

County Bremer
City Waverly

Address 310 5th Street SW

Site Number 09-00954
District Number 09-00961

Criteria Considerations

- 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)

02 ARCHITECTURE

Significant Dates

Construction date 1915 check if circa or estimated date
Other dates, including renovation _____

Significant Person

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

Architect/Builder

Architect unknown
Builder unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography See continuation sheet for citations of the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form

10. Geographic Data

UTM References (OPTIONAL)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	_____	_____	2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet for additional UTM references or comments

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marlys Svendsen date 6/14/2015
organization Svendsen Tyler, Inc. for the Waverly HPC telephone 715/469-3300
street & number N3834 Deep Lake Rd. state WI zip code 54870
city or town Sarona

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION (Submit the following items with the completed form)

FOR ALL PROPERTIES

- Map:** showing the property's location in a town/city or township.
- Site plan:** showing position of buildings and structures on the site in relation to public road(s).
- Photographs:** representative black and white photos. If the photos are taken as part of a survey for which the Society is to be curator of the negatives or color slides, a photo/catalog sheet needs to be included with the negatives/slides and the following needs to be provided below on this particular inventory site:

Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____

- See continuation sheet or attached *photo & slide catalog sheet* for list of photo roll or slide entries.
- Photos/illustrations without negatives are also in this site inventory file.

FOR CERTAIN KINDS OF PROPERTIES, INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AS WELL

- Farmstead & District:** (List of structures and buildings, known or estimated year built, and contributing or noncontributing status)
- Barn:**
 - A sketch of the frame/truss configuration in the form of drawing a typical middle bent of the barn.
 - A photograph of the loft showing the frame configuration along one side.
 - A sketch floor plan of the interior space arrangements along with the barn's exterior dimensions in feet.

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Use Only Below This Line

Concur with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility: Yes No More Research Recommended
 This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.

Comments: _____

Evaluated by (name/title): _____ Date: _____

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7. Description

The Oberdorf House at 310 5th Street SW is estimated to have been constructed in 1920 according to the Bremer County Assessor's records. A news account from December 1915, however, notes the completion of the house for the owner at that time. This earlier date is consistent with the building's form and design. The house is an example of the Craftsman Style Side-Gabled Roof, 2-Story house form. The house has a rock faced concrete block foundation and narrow wood clapboard siding on the walls with corner board trim. It has a moderate pitched side-gabled roof with shed-roofed attic dormers centered on the front and rear slopes with deep eaves on all sides. The roof is fluted metal panels installed sometime prior to 2010. A low-pitched front-gabled porch is centered on the front facade. It has a matching concrete block foundation, closed balustrade and corner pedestals. Three tapered columns are clustered on the corner pedestals. The pediment has purlins and small brackets along the eaves with the stucco-clad tympanum also featuring vertical and diagonal stick work.

Fenestration includes symmetrically placed 1/1 double-hung window units in various sizes. A group of three small 1/1 units with short upper lights are in the dormer and similar configured windows are paired in the gable peaks. The property has a detached double-bay frame garage constructed in 1990. It has a low-pitched front-gable roof with wide clapboard-style synthetic siding. It is accessed from the alley and is considered noncontributing.

8. Significance

The Oberdorf House at 310 5th Street SW derives significance under Criterion C for as a well-preserved example of a Craftsman Style residence built using the Side-Gabled, 2-Story house form. The building's use of concrete porch elements and its high level of integrity add to its significance. The garage is considered a noncontributing resource.

The house is also significant as a contributing resource in the Sturdevant SW Historic District under both Criteria A and C. The historic district qualifies for the National Register of Historic Places as a well-preserved collection of mid and late 19th century and early 20th century architectural styles and vernacular house forms located in Waverly's southwest residential neighborhood. The neighborhood developed as a middle class and working class residential district from the late 1850s through the mid-20th century

Historical Background for Waverly¹

Waverly was established in 1853 along the Cedar River in Waverly Township located in southeastern Bremer County. It was designated as the county seat for Bremer County the same year that the county was officially organized and was formally incorporated in 1859. Like most Iowa towns established before the Civil War, growth during the early 1860s was deferred until after the war came to a close. Waverly's first railroad, the Cedar Falls and Minnesota Railroad was extended to Waverly in 1864. Eventually track was also laid for other branch lines and an electric interurban. By 1917 track for branch lines was absorbed by the Chicago and

¹ The historical background information is largely drawn from the *Waverly, Iowa: An Architectural Heritage*, (Waverly, Iowa: City of Waverly), 1977.

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Great Western Railroad and the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad. Track for the electric interurban – the Waterloo, Cedar Falls, and Northern – was laid in 1910 but usage was never as substantial as predicted.

Waverly grew in the manner typical of other Iowa county seats in the late 19th and early 20th century. Its commercial center extended along the east-west route of Bremer Avenue on both sides of the Bremer Avenue Bridge that crossed the L-shaped course of the Cedar River as it passed through the center of town. The county courthouse was located outside of the commercial area on a slight prominence at the east end of Bremer Avenue. Residential districts grew up in the four quadrants formed by the intersecting main street and river. The broad, generally flat profile of both the business district and early residential neighborhoods saw the regular occurrence of flooding resulting in the gradual replacement of most first generation frame building stock. German immigrants were among the largest ethnic group to populate Waverly during the 19th century establishing religious institutions with ethnic affiliations such as St. Paul's Lutheran Church in the northwest quadrant, St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in southeast quadrant, and the German Methodist Church.

Bremer County and its county seat of Waverly prospered during the late 19th and early 20th century becoming a retail and professional services center for Bremer County and sections of adjacent Butler County. The county's standing as the "Dairy Spot of Iowa," gave rise to a number of dairy industries including a manufacturing plant operated by the Carnation Milk Products Company for the production of condensed milk in the 1920s. Population stood at 16,300 people in 1900 before the growth rate slowed before World War I. By 1930 population topped 17,000. Expansion of a Lutheran seminary in Waverly first located in the community in 1879 through the relocation of Wartburg College to the community in 1939 was a cultural and economic stimulus for the community. Waverly continued to add a 1,000 people per decade until 1950 when the post-War boom saw growth accelerate to more than 21,000 by 1960. During the past 50 years population has slowed somewhat topping out at 23,325 in 2000.

Historical Background for the Oberdorf House at 310 5th Street SW

The Oberdorf House at 310 5th Street SW is estimated to have been constructed in 1920 according to the Bremer County Assessor's records. This date is consistent with the architectural style and form of the building as well as the materials. The original occupants of the house were Louis Case Oberdorf (1847-1931) and his wife Sarah Marilla (1855-1926). The couple moved into their new house on December 23, 1915 according to a news account in the *Bremer Independent*. The account noted that Mr. Oberdorf was recovering from an illness at the time. It is likely that the couple built the house as a retirement home. Louis had a long career as an educator in Bremer County. A brief biography appears below and on the following page. Following L.C. Oberdorf's death 16 years after they moved into the house, it passed to Madge McCurnin, Fay Paulkner, William Busse, and Mike and Lois Miller in subsequent years.

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Lewis Cass Oberdorf

LEWIS CASS OBERDORF, now serving as Superintendent of the Schools of Bremer County, has long been connected with the educational interests of this section of the State, and few men have done more for the advancement and improvement of the schools than he. He is now giving to his work careful study, planning and executing methods that will bring to still greater perfection the schools that are now under his jurisdiction.

Mr. OBERDORF was born on a farm in Northumberland County Pennsylvania, November 11, 1847, and is the second in order of birth of ten children whose parents were Philip and Massey (DAWSON) OBERDORF. His father and grandfather, were both natives of Northumberland County, but the great-grandfather was born in Germany, and crossing the Atlantic became the founder of the family in America. The mother of our subject was also born in Northumberland County, whether her parents removed from New Jersey. They were of German and English extraction. Philip OBERDORF was a farmer, and in the spring of 1855 he removed with his family to Iowa, and arrived in Waverly, Bremer County, on the 28th of April. Our subject was at that time seven years of age. He now resumed his studies which he had begun in the public schools of the Keystone State, and completed his literary training in Waverly at the age of nineteen years. He had thoroughly reviewed his studies and at the age noted began teaching, accepting the charge of a school in Jefferson Township. He has taught all together twenty-six terms of school, having charge of one school for thirteen consecutive terms. No higher testimonial of his ability could be given than this statement. In 1860 his father, who was engaged in the lumber business, failed and removed to a farm. Lewis at once went to his father's assistance. He was at the time still in school and anxious to keep up with his studies; so while working in the fields he would carry his book with him and learn his lessons while following the plow. The school-house was three miles from his home, and it was therefore frequently impossible for him to attend, but the old saying that "where there's a will there's a way" was demonstrated in his case. Though many difficulties arose in his "path of knowledge," he overcame these by determined effort, and extensive reading and study in later years have made him one of the well informed men in Bremer County. Even after he began teaching he continued to aid his father until the latter had again secured a start in life.

For our subject rural life has always had a special charm, and the desire of his heart has always been to become the possessor of a fine farm. To this end he saved his earnings as a teacher and made judicious investments in reality, so that to-day he is the owner of a very desirable property comprising 180 acres of rich land valued at \$10,000. It is under a high state of cultivation and is stocked with fine grades of horses and cattle. He gave up his position as teacher at the close of the school year of 1884, and turned his attention to his farm, making a specialty of stock-raising and dairy farming. He raised most of his own feed, and his corn crops often yielded seventy-five bushels to the acre. He possesses the indomitable courage and determination that carry forward to successful completion whatever he undertakes, and it is a common saying among his neighbors and friends that he can make two blades of grass grow where others grow but one. His success has by no means been the result of chance. He has made a close study of farming, as he has of everything else to which he has directed by a sound judgment, and the careful attention which he gave to his business enabled him to win prosperity therein.

On the 9th of October 1872, Mr. OBERDORF married Miss Sarah M. BILLS, who was born in New York, but was living in Bremer County at the time of her marriage. Her father was of English and her mother of German Extraction. They are parents of three children: Bert E, born September 15, 1873, Estella Fay, born December 17, 1881; and Madge, born February 24, 1885.

Mr. OBERDORF has much faith in the safety of real-estate investments and has purchased considerable land in Iowa. In politics he has always been a Democrat and is a recognized leader in the ranks of his

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party. He is not bitterly partisan, however, and never argues a point; but when asked for his opinion he gives it freely, though concisely, and his words are always to the point. He was first nominated for office in 1873 and made the race for County Auditor. The county then was overwhelmingly Republican, but though he was defeated he ran 150 ahead of his ticket. In 1879, only fifteen days before the election, the Democratic ticket was made up and he was the nominee for County Superintendent of Schools, and succeeded in reducing the usual Republican majority of 900 to 300, thus nearly doubling his party vote. In 1891 he was elected secretary of the Bremer County Farmers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company, and continued in that position until 1893, when he was elected County Superintendent of Schools of Bremer County, by a majority of nearly 500, running ahead of his ticket. He is a man of great personal popularity, and his genuine worth and fitness for office are widely recognized. In 1895 he was re-elected and is now serving his second term, giving general satisfaction. Undoubtedly the secret of his success lies largely in his deep-felt interest in the young and his untiring efforts for their advancement.

He said his family attend the Methodist Episcopal Church and are highly esteemed people. He is a man of much force of character and tenacity of purpose, and has the power of concentrating his mind and energies on one thing alone to a remarkable degree. He justly ranks among the able educators of the State, and is deserving of the high esteem in which he is held by all.

A Memorial and Biographical Record of Iowa (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1896, pp. 657-659); available online at: <http://iagenweb.org/boards/bremer/biographies/index.cgi?read=145908>; accessed 6/14/2015.

9. Sources

Atlas of Bremer County, Iowa. Waverly, Iowa: Waverly Publishing Company, 1917.

Atlases of Bremer County. Microfilm copies of atlases for 1875, 1894 and 1927, Waverly Public Library.

Bremer County History Book Committee. *Bremer County History, 1985*. Dallas, Texas: Taylor Publishing, 1985.

City directories, 1899 and 1913.

Grawe, Joseph F. *History of Bremer County, Iowa, Volumes I and II*. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Company, 1914.

History of Butler and Bremer Counties, Iowa. Springfield, Illinois: Union Publishing, 1883.

"L.C. Oberdorf has moved into his new residence on South Oak..." *Bremer Independent*, December 23, 1915, p. 8, column 4.

"Lewis Cass Oberdorf," *A Memorial and Biographical Record of Iowa*. Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1896, pp. 657-659; available online at: <http://iagenweb.org/boards/bremer/biographies/index.cgi?read=145908>; accessed 6/14/2015.

Page, William C. *Reconnaissance Historical and Architectural Survey of Black Hawk and Bremer Counties, Iowa, Volume I*. Black Hawk and Bremer Counties Preservation Partnership and State Historical Society of Iowa, August 21, 1992.

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Sanborn Company Maps. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1885, 1892, 1897, 1905, 1915, 1927, and 1927 updated to 1943.

Waverly building histories, miscellaneous bound volumes in reference collection, Waverly Public Library.

Waverly Heritage Days historical walking tour brochures for 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2009.
Vertical file collection, Waverly Public Library.

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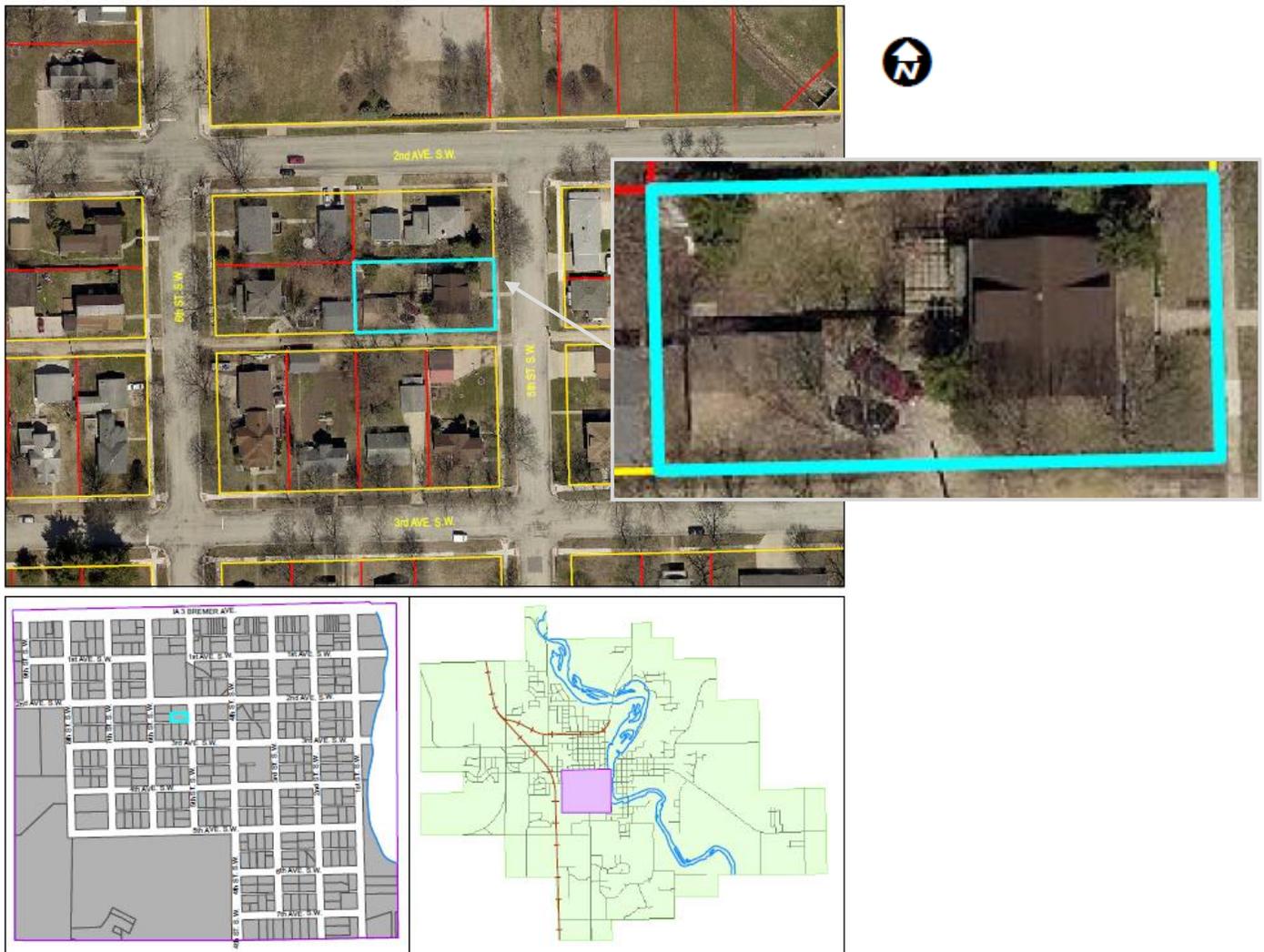
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Additional Information:

Waverly Southwest Quadrant Historical and Architectural Survey Map (Bremer County GIS Department, 3/26/2014).

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PIN 09-03-287-004



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Full Legal Description: WM STURDEVANT'S ADDITION SOUTH 1/2 LOTS 1 & 2 BLOCK 2.

Site Map

Aerial map available at Bremer County Assessor's website at: <http://beacon.schneidercorp.com/Application.aspx?AppID=330&LayerID=3621&PageTypeID=4&PageID=2342&Q=299298458&KeyValue=0903287004>; accessed **12/15/2010**. Historic resource is designated by the red star.



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Photographs: 310 5th Street SW, looking west and northwest, **4/7/2014**, Andrew Bell, Svendsen Tyler, photographer.



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Photographs: 310 5th Street SW, looking northwest, **4/7/2014**, Andrew Bell, Svendsen Tyler, photographer.



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Photographs: 310 5th Street SW, looking west and northwest, **4/7/2014**, Andrew Bell, Svendsen Tyler, photographer.



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Photographs: 310 5th Street SW, looking west and northwest, 12/06/2010, Marlys Svendsen, IHSEMD, photographer



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Photograph and Sketch Plan: Bremer County Assessor website photograph and map available at:
<http://beacon.schneidercorp.com/Application.aspx?AppID=330&LayerID=3621&PageTypeID=4&PageID=2342&Q=299298458&KeyValue=0903287004>; accessed 12/23/2010.

