

PH0662411

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	<b>DATA SHEET</b>
RECEIVED	FEB 8 1978
DATE ENTERED	AUG 11 1978

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Israel Stowell / Temperance House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

61-63-65 East Walworth Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Delavan

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

First

STATE

Wisconsin 53115

CODE

55

COUNTY

Walworth

CODE

127 ✓

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Old Delavan Limited, c/o Edward Chesko, Dorothy Bogdan, and Richard Alexander

STREET & NUMBER

67 East Walworth Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Delavan

STATE

Wisconsin

VICINITY OF

53115

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Walworth County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

22 Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Elkhorn

STATE

Wisconsin

53121

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1977

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin

53706

# 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 type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The original, or center, portion of the present structure was built in 1840 (see figure 1 for diagram of present structure showing additions). It is a saltbox of mortise and tenon construction with Greek Revival elements. Although the building was crudely constructed, it is interesting that the builder took time to add Greek Revival detail. Soon after, very likely in the 1840s, a three-bay addition was made to the east side. The addition is of identical construction to the original portion, and maintains the profile and detailing of the original. Sometime after, a ten-foot addition was made to the east end. It, too, retains the saltbox profile of the original, as well as Greek Revival detailing; it is, however, of balloon frame construction. Later in the nineteenth century, a bay window was added to the original portion. Then, sometime around the turn of the century, a one-bay, two-story, Victorian vernacular addition was made to the west end where a porch had been. From very early in the tavern's history it has had a number of shed additions attached to the rear.

The original portion is five bays wide, with the bays spaced irregularly. It is the only section with a full basement, and it rests on a stone foundation. The front door is side-lit and framed by a heavy, molded lintel supported by pilasters. Upstairs windows in the older portions are original with twelve-over-eight lights; several retain the original glass. First floor windows originally were identical, as is evidenced by cuts in the clapboard; they were replaced by the present windows late in the nineteenth century. The two saltbox additions to the east end of the original structure maintain the Greek Revival detailing of the original. An entablature band extends through the entire length of the front facade, and the addition at the extreme east end has a Greek Revival doorway and eave returns. The structure is sided with original clapboard.

Structural framing of the original and first-addition portions of the structure is of hewed oak and walnut beams. Studding is irregularly spaced and of hardwood cut at the nearby Phoenix sawmill (established 1839). Partitions in the oldest sections of the structure were formed by placing studs with their wide sides parallel to the wall plane, spaced somewhat irregularly, and applying lath and plaster to them. The oldest partitions have oaken split-lath. The first-floor layout of the oldest section was typical to Greek Revival structures of the period, with the staircase centrally located, and two rooms on either side of it. The rear room to the right of the staircase perhaps was the kitchen; cuts in the second-story flooring above it suggest the prior existence of a large cooking fireplace there. There is some question whether the second floor originally was partitioned or left as an open space, perhaps to accommodate dormitory-style sleeping arrangements. In any case, upstairs partitions are old; many of them have hardwood split-lath. Only vestiges of the original heating system remain in the form of chimney stubs and suggestive structures and framing. These suggest the aforementioned kitchen fireplace, and fireplaces or stoves using chimneys in the gable ends.

The structure, with the exception of the Victorian portion which recently has been repaired, is in fair condition. Four years ago, the entire structure received a new asphalt shingle roof. A long-time sag in the roof is caused by a shifting foundation that slowly is moving the front and rear walls apart.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

---

The owners intend to repair and stabilize the building. For them, the historical appeal of the structure is its greatest virtue, and so they are making every effort to maintain its integrity in their repairs. The owners plan to convert the structure into a series of small shops dealing in old books, antiques, and art works. They find the existing fabric and layout of the structure useful for this purpose, and plan to retain it insofar as they are able economically and within code requirements. The owners hope that the Stowell Tavern will be the first in a series of preservation and reuse projects in the neighborhood, which includes several of Delavan's oldest structures.

# 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      1840

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Israel Stowell

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Israel Stowell Temperance House in Delavan is significant to the history of Wisconsin as a manifestation of the evangelical reform spirit that was espoused by many of the "yankee" settlers of Wisconsin in the antebellum period. Delavan was the scene of an attempt to plant a reform colony on Wisconsin soil; the Stowell Temperance House, an important social institution in that colony, remains both as an artifact of the Delavan colony and as an important phenomenon in the early history of Wisconsin. The reform spirit which was brought to Wisconsin by many of its early "yankee" immigrants developed out of the enthusiastic religious revivals that swept through the Northeast, particularly through central and western New York, just as migration into Wisconsin was getting under way.<sup>1</sup> Striving for moral perfection in man, reformers sought to remove the evils of society which they believed contributed to man's corruption; their most popular strategy in the early period was moral suasion. Among the evils most abhorrent to these reformers were the intemperate use of alcohol and chattel slavery. For many, the frontier represented an opportunity to create new societies free from these evils; these would in turn serve as models for a new and better social order.

The Delavan Temperance Colony, dedicated to total abstinence from alcoholic beverages and to the immediate abolition of slavery, was Henry and Samuel Phoenix's proprietary attempt to plant a reform colony in Wisconsin. The Stowell Temperance House, one of the first frame structures erected in the colony, was an important gathering place for the colony's residents. Moreover, as a Temperance House, it represented a key tactic used by suasionist temperance reformers as a means of keeping teetotalers in the fold, of seeking new converts, and of giving alcohol-dispensing tavernkeepers competition. Temperance houses were so important to the Wisconsin Territorial Temperance Society that it formed a committee to seek ways to support existing houses and to add to their number at its first annual meeting in 1840.<sup>2</sup>

## History

Colonel Samuel Falkner Phoenix and his brother Henry, the founders of Delavan, were reform activists from Wyoming County in western New York. They had been caught up in the great revivals of the middle and late 1820s and had become reform-minded enthusiastic Baptists. In the 1830s Samuel took an active role in both the temperance and anti-slavery movements in New York. Early in the decade he toured the South and later was nearly mobbed for speaking strenuously against slavery in Philadelphia; in 1835 he helped found the New York Anti-Slavery Society. The

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.28

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1,6	3,6,4,8,1,0	4,7,2,1,1,8,0
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B 

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 12, except the north 26 feet thereof; lot 11, and a strip of land 25 feet wide off the west end of lot 8, except the north 26 feet thereof, all in block 7 of the original plat of the Village, now City, of Delavan.

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

David Donath, Historian, Historic Preservation Division

ORGANIZATION

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

November 28, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

816 State Street

TELEPHONE

608/262-3390

CITY OR TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

## 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

*Richard K. Emery*

TITLE

Director  
State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

1/25/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST

*Charles A. ...*

DATE

2/1/78

DATE

8.1.78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

Phoenixes' reform temper was extremist. They rejected the use of all alcoholic beverages, including beer and wine, and they were identified with the Garrisonian camp of immediate abolitionists.<sup>3</sup>

In 1836 the Phoenixes came to Wisconsin searching for a place to plant a colony dedicated to the ideals of temperance and abolition of slavery. Samuel finally selected a 4000-acre tract where a road west from Racine crossed Turtle Creek, a couple of miles north of Delavan Lake. To mark his claim, he blazed the legend "Temperance Colony" on bounding trees.

The Phoenixes named their colony Delavan, after Edward Cornelius Delavan, a prominent New York Temperance organizer and publisher. Recruiting through their friends and associates in the "burned-over district," they sought like-minded colonists, and within the next couple of years the temperance colony took root. Seeking to insure that the colony would remain alcohol-free even after their deaths, the Phoenixes inserted covenants in the deeds they issued "prohibiting for all future time . . . the manufacturing, the traffic in and the use of all alcoholic drinks in and upon said premises."<sup>4</sup> In 1839 an enthusiastic Baptist church was formed by the Phoenixes and many of their colonists; the congregation espoused temperance and anti-slavery in its Articles of Faith and denied membership to any who did not share its sentiments. In 1842 the first anti-slavery society in Wisconsin held its organizational meeting in the Delavan Baptist Church.<sup>5</sup>

On February 13, 1840, Samuel and Henry Phoenix attended the annual meeting of the Wisconsin Temperance Society. There they heard the committee on Temperance Houses report on the success of the six houses then in existence in southeastern Wisconsin, and call for the establishment of more.<sup>6</sup> A week later the Phoenix brothers contracted with Israel Stowell, a 27-year-old colonist from Cortland, in central New York, to build and maintain a temperance house in Delavan.<sup>7</sup> Stowell had little capital so the Phoenixes gave him terms which would enable him to earn title to the land the tavern was built upon by constructing and operating it, and by performing other services for them. Israel agreed to build a 34-by 27-foot structure, two stories high in the front, painted white. It was to be ready for occupancy by June of the same year; its finer points could be finished later. The Phoenixes agreed to furnish Stowell with "timber in the tree and lumber at their sawmill and nails, glass, window sash at the store and such door hangings, trimmings as they have in their Store all at fair prices." Once the structure was up, Stowell was to operate it as a strict temperance house. After three years, he was entitled to purchase the tavern's lots from the Phoenixes for \$50; in the meantime, the proceeds from the establishment would be his.<sup>8</sup>

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Built in the spring of 1840, the Stowell Tavern operated as a temperance house for less than a decade. During the early 1840s, it functioned as a community focus in Delavan. In 1842 Delavan's first town meeting was held there; Stowell was elected constable.<sup>9</sup> Social circles met there, and the tavern remained an important gathering place through the decade. Moreover, the tavern served the growing traffic on the road west which passed by the front door.

Through the decade, however, the strict temperance colony founded by the Phoenixes dissolved. Samuel died in September of 1840, and Henry a year-and-a-half later. They had been such a driving force behind the reform colony that no one seemed capable of taking their place. Although many Delavan residents remained active in the temperance and abolition movements, inroads quickly appeared in what had been an exclusive colony. Stowell passed over his option to purchase the tavern property, and gave up keeping the tavern around mid-decade. He later took up farming in nearby Darien. Thereafter, the place passed through a number of ownerships, and had a number of keepers. One of these, a Mr. Harkness began serving alcoholic beverages there in the late 1840s. A scandal erupted in town when a local cabinetmaker, a member of the temperance society, agreed to build Harkness' taproom fixtures.<sup>10</sup>

By the early 1850s newer and larger hotels and inns in town were giving the old tavern serious competition. In 1854 Eliphas Gates, a cabinetmaker, bought the place. He converted it to a multiple-dwelling structure, and it remained in the Gates family until recently.

1. This region of New York has been called the "burned-over district" because of the series of revivals which raged through the area beginning in the 1820s, making of it a seedbed of enthusiasm, utopianism, and reformism. See Whitney R. Cross, The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850 (Ithaca, N.Y., 1950).
2. Milwaukee Sentinel (March 24, 1840), p. 2, cols. 1-5. See also Frank Loyola Byrne, "Cold Water Crusade: The Ante-Bellum Wisconsin Temperance Movement," (M.A. Thesis, U.W.-Madison, 1951), p. 12.
3. Solomon A. Dwinneil Papers, Wis. Mss. 2CJ, State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Dwinneil was a Congregational preacher and a temperance and anti-slavery reformer in Elkhorn, Wisconsin; he was a contemporary and friend of the Phoenixes.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 8 1978
DATE ENTERED	73

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

(SIGNIFICANCE, Footnotes, continued)

4. Agreement between Israel Stowell and Henry and Samuel F. Phoenix (February 21, 1840), Deeds 4, p. 310, Register of Deeds, Walworth County Courthouse. Local histories note that this was the standard restriction made in the Phoenix conveyances.
5. Byrne, "Cold Water Crusade," p. 58; Western Historical Company, History of Walworth County, Wisconsin (Chicago, 1882), pp. 352, 680.
6. Milwaukee Sentinel (March 24, 1840), p. 2, cols. 1-5.
7. Israel Stowell fits the pattern identified by Cross in Burned-Over District, having sprung from old Massachusetts Bay Colony Puritan stock. He was born in New Hampshire, but moved to central New York at an early age. See William Henry Harrison Stowell, Stowell Genealogy: A Record of the Descendants of Samuel Stowell of Hingham, Massachusetts (Rutland, Vt., 1922), p. 454.
8. Agreement between Stowell and the Phoenixes (February 21, 1840), Deeds 4, p. 310, Register of Deeds, Walworth County Courthouse.
9. Western Historical Company, History of Walworth County, p. 661.
10. Affidavit filed by the Phoenix heirs, November 13, 1844, Deeds 4, p. 310, Register of Deeds, Walworth County Courthouse; Albert Clayton Beckwith, History of Walworth County, Wisconsin (Indianapolis, 1912), I, 257.



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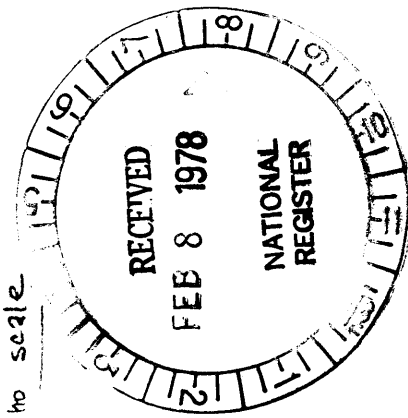
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

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approximate plan

Israel Stowell  
Temperance Tavern  
Delaware



no scale

