


City, Village or Town: 1 Eau Claire	County: Eau Claire	Surveyor: M. Taylor	Date: 10-29-81
-----------------------------------------------	------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------

Street Address: 216 Fifth Avenue	Legal Description: Lot 4 Blk 32 A. Randalls 1st Add.	Acreage: Less than one acre
--------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

Current Name & Use: Butterfly Exchange - commercial building	Current Owner: Kenneth and Cecil Johnson
------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------

Film Roll No. EC 22		Current Owner's Address: 510 Water Street, Eau Claire
Negative No. 10		Special Features Not Visible In Photographs: UTM: zone 15
Facade Orient. E		Easting: 617870
		Northing: 4961900

USGS Eau Claire West Quadrangle 1:24,000 Interior visited? Yes No

Original Name & Use: preferred	Source	Previous Owners	Dates	Uses	Source
2 John, Johnson, Saloon (F.C. MARK)	A				
Dates of Construction / Alteration 1882	Source B				
Architect and/or Builder: Unknown	Source				

3 Architectural Significance

Represents work of a master

Possesses high artistic values

Represents a type, period, or method of construction

Is a visual landmark in the area

Other: _____ None

Architectural Statement:

See continuation sheet.

4 Historical Significance

Assoc. with lives of significant persons

Assoc. with significant historical events

Assoc. with development of a locality

Other: _____

None

Historical Statement:

See continuation sheet.

5 Sources of Information (Reference to Above)

A 1884 Eau Claire city directory

B Tax assessment rolls - UW-Eau Claire Area Research Center

C Newspaper article available at Chippewa Valley Museum- no date, but retells story of 1882

D Water Street fire using April 26, 1882 edition of the Daily Leader.

E

F

6 Representation in Previous Surveys

HABS NAER WIHP NRHP landmark

other: _____

7 Condition

excellent good fair poor ruins

8 District: _____

pivotal contributing non-contributing

initials: _____ date: _____

9 Opinion of National Register Eligibility

eligible not eligible unknown

national state local initials: met

Fifth Avenue

210

Plat Map # 1

22/10

ARCHITECTURAL STATEMENT:

Description: The gable roofed and clapboard sided John Johnson Saloon is highlighted by a "boomtown" facade that is terminated by a simple bracketed cornice. On the second floor are three double hung sash windows outlined by plain moldings. The lower storefront, supported by wooden pillars, contains a recessed entrance flanked by large display windows. Transom windows are located above the display area and paneled kickplates, below. Next to the storefront (to the south) is an entrance to the second story. A transom window lights the entry. A covered outside stairway is also featured.

The interior of the building retains its pressed tin ceiling and original wood floor.

Significance: The John Johnson Saloon, constructed after a fire that devastated the Water Street commercial district, is an architecturally significant structure, providing an intact example of a vernacular commercial building with the characteristic "boomtown" facade. It was identified in the intensive survey of the city as one of two "boomtown" commercial structures in the community which retained their architectural integrity. The other building, the Ottawa House, 20/8, located just over a block away at 602 Water Street, is also being nominated.

The "boomtown" facade type of commercial architecture is most commonly associated with the frontier, but the easy-to-construct frame structures were features of nearly every community, particularly during their early years of development. The "false" or "boomtown" front affected a permanence and prestige that contrasted with the modest structure behind it. Early photos of Eau Claire's business districts contain numerous examples of the building type which has been reduced through both demolition and alteration. Although the Johnson Saloon and the Ottawa House were erected after Eau Claire's formative years, the two buildings are excellent representatives of the early commercial form.

HISTORICAL STATEMENT:

On April 24, 1882, a fire swept through the Water Street business area destroying seventy one buildings. According to the newspaper accounts, sparks from a passing steam boat ignited the blaze (C). The businesses on Water Street (and intersecting streets such as Fifth Avenue) served the city's west side which was the site of several lumber companies, including the Valley, Empire Lumber, and the Daniel Shaw Lumber Company. Although most of the buildings erected after the fire were brick, both the Johnson Saloon and the Ottawa House featured the frame construction that dominated the pre-fire years.