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

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Griswold, George, House
other names/site number Zeidler Funeral Home

2. Location

street & number 146 South Dickason Boulevard N/A not for publication
city or town Columbus N/A vicinity
state Wisconsin code WI county Columbia code 021 zip code 53925

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination 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 meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _ nationally _ statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] _____
Signature of certifying official/Title Date 5/15/09

State Historic Preservation Officer - Wisconsin

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _ meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Griswold, George, House

Columbia

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall

7-1-09

Beall

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- structure
- site
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

contributing	noncontributing
1	0 buildings
	0 sites
	0 structures
	0 objects
1	0 total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

FUNERARY/mortuary

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Limestone

walls Brick

Wood

roof Asphalt

other Stone

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1858-ca.1918

Significant Dates

1858

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Baldwin, E. D.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Less than One Acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 336530 4800190
 Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Timothy F. Heggland
organization
street & number 6391 Hillsandwood Rd.
city or town Mazomanie

Date September 16, 2008
Telephone (608) 795-2650
state WI
zip code 53560

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	Rosalind Zeidler	date	September 16, 2008
organization		telephone	(920) 623-2214
street & number	146 South Dickason Boulevard	zip code	53925
city or town	Columbus	state	WI

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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Griswold, George, House
Columbus, Columbia Co., WI

Description:

The very fine and largely intact Italianate Style George Griswold house was built in 1857-1858 to a design supplied by E. D. Baldwin, Columbus's first architect. The main façade of the house is symmetrical in appearance, and its design is an excellent example of the "Simple Hipped Roof" subtype of the Italianate Style that was identified by Virginia and Lee McAlester.¹ In this instance the design consists of a 42-foot-wide by 38-foot-deep, two-story, hip roofed, rectilinear plan block whose main façade faces southeast onto S. Dickason Blvd. This block rests on foundation walls of dressed ashlar limestone and they enclose a full basement story. The exterior walls that rest on this foundation are fashioned from a rose pink-colored brick and these walls are sheltered by the very broad overhanging boxed and bracketed eaves of the house's very shallow-pitched hip-roof. Crowning this roof is the house's elaborate, square plan, hip-roofed wood cupola, each side of which features four tall, thin, semi-circular-arched windows. Following Griswold's death in 1891, the house was inherited by his sister-in-law, Mary Griswold, who later had portions of both the exterior and interior updated in a more modern Colonial Revival-influenced style. The house remained in the Griswold family until at least the late 1920s. In 1948, it was purchased by Paul and Rosalind Zeidler, who occupied the second story themselves and turned the rest of the house into a funeral home, which it still is today. To facilitate the building's new use, portions of the original one-story rear service wing were incorporated into the modern additions that now cover most of the rear elevation of the house.

The Griswold house faces onto S. Dickason Blvd. which is one of the main thoroughfares in the city of Columbus, and the parcel that is associated with the house occupies the south corner of a block that is encircled by S. Dickason Blvd. and by W. Harrison, S. Spring, and W. James streets.² Today, this corner parcel fronts onto both the southwest-northeast-running S. Dickason Blvd. and also onto the northwest-southeast-running W. Harrison St. Originally, Griswold owned eight of this block's 10 lots and Sanborn-Perris maps show that during his lifetime there was also a horse barn (non-extant) located behind the house that faced onto W. Harrison St., and a small one-story frame office building (non-extant) that Griswold owned and used, which also faced southeast onto S. Dickason Blvd. at the opposite end of the block from the house. Griswold began assembling this eight-lot parcel in 1856 and he continued to own it until his death in 1891. Subsequently, his heirs sold off several of the lots and donated two others to the city for a public library site. Today, the Griswold house's remaining multi-lot parcel is surrounded by other single family residences that are located on Harrison and Spring streets, and by a contemporary style one-story building that houses Columbus's telephone exchange and which is located next door on S. Dickason Blvd. The rear (northwest) half of the Griswold

¹ McAlester, Virginia & Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf, 1984, pp. 211, 216-219.

² The population of Columbus in 2000 was 4479. James St. is one of the main thoroughfares in Columbus.

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house's own parcel is now covered with blacktop and it serves as the parking lot for the funeral home. In addition, a concrete driveway runs from S. Dickason Blvd. along the northeast edge of the parcel and it also serves this parking lot. The S. Dickason Blvd. and W. Harrison St. elevations of the house, however, are bordered by mown lawn, trimmed hedges, and mature shade trees and they still retain much of the parcel's original residential character. In addition, the S. Dickason Blvd. and W. Harrison St. edges of the parcel are bordered by concrete curb and gutter, wide mown grass terraces, and concrete sidewalks.

Exterior

The entire original block of the house rests on cut stone foundation walls of dressed limestone blocks that enclose a full basement story, there is a corbelled dressed stone water table located at the base of the exterior walls that rest on this foundation, and the walls themselves are clad in rose pink brick. These walls rise up to a tall denticulated brick frieze that is located just below the very wide overhanging boxed eaves that encircle the house. These eaves have board soffits and they are supported by large, elaborate, scroll sawn wood brackets of a kind that are commonly used to ornament Italianate Style houses. The exterior walls of the house are sheltered by the very shallow-pitched, asphalt shingle-covered hip roof that covers the attic story of the house and this roof is crowned by a square plan cupola whose shallow-pitched hip roof also has wide, overhanging boxed and bracketed eaves. Almost all of the house's original window openings still survive but it is believed that the windows that they originally contained were later replaced either late in the nineteenth century or early in the twentieth century by the one-over-one-light windows that are in place today.

Southeast-Facing Main Elevation

The 42-foot-wide southeast-facing elevation of the house is symmetrical in design and is three bays wide. Only a small portion of the dressed ashlar limestone basement story of this elevation is visible above grade level and it is crowned by a corbelled dressed stone water table. The right and left-hand bays of the first story of this elevation both feature large, single, rectilinear window openings that have dressed limestone lug sills and plain dressed limestone lintels. These window openings now contain large, one-light, plate glass lower sash and these lights are both surmounted by transoms that contain elegant geometric designs composed of bands of clear beveled leaded plate glass circles that are outlined by much narrower bands composed of colored plate glass circles and it is believed that these windows are later replacements for the originals. The wider center bay contains the main entrance to the house. This opening also has a plain dressed limestone lintel and it contains a pair of one-light-over-three-panel painted wooden storm doors that protect the house's two one-light-over-three-panel varnished oak main doors, the lights of which consist of beveled plate glass. Surmounting the entrance

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is a transom that is composed of the same beveled plate glass circular bands as the ones above the windows just described, the difference being that the transom over the door is wider than those over the windows. This entrance is now sheltered by a one-story-tall, open, rectilinear plan entrance porch that Sanborn-Perris maps show dates from between 1915 and 1927. This classically derived porch measures 14-feet-wide by 4-feet-deep and it has a poured concrete floor that is accessed by ascending a flight of five concrete steps. The flat roof of the porch is supported at both of its outer corners by three beautifully executed fluted wooden Corinthian Order columns and these groups are doubled by fluted wooden Corinthian Order pilasters that are placed on the main wall surface flanking the entrance. These columns support an entablature that features a denticulated frieze and a cornice that is ornamented with small scroll-shaped modillions, and the outer edges of the porch roof above are encircled with a wooden balustrade that has square pedestals and turned balusters.

The second story above is also three-bays-wide and each of these bays contains a single rectangular window opening that is positioned directly above one of the first story's openings. These openings admit light to second story bedrooms and while they are narrower than the openings in the first story below, they are taller and they are also crowned with paneled and shaped dressed limestone lintels. The center bay now contains a pair of wooden ten-light French doors that open out onto the roof of the entrance porch and it is likely that these doors replaced the bay's original window when the current porch was built. The window openings on either side of the center bay both now contain one-over-one-light double hung wood sash windows. Both of these windows are surrounded by classically derived decorative wood trim that is inset into the window opening itself and which consists of a pedestal-like panel at the base that supports fluted wood pilaster strips that are placed on either side of the windows themselves, and these pilaster strips support a denticulated cornice that is placed above each window.³ A single course of corbelled brick that forms a belt course that encircles the block is placed above these window openings and the elevation is terminated by a corbelled, denticulated brick frieze that is located immediately below the very wide boxed eaves that shelter the walls. These eaves have board soffits and they are visually supported by five large scroll sawn wooden brackets.

Northeast-Facing Side Elevation

This 63-foot-wide elevation is composed of the northeast-facing side elevations of the original main block on the left (south) and of a two-story ell on the right (north) that was added to the rear of the block sometime after 1965.

³ It is believed that these windows date from the modernization of the house that occurred during Mary Griswold's period of ownership.

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The 38-foot-wide northeast-facing elevation of the original main block is three-bays-wide and it was originally symmetrical in design. The left-hand bay of the first story of this elevation features a large, single, rectangular window opening that has a dressed limestone lug sill and a plain dressed limestone lintel. This opening now contains a one-over-one-light double hung wood sash window that is also now surrounded by classically derived decorative wood trim that is inset into the window opening itself and which is identical in design to the trim described earlier that is found in the main elevation's second story window openings. A narrower and shorter version of this window occupies the center bay as well, but the window opening that originally occupied the right-hand bay and which was identical to the one in the left-hand bay was converted into an interior doorway after the house was converted into a funeral home. This door now opens into an 18-foot-wide by 12-foot-deep, flat-roofed, rectilinear plan ell whose southwest end is attached to the original main block. This ell is sided in aluminum clapboards and it houses an anteroom that is accessed from the outside by a handicapped accessible ramp that leads from the driveway that runs along the northeast edge of the parcel up to a door that is located in its southeast-facing side.

The second story of this elevation is also three-bays-wide and each of these bays contains a single rectangular window opening that is positioned directly above one of the first story's openings. These openings admit light to second story bedrooms and they have dressed limestone lug sills and they are crowned with paneled and shaped dressed limestone lintels. In addition, each of these openings also now contains a one-over-one-light double hung wood sash window that is also surrounded by classically derived decorative wood trim that is inset into the window opening itself and which is identical in design to the trim described earlier. In addition, this elevation is also crowned by the same corbelled, denticulated brick frieze and very wide boxed and bracketed eaves that are found on the main elevation. These eaves are visually supported by five large scroll sawn wooden brackets.

The 25-foot-wide northeast-facing side elevation of the rear ell is two-stories-tall, it is clad in stucco over concrete block, and there are no openings of any kind in this elevation. This rear ell was built sometime after 1965, it has a nearly flat hipped roof, and it is the newest of the three ells that have been added across the rear elevation of the main block since the house was converted into a funeral home.

Northwest-Facing Rear Elevation

This 53-foot-wide elevation of the house is composed of the northwest-facing elevations of the two-story-tall, 13-foot-wide by 25-feet-deep, post-1965 ell on the left (east); the two-story-tall, 16-foot-wide by 25-foot-deep, 1965 ell in the middle; and the two-story-tall, 24-foot-wide by 12-foot deep, 1950 ell on the right (west). Still intact above the nearly flat roofs of these three equal height ells is the

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uppermost portion of the rear elevation of the original block of the house, whose denticulated frieze and bracketed, boxed eaves are still visible.

The northwest-facing elevation of the post-1965 ell is 13-feet-wide, it is clad in stucco over concrete block, most of its first story consists of a rectilinear automobile garage opening that contains a modern paneled overhead garage door and which is crowned by a corbelled lintel, while the second story above contains no openings. The northwest-facing elevation of the attached 1965 ell that adjoins lies in the same plane and it is 16-feet-wide and it too is clad in stucco and its second story also has no openings of any kind. The first story of this elevation, however, has an door placed to the right, a now filled former window opening whose corbelled stone sill is still visible is placed to its left, and two small oblong two-light windows are located on the wall surface above this former window opening. Both of the first stories of these two elevations are also now sheltered by a 29-foot-wide flat-roofed canopy that spans the full-width of the two, and this canopy is upheld by four fluted metal columns.

The northwest-facing elevation of the 1950 ell is 24-feet-wide and it is sided in aluminum clapboards. This elevation is two-bays-wide and the left-hand (east) bay contains a single rectangular window opening. Placed to its right (west) is a door opening that contains a pair of one-light over three-panel wood storm doors that protect the house's two one-light over three-panel varnished oak rear doors. These doors are sheltered by a flat-roofed, 14-foot-wide by 14-foot-deep, one-story-tall porte cochère whose roof is upheld by the solid northwest-facing end of the porte cochère, which consists of a paneled and painted wooden wall. In addition, the second story of each of these bays contains a group of three small double hung windows.

Southwest-Facing Side Elevation

This 63-foot-wide elevation is composed of the southwest-facing side elevations of the two-story-tall 1965 ell on the left (north), the two-story-tall 1950 ell in the center, and the two-story-tall original block on the right (south).

The first story of the 25-foot-wide southwest-facing side elevation of the 1965 ell is clad in red brick, its second story is clad in stucco-covered concrete block, there are no openings of any kind on this elevation, and the right-hand 12-feet of it are covered by the 1950 ell.⁴

⁴ The pinkish red brick first story of this elevation of this ell is the same brick that was used on the original main block and it is possible that the first story of this ell is actually part of the original one-story rear wing of the house, which Sanborn-Perris maps show was located in this exact same position and which was of about the same dimensions.

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The 12-foot-wide southwest-facing side elevation of the 1950 ell is clad in aluminum clapboards, it is one-bay-wide, and its first story contains a large window opening that contains a four-over-four-light double hung window while its second story contains a quadruple window group that is composed of four small one-over-one-light windows.

The 38-foot-wide southwest-facing side elevation of the original block is clad in rose pink brick and it is three-bays-wide and it is symmetrical in design. The left and right-hand bays of the first story of this elevation both contain a large, single, rectangular window opening that has a dressed limestone lug sill and a plain dressed limestone lintel. These openings now each contain a one-over-one-light double hung wood sash window that is also surrounded by classically derived decorative wood trim that is inset into the window opening itself and is identical in design to the trim described earlier that is found in the main elevation's second story window openings. This story's center bay also contains a single window opening of identical size and it too has the same stone sill and lintel. The lower half of this opening, however, is filled with a wooden panel whose surface is decorated with three rows of four inset panels and the upper half contains an almost square window that is filled with a much more elaborate version of clear beveled leaded plate glass circles outlined by much narrower bands composed of colored plate glass circles that ornament the transoms of the main elevation's first story windows and doors.

The second story of this elevation is also three-bays-wide and each of these bays contains a single rectangular window opening that is positioned directly above one of the first story's openings. These openings admit light to second story bedrooms and they have dressed limestone lug sills and they are crowned with paneled and shaped dressed limestone lintels. In addition, each of these openings also contains a one-over-one-light double hung wood sash window that is also surrounded by classically derived decorative wood trim that is inset into the window opening itself and is identical in design to the trim described earlier and this elevation is also crowned by the same corbelled, denticulated brick frieze and very wide boxed and bracketed eaves that are found on the main elevation, and these eaves are also visually supported five large scroll sawn wooden brackets.

Two corbelled cream brick chimney masses are also located on the southwest-facing slope of the main roof and the roof is crowned by a tall cupola that measures approximately eight-feet-square. This cupola is of wood and each of its sides contains four tall, thin one-light semi-circular-arched windows. Sheltering these four sides are the wide overhanging boxed eaves of the cupola's hip roof, the eaves of have board soffits and are supported by large scroll sawn brackets, and the cupola's roof is then crowned by a turned finial that is supported by curved wooden elements.

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Interior

The interior as it exists today is a mixture of original elements and elements that were added after George Griswold's death in 1891, by his sister-in-law, Mary Griswold. For instance, the ornamental plasterwork that is still evident in the ceilings of the first story of the house is original to it, but the current main staircase is a replacement for the original one, which had a spiral or winding design. Likewise, nearly all of the wood trim that is now in evidence in the first story of the house dates from Mary Griswold's later remodeling of the house. The original arrangement of the principal rooms of the first story of the original block of the Griswold house is believed to still be largely intact. Passing through the main entrance doors one enters into the centrally positioned entrance hall, which has the house's main staircase on its right (northeast) side. A large opening in the left wall of the entrance hall opens into the double drawing room that occupies the entire west third of this story, while an equally large opening in the right wall of the entrance hall opens into a smaller front parlor that occupies the rest of the front portion of the first story. In addition, the house's original dining room is located behind the smaller front parlor and behind the entrance hall and is accessed via doors located in the rear of the entrance hall and in the east wall of the main drawing room. All of the first story's walls and ceilings are plastered and all of this story's original hardwood floors are now covered in carpeting.

One enters the rectilinear plan entrance hall through the one-light-over-three-panel varnished oak main doors described earlier. In the hall one finds broad rectilinear openings that originally held pairs of doors placed opposite each other on the hall's side walls while a third single door is located in the rear of the hall. The main staircase is attached to the rear (northwest) and to the right-hand (northeast) walls of the hall and it has a dog-legged plan. The staircase begins with a square, paneled, fluted and carved oak starting newel post and the hand rail assembly that connects to it is supported by thin, turned balusters (there are three per tread), all of which are also varnished. The triangular-shaped spandrels that enclose the spaces under both runs of stairs consists of varnished oak paneling that is made up of a grid of mostly triangular and oblong-shaped raised field panels. This paneling fills the space below both runs and it is used on the underside of the second run. In addition, the entrance to the basement is placed underneath the second run and it is accessed via a two-panel over-three-panel varnished oak door whose varnished and molded oak casing is enriched by a thin beaded molding. More elaborately ornamented varnished oak casings that have beaded ornamentation and denticulated cornices surrounds the hall's main doors and the door at the rear of the hall that opens into the dining room. More of this casing once surrounded the door openings on either side of the hall, but this has now been removed and placed in storage in the basement of the house along with the original doors that filled these openings.

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The walls of the hall have tall, molded, varnished oak baseboards and the cornices that decorate the upper portion of the walls are ornamented with three bands of pierced and perforated plaster ornamentation. The lowest of these bands is the thinnest and it has been gilded, the broader middle band is decorated with foliated scroll ornamentation, and the third and uppermost band – which is actually attached to the ceiling – is decorated with acanthus leaves. Centered in the ceiling of the hall is a pierced and perforated plaster rosette that surrounded the hall's original hanging lighting fixture, which has now been replaced with a very fine, but non-original brass chandelier.

The smaller rectilinear plan front parlor that is to the right (east) of the entrance hall occupies the east corner of the first story. It still retains the same tall, varnished oak, molded baseboards that are found in the entrance hall. In addition, the upper parts of the room's walls are decorated with a very fine and elaborate plaster modillion cornice. The room is further enriched by the leaded glass transom that is above the window in its southeast-facing wall.

The house's rectilinear plan double drawing room occupies both the south and west corners of the first story, which together comprise the whole of the southwest side of this story. Here too can be found the same tall, molded, varnished oak baseboards found in the entrance hall and the front parlor. The walls here are crowned with a narrow molded crown molding, although this molding is probably not original to the room. In addition, this room is further enriched by the leaded glass transom above the window in its southeast-facing wall and by the still larger one that is centered on its southwest-facing wall.

A broad rectilinear opening in the northeast wall of the drawing room, whose original casing and doors have now been removed and stored, opens into what was the house's original dining room. This rectilinear plan room occupies the north corner of this story. It also retains its tall molded baseboards, although they and the rest of this room's window and door casings are painted rather than varnished. Besides its baseboard, this room has a molded encircling chair rail and its walls are further enriched by denticulated crown molding. Natural light for this room comes from the windows located on its northeast and northwest walls and additional light comes from the two very fine but non-original brass chandeliers that hang from its ceiling.

No historic pictures of the interior of the Griswold house have been found so the exact appearance of the interior as it was during George Griswold's time is not known. It is clear, however, that changes have been made to the trim in some of the rooms, although just how much has been changed is again a matter of speculation. Some of the changes that have occurred took place during the period when the house was lived in by Mary Griswold and are the result of modernizing activities designed to give the interior a more up to date appearance. Others, however, are the result of changes that occurred when the house was turned into a funeral home by the Zeidlers. These changes include the carpeting of the

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floors, the removal of the original double doors between the first story rooms to facilitate movement and vision between the rooms, all of which are now used for funeral services, and the construction of new additions on the rear of the house for garage space, storage space and other needs associated with the funeral home.⁵ In addition, the Zeidler's own quarters occupy the second story of the house and this space was largely remodeled in 1971. No access was provided to the second story.

Despite these changes and despite the uncertainty that surrounds the disposition of all of the elements of the house's original decorative elements, enough of the fabric of the Griswold house's historic interior remains to give a good indication of what life in this fine house was once like. In addition, the significance of what remains has been greatly enhanced by the very high standard of maintenance the house has received over the years.

⁵ These doors and the wood trim that once surrounded the door openings have been preserved and they could all easily be returned to their original positions.

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Significance

The George Griswold House is believed to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) because it is one of the earliest and most distinctive examples of the Italianate Style to be found in the city of Columbus, a community that is especially rich in examples of this style. Research designed to assess the house's potential for eligibility was undertaken using the NR significance area of Architecture, a theme that is also identified in the State of Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP). This research centered on evaluating the house utilizing the Italianate Style subsection of the Architectural Styles study unit of the CRMP.⁶ The results of this research are detailed below and demonstrate that the brick-clad Griswold House is locally significant under NR Criterion C as a fine, largely intact example of Italianate Style residential design. The house consists of a symmetrical, two-story-tall, hip-roofed main block that was built in 1857-1858 to a design furnished by Columbus's first architect, E. D. Baldwin, who came to Columbus after practicing his profession in the eastern United States and in Canada. The quite formal design that Baldwin provided for Griswold is very different from the more informal, asymmetrical designs that are typical of Columbus's numerous fine examples of the Italianate Style and it probably reflects Baldwin's exposure to similar designs seen, and perhaps produced, back east.

The Griswold House is one of Columbus's earliest and most notable Italianate Style houses. The original owner, George Griswold, was born Salisbury, Herkimer County in New York in 1816 and he was educated at Union College in Schenectady, New York, where he studied for a career in law and was also a staunch and early anti-slavery advocate. Failing eyesight, however, ended his budding law career before it began, so he turned to mercantile endeavors instead and came to Columbus in 1850 and opened up a merchandising business there. His initial success brought two of his brothers here to join him and with their help he amassed what his obituary would later call "a considerable fortune." The most visible sign of his success was his house, which he later shared with his brother, William M. Griswold, and with William's wife and children. Despite going completely blind, Griswold continued to be an active member of the community, while William Griswold, besides being active in business, would serve three terms in Wisconsin's State Assembly and another two in the State Senate. Griswold made a will in 1877 that left his house and all its contents to his brother, William. When he died in 1891, however, William had already predeceased him, so the house became the property of William's wife, Mary, and she would continue to occupy the house until at least the 1920s. Finally, in 1948, the house was purchased by the Zeidlers, who converted the house

⁶ Wyatt, Barbara (ed.). *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Division of Historic Preservation, 1986, Vol. 2, p. 2-6 (Architecture).

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into a funeral home that Mrs. Rosalind Zeidler still runs today. Because the Griswold house was in the continuous possession of the Griswold family from the time of its construction in 1858 until the 1920s and because both the exterior and interior reflect the very high quality modernizing work that was carried out for Mary Griswold ca.1918, the period of significance of the house is considered to be 1858-ca.1918.⁷

History

The 821-page collected local newspaper columns of Frederic A. Stare⁸ provide an excellent general history of the city of Columbus up to World War II and a detailed history of the city and its built resources are also embodied in the City of Columbus Intensive Survey Report, printed in 1997.⁹ Consequently, the history that follows deals primarily with the history of the George Griswold House itself and also with the evolution of the city during the time of its construction.

Today, Columbus is located in Columbia County. In 1839, though, when Major Elbert Dickason, the first settler of the land that was to become the city of Columbus arrived, all this land was included within the boundaries of the larger and as yet undivided Portage County and was then without formal governmental organization. Dickason, a veteran of the Blackhawk wars, had contracted with Lewis Ludington (1786-1857), the non-resident purchaser of a 1300 acre tract of land straddling the Crawfish River in that county, to manage and improve the property for their mutual benefit. Arriving at the site in the spring of 1839, Dickason's first act was to build himself a log cabin (non-extant) on the banks of the Crawfish at a spot close to where the railroad depots are located today. Dickason, like so many other town founders of that time, settled along a river because it provided both a reliable source of water and the only readily available means of generating power for industrial purposes. This power source was put to good use the following year when Dickason constructed a saw and grist mill (non-extant) on the river bank with additional financial assistance from Ludington. Building such a mill was usually the first step in building up a town in the days before the coming of the railroads because the locale surrounding a mill was a natural gathering place for area farmers and was thus a logical place around which to build a trading center. This held true in this place as well. With Dickason's mill in place, which was among the first in this section of the state, the rich gently rolling prairie that surrounded it became especially attractive to settlers wishing to engage in agricultural pursuits. They did not arrive in sufficient numbers to save Dickason, however, who was unable to generate enough income to meet his financial obligations to

⁷ The ca. 1918 date is based on an analysis of Columbus real estate tax assessment records for the property.

⁸ These clippings are available at the Columbus Public Library and on microfilm at the Wisconsin Historical Society.

⁹ Heggland, Timothy F. *City of Columbus, Columbia County, Wisconsin: Intensive Survey Report*. Columbus: City of Columbus Historic Landmarks and Preservation Commission, 1997.

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Ludington and to the other owners of the land. Consequently, Ludington replaced him with Col. Jeremiah Drake (1784-1868), who arrived at the site in 1842 and promptly set about enlarging the mill and building the first frame dwelling in the place for himself.

By 1843, farmers were coming from as far as Madison and Stevens Point to have their grain milled at the place that Dickason had christened Columbus and the farms of these new arrivals were beginning to dot the countryside surrounding it. In the same year, Henry A. Whitney (1819-1880) built the first store (and tavern) in Columbus and the long lines of farmers waiting their turn at the mill persuaded him to build the first hotel in the new community in the following year at the corner of James and Ludington streets, where its 1857 replacement now stands (101 S. Ludington St.). Also in 1844, Lewis Ludington, the town proprietor, recorded the first plat of the future city, which was known as Ludington's Plat (or the original Plat) and comprised a nine-block area (blocks 1-9) bounded by Mill, Spring, Prairie, and Water streets. In 1845, the second store in the community was constructed for Josiah E. Arnold and Daniel E. Bassett, and the first doctor, James C. Axtell, and the first lawyer (future Wisconsin Civil War governor James T. Lewis) also set up office in that year.

By 1846, population in the region had grown to a point where it made sense to set Columbia County off from Portage County. Most of Columbia County's earliest settlers were transplanted Yankees and persons of English descent, but by 1848, the first of what would prove to be a large number of immigrants from Germany would begin to arrive as well. Not coincidentally, 1848 also saw the construction of the first brewery (non-extant) in Columbus on the banks of the Crawfish at its intersection with N. Ludington St. In 1849, Ludington platted a four-block addition (Ludington's Addition) to his original plat (blocks 10-13) bounded by Water, Prairie, Spring, and School streets and a year later platted a second six-block addition (blocks 14-19) bounded by Mill, Spring, Newcomb, and Water streets (the First Addition to the Original Plat). These nineteen blocks now comprise the historic commercial core of Columbus, which quickly spread outward from the Ludington Street/James Street intersection and Whitney's first hotel to encompass the area now listed in the NRHP as the Columbus Downtown Historic District.

The more or less steady growth that Columbus was experiencing during this period attracted still more newcomers. Among them was George Griswold (1816-1891), a native of Salisbury, Herkimer County, New York, and one of the oldest of the nine children of Amos Griswold, who was originally from Connecticut. George Griswold was educated at Union College in Schenectady, New York and he also studied law under Judge A. Loomis at Little Falls, New York and later with Michael Hoffman of Herkimer, New York.¹⁰ Griswold came to Columbus in the fall of 1850 when he was 34, by which

¹⁰ Butterfield, Consul W. *The History of Columbia County, Wisconsin*. Chicago: The Western Historical Company, 1880, p. 967.

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time he had already lost a good deal of his sight. Perhaps as a result, Griswold appears to have turned to merchandising and he was apparently successful from the start, judging by what followed. Once settled in Columbus, Griswold started a mercantile firm and its success was sufficient to lure his younger brother, William, to Columbus in 1853. William M. Griswold (1823-18??) was also a lawyer by profession but he too promptly entered into the mercantile trade with his brother. Two years later, in 1855, George Griswold's still younger brother, Eugene S. Griswold, also came west to Columbus, where he was promptly put to work as a clerk in his brothers' mercantile firm, which was known locally as the "Old Corner Store."

Eugene Griswold's arrival in Columbus came at a propitious time for a man seeking to embark on a career in merchandising. By 1855, Columbus had a population of approximately 800 and a well-established business core centered on the intersection of Ludington and James streets that was surrounded by residential plats to the northwest and northeast. All this development was concentrated for the most part to the northwest of Water Street, which is not surprising. As its name suggests, Water Street was bordered to the southeast by the Crawfish River and by the mill pond created by the dam of the mill (which was located where today's Udey Street intersects with the river). Since land to the northwest of Water Street was higher than the river and since it increased in elevation as one traveled northwest, it was therefore safe from flooding, which circumstance naturally favored development in that area of the city. In February of 1855, the first issue of the *Republican Journal* stated that at that time the village:

Had already seven stores with two or three more to be opened in the spring. There was a drugstore, a good flouring-mill, a saw-mill, two wagon-shops, one of which had made a hundred wagons, and the other fifty, during the year previous; three groceries and provision stores, two hotels, four blacksmith shops, three boot and shoe stores, three tailor shops, one jewelry store and one harness shop. The Congregational Church was building, and it was thought the coming spring would lay the foundations of Methodist and Universalist houses of worship.

To these were added the first bank in Columbus, which was established the following year by William L. Lewis, but the most momentous news of 1856 was the eagerly anticipated arrival of the Milwaukee & Watertown Railroad, the first railroad to reach Columbus. This all-important event would all but guarantee that Columbus would be able to hold on to its existing trading advantage in the area and well before the railroad reached Columbus, the April 17, 1856 issue of the *Republican Journal* was busy making sure that everyone understood its importance. Under the headline "The Prospects of Columbus" were the following comments.

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Never before have the prospects of our village been as bright as at present. The certain completion of the Milwaukee & Watertown railroad to this place early next fall and also that of the Wisconsin Central road within one year from next fall, has put an impetus into the business of this place that surpasses that of any previous year. We were surprised last year to see so many buildings going up. Some thought the village was growing too fast, that it would be a long while before those buildings that were being erected would find occupants, but here we are, at the commencement of another spring and not a building to rent. If there were fifty buildings now ready for occupants, they could all be rented before the end of another week.

It was in the midst of all this anticipation and activity that George Griswold, who never married, began to develop plans for a new residence that would be big enough to house both himself and other family members. His first step was the acquisition of a proper site.

In July 1855 George Griswold purchased lots 1, 2, 3 and 8 in block 4 [Ludington's Plat] from D. Franklin Newcomb for \$800.00 and in July 1856 he bought lots 5, 6, and 7 from Benjamin S. Hurlburt, and in May, 1857 he bought lot 4 from Benjamin A. Hagaman for \$600.00. ... Thus in less than two years George Griswold had become the owner of eight of the ten lots in block 4, the other two, 9 and 10 being owned by John Swarthout.¹¹

By the time Griswold's site was assembled, the impact that the railroad (which would finally arrive on May 25, 1857) would have on the community was obvious. Between 1856 and 1857, the population of the village more than doubled and even when one allows for a large degree of boosterism on the part of the *Republican Journal*, just the bare bones of the description of Columbus that it reprinted from another Wisconsin paper in its March 24, 1857 issue represented a record of quite extraordinary community growth for one year.

Columbus contains about 2000 inhabitants. Its places of business include four hotels, 12 dry goods stores; 4 saloons; 2 drugstores; 7 grocery stores; 3 hardware stores; two bookstores.

Soon thereafter, Griswold contracted with Columbus architect E. D. Baldwin to design his new house, and by October of 1857, construction was well under way.

New buildings are still going up as fast as workmen can be procured to work on them. There are now three buildings in the course of construction, of Watertown brick; the new hotel, Mr. Albert Foster's

¹¹ Stare, Frederick A. *The Story of Columbus*. Installment No. 46. This installment and the two that follow contain a great deal more information on Griswold and his life.

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residence, and Mr. W. L. Lewis' residence. Mr. George Griswold has also a building for a private residence in the course of erection, 38 by 42, two stories high besides the basement. This building will be of Columbus brick.¹²

While Griswold's new house was being built, Columbus also continued to grow, as can be seen by a more complete tally of Columbus business interests that was published in the April 14, 1858 issue of the *Republican Journal*, which showed that growth was continuing unabated, a situation that was all the more impressive because of the nationwide financial panic of 1857, which had put a damper on growth in many places that would last up until the beginning of the Civil War.

Perhaps there is not a village in the State with a better prospect of becoming a rich business place than Columbus. The growth of the village, to be sure, has not been as rapid as some others, but it has been steady and healthy, no mushroom concern. We venture to say that there were fewer failures here than in any other place doing the same amount of business in the west, or perhaps the east either, and the crisis being now passed no more are apprehended. The population of the village is now between two and three thousand and steadily increasing.

There are six dry goods stores, two clothing stores, two grocery, fruit and provisions stores, three hardware stores, two drug stores, one book store, seven warehouses, and four lumber yards in the village. There is also one of the best grist mills in the country running day and night; also a sawmill.

Of manufactories and workshops there are two wagon factory, one plow factory, one door and sash factory, three cabinet shops, two upholsterers, four blacksmith shops, two saddle and harness shops, two tailor shops, two jewelers and watchmakers, four boot and shoe makers, two milliners shops, one brick yard, one brewery, and one barber shop. There are three doctor's offices, three lawyer's offices, four insurance agencies, two banking and exchange offices, one land agency, one dentist, one express agency, one printing office, post office, and railroad office. There are six hotels, two of which are large first class houses, also a livery stable with first rate horses and all the vehicles and accouterments belonging to such an establishment. There are two eating saloons, one billiard and one bowling saloon, besides a number of lager beer saloons and groceries.

There are six religious societies, two of which have churches completed and three more are commenced. The Methodists have their church nearly completed. There are lodges of the Free

¹² "Building in Columbus." *Republican Journal*. Oct. 27, 1857, p. 3. Watertown brick was cream brick that was made in the nearby Jefferson County city of Watertown while Columbus brick was red.

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masons, Odd Fellows and Good Templars, and a Division of the Sons of Temperance here, all in flourishing condition.

Columbus is the present terminus of the Milwaukee and Watertown railroad and also of the Land Grant Road, which [when completed] leads to Lake Superior and will connect with roads running into Minnesota hundreds of miles.

By mid-1858, Griswold's fine new house was complete, and with the day-to-day operations of his mercantile affairs safe in the hands of his brothers and with his sight now almost totally gone, he now turned to other pursuits and adopted a more retired way of life.

Meanwhile, spurred on by the arrival of the railroad, Columbus experienced sufficient population growth during this period to justify its being officially incorporated as the Village of Columbus in 1864. The newly minted village was even big enough now to be divided into three wards and to have areas located across the Crawfish River from the main portion that were known locally as "Mexico" and "Lowville." This growth could not be indefinitely sustained, however. Part of the growth that the community had experienced up until then had been based on the fact that for a short time Columbus was the actual terminus of the Milwaukee & Watertown road. This was just a momentary advantage, however, and in reality many of the persons who gave the city a short term population in the mid 2000 range actually intended to locate there for just a short time before moving into the surrounding countryside or to points beyond Columbus. Also, too, other communities in the area that were already well established like Portage, which was also located on the Wisconsin River, or which had access to more than one railroad, like Watertown, eventually outstripped Columbus because of these and other natural advantages.

Although hampered by blindness and although he no longer took part in the day-to-day operations of the mercantile firm he had founded, George Griswold continued to be actively involved in business, especially in real estate, and he was still very much a part of the economic and social life of Columbus. In 1868, he and his brothers had local building contractor Richard D. Vanaken build a two-story, cream brick-clad, Italianate style building for them on the west corner of the intersection of S. Ludington and W. James streets, two of whose three stores housed the dry goods store run by Eugene Griswold and the family's other mercantile business.¹³ Another major event that occurred in the same year was the marriage of William Griswold to Mary Scofield. Since it had always been

¹³ This building (100 S. Ludington St.) is still extant and it is known as the Griswold Block and is listed in the NRHP as part of the Columbus Downtown Historic District (NRHP 3-5-1992). In addition to the family businesses, this building also housed a drugstore run by John Swarthout, who was George Griswold's next-door neighbor.

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George's intent to share his large house with his family, William and his new wife moved in with him and they would all continue to live in the house on S. Dickason Blvd. for the rest of their lives.

By 1874, the village's population had reached the point where another advance in its governmental status was deemed necessary, so in that year application was made and permission was given to reincorporate Columbus as a city. By 1885, the Columbus's population had advanced to just 2050, which would seem to indicate that by that time Columbus had reached its natural place in the economic order of things as a prosperous rural trading center whose economy was and would remain dependent on the larger agricultural community that surrounded it.

George Griswold, meanwhile, continued to look after his business interests and even built himself a small frame office building (non-extant) that was located on the corner of W. James Street and S. Dickason Blvd. at the opposite end of the block from his house, from which he could conduct his affairs. Griswold was still living in his fine house when he died there in 1891, at the age of 75, by which time he had outlived his brother, William.¹⁴ William's wife and her two children were still living in the house with him at this time, and Mary Griswold would continue to live there until at least the late 1920s. Subsequently, the house was sold to Paul and Rosalind Zeidler, who converted the first and basement stories into the funeral home that still occupies the house today, while they themselves occupied the remodeled second story.

Architecture

The George Griswold House is believed to be eligible for listing in the NRHP because it is an excellent representative example of the larger, more formal Italianate Style residences that were built in Wisconsin's cities between 1850 and 1880, and this significance is enhanced by the high degree of integrity that is present in the exterior fabric of the Griswold house today. According to the CRMP, typical hallmarks of Italianate Style residences in Wisconsin are wide eaves with brackets, low-pitched hipped or gabled roofs, and often a polygonal or square cupola placed on the roof. These buildings are usually either "L" shaped or square in plan, they frequently have smaller ell's attached to the main block, and they have boxy proportions. Other common characteristics include verandas or loggias, bay windows, and tall windows with hoodmolds or pediments. In addition, Italianate Style residences usually have clapboard, ashlar, or brick walls, or, less frequently, are built of stone.¹⁵ All of these features are also present in the design of the Griswold house, which is a very fine, very formal example of the style.

¹⁴ "Geo. Griswold." *Columbus Republican*. April 11, 1891, p. 1. Obituary of George Griswold.

¹⁵ Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). *Op. Cit.* Vol. 2, p. 2-6 (Architecture).

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The Griswold house is also an excellent three-ranked example of the "Simple Hipped Roof" subtype of the Italianate style that was identified by Virginia & Lee McAlester in their important work *A Field Guide to American Houses*. Such houses were described by the McAlesters as follows.

These are square or rectangular box-shaped houses with hipped roofs that are uninterrupted except, in about half of the surviving examples, by a central cupola (these have been called cube and cupola houses). Façade openings are typically three-ranked, less commonly five-ranked, rarely two or four-ranked. This is the most common subtype, making up about one-third of Italianate houses.¹⁶

The architect who designed the Griswold house was E. D. Baldwin, who was the first architect known to have practiced in Columbus. Almost all of what little is known about his work in Columbus, including his authorship of the Griswold house's design, is contained in the following newspaper account.

Although the weather has been severe, and the season unfavorable, the Columbus Exchange Hotel, which was totally destroyed by fire about a month ago, has sprung Phoenix like from its ashes, an honor to its enterprising proprietors,—and a credit to the village. Its size and dimensions are 46 by 60 feet, 47 feet in height, a four story building of Watertown brick,—with iron window heads and trimmings. The structure would do honor to any of our large cities, and is one of which Columbus may well be proud. The walls are completed, the roof is on and it will soon be ready for occupation, and we have no doubt that the proprietors, Messrs. Whitney & McCafferty, will see to it that we have a Hotel second to none in the West. The building was drafted by S. Baldwin [sic] & Son, Architects of this village, who, by the way, in their line of business, are not surpassed in the State. The new M. E. Church of this village, the Birdsey Hotel and Mr. Geo. Griswold's new house were also drafted by them, the whole of which are first rate specimens of modern architecture.¹⁷

An interesting sidelight on the design of this house is the fact that George Griswold wanted it to be an exact replica of the house that he grew up in Salisbury, New York.

¹⁶ McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *Op. Cit.*, pp. 211, 216-219.

¹⁷ "Western Enterprise." *Columbus Journal*. Nov. 17, 1857, p. 3.

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The reason George desired a replica was that he knew he was destined to go through life blind and therefore wanted a home the arrangement of which would be familiar to him, so he could get around himself and not be a burden to anyone else.¹⁸

By mid-July of 1858, Griswold's new house was nearly complete and it was already a source of civic pride even then.

The brick dwelling of Mr. Geo. Griswold's, on Broadway, is drawing towards completion. This will, when finished, be one of the handsomest buildings for a dwelling in this part of the state.¹⁹

Judging from the results, one is inclined to agree with this assessment and it is to be regretted that no information about either Baldwin's earlier or subsequent work has been found other than what is contained in the brief account that follows.

E. D. Baldwin

E. D. Baldwin was the first architect known to have designed buildings that were actually built in Columbus and he was also the first architect who is known to have to set up a practice in the city. Baldwin first came to the attention of Columbus in May of 1857 through a newspaper ad that he placed in the *Republican Journal*. At that time, according to this ad, Baldwin was apparently residing in the tiny nearby Columbia County community of Fall River.

The subscriber having had several years experience in the planning and erection of buildings of almost every class to be met with in the Eastern States and Canada feels confident that he can furnish the people in Columbus and vicinity with plans and specifications for dwellings, stores, etc., which will be neat and conveniently arranged. Person contemplating building would do well to give him a call before going elsewhere as he feels confident that with his experience he can save them much unnecessary expense and annoyance.²⁰

This brief description represents the sum total of current knowledge about Baldwin's career before coming to Columbia County, but his work apparently met with approval because within a month of his ad's appearance an item appeared in the Columbus paper stating that he had been given the contract to

¹⁸ Stare, Frederick A. *The Story of Columbus*. Installment No. 57.

¹⁹ *Republican Journal*. July 14, 1858, p. 3. Today's Dickason Blvd. was originally named Broadway.

²⁰ *Ibid*, May 12, 1857, p. 3.

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design and build Columbus's new Methodist Episcopal Church (non-extant).²¹ By mid-November of 1857, though, this church was just one of four Columbus buildings that Baldwin had designed and which were then under construction.²² Two of these, the frame construction Methodist Church and the Birdsey House Hotel, are no longer extant, but the other two, the very fine, recently renovated and restored cream brick Italianate style Whitney House hotel (101 S. Ludington St., Columbus Downtown Historic District, NRHP 3-5-92) and the pink brick George Griswold house, are two of the finest extant buildings in Columbus that date from the 1850s. Baldwin had apparently moved to Columbus by this time and was in practice with his son since the newspaper article that details these four projects also refers to them having been "drafted by S. [sic] Baldwin & Son, Architects, of this village." What other buildings these men may have designed in the Columbus area are unknown since no further mention of them has been found. Why this is so is conjectural since the firm seems to have gotten off to a good beginning, but perhaps the nation-wide financial panic of 1857 played a role. Whatever the reason, the fine Columbus buildings designed by Baldwin set a high standard for the many outstanding Columbus buildings designed by others that were to follow.

Because no historic photos of the Griswold House have been found, the only visual evidence as to the house's appearance during Griswold's lifetime are the sketched images of the house that can be seen on the 1868 and 1893 Bird's Eye Views of Columbus. These sketches and Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance maps of Columbus show that during this period the main block of the house was as it is now, but they also show that at there was also a one-story wing attached to the rear elevation of this block. This wing presumably housed the kitchen and other domestic offices and it gave the overall house an L-shaped plan.²³ The two Bird's Eye Views also show that there was a one-story front porch that spanned the full-width of the house's southeast-facing principal façade at this time. The 1885 Sanborn-Perris map, though, reveals that this porch actually wrapped around the south corner of the house as well and it extended across the full width of the southwest-facing Harrison St. side elevation of the main block. By 1892, however, just one year after Griswold's death, the Sanborn-Perris map that was printed in that year shows that that portion of the porch that was located on the side elevation had been removed. Later Sanborn-Perris maps show that the remaining portion of the Griswold House's original front porch was removed between 1915 and 1927 and that it was replaced by the narrower but very fine classically inspired porch that was built during the period of Mary Griswold's

²¹ Ibid, July 7, 1857, p. 3. The 1868 *Bird's Eye View of Columbus* shows that this building was located on the east corner of W. Mill and E. Birdsey streets (ca. 458 W. Mill St.) and it consisted of a frame, rectilinear plan building that had a gable-roofed nave and a tall steeple that was centered on its main Mill Street facade.

²² Ibid, November 17, 1857, p. 3.

²³ Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Fire Insurance Maps of Columbus, Wisconsin. New York: Sanborn-Perris Co., 1885; 1892; 1898.

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ownership and which is still extant today. Also probably altered during Mary Griswold's period of ownership were the house's windows, almost all of which now have fluted wood pilaster strips on either side of their double hung sash, this being a classically inspired feature that is more typical of the very early Colonial Revival Style. Otherwise, the house remained unchanged until 1948, when it was converted into the funeral home that still occupies the house. In order to satisfy the needs of this new use, the original rear kitchen wing was removed, the interior was updated, and new additions were added across the rear of the house that now largely obscure the original rear elevation from view. Fortunately, the house's front and side elevations are still intact, the house still possesses its distinctive and characteristic cupola, and the house continues to be an excellent example of the Italianate Style.²⁴

The interior of the Griswold house is also of interest for the way in which it combines the design preferences of two different generations of the Griswold family. Almost nothing is known about the original Italianate Style interior of the house in terms of its ornamental features. As noted earlier, it is believed that the original first story floor plan is still largely intact and the ornamental plasterwork that is still visible on the first story ceilings and in some of the crown moldings, most notably in the entrance hall, is also known to be original to the house. Two elements of the original design that were altered during Mary Griswold's period of ownership are related in the following historical note.

The [George Griswold] home originally had a spiral or winding stair way, which was replaced with the present stairway when Mrs. Mary Griswold rebuilt and modernized the house in later years. The ornamental plaster mouldings in the house were done by an itinerant craftsman who just happened to come along at the time the house was being built and set up his molds in the basement. The front door originally had side lights, but the entrance was changed in the modernizing.²⁵

The visible evidence of Mary Griswold's later modernization efforts in the interior of the house can be seen in the more delicate, classically inspired varnished oak window and door surrounds that are found in the parlors and the entrance hall, all of which feature a thin beaded molding as a discreet form of ornamentation, and in the staircase itself, with its lightly fluted varnished oak main newel posts and its paneled varnished oak spandrels, which are placed below and alongside the stairs. Other features associated with this remodeling include the new paired entrance doors in the remodeled main entrance that replaced the original entrance door and its side lights, and the beautiful, geometrically designed beveled glass transoms that were added above a number of the remodeled first story windows. All of

²⁴ The only other Italianates style house in Columbus that also possesses a cupola is the brick-clad Gov. James T. Lewis House, located at 711 W. James St., which was built in 1854 and was listed in the NRHP in 1982.

²⁵ Stare, Frederick A. *The Story of Columbus*. Installment No. 57.

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this work displays a level of craftsmanship that is at least equal to that of the original interior and the materials that were utilized are of equally high quality as well. The overall effect that Mary Griswold achieved was to lighten and modernize what must, by 1918, have, been a somewhat old-fashioned and overwhelming interior and it is believed that the surviving elements of both periods of the Griswold family's period of ownership are of interest both in themselves and for what they have to say about the changes in taste that occurred in the 60 years that had elapsed since the construction of the house.

The George Griswold House is thus believed to be locally significant under National Register Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an excellent, largely intact, and representative example of the Italianate Style houses that are an especially important part of Columbus's architectural heritage. Columbus is unusually rich in fine examples of Italianate Style buildings but even in this company the Griswold House stands out as one of the finest and earliest examples. It is also one of Columbus's most characteristic examples of the Italianate Style. The building has such hallmark features as masonry cladding, wide, overhanging eaves ornamented with large brackets, and also, in this case, a symmetrical plan and a cupola. It is also the sole identified Columbus residence designed by E. D. Baldwin, Columbus's first architect. In addition, the house is also notable for the Colonial Revival Style-influenced modernization it experienced during the period of Mary Griswold's ownership. Modernization efforts like this were not uncommon among owners of older houses during this period but the results were seldom as dignified or of such high a quality as this.

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George, Griswold, House
Columbus, Columbia Co., WI

Boundary Description

City of Columbus: Ludington's Plat, Block 4: S 42.86' Lot 4; all Lot 5; SE1/5 of Lots 6 & 7.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries enclose all the land that is currently associated with the Griswold House. During his lifetime, George Griswold's landholdings in this block included all of Lots 1-8. However, some of this was sold by his estate after his death and Lots 1 & 2 were donated to the city of Columbus by his heirs to be the site of the Columbus Public Library, which is individually listed in the NRHP and was built in 1912 to a design by the Madison, Wisconsin architectural firm of Claude & Starck.

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Items a - d are the same for photos 1 - 10.

Photo 1

- a) Griswold, George, House
- b) Columbus, Columbia County, WI
- c) Timothy F. Heggland, March 2008
- d) Wisconsin Historical Society
- e) Main Façade of House, View looking NW
- f) Photo 1 of 10

Photo 9

- e) Main Parlor, View looking towards Entrance Hall,
View looking E
- f) Photo 9 of 10

Photo 10

- e) Former Dining Room, View looking NE
- f) Photo 10 of 10

Photo 2

- e) General View of House, View looking N
- f) Photo 2 of 10

Photo 3

- e) General View of House, View looking NE
- f) Photo 3 of 10

Photo 4

- e) General View of House, View looking SE
- f) Photo 4 of 10

Photo 5

- e) General View of House, View looking W
- f) Photo 5 of 10

Photo 6

- e) Interior, Main Entrance Door and Stairs, View looking SE
- f) Photo 6 of 10

Photo 7

- e) Interior, Main Stairs, View looking N
- f) Photo 7 of 10

Photo 8

- e) Interior, Front Parlor looking towards Entrance Hall, View looking S
- f) Photo 8 of 10

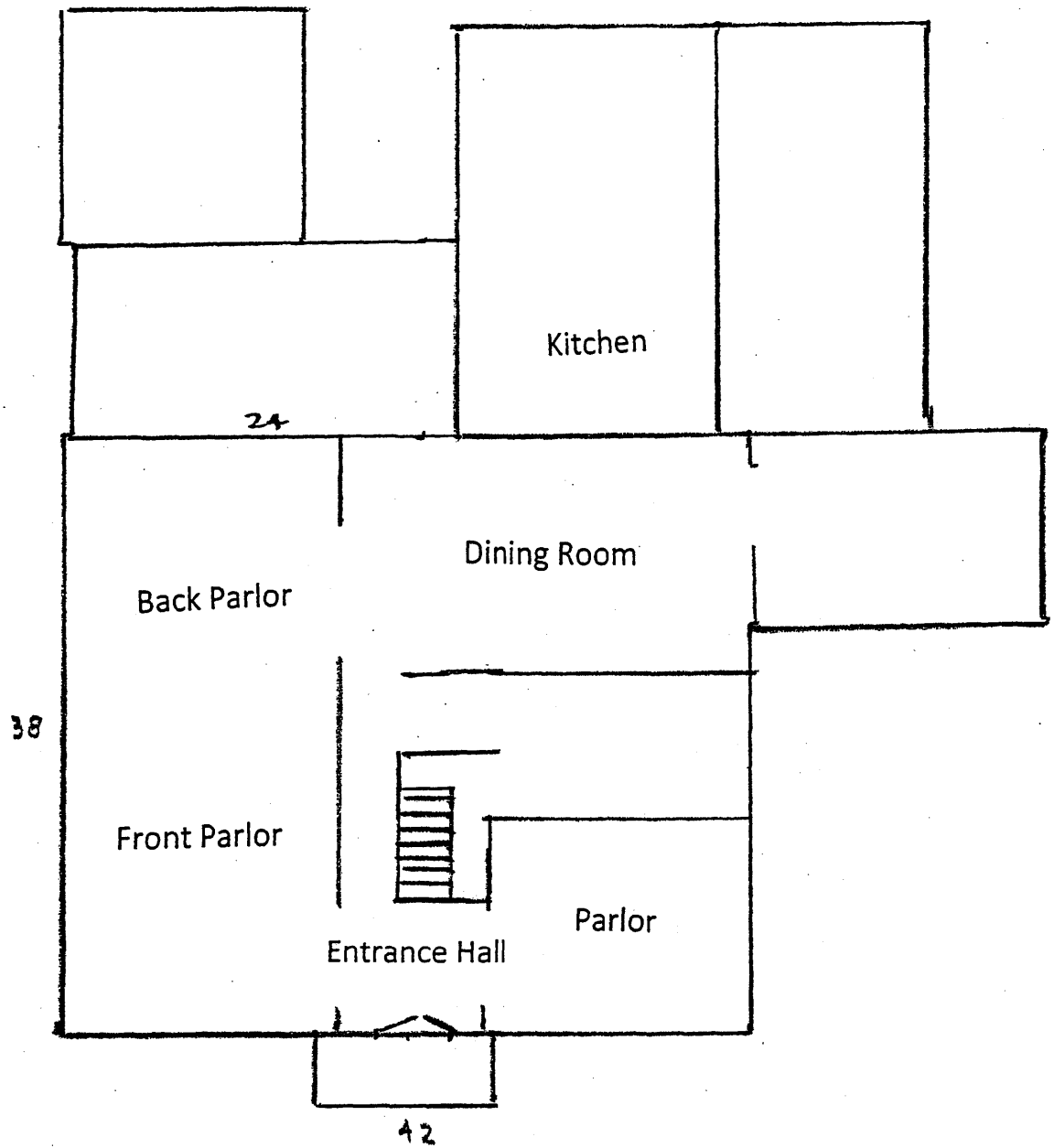
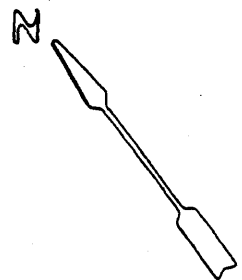


FIGURE 1:
GRISWOLD, GEORGE, HOUSE
 146 SOUTH DICKASON BOULEVARD
 COLUMBUS, COLUMBIA COUNTY, WI



First Floor

Not to Scale