

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED MAY 23 1979
DATE ENTERED JUL 16 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Charles R. Smith House

AND/OR COMMON

Shepard House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

824 East Forest Avenue

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Neenah

__ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Sixth

STATE

Wisconsin

CODE

55

COUNTY

Winnebago

CODE

139

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERICAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Gary and Roberta Youso

STREET & NUMBER

824 East Forest Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Neenah

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin 54956

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder of Deeds, Winnebago County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

415 Jackson Street

CITY, TOWN

Oshkosh

STATE

Wisconsin 54901

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1973

__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

EXCELLENT

DETERIORATED

UNALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE

GOOD

RUINS

ALTERED

MOVED DATE _____

FAIR

UNEXPOSED

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Original Dwelling and Major Additions

The Charles R. Smith House is a detached dwelling two and one half stories high. The foundations are rock-faced ashlar limestone, the walls are beveled clapboard, and in the main mass the roof is hipped to a high deck. Four primary pavilions extend from this mass: from the eastern halves of the south and north sides and the northern halves of the west and east sides. The southern and northern pavilions are gabled with closed eaves and returns, and the western and eastern pavilions are pedimented with a pent; the southern pavilion ends in a curved bay with projecting gable corners and the western pavilion has a two-story bow beneath a full projecting pediment. On the southwest corner is a tower truncated to a flat roof above the cornice.

These elements are those remaining of the original dwelling completed in 1891.

Extending from this core are three secondary pavilions: a polygonal bay pavilion on the east side of the main mass tangent to and extending beyond the eastern pavilion, a gabled pavilion with closed eaves and returns on the north side of the northern pavilion continuing the west slope, and a pedimented pavilion on the east side of the northern pavilion tangent to and extending beyond the eastern pavilion. A secondary mass is defined by the western pavilion, the main mass, the northern pavilion, and the secondary gabled pavilion, and hipped to a low deck on the north and west sides. A hipped pavilion extends from the north side of the secondary pedimented pavilion tangent to and extending beyond the northern pavilion, and a jetty with a flat roof extends from the west side of the main mass over the veranda.

These six feature were all added at a later date, most after 1900.

The Porches

Extending further from the dwelling are two porches and a porte-cochere. On the south side of the main mass the front porch, or veranda, runs along the face of the southern pavilion, projecting southward at the front entry between the pavilion and the tower, and continues with a curve around the tower to the south side of the western pavilion. Supported in part by four stone piers, the veranda is reached at two locations: at the front entry projection and next to the western pavilion. The front stairs consist of one stone step and six wooden steps all divided by a black wrought iron hand rail, while the side stairs have only the six wooden steps. Both stairs are closed by stone walls which are capped in smooth-faced limestone and provide further support for the veranda; the front stair walls are rounded at the exposed verticle ends. The deck above the veranda runs from the southern pavilion, over the front entry projection, to the south side of the

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western pavilion and is supported by thirteen wooden Tuscan columns with entasis. Six of these flank the front entry projection in two groups of three, one on each stair wall. The ceiling is tongue-and-groove paneling. Enriched scroll modillions adorn the cornice except along the east side by the southern pavilion.

The appearance of the veranda is a simplification of its original design. The stone piers and stair walls extended up into square pedestals with limestone caps to brace a straight wooden balustrade of turned spindles and support smaller Tuscan columns. Above each of these on the deck was a square wooden pedestal bracing a goose-necked balustrade and topped with an urn-like finial. Originally the deck continued across the face of the southern pavilion and the porte-cochere projected from the side entry.

The porte-cochere was relocated after 1900 and the veranda simplified after 1925.

Extending from the west side of the secondary mass and the western pavilion is the relocated porte-cochere. One stone step and six wooden steps all divided by a black wrought iron hand rail lead directly to the porte-cochere entry. The stairs are closed by stone walls with limestone caps and have matching L-shaped piers opposite each on the west side of the driveway; stone pylons protect the exposed corners of both. Four Tuscan columns, one Tuscan pilaster, and two rectangular red brick piers with limestone capitals and bases support the deck over the driveway. One column rests on each end of the stair walls, the pilaster against the northwest corner of the western pavilion where the southern stair wall and the deck meet the dwelling; the other two columns are supported by the L-shaped piers, one on each end closest to the driveway in front of the red brick piers. The ceiling is tongue-and-groove paneling and enriched scroll modillions adorn the cornice.

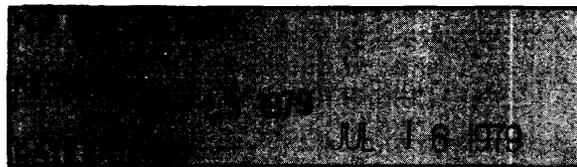
Like the veranda the porte-cochere was simplified after 1925.

The final extension from the dwelling is an enclosed porch across the north side of the hipped pavilion. Supported by three square stone piers, the porch has a west side entry but the stairs have been removed. An unadorned cornice ends in a deck.

A third porch, enclosed after 1925 but originally open with a balustrade, is incorporated as the first floor of the secondary mass. Supported by three stone piers joined by rock-faced cement blocks, it is reached by

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the porte-cochere entry. Three square stone pedestals with limestone caps extend from these piers and support three short columns: two Tuscan columns flanking one square red brick column with a limestone capital and base on the northwest corner of the mass. Further support is provided by a square-shafted Tuscan column at the northern juncture of the porch and the porte-cochere; where the porch meets the western pavilion and the secondary gabled pavilion are single matching Tuscan pilasters.

Another enclosed porch is incorporated into the second floor of the secondary pedimented pavilion and the hipped pavilion. Originally a one-story addition with enriched scroll modillions adorning the cornice and a balustrade, this area was enclosed after 1925, completing the two pavilions.

All four porches and the porte-cochere are additions or replacements of those original to the dwelling.

The Entries

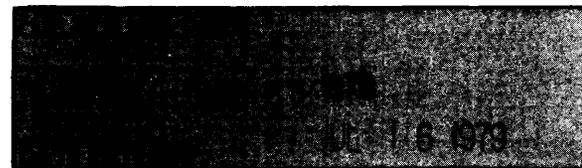
There are ten entries to the dwelling, all but one on the first floor. On the south side of the main mass between the southern pavilion and the tower is the front entry, which consists of one paneled dutch door; on the west side beside the western pavilion is the side entry which consists of a single varnished oak door with a full length pane of beveled glass. On the south side of the southern pavilion is a converted bay window entry consisting of two multi-paned French doors of beveled glass.

On the north side of the secondary gabled pavilion is a ground level entry consisting of a single paneled door with the top panel removed for a transom light. On the west side of the secondary mass is the porte-cochere entry consisting of two separate double-paned glass doors which in turn lead to two contemporary bi-fold doors leading to the secondary gabled pavilion, a single door with a full length pane of beveled glass leading to the northern pavilion, and a single paneled door leading to the western pavilion. On the west side of the hipped pavilion porch is a single paneled door with a large pane of glass, which in turn leads to two sets of multi-paned French doors of varnished pine on the north side of the hipped pavilion.

All entries have been altered to some extent or are part of later additions; the front entry was redesigned after 1925.

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The Windows

There are one hundred and forty-four windows: nineteen basement windows, sixty-seven first floor windows, forty-eight second floor windows, and ten gable windows. Those windows in the main mass, the four primary pavilions and the secondary polygonal bay pavilion are mostly double-hung sash with bull's eye rosette framing; in the other additions the windows are mostly double multi-paned casements with simple framing. All exterior transoms originally had stained or ornate beveled glass except those over the front door, the porte-cochere doors, the French doors on the north side of the hipped pavilion, the single door on the west side of the hipped pavilion porch, and the single-paned casements on the north and west sides of the first floor porch of the secondary mass.

In the main mass on the first floor there are two multi-paned sidelights and a multi-paned transom surrounding the front entry. On the second floor there are two windows on the south side, one with triple-hung sash to allow access to the veranda deck; on the west side there is a narrow three-window grouping between the western pavilion and the jetty. The tower has identical window arrangements on both floors: in the paladian tradition two small bowed windows flank a large sashless bowed window and transom. The jetty has a small window on the south and west sides, and the main mass deck has a multi-paned skylight.

On the first floor of the southern pavilion are two bowed windows on each side of the curved bay with a transom over the French doors; on the second floor the arrangement is the same except a large sashless window remains in place of French doors. On the first floor of the western pavilion is a three-window grouping on the bow, and on the south side is a large sashless window with an ornate beveled glass transom; on the second floor the arrangement is the same except the side window is smaller, double-hung, and transomless. The framing on the bow groupings suggests an alteration concurrent with the first floor addition of the secondary pedimented pavilion. On the first floor of the northern pavilion there is a two-window grouping on the north side; on the second floor there are small mullioned casements on the north and east sides, the later one opening onto the secondary pedimented pavilion. Both replaced larger windows. On the first floor of the eastern pavilion is a four-window grouping consisting of a large sashless window and transom flanked by two narrow windows; on the second floor this arrangement is repeated with the central window double-hung and the transom removed.

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On the first floor of the secondary polygonal bay pavilion there is a six-window grouping comprising the south, southeast, east, and northeast sides; on the second floor there is a three-window grouping around the southeastern corner.

On the secondary gabled pavilion there is a double-hung sidelight by the ground level entry and one window on the north and west side on the first floor, both double-hung; on the second floor there is a large sashless multi-paned window on the north side replacing a two-window grouping, and on the east side there is one double-hung window and a small frosted glass casement. On the first floor of the secondary pedimented pavilion there is a three-window grouping on the south side and a two-window grouping on the east side, both double-hung; on the second floor the south and east sides are comprised entirely of casements.

On the first floor of the secondary mass collapsing accordion single-paned casements enclose the porch in four major units, each surmounted by two transoms; on the second floor there is one double-hung window on the north side and two on the west where a third is triple-hung to allow access to the porte-cochere deck. On the first floor of the hipped pavilion there is one double-hung window on the east side and two ornate beveled glass transoms above the French doors on the north; on the second floor the east, north, and west sides are comprised entirely of casements.

On the hipped pavilion porch the east and west sides are also comprised entirely of casements while the west side has a casement and a transom over the entry.

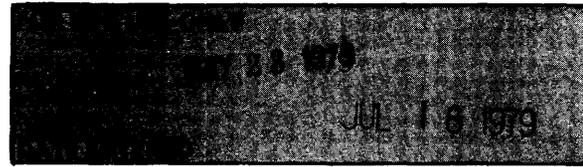
In each full gable there is a two-window grouping with simple framing; all but the grouping in the secondary gabled pavilion have been altered from double-hung to multi-paned casements.

The Dormers

In addition to the gable windows there are eight dormers, all but one with a single double-hung window. Three are gabled and four are pedimented with a pent; all have fancy cut shingles on their sides and facings. On the main mass there are three gabled dormers: one high on the south side and two on the west side flanking the western chimney. The southern dormer has brackets and incised vergeboards, while the southwestern dormer on the west side is a two-window dormer with multi-paned casements. On the secondary mass there are three pedimented

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dormers: one on the north side and two on the west. On the hipped pavilion there is a pedimented dormer on the north side and the east.

The Chimneys

With the gable windows and the dormers are six chimneys. Of these three are original and made of yellow brick: on the west side of the main mass, on the north side of the western pavilion, and on the north side of the eastern pavilion. The last two are now interior chimneys; all have been painted red to match the later red brick additions. These later chimneys are as follows: on the east side of the southern pavilion, on the west side of the northern pavilion, and on the north side of the secondary pedimented pavilion. All three are now interior chimneys; all repeat the brickwork of the originals. A seventh chimney serving the northern pavilion has been taken down to the roofline and capped. The remaining six chimneys are at various heights, and some are braced by simple iron rods.

The Roof and Tower

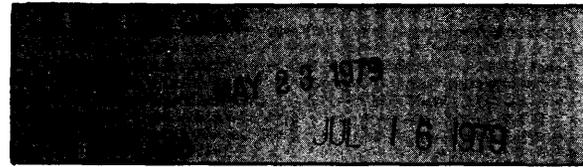
The roof is shingled in a gray manufactured slate, but originally it was covered in wooden shingles; all ridges had sawbacked ridgeboards that ended in turned finals. Sometime after 1925 the third floor of the tower was removed; before that the tower continued up above the cornice with a circular pent roof, three additional bowed windows and a graduated conical roof.

The Decorative Features

The original decorative focus was the tower framed by the southern and western pavilions. Of these the southern pavilion was particularly featured: the curved portions of the bay are covered with fancy cut shingles, each projecting gable corner is braced by two fan brackets that meet with a pendent, and the vergeboards are extensively incised. The western pavilion has more delicately decorated vergeboards, and the projecting pediment is braced by only two single fan brackets at either side. With the tower removed the emphasis has become the broad, intricate cornice, original to the main mass and primary pavilions and repeated faithfully on every addition. It consists of a complex combination of dentil motifs, scroll brackets, and raked frieze boards with incised panels.

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Other decorative features include fancy cut shingles on all the gable ends and the first floor of the polygonal bay pavilion, incised fans and narrow vergeboards over the returns of the northern and secondary gabled pavilions, and a belt coursing at the juncture of the first and second floor, in some locations beneath a slight pent. The northern pavilion also has a wooden grill at its vertex, and the vergeboards on the eastern and secondary pedimented pavilions match those on the western pavilion.

Originally the color scheme of the exterior was gold siding, white trim, and green sash with green-stained roof shingles and white ridgeboards; today the siding and sash are white and the trim is gold.

The Interior

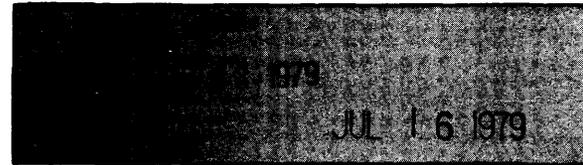
The interior was extensively altered after 1925, yet it retains many features of interest. The woodwork has been painted for the most part, but the style is similar to the bull's eye rosette framing on the exterior. There are also several interior examples of eclecticism, the front reception hall being the best: the wainscoting is Queen Anne, the door and window framing is accented with Italianate keystone consoles, and the columns flanking the fireplace are colonial revival in origin.

Elsewhere on the first floor there are noteworthy plaster cornices, a variety of wainscottings, and some interesting light fixtures including a wrought iron chandelier with Dresden flowers in the morning room. The dining room, an addition after 1900, is in an essentially original condition: the walls are paneled with oak to shoulder height, above which is stretched canvas; the ceiling is completely paneled and beamed in oak; the chandelier and sconces are solid brass; and the fireplace is set in a large alcove and surrounded by built-in buffets, beveled mirrors, and miniature corinthian columns, all surrounded by two curtain walls, two large corinthian columns, and two decorative gallery windows with green art glass. The library is also beautifully paneled and beamed in mahogany, but the work dates after 1925.

While many details and decorations have been altered, the unique feature of the interior is its use of space: on the first floor the dining room is accessible from the front hall only by way of two successive parlors; upstairs the master bedroom suite comprises a third of the entire floor including a sitting room, bedroom, bathroom, dressing room, and vast sun room, which is in turn accessible only through the master bedroom and the nursery. The sun room was later converted to two sleeping

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porches. The overall effect of the interior spaces is both cloistered and expansive.

The Grounds

In addition to the dwelling there is a swimming pool and tennis court on the extreme west side of the property, both with lattice fences and pergolas supported by Tuscan columns; this complex also includes a poolside playhouse and a matching pumphouse. Towards the rear of the property is a partial wall of rock-faced ashlar limestone marking the site of the second carriage house, burned in 1974. Directly behind the house are two contemporary double garages built after the fire.

The Condition

The dwelling and grounds were allowed to decline from 1971 to 1977, when the current owners undertook its preservation. Serious dry rot has destroyed a portion of the cornice on the hipped pavilion, but this is being restored. Elsewhere decorative features are deteriorating, but through the efforts of the current owners the property is rapidly approaching a stable condition.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)

historically significant per
sonages.

1890-1891
SPECIFIC DATES numerous additions BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Introduction

The significance of the Charles R. Smith House is threefold: first, it was built by millionaire Charles R. Smith, second-generation industrialist who made the Menasha Wooden Ware Company (now the Menasha Corporation) one of the largest manufacturers of turned woodenware; second, it was the home of Isabel Bacon Rogers, eponym of Ladysmith, Wisconsin and wife of Orrin Johnson, stage star of the early 1900's; and third, its location and architecture dramatically reflect the social dynamics and isolated indulgence within the Neenah-Menasha enclave of Wisconsin's industrial elite.

History

Charles Robinson Smith (1855-1916) was the favored son of Elisha D. Smith pioneer industrialist and founder of Menasha Wooden Ware. A native of Menasha, Smith was educated at Princeton University where he became a friend of Woodrow Wilson. During his college years the family business suffered severe reverses, prompting his father to recall him to work as a lumberjack near Auburndale. Upon graduation in 1876 Smith began the manufacture of broom handles on his own account with his father's financial assistance. Two years later he started his involvement at Menasha Wooden Ware as corporate secretary, officially assuming the presidency at his father's death in 1899.

While Smith's college education equipped him to excel at board room politics, his experiences in the rugged lumber camps also made him more hard-fisted than his predecessor: five years prior to his father's death, Smith gained control of the company through a merger with his own burgeoning manufacturing interests. Immediately thereafter he saw to it that new facilities were built, modern machinery installed, and more land acquired for production and timber. He also founded the Wisconsin & Northern Railroad to serve new operations in the northern part of the state and affiliated the company with the Wooden Ware Association, a marketing and pricing pool whose policies he helped to formulate in 1897.

Smith belonged to a new school of educated industrialists whose dedication to profit left them little time for the entrepreneurial activities of a previous generation. Smith supported local projects, attended the Congregational Church in Menasha, and served for a time as superintendent of Menasha's public schools, but he was not a community

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.8

QUADRANGLE NAME Neenah, Wis.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 384520 4893830

B

ZONE EASTING

NORTHING

ZONE

EASTING

NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Peter James Adams

April 8, 1979

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

537 E. Wisconsin Avenue

TELEPHONE

414/722-1422

CITY OR TOWN

Neenah, Wisconsin 54956

STATE

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Richard Stoney

TITLE

Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

5/14/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Arthur Charles Stoney
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

7-16-79

ATTEST: *Emma Jane Saxe*

DATE

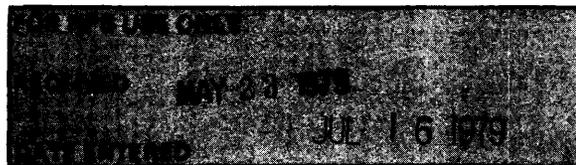
7-10-79

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

Regional Review Coordinator

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The Charles R. Smith House (continued)

spokesman like his father.

He was, however, a more successful businessman.

Emulating Neenah's paper mill owners, Smith became the driving force behind the company's emergence as the world's largest manufacturer of turned woodenware. Under his direction operations expanded out from Wisconsin into Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, Utah, New Mexico, and Canada setting the framework and momentum for diversification into the lumber, coal, iron, furniture, and paper industries. The Menasha plant alone became one of the largest manufacturing sites in the state, utilizing one hundred acres and employing the equivalent of one out of every seven residents.

Ironically, Smith ran the company and virtually controlled the economy of Menasha as a resident of Neenah. In 1890 he began the construction of the East Forest Avenue house for his first wife Jennie Mathewson (1867-1895), the same year he succeeded her grandfather as president of the First National Bank of Menasha.¹ Completed a year later, the house was expanded almost immediately and soon became as amorphous as the company that made it possible.

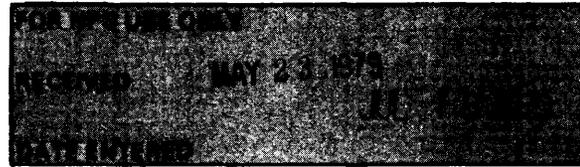
In 1900, five years after his first wife died, Smith secretly married Isabel Bacon Rogers (1870-1950), a beautiful young divorcee from Racine.² Before the couple left for an indefinite tour of the East Coast and Europe, Smith arranged for Warner, Wisconsin, a company town, to be renamed Ladysmith in honor of his new wife. It was a significant gesture that dramatically marked a period of rapid company expansion and equivalent domestic excess: Smith's new wife not only expanded their home with each new corporate merger, but she also kept house on West Seventy-second Street near Riverside Park in New York City.

The Smiths lived there during the winter season so that Mrs. Smith could indulge her love of the theater. Perfectly situated two blocks from producer David Belasco,³ it was to this home that she brought her husband to recuperate from a severe head injury incurred while traveling in the West. Two months later Smith died of a stroke leaving an estate estimated at somewhere between \$20,000,000 and \$60,000,000, a fortune which had enabled him to give generously to Wilson's presidential campaign fund in spite of his own republican politics.

Mrs. Smith's enthusiasm for the theater lost her one husband but gained her a third. In 1918 she married actor Orrin Johnson (1865-1943),

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veteran of numerous Broadway productions and several silent movies, from her new Park Avenue apartment. A contemporary of matinee idol John Drew, Johnson first received general notice with Maude Adams in "Men and Women," a collaborative effort of Belasco and H. C. de Mille (father of Cecil B. De Mille); a few years later in 1903 he gained starring rank as the Marquis de Roulerie in "Hearts Courageous." Johnson also starred in numerous popular plays of the period, including "The Richest Girl," "The Gay Hassars," "The Children of Destiny," and "The Ruling Power."

Having known the palmy days of Broadway, Johnson was at a decline in his career when he married Mrs. Smith. The prestige deriving from marriage to a wealthy Park Avenue widow failed to sustain renewed popularity, however, so in 1921 he retired to Neenah and his wife's Doty Island home.

By the 1920s East Forest Avenue was lined with large, elegant mansions set back on sizable tracts of land. It remained a **secluded** part of town which had, over the years, attracted a colony of Menasha's industrial elite; on the south side of the Island they could enjoy an affiliation with Neenah society without abandoning their allegiance to Menasha. Situated out of reach of Sunday afternoon riders and public appraisal, the location also allowed greater personal freedom than a more prestigious address on East Wisconsin Avenue.

On the Island Smith could marry an adventuress, give free rein to her whims in altering the house, and remain aloof of most social conventions with impunity. Similarly, his widow could remarry almost immediately to an actor, and his daughter to a company employee—in the tennis court.⁴

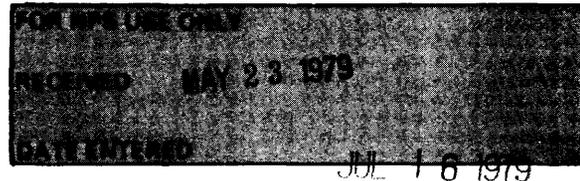
Conclusion

The Smith House is a significant historical structure in that it was built by Charles R. Smith, a man who helped to make the Fox River Valley one of the most important industrial centers of the Midwest, and was the home of both Isabel Bacon Rogers and Orrin Johnson. Furthermore, it is significant as a dramatic reflection of the social dynamics and the isolated indulgence of life within the Neenah-Menasha enclave of Wisconsin's industrial elite.

1. Neenah Daily Times, April 28, 1890, p. 3
2. Interview with Ruth Falvey, April 3, 1979
3. The Columbia Historical Portrait of New York, p. 445
4. Interview with Donald Shepard, October 3, 1978

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