

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

SEP 26 1988

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Louis Kissel &amp; Sons Thematic Resources of Hartford

and or common N/A

**2. Location**

street &amp; number See Inventory

N/A— not for publication

city, town Hartford

N/A— vicinity of

state Wisconsin

code WI

county Washington

code 131

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple Ownership -- See Continuation Sheet

street &amp; number N/A

city, town N/A

vicinity of N/A

state N/A

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washington County Register of Deeds

street &amp; number Washington County Court House

city, town West Bend

state Wisconsin 53095

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**title Wisconsin Inventory of  
Historic Placeshas this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1977

☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison

state Wisconsin 53706

## **.7. Description**

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

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

### Statement of Resources to be Nominated

The Louis Kissel and Sons Thematic Resources of Hartford nomination includes three districts and four individual structures. The first district is the Kissel Motor Car Company Historic District, which encompasses the industrial complex in which the famous Kissel Car was built. The second district is the Kissel Addition Historic District, and the third is the Kissel Wheelock Addition Historic District. Both are large residential portions of the city that the Kissels developed. The four individual structures are the residences of Louis Kissel and his sons.

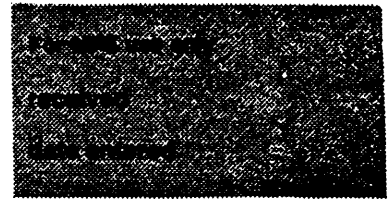
### Historical Development of Hartford

Located in what was originally part of the southeastern Wisconsin hardwood forest,<sup>1</sup> the City of Hartford is found in west central Washington County. The city is bisected by the diminutive Rubicon River which gently meanders through town from east to west. As the forest was cleared, the resulting combination of tillable land and water power created optimal conditions for aspiring agriculturalists, a field of endeavor that is still very evident in the surrounding countryside today.

The 1844 arrival of James and George Rossman signaled Hartford's beginning. By acquiring land adjacent to the river and then damming it, they provided the catalyst to attract the sawmill, gristmill and general store that soon followed.<sup>2</sup> Anticipating growth, the Town of Hartford was incorporated on January 21st, 1846, and platted in 1847.<sup>3</sup> Hartford grew as an agricultural service center, helped by the fact that the Milwaukee & La Crosse Railroad built a line through town in 1855.<sup>4</sup> The town began to grow geographically in 1852 when the Musgrove Addition was platted. By 1883, when the City of Hartford was incorporated, seven more additions had been integrated into the community.<sup>5</sup>

The railroad's arrival in 1855 spawned industrial growth in Hartford, as well as providing farmers with a way to ship their crops to market. One of these early manufacturing concerns was the Plow and Cultivator Factory of Rowell and Company, established in 1862.<sup>6</sup> It was this company that Louis Kissel bought into upon his arrival from Germany in the 1880s, and thus provided the basis for Kissel influence in Hartford over the next 40 years.

The influence of Louis Kissel & Sons upon Hartford can not be understated. Their business empire grew to include more than 10 enterprises, the most significant of which was the Kissel Motor Car Company. Wisconsin was home to thousands of agricultural support communities. Few of those, however, became major manufacturing centers as did Hartford.

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General Description of Resources Nominated

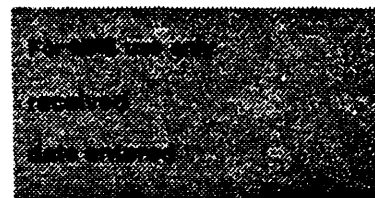
Kissel influence in Hartford is manifested in several ways, not the least of which is the City's physical, or built, environment. The individual properties and districts included in this nomination reflect this physical influence.

The Kissel Motor Car Factory is located on the east side of Hartford, on a flat piece of land between the Rubicon River on the south, the railroad tracks on the north and an old mill pond on the west. Laid out on an east-west axis, the complex is a group of interconnected buildings constructed between 1905 and 1920. These buildings are nondescript, utilitarian structures. Most are built of brick/stone around wooden superstructures, are three stories high, and profusely punctuated with windows. All have flat roofs, with the exception of two buildings which have saw-tooth roofs.

The Kissel Addition is located in the gently rolling southwest quadrant of the city, and the Kissel Wheelock Addition is in the flat southeast quadrant. Both were developed by the Real Estate Department of I. Kissel & Sons, under the direction of Otto P. Kissel. Operating as a vertically integrated company, much like Henry Ford's company in Detroit, the Kissels controlled virtually all facets of building production. They bought timber from northern Wisconsin, maintained their own lumberyard, developed a brick yard and quarry, bought land, hired local construction labor, and sold their buildings - frequently to their own employees. Consequently, the fabric of Kissel houses was largely uniform. They offered stone basements, frame construction, golden oak finish, hardwood floors, electric lights, and enameled plumbing fixtures as well as water and sewer connections.<sup>7</sup>

Local contractors working for the Kissels included Joseph Assenmacher, carpenter, John Ratenbach, mason, and George Stregel, mason.<sup>8</sup>

Most of the house styles in the residential districts are variations on the vernacular front gable, side gable, cross gable and gabled ell types. All have prominent porches and were built between 1902 and 1910. The front gabled houses are all two and one half story structures. A small window is located in the front gable peak and illuminates the attic space. The front gable further has two second floor windows, symmetrically placed, just above the hipped porch roof. Dormers frequently punctuate the roof on one or both sides of the front gable. Side gable houses are perhaps the most prominent in the Kissel/Wheelock district. They are, however, not pure side gable because they all have a smaller gable facing the street. Windows are symmetrically placed all around the two story structures, and the porches either have hipped or shed roofs. Some of the more elaborate side gabled houses have Palladian windows in the smaller front gable, as well as a gable in the front porch roof. The cross gable houses display

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the same symmetrical window location as the front gable houses. These houses are slightly larger than the front gable buildings. In the course of increasing the size, the side gables were enlarged to equal the front gables. Gabled ells are very prominent in the Kissel Addition district. The ells are found projecting from either side of the front gable portion, and each has a porch. Several of the larger gabled ells are actually "T" shaped structures, with projections to the back of the building.

The American Four-Square is the only high style architecture in the residential districts. Discernable by the massive, boxlike shape, these houses have low, hipped roofs punctuated with dormers, symmetrically placed windows, and a porch that spanned the front of the house. Most of these were built between 1914 and 1917.

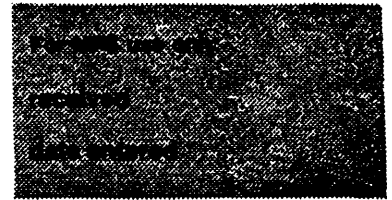
As vernacular architectural forms, buildings like these are found elsewhere in the city. It is not known if the Kissels themselves were building outside the districts, or to whom these buildings are attributable.

The individual houses associated with Louis Kissel and his sons are all located within one block of the Kissel Wheelock Addition. None is more than 4.5 blocks from the auto factory. All are frame structures and set back on lots, the sizes of which are comparable with others in their neighborhoods. Although the houses are compatible with neighboring structures, all have some degree of classical ornamentation, thus are more elaborate than the houses the Real Estate Department was building in the additions.

### Methodology

The resources in this nomination were initially identified by Susan Karr in a 1981-1982 historical and architectural survey of the City of Hartford. That survey indicated that a large number of Kissel related resources remained in the city, a fact that led the Hartford Historic Preservation Committee to want a National Register of Historic Places nomination prepared for them.

John Vogel, a consulting historian, was retained in 1985 to complete the research necessary for the nomination, as well as the nomination itself. Vogel has an Associate Degree in Professional Photography from the Layton School of Art and Design, Milwaukee, a Master of Arts Degree in History from the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, and is currently a Doctoral Candidate (ABD) in history at Marquette University, Milwaukee. He has prepared several National Register Nominations for individual buildings, in addition to serving as historian for the Hartland, Wisconsin, thematic history and intensive survey of historic resources, and co-author of the resultant National Register nomination that was completed in 1986.

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Because the industrial and development activities of Louis Kissel and Sons provide the basis for this thematic nomination, it was necessary to create a firm connection between the Kissels and all contributing structures in the districts. In the industrial district this was not difficult. Since the motor car company was a family operation, it is clearly evident that construction and expansion were inspired and executed by the Kissels. It was much harder to establish this connection in the residential districts where investors were active.

A three step methodology was established, therefore, to demonstrate a direct connection between the Kissels and the two residential districts. L. Kissel and Sons Real Estate Department advertised their houses profusely in the local newspapers, frequently including pictures of the various models that their crews were building. In the first (1) step, these pictures created the initial database from which comparisons were made with the extant buildings in the districts. Buildings displaying the same styles, forms, scale and materials were considered to be potentially contributing structures.

In the second (2) step, tax records for the years 1905-1907 were reviewed. This step revealed many investor owned lots and properties in the additions. Buildings on these lots were then coded as non-contributing elements of the districts since they were likely not Kissel built. The tax record review also proved a direct Kissel responsibility for building the house styles they were advertising in the newspapers. This was done by identifying the houses on Kissel owned lots with increases in assessed valuations before or during the time that they were being sold, and comparing them to the newspaper pictures compiled in step one. The residential districts were then surveyed again. Houses that matched the styles that we knew, through the first two steps of this process, Kissel had built were noted as contributing structures. Several styles were contemporary, but not identifiable with the Kissels. These were noted as non-contributing structures.

Finally, a few styles were repeated in the districts that were not traceable to the Kissels through the newspaper or the tax records. This situation led to the methodology's third (3) step. Title records for these houses were checked to see if ownership was acquired directly from the Kissels, and if so, if a house was included in the transferal. If one was, it indicated a Kissel built house. Buildings where this direct Kissel connection was evident were noted as contributing, all others were coded as non-contributing.

Only minor variations occurred in these Kissel built houses. Porches with hip or shed roofs are used interchangeably on the front, cross and side gable buildings. Some of the porches have gabled protrusions in the roof

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immediately above the door. There is also a slight variation in the size of subordinate gables on the front and side gable houses. Kissel use of these variations has been substantiated through step no. 2.

Garages have not been included in this nomination. Their scale in relationship to the properties nominated is insignificant, and they do not independently meet National Register criteria for nomination.

Districts Nominated

2070 owner obj.  
KISSEL MOTOR CAR INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT (see attached map 2)

The initial group of buildings in this district was developed to facilitate construction of the Kissel Gasoline Engine. Automobile manufacture at this time was not anticipated. Keyed to Map 1, buildings A, B, C, and D were built in 1905. Building A, the molding room, or foundry, is one story and is 100' x 100.' Building B is 50' x 100.' It is one story and served as the machine shop. Both structures are sheathed in brick. Their north sides, however, were simply boarded up to allow for expansion, which came in fact that same year.<sup>9</sup> Building C housed a new plow manufacturing plant, but was soon converted to a blacksmith and buffing shop for the auto plant. It is one story, sheathed in brick and 50' x 120.' Building D is 50' x 174,' two stories high, sheathed in brick, and joins buildings A and B at their rears. It housed the erecting and shipping departments of the engine factory.<sup>10</sup> Machinery in these buildings included 9 engine lathes, a radial drill, a 10' planer, a 4 ton vertical boring machine and 6 drill presses.<sup>11</sup> Original plans called for these machines to be powered by a gas engine. After thinking of steam briefly, electricity was the final source decided upon.<sup>12</sup> These buildings, with the exception of two small portions of Building D, were completely surrounded by subsequent structures, thus their current appearance can not be described. The west end of Building D is visible and the brick sheathing apparent. The windows in this wall, however, have been filled in with concrete block. A small portion of the north wall of building D is also visible. Found just above the loading dock and below the cornice, it has been covered with metal sheathing.

During 1906 the decision was made to produce automobiles, and Building E was constructed in 1906-1907 for that purpose. Located immediately west of the 1905 complex, this one story structure is 112' x 160' and built of cement block.<sup>13</sup> It has a saw-tooth roof, a type of roof frequently found on industrial buildings. This type of roof provided natural light through a series of monitors constructed to resemble a saw-tooth. This building has also been largely surrounded by subsequent development. The concrete block is still visible on the north wall and a portion of the west wall, however. Six paired and two single window units are found in this portion of the west wall. Each of these units has five lights. They are set in

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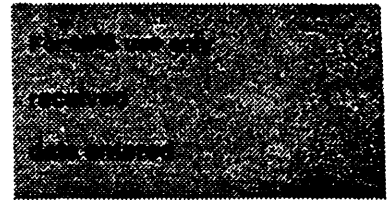
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metal frames and have no apparent sill. The windows are not original. The ten window units once in the north wall have all been filled in with concrete block. The saw tooth roof remains a prominent feature of this building, despite having been patched numerous times.

Factory expansion continued. A 3 story, 100' x 50' addition (building F) was built in 1907. It is west of the 1906 car factory, parallel to the railroad tracks. Constructed of cement blocks supplied by Bonniwell & Turk, it housed the tool, erecting and paint departments.<sup>14</sup> The second and third floors of this building have been removed and windows on the first floor have been filled in with concrete blocks. The building presently has a flat roof. Because two-thirds of this building has been removed, with the effect that it resembles little the functional building that was once part of the factory, this building has been noted as non-contributing.

Building G was added in 1908. Adjoining Building F, it is a 4 story, stone and cement block structure. Carpentry on this building was done by P. Mueller, while masonry was by John Ratenbach.<sup>15</sup> This building housed the tin shop in the basement, an office on the first floor, finishing department on the second floor, and paint shop on the third floor. The north and south walls both have four stories of windows, with 10 paired or tripartite units in each story. Each window unit has a wood frame, 9 lights over 9 lights with wood muntins, and no sill. The south wall is constructed of uncoursed rubblestone and each of the paired window units on the first three levels is crowned by a brick segmental arch. Those on the fourth floor have no arches. The north wall is constructed of rusticated concrete block. Windows in the second and third course have concrete lintels. Those on the first story have brick segmental arches, and those on the fourth story have no arches or lintels. The building has a flat roof. In its present condition, the building is vacant and a number of windows are broken.

Buildings H and I were built in 1909. Building H is similar to Building G, and was attached to Building G's west facade. It housed a continuation of the tin shop in the basement, a trimming shop on the first floor, and extensions of the finishing and paint departments on the second and third floors. As with Building G, the north and south walls both have four stories, with sixteen paired units in each story. Each wooden window unit has 9 lights over 9 lights. The south wall is constructed of uncoursed rubblestone and each of the paired window units on the first three levels is crowned by a brick segmental arch. Those on the fourth floor have no arches or lintels. The north wall is constructed of rusticated concrete block. Windows in the second and third course have concrete lintels. The windows on the first level have brick segmental arches, while those on the fourth story have no arches or lintels. The west wall is built of concrete blocks with corner quoins. The windows on all four floors of the west wall

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have been filled in with concrete blocks. The building's flat roof is hidden by a parapet that starts in the southwest corner. The parapet "steps up" twice, proceeds to the northwest corner then along the north side of Buildings H and G. It, too, is vacant and has a number of broken windows.

Building I was a 220' x 44,'2 story warehouse built just to the north of buildings F and G, between the railroads mainline and the Kissel siding.<sup>16</sup> It is no longer extant.

Although the demand for factory space was high, a tent was erected in 1910 to accommodate car assembly and painting, the next major additions were not built until 1911-1912. Over that winter Building J, a 3 story, 106' x 210' structure was built, as well as building K, a 50' x 210' structure.<sup>17</sup> The three story Building K was used as an assembly area for the motor car. It is built of concrete block and was subsequently enclosed on all sides but the west. The concrete block exterior visible on the west contains no windows or other details. The only distinctive feature on Building K is the two course saw tooth roof.

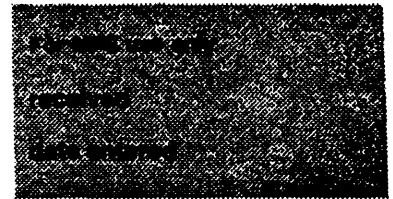
Building J was also a three story structure used for automobile assembly. Unlike building K, however, this building was constructed of brick. Each floor has twenty wooden framed window units and concrete sills. The twenty windows are paired and symmetrically placed between nine projecting piers. Each unit is 12-over-12 and has wood muntins. The building has a gently sloped, built-up roof, and a three step parapet on the west side.

Most of the remaining construction at the factory occurred between 1915 and 1920. The enameling building, built in 1915 (building L), was 2 stories high and 110' x 70.' Comprised of cement blocks supplied by Bonniwell and Turk, it was built by Joe Assenmacher's carpentry crew and George Stregel's masonry crew.<sup>18</sup> This building has been demolished.

The Kissels bought a 17 acre parcel immediately east of the factory complex in 1916. Although a 1916 Hartford Press article suggested that plans for an addition on the site were already in progress, it is unclear when the approximately 200' x 200' (Building M) structure was built. Sanborn maps indicate it was between 1916 and 1929.<sup>19</sup> Building M was used for a variety of purposes. A portion served as a wood working area, while another part was used as a stock room, and another for a finished product warehouse. It is a frame and brick structure, with only a small amount of the brick visible today. The balance of the structure has been sheathed in the same metal material used to construct the non-contributing Building aa. Because Building M is adjacent to non-contributing Building aa, and because so much of it has been sheathed in the same metal material as non-contributing Building aa, thus making it difficult to discern where Build M stops and

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Building aa starts, Building M has been noted as a non-contributing structure.

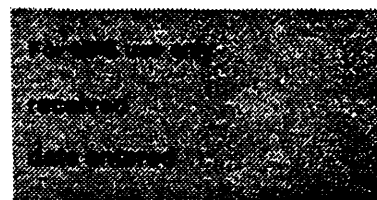
The final structures for which specific construction dates can be fixed are buildings N, O, and P. These buildings, completed in 1918, comprised a warehouse structure that was 40' wide and approximately 690' long.<sup>20</sup> These buildings, located to the South of the industrial complex itself, have all been removed.

Although specific dates can not be assigned for the construction of the remaining buildings, a review of Sanborn maps suggests that buildings Q, T U and V were built between 1913 and 1918, while buildings R and S were built between 1907 and 1913. Building Q is the only one of these that remains today (Building V seems to have lost its identity over time, perhaps being incorporated into Building D.) It was attached to the east facade of building J, and is a three story, painted brick structure. Each story has thirty window units, each of those units being enclosed by a metal frame, with metal muntins and having a total of 30 lights, as well as a concrete sill. These windows are paired and symmetrically placed between fourteen projecting piers. This building has a flat roof with a one step parapet at each end. It was used for automobile assembly.

Automobiles were no longer manufactured in the factory after 1931. Since that time, however, the buildings have remained in use. The Kissels leased space out, as well as using the factory to manufacture outboard motors. Through a succession of owners that includes the West Bend Company and Chrysler Marine, the factory continues to produce marine products today.

Map 2 indicates the Motor Car Company buildings that are extant today, and thus comprise the historic district (14 buildings, 11 contributing, 3 non-contributing). Buildings I, L, N, O, P, S, T, and U have all been demolished. Five of these buildings, I, N, O, P, and U were all storage structures. Their loss does not greatly affect the district's integrity. The remaining three, buildings L, S and T, were all located on the complex's periphery. Since the core of the complex remains, the removal of buildings L, S, and T has not significantly compromised the district's historic integrity. After all, the remaining buildings include the oldest structures (those associated with the early development and production of the Kissel Car), as well as those that housed the functions central to automobile production and assembly. Other changes are minimal.

Building M has been sheathed in metal that covers its original exterior, and makes it look like an extension of the new, metal factory structure that has been built to the east (Building aa). Therefore, it is considered a non-contributing building, as is Building F, since its top two floors have been removed.

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Having been built at the east end of the Kissel complex, however, the massive proportions of Building aa do not compromise the visual integrity of the original buildings. In addition, a single story concrete block loading dock has been built on the north side of the complex, adjacent to buildings D and M. Otherwise, the industrial complex stands much as it did when the Kissels were manufacturing cars there. Note, however, that all of the automobile manufacturing machinery has been removed.

The rail siding to the industrial complex does not exist today. Parking lots are now located where once buildings N, O, and P stood.

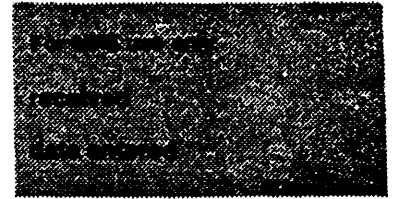
2071 KISSEL'S ADDITION HISTORIC DISTRICT (see attached map 3)

Generally located in the southwest quadrant of the City of Hartford, the Kissel Addition included all or portions of 18 blocks. It contained over 200 lots and was the family's first attempt to plat and develop a portion of the city. Retained by the Kissels, George W. Morse surveyed and platted the addition between October 8 and 15, 1901. Largely extending extant streets, Morse's plat followed a grid pattern, though without symmetrical blocks. All streets were laid out on either an east/west or north/south axis. Virtually all the lots had a 50 foot frontage, although a few were 53 feet. Lot depths varied from 100 feet to 214 feet, depending on the size of the block on which they were located. Louis Kissel, Adolph Kissel and Otto P. Kissel were the petitioners when the plat was filed for record on October 6, 1902.<sup>21</sup> The addition was largely built up by 1907.

Activity began almost immediately. By October 16, 1902, 102 lots had been sold in the addition for an average of \$300/lot (The high number of lot sales likely suggests investor activity). More than twenty houses were completed by November. 1903 promised 20-30 more houses in the addition, as well as wooden sidewalks. To promote development, the Kissels even loaned the city \$2,500 to lay watermains in the area.<sup>22</sup>

The Kissel Addition was planned for smaller houses and economically minded buyers. A search of real estate transactions reported in the Hartford Press through 1910, indicates that no houses with more than 8 rooms were sold in this addition.<sup>23</sup> Kissel built houses generally came in a variety of styles. Most were in vernacular forms. It is this varied, though limited, number of styles available that creates the visual unity of this district. Most prominent were gabled ell (10 in district) and side gabled structures (7 in district). There is also one American Foursquare and one front gable building in the district. Between 1904 and 1908, houses of varying size sold for between \$1,600 and \$2,850 in the Kissel Addition.<sup>25</sup>

The house at 125 Rural Street is a typical example of the gabled ell structures found in this district. It is a very simple two story building.

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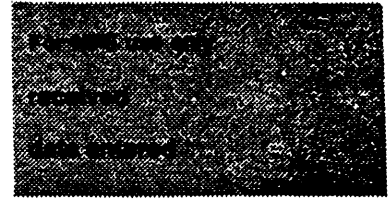
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It has a steeply pitched, gabled roof and is sheathed in asbestos shingles. Paired sash windows, one-over-one, are located on the second floor of the gable facing the street. A small picture window is located on the first floor, directly beneath the second floor windows. The picture window is flanked by canted corners, each with a single, one light over one light window. The ell projects to the north and contains the main entrance to the house. The porch, which has been enclosed, has a hipped roof. It has a single casement window unit immediately north of the door. A single window is apparent on the ell, being located just under the eave.

The house at 133 Rural is a typical example of the side gabled structures found in the district. It is a two and one half story building that has been resided, and consequently has lost any ornamentation. The roof plane parallel to the street is broken by a large gabled wall dormer that contains two symmetrically placed sash windows, single light over single light, located in the center of the facade. The porch has a hip roof which spans the entire front of the house, has been enclosed with the same siding material. It contains a picture window unit with sash windows on either side of it. This entire unit is then flanked by sash windows, one light over one light. The main entrance is located on the south side of the enclosed porch. The residing and enclosed porch notwithstanding, the integrity of this house has not been compromised. The roof line, window placement, gable style and massing clearly identify this house as a Kissel design.

The front gable style is represented in this addition by the house at 138 Rural Street. A two and one half story clapboard structure, this house has a small attic vent in the gable peak, immediately below which is a paired unit of sash windows, one-over-one. A hipped roof porch is immediately below the second floor windows. Supported by three simple timber columns, it covers the main entry way which is located to the south of center and a sash window that is located to the north of center. All windows are highlighted by the placement of modern shutters. Gabled dormers project to the north and south.

The American Foursquare house, located at 75 S. Rural Street, belonged to Herman Palmer, chief chassis designer and engineer at the Kissel Car factory. Educated at the University of Cologne, Palmer came to Milwaukee in 1903 and Hartford in 1906. His design ability contributed greatly to the success of the Kissel Car. He remained with Kissel Industries, the car company's successor, as well as subsequent factory owners until he retired.<sup>26</sup> This two and one half story, clapboard structure faces east, its axis being perpendicular to the street. It has a hipped roof, with hipped dormers projecting to the south, east and north. The south and north dormers have three sash windows, each one light over one light, while the east dormer has four, one light over one light windows. Beneath the

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overhanging eaves, a door is centered on the second floor. It provides access to the porch balcony that spans the front of the building. Paired sash windows, one light over one light, are located on either side of this door. The balcony is enclosed by a balustrade. The main entrance is directly beneath the second floor, balcony door. It is flanked by paired sash windows, one light over one light. The porch itself is made of brick. The porch roof (balcony) is supported by four simple, tuscan order columns.

The character of the Kissel Addition was almost entirely residential. The exception was the Charles Bellack Clothing factory. Built in the century's first decade, it was a 100' x 100,' 2 story structure located on the northwest corner of Johnson and W. Loos. Later used by Kissel as their body shop, the building burned down in 1934.<sup>27</sup>

In the post war years, many of the Kissel constructed houses were demolished. The subsequent rebuilding on these lots has totally changed the Kissel built landscape to the point that only a small portion of the original district retains enough integrity to merit nomination. The district contains 19 contributing buildings and 13 non-contributing. The buildings in the district are generally in above average condition. In some cases they have suffered from being resided with different materials than the original. Some porches have been enclosed, or otherwise altered as well. These changes notwithstanding, the visual impact and unity of the district is substantial and the Kissel connection is unmistakable.

2072 KISSEL'S WHEELOCK ADDITION HISTORIC DISTRICT (see attached map 4)

No doubt predicated on the positive response to the recently platted Kissel Addition, in March, 1902, L. Kissel & Sons bought a 67.5 acre tract of relatively flat land in the city's southeast quadrant from Joseph Schwartz with the intention of platting and developing it. The cost was \$8,500.<sup>28</sup> Surveyed by C.F. Leins in early August, 1903, at the direction of Louis Kissel, Adolph Kissel and Otto P. Kissel, Kissel's Wheelock Addition was filed for record on March 31, 1904. It contained over 90 lots, all of which had a 50 foot frontage. The depth of the lots was between 150 and 180 feet, though some had more or less than that depending on the oddities of the block upon which it was located. The addition was largely built up between 1905 and 1908, although some construction occurred as late as 1915. The streets in the newly platted addition ran east-west and north-south, although the blocks themselves were not symmetrical. A variation in block and lot sizes was forced on the west side of the new addition by Branch Street, which ran from the northwest to the southeast. Branch Street provides the western boundary for a portion of the district.

In contrast to the Kissel Addition, Kissel Wheelock's Addition was planned for slightly wealthier patrons. Few houses with less than 8 rooms were

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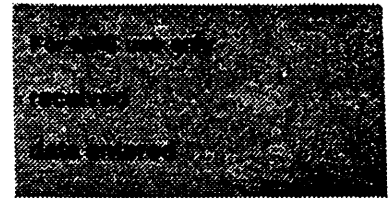
sold in this addition, while most had 9. Some even had as many as 10 or 12 rooms. Newspaper stories indicated that prices from 1904 and 1908 varied between \$2,200 and \$3,800 for these houses.<sup>29</sup> As the increase in rooms suggests, houses in this addition were generally larger than those in the Kissel Addition. There were far fewer gabled ell houses (2 in district) as a result, and more of the larger side gabled structures (32 in district), cross gable buildings (20 in district) and American Foursquare houses (5 in district). There are also front gable houses (28) and two story cube houses (4) found in this district.

The house at 229 Teddy is one of the two gabled ells in the district. It is a simple two and one half story, clapboard structure. Paired one-over-one, sash windows are located on the second floor of the gabled end perpendicular to the street. It has shutters on either side. A small picture window is located on the first floor, beneath, but slightly offset to the north of the second floor windows. The offset is attributed to the porch, which is not like that found on a typical gabled ell. It does originate in the ell, but is projects beyond the plane of the gable facing the street, and partially wraps around it. The porch, with its gabled roof, is enclosed. The entrance is to the north and three sash windows, six lights over six lights are immediately to its south. The ell projects to the south and has two windows facing the street. This house appears to be unaltered.

Side gable houses are represented by the simple, two and one half story, clapboard building at 316 Grand. The roof plane facing the street is broken by a gable, beneath which are two, one-over-one sash windows. An enclosed shed roof porch is directly beneath these windows. A small gable projects from the shed roof, immediately above the entry. The front door itself is flanked by four sash windows, all one light over one light. It is difficult to tell if the porch was originally enclosed or if it was done later. That issue aside, the house has retained its "Kissel" look well.

A variation of the side gable house is located at 417 Grand. This two and one half story, clapboard structure has a gabled wall dormer facing the street. The dormer has a modified palladium window (the tops are squared off instead of rounded). One-over-one, sash windows are located on the second floor, below, and to either side of the palladium window. An enclosed, hipped roof porch runs the length of the house. The hipped roof is broken by a gable immediately above the main entrance. A variation of this type is found at 304 E. Loos and 423 S. Grand, which are identical with the exception of a low pitch front gabled porch roof instead of the hipped roof.

Cross gable structures are typified by the simple, two and one half story, clapboard house at 331 Grand. A small attic window is found in the peak of

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the gable facing the street. Symmetrically placed, single, one-over-one sash windows are located on the second floor of this facade. A hipped roof, open porch with turned posts is immediately below the second floor windows. The main entrance is centered under the porch and paired sash windows are located to either side of it. There are no ornamental features on this house that has undergone little, if any alterations.

The American Foursquare is represented by the house at 322 Grand. This two and one half story, stucco structure faces west. It has a hipped roof with dormers projecting to the north, west and south. Each dormer has three, one-over-one, sash windows. Beneath the overhanging eaves, the second floor windows are placed symmetrically around the house. All are one light over one light, sash windows. An enclosed porch spans the front of the structure. The main entryway is located in the center of the porch, and flanked by sidelights. Paired windows are located to either side of the side lights. The porch has a hipped roof, broken by an open gable just over the main entrance.

An important building in the district, and a representative example of the front gable houses found in the district is located at 228 Grand. This was the residence of J. Fredrich Werner, the body engineer at the Kissel Car Company. Werner trained as a coach builder at the Royal Technical School in Munich, Germany. After working for the Opel Motor works, he came to the United States and Hartford in 1908. Werner's Kissel Car body designs were widely admired.<sup>33</sup> His house is a two and one half story, clapboard structure, with a small side gable projecting to the south. A small attic window is found in the lower portion of the front gable, immediately above, and centered between the two sash, one-over-one, second floor windows. An enclosed porch with a hip roof spans the entire front of the house. The entrance is off-set to the south, with two sash, one-over-one windows to the south of it. To the north, however, are six more sash windows. Believing that the porch was enclosed at the time of construction, this house has undergone very little, if any change.

The house at 446 Branch is typical of the two story cube houses found in the district. This two story, clapboard structure has a hipped roof with a projecting gablet facing Branch street. Beneath the gablet is a three plane bay, each plane containing a one light over one light sash window. A single sash window is located on the second floor, just west of the bay. A porch with a shed roof spans the front of the house which faces southwest (Branch Street). The front door, flanked by side lights is on the far left side of the porch. Four paired windows, four lights over one light are located to the right of the entryway.

The house of Adolph Kissel, one of Louis Kissel's four sons, is located in this district. Found at 237 Grand, it presents a variation of the side

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gable design. It is larger than the other side gable houses found in the districts, and has a large wing behind the house. It has a clapboard exterior. A small gable projects from the north half of the roof plane facing the street, the projection itself carrying down to the second floor. A single sash attic window is located in the gable and three six-over-six, sash windows are located on the second floor, immediately below it. To the south, of the projection, and also on the second floor, is a paired unit of six-over-six sash windows. A small shed roof bay is located on the first floor, south facade. A front porch with a shed roof, built on a split fieldstone foundation, spans the entire length of the house. It is enclosed. The entrance is centered and has a single one-over-one sash window immediately on each side. On either side of those are paired, two-over-two sash windows. The end wall, brick chimney on the south facade has a corbeled cap and two cylindrical chimney pots.

The Kissel's worked hard to make this addition an attractive one. In May, 1904, they planted 350 Silver Maple trees and 150 Carolina Poplars. This was a legacy that continues to benefit the city today. They also laid cement sidewalks along all streets, as well as to houses then built, in the addition in 1905. 20,000 square feet of walk were laid in all.<sup>30</sup>

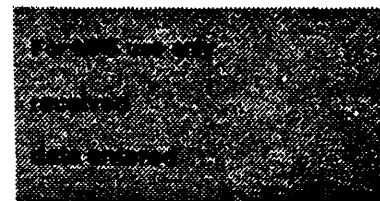
The Addition to Kissel's Wheelock Addition (incorporated in the Kissel Wheelock Historic District although its name is not included in the district name) was platted by W.T. Leins in November, 1916. Ordered by Otto P. Kissel and his wife Lilly, Louis Kissel's wife Catherine, Adolph P. Kissel and his wife Lillian, William Kissel and his wife Elizabeth, George A. Kissel and his wife Blanche, as well as Louis Kissel's estate, this addition was filed for record on January 2, 1917. It made 175 new lots available in the city.<sup>31</sup> This addition was platted on an east/west axis, by extending McKinley, Pleasant, Loos, Maple and Linden Avenues to the east. The lots in Blocks 4 and 5 were 50 feet wide and 75 to 100 feet deep depending on the block. Lots in blocks 6, 7, and 8 were all 40 feet wide and 142 feet deep. Lots in block 9 were 50 feet wide by 219 feet deep.

Although not platted until 1916, tax records from 1907 indicate that the Kissels had already started construction in this addition. Development was largely completed by 1917. Most of the architectural styles previously mentioned are found in this portion of the district. Especially prominent are the side gable houses with smaller gables that face the street, and the cross gable structures that have just been discussed.

The character of these additions was entirely residential. Unlike the Kissel Addition, there was no industry located in this district. The only disproportionate building was a 17 sleeping room, rooming house located at the corner of Church and Grand Streets (not extant). Designed by the Milwaukee architect Robert Messmer, it was built to house up to 40 Kissel

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employees. Being built of cement blocks, its type of construction was an aberration in the district. The interior was finished in Georgia Pine and Golden Oak.<sup>32</sup>

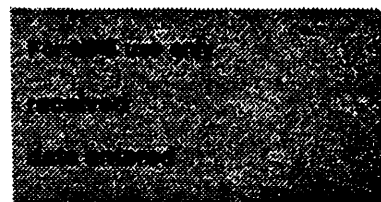
Unlike Kissel's Addition which had seen so much demolishing and rebuilding, Kissel's Wheelock Addition Historic District retains much of its geographic integrity. With the exception of one or two lots on the perimeter, Kissel's Wheelock Addition is being nominated in its entirety. However, portions of the Addition to Kissel's Wheelock Addition were redeveloped, so they are not included in the district. The district has 91 contributing structures and 59 non-contributing. The integrity of individual houses in this district is good, and the visual unity of the neighborhood as a whole is striking. Some of the buildings have been resided in something other than their original materials. Others have had their porches enclosed. But even with these changes, one can look at the houses and see reflected in the second floors, if not the entire structure, the unmistakable Kissel association. In isolated places original Kissel houses have been demolished and the land annexed to an adjacent property. This is the only variation in the otherwise repetitive 40 and 50 foot lot frontages in this district. Finally, the visual unity of this district is further enhanced by the silver maples that the Kissel's planted back in 1905.

Individual Properties Nominated

2073 WILLIAM L. KISSEL HOUSE

67 South Street - A clapboard building (ca 1904), this house incorporates many of the features of the two-story cube design. It is a large, boxy structure with a low, hipped roof that has small, hipped bay windows projecting to the north and south. Six-over-one, sash windows around the house are placed asymmetrically, punctuating the second floor almost at random, and conveying only slightly more rhythm on the first floor. A tripartite picture window is located to the south of the main entryway on the first floor. A one story, low pitch, hip roofed porch supported by simple tuscan columns on wood piers surrounds the front entryway. A spindled railing projects from the house to the wood piers on the porch. This house rests on a fieldstone and mortar foundation. It is located one block to the west northwest of the Kissel Wheelock Addition Historic District, in a largely residential district (a church and its parking lot are across the street). The Otto Kissel house is half block to the south.

Exterior alterations seem limited to the boarding and siding over of some of the second floor windows. This was done to facilitate room assignments in the upstairs apartment.

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The interior of this house has been remodeled to create an upper and lower flat. The original entry foyer has been divided by a curtain wall. On the north side of the wall, non-descript stairs allow access to the upper unit.

Entering the upper flat from the stairway, a bedroom is located immediately to the left. Continuing in a westerly direction, a dining room is found in a former bedroom to the right, and a living room is immediately across the hall from that. Walking to the back of the house, one finds the kitchen and an enclosed stairway/porch built onto the back of the house. The original walls are plaster on lath, the remodeled curtain walls are plaster board. All second floor rooms have hardwood floors. Ceilings have not been dropped, and picture molding is found in all the rooms.

The north half of the lower flat has been subdivided to create bedroom space. In addition the kitchen and bathroom, both currently being remodeled, have had their ceilings lowered. The most impressive feature of the lower flat, however, remains intact. Upon entering the flat, a double door to the left allows access to a front parlor. This room opens up to a middle parlor with a large bay window facing the south. A fireplace is located in the northwest corner of the middle parlor. Continuing west, behind the middle parlour is the dining room. Although the wood trim has been painted, the flat has hardwood floors and picture molding.

Despite covering up some of the second floor windows, dividing the entry foyer, remodeling the kitchen, and assigning different uses to some of the rooms, this house has not been altered to the point that William Kissel would not recognize it. It retains the imposing porch, scale, shape and basic window arrangement, as well as the most prominent interior feature from the William Kissel period of ownership - the front and middle parlor and dining room combination.

## 2074 OTTO P. KISSEL HOUSE

124 South Street - This two and one half story, clapboard house (ca 1904) was built on a north/south axis, and faces South Street. Its back lot line is immediately adjacent to the west side of the Kissel Wheelock Addition Historic District. The neighborhood is largely residential, although a church parking lot is located immediately to the north. The Wm. Kissel house is one half block to the north.

Gables project from a steeply pitched, hipped roof on the north, west and south sides of this Queen Anne house with Colonial Revival influences. Small pent roofs define the gable's lower portion and incorporate the gables effectively into the roof structure. Each of the gables contain two small pedimented windows and shelters a small bay. On the second floor,

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the north and south bays have squared corners, while the front bay has canted corners. Second floor windows are paired, one-over-one, sash windows in the north and south bays, and occur singly in the west bay. The first floor has a flat roof, enclosed, wrap-around veranda on the north and west sides. Each one of the porch's 8 window units has a large single light, with a small transom above it. The glass door has side lights and a transom. The second floor bay on the south side carries down to the first floor, but its corners are canted at that point.

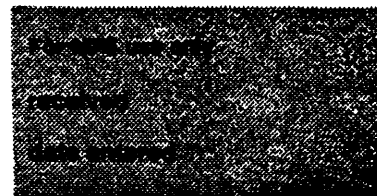
Admittance into this house places one in the living room. Immediately to the right is the stairway to the second floor. To the left is the main portion of the living room, once probably the front parlor. Straight ahead is the dining room. Entering the dining room, a dominant feature is the built in china cabinet on the opposite wall. It has beveled leaded glass and a large mirror. From the dining room, one may proceed straight back to the kitchen. It has been completely remodeled. In fact a back stairway that went from the basement to the second floor was removed, that area now serving as a kitchen pantry. To the left of the dining room is another portion of the living room. A fireplace in the southwest corner of this room has been removed. Following around to the left one reenters the portion of the living room where the main entry is located. There are very few decorative appointments built into the house. Most of the molding along the baseboard and ceiling was painted by the Kissels.

The stairway retains its natural woodwork, however. Anchored around a squared newel post, the stairs proceed straight upstairs, taking a 90 degree turn at the top. Four bedrooms are located on the second floor. As one reaches the top of the stairs, the master bedroom is to the left. Turning right, and going down the hall, two bedrooms are encountered on the left and one on the right. All interior finish is plaster on lath, and aside from corner molding, there are no other decorative features. At the end of the hall is the bathroom, recently remodeled to take advantage of the space created by removing the back stairway.

Remodeling the kitchen and removing the back stairway are the only major alterations made to this house since the present owners acquired it from Otto Kissel's widow. As such it largely remains as it did when occupied by the Kissels.

2015  
GEORGE A. KISSEL HOUSE

215 East Sumner - George Kissel built one of the few brick houses (1926) on the east side of Hartford. The brick pattern is Flemish bond. Placed on an east/west axis and facing East Sumner Street, this two story Colonial Revival structure is a restrained example of the style. A pedimented porch

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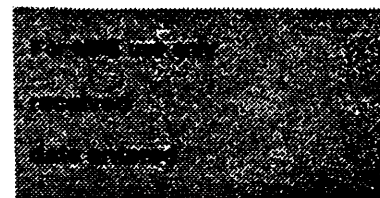
over the front door, which appears to be carried by two projecting columns on each side of the door, and shutters on the second floor windows are the major stylistic features. The windows are placed symmetrically, a single window being located in the middle of the second floor, with a pair of windows located on either side of it. The same window arrangement is repeated on the first floor, except for the door that is located right below the center second floor window. Each window is sash, six-over-six and has a brick flat arch and key stone, as well as concrete sills. A one story solarium with a low pitch hipped roof is located on the east side of the house. The side gabled roof has no dormers. The house has an interior chimney as well as an end wall chimney, both of brick. Each is capped with concrete coping. The end wall chimney has three squared chimney pots and the interior chimney has one.

The back of this lot line is less than one block from the northwest corner of the Kissel Wheelock Addition. East Sumner is the main highway into the city from the east. Houses on the south side, including the George Kissel house, are large, imposing structures on large lots. Houses on the north side are more modestly sized and on smaller lots.

The interior of this house is characterized by its spaciousness, both in common areas, the halls and stairways, for instance, as well as the rooms. From the entry foyer, the dining room is located to the right. This room is wall papered, except for the plain plaster wainscoting around the lower portion of the walls. The radiators are enclosed with marble slabs. To the left of the dining room is a pantry, which one proceeds through to get to the recently remodeled kitchen. Leaving the kitchen, one is again in the central foyer. Directly across the foyer is the living room, entry to which is through French doors. Radiators in this room again are enclosed with marble slabs. A simple fireplace dominates the east wall of the living room. Behind the fireplace, with a door on either side of the fireplace is the solarium.

Returning to the central foyer, a wide, open stairway takes one directly to the second floor. The large foyer is repeated on the second floor. A bedroom is located in each corner of this floor, with a bathroom located between each bedroom per side. The simplicity of the this house's design has been carried from the exterior, to the first floor and now the second floor, the only decorative feature being picture molding in each of the bedrooms.

This house has been little altered since it was occupied by the Kissels. The remodeled kitchen, and the maid stairs that were removed in the course of that remodeling, are all that have been changed. Otherwise the house remains as it did when occupied by the Kissels.

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## 2017 LOUIS KISSEL HOUSE

407 East Sumner - This Queen Anne/Neo Classical house was designed by Milwaukee architect Robert Messmer and built sometime prior to 1898.<sup>34</sup> It faces East Sumner Street, is less than one block north of the Kissel Wheelock Addition, and is only two blocks southeast of the Kissel Motor Car factory.

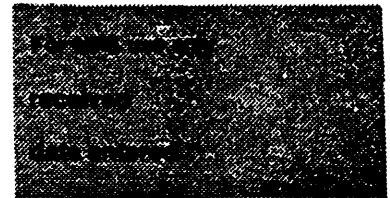
Its irregular fenestration, asymmetry and variety of textures and materials are typically Queen Anne, although the restrained, classically derived ornamentation illustrates the emerging Classical Revival style. Like the Otto Kissel house located at 167 South Street, this two and one half story, clapboard house has a steeply pitched, hipped roof with projecting gables. Each of the four shingled gables is dominated by a modified Palladian window crowned with a decorative pediment. Each of the gables is "set off" by a small pent roof that is supported by simple decorative brackets. The projecting gables to the north and west are incorporated into two story bay windows with canted corners. A single, double-hung widow is found in each one of these planes on both the first and second floors. Otherwise, windows are placed asymmetrically around the house, although first floor window placement is mirrored by their second floor placement. A small bay projects to the north, on the first floor level, to the west of the two story bay under the projecting gable. It has three windows, each with a transom, and is supported by simple wooden brackets. The dominant decorative feature on this clapboard building is the open, one story, wrap around porch. Supported by 7 Ionic columns, the porch encompasses the entire north side of the house and wraps around to include about a third of the west side. The house rests on a fieldstone and mortar foundation.

The house's main entrance is located on the north side. Upon entry, straight ahead, is a room that has been remodeled into an office. The woodwork and appointments in the room are all original, although they have been painted. Immediately to the right of the main foyer is the front parlor. Walking south, one then enters the middle parlor, and then the dining room. Entry into all these rooms is gained through double pocket doors. The woodwork in these three rooms is all natural. The heads of each window frame have egg and dart moldings. The fireplace, located in the middle parlor, is framed by Ionic, fluted columns. A side board with massive fluted columns is built into the east wall of the dining room. The kitchen is directly east of the dining room. It has been remodeled and modernized.

The main access to the second floor is a stairway located in the house's main foyer. Anchored by a fluted corinthian column, the stairway has two landings. The second floor has six bedrooms of varying size. The master

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bedroom is located just to the right as one reaches the landing. Four other bedrooms are located on the right hand side of the hall which basically follows to the south. Another bedroom and bathroom are located to the left. Hardwood floors and picture molding are found throughout the first and second floors. A small rear stairway leads from the upstairs hall down to the kitchen.

Despite being used as a rooming house, and then an antique shop, the house has largely retained its original form. The kitchen remodeling and some ceiling tract lighting in the front parlor are the only remains of these past uses. It is again in service as a single family dwelling.

Total Count of Resources

Contributing

125  
0  
0  
0  
125

buildings  
Sites  
Structures  
Objects  
TOTAL

Non-Contributing

74  
0  
0  
0  
74

Notes

<sup>1</sup>Joseph Schafer, Four Wisconsin Counties: Prairie and Forest, (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1927), p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>The Heritage of Hartford, (Hartford: 1983), p. 8; History of Washington and Ozaukee Counties, Wisconsin, (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1881), p. 413.

<sup>3</sup>Heritage, pp. 10-11.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

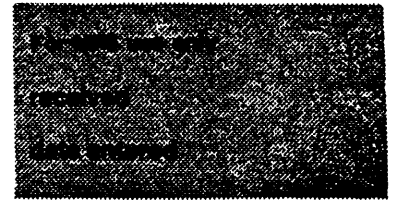
<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>7</sup>Hartford Press, (various dates) 1900-1910; Press, 9 October 1906.

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8"Erecting Two New Buildings," Press, 15 September 1908, p. 1; Press, 17 September 1915, p. 1.

9"The New Factory," Press, 8 August 1905, p. 1.

10"Work At Factory," Press, 17 November 1905, p. 1.

11"Received New Machinery," Press, 5 December 1905, p. 1.

12"The New Factory," Press, 2 January 1906, p. 1.

13"Start Work on Auto Factory," Press, 18 December 1906, p. 1.

14"Another Large Building," Press, 6 September 1907, p. 1.

15"Erecting Two New Buildings," Press, 15 September 1908, p. 1.

16"Business Growing," Press, 9 June 1909, p. 1.

17"Erecting a Large Tent," Press, 15 April 1910, p. 1; "Increased Capital Stock," 15 December 1911, p. 1.

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19Hartford Press, 21 January 1916, William Kissel Scrapbook, Microfilm copy at State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.

20press, 22 February 1918, p. 1; Press, 4 October 1918, p. 1.

21Kissel's Addition to the City of Hartford, 6 October 1902, Map Book 2, p. 42, Deeds and Records of Washington County, West Bend, Wisconsin.

22"102 Lots Sold," Press, 16 October 1902, p. 1; "Has Grown," Press, 20 November 1902, p. 1; "More Houses," Press, 19 March 1903, p. 1; "New Walks in Addition," Press, 18 August 1903, p. 1.

23"Building Commences," Press, 26 April 1904, p. 1.

25press, 17 October 1905, p. 1; Press, 25 February 1908, p. 1.

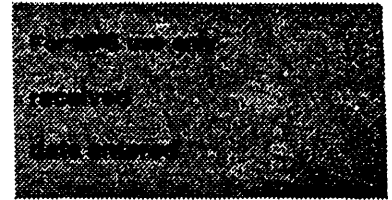
26Kissel Scrapbook.

27"Fire Destroys Old Kissel Body Factory," Hartford Times, 30 March 1934, p. 1.

28press, 6 March 1902, p. 1; Kissel's Wheelock Addition to the City of

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Hartford, 31 March 1904, Washington County.

<sup>29</sup>press, 17 October 1905, p. 1; Press, 5 October 1906, p. 1.

<sup>30</sup>"Arbor Day," Press, 6 May 1904, p. 1; "Building Cement Sidewalks," Press, 12 May 1905, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup>Addition to Kissel's Wheelock Addition to the City of Hartford, 2 January 1917, Washington County.

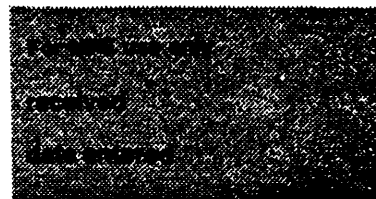
<sup>32</sup>"A 16 Room Flat," Press, 15 June 1909, p. 1; "Boarding House Ready," Press, 10 December 1909, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup>File KI/42, Hartford History Room, Hartford, Wisconsin; Gene Husting, Automobile Quarterly (vol. 9, no. 3 - Spring, 1971).

<sup>34</sup>Carl Quickert, ed., Washington County Wisconsin Past and Present, 2 vols., (Chicago: S.J. Clark Publishing Company, 1912), vol 2, pp. 350-353; Fred L. Holmes, ed., Wisconsin: Stability, Progress, Beauty, vol 5, (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1946), p. 65.

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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



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## Thematic Resources Inventory [keyed to maps]

### Key to classification (class)

- C = Contributing  
N = Noncontributing

### Key to method of determining significant structures (method)

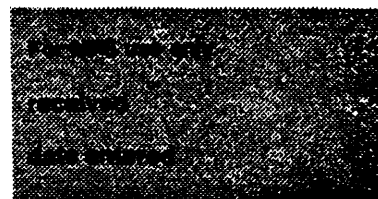
- News = House follows pattern of one advertised in newspaper  
(Methodology step #1)  
Tax = House follows pattern of one tax records verified  
Kissel built (Methodology step #2)  
Title = House follows pattern of one title records verified  
Kissel built (Methodology step #3)

### Kissel Motor Car Company Historic District [keyed to map #2]

<u>Map Code</u>	<u>Historic Function</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Classification</u>
Building A	Foundry	1905	C
B	Machine Shop	1905	C
C	Plow Shop/Blacksmith	1905	C
D	Shipping/Wood Shop/ Welding & Painting	1905	C
E	Auto Factory/Machine Shop	1906	C
F	Tool Shop (1st floor) Finishing (2nd floor) Paint Dept. (3rd floor)	1907	N
G	Tin Shop (basement) Office (1st floor) Finishing (2nd floor) Paint Dept. (3rd floor)	1908	C
H	Tin Shop (basement) Trimming (1st floor) Finishing (2nd floor) Paint Dept. (3rd floor)	1909	C
J	Assembly	1911	C
K	Assembly	1911	C
M	Miscellaneous utility	ca 1920	N
Q	Assembly	ca 1915	C
R	Core Room	ca 1910	C
V	Stock Room	ca 1913-18	N
aa	US Marine	ca 1965	N

[NOTE: Functions separated with a slash (/) denote successive uses, floor designations indicate concurrent uses]

Resource count: 11 contributing, 4 noncontributing, 15 total

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## Kissel's Addition Historic District [keyed to map #3]

<u>Address</u>	<u>Building Type</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Method</u>
Block No. 1				
302 W. Root	Side Gable	ca 1906	C	News/Tax
262 W. Root	Side Gable	1906	C	Tax
254 W. Root	Side Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
248 W. Root			N	
242 W. Root	Side Gable	1906	C	News/Tax
228 W. Root			N	
222 W. Root	Side Gable	ca 1903	C	News/Tax
214 W. Root	Side Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
73 S. Rural	Foursquare	ca 1906	C	H. Palmer Hse
83 S. Rural			N	
91 S. Rural			N	
Block No. 2				
231 W. Root	Gabled Ell	ca 1903	C	News/Tax
223 W. Root	Gabled Ell	ca 1903	C	News/Tax
217 W. Root			N	
105 S. Rural	Gabled Ell	ca 1903	C	News/Tax
113 S. Rural	Gabled Ell	ca 1903	C	News/Tax
119 S. Rural			N	
125 S. Rural	Gabled Ell	1905	C	Tax
133 S. Rural	Side Gable	1906	C	Tax
139 S. Rural	Gabled Ell	ca 1903	C	News/Tax
203 S. Rural			N	
209 S. Rural	Gabled Ell	ca 1903	C	News/Tax
217 S. Rural			N	
235 S. Rural	Gabled Ell	ca 1903	C	News/Tax
Block No. 3				
112 S. Rural	Gabled Ell	ca 1903	C	News/Tax
118 S. Rural			N	
124 S. Rural			N	
130 S. Rural			N	
138 S. Rural	Front Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
202 S. Rural			N	
210 S. Rural			N	
216 S. Rural	Gabled Ell	ca 1903	C	News/Tax

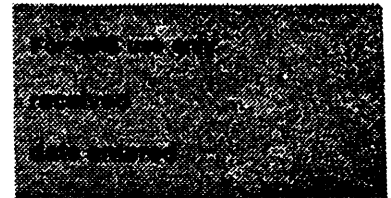
Resource count: 19 contributing, 13 noncontributing, 32 total

## Kissel's Wheelock Addition Historic District [keyed to map #4]

Block No. 1				
125 S. Teddy	Side Gable	1906	C	Tax

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131 S. Teddy				N	
137 S. Teddy	Front Gable	ca 1910	C		News/Tax
145 S. Teddy			N		
151 S. Teddy	Front Gable	ca 1910	C		News/Tax
157 S. Teddy	Two Story Cube	1907	C		Tax
203 S. Teddy	Side Gable	ca 1910	C		News/Tax
209 S. Teddy	Side Gable	1906	C		Tax
217 S. Teddy			N		
223 S. Teddy			N		
229 S. Teddy	Gabled Ell	1906	C		Tax
235 S. Teddy	Side Gable	ca 1910	C		News/Tax

Block No. 2

124 S. Teddy	Side Gable	1907	C		Tax
130 S. Teddy	Foursquare	ca 1915	C		Title
136 S. Teddy			N		
144 S. Teddy			N		
150 S. Teddy	Cross Gable	1907	C		Tax
156 S. Teddy			N		
202 S. Teddy	Foursquare	ca 1915	C		Title
210 S. Teddy	Cross Gable	1907	C		Tax
216 S. Teddy	Side Gable	ca 1910	C		News/Tax
222 S. Teddy	Foursquare	ca 1915	C		Title
304 E. Loos	Side Gable	ca 1910	C		News/Tax
310 E. Loos	Side Gable	1906	C		Tax
316 E. Loos			N		
237 S. Grand	Side Gable	ca 1910	C		A. Kissel Hse

223 S. Grand			N		
215 S. Grand	Side Gable	ca 1910	C		News/Tax
201 S. Grand			N		
187 S. Grand	Cross Gable	1907	C		Tax
173 S. Grand			N		
167 S. Grand			N		
159 S. Grand	Side Gable	1907	C		Tax
153 S. Grand	Front Gable	ca 1910	C		News/Tax
125 S. Grand	Cross Gable	ca 1910	C		News/Tax
119 S. Grand	Front Gable	ca 1910	C		News/Tax
111 S. Grand	Gabled Ell	1906	C		Tax
103-5 S. Grand	Front Gable	ca 1910	C		News/Tax

Block No. 3

438 S. Branch	Side Gable	ca 1910	C		News/Tax
446 S. Branch	Two Story Cube	ca 1910	C		Title
502 S. Branch	Side Gable	ca 1910	C		News/Tax
510 S. Branch	Front Gable	ca 1910	C		News/Tax

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518 S. Branch	Two Story Cube	ca 1910	C	Title
526 S. Branch			N	
431 S. Grand	Two Story Cube	ca 1910	C	Title
423 S. Grand	Side Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
417 S. Grand	Side Gable	1907	C	News/Tax
411 S. Grand			N	
403 S. Grand	Side Gable	ca 1917	C	Title
337 S. Grand	Foursquare	ca 1915	C	Title
331 S. Grand	Cross Gable	1907	C	Tax
323 S. Grand			N	
317 S. Grand			N	
309 S. Grand			N	
303 S. Grand	Front Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
321-23 E. Loos			N	
313 E. Loos			N	
307 E. Loos	Cross Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
301 E. Loos	Side Gable	ca 1917	C	Title
Block No. 4				
413 E. Church			N	
110 S. Grand	Side Gable	1907	C	Tax
116 S. Grand	Front Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
Block No. 5				
154 S. Grand	Front Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
160 S. Grand	Side Gable	ca 1905	C	News/Tax
166 S. Grand	Side Gable	ca 1917	C	Title
168 S. Grand			N	
174 S. Grand	Side Gable	ca 1917	C	Title
424 E. Pleasant			N	
432 E. Pleasant	Front Gable	ca 1917	C	News/Tax
438 E. Pleasant	Front Gable	ca 1917	C	News/Tax
502 E. Pleasant			N	
508 E. Pleasant	Front Gable	ca 1917	C	News/Tax
501 E. McKinley	Front Gable	ca 1917	C	News/Tax
439 E. McKinley	Front Gable	ca 1917	C	News/Tax
433 E. McKinley	Front Gable	ca 1917	C	News/Tax
427 E. McKinley	Front Gable	ca 1917	C	News/Tax
Block No. 6				
202 S. Grand	Front Gable	1905	C	Tax
208 S. Grand			N	
216 S. Grand			N	
222 S. Grand			N	
228 S. Grand	Front Gable	1905	C	Tax
424 E. Loos			N	

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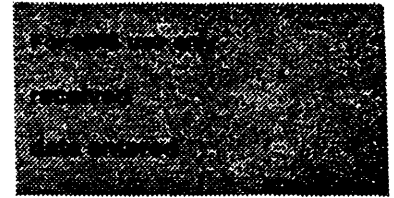
430 E. Loos	Side Gable	ca 1917	C	Title
434 E. Loos			N	
440 E. Loos	Cross Gable	1907	C	Tax
502 E. Loos			N	
508 E. Loos			N	
512 E. Loos	Front Gable	1908	C	News/Tax
518 E. Loos			N	
524 E. Loos			N	
526 E. Loos			N	
534 E. Loos	Cross Gable	1907	C	Tax
507 E. Pleasant			N	
441 E. Pleasant	Side Gable	ca 1917	C	News/Tax
435 E. Pleasant			N	
431 E. Pleasant			N	
423 E. Pleasant	Front Gable	ca 1917	C	News/Tax

Block No. 7

302 S. Grand	Foursquare	ca 1915	C	Title
310 S. Grand	Side Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
316 S. Grand	Side Gable	1907	C	Tax
322 S. Grand	Foursquare	ca 1915	C	Title
328 S. Grand	Front Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
336 S. Grand			N	
424 E. Maple			N	
434 E. Maple			N	
440 E. Maple	Cross Gable	1907	C	Tax
506 E. Maple			N	
512 E. Maple	Cross Gable	1907	C	Tax
520 E. Maple			N	
528 E. Maple	Cross Gable	1907	C	Tax
531 E. Loos	Cross Gable	1908	C	Tax
525 E. Loos	Front Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
519 E. Loos			N	
513 E. Loos	Cross Gable	1907	C	Tax
507 E. Loos	Side Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
503 E. Loos	Side Gable	1906	C	Tax
441 E. Loos	Cross Gable	1907	C	Tax
435 E. Loos	Side Gable	ca 1917	C	Title
431 E. Loos			N	
425 E. Loos			N	

Block No. 8

402 S. Grand	Cross Gable	1907	C	Tax
408 S. Grand			N	
416 S. Grand	Front Gable	1906	C	Tax
422 S. Grand			N	

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428 S. Grand	Front Gable	1907	C	Tax
404 E. Linden			N	
428 E. Linden			N	
436 E. Linden			N	
502 E. Linden	Front Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
508 E. Linden			N	
518 E. Linden	Cross Gable	1908	C	Tax
529 E. Maple	Cross Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
523 E. Maple			N	
513 E. Maple	Cross Gable	1907	C	Tax
505 E. Maple			N	
441 E. Maple	Cross Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
433 E. Maple			N	
425 E. Maple			N	

## Block No. 9

409 E. Linden			N	
508 S. Grand	Side Gable	1907	C	Tax
514 S. Grand	Side Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
524 S. Grand	Side Gable	ca 1910	C	News/Tax
515 E. Linden	Cross Gable	1908	C	Tax
509 E. Linden	Front Gable	1907	C	Tax
503 E. Linden			N	
439 E. Linden	Front Gable	1908	C	Tax
433 E. Linden			N	
425 E. Linden	Front Gable	1907	C	Tax

Resource count: 91 contributing, 57 noncontributing, 148 total

## Individual Properties

<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Classification</u>
124 South St.	Otto Kissel House	ca 1904	C
67 South St.	Wm. L. Kissel House	ca 1904	C
215 E. Sumner	Geo. A. Kissel House	1926	C
407 E. Sumner	Louis Kissel House	1898	C

Resource count: 4 contributing, 4 total

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
1902–1931		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	Builder/Architect
Various	Various

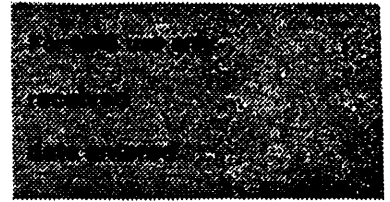
### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

#### Statement of Significance

The Louis Kissel and Sons Thematic Resources are being nominated under criterion A in the areas of industry and community planning, and under criterion B for association with the locally prominent Kissel family. The nomination includes three districts and four individual structures. The first district is the Kissel Motor Car Company Historic District, which encompasses the industrial complex in which the famous Kissel Car was manufactured (Criterion A, industry). The second district is the Kissel Addition Historic District and the third is the Kissel Wheelock Addition Historic District (Criterion A, community planning). Both are large residential portions of the city that the Kissels developed. The four individual structures are the residences of Louis Kissel and his Sons (Criterion B).

Growing slowly as an agricultural support center through the late 19th century, Hartford experienced phenomenal development between 1900 and 1930 due largely to the commercial and industrial endeavors of Louis Kissel & Sons.<sup>1</sup> Their early industrial activities involved trying to attract other industries to Hartford. Kissel influence was instrumental, for instance, in attracting the Bellack Clothing company to the city in 1903.<sup>2</sup> Then, when attempts to lure another manufacturer to Hartford failed, the Kissels decided to manufacture an automobile in Hartford – the Kissel Car. As a result of these industrial activities the city's population grew from a 1900 figure of 1,632 to 4,575 in 1920.<sup>3</sup> At the height of its success in the early 1920s, the company employed over 1,200 men to manufacture their automobiles. Equally as important to the community as the number of men hired, were the wages paid them. From a high of \$1,362,741 in 1920 to a low of \$483,562 in 1924, Kissel pumped an average of \$800,000 per year, over the last 15 years of its operation, into the Hartford area economy through wages paid its employees.<sup>4</sup>

The significance of Louis Kissel and Sons' influence in Hartford extends beyond the simple manufacture of cars (see organizational chart attached) to the impact they had on the physical development of Hartford. Their Real Estate Department platted and developed 3 additions to the city, thus adding over 465 residential lots to the city<sup>5</sup>. They then built houses on many of these lots from material provided by other Kissel enterprises (i.e. lumber yard, quarry, brickworks). The Kissels sold many of these houses to the workers that they were attracting to the city to work in their various enterprises. Additionally, one of their companies provided the first

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commercial electric service to the city.

Therefore, Louis Kissel, and his sons Otto, William, George and Adolph, were locally significant individuals who made substantial contributions to the city's development and industry. Their period of significance runs from 1902, when the Kissel Addition was platted and attempts to lure Bellack Clothing were made, to 1931, when auto production ceased.

### Historical Background

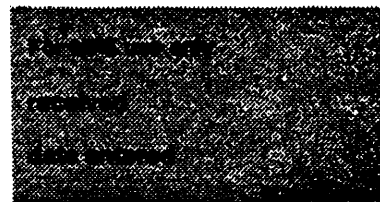
Hartford's founding is traced back to 1844 when James and George Rossman, then of Waukesha, came to the area, purchased land, and dammed the Rubicon River. A sawmill, gristmill and general store soon appeared. These enterprises served as the nucleus for the trade center that was evolving to serve the needs of the rapidly growing farm community in the area.<sup>6</sup>

The town's ability to serve farmers was greatly enhanced in 1855 when the Milwaukee and La Crosse Railroad built a line through town. The railroad also helped attract industry to Hartford. Among those settled in town by the turn of the century were the Hartford Stave Factory, Tobias Nehbrass Coffin Factory, Joseph Schwartz Brewery, W.B. Place Tannery, Uber Brothers Tannery, Edward Leach Tannery and the Hartford Plow Factory of Rowell and Company.<sup>7</sup> Despite these industries, Hartford's 1900 population was a modest 1,632, having grown by only 300 since 1890.<sup>8</sup>

The community's early settlers were primarily Yankees from Ohio and New York. Soon Germans began settling in the area, and by 1881 they accounted for 3/4 of the entire Washington County population. The town proper remained Yankee until about 1870, when Germans became the dominant ethnic group there too.<sup>9</sup>

One of the German families to move into the area was that of Louis Kissel. Originally a farmer in the surrounding countryside, Kissel's activity in Hartford began in 1883 when he opened up a hardware store.<sup>10</sup> His business enterprises expanded in 1892 when he bought 1/2 interest in the Hartford Plow Company. Later that year his sons Adolph and Otto joined him in business, thus creating the firm of Louis Kissel & Sons.<sup>11</sup>

Kissel bought out his partners in the Plow Company, A.D. Rowell and S.M. Seeley, in 1905. He did this by negotiating a sale of 1/2 interest in the company to Sears & Roebuck in Chicago. R.W. Sears saw the advantages of a partnership with the plow manufacturer. A 1905 letter from Sears to Kissel, indicated that "we have a rapidly growing agricultural implement business and especially in the growth in the line of implements you make and, from what Mr. Knight [a Sears employee] tells me, are peculiarly situated to make."<sup>12</sup> The Plow Company grew, and new lines were added with

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Sears' support. It began producing manure spreaders in 1909, for example.<sup>13</sup> Production at the plow company ended in late September, 1909 when a fire destroyed the factory. The Kissels sold their remaining interest in the firm's assets to an Illinois firm in March, 1910.<sup>14</sup> The loss of the Plow Company affected the city little, however, as production of the family's automobile, which started in 1906, was then the dominant manufacturing employer in Hartford.

The Kissels manufactured automobiles in Hartford from 1906 to 1931. It fell victim to the depression. Feeling a deep sense of responsibility to the city and its residents, the family attempted to keep the former auto factory productive by leasing space to the Rich-Vogel Shoe Company in the summer of 1932. By 1933 the shoe company was producing 1,500 pair per day and employing more than 250 workers.<sup>15</sup>

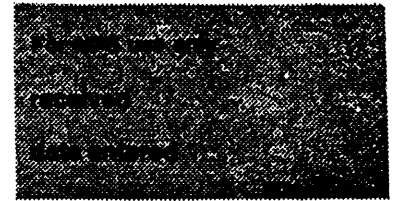
Hope for a return to better days at the factory was behind the Hartford Times June 8, 1934 headline that declared "Kissel Plant May Reopen; Plans Afoot." And indeed they were. The Kissel's applied for a \$200,000 loan from the Federal Reserve that summer, hoping that they could return to automobile manufacturing. Their loan was turned down, however, due to "...an unsatisfactory basis for credit."<sup>16</sup> Turning then to the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, a Depression era government agency, they again applied for a \$200,000 loan that would enable them to again build autos. Two months later, after having Senator Bob La Follette, Jr. appeal to the RFC on their behalf, the loan request was turned down. The November 17, 1934, letter cited no substantiation for anticipated success, a loan to project ratio of almost 100%, and the virtually total lack of collateral as the reasons for rejection.<sup>17</sup> Automobiles would never again be built in Hartford.

Hoping to renew their relationship with Sears, Kissel Industries applied for a \$20,000 Federal Reserve loan in 1935 that would allow them to produce outboard motors for the retailer. The Federal Reserve agreed to this loan if a local bank participated in it. By the time Kissel Industries sold the factory to the West Bend Aluminum Company in 1944, they had produced many Waterwitch outboard motors for Sears, turning out 33,000 in 1941 alone.<sup>18</sup>

Areas of Significance

## INDUSTRY

Hartford's early existence was sustained solely by its role as an agricultural support community. Farmers could conveniently buy their supplies and ship their produce from the city. Nineteenth Century manufacturing in Hartford reflected this agricultural emphasis, with the

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creation of the Hartford Stave Factory, Schwartz Brewery, three tanneries, and the Hartford Plow Factory. Early Twentieth Century industry showed a bit of diversity with the Hartford Canning Company's founding in 1905 and the International Stamping Company in 1918.<sup>19</sup> But none of these industries came to the forefront as a dominant employer in the city, or changed the city's image as an agricultural support community.

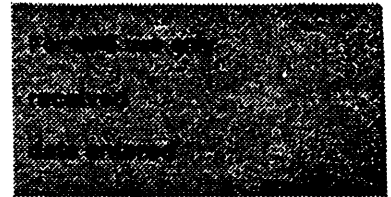
In early 1902, Louis Kissel and his sons owned one half interest in the Hartford Plow Company. With that basis in the city's industrial community, the Kissels made two significant contributions to Hartford's industrial development, contributions that would lift Hartford to a prominent position as a small manufacturing community in Wisconsin. Their first industrial contribution was for the role they played in trying to attracting other industries to the city. One such example was the Bellack Clothing factory. In March, 1902, the family offered an inducement to draw a new factory to the area. They pledged to buy \$10,000 of a company's stock and provide free land for a building in the Kissel Addition, if the new factory would employ a minimum of 100 people. Bellack Clothing responded, but they wanted a \$15,000 bonus and a \$10,000 interest free loan to locate in the city. In negotiations conducted by Otto Kissel, the company agreed to a \$10,000 bonus and a \$15,000 loan. The city could not put the deal together, however, so the Kissel's made the \$15,000 loan themselves. In addition, the family agreed to contribute \$2,000 to the bonus. Choosing the Kissel's proposal over one submitted by Cedarburg, Bellack located in Hartford and opened their doors in December 1902. The fact that Bellack left town in 1908 does not diminish the significance of the role the Kissel played in attracting them to Hartford.<sup>20</sup>

The family made another attempt to attract a factory to town in 1905. This time they were after a harvester manufacturer, pledging again to invest if the company relocated. Failing this, Kissel promised to build a factory that would produce gasoline engines. Efforts to secure the new manufacturer failed, and the Kissels announced that they would build a facility in the city to produce the gas engines.<sup>21</sup> Construction of the gasoline motor factory was the catalyst that led to the production of automobiles. On Monday, June 25, 1906, the Kissel Motor Car Company was incorporated. Capitalized at \$50,000, attorney H.K. Butterfield, a long time Kissel associate, was named president, Otto Kissel was the vice president and George Kissel was to be the secretary/treasurer and general manager of the company that would produce touring cars, runabouts and trucks "on a large scale."<sup>22</sup>

The first touring car produced that year was delivered to E.A. Savage, the Kissel's new Milwaukee sales agent. Sporting a 30 horse, 4 cylinder engine, the car was royal blue with black leather upholstery. In September, 1906, the Kissel's signed an agreement with McDuffy Auto,

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Chicago. McDuffy ordered a minimum of 100 cars that were to be sold at \$1,850 each.<sup>23</sup>

Events progressed rapidly for the company. Establishing distributors across the country, Kissel had orders for 425 of their 1908 models by the end of July, 1907. To meet the demand for their cars, the company started a night shift in 1908, which increased the number of men employed in auto production to over 400, and introduced two new models in 1909.<sup>24</sup> Demands upon the factory increased with the introduction of a Kissel truck in 1910. Incorporating a 50 horsepower engine, a 3-5 ton payload, enclosed chain drive and solid rubber tires, it was expected to be a popular venture. Attempts to cope with expansion continued into 1912 as the company increased its capitalization from \$400,000 to \$1,000,000, and made plans to open an engine factory in Milwaukee.<sup>25</sup>

Kissel success, as well as their cars, caught the imagination of many of America's rich and famous. British aviator Claude Grahame-White and President William Taft posed for pictures in the car in 1910 and 1911 respectively. "Paramount Star Actress" Anita King drove a Kissel across the country in 1915, later coming to Hartford to visit the factory.<sup>26</sup> Many other famous folk owned Kissels, including Fatty Arbuckle, Al Jolson, Eddy Duchin, Amelia Earhart, James Montgomery Flagg, Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks, William S. Hart, Rudy Vallee and Ralph de Palma. Tyrone Power drove a 1927 DeLuxe 8-75 "Gold Bug" in the film, "The Eddy Duchin Story."<sup>27</sup>

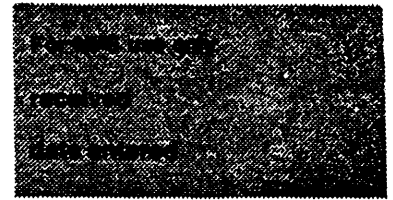
Production peaked in 1920, however, and began a slow decline thereafter. Despite a 1929 order for 500 taxicabs from Bradfield Motors, the company fell victim to the Depression. It entered receivership in September, 1930, an action not opposed by George or William Kissel, then president and secretary/treasurer respectively. The Kissel Car Company was liquidated in July, 1932, when its assets were sold to Hartford Industries, another Kissel enterprise.<sup>28</sup>

Despite the demise of Kissel Car manufacturing in the early 1930s, the city's population had grown from its 1900 level of 1,632 to a high of 4,575 in 1920 (it had fallen back to 3,745 in 1930, shortly before production ceased).<sup>29</sup>

The Kissel Car industrial complex is locally significant as the location of the most powerful industrial concern in the City of Hartford. The remaining buildings of the factory complex are the most significant resources relating to this important industrial concern, and are the buildings most closely connected to the actual production of the Kissel cars. The industrial contributions of Louis Kissel and Sons elevated Hartford from a small agricultural support community to a nationally visible manufacturing community. They also spurred other industrial and

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Kissel Thematic

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economic development in Hartford. The Kissel Motor Car factory is the single extant resource which evokes the industrial importance of the Kissel family in Hartford.

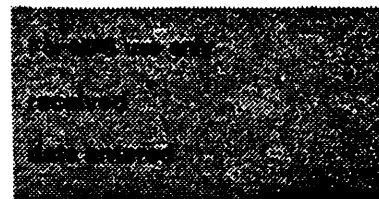
**COMMUNITY PLANNING**

At the turn of the century electricity was a highly prized commodity that the City of Hartford wanted its citizens to enjoy. The Kissels, through the Hartford Plow Company, owned and operated the Hartford Electric Company. In 1897 the city granted them an exclusive 10 year contract to provide the city with electricity. Proprietors of the electric company were Adolph, Otto and Louis Kissel, as well as A.D. Rowell and S.M. Seely.<sup>30</sup>

In 1907 the city was thinking of building an electrical generating plant itself. The Kissels then offered the city theirs, along with all their wire, poles and other equipment for \$15,700. The city must have passed this offer up, because in 1908 they offered the Kissels \$5,000 for their poles, lines and house connections. The Kissels accepted this offer despite a loss of \$2,600 for the residential meters they had installed. By December, 1908, the city generating plant was in operation and the Kissels stopped selling electricity commercially. Still, they are significant for their role in providing the city with its initial electrical service.<sup>31</sup>

Unquestionably, however, Kissel's greatest contribution to community development came with their advertising to attract workers to Hartford to work in the plow works and car factory, as well as their role in developing three large additions to the city. Throughout the first decade of the century, Kissel regularly advertised for employees. Early ads called for 25 or 50 men, later ads called for hundreds. They ran ads in Milwaukee papers, too, and sometimes even offered 10% off on house prices to induce people when needed in a hurry. This Kissel inspired growth was looked proudly upon by the city. Explaining the 931 person increase between the 1905 state census and the 1910 federal census, the Press declared that "this increase in our population has been almost solely due to the Kissel Motor Car company, which employs such a large number of men."<sup>32</sup>

Prior to the Kissel advertising, the geographic area encompassed by the City of Hartford had grown slowly. There had been only ten additions platted since the original plat was filed for record in 1847. The eighth was platted in 1875 and the ninth and tenth of these additions were platted in 1894 and 1895. Clearly, the city's physical growth slowed dramatically in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, after the first six additions were platted in the town's first ten years.<sup>33</sup>

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Kissel Thematic

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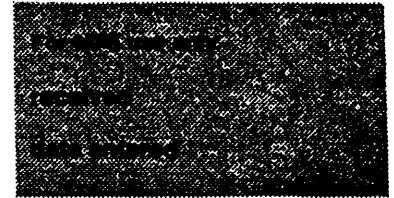
The city had to expand rapidly to meet the demand created by this influx of Kissel inspired workers. The Kissels facilitated this need by platting and developing the Kissel Addition (11th addition to the city), Kissel Wheelock Addition (13th addition to the city), and Addition to the Kissel Wheelock Addition (20th addition) to the City of Hartford. This was accomplished through the Real Estate Department of L. Kissel & sons, directed by Otto P. Kissel. The Kissels operated a vertically integrated company, and controlled all facets of building production. Timber was purchased from northern Wisconsin and distributed through their own lumber yard. They developed a brick yard and quarry, bought land, hired local construction labor, and sold their own buildings.

The fabric of these Kissel built houses was largely uniform. They offered stone basements, frame construction, golden oak finish, hardwood floors, electric lights enameled plumbing fixtures and water/sewer connections.<sup>34</sup> The Kissels promoted a strong visual unity in these additions by limiting the number styles available. The gabled ell and side gable were the most prominent in the Kissel Addition, while the side gable, front gable, cross gable and American Foursquare were predominant in the Kissel Wheelock and Addition to Kissel Wheelock Additions.

The Kissel Addition contained 220 lots in the southwest quadrant of the city. George W. Morse surveyed and platted the addition between October 8 and 15, 1901. The resultant plat was filed for record on October 6, 1902, by Louis Kissel, Adolph Kissel and Otto P. Kissel.<sup>35</sup> Selling for an average of \$300/lot, 102 lots had been sold in the addition by October 16, 1902. More than twenty houses had been completed by November, and 20-30 more, as well as wooden sidewalks, were projected for 1903. To promote development, the Kissels loaned the city \$2,500 to lay watermains in the addition.<sup>36</sup> The Kissels planned this addition for smaller houses and economically minded buyers. No houses with more than 8 rooms were sold here.<sup>37</sup> This addition was largely developed by 1907.

The Kissel Wheelock Addition was platted by C.F. Liens in August, 1903. Louis, Otto and Adolph Kissel were the petitioners when the 90 lot plat was filed for record on March 31, 1904.<sup>38</sup> Unlike the Kissel Addition, this one was planned for slightly larger houses. Fewer with less than 8 rooms were sold in the Kissel Wheelock Addition, while most had 9. Some had as many as 10 or 12 rooms. Newspaper stories indicated that prices from 1904 and 1908 varied between \$2,200 and \$3,800 for these houses.<sup>39</sup> The Kissels worked hard to make this addition attractive. They planted 350 Silver Maple trees and 150 Carolina Poplars in May, 1904, as well as laying 20,000 square feet of concrete sidewalks in 1905.<sup>40</sup>

The Addition to Kissel's Wheelock Addition was surveyed in November, 1916, by W.T. Liens. This new addition, directly to the east of the Kissel

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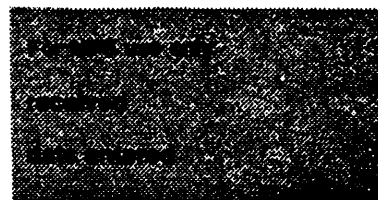
Continuation sheet Kissel Thematic  
Washington County, WI Item number 8 Page 7

Wheelock Addition, was ordered by Otto P. Kissel and his wife Lilly, Louis Kissel's wife Catherine, Adolph P. Kissel and his wife Lillian, William Kissel and his wife Elizabeth, George A. Kissel and his wife Blanche, as well as the estate of Louis Kissel.<sup>41</sup> Although not platted until 1916, tax records from 1907 indicate that Kissel inspired construction was already underway in this addition. Development was largely completed by 1917.

The Kissel's contributions to community planning and development were unique in the overall history of Hartford's development. As the industrial expansion of the Kissel Motor Car Company resulted in an accompanying increase in population, Louis Kissel and Sons played a significant role in planning, platting and developing a large portion of the community's residential area between 1902 and 1917. The Kissels' contribution was clearly of major importance in shaping Hartford's built environment. The Kissel Addition Historic District and Kissel Wheelock Addition Historic District remain largely as planned by the Kissel family and represent the important contributions of the Kissels to the planning and development of present day Hartford.

## ASSOCIATION WITH SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

Louis Kissel was the driving force behind Louis Kissel and Sons and all that they accomplished in Hartford. He was born in Nassau, Germany, in 1839. He came to Wisconsin in 1857 and settled in rural Washington County. Moving into Hartford in 1883, Kissel began a business when he opened a hardware store. Seeing an opportunity to expand his holdings and capitalize on Hartford's role as an agricultural support community, Kissel bought one half interest in the Hartford Plow company in 1892. The Plow Company provided the foundation for further Kissel expansion. As the dominant member of Louis Kissel and Sons, Louis Kissel was the driving force behind the effort to attract new industries (i.e. Bellack Clothing) to Hartford, as well as the effort to build a new gasoline engine plant. With the gas engine plant in place, and encouraged by his sons' efforts to build an automobile, Louis Kissel agreed that they should begin commercial production of that auto. Kissel was the driving force behind the efforts to plat and develop the Kissel Addition and Kissel Wheelock Additions to the City of Hartford. He was among the petitioners for these additions and over saw all efforts to develop them. Louis Kissel remained active in his business endeavors until his death. He was in the hardware store one day in 1908 when an angry customer came in and wanted to see Otto, presumably about a real estate deal that they had made. He was shot in the argument that ensued, and died shortly thereafter.<sup>42</sup> Although Louis Kissel did not live to enjoy the great success shared by his sons and the Kissel Car Company, he was directly responsible for providing the physical resources and financial resources needed for the automobile's development, as well as the development of the Kissel and Kissel Wheelock Additions to the city.

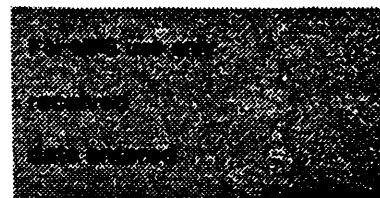
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The Louis Kissel House (407 E. Sumner) is locally significant, therefore, as the best extant resource representing the individual importance of Louis Kissel to the history of Hartford. The house served as his residence from its 1898 construction to his death in 1908, and, despite its changing usage, remains largely as it was when Louis lived there. The house represents the contributions of Louis Kissel as the driving force behind the Kissel family's industrial and community development efforts in Hartford.

The two major endeavors promoted by Louis Kissel were the Kissel Motor Car Company and the Louis Kissel and Sons Real Estate Department. Two of his sons ran the Motor Car Company, and the other two managed the Real Estate Department. George Kissel and William Kissel were the sons who managed the Motor Car company. George A. Kissel moved with his parents to Hartford at the age of two. He was educated in the city's public schools, and was employed at his father's hardware store before being admitted to the family partnership. William Kissel was four years old when his family moved to Hartford. He too received his education in the city's schools, as well as the Spencerian Business College in Milwaukee. He began his business career at the plow factory, and was soon admitted to the family partnership. It was George and William who, in 1905, built an experimental car. This led to the 1906 incorporation of the Kissel Motor Car Company. George was the secretary/treasurer and general manager of the company at the time of incorporation. He later became president of the company as did William become the secretary/treasurer. George and William assumed almost exclusive control over automobile production upon their father's death. They guided the great physical expansion of the automobile factory that occurred between 1908 and its demise. They controlled over 1,200 employees at the company's high point in the early 1920s, and were responsible for pumping over \$1.3 million in the Hartford's economy through the salaries paid those employees.<sup>43</sup> They were also responsible for the national attention that Hartford drew as a result of the Kissel Car. Active in fraternal orders including the Masons and Tripoli Temple, George died in 1942 at age 61.<sup>44</sup> William Kissel's community involvement included membership in the Masons, Tripoli Temple, Rotary, Knights of Pythias and Hartford Chamber of Commerce. Born in 1879, he died in 1972.<sup>45</sup>

The George Kissel House (215 E. Sumner) is locally significant as the best extant resource representing the importance of George Kissel to the history of Hartford. The house served as his residence from its 1926 construction to his 1942 death, and remains largely as it did when George lived there. The house represents the individual contributions that George made as one of the two men who developed the Kissel car, guided the Kissel Motor Car Company through its phenomenal growth and, as such, was responsible for much of the national attention focused on Hartford as a result of the car.

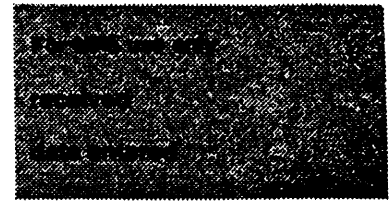
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The William Kissel House (67 South Street) is locally significant as the best extant resource representing the importance of William Kissel to the history of Hartford. The house served as his residence from its early twentieth century construction, to his death in 1972. Although it has been remodeled into an upper/lower duplex, resulting in assigning different uses to some of the rooms, dividing the entry foyer, and covering up a few of the exterior windows, the house has not been altered to the point that William Kissel would not recognize it. The house has retained its original form and scale, imposing front porch, and its most prominent interior feature from the William Kissel period of ownership - the front and middle parlour and dining room combination. As such, the house represents the individual contributions that William made as one of the two men who developed the Kissel car, guided the Kissel Motor Car Company through its phenomenal growth and, as such, was responsible for much of the national attention focused on Hartford as a result of the car.

Otto P. Kissel and Adolph Kissel entered partnership with their father in 1892, thus creating firm of Louis Kissel and Sons. Otto and Adolph were the sons who managed, and controlled upon their father's death, the Real Estate Department of Louis Kissel and Sons. As such they were directly responsible for the development of Kissel's Addition, Kissel's Wheelock Addition, and the Addition to Kissel's Wheelock Addition to the City of Hartford. They negotiated the sale of lots, as well as the construction and sale of houses on the lots. Otto and Adolph attempted to make sure that their additions offered the best amenities possible, thus paid to install sidewalks and trees in the Kissel Wheelock Addition<sup>46</sup>, as well as loaning money to the city to install a watermain in the Kissel Addition.<sup>47</sup> The visual unity of the residential districts today is directly attributable to the management decisions made by Otto and Adolph Kissel as they sold the lots in the additions, and decided what types and styles of houses they would have their construction crews build. Indeed, Hartford's built environment increased dramatically under the direction of these two men. Otto Kissel was also one of the incorporating officers of the Motor Car Company, although he was never active in its management. He was also one of the original petitioners for the creation of the First National Bank in 1906, Kissel was elected an officer in 1907. He was the bank's president in 1930.<sup>48</sup>

The Otto Kissel House (124 South Street) is locally significant as the best extant resource representing the importance of Otto Kissel to the history of Hartford. The house served as his residence from its early twentieth century construction to his death, and remains largely as it did when Otto lived there. The house represents the individual contributions that Otto Kissel made as one of the two brothers responsible for managing and controlling the Real Estate Department of Louis Kissel and Sons in general, and developing the Kissel Addition, Kissel Wheelock Addition and Addition

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Kissel Thematic

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to Kissel Wheelock Addition in particular.

Summary

The Kissel influence in Hartford is inescapable. Beginning with their position as prudent businessmen, the Kissel family offered the community its first commercial electric service, a well-run manufacturing concern, and a real estate department that was planning and developing large portions of the city. They were also demonstrating a strong commitment to the city by going to the lengths they did to attract other industries to Hartford. Their greatest impact, however, came through the success of their 1906 venture, the Kissel Car. Attracting workers to Hartford to build the automobile, the city's population almost tripled between 1900 and 1920. As such the dynamics of Hartford's economy was unalterably changed from a small agricultural support community to a large manufacturing center with product and reputation known world wide. These efforts that Louis Kissel and Sons made are reflected today in the Kissel Motor Car Company Historic District, the Kissel Addition Historic District, the Kissel Wheelock Historic District, and the individual houses of Louis, William, Otto and George (Adolph's is included in the Kissel Wheelock Addition District) Kissel.

Preservation Activity

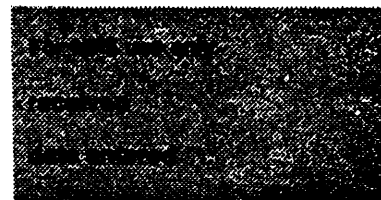
The City of Hartford recognizes the historical importance of the Kissel family contributions to the City, and has sponsored this nomination. Preservation activity is mostly limited to routine maintenance. The nomination of the resources relating to the Kissel family is a first step in recognizing those resources and will assist in assuring their future preservation and protection.

Archaeological Potential

One archaeological site has been recorded in the city limits of Hartford and is a historic report of an Indian campsite on "Wig Wam Hill" which is outside the nominated area. No systematic study of the City of Hartford or survey of archaeological resources has been made, thus individual resources are unknown and unevaluated. There is a likelihood, however, that excavation in the areas may produce additional sites.

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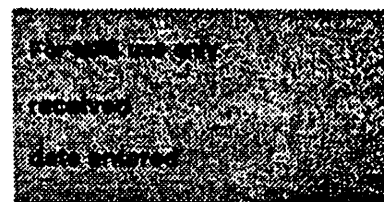


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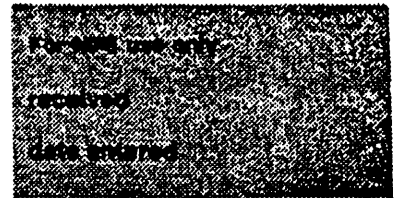
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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet 2 of 1

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acres of nominated property** See Continuation Sheet

Quadrangle name Continuation Sheet

Quadrangle scale Cont. Sheet

**UTM References** See Continuation Sheet

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Zone Easting Northing

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

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

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<b>state</b>	N/A	<b>code</b>	N/A	<b>county</b>	N/A	<b>code</b>	N/A
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**11. Form Prepared By**

<b>name/title</b>	John N. Vogel, Consulting Historian
-------------------	-------------------------------------

organization	N/A
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**date** 9 June 1988

**street & number** 301 North 73rd Street

**telephone** (414) 258-6598

**city or town** Milwaukee

<b>state</b>	Wisconsin	53213
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## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

**The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:**

       national             state        X   local

**As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.**

**State Historic Preservation Officer signature** *x*

**title** State Historic Preservation Officer- WI

date July 28, 1900

**For NPS use only**

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

**date**

**Keeper of the National Register**

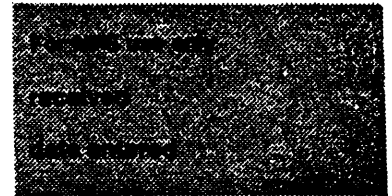
**Attest:**

**date**

**Chief of Registration**

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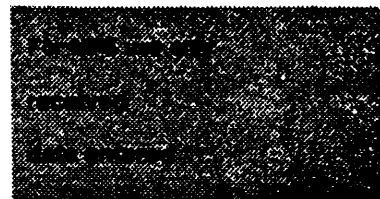
Continuation sheet Kissel Thematic Washington County, WI Item number 9 Page 1

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

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



Kissel Thematic

Continuation sheet Washington County, WI Item number 9

Page 2

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Louis Kissel

Otto

William

Adolph

George

L. Kissel & Sons

Kissel Car Co.  
1906-1931

Hartford Plow Co.  
1892-1909

Kissel Mfg.  
1906

Real Estate  
1900 ->

1st Nat'l Bank  
1906-1930s

Retail  
1883 ->

Hartford Elec.

Residential  
Customers

Stone  
Quarry

Brick  
Yard

Lmbr

Hrdwr

City  
Business  
Growth

Bellack Cloth. Others

Kissel Addn  
1902

Kissel/Wheelock Addn  
1904

Kissel Addn to K/W  
1917

Werner

Palmer

Technical Innovations

Economic Contribution  
to Hartford

FIGURE 1

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic GroupName Kissel, Louis, & Sons of Hartford TR  
State Washington County, WISCONSIN

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

Cover

**Substantive Review**Keeper Beth Boland 11/1/88

1. Kissel's Addition Historic District

Entered in the  
National RegisterKeeper Melrose Byers 11/1/88

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

2. Kissel's Wheelock Addition Historic  
DistrictEntered in the  
National RegisterKeeper Melrose Byers 11/1/88

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

3. Kissel, George A., House

Entered in the  
National RegisterKeeper Melrose Byers 11/1/88

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

4. Kissel, Louis, House

Entered in the  
National RegisterKeeper Melrose Byers 11/1/88

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

5. Kissel, Otto P., House

Entered in the  
National RegisterKeeper Melrose Byers 11/1/88

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

6. Kissel, William L., House

Entered in the  
National RegisterKeeper Melrose Byers 11/1/88

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

7. Kissel Motor Car Industrial District

**Substantive Review**Keeper Beth Boland 12/27/88

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

**DOE/OWNER OBJECTION**

8.

Keeper \_\_\_\_\_

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

9.

Keeper \_\_\_\_\_

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

10.

Keeper \_\_\_\_\_

Attest \_\_\_\_\_