

Historical Walking Tour

Harmon & LeValley NW Historic District

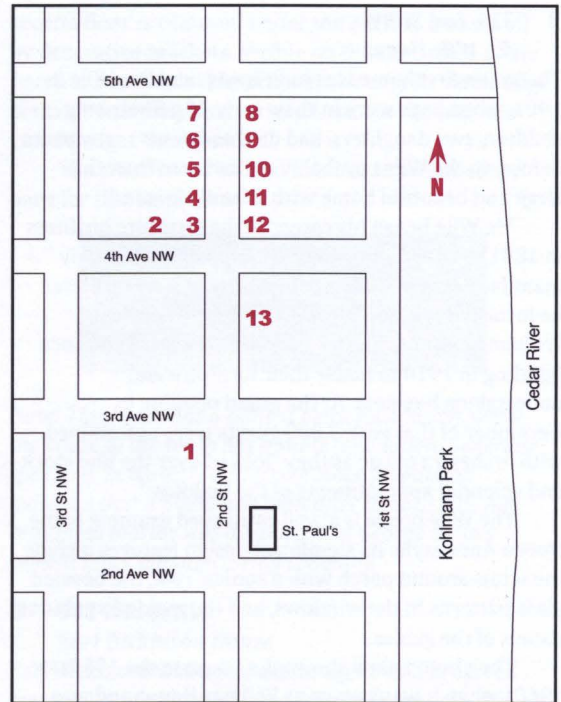
(north of Bremer Avenue and
west of the Cedar River)

2nd Street NW
(formerly North Elm Street)



2 216 4th Ave NW – Dr. C.P. Beyer 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 | 321 2nd St NW | <i>A.J. Wile House</i> |
| 2 | 216 4th Ave NW | <i>Dr. C.P. Beyer House</i> |
| 3 | 503 2nd St NW | <i>Harmon B. Miller House</i> |
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1 321 2nd St NW

A.J. Wile House

The tour's first home was built by A.J. and Eva Wile in 1901, when both were in their early 40s. Their only children, two daughters, had died as infants many years before, so the Wiles probably did not construct this large and beautiful home with a family in mind.

Mr. Wile began his career in the furniture business in 1881 as an employee of the Woodring Bros., early manufacturers of furniture in Waverly. Ten years later he formed a partnership with his brother-in-law, William Maaser. Together they built the Love and Lace building in 1910 to house their furniture and undertaking business. At the grand opening in December of that year, 3,000 guests were entertained with orchestra music as they "looked over the fine stock and splendid appointments of the building."

The Wile house is a well-preserved example of the Queen Anne style. Its significant design features include the wrap-around porch with a conical roof, the beveled glass patterns in the windows, and the molded sunburst panels of the gables.

The photo below shows the house in the 1950s or 1960s when it was known as Vollmer House and was off-campus housing for Wartburg students.



Vollmer House

2 216 4th Ave NW (pictured on the cover)

Dr. C.P. Beyer House

This home may also have served as housing for Wartburg students, but when Christian and Olive Beyer constructed it in 1892, they had a young family. The newspapers reported that a twelve-pound boy was born to the Beyers in early 1893.

The house was constructed in a Queen Anne style with Spindework detailing and retains nearly all of its

original trim, including scroll-cut brackets above the angled windows on east and west sides, and the semi-circular trim in the gables. The porch's posts, brackets, scroll-cut frieze, and the basket-weave skirting are also original.

Dr. Beyer, one of Waverly's early dentists, opened his practice in 1888, the same year he graduated from the dental course at the University of Iowa and married Olive Wescott of Sumner.

3 503 2nd St NW

Harmon B. Miller House

The exact year Harmon Miller built this home is unknown, but he purchased the lot in February of 1885, just after he married Atta Wescott. By 1894 the house is shown on a map of the neighborhood. At that time it was clad in wood siding with a porch that spanned the entire front. The flattened peak of the house may have been trimmed with iron cresting in those early years.

The house was given its Colonial Revival appearance in the 1950s when the full-width porch was removed and replaced by the present entrance bay and flat-roofed porch with square fluted columns at the outer corners. The stucco was likely applied at that time.

4 507 2nd St NW

Harold Miller House

Harmon and Atta's son, Harold, a building contractor, acquired this small parcel of land from his parents in November of 1914 and began the construction of this house soon after. John Leitha, a well-known Waverly architect, provided the design.

The *Waverly Democrat* of January 7, 1915, described the house as the "first real western style bungalow to be built in Waverly," and noted that the basement had "all that is necessary to make a modern home, such as vegetable rooms, laundry, cistern, boiler room, and coal bin."

The Bungalow/Craftsman-style house is covered with square-cut wood shingles laid in a "thick and thin" pattern. Its brick porch has massive columns at the outer corners and a closed balustrade with a curved concrete cap at its upper edge.

Mr. Miller built the Miller Casket Co. near the Strotman Building Center in 1917 and was still operating it in the 1930s. By 1940 he was an insurance salesman, the same occupation as his father.

5 515 2nd St NW

William Weick House

William and Ella Weick bought this lot for \$1,000 in 1903 with plans to build a \$3,000 house on it, but construction did not begin until 1905. On July 27, 1905, the *Bremer County Independent* reported that the Weicks were moving into their "fine new residence" that week.

The two-story frame house is similar in design to two others across the street—late Queen Anne style with a Cross-Gable Roof form. In this example, a flat-roofed front porch with a smooth-finished column supporting its outer corner is tucked into the right-hand ell.

Will was a blacksmith until he and his brother Frank purchased a large farm in South Dakota in 1910. By March of 1911, he had sold his blacksmith shop and this home, and had moved his family to Garretson, SD.

6 519 2nd St NW

Charles Krause House

Charles Krause chose a style called the Center Gable house for his home on North Elm Street; the style was built in Iowa from the 1860s until the turn of the twentieth century. Mr. Krause was a carpenter who constructed several homes in the neighborhood. This residence was built in 1900 at a cost of \$2,000.

The house has several interesting features, including the red granite hard head foundation. The gable peaks have unusual molded panels in a raised diamond pattern with carved floral designs. And the pediment over the entrance steps contains a sunburst panel. Also unusual is the radiating oval design in the leaded glass windows on either side of the entrance.

7 523 2nd St NW

Gustav Buls House

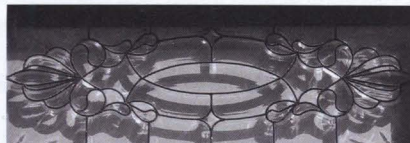
Gustav Buls chose this lot at the corner of North Elm and West Fulton Streets as the location for his "retirement" home. When rheumatism made farming no longer possible, he moved to Waverly in 1907 and contracted with John Leitha to design and build this elegant home at a cost of \$6,000.

The house is a variation of the American Four-Square style that was popular in Iowa from the turn of the twentieth century until the 1920s.

Beautiful curvilinear and floral patterns are found in the beveled leaded glass designs of several windows on the first and second floors, as well as the sidelights of the front entrance. The angular bay window on the

second floor is centered under the dormer and set off by decorative brackets. Visible on the north side of the porch is a section of the original skirting. Its rare design contains narrowly spaced scroll-cut boards with the curved edges facing out.

The small home behind this house was once the barn for this residence.



Note: This house has a cement block foundation, while the house to the south has a stone foundation. Generally speaking, in Waverly a concrete block foundation indicates that a house was built after about 1905. And red-tinted mortar was a hallmark of George Blain's cement block manufacturing company.

8 522 2nd St NW

Earl Dickinson House

Earl Dickinson was a real estate agent who brokered many sales of vacant lots and existing houses in the Harmon & LeValley neighborhood. He constructed his own "neat cottage" on this choice corner location in 1900. The board-and-batten city barn was built in the spring, followed by the house in the summer; the cost of both was \$2,400.

The house is an example of a vernacular Hipped Roof one-story house form. The city barn, which still exists at the back of the property, was a common sight in 1900 but very few remain today. Mr. Dickinson probably maintained a horse and buggy for driving his clients around the neighborhood.

9 518 2nd St NW

George Ebert House

The newest house on this block was built by George Ebert in about 1940 in the Bungalow Style with Front-Gabled Roof form. From the 1930s until the end of World War II, similar infill houses were constructed on small lots throughout the neighborhood.

Mr. Ebert was a saloon proprietor in Waverly after he moved his family here from Alta Vista in 1900. Later he worked as a carpenter and building contractor, and may have been involved in the construction of this house. Cora Ebert, George's daughter and a professor of English and Latin at Wartburg, resided here in the 1960s.

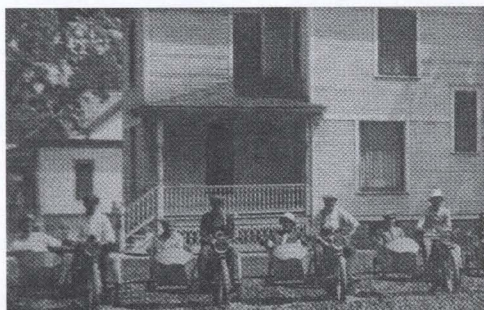
10 516 2nd St NW

Fred Nolte House

Fred Nolte married Elda Schild on May 21, 1903, at the Evangelical church one block south. The bride was accompanied down the aisle by her future brother-in-law, Ben Mether, who lived on the corner at 502 2nd St NW. Ben and his wife Linda hosted the wedding reception at their home. Elda and Linda were daughters of John and Dorothea Schild, "prominent and wealthy residents of Belle Plaine."

Fred had begun to build this house in early 1903 on a vacant lot purchased by his father from Ben Mether. The *Bremer County Independent* described it as a "good substantial house" on Elm Street that "will be another credible addition to that part of town." The house was nearly complete at the time of the wedding.

The house is similar in design to others in the neighborhood, a late Queen Anne Cross-Gable house form. The 1915 photo below of customers of the Verne Getts Motorcycle Agency shows the house in the background. The original porch balustrade and skirting are clearly visible, as is the Earl Dickinson house on the corner.



The Fred Nolte and Earl Dickinson homes in 1915

11 510 2nd St NW

William Klammer House

William and Sophia Klammer built this home in 1927 in the Bungalow/Craftsman style. William had been a furniture dealer and undertaker in Westgate before the couple moved to Waverly, Sophia's hometown.

This is another example of the infill houses that were built on the vacant lots in the neighborhood in the post-World War I era. The double-hung windows with multiple narrow panes in the upper sash and a single pane in the lower sash are a design element of the Craftsman style.

12 502 2nd St NW

Benjamin Mether House

When Ben and Linda Mether bought three lots on this corner in early 1900 the property included an old house. That house was moved away in 1902 when they began to build "a fine new residence." Mr. Mether owned a shoe store briefly, but the newspapers often reported that he was away looking after his real estate holdings in South Dakota and Minnesota. In 1905 he sold this home and moved his family to Pipestone, MN.

The Queen Anne-style house has lovely details. Note the half cove-cut shingles on the gables and the egg-and-dart molding under the eaves. The feature windows include leaded and beveled glass in decorative patterns, as well as stained glass in the gable windows.

13 416 2nd St NW

Engelbrecht House

The last house on the tour was moved to this neighborhood about 1950. The photo below shows the house at its original location on the Wartburg campus. It sat in the 300 block of North Orange St (now 9th St NW) and was the retirement home of August Engelbrecht, Wartburg's president from 1909 until 1933.

A clue that the house was moved is the flush-finished concrete block of the foundation, a mid-to-late-twentieth century building material. Original details include the sunburst panel on the pediment, over the entrance steps and the matching designs in the gable peaks.



The Engelbrecht house on the Wartburg campus with Old Main at the right.

The photos in this brochure were reproduced from the collections of the Waverly Public Library, Wartburg's Vogel Library and the Bremer County Historical Society Museum.

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