

Historical Walking Tour

Harmon & LeValley NW Historic District

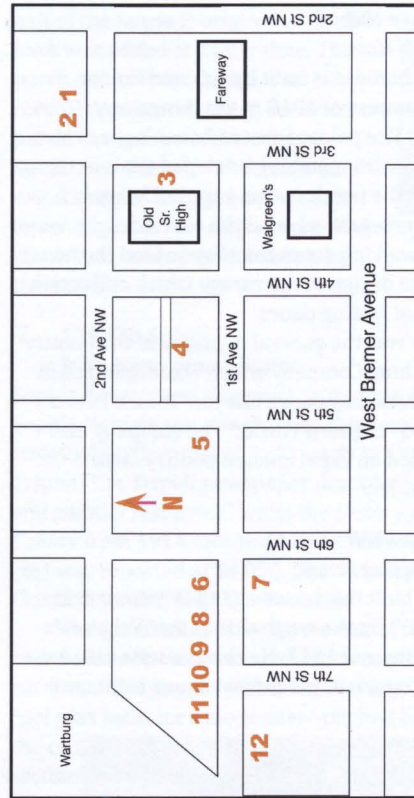
(north of Bremer Avenue and
west of the Cedar River)

1st Avenue NW
(formerly West Jefferson Street)



8 614 1st Ave NW - Henry Schell House

This is a self-guided walking tour. Please view the homes only from the sidewalk and respect the privacy of the owners.



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1 212 2nd Ave NW
A.G. Studier House

This tour's first home was built by A.G. and Emma Studier in the summer of 1919 in the Bungalow/Craftsman style. The painted stucco house has a brown brick foundation with matching brick pedestals at the outer corners of the porch and an exposed brick chimney that pierces the eave on the east side.

It's worth walking down the alley behind the house to see the unique design of the garage which still retains two of its original folding doors.

Mr. Studier was the general manager of the Poultry Breeders Publishing Company which was organized in Waverly to produce magazines like the "Rhode Island Red Journal" and "Leghorn World." The company also briefly maintained an experimental poultry farm southeast of Waverly.

2 220 2nd Ave NW
William Liebau House

William Liebau built this house at 315 W Jefferson St (now 1st Ave NW) on the north side of the Walgreen's block in the summer of 1912. He chose a style called the American Foursquare, popular from about 1900 until



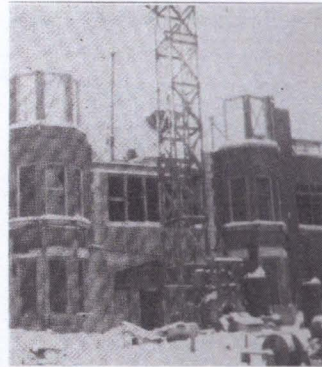
William Liebau house in 1913

the 1930s. The simple style was a reaction to the more ornate homes of the Victorian era. Hallmarks of the foursquare style, all present in this home, include a hipped roof, roof dormers and a front porch that spans the width of the house. The original porch was not retained when the house was moved to this location in 1967; this porch was built in 2003 to replicate the foursquare style.

Mr. Liebau operated a cigar factory in Waverly for 28 years, until machine-made cigars forced him out of business. He then sold insurance until he retired.

3 215 3rd St NW
Old Waverly High School/Junior High

Waverly's second high school was built in 1925-26 using the design of Waterloo architect Howard Bowman Burr, a Waverly native. The style is a subgenre of Gothic Revival architecture known as Collegiate Gothic, and can be found on college campuses around the country.



High School during construction

This example was constructed in a "strawberry shade" of "Tuxedo brick" with light pink mortar. Dressed and carved limestone was used throughout the building, including in the elaborate door surround, the name block above, and the clock at the cornice level. The

entrance is flanked by angular bay windows that extend three stories.

The north and south ends of the front façade contain masonry work of darker and lighter brick in a diamond pattern below nine-point star medallions of cut stone. When completed in 1926, the structure was considered one of the finest schools built in Iowa in the mid-1920s.

4 Alley between 4th St NW and 5th St NW
A collection of "city" barns

Before the invention of the automobile, "city" barns were a common sight around Waverly. Most were built from about 1890 to 1910, often in the wood clapboard two-story style of the barns found along the alley of this block. They provided shelter for a horse or two, buggies and perhaps some chickens.

5 203 5th St NW
John Leitha House

John Leitha started his career as a carpenter, but later completed a correspondence school course in architecture. He then began designing his own buildings in Waverly and Bremer County, including the Lutheran church in Sumner, several Waverly business buildings and homes, and a dormitory at Wartburg. In the early years of the twentieth century, Mr. Leitha was Waverly's most important local architect.

In 1910 he purchased this lot where he completed his personal residence in 1911. The newspapers reported that May Leitha invited friends to her new home for an afternoon of sewing and conversation after which they were given a “tour of inspection which was worthwhile. Everything seemed as complete as could be.”

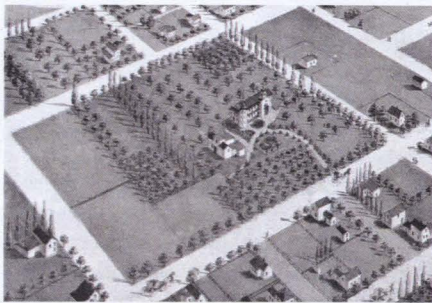
The Craftsman-style house is covered in a narrow-and-wide pattern of square-cut wood shingles that flare out over the foundation and extend to ground level. An interesting design feature is the projecting window group at the northeast corner of the first floor. The bay has a shed roof like the dormer on the front of the house and diamond-patterned lights.

6 203 6th St NW

Woodring/Hagemann House

The five houses along the north side of 1st Ave NW in this block are situated on the southern edge of a parcel of land that was known in 1868 as Le Forest Park or the LeValley Reservation. The land was later subdivided; Frank Woodring bought two lots at the southeast corner and built a home for his new bride, Mamie Burrington, in 1893. By 1896 the Woodrings had moved to Albert Lea where Frank opened a creamery supply business.

Fred Hagemann and Sophia Nevermann moved into the house in 1898 after their marriage. Mr.



The LeValley Reservation or Le Forest Park. Detail from a bird's-eye-view drawing of Waverly in 1868.

Hagemann had graduated from law school in 1896 and opened a practice in Waverly with a partner, Frank Farwell. He was also the county superintendent of schools for four years, and helped secure the funding for Waverly's Carnegie library as president of the library board. He served two terms in the Iowa Senate and ran unsuccessfully for governor of Iowa.

The house is an outstanding example of a Queen Anne Style Gable-Front-and-Wing house form. The front

half of the house is original while the back was added at a later date. The porch on the front façade was recently restored from an enclosed porch. The gables of the original house are covered with square-cut wood shingles staggered across the lower edge, narrow clapboard siding above that, and wave-cut siding in the peaks.



Fred Hagemann

7 121 6th St NW

John Nevermann House

Sophia Nevermann Hagemann's parents, John and Sophia Nevermann, constructed the house across the street when they moved to Waverly in 1906 from Tripoli. The Tripoli newspaper described it as “a large and palatial residence” while the *History of Bremer County* from 1914 referred to it as “commodious”; its cost was reported at \$4,000. The style is a blend of Classical Revival with Queen Anne.

The foundation of the house was constructed with oversized rock-faced concrete block in a dimpled pattern, a design rarely found in Waverly. The complex roof plan includes a moderately-pitched hipped roof at the center with projecting two-story gabled wings; some sections have flared edges, wide eaves and extended slopes. The balcony on the second floor has a half-height column that matches those of the first floor porch.

The original two-story carriage house/city barn still exists at the rear of the property.

Mr. Nevermann farmed for many years in Maxfield township, then retired to Tripoli for several years before coming to Waverly. He also served as constable, justice of the peace, township clerk and school director.

8 614 1st Ave NW (pictured on the cover)

Henry Schell House

Henry Schell's home was designed by John Leitha and constructed in 1914 at a cost of \$5,650. “For a home of real comfort and one that has all the advantages that a person may desire, the H.G. Schell home is complete in every detail.” It was newsworthy at the time that the house had “the waterworks and sewerage system”; many homes did not have the modern convenience of indoor plumbing.

This extremely well-preserved example of an American Foursquare had another feature that was popular in the early 1900s: a sleeping porch. It was believed that sleeping in the fresh air helped sufferers

of tuberculosis, a leading cause of death at the time. Mrs. Schell had contracted the disease and was treated in a sanitarium not long after moving into this house.

Henry Schell had clerked in a grocery store in his youth and, after pursuing a commercial course at Upper Iowa University, he opened his own store. He was a member of the City Council and a stockholder in the State Bank.

9 618 1st Ave NW
Burton Sweet House

When Burton Sweet, an attorney and Waverly native, moved into his new home in December of 1901, he had been married a year and was serving the first of two terms in the Iowa House of Representatives. The house style he and his bride chose was a Colonial Revival with a Gambrel Roof, and was described as "pretty, though unpretentious."



Burton Sweet

The steeply-pitched sloping side of the roof faces the street and contains a large attic dormer. If you look closely at the photo on the

cover of the brochure, you will see this house in the background, and will note how the roofline over the bay window has changed, along with the configuration of the front porch.

Mrs. Sweet contracted tuberculosis only four years after her marriage and moved nearly permanently to Colorado Springs, hoping the change in climate would be beneficial. She died there suddenly in the summer of 1906 while her husband was in Waverly on a business trip. A four-year-old daughter also survived her.

10 626 1st Ave NW
Edward Kaufman House

The next house on the tour, the American Foursquare of E.J. and Rose Kaufman, has a sleeping porch on the front over an open porch on the main level. It's an unusual feature for a foursquare but appears to be original. The open porch spanning the width of the house, the attic dormer and the low pitch of the hipped roof are, however, typical of the style.

Mr. Kaufman was clearing his lots in preparation for building "a new \$3,000 residence" in March of 1903. By November he and his family were living in the home. He was an assistant cashier at the State Bank at the time, and later was a real estate agent.

11 702 1st Ave NW
Smock/Kern House

The builders of the next home were Rev. P. Monroe Smock, the Baptist minister, and his wife Anna. Its architecture is a blend of the Queen Anne style (narrow clapboard siding, decorative shingles in the gables) with the hipped-roof style of the American Foursquare. The house was built in 1902 with a stone foundation; cement block foundations began to appear in Waverly construction about 1905.



Rev. P. Monroe and Anna Smock

In 1904 Rev. Smock, who also served as the county's superintendent of schools, left Waverly for South Dakota and the house was sold to Dr. L.C. Kern. A physician and surgeon who practiced medicine in Waverly for 62 years, Dr. Kern was one of the founders of St. Joseph Mercy Hospital.

12 709 1st Ave NW
Martha Miller House

From about 1905 until 1920, cement block construction was promoted as durable, fire proof and an inexpensive alternative to stone. Waverly had several manufacturers of "Art Blocks," and now has an outstanding collection of concrete block homes. This example was built by Lloyd Knapp about 1914. He used rock-faced concrete blocks with a dark red mortar for the foundation and walls, and a flat-faced block for the water table between the two. The closed balustrade of the porch is formed of poured concrete with an interesting curved design at the upper edge.

The photos in this brochure were reproduced from the collections of the Waverly Public Library, the Bremer County Historical Society Museum and the current homeowners.

If you have comments or corrections to this brochure, please contact Mary Meyer at 319-352-2013 or maryjmeyer@aol.com.