

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

state iowa county Linn zip code 52314

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

Applicable National Register Criteria: **X A B X C D**

Title	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government
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4. National Park Service Certification

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

Wilds, Col. John Q. and Rowena (Camp) House
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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | private |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - Local |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - State |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - Federal |

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | object |

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		site
		structure
		object
1		Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19TH CENTURY

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE

walls: BRICK

roof: ASPHALT

other:

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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph (Briefly describe the current, general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

This 1857 house with Mid-19th Century stylistic influences sits on a broad city lot, fronting the street to the southeast. The lot slopes downward quite steeply from southwest to northeast, leaving a good portion of the building's northeastern basement exterior exposed. The original two-story house is built of locally-manufactured, reddish-orange soft mud brick. The brick is laid in seven courses of stretchers for every single row of headers, or a 7:1 common bond. Significant features include: the moderate pitch to the side-gabled roof, the wooden cornice molding on the moderate eave overhang, the frieze board below the eaves, and the cornice returns on the side-gable ends of the original house, all of which are common to Mid-19th Century styles. Brick chimneys extend from the roof peak at either end. The basement/foundation is built of locally-quarried limestone laid in regular courses using rough-cut stones. A single-story rear addition has a shed roof and brick walls that have largely been covered in stucco. A single-story side addition has exposed brick walls and also has a shed roof. The additions have bricks laid in a running bond, which is a veneer but is also used in cavity wall construction. A small shed of modern construction in the rear yard is not counted as a resource since it is a minor outbuilding. The house retains fair to good historic integrity on both the exterior and interior.

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable.)

(**Iowa SHPO Additional Instructions:** After the main **Narrative Description**, discuss any physical alterations since the period of significance under the subheading **Alterations**, and the seven aspects of integrity as it applies to the property in a **Statement of Integrity**.)

This two-story, side-gabled brick house is located on a city lot, fronting 2nd Avenue NW in the northwest quadrant of the City of Mount Vernon in Linn County, Iowa. The lot slopes quite steeply from southwest to northeast, with the basement of the house banked into this slope. The house sits close to the sidewalk, with only small areas of lawn in the front. The width and slope of the lot also allows only narrow strips of side yard to either side, with pine and shade trees scattered on both sides and to the rear of the house. The rear yard is larger in area but has a fairly dense growth of shade trees imparting something of a wooded feel to the setting. A small gabled, wooden-frame shed in the rear yard is a modern addition but is built of salvaged antique architectural pieces such as turned spindle posts. This is a minor outbuilding and does not detract from the integrity of the property and is not counted as a resource. There is a late 20th century house to the north and an alley, parking lot, and a late 20th century commercial building to the south. There are older historic buildings on the opposite side of the street including another side-gabled brick house of similar age to the house, which is located just downhill from Mount Vernon's Commercial Historic District but is outside the boundary of that NRHP-listed district.

The subject house was built in 1857 using locally-manufactured, reddish-orange soft mud brick. The foundation is built of locally-quarried, rough-cut limestone blocks laid in regular courses. The bricks of the original house are laid in a 7:1 common bond. The brick construction evident on the exterior of the rear and side additions is a running bond, which consists of only stretcher courses of brick. A running bond is technically a veneer; however, this type of wall can also indicate a cavity wall construction where two running bond walls are tied together on the interior with metal ties but have an air cavity in-between the two walls. This gives the thickness of a solid brick wall without the expense of that type of construction.¹

One of the original 6/6 double-hung, wooden-sash windows remains on the second story of the rear, with the windows on the first floor being later 1/1 double-hung, wooden-sash windows and those on the second story being more recently installed 1/1 vinyl replacement windows. The roof is covered with standing seam metal roofing installed over the asphalt shingles in 2018.

¹ It is recommended that future research study the actual construction of these walls to determine how they are built and, if cavity walls, how they are tied together. Such research was beyond the parameters of the current nomination project.

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Façade (East Side)²

The façade is covered by a one-story wooden porch that has been modified through the years (Figure 1). The low-pitched hip roof of the porch may be original, but the original posts have been replaced in the late 20th century with wrought-iron supports. In addition, the original wooden flooring and likely stone foundation of the porch were replaced at the same time by a poured concrete stoop that is accessed by two poured concrete steps. Metal railings line the porch and steps. A set of double wooden doors, with wooden storm doors is centered on the façade, which overall has three-rank fenestration. The storm doors each have 12 fixed-panes of glass. The interior doors each have a rectangular single-pane of glass above two inset wooden panels that are scored in a decorative grid pattern and have other decorative details that reflect a Late Victorian style. The doors have historic brass hardware and knobs and one still has the brass doorbell just below the glass pane. The bell casing is marked "Corbins Bell/New Britain."³ The door opening is deep and has a paneled wooden casement that is likely original. It appears that the doorway may have had a rectangular transom window that is now covered. It is uncertain whether the front door was originally a single door with side lights or the current double-door configuration, but the former is most likely. However, the current entryway is historic in age being either late 19th or early 20th century.

On either side of the porch are 1/1 double-hung, wooden-sash windows, covered by metal storm windows. The second floor features two 1/1 vinyl windows on either side of a centered single door that once led out onto the porch roof, although any railings around the porch roof have been removed. The front windows are flanked by modern black decorative shutters, and each opening has plain wooden lintels. The first-floor windows have wooden sills, while the upper ones have sills made of stone. The stone sills were installed by the current owner to match the first-floor sills and to replace the rotted wooden sills.

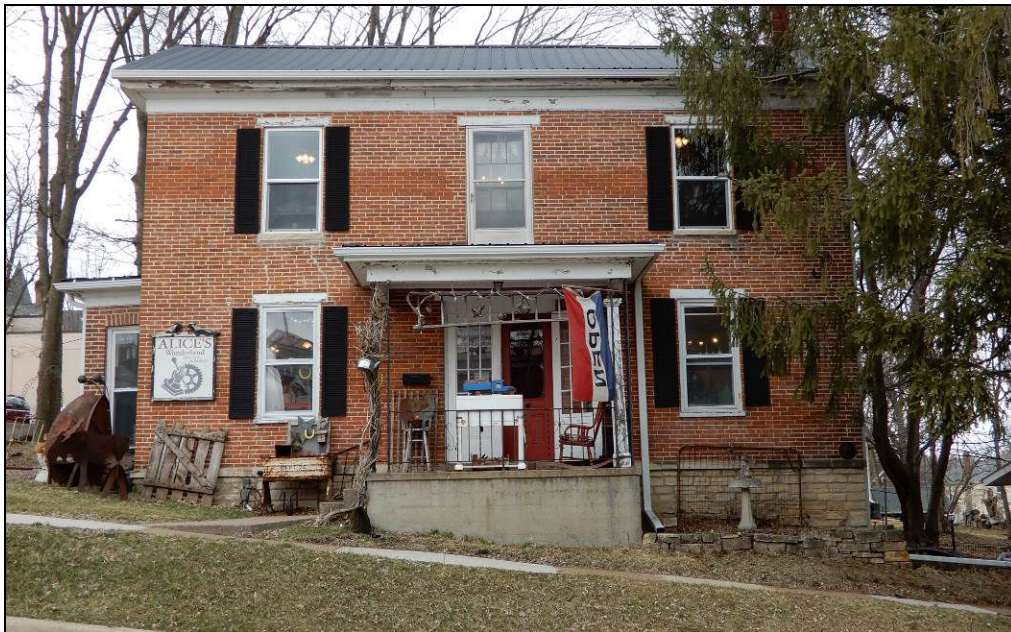


Figure 1. Façade (east side). Photograph taken March 30, 2019.

² The building's façade is actually southeast-facing given the street angle in the northwest part of the Mount Vernon plat; however, for ease of description, the southeast façade is described as "east," the northeast side as "north," the northwest (rear) side as "west," and the southwest side as "south."

³ Brothers Philip and Frank Corbin began their business in 1848 adding partner, Edward Doen, in 1849. The company first manufactured ox balls to cover the horns of oxen and steer. In the last half of the 19th century they began making coffin trimmings, door knobs, and stove handles. By 1851, the Corbin brothers became sole partners and renamed the company P&F Corbin Company. Then in 1868, the company began producing brass and bronze builder's hardware and by the early 1870s began to focus on decorative hardware. In 1902, the company merged with another and was renamed the American Hardware Corporation, which much later was purchased by Black and Decker. It is suspected that the doorbell on the front door of the subject house was manufactured between 1868 and 1902 (<https://www.historichouseparts.com> and <https://connecticuthistory.org/philip-corbin-manufacturing-a-legacy-for-new-britain/>, accessed November 2018).

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North Side

This side of the house has much of the stone basement level exposed (Figure 2). This configuration allowed for two window openings which were both filled in during the late 20th century. One is filled with modern stone slabs, while the other is filled with smooth concrete blocks and has the intake for the air conditioning unit. There are two 1/1 double-hung, wooden-sash windows on each of the first and second stories of this side. They retain their original wooden framing, including flat lintels and sills and are covered with modern, metal storm windows. Cornice returns frame the gabled end. The rear addition, largely covered in stucco, features a small double-hung window on this side, which is a modern insert that also appears to be in a reduced window opening that has brick infill below the window. An exterior cellar door is on the side of the addition just below the window. The entry has a wooden-paneled door that opens out and has concrete side walls on the exterior.



Figure 2. North Side. Photograph taken May 2, 2018.

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Rear (West Side)

On the rear (west side) there are three single windows across the second story section of the house, with the center window retaining an original 6/6 double-hung, wooden-sash window (Figure 3). The other two are 1/1 vinyl replacement windows. The window openings are original and have flat lintels and sills like the front windows. The windows also have metal storm windows. The one-story, shed-roofed rear addition is clearly historic, as evidenced by the visible brickwork and the limestone foundation. However, most of the brick walls have been coated in stucco. A modern, wooden deck has been constructed along part of the rear wall of this addition. The installation of a metal roof in 2018 resulted in an extension of the porch eaves out over the entire length of this addition. In the process, a shed-roofed awning over the double doors was removed. Much like the front doors, the rear double doors are modern and largely glass (15 square panes set in a wooden frame). To the right of the double doors is a modern 1/1 vinyl window.



Figure 3. West (rear) side. Photograph taken March 30, 2019.

South Side

The rear addition on this side is not coated in stucco and shows the original brick wall (Figure 4). A second brick addition wraps around the side and southwest corner to abut or join the rear addition. The side addition features a small, rectangular decorative-pane, wooden-frame window (center pane of textured glass surrounded by small panes of colored glass), and three 1/1 double-hung, wooden-sash windows that are very tall and narrow in what was originally a rectangular bay window on this side. The windows on this side of the house all have brick soldier-course lintels and stone sills. On the two-story section of the house there are two 1/1 vinyl windows that have newly-installed stone sills but retain the original flat, wooden lintels, as well as decorative shutters. Cornice returns on the gable ends match those on the opposite end.

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Figure 4. South side. Photograph taken May 2, 2018.

Interior

As one enters the ground floor through the double front doors, one enters a largely open living room to the north with the stairs to the second floor along the south wall. This wooden staircase is not the original staircase in this house (Figure 5). The original staircase was removed in the 1980s and replaced with a pull-down trap door staircase since the upstairs was then used only for storage. However, the next owners when this building housed *The Sun* newspaper, installed the current staircase using new materials but made to look historic and located where the original stairs were sited. The original newel post and some of the treads are stored in the basement of the house but none of the railing or the spindles survived.

To the south of the stairs is the parlor that contains the bay window in the south wall. From the parlor one enters the dining room to the west through a double-wide opening. There is a modern bathroom in the addition that bumps-out from the southwest corner of the house and is entered from the dining room. There are two door openings between the dining room and the kitchen to the north, which also has two openings from the living room and has the double-doors to the rear deck on the west wall. There may originally have been more of a wall between the stairs and the living room originally, with the wall opened up, but not entirely removed, in later years. The second floor of the original house shows something closer to the original ground plan having a central hall containing the staircase and bedrooms to either side, although in this case there are two bedrooms on the north side and a large single bedroom on the south side.

Some older wooden flooring remains, including both original wide wooden planks and narrower hardwood flooring that was probably installed in the early 20th century (Figure 6). The dining room has modern vinyl flooring. The woodwork is plain but mostly original and consists of flat wooden lintels and surrounds on the windows, although some of the doorways and windows have slightly-peaked lintel boards with corner blocks and paneled surrounds (see Figures 5 and 6). The original portion of the house has baseboards with quarter-round shoe molding and some original wooden, four-panel doors with brass box locks and ceramic door knobs.

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Figure 5. Interior details (left to right): front staircase, plain wooden-paneled door with metal lock box hardware, and front door with original double-wide wooden-paneled door casement.

Photograph taken August 2, 2018.

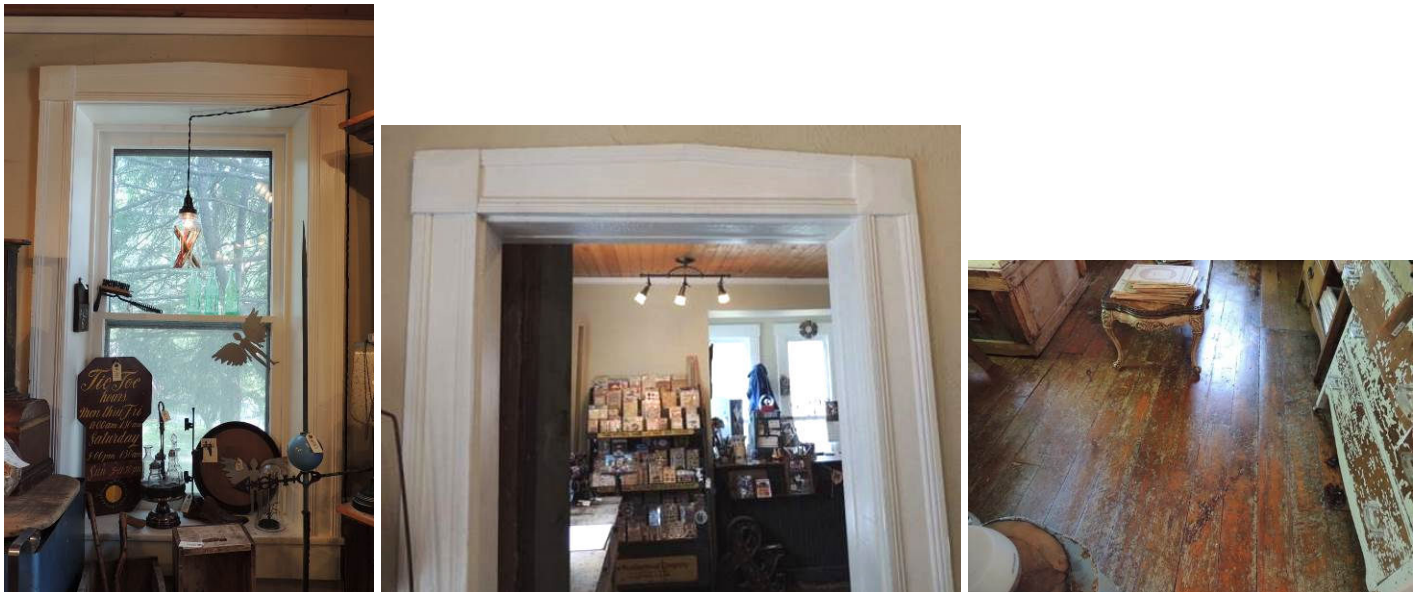


Figure 6. Interior views (clockwise from top left): window surround with peaked lintel board; door surround with peaked lintel board; original wide board flooring. Photographs taken August 2, 2018.

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Statement of Integrity

The Wilds House retains fair to good historic integrity on both the interior and exterior in most of the seven aspects of historic integrity but fair integrity of setting. The house retains good integrity of location being on its original site just downhill from the main historic commercial area of Mount Vernon.

The house retains fair integrity of design being a representative example of the modest-sized Mid-19th Century side-gabled brick houses that were built in Mount Vernon during that era. The modest size resulted in the use of three-rank rather than five-rank fenestration, but the house still has the decorative details of mid-19th century styles in the use of cornice returns, eave moldings and frieze boards, and the façade configuration with the centered doors on both stories flanked by single windows. The original ground-floor front doorway may have been a single door with sidelights; however, the current double-door configuration may be of historic age and notably retains the original wooden-paneled interior casement and what was probably a rectangular transom above the doors. Integrity is fair due to the modifications to the front door and façade.

Integrity of materials is good, with the house exhibiting the use of early soft bricks in a solid wall construction on a limestone foundation. Both the bricks and the limestone were obtained from local sources and manufactories, with the bricks obtained from Henry and William Albright's brickyard in Mount Vernon.

The masonry work in brick and stone also reflects good integrity of workmanship, with the house built by the Albright brothers, who were local builders and brickyard operators in mid-19th century Mount Vernon.

The house retains good integrity of association being recognizable as an early brick home in Mount Vernon and for its association with the Military Road Era in the town's settlement and development.

The house has good integrity of feeling presenting a strong sense of time and place of any early brick home in Mount Vernon.

The integrity of setting is fair, with this house banked into a fairly steep slope but sitting close to the east frontage of the lot and the street. The lot itself has small front and side yard space but does have a rear yard that extends to the west of the house that is now largely wooded. The trees along the north and rear of the house help to screen the house from the modern house to the north and the modern commercial/City Hall block to the south. There is a historic brick house of similar vintage directly across the street, with the brick building of the Mount Vernon Commercial Historic District to the southeast and a Late Victorian frame house to the north west.

Modifications have included: replacement of all but one of the original 6/6 double-hung sash windows with modern 1/1 vinyl windows on the second story but older 1/1 wooden-sash windows on the first floor; replacement of the porch posts and floor/foundation structures in the late 20th century with metal posts and a concrete slab, foundation, and steps; the late 20th century application of stucco on two walls of the rear brick addition; the modern reduction of one side window on the rear addition; the addition of a modern deck and French doors on the back side of the rear addition; and some interior updates, which are of limited extent. The most recent modification was the installation of a standing-seam metal roof and the extension of the rear roof overhang on the one-story addition in 2018.

While it is difficult to discern because of the stucco coating and the south-side addition, it is suspected that the one-story brick addition is not actually an addition but rather part of the original construction. It was present at the time of the 1894 Sanborn fire insurance map, which showed the two-story brick section with a full-width, one-story brick wing on the rear wall (Figure 7). That map showed interior connections between the two sections, with the two-story section having the rectangular bay window. The 1894 map also showed a full-width, one-story frame porch across the façade. This remained the configuration through the 1900 Sanborn map, which oddly depicted the house as frame construction rather than brick. However, by 1906, the south-

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side addition had been made extending from the bay window west and wrapping to connect to the rear wing. A small frame porch was shown on the north end of the rear wing. The front porch was still intact. This remained the configuration through the 1921 and 1941 Sanborn maps. Therefore, the south side addition was made between 1900 and 1906 and the front porch was either reduced in size to its current configuration or was replaced after 1941. The wrought-iron posts on the porch became popular as part of the Ranch style in the 1950s-1960s but were also popular as replacements for wooden porch posts.

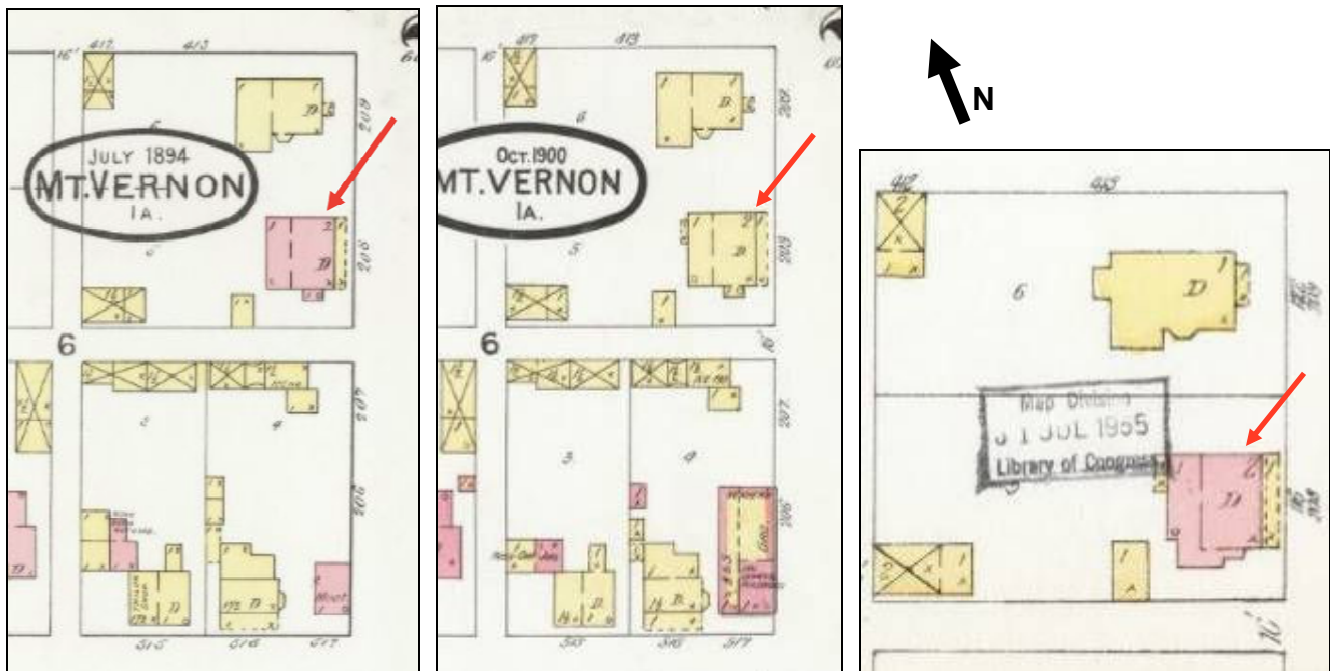


Figure 7. Wilds House, left to right: 1894, 1900, and 1906 Sanborn maps.

Oddly, the 1900 map depicts the house as frame construction (yellow shaded) instead of brick (pink shaded).

Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Mount Vernon, Iowa, 1894, 1900, and 1906.

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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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

Period of Significance

1857-1870

Significant Dates

1857

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

Architect/Builder

Albright, Henry D.

Albright, William D.

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Statement of Significance

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

The Col. John Q. and Rowena (Camp) Wilds House is locally significant and eligible for listing under the "Military Road-era Buildings, Structures, and Objects, c.1840-70" context and the "Mt. Vernon Local Brick Buildings, c.1840-93" context of the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Submission, *Historic Resources of Mt. Vernon, Iowa*. The Wilds House is significant under Criterion A of the Military Road-era context as a property "that illustrate[s] the effect the Military Road had on Mount Vernon settlement and is directly associated with important events of the period" and under Criterion C of that context as a property "that displays vernacular building techniques and traditional building materials, such as locally produced brick and locally quarried stone." The Wilds House is also significant under Criteria A and C of the "Mt. Vernon Local Brick Building" context as a property that has "associations with settlement patterns," and "that contribute[s] markedly to the distinctive architectural character of Mount Vernon" through its "wall covering of locally produced brick" and its Early Republic stylistic influences. Built in 1857 for prominent early Mount Vernon merchant John Q. Wilds most likely by the Albright brothers, the Wilds House meets these registration requirements under both Criteria A and C of both historic contexts through its association with the Military Road and its role in the settlement of Mount Vernon, through its display of local building traditions and materials, namely locally quarried limestone and locally manufactured red-orange brick, and through the workmanship of the town's earliest masons. The period of significance for the Wilds House is 1857 to 1870, from the year Col. John Q. Wilds had the house built to the end of the period of significance for the "Military Road-era Buildings, Structures, and Objects, c.1840-70" context of *Historic Resources of Mt. Vernon, Iowa* Multiple Property Submission.

This property is one of a group of 11 historic brick houses in Mount Vernon being nominated under the *Historic Resources of Mt. Vernon, Iowa* Multiple Property Submission in 2019.

Narrative Statement of Significance

 (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

(Iowa SHPO Additional Instructions: For properties not nominated under Criterion D, include a statement about whether any archaeological remains within or beyond the footprint of the property were assessed as part of this nomination under the subheading **Archaeological Assessment**.)

Criterion A: Historical Significance of the Col. John Q. and Rowena (Camp) Wilds House

Under the registration requirements for Criterion A of the "Military Road-era, c.1840-70" context, the Col. John Q. and Rowena (Camp) Wilds House is a property "that illustrate[s] the effect the Military Road had on Mount Vernon settlement and is directly associated with important events of the period" (Long 1991:F2). According to the description of the significance of this property type:

Significant properties call attention to the establishment of the Military Road and illustrate the effect the route had on settlement in the Mount Vernon area. The Military Road was a key ingredient in fostering area settlement. Significant examples reveal an important architectural period and building tradition in Mount Vernon. Through their use of local building materials, these resources show how early settlers took advantage of natural resources to provide shelter during the Military Road era. They also represent the effects of a specific period of local efforts to capitalize on the presence of a major transportation route, the Military Road. Finally, significant properties illustrate a specific and influential period, the early settlement of Mount Vernon. In short, they date from the founding of the community.

Surviving properties from this pivotal period in the history of the community are so rare that examples from prominent building types, such as houses, that retain sufficient integrity are considered significant to understanding Mount Vernon's development (Long 1991:F2).

Under the registration requirements for Criterion A of the "Mt. Vernon Local Brick Building, c.1840-93" context, the Wilds House is also a property that has "associations with settlement patterns" although the primary

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significance for this context is under Criterion C (Long 1991:F4). According to the description of the significance of this property type:

Although their significance is primarily architectural, many examples also call attention to the early settlement period of Mount Vernon. Their construction is associated with the establishment of the Military Road around 1840 and they illustrate the effect the route had on settlement in the Mount Vernon area (Long 1991:F3-F4).

John Quincy Wilds was born in Fulton County, Pennsylvania, in 1825. Wilds' father died while he was still a child, leaving his mother, himself, and his younger siblings a hard life of poverty on the family farm. In 1853, at the age of 28, Wilds moved to Iowa and settled in Mount Vernon. The year 1853 was an auspicious one, as the Mount Vernon Centennial records:

This year will be remembered as of utmost importance since it records the founding of the Iowa Conference Seminary. . . Immigration into Iowa reached a high peak. Among the community activities there were new business enterprises, such as the venture of George Camp in opening a factory for the manufacture of wagons (Centennial Committee 1948:24).

John Wilds opened a general store in the Ellison block and took up residence with George Camp's family, where he met Camp's daughter, Rowena. Three years later, Wilds was running a successful business and investing in real estate. He and Rowena were married in 1857, the same year he purchased the lots in Block 6 of Mount Vernon, where he had the brick house built, most likely by the Albright brothers, whose contracting and brickmaking enterprise was at its peak (Centennial Committee 1948:24; Iowa State Census 1856; *Lisbon Sun*, November 20, 1891; *Marion Herald*, April 7, 1859). By 1859, Wilds' general store had made him wealthy enough to purchase the Marion Steam Mill for \$10,000, for which he paid mostly in trade with 1,967 acres of land in various locations across Iowa. He intended "putting it into good order and 'grind away'" (*Marion Herald*, April 7, 1859).

In 1860, Wilds sold the steam mill. He was listed in the census that year as having two small daughters, no occupation, and considerable wealth (*Marion Herald*, March 1, 1860; U.S. Census 1860). As Henry C. Kurtz recalled in his 1891 tribute to Wilds: "At the breaking out of the [Civil] war, [Wilds] was out of business, but in good circumstances for those days, and with his experience and capital he could have become wealthy, had he remained at home" (*Lisbon Sun*, November 20, 1891). Instead, Wilds volunteered for the 13th Iowa Regiment Company A in Mount Vernon in 1861 and was chosen captain. In 1862, he was promoted to lieutenant colonel of the 24th Iowa Infantry and was made full colonel not long after (Figure 8). Wilds was mortally wounded in October 1864 at the Battle of Cedar Creek in the Shenandoah Valley, not far from his boyhood home. He died of his wounds in a hospital a month later and was brought home for burial in Mount Vernon, where his wife and both daughters had died of illness within weeks of each other (Centennial Committee 1948:55-56; Kurtz 1891).

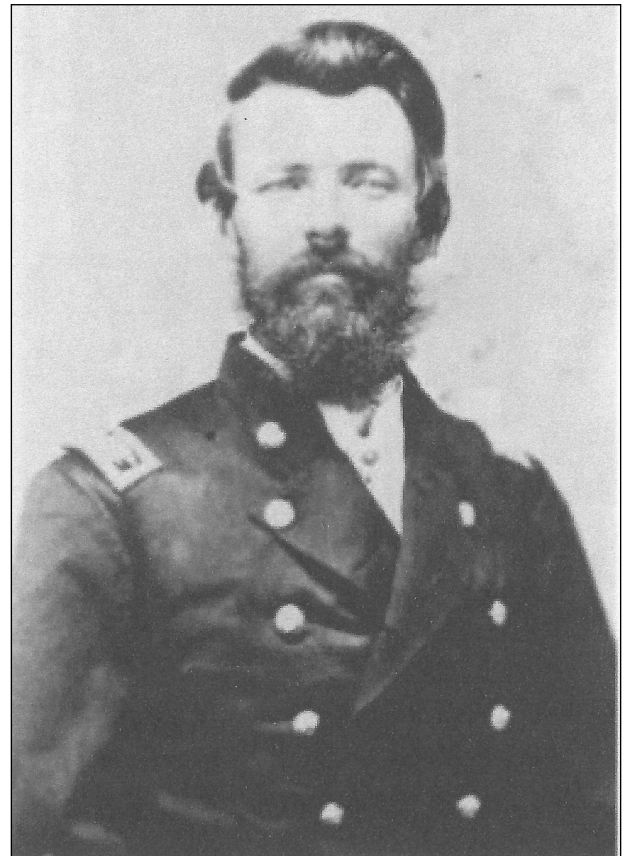


Figure 8. Photograph of Col. John Q. Wilds.
Copy provided by Alice Schumacher, Mt. Vernon, Iowa.

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The Wilds Estate, including the Wilds House, languished in probate as the sequence of deaths of each member of the Wilds family was ascertained. As the *Marion Register* explained in 1868:

There is another singular fact connected with the death of Col. W. and his oldest daughter. The difficulty of deciding who died first involved the question of heirship to nearly \$30,000. If the father died first, the daughter inherited the whole, and the whole property went back to the child's grandfather. If the child died first, the property went to Col. W's blood relations, he having no wife or child. The case was so close that the families after a year's examination of the matter, agreed to divide the property equally, so the grandfather of the daughter took one half of the estate, and the blood relations of Col. W took the other half, and everything was settled in the most amiable manner (*Marion Register*, August 12, 1868).

Thus, one of George Camp's sons ended up owning the Wilds House from 1867-1870. The house then was purchased by A.W. Dean, Isaac Wilcox, and N.P. Drown, the latter owning the house from 1873 to 1876. In 1873, James and Ruth (King) Smith moved in with their three children, William M., Carrie, and Charles T. The Smiths had moved from Painsville, Ohio to Tama County, Iowa, in 1865, where they engaged in storekeeping and farming (Abstract of Title; *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, December 13, 1901). In 1873, the Smiths moved to Mount Vernon. As the *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye* related in James Smith's obituary in 1901:

In 1873, feeling the desirability of locating in a college town for their children Mr. and Mrs. Smith selected Mt. Vernon as a home as so many others have for the same reason. The very house which is the family home today, enlarged and remodeled, is the one into which they moved upon coming to this city (*Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, December 13, 1901).

After moving into the house in 1873, William M. Smith – eldest son, Civil War veteran, and traveling salesman – purchased the house in 1875 from N.P. Drown, who had moved to Marengo. James Smith owned a successful dry goods store in Mount Vernon. He was elected mayor five different times, and served as township trustee for 15 years, and was much respected in the community. Although William Smith owned the property from 1876 to 1884, he spent little time there. In 1883, however, Smith returned home to help found the Smith & Carson Bank (later known as Mount Vernon Bank), and the following year, he sold the property to his parents and married Clara A. Brackett. William Smith died in 1899, and his father James Smith died in 1901. His probate inventory made note of his "home place located at Mt. Vernon, Iowa, being a brick house and a frame barn described as Lot 5, Block 6." This barn is nonextant but stood at the southwest corner of the lot as shown on the 1900 Sanborn map (see Figure 7). Afterward, the house passed through the family until 1916, when it was sold to Grace G. Wolfe through Daniel Welty. Grace G. Wolfe also made a name for herself running for State Treasurer in 1924 (Figure 9) (Town Lot Volumes 2, 6, 9, 15, 20, 277, and 44, Linn County Auditor; *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, November 12, 1875; *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, December 22, 1876; *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, August 25, 1899; *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, September 1, 1899; *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, December 13, 1901; U.S. Census 1880).

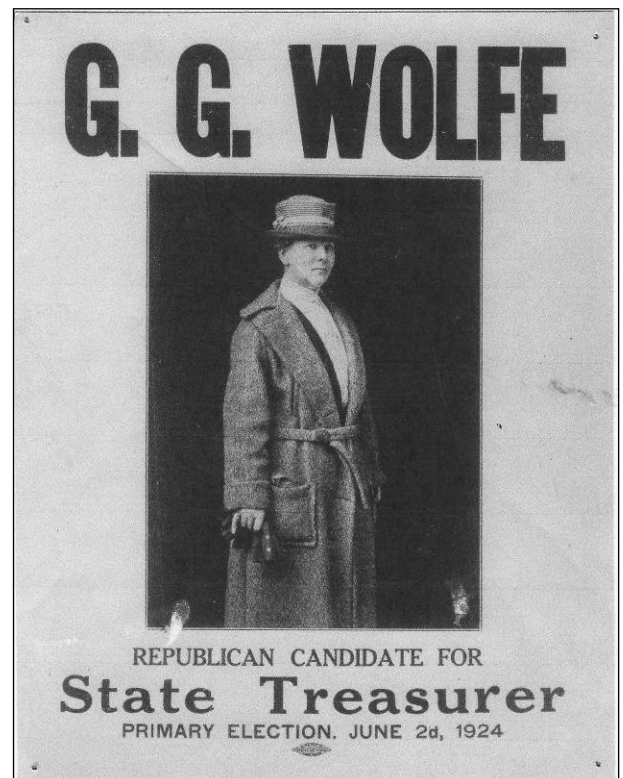


Figure 9. Campaign sign with photograph of Grace G. Wolfe.
Copy provided by Alice Schumacher, Mt. Vernon, Iowa.

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Criterion C: Architecture of the John Q. and Rowena (Camp) Wilds House

Under the registration requirements for Criterion C of the "Military Road-era, c.1840-1870" context, the Col. John Q. and Rowena (Camp) Wilds House is a property "that display[s] vernacular building techniques and traditional building materials, such as locally produced brick and locally quarried stone" (Long 1991:F2). According to the description of the Military Road-era housing property type:

The houses for this property type are built of deep red-orange local brick. Rooflines vary and include gable-side (the dominant shape), gable-front, crossed-gable, upright-and-wing, mansard, and hipped. Later examples are more likely to be hipped and early examples tend to be gabled. Most are two-story. Foundations are of locally quarried limestone (generally rubble or roughly dressed). Some lintels and sills are also stone. Brick is sometimes used decoratively for cornices, cornice returns, and more elaborate lintels. With the earliest examples, the use of brick with simple details and form results in a simplicity that contributes markedly to the charm of the community. Good representative examples are: 113 and 201 2nd Ave N, 417 A Ave S, 224 1st St SW, 600 and 601 1st Ave S. Stylistic influences include Greek Revival, the principal influence), Italianate, and Gothic Revival. The earliest examples often exhibit no strong stylistic influence but have a Federal stylistic simplicity and arrangement. (Long 1991:F3).

The Wilds House is also significant under Criterion C of the "Mt. Vernon Local Brick Buildings, c.1840-93" context as a property "that contribute[s] markedly to the distinctive architectural character of Mount Vernon" through its "wall covering of locally produced brick" and its Early Republic stylistic influences. According to the description of the significance of the Local Brick Building property type:

Buildings of locally produced brick and stone are a key visual element defining the nature and character of Mount Vernon, and their primary area of significance is architectural. Because of the key visual importance of this property type, most examples from the period c. 1840-1893 which retain their integrity are likely to be significant (Long 1991:F3-F4).

The Wilds House is a two-story, side-gabled vernacular house with Early Republic style influences. The house was built in 1857, after John Q. Wilds, an early Mount Vernon merchant, married Rowena Camp. Its foundation is locally-quarried limestone and its exterior walls are the deep reddish-orange, locally-produced brick that is the hallmark of Mount Vernon's Military Road era housing. As Janet Dumbaugh observed in her survey of brick buildings in Mount Vernon in 1978, the early pioneers of Mount Vernon "depended on craftsmen to build their new dwellings, which usually reflected styles of homes from communities left behind." Not only were an "unusually high number of brick homes" built during the Military Road era, Dumbaugh notes, but also "a high proportion of settlers were from the Lancaster, Pennsylvania area" (Dumbaugh 1980:2).⁴

The Lancaster area is world famous for its brick domestic and barn architecture. The [Pennsylvania] Dutch settlers in the early 1700s were ingenious in putting to use the native lime and muddy soils needed to make bricks. These same resources were available in the Mt. Vernon locale. Clay was easily extracted from the sides of the hills, limestone was plentiful, and the Cedar River banks supplied the sand. . . . The craftsmen of Mt. Vernon probably did not use pattern books and most certainly were not guided by city codes. They brought their skills and ideas with them and were limited to repeating the same designs with little variation until perhaps ten years later. These men usually built double brick walls with the bricks laid lengthwise in two parallel rows joined by crosswise bricks in various patterns. . . . Because of the resources available to make the bricks and the talented craftsmen from Pennsylvania it was natural and fortunate that Mt. Vernon should reflect this heritage (Dumbaugh 1980 2, 4).

Henry D. and William D. Albright, brothers who were born and grew up near Hanover, Pennsylvania, which is near Lancaster. They arrived together in Mount Vernon in June 1852, attracted by the founding of Cornell College and the possibility of contracting work, and for the next few years they worked as brickmakers and builders for early settlers. They are specifically known to have built Old Sem (1853) and College Hall (1856) at

⁴ The Pennsylvania Dutch, also known as Pennsylvania Germans, are descendants of early German immigrants to Pennsylvania.
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Cornell College and the house in which Henry and his wife Juliana would reside for most of the rest of their lives. According to Dumbaugh, all three buildings feature similarities:

All are basically rectangular, with the entrance centrally located on the long side, and windows placed symmetrically beside the door on each side and in the same position on the second or more stories. It is still domestic architecture that has been adapted in the case of the college buildings, for another purpose.

The Home and College Buildings share another feature that seems to be quite a common feature in this era of vernacular design and that is the inverted square U of raised brick forming the lintel and extending a short way down the side of the window. . . . Another common design is the use of a semi-circular window or vent at the gable (Dumbaugh 1980:5).

Col. John Q. Wilds was from Fulton County, Pennsylvania, about two counties west of Lancaster, and he arrived in Mount Vernon in 1853, just as the Albright brothers were building Old Sem and Henry Albright's house. The Wilds House, built in 1857, was almost certainly built by the Albrights, when the brothers' contracting business had reached its peak.

As with other houses of this antebellum period, the brick of the Wilds House is set in the Common Bond pattern, in which every seventh row is turned to form a tie between two rows of brick in a brick wall, creating a double wall. The double wall strengthened and supported the structure in addition to providing insulation and fire protection. William Albright supplied the needed building material – bricks and lime – from his brickyard located east of Mount Vernon's historic commercial area and just north of the limestone quarry. He may also have made some of the bricks on site using a temporary kiln, a common practice (Dumbaugh 1980:4).

Between 1876 and 1901, during the Smith family's ownership, the house was "enlarged and remodeled" (*Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, December 13, 1901). This is supported by the Sanborn fire insurance maps, which show that between 1900 and 1906 the addition that wraps around the southwest corner of the house was made.

Archaeological Assessment

The potential for any prehistoric or historic archaeological remains within the property boundary was not evaluated as part of the present National Register nomination. The main area on this property having archaeological potential is the rear yard where features such as a well, cistern, privies and nonextant outbuildings may be intact.

Acknowledgements

The completion of this nomination was made possible by the assistance of members of the Mt. Vernon Historic Preservation Commission, who compiled the floor plans, conducted on-site photography, conducted historic research, and reviewed the various drafts of the nomination. The property owners also assisted with the compilation of floor plans, photography, and historical materials and reviewed the draft versions of the nomination. The City of Mt. Vernon provided support for the project and cash match towards the grant.

Disclaimer

The activity that is the subject of the National Register nomination has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.

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Office of Equal Opportunity
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20204

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Lisbon Sun, March 9, 1888.
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Marion Herald, March 1, 1860.
Marion Register, August 12, 1868.
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Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye, November 12, 1875.
"Obituary Record: James Smith Esq.," *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, December 13, 1901.
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Mount Vernon, Iowa, 1894, 1900, 1906, 1921, and 1941. Obtained from the Library of Congress website.
U.S. Federal Census, 1860, 1880.

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 # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

1	<u>41.92344</u> Latitude	<u>-91.41787</u> Longitude	3	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude
2	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude	4	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated property is a parcel defined as Lot 5 of Block 6 in the Original Plat of Mount Vernon located at on the west side of 2nd Ave NW between 1st Street NW and 2nd Street NW. The north and south boundaries are each 132 feet and the east and west boundaries are each 66 feet.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Col. John Q. and Rowena (Camp) Wilds House at 113 2nd Avenue in Mount Vernon, Linn County, Iowa.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>Jennifer A. Price, Ph.D./Consultant, and Leah Rogers, Volunteer</u>	date	<u>March 1, 2020</u>
organization	<u>Price Preservation Research</u>	telephone	<u>(319) 594-9513</u>
street & number	<u>P.O. Box 5201</u>	email	<u>jenniferprice1311@icloud.com</u>
city or town	<u>Coralville</u>	state	<u>IA</u> zip code <u>52241</u>

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures)

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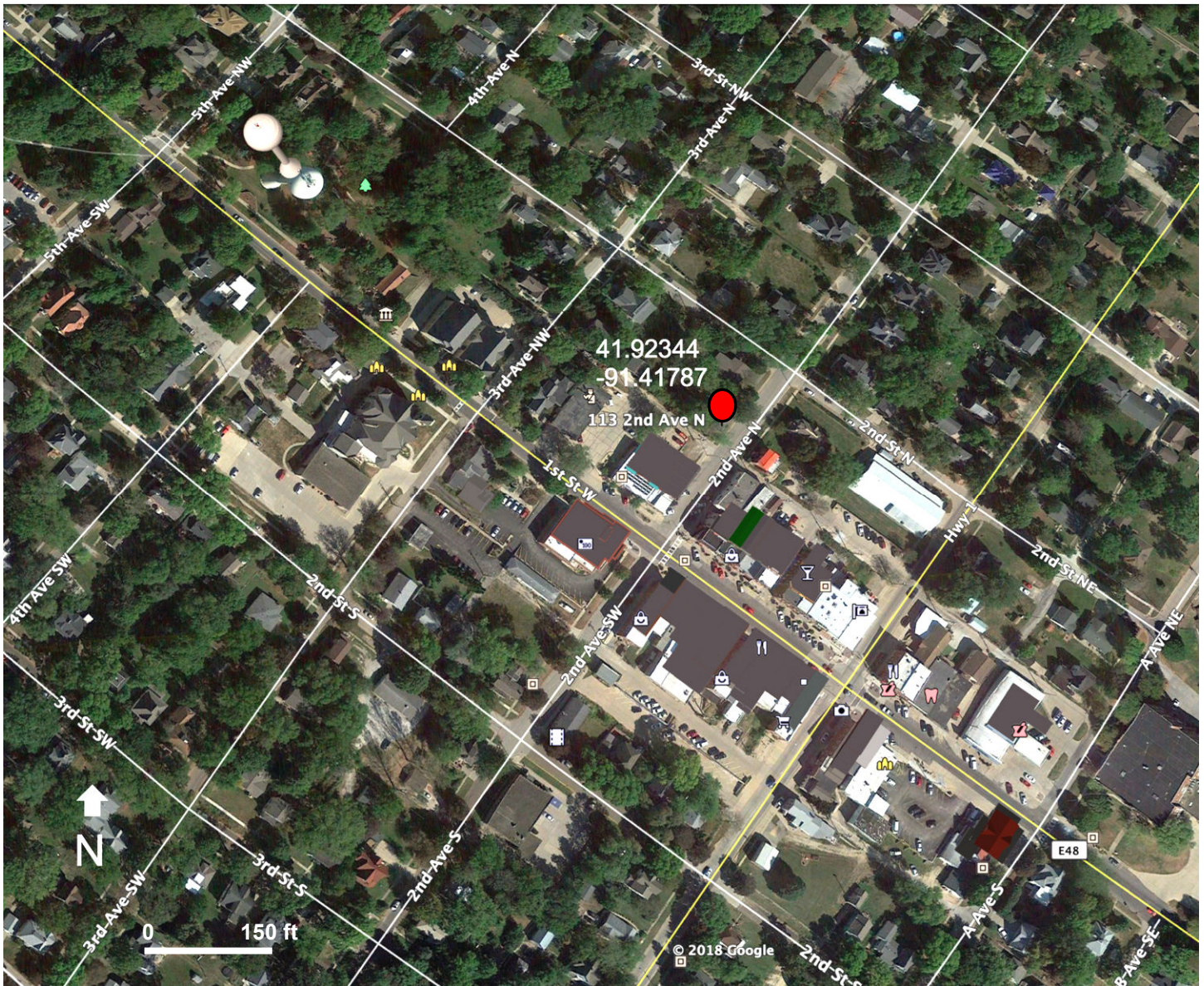


Figure 10. GIS Location Map
Map obtained from Google Earth, 2018.

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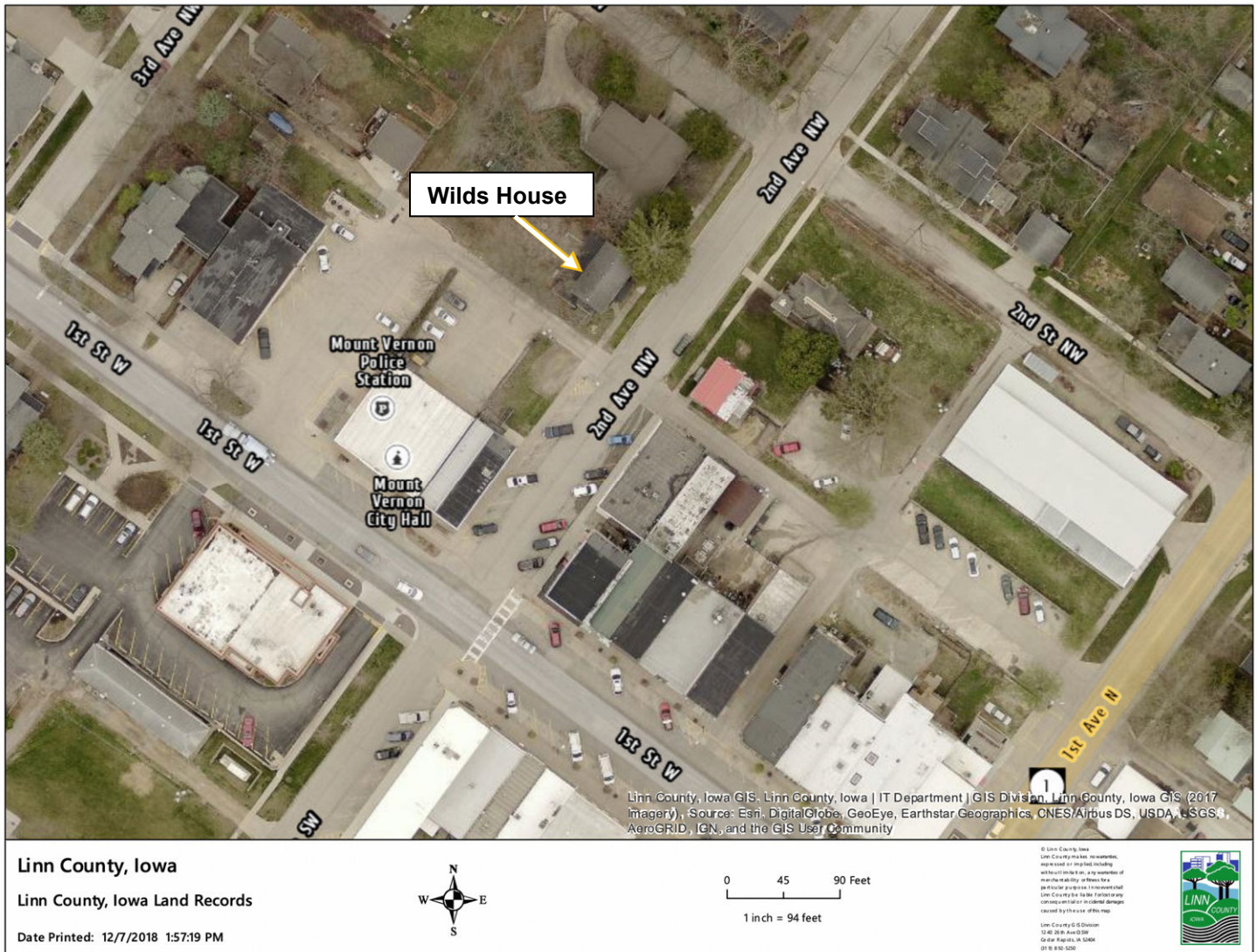


Figure 11. Local Location Map
Map obtained from Linn County, Iowa GIS, 2018.

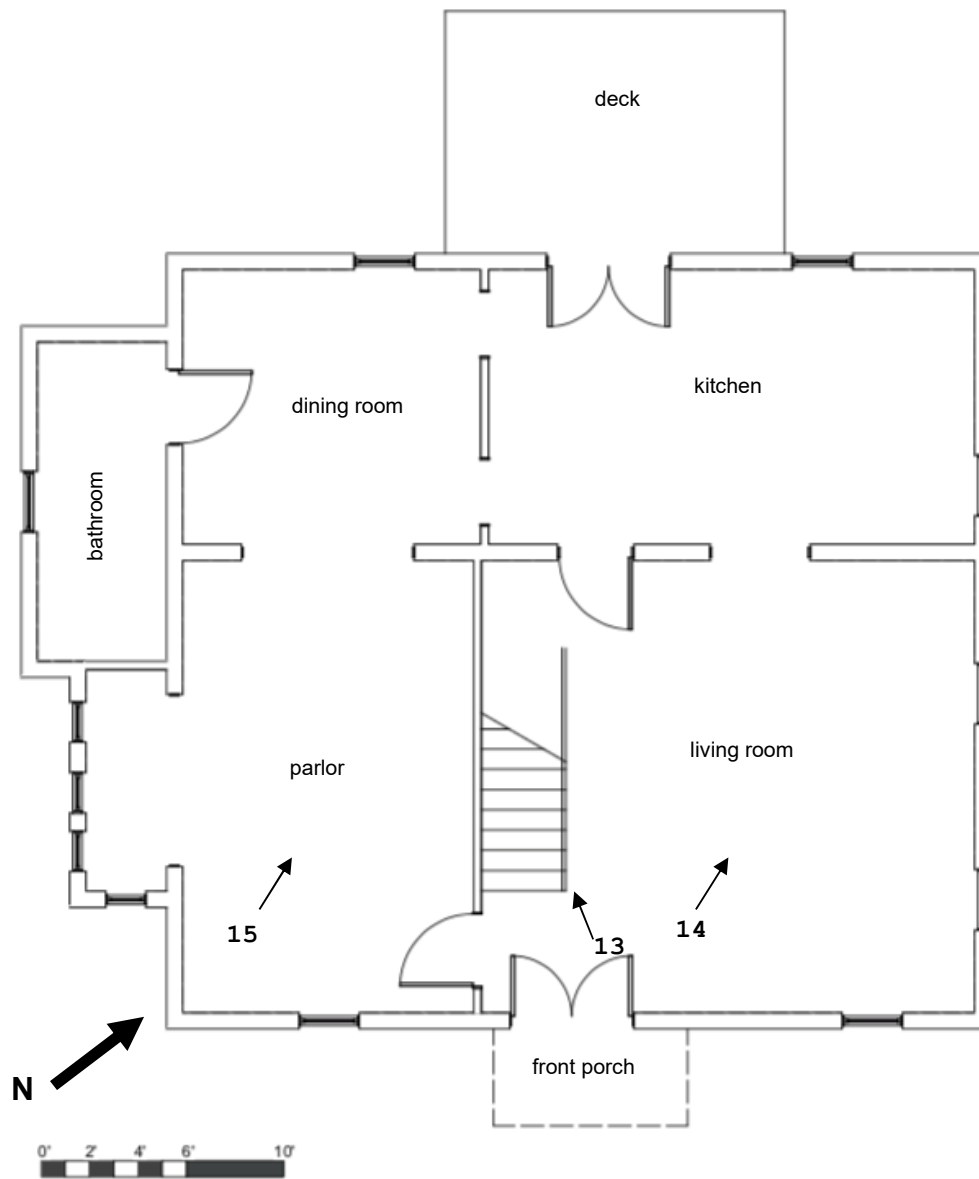
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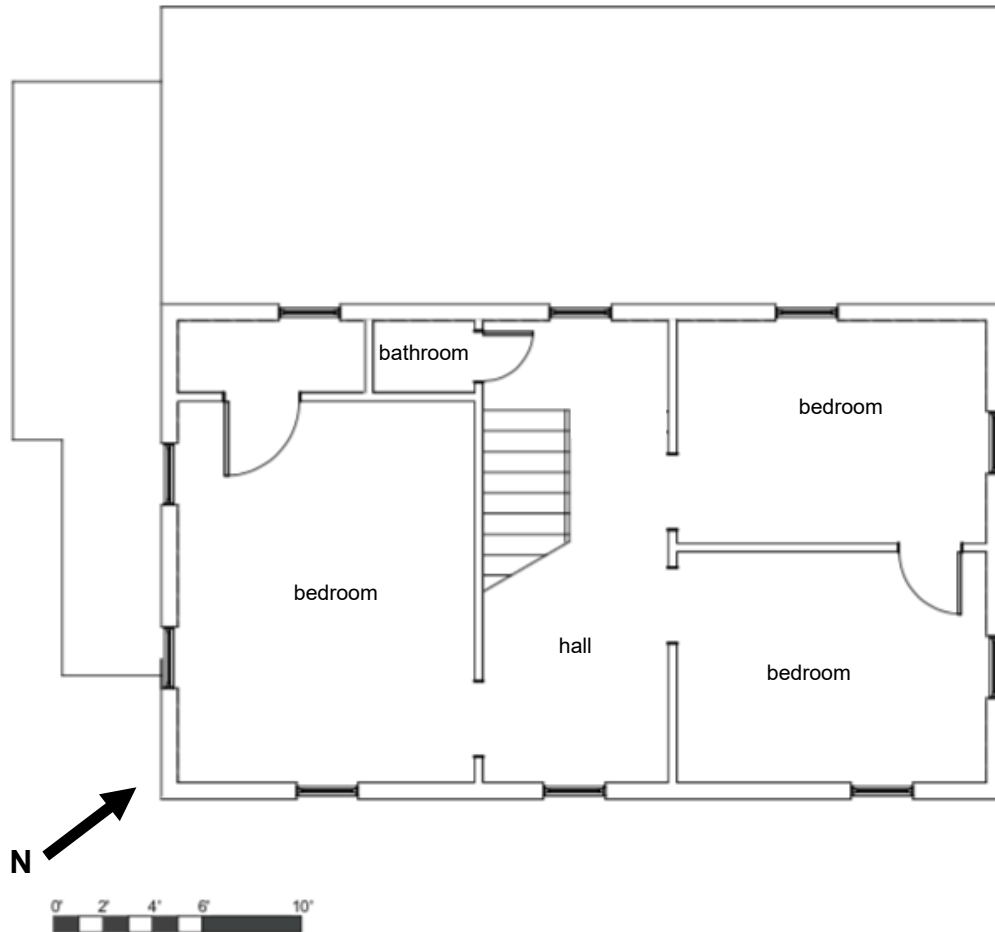
113 2nd Ave NW - MAIN FLOOR

Figure 13. Main Floor Plan and showing direction of photos #13-15

Drawn by Ed Sauter, Mount Vernon, Iowa

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113 2nd Ave NW - UPPER FLOOR

Figure 14. Upper Floor Plan

Drawn by Ed Sauter, Mount Vernon, Iowa

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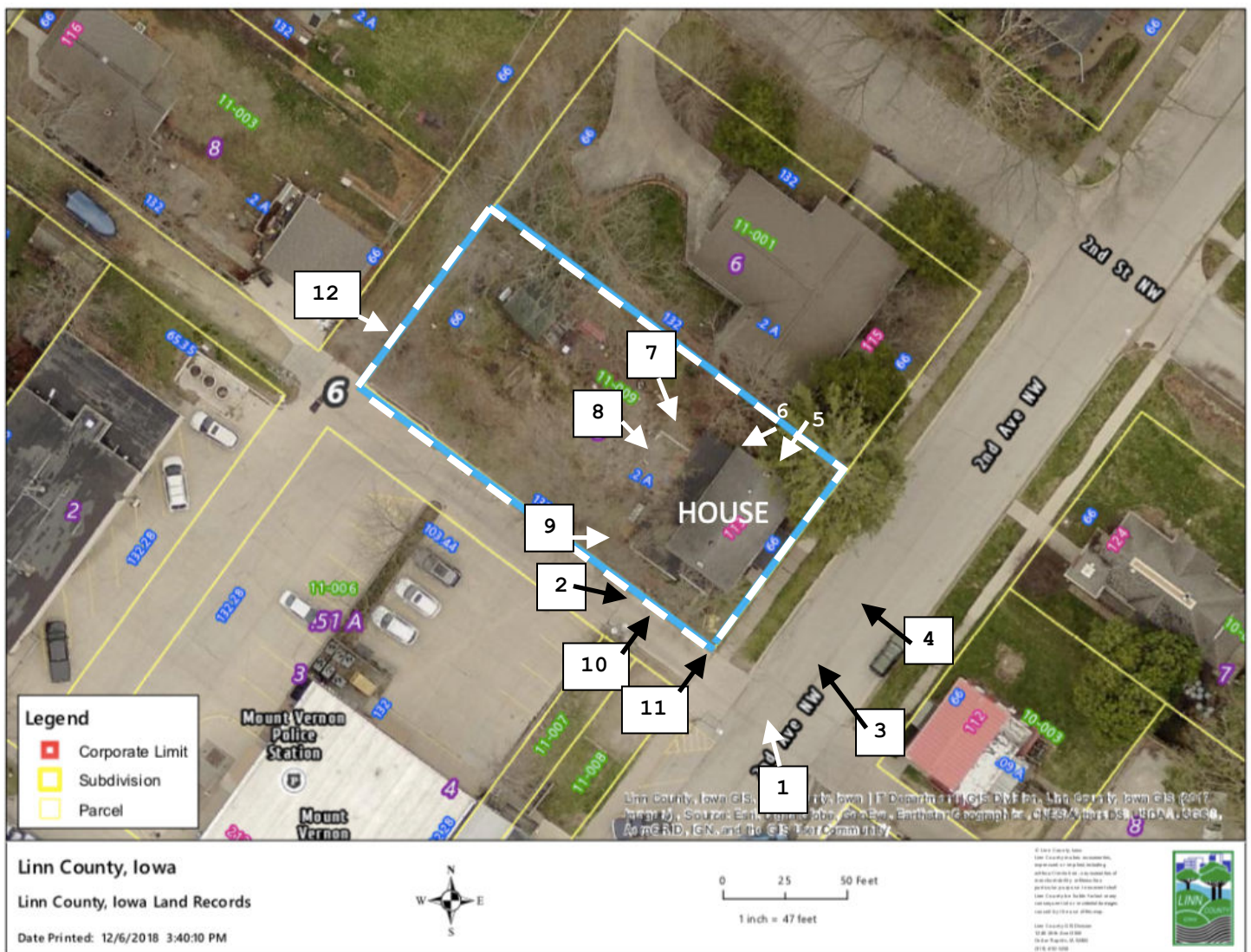


Figure 15. Site Plan showing directions of photos 1-12.
Map obtained from Linn County, Iowa GIS, 2018.

(white dashed outline = NRHP nomination boundary)

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Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Wilds, Col. John Q. and Rowena (Camp), House
City or Vicinity: Mount Vernon
County: Linn County **State:** IA
Photographer: Leah Rogers and Mary Evans
Date Photographed: March 30, 2019 (1-12) and March 3, 2019 (13-15)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo 1 of 15: General view of Wilds House looking NNW from across the street
Photo 2 of 15: General view of Wilds House looking ESE from alley
Photo 3 of 15: General view of Wilds House looking NW
Photo 4 of 15: Façade of Wilds House looking NW
Photo 5 of 15: North side of Wilds House looking SW
Photo 6 of 15: Lower portion of north side of Wilds House looking WSW
Photo 7 of 15: Rear of Wilds House looking SSE
Photo 8 of 15: Rear of Wilds House looking SE
Photo 9 of 15: Rear and south side of Wilds House looking East
Photo 10 of 15: South side of Wilds House looking NE
Photo 11 of 15: South side and façade of Wilds House looking NE
Photo 12 of 15: Small shed and rear yard of Wilds House looking ESE
Photo 13 of 15: Interior of Wilds House looking WNW at staircase up to second floor
Photo 14 of 15: Interior of Wilds House looking NNW at front NE room
Photo 15 of 15: Interior of Wilds House looking NNW at front SE room

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.