

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED **NOV 30 1979**
DATE ENTERED **JAN 31 1980**

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

1 NAME *Henry House*
HISTORIC (*Weed Mill Boarding House*)
AND/OR COMMON
The Henry House (preferred)

LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER *1749 Riverside Drive*
CITY, TOWN *Suamico* VICINITY OF _____
STATE *Wisconsin* CODE *55* COUNTY *Brown* CODE *009*
NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT *Eight*

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME *Mr. and Mrs. Gerald C. Henry*
STREET & NUMBER *P.O. Box 188*
CITY, TOWN *Suamico* VICINITY OF _____ STATE *Wisconsin 54173*

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. *Brown County Courthouse*
STREET & NUMBER *100 South Jefferson St.*
CITY, TOWN *Green Bay* STATE *Wisconsin 54301*

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE *Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places*
DATE *1979* FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS *State Historical Society of Wisconsin*
CITY, TOWN *Madison* STATE *Wisconsin 53706*

7 DESCRIPTION

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	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE February, 19

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Henry House, formerly the Weed Mill Boarding House, is a plain vernacular structure, about 24' wide and 36½' long, sheathed in clapboards and with a new wood shingle roof. The balanced facade is composed, on the first floor, of two equally spaced windows on either side of a plain central doorway. There are four windows on the front facade of the second floor, placed directly above each of the first floor windows. There is no opening or decoration above the doorway, only plain clapboards, nor is there any exterior decoration or ornament or any stylistic pretense whatsoever, outside or inside the structure.

A porch extends across the entire front, a replica of one that may have originally been on the building; it was reconstructed about 1974. A turn-of-the-century porch had been on the house, but was removed at the time the structure was moved, in 1973. A modern chimney extends up near the center of the roof.

The building faces easterly towards a private road; its orientation is similar to its original orientation when it was located about 3,500 feet further west along Riverside Drive, although on the original location it faced northeasterly. When built it faced the mill and other structures adjacent to the mill; at present it faces the railroad and other commercial structures across a wide parkway.

The 2 over 2 window sash on the front are, with one exception, original, as is the front door. The window opening immediately left of the doorway had, at one point, been enlarged into a doorway, but the present owners have restored the window. Other window sash on the remaining three facades include a number of original 2 over 2; four old 6 over 6 which may be original or may have been transplanted to this structure many years ago; and five modern 1 over 1, some of different sizes than the original window openings. The interior stair originally rose opposite the front door; when it was moved to the north wall early in this century a new exterior door was cut into the north wall, and a window may have been blocked over.¹ With the exception of these changes in fenestration, the possible blocking or moving of a few windows on the second floor, and the reconstruction of the porch, the exterior is unaltered. A shed was added to the rear.

The interior apparently originally consisted of four or five rooms on the first floor, and five rooms on the second floor. Alterations over the years have completely obscured the original room arrangement in the rear portion of the first floor, but recent reconstruction exposed the partition locations and the opening for the stairs in the front portion. The first floor rooms presumably included the dining room and the parlor for the boarders on either side of a small entry and central stair. The rear portion presumably included the kitchen and one or two rooms which may have been for the staff of the boarding house.

The second floor has been little altered. The central stair rose to a wide landing, with narrow corridors running right and left the entire width of the building--there may have once been windows at each end. Each of the five rooms were probably boarders' sleeping rooms. There were one 'single' and two 'doubles' across the rear, and two larger 'quadruples' across the front, for a total of 13 bed locations. It is not known whether the beds were standard beds or bunk

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beds (and, if so, how many tiers high), or how many occupants there were per bed or tier. In 1870 there were five boarding houses in Suamico Township, including four clearly associated with saw mills; the four largest (of which one must be the Weed Mill Boarding House) had a combined population of 126 people, or an average of $31 \frac{1}{2}$ each; the fifth, at the Davidson Mill, had only 13 occupants.² In any event, the original wide pine floorboards are scarred by the mill workers' hob nail boots in the center of each room, but remain unscarred where the beds and chests or trunks were clearly placed.

When the stair was moved north one of the original second floor newel posts and railings were moved with it and retained; they remain in place today. The partitions between two of the rooms and the corridors were removed to enlarge these two rooms; the smallest bedroom was also enlarged by extending it into the former landing. The second floor room arrangement has not been altered since.

The most distinctive feature of the building, inside or out, is the manner in which it was originally walled, ceiled and insulated. The interior walls and ceilings, throughout, were originally covered with boards and battens.³ The boards were 1" x 12" (full measure) and the battens were 3" wide. They ran horizontally on the walls, and the total board feet must have been about 7,000 (worth more than \$8,000 in 1979 prices). Sawdust from the mill was used to insulate both the exterior walls and the ceilings. By 1973, when the structure had to be moved, all of the downstairs boards had been covered or removed, and all the battens were gone, but reconstruction activities have exposed the boards in parts of the main front room, and the battens have been restored. On the second floor, however, nearly all the original boards remain, and many of the battens; most of these were cleaned and restored by the present owners, although it was necessary to cover some of the wall surfaces. Nevertheless, both the main room downstairs and all of the second floor retain the character of the original building.

The present use as commercial space, for a combined floral/antique/gift shop of distinct character, is closer in spirit to the original use than was its use as a private residence for many years. Large numbers of people come and go, passing through the rooms and up and down the stairs, not unlike the transient character of the boarding house of 110 years ago. It even lacks plumbing, although a modern heating system and electricity have been discreetly installed.

1. The property was acquired by Charles Herring in 1904, who operated a modern tavern (spirits only, no boarders) for many years in the house; it is believed that the stair was moved by Herring sometime after 1904 in order to provide a more spacious taproom. Abstract of Title, Henry Papers.

2. Brown County census, 1870.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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3. In every case where the walls are exposed or have been probed, either the original boards remain or evidence exists that they were once in place; it therefore seems clear that the system was uniformly used.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		Association with historically important persons; building technology	

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1869

BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

Association with historically important persons; building technology

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Henry House, or Weed Mill Boarding House, appears to be the sole remaining significant structure in Suamico Township, Brown County, relating to the short-lived lumbering boom on the eastern shore of Green Bay. It also may be one of the relatively few such surviving structures anywhere in that part of Wisconsin's cut-over area which was later converted to agriculture. It survived the devastating fires which are collectively known as the Peshtigo Fire, and which occurred the same night as the more famous but less deadly Chicago Fire, on October 8-9, 1871. It was constructed by or for the Weed Brothers, well-known lumbermen from Oshkosh. The structure is also of interest because of the manner in which its interior was finished, relating it both to the lumber industry of which it was part, and also to a type of "fast build" or prefabrication technology current in 1869.

Industry

The Green Bay area originally had mixed lumber, with white pine, maple, beech and oak, and it was these forests that attracted one of the first lumbering booms in Wisconsin. The first saw mill in Suamico was established as early as either 1835 or 1849-50,¹ but it was not until the 1860s that the lumber industry became significant in the then sparsely settled, heavily-wooded township. By 1870 at least five or six, and possibly as many as eight mills were doing "a flourishing business." In any event, after the post Civil War slump, 1869 was a banner year for the lumber industry in Brown County and vicinity, with 1,800 employed in the mills throughout the county, and the number of people estimated to be thereby supported listed as 6,000.² It was in 1869 that Alfred and James H. Weed, prominent lumbermen of Oshkosh, constructed the Weed Mill on the Suamico River, along with a store, worker's houses and a "hotel" or boarding house.³ The small settlement thrived for several years, but as early as 1877 the boarding house property was sold. About the same time (presumably earlier) the mill had been closed and the equipment apparently moved to Green Bay. Even in Green Bay, however, the mill shut down at least temporarily in the fall of 1877 "for want of a supply of logs."⁴

Within a few years what had been dense forest was gradually being transformed into productive farmland, and the former boarding house was converted into a farmer's residence, which it remained until the early 1970s (including a long twentieth century period when it was also a tavern). Part of the significance of the structure lies precisely in the transient nature of the lumber industry, and the short-lived nature of the buildings associated with the industry. In Suamico the only other structure believed to have been associated with the lumber industry is the Bruce Mill Boarding House, also converted to a farmhouse, but badly deteriorated.⁵ The village which grew up about the Weed Mill has entirely dis-

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Census, 1870 (Manuscript), Brown County, Area Research Center, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay.
 Curtis, Hon. J.S. "Brown County" in Resources, Advantages and Productions of the Counties of Brown, Door, Oconto and Shawano, Green Bay: Robinson & Bro., Printers and Stationers, 1870.

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.53
 UTM REFERENCES Quadrangle Name: Suamico, Wis. Scale: 1:24000

A	1,6	4,1,6	4,8,0	4,9	4,2	2,8,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				
C							D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

A part of NE 1/4 NE 1/4 Sec 22 T 25N R20E described in 1073, R561; approximately 170' x 137' (Tax Parcel 469.3).

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

Richard P. Hartung, Acting Chairman

ORGANIZATION

Wisconsin Historic Preservation Negotiating Board

DATE

September 1, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

121 S. Academy St.

TELEPHONE

608/756-4509

CITY OR TOWN

Janesville

STATE

Wisconsin 53545

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL X

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Richard Henry

TITLE Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

10/16/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Carol D. Shuck

DATE

1-31-80

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST *Ema Dore Saxe*

DATE

1/31/80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Reginald Coordinator

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appeared, as have the settlements around several of the other mills. In fact, many mid- and late nineteenth century structures which have survived in Suamico have either been moved at least once, or adapted to other uses, or both.⁶

Exploration/Settlement

Suamico Township, located several miles northwest of the City of Green Bay, and now well within its area of suburban growth, was a strong logging community through the period of about 1854 to 1880. Subsequently Suamico became, and remains, largely agricultural, but it is located in the border area between primarily agricultural lands in southern Wisconsin and primarily cut-over timber lands in northern Wisconsin. By 1972 the former boarding house of 1869 was viewed as obsolete by its then farmer owner/occupants, and they constructed a new farm house immediately to the rear of the old boarding house, and intended to demolish the latter. However, the current owners recognized the significance of the structure, and arranged to move it less than a mile to its present location, where it is located in a complex that includes a general store in operation since 1905, a former pickle factory, a former cheese factory, a moved one-room school and other structures. Located in this mix of uses and structures, its original setting is replicated more than by its former one in the midst of a farm.

In any event, the Henry House is one of only three structures associated with the lumber industry and known to have survived the devastating fires which swept over 1,000 square miles of the Green Bay area the night of October 8, 1871. There were three fires in all, one of which began just north of Fort Howard (now part of Green Bay). This fire wiped out Mill's Center, in Pittsfield Township just west of Suamico, and heavily damaged Suamico itself.⁷ This fire burned out south of Oconto, but a second one began north of Oconto and destroyed Peshtigo; a third fire occurred on the Door County peninsula on the east shore of the bay. The fact that Oconto survived between the two fires accounts for the existence of the Holt-Balcom Lumber Company Office of 1854 (NRHP), the other significant structure to survive the fires. The fires, of course, contributed to the rapid decline of the industry along Green Bay.

Association with Historically Important Persons

The Weed Mill Boarding House was built for Alfred and James H. Weed, who had acquired the property in 1865.⁸ They, along with their brothers Jacob and Walter, were prominent in the early lumber industry in the Fox Valley area, and in commerce. James H. Weed lived to be 93, and died in Oshkosh in 1913; his obituary stated that "a complete biography...would quite completely trace the history of Oshkosh and the lumber districts of northern Wisconsin."⁹ Although the Weeds operated several mills over the years, it is not known if any other structure associated with their activities survives.

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Building Technology

The use of board and batten interior sheathing, as in the Henry House, is unusual but not unique. It made a cheap and easy substitute for plaster when trained plasterers could not be found, and this would have been especially so where the needed lumber was directly across the road, and owned by the same men for whom the structure was being built. A similar wood sheathing, but tongue and groove, was recommended in a catalogue of prefabricated buildings issued by Lyman Bridges in Chicago, in 1870.¹⁰

1. Lindsley (1835); Johnstone, p. 70 (1849-50).
2. Curtis, p. 10.
3. Johnstone, p. 105; Weed Mill and boarding house show on the Jacobi map of 1870.
4. Green Bay Press-Gazette, October 2, 1977 ("Over the Century")
5. Interviews with Gerald C. Henry, 1978-79.
6. These include the railroad depot (moved), the cheese factory (now a residence), the Bruce boarding house (now a residence), parts of another, later, hotel (split in two: one half a residence, the other half moved and now a tavern/residence), the former White Pine school (moved, future antique store), and the town hall (now a residence).
7. Wells, p. 190.
8. Abstract of Title, Henry Papers.
9. "J. H. Weed is Dead..." Wisconsin Necrology, Vol. 13, p. 123.
10. Sprague, personal communication, November 15, 1978.

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9.

Henry, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald C., Papers:

Copy of Abstract of Title for W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, S. 22, T 25 N-R 20E (original site);

File of newspaper clippings and other records in regard to the Henry House

Gilbert, Dave "From Bunkhouseto Antique Shop in 108 years", Green Bay Press-Gazette, October 2, 1977;

"A Century Ago in Green Bay," Press-Gazette, October 2, 1977;

"Moving A House No Easy Task," Press-Gazette, May 6, 1979.

Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. Gerald C. Henry, various dates, 1978-1979.

Jacobi, Arthur, Official Map of Brown County, Wisconsin, 1870, compiled and drawn for the County Board of Supervisors.

Johnstone, Lizzie Rice Story of Pittsfield and Suamico [De Pere], printed by Kruppers Publishing Co, 1928.

Lindsley, M. P. "Milling: its early history in Brown County," from the Green Bay Advocate, Thursday May 6, 1876 (in Wisconsin Miscellaneous at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Vol. 5).

Sprague, Paul E., personal communication, November 15, 1978.

"J. H. Weed is Dead..." obituary, July 22, 1913, from Wisconsin Necrology, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Vol. 13, pp.123-24.

Wells, Robert W. Fire at Peshtigo, Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968.