

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

JUN 25 1979

DATE ENTERED

AUG 7 1979

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Palmer Brothers' Octagons

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

358 North Leonard Street (continued) *and WI 16*

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

West Salem *and vic.* VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3rd

STATE

Wisconsin

CODE
55

COUNTY

LaCrosse

CODE
063**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

 DISTRICT PUBLIC OCCUPIED AGRICULTURE MUSEUM BUILDING(S) PRIVATE UNOCCUPIED COMMERCIAL PARK STRUCTURE BOTH WORK IN PROGRESS EDUCATIONAL PRIVATE RESIDENCE SITE PUBLIC ACQUISITION ACCESSIBLE ENTERTAINMENT RELIGIOUS OBJECT IN PROCESS YES: RESTRICTED GOVERNMENT SCIENTIFIC BEING CONSIDERED YES: UNRESTRICTED INDUSTRIAL TRANSPORTATION NO MILITARY OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Rachel Gullickson / (continued)

STREET & NUMBER

358 North Leonard Street

CITY, TOWN

West Salem VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin 54669

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. LaCrosse County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

400 North 4th Street

CITY, TOWN

LaCrosse

STATE

Wisconsin 54669

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1977

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

7 DESCRIPTION

300

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD (Gullickson)	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE 1866 Gullickson
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR (Lewis)	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		c. 1890 Lewis ¹

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Palmer-Lewis and Palmer-Gullickson octagon houses were built within a few years of each other in the community of Neshonoc. Both were moved to West Salem. While the Palmer-Gullickson octagon is now situated in a residential area in West Salem, the Palmer-Lewis octagon is on a farm just north of town, near the outlying commercial district.

Although the Palmer-Lewis octagon is much smaller, both houses have two stories with slightly pitched hipped roofs and central chimneys. The roof of the Palmer-Lewis octagon is tin and that of the Palmer-Gullickson octagon is of combination shingles. Facets of the octagons feature either two windows or a single window, or are windowless. The major exterior difference between the houses is the porches. The Palmer-Lewis house, generally less pretentious and less modified, features a one-story, shed roof porch on three sides. The porch, like the cornice of the house, is bracketed. When the Palmer-Gullickson octagon was moved it probably received the rather unusual two-story veranda on five sides. The veranda features paired columns on both stories and a balustrade at the second level. Part of the veranda is screened.

The clapboard siding on the second story of the Palmer-Gullickson octagon is probably original. Asbestos shingles were added at the first level in about 1928. The Palmer-Lewis octagon was originally sheathed in board and batten but at some point this was covered with clapboard. Both houses feature corner boards at each angle of the octagon.

The floor plan of the Palmer-Gullickson octagon is almost identical to the John J. Brown House in Williamsburgh, New York. This house appeared in the 1854 revised addition of Orson Fowler's book, A Home For All. The Brown house, like the Palmer-Gullickson house, features a central fireplace separating the living and dining rooms, and two long rooms of disproportionate width on either side of this area. The stairs are in the narrower portion. Upstairs, there are three bedrooms and a hallway where the stairs ascend. Triangular closets are built at two corners.

The Palmer-Lewis floor plan may have been taken from the 1853 edition of Fowler's book. Although it appears that the first floor walls were changed somewhat when the house was moved, the second floor is very similar to the Howland house in Williamsburg, New York, designed by the architects Morgan and Brothers. Part of the first floor has been altered by the wing extending from the east side of the house, and it seems that a fireplace may have been removed. Presently there is a living room, a bedroom, a small storage room, two closets, and an entry hall. Upstairs there are three bedrooms, three closets, and a hallway where the stairs ascend. The rooms in this house are quite small, as the facets of the octagon only measure 11'. The facets of the Palmer-Gullickson octagon measure about 13'.

The additions that have been built onto the octagons differ greatly. In neither case is the octagon shape obscured by the additions. There

(continued)

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

4

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7. DESCRIPTION continued

is a large, two-story wing extending from the north side of the Gullickson house. The front portion of this wing was built by Dr. Palmer as an office. Originally, a barn was attached to the north end of the wing. It was later removed and a dining room and kitchen were added to the back of the addition so it could be leased as an apartment. The attic was converted to a bedroom.

When the Palmer-Lewis octagon was moved to its present site it was joined to an existing 1-1/2 story house. The house is a plain, clapboard structure that has been greatly modernized. The octagon has never received plumbing and is only partially heated. In both the Lewis and Gullickson houses the original woodwork and staircases remain.

The only outbuilding at the Palmer-Gullickson octagon is a small frame garage built in the 1920s. It is in poor condition but still serves its intended purpose. At the Palmer-Lewis octagon there are several farm outbuildings, all in poor condition and excluded from the nomination.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

15

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES	c. 1860 Gullickson c. 1855 Lewis ¹	BUILDER/ARCHITECT
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Palmer brothers' houses are significant as examples of the octagon fad that was popularized by Orson Fowler in the mid-nineteenth century. Both plans were probably taken from Fowler's book, A Home for All or the Gravel Wall and Octagon Mode of Building. The houses are associated with prominent settlers and residents of Neshonoc and West Salem, Wisconsin. Relocation of the houses to West Salem demonstrates the crucial role the railway played in the development of Wisconsin communities.

ARCHITECTURE The octagon house was popularized by Orson Fowler's treatise on the subject that first appeared in 1848. Although a comparatively small number of the houses were built after 1860, during the 1850s the fad swept across America. There are about 20 octagon houses standing in Wisconsin. Of these, seven have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Both of the nominated houses are excellent examples of the octagon mode of architecture. The interiors of both are notable for the retention of their early appearance. In neither of the houses, however, is the location of the original kitchen apparent. It may be that they were located in the basements, as recommended by Orson Fowler, before the houses were moved. The octagons have been treated well since they were built nearly 125 years ago. Their architectural integrity has not been marred by their relocation or subsequent additions, as the dominant feature of this type - the eight-sided form - is still apparent.

HISTORY In the fall of 1851 Monroe Plamer arrived in LaCrosse County, Wisconsin. He had come via Oshkosh from Massachusetts. That winter he began building a saw and grist mill on the LaCrosse River. In 1852 the saw mill was in operation and by the next year the grist mill began operation. In 1855 he achieved full operation, continuing until 1860 when the saw mill was discontinued. In 1872 he sold the business.

In 1855 Monroe Plamer engaged the Deputy County Surveyor, Isaac Thompson, to plat 15 acres near the mill into blocks of 12 lots each to form the village of Neshonoc. By the spring of 1858 the population had climbed to 100.

The exact year that Palmer built his octagon house at Neshonoc is unknown. It is known that he built a small log cabin near the site of the mill when he arrived in the Town of Hamilton. The octagon was undoubtedly built

1. LaCrosse County Tax Records

(continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bryant, Benjamin F., editor. Memoirs of LaCrosse County. Madison: Western Historical Association, 1907
 Gullickson, Rachel. Interviewed by Erroll Kindschy, September 1978.
History of LaCrosse County, Wisconsin. Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1881.
 LaCrosse County Tax Records.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .594 (Gullickson); 2 acres (Lewis)

UTM REFERENCES QUADRANGLE NAME West Salem, Wisconsin QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

A	1, 5	6, 5, 4, 0, 5, 0	4, 8, 6, 2, 5, 0, 0	B	1, 5	6, 5, 4, 4, 2, 0, 0	4, 8, 6, 3, 3, 3, 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

- (B) PALMER - LEWIS OCTAGON: The parcel located in Section 34, T17N, R6W and enclosed by STH 16 on the northwest and the private, circular drive that surrounds the house.
- (A) PALMER - GULLICKSON OCTAGON: The north 113-1/2' of the south 243-1/2' of Outlot 29 of the Village of West Salem.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE: Barbara Wyatt, Nominations Specialist (continued)
 ORGANIZATION: State Historical Society DATE: 4 April 1979
 STREET & NUMBER: 816 State Street TELEPHONE: (608) 262-8904
 CITY OR TOWN: Madison STATE: Wisconsin 53706

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Richard Penney

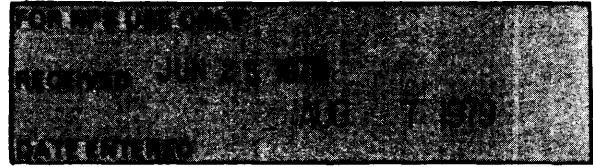
TITLE Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE 5/7/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<i>Carol Shull</i>	DATE 8-7-79
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST: <i>Emma Jane Saxe</i>	DATE 8-7-79
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<i>Regional Coordinator</i>	

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**



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8. SIGNIFICANCE continued

shortly after the mill, at the height of the fad for the unusual plan.

In 1856 Dr. Horace Palmer from Massachusetts joined his brother in Neshonoc. He purchased four lots in the village and sometime during the next few years built his octagon house.

In the summer of 1858 the demise of the village of Neshonoc became certain when the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad located a station on land donated by Thomas Leonard. First, Neshonoc merchants began to transfer their establishments to West Salem; residents soon followed. However, Dr. Palmer practiced medicine in Neshonoc until 1866 when he moved his octagon to West Salem. He stayed until 1875, leaving for Sparta, Wisconsin where he purchased a drug store.

When Dr. Palmer left West Salem, he sold the octagon to Leonard Lottridge and his wife, Dr. Mary Lottridge. Both were prominent residents of the community. Leonard Lottridge came to LaCrosse from New York in 1853. For several years he was editor of the Independent Republican newspaper. He also served as the postmaster at Mindoro, clerk of the court of LaCrosse County, supervisor of the 1880 census, and an Internal Revenue Service collector. In 1887 he opened the LaCrosse County Bank at West Salem. He operated the bank until his retirement in 1904.

Dr. Mary Lottridge studied medicine at the Eclectic Medical College in Cincinnati, Ohio (the University of Cincinnati). She graduated in 1856, a time when there were few female physicians in the United States. Practicing first in LaCrosse, she continued her practice in West Salem when she and her husband moved there. Dr. Lottridge died in 1906 and her husband occupied the octagon until his death in 1911. Until 1921 the house was occupied, first, by Wilbur Dudley, Sr. and then by his daughter and her husband, Roy Gilfillian.

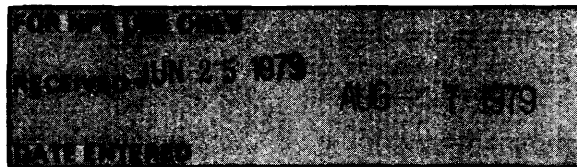
In 1921 Oliver Gullickson purchased the house. Mr. Gullickson was superintendent of the LaCrosse County Insane Asylum (now the Lakeview Health Center) for 27 years. He had come to the United States at age 14 from Norway in 1870. Gullickson's son, Lynn, later obtained the octagon. His widow, Rachel Gullickson, still occupies the house.

The Monroe Palmer octagon was not moved to West Salem until about 1890. In that year the house was bought by David R. Lewis. It is not certain if Palmer or Lewis moved the house. The house has remained in the Lewis family since the 1890 purchase. David Lewis was a farmer who had served

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8. SIGNIFICANCE continued

with the Eighth Wisconsin Regiment during the Civil War. In 1903 the octagon went to Arthur R. Lewis, one of David Lewis' sons. He was also a farmer, and served on the county board as a representative from the Town of Hamilton for 28 years. In 1976 David B. Lewis bought the farm from his father's estate.

The Palmer brothers are good examples of the progressive people who settled Wisconsin. The very concept of an octagon house was a radical notion, promoted by a practicing phrenologist (Fowler) who also advocated many of the social reforms of his day. Fowler believed that spherical forms, which the octagon approached, were closest to the forms in nature, therefore more commodious and comfortable. Further, he believed that people could be the architects of their own homes provided they were endowed with strong phrenological organs of Inhabitiveness (love of home) and Constructiveness (ability to build).¹ Apparently, the Palmer brothers were so endowed.

1. Madeline B. Stern. The Octagon House, introduction, p. vii.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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ITEM NUMBER

see
below PAGE 1

9. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES continued

LaCrosse Daily Chronicle, June 28, 1906.
Sparta Herald, December 28, 1880.

11. FORM PREPARED BY continued

Errol Kindschey, Curator and Treasurer

West Salem Historical Society, Inc.

357 West Garland Street

West Salem

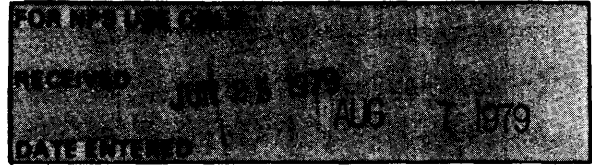
March 1979

(608)786-1399

Wisconsin 54669

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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See

CONTINUATION SHEET

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2. State Hwy 16 at North Leonard Street

3rd

West Salem Vicinity

Wisconsin

55

La Crosse

063

4. David Lewis

Route 1

West Salem

Wisconsin 54669

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: PROPOSED MOVE

PROPERTY NAME: Palmer Brother's Octagons

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: WISCONSIN, La Crosse

DATE RECEIVED: 5/18/07 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/01/07
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 79000092

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 6/21/2007 DATE

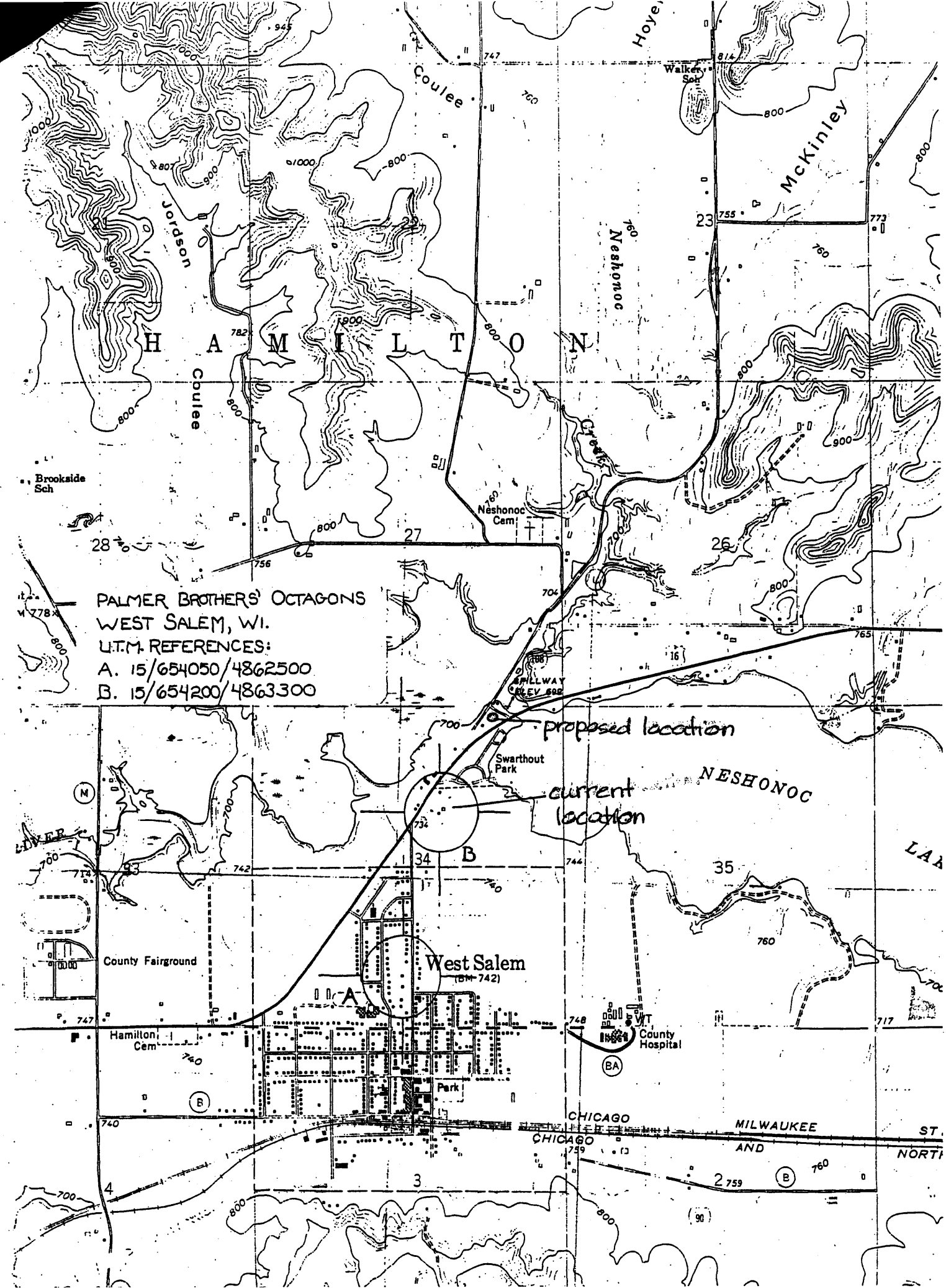
ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The proposed move of the Palmer Lewis Octagon is justified in the documentation submitted by the state.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept proposed move
REVIEWER Patrick Andrews DISCIPLINE Historian
TELEPHONE _____ DATE 6/21/2007

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



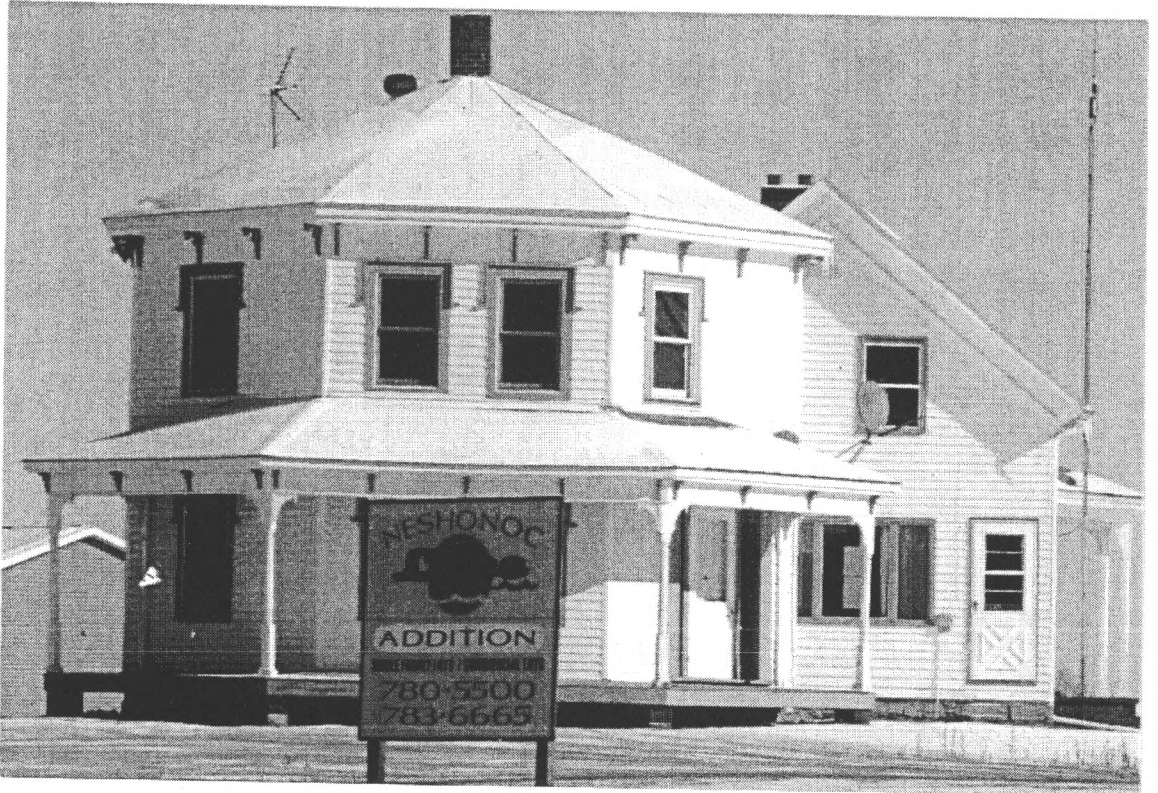
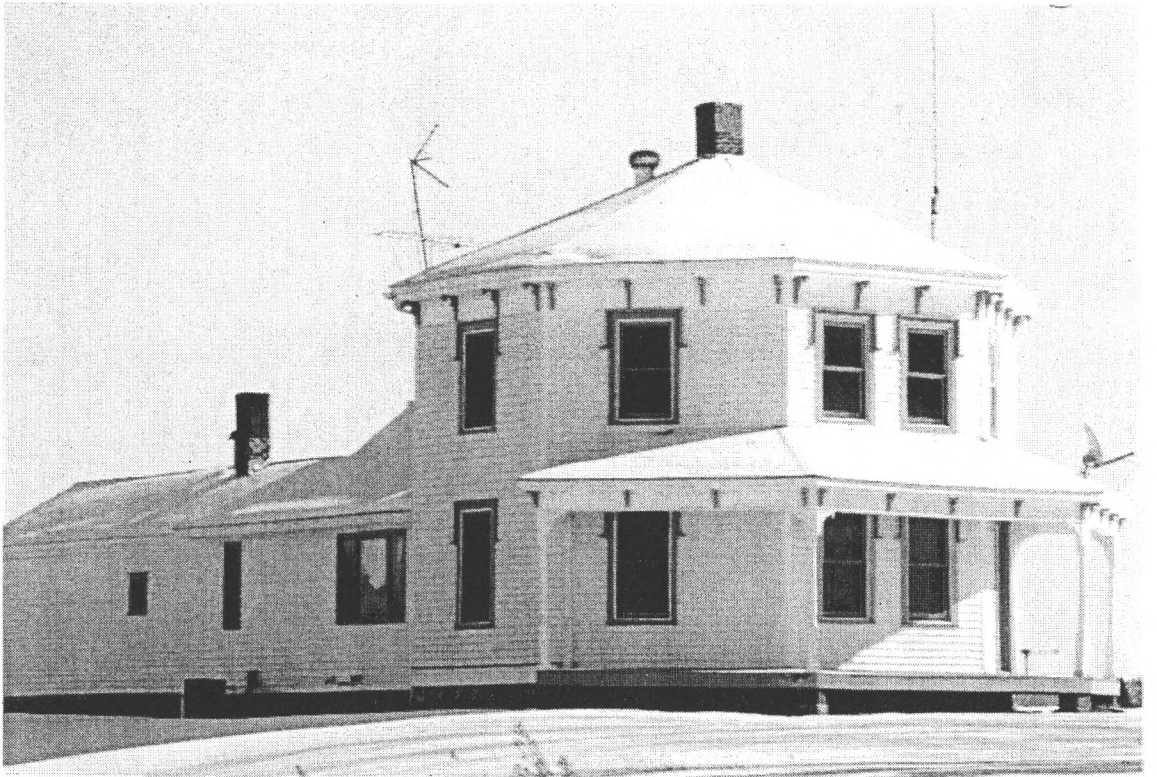
PALMER BROTHERS' OCTAGONS
WEST SALEM, WI.
U.T.M. REFERENCES:
A. 15/654050/4862500
B. 15/654200/4863300

proposed location

current location

West Salem
(BM 742)

CHICAGO MILWAUKEE ST. AND NORTH



PALMER-LEWIS OCTAGON
ON CURRENT SITE



PALMER-LEWIS OCTAGON
PROPOSED LOCATION