

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

For NPS use only

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

received **SEP 12 1985**

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic THOMAS B. HART HOUSE

and/or common THOMAS B. HART HOUSE

2. Location

street & number 1609 Church Street not for publication

city, town Wauwatosa vicinity of

state Wisconsin code 55 county Milwaukee code 079

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name ROY D. and MARY JO COLE

street & number 1609 Church Street

city, town Wauwatosa vicinity of state Wisconsin 53213

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Milwaukee County Courthouse

street & number 901 N. 9th Street

city, town Milwaukee state Wisconsin 53233

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title WISC. INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PLACES has this property been determined eligible? yes no
WAUWATOSA LANDMARK 1978

date 1975 federal state county local

depository for survey records STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN, 816 State St.

city, town MADISON state WISC. 53706

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input 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

Situated on one of the oldest residential streets in Wauwatosa, above the Menomonee River, the Thomas B. Hart home is recognized as one of the finest Victorian Gothic revival cottages in the county.¹ The original house was probably a T-shaped, two-story dwelling, that faced east. Although it has undergone numerous renovations during the last 130-140 years (see diagram enclosed), and little of the original interior remains, the exterior front facade has not been significantly altered since the enclosed 1912 photograph; however, in the 1920's a three-story addition was added on the rear. A myriad of small bays, decks, enclosures, and rooms have completed the approximately 43 ft. by 50 ft., asymmetrically massed dwelling.

The most outstanding single feature of the house is the bargeboards. On the entire property, there are six distinctive sets in nine sections. On the front facade (east), there are three separate patterns. The most spectacular is over the lancet arched window. It is a hand-carved, delicately rounded, lacey scroll. On the eave over the front door is the most common design of the house, a quatrefoil, which is also repeated on both of the gables of the back addition, northwest side and southwest side as well as the northeast gable in a narrower treatment. Of the two remaining patterns on the house, one is an oakleaf pattern on the southern front gable and one is a trefoil floral design on the southeast gable. The sixth is a simple scroll design on the barn. All are in perfect condition.

Aside from the bargeboards, the front facade has other Early Gothic Revival/Victorian features. The pediment over the front porch door has a very large trefoil. Spandrels separate the five double columns which form an arcade encasing the front porch on the north side. On the south side of the facade, there is an octagonal bay set upon a chiselled coursed limestone foundation, and eight pointed gables, with a lancet arched window above the front porch.

Missing from the 1912 photograph are the upper finials over the gables, the chimney, and the woven wood lattice under the porch. Fortunately the new owners, the Coles, discovered what appears to be the original flushboard siding, and the original paint colors after having removed the steel siding and doing a scraping. They do plan to restore the building by removing all of the steel siding and painting the original colors, replacing the finials, and the woven latticework. Other than the bargeboards, the north, the west, and the south facades have little of interest. The only recent addition to the building occurred last year when the Coles modernized the kitchen. At that point, they placed an octagonal bay, similar to the one located on the front, outside of the kitchen window, on the west facade.

The barn/garage, located on its original site at the northwest corner of the property, has also undergone some recent modifications. Due to its unique architectural interest with vertical board and batten design, and the simple scroll around the eaves, the Coles decided to retain the building. However, it was severely rotted around the foundation. By raising the barn, they removed one foot of the wooden base and replaced it upon a new foundation, retaining much of the original context. The Hart House represents the decorative tastes of the late Gothic and Victorian design era. It is illustrative of changing tastes, attitudes, and uses over a period of time in the past, from the 1850's to the present.

Footnotes:

1. Zimmermann, H. Russell. The Heritage Guidebook; Landmarks and Historical Sites in Southeastern Wisconsin. (Milwaukee, 1976) p. 148. (Based upon general visual study.)

8. Significance

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

Specific dates Early 1840's ¹ **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Thomas B. Hart House is a good example of Victorian Gothic Revival architecture and is recognized for its outstanding bargeboards and Victorian detailing. Not only is the Hart House significant for its architectural attributes, but also for its association with early Wauwatosa history and the prominence of some of its owners.

Historical Background

The Hart House is located in the historic core of the present City of Wauwatosa, an area originally known as "Hart's Mills." This land had been ceded by the Pottawatomis to the U.S. government in 1831, though occupancy of the land was not to take place until 1836. In 1837, Charles Hart built a grist mill, with financial aid of his brother, Thomas B. Hart, even though he didn't gain title to the whole 160 acres until 1839. The Harts were followed by others, including Parley J. Shumway, who established a blacksmith shop and a tavern. In 1842 "Hart's Mills" became the commercial hub of the area, and the name of the town was changed to Wauwatosa. ²

Historical Significance

Due to the vagueness of existing tax records and a lack of some of the early records, it may well be impossible to determine when, or by whom, the house was built. There is no abstract available, or insurance data from Chicago Title and Trust Fund Co. However, the oldest available tax assessment records of Wauwatosa township are from 1846, and they suggest that there was a dwelling on the land where the present house is located. ³

Writing on the Hart House for the Milwaukee Journal (Sept. 28, 1969), ⁴ H. Russell Zimmermann interviewed Mrs. Price Davis, a woman who had lived in the neighboring house for over fifty years. She stated that her house, the Day House, was built some time between 1854 and 1857, and that her neighbor's house (the Hart House) was built fifteen years earlier. ⁵ If this assertion, together with the township records, could be substantiated, the Hart House would be the oldest in Wauwatosa.

The first possible proof of the Hart House's existence is its appearance on the 1858 Walling Plat Map of Milwaukee County, based on an 1857 survey by Henry Gardiner, Civil Engineer. ⁶ On the map the house is labelled as belonging to C. C. Rose. This is undoubtedly referring to Courtland D. Rose, who bought one-half acre and, presumably, the house from Perley Shumway in 1856 for \$250. ⁷

While C.D. Rose played no significant role in Wauwatosa's history, Perley Shumway certainly did. Mr. Shumway, who may well have been the first resident of the house, was the village smith, and owner of a tavern known as Wauwatosa House, which was reputed to be part of the underground railroad. ⁸ None of these buildings exist presently, but the enclosed map shows their location. Mr. Shumway was also active in local politics, being elected to the state assembly in 1848. ⁹

9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see Continuation Sheet, Item 9.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one

Quadrangle name Wauwatosa, WI

Quadrangle scale 7.5'

UTM References

A

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4	7	6	6	8	5	0
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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification Lot 7, Assessor's Plat Number 24, being par of South East 1/4 of section 21, Township 7 North, Range 21 East. In the City of Wauwatosa, County of Milwaukee, State of Wisconsin.

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

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dawn F. Goshorn

organization Hatterhorn Enterprises date 8/30/84

street & number 1845 N. Farwell, Suite #301 telephone (414) 272-6595

city or town Milwaukee state Wisconsin

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state 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 *[Signature]*

title DIRECTOR OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION date SEP. 3, 1985

For NPS use only

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

[Signature] Entered in the National Register date 10-10-85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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date entered

Continuation sheet Hist. Sign. Hart House Item number 8 Page 2

Between 1862 when Mr. Rose sold the house and 1874 when Thomas B. Hart moved in, the house had a series of four owners. The most prominent during this period was Robert Hill, a local merchant and a charter vice-president of the Wisconsin National Bank

Thomas B. Hart, with his son T. W. Hart, owned the dwelling for the next 38 years. Thomas B. Hart is respected as one of the central figures of Wauwatosa history. He was an early pioneer and a brother of the first permanent settler, Charles Hart. Thomas B. Hart had not yet relocated in Wauwatosa, but had sent money from the East for Charles to build a grist mill in 1837. Thus, the early Wauwatosa settlement was called "Hart's Mills." 10

Thomas B. Hart joined his brother after a few months and played a part in local affairs. Sometimes referred to as Benjamin, he was elected one of the first 1837 township supervisors for the area, involving himself in the operation of the grist mill as well as in real estate. Having prospered substantially from his various enterprises, Mr. Hart spent his remaining years in this house on Church Street. 11

Between 1910 and 1937, the Hart House changed ownership twice before being bought by Dr. Stanley J. Seeger. Dr. Seeger was not only locally prominent, but also gained recognition for his medical work. He was the Chief of Staff of two hospitals in the Milwaukee area during the 1920's and 1930's: Columbia Hospital and Children's Hospital. Dr. Seeger received wide national acclaim for his work as a surgeon and for his original work in the treatment of burns. 12

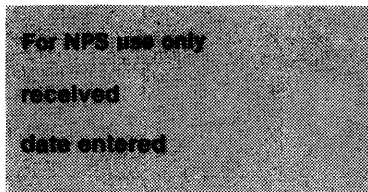
In 1937, the house was sold to the Hemp Family. During the war years it was divided into apartments. They maintained ownership of the Hart House until 1982, when it was purchased by its present owners, Roy and Mary Jo Cole. The Coles are presently engaged in an extensive restoration effort to return the house to its former grandeur.

Architectural Significance

Situated on one of the oldest residential streets, above the Menomonee River, the Thomas B. Hart House is recognized as one of the finest Gothic Revival/Victorian cottages in the county. The original house was probably a T-shaped, two-story dwelling facing east. Although it

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Hart
Continuation sheet Architectural Sign. House Item number 8 Page 3

has undergone numerous renovations during the last 130 to 140 years, and little of the original interior remains, the exterior has been kept amazingly intact (see 1912 photograph). In the 1920's, a three-story addition was added on the rear. A myriad of small bays, decks, enclosures, and rooms have completed the approximately 43 ft. by 50 ft., asymmetrically massed dwelling.

The most outstanding single architectural feature of the house are the six distinctive sets of barge boards in nine sections. The first, a lacey, delicate scrollwork over the lancet arched window, is hand-carved, round, and totally different from the others. The additional bargeboards are all sawed, as was typical of the era. The quatrefoil is the single most common design of the house, repeated in two designs on four sections of bargeboards. The oakleaf and trefoil floral designs are the remaining designs on the bargeboards of the house.

Aside from the bargeboards, the front facade has other Gothic Revival/Victorian features. The pediment over the front porch door has a very large trefoil. Spandrels separate the five double columns which form an arcade encasing the front porch on the north side. On the south side of the facade, there is an octagonal bay set upon a chiselled coursed limestone foundation, and the roof has eight pointed gables, with a lancet arched window above the front porch. The barn/garage, with its simplified scroll pattern, still retains its vertical board and battled siding, typical of the Gothic period. These elements, together with its age, combine to make the Thomas B. Hart House a fine example of a Gothic Revival/Victorian building.

The following buildings are other examples of Gothic Revival/Victorian architecture in Southeastern Wisconsin, as noted in H. Russell Zimmerman's The Heritage Guidebook;

- 1) # 655. George McCurlie Residence, W300 N5573 County Hwy. E, Hartland c. 1850
2. # 656. Congregational Church Annex, 230 E. Capitol Drive, Hartland, c. 1871
- 3) # 681. David Edward's Residence, 414 Silver Lake Street, Oconomowoc, c. 1875

The following buildings are examples from Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places for the community of Wauwatosa:

- 7220 W. Harwood Avenue, Wauwatosa, WI 1854
- 1514 Church Street, Wauwatosa, WI 1888

Updated with various architectural and stylistic refinements over the years, the Thomas Hart House appears to represent one of the most distinctive examples of eclectic "Victorian era" Design in the region.

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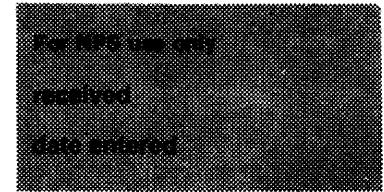
Continuation sheet Significance Item number 8 Page 4

Footnotes:

1. Interview with Mrs. Price Davis; part of an oral history compiled by H. Russell Zimmermann. 1967-1968.
2. Wilkomen, Edward, Historic Wauwatosa, (No. 44; Jan, 1985) P. 6
2. Assessment Records of the Township of Wauwatosa, 1846-1857.
4. The Milwaukee Journal, September 28, 1969. (part 7).
5. Interview with Mrs. Price Davis; part of an oral history compiled by H. Russell Zimmermann, 1967-1968.
6. The Walling Plat Map of Milwaukee County, Walling, Henry Francis; New York, 1858.
7. Registrar of Deeds, Milwaukee County (Vol. 55, InsertWDA, 1856), p. 302.
8. Clapp, Emma. Reminiscences of Early Wauwatosa, (privately printed in Wauwatosa, 1902) p. 18.
9. Watrous, Jerome A. Memoirs of Milwaukee County, 2 Vols. (Chicago, 1881) p. 160.
10. Foley, Elizabeth V. Sketches of Wauwatosa, (Privately printed in Wauwatosa, 1932) pp. 8-15
11. Ibid., p. 41.
12. The Milwaukee Journal, June 20, 1952.

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Continuation sheet Major Bibliographical

Item number 9

Page 1

Assessment Records of the Township of Wauwatosa, 1846-1857.

Clapp, Emma. Reminiscences of Early Wauwatosa. Privately printed
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Davis, Mrs. Price. Interviewed as part of an oral history compiled
by Russell Zimmermann (1967-1968).

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Wilkomen, Edward. Historic Wauwatosa, (No. 44; Jan., 1985).

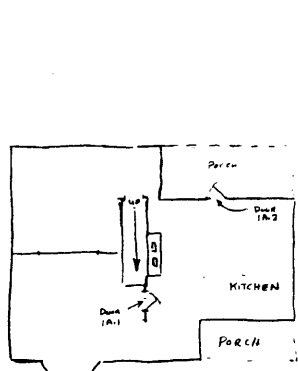


Fig. 1A - 1st fl.

ORIGINAL HOUSE

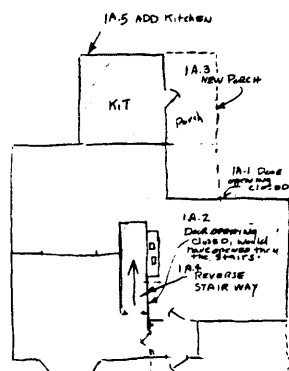


Fig. 2A - 1st fl.

1856 - ROSE

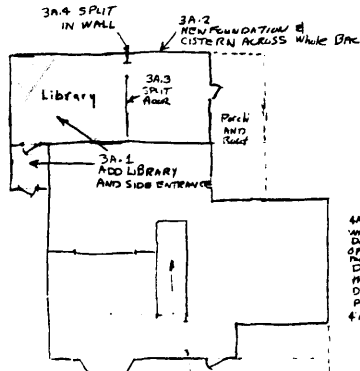


Fig. 3A - 1st fl.

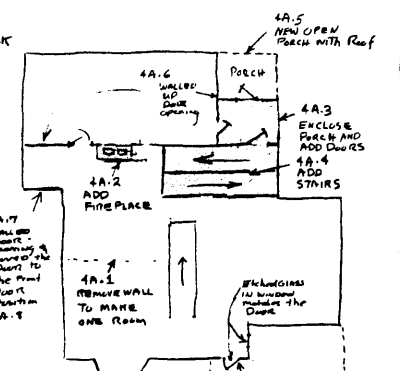


Fig. 4A - 1st fl.
(Fuller additions 1912)

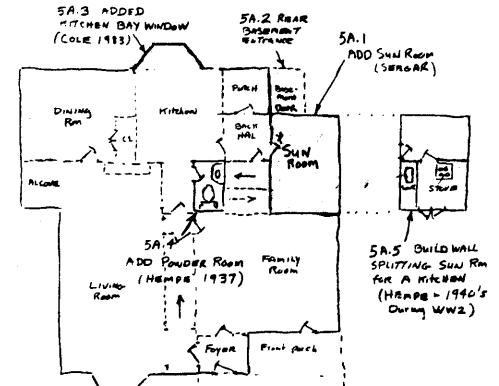


Fig. 5A - 1st fl.

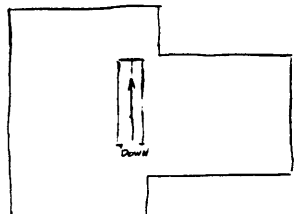


Fig. 1B - 2nd fl.

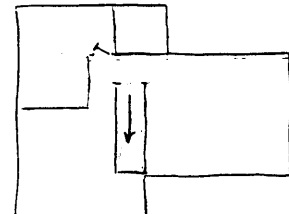


Fig. 2B - 2nd fl.

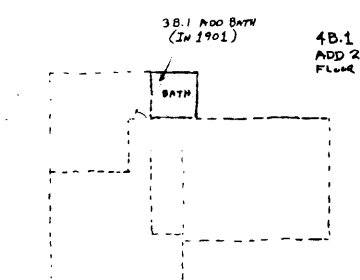


Fig. 3B - 2nd fl.

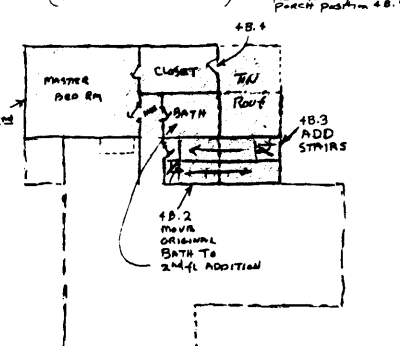


Fig. 4B - 2nd fl.

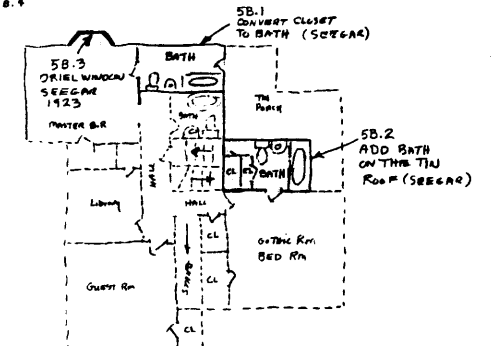


Fig. 5B - 2nd fl.

1609 CHURCH STREET
T. B. HART HOUSE
Evolution Drawing Prepared March 5, 1985
By MARY JO & ROY COLE - OWNERS

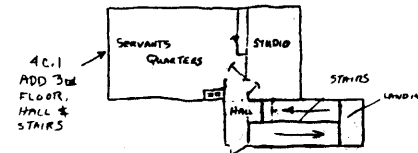


Fig. 4C - 3rd fl.

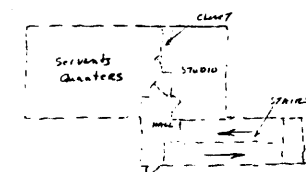


Fig. 5C - 3rd fl.

