

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

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

For NPS use only
received APR 22 1983
date entered

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

1. Name

historic The John A. Johnson House

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 418 North Third Street

N/A not for publication

city, town St. Peter

N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota

code 22

county Nicollet

code 103

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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<u>N/A</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Gerald D. and Marjorie L. Lewis

street & number 418 North Third Street

city, town St. Peter

N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Nicollet County Courthouse

street & number Minnesota Avenue

city, town St. Peter

state Minnesota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Minnesota Statewide Historic Sites Survey

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date July 1982

federal state county local

depository for survey records Minnesota Historical Society, Fort Snelling History Center

city, town St. Paul

state Minnesota

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____ N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The John A. Johnson House is located at 418 North Third Street, on a narrow city lot in a residential area. Built in 1905, the house is square with a one story rear appendage and a hipped roof with three intersecting gables. The two-story, wood frame structure has a central chimney and a one story, full front porch.

There is an oval window in the center of the second floor which has a wood frame with four mock keystones. Other distinctive features include the decorative shingles and Palladian window on the front gable, a deep frieze board, and simple corner pilasters.

The roof has been altered by extending the eaves in order to install built-in gutters, resulting in a flared hip profile.

The original front porch has been removed and replaced with an enclosed porch with low hip roof and square posts. The porch and the foundation were stuccoed.

The alterations have not changed the basic structural integrity of the house, which remains in excellent condition.

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1905

Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The John A. Johnson house is significant for its historic associations with John Johnson, Minnesota's fifteenth governor. Three times elected governor on the Democratic ticket, Johnson was the first native born Minnesotan to be elected to the office. He built this house in 1905 at the beginning of his first term in office.

Johnson was popular both personally and as a politician. He was admired for overcoming the hardships of his early life to become a national figure. Born on July 28, 1861 in a log cabin outside of St. Peter, Johnson was forced to leave school at age 12 to help support his mother and family. He became a pharmacist in the local drugstore until 1886 when at age twenty-five he was asked to be editor of the democratic St. Peter Herald. This launched his public career as he became a well known orator and popular public figure.

In 1894 he was defeated in his first campaign for State Senator, only to be elected in 1898, defeating C. J. Carlesen, a professor at Gustavus Adolphus College. He served in the Senate until 1901.

Johnson defeated R. C. Dunn in the 1904 gubernatorial race by a vote of 147,982 to 140,130. His first term as governor was marked by his good management and his broad background allowed him to work with the republican legislature successfully. Historian James Baker, in Minnesota Historical Society Collections, volume 13, has pointed out that Johnson's ability to work above politics kept him free from the "boss rule" of the railroad, timber and mining influences which marked previous governorships. During Johnson's first term, the legislature passed several reform bills which he supported including a bill to take the Department of Education out of politics.

Johnson won re-election in 1906, an overwhelming victory defeating republican A.L. Cole 168,480 to 96,162. During this period, Johnson was able to pass major reform bills, especially for railroads, insurance and taxation. Some of the railroad legislation included a maximum freight rate schedule, two-cent passenger fare, and the abolition of railway passes and franks. Insurance legislation provided a uniform code of state insurance laws and a uniform life insurance law. Progressive tax laws included creating a nonpolitical tax commission, inheritance tax laws and a registry tax on real estate mortgages.

A highlight of Johnson's administrative abilities was his handling of the miner's strike in the summer of 1907. Johnson personally acted as a negotiator between the miners and the mine owners resolving the conflict without the aid of the state militia.

The success of Johnson's second term brought him into national prominence and he was considered for the presidential nomination in 1908. When William Jennings Bryan won the nomination, Johnson ran for his third term as governor of Minnesota with many friends and political leaders believing he would be a presidential candidate, if not president, in 1912. Unfortunately, an intestinal disorder which had plagued him for many years claimed his life on September 21, 1909.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Day, Frank A and Theodore M. Knappen. Life of John Albert Johnson. Chicago: Forbes and Company 1910.
MHS Collections Vol. 13, Lives of the Governors of Minnesota, by James H. Baker, A.M., St. Paul: MHS 1908.
Folwell, William Watts. A History of Minnesota in Four Volumes, Vol. 3. St. Paul: MHS 1969.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name St. Peter Quad., Minnesota

Quadrangle scale 7.5

UTM References

A

1	5	4	2	3	9	2	0	4	9	0	8	7	2	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 2 and N. 33 1/3 feet of Lot 3 Block 21
Dodd's Add. St. Peter

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sandra A. Smith, Intern

organization State Historical Preservation Office

date January 20, 1983

street & number Fort Snelling History Center

telephone (612) 726-1171

city or town St. Paul

state Minnesota

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

Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date

4/7/83

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date

5/19/83

for [Signature]
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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The Johnson House, built in 1905 as he began his career as governor, remains the most visible record of Johnson's early roots and his life long association with the community of St. Peter. The house stands as a symbol for the high esteem which the community holds for him, for his political and personal accomplishments.