

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED **AUG 15 1975**

DATE ENTERED

**OCT 14 1976**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

The (Octagon House)

AND/OR COMMON

The Langworthy House *was the*

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

1095 West Third Street

\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Dubuque

\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Second

STATE

Iowa

CODE

14

COUNTY

Dubuque

CODE

061

**CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

\_\_ DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

\_\_ STRUCTURE

\_\_ SITE

\_\_ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

\_\_ PUBLIC

PRIVATE

\_\_ BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

\_\_ IN PROCESS

\_\_ BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

OCCUPIED

\_\_ UNOCCUPIED

\_\_ WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

\_\_ YES: RESTRICTED

\_\_ YES: UNRESTRICTED

NO

**PRESENT USE**

\_\_ AGRICULTURE

\_\_ COMMERCIAL

\_\_ EDUCATIONAL

\_\_ ENTERTAINMENT

\_\_ GOVERNMENT

\_\_ INDUSTRIAL

\_\_ MILITARY

\_\_ MUSEUM

\_\_ PARK

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

\_\_ RELIGIOUS

\_\_ SCIENTIFIC

\_\_ TRANSPORTATION

\_\_ OTHER:

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Langworthy Chalmers

STREET & NUMBER

1095 West Third Street

CITY, TOWN

Dubuque

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Iowa

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Dubuque County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

720 Central

CITY, TOWN

Dubuque

STATE

Iowa

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

*FNBS*

DATE

\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_ STATE \_\_ COUNTY \_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT                       DETERIORATED  
 GOOD                                 RUINS  
 FAIR                                  UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

---

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Edward Langworthy House, also called Octagon House, today looks almost as it did in 1856, when it was built. It was designed by John Francis Rague (1799-1879), who designed the Capitol at Springfield, Illinois (now fully restored), the Old Capitol in Iowa City, Iowa (now being restored), the Insurance Exchange Building in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the City Hall, Egyptian Revival Style Jail and several schools and homes in Dubuque, Iowa. The Octagon House is built of brick on a two foot high limestone elevation. The portico columns are octagonal style with strong mid-nineteenth century traditions; tall proportions, a contrast of materials and ornamental carpentry work. The height of the porch and portico is extended by the eight-sided belvedere atop the house. There are bay windows on the first floor. Second story windows open to balconies above the bays. The back wing and front porch are faceted octagonally to relate with the overall design of the house. Capped pilasters act as vertical accents at the corners. The back part has a lower elevation. Here the windows have plain stone lintels. The east porch has columns similar to the portico and a wooden lattice railing.

Structurally the house today is almost as it was built. A basement was dug when central heating was installed. The back porch has been enclosed and a door has been cut at the west side of the back hall. There are three rooms and a central hall in the octagon, a kitchen, dining room, pantry and hall in the back section. Upstairs there are nine rooms. There are six coal burning fireplaces, four on the first floor and two in the bedrooms. The flues form part of the belvedere walls which helped to warm that room.

A small one story apartment was added at an angle to the back of the house in 1946. Architecturally, it blends with the original house. Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers have restored the west parlor to its original rich decor, using the furnishings brought from New York by steamship to New Orleans and then by river boat to Dubuque by Edward Langworthy.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" 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		

SPECIFIC DATES    1856

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Langworthy House is significant as one of the few remaining houses built in the octagonal design which is still standing in Iowa. It is also significant for the importance of its builder to the early settlement of Iowa. The Octagon House was built by Edward Langworthy in 1856. It has never been out of family ownership. A daughter, Paulina, married George Rudd. Their only child, Eleanor, married John G. Chalmers. Their son, E. L. Chalmers, the present owner, was born in the house and has lived there most of his life. He and his wife restored the west parlor and maintain the exterior as it was built.

Edward Langworthy was born August 31, 1808, in New York State. The family moved to Central Illinois. About 1827, Edward and three of his brothers went to Galena, Illinois, to work in the lead mines. They fought in the Winnebago and Blackhawk Wars. In 1833, the government opened the Northeastern part of Iowa for settlement. The Langworthy brothers were among the first to arrive in the Dubuque area. They were partners in a lead mine until 1862; they helped build the territorial road from Dubuque to Iowa City; they purchased land, became farmers and dealers in real estate; they owned a steamboat and a mercantile exchange. So widespread were their businesses and influence, that the Langworthy Brothers have been called the "Fathers' of Iowa's Oldest City."

Edward was an active citizen of Dubuque. He served on the Town Council in 1836 and 1837; he was a county commissioner in 1836, a school trustee in 1838 and 1839, a member of the Territorial Legislature from 1839 to 1841 and in 1844, he was a member of the Constitutional Convention. He strongly advocated building the railroads and during the winter of 1837-1838, he was a delegate to the Railroad Convention in Madison, Wisconsin. In 1836, an article attributed to Edward Langworthy appeared in the local newspaper, The Dubuque Visitor, in which he called the area "Iowa". Later, the newspaper changed its name to the Iowa News, possibly creating the publicity that caused the area to be officially named Iowa. Edward Langworthy married Paulina Reeder on August 13, 1835. They had four children, three daughters and a son. Edward died January 4, 1893.

Since 1934 the Octagon House has been on the Historic American Buildings Survey.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Langworthy, W. F. and Langworthy, O. S., The Langworthy Family, Tuttle Publishing Company, 1940, page 258, 268-269.  
 \_\_\_\_\_, "The Langworthys of Dubuque", Iowa Journal of History and Politics, Volume VIII-21, page 340-355.  
 Sissel, D. Kent, The Octagon Form in Nineteenth Century Domestic Architecture of Iowa, thesis, University of Iowa, 1968.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A [ 11.5 ] [ 61910719 ] [ 471071150 ]  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 C [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

B [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 D [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

## LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Mrs. Keith Malone

ORGANIZATION

Dubuque County Historical Society

DATE

October 15, 1974

STREET & NUMBER

1735 Eden Lane

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Dubuque

STATE

Iowa

# 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

*Adrian D. Anderson*

TITLE

Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

3/11/75

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Adrian D. Anderson* DATE 10/14/75  
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: *Ronald M. Greenberg* DATE 10/14/75  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

