

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is

entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet.
determined eligible for the
National Register

See continuation sheet.
determined not eligible for the
National Register

removed from the National Register
 other (explain):

Ethan H. Beal 7.19.01

Per

Signature of
Keeper

Date
of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: department store

COMMERCE/TRADE financial institution

COMMERCE/TRADE professional

COMMERCE/TRADE business

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: business

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Commercial Queen Ann

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

roof _____

walls BRICK

other GLASS; WOOD; SYNTHETICS

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

Period of Significance 1892-1951

Significant Dates 1892, 1900

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Contractor: Bjorquist, John L.
(Holmes Block)

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS)
 preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Midwest Minnesota Community Development Corporation

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet) Detroit Lakes, Minn., 1959, Photorevised 1982

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>15</u>	<u>282960</u>	<u>5188760</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Denis P. Gardner and Charlene K. Roise
organization Hess, Roise and Company
street & number 100 North First Street
city or town Minneapolis state MN zip code 55401
telephone (612) 338-1987
date March 2001

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Midwest Minnesota Community Development Corporation
street & number P.O. Box 623 telephone (218) 847-3191
city or town Detroit Lakes state MN zip code 56502

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Description

Situated immediately south of U.S. Highway 10, the Holmes Block occupies parts of the north, east, and south sides of Block 6 in downtown Detroit Lakes, just across the highway from the Northern Pacific Railroad Depot (see map). The two-story Holmes Block was constructed in 1892, with a two-story addition in 1900. Although the structure was erected in two parts (Holmes Building in 1892 and Teague Addition in 1900), it has historically been treated as a single unit. The Holmes Building is north of the Teague Addition, its south wall contiguous with the north wall of the Teague structure. U.S. Highway 10 borders the Holmes Building to the north and Washington Avenue edges it to the east. Washington Avenue also borders the east front of the Teague Addition, and Front Street parallels its south side.¹

The Holmes Building measures roughly eighty feet along its Washington Avenue, or east, front and about seventy feet along its U.S. Highway 10 (historically Pioneer Avenue), or north, front. Because of its quadrilateral shape the building's rear length is approximately 130 feet. The building's width is approximately sixty-five feet. Both the north front and the east front were originally faced entirely in red brick. The first-floor level at the east front, however, has been covered in green panels. The lower level along the north front has also been changed. The brick along this front has been painted white. The rear of the structure is comprised of cream-colored brick, although most of the facade had been coated with pink paint. The northernmost section, however, is painted in a grayish color. A historic photograph that predates the Teague Addition confirms that the south side of the Holmes Building is also comprised of cream-colored brick.

The structure's cornice is formed of two parallel courses of raised bricks, creating a recessed brick fascia between them. Brick corbeling highlights the bottom of the cornice. The building's

¹ This description is based on a site visit by Denis Gardner on July 31, 2000. Maps of Block 6 also proved useful. For maps of the block see *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Detroit [Lakes]* (Pelham, N.Y.: Sanborn Map Company, 1892, 1899, 1904, 1909, and 1914).

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front facades are accented with brick pilasters. At one point the pilasters enclosed large windows on the second floor, but the current windows are only half the size of the originals. To compensate, wood panels with incised vertical lines were installed immediately above the present windows. Narrow, light-colored, stone lintels mark the top of the original window openings. Arched brick and checkerboard patterns punctuate the space just above the lintels. Window sills are also light-colored stone. The chamfered northeast corner of the building is further highlighted with an arched stone tablet bearing the moniker "Holmes Block."

Windows on the upper level of the front facades are one-over-one, double-hung natural aluminum sash or side-by-side, dark bronze, metal sash. Medium-sized, single-pane windows are positioned on the lower level of the structure's north front. The lower level at the east front is composed of several large storefront windows and glass doors. A fixed, flat awning that spans the length of the Holmes Building and Teague Addition at the east front is situated above the storefronts. Two smaller, fixed, sloped awnings are constructed above doors along the building's north front and northeast corner.

A variety of sash, none original, marks the rear of the structure. The second floor at the south end of the building is highlighted with large, one-over-one windows. On the upper level at the north end medium-sized, four-pane windows are situated above medium-sized, one-over-one windows. The window openings are accented with flat-arched lintels comprised of soldier bricks. The lower level at the south end holds three large one-over-one windows, while the lower level toward the north end is marked with two glass-block windows. Access to the building's interior at the lower level is provided through three doorways at the middle of the building and one at the north end. A black metal fire escape is mounted to the extreme north end of the building allowing exit from the structure's upper floors, as well as the top floors of the Graystone Hotel Annex.

The interior of the Holmes Building at the north end of the building, former banking space now occupied by an insurance agency, retains some of its historical characteristics. The original metal entrance door is still in place. Also, the original interior wall

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covering consisting of white and gray marble edged in green marble remains. Hanging panels and fluorescent lighting, however, cover the original ceiling. Additionally, the rear of the office space appears to have been subdivided. The south two-thirds of the Holmes Building at the first-floor level is currently being remodeled, no hint of its original construction remains. The second-floor area above this space is occupied by a Godfather's Pizza parlor. It is an airy, wood-floored area with high, ornate tin ceilings. A loft has been constructed along the north and east wall providing more seating room for patrons. This space was originally designed as an opera house.

The Teague Addition measures twenty-five feet across its east front and 135 feet along its south side. The front facade of the building looks almost exactly like the Holmes Building, except that the pigmentation of the red brick is slightly darker. An additional stone band situated above the center window on the second floor further distinguishes the building. The band is engraved with the initials of John A. Teague. The date the addition was constructed, 1900, is also etched into the stone. None of the three original windows on the upper level remain. Two of the three window openings have been completely covered with wood panels. The other window space is covered with wood panels and a medium-sized, side-by-side window. The lower-level storefront space generally matches the Holmes Building.

The west half of the parapet on the south side of the Teague Addition is constructed lower than the east half. The cornice matches the east front. Both the north and south sides of the structure are formed of cream-colored brick, although most of the lower level on the south side has been painted beige. The lower level at the west end of the south side, however, has been boarded over and painted grayish-white. The north side has also been painted, its pink color partially matching the rear color of the Holmes Building. About half of the windows along the south side have been boarded or paneled over. The other half consists of one-over-one windows at the upper level and a few large storefront windows with glass doors at the lower level. Cambered window openings on the second floor of the north side have been completely paneled over, except for the westernmost opening, which has been modified with a wood panel to hold a one-over-one window. Segmental

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brick arches with three brick courses accentuate the top of the openings. Two large window openings at the lower level have also been covered. Access to the building's interior at this side is provided by two sets of modern, metal, double doors. The interior space of the addition houses a travel agency and a realty agency. The interior has been significantly altered with partitioned offices.

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Statement of Significance

I. Introduction

The Holmes Block is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its local significance in the area of commerce. The property reflects the historical patterns identified by the Minnesota historic context "Railroads and Agricultural Development, 1870-1940." Constructed in 1892, with an addition in 1900, the Holmes Block occupied the most prominent commercial location in Detroit Lakes in the late 1800s, spurring the early mercantile development of the community.

II. Establishing a Community

Situated in northeast Minnesota, the community of Detroit (renamed Detroit Lakes in 1926) was established in July 1872 with the filing of the original townsite plat. Settlement in the area began a few years prior, however. In mid-summer 1870, drawn by the natural splendor of the land, Merwin M. Tyler established a home in Section 34 of Detroit Township, just east of the present city of Detroit Lakes. One year later the Northern Pacific Railroad reached the area, and by October 1871 trains were stopping regularly. Railroad personnel and early settlers to the territory had no place to stay, and so Tyler's small twelve- by fourteen-foot log cabin became a common lodge for the new arrivals. With travel to the region increasing, Tyler soon had to erect an addition to the structure to house all the guests. The building became known as Tyler's Hotel, and the small community that sprang up around it was called Tylertown.²

Tylertown's initial prosperity proved fleeting. Two years after Tyler came to the region, Colonel George H. Johnson, a recent arrival from the East, established the new townsite of Detroit a short distance west of Tylertown. It soon gained favor among

² Denis Gardner and Charlene Roise, "Graystone Hotel," 1998, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form prepared by Hess, Roise, and Company, available at State Historic Preservation Office, Minnesota Historical Society, Saint Paul, 8.2-8.3.

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recently arriving settlers. Over the next few years Tylertown's residents also began relocating to the new site. With migration away from Tylertown, Tyler's Hotel suffered. Although it continued to operate for a number of years, by 1891 the hotel had crumbled into disrepair.³

III. Elon Galusha Holmes

Detroit Lakes grew quickly in the late 1800s, spurred on by entrepreneurs like Elon Galusha Holmes. Although not the "founding father" of Detroit Lakes, he nevertheless was a principal driving force in the development of the community. His legacy is evident in Detroit Lakes today, reflected in the structures that comprise Block 6 in the downtown district. Not shy about self-promotion, his surname is prominently engraved in the upper northeast corner of the brick building occupying the east section of Block 6. Early in the community's history, the buildings marking this block proved the town's commercial and cultural center. In fact, according to one local author the development of Block 6 was the impetus for further construction south toward Detroit Lake.⁴

A former Civil War veteran, Holmes married Lucy Sherman of Saint Cloud in 1869. After spending two years in Saint Paul where he worked as a clerk in a mercantile exchange, the couple moved to the northwest region of the state. Holmes set up a store and newspaper in Ottertail City to the south of Detroit Lakes. One local history notes that Holmes tried to speculate where the railroad would go. Guessing incorrectly, he uprooted his interests at Ottertail City and moved north to Detroit Lakes in Becker County. By 1872, he was operating a store in Detroit Lakes out of the first frame building erected in the county. He had also reopened his newspaper, naming it the *Detroit Record*. In 1874, Holmes entered the banking business, becoming cashier for the Bank of Detroit. He assumed the presidency of the bank in 1884, and renamed it the First National Bank of Detroit one year later. Extending his commercial endeavors, Holmes accepted large contracts to provide lumber and ties for the

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 8.4-8.6; Ken Prentice, *Horse and Buggy Days at Detroit Lakes* (Detroit Lakes: Lakes Publishing Company, 1971), 31; site visit.

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Northern Pacific Railroad. He realized large sums of money from these contracts, and the influx of laborers needed to fulfill the obligation contributed to the swelling population of Detroit Lakes.⁵

By the end of the 1880s Holmes was one of the most prominent men in northwestern Minnesota, platting four additions to Detroit Lakes and owning approximately 17,000 acres of land in Becker County. He also founded the community's first light company, which he later sold to the city. Holmes achieved further regional success as a civil servant. From 1876 to 1880, he served as clerk of district court. In 1883, he was elected to the county board where he was named chairman. As such he was instrumental in procuring funds for the erection of the courthouse and jail. He reached the pinnacle of his public service with his election to the state legislature in 1889, becoming Becker County's first senator.⁶

IV. The Holmes Block

In 1880, Holmes constructed a brick building on the west side of Washington Avenue on Block 6, the current site of the Holmes Block. A frame building was built immediately south on the same block. A saloon occupied the framed structure. Another saloon was located in the north end of the brick building at the north end of Block 6. Tucked between the two saloons was C. K. Day and Company, a grocery and dry goods store that filled the remaining lower floor space of the brick structure. Allowing that necessities and spirits did not make a town, Holmes provided cultural refinement in the form of an opera house, which he built above the C. K. Day and Company space. This brick building became known as the Opera House Block.⁷

The life of the Opera House Block was short. In early fall 1888 a fire, which appears to have begun in a warehouse behind the Opera House Block, enveloped the buildings on Block 6. The Opera House Block and the frame building to its south, as well as buildings abutting Pioneer Avenue (currently U.S. Highway 10) on the north

⁵ Gardner and Roise, 8.5.

⁶ Ibid., 8.5-8.6.

⁷ Prentice, 31-32.

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edge of Block 6, were destroyed. Undeterred, the following year Holmes hired contractor John L. Bjorquist of Moorhead to rebuild the Opera House Block. Evidently pleased with the prospect of a new building on Block 6, the local newspaper noted: "It is just such men as Mr. Holmes who build up prosperous and thrifty towns." In September 1889 the facility was ready for occupancy. Costing roughly \$25,000, the completed structure was built of cream-colored brick trimmed in red sandstone. It measured eighty-three feet along its Washington Avenue front and eighty-four feet along its side edging Pioneer Avenue. Its unique quadrilateral shape created a rear width of 131 feet. The front of the building was marked with plate-glass windows that cost close to \$1,000. The lower level of the building's northeast section was tenanted by Holmes's First National Bank. Other ground floor space was occupied by the hardware and dry goods company Blanding and Smith, an enterprise that would evolve into the community's first large retail outlet. The remaining ground-floor area was filled by Brooks and Company and the A. Dietlein Saloon. The second floor housed various offices and an art studio, as well as a new opera house. The opera house was forty-four by seventy-three feet in size and contained a fourteen-by forty-four-foot stage. It was the hub of Detroit Lakes. Not only did it provide a venue for entertainment, but it also served as a meeting place for discussing social and political issues. Becker County Democrats and Republicans both used the site at various times.⁸

The attractive new building did not last as bad luck returned to Block 6. Less than two years after being rebuilt all the structures on the city block were again destroyed by fire. There was some doubt that Holmes would rebuild, but he quickly expressed his desire to erect a more substantial structure. Again, the local newspaper voiced appreciation: "E. G. is surely of the kind of men who build up good towns." Holmes was reluctant to build another opera house, but the community wanted another such facility and he eventually relented. He again contracted with Bjorquist for the two-story, red-brick structure. The building was completed and ready for tenants in 1892. Its profile and dimensions resembled the previous structure. The First National Bank occupied the ground

⁸ "Local News," *Detroit Record*, March 27, 1891; *Ibid.*

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floor at the north end of the building. Law offices filled some of the second floor above the bank.⁹ The Blanding and Smith Company used most of the remaining ground floor space in the building. Like the previous structure, the opera house was built on the second floor. It was positioned over Blanding and Smith's space. Although sometimes noted as the Opera House Block, this building became principally known as the "Holmes Block."¹⁰

V. Blanding-Norby Expands

After the 1891 fire, a one-and-one-half-story, gable-roofed, framed structure was constructed immediately south of the Holmes Building, with the walls of the two structures almost touching.¹¹ A local druggist, John A. Teague, occupied this building. A roofless shell was built just behind the drugstore and appears to have been used as storage. Teague had owned one of the structures along Pioneer Avenue that was destroyed by the 1888 fire. It is uncertain whether he had rebuilt on Block 6 before the second fire.¹²

By early 1898, Teague had become an officer in the new Blanding-Norby Company, the successor to the Blanding and Smith Company. John Smith had left the firm to open another store in a new

⁹ Two photographs, one undated but probably circa 1900-1910, and another dated 1910 show at least part of the second floor occupied with law offices. Although the photos were taken several years after the Holmes Block was erected, it seems likely that law offices filled the space from the beginning. Law offices appear to have been a mainstay in the structures Holmes erected on Block 6. In fact, his 1880 structure housed at least two practices, that of Jeff H. Irish and J. T. Brown. The undated photograph is located in the Photograph Collection at the Becker County Historical Society, Detroit Lakes. The 1910 photograph is available in the Photographs Collection at the Minnesota Historical Society, Saint Paul. See also Prentice, 31-32.

¹⁰ "Local News," March 27, 1891; Prentice, 31-32.

¹¹ A circa 1892 photograph with caption that reads "Frame Bldg. Teague's Drug; Blandings & Smith; Stores Decorated For Barbecue Day," shows Teague's frame building immediately next to the Holmes Building. The photograph is available in the Photograph Collection at the Becker County Historical Society, Detroit Lakes.

¹² *Sanborn Insurance Map* (1892 and 1899).

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location, leaving Arthur Blanding and a new partner, Lewis Norby, with a store in the Holmes Block. Unfortunately in 1899, one year after Blanding and Norby incorporated, Arthur Blanding died. The store's landlord, E. G. Holmes, stepped in as the company's new president. Yet another change in ownership came in 1906 when Lewis Norby left to found a new business. At that point, the store became known as the Blanding Company, a name it retained for the rest of its existence.¹³

Both Holmes and Teague thus had a strong interest in the store's success and, between them, controlled title to the block's Washington Avenue frontage, one of the most prominent commercial locations in Detroit Lakes. To mark the turn of the century they embarked on an aggressive expansion plan, which resulted in the replacement of Teague's frame drugstore with a two-story brick addition to the Holmes Building to accommodate Blanding-Norby's growth. The local newspaper noted: "with the additional room . . . [Blanding-Norby] will be better prepared to attend to their large and increasing trade."¹⁴

Although it is unknown who engineered the Teague Addition, it was planned as an integral extension of the Holmes Building in both function and design. Before its construction, the store had offered dry goods and clothing in the northern third of its space in the Holmes Building, general merchandise in the middle third, and hardware to the south. After the expansion, Blanding-Norby moved hardware to the northern third of this space. Groceries occupied the middle section, and "gents" clothing filled the former hardware area. A door through the south wall gave access to the store's dry goods department in the Teague Addition. Teague continued his drugstore business in a small space at the rear of the new structure. Second-floor offices above the corner bank extended to the area over Blanding-Norby's hardware division. The store occupied the remainder of the second floor of both buildings when

¹³ "Local News," *Detroit Record*, December 31, 1897; "Articles of Incorporation of Blanding-Norby Company," *Detroit Record*, December 24, 1897; Craig McEwen, "Open Since 1887, Blandings, City Landmark, to Close," *Detroit Record*, January 1, 1979; "A New Brick Building," *Detroit Record*, January 19, 1900.

¹⁴ "A New Brick Building."

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the opera house, having lost its luster as an entertainment venue, closed sometime after 1904. By 1909, the Blanding Company was selling clothing in the former opera house space, and offering a "music room" in the front of the Teague Addition and furniture sales in the back. By 1914, all of the store's second-floor space was dedicated to furniture.¹⁵

The Teague Addition facade copied the details and scale of the Holmes Building, continuing the fenestration pattern and cornice of its predecessor. The structure's only effort to assert its own identity is a stone block over a second-floor lintel inscribed with Teague's initials and the addition's construction date, 1900. Measuring twenty-five feet in width, the new structure filled the space between the Holmes Building and the south end of Block 6 edged by Front Street. Although not as wide as the Holmes Building, the addition was about twice as long, extending 135 feet to the west. Like the 1892 structure, it contained a full basement.¹⁶

In recognition of this integration of design and function, Sanborn maps referred to the Holmes Building and Teague Addition as a single structure. The 1914 atlas, for example, labeled the entire Washington Avenue frontage the "Holmes Block," with the Teague Addition and the three south sections of the Holmes Building together identified as "The Blanding Co."¹⁷

Between 1904 and 1909, a narrow building was constructed contiguous with the rear wall of the Teague Addition. As with the Teague Addition, this two-story structure paralleled Front Street. It was a rusticated concrete block building that appears to have been used as a flour storage facility. The opposite side of Block 6 underwent changes as well during this period. A new office/retail building (presently known as the Graystone Annex) was constructed from the northwest corner of the Holmes Block northwesterly along Pioneer Avenue. This building eventually served as the annex to the Graystone Hotel, a grand facility built by E. G. Holmes in 1916. The hotel spanned the Pioneer Avenue frontage between the Graystone

¹⁵ Sanborn Insurance Map (1899, 1904, 1909, and 1914).

¹⁶ Sanborn Insurance Map (1904); site visit; "A New Brick Building."

¹⁷ Sanborn Insurance Map (1914).

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Annex and the west edge of Block 6.¹⁸

VI. The End of a Long Run

Blanding's was a fixture in downtown Detroit Lakes for many decades. A classic example of an early twentieth-century department store, it offered just about everything a shopper might want. In fact, Richard Blanding, grandson of founder Arthur Blanding, would later compare the store to large, modern chain department stores. "We had everything you need to survive under one roof," he remarked. To celebrate the enterprise's golden anniversary the business mailed booklets throughout the Detroit Lakes region that provided a short history of the company. The booklets also noted that a special sale would mark the anniversary.¹⁹ While the sale was welcome, the heartfelt words of Blanding's management that greeted readers of the booklet characterized the close bond between the company and the local citizenry:

It's only a 10,000 to 1 chance for a business concern to last fifty years. We are truly grateful for enjoying such a privilege . . . and what a privilege to live in such a fine section of Minnesota . . . Becker County, with its fertile prairies, its beautiful forests, and its hundreds of crystal clear lakes. We are mighty proud of Detroit Lakes, with its fine schools and churches, its hospitals, its municipal light plant, its good clean government, its stores, hotels, resorts, and modern business institutions of all kinds. It has snap . . . it looks like a city of ten thousand people; its citizens are friendly and progressive; they cooperate for the development of Detroit Lakes and Becker County. We're glad we live here.

¹⁸ Gardner and Roise, "Graystone Hotel," 4; *Sanborn Insurance Map* (1904 and 1909). A circa 1910 photograph shows the stone-block flour storage facility positioned at the rear of the Teague Addition. Although viewing the south wall of the structure is difficult because of the awkward camera angle, no windows or openings appear to mark the wall. The photograph is available in the Photograph Collection at the Becker County Historical Society, Detroit Lakes.

¹⁹ McEwen; "History of Blanding's is One of Progress," *Detroit Lakes Tribune*, June 17, 1937.

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We love it, and hope we may remain for all time. It's our home.²⁰

Despite its desire to survive in the region indefinitely, changing tastes and demographics ultimately led to Blanding's demise. A dressmaking department established in 1905 was eventually phased out. Groceries were discontinued in the 1950s. In 1979, the business finally came to an end when Henry and Richard Blanding retired and could find no one interested in continuing the operation. Strong competition from newer stores at other locations had drawn shoppers away from downtown, weakening retail sales for most merchants. A local journalist began his story announcing the sad closing by saying: "One of Detroit Lakes' oldest landmarks will close its doors to history." He continued: "The store will be missed, as will the presence of the Blanding brothers on main street (Washington Avenue)".²¹

Today, the pigmentation of the brick on the Teague Addition is slightly darker than that of the Holmes Building brick. Historic photographs imply that this was not always the case. When the Teague Addition was constructed its pigmentation appeared to match the Holmes Building. It seems the facades for the two structures aged differently. Presently, a break in the brick courses marks the division between the two buildings. Historically, this break was not visible. Today, the casual observer sees little distinction between the two structures, even though their use is now divided among several tenants. A bank remained in business on the corner of Pioneer and Washington for many decades, despite changing ownership several times: the First National Bank was replaced by Merchants National Bank in the 1910s or 1920s, which was succeeded by the Detroit State Bank in the 1930s. At some point, an insurance agency took over the space.²²

²⁰ Blanding Company, "We are Celebrating our 50th Anniversary, 1887-1937," company booklet published in 1937, available at Becker County Historical Society, Detroit Lakes.

²¹ McEwen.

²² A circa 1900 photograph captioned "Teague Building and Holmes Bldg., Detroit, Minnesota," depicts the facade of the Holmes Block. The facade pigmentation of both the Holmes Building and Teague Addition appears the same. Additionally,

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The architecture of the Holmes Block underwent some modification over the years. The storefronts were remodeled and at some point a modern awning was constructed above them. A section of the north wall of the Holmes Building was painted. A section of the south wall of the Teague Addition was also painted. The most dramatic change to the Holmes Block, however, came in 1963, when two bays at the west end of the north front facade were removed and rebuilt to hold a lobby and elevator for apartments in the Graystone Hotel Annex, which was then renamed the "Markland." The new exterior was sheathed with glazed brick.²³

A Godfather's Pizza parlor is now established on the second floor in what long ago was the opera house. The airiness of the space and the ornately engraved ceiling provide some sense of its original purpose. At present, the floor beneath Godfather's is being remodeled. A travel agency functions from offices in the first floor of the Teague Addition. The upper floor may be used for storage, since the windows at the front and sides of the building are boarded over. An access door at the side of the structure provides entrance to a realty company.²⁴

VI. Conclusion

Occupying the most prominent commercial location in Detroit Lakes in the late 1800s, the Holmes Block stands today as a physical reminder of the community's early mercantile development. It served as the home to Blanding's for over eighty-five years. A mainstay in

several photographs substantiate the evolving bank history of the north end of the Holmes Block. Although most of these photographs are undated, circa dates can be gleaned from them. They appear to cover the 1910s through the 1940s. All of these photographs can be viewed in the Photograph Collection at the Becker County Historical Society, Detroit Lakes.

²³ In a letter to Denis Gardner dated January 7, 1999, the Becker County Historical Society explained that a former owner of the annex, Milton Swedberg, was the individual who gave the Markland its name in 1963. In 1999, the current owners of the building re-adopted the Graystone Annex moniker. For other references, see "Split Open," *Detroit Lakes Tribune*, July 10, 1963; site visit.

²⁴ Site visit.

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Detroit Lakes for almost a century, Blanding's even occupied the structure that preceded the Holmes Block on Block 6 of the Original Townsite. Beginning as a modest enterprise, Blanding's grew into the first large retail outlet in the community, offering Detroit Lakes residents everything from clothing to groceries to hardware and housewares. For its significant contribution to the development of commerce in Detroit Lakes, the Holmes Block is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies Lots 11 through 13, as well as parts of Lots 10, 14, and 15 of Block 6, of the Original Townsite of Detroit (now Detroit Lakes).

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the city lots that have historically been associated with the property.

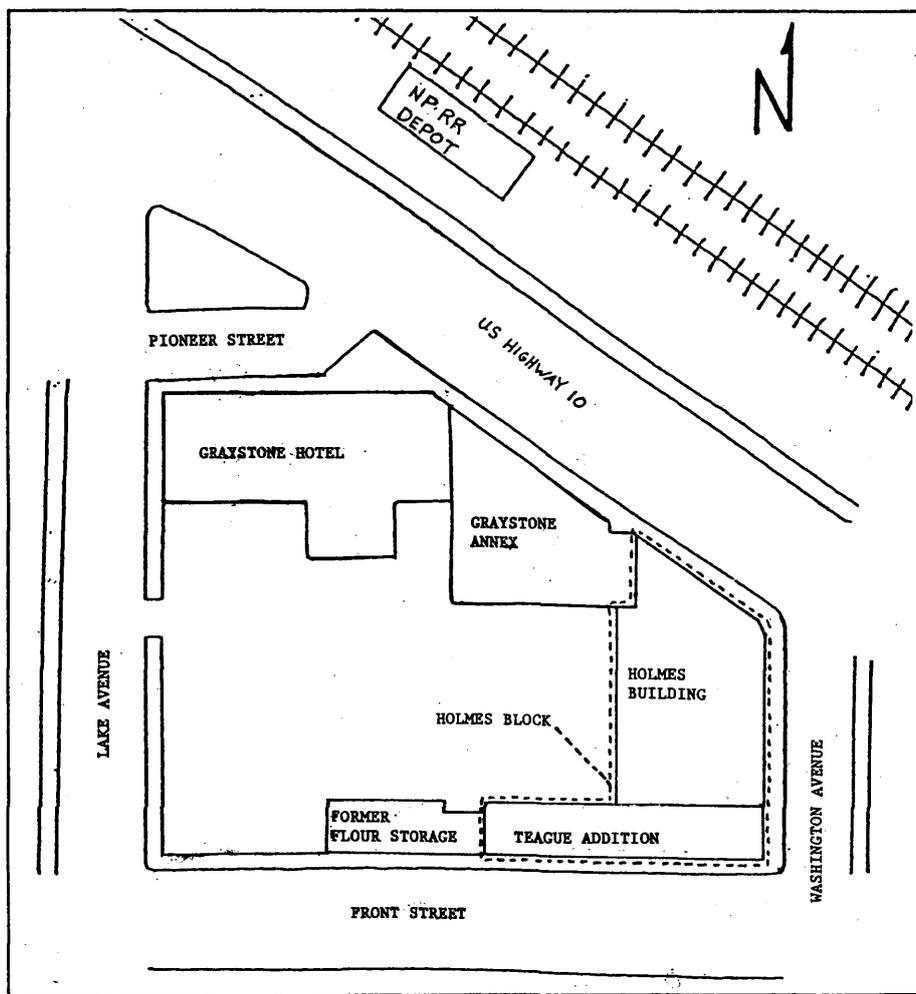
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Site map of Block 6, of the Original Townsite of Detroit (now Detroit Lakes), showing relationship of Holmes Block to other block structures. The map was adapted from a 1998 construction drawing by Baker, Hogan and Houx, Architects.