

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

JAN 14 1993

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Nichols, Frank Eugene, House
other names/site number Nichols/Hermann House

2. Location

street & number 421 North Second Street N/A not for publication
city, town Onalaska N/A vicinity
state Wisconsin code WI county LaCrosse code 063 zip code 54650

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

12/11/92
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer—WI
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:)

Entered in the National Register
Albena Byers 2/11/93

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwellingDomestic/secondary dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwellingVacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stonewalls asbestoswoodroof metalother wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Frank Eugene Nichols House and carriage house are located at 421 North Second Street (State Highway 53) in the city of Onalaska, Wisconsin. The Nichols house was built in 1888 by F.E. Nichols, local lumber baron, as his personal residence. [LaCrosse County Record, 30 August 1888] Located on a knoll overlooking Lake Onalaska to the west, the siting of this residence is quite spectacular. The yard has been planted in hardwood trees and shrubbery. Concrete and paving brick walks lead the visitor from the street sidewalk to the house's front porch. A gravel driveway guides motorists into the lot to the north of the house, just south of the carriage house.

Overall integrity of the site is good, with the house, carriage house and cast iron fence all intact. The house's integrity has been somewhat compromised with the addition of asbestos shingle cladding, the removal of all eave brackets and the change from shingle roof to metal roof. However, the basic plan has not changed since the house was built in 1888. The carriage house remains the same as when built, with the possible exception of the addition of two doors on the main, east facade. The structure appears to sag but seems to be structurally sound. The cast iron fence, though in need of paint, is intact and appears much as it did when erected.

F.E. Nichols House (See "A" on attached sketch map - Contributing)

The house is a two and one-half story frame Queen Anne style single family residence. The plan is basically a truncated hip with projecting gables creating variations of roof and facade lines on all

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sides. Though originally clad in horizontal 5 inch weatherboard, most of the exterior has been re-covered in asbestos siding. The foundation is rough cut stone and the roof is currently metal, though earlier photographs indicate the roof was covered in shingle at least as early as circa 1920. (F.E. Nichols House, photo, circa 1920)

The main, east facade features an elaborate Victorian period wrap-around porch. The steps and balustrade, which are not original and were probably built in the last ten years, lead up to the main entry double doors, which are set off center to the north and are capped their entire width by a two part textured glass transom. The wood porch balustrade features a sawn "key-hole" pattern. The ends of the balustrade are accented by large ball newel posts. The turned porch posts support a hipped roof. The porch frieze is designed in an open checkerboard pattern. Over the step entry, accenting the roof line on the porch, is a "sunburst" motif pediment. Sawn brackets add support to the slightly overhanging porch roof. To the south of the double doors is a large fixed-pane picture window.

Though much of the rest of the house is clad in asbestos siding, under the main porch the cladding has remained in the 5 inch horizontal weatherboard.

A secondary entry, also facing east, is found set back (west) from the main facade, with a smaller porch stoop, of similar balustrade and frieze, turned post and sawn bracket design. It shelters a single, five panel door and simple textured glass transom.

The second story of the east, main facade has two sets of double 1/1 sash windows, placed next to one another. The wood window surrounds on all facades of the house are simple, with virtually no decorative accents. The main front gable has a pent roof pediment and is decorated with staggered square cut, painted wood shingles. Centered in the shingled gable is a pair of small fixed-pane attic windows. In the gable peak is a turned kingpost gablebrace. The bargeboard is edged with decorative wood rosette medallions.

The south facade receives a great deal of decorative attention. The two-story gable projection extends out from the house, creating a large bay toward the east side of the wall. The first story "bay" has clipped corners, accented at the bottom of the second story level with decorative sawn

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brackets. These clipped corners create three facets, each of the two sides with a 1/1 sash window. The center window of the three, facing south, has a stained glass of a berry and leaf motif in the upper one third of the fixed pane window.

Immediately to the east of the large bay, toward the secondary porch, is a small stained glass window, of the berry and leaf motif, which is arched at the top.

To the west of the large bay is a smaller one story bay window, again three faceted. Each facet features a 1/1 sash window, and the bay is capped with a shingled shallow hipped roof. The stone foundation under this bay follows the bay plan.

The second story of the entire south facade has 1/1 sash windows centered over each of the main facade windows below. A small multilight bathroom window has been added recently toward the west end of the second story.

The south gable field features a pair of fixed pane side-by-side windows, square cut shingles, and rosette medallions decorating the gable edging. There is no gablebrace on this gable, though there likely was at one time.

The west facade, or rear of the house, also features a projecting gable. The first floor has a small, enclosed shed roofed porch with a small window, which extends out from the rear of the house. Simple wood steps lead up to it.

To the south of the small porch is a squared "bay" which has no window in the main body, but does have stained glass above the width of it. Below this bay are the exterior, ground level horizontal cellar doors.

To the north of the small porch on the first floor level, at the northwest corner, are two large new replacement casement windows.

The gable is decorated like those elsewhere on the house, with staggered square cut wood shingles, and a kingpost gablebrace in the gable peak, with rosette medallions along the gable trim.

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The north facade also has a projecting gable, near the front, east part of the house which projects out from the house the entire two and one half stories. There are no windows in this projection except a large stained glass window about half way up the wall, which corresponds with the main stairway inside. About halfway across the facade and roofline is a shallow truncated projection which extends to the rear, west end of the house. This truncated projection carries through into the roofline, with a truncated hip which corresponds to the facade truncation.

The west part of the north facade has three 1/1 sash windows on each of the first and the second stories. A fourth window was recently covered to accomodate some interior kitchen remodeling, on the first floor near the west facade. Also near the west end of the house is a new four part replacement casement window. Again, the gable features staggered square cut wood shingles, a small multilight window in the center, rosette medallions on the gable trim, but the gable brace is missing.

The interior of the Nichols House is very elaborate, indicating with its intricate woodwork that the first owner was a prominent lumber baron in Onalaska.

The double entry doors on the east facade open into a hall with an elaborate staircase, featuring large newel post and balustrade. The stairs ascend to the north, while a door brings the visitor into a parlor room to the south. Each of the three main rooms downstairs feature tongue-in-groove wainscoting, chair rails, hardwood floors, pocket doors, and intricate brass chandelier light fixtures which were originally designed to burn gas. From the parlor the visitor walks into the center of the house, with a large room on both the north and south walls. The dining room is in the west end of the house, connected to the kitchen by a small pantry with floor to ceiling wood cabinets. The kitchen in the northwest corner of the main floor has been recently extensively remodeled. A rear, enclosed stair ascends from the kitchen.

The second floor is a hallway plan with five bedrooms off the halls. A newly remodeled bathroom has been added to the second story.

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Fence (See "B" on attached sketch map - Contributing)

A cast iron fence, with gate, erected in 1888, spans the two lot property along the sidewalk edge. Nine rods of fence were ordered from the Smith and Shultz Company for a cost of \$200. (LaCrosse County Record, 7 June, 1888)

The fence is an open design, with vertical 3 foot spears alternated by 2 foot spears, held together horizontally by two iron strips.

The fence parallels the sidewalk along the east edge of the two lot property, except over the driveway.

Garage (See "C" on attached sketch map - Non-contributing)

Directly to the west of the F.E. Nichols House is a large, one story cinder block, front gable garage. Used for a trucking business, this structure was likely built circa 1980. It has a shingled roof, a small entry door on the southeast corner, two windows on the south facade, an exterior concrete chimney on the south facade, and two large garage doors on the north gable end.

Carriage House (See "D" on the attached sketch map - Contributing)

This carriage house, or "barn" was built in 1889 by F.E. Nichols to house his horses and carriages. (LaCrosse County Record, 5 Sept. 1889) This one-and-one-half story wood frame building has a cross gable plan, and does mirror some of the Queen Anne detailing seen on the house. The building has a full basement with cut stone foundation. The first story of the building is mostly clad with 5 inch horizontal weatherboard for half its height, the rest is square cut staggered shingles. The upper story is mostly clad with sawtooth wood shingles. The roof is covered in honeycomb shaped asphalt shingles.

The front, east facade features three sets of large batten, cross buck wood double doors, with simple surrounds. Centered above the three main doors are a pair of small loft doors, each with angled panels. Small, multipane windows are above the loft doors, capped by a small shelf roof overhang, which is decorated with sawn brackets.

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The south facade features three multipane windows at the upper part of the first story. Rather than simple window surrounds, a molded cornice caps each of these windows. Small, weatherboarded panels cap each window. Three multilight windows line the upper story in the gable, again capped by a small, bracketed overhang, like the east facade.

The west facade, at the rear of the building, is similar with three multilight windows with similar cornices. There is no gable on this facade.

The north facade is the same as the south facade, only with two multilight windows at the first story level. The basement level is exposed on this facade, and features two windows, which have been boarded over.

The interior of the carriage house has an open plan, wood floor, and an open stair along the south wall which leads to the loft, where presumably hay and straw was stored for the horses.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Industry

Period of Significance

1888 - 1920

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Nichols, Frank Eugene

Architect/Builder

DeLorea, Frank *

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Statement of Significance

The Frank Eugene Nichols House is locally significant in the context of Industry in Wisconsin under Criterion B for its association with a significant person, lumber baron Frank E. Nichols. The house and related carriage house are Queen Anne style buildings, built in the latter part of the 1880s, and located on Second Avenue North in Onalaska, Wisconsin. The house is located in a residential neighborhood overlooking the Black River and Lake Onalaska, and though built during the same era as its neighbors, is a grander scale. F. E. Nichols built the house in 1888, one year after becoming one-third partner in the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company, one of the most prominent industries in Onalaska's early history. From 1902 to 1910, F.E. Nichols was president of the company, which produced red cedar shingles in Washington state, and distributed them throughout the midwest from Onalaska and North LaCrosse warehouses. The F.E. Nichols house is historically significant from 1888, when it was built, to 1920, when he died.

* [LaCrosse County Reporter, 22 March 1888]

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Lumber and Logging Industry

The early history of Onalaska, Wisconsin is based on the lumber and logging industry of west central Wisconsin. Onalaska is located on the east bank of the Black River in LaCrosse County, approximately five miles north of the city of LaCrosse. Onalaska was first permanently settled in 1851, when the first house and tavern were established by Thomas G. Rowe. By 1856 there were three steam sawmills, and two more under construction. There were also a number of establishments, including a sash and blind factory, a brewery and bakery, two blacksmith's shops, a cooper shop, eight stores, and forty dwellings. Two hundred lots were also sold for the erection of buildings in the following spring. (Bryant:229)

As the city of LaCrosse, as early as 1852, was already heavily utilizing the Black River for the transportation of logs from the northern Wisconsin counties, Onalaska was a natural location for a logging town. (Wyatt: Industry - 5-4)

The Nichols family of Onalaska, Wisconsin was a very prominent and important addition to that community for nearly sixty-five years, as the founders of the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company, functioning as a major employer through their thriving lumber industry which existed in the Onalaska area from 1856 to 1902.

Charles Mason Nichols moved to Onalaska from Dane County, Wisconsin in 1852 and in 1856 he and a partner, Nathan J. Tompkins, bought land and built a sawmill on the east side of the Black River in Onalaska, one of the first lumber mills in the community. By 1859 the mill came to be known as the C.M. Nichols Lumber Co. and operated under that name until 1871, when C.M. Nichols sold the business to his son, Charles Haskell Nichols, and his son-in-law, Frank Pooler. At this time the mill came to be known as the C.H. Nichols Lumber Co. (Dolbier:24)

The lumber mill continued to expand throughout the next fifteen years, sending crews into the woods of northern Wisconsin each winter, and sending logs down to the Black River and to the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company each spring and summer. (Dolbier:11-14) The company bought several tracts of land in Jackson County to exploit the timber from 1874 through 1888. (See Jackson County Deeds in bibliography)

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Competition in Onalaska's logging and lumbering industry came almost exclusively from the Island Mill Lumber Company, located across the Black River on the northern end of French Island. Built by G.C. Hixon and Niran H. Withee in 1872, the company incorporated in 1882, but closed by 1893, nearly a decade before the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company ceased operations in Onalaska.(Onalaska Centennial, n.p.)

In 1887 the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company incorporated, adding Frank Eugene Nichols to the existing partners of C. H. Nichols and Frank Pooler. The capital stock of the corporation was valued at \$200,000.00, divided into shares of \$100.00 each. The Articles of Association describe the business as having the "purposes of the manufacture and sale of lumber and other articles from wood for the operating of mills and machinery for that purpose and such other purposes as may be deemed advantageous to such corporation; for the purchase and sale of real estate and personal property, logging booming, rafting and making all improvements necessary for carrying on such business..." (Articles of Association of the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company, 29 August, 1889)

Onalaska newspapers of this era are full of accounts of the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company business. Often, reports of amounts of lumber shipped were recorded. (LaCrosse County Record, 26 March 1886; 31 Dec. 1886; 21 Feb. 1889; 8 Aug. 1889) Other times, note was made of new machinery and improvements, such as a machine to manufacture window frames (LaCrosse County Record, 19 Aug. 1888), and a new lighting plant to enable night work (LaCrosse County Record, 14 March 1889).

The logging industry had peaked in about 1892. By the turn of the century, the logging industry in Wisconsin was falling into a rapid decline, due to the depletion of adequate white pine forests in the northern Wisconsin counties.(Wyatt: Industry, 5-14) In 1899 Black and Mississippi River mills in the Onalaska vicinity hired 1785 men. By 1905 there were only 39 men employed in the mills.(Dolbier:16)

With the decline of the state's rich forest reserves, many Wisconsin lumbermen began securing rights to timber lands in the South and on the Pacific coast. Many of these Wisconsin lumber entrepreneurs were cutting and milling timber in the Pacific Northwest while still maintaining operations in Wisconsin.(Wyatt: Industry, 5-15)

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Thus, the partners of the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company began to seek alternatives to logging in Wisconsin. F.E. Nichols, Earl Pooler (son of Frank Pooler) and D.L. Aikens took a tour of Washington and Oregon states to look over tracts of timber and investigate investments during the winter of 1901. (LaCrosse County Record, 31 Jan. 1901) By February of 1902 the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company, for the cost of \$18,500.00, became the owners of a fully operational and equipped sawmill in Ballard, Washington, with the intention of manufacturing red cedar shingles for shipment and sale in the Mississippi valley. (LaCrosse County Record, 27 Feb. 1902; King Co., Washington, Deed Book 16, pg. 540, 15 Feb. 1902))

By May, 1902 the industrial works of the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company in Onalaska, Wisconsin was sold to D.E. Bice. (LaCrosse County Record, 22 May 1902) Earl Pooler moved to Washington, while F.E. Nichols, as president of the company, remained in Onalaska, keeping an office in the Batavian Building in downtown LaCrosse, Wisconsin. (LaCrosse County Record, 4, 11 Sept. 1902) That same year, the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company built their first storage shed in North LaCrosse for red cedar shingles which were being shipped from their Ballard, Washington lumber yards. (LaCrosse County Record, 29 May 1902)

The C.H. Nichols Lumber Company continued to prosper with their two-state operation, and by 1904 announced their increased office space in the Batavian Building in LaCrosse. (LaCrosse County Record, 21 Jan. 1904) Their prosperity was further emphasized that same year when a potentially devastating fire entirely destroyed their mill in Ballard. Within two months the shingle mill was rebuilt, utilizing improved machinery, reputedly making it "the most complete and modern exclusive shingle mill in the state of Washington." (LaCrosse County Record, 24 March 1904) The company put an addition on their shingle shed in north LaCrosse, and reported the sale of 253,000,000 shingles in 1903. (LaCrosse County Record, 24 March 1904)

Despite these improvements, the LaCrosse office of the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company closed in December 1906. (LaCrosse County Record, 13 Dec. 1906) By 1910 the company sold its Ballard Manufacturing Company to John W. McDonnell for \$6,400. Thus, the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company ceased to exist. (C.H. Nichols Lumber Co., et.al. to John W. McDonnell, Seattle, WA, Bill of Sale, as found in Nichols: n.p.) Within days after the sale of the Ballard mill, Raymond E. Nichols, son of F.E. Nichols, incorporated the R.E. Nichols Lumber Company in Seattle on July 15, 1910, following in his family's business, but under a new corporation. (Nichols: n.p.)

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Frank Eugene Nichols

Frank Eugene Nichols of the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company, was born in Madison, Wisconsin, August 10, 1845, to Charles Mason and Jane Ann (Filkins) Nichols, both natives of New York state. C.M. Nichols moved his family to Onalaska, Wisconsin in 1852, where he started a store. By 1856 C.M. Nichols was partner in a sawmill business, which by 1859 became known as the C.M. Nichols Lumber Company. F.E. Nichols was working in his father's mill by age sixteen, and was made a partner by age twenty-one. When the lumber company incorporated in 1887, F.E. was made one-third partner of the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company with his brother Charles Haskell Nichols and his brother-in-law Frank Pooler. (Dolbier:24; C.H. Nichols Lumber Company Articles of Association, 29 Aug. 1887)

F.E. Nichols was married November 26, 1874, at West Salem to Dora Green (Grunn). They had six children during their marriage, namely: Charles Mason, 1875-1877; Dora Nell, 1877-1952; Raymond Eugene, 1880-1940; Frank Plato, 1883-1945; Reese Haskell, 1889-1950; and Bernard Vilas, 1896-1966. (Dolbier: 24)

F.E. Nichols lived in a house in Onalaska on Block 21, Lots 5 and 6, with a tax property value of \$1000 in 1880 (Town of Onalaska, WI Tax Roll, 1880) However, in 1888, one year after his partnership in the family company, F.E. bought a house lot overlooking the Black River, on the upper bank north of the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company. For \$1,500.00, F.E. Nichols purchased Lots 14 and 15, Block 1 in Brice's Addition on North Second Street in Onalaska from George W. Brice. (LaCrosse County Deeds, Vol. 72, Page 430, 9 Mar. 1888) Almost immediately Nichols obtained the services of a LaCrosse contractor named Frank DeLorea to build a residence on the newly purchased lots for the cost of \$7000.00. (LaCrosse County Record, 22 Mar. 1888) Accounts in the local paper continued to chronicle the progression of the house construction throughout the spring and summer of 1888, with it nearing completion by August 1888. (LaCrosse County Record, 29 Mar. 1888; 26 Apr. 1888; 7 June, 1888; 30 Aug. 1888) By mid-winter 1889 Mrs. Nichols was entertaining guests and holding Ladies Guild meetings in the new Nichols home. (LaCrosse County Record, 28 Feb. 1889; 9 May 1889; 6 June 1889)

In the early summer of 1889 F.E. Nichols began work on his new carriage house, anticipating its completion by fall. (LaCrosse County Record, 27 June 1889)

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The Nichols family made news in the community in 1891 when F.E. commissioned the construction of a waterworks system for his property, to supply the residence, barn and lawn with water. According to the local paper "he will erect a strong frame, eighteen feet square at the base, resting upon a firm foundation, thirty feet in height. On this frame he will place a tank twelve feet high with a capacity of three hundred barrels. The structure will be enclosed, nicely finished and divided into apartments. A turbine wheel will be placed over the building to do the pumping and keep the large tank filled." (LaCrosse County Record, 16 April 1891) By the following year, Nichols abandoned the windmill for a new two horse power Charter gasoline engine to pump his water at a rate of 34 barrels per hour. Nichol's new purchase was quite a novelty in the community and he claimed, "laughingly", that he had 5,000 people come look at his new waterworks system on one Sunday afternoon. (LaCrosse County Record, 24 March 1892; 30 March 1892)

The Nichols home became the focal point for much of Onalaska's social activities in the following years, with meetings of the Ladies Guild and the Mendelssohn Club, the Cemetery Association, the Souvenir Cinch Club, Red Cross meetings, even musical recitals. (LaCrosse County Record, 9 May 1889; 6 June 1889; 21 May 1891; 7 April 1892; 20 April 1893; 6 July 1893; 5 April 1894; 7 June 1894; 13 Dec. 1894; 17 Jan. 1895; 16 Sept. 1896; 21 Jan. 1897; 29 Jul 1897; 8 Nov. 1917; 30 Jan. 1919) The LaCrosse County Record was diligent about reporting these types of meetings, and the frequency of small social organizations meeting at the F.E. Nichols house was notable. Mrs. Nichols only major rivals as meeting hostess included her mother-in-law, Mrs. C.H. Nichols, and her sister-in-law, Mrs. F.E. Pooler, who both hosted similar gatherings on occasion.

Again, in late 1903, F.E. Nichols was experimenting with domestic technology when he had a gas lighting plant installed in his home, making the Nichols residence one of the first homes in Onalaska to have such a residential lighting system. (LaCrosse County Record: 10 Dec. 1903) The gas plant is still intact in the basement of the house at this writing.

Though there is much documentation on the general workings of the C.H. Nichols Lumber Company, little is known of F.E. Nichol's direct participation in its administration. He was made a one-third partner of the company in 1887 (Articles of Association, C.H. Nichols Lumber Co., 29 Aug. 1887). F.E. was part of a team who traveled from Onalaska to the Pacific Northwest seeking investment opportunities in 1901, and by 1902 the company owned the Ballard Manufacturing

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Company of Ballard, Washington. (LaCrosse County Record, 31 Jan. 1901; King County, Washington, Deed Book 16, page 540, 15 Feb. 1902) At that time, F.E. Nichols became president of the company, remaining in Onalaska, with an office in LaCrosse, while Earl Pooler and Raymond Nichols (F.E.'s son) moved to Washington state to oversee operations there. (Dolbier:25)

Prosperity of the business apparently thrived under F.E.'s presidency, with the building of new storage sheds for the shingles shipped from Washington, expansion of office space in the Batavian Building in LaCrosse, and construction of a greatly improved shingle mill in 1904. (LaCrosse County Record, 29 May 1902, 11 Sept. 1902, 21 Jan. 1904, 24 Mar. 1904)

Frank E. Nichols retired circa 1910 after the sale of the Ballard Manufacturing Company in Washington. (Nichols: n.p., Bill of Sale) He continued to live in his house on Second Avenue North in Onalaska until his death on February 29, 1920. The obituary in the local paper claimed that Nichols had "a wide circle of friends throughout the northwest. During pleasant weather Mr. Nichols was usually to be seen about town, visiting with old friends or, working about his home, which he took great pride. He was also a great lover of hunting and fishing and a good portion of his time was spent this way. He was a kind husband and father and a most cheerful and helping friend of the needy. He will be greatly missed in Onalaska." (LaCrosse County Record: 4 Mar. 1920)

Within two years after F.E. Nichols' death, his wife Dora sold the house in Onalaska to Frank W. Pitman of LaCrosse County, who in turn sold the house to Phillip J. Hermann of Trempeleau County, Wisconsin in August 1922. (LaCrosse County, Wisconsin: Deed Vol. 143, page 216, 23 Mar. 1922; Deed Vol 141, page 211, 15 Aug. 1922) The property remained in the Hermann family until 1990, when it was sold by the George P. Hermann Estate, to Kenneth and Sandra Berg. (LaCrosse County, Wisconsin: Deed Vol. 878, page 567) The Bergs are currently in the process of renovating the house with plans to restore much of it to its original appearance.

Summary

The F.E. Nichols House is significant for its important association with Frank E. Nichols, prominent Onalaska industrialist. Nichols was associated with the C. H. Nichols Lumber

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Company from 1887 to 1910. The firm represents a typical turn-of-the-century, vertically-integrated lumber operation where timber was logged, milled, and processed into finished products by a single firm. Frank Nichols presided over the firm from 1902 to 1910 during an especially difficult transition from a Wisconsin-based concern to a larger national scope of operations. The C. H. Nichols Company illustrates an important trend in lumber exploitation as many Wisconsin concerns moved to the South and Pacific coast to secure new timber stands and diversify operations. The Nichols house is the most important extant resource with direct associations to this important facet of Onalaska's early industrial history.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Area Research Center, LaCrosse, WI

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one (1) acre

UTM References

A

1	5
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6	4	1	7	0	0
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4	8	6	0	5	2	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Block 1, Lots 14 and 15, Brice's Addition, Onalaska, Wisconsin

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Entire parcel historically associated with property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Barbara Kooiman, Historical Consultant
organization U.S. West Research date September 12, 1992
street & number 421 Main St., Suite 360 telephone 608/782-3338
city or town LaCrosse state Wisconsin zip code 54601

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

F.E. Nichols House
Onalaska, LaCrosse County, Wisconsin

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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F.E. Nichols House, photograph, circa 1920. LaCrosse: University of Wisconsin, Murphy Library, Area Research Center, LaCrosse, WI.

Jackson County, Wisconsin. Deeds, Vol. 21, pp. 45, 160, 548; Vol. 24, p. 585; Vol. 32, pp. 416-417; Vol. 33, pp. 213, 488; Vol. 34, p. 33; Vol. 35, pp. 532-534, 596-597; Vol. 37, pp. 348-350.

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LaCrosse County, Wisconsin. Deeds. Vol. 72, p. 430; Vol. 141, p. 211; Vol. 1443, p. 216; Vol. 878, p. 567.

LaCrosse County Record, Onalaska, Wisconsin.

22 March 1888

29 March 1888

26 April 1888

7 June 1888

20 August 1888

28 February 1889

14 March 1889

9 May 1889

6 June 1889

27 June 1889

16 April 1891

21 May 1891

24 March 1892

30 March 1892

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2

F.E. Nichols House
Onalaska, LaCrosse County, Wisconsin

7 April 1892
20 April 1893
6 July 1893
5 April 1894
7 June 1894
13 December 1894
17 January 1895
16 September 1896
21 January 1897
29 July 1897
20 May 1902
11 September 1902
10 December 1903
14 January 1904
21 January 1904
24 March 1904
3 May 1904
13 December 1906
8 November 1917
30 January 1919
4 March 1920

Nichols, Ltc. Barbara J. C.H. Nichols Lumber Company. N.P., unpaginated, Seattle: 1986. Compilation of information about the company in Wisconsin and Washington. Includes Articles of Association, C.H. Nichols Lumber Company, August 29, 1889, Bill of Sale, 1 July 1910, Ballard Manufacturing Co. by C.H. Nichols Lumber Co. to John W. McDonnell, Seattle, WA; numerous maps, newspaper citations, biographies of company personnel. Copy on file, LaCrosse: University of Wisconsin, Murphy Library, Area Research Center, LaCrosse, WI.

Onalaska Centennial, 1852-1952. Compiled by the Onalaska, WI Centennial Steering Committee. N.P. 1952. Copy on file, LaCrosse: University of Wisconsin, Murphy Library, Area

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 3

F.E. Nichols House
Onalaska, LaCrosse County, Wisconsin

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 1

F.E. Nichols House
Onalaska, LaCrosse County, Wisconsin

FRANK EUGENE NICHOLS HOUSE

421 Second Avenue North

Onalaska, LaCrosse County, Wisconsin

Photographs by Barbara Kooiman

Taken August 14, 1991

Negatives: State Historical Society of Wisconsin Madison, Wisconsin

The above information applies to all the following photographs:

Photograph #1 of 11

F.E. Nichols House, general setting

"A" on attached sketch map

East and south facades

View facing northwest

Photograph #2 of 11

F.E. Nichols House

"A" on attached sketch map

East, main facade

View facing west

Photograph #3 of 11

F.E. Nichols House

"A" on attached sketch map

Detail of main porch

View facing southwest

Photograph #4 of 11

F.E. Nichols House

"A" on attached sketch map

South facade

View facing north

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 2

F.E. Nichols House
Onalaska, LaCrosse County, Wisconsin

Photograph #5 of 11
F.E. Nichols House
"A" on attached sketch map
South and west facades
View facing northeast

Photograph #6 of 11
F.E. Nichols House
"A" on attached sketch map
West facade
View facing northeast

Photograph #7 of 11
F.E. Nichols House
"A" on attached sketch map
North facade
View facing south/southwest

Photograph #8 of 11
Garage
"C" on attached sketch map
East and south facades
View facing northwest

Photograph #9 of 11
Carriage House
"D" on attached sketch map
East facade
View facing west

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 3

F.E. Nichols House
Onalaska, LaCrosse County, Wisconsin

Photograph #10 of 11
Carriage House
"D" on attached sketch map
East and south facades
View facing northwest

Photograph #11 of 11
Carriage House
"D" on attached sketch map
South and west facades
View facing northeast

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Owners Page 1

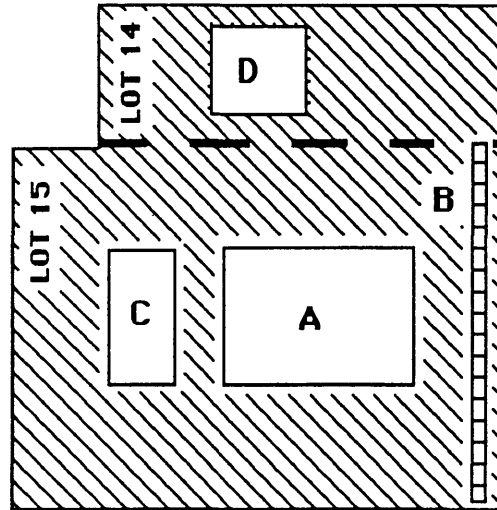
F.E. Nichols House
Onalaska, LaCrosse County, Wisconsin

Current Property Owners

Kenneth and Sandra Berg
421 N. Second Street
Onalaska, Wisconsin 54650

608/781-8938

F.E. NICHOLS HOUSE
421 SECOND AVE. N.
ONALASKA, LaCROSSE CO.
WISCONSIN
BLOCK 1, LOTS 14 & 15
BRICE'S ADDITION

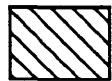


2nd Avenue North/U.S. Highway 53




NORTH

MAP KEY



NOMINATED PROPERTY

- A. F.E. Nichols House (C)
- B. Fence (C) 
- C. Garage (NC)
- D. Carriage House (C)

C = contributing

NC = non-contributing

Map not to scale
Drawn by B. Kooimar
August 28, 1991