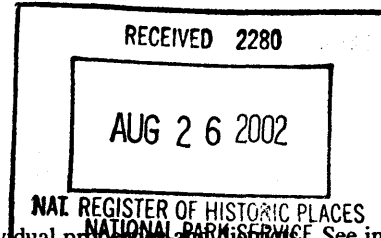


1082

**United States Department of Interior  
National Park Service**



**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Olson, Peter and Jessie, House  
other names/site number N/A

**2. Location**

street & number	415 Granite Street	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Waupaca	N/A	vicinity
state	Wisconsin	code	WI
county	Waupaca	code	135
zip code	54981	zip code	54981

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally, statewide X locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Alicia J. Gore  
Signature of certifying official/Title

August 22, 2002  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Olfson, Peter and Jessie, House  
Name of Property

Waupaca County  
County and State

Wisconsin

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  
\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register.  
\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register.  
\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_ removed from the National Register.  
\_\_\_ other, (explain:)

*Edson H. Beall*

*10/4/02*

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

#### 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as  
as apply)

private  
\_\_\_ public-local  
\_\_\_ public-State  
\_\_\_ public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

building(s)  
\_\_\_ district  
\_\_\_ structure  
\_\_\_ site  
\_\_\_ object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources  
in the count)

contributing	noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>buildings</u>
	<u>sites</u>
	<u>structures</u>
	<u>objects</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>total</u>

**Name of related multiple property listing:**  
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property  
listing.)  
N/A

**Number of contributing resources  
is previously listed in the National Register**  
0

#### 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
DOMESTIC/single dwelling

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
DOMESTIC/single dwelling

#### 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
Foundation granite  
walls weatherboard  
roof asphalt  
other wood

#### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Olfson, Peter and Jessie, House  
Name of Property

Waupaca County  
County and State

Wisconsin

## 8. Statement of Significance

**Applicable National Register Criteria**  
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1899

**Significant Dates**

1899

**Significant Person**  
(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

## Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Olfson, Peter and Jessie, House  
Name of Property

Waupaca County  
County and State

Wisconsin

### 9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):**

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 #

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
Other State Agency  
Federal Agency  
 Local government  
University  
Other

Name of repository:

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	333370	4913980	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Carol Lohry Cartwright, Consultant	date	10/1/2001
organization	for Waupaca Historic Preservation Comm	telephone	262-473-6820
street & number	W7646 Hackett Rd.	zip code	53190
city or town	Whitewater	state	WI

Olfson, Peter and Jessie, House  
Name of Property

Waupaca County  
County and State

Wisconsin

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

<b>name/title</b>	Arthur Parry and Sandra Koch		<b>date</b>	10/1/2001
<b>organization</b>			<b>telephone</b>	
<b>street&amp;number</b>	415 Granite Street		<b>zip code</b>	54981
<b>city or town</b>	Waupaca	<b>state</b>	WI	

**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. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1 Olfson, Peter and Jessie, House  
Waupaca, Waupaca County, WI

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**GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The Queen Anne style Peter and Jessie Olfson House is a wood frame, two story house constructed in 1899. It sits on a large lot in a residential neighborhood in Waupaca, a small city in central Wisconsin. The house is located in the established northwest side neighborhood along Granite Street, an area of well-maintained historic period homes. This neighborhood developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with Granite Street at the core. The oldest houses were built close to the city's downtown commercial district. Due somewhat to the topographical features of the area north and west of the downtown (bluffs and the Waupaca River), this neighborhood developed in a northwesterly direction. A few Greek Revival and Italianate style houses were built in the early development period, but much of the neighborhood is filled with houses reflecting the Queen Anne style and styles of the early twentieth century. The neighborhood developed as both a middle and working-class area of small to medium-sized houses.

Most of the houses in this neighborhood sit on average-sized lots that are landscaped with an abundance of mature trees and shrubs. Some of the houses along Granite Street, including the Olfson House, sit on larger, more spacious lots. Granite Street is a wide street that allows for two-way traffic and parking on both sides of the street. Wide terraces sit between the concrete curbs and gutters of the street and concrete sidewalks. The houses have fairly wide setbacks in this area of the street. Closer to downtown, the houses are located closer to the street.

The Olfson House sits on the eastern one-third of its large lot. The western two-thirds of the lot is made up of a large lawn punctuated with many large trees and a driveway. Large trees, including a number of tall, mature conifers, also landscape the east side of the house. The driveway sits at the western edge of the lot and curves behind the trees to a garage that is attached to the back of the house. A part of this driveway also serves the neighboring house on the next lot to the west. Until recently, several large trees sat in front of the house, greatly obscuring the view of the main elevation. These trees have been removed, both by a recent renovation effort and a recent violent windstorm. Closer to the foundation of the house, there are a number of small shrubs that complete the landscaping of the house.

*Exterior*

The Olfson House has two stories topped with a combination hip and gable roof. The house has an irregular plan that consists of a steeply pitched hipped-roof central block with projecting gable-roofed sections at the front of the house and a large, lower-pitched hipped-roof block at the rear of the house. The house has balloon-frame construction with clapboard siding detailed with a wood belt course. Many other wood details typical of the Queen Anne style decorate the

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Section 7 Page 2 Olfson, Peter and Jessie, House  
Waupaca, Waupaca County, WI

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house. The house sits on a granite foundation. It has recently been renovated and is in very good condition.

The main or north elevation of the house features a two-story gable section projecting from the hipped-roof central block. The gable section has corners cut away at a 45-degree angle. A tall, narrow, single-light, double-hung sash window sits in the angled corners in each of the stories. The second story window at the northeast corner of the projecting gable features a triangle-shaped balcony with a roof that is made up of the returned eave of the main gable. The balcony has a stickwork balustrade on a clapboard base and a turned post. Long, narrow scroll brackets decorate the returned eaves of the main gable and a similar scroll sits under the balcony.

The gable peak of the projecting gable section is decorated with bargeboard that ends at the gable's returned eaves in a large scroll. A solid pediment at the front of the gable is filled with a carved wood sunburst radiating from a diamond. This piece obscures the upper part of the wall surface of the gable that is covered with segmental wood shingles. At the center of the gable peak is a long, narrow, transom-like opening filled with two multi-pane lights. Under the gable peak is a set of two single-light sashes set into the middle of the second story. In the middle of the first story is a large single pane opening topped with a transom filled with decorative leaded glass.

Attached to the recessed central block is the front porch that also wraps across part of the projecting gable section. The picturesque front porch has a very low pitched hip roof with a projecting gable that shelters the porch staircase. The gable is decorated with a pediment accented with a carved sunburst panel. Brackets that are made up of carved sunburst panels support the gable. The porch has overhanging eaves over a plain frieze. The porch openings are arched. Filling in the arches are additional carved sunburst brackets that flank panels of spindlework on the north and west elevations. The brackets rise from the tops of the turned posts that support the porch roof.

The porch posts sit on narrow bases that are part of the porch balustrade. Between the bases, the balustrades are made up of short spool-shaped balusters sitting on wood panels with an inset rectangle pattern. Identical balustrades flank each side of the wooden porch steps. At the end of these balustrades are larger posts topped with domed knobs. Above the porch roof is a smaller balcony. The balcony is decorated with a raised pediment accented with a carved sunburst. Turned posts and pilasters support the balcony roof and accenting the arched openings are brackets filled in with carved sunbursts like those of the main porch.

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The porch and balcony cover entrances on the first and second stories. The first story main entrance features a wood paneled door that is decorated with a simple cornice molding. A simple wood paneled and glass door sits behind the balcony. To the west of the main entrance are two tall single-light, double-hung sashes and an identical sash sits around the corner of the central block. A small inset balcony projects from the north wall of the gable section that projects from the west elevation. This balcony is similar to the balcony on the northeast corner of the second story of the main elevation. It has a turned post and a stickwork balustrade. Below the balcony is a single-light double-hung sash window.

The east elevation of the house also has a gable section projecting from the central block. This gable section has 45 degree angle corners with openings like those of the gable section of the main elevation. The gable peak is decorated with a bargeboard with large scroll brackets attached to a cross piece that features four carved sunburst panels and small brackets. Like the gable peak on the main elevation, this gable peak is covered with wood shingles punctuated with a long, narrow, transom-like opening. One half of the opening is filled with a multi-pane light, while the other half is covered with a louvered vent opening.

An ell porch is attached to the first story of the projecting gable section and the east wall of the rear block. The porch has a hip roof with wide eaves over a plain frieze. The arched openings of the porch are attached to the tops of the turned posts. The arches are filled in with carved sunbursts. The turned posts sit on tall, narrow bases. The porch covers the side entrance of the house, which consists of a wood and glass door and a wooden screen door. To the north of the entrance is a tall, narrow, single-light, double-hung sash. Both openings are decorated with narrow cornice moldings.

The west elevation of the house also has a projecting gable section, but without the 45-degree angle corners. The gable peak is decorated with the identical bargeboard, cross piece, and wood shingles as the gable on the east elevation. The opening in the gable is also identical with one multi-pane light and one louvered vent opening. Under the gable peak, on the second story, there is a pair of single-light, double-hung sashes. On the first story there is a rectangular oriel with a hip roof and a bank of narrow single-light double-hung sashes. The oriel sits on a tapered base.

The rear or south elevation of the house is plain and consists of the back wall of the large hipped-roof rear section, and an attached one-story, two car garage. The garage was constructed circa 1955 and is a non-contributing element of the house. The back wall has a pair of single-light, double-hung sashes at the southeast corner and two smaller sashes on the second story. The modern, one-story garage addition has a low-pitched gable roof and is covered with clapboard siding. A sash window opening sits in the east wall of the garage and along the west wall are two large modern garage doors covering the two automobile bays. A wood paneled entry door



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sits to the north of the garage doors. A chain-link fence dog kennel is attached to the rear of the garage.

*Interior, first floor*

The main entrance to the Olfson house is a heavy five-panel oak door with its original "wind-up" doorbell. The foyer is the first architecturally decorative feature of the interior. The main features of the foyer include a staircase, which will be described later, and a nook, placed between the lowest run of the staircase and the narrow wall sitting under the third run of the staircase. The nook is filled in with a built-in bench. The back of the bench is made of wood paneling attached to the wall of the second staircase run. Wood paneling also makes up one side of the bench, while the staircase forms the other side. Under the wooden seat is a wood base decorated with inset panels. A large pilaster with beveled edges decorates the nook on a corner opposite the lower run of stairs. It is decorated with horizontal and vertical grooves and bands of carved X's.

The foyer is carpeted and has plaster wall and ceiling surfaces. Two types of doors lead from the foyer into the rest of the first floor. A single door leads into the library and a double pocket door leads into the living room. Both the single door and pocket doors are oak and have two raised vertical panels over three horizontal panels. The trim around the doors consists of plain oak casings and simple oak cornice moldings with period brass hardware. Wide oak baseboards decorate the floors of the foyer.

Similar features decorate the large parlor that sits to the east of the foyer beyond the double pocket door. This large room is well lit by several window openings that correspond to the projecting gable section on the north or main elevation of the house. The windows are trimmed with simple oak casings and cornice moldings accented with formal draperies. The walls and ceiling are plastered and the floor is carpeted. Wide oak baseboards accent the floors. A period chandelier hangs from the center of the ceiling.

Another set of wood pocket doors that sit in the parlor's south wall lead into the large dining room. Like the parlor, this room is well lit by the windows of the projecting gable section on the east elevation of the house. The window openings and the pocket doors are also trimmed in the same manner as the parlor and the windows are decorated with formal draperies. The walls and ceiling are plastered and wide baseboards accent the floor, which in this room is covered with maple boards. An oriental style rug sits under the formal dining room table and above the table there is a crystal chandelier.

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At the southwest corner of the dining room there is a fireplace. The fireplace has an original cast-iron coal-burning insert that features a foliated grate flanked by fluted pilasters and topped with a classical swag. Surrounding the insert is a copper facing that is lavishly decorated with classical motifs. Flanking the insert are identical raised decorations featuring beaded wreaths, ribbons, and pendants. Above the insert is a wide panel with a large raised classical decoration of beaded wreath, ribbons, and foliated scrolls. A small raised woman's face tops this decoration. Flanking the surround are fluted colonettes with Ionic capitals supporting an oak entablature mantle with a cornice molding. Above the colonettes are panels with raised ribbon carvings. At the center of the entablature is an elaborate raised classical carving of foliated scrolls, swags, and ribbons that form a shield-like pattern at the center.

Along the west wall of the dining room, a single pocket door leads into the library. The library also has a maple floor and trim around doors and windows that match the dining room and parlor. A raised panel door (two vertical panels over three horizontal panels) along the north wall of the library leads into the foyer, while another, Craftsman-era, door covers a toilet room that was added later, probably made from a closet. The walls and ceiling of this room are also plastered and wide baseboards accent the floor. There are bookcases attached to the walls of the room.

The kitchen has been remodeled, but its openings are still in their original locations. The walls and ceiling are plastered and the floor is covered with wood boards. The trim around doors and windows is maple and consists of the same plain casings and cornice moldings seen throughout the first floor. The wooden cabinets on one side of the kitchen date from the 1960s or 1970s and are painted white. Modern fixtures and appliances are included in the kitchen, as well.

To the west of the kitchen is the back staircase to the exterior and to the basement. Also in this area are recently remodeled mud and laundry rooms and an entrance that leads into the modern garage. The remodeled rooms feature a new ceramic tile floor and new moldings around openings that replicate those of the rest of the first floor.

The basement of the house extends under the entire first floor except for the parlor and foyer of the house. The basement consists of two large rooms that have unfinished stone walls and poured concrete floors. A modern wall separates the two sections of the basement.

*Interior, second floor*

The Eastlake detailed staircase leads to the second story of the Olfson house. It is an open-wall, close-string, three-run staircase with carpeted treads. The staircase and its adjoining nook are

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accented by intersecting cross pieces that form rectangular arches. The cross pieces are attached to a large post that sits in the location of a newel post and to the pilasters attached to the nook and the west wall of the landing. Both the pilasters and the post have beveled edges, vertical and horizontal grooves, and bands with an incised X pattern. The cross pieces are filled with large spindle fanlights in a rectangular opening.

The newel posts of both the first and second staircase runs are identically decorated with beveled edges, vertical and horizontal grooves, bands of incised X's, carved diamonds in a sunburst design radiating from round spirals, and undecorated newel caps. The staircase balustrade consists of spool turned balusters under molded banisters. The balustrade also encloses the second floor landing and has undecorated beveled newels. Along the wall between the first and second staircase runs, is a very large round-arched opening filled with stained glass in a stylized fleur-de-lis pattern of amber, green, and blue-green glass. It is trimmed with a simple wide molded oak surround.

The plan of the second floor includes a central hallway that bends sharply at both ends. Off of this hallway are four bedrooms and a bathroom. The hallway has plastered walls and ceiling surfaces and a carpeted floor. The trim around the doors and windows, as well as the baseboards, consists of plain casings and simple cornice moldings that are similar to the trim seen on the first floor. The doors of the second story are slightly different. They have two raised vertical panels over two shorter raised vertical panels. At the north end of the hallway there is a wood and glass door that opens to the second story porch the main elevation.

Three bedrooms sit on the east side of the second story. These rooms have two interior doors that connect them, and are currently used as a suite by the current owners. The front bedroom on the northeast corner of the house is used as a sitting room. It is carpeted and its wood trim is painted. The trim is identical to the trim in the hallway. The room behind the sitting room is the bedroom. It is carpeted and the wood trim is not painted. The walls are covered with wallpaper. Behind the bedroom is a room used for an office and storage at the present time. This room also has carpeting and its trim is painted.

Across the hall from the central bedroom is the fourth bedroom, currently used as a guestroom. This room is carpeted and its wood trim is painted. The closet door is also painted and along the bedroom's north wall there is a painted wood and glass door that leads to the small balcony at the northwest corner of the main elevation of the house. Behind the guestroom is the back staircase, at the end of the main hallway and the bathroom. It has fixtures and cabinets that date from the late 1940s or early 1950s. The floor is covered with modern vinyl flooring. The trim and cabinets in this room are painted and accented with wallpaper.

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**SIGNIFICANCE**<sup>1</sup>

The Peter and Jessie Olfson House is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C, architecture, because it is locally significant as a good example of the Queen Anne style and one of the best examples of the style in the city. There are several good examples of the Queen Anne style in Waupaca, but this house stands out because of its well-constructed picturesque details and its high level of historic integrity. Because the Queen Anne style was built over a long period, many variations of the style were built. This house represents the picturesque variation of the style that featured an abundant use of wood details and stickwork. It is a well-proportioned house built with high quality materials that, due to its recent renovation, is now one of the finest historic houses in the city.

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The city of Waupaca is located near a wide chain of interconnected lakes about five miles in length. According to historical sources, Native Americans were attracted to these lakes and numerous prehistoric mounds and archeological sites have been identified in the Waupaca area. The city is located in one of the state's most picturesque areas, but it was a water power source that drew the early white settlers to form a community at this location. A group of five men from Vermont, among them E. C. Sessions and William and Joseph Hibbard, came to the area in 1849 and made land claims between that year and 1852. The land claims were formalized in 1853 and more settlers began to come after that time.<sup>2</sup>

In 1853, the county board established the county seat at Waupaca, and, after attempts to move it elsewhere, the county seat was permanently set at Waupaca in 1855. A courthouse was built in Waupaca in that year on the square block of public land in downtown Waupaca that was established in the land sale of 1853. During the 1850s, the downtown commercial district of the city grew up around the courthouse, primarily in small frame buildings housing general stores and small shops that made goods such as shoes, harnesses, furniture, wagons, and agricultural implements.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This footnote pertains to the period of significance and significant date on page one of Section 8. The period of significance for this house is the date of construction. The significant date for this house was selected based on historic tax assessment rolls and newspaper accounts, all cited elsewhere in this narrative and in the bibliography.

<sup>2</sup> Carol Lohry Cartwright, *City of Waupaca, Wisconsin Intensive Survey Report Architectural and Historical Survey*, Waupaca: Waupaca Historic Preservation Commission, 1999, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

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By 1857, Waupaca was incorporated as a village and important public advancements were made during the 1860s, such as the construction of a new public school building and the establishment of a cemetery. In 1860, the first fraternal group would be formed, the Masons. During the 1850s and 1860s, Baptist, Episcopal and Methodist churches were formed. Industry in Waupaca during this period revolved around grist milling, lumber milling and small industrial shops. The coming of the railroad in 1871 would help boost the city's commerce and industry.<sup>4</sup>

During the first twenty years of the history of Waupaca, residential development coincided with the growth of the city's downtown commercial district and its industries. Both the topography of the area and the meandering Waupaca River determined, somewhat, how housing developed in the city. The location of the river near downtown and the bluffs around the city limited housing to certain areas early in its development. During the city's first few decades, housing was built primarily to the southeast and east of downtown, south of the river and north of Mirror Lake. Southwest and north of the downtown, there were bluffs that made house building difficult. Some houses were built northeast of the river, near some of the city's early mills.<sup>5</sup>

After the city was incorporated in 1875, the economy had tremendous growth. Most of the city's early frame commercial buildings in the downtown were demolished or destroyed by fire during this period and were replaced with two and three-story brick blocks. The growth of the city's downtown reflected the growth of retailing in Waupaca, but, overall, the city's commercial economy was dominated by the potato trade of the late nineteenth century. Local farmers had good luck growing potatoes and eventually a larger market was built for potato growers. By the 1880s, dealing in potatoes was the most important commercial activity in the city and potato warehouses sprang up along the rail lines of the city. By the turn of the twentieth century, Waupaca was the leading potato shipping center in the country.<sup>6</sup>

The growth of the potato trade fueled the growth of Waupaca's residential areas as well. The previously noted areas of residential growth expanded and became denser. During the late nineteenth century, the area both northwest and west of the city's downtown began filling in with houses as far as the topography would allow. In particular, Granite Street and its nearby streets northwest of downtown saw considerable residential development. More houses were also built in the east and northeast areas of the city near mills and potato warehouses. Another area of significant residential development was in the historic residential area southeast of the

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>5</sup> "Waupaca, Wis., 1871," bird's eye view, Madison: M. Fowler & Co., reprint available at the Hutchinson House Museum of the Waupaca Historical Society, Waupaca, Wisconsin.

<sup>6</sup> Cartwright, p. 9.

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downtown. Money from the potato trade, retailing and the lumber industry fueled the construction of many large and stylish houses there.<sup>7</sup>

During the early twentieth century, the city's commercial district expanded both in buildings and in types of modern stores, including department stores. Industry was still dominated by the lumber mills and granite quarries and the city had slow and steady growth. During this time new construction filled the neighborhoods established earlier. The area northwest of the downtown, centering on Granite Street, was the site of infill construction consisting of Bungalows, American Foursquares and Craftsman style houses. Another area of residential expansion was along West Fulton Street and other streets just west of the downtown. The residential area southeast of the downtown also saw the introduction of many infill houses, although several of these houses were more elaborate Period Revival and Craftsman style buildings, befitting the more prominent neighborhood in which they were located. Residential construction also occurred in the city's southeast edge during this time, mostly with small homes.

The Great Depression of the 1930s and World War II in the 1940s put a hold on most of the economic growth and development in the city other than war-related production. After World War II, the lumber industry was in decline, but a new industry soon took over as an anchor for the city's industrial economy. During the 1950s and 1960s, the Waupaca Foundry expanded to fill in an entire 13-acre site where an old lumber mill had stood. The Waupaca Foundry continued to expand during the late twentieth century and today employs almost 2,000 people in several casting plants at two large sites in the city. The foundry was joined by smaller industries, such as a manufactured housing company, a potato chip factory, and a knitting mill.<sup>8</sup>

While the city's industrial base grew and developed after World War II, the city's commercial base changed dramatically. In the 1960s and 1970s, the downtown business district, although still important, was losing business to nearby communities with modern shopping malls and large discount stores. By the 1980s, many of the traditional businesses in downtown Waupaca were gone and a new shopping area had emerged on the city's west side.<sup>9</sup>

Post World War II residential construction grew up on the outskirts of already established neighborhoods in Waupaca. Only a few modern houses were built in the older neighborhoods, since most of the lots were already filled. Again, the dramatic topography of the city played a role in this development. The Waupaca River, Mirror Lake, and the bluffs centered new residential construction in certain areas of the city. Also, the large Waupaca Foundry and old

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<sup>7</sup> Foote, C. M. and W. S. Brown, *Plat Book of Waupaca County, Wisconsin*, Minneapolis: C. M. Foote & Co., 1889.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-14.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

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granite quarries on the north side of the city restricted new subdivisions in that area. In the older neighborhoods, some large houses were divided into apartment buildings, a few old houses were razed, and, unfortunately, some were inappropriately altered. But, by and large, the older houses in Waupaca's older neighborhoods have been maintained. And, today, many families are moving into the old neighborhoods instead of into subdivisions because they like ambience of an old house in an older, small-town, neighborhood.

*Site-Specific Background*

Peter Olfson was a local boy who made his "fortune" in the lucrative Waupaca potato trade of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Olfson was born in Waupaca County in 1863 and lived and worked on his father's farm until 1890. In that year, he went to Michigan to operate a wholesale commission house. But, in 1892, he returned to Waupaca to start a business as a potato trader. He purchased a large warehouse for his business and also dealt in grain and other produce. He expanded his business with warehouses at Arnott and Iola.<sup>10</sup>

In 1888, Olfson married Jessie W. Niven, and, in 1898, the Olfsons purchased Lots 1, 6, 7, 20, and 21 of Scott's Addition in the northwest part of Waupaca. In April of 1899, the local newspaper announced that Olfson was beginning work on his new house on South Street, the old name for Granite Street. According to historic tax assessment rolls, the house was completed in that year. The house faced Granite Street on Lots 20 and 21 and eventually the other lots were sold. Peter Olfson died some time between 1909 and 1915, but Jessie Olfson continued to live in the house into the 1930s.<sup>11</sup>

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: ARCHITECTURE**

The Peter and Jessie Olfson House is architecturally significant at the local level because it is a good and well-preserved example of the Queen Anne style, particularly of its picturesque variation. It is one of the best examples of the style in Waupaca and stands out because of its high quality design, building materials, craftsmanship, and preservation. The house reflects the picturesque Queen Anne designs that were frequently published in plan books of the late

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<sup>10</sup> Scott Christie, "Historic" Landmark Nomination Form for the P. M. Olfson House, 2001, on file with the Historic Preservation Commission, City of Waupaca, Waupaca, Wisconsin.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, Tax Rolls for the City of Waupaca, on file in the Area Research Center of the Library of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Stevens Point, Wisconsin; Property Ownership Plat Book for the City of Waupaca, 1930s, on file in the City of Waupaca Building Inspection Office, Waupaca City Hall, Waupaca, Wisconsin.

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nineteenth century. Its well-proportioned design, high-quality materials and recent restoration make the house one of the city's finest landmarks.

The Queen Anne style was popular in Wisconsin between 1880 and 1910, and it is seen in the state in large numbers. Often called "Victorian," the style is characterized by asymmetry and irregularity of plan and massing. Queen Anne houses often have a variety of surface materials, such as wood shingles, stone veneer, or stucco. Common details of the style include steeply pitched multiple gable or combination hip and gable roofs, gable projections, bays with elaborate hoodmoldings or cornices, round or polygonal turrets or oriels, classical details, and large, wrap-around verandas. Fenestration is irregular in both size and in placement of openings. Many Queen Anne houses built after 1900 are less picturesque and more symmetrical than their earlier counterparts, but the style had so many variations that both picturesque and classical versions were built throughout the period of its popularity.<sup>12</sup>

According to a 1999-completed survey of historic resources in Waupaca, there are several good examples of the Queen Anne style in the city. At the time of the survey, the Olfson house was notable primarily for its elaborate decoration and picturesque style and was one of the seven Queen Anne houses identified as being potentially eligible for the National Register. The survey was completed before the renovation of the house, and, since that time, it has gained prominence for its high level of integrity and historic appearance that makes it stand out as one of the best of the seven potentially eligible Queen Anne houses in the city.

The Olfson house is architecturally significant because it is such a good example of the Queen Anne style. The asymmetry of the style is well executed on the house in its irregular plan and massing and asymmetrically located details. The variety of surface materials is also well-executed on this house and is typical of the style. The wood-shingled gables are a common detail of Queen Anne houses, but the cross-pieces are somewhat unusual, particularly the cross piece of the main elevation gable that features a carved sunburst panel. Stickwork breaks up the regularity of the clapboard exterior, and the wood details add variety to the building.

Although the house does not have a wrap-around veranda, its picturesque porch, with arched openings, turned posts, and unusual balustrade of short spool-shaped posts sitting on geometrically-accented panels, gives the house the elaborate wood detail expected of the style. The other small, second-story porches also add irregularity and a picturesque quality to the house that is typical of the style.

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<sup>12</sup> Barbara Wyatt, ed., *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, Vol. II*, Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Architecture, p. 2-15.



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The house is very well-proportioned, with details that enhance the plan and do not overwhelm the form and massing of the house. Its design suggests the type of Queen Anne houses published in plan books during the late nineteenth century. The design could not be attributed to any particular plan book, but its overall form, massing and details strongly suggest a plan published by an architect.

The style of this house is a large part of its architectural significance, but another large part of its significance is its high level of preservation and integrity. The recent renovation, including the removal of overgrown foliage, has brought this house out of hiding. Prior to the renovation, the house was painted white and its historic features were barely visible. The new, multi-color paint scheme used on the house accents its fine details, making them "pop" out in the streetscape.

Not only is the exterior of this house significant, but the high level of integrity of the interior adds to its architectural significance. Most of the original interior details of this house are intact and are in good condition. Many of the wood floors have been exposed and most of the wood trim around doors and windows is intact and most is unpainted.

The interior is not as elaborately detailed as the exterior, but there are some decorative features that are typically seen in Queen Anne houses that add to its interest. Of particular note is the foyer, with its staircase and nook featuring an abundant use of wood trim with primarily Eastlake style decoration. The staircase and its features are all well-executed, showing a high quality of materials and craftsmanship.

Another fine feature of the interior of the house are the doors of the first floor. These raised panel doors are beautifully crafted and when used in the single and double pocket style entrances, they add elegance to the formal rooms of the house. The trim around the doors and windows is also well-crafted and features a simple, yet classic style that is often seen in simple Queen Anne houses. Adding to the elegance of the house is the stained glass window along the wall of the staircase. This well-preserved detail shows high artistic qualities and craftsmanship.

The well-preserved fireplace in the dining room also adds to the elegance of the interior, particularly because of its elaborate classical details. Not only does the fireplace have its mantle extant and in good condition, but also extant is the fine copper surround. Both features are lavishly decorated with delicate classical motifs, including the cast iron fireplace insert. The delicate raised carvings of the mantel, along with the pressed metal details of the surround show the high craftsmanship that is a hallmark of this house. Few fireplaces have such high integrity as this example, and it adds to the historic quality of the interior.

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The second story of the house is less elaborate, but its historic trim is all extant. Only two rooms and the bathroom have painted trim. The floorplan of the house has not changed, either on the first or second floors, and only a small amount of remodeling has taken place. What remodeling has been done is largely confined to the back of the house in the kitchen and back staircase area. And, in the case of the kitchen, it is not so remodeled that the historic openings and their trim have been altered.

Most of the remodeling has taken place in the mud room and laundry rooms, but this remodeling has been tastefully executed to blend in with the house's historic interior, especially in the reproduction of wood trim around doors and windows that replicates the trim in the rest of the house. The main alteration to the exterior of the house is the attached garage. It is attached at the rear and is not visible from the front of the building and it does not detract significantly from the overall historic quality of this house.

The Peter and Jessie Olfson House is architecturally significant and eligible for the National Register because it is a good and intact example of the Queen Anne architectural style and is one of the best examples of the style in Waupaca. It represents the picturesque variation of the style often seen in late nineteenth century plan books and features a high degree of craftsmanship using high-quality materials on both the exterior and interior of the house. The recent renovation of the house has accentuated its high level of integrity and will help preserve it well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The high level of integrity of this house is an important component of its architectural significance. Because of its fine historic appearance, the Olfson house is an important architectural landmark in the city.

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**BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The Peter and Jessie Olfson House has a historic boundary that is described as follows: All of lot 21 and approximately the west 3/4ths of Lot 20, Scott's Addition. Its modern boundary has been recorded as Lot 1 of Certified Survey Map No. 4820, March 30, 1998, which includes the historic boundary of the property.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary of this property has been its part of its historic site since the house was built in 1899. Originally, the owner had additional lots attached to this site, but eventually sold these lots. The house sat on Lot 21 and most of Lot 20 through most of its period of significance. In 1998, this boundary was replatted as Lot 1 of a certified survey. According to the certified survey, Lot 1 includes all of Lot 21 and part of Lot 20 of Scott's Addition, which is the historic boundary of the property.

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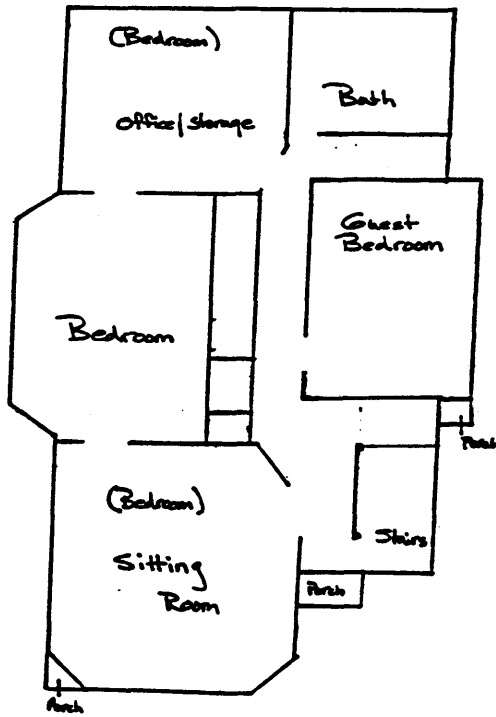
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**OLFSON, PETER AND JESSIE, HOUSE.** Waupaca, Waupaca County, WI. Photos by Carol Cartwright, June, 2001. Negatives on file in the Historic Preservation Division of the Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin.

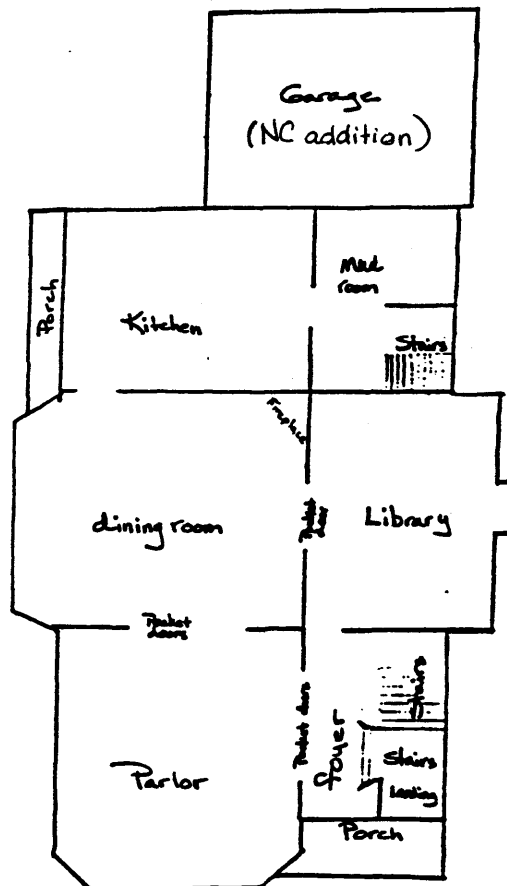
- 1 of 15: Site view, from the northwest.
- 2 of 15: Main elevation, from the northwest.
- 3 of 15: East elevation, from the southeast.
- 4 of 15: West elevation, from the west.
- 5 of 15: South elevation, from the southeast.
- 6 of 15: Interior, first floor, foyer nook.
- 7 of 15: Interior, first floor, looking into parlor from dining room.
- 8 of 15: Interior, first floor, pocket doors between parlor and dining room.
- 9 of 15: Interior, first floor, dining room.
- 10 of 15: Interior, first floor, dining room fireplace.
- 11 of 15: Interior, first floor, main staircase.
- 12 of 15: Interior, first floor, stained glass window in staircase area.
- 13 of 15: Interior, second floor, hallway.
- 14 of 15: Interior, second floor, looking from bedroom into office-storage room.
- 15 of 15: Interior, second floor, bedroom.

**OLFSON, PETER AND JESSIE, HOUSE**  
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Floor Plans\*

*Second Floor  
Plan*



*First Floor  
Plan*



*Not to Scale; plans drawn by Scott Christie, Waupaca Historic Preservation Commission*