

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received NOV 7 1984
date entered DEC 6 1984

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Beals and Torrey Shoe Co. Building

and/or common n.a.

2. Location

street & number 100 W. Milwaukee Street not for publication

city, town Watertown vicinity of

state Wisconsin 53094 code 55 county Jefferson code 055

3. 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 type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: warehouse

4. Owner of Property

name Mill Race Associates, c/o Thomas M. Neujahr, Urban Land Interests

street & number 301 N. Broom Street

city, town Madison n.a. vicinity of state Wisconsin 53703

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Courthouse

street & number 320 S. Main Street

city, town Jefferson state Wisconsin 53549

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1984 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Beals and Torrey Shoe Co. factory is located four blocks south of Main Street at the west end of the Milwaukee Street bridge crossing the Rock River. Industrial uses predominate along both sides of the river south of Main Street, as they have since Watertown was founded in the 1840s. To the north of the shoe factory is the old Globe Flour Mill, started in 1845 and still serving as a feed and grain warehouse. To the south is a one-story metal warehouse. But a residential neighborhood begins across the street from these buildings and stretches westward.

Built in 1904, the shoe factory is three stories high on the west and four stories high along the north, south and east sides where the ground slopes downward toward the river. The building is of cream brick, load-bearing construction with a rubble foundation barely visible on the east side. Brickwork is in common bond with an occasional row of headers. A gently sloping shed roof is hidden on the west, north and south sides by a parapet which is trimmed by a slightly corbelled table of bricks. A square chimney rises from the northeast corner. On the 150' long east and west sides, 23 windows light each story, with full-sized windows on the basement level to the east and one-third height basement windows on the west. The 40' wide north facade is five windows across and the 40' south side is divided into six bays. The full-sized windows have four-over-four sash, boarded up for safety. All windows have segmental arches composed of three rows of headers, and thin stone sills. A raised loading dock door on the west facade giving access to the railroad spur is the original, with diagonal tongue-in-groove panels and an overhead transom. A modern glass and aluminum passage door is located at the southwest corner of the south facade and another utility door under a cast iron lintel provides access to the east side at the northeast corner of the building. "Kusel Dairy Equipment Company" is painted on three sides of the building. Fire escape platforms with scroll brackets were added to the south and east facades at an unknown date.

To the north projects a low, one-story cream brick boiler house with a shed roof built at the same time as the main block. Other additions were constructed sometime between 1937 and 1954.¹ Two, constructed of concrete block with rectangular window openings, project from the east and north sides. A tiny frame addition with a shed roof extends north off the boiler room. These one-story additions are too small to detract from the historical appearance of the building, but are non-significant, non-contributing elements.

Also located on the site, on piers over the water, is a small, metal sided shed that also does not contribute to the historical significance of the shoe factory.

The interior of the factory consists mostly of open spaces between exposed brick walls. Floors of hardwood on wood joists running across the building are supported by heavy wood posts and beams joined by metal beam connectors. A wide wooden staircase trimmed with a simple wainscot balustrade joins the floors. Plaster-board partitions of unknown date divide up the south section of the structure.

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The shoe company used the basement for its sole leather department, the first floor for finishing and packing, the second floor for bottoming, and the third for cutting and fitting. In 1937 the Kusel Co. used the basement for printing (perhaps space leased to others), the first floor as a tin shop and the second and third floors as warerooms.

¹1937 Sanborn-Perris map and 1954 photo of building in "Centennial Edition," Watertown Daily Times, June 26, 1954.

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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Period of historical significance: 1904 - 1920

Specific dates 1904¹ **Builder/Architect** F. Lindsay, architect¹⁰

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Beals and Torrey Shoe Co. factory is historically significant as one of the two buildings remaining that housed the leading manufacturing concern in Watertown for over 40 years. The building is associated with a period of innovation and rapid growth of a company which by 1917 had become "the leading [industrial] plant in Watertown."² In that year it employed 100 people and disbursed the largest payroll in the city, a position which the shoe factory held through 1954.

The factory structure is also significant as one of the three relatively intact pre-1937 industrial buildings remaining in the city.

Historical Development of the Site

The Beals Torrey Shoe Co. began in 1867 when two young Civil War soldiers, Ezra Beals and I. G. Mann, stopped over in Milwaukee on their way home to Massachusetts. They were impressed by the rapidly growing town and decided to establish a full-line shoe jobbing house there (first building on Huron St. gone). Other members of the Beals family and Alexis Torrey soon bought out Mann's interest and in 1879 the firm became known as the Beals and Torrey Shoe Co. Shortly thereafter, the company built a factory on Wisconsin Avenue (demolished), where they turned out mens' work shoes and womens' turned shoes, both high and low cut. In 1888 the firm moved its store and factory to a new site on West Water St. (demolished), but soon the jobbing business took all of the available space and the factory was moved several times in the next few years to various leased spaces (sites unknown).

In 1904 the company decided to move its factory operations to a building erected for that purpose in Watertown, retaining its leased space at 231 E. Buffalo St. in Milwaukee (Historic Third Ward Historic District, NRHP), as its offices and salesroom. For a time the factory produced the same types of shoes as had been made in Milwaukee, but after the death of E. F. Beals ca. 1907, the manager of the Watertown plant, Frederick W. Pfeiffer, convinced the new management that this type of operation was expensive and impractical. The management decided to specialize in "BP" brand "Mens' Fine Goodyear Welt Shoes." Their new product soon established an "enviable reputation in the shoe industry."³ By 1909 the company had become "one of the largest concerns of its kind in the West."⁴ Sixteen travelling salesmen operating directly out of the Watertown plant were so successful that the company had difficulty keeping up with its orders. World War I boosted sales immensely when demand was heavy for this type of dress shoe for the military. In 1917 the plant produced 500 pairs of shoes daily. By 1918 the company had outgrown their Milwaukee Street factory and began construction of a new plant on Hart Street. By then the company supplied the shoe trade all

9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 12,457 sq. ft. ^{3AH}

Quadrangle name Watertown, WI

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

116	3519	61915	417813	11610
Zone	Easting		Northing	

B

Zone	Easting		Northing	

C

Zone	Easting		Northing	

D

Zone	Easting		Northing	

E

Zone	Easting		Northing	

F

Zone	Easting		Northing	

G

Zone	Easting		Northing	

H

Zone	Easting		Northing	

Verbal boundary description and justification

Please see continuation sheet.

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 Katherine Hundt Rankin, Preservation Consultant

organization for the owner

date July 7, 1984

street & number 1109 Sherman Avenue

telephone 608-256-2905

city or town Madison

state Wisconsin 53703

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.

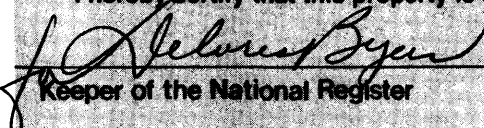
State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Director of Historic Preservation

date October 23, 1984

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register


Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 12/6/84

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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over the United States, Cuba, Mexico and Central America.

In 1920 operations were moved to the new site. Meanwhile in 1917 the firm had changed its name to the Beals-Pratt Shoe Manufacturing Co. In 1925 Walter J. Booth bought control of the company and changes its name to his. After he died in 1936, the Ideal Shoe Co. merged with the Booth Co. and the new firm became known as the Mid-States Shoe Co. By 1954 the company had five plants in Wisconsin. In that year one thousand employees (four hundred in Watertown), produced 10,000 pair per day of Blackhawk and Classmates childrens' shoes and Crosby Square mens' shoes. The annual payroll for the Watertown plant in 1954 was \$1,000,000 and its shoes were "one of Watertown's most widely distributed products."⁵

After the shoe company moved out of its original Watertown factory in 1920, the building housed the Breuer-Stone, Inc., a local printer and manufacturer of printing machines. This relatively short-lived company was no longer listed in the city directory for 1930. Before 1930 the building was purchased by the D. and F. Kusel Co. for its dairy equipment division. The Kusel Company was one of the oldest business concerns in Watertown. It was begun in 1849 as a stove and tin shop on West Main Street by a newly-arrived immigrant from Germany, Daniel Kusel. In that year Kusel, who came to Watertown with a nest egg of \$3000 in gold, also began construction of his elegant pink brick Italianate mansion which remains in relatively intact condition to this day. Soon Kusel added retail hardware sales to his business. In 1864, two of his sons took over the firm, which became known as the D. and F. Kusel Company. At that time the firm's manufactured products included tin, copper and sheet iron ware. In 1897, the firm was incorporated under the leadership of the third generation of Kusels. Around 1910 the firm began the manufacture, jobbing and importing of equipment and supplies for dairies, cheese factories, creameries and ice cream production. In 1938 the dairy division was split from the retail hardware function and incorporated as the Kusel Dairy Equipment Co. by two members of the fourth generation of the family, Daniel and Robert. By 1954, the company had greatly expanded. In that year 50 employees made plate heat exchangers, cheese vats, cheese presses, agitators, stainless steel tanks and small dairy plant tools. Thier products were shipped throughout the U.S. and to foreign countries as well. The firm was still operating in 1965.

A commemorative newspaper article stated that "the Kusel Co. and name have been identified with the history and growth of Watertown as a community."⁶ The Kusel firm and the Globe Flour Mill, both founded in the 1840s, are the oldest industrial institutions remaining in Watertown.

The building on Milwaukee Street is not the building most closely associated with the Kusel family, however. The beautiful Italianate Kusel homestead, along with nearly every other pre-1937 house occupied by members of the Kusel firm

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remain in good condition. The Kusel Hardware Store on West Main Street is still doing business in the ca. 1870s and 1905 Italianate and Queen Anne building on the same site as the original 1849 tin shop. But the dairy equipment plant does have some historical interest for its connection with this pioneer family. The addition of dairy equipment jobbing and manufacture to their business ca. 1910 is indicative of the importance of the booming dairy industry in Wisconsin, the heart of which many say is in Jefferson County.

Other Industrial Plants Remaining in Watertown

A survey of Sanborn-Perris maps from 1885 to 1937 and a windshield survey of the city indicates that 37 manufacturing buildings existed in that era in Watertown. Of those 37 buildings, 20 have been demolished (including the only other shoe factory in town, the Watertown Shoe Co.); six have been so altered as to have completely lost their original appearance. The ten pre-1937 manufacturing buildings, besides the Beals and Torrey Shoe factory, remaining in Watertown are:

1. 200 N. Water St. This very fine, two and three story, cream brick, Italianate building in relatively intact condition features many round-arched windows. A post-1937 addition to one side does not significantly detract from the architectural character of this building, the oldest industrial building in Watertown. It was used as the Misigatis Wagon Works from before 1884 to 1899. Misigatis' firm began in 1857. From 1899 to 1938 this building was Otto Biefeld's machine repair shop. Biefeld began his company in 1883, incorporating it in 1917. In 1918 the firm employed about 50 men.
2. S. Water Street, east side, opposite Lafayette St. The original section of this building is a cream brick veneered mill built in 1871, basically functional in design with some Italianate details. The building was used as a flour mill until after 1937. The flour mill at one time was the nation's leading supplier of rye flour, a German staple. Between 1909 and the present many warehouse additions were constructed, obscuring somewhat the historic appearance of the building.
3. 810 S. Second Street. This plain, somewhat altered, one-story, brick load-bearing structure was built between 1901 and 1909 as the boiler shop for the Dornfeld-Kunnert foundry located behind this building to the west (gone). A very long wing of similar design was added to the south between 1926 and 1937. The Dornfeld-Kunnert Co. manufactured bridges, brewers' equipment and boilers. It was sold to a New York firm in 1916. The building then housed the Monarch Tractor Co. and in 1938 Otto Biefeld (see #1) took over the complex. This company ran the other dairy equipment manufacturing division in Watertown in the pre-World War II era. The Biefeld firm occupied this site until after 1954.
4. Frederick Street, south side, opposite S. Water St. Built between 1901 and

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1909, the one-story frame section of this building recently has been totally obscured by corrugated aluminum siding, an addition and a large modern garage door. The brick and concrete office was constructed in 1917. From before 1909 to after 1937 these structures housed the Washington Cutlery Co., incorporated in 1906. In 1917 the firm employed 35 workers with an annual payroll of \$35,000. The company is still in operation under the name of the Village Blacksmith.

5. West St., south side, east of Milford. Built in 1907, this structure housed the Van Kamp Packing Co. evaporated milk plant until after 1937. This two-story, load-bearing brick building decorated with parapet gables is virtually untouched on the exterior. Some original wooden doors remain.

6. Southwest corner N. Water and O'Connell Sts. A simple cream brick structure with steel windows built in 1914 for Otto Biefeld's boiler shop (see #1), this building was doubled in size by additions in 1918 and 1929, incorporating a small 19th century barn to the west.

7. Milford, west side, just north of the railroad tracks. A small, one-story brick building of vernacular design, this structure was the woodworking shop of the G. B. Lewis Bee Keeper's Supply Co. It was constructed between 1909 and 1915 with a large cinder block addition to the south built between 1926 and 1937. The G. B. Lewis Co. began in 1863 as a sash and door mill using waterpower from the Rock River. It branched into the manufacture of beeware in 1878 and eventually became the world's largest manufacturer of bee keepers' supplies. Two Lewis factories burned to the ground in 1880 and 1909. Shortly after the last fire a new complex was constructed on 11 acres of ground, including this building constructed in 1911. The company later developed and produced lightweight shipping boxes and golf ball washers. Most of the buildings on the complex have been altered a great deal. This one has had windows blocked up in addition to the large wing, but its original design is still recognizable.

8. Baxter, at the railroad tracks. This large, two-story brick cannery of simple, stripped classical design was constructed between 1909 and 1915 for the Watertown Milk Produce Corp. Several additions were constructed between 1926 and 1937, somewhat obscuring the original design. This and the Van Kamp cannery (see #5) together employed 60 men in 1917.

9. 316 Hart Street. Built in 1918-1920, this large four-story red brick factory was built for the Beals-Pratt Shoe Co. when the company outgrew its old building on Milwaukee Street. The 1920 structure is in relatively intact condition and was used as a shoe factory until after 1954. Two large additions were built after 1954.

10. Cady Street, west end, at the railroad tracks. The Watertown Canning Co., founded in 1912, built this plant sometime between 1915 and 1926. Organized as a pea cannery, in 1917 the firm paid out \$15,000 in annual wages. The plant

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contains two moderate sized brick buildings with blocked up windows and many concrete garage and warehouse additions between the two older sections.

Conclusion

In 1917, three years before the Beals-Pratt Shoe Manufacturing Co. moved to its new plant, the shoe factory had become the leading plant in Watertown. Its annual wage disbursement in that era was the "largest ..⁸ of any factory in Watertown, paying out over ninety thousand dollars per year." One out of every ten industrial workers in the city worked at the shoe factory (1000 people worked in 30 manufacturing institutions in Watertown in 1917). The company continued to be the city's largest industrial concern until after 1954.⁹

Both Watertown plants of the shoe company remain. The older plant on Milwaukee Street has suffered fewer exterior alterations than the newer commercial style plant on Hart St. The older plant retains its basic configuration. Small, one-story concrete block wings, all built under the sill line of the first floor windows, do little to detract from the historic flavor of the building. Even original doors and window sash remain intact. The newer plant has had at least two large wings added since 1954, a two-story contemporary style brick office section added across one side of the street facade and a large brick garage wing appended to one side.

The Beals and Torrey Shoe Co. building is also historically important as one of the most intact of the eleven remaining pre-1937 manufacturing buildings in the community. At first hoped to rival Rochester, N.Y. in waterpower, Watertown developed into a thriving little city with an unusually diversified industrial base. The original flour, saw, and woolen mills eventually gave way to large industries making bridges, paper boxes, evaporated milk, beeware, table slides, knives, cigars, brass fixtures and shoes. As is to be expected, many of the factories associated with these industries have been demolished, destroyed by fire, or completely rebuilt in recent years. Of the eleven that remain, three (the shoe factory, #1 and #5), are in excellent original condition; two (#2 and #9) are somewhat altered but retain enough historical character probably to be eligible for the National Register, and the rest are either quite altered or are small parts of larger complexes that no longer remain intact. While this assessment is by necessity based in incomplete research on the individual structures, it does demonstrate the importance of the Beals and Torrey Shoe Co. building as a representative and intact example of the historic industrial structures in Watertown.

¹History of Jefferson County, 1917, p. 190.

²Ibid., p. 191.

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- 3"Centennial Edition," Watertown Daily Times, June 26, 1954.
- 4Watrous, Memoirs of Milwaukee County, 1909, p. 45.
- 5"Cent. Ed.," June 26, 1954.
- 6Watertown Daily Times, June 18, 1958.
- 7"Cent. Ed.," June 26, 1954.
- 8Ott, p. 190.
- 9"Cent. Ed.," June 26, 1954.
- 10cornerstone. Lindsay, about whom almost nothing is known, practiced in Watertown for only a short time.

Item #9: Major Bibliographical References

"Centennial Edition," Watertown Daily Times, June 26, 1954.

City directories for the Cities of Watertown and Milwaukee.

Historic Third Ward Historic District NRHP nomination form, 1983.

History of Jefferson County, Wisconsin, Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1879.

History of Jefferson County, Wisconsin and Its People, Chicago: S. J. Clarke, 1917.

Sanborn-Perris maps for the City of Watertown, 1884, 1890, 1895, 1901, 1909, 1915, 1926, 1926 updated to 1937.

Watertown Daily Times, Feb. 22, 1905, April 15, 1916, March 10, 1924, June 18, 1958.

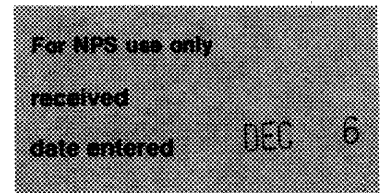
Watertown Gazette, Feb. 24, 1905, Aug. 10, 1916.

Watertown, Wisconsin Centennial, 1854 - 1954, Watertown: Jansky Printing Co., 1954.

Watrous, James Anthony, ed., Memoirs of Milwaukee County..., Madison: Western Historical Assn., 1909.

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All that part of a certain tract or parcel of land situated in the Third Ward of the City of Watertown, marked and designated "Reserved" on the recorded map or plat of James Rogan's Addition to the said City of Watertown, which lies North of the North line of that certain part of said "Reserve" heretofore deeded to the said City of Watertown for the use of a public street and known as West Milwaukee Street; and also the following described strip or parcel of land in the Third Ward of the City of Watertown, Jefferson County, Wisconsin, bounded and described as follows, viz: Commencing at that point where the North line of West Milwaukee Street intersects the East line of Water Street; thence North on the East line of said Water Street to the North line of Rogan's Addition; thence West along the North line of said Rogan's Addition for a distance of 11.50 feet; thence South parallel to the East line of said Water Street to the North line of West Milwaukee Street; thence East along the North line of West Milwaukee Street for a distance of 11.5 feet to the place of beginning. The Third Ward referred to above is now the First Ward of the City of Watertown. Also, all that part of an abandoned Mill Race and a wooded island lying contiguous to and east of the previously described parcel and lying South of the North line of the previously described parcel. Said lands lying and being in the City of Watertown, County of Jefferson and State of Wisconsin.

The above described property is the land upon which the shoe factory building sits. Besides a small metal shed described in Item #7, the shoe factory is the only bldg. on this site, and occupies a significant portion of the site.