**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: 93000029

Date Listed: 2/24/93

Crosse, Dr. Charles G., House Property Name

Dane	WI
County	State

Multiple Name

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

/	0/2	0/93	
Date	óf .	Action	

Amended Items in Nomination:

Social History was written in by mistake as an area of significance. The house is listed under criterion C for architecture.

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

DISTRIBUTION: National Register property file Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment) NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 8/86) Wisconsin Word Processor Format (1331D) (Approved 3/87)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in <u>Guidelines for Completing</u> <u>National Register Forms</u> (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 lett margin. Use only archival paper (20 pound, acid free paper with a 2% alkaline reserve).

OMB No. 1024-0018

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1. Name of Property			
historic name	Crosse, Dr. Charles G.,	House	
other names/site number	N/A		
2. Location			
street & number 133 Wes	t Main Street	N/A	not for publication
<u>city, town Sun Pra</u>	irie	N/A	vicinity
<u>state Wisconsin</u> <u>code</u>	WI county Dane	<u>coae 025</u>	zip code 53590
3. Classification			
Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resour	rces within Property
private	<u>X</u> building(s)	contributing	noncontributing
<u>X</u> public-local	district	_1	buildings
public-State	site	<u></u>	sites
public-Federal	structure		structures
	object		objects
		_ <u> </u>	<u> </u> Total
Name of related multiple	property listing:	No. of contr previously li National Regi	

4. State/Federal Agency Certification As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this <u>X</u> nomination <u>request for determination</u> 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 <u>x</u>meets \_\_\_\_\_\_does not meet the National Register criteria. <u>\_\_\_\_\_\_See continuation sheet</u>.

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.

Date

Signature of commenting or other official

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification		
I, hereby, certity that this property is	:	
entered in the National Register.	Bett Boland	
determined eligible for the National RegisterSee 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	Current Functions	
(enter categories from instructions)	(enter categories from instruct	cions)
DOMESTIC/single dwelling	COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty stor WORK IN PROGRESS	:e

7. Description		
Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter cate	egories from instructions)
	foundation	STONE
Gothic Kevival	walls	Weatherboard
	roor	ASPHALT
	otner	WOOD

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

### Description

The Dr. Charles G. Crosse house is a fine, highly intact "T" plan side gable vernacular form residence whose design was influenced by the Gothic Revival style. This one-and-a-halt story trame house is located on a lot that tronts onto Main Street, the principal historic thoroughtare of the city of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin. Crosse moved to Sun Prairie in 1860, setting up a practice there and also establishing a drugstore. Crosse built this house in 1866, following his return from service in the Civil War, and he and members of his family continued to live there after his death in 1908. In 1940, following occupancy by others, the house was converted into apartments. By 1976, its clapboard siding had been covered over with metal siding, its original encircling veranda having been removed, and the building as a whole had deteriorated. Fortunately, in that year, Sun Prairie Historical Restorations, Inc. was formed by interested city residents as a nonprofit organization with the goal of restoring the building. In the ensuing years this organization has restored the original siding, much of the interior, and accurately reconstructed the veranda using historic photos as a guide. As a result, the Crosse house, which is one of the oldest surviving residences in Sun Prairie, has now recovered its historic appearance and its rightful place as a city landmark.

The flat, roughly rectilinear lot associated with the Crosse house is situated on the south side of West Main Street at the Western edge of the historic commercial district of the city. Historically, this lot was considerably larger (one acre) and much deeper than it is today. In recent years, however, most of the rear (south) end of the lot has been given over to a blacktopped parking lot and a large modern service building, both of which are associated with the adjoining building complex belonging to the Sun Prairie Water & Light Commission, the owners of the Crosse house. The reduced lot that now encircles the Crosse house consists of lawn ornamented with several mature trees and shrubs. The house is separated from Main Street by a parkway and a concrete sidewalk, and the setback of the house is consistent with other newer houses located west of it along this side of the street.

Today, the city of Sun Prairie is situated about three miles northeast of the city of Madison; the capital of the state of Wisconsin and its second largest city.<sup>1</sup> In 1866, however, when the Crosse house was built, Sun Prairie was the western terminus of the Milwaukee & Baraboo Valley Railroad and was an important grain marketing center in its own right. Eventually, the village evolved into a rural distribution center for the surrounding farms, a role it continued to play until the 1950s. Since then the rapid growth of Madison has transformed Sun Prairie into a bedroom community that is now close to being absorbed by its much larger neignbor.

The 1980 population of Sun Prairie was 12,932; of Madison, 170,616.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_\_7\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_1\_\_\_\_

#### Exterior

The Crosse house is free-standing and its principal facade faces north onto West Main Street. The house has a "T"-shaped plan that consists of a one-and-a-halfstory rectilinear side-gabled main block with overall dimensions measuring approximately 32 feet wide by 18 feet deep. An 18 foot wide by 31 foot deep one-anda-half-story rectilinear ell is then centered on the south-facing rear elevation of the main block. Both sections of the house are covered by an asphalt sninglecovered multi-gable root. The house's exterior walls rest on mortar-laid 24" rubblestone foundation walls that enclose a full concrete-floored basement under the rear ell and an unexcavated crawlspace under the main block. The exterior walls that rest on the foundation are supported by sawn wood framing and are clad with original yellow pine lap siding throughout. The siding is entramed by a system of simple corner boards and fascia boards and the walls are terminated by wide overhanging eaves.

The north-facing West Main Street facade is the principal elevation of the Crosse house and the main entrance to the building is centered on this three-bay-wide symmetrically designed composition. Flanking the entrance are two rectilinear window openings, each of which is enframed by an earred surround and filled with a pair of original four-light French doors that open out onto an encircling veranda.<sup>2</sup> The entrance door opening consists of a simple surround that enframes the flatarched wooden entrance door. This door is original and contains a single tall semicircular stilted arch light placed above a single large panel.

The shape of the light in the main door is echoed in the shape of the window opening that is located in the large wall dormer that pierces the cornice of the facade above the entrance. This semi-circular-arched opening has a simple wood casing and it is filled with the original eleven-over-six-light double hung wooden sash window. The verges of this dormer are then decorated with distinctive "Carpenter Gothic" style scrollsawn vergeboards. These vergeboards consist of a sandwich formed by two superimposed boards, each of which has its own distinctive repeated pattern. Together, the repeated patterns of the two boards form a pattern that is suggestive of the foils and cusps found in Gothic style designs. The apex where the vergeboards join is emphasized with a pendant that is constructed with the same "sandwich" technique as the vergeboards. The facade is surmounted by a centered cream brick chimney mass that has a shaft whose sides are decorated with inset panels and which is surmounted by a barrel vault design spark arrestor.

A full-width one-story veranda that is raised one step above grade extends across the main facade and wraps around much of the east elevation of the house as well. This veranda has a very shallow-pitched roof that is covered in cedar shingles. It is supported on the main facade by five chamfered posts that rest on tall panelled

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Today, each pair of these doors is covered by a metal storm window, but historic photos show that all the house's windows were originally protected by louvered wooden shutters that are no longer extant.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_\_7\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_2

plinths. The simple capitals of these posts are each decorated with a pair of large scrollsawn plywood trim pieces that have an elaborate open toliated pattern. The decking of the veranda is fashioned out of wood boards.<sup>2</sup>

The east-facing side elevation of the Crosse house consists of the east elevation of the main block and of the rear ell. The east elevation of the main block is symmetrical in design and one-bay-wide. Centered on the first story (which is sheltered by a continuation of the previously described veranda) is another pair of French doors that are identical in design to those on the main facade that were described previously. A smaller flat-arcned second story window opening is then positioned directly above in the main gable end and it contains a one-over-one-light double hung window. The verges of the gable end are decorated with elaborate vergeboards that are identical in design with those that decorate the dormer on the main facade.

Originally, the 31-foot-long east-facing side elevation of the rear ell was pierced by two pairs of windows and side entrance doors. Each pair consisted of a four-overfour-light flat-arched double hung window placed just to the left of a six-panel door. The entire elevation was also originally sheltered by a continuation of the veranda, although only the posts on the part that encircled the main block had capitals with scrollsawn ornament. Today, the veranda that shelters the right-hand (north) two-thirds of this elevation is still intact and it covers a six-light over two panel side entrance door and an adjacent four-over-four-light window, both of which give onto the living room or second parlor of the house. However, at some time after 1928, the left-hand (south) door and window pair were removed and replaced with a clapboard-sided rectilinear plan 8-toot-wide bay that is sheltered by the veranda roof. This bay features four four-over-four-light double hung windows, two of which are paired and face east. A tall, thin, brown brick chimney mass is located at the midpoint of the ridgeline of the roof of the ell. It replaces an earlier shorter chimney visible in the earliest surviving picture of the house (Photo No. 8).

The 18-foot-wide rear (south-facing) elevation of the rear ell is one-bay in width, one-and-a-half stories in height, and asymmetrical in design. Placed off-center and slightly to the right on the first story is a six-panel solid wood rear entrance door that is identical to doors seen in Photo No. 8. Centered in the gable end above is a two-over-two-light double hung second story window. The verges of this gable are unornamented, the only ones to be so treated.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> This veranda is a recent (post-1976) reconstruction of the original one. The design carefully follows that of the original and was based on early photos of the house (see Photo No. 8).

<sup>&</sup>quot; Between the time Photo No. 8 was taken and the 1875 Bird's Eye view of Sun Prairie was drawn a small one-story gable-roofed addition was added to the south elevation of the rear ell. An ell of similar size and shape was removed after 1976, but it was probably a later replacement since it was more modern in appearance and it rested on concrete block foundation walls that enclosed a crawispace.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_7\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_3

The west-facing side elevation of the rear ell is composed mostly of a three-quarterlength one-story extension that is sheltered by a shed roof that was created by extending the west slope of the main roof of the ell downward. This extension is three-bays-wide. The left-hand bay contains a six-light over two-panel side entrance door, the right-hand bay contains a single one-over-one-light double hung window, and the center bay consists of a 7.5-toot-wide clapboard-sided rectilinear plan bay window that is sheltered by a downward extension of the extension roof. This bay window - like the nearly identical one on the east elevation - is a later addition that features four four-over-rour-light double hung windows, two of which are also paired and face west. The same roof extension that shelters this bay also acts as the roof of a small porch that the side entrance door to the left opens out onto. The portion of the walls surface of the ell not covered by the extension contains a single two-over-two-light window as well.

The original appearance of the west-facing side elevation of the rear ell cannot be determined from existing evidence. It may have duplicated the original appearance of the east-facing elevation or it may have appeared as it does today. What is certain is that its present appearance dates from at least 1875, according to the 1875 birdseye view and early Sanborn-Perris maps.

The west-facing side elevation of the main block lies in the same plane as the wall surface of the extension just described and it is asymmetrical in design and one-baywide. Placed slightly to the left of center on the first story is a one-over-onelight double hung window that is identical in design to a second window that is centered in the gable end above. The verges of this gable end are also decorated with elaborate vergeboards that are identical to those that decorate the dormer on the main facade and the corresponding east-facing side elevation of the main block.

## Interior

Interior restoration work in the Crosse house undertaken since 1976 has been confined mostly to the first story and some changes have been made to these simply designed rooms as a result. Still, much of the historic fabric of the interior remains and the historic floor plan of the house has been kept. A report on the condition of the house that was written in 1989 had the following to say about the restoration work undertaken up to that point.

The interior was partially stripped, and covered with gypsum board (drywall), painted and decorated with wallcoverings in the style of the period. The plank floors were sanded and varnished. New lighting fixtures were installed and some trim was replaced. The original trim shapes were not easily available at the time work began and the new trim was installed. Rather, the replacement trim is a stylized version of the original. New stairs were installed, and again, the balustrade is a stylized version. The balusters themselves are modern, off-the-

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_\_7\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_4\_\_\_

shelf parts, which do not reflect the original. (Parts of the original balustrade are stored upstairs.) No upper level work has been done, with the exception that the handrall (guardrail) that surrounds the stairs is in place. Most of the door hardware is uncoordinated, which indicates changes made over the years. The exterior walls had been stripped, and it was discovered that the spaces between the studs were filled with a lime grout mixture, with some rather large stones (2%" - 3") found. The exterior walls were insulated and new gypsum wallboard installed.<sup>5</sup>

The use of grout to till the space between the studs on the houses's exterior walls (a feature of the first story only) is especially noteworthy since the use of grout as a nogging material is uncommon, especially when it was then covered by clapboard siding as it was here. The interior surfaces of these walls were then each given a thick finish coat of plaster, which resulted in walls of almost monolithic hardness and durability. Nearly all of these walls still survive in their original state. Most of the first story's original plaster-over-lath interior partition walls, however, were replaced with drywall when the restoration work began because of cracking and other defects.

The first story of the main block of the Crosse house contains three rooms; a central entrance hall, a front parlor, and a room believed to have been Dr. Crosse's office. The principal entrance to the Crosse house is via the door that is centered on the main facade. This door opens into a rectilinear plan 7-foot-wide by 10-foot-long centrally placed entrance hall whose principal feature is the rebuilt quarter-turn open stairway described above that runs up the right-hand (west) wall. The floor of this room (and of the entire first story) is fashioned from narrow boards that have been sanded and refinished as part of the restoration. Doors that lead to the rooms on either side of the hall are placed opposite each other to the left and right of the entrance and another door that features a large single rectilinear light over two panels is located at the rear (south) end of the hall. The original deeply molded 5½" wooden casing still enframes the main entrance door. All the other doors, however, are now enframed with simple wooden casings that may or may not be original. The entrance hall's original side and rear walls were among the partition walls resurfaced in drywall as part of the recent restoration effort.

To the left (east) of the hall is the rectilinear plan 12-foot-wide by 16-foot-long front parlor. Paired French doors are centered on this room's north and east walls and a large flat-arched opening that leads to the second or rear parlor is placed just to the right of center on the south wall. The original windows are still in place, the reveals of the deep window openings retain their original wood panelling, and the original molded casings still enframe the openings. The juncture where the walls meet the floor is still hidden by the original 10" - tall molded baseboards.

Villand, Knute W. <u>The Crosse House: A Statement of Condition</u>. Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, 1989, pgs. 16-17.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_7\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_5\_\_\_\_

The walls themselves are currently covered with wallpaper that has cabbage roses printed on a dark maroon ground.

To the left of the entrance hall is a long irregular plan two room suite that runs along the west side of the house. This suite occupies a portion of the main block and most of the addition that extends along the west side of the rear ell and it is believed to have originally served Dr. Crosse as an office and infirmary. The room that is situated in the main block measures approximately 10-reet-wide by 12-reetdeep. A pair of French doors is positioned just to the left (east) of center on the north wall of this room and a smaller double hung one-over-one-light window is positioned to the right of center on the west wall. These windows also retain their panelled reveals and their molded wooden casings. A flat-arched double width opening centered in the south wall of the room then opens into the remainder of the suite. This remaining space is approximately 17-feet-long by 7-feet-wide and it would be rectilinear in plan if it were not for the bay window that is now placed at its southern end." A large elliptical-arched opening is positioned on the east wall opposite this bay. This opening opens into the rear parlor. It is filled with a pair of four panel doors that are surmounted by an arched transom that is filled with two lights. A side entrance door is placed on the west wall of the suite just to the north of the bay. This door contains two large lights placed above two panels and still features its original hardware.

The rear parlor (or living room) occupies the north end of the rear ell of the house and it is a rectilinear plan room that measures approximately 16-feet-wide by 13feet-deep. No fewer than six door openings and one window are positioned on the walls of this room, some of which were described above. A flat-arched double opening and a single door opening in the north wall open into the front parlor and into the entrance hall. A side entrance door in the east wall opens onto the encircling veranda as does a window that is placed just to the south, both of which have molding identical to that found in the main block. A large arched opening in the west wall opens into the original infirmary space and a similar arched opening in the south wall (this one without doors) opens into the dining room in the south end of the ell. To the right of this opening is a single door opening that leads out to the kitchen and a fireplace mantel is now positioned on the south wall between these two openings.<sup>7</sup>

\* See floor plan (Attachment C). The varying alignment of the floorboards in this room (east-west in the north and south ends and north-south in the center section) suggests that there may once have been another partition that divided this room into three distinct spaces, but this is only conjectural at the present time. \* This fine ca. 1870 cast iron mantel is decorated with panels of rose marble and it was put in place during the recent restoration. The mantel has a round-arched opening and a design that is in keeping with the period during which the house was constructed. It was also placed on that part of the south wall that conceals the rear ell's chimney. Originally, however, an iron parlor furnace was located in front of where the mantel is now placed. The circular opening for the stove pipe is still visible and a rectifinear portion of the floor where the base of this furnace was once located was replaced with flooring when central heating was installed.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_\_7\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_6\_\_\_\_

The remainder of the first story of the ell is divided into three rooms; a dining room, an almost equal size kitchen (these may or may not be the historic usages of these rooms) and a smaller bathroom. The dining room occupies the east half of this portion and light is admitted to it from the outside via the bay window on its east wall. A four-panel rear entrance door is the only opening in the south wall of the room and two other door openings in the west wall open into the bathroom and the kitchen. The bathroom itself probably dates from a remodeling that occurred around 1940 and its fixtures are newer still. The date of the kitchen space is more problematic. Some of the kitchen cabinetry is clearly older than the 1940 remodeling. Never-the-less, it is not as old as the house and it is not known if this is the historic location of the original kitchen.

The second story is reached by ascending the open quarter-turn flight of stairs described earlier; the house's only staircase.<sup>4</sup> This staircase ascends to the 7foot-wide by 10-foot-long upper hall that is also located in the center of the main block. Light is admitted to the hall via the front-facing dormer and three doors open off the hall and provide access to the bedrooms that take up all of this story's remaining space. Two of these rooms are placed on either side of the hall. The east bedroom is approximately 12-feet-wide by 16-feet-deep and the west bedroom is approximately 10-feet-wide by 16-feet-deep. Each room is lit by a single window placed in the east and west-facing gable ends. The space in both rooms is sharply circumscribed by the slopes of the main root and each room now has a false wall constructed across one end that encloses closet space.

A four-panel door in the rear (south) wall of the upper hall opens into the first of two more bedrooms that comprise the second story of the ell. These rooms are almost equal in size, measuring approximately 16-feet-wide by 14-feet-deep, and the second bedroom can only be reached by passing through a door located in the partition wall that separates the two rooms. Centered on this wall is a chimney and holes for stove pipes can be seen in each room. In these rooms too, the slope of the roof defines usable interior space. The second of these rooms (southernmost) is lit by a window in the south-facing gable end but the first room can only be lit with artificial light.

The second story still retains its original 4" to 16" wide tongue and groove pine flooring, all of its original four-panel doors, and most of its original plaster, although much of the latter is in deteriorated condition. These rooms also contain most of their simple original wood moldings and window and door casings.

Generally speaking, the integrity level of the Crosse house is excellent. The historic fabric of the house itself has survived in a largely intact state and the modern restoration effort has accurately recreated the encircling veranda, the only important historic design element that had been lost.

<sup>a</sup> The modern balustrade that is now a feature of this staircase also encircles the stairwell as well.

8. Statement of Significance	
Certifying official has considered the	significance of this property in relation to
other properties:nationally	statewidelocally
Applicable National Register Criteria	AB <u>X</u> CD
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) _	ABCDEF
Areas of Significance	
(enter categories from instructions)	
Architecture	<u>1866</u> <u>1866</u> <sup>9</sup>
Social History	1866-1908
	Cultural Affiliation
	N/A
Significant Person	Architect/Builder
N/A	Unknown

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

### <u>Significance</u>

The Dr. Charles G. Crosse house is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for its local significance under National Register (NR) criterion C. More specifically, the Crosse house is being nominated because of its association with the area of Architecture; a theme which is also identified in the State of Wisconsin's <u>Cultural Resource Management Plan</u> (CRMP). Research was undertaken to assess the NRHP potential of the Crosse house utilizing the Gothic Revival style and the Side Gable vernacular form subsections of the Architectural Styles study unit of the CRMP. The results of this research is detailed below and confirms that the Crosse house is locally significant under NR criterion C as a fine example of a simple Gothic Revival style residence.

The house was built for Dr. Charles G. Crosse, the second physician to settle in Sun Prairie. Crosse moved to Sun Prairie with his wife and children from Newport, Wisconsin in 1860. Besides his work as a doctor, Crosse also operated a drugstore in Sun Prairie as he had previously in Newport, a typical arrangement for many early physicians. Crosse built the house on Main Street that is the subject of this nomination in 1866, shortly after he returned home from serving as a physician in the Civil War. In the years that followed, Crosse became one of the village's leading citizens. His drug business grew and he later moved it from his original store (nonextant) to a new building (extant) he built in 1893 known as the Crosse Block, located on the corner of Main and Bristol streets a half block east of his residence. In 1877, with his son, Charles S. Crosse, he established Sun Prairie's first newspaper. He also served several terms as the president of the village board and a single term in the state legislature. After Crosse's death in 1908, his house remained in the family's possession until 1919, when it was sold to Otto M. Volker. Today, the house is a well known Sun Prairie landmark and it has served as the focus of preservation activities in that city since the local non-profit organization Sun Prairie Historical Restorations, Inc. was founded in 1976 to restore it.

<sup>9</sup> Abstract of Title for 133 West Main Street. In the possession of Sun Prairie Historical Restorations, Inc. The period of significance extends from the datee of construction date to the death of Dr. Crosse.

X See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_\_8 \_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_1

## Historic Context

The naming of the site of what has since become the city of Sun Prairie is a celebrated story in the history of Dane County and one that was recounted by Dr. Charles G. Crosse in one of the earliest histories of the county. The decision of the first Wisconsin territorial assembly to locate the permanent seat of the future state government at Madison resulted in Augustus A. Bird being elected acting commissioner for the erection or suitable buildings for the assembly and for the officers of the territorial government. On May 26, 1837, Bird began the overland trek from Milwaukee to Madison seventy miles to the west with a crew of 45 men, including his brother, Charles H. Bird. The nine days journey was made miserable by constant rain and an almost total lack of sunshine.

At length, as they emerged on the borders of the beautiful prairie, about two miles east of where the village of Sun Prairie now (1877) stands, the sun shown forth in all its brightness, and illuminated the scene before them as with a halo of glory. The contrast which this beautiful vision presented to the gloom with which they had been surrounded was so great, that they greeted it with a shout, and almost involuntarily bivouacked upon its borders, christening the locality "Sun Prairie," which name they carved into an oak tree which stood near by; and for many years this tree bore upon its breast, in rude letters, the inscription "Sun Prairie."<sup>10</sup>

Two years later, Charles Bird returned to this spot and built a residence there, becoming the first settler of the future township and village of Sun Prairie. Bird organized the township of Sun Prairie in 1839, which initially included all that land that now constitutes Sun Prairie, York, Medina and Bristol townships. Bird spent his first year alone, but in 1840 he was joined by Thomas Marks and 1841 saw the arrival of seven more families. The next few years saw still more families arrive. "In the year 1844, William H. Angell purchased five acres of land from Mr. Bird, being the first lot of ground sold in the present village of Sun Prairie. The idea was then conceived of founding here a village. The first step taken was to secure a post office."<sup>11</sup> The original name chosen was Rome, but this was replaced about a year later with that of Sun Prairie. William H. Angell was the new postmaster and his first term in that office lasted until 1850.

Coinciding with the development of Sun Prairie was the settlement of the surrounding territory by the area's first farmers. Within a few years Sun Prairie was ringed with farms and small crossroads settlements located at Deansville, North and East Bristol, and Pierceville sprang up to serve them. Gradually, an agricultural

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Crosse, Dr. C.G. Sun Prairie. Included in: <u>Madison, Dane County and</u> <u>Surroundings</u>. Wm. J. Parks & Co., Madison, Wisconsin, 1877, pgs. 313-327.
 <sup>11</sup> Butterfield, Consul W. <u>History of Dane County, Wisconsin</u>. Western Historical Company, Chicago, Illinois, 1880. pg. 833.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_8\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_2\_\_\_

district came into being with Sun Prairie at its core. This circumstance gave the young village a continuing reason for existence and it was the foundation upon which its future growth was built.

The first regular attempt at merchandising was in the fall of 1845, Edwin Brayton opening a small stock of goods in the building erected by Mr. Angell for his carpenter shop. Mr. Brayton continued to do business for about one year. In June, 1848, Silas Smith came to the place and rented the place formerly occupied by Mr. Brayton, and opened a stock of general merchandise. Fredrick Starr was successor to Mr. Smith, and after a brief business career, the former was followed by Thomas White. In 1859, White was succeeded by William & Maloney, who soon established a successful trade, of which George Maloney is the present [1880] representative.

Patrick Doyle was the first "village smith," and opened his shop here in the fall of 1846.12

Others started the various small retail and service enterprises that were features of the village life of that day; a school was built as early as 1842, Methodist and Congregational churches were built, and both the American House hotel and the Sun Prairie House hotel were established in 1850. Gradually, Sun Prairie took on the appearance of a typical small rural distribution center of that day and it might have continued like this indefinitely but for the ambition of its settlers and the coming of the railroad.

In the year 1859, a line of railroad having been projected from Milwaukee to the Baraboo Valley, it was completed as far as Watertown. The line was located and graded about three miles south of the village of Sun Prairie; but the route was afterward changed; and on the 24th day of September, 1859, the railroad was completed to the last mentioned place. Then followed a period of active business prosperity, and apparently a golden opportunity for building up, on a permanent basis, a village of considerable importance and magnitude. For ten years, Sun Prairie was the western terminus of the Milwaukee and Baraboo Valley Railroad, and was one of the largest and most flourishing inland grain markets in the State.<sup>13</sup>

# Association with a Significant Person

Among those attracted to Sun Prairie by the opportunity the coming of the railroad presented was New York state native Charles Giles Crosse (1828-1908), who arrived in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Butterfield, Consul W. Op. Cit. pg. 834. Patrick Doyle's stone blacksmith shop (non-extant) was located two lots to the east of the eventual site of the Crosse house. Besides owning two farms on the outskirts of the village Doyle was also one of the earliest owners of the lot that the Crosse house now sits on, having owned the lot from 1850 to 1857. <sup>13</sup> Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_8\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_3\_\_\_\_

1860 with his wife, Rowena Smith Crosse, and their two sons. Crosse was one of the twelve children of Mercy Fish Cross (1793-1878) and the Rev. Daniel Cross (1799-1882), a former blacksmith turned Methodist clergyman. Rev. Cross moved his family from New York state to Lake County in Ohio in the early 1830s and to Whitewater, Wisconsin in 1846, where he served for a time as a minister. Three of the Cross children became physicians; Asahal A. Cross, James B. Cross, and Charles G.

Dr. Charles G. Crosse secured his earlier educational training in the common schools of Ohio, after which he attended an academy at Mentor, Lake County that state, finally entering the Western Reserve College, where he completed his purely literary education. In 1853, he was graduated from the Cincinnati Medical College, from which he received his well earned degree of Doctor of Medicine.<sup>14</sup>

Nine of the Cross children survived to adulthood and all of them ultimately made their way westward, coming either with their parents or not long afterwards. Charles G. Crosse was one of several of the children who settled in Wisconsin.

At the beginning of his active business career, armed with his medical diploma, he was for a brief time associated with his elder brother, Dr. A. A. Cross, at North Amherst, Ohio. In September, 1853, he married Rowena Nancy Smith. This was before the days of transcontinental railroads, and the young doctor, penniless but ambitious, acquired a horse and buggy on credit, and seating his young bride by his side, started for Wisconsin.<sup>15</sup>

The couple reached the home of Dr. Crosse's parents in Whitewater, Walworth County, the following summer and had their first child there in September. This boy lived only a few days, but a second child, Theodore P. Crosse (1855-1909), was born to the couple the following year.

In 1856 or '57, hearing of the promising new town of Newport in Sauk County, on the Wisconsin River, opposite Kilbourn [today's Wisconsin Dells], the struggling young doctor, with his wife and baby Theodore, started overland for that village. Here he opened a drug store and his doctor's office.

At Newport, in the living-rooms above his drug-store, a third son was born. He was given the name Charles Sumner.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> <u>Sun Prairie Countryman</u>. "Sun Prairie Loses Another Prominent Pioneer." April 23, 1908. Obituary of Charles G. Crosse.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Crosse, Charles Sumner. <u>Genealogy of the Crosses: A Brief Family History, 1799-</u> <u>1929</u>. Unpaginated (pg. 6). A privately printed pamphlet written by a son of Charles G. Crosse. In the possession of a descendant, Sun Prairie resident Nancy Chase McMahon. Note: in regard to the change in spelling of the family name Charles S. Crosse wrote: "Of the six sons and four daughters in my father's parental family he alone annexed the final "e". Just why, I never knew--nor did he, unless we accept his own solution: "I thought 1'd be different."

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_\_8 \_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_4

Unfortunately, the growth of Newport was predicated on the expectation that it would be a station on the extension line of the Chicago, Milwaukee and Northwestern Railroad then being constructed across the state. When the railroad chose instead to build its route along cheaper land on the north side of the river and through the village of Kilbourn, Newport's hopes for the future were doomed as were the prospects of its inhabitants.

Packing his small stock of drugs and household goods into a sleigh with his little family, behind a team of horses, Dr. Crosse left Newport on the last day of 1859, bound for Sun Prairie, Dane county, a village 50 miles south-east, 12 miles east of Madison, the capital city. They reached there on New Year's Day, 1860, with the mercury registering 20 degrees below zero.

In Sun Prairie, Dr. Crosse opened the "Old Corner Drug-Store" and resumed his medical practice. With 1861 came the Civil War, and locking the door of his little drug store [in 1865], he enrolled as a surgeon with a Wisconsin regiment of volunteers, and was assigned to military duty in Missouri.

Returning to Sun Prairie, at the close of the war, he re-opened his drug store [non-extant], resumed his practice as a physician, and until his death in 1908 was an active factor in Sun Prairie's civic, commercial and social life.<sup>17</sup>

A year before enrolling in the Army, Crosse and his wite purchased a large one acre lot on Main Street.<sup>10</sup> After his return the couple set about the construction of a new house on this lot, the one that is the subject of this nomination. Tax rolls show that this house was finished in 1866 and that the Crosses lived in it continuously until just before Dr. Crosse's death in 1908, when he and his wife moved to the village of Stoughton to live with their son, Charles S. Crosse.<sup>19</sup>

Crosse also participated in a wide variety of civic and social activities in Sun Prairie.

During his long career as an influential citizen of the village he has held many positions of public trust. He was president of the village for three years, and was a member of the board of trustees for a similar period. He was supervisor for five years and served several years on the school board, and in 1880 he was a

<sup>18</sup> Abstract of Title for 133 West Main Street.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Crosse, Charles Sumner. Op. Cit. pgs. 7-8. Crosse was one of the earliest doctors to settle in Sun Prairie. The name of the first (who came in the 1840s) has been lost and he was afterwards followed by Drs. Woodward and Lewis, the latter of whom was for a time in practice with Dr. Crosse.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Dane County Tax Rolls. 1858-1869. Archives Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_\_8\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_5\_\_\_\_

member of the assembly of the state legislature. The doctor also bears the distinction of being a charter member of Sun Prairie Lodge No. 143, F. & A. M., being chosen as the first master, and which position he held for fifteen years.<sup>20</sup>

Crosse also had many other interests that he pursued outside the framework of his profession, at least one of which had a lasting impact on Sun Prairie.

Possessed of an active and versatile mind, he sought and found much diversion in other channels and vocations. Of a strong mechanical bent, he found hours of pleasure in striving with machinery. One room in his home, where he spent much time and effort, he called his "tinker-shop." He often said of himself: "A good blacksmith was spoiled to make a poor country doctor." He invented several ingenious mechanical devices, chief among them a grain self-binder, a unicycle, a bow-facing oar lock, a self-releasing thill for horse-vehicles. He covered all of them with U.S. patents, but never exploited or promoted them.<sup>21</sup>

Crosse's interest in things mechanical also involved an interest in printing and in printing presses. This resulted in the purchase of a small press that he kept in a room located in his "Old Corner Drug Store" (non-extant) on the corner of Main and Church Streets. Initially, Crosse appears to have used this press primarily to print materials for the village and to do a little job printing, but in 1877, decided to use the press as a means to give his nineteen year old younger son, Charles S. Crosse, a start in the newspaper business. To this end father and son began the publication early in October of 1877 of what was at first a free weekly newspaper, called fittingly enough, The Occasional. Since Sun Prairie was then without a newspaper of its own, this early effort was well received and led to the establishment of the village's first successful newspaper, the Sun Prairie Countryman. The first edition of this new paper was published on December 6, 1877 with Charles S. Crosse as editor, and he continued to edit it until 1889, when he sold out to others and moved to Little Falls, Minnesota to start the Little Falls <u>Herald</u>. His first paper survived him, however, and is still being published today as the Sun Prairie Star-Countryman.<sup>22</sup>

The editing of both the new paper and its predecessor appears to have been done in the family home on Main Street, but the actual printing took place in the little shop at the pharmacy. Dr. Crosse's interest in printing apparently continued even

<sup>20</sup> <u>Sun Prairie Countryman</u>. Op. Cit. Obituary of Charles G. Crosse.

<sup>21</sup> Crosse, Charles Sumner. Op. Cit., pgs. 9-10.

<sup>22</sup> <u>History of Dane County: Biographical and Genealogical</u>. Western Historical Association, Madison, Wisconsin, 1906, pgs. 207-208. Crosse subsequently returned to Dane County and to the village of Stoughton, where he purchased and edited the <u>Stoughton Hub</u>. Note: Sun Prairie had had several very short-lived newspapers before the <u>Countryman</u>, including the <u>Sun Prairie Ledger</u> (December, 1868 - January, 1869) and the <u>Sun Prairie Enterprise</u>, but the <u>Countryman</u> was the first to succeed.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_\_8 \_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_6

after his son left Sun Prairie for new publishing ventures. In 1893, when he built a new building at 100 West Main Street (extant) to house the expanded medical practice and pharmacy (Crosse and Crosse) that he had shared since 1880 with his son and colleague, Dr. Theodore P. Crosse, the printing shop followed and was housed in the new building.

Dr. Charles G. Crosse died at the Stoughton home of his son Charles on April 27, 1908. His son Theodore died in Sun Prairie the following year, April 20, 1909, and his wife Rowena died in Stoughton on July 17, 1916. All three were buried in Sun Prairie, but the death of Theodore Crosse marked the end of the Crosse family tenure in the family house at 133 W. Main St. During the 40 years that the Crosse family owned this house the family members had a significant impact on Sun Prairie and contributed materially to the advancement of the community. Dr. Charles G. Crosse played a particularly important role as one of the village's pioneer physicians and druggists. In addition, his activities as a civic leader and his role in creating the village's first successful newspaper make it especially appropriate that his fine home should be the focus of local preservation activity today.

# Architecture

The architectural significance of the Dr. Charles G. Crosse house lies in its being a fine example of Gothic Revival style design. This significance is enhanced by the highly intact condition of both the exterior and the interior of the house. The clapboard-sided frame construction Crosse house was built in 1866 and both its designer and builder are still unknown as of this writing. This house has a T plan that is composed of a side-gabled main block and intersecting gable roofed rear ell. It is one-and-a-half stories in height and is sheltered by a somewhat steeplypitched multi-gable roof. The symmetrically designed north-facing principal facade of the main block is three-bays-wide and has a centrally placed semi-circular arched entrance door whose design is echoed by a large double hung window placed directly above in a centrally placed wall dormer. This window is almost identical in size and shape to the door below. The verges of the dormer are decorated with elaborate Gothic Revival style vergeboards and identical vergeboards are also used to decorate the verges of the two main gable ends of the main block. The main facade and much of the east-facing side elevation is also sheltered by an accurately reconstructed wraparound veranda whose supporting posts have capitals that are decorated with elaborate scrollsawn ornamentation of the type sometimes called "steamboat gothic."

A number of these specific elements, including "steep pointed gables ... with decorated bargeboards," "decorated cross gables," and "a veranda," are all characteristics of the Gothic Revival style that are specifically cited in the Gothic Revival style subsection of the Architectural Styles study unit of the CRMP.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). <u>Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin</u>. Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, 1986. Vol. 2, 2-5 (Architecture).

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_\_8 \_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_7

In addition, the Crosse house is also an example of the centered gable subtype of the Gothic Revival style that was identified by Virginia and Lee McAlester in their recent book: <u>A Field Guide to American Houses</u>. In this work, the McAlesters first list the general features of the style (most of which are also listed in the CRMP and quoted above). They then go on to describe this subtype as follows:

Centered Gable--These are symmetrical houses with side-gabled or hipped roots having a prominent central cross gable. The plane of the cross gable may be either the same as the front wall or projected forward to make a small central wing. ... This subtype makes up over one-third of Gothic Revival houses.<sup>24</sup>

Other features of the Gothic Revival style noted by the McAlesters and found on the Crosse house include "the characteristic window crown called a drip-mold," all of which in this case have slightly pointed architraves as their topmost molding, and overhanging "open eaves with the rafters sheathed parallel to the overlying roof."<sup>25</sup>

The Architectural Styles study units of the CRMP cited above notes that examples of the Gothic Revival style were constructed in Wisconsin from 1850-1880.<sup>26</sup> Thus, the Crosse house was constructed squarely in the middle of this period at a time when the McAlesters note the use of decorative bargeboards was changing.

Decorative vergeboards, making an inverted V beneath the eaves of the steep gables, are a distinctive feature of most wooden Gothic houses and came in almost as many designs as there were Gothic carpenter-builders. After about 1865 this feature became less popular and was generally replaced by decorative trusses at the apex of the gables.<sup>27</sup>

Such bargeboards are a distinctive feature of the Crosse house, but they are also found on the only other Gothic Revival house in Sun Prairie. This is the cream brick-sided Maloney house at 150-152 Center Street, which, like the Crosse house, is a highly intact centered-gable design. Not only were these houses (which are located about three blocks from each other) both built in 1866, but their bargeboards are of identical design, which may indicate that the same carpenter executed them.

As noted in Section 7, both the exterior and interior of the Crosse house still retain a high level of integrity. Today's exterior is nearly identical to that seen in the earliest known photograph of the house and most of the significant stylistic

<sup>24</sup> McAlester, Lee & Virginia. <u>A Field Guide to American Houses</u>. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1984, pg. 197.
<sup>25</sup> Ibid. pg. 198.
<sup>26</sup> Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). Op. Cit. 2-5 (Architecture).
<sup>27</sup> McAlester, Lee & Virginia. Op. Cit., pg. 198.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_\_8 \_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_8

features such as the ornamental trim and the basic plan of the house are still intact. In addition, the house also retains its original siding, windows and doors, and most of the interior layout and detailing. The only significant changes to the exterior have been the addition of the two small bays to the south (rear) ends of the east and west side elevations. Since these bays are small in scale and unobstrusive in design and since they are sided in narrow clapboards that are equivalent to the original siding, it is felt that they are sympathetic additions that do not detract from the overall significance of the house. Similarly, the reconstruction of the wraparound veranda was a necessary act that was undertaken using historic photographs as documentation for the new construction. The Sun Prairie Historical Restorations, Inc. has sought sound professional advice in reconstructing the veranda and in making other necessary repairs. Consequently, it is also believed that the reconstructed porch does not detract from the overall significance of the house.

Sun Prairie is fortunate to still possess a fine, prominently located Gothic Revival style building such as the Crosse house. The great increase in population that the city of Sun Prairie has seen in the past two decades is bringing profound change to the historic core of the city and has put substantial pressure on the city's older houses. Most of the oldest buildings in the city are modest Greek Revival style or vernacular form houses that are increasingly subject to remodeling in order to fill the community's need for affordable housing for young families. Consequently, it is hoped that the ongoing restoration of the Crosse house will serve to generate interest in and respect for the city's older buildings.

<u>Owner</u>

Sun Prairie Water & Light Commission 125 West Main Street Sun Prairie, Wisconsin 53590

9. Major Bibliographical References	
Abstract of Title for 133 West Main Stree	et.
Butterfield, Consul W. <u>History of Dane (</u> Company, Chicago, Illinois, 1880.	<u>County, Wisconsin</u> . Western Historical
Previous documentation on file (NPS): preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested	<u>X</u> See continuation shee
previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National Register	Primary location of additional data: <u>X</u> State Historic preservation office Other State agency Federal agency
designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #	Local government University Other Specify repository:
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	
10. Geographical Data Acreage of property <u>Less than 1.00 acre</u>	
Zone Easting Northing	
	See continuation sheet
	number 12, original plat of the Village of is located in the SWM of the SEM, Section 5 See continuation sheet
Boundary Justification	
The boundaries enclose all that portion o Dr. Charles G. Crosse house that has not Prairie Water & Light Commission.	of the lot historically associated with the been blacktopped for parking by the Sun
, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	See continuation sheet
11. Form Prepared By name/titleF. Heggland/ Consult	ant
For: Sun Prairie Historical Resto organization <u>Sun Prairie, WI 53590</u>	orations, Inc.
street & number <u>1311 Morrison Street</u>	
city or town <u>Madison</u>	
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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number \_\_\_\_9 Page \_\_\_\_1

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McAlester, Lee & Virginia. <u>A Field Guide to American Houses</u>. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1984.

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Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). <u>Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin</u>. Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, 1986. Vol. 2.

NPS Form 10-900a (Rev. 8-86) Wisconsin Word Processor Format Approved 2/87 United States Department of the Interior National Park Service NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Dr. Charles G. Crosse House, Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin Section number <u>Photos</u> Page \_\_\_\_ Dr. Charles G. Crosse House Dr. Charles G. Crosse House Sun Prairie, Dane County, WI Sun Prairie, Dane County, WI 1 of 8 7 of 8 Tim Heggland, photographer 3/28/92 Tim Heggland, photographer 3/28/92 State Historical Society of Wisconsin State Historical Society of Wisconsin View facing east View facing south Dr. Charles G. Crosse House Dr. Charles G. Crosse House Sun Prairie, Dane County, WI Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin 2 of 8 8 of 8 Tim Heggland, photographer 3/28/92 Sun Prairie Historical Restorations, Inc. State Historical Society of Wisconsin Historic view facing SW ca.1870 View facing south Dr. Charles G. Crosse House Sun Prairie, Dane County, WI 3 of 8 Tim Heggland, photographer 3/28/92 State Historical Society of Wisconsin View facing south Dr. Charles G. Crosse House Sun Prairie, Dane County, WI 4 of 8 Tim Heggland, photographer 3/28/92 State Historical Society of Wisconsin View facing NE Dr. Charles G. Crosse House Sun Prairie, Dane County, WI 5 of 8 Tim Heggland, photographer 3/28/92 State Historical Society of Wisconsin View facing NW Dr. Charles G. Crosse House Sun Prairie, Dane County, WI 6 of 8 Tim Heggland, photographer 3/28/92 State Historical Society of Wisconsin View facing west

# 2. Present Physical Conditions

# A. A graphic description of the Crosse Home

The following pages are a graphic description, drawn originally in 1/4"=1'-0" scale. These drawings are 18"x 24" in size, reduced to accommodate the format of this report.

Please note that there is no description regarding the condition of the materials indicated. The drawings only show the building's layout, exteriors and a general building section. No attempt has been made to identify original construction vs additional work beyond the notes that define the original building footprint, and the addition(s).

# Index to Drawings:

- 1. Site Plan
- 2. Basement Floor Plan
- 3. Main Level Floor Plan
- 4. Upper Level Floor Plan
- 5. Elevations (North & East)
- 6. Elevations (South & West)













# UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: PROPOSED MOVE

PROPERTY Crosse, Dr. Charles G., House NAME:

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: WISCONSIN, Dane

DATE RECEIVED:5/03/99DATE OF PENDING LIST:DATE OF 16TH DAY:DATE OF 45TH DAY:6/17/99DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:6/17/99

REFERENCE NUMBER: 93000029

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:NDATAPROBLEM:NLANDSCAPE:NLESSTHAN50YEARS:NOTHER:NPDIL:NPERIOD:NPROGRAM UNAPPROVED:NREQUEST:NSAMPLE:NSLRDRAFT:NNATIONAL:N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA_Approve	,
REVIEWER Doland	DISCIPLINE_Historia
TELEPHONE	DATE 6/14/99

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

