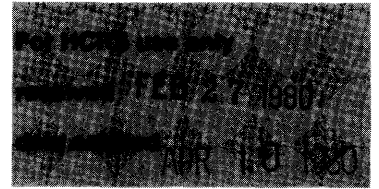


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

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



1. Name

historic Curtis - Kittleson House

and/or common Thoreau House

2. Location

street & number 1102 Spaight Street not for publication

city, town Madison vicinity of congressional district Second

state Wisconsin code 55 county Dane code 025

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Walden Homes, Inc. Richard Rosen, Administrator

street & number 2038 Pennsylvania Avenue

city, town Madison vicinity of state Wisconsin 53704

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dane County Courthouse

street & number 210 Monona Avenue

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53709

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Designated Madison Landmark has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date May 15, 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records Madison Landmarks Commission

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53709

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Curtis-Kittleson house is basically rectangular. A large tower with a conical roof intersects the S.E. corner and a large unenclosed porch extends across the front, around the tower and halfway down the Ingersoll St. side. The porch roof is flat and supported by square tapered wood columns with Doric caps. The porch entrance projects slightly, is crowned with a pediment and supported by double columns.

The house rests on a high foundation of rectangular light gray stone. The main body of the house is of smooth reddish brown brick interrupted with horizontal bands of smooth stone directly above and below the second floor windows. These bands form the lintels and sills for the windows. Banding on the tower continues to the third floor level.

The roof is deeply pitched with a large gable on each of three sides and a smaller one on the back providing for a third story or roomy attic. Palladian windows with diamond shaped panes appear on the ends of the three largest gables. A projection below the gable on the Ingersoll St. side provides for 1st and 2nd floor bay windows. The projection is capped above the 2nd floor windows with a stone cornice. On the north side is a narrower projection with bays just to the left of the gable. This forms an interior stairway leading from the entry hall to the second floor. Windows are of leaded glass.

Other decorative elements include dentil molding below the eaves, ornamental brick work above bay and Palladian windows, two cut stone panels on the Ingersoll St. side and two fluted brick chimneys. An acanthus leaf frieze also appears beneath the large gables.

The main body of the house appears to be structurally unchanged. Sometime between 1908 and 1942 a porte cochere on the north side was bricked in - becoming a room in the house.

The original roof treatment is unknown but today it is of variegated reddish shingles. Original paint color is also not known but an early photograph suggests that it was light and of the same color value as the stone. Present wood trim is light green.

According to a 1950's article by Alexis Baas, the interior was elegant, some of the carved woodwork was overlaid with gold leaf, border panes of the staircase windows were colored glass, and many other windows had leaded upper panels. According to the Wisconsin State Journal, June 12, 1901, the cost of the finished house was estimated to be close to \$20,000 - nearly \$8,000 more than the original estimate. Inside the original woodwork is intact including fluted Ionic columns, elaborate fireplace mantels, a beamed dining room ceiling and library cabinets, all of excellent workmanship. The plan is open with two parlors and the dining room connected by wide arches. The present owners have closed off the entrance hall and elaborate staircase to the second floor to prevent damage. The main entrance still has its original red flocked wall covering and matching cut velvet seat cushions.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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DATE ENTERED	APR 10 1980

Curtis - Kittleson House, Madison, Wisconsin

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Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

1973

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Madison

Wisconsin 53706

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
				Association with historic
Specific dates	1901 ¹	Builder/Architect	Gordon and Prunack ¹	personages

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Curtis-Kittleson house meets two of the criteria for landmark designation. The house is significant both because of the historical contributions to the city by its inhabitants and the architectural style and taste it represents. Its greatest importance lies in its identity with Mr. and Mrs. William Dexter Curtis and Mr. and Mrs. Milo Kittleson.

The house was built for the family of W.D. Curtis, manager of the Dexter Curtis Co. and son of its founder, Dexter Curtis. The company was well known for zinc horse collar pads and specialities for the saddlery trade and, at one time, maintained plants in Birmingham, England and Troyes, France. W.D. Curtis also served as chairman of the Board of Directors of the Union Trust Co., as V.P. of the 1st National Bank and V.P. and Financial Manager of the L.L. Olds Seed Co.

Curtis was elected mayor in 1904 by a large majority but chose to serve only one term due to business pressures. He was a believer in City Manager form of government. During his term, he obtained for Madison new passenger and freight stations of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. A lover of horses, he was interested in expansion of the park and drive system and served as President of the American Saddlery Association. W.D. Curtis was born in 1857 in Chicago, moved to Madison at about age 3 and died in 1935 at the age of 78.

The house was purchased by Isaac Milo Kittleson after the death of Curtis' third wife in 1949. Kittleson, of Norwegian descent, was born in 1874 on his father's Green Co. farm. He attended high school in Monroe, taught for 6 years and graduated from the Univ. of Wisc. Law School in 1902. That same year he entered the employ of the Savings Loan and Trust Co. and became Secretary and Director of that company. In 1906 he married Ida Johnson of Mt. Horeb, also of Norwegian descent. Mrs. Kittleson became a leader in civic circles serving as treasurer of the Public Welfare Assn. and of the YWCA and, for many years, President of the Dane Co. Humane Society. Mr. Kittleson served as alderman from 1912 to 1914 and in 1920 began the first of his three terms as mayor. He died in 1958.

The house was subsequently owned by The Rev. Richard Larson of Bethel Lutheran Church. His wife was a well known puppeteer and director of the Bethel Players and Children's Theatre of the church. The house is now a group home, owned by Walden Homes, Inc. and known as Thoreau House.

¹ Madison Newspapers, 1901

9. Major Bibliographical References

Wisconsin State Journal - Madison Past and Present, 1902

Quaife, Milo - Wisconsin, Its History and Its People, 1924

Wisconsin Necrology, Vol. 36, pp. 125-26 - State Historical Society of Wisconsin

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property c 0.2

Quadrangle name Madison East, Wis.

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	6	3	0	7	5	3	5	4	7	7	2	2	9	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing							

C

Zone		Easting				Northing							

D

Zone		Easting				Northing							

E

Zone		Easting				Northing							

F

Zone		Easting				Northing							

G

Zone		Easting				Northing							

H

Zone		Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 18 and SW 16 ft, Lot 17, Block 181, Original Plat, City of Madison

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jane Gaff and Katherine Rankin

organization Madison Landmarks Commission

date December 17, 1979

street & number 351 West Wilson Street

telephone 608 266-6552

city or town Madison

state Wisconsin 53703

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Richard Reiney

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

date 2/21/80

For HCRS use only

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

W. Ray Luce

date 4/10/80

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: *Kristin O'Connell*

date 4/9/80

Chief of Registration

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Architecturally, the house is Queen Anne in style, eclectic, and representative of fine craftsmanship. It is representative of the taste of the era in which it was built and its imposing chateau-like appearance suggests something about the position of its well-to-do original owner. It was designed by the firm of Gordon and Paunack. Other buildings credited to this firm include the Wisconsin Building (now Commercial State Bank), the Jackman Bldg., Old Bethel Lutheran at N. Hamilton and Butler, the home of Halle Steensland, at 315 N. Carroll, the D.K. Tenney house on Langdon and others. J.O. Gordon arrived in Madison from western New York in 1857. He established his architectural firm in 1890 and in 1892 formed a co-partnership with F.W. Paunack. The house is one of the finest Queen Anne mansions remaining in Madison, and is relatively intact.

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A Study of Madison Architecture from the Madison Papers, 1838-1900, Wis MSS/25BX/
boxes 6 & 7, SHSW Archives - Manuscripts Reading Room