

**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 Bouche, J.B., House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number	9697 School Road	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Town of Brussels	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Door	code 029
			zip code 54204

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 of certifying official/Title Michael J. Thomas SHPO Date 3/23/04

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

Bouche, J.B., House

Door County

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:)

Edward H. Beall 5/6/04

[Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	2	1 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district		sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> site		objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	2	1 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
is previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC/ single dwelling	DOMESTIC/ multiple dwelling
AGRICULTURE/ agricultural outbuilding	AGRICULTURE/ agricultural outbuilding

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
Late 19 th and Early 20 th Century American Movements	Foundation STONE
	walls BRICK
	roof ASPHALT
	other WOOD

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

Bouche, J.B., House
Name of Property

Door County
County and State

Wisconsin

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

ETHNIC HERITAGE/ EUROPEAN

Period of Significance

C. 1880-C. 1890

Significant Dates

C. 1880

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Bouche, J. B., House
Name of Property

Door County
County and State

Wisconsin

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	Wilfred and Emily Vandertie	date	1/2004
organization		telephone	920 825-1350
street&number	9635 School Road	zip code	54204
city or town	Brussels	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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Bouche, J.B., House

Section 7 Page 1

Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

Description

The J.B. Bouche House, located at 9697 School Road, Section 17, Township 26 North, Range 24 East, in the community of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin, is on the southeast corner lot at School Road and County Trunk Highway (CTH) C, with the main facade parallel to School Road. The property contains three buildings, including a contributing house (c. 1880) and barn, and a non-contributing, three-bay garage. The property is landscaped with a few large trees, small flowers, shrubs and bushes, and patches of overgrown vegetation.

J.B. Bouche House *c. 1880* *Contributing*

The J.B. Bouche House consists of a brick, two-story, front-gable main section and a one-and-one-half-story, rear brick addition. It is a strong representative of the Belgian architecture of northeastern Wisconsin. The house rests on a stone foundation and displays a gabled roof covered in asphalt shingles. An interior brick chimney sits at the ridge nearest the main (north) facade. The unusual placement of the chimney raises unanswered questions about the original plan. The former single family home has been remodeled into three apartments, obscuring original room configurations.

On the first level, the main facade features a concrete porch and central entrance, with a single-pane wood door and storm door, which is also of wood. The lower half of the door is accented with several elements of decorative wood molding. Above the door is a two-pane, slightly arched transom with a partial brick lintel above. Side lights with a single wood panel below flank either side of the entrance. A prominent feature of the main facade is the second-story porch and door. The porch, which likely replaced an earlier one, is constructed of wood with a cast-iron railing. It is supported by four square wooden posts that rest on the concrete porch below. Access stairs are located at the northeast corner of the porch, and descend along the east facade of the house. The second-story door is centered and contains four panes over two panels, but is narrower than the first-story door. Above the door is an arched overhang with a gabled roof covered in asphalt shingles. Two wooden brackets support the overhang. Four, two-over-two, double-hung windows pierce the main facade and are symmetrically placed on either side of the doors on each level. The second-story windows are shorter than those on the first-story, but all four windows display a triple row of raised brick arched lintels. Centered underneath the main facade gable is a half-moon window, also with a raised brick arched lintel.

The west facade of the original house contains four symmetrical bays on each level. The first level is pierced by one, two-over-two, double-hung window; a four-panel wooden door, which is not in use; and two more two-over-two, double-hung windows. All four apertures display raised brick, arched lintels. To the left of the four-panel wood door is a small basement window that contains a single light. The second level is pierced by four, two-over-two, double-hung windows. These windows terminate at the roofline and there are no arched lintels. Again, the second-level windows are shorter than those on the first level.

The openings of the east facade are randomly placed. On the southernmost end of the facade on the second level, is an arched, two-over-two, double-hung window that terminates at the roofline. It is also shorter than the first level arched windows. In the middle of the second level is a small pair of one-over-one casement windows

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Bouche, J.B., House

Section 7 Page 2

Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

situated directly underneath the roofline. On the southernmost end of the first level is a two-over-two, double-hung window with an arched lintel that is not raised. Directly to the right is a three-over-one, vertical-muntin, double-hung window with a flat top and no lintel. To the right of this is an original four-panel door, also with a non-raised arched lintel. The last opening on the first level of the east facade is another two-over-two, double-hung window with a non-raised arched brick lintel. It sits directly below the pair of casement windows on the second level. The northern half of the east facade is occupied by the stairs leading to the second-story porch. On the southern end of the east facade, directly in front of the double-hung window is a vestibule of wood clapboard, with a four-panel door, and a round-headed roof. This vestibule covers the original opening of the cellar doors and leads to the basement.

The one-and-one-half-story rear addition, c.1890, is sympathetic to the original house in form, details, and materials. The addition, which nearly doubles the house in length, rests on a stone foundation. It displays a gabled roof covered with asphalt shingles, and an interior brick chimney on the ridge. Near the center of each side of the gabled roof are shed dormers, as well as hipped-roof porches that extend below the eaves of the roof. The dormers are clad in horizontal wood siding, and each contains a one-over-one, double-hung window. Both the dormers and the porch roofs are covered in asphalt shingles. The west facade porch is built with wood flooring supported by wood blocks and a roof supported by three lathe-turned, wood posts. A similar porch on the east facade also has wood flooring supported by wood blocks, but it is wider, and covered by a larger roof supported by two square wood posts. Under the west facade porch are two arched, two-over-two, double-hung windows and a four-panel door with wood storm door on the north end. The east facade of the addition is pierced from south to north by one arched, two-over-two, double-hung window, and one wood door with two panes and an aluminum storm door. The northern portion of this facade extends to the east to create an interior space, which contains an arched, single-pane fixed window. The rear (south facade) of the addition has four arched, double-hung windows with raised brick arched lintels. The second story contains a pair of two-over-two windows, and the windows on the first story are one-over-one. They are placed symmetrically, with the second-level windows being shorter than those on the first level. A small, three-pane basement window is located to the east of center on the south facade.

Gabled Barn *c. 1890*

Contributing

The c. 1890 timber-frame barn is located to the south of the house, oriented with the gabled end facing CTH C to the west. The gabled roof is covered with asphalt shingles, while the walls are sided with vertical wood boards. Uncommon for barns in the region is the decorative half-moon window in the west facade of the gabled end. A large, aluminum sliding bay door and an uncovered doorway are the only openings on the north facade of the barn. There are no openings on the south facade of the barn. A shed-roof addition, created with an extended original roof line, has been added to the east of the north facade. The addition is sided with wood clapboard and contains two fixed windows, of which one is two-pane and the other is three-over-three. The east facade also contains an aluminum bay door on the main section of the barn, while the shed addition to the north has a small opening, accessible by ladder, and a wood door on the northernmost end. The barn is in good condition and is a contributing resource of the property.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 3

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

Garage

c. 1940

Non-Contributing

The three-bay, c. 1940 garage remains in good condition. Located southeast of the house, the main facade of the garage faces west. It is constructed of concrete block, with an asphalt-shingled, side-jerkinhead roof. The west facade contains three vinyl bay doors, with a wood door as an entrance to the south facade. The north facade is pierced by one fixed, two-over-two window. The garage is a non-contributing resource due to its construction after the period of initial settlement and its use of modern construction materials.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 1

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

Statement of Significance

The J.B. Bouche House is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under *Criterion C: Architecture* as a fine local example of a late nineteenth century Belgian farmhouse, with a contributing three-bay barn. Built c.1880, the house has few alterations and displays many of the traditional elements of Belgian construction, including a front-gable form, brick construction on a stone foundation, a half-moon window under the front gable, and arched-lintels with decorative brickwork. The house has been elongated with a sympathetic rear addition. The c.1890 addition features the same brickwork as the original front section. A c.1890 three-bay, wood-frame barn also contributes to the significance of the property demonstrating the types of outbuildings historically associated with rural houses of this period. The Bouche Farmstead is also eligible under *Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage*, for its strong association with Belgian culture and the perpetuation of these immigrants' native building practices and culture. The period of significance for the Bouche Farmstead is c.1880 through c.1890, encompassing the construction dates of the house and the contributing barn.

Historic Context

*History of Belgian Settlement*¹

The difficult economic situation in Belgium that followed the country's independence in 1830, combined with promotional activities by immigrant recruiting agents, resulted in an exodus of rural Walloon peasants seeking a better life in America. Wisconsin was advocated as a place to settle by recruiters who worked for Antwerp shipowners and were equipped with promotional guidebooks. The Belgians who emigrated to Wisconsin's Door Peninsula between 1853 and 1857 came primarily from the south-central provinces of Brabant, Hanaut, and Namur. Belgians from these southern provinces were Catholics and spoke Walloon, a French Patois dialect. In

¹ Belgian settlement in northeast Wisconsin has been well studied, most recently by Professors William Laatsch of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, and William H. Tishler of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. This section was compiled from a number of secondary sources, including William G. Laatsch and Charles F. Calkins, "Belgians in Wisconsin," in *To Build in a New Land: Ethnic Landscapes in North America*, ed. by Allen G. Noble (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); William H. Tishler, "Namur Belgian-American District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 6 November 1989; Allen G. Noble, *Wood, Brick, and Stone: The North American Settlement Landscape*, Vol. 2, *Barns and Farm Structures* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984); Barbara Wyatt, ed., *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*, 3 Vols. (Madison, WI.: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986); Deborah B. Martin, *History of Brown County, Wisconsin: Past and Present*, Vol. 1 (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1913); Xavier Martin, *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, Vol. 13, *The Belgians of Northeast Wisconsin*, ed. by Reuben Gold Thwaites (Madison, WI.: Democrat Printing Co., 1895); William H. Tishler and Erik Brynildson, "The Architecture and Landscape Characteristics of Rural Belgian Settlement in Northeastern Wisconsin" (Madison, WI., July 1986); and Virginia C. Dell, "Bay Settlement: A Hamlet in Northeastern Wisconsin," 1974, Belgian-American Research Collection, Special Collections, Cofrin Library, the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Green Bay, WI.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 2

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

1857, however, emigration slowed due to restrictions by the Belgian government and discouraging letters from previous emigrants.

Most of the Belgian settlements in the Door Peninsula were concentrated in the towns of Gardner, Union, and Brussels in Door County; the communities of Red River and Lincoln in northern Kewaunee County; and the towns of Humboldt, Scott, and Green Bay in Brown County. The majority of the settlers were farmers, but a few were skilled laborers or factory workers who left these professions in their native country to farm their own land in America. The number of Belgians in the peninsula by 1860 was estimated to be 4,647.

Dense forests and scattered swamps physically isolated the Belgian enclave from other nearby settlements. Language and cultural misunderstandings also kept the Belgians apart from their German, Irish, and Scandinavian neighbors who lived in communities 10 to 15 miles away. This isolation, coupled with economic troubles, denied these Belgian settlers benefits that were enjoyed by other tax-supported populations in the area, including expanded county roads and schools. However, in 1858, the Belgians, as a group, finally decided to exercise their right to vote and run for office. The result was a Belgian coup of local government through which they assumed the upper hand in the affairs of Bay Settlement – the nearest large community. The community of Belgians was thereafter recognized as an important faction in the county. Newly elected Belgians were instrumental in establishing school districts, obtaining teachers, and improving roads in their settlement. Upon application to the federal government, post offices were soon established at Bay Settlement and Robinsonville, also located in Brown County. By the 1860s large tracts of previously forested land were under cultivation and larger, more commodious houses and barns were being built.

The Walloon Belgian immigrants were largely of the Catholic faith and carried cultural affiliations of the Roman-Catholic Church with them from their homeland. Originally, 10 Belgian-American families had claims to settle land located to the south of Green Bay near Kaukauna. However, Father Edouard Daems, a Belgian immigrant who came to Wisconsin in 1852 and became the first priest of Bay Settlement, convinced the families to settle near his parish north of Green Bay in Door County.² Father Daems' presence would attract many other Belgian immigrants to this part of northeast Wisconsin.

² Hjalmar R. Holand, *History of Door County, Wisconsin: The County Beautiful* (Chicago, Ill.: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1917), 1:412.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 3

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

Congregations and shrines were quickly established following settlement. Constructed in 1858, the Chapel of the Holy Virgin in Robinsonville (Brown County) was the first church to be built in the area. In 1860 St. Mary's was built in the township of Union.³ By 1880 Bay Settlement was home to three institutions founded by Father Daems – the Holy Cross Church, the Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Cross convent, and the Holy Cross School.⁴

The Belgian Americans often constructed roadside chapels to participate in daily worship without traveling to the local church. These numerous chapels attest to the deep religious conviction of the Belgian Americans. Usually located on public roads, chapels were easily found, placed to facilitate use in religious processions, and by travelers. Traditionally, the function of wayside chapels is tied to the road and typically they were moved to keep their use viable. Owners of chapels encouraged their use by visitors. Chapels were often built for such reasons as to remember a loved one, or to honor a particular patron saint.⁵

Many Germans, Irish, Scandinavians, and Hollanders were also Roman Catholic and contributed to the development of the strong religious community in the Door Peninsula. Members of the Norbertine Order, for example, came from Holland in 1893 and became influential among Catholics in the area. The Norbertines advocated adherence to church rules by settlers who had fallen astray of their religion. They also established facilities for higher learning, including St. Norbert's College in De Pere.⁶ By 1898 Roman Catholics, the majority of whom were immigrants, numbered 125,000 in the Green Bay Diocese, which had jurisdiction over northeastern Wisconsin, and 121 churches had been established.⁷

History of Door County

Menominee, Winnebago, and Fox Indian tribes inhabited the shores of Green Bay when Jean Nicolet landed there in 1634. In the 1650s and 1660s, French traders began fur trading and missionary activities, and soon established Wisconsin's first community of European settlers. In 1835 Increase Chafin, a trapper and trader, settled at Little Sturgeon in Door County. Besides trapping and trading, other early settlers to the area fished

³ Tishler and Brynildson, 60.

⁴ Wyatt, ed., "Religion," 3:3.4-3.7; Wyatt, ed., "Settlement," 1:4.5; and Sylvia Hall Holubetz, ed., *Farewell to the Homeland: European Immigration to N.E. Wisconsin 1840 to 1900* (Green Bay, Wisc.: Brown County Historical Society, 1984), 21.

⁵ Holubetz, ed., 25.

⁶ For information about the Norbertines and their influence, see *The Haven of My Salvation . . . Dedication of St. Norbert Abbey* (West De Pere, WI., 1959); and *With the Grace of God . . . 100th Anniversary* (Green Bay, WI.: Alt Publishing Co., 1993).

⁷ Wyatt, ed., "Religion," 3:3.4-3.7; and Wyatt, ed., "Settlement," 1:4.5.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 4

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

the waters of Green Bay. The timber industry, namely the harvest of pine and cedar, began around 1850 with mills being built in Sturgeon Bay and other communities. The population of Door County reached 2,948 in 1860, rising to 4,919 by 1870.⁸

Beginning in the 1850s, a large number of Belgian immigrants settled in southern Door County, forming ethnic enclaves in Brussels and Union Townships. The town of Brussels was first settled in 1856 by Belgian Ferdinand Debraux and his family and three other Belgian immigrant men. Within two years, 55 families had settled in Brussels, and by 1861 the first business – a tavern – was opened by Francois Pierre. The first Brussels post office was established in 1862. In 1870, 216 of the 406 residents were Belgian natives.⁹ A new township was established from a portion of Brussels Township by the County Board in November of 1865. A town meeting was held shortly thereafter at the home of X. Braus, where the name “Union” was decided upon because its townspeople were thought to be unified in areas of public interest.¹⁰

Early settlement of townships typically involved the development of villages at major road intersections or near mills and general stores, as these areas were better able to support commercial activities. Rosiere and Brussels in Brussels Township, and Namur in Union Township, are communities that developed in the early history of southern Door County. Typically, these communities included a commercial center with a general store, mill, and other services, and they were surrounded by houses.

In the 1890s the village of Rosiere had the largest population in Brussels Township with 300 residents and supported three general stores. The Charles Rubens General Store in Rosiere was also a hotel and cheese factory, and it commanded a prominent location in the village on the main thoroughfare. Rosiere also sustained three blacksmiths, a carpenter, a mason, a shoemaker, and a notary public. At the same time, the village of Namur in Union Township supported three general stores, including Frank Everard’s General Store. With a population of 100, Namur also boasted two physicians and a blacksmith. In contrast, by 1895 the smaller village of Brussels had only one business – the Pierre Virlee & Company General Store.¹¹

By 1903 business in Rosiere and Namur had decreased. The population in Rosiere had dropped from 300 to 50. Rosiere possessed the Charles Rubens General Store, three blacksmiths, a carpenter, a shoemaker, a creamery, a

⁸ Holand, 1:83.

⁹ Tishler and Brynildson, 25.

¹⁰ Chas I. Martin, *History of Door County, Wisconsin* (Sturgeon Bay, Wis.: Expositor Job Print, 1881), 90.

¹¹ *Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory* (Chicago, Ill.: R.L. Polk & Co., 1895-96). The Pierre Virlee & Company General Store is still extant and was determined to be eligible for the National Register in a report by Mead & Hunt, Inc., “State Trunk Highway 57 Reconstruction, Door County, Reconnaissance Survey of Potentially Significant Historic Properties,” April 1995, Madison, Wisc.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 5

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

cooper, a mason, a hay presser, and a sculptor; while just one general store continued to operate in Namur. At the same time, Brussels' population grew to 160 as the village gained many new businesses, including two saloons, two masons, a hotel, a tailor, a shoemaker, a carpenter, and a blacksmith. According to the *Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory*, the Pierre Virlee & Company General Store added a flourmill on-site.¹²

Brussels continued to grow through 1912 to a population of 200, while the population of Rosiere and Namur remained static. Namur still supported one general store as did Rosiere, with only a few other surrounding businesses. Brussels, on the other hand, added three new stores, including the Gabe Pierre General Store and Agricultural Implements.¹³

By 1918 Brussels had doubled in population to 400, and besides having six general stores, added businesses such as the Rex Theater, a restaurant, newspaper, pharmacist, cement contractor, and two horse breeders. The Pierre Virlee & Company had disbanded, but Gabe Pierre and Jules Pierre, who may have been proprietors of this enterprise, operated separate businesses in Brussels.

Architecture

Building Materials

Belgian immigrants in the Door Peninsula built their first domestic structures, including homes and agricultural outbuildings, of log. Wood was the most logical construction material to these early settlers, in that it was both abundant and inexpensive. The most predominant wood source in the area was white cedar. In addition to being available, white cedar was soft, grew relatively straight, and was easy to work with.¹⁴ Construction techniques included the use of rough hewn cedar and pine logs, with square, half, or dovetail notching, and clay chinking.¹⁵ Although many immigrants to Wisconsin brought traditional timber construction with them from their homelands, log construction was not common in Belgium.¹⁶ As a result, initial log structures built by Belgian immigrants often lacked the refinement and craftsmanship found with those of other ethnic groups in Wisconsin, such as the Finns, Swedes, and Norwegians.¹⁷

¹² *Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory* (Chicago, Ill.: R.L. Polk & Co., 1903-04).

¹³ *Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory* (Chicago, Ill.: R.L. Polk & Co., 1911-12).

¹⁴ Tishler and Brynildson, 68.

¹⁵ Noble, 2:139-141.

¹⁶ Wyatt, ed., "Architecture," 2:4.2.

¹⁷ Tishler and Brynildson, 68.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 6

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

Once the Belgian settlers became established on the land, initial log dwellings were often converted to a farm structure, and a second house was constructed. This house usually exhibited a higher degree of craftsmanship than that of the first house. These second dwellings were sometimes covered with a wood or brick veneer and enlarged with frame additions over time.¹⁸

Other early wooden buildings and structures not entirely built of logs utilized timber- and balloon-frame construction. Timber-frame construction, which involves a system of heavy posts and timbers held in place by wooden pegs, was brought to Wisconsin by European settlers and was used well into the nineteenth century. Balloon-frame construction originated in Chicago in the 1830s. It substituted lighter boards and nails for the massive timbers and pegs used in timber framing. Balloon framing became very popular in Wisconsin in the late nineteenth century because it was inexpensive and expedient. However, as with all wood construction, buildings with balloon frames were vulnerable to catching fire.¹⁹

On October 8, 1871, the great Peshtigo fire took a number of lives and destroyed many of the buildings and structures made of log and wood in the Door Peninsula. In Brussels, for example, approximately 130 people were killed. The city of Green Bay was largely untouched by the fire and served as a relief center for other communities.²⁰ Since historic and contemporary accounts of the Peshtigo fire are unclear as to the extent of the damage in the area, it is unknown if all buildings were destroyed. Yet, it is likely that some log and wood buildings did survive the fire and date before 1871.²¹

Shortly after the Peshtigo fire, Belgians in the Door Peninsula began to expand their farms onto former timberland cleared by the fire and to rebuild their farmsteads with fireproof materials such as stone, brick, and metal.²² Brick and stone were common building materials in Belgium and were readily accepted by Belgian immigrants in the Door Peninsula. Typical Belgian houses are one-and-one-half to two-and-one-half-story structures with stone foundations, shingle or metal roofs, and brick exteriors. A bull's-eye window in the gable end facing the road appears on many examples of brick Belgian houses. The floor plan for these houses is often four-and-two, which consists of two large rooms on one end and four small rooms on the opposite end of the first floor. Similar four-and-two floor plans can also be found in some log, stone, and bricked-over log houses

¹⁸ Tishler and Brynildson, 69.

¹⁹ Wyatt, ed., "Architecture," 2:4.4 - 4.5.

²⁰ "Brown County History - 1700 to 1800," n.d., <<http://www.rootsweb.com/~wibrown/1700s.htm>> (7 September 2001).

²¹ Joe Knappen, "A Terrible Visitation," *Door County Advocate*, 23 June 1995.

²² Noble, 2:139-140.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 7

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

in the area of Belgian settlement.²³ Over time, these unique brick buildings have become icons of Belgian settlement in northeastern Wisconsin.

The entire region in which the Belgians settled lies within what is known as the "Red Clay District of Wisconsin." This proximity to soil types suitable for making bricks allowed for bricks to be easily and inexpensively manufactured.²⁴ Small, local brickyards were established in the 1880s and supplied the deep red bricks used for construction in the area. These locally produced red bricks were used for the main building, and light tan or cream-colored bricks from the Milwaukee area were sometimes used to accent window and door openings. The use of different colors in brick construction is a distinctive feature of this rural landscape.²⁵ According to the *Milwaukee Journal*, Joseph Vandermissen had the largest brick-making kiln in the area, employing several people, and George Peters operated a kiln south of Brussels.²⁶ A 1986 survey conducted by William H. Tishler and Erik Brynildson, *The Architectural and Landscape Characteristics of Rural Belgian Settlement in Northeastern Wisconsin*, documented 18 brickyards in the area, including those owned by Vandermissen and Peters.²⁷ Local brick production diminished by the early twentieth century when larger brick-making operations and newer technologies took over. By 1913 there were only seven brick manufacturers in the area around Green Bay.²⁸

Higher-quality bricks were used on the exterior of the building, while lesser-quality bricks were used for the interior walls, which were often plastered over. The mortar was made from local lime and sand from the shores of Lake Michigan.²⁹ Brick architecture was used not only for domestic structures, but also for educational, commercial, and some agricultural facilities. Brick agricultural outbuildings are rare in the region, though a few barns, sheds, granaries, and pigsties have been identified in the area. Tishler and Brynildson noted two examples of brick barns a smokehouse and pumphouse of brick; and a number of brick granaries in their survey

²³ Tishler and Brynildson, 68, 70-71, 75, 77.

²⁴ Tishler and Brynildson, 75.

²⁵ Noble, 2:140; Wyatt, ed., "Architecture," 2:4.11.

²⁶ "Red brick homes mark of Belgian Settlement," *Milwaukee Journal*, 9 May 1926
<<http://www.shsw.wisc.edu/wlhba/articleView.asp?pageno=1&id=12467>> (31 July 2002).

²⁷ Tishler and Brynildson, 41-49.

²⁸ Deborah B. Martin, 330.

²⁹ Lawrence LeRoy, interview by William H. Tishler and Erik Brynildson, in "The Architecture and Landscape Characteristics of Rural Belgian Settlement in Northeastern Wisconsin" (Madison, WI., July 1986), 76.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 8

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

of Belgian architecture.³⁰ Brick veneer, over-hewn cedar or pine logs can also be found in the Belgian architecture of the Door Peninsula. They also recorded that at least one barn in the area had a brick veneer; this example was reported in the *Door County Advocate* in 1884 but is apparently no longer extant.³¹ This construction technique is unusual, however, and likely represents a transition from log to all-brick construction.³²

In "The Architecture and Landscape Characteristics of Rural Belgian Settlement in Northeastern Wisconsin," Tishler and Brynildson documented 233 pioneer brick farmsteads in the area of Belgian settlement – constituting 62 percent of all houses inventoried, and 16 brick schools – constituting 70 percent of all schools inventoried.³³ In these buildings, Tishler and Brynildson found a transfer of architectural themes and building methods from the Old World. The greatest concentration of Belgian brick dwellings in northeastern Wisconsin is in the Namur Belgian-American National Historic Landmark District (NRHP, 1989) in Door County. The c.1880 Bouche House is an example of a brick dwelling displaying a transfer of Old World Belgian architectural themes. The contributing barn of the Bouche Farmstead is constructed of wood.

Front Gable Houses

According to *Cultural Resource Management (CRM) in Wisconsin*, front-gabled, or upright, houses were generally built in Wisconsin from c.1840 to 1925. CRM identifies the front-gabled houses built by Belgian immigrants in Door, Kewaunee, and Brown Counties, as a well-known variant of this form. Front-gabled houses are characterized by a rectangular plan, gabled roof, and the placement of the major facade in the gable end of the building.³⁴ Decorative brickwork and bull's-eye windows are characteristics of front-gabled houses built by Belgian immigrants.

The c. 1880 J.B. Bouche House is a two-story, front-gabled house with characteristic Belgian elements, including brick construction on a stone foundation, decorative brickwork, and a half-moon window in the front gable. The house is elongated when compared to other front-gabled Belgian houses in the region, due to a

³⁰ Laatsch and Calkins, 200; and Tishler and Brynildson, 87-89. According to Allen G. Noble, "The Belgians did not use brick for either barns or outbuildings," see Noble, 2:141. He was apparently not aware of the few examples that have been identified.

³¹ Laatsch and Calkins, 200; Noble, 2:140; and Tishler and Brynildson, 74. Tishler notes having located mention of such a barn in the newspaper.

³² Tishler and Brynildson, 73.

³³ Tishler and Brynildson, 35, 69.

³⁴ Wyatt, ed., "Architecture," 2:3-2.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 9

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

historic addition connected to the rear of the house. The addition was constructed c.1890 and features the same brickwork with arched-lintel detailing as the original section.³⁵

Many of the houses identified in Mead & Hunt's reconnaissance survey have been altered or modernized, leaving very few pristine examples.³⁶ Alterations range from simple window replacements and porch additions, to completely modified window openings and large modern sections being added. Alterations to the J.B. Bouche House are minor and include a two-story front porch and historic rear addition. Only a few modern windows exist on the house and the original window openings have not been altered. Overall, the Bouche House retains good integrity.

History of the Property³⁷

The 1899 atlas of Door County indicates J.B. Bouche as the owner of 79 acres in the NW ¼ of the NW ¼, where the present buildings are located, and the SW ¼ of the NW ¼ of Section 17, Township 26 North, Range 24 East, in the Town of Brussels, Door County. The J.B. Bouche Family consisted of J.B., his wife, their three children, and J.B.'s parents. Both J.B. and his parents were born in Belgium, while the wife of J.B., their one son, and two daughters were born in Wisconsin. Jules Defosse held ownership of the property in 1905, possibly due to financial hardship. The next year, the Bouche Family re-acquired the property, with Jos. Bouche gaining ownership. The 1914 atlas of Door County indicates J.L. Bouche, a real estate conveyancer in Brussels and presumably J.B.'s son, as the owner of the original Bouche parcels of land. According to the plat book of Door County, J.L. Bouche owned the same 79 acres through 1930. Wilfred and Emily Vandertie currently own the property.

³⁵ *Wisconsin State Census, 1895*, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Library Microforms Room, Madison, Wisc. (Salt Lake City: The Genealogical Society, 1979).

³⁶ The corridor studied by Mead & Hunt focused on properties near STH 57, from STH 54 on the southwestend to STH 42 on the northeast. The corridor spanned the STH 57 centerline by 1 mile to the north and 2.5 miles to the south, and included much of the Belgian-American settlement region of northeastern Wisconsin.

³⁷ Information regarding the property, assessment, and familial history was compiled from Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin, *Assessment and Tax Rolls, 1900-1949*, Door County Courthouse, Sturgeon Bay, Wisc., and Special Collections, Cofrin Library, The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Wisc.; *Illustrated Atlas of Door County, Wisconsin* (Oshkosh, Wisc.: Randall & Williams, 1899); *Atlas of Door County, Wisconsin* (Sturgeon Bay, Wisc.: Otto Nelson, 1914); *Plat Book of Door County, Wisconsin* (Rockford, Ill.: W.W. Hixson & Co., c. 1930); *Wisconsin State Census, 1895*, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Library Microforms Room, Madison, Wisc. (Salt Lake City: The Genealogical Society, 1979).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 10

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

Conclusion

The Bouche House reflects the continuation of a Belgian cultural preference for masonry construction. Many European immigrants who settled in Wisconsin came from areas with scarce timber resources and were culturally disposed to construct masonry buildings. Typically, the first generation settlers were strongly influenced to build masonry dwellings, whereas their children followed the prevailing upper Midwestern preference for frame construction due to the low cost and easy availability of lumber. The Belgians were atypical of this pattern of cultural adaptation. Their perpetuation of masonry traditions may be a result of the devastating consequences of the Pestigo Fire. Shortly after the fire, many surviving log buildings were clad in brick for fire resistance, and the continued local masonry building tradition may be the result of a circumstance where a terrifying natural disaster reinforced a cultural behavior that might otherwise have been lost as later generations became increasingly Americanized. As a result, the J.B. Bouche House is significant under *Criterion C: Architecture*, as a fine example of a late nineteenth-century Belgian house, with a contributing three-bay barn. The c.1880 house is in good condition and displays many of the traditional elements of Belgian construction. A c.1890, wood-frame barn is located on the property and remains in good condition. The J.B. Bouche Farmstead is also significant under *Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage*, for its strong association with Belgian cultural practices and the perpetuation of these immigrants' native building practices.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 1

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

Bibliography

“Brown County History – 1700 to 1800.” N.d. <<http://www.rootsweb.com/~wibrown/1800s.htm>> (7 September 2001).

Dell, Virginia C. “Bay Settlement: A Hamlet in Northeastern Wisconsin.” Belgian-American Research Collection, Special Collections, Cofrin Library, the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay, Green Bay, WI, 1974.

The Haven of My Salvation . . . Dedication of St. Norbert Abbey. West De Pere, WI, 1959.

Holand, Hjalmar R. *History of Door County, Wisconsin: The County Beautiful.* Vol. 1. Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1917.

Holubetz, Sylvia Hall, ed. *Farewell to the Homeland: European Immigration to N.E. Wisconsin 1840 to 1900.* Green Bay, WI: Brown County Historical Society, 1984.

Knappen, Joe. “A Terrible Visitation.” *Door County Advocate*, 23 June 1995.

Laatsch, William G. and Charles F. Calkins. “Belgians in Wisconsin.” In *To Build in a New Land: Ethnic Landscapes in North America.* Ed. Allen G. Noble. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.

Martin, Chas I. *History of Door County, Wisconsin.* Sturgeon Bay, WI: Expositor Job Print, 1881.

Martin, Deborah B. *History of Brown County, Wisconsin: Past and Present.* Vol. 1. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1913.

Martin, Xavier. *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.* Vol. 13, *The Belgians of Northeast Wisconsin.* Ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites. Madison, WI: Democrat Printing Co., 1895.

Mead & Hunt, Inc. “State Trunk Highway 57 Reconstruction, Door County, Reconnaissance Survey of Potentially-Significant Historic Properties.” Madison, WI, 1995.

Noble, Allen G. *Wood, Brick, and Stone: The North American Settlement Landscape.* Vol. 2, *Barns and Farm Structures.* Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984.

“Red brick homes mark of Belgian Settlement.” *Milwaukee Journal.* 9 May 1926.
<<http://www.shsw.wisc.edu/wlhb/articleView.asp?pageno=1&id=12467>> (31 July 2002).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 2

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

Tishler, William H. "Namur Belgian-American District." National Register of Historic Places Nomination. 6 November 1989.

Tishler, William H. and Erik Brynildson. "The Architecture and Landscape Characteristics of Rural Belgian Settlement in Northeastern Wisconsin," Madison, WI, July 1986.

Town of Brussels. Door County, Wisconsin. *Assessment and Tax Rolls, 1900-49*. Door County Courthouse, Sturgeon Bay, WI, and Special Collections, Cofrin Library, the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Green Bay, WI.

Wisconsin State Census, 1895. State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Library Microforms Room, Madison, Wisc. Salt Lake City: The Genealogical Society, 1979.

Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory. Chicago, Ill.: R.L. Polk & Co., 1895-96, 1903-04, 1911-12.

With the Grace of God . . . 100th Anniversary. Green Bay, WI: Alt Publishing Co., 1993.

Wyatt, Barbara, ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. 3 Vols. Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, June 1986.

Maps

Atlas of Door County, Wisconsin. Sturgeon Bay, WI: Otto Nelson, 1914.

Illustrated Atlas of Door County, Wisconsin. Oshkosh, WI: Randall & Williams, 1899.

Plat Book of Door County, Wisconsin. Rockford, Ill.: W.W. Hixson & Co., c. 1930.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 1

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is a village lot upon which this property sits and is a rectangle 116 feet by 190 feet. The north boundary of the property is concurrent with the curb line for School Road, and the property's west boundary is concurrent with the curb line for CTH C. The map is to scale.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the extant buildings that were historically associated with the J.B. Bouche House.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section photos Page 1

Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

The following information pertains to all photographs:

Bouche, J.B., Farmstead
Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin
Date: July and November 2002
Photographer: Matt Becker and Jeremy Happel, Mead & Hunt, Inc.
Negatives located at the Wisconsin Historical Society

Photograph 1 of 9
House and barn, north and west facades
View looking southeast

Photograph 2 of 9
House, north and west facades
View looking southeast

Photograph 3 of 9
House, south and west facades
View looking northeast

Photograph 4 of 9
House, north and east facades
View looking southwest

Photograph 5 of 9
House, south and east facades
View looking northwest

Photograph 6 of 9
House, detail of main entrance
View looking south

Photograph 7 of 9
House, detail of window and lintel
View looking east

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section photos Page 2

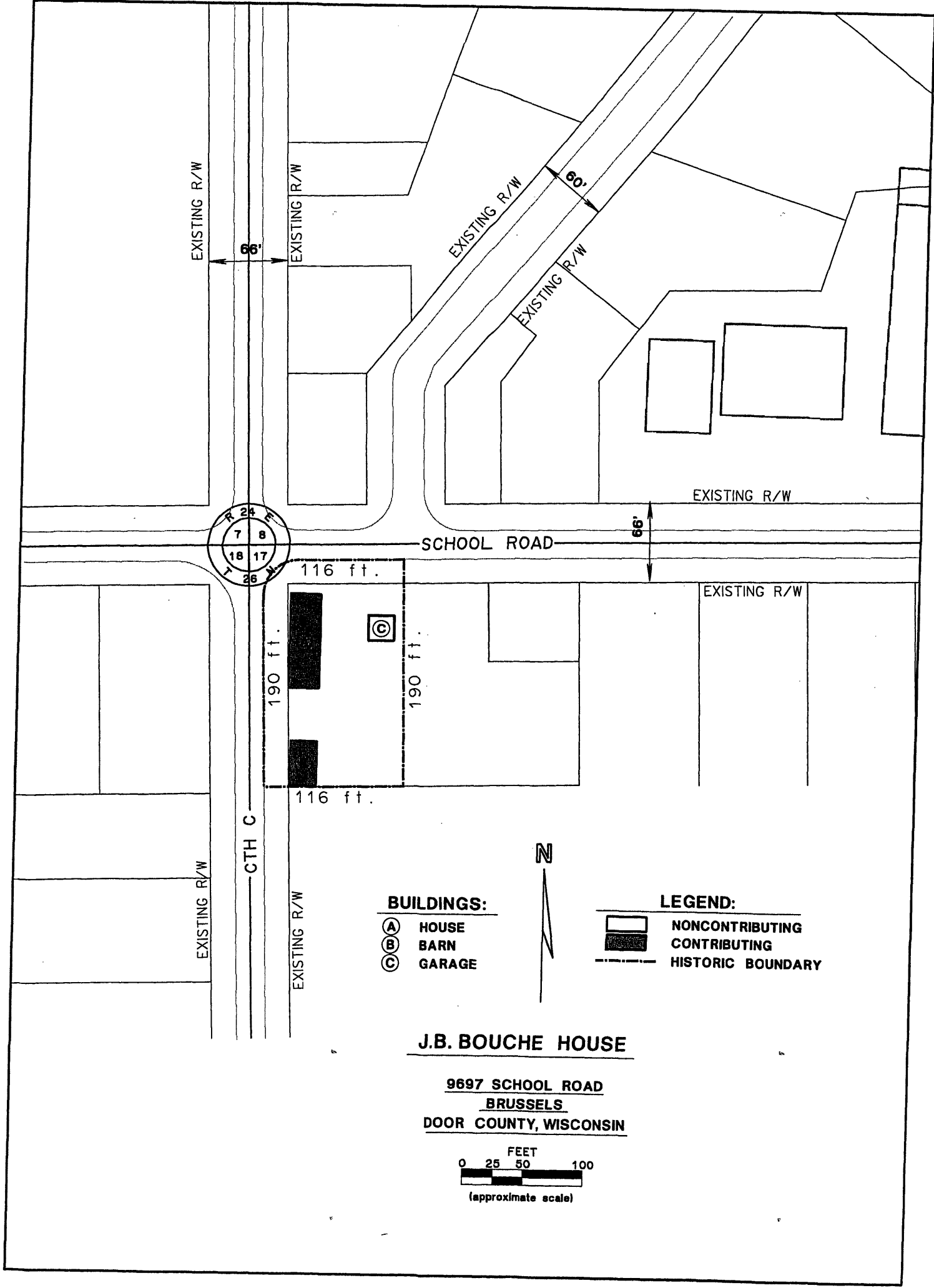
Bouche, J.B., House
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin

Photograph 8 of 9

Barn, north and east facades
View looking southwest

Photograph 9 of 9

Garage, south and west facades
View looking northeast



EXISTING R/W

66'

EXISTING R/W

EXISTING R/W

60'

EXISTING R/W

EXISTING R/W

SCHOOL ROAD

66'



116 ft.

190 ft.

190 ft.

116 ft.

EXISTING R/W

CTH C

EXISTING R/W

EXISTING R/W

BUILDINGS:

- (A) HOUSE
- (B) BARN
- (C) GARAGE

LEGEND:

- NONCONTRIBUTING
- CONTRIBUTING
- HISTORIC BOUNDARY



J.B. BOUCHE HOUSE

**9697 SCHOOL ROAD
BRUSSELS
DOOR COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

