

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED NOV 14 1979  
DATE ENTERED JAN 21 1980

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

Lovejoy and Merrill-Nowlan houses (preferred)

AND/OR COMMON

YWCA and the Nowlan-Merrill house

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

220 and 202 St. Lawrence Avenue, respectively

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Janesville

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Wisconsin

CODE

55

COUNTY

Rock

CODE

105

**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

COMMERCIAL

EDUCATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

GOVERNMENT

INDUSTRIAL

MILITARY

MUSEUM

PARK

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

RELIGIOUS

SCIENTIFIC

TRANSPORTATION

OTHER:

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Young Women's Christian Association of Janesville, Wisconsin -

STREET & NUMBER

220 St. Lawrence Avenue

Gloria James Ziegler, Director

CITY, TOWN

Janesville

VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin

53545

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Rock County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

51 South Main

CITY, TOWN

Janesville

STATE

Wisconsin

53545

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Rock County Historic Survey

DATE

1975

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Rock County Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Janesville

STATE

Wisconsin

53545

# 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 Lovejoy-Merrill nomination consists of two, substantial adjacent houses which face St. Lawrence Avenue and Janesville's Courthouse Park. Both were constructed by Janesville businessmen, one by a lumberman and banker, and the other by a gas company executive. Both are now under one ownership and either have been or will be adaptively reused by that owner, the Young Women's Christian Association of Janesville, a not-for-profit agency.

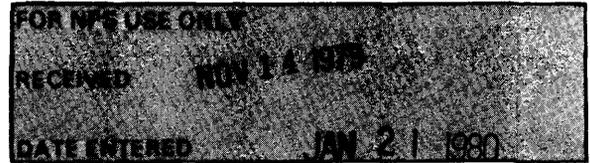
The Allen Perry Lovejoy house (1881-83) is a Late Picturesque house constructed of cream brick veneer over a balloon frame, 65' (N-S) by 56' (E-W) in size. It is 2 1/2 storied, with protruding wings and angled bays. The first two stories are brick; the trim and attic story above are of multi-textured wood and shingles: vertical, diamond shaped, and molded in rectilinear panels. Dormers and steep-gabled roofs display flaring eaves, and corner upstairs windows are hooded by curvilinear overhangs. Crosses and curves are punched into the barge boards; dot-encircled holes are punched into the brackets and spandrels of the first story verandas and second story porches. It is aptly termed a lumberman's delight.

Oiled paper drawings from the 19th century and the specifications for the house, by architect James Douglas, of Milwaukee, are still extant. They detail stone foundations, with local Janesville quarry stone below ground and dressed Milwaukee stone above ground, and fine woods: hard maple and red oak floors, gumwood veneered pine doors, parquet floors, red oak and gumwood stairs, and at least one black walnut water closet. Other drawings by the architect are inscribed "James Douglas, 1891", and show an addition to the southwest corner of the house with a nursery on the main floor and an enlarged bedroom above it upstairs. There are also blueprints by two local, Janesville architects: Lorrin Hilton designed a porte-cochere (since removed) and expanded the veranda ca. 1906-07, and W. H. Blair converted the nursery into a study about 1910.

Downhill, but immediately adjacent to the west, the Merrill-Nowlan house has the attributes of a turn-of-the century 2 1/2 story Georgian Revival house. This frame building on limestone foundations is basically rectilinear, 69' deep (N-S) and about 36' wide across the front (E-W). The main block is fronted with a two story Ionic portico, largely screened-in, and a frieze above which supports a modillioned pediment. In this pediment, the front of the attic story, is centered a Palladian window topped with a wooden keystone. The triple fascia frieze with modillioned cornice continues around the house, above pilasters at the corners. An ell projects slightly to the west; the back (south) wall is about 46' wide. Three Palladian windowed pediments, which match the front one, are located above the frieze on this ell, above the back wall, and at the back of the east side (above a continuous straight wall). A pilastered dormer with arch and keystone breaks the roof on either side of the main block; the roofline is otherwise smooth, except for the chimneys. Below the roofline, a two-story, three sided bay projects westerly from near the northwest side of the west wall. A small screened one-story porch

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Lovejoy and Merrill-Nowlan Houses, Janesville, Rock County, Wis.

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with Ionic columns is attached to the east end of the back (south) wall of the house.

Both the Lovejoy and the Merrill-Nowlan houses contain several fireplaces, five in the Lovejoy house and six in the Merrill-Nowlan house; both contain hardwood floors and fine quality wood moulding, plaster and glass. Both also had stone cisterns, which are now filled in.

Both houses have undergone alterations. The Lovejoy house was embellished by minor additions or remodelings from the 1890's through about 1910, with all changes retaining the Late Picturesque character of the house. The 1891 nursery floor was inlaid with varicolored wood parquet to suggest the design of a railroad track around the room for the children's toys; this was subsequently covered over with carpet. The amorphous green-brown-gold fireplace tiles here and the black-on-buff animal scenes and geometric panels of the bedroom fireplace above differ from the soft, moulded and glazed figurative tiles with classical and historical portrait heads of the parlor fireplace. Leaded glass and wood cabinets were added when the nursery room was converted to a library ca. 1910.

When the veranda of the Lovejoy house was expanded with a porte-cochere by Mr. Hilton ca. 1906-07, new leaded stairway windows were substituted and the original stained glass panels, which depicted the four seasons, were moved upstairs. This porte-cochere was removed about 1962, but the wrap-around veranda remains, with an enlargement of the east bedroom just above it.

From 1910 until the death of the builder's wife in 1953 (103 years after her husband had come to Janesville as a bachelor!), there were few alterations to the house other than the installation of a small cage elevator near the entrance. This was removed when the house became the Janesville YWCA in 1954. Then plans were drawn by Reyner Eastman of Rockford, Illinois. They included minor alterations to the house such as removal of the partition between the parlor and music room to create a larger lounge and between the two bedrooms upstairs to make a meeting room (now the Y-Teen Room). Stairs and some heavily trafficked passageways were covered with vinyl or carpeting. Most importantly, the 1954 plans called for the addition of a one-story recreation room to the west with a 45' x 50' ballroom which is reached by a 9' x 24' passageway. This addition, in a traditional bracketed style, does not detract from the house itself; its existence has limited the necessity to alter the house itself to any major extent. However, the 1954 wing should not be considered as part of the nomination.

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The Merrill-Nowlan house appears to be a radical remodeling and enlargement, ca. 1904, of the frame vernacular Italianate house, with Late Picturesque trim, which was already on the site when Mr. and Mrs. Hiram Merrill bought the lot from Catherine Boyd in 1882. Some marble fireplace mantels in the house today clearly date from the mid-nineteenth century. Further, the present chimneys, the appearance of the northwest corner of the rear ell including its two-story bay windows, and the fenestration adjacent to and behind the portico on the northwest side, coincide with a contemporary photograph of the house.<sup>1</sup> However, the present house as an enlargement of the former is almost doubled in size, with the roof and attic story heightened considerably to accommodate the larger dimensions of the broader house. The new boxy proportions, the removal of the original gabled roof and pendants of the two-story bay, the addition of pilastered corners, pedimented gables and porticoed front all transformed the Merrill-Nowlan house into its present Neo-Georgian existence. Since 1904 there have been few alterations to the house. It was designed for the Merrills with two large apartments, upstairs and down, to hold two generations of the family.<sup>2</sup> Recently, however, there have been three units on the main floor, but this was achieved with little change to the fabric of the house. The upstairs remains virtually untouched. Each unit had about 2,600 square feet of space, and the upstairs layout includes a spacious central hall, a large living room, a paneled dining room, four bedrooms, two bathrooms and three fireplaces.

The Merrill-Nowlan house was recently donated to the YWCA by its longtime owners, who had grown up in the house. The YWCA has provided a new roof to stabilize the building and is presently looking for an adaptive use for the house.

1. Illus. in Wise, Picturesque Janesville, Janesville, 1888.
2. Mr. and Mrs. Merrill occupied the lower unit, while their young widowed daughter, Mrs. Burton Nowlan, lived upstairs with her two children, Hiram and Louise, who retained ownership until 1978.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) association w/locally prominent people
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c.1882, 1854-6, c. 1904 BUILDER/ARCHITECT James Douglas; George Colling

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Lovejoy and Merrill-Nowlan houses are primarily of architectural significance as fine houses which embody the distinctive characteristics of two periods of construction, the late 19th century and turn of the 20th. The Lovejoy house is also significant as an example of the domestic architecture of the Milwaukee architect James Douglas (1823-1894), who was primarily known for his church and residential architecture.

Scottish-born Douglas emigrated with his family to Canada at 17 years of age and then began working as a carpenter in the young village of Milwaukee, Wis. in 1843. His career advanced with the growth of the city; by 1847 he was listed there as an architect. He is credited with the design of North Presbyterian Church, Milwaukee, and the Milwaukee Orphan Asylum; with Grace Episcopal Church, Madison (NRHP); St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Watertown (NRHP pending); and evidently with the Chapel of St. Mary the Virgin, Nashotah (NRHP).<sup>1</sup> Though Douglas' work for nine years with the Northwestern Life Insurance Co., Milwaukee (1863-72) evidently provided a hiatus from architecture, he resumed practice in 1872, enlarging his reputation in domestic architecture and branching into land development.<sup>2</sup> His domestic designs were employed as far south as Florida and as far west as California.<sup>3</sup> His biography praises the originality of his work, in its departure from stereotyped models of "the Gothic, the Vandals and even the English," introducing "a new American style of art, the Douglas style."<sup>4</sup> To judge by this Janesville example, the Douglas style was an exuberant amalgam of Late Picturesque tendencies with a free adaptation of various historic illusions.

The Lovejoy house embodies several Late Picturesque elements. Queen Anne elements appear in the combination of materials: stone, brick, and many textures of wood and shingles; in the asymmetrical plan; and in the appearance of steep overhanging gables and dormer roofs with flaring eaves and decorated bargeboards. There is also delight in the variations of patterns of wood and shingles, and repetition of vertical members--as in the flared mullions below the pent roof in the attic gable--and in the superimposed first and second story porches. There is a strong vertical emphasis which was even stronger in the house as first built, before enlargement of the first story porches as verandas c. 1906, and before the original cresting and metal finials were removed.<sup>5</sup> The punched designs in bargeboards and in the brackets and spandrels of the porches are also typical of the period.

Two other builders or architects had lesser roles, providing additional plans for early 20th century alterations to the Lovejoy house. Lorrin L. Hilton was an architect with the Janesville firm, Hilton and Sadler. William H. Blair had evolved from a carpenter-contractor and partner of George Colling to an architect by 1910.<sup>6</sup>

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Commemorative and Biographical Record, 1901, pp. 36-38

Douglas and Hartung, Rock County Historic Sites and Buildings, Janesville, 1976, pp. 62, 65 (illus. pl. 23 d), 208-209, 217

Flower, Frank, History of Milwaukee, Part II, Chicago, 1881, p. 1500

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.8

UTM REFERENCES Quadrangle Name: Janesville West, Wis. Scale: 1:24000  
(Lovejoy) (Nowlan-Merrill)

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

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 2, 3, 4, and 5 of north half of Block 27, Original plat of Janesville. The property also includes 18' on St. Lawrence Avenue and 20' on S. Parker Dr. This part of the property, taken from the street right-of-way, is not included in the nomination.

## 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

Nancy Belle Douglas, National Register Officer

ORGANIZATION

Rock County Historical Society

DATE

May 18, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 896

TELEPHONE

608/756-4509

CITY OR TOWN

Janesville

STATE

Wisconsin 53545

# 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 Kuey*

TITLE Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE 10/29/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*Carol O. Stuel*

DATE 1-21-80

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST *Anna Jane Saps*

DATE 1/16/80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Regional Coordinator*

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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The Merrill-Nowlan house is also significant architecturally, but as an example of the Georgian Revival as practiced at the turn of the century in the midwest. Features of the house which may be found in the Georgian Revival style are its generally symmetrical cubic masses, the large scale, the colossal Ionic order employed in its portico and engaged pilasters, with a continuous frieze surmounted by pediments with Palladian windows. Rather more unusual, and a neat trick, is the probable incorporation of an earlier, vernacular Italianate house into the enlarged structure. One can note the transformation of windows on the main walls, the chimneys, and a Late Picturesque bay (in place by 1888) to adapt to the newer style. According to one of the two donors, the last owners of the house, it is the work of a local builder, George K. Colling.

Both houses are significant historically for their association with two businessmen who made major contributions to the social and political development of Janesville. The lives of these two neighbors, Allen Perry Lovejoy (1825-1904) and Hiram Merrill (1829-1908), contain many parallels. Both were Yankee-born to large families (10 and 7 children in Maine and New York State, respectively) in the 1820's. Both came as young men to Milwaukee and then settled in Janesville, in 1850 and 1864, respectively. Both developed and headed their businesses, the first in lumbering and the other in utilities. Both were also officers of the Janesville Machine Company. Lovejoy was vice-president (after being president of its parent firm, the Harris Manufacturing Co.) and then president, and Merrill was vice-president. This large agricultural equipment company, incorporated in 1881, whose distributing offices spanned both coasts, was subsequently sold in 1918 to General Motors. It was the basis of the present GM Assembly Division plant in Janesville, which is now the major industry in Rock County, with 7,000 employees. Lovejoy was also a director of the First National Bank of Janesville; two grandsons remain active in the bank at the present time.

Active in public life, both were elected mayors of Janesville, Lovejoy in 1881 and Merrill in 1874, and both served in the State Assembly, Lovejoy in 1869 and Merrill in 1875. Lovejoy was also a State Senator, 1887-89.

Allen P. Lovejoy, trained as a carpenter in the east, arrived in Janesville in 1850 and opened his first retail lumberyard there in 1859. He expanded his business with several yards in towns nearby and in 1868 entered the wholesale lumber business,

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purchasing thousands of acres of pine woods in northern Wisconsin and Michigan and in the west, from Oregon to California. In 1880, at the age of 55, he married 30-year-old schoolteacher Julia Stow in New Haven, Connecticut. They took an extensive European honeymoon before building their residence.

The land on which it was built was purchased on Dec. 23, 1880 and on July 22, 1881. The house was built between then and 1884.<sup>8</sup> Besides bearing four children, Mrs. Lovejoy founded the first kindergarten in Janesville and helped establish the city's first hospital.<sup>9</sup> After her husband's death and until she died at age 103 in 1953, she lived in the house, which was virtually unaltered subsequent to 1910. J. A. Craig, who had been brought to Janesville in 1897 by Mr. Lovejoy to manage Janesville Machine and who was the last president of the company, effecting its sale to General Motors, bought the house from the estate and presented it in 1954 to the YWCA of Janesville. It is thus one of Janesville's earlier and most successful cases of adaptive re-use.

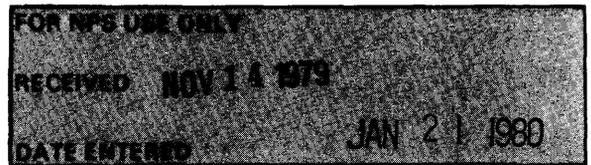
Hiram Merrill came to Milwaukee in 1837 with his father, who kept the Traveler's Inn at Walker Point, as well as a store and a shipyard. Hiram worked in the latter, then from 1849-54 left Milwaukee for the California gold rush, selling water for hydraulic mining to miners. He came to Janesville in 1866 as manager of the New Gas Light Company. This was a reorganization, with Milwaukee businessmen, of the Janesville Gas Light Company, which had been chartered in 1853, but which went broke in 1862 (its building was sold in a sheriff's sale).<sup>10</sup> Merrill soon purchased a controlling interest, and became long-time president of the company. Gas, manufactured by the burning of coke, was in general use in the businesses and private houses in Janesville by the late 1870's.<sup>11</sup> The New Gas Light Company was eventually sold to the Middle West Utilities (1926), then to the Wisconsin Power and Light Company (1927), but was kept as a subsidiary of the latter until the gas company was dissolved in 1936. The gas works building was razed in 1968.<sup>12</sup>

The lot just west of the Lovejoy's property contained a house when it was bought by the Merrill's from Catherine A. Boyd, April 26, 1882, with a \$3,000 mortgage. By this time it might have had some of the Late Picturesque trim which was illustrated six years later, or the trim might have been added by the Merrills. Mrs. Boyd died on May 17 of 1882, naming Merrill as executor. She had received the property in 1878 by will from her sister, Eliza Stimson.

Some house on the property may have existed from ca. 1854-6. George Britain took out mortgages of \$300 on the property and sold it the same year, 1854, for \$775 to Franklin Whitaker, owner of Janesville's first woolen mill, built in 1849. He sold

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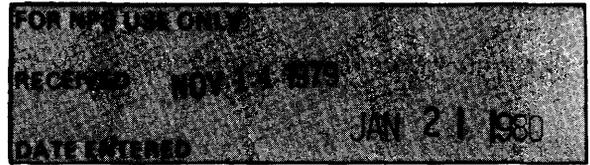
it (improved?) in 1856 for \$1200 to a James Niel. He sold it in 1869, for only \$700, to Eliza Stimson (all Janesville real estate depreciated considerably after the Civil War).

In any case, the house as it now stands is the structure of 1904, although incorporating much of the previous house.

1. According to recent evidence, amassed by Barbara Wyatt, SHSW, in connection with the nomination of St. Paul's, Watertown. M. F. Himmerich discovered the original specifications and contract for St. Mary's Chapel, Nashotah, signed by Douglas: correspondence with Barbara Wyatt: 12/26/78.
2. Obit., in Evening Wisconsin, 1 Sept. 1894.
3. Flower, Frank A., History of Milwaukee, Part II, Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1881, p. 1500.
4. Ibid.
5. Wise, Illus. Janesville, Janesville, 1888.
6. Janesville, Directories 1894, 1903, 1907, 1911.
7. Interview with Hiram Nowlan. Colling was listed in the 1903 and 1907 Janesville Directories as a contractor and builder; he was dead by 1911. By 1870, George K. Colling was established as a carpenter, contractor and builder. In the 1890's his partners were James G. Wray and William H. Blair. The latter worked on the Lovejoy house. These three men were proprietors of the Phoenix Planing Mill.
8. Janesville Directory, 1884-5, p. 145.
9. Janesville Gazette, Dec. 31, 1949.
10. Portrait and Biographical Album of Rock County, 1889, pp. 567-8.
11. History of Rock County, 1879, p. 570. The Tallman House (NRHP) retains its original gas lights, installed in 1869.
12. Janesville Gazette, March 8, 1968.

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Lovejoy and Merrill-Nowland Houses, Janesville, Rock County, Wisconsin

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History of Rock County, Chicago, 1879, p. 570.

Janesville Gazette, March 18, 1904; Dec. 31, 1949; March 8, 1968; May 14, 1977;  
June 20, 1978.

Portrait and Biographical Album of Rock County, Chicago, 1889, pp. 243-244; 567-568.

Souvenir, Janesville Fire Department, Janesville, 1902 (illus.).

Wise, George, Picturesque Janesville Illustrated, Janesville, 1888 (illus.).

Collections and files, RCHS and YWCA, Janesville.

Survey and photo information:

1975, Nancy Douglas

Merrill-Nowlan House: RO 75 (k 53), neg. 27a  
from NW (Lovejoy house behind trees on left)

Lovejoy House: RO 75 (k 59) neg. 34a from NE  
RO 75 (k 59) neg. 35a from N (detail)