

Site Inventory Form
State Historical Society of Iowa
(November 2005)

State Inventory No. 09-01438 New Supplemental
 Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) **09-00961**
Relationship: Contributing Noncontributing
 Contributes to a potential district with yet unknown boundaries
National Register Status:(any that apply) Listed De-listed NHL DOE
9-Digit SHPO Review & Compliance (R&C) Number _____
 Non-Extant (enter year) _____

1. Name of Property

historic name Cornforth, Bateman and Ada, House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 720 1st Ave SW

city or town Waverly vicinity, county Bremer County

Legal Description: (If Rural) Township Name Township No. Range No. Section Quarter of Quarter

(If Urban) Subdivision Wm. Sturdevant's Addition Block(s) 19 Lot(s) Lot 5 "EX N 16" _____

3. State/Federal Agency Certification [Skip this Section]

4. National Park Service Certification [Skip this Section]

5. Classification

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

If Non-Eligible Property

Enter number of:

— buildings
— sites
— structures
— objects
— Total

If Eligible Property, enter number of:

Contributing Noncontributing

1 1 buildings
— — sites
— — structures
— — objects
1 1 Total

Name of related project report or multiple property study (Enter "N/A" if the property is not part of a multiple property examination).

Title

Historical Architectural Data Base Number

Waverly SW Quadrant Hist.&Arch Survey

HADB 09-031

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

01A01 Single Dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

01A01 Single Dwelling

01C05 Garage

01C05 Garage

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

09A01 Front-Gabled Roof, 1-Story

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation 10A Concrete Block

walls (visible material) 15B Vinyl

roof 08A Asphalt Shingle

other _____

Narrative Description (SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" representing your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria)

- Yes No More Research Recommended

- A Property is associated with significant events.
- B Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.
- C Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
- D Property yields significant information in archaeology or history.

County Bremer
City Waverly

Address 720 1st Ave SW

Site Number 09-01438
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

07 COMM.PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Significant Person

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

Significant Dates

Construction date

1916 check if circa or estimated date

Other dates, including renovation

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

organization Svendsen Tyler, Inc. for the Waverly HPC

date 3/7/2015

street & number N3834 Deep Lake Rd.

telephone 715/469-3300

city or town Sarona

state WI

zip code 54870

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

FOR ALL PROPERTIES

1. **Map:** showing the property's location in a town/city or township.
2. **Site plan:** showing position of buildings and structures on the site in relation to public road(s).
3. **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

1. **Farmstead & District:** (List of structures and buildings, known or estimated year built, and contributing or noncontributing status)
2. **Barn:**

a. A sketch of the frame/truss configuration in the form of drawing a typical middle bent of the barn.

b. A photograph of the loft showing the frame configuration along one side.

c. 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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Cornforth, Bateman and Ada, House	Bremer
Name of Property 720 1 st Ave SW	County Waverly
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7. Description

The Ada and Bateman Cornforth House at 720 1st Ave SW is estimated to have been constructed in 1914 according to the Bremer County Assessor's records. This date is consistent with the building's form and design, however, property transfer records and newspaper accounts suggest a slightly later date of 1916. On 5/18/1916 "Bate" Cornforth and his wife Ada acquired Lot 5 in Block 19 from Helen Ellis who owned the entire block and was subdividing parcels for homebuilding. Cornforth was identified in a news account published in the *Bremer County Independent* on 6/1/1916 as building a house on a "former Ellis lot." The likely date for completion of this house based on public records is ca. 1916.

The Cornforth House is an example of a vernacular Front-Gabled Roof, 1½-Story house form. The building has a concrete block foundation with medium-width clapboard-style vinyl siding and corner board trim on the walls. It has a broad front-gabled roof with a moderately-steep pitch, wide eaves, and gabled wall dormers on both the east and west slopes. An enclosed front porch with a low-pitched, broad front-gabled roof nearly spans the front façade. It has a concrete foundation with a closed balustrade covered in matching vinyl siding. When originally built as an open porch, pedestals topped by battered piers were at the outer corners and no pier was on the pedestal adjacent to the off-set entrance steps. Now, the upper walls feature continuous 1/1 windows. The house also has a major shed-roofed addition extending along the east side with the front aligning with the original front façade.

Fenestration elsewhere in the house includes single, paired and grouped 1/1 double-hung windows of various sizes as well as large single-light horizontal windows. A group of three 1/1 double-hung windows is centered in the front gable and pairs of similar windows are in the dormers. Small single-light vertical sash are positioned to either side of the front-gable windows. The east addition includes a group of three small square, single-light sash on the front facade. The original front-gabled double-bay garage is north of the house opening onto 8th Street. Its finishes match those of the house. The garage is considered noncontributing.

8. Significance

Ada and Bateman Cornforth House at 720 1st Ave SW derives significance as a contributing resource in the Sturdevant SW Historic District, which qualifies for the National Register under both Criteria A (Community Development) and C (Architecture). The garage is considered noncontributing. The historic district is 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,

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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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 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 Cornforth House at 720 1st Ave SW

Ada and Bateman Cornforth House at 720 1st Ave SW is located in the southwest quadrant of Waverly that includes additions platted by early Waverly settlers, Ira Sturdevant and his son William Sturdevant. The Sturdevant family moved to the unsettled area along the Cedar River in the mid-1850s. Ira received a 40-acre federal land grant based on his military service in the War of 1812. William acquired 80 acres of adjoining land to the north of his father's 40-acre parcel. In 1857 the William Sturdevant's Addition was laid out and in 1860 the Ira Sturdevant Addition was platted. Growth remained relatively slow in these subdivisions until after the Civil War.

The Ada and Bateman "Bate" Cornforth House at 720 1st Ave SW is estimated to have been constructed in 1914 according to the Bremer County Assessor's records. Though this date is consistent with the building's basic form and design detailing, property transfer records and a newspaper account suggest a slightly later date of 1916. "Bate" Cornforth and his wife Ada acquired Lot 5 in Block 19 from Helen Ellis who owned the entire block and was subdividing parcels for homebuilding before WW I. The lot purchase came on 5/18/1916 and Cornforth was identified in a news account published in the *Bremer County Independent* on 6/1/1916 as building a house on a "former Ellis lot." The house was likely built as a retirement home for the Cornforths.

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who worked a farmer in Lafayette Township for many years. A brief biography of Bateman Cornforth appears below:

Cornforth, B. [Bateman]

Farming interests of Bremer county find a progressive and worthy representative in B. Cornforth, who owns a fine property in Lafayette township and who concentrates his attention upon the development of this place and upon the promotion of general agricultural advancement in this section of the state. He has been a resident of Bremer county since 1866, but was born in Franklin, Maine, December 11, 1853, a son of William and Sarah (Norton) Cornforth, also natives of that community. The family is of English origin, the earliest ancestor of whom there is records, William Robert Cornforth, having been born in Gerby. He married there and had one son, William, who was born March 3, 1794. The father came to America in 1907, settling in Readfield, Maine, where he engaged in farming. His son William was four years of age when the family settled in Maine and he served an apprenticeship to a clothier in that state. He wedded Miss Lydia Oates, who was born in Gorham, Maine, on the 20th of February, 1794. He was the owner of a woolen and grist mill and also engaged for a number of years in farming, dying August 13, 1881, at the age of eighty-seven years, five months and ten days. He had survived his wife since April 10, 1877, her death occurring at the age of eighty-three years, one month and twenty-five days. They had eleven children, of whom the fourth, William, was the father of the subject of this review. He was born December 18, 1822 and his marriage occurred December 4, 1851. He engaged in farming in Maine until 1866, when he came to Bremer county, Iowa, settling in Warren township. He became one of the most substantial and prosperous citizens of this locality, where he engaged in farming until he retired from active life. He afterward spent a few years in Waverly and then moved to the home of his daughter in South Dakota, where his death occurred. He had five children, one of whom died in infancy. The eldest, Orin, moved to North Dakota, where he died in 1909, at the age of fifty-seven. The second son is the subject of this review. Charles makes his home in Florida. Mary became the wife of Erwin L. Kingsley and makes her home in South Dakota.

B. Cornforth spent his early boyhood in Maine and came to Iowa with his parents in 1866. Ten years later he began farming near Bremer and after spending seven years in that locality went to Minnesota. At the end of one year he returned and bought land in Lafayette township, this county, whereon he engaged in general agricultural pursuits for fourteen years thereafter. He then sold the place and moved to Butler, but at the end of three years returned and bought back the same farm in Lafayette township. He has a beautiful place, provided with a modern residence set in the midst of a fine lawn, in which are maple and pine trees, which add materially to the appearance of the property as well as afford shade and protection from the wind. Mr. Cornforth has erected substantial barns and outbuildings and has fenced and cross-fenced his fields. He engages in general farming, his principal crop being corn, and he is also a stock-raiser on an extensive scale, keeping fine herds of registered Norman horses and registered Shropshire sheep. He is interested in the development of scientific farming and has taken an active part in all the agricultural meetings of the locality, speaking on various subjects connected with farming. He was a member of the commission which organized the Live County Fair and has served on the directorate continuously since that time, and he can always be found among the leaders in the promotion of any progressive public project.

Mr. Cornforth has been twice married. On the 23 of October, 1877, he wedded Miss Margaret Happer, a native of Illinois and a daughter of Samuel and Margaret Happer, who came to Bremer county in 1871. Mrs. Cornforth died in January, 1898. By his first union Mr. Cornforth has three children: Bessie, who married H.R. Pease, of Rochester, Minnesota; Elsa, a graduate of Waverly high school, with the class of 1912, and now engaged in teaching; and one who died in infancy. On the 27th of July, 1900, Mr. Cornforth was again married, his second union being with Mrs. Ada Carroll, who was born in Chautauqua, New York, a daughter of Benjamin and Margaret Herby. This family is of old colonial stock and came originally from England. Among Mrs. Cornforth's collateral ancestors were three brothers of the Herby family who emigrated from Great Britain, settling, one in Canada, one in Australia and the third, Mrs. Cornforth's great-grandfather, in Plymouth county, Massachusetts. Mrs. Cornforth's maternal ancestors have also been in America for many generations, her maternal great-grandfather, Ralph Roslin Bereford, having come to the United States during the Revolutionary war as a member of the British army. He afterward allied himself with the continental cause. His wife was in her maidenhood Elizabeth Payson Willis and they had two sons and two daughters, one of the latter being Mrs. Cornforth's grandmother and one son being the father of Fanny Fern. A member of the Willis family fought in the American revolution, as did also a member of the Herby family. Mr. Cornforth's mother was born on the original Willis homestead, which came into possession of the family as a land grant from King George III in 1733 and which is still owned by a direct descendant of the American progenitor of this branch.

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Mr. Cornforth gives his political allegiance to the Republican Party and has been for many years a member of the school board. He is a man of superior attainments and attractive personality and he holds the esteem and respect of his neighbors as a substantial farmer and a public-spirited and useful citizen. (from Joseph Grawe's *History of Bremer County, Iowa* Vol. II 1914; available online at <http://iagenweb.org/boards/bremer/biographies/index.cgi?read=259004>; accessed 3/7/2015.

The Cornforths resided here together until Bate died in 1928; Ada continued here until the property was sold shortly before her death in 1954. Anker and Olive Juhl acquired the house on 2/4/1954 and resided here until they sold it in 1993 to Mark and Lisa Reinhardt.

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 Auditor's Office, Property Transfer Records.

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.

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.

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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Additional Information:

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



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Photographs: 720 1st Ave SW, looking southeast, **3/27/2015**, Marlys Svendsen, Svendsen Tyler, photographer.

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Plan: Bremer County Assessor website photograph and map available at <https://beaconbeta.schneidercorp.com/Application.aspx?AppID=330&LayerID=3621&PageTypeID=4&PageID=2342&Q=1755981617&KeyValue=0903276004>; accessed **3/7/2015**.

