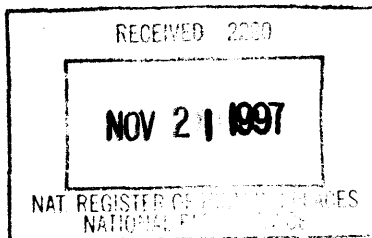


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



1082

### 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 Thompson House Hotel

other names/site number City Hotel

#### 2. Location

street & number 200 Ash Street N/A  not for publication

city or town Baraboo N/A  vicinity

state Wisconsin code WI county Sauk code 111 zip code 53913

#### 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 Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer-WI Date \_\_\_\_\_

State of Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 11/13/97  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

#### 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.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature]  
Signature of the Keeper Edson H. Beall

Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

Thompson House Hotel

Name of Property

Sauk, Wisconsin

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
1	0	objects
		Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Hotel

Commerce/Trade: Restaurant

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls brick

roof rubber

other wood

Narrative Description

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

Thompson House Hotel  
Name of Property

Sauk, Wisconsin  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for 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)

Commerce

**Period of Significance**

1899-1946

**Significant Dates**

1899 (i)

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Worth, Dan

Thompson, John (ii)

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Thompson House Hotel  
Name of Property

Sauk, Wisconsin  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	278359	4816150
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Daina Penkiunas  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date October 19, 1996  
street & number 214 Acewood Blvd. telephone 608-243-8144  
city or town Madison state WI zip code 53714

**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 Gary and Susan Kowalke  
street & number 816 Iroquois Circle telephone 608-356-6782  
city or town Baraboo state WI zip code 53913

**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.

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Sauk County, WisconsinSection number 7 Page 1

The Thompson House is a two story, brick building located at the corner of Ash and Water streets in the city of Baraboo in Sauk County, Wisconsin. The current building dates from 1899 and was built along Italianate lines; it replaced an earlier hotel/commercial building which had stood on the site from ca. 1885 (1). The area surrounding the building is a commercial and industrial zone not far from the former winter headquarters of the Ringling Brothers Circus (now the Circus World Museum) and the former Chicago and North Western Railroad depot. Sanborn-Perris maps from the turn of the century indicate that the vicinity has been a mixture of hotels, shops, services, and residences from the time of the Thompson House construction.

All exterior walls are of brick construction, laid in American bond. The foundation is of formed concrete blocks along Ash Street and stuccoed random ashlar elsewhere. A cornice along Ash Street and a parapeted cornice along Water Street hide the roof which slopes towards the east side of the building. The roof is currently coated with rubber.

The Thompson House has two primary facades, one facing Water Street and the other Ash Street. The lower floor is cut at a diagonal at the corner and accommodates a single door. The door has a fixed pane in its upper half with three indented panels above the glass and a rectangular panel and six indented panels in the lower half of the door. Each of the square panels contains a raised circle in its center. Above the door is a transom window. All of the doors on the primary elevations are of the same style. All of the doors were replaced in kind in 1996 as part of an adaptive reuse project.

The door and window heads are consistent on these two facades also. Above the transom the bricks are laid vertically. Around this head is a single band of bricks, headers to the sides and stretchers above. A single row of bricks laid at a diagonal form a jagged tooth pattern. The motif is completed by a second band of bricks (headers on the sides, stretchers above) forming an elevated band. The window head motif joins with a belt course running along the two major elevations at the level of the middle of the

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(1) "Opening Held Saturday Night - Refreshments Served to Friends," Baraboo Republic (9 August 1899), 1. Sanborn-Perris fire insurance map, 1885.

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transom windows. The second story windows have a similar treatment. The upper motif lacks the row of vertical brick work, rather the area within the raised band consists of rows of headers. The upper floor windows also lack transoms. Here, the belt course runs several inches below the top of the window. Topping the Water and Ash Street elevations is a simple cornice. An entablature of two horizontal boards contains slender brackets supporting a simple built out cornice. Due to deterioration this was also replaced in kind.

The west elevation, facing Ash Street, contains a double pair of doors at the approximate center of the ground floor. The doors open to the stair hall, originally leading to the upstairs rooms. To the left of the doors is a large, 36 light, fixed plate glass window. To the right of the doors are two one over one double hung windows with transoms above. The second story is lit by six one over one double hung windows. While the windows of the second story are evenly spaced, they do not line up with the openings of the first floor. A postcard view of Ash Street, dated and postmarked 25 November 1912, indicates that the location and size of openings on this elevation have not been altered.(2)

The Water Street elevation contains a single door near the center of its first floor. This door and the door at the corner originally opened to the ground floor saloon. Because the ground slopes downward from the corner, a covered porch leads to the door. The roof of the porch is supported by turned posts with a canopy of turned spindles held by carved brackets. A low balustrade runs between the posts.

To the left of the door of the Water Street elevation are two windows, one over one double hung with transoms above. To the right of the door and under the porch roof is large window, like that of the Ash Street elevation -- a fixed pane of 36 lights. To the right of the large window, and beyond the porch, are two one over one double hung windows with transoms above. Once again, the second story windows are evenly spaced but are not aligned with the

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(2) "Ash Street, Baraboo, Wisconsin," dated and postmarked 25 November 1912. An historic post card in the collection of the Sauk County Historical Society.

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windows of the first floor. Because of the drop in elevation, the southeast corner of the basement has a window and an entrance well with a door. All of the windows and doors of the Thompson House were replaced in kind in 1996.

The north and east elevations are utilitarian. They lack the decorative brickwork and cornice. The east elevation faces a narrow walkway between the hotel and its neighbor. The ground floor windows were all bricked in prior to this project. The upper floor retains one of five windows. The remainder were bricked in 1996. The rubble stone walls of the foundation are visible on this elevation. Two former openings are filled with CMUs\* (one prior to the reuse project, and one in 1996).

The north elevation faces the former service yard. The left third of the building was blocked by a two story wood addition until 1995. A small one story addition is indicated on the 1904 Sanborn map. This was replaced by 1913 with a larger two story addition. The 1913 map indicates that the first floor was used as a laundry and that the structure was of cinder block and had a cement floor. The same addition is visible on the 1927 map. (3) However, the removed ell was essentially of wood frame construction with a wood floor.

The north elevation now contains five windows with transoms above and two doors on the ground floor. The second opening from the right, currently an entrance to an apartment, had been a window. In the completed project, the upper story has seven windows, while an eighth opening has been bricked in. This opening was the second from the left and had been the passage from the main building to the ell.

The interior of the Thompson House has undergone substantial changes as part of its current adaptive reuse project; the entire building is being converted to small, affordable apartments. The first floor contained the former saloon along its Water Street elevation, the innkeeper's quarters on the north side, and a variety of storage rooms in the back addition. The second floor housed 20 guests and later tenants -- four in the addition and 16 in the main

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(3) Sanborn-Perris fire insurance maps, 1904, 1913, 1927.

\* Concrete Masonry Units (i.e. concrete block)

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Thompson House Hotel, Baraboo  
Sauk County, Wisconsin

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part of the building. The rooms were located along the outside walls with a core of lavatory and storage rooms in the center of the building.

In addition to retaining the original exterior openings, the current project retains the original stair hall configuration, as well as the original staircase and balustrade. On the upper floor, the original number of doors will be retained on the hall elevation to recall the building's past use as a hotel and rooming house. The interior has been reconfigured to house five apartment units upstairs and three downstairs. The basement has been finished to provide storage areas for tenants and to house the new mechanical systems. The lower door on the Water Street elevation may provide access to future office space.



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Thompson House Hotel, Baraboo  
Sauk County, Wisconsin

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(i) "Opening Held Saturday Night," Baraboo Republic,  
9 August 1899, p.1.

(ii) "An Old Landmark Gone," Baraboo Republic, 19 April 1899,  
p.3.

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The Thompson House Hotel is being nominated to the National Register under criterion A at the local level for its association with the history of the development of Baraboo and as an example of a turn-of-the-century commercial hotel. The Thompson House's location near both the railroad depot and the circus headquarters must have made it a popular lodging place.

Historical Background

The City of Baraboo is located in eastern Sauk County, Wisconsin. Baraboo's origins date to the late 1830s and early 1840s as a mill town on the Baraboo River. Development was rapid; by 1850 there were four dams on the river with additional milling works being established.

Commercial and political growth followed the mills and Baraboo grew into the manufacturing and retail center of the county and adjacent areas. In 1846, following a dispute with Prairie du Sac, Baraboo became the county seat. (This was only finally confirmed in 1853 following a contest with Reedsburg.) Baraboo was officially incorporated as a village in 1865. The arrival of the Chicago and Northwestern railroad in 1871 brought additional wealth. Baraboo became the distribution point for the Madison division of the line and was home to many railroad employees. In addition, the location of the depot created two commercial districts in town -- Courthouse Square on the hill and the Ash-Walnut-Water Street area near the river and the depot.

In May of 1884 the Ringling Brothers Circus opened in Baraboo. Until 1918, the Ringlings used the complex of buildings on Water Street (now the Circus World Museum) as the winter home of the circus. In 1891 the Ringling's cousins, the Gollmar Brothers, organized a second circus based in Baraboo. The presence of the county government, the railroad, and of the circuses contributed to Baraboo's rapidly growing population. In 1870 the population was 1528, doubling by 1880 to 3266. The following decades brought additional growth -- 4605 in 1890, 5751 in 1900, 6324 in 1910. The population fell to 5538 in 1920 and then remained fairly stable to 1930. Increases in population followed in 1940 and after.(4)

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(4) Michael Goc, Many a Fine Harvest (1990), 155.

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As the center of local commerce and because of its proximity to Devil's Lake (a tourist destination), Baraboo was home to a number of hotels at the turn of the century. The city directory of 1895-1896 lists eight hotels in Baraboo, as well as six boarding houses. The location of the hotels corresponded to the two commercial areas of Baraboo. One group of hotels, larger and more elegant, stood near the courthouse square. The second group, including the Thompson House, were closer to the industrial areas, the Ringling circus headquarters, and the railroad depot by the river. While the names and the proprietors of the hotels changed, the number of hotels stayed fairly constant through the beginning of the twentieth century. However, by 1915 the city directory shows that the number had fallen to three. After an increase to five in 1917-1918, the number again fell to three.

Prior to the widespread use of the automobile, hotels were used widely by salesmen who often travelled by train. Most included a "sample room" where wares would be displayed. In addition, most hotels contained dining rooms and/or saloons for entertainment and socializing. The Thompson House was built with a dining room (5). Later city directories indicate that the building also housed a saloon, Wilder's Tavern, O & G Grill (a restaurant and tavern), Hazel and Al's Restaurant and Bar, and the Cozy Corner Cafe.(6)

The Thompson House

The 1885 Sanborn-Perris map of Baraboo indicates a two story masonry building standing at the corner of Bridge and Water streets. (Bridge Street was later renamed Ash Street.) According to the map, the building housed a barber shop with a dwelling above. The 1895-1896 Baraboo city directory lists the building at this location as the City Hotel with John Thompson as the proprietor.

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(5) "Opening Held Saturday Night," Baraboo Republic, 9 August 1899, p.1.

(6) Baraboo city directory, 1903-1904, 1938, 1955, 1961, 1964.

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In 1899, John Thompson, who the newspaper reported as having been the proprietor for nearly seven years, demolished the old building. In its place he built a new and larger hotel. The Baraboo Republic noted that it was to have "twenty-three sleeping apartments, and the building will be constructed on the latest approved method for hotel purposes." Dan Worth was listed as the contractor for the mason and brick work, while Thompson, a former carpenter, was to superintend carpentry work.(7) When the new hotel opened in August it was called the Thompson House. Ice cream and cake, as well as music and dancing, were part of the opening ceremonies.(8)

The Thompson House's changes in use reflect changes in Baraboo. City directories indicate that John and Mary Thompson ran the hotel as the Thompson House at least through 1905-1906. At that time there were eight hotels in Baraboo. By 1915 the Thompsons had sold the hotel to A.F. Dixon who ran it as the City Hotel. Arthur C. Boyd ran the hotel in 1917-1918.(9) By the 1950s the hotel had become a rooming house, owned and operated by Ann Johnson. She ran it under various names -- the Baraboo Hotel and the Baraboo Hotel Rooming House (1955), the City Hotel (1957, listed in the city directory as a hotel), and the City Rooming House (through the mid-1970s).(10) With the construction of motels on the outskirts of town beginning in the 1960s, Baraboo's old hotels and rooming houses closed and converted to new uses. The former Thompson House became a gift shop and is now completing (1996) a remodeling as an apartment adaptive reuse project.

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(7) "An Old Landmark Gone," Baraboo Republic, 19 April 1899, p. 3.

(8) "Opening Held Saturday Night," Baraboo Republic, 9 August 1899, p.1.

(9) Baraboo city directory, 1915, 1917-1918.

(10) Baraboo city directory, 1955, 1957, 1961, 1962, 1964.

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Thompson House Hotel, Baraboo  
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The Thompson House / City Hotel is one of three constants in the Baraboo city directories. After the closing of most of Baraboo's other hotels in the 1910s, the Wellington, the Warren, and the City Hotel remained. The 1884 Warren Hotel, located at 102-104 Fourth Ave. was Baraboo's largest. Damaged by fire in 1964, it was razed in 1968. The 1890 Wellington Hotel stands at 144 Fourth Ave. Renamed the Windsor in 1948, it was remodelled to accommodate offices in the late 1970s. The Thompson House, despite its interior alterations, retains a high level of integrity on the exterior. While the windows, doors, and woodwork have been replaced in kind, it maintains the appearance of a commercial hotel built nearly a century ago.

The Thompson House Hotel is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of commerce for its important role in the city's commercial life. The Thompson House Hotel was a center of commerce itself, as well as an important commercial service as the resting place of salespeople, travelers, farmers, circus performers and others who contributed to development of the local commercial economy. It is therefore a primary resource in understanding the development of Baraboo as a regional trade center for much of Sauk County.

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Thompson House Hotel, Baraboo  
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9. Bibliography:

"Ash Street, Baraboo, Wisconsin." A post card dated and postmarked 25 November 1912. Collection of the Sauk County Historical Society.

Baraboo City Directories, 1895-1896, 1903-1904, 1905-1906, 1915, 1917-1918, 1938, 1955, 1957, 1961, 1962, 1964, 1971.

Belknap, T. Harry. Sauk County Directory, 1898-1899. 1898.

Cole, Henry Elsworth. A Standard History of Sauk County Wisconsin. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1918.

Goc, Michael J. Many A Fine Harvest: Sauk County 1840-1990. NP: New Past Press, 1990.

Miller, Marla. Baraboo Intensive Survey. Baraboo: Community Development Authority, 1989.

"An Old Landmark Gone." Baraboo Republic. 19 April 1899, 3.

"Opening Held Saturday Night - Refreshments Served to Friends." Baraboo Republic. 9 August 1899, 1.

Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Maps. 1885, 1892, 1898, 1904, 1913, 1927.

Wyatt, Barbara. Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin. Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986.

10. Verbal Boundary Description:

City of Baraboo, original plat, lot 4, block 1.

Boundary Justification:

This is a portion of the parcel originally occupied by the hotel and its ell and outbuildings; the holdings also included a portion of lot 4, block 47. However, the building as it now stands occupies only lot 4 of block 1. The portion of the property on block 47 is currently a parking lot and, therefore, is not included in the nomination.

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Thompson House Hotel, Baraboo  
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## Photographs

Photo #1 of 2

### THOMPSON HOUSE

Baraboo, Sauk County, WI

Photo by Daina Penkiunas, July 1996

Neg. at State Historical Society of Wisconsin

View looking northwest

Photo #2 of 2

### THOMPSON HOUSE

Baraboo, Sauk County, WI

Photo by Daina Penkiunas, July 1996

Neg. at State Historical Society of Wisconsin

View looking south