the Town of Britt, Iowa.

### Verbal Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the George E. Stubbins House.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Stubbins, George E., House  
Hancock County, Iowa

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Photo taken sometime in the 1930's before tower and wrap around porch was removed.

Source—Applicants' Great Grandmother, Mary Reibsamen, previous owner, 1930's

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Stubbins, George E., House  
Hancock County, Iowa



Source-Mason City Globe Gazette  
Date-1997 photo

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   Add'l   Page   12  

Stubbins, George E., House  
Hancock County, Iowa

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Source-Applicant  
Date-1998 photo