

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

### SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 92000110

Date Listed: 3/20/92

Jennings, Ellis, House  
Property Name

Winnebago  
County

WI  
State

#### Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Beth Boland  
Signature of the Keeper

6/9/92  
Date of Action

#### Amended Items in Nomination:

##### Section 8: Significance

The date "1963" refers to a modern, noncontributing garage; since it falls outside the period of significance, it is hereby deleted from the Significant Dates blank.

The statement in Section 8, Continuation Sheet #1 that the Jennings House is nominated under criterion A is incorrect; it is nominated under criterion C. All other references to the applicable criterion are correct.

This information was confirmed by Jim Draeger of the WI SHPO staff.

#### DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries. Use letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only 25% or greater cotton content bond paper.

1. Name of Property

historic name JENNINGS, ELLIS HOUSE

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 711 East Forest Avenue

N/A not for publication

city, town Neenah

N/A vicinity

state Wisconsin

code WI

county Winnebago

code 139

zip code 54956

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

No. of contributing resources  
previously listed in the  
National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

X [Signature] \_\_\_\_\_ Date 1/22/92  
Signature of certifying official  
State Historic Preservation Officer-WI  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. [Signature] 3/20/92  
\_\_\_ See continuation sheet  
\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register. \_\_\_ See continuation sheet  
\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register.  
\_\_\_ removed from the National Register.  
\_\_\_ other, (explain:)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
<u>Domestic/Single Dwelling</u>	<u>Domestic/Single Dwelling</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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## 7. Description

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Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)
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Queen Anne

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foundation Limestone  
walls Weatherboard

---

roof Asphalt

---

other Wood

---

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Ellis Jennings House is located on Doty Island on the southeast corner of East Forest Avenue and Grant Street, in a secluded neighborhood of large late 19th and early 20th century homes. The building is a two-story Queen Anne residence of frame construction built in 1893 with a contemporaneous one-story addition across the rear or south facade.

The plan configuration is rectangular with a canted bay on the east facade. The second story roof is steeply pitched with prominent gables on the west and north or front facades, and the roof over the rear addition is flat. The foundations are rock-faced ashlar limestone. The first floor is surfaced in clapboard with scalloped boards between the first and second floor, and the second floor is surfaced with imbricated shingles. The roofing materials are composition shingles, with imbricated shingles in the gable ends. The fenestration is functional and includes multiple window arrangements on the first and second floor of the front facade, the second floor of the east facade, and the first floor of the south and west facades. The wooden sash is double-hung and single-paned with stained glass transoms located over the central windows of the multiple window groups located on the first floor of the front facade. The front double doors have glass lights etched with floral motifs. The eaves are boxed and ornamented on the north facade by flat modillions and scroll brackets. The north and west gable ends are pedimented with flared skirts, the verge boards are incised with bull's eye and floral motifs, and the attic lights are multi-paned and topped by fan ornaments that suggest a palladian window group. Integral chimneys on the east and south facades are incorporated into the end of small gables with fan ornaments. Fan motifs are also repeated in the first floor transoms.

The original wrap-around verandah was partially removed in 1963 and rebuilt in 1985 utilizing photographic documentation and physical evidence, including extant stone porch supports. Following historic lines, the reconstructed verandah roof is pedimented over the stairs and curvilinear along the northeast corner. The supports, spindles and balusters are turned as were the features they replicate. While some subtle differences exist between the original and reconstructed verandahs, the overall effect has been to enhance building integrity by restoring the balance between vertical and horizontal elements.

The first floor of the interior consists of a single room across the north, behind which are a library, central stairhall, and dining room. The kitchen and pantries are located in the rear one-story portion of the house. The second floor consists of three bedrooms and a bath. Although the front room may have at one time been fully or partially divided, the rest of the house remains largely unaltered with historic woodwork, hardware and cabinetry.

X See continuation sheet

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A two-car garage located on the southwest corner of the property is non-contributing. Of contemporary construction, it replaced a single-car garage from the early 20th century, which is believed to have replaced a small carriage house that stood on an adjacent lot. While somewhat larger than its predecessor, the present garage is a modest intrusion on the site with negligible visual impact.

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8. Statement of Significance

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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:   \_\_\_ nationally           \_\_\_ statewide            X  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria   \_\_\_ A   \_\_\_ B    X  C   \_\_\_ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)   \_\_\_ A   \_\_\_ B   \_\_\_ C   \_\_\_ D   \_\_\_ E   \_\_\_ F   \_\_\_ G

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Architecture	1893 (1)	1893 (1)
_____	_____	1963 (2)
_____		
_____	Cultural Affiliation	
_____	N/A	
_____		
_____		
Significant Person	Architect/Builder	
N/A	Waters, William (3)	

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State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Ellis Jennings House is nominated to the National Register for its local significance under criterion C. The Jennings House embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Queen Anne period of construction addressed in the Cultural Resource Management Plan. It is also reflective of a period of significant growth and achievement in the community.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Neenah began in 1835 as an industrial and agricultural mission for the Menominee Indians. Its early white settlement, attracted by the water power of the Fox River, started a few years later. Developing in the 1850's as an important flour milling center in Wisconsin, Neenah's industrial economy evolved into a nationally prominent center for paper milling in the late 19th century, dominated by Kimberly-Clark Corporation. After the turn of the century the local paper industry turned from bulk papers to consumer products, a move which resulted in continued industrial expansion during the early 20th century.

The economic development of the late 19th century produced a number of substantial fortunes for local industrialists. With their new found wealth they built notable residences on East Wisconsin Avenue and East Forest Avenue, the latter being on the Neenah side of Doty Island. The homes on East Forest Avenue were largely constructed by prominent Menasha industrialists, including J. C. Kerwin, Alexander Syme, Henry and Charles R. Smith, Albert and Theodore Gilbert, and George Whiting. The location of their residences in Neenah contributed to the local axiom that Neenah was a city of mill owners, while Menasha was a city of mill workers.

X  See continuation sheet

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The Ellis Jennings House was constructed in 1893 from designs by Oshkosh architect William Waters. It was one of six houses on East Forest Avenue designed by Waters, the others being the J. C. Kerwin House (516 E. Forest Ave.) built in 1885, the George Barnes House (620 E. Forest Ave.) built in 1885, the Charles R. Smith House (824 E. Forest Ave.; NRHP 7/16/79) built in 1891, the Henry S. Smith House (706 E. Forest Ave: NRHP 6/25/82) built in 1892, and the Perry Lindsley House (1102 E. Forest Ave.) built in 1893 (3). Although Jennings was not in the same economic and social league as his industrialist neighbors, he was a partner in the small lumber firm of Wheeler & Jennings which was sufficiently successful to afford him a substantial home in a desirable location. However, not long after its construction Jennings sold his house and left Neenah, perhaps due to financial reverses resulting from the Panic of 1893. Subsequently the Jennings House has been occupied by a succession of owners.

While little is known about Jennings, a great deal is known about his architect. William Waters was a master architect from Oshkosh who influenced Wisconsin architecture throughout the Fox River Valley area. His residential designs were rendered predominantly in the Queen Anne, Shingle, and Richardsonian Romanesque styles. Among the most characteristic features of his designs are the abundant use of decorative wood shingles and varied roof lines which seem to dominate the buildings. The patterning of shinglework in prominent gable end walls is also indicative of his late 19th century work in the Fox River Valley. Waters is perhaps best known as the architect of the Wisconsin State Building at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago. He is also known to have designed a significant number of residential and commercial buildings in Neenah during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, several of which have been nominated to the National Register.

#### ARCHITECTURE

The Ellis Jennings House is nominated under criterion A because it is a fine example of the Queen Anne period of construction.

Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan states that the Queen Anne period of construction in Wisconsin began in the 1880's and continued into the first decade of the 20th century. It goes on to state that Queen Anne houses are characterized by an irregularity of plan and massing, and a variety of surface textures, roofs, and wall projections. Roofs are steeply pitched with a dominate front gable, and bay windows and corner towers are often included in the design. Both classical and Colonial Revival ornamentation are prevalent.

While significantly smaller and less pretentious than other local examples of this style, the Jennings house is nevertheless clearly identified by such Queen Anne

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features as incised verge boards, imbricated shingling, and vertical massing. The steeply pitched roof and prominent front gable are also indicative of the period. The documented verandah reconstruction reinforces the overall integrity of the design through the abundant use of turned supports, grille spindles, and balusters. The house also displays aspects of the Classical Revival style, including the attempt to create a formal symmetry around a central entrance and to balance the fenestration on the second floor facade. The Classical Revival influence is also exhibited by the palladian-like decorative motif in the attic windows, the pedimented gable ends, and the use of details such as brackets and modillion blocks.

The Ellis Jennings House is distinctive as an example of the Queen Anne period of construction for its Classical Revival influence, and compares favorably with other works by William Waters located on East Forest Avenue. The Henry S. Smith House, Charles R. Smith House and J. C. Kerwin House are sprawling Queen Anne houses exhibiting Colonial Revival influences such as bas relief garland festoons, goose-neck porch railings, and urn finials. The two Smith houses have been significantly altered by extensive enlargement, while the Kerwin house has been converted to a duplex. The Perry Lindsley House is a more modest Shingle Style bungalow with exceptional integrity of site and form, while the Queen Anne George Barnes House retains its incised ornamentation but has had its original porches removed.

Other William Waters houses can be found in Neenah, principally on East Wisconsin Avenue. These include the Queen Anne Charles W. Howard House (409 E. Wisconsin Ave.) built in 1893, the High Victorian Gothic Henry Sherry House (527 E. Wisconsin Ave.) built in 1883, the Queen Anne Havilah Babcock House (537 E. Wisconsin Ave., NRHP 1974), and the Italianate Charles B. Clark House (583 E. Wisconsin Ave.) built in 1877. In general these houses are less altered than those found on East Forest Avenue. Of those from the Queen Anne period of construction, the Howard house is distinguished by its unusual bungalow references, while the Babcock house is noted for its distinctive Tudor influence.

Within the context of these two residential districts, the Ellis Jennings House can be seen as an important example of Queen Anne design. While moderately altered, it retains significant integrity of site and form, and is distinguished by its Classical Revival references. The significance of this latter distinction is enhanced by its association with Waters' other Queen Anne works in Neenah. Together they demonstrate the architect's exceptional ability to provide his clients with distinctive variations of the popular Queen Anne style. The Ellis Jennings House is a significant example of that versatility.



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- (1) 1893 Neenah Tax Rolls, p. 61.
- (2) Assessor's Records, Neenah City Hall.
- (3) William Waters Photograph Album, collection of George and Ila Arndt.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Adams, Peter J. Neenah Historical and Architectural Survey Project. Neenah Community Development Department, 1982. Neenah, Wisconsin.  
Glaab, Charles N. and Larsen, Lawrence H. Factories in the Valley. State Historical Society, 1969. Madison, Wisconsin.  
Wyatt, Barbara. Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: Vol. 2. State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986. Madison, Wisconsin

Previous documentation on file (NPS): \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet  
\_\_\_\_ 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  
Specify repository:  
City of Neenah \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property \_\_\_\_\_ less than one

UTM References

A	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/8/4/2/4/0</u>	<u>4/8/9/3/7/9/0</u>	B	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	D	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>

\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Ernstings Addition, Lot 1, Block 2, except the south 120 feet.

\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire city lot area that has been historically associated with the property.

\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gail Cummings, Mary Kidd, and Peter J. Adams  
organization Neenah Landmarks Commission date February 1, 1988  
street & number 211 Walnut Street telephone 414/729-4665  
city or town Neenah state Wisconsin zip code 54956

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Photographic Materials - Identification

Ellis Jennings House  
Neenah, Winnebago County, WI  
Photos by Gail Cummings, February 1988

Photo #1 of 5: View from north.

Photo #2 of 5: View from east.

Photo #3 of 5: View from southeast.

Photo #4 of 5: View from northwest.

Photo #5 of 5: View from north, detail of gable.

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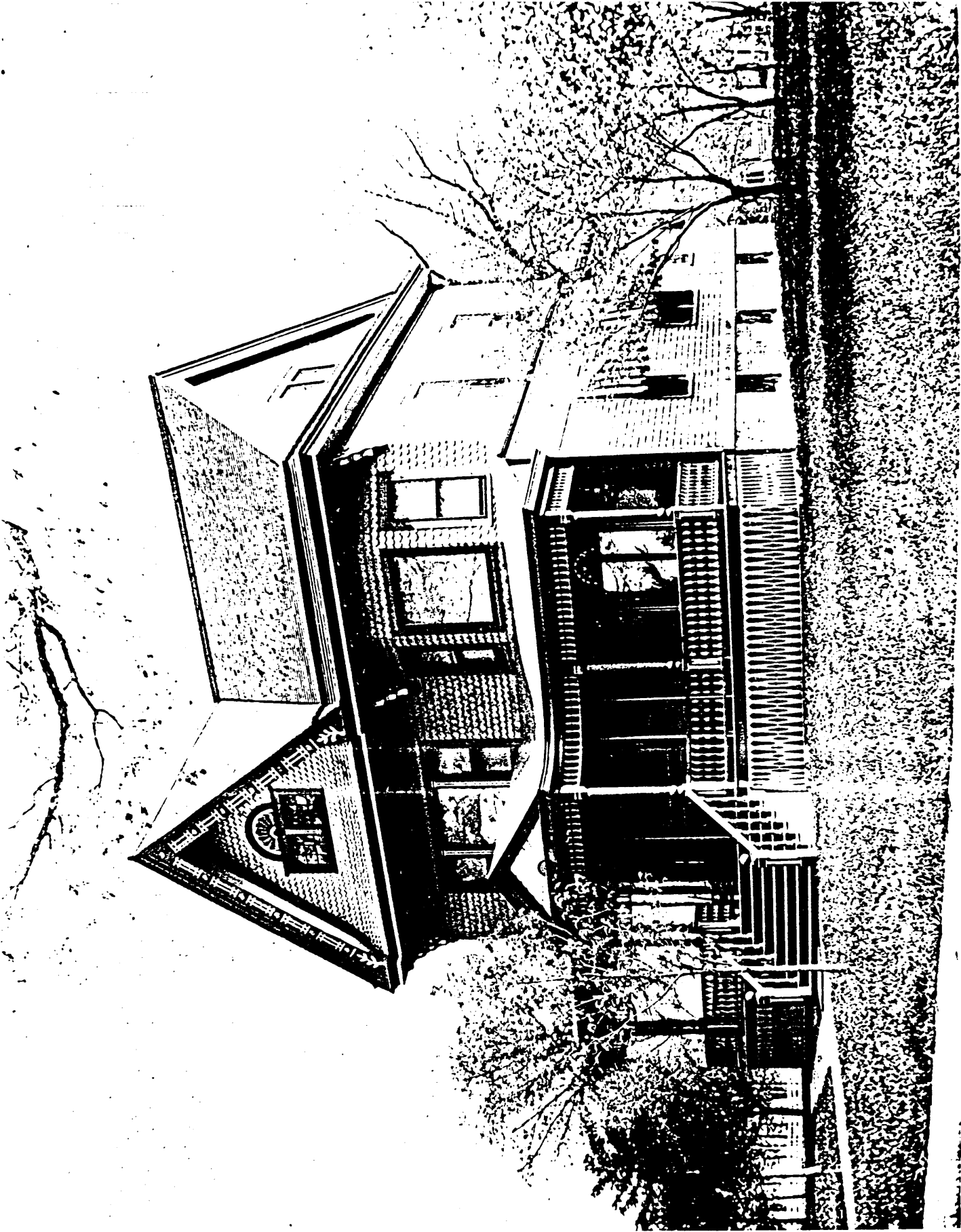
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Richard J. Moore  
711 East Forest Avenue  
Neenah, Wisconsin 54956

414/727-9877



JENNINGS, ELLIS, HOUSE NEENAH, WINNEBAGO COUNTY, WI FIGURE 1 historic view showing original porch