

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

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

For NPS use only
received **APR 22 1983**
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic The Henry A. Swift House

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 820 South Minnesota Avenue

N/A not for publication

city, town St. Peter

N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota

code 22

county Nicollet

code 103

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>N/A</u> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input checked="" 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 Theodore and Lynne M. B. Lillie et al

street & number 1439 Leonard Street

city, town St. Peter

N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Nicollet County Courthouse, Assessors Office

street & number Minnesota Avenue

city, town St. Peter

state Minnesota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Minnesota Statewide Historic
title Sites Survey

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date July 1982

federal state county local

depository for survey records Minnesota Historical Society, Fort Snelling History Center

city, town St. Paul

state Minnesota

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<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 <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Henry A. Swift House, located on the corner of Minnesota Avenue and College Street, was built in 1857. The building is late Federal/Italianate in massing with a complex hip roof and two story front "L" shape. It also includes a rear one and one half story section with gabled roof and a one story appendage, likely an open kitchen porch enclosed at a later time.

The windows are symmetrical with plain trim. The wide eaves are supported by paired brackets and there are chimneys on the outside walls. The stuccoed building shows evidence that it was originally sheathed in a thin cementitious coating which was scored to resemble cut stone blocks.

The building's mass and appearance are essentially intact. Alterations include shortening of the windows; removal and covering of stone lintels and sills, and removal of the one story front porch and several chimneys. The house has been converted into four apartments.

The house is in a good state of repair and is well maintained. It remains on the original site.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input 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/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1857-1858

Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Swift House is significant for its association with Henry A. Swift, third governor of Minnesota. Swift served in the office from July 10, 1863 to January 11, 1864. He built this house in 1857-1858 when he first arrived in St. Peter and lived here until his death in 1869. The house remained in the Swift family until 1916 when his daughters, Margaret Spackman and Mary Ives, sold the house to Edward Engesser, a prominent St. Peter businessman.

Born in Ravenna, Ohio on March 23, 1823; Swift moved west first to St. Paul in 1853 and then to St. Peter in 1856 where he became a member of the St. Peter Company. This company was responsible for platting and organizing the town of St. Peter and Swift is regarded to be one of the founding fathers of St. Peter. He served several years as the Registrar of the United States land office and served in Washington working to procure land grants for the railroad and pushing for the admission of the new state into the Union. His background in both business and law allowed him to figure as a prominent citizen in the community.

In 1857 Swift was nominated for congress as a Republican but lost to the Hon. James M. Cavanaugh. In 1861 he was elected to the State Senate to serve for two years. Swift took an active part in the Sioux uprising in August 1862, being among the first of the recruits from St. Peter to aid in the defense of New Ulm.

In 1863 Swift was elected President of the Senate. When Lieutenant Governor Ignatius Donnelly resigned from that position to serve in Congress, Swift became the ex-officio Lieutenant Governor. This same legislature then elected Governor Ramsey to the U. S. Senate, thus promoting Swift to the office of Acting Governor. As a governor, Swift strongly supported the Union, purchasing ground in Gettysburg for the burial of Minnesota's soldiers who died in that battle. He also fulfilled Minnesota's quota for soldiers by raising troops to be used in defending the territories against the Indians.

Preferring a quiet family life to a political career, Swift refused re-nomination as Governor in his own right in 1864. Instead he was elected to the State Senate where he took an active role in passing a bill for the "Organization and regulation of Independent School Districts". During this term he was urged to accept nomination for the U. S. Senate, an honor which he declined. Completing his term in the State Senate, in 1865 he was appointed registrar of the St. Peter land office, the position which he held until his death. He died on February 25, 1869 from typhoid fever which, it is believed he contracted during his efforts at New Ulm during the Indian uprising.

The Swift House, built in 1857 three years after the formal platting of St. Peter, remains a visible link with the founding of the city and a reminder of the political contributions made by Swift on a local and state level.

9. Major Bibliographical References

MHS Collections vol 13, Lives of the Governors of Minnesota by James H. Baker. A.M. St. Paul: MHS 1908.
Shutler, Manon D. and J. S. McLain, eds. Progressive Men of Minnesota. Mpls.: The Mpls. Journal 1897. History of the Republican Party, A Political History of Minnesota. St. Paul: E. V. Smalley, Publisher, 1896.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than 1

Quadrangle name St. Peter Quad., Minnesota

Quadrangle scale 7.5

UTM References

A

1	5	4	2	3	3	4	0	4	9	0	7	5	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

W. 12' of N. 30' and S. 102' of lot 4 block 183

S. 5' of N. 66' and S. 66' of lots 5 and 6 of block 183 Amended Plat St. Peter

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sandra A. Smith, Intern

organization State Historic Preservation Office

date January 20, 1983

street & number Fort Snelling History Center

telephone (612) 726-1171

city or town St. Paul

state Minnesota

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

Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Office

date

4/7/83

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date

5/19/83

for *Allores Byers*
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration