# **Historical Documentation**

# DANIEL LEHMAN FARM

Bremer County, Iowa

submitted to: Iowa Department of Transportation 800 Lincoln Way Ames, Iowa 50010

FRASERdesign 1269 Cleveland Avenue Loveland, Colorado 80537

January 1992

Site Location:

Just east of U.S. Highway 218, 2.0 miles north of Janesville; Jackson Township, Bremer County, Iowa; SW\(\frac{1}{4}\) of NW\(\frac{1}{4}\), and NW\(\frac{1}{4}\) of SW\(\frac{1}{4}\), Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West USGS quadrangle: Waverly, Iowa (7\(\frac{1}{2}\) Minute Series, 1963)

UTM coordinates: 15.542020.4725060

Present Owner:

Iowa Department of Transportation, Ames IA

Present Usage:

vacant (scheduled for removal in 1992)

Present Condition:

fair / poor

Significance:

A stonemason and a farmer, Daniel Lehman moved with his family to Bremer County, Iowa, in 1854. They purchased this farm in 1857 after living for a short time in Waverly, the county seat. Serving briefly as Bremer County Sheriff, Lehman played a minor role in the development of the area. His real historical contribution, however, was like that of thousands of other pioneers who moved to northeastern Iowa in the late 1850s. The Lehmans typified the flood of early, agriculturally based settlement that occurred throughout the region during its formative period. The house that they built circa 1881 to replace an earlier structure is similarly important for its representation of broad historical trends. Its staggered-block configuration and modest Victorian detailing mark the Lehman House as one of thousands of similar frame farm dwellings built throughout the state in the 19th century. The removal of the front porch and other alterations and additions have diminished the building's physical integrity somewhat, but it still stands as a noteworthy example of Iowa rural domestic architecture.

Written by:

Carl W. McWilliams and Clayton B. Fraser

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Loveland Colorado 80537

January 1992

# Part I. Historical Information

## A. PHYSICAL HISTORY

- 1. Construction Date: circa 1881
- 2: Architect/Builder: unknown
- 3: Ownership: The Daniel Lehman Farm comprises a tract of land in the SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of the NW <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West, in Jackson Township, Bremer County, Iowa. The following references were taken from records in the Bremer County Clerk's Office:
  - Patent, 15 January 1852; recorded as Land Warrant no. 73739, (see "Abstract of Original Entries in Bremer County, Iowa.")

    State of Iowa to John L. Chapin, N½ of SW¼, SE¾ of SW¾, and SW¾ of SE¾ (160 acres), Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
  - Deed, 29 May 1853; recorded in Book 1, p. 42.

    John C. Chapin to Frederick Roop, N<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> of SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> and SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> (120 acres),

    Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
  - Patent, 26 October 1853; recorded as Land Warrant no. 15954 (see "Abstract of Original Entries in Bremer County, Iowa.")
    State of Iowa to Jonathan Shippy (cash), West half of NW4, Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
  - Deed, 6 May 1857; recorded in Book C, p. 585.
    Frederick Roop to Wm. Roop, NW & of SW &, Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
  - Deed, 18 August 1857; recorded in Book D, pp. 41-42.

    Jonathan Shippy to John H. Martin, West half of NW 4, Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
  - Deed, 26 October 1857; recorded in Book D, p. 237.

    Wm. F. Roop and Wife to Chas. E. Burman, NW of SW, and 10.9 acres on south side of NW of SW (50.9 acres), Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.

- Deed, 30 December 1857; recorded in Book D, p. 246. Chas. E. Burman to Daniel Lehman, NW 4 of SW 4, and 10.9 acres on south side of NW 4 of SW 4 (50.9 acres), Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
- Mortgage, 13 December 1866; recorded in Book D, p. 171.
  Daniel Lehman to H.A. Miles Guard and Company, NW 4 of SW 4, Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
- Mortgage, 2 March 1881; recorded in Book R, page 31.

  Bremer County Bank to Daniel Lehman and Wife, South half of SW4 of NW4, and other lands, Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
- Mortgage, 12 March 1898; recorded in Book 29, p. 302.

  Meik Shurmann and Wife to Lipman Laser, North 3/4 of West half of SW4 and 47 acres in West half of NW4, Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
- 1930 Quit Claim Deed, 24 September 1930. Fred W. Mohr et al. to George F. Mohr, South 47 acres in West half of NW 4, Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
- 1930. Quit Claim Deed, 24 September 1930. Fred W. Mohr et al. to George F. Mohr, West half of SW\(\frac{1}{4}\), Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
- Warranty Deed, 18 June 1946; recorded in Book 102, page 124. George F. Mohr et al. to Alma J. Mohr, West half of NW4, NW4 of SW4, North half of SW4 of SW4, Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
- 1980 Court Officer Deed, 10 March 1980; recorded in Book 250, page 698.

  Alma J. Mohr estate to Irvin T. Tweeden, West half of NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
- 1988 Court Officer Deed, 2 June 1988; recorded as entry no. 1988-1533.

  Irvin T. Tweeden to Ronald J. and Janice A. Kriener, West half of NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>,
  Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
- 1991 Easement, 28 June 1991; recorded as entry no. 1991-2330.
  Ronald J. and Janice Kriener to the State of Iowa, NW 4 and SW 4 of NW 4, Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.
- Warranty Deed, 28 June 1991; recorded as entry no. 1991-2329.

  Ronald J. and Janice Kriener to the State of Iowa, NW 4 and SW 4 of NW 4;

  NW 4 and SW 4 of SW 4, Section 23, Township 91 North, Range 14 West.

- 4: Original Plans, Construction: The 1½-story Daniel Lehman farmhouse was built in a style that is perhaps best described as Folk Victorian. The building features a staggered-block footprint, with modest decorative trim.
- Alterations and Additions: The only exterior addition of note to the Lehman House is the construction circa 1930 of an attached garage at the rear of the house. Slightly more than 300 square feet, this gable-roofed rear wing is scaled to accommodate a single car. The garage represents an extension of the rear of the house and, as such, is not especially obtrusive. Another major alteration, however, has changed the architectural character and visual orientation of the building. The original open front porch that extended along the west wall of the south block in the north el has been removed. Two doorways originally entered onto this porch, one from the kitchen and one from the parlor; both have since been boarded over. The loss of the front porch and the substitution of the southside door as the main entrance serves to redirect the visual and functional orientation of the building from its west wall (the traditional facade of the house) to its south wall. The loss is significant, because the principal elevation of the house is now shifted from west - toward the road - to the south. Additionally, the front porch undoubtedly formed a strong architectural element for the building. Without it, the Lehman House appears somewhat featureless. Other exterior modifications have been relatively minor. Aluminum storm windows have been installed over the original wood sash, and the main entrance door on the house's south side has been replaced. Three-tab asphalt shingles have been installed over the wood shingle roof. And a corrugated metal hood has been installed over the south-side entrance.

The interior alterations have been far more extensive, reflecting the extended occupation of the building. The spatial organization remains essentially unaltered, but the interior surfaces in some of the rooms have been covered with more recent materials. The plaster walls of the kitchen have been covered with wood paneling, the ceiling with Celotex acoustical tiles, and the floor with vinyl sheet flooring. Carpet has been placed over the floors in the other first-floor spaces. The second-floor sleeping chambers and the remainder of the first-floor spaces display finishes (wallpapered or painted plaster, painted floorboards) that - although undoubtedly not original - are similar to the original materials.

## B. HISTORICAL PERSONS AND EVENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPERTY

The lands north of Janesville that would later encompass the Daniel Lehman Farm were patented in 1852 and 1853 respectively by early Bremer County residents John L. Chapin and Jonathan Shippy.<sup>2</sup> Apparently speculators, the two sold their property within a few years and soon moved from the region. By 1857 portions

of this property had come under single ownership. In December of that year, 51 acres of the land patented by Chapin and Shippy were purchased by Daniel and Martha Lehman. The Lehmans established and farm here, maintaining the property until their retirement in the mid-1890s. Thus it is with the Lehmans that the farm was most significantly associated during its historic period.

Born in 1829 in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, Daniel Lehman learned the trade of stonemasonry during his teens, before moving westward to Stephenson County, Illinois, in 1851.<sup>3</sup> Lehman stayed in Illinois for only three years, but during this time he met and married Martha Wilson, a Kentucky native born in 1830. In 1854 Daniel and Martha moved to Bremer County, Iowa, joining numerous other pioneers in establishing farms west of the Mississippi River. The young couple settled in Waverly, the county seat, and Daniel initially continued his work as a stonemason.

The Lehmans quickly became respected members of the community; in December 1854, Daniel was appointed to serve as the county sheriff. Before long the Lehmans were attracted by what had brought so many others to the region - fertile soils and the suitability for crop production. After purchasing the farm in 1857, Daniel also continued to work as a mason for a short time. Within a few years, though, the family devoted its efforts to farming on a full-time basis. In 1866 the Lehmans took out a mortgage on the property, perhaps using the money to build farm structures. A second mortgage taken out fifteen years later likely funded construction of the extant farmhouse.<sup>5</sup>

The Lehman family maintained the farm for some forty years, before relinquishing ownership in the mid-1890s. After retiring, the Lehmans moved to Janesville. Martha passed away in 1904, and Daniel died a year later at the home of their daughter in Siloam Springs, Arkansas. Subsequent property owners continued the farming tradition established by the Lehmans. By 1898 the property had been purchased by Meik Shurman, who in that year sold it to Lipman Laser. In the 20th century the farm was long under the stewardship of the Mohr family (Fred K., Fred W., George F. and Alma J.), who owned it from at least 1917 until 1980. Owners in recent years (1980-1991) include Irvin T. Tweeden and Ronald and Janice Kriener.

The Lehmans were most responsible for the development of the farm and its buildings. The farmhouse, built when they owned the property, typifies late 19th century rural construction in the upper Midwest. With a modest, somewhat informal floor plan and relatively restrained decorative woodwork in the gables, the Lehman House is representative of rural domestic architecture in Victorian Iowa.

### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup>See Virginia and Lee McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), pp. 309-317.

<sup>2</sup>Information regarding ownership of the property was compiled from "Abstract of Original Entries in Bremer County, Iowa," and Bremer County Grantor - Grantee Books, 1852-1991, both on file at Bremer County Clerk's Office, Waverly, Iowa.

<sup>3</sup>History of Butler and Bremer Counties, Iowa, (Springfield, Illinois: Union Publishing Company, 1883), p. 928. See also the 1860, 1870 and 1880 federal censuses for Iowa, and the Iowa census returns for 1885 and 1895, microfilm copies on file at the Waverly Public Library, Waverly, Iowa.

'Ibid. Lehman was appointed sheriff in December 1854 after Austin Farris, Bremer County's first sheriff, resigned in mid-term. Lehman served as sheriff for some nine months before relinquishing the post in August 1855.

The Lehman House's date of construction remains unknown. The building's construction technology, massing and Victorian-era detailing, though, suggest an erection date of circa 1880. That the Lehman's took out a \$3800.00 mortgage on the property in March 1881 indicates that the house may have been built at that time. See Bremer County Mortgage Record R, page 31, recorded 2 March 1881. This house was not the first structure built on the property. The 1875 Atlas of Bremer County shows at least one building on the Lehman farm. The extant farmhouse, though, is clearly not this old. See H.S. Hoover and William P. Reeves, Atlas Map of Bremer County, Iowa (annotated), (Milwaukee: J. Knauber and Company, 1875).

# Part II. Architectural Information

#### A. GENERAL STATEMENT

- 1. Architectural Character: Built circa 1881, the Daniel Lehman House is a modest 1½-story frame dwelling with a staggered-block floor plan and relatively plain architectural detailing. Reflecting the prevailing domestic architecture of its time, the house is representative of the thousands of other rural farmhouses built throughout the Midwest in the latter half of the 19th century.
- 2. Condition of Fabric: fair / poor

## B. DESCRIPTION OF EXTERIOR

- 1. Overall Dimensions: Original south block 31'2" by 17'1"; original north block 24'3" by 16'8"; attached garage 18'2" by 17'1".
- Foundations: stone rubble masonry perimeter walls, with concrete parging on the exterior surface.
- Exterior Walls: Medium exposure, painted wood, beveled siding with plain corner boards and water tables (physical evidence indicates that this siding replaced earlier, beveled-board siding).
- 4. Structural system: Milled wood platform framing, with hewn timber sills and sawn rafter plates.
- 5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads: The original wood covered porch in the west el between the two blocks has been removed. Physical evidence indicates that this was a single-story porch that extended the width of the west wall of the south block. A simple one-step concrete stoop is located at the south side entrance. A corrugated metal hood supported by ornamental wrought iron braces shelters this stoop. A concrete bulkhead situated partly under the bay window forms a cellar entrance on the south side.
- 6. Chimneys: Two interior brick chimneys straddle the ridge lines of the original house. A concrete block flue is attached to the outside of the garage north wall.
- 7. Openings: Two single-leaf doorways on the south side one that enters the kitchen, the other that enters the garage with plain-board casements, slip sills, paneled wood doors and aluminum storms. On the east end of the south elevation is a garage door opening to provide access for a single automobile. The original garage doors have been removed and the opening is now partially enclosed by two sheets of plywood. The original two front entrances under the (removed) porch on the west side both featured single-leaf doorways with plain-board trim. Both have subsequently been boarded over on both outside and inside surfaces.

Arranged singly, the windows are primarily wood double-hung sash, with 1/1- or 6/6-light patterns. A canted bay on the south side includes four double-hung windows over a paneled bulkhead and is covered by a small mansard roof. Other windows generally feature simply molded crowns, lug sills and plain board casings. Many exterior windows are covered with wood screens or aluminum storm windows.

8. Roof: Moderately pitched crossed gables over main blocks; shallowly pitched gable roof over garage. All roofs have three-tab asphalt shingles and feature plain-board boxed cornices and soffits. The gable ends of the west and south

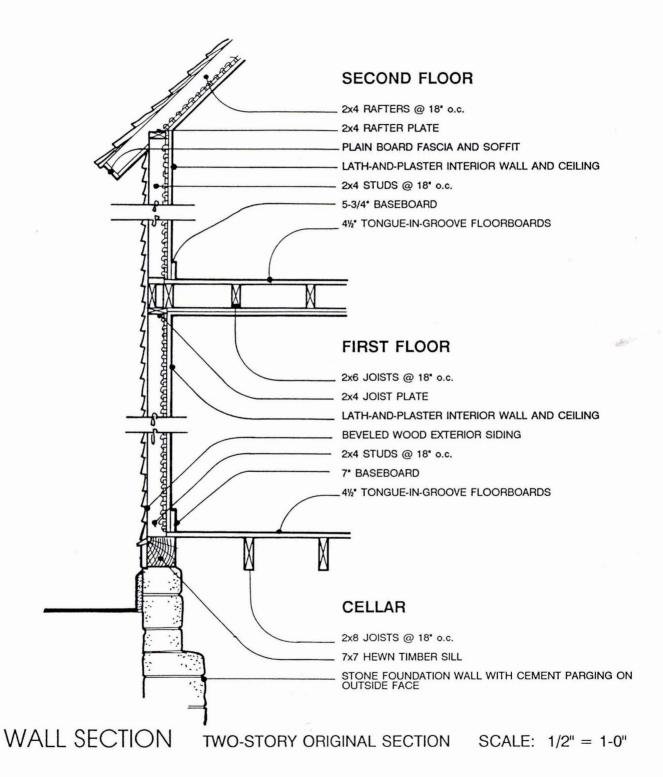
sides display decorative wood brackets. These gable brackets feature pendants, chamfered frames and scroll-sawn cut outs in fan and quatrefoil patterns.

## B. DESCRIPTION OF INTERIOR

- 1. Floor plan: The Daniel Lehman House is comprised of two offset blocks with a one-story garage addition at the rear. The larger of the two blocks (to the south) houses the kitchen, bathroom and a mud room on the first floor. The bathroom is quite large, and may have served as a sleeping chamber in earlier times. Providing access to the garage, the mud room likely served as a general storage area. In the north block is the parlor, a sleeping chamber and a storeroom or pantry. A straight-run stairway provides access to the upstairs from the kitchen. Upstairs, three sleeping chambers are grouped around a central hallway. A cellar is located under the kitchen and is accessible both from an interior stairway nested beneath the upper-level stair and from an exterior bulkhead entrance on the south side.
- 2. Interior finishes: The interior finishes of Lehman House include lath-and-plaster walls and ceilings and tongue-in-groove wood strip floors. Most of the ceilings and the interior walls are covered with painted wallpaper, which is in generally poor condition. In the kitchen, three walls are wood-paneled, and the kitchen floor is covered with sheet vinyl. The kitchen also features Celotex tiles attached to the original plaster ceiling. The parlor floor is carpeted, and the mud room and garage floors are uncovered concrete. The bathroom flooring is comprised of ceramic tiles. Most of the original window and door trim has been left in place, although most of the door hardware has been removed.

# B. DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The Daniel Lehman Farm is located just east of U.S. Highway 218 about halfway between the towns of Waverly and Janesville. Facing west, the house is partially shielded from the highway by a row of pine trees that serves as a windbreak. South of the house is a two-story barn that was built in the early 20th century using mortise-and-tenon timber construction. Several other small outbuildings enclose a farmyard south of the house. Also built in the early 20th century, these buildings include three sheds, a poultry barn, a detached garage and a privy. Featuring wood frame construction and gable roofs, all of the outbuildings are similarly massed and scaled. A gravel driveway enters the property from the highway, extending west to form a turn-around between the house and barn. A wire fence with steel pipe posts and top rail parallels the north side of the driveway, extending from the property line to the farmyard. Large oak trees and native grasses are scattered throughout the farm. The outlying terrain varies from flat to slightly rolling, and most of the surrounding countryside is under cultivation, with corn as the principal crop.



# Part III. Sources of Information

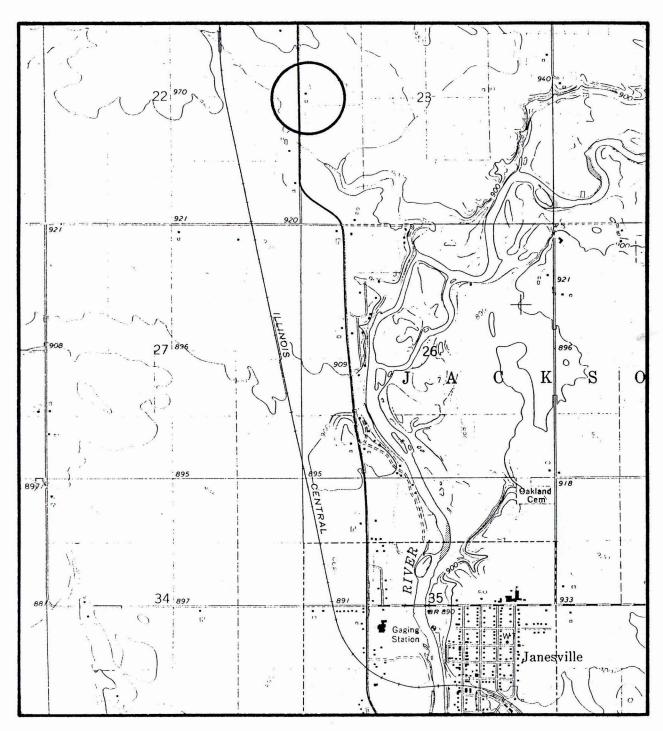
## PUBLISHED SOURCES

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- Atlas of Bremer County, Iowa. Minneapolis: The Title Atlas Company, 1975.
- Atlas of Bremer County, Iowa. Minneapolis: The Title Atlas Company, 1983.
- Bremer County, Iowa. Dallas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1985.
- "Deaths of the Week Several Prominent Bremer County Citizens Called To Their Reward." *The Waverly Democrat*, 9 March 1905, p. 4. (includes obituary for Daniel Lehman.)
- Gottfried, Herbert, and Jennings, Jan. American Vernacular Design: 1870-1940. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1985.
- Gowans, Alan. The Comfortable House. Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1986.
- Grawe, J.F. History of Bremer County, Iowa: A Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress and Achievement, vol. 1. Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1914.
- History of Butler and Bremer Counties, Iowa. Springfield, Illinois: Union Publishing Company, 1883.
- Hoover, H.S., and Reeves, William P. Atlas Map of Bremer County, Iowa. Milwaukee: J. Knauber and Company, 1875.
- "Janesville." Bremer County Independent, 9 March 1905, p. 1. (includes obituary for Daniel Lehman.)
- Leonard, Helen Maxine C., comp. *The Janesvillians: 1849-1974*. Janesville, IA: The Janesville Quasqui-Centennial Committee, 1974.
- McAlester, Virginia, and McAlester, Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.
- Noble, Allen G. Wood, Brick, and Stone: The North American Settlement Landscape. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1984.

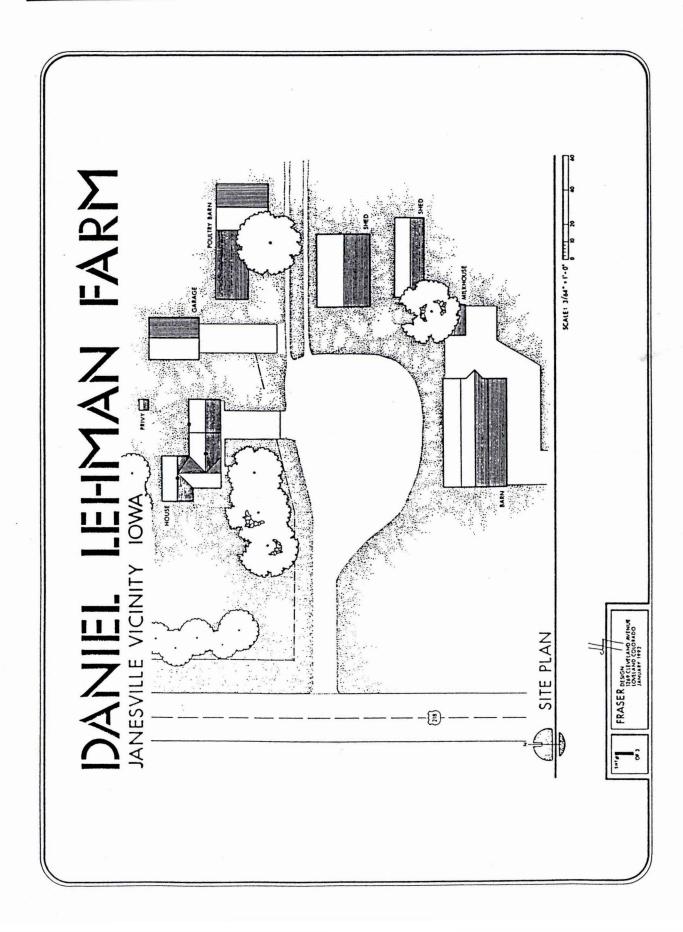
Standard Atlas of Bremer County, Iowa. Chicago: George A. Ogle and Company, 1917.

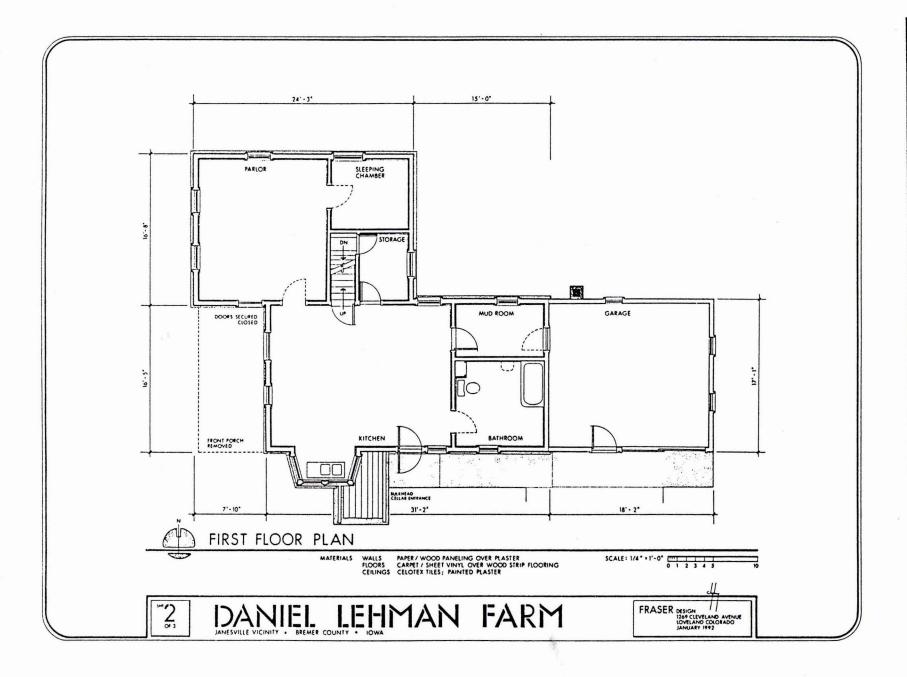
## UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

- "Abstract of Original Entries in Bremer County, Iowa." on file at Bremer County Clerk's Office, Waverly, Iowa.
- Bremer County Grantor Grantee Books, 1857-1991, on file at Bremer County Clerk's Office, Waverly, Iowa. (See Chain of Title in Part I. of this report for specific book and page numbers.)
- "1860 Federal Census Iowa." Microfilm copy on file at Waverly Public Library, Waverly, Iowa. (See entries under Bremer County.)
- "1870 Federal Census Iowa." Microfilm copy on file at Waverly Public Library, Waverly, Iowa. (See entries under Bremer County.)
- Ingalls, Marlin R. "Iowa Site Inventory Lehman Farm." 26 December 1990, on file at Iowa Department of Transportation, Ames, Iowa.
- "Iowa Census 1885 Bremer County." Microfilm copy on file at Waverly Public Library, Waverly, Iowa. (See entries under "Jackson Township.")
- "Iowa Census Returns 1895 Bremer County." Microfilm copy on file at Waverly Public Library, Waverly, Iowa. (See entries under "Janesville and Jackson Township.")
- Probate File No. 980, "Daniel Lehman Estate." 13 July 1905, on file at Bremer County Clerk of Court's Office, Waverly, Iowa.
- "Tenth [Federal] Census 1880 Iowa." Microfilm copy on file at Waverly Public Library, Waverly, Iowa. (See entries under Bremer County.)
- "Transfer of Lands No. 1, Township 91 North, Ranges 13 and 14 West." On file at Bremer County Clerk's Office, Waverly, Iowa. (See entries under Section 23.)

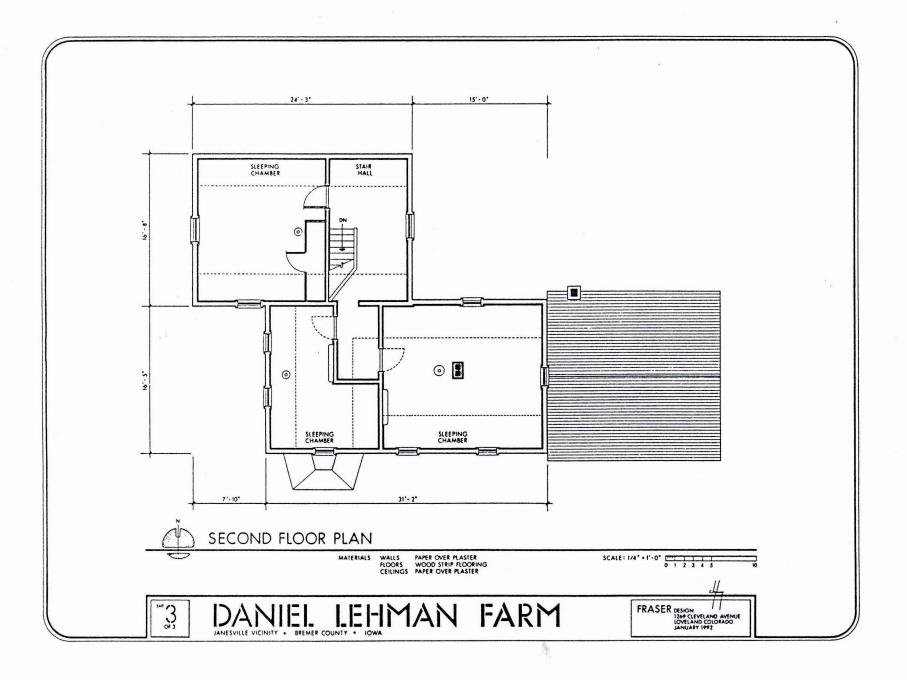


Taken from USGS Waverly, Iowa, quadrangle map [7.5 Minute Series, 1963, (photorevised 1972)].





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# Photographs

- 1) Overall view of farm, showing house (left) and outbuildings, with farmyard at center background; view to east.
- 2) Overall view of farm from farmyard, showing barn and outbuildings; view to southeast.
- Overall view of farm, with barn in left foreground and house in right background; view to north.
- West front of house; view to east.
- 5) South side of house; view to north.
- 6) South side and east rear of house; view to northeast.
- 7) Detail of south side and east rear of original part of house; view to northeast.
- 8) East rear and south side of house; view to northwest.
- 9) East rear and north side of house; view to southwest.
- 10) West front and north side of house; view to southeast.
- 11) West front and south side of house; view to northeast.
- 12) Detail of south gable, showing gable treatment and canted bay window; view to northwest.
- 13) Detail of canted bay window on south side; view to northwest.
- 14) Detail of south gable bracket; view to northwest.
- 15) Parlor on first floor of house; view to northwest.
- 16) Parlor on first floor of house, looking toward kitchen; view to southeast.
- 17) Kitchen on first floor of house; view to northwest.
- 18) Stair hall on second floor of house; view to southwest.
- 19) Northwest sleeping chamber on second floor of house; view to southeast.
- 20) Southwest sleeping chamber on second floor of house; view to south.

- 21) Southeast sleeping chamber on second floor of house; view to west.
- 22) North and east sides of barn; view to southwest.
- North and west sides of barn; view to southeast.
- 24) West and north sides of barn; view to east.
- 25) South and east sides of shed; view to northwest.
- 26) First floor of barn; view to west.
- 27) First floor of barn; view to southeast.
- 28) First floor of barn; view to north.
- 29) Second floor loft of barn; view to west.
- 30) Interior detail of west wall of barn loft; view to southwest.
- 31) Framing detail in loft of barn; view to northwest.
- 32) Framing detail in loft of barn; view to northwest.
- 33) Framing detail in loft of barn; view to southeast.
- 34) North and west sides of outbuildings; view to southeast.
- 35) South and west sides of poultry shed; view to northeast.
- 36) South and east sides of detached garage; view to northwest.
- 37) West and south sides of shed; view to northeast.
- 38) South and east sides of privy; view to northwest.







