

City, Village or Town: Eau Claire		County: Eau Claire	Surveyor: M. Taylor	Date: 10-29-81
Street Address: 602 Water Street		Legal Description: Lots 27 & 28 Blk 31 A. Randalls less than 1st Add.		Acreeage: one acre
Current Name & Use: Wax Paper - commercial building		Current Owner: Charles VandenBreul		
Film Roll No. EC 20		Current Owner's Address: 602 Water Street		
Negative No. 8		Special Features Not Visible In Photographs: UTM: zone 15 Easting: 617710 Northing: 4961850 USGS Eau Claire West Quadrangle 1:24,000 Interior visited? <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No		
Facade Orient. S				

Water Street
602

Original Name & Use: preferred Ottawa House (ECMRA)	Source	Previous Owners	Dates	Uses	Source
	A				
	Dates of Construction / Alteration 1882	Source			
	B				
Architect and/or Builder: Unknown	Source				

3 Architectural Significance

Represents work of a master

Possesses high artistic values

Represents a type, period, or method of construction

Is a visual landmark in the area

Other: _____ None

4 Historical Significance

Assoc. with lives of significant persons

Assoc. with significant historical events

Assoc. with development of a locality

Other: _____

None

Architectural Statement:

See continuation sheet.

Historical Statement:

See continuation sheet.

Plat Map #7

- 5** Sources of Information (Reference to Above)
- A** 1885 Eau Claire city directory
- B** tax assessment rolls - UW-Eau Claire Area Research Center
- C** 1885 - 1900 Eau Claire city directories
- D** Newspaper article available at Chippewa Valley Museum-no date, but retells story of 1882 Water Street fire using April 26, 1882 edition of the Daily Leader.
- E**
- F**

6 Representation in Previous Surveys

HABS NAER WIHP NRHP landmark

other:

7 Condition

excellent good fair poor ruins

8 District: _____

pivotal contributing non-contributing

initials: _____ date: _____

9 Opinion of National Register Eligibility

eligible not eligible unknown

national state local initials: *MCT*

20/8

OTTAWA HOUSE (602 Water Street)
Intensive Survey Form - Continuation Sheet (1)

ARCHITECTURAL STATEMENT:

Description: Flush board siding covers the walls of the Ottawa House, which stands on the northwest corner of Water Street and Sixth Avenue. A bracketed "boomtown" front distinguishes the main facade of the gable roofed structure. Two double hung sash windows with plain surrounds punctuate the building's second story, while at the ground level a recessed entrance with flanking display windows is featured. Transoms and panelled kickplates complete the storefront area which is framed by wooden pillars. A corner window also with a transom and kickplate adds interest to the simple design. On the west side of the building is a one story addition and on the east side, additional window openings and an entrance to the second floor and rear of the building where the living area was located.

The interior of the front portion of the structure retains its pressed tin ceiling and wood floor.

Significance: Like the John Johnson Saloon, 216 Fifth Avenue, 22/10, which is another property being nominated, the Ottawa House is significant as an illustration of vernacular commercial architecture with the characteristic "boomtown" facade. The combination saloon and residence, also constructed after the 1882 fire, is located within the city's west side commercial district which centers on Water Street. The Ottawa House and the Johnson Saloon were identified in the intensive survey of the city as the two remaining intact structures of this type.

The "boomtown" facade type of commercial architecture is most commonly associated with the frontier, but the easy-to-construct frame structures were features of nearly every community, particularly during their early years of development. The "false" or "boomtown" front affected a permanence and prestige that contrasted with the modest structure behind it. Early photos of Eau Claire's business districts contain numerous examples of the building type which has been reduced through both demolition and alteration. Although the Ottawa House and the Johnson Saloon were erected after Eau Claire's formative years, the two buildings are excellent representatives of the early commercial form.

HISTORICAL STATEMENT:

The Ottawa House was first included in the 1885 city directory. The proprietor was Napoleon Lalonde who is listed in the tax rolls as the property owner. Until 1898 the proprietorship remained the same. In that year the Ottawa House was owned by Leon Perrier (C). The name of the saloon and the names of the owners suggest a connection to Eau Claire's French Canadian population that resided in this section of the city, in close proximity to three large lumber mills for which many of them worked.

As mentioned previously, the Ottawa House was erected after the April, 1882, conflagration. A newspaper article which described the effects of the fire specifically listed Lalonde's saloon as one of the buildings destroyed (D).