

1861

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name John Christian & Bertha Landrock Reichert House
other names/site number Wingert-Gelm-Victorian House

2. Location

street & number 508 East Fourth Street not for publication
city, towns/site number Tipton vicinity
state Iowa code IA county Cedar code 031 zip code 52772

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

David [Signature] 11/1/91
Signature of certifying official 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.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. Entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet. 12/19/91
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed for the National Register.
 other, (explain:)
[Signature] Signature of the Keeper
 Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

Current Functions

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE/Restaurant

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Materials

Late Victorian

foundation stone/limestone

Stick/Eastlake

walls wood/weatherboard

Eastern Stick/High Victorian Eastlake

roof slate & metal

other wood/shingle

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Prominently sited on an original three acre "lot" in the county seat town of Tipton, the John Christian and Bertha Landrock Reichert house is a 2-1/2 story wood frame edifice whose walls rest on stone foundations and are capped with a steeply pitched cross gabled roof that features a large, squat, rectangular tower. The house consists of a 2-1/2 story essentially rectangular-shaped main block and an attached 1-1/2 story ell. Constructed in 1883, the house was designed by New York City architect S. B. Reed in what has come to be called the Stick Style. Stick Style features include the steeply pitched cross gable roof, gables with decorative truss work, the square tower, wooden wall cladding that is interrupted by patterns of horizontal, vertical or diagonal boards which are raised from the wall surface for emphasis, and a porch which features diagonal or curved support braces. Exterior alteration to this house appears minimal, and it has a very high degree of its original interior plan, materials, and finishes intact as well.

The native Americans ceded this site, an infinitesimal particle of the Black Hawk Purchase, to the U.S. government in 1832. The embryonic county seat town of Tipton was only into its second year, when Charles M. Jennings, on June 19, 1841 purchased the 39.99 acres, or the NW 1/4 of NE 1/4 Section 6, Twsp. 80, Range 3 of 5th P.M. as original entry land at \$1.25 per acre. Jennings shortly abandoned the tract to the county, who found a willing buyer in Will H. Tuthill on June 7, 1844. Shortly after 1880 the tract was dismembered. T. C. Prescott purchased a portion, platted it into two blocks, designated them as Prescott's Addition to Tipton.

On February 15, 1882, Reichert consummated a transaction with Prescott for Lot Four Block Two. This lot was a three acre rectangle running 308'x424'. The inducement was \$800.00 for a site already enhanced by many large oaks.

Reichert engaged S. B. Reed of New York, a capable architect who incorporated in the plans the guidance for a structure combining comfort, permanence and ensconced in beauty. The basis for choosing an eastern architect is unknown. A search in 1990 for building documents was a failure.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
<u>Architecture</u>	<u>1883</u>	<u>1883</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Cultural Affiliation
<u>N/A</u>

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
<u>Reed, S. B.</u>
<u>Reichert, John</u>
<u>See Sub-Contractors in Text</u>

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The John Christian and Bertha Landrock Reichert house is locally significant under National Register criterion C as Tipton's best example of a Stick Style residence. Constructed in 1883 and designed by New York City architect S. B. Reed, the Reichert House is virtually a text book example of what is considered to be a relatively rare style in Iowa and the Midwest. Because of it's architect, this house exhibits the squat tower with steeply pitched roof and porch with diagonal or curving support braces more often encountered on East Coast examples.

The John Christian and Bertha Landrock Reichert House is the most prestigious residence in Tipton. A classic example of late Victorian stick style architecture, it is unquestionably the "Queen" on "The Boulevard" as East Fourth Street is historically known. Reposing on a spacious level site at 508, it reigns with dignity, exuding a wave of its remembrances to those who choose to assimilate its charm and style.

The stick style was constrained to a narrow time range between High Victorian Gothic and more sedate and numerous Queen Anne Style. The Christian Reichert House locally demonstrates the rapidity of the east to west movement of the stick style when Tipton today exhibits only one example of the classic Stick Style. There are nearly a dozen of the succeeding Queen Anne Style extant in Tipton. One might characterize the Queen Anne Style as being more rounded and softer; perchance that could have been a factor in their popularity in Tipton.

The Christian Reichert house has most of the variations of cladding peculiar to its style. Firstly, the building has the usual corner boards applied vertically and extending downward from the soffit and joining with the water board at the bottom of the cladding. A drip cap moulding resides on top of this water board and receives the bottom course of cladding.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Tipton Advertiser issue October 18, 1883, pg. 3, column 4
Tipton Public Library
- Stout, Donald & Dorothy - Cedar Land. A History of Living 1836-1980
Volume One, Tipton, Cedar Land Librarie, 1981, pg. 101, 228, 229
(Available at the University of Iowa Library, Special Collections, and
State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City
- Stout, Donald & Clark, Stuart - A City Called Tipton 1840-1990 - Tipton
C & S Enterprises, 1990 - pg. 15, 16, 19, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35,
37, 41, 44, 45, 48, 51, 64, and 364
- Aurner, C. Ray (editor) - A Topical History of Cedar County, Iowa Vol 2
Chicago, The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co. 1910 Pg. 267 - biography
- The History of Cedar County, Iowa - Chicago, Western Historical Co. 1878
pg. 472, 476, 479, 605

See continuation sheet

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
- Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of property less than one

UTM References

A

Zone Easting Northing

C

B

Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

A part of lot 4, Block 2, Prescotts Addn. to Tipton, Ia. Starting at a point 110' east of SW corner of said lot and continuing eastward 190', then north 150', then west 190', then south 150' to point of beginning.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries encompass the area around the house and garage.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Donald F. Stout, Research Historian

organization Cedar Land Librarie Date: October 18, 1991

street & number 607 Orange Street telephone 319-886-2740

city or town Tipton state Iowa zip code 52772

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Examination of the Building

In an unexplained manner we are standing on the lawn on a sunny afternoon in October, 1883. Our hosts are Mr. and Mrs. John Reichert who would be moving tomorrow into their new home. This we observed...

From the outside course of the 2' thick foundation comprised of dressed stone - to the peaks of the various roofs clad in both metal and slate tile the image is majestic. The overall appearance was effected by the tower, broken walls, gables and extending corners. The relatively small windows, complimented by the inclusion of colored glass in odd sizes and shapes, stimulated the conception of height.

For the exterior color scheme the painter dramatically used olive and Indian Red trim, while characterizing some of the smaller work with a deeper shade of olive delineated with black.

The basic structure is about 57'x42', plus the extensions gained by verandas and bay windows. The extensive use of the verandas provides a welcoming spaciousness to the visitor, as well as convenience to the owner. On the southwest corner of the residence there is an inclement weather debarking area, sheltered by a pagoda shaped roof 12' square that projects over the drive, giving access to the home via the west veranda.

A cellar extends under the entire building. This area was not completely delegated, permitting future allotment of space. The massive Boynton furnace, capable of heating the entire building, was installed by mid-October, 1883 when the moving in process was under way. Of special note was the base supporting the enormous chimneys, one of which rises 70'. This base also contained pits to receive the ashes from the open grates in the rooms above. In the rear, to the north, was a laundry room 16'x 21' complete with cement floor and drain to the main sewer, as well as all other pertinent conveniences contemporary to 1883.

Let us begin the grade level grand tour from the south veranda. The front doors open to a 3'x 8' vestibule, then interior doors provide access to the main hall 21'x 8'. The exterior front doors each have a single etched glass panel 14"x 61" with dove and flowers. The interior pair of doors providing access to the hall were each 28" wide and 94" tall. This pair had glass panels etched with flowers or limbs, the panels being 17"x 53".

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The first level main hall, and a duplicate on the second floor, received the same finishing procedure. Both were professionally stained to imitate hard woods - walnut and ash. Both halls were joined by a stair with low risers, crowned with grand walnut newell posts, a walnut railing supported by bracketed oak balusters. The hall interior was finished in a style known as Eastlake. This hall, and all first floor rooms had the ceilings relieved by a double cornice plus ornate center pieces.

Opposing folding doors provide access from the first floor hall to a reposeful sitting room 14'x14' on the west. On the east the parlor is 15'x 20'. This room can be expanded by activating the sliding doors on the north wall which reveal a library roughly 12-1/2'x 15' that incorporates a large east bay window. Returning to the west side of the first floor we find north of the sitting room a formal dining room, 14'x 17'. All rooms mentioned on this level, as well as all the second floor ones, are painted to match the carpeting, resulting in a green room, tan room, etc., the colors tastefully selected.

The kitchen is accessible from the dining room via a pantry 6-1/2'x 8'; also from the main hall by proceeding through a second hall 8'x 12' which has a second function of landing a back stairway. Size of kitchen is 14'x 15'.

On the second level there are four munificent bed chambers: 13-1/2'x 15-1/2'; 14-1/4'x 14-1/4'; 14-1/2'x 15-1/4'; 14'x 14'. Each bedchamber is supplemented by a generous closet. Also on the second floor the master bath, 8'x 7', contained both hot and cold water faucets for the lavatory and tub, a water closet and the latest designs in the other required appurtenances. The second floor back hall, 3-1/2'x 8' leads to the room over the kitchen measuring 13'x 15'. The second floor main hall is 8'x 24' to the newell post. The third level main hall is 8'x 24'. There were two finished rooms. One 14'x 14' in the southwest corner of the building was used as a sewing room. The second on the east side of the hall, although plastered, was not completely decorated, initially to be used as a play room. This room was 15'x 33'. In addition on the west side of the hall was a small unfinished room that contained a huge water tank with a capacity of 17 barrels. This reservoir was filled automatically from the tower roof with water which was then diverted for usage in the lower levels. The entire structure was crowned with a room 14'x 14' in the tower displaying an unusual proportion of glass area. The completed residence and grounds cost some \$9000.00

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The building contract and the component parts of fulfillment-- Originally John T. Werling received the contract and started construction. Werling was a major contractor in Tipton at this time. For a reason not researched, he forfeited the contract at an early stage. This type of event is not as rare as those people not in the trade might imagine. No serious problems surfaced from Werlings action, for Reichert had been an experienced carpenter and contractor for some 15 years prior to entering the hardware and farm implement business in 1869. So Reichert readily assumed the role once more as a general contractor and incorporated the work of these sub-contractors: A. B. Olsen laid up the foundation. Plastering was by Ed Godden with the exception of the special plaster centers in the ceilings which came from Kellett of Chicago. John Earle was the stairbuilder. Will Van Pelt fabricated the casings. Findley, of the firm of Cowrey, Findley & Co. of Stanwood, was the craftsman who put it all together inside and in addition the wood finishing proper. The Cowrey, Findley & Co. firm was one of the major contractors of the county during this period. They were constructing the magnificent Buchanan residence south of Mechanicsville at the same time as the Reichert endeavor. Ed Ingman painted the exterior. Collins and Maitland applied the interior colors. George Kendall & co. of Clinton, Iowa, handled all the plumbing. The complicated roof was put on by Hilwell of Davenport, Iowa.

Current Observations

The passage of time (107 years) creates changes and this house was not totally isolated in such passage. All involved should be elated that they have been minimal, and in the main relegated to some minor structural changes, name designation of rooms, colors and other decorating alterations. The first floor sitting room is now the small dining room. The gray Vermont marble fireplace remains an object of BEAUTY. The ceiling supports the same detailed plaster ornament in the center and the perimeter is surrounded by a heavy varnished cove, walls are papered. Now the original parlor on the right is the living room. Plaster ceiling ornament and an impressive stencilled pattern remain as does the wall cove about 7' above the floor. The formal dining room remains as such with its colored glass, heavy cove at the ceiling.

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No dramatic changes noted in the vestibule, second hall, pantry and kitchen with its simulated old fashioned range on the north wall. In the future a closet in the second hall will contain a half bath. Second floor is original except the stairwell reaching to the third floor, in an endeavor to conserve heat, was enclosed and bulkheaded at the third floor. This occurred during the period 1928-1969 when Ruby Wingert, daughter of Frank Wingert, was in possession of the house. This second to third floor well will be opened up in 1991 and restored to original glory.

The usual bathroom at the head of the stairs on the second floor had its entrance off the second floor back hall. Long ago, probably about the turn of the century, this bath entrance was changed to the landing at the top of the second floor. The door casing, although superior in elegance to the contemporary (1991), lacks the elaborateness of the 1883 casing. Nor is the hand graining of the door panels as accomplished as the original artist, Findley.

On the third floor the huge east room has been divided into two guest rooms. The northeast one 14-1/2'x16'; the southeast 14-1/2'x14-1/2'. A small hall was incorporated to provide access to them. The water tank room, along with some other space, has been converted into a bathroom 14-1/2'x17' featuring a claw foot cast iron free standing bathtub in the center of the room. In December, 1990 the structure had a white base coat on the exterior in preparation for a color coat to be applied in 1991. continuing the exterior observation it is noted that the roof on the east bay window now has been shingled with cedar shingles in lieu of the deteriorated slate ones.

A photo has been found, vintage of 1898 (?). It shows a little decorative railing above the south veranda roof. This is absent now but will be replaced in 1991. The cladding is unchanged except for replacement of deteriorated in a few small areas. Similar material was used. Fenestration of windows and other openings appear original. The porches have had similar replacement of deteriorated parts. there is a garage on the northwest corner of lot which is non-contributing.

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There are a number of extant houses within the broad category of Victorian style in Tipton. Although there are several outstanding Queen Anne styles and other residences with diminished purity in style, only one striking and extant specimen of the stick style can be named and that is the Reichert house. Posing the question, why did Reichert's house fail to stimulate the construction of similar edifices in Tipton? Potential reasons include that only a few could afford such a private residence. Of the ones with the financial means perchance they preferred the Queen Anne style with softer contours rather than the sharp angular trademarks of the stick style. There was a Davenport architectural firm advertising in the local paper during this period. This firm would be known locally and perchance the firm was not an aficionado of the stick style and failed to extol its virtues or features. We are wallowing in a morass of assumptions now.

With foundation to rafter posts and full length studding this is the then familiar type of balloon framing. A survey of the roof framing reveals that the rafters with the greater rise per run are 2"x6", full and undressed placed 24" o/c. Those roofs with a lesser rise are supported by 2"x8" full dimension 24" o/c. Roof sheeting is 1x6 and 1x8 shiplap undressed except for rabbet. The different pitched roofs join at purlins. Floor joists are 2"x10" full at 16" o/c.

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The people who actually build this style of building further define cladding and employ the term bevel siding. The stick style is further identified by horizontal bands at various heights on different elevations of the exterior walls. The walls at the top in some areas display a vertical picket type pattern of cladding. This applicant has the pierced rounded end pattern as well as an example of the traditional sharp 45 degree angle tip. Displayed on the west and south elevations there is a pattern of decorative boards incorporating curved, straight and diagonal lines. Some elevations provide a horizontal band at both top and bottom of the windows.

The gable end eaves as well as the horizontal eaves are supported by brackets which in the horizontal are of the scrolled design. the gable brackets are typical knee brace style, pleasingly decorated. Fish scales were noted in the gable of the southeast projection. The gable bargeboards are straight but display simple fluting across the face at designed spacing. The gable peaks are enhanced by fluted king posts displaying pendants. The posts nestle between a pair of spoked wooden wheels.

John C. Reichert

The original owner of the Reichert House was born March 27, 1835 at Summerhausen, Bavaria, Germany. John Christian reached Ohio in August of 1837. Later he migrated to Tipton arriving there on April 10, 1855. His father was a cabinet maker and taught his sons the craft. John had accumulated seven years of carpenter experience prior to his arrival in Tipton. John's brother, John Henry, arrived a year later and the brothers worked together at the carpentry trade. In a logical manner they soon expanded into a contracting business and constructed numerous houses and other structures within and surrounding Tipton. During this same time frame they were operating a lumber yard. This contracting and retail business continued until 1869. They then refocused their time and energies to a hardware and farm implement enterprise doing business as Reichert Bros. Eventually in February 1891 John christian sold out to Hecht & Diel.

Through the years, Reichert had built a huge customer base for the hardware and implement business. With such an achievement it is evident that he could provide the financial support for such a magnificent house.

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Mr. Reichert was wed to Miss Bertha Landrock on February 5, 1861. He was a director of the Cedar County State Bank. Reichert held memberships in several popular fraternal organizations of that period, a man of competence and substance. This depicts the type of man who built such treasures as this candidate for the National Register.

Mr. & Mrs. J. C. Reichert retained their prestigious home less than 14 years. On August 10, 1897 the property was conveyed to Mr and Mrs. Frank D. Wingert for the consideration of \$5500 which included a tract 300' square in the west part of Lot 4 Block 2. It is unknown why such a low price only slightly more than half of the original cost for these were "booming" times for real estate in Tipton. After the property was sold the Reicherts moved to Cedar Rapids where John died on July 17, 1928, aged 93 years. His wife Bertha preceded him on May 4, 1928, aged 85 years.

Frank Wingert was a banker, extensive landowner and an enterprising farmer. He lived in the residence at 508 East Fourth Street until his death August 11, 1923. Ownership passed to a daughter, Ruby, which continued until her death November 12, 1969. By now the lot had diminished in size and began 110' east of the west boundary of Lot 4, running east for 190' on Fourth, then north 300', west 190' on Fifth, then south 300' to the beginning.

Ben Otten on March 21, 1970 bought the property from Ralph Wingert for \$24000.00. Otten offered the property at auction in September 1979. Christine Scott was the high bidder at \$40,500. Christine's parents, the Ray Silvers, lived in the residence until 1984. Christine Gelms and her husband Robert converted the property into Tipton's first "bed and breakfast" operation and appropriately called it "The Victorian House."

On July 13, 1989, Christine and Robert Gelms sold to Delores Mitchell and Lowell Salser a part of Lot 4, Block 2, Prescott's Addn. starting 110' east of SW corner of Lot 4, then 19' east, then north 150', then west 190', then south 150' to beginning. The present owners are continuing the property as a bed and breakfast, doing business as the Victorian House.

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Expanding on the first source listed on the bibliographies, the October 18, 1883 issue of the Advertiser gave a complete and detailed accounting of the finished residence. There were several significant houses erected in 1883, in Tipton and its area. the Advertiser owner, C. L. Longley, had watched with interest the progress of all during the construction phase. In the october 18 issue he stated that the Reichert House was the best of the lot. His on-site comments were the basic reference source for the building itself.

The author of this application for nomination did not have access to the original building documents. A search was unrewarded in both 1980 and 1991. In lieu of which we are indeed favored to have the detailed accounting and summation of the project by c. L. Longley. Beyond any doubt Longley had access and did carefully examine the building documents preparatory to his visit and then discourse of October 18. When the researcher surveyed both the grounds and the residence my findings were compatible with Longley's summarization. My measurements of room dimensions in 1990 documented Longley's text of 1883. With a background of over 30 years as a building contractor, I am comfortable with Longley's examination of the documents.

all real estate and deed conveyances were examined in the Recorder and Auditors offices at the Cedar county Court House in Tipton.

Probate and other records were consulted in the County Clerks office.

Other Sources Referenced

Mcalester, Virginia and Lee - A Field Guide to American Houses, New York, alfred Knopf, 1948

Blumenson, John - Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and terms - 1600 to 1945, N. Y. W. W. Norton, 1981

Ornamental carpentry on 19th Century American Homes - NY Dover Publ. 1981

Whiffen, Marcus - American Architecture Since 1780 - A guide to the Styles, Cambridge, Mass., The MIT Press, 1969

Williams, Henry and Ottalie - A Guide to Old American Houses - Cranbury AN.J., A. S. Barnes, 1962.