

PH0501697

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUL 28 1977  
DATE ENTERED JAN 20 1978

**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

Weber, Jacob, House

AND/OR COMMON

H. H. Bennett House

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

825 Oak Street

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Wisconsin Dells

— VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2nd

STATE

Wisconsin

CODE

55

COUNTY

Columbia

CODE

21

**CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

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

**OWNERSHIP**

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

**STATUS**

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

**PRESENT USE**

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

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mrs. Charles Thompson and William Hutchins

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 296

CITY, TOWN

Wisconsin Dells

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin 53965

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Columbia County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Portage

STATE

Wisconsin 53901

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1974

— FEDERAL  STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The H. H. Bennett house, built in 1863, is a fine straightforward Greek Revival structure typical of its period in the Midwest. The two-story frame building, with a full pediment at the front gable end, has single story wings at the left side and rear of the house. The gable end of the side wing is also pedimented and has a hip-roofed portico along the front side with simple square columns for support.

The front entry, at the left, is rectangular and surmounted by a denticulated cornice, echoing the cornice below the eaves of the house. The entryway, slightly inset, is a six-paneled single door with side-lights and a transom. The windows are 6/6 double hung sash and have wooden lintels and sills and louvered shutters (being painted when photo was taken.)

The Bennett house has been restored recently by the present owners. Its exterior remains relatively unaltered. The roof has been taken off and replaced with wood shingles. Only two interior changes have been made since H. H. Bennett lived there -- one wall has been removed and a fireplace added.

# 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Association with nationally prominent photographer
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1863<sup>1</sup>

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Jacob Weber

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Henry Hamilton Bennett house is significant because it is one of the few houses remaining in Wisconsin Dells that date from the 1860's and is probably the best example of Greek Revival architecture in its locale. It was built in 1863 by Jacob Weber, postmaster of Kilbourn. The house also has associative significance as the home during the later but still highly productive years of one of the United States' outstanding photographers of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Through his photography, Bennett recorded a pictorial history of Wisconsin that contributed significantly to the state's growth and its recognition throughout the country. Bennett purchased the house in November 1891, and it remained in his family until 1971.

Bennett's home was his principal operating base when he was not in the field. He was never much interested in photographic portraits and left the running of the commercial studio to his two successive wives while he explored and photographed the inlets, cliffs, and caves of the Dells of the Wisconsin River. By canoe, mule-pack, and rowboat, he traveled into seldom seen areas.<sup>3</sup> His stereoscopic views of Wisconsin and the Dells, which he began marketing in 1868, were sold all over the world and did much to promote tourism into the state. Twenty-four dozen of his slides were sent to the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876.<sup>4</sup>

A skilled technician and inventor, Bennett not only built his own cameras but also devised such improvements for them as high speed shutters and special lens mounts. As a result, he was widely known for the quality of his pictures as well as for their beauty.<sup>5</sup> Bennett also originated methods for printing, trimming, washing, and mounting pictures.

When he died in 1908, he left behind an almost complete collection of his negatives. These are still held at his studio in Wisconsin Dells.

1. Thompson, Julie B., Synopsis of life of H. H. Bennett, (typescript), n.p., n.d. (1976), 1.
2. Reese, Betsy, The Bennett Story, H. H. Bennett Studio, Inc., Wisconsin Dells, Wis., 1975, 7.
3. Atkinson, Tracy, "Bennett, Steichen, Metzker," The Wisconsin Heritage Photography Exhibition Catalog, Milwaukee Art Center, Milwaukee, 1970.
4. Reese, Betsy, op. cit., 13.
5. Dictionary of Wisconsin Biography (Madison, Wis., 1960), 33.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Atkinson, Tracy. "Bennett, Steichen, Metzker." The Wisconsin Heritage Photography Exhibition Catalogue. Milwaukee Art Center. Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1970.
- Bennett, A. C. "A Wisconsin Pioneer in Photography." Wisconsin Magazine of History. vol. 22, March 1939, p. 268-279.
- Dictionary of Wisconsin Biography, 1960 ed. "H. H. Bennett."
- Reese, Betsy. The Bennett Story: The Life & Work of Henry Hamilton Bennett. By the H. H. Bennett Studio, Inc. Wisconsin Dells: 215 Broadway, 1975.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.6

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>1,6</u>	<u>2,7,6</u>	<u>2,0,0</u>	<u>4,8</u>	<u>3,4</u>	<u>1,7,5</u>	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				
C							D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 1 and the northern 1/2 of Lot 2,  
Block 46, City of Wisconsin Dells

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

Louise Farnsley, Preservation Asst. & D. N. Anderson, Historian & Registrar.

ORGANIZATION Historic Preservation Division

DATE

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

March 28, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

816 State Street

608/262-0746

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Madison

Wisconsin 53706

## 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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Richard A. Erney*

TITLE

Richard A. Erney, Acting Director

DATE

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

7/22/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

1-20-78

ATTEST:

*Charles [Signature]*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

1-17-77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER