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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**


historic name Salsbury Row House  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**

street & number 302-310 West Grand Avenue N/A not for publication  
city or town Eau Claire N/A vicinity  
state Wisconsin code WI county Eau Claire code 035 zip code 54701

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

 2/26/09  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Officer - Wisconsin

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Salsbury Row House

Eau Claire

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the 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.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

*Edson H. Beall*

4.15.09

*[Signature]*

Signature of the 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

structure

site

object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

contributing

5

noncontributing

buildings

sites

structures

objects

5

0 total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources is previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/ Queen Anne

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation STONE

walls ALUMINIUM

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD

**Narrative Description**

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

Salsbury Row House  
Name of Property

Eau Claire  
County and State

Wisconsin

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or 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)

ARCHITECTURE

### Period of Significance

1891

### Significant Dates

1891

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

N/A

### Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Salsbury Row House  
Name of Property

Eau Claire  
County and State

Wisconsin

### 9. Major Bibliographic References

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

**Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):**

- 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:**

- X State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 618200 4962590  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

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      | Eric J. Wheeler / Consultant for:         | date      | July 2008    |
| organization    | City of Eau Claire – Landmarks Commission | telephone | 715-839-4914 |
| street & number | 203 South Farwell Street                  | zip code  | 54701        |
| city or town    | Eau Claire                                | state     | WI           |

Salsbury Row House  
Name of Property

Eau Claire  
County and State

Wisconsin

### 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 SHPO or FPO.)

|                          |                       |                  |              |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|--------------|
| <b>name/title</b>        | John Curtis           | <b>date</b>      | July 2008    |
| <b>organization</b>      |                       | <b>telephone</b> | 715-832-1881 |
| <b>street&amp;number</b> | 302 West Grand Avenue | <b>zip code</b>  | 54701        |
| <b>city or town</b>      | Eau Claire            | <b>state</b>     | WI           |

**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 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 Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 2050

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Salsbury Row House  
Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin

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DESCRIPTION OF PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Salsbury Row House is a two-story, five-unit, wood frame, multi-family dwelling built in 1891 and located at 302-310 West Grand Avenue. This unusual and rather well preserved Queen Anne style residential property is located two blocks west of the Chippewa River and across the street from the Eau Claire County Courthouse. Located prominently on a corner lot, the Salsbury Row House is one of the most distinctive properties in a neighborhood consisting of a mix of large homes, churches, and small commercial structures built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This property is historically and currently owner occupied with the owners living in the corner unit at 302 West Grand, a unit with a larger floor plan and higher style design. The Salsbury Row House is associated with James F. Salsbury, an early lawyer and land developer in the Chippewa Valley, and the prominent Eau Claire family of William S. Kelley, who owned and occupied the property in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Salsbury Row House is a well preserved example of a late Victorian row house, a dwelling style found mainly in larger cities on the east and west coasts. In Wisconsin, this style of dwelling is rarely found outside of Milwaukee and is the only surviving example of the row house type in Eau Claire.

Site

The Salsbury Row House is situated on one city lot measuring 66 feet by 133 feet on a rectangular parcel that is oriented lengthwise northeast to southwest. The front entrances to the row houses face to the southeast along Grand Avenue. A steeply sloped lawn area with shrubbery extends to the concrete city sidewalk on the north and east sides of the property. Additionally, a standard width grassed city parkway with shade trees extends from the sidewalk to a concrete curb and blacktop city street. A narrow slightly sloped lawn area with shrubbery extends to a 10 foot-wide blacktop alley on the south side of the row house. The rear of the building has an irregular footprint created by full-height extensions of the building with attached open porches. The entire rear of the site extending from the foundation wall to the west lot line is blacktopped. This asphalt surface in the rear provides a parking area, refuse container storage, and miscellaneous storage for the owner and tenants.

Exterior

The two-story, wood frame row house has an asphalt shingle mansard style roof, light blue-colored horizontal aluminum siding, and an exposed ashlar limestone foundation. The exterior walls are punctuated by symmetrical double hung and fixed pane windows with contrasting white trim. Functional and stylistic elements include single and multi-story bays, decorative gables and scrollwork, pent roofs, and a tall ornamented brick chimney.

Starting on the Oxford Avenue side at the northeast corner of the building, the east façade features a large two story central bay topped by a decorative pedimented gable roof. The fascia and soffits under the eaves are aluminum clad as is the joint cap at the junction of the lower pitch main roof and steeply pitched side of the

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mansard roof. The center of the octagonal bay has a pair of double hung windows on the second story and a large fixed-pane window with mullioned transom window on the first story. The flanking sides of the bay have a single double hung window on both stories. The north end of the east façade has two double-hung windows above and three evenly placed double-hung windows below. Just to the left or south of the two-story central bay is a three-story tall, red brick chimney with one course of red brick exposed beyond the siding. Three corbelled brick belt courses delineate the top of the first and second stories, the mid-point of the roofline and the top of the chimney. A small corbelled brick decorative element is located on the chimney in the middle of the second story.

Continuing to the southeast corner of the building facing Oxford and Grand avenues, one of the most distinctive features of the Salsbury Row House is a three story rectangular bay that extends beyond the east and south façades at a right angle. The first story bay is slightly larger than the bays above and is delineated by an asphalt shingled pent roof above and recessed panel below. A large fixed pane window with transom above is centered in this bay. A raised ornamental foliated detail in the transom opening is not original. There are individual double hung windows on either side of the first story bay. Centered in the second story bay is a pair of double hung windows flanked by single double hung windows on each of the two other exposed sides. The third level of the corner bay has a single centrally located triangular shaped window divided in half by a single mullion. The sides of the window are slightly convex resulting in a modified lancet appearance. The corner bay is capped by a cornice of aluminum and asphalt roofing that abruptly terminates the vertical extension of the bay. Originally, there may have been a rectangular or pyramidal roof above this third level section.

Continuing along the south and main façade facing Grand Avenue the Salsbury Row House presents an appearance of balance and symmetry in the regularity of window placement and in the size, shape and ornamentation of the porches and entries. The owner occupied end unit at 302 West Grand Avenue varies slightly from the other four units, but retains the harmony and symmetry of appearance. The open porch/entry has an asphalt shingle shed roof supported by four posts with a highly ornamental scrollwork cornice extending across the front and continuing around to both sides. A wooden stairway of ten steps with enclosed risers provides access to the single door entry from the sidewalk. A three-foot tall wooden railing extends from both sides of the stairway along the front entry and continues to the exterior wall. The roof is topped with an ornamental pediment with raised detail outlined in the tympanum which is not original but is consistent with the Queen Anne style. Directly above the entry roof is a pair of double hung windows flanked on the right or east side by a similar sized single double hung window. A short, fixed pane three-panel window horizontally spans the wall space between the corner bay and the main entry on the first story at 302 Grand Avenue. This is the only window that varies in size and shape from the others on the south façade.

Following along the south façade to the west, 304-306 West Grand Avenue and 308-310 West Grand Avenue are matched pairs of units that are mirror images of each other on the exterior and interior. The east end of the two pairs of units is defined along the roofline by an ornamental asphalt shingled gable with contrasting white horizontal aluminum siding in the gable end.

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304-306 West Grand Avenue is defined by a wooden stairway of ten steps that leads to the open porch/entry and separate single doors that provide access to each apartment. Each of the doors is flanked by a mailbox and bracket lamp and topped by a short transom window. The single pitch asphalt shingle porch roof is highlighted by an ornamental central gable with raised floral design added by the current owner in the early 1990s. Supporting the roof are three wooden posts with a highly ornamented scrollwork cornice extending along the front and continuing around to both sides. A three-foot tall wooden railing extends from both sides of the stairway along the front entry and continues to the exterior wall. Wooden latticework covers the open area under the porch. Flanking the entry on either side is a six-foot wide bay window with a large fixed pane opening and transom window above. The bay windows are supported by an extension of the limestone foundation and capped by a single pitch asphalt shingle roof with aluminum fascia. A pair of single double hung windows are positioned evenly above the entry roof on the second story. Also on the second story, positioned on either side of the single windows and directly above the flanking bay windows is a pair of double hung windows of identical size and shape.

The size, placement and overall appearance of all of the above described elements for the south façade of 304-306 West Grand Avenue is identical for the south façade of 308-310 West Grand Avenue.

From the southwest corner of the building the asphalt shingle mansard roof with aluminum cap and soffit continues along the west façade to the northwest corner at the rear of the row house. The west façade is the least ornamented of the exterior walls that are visible from the street. A centrally placed pair of double hung windows is flanked by single double hung windows placed equidistant from the corners and central window. The window size, shape and placement on the second story are identical to that on the first story.

From the northwest corner continuing along the rear of the building, the mansard roof is revealed to be actually an ornamental projecting parapet that extends approximately four feet above the single pitched composition roof, which is the actual structural roof configuration. The roofline along the north and rear of the building is trimmed by a metal drip edge that extends a few inches past the junction of the roof and wall. Most of the wall surface of the rear of the building is horizontal light blue siding as in the façade facing West Grand Avenue. The siding on the first floor at the rear of 308-310 West Grand Avenue is wood paneling. The footprint of the rear is irregular in that there are roughly equal-sized two story extensions behind each of the units defined in front as 302 West Grand Avenue, 304-306 West Grand Avenue, and 308-310 West Grand Avenue. These projecting sections are separated by two recessed areas of similar width and depth. Each of these sections has an open entry/porch providing rear access to each of the units. The open porches each have a single pitched asphalt roof with a simple centrally placed gable. All of the porches have wooden steps, railings and support posts of a simpler design and appearance than that seen on the porches on the front façade. The rear windows are single or paired double hung windows of similar size, shape and appearance as those on the front façade. The rear entry doors are utilitarian and do not appear to be original. There is one modern casement window in one of the recessed areas, otherwise the windows openings and double hung windows in the rear of the building appear to be original.



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Interior

The interior of this five-unit row house in many ways reflects the exterior in that the owner-occupied unit at 302 West Grand Avenue on the east end of the row house is somewhat larger and has higher quality finish than the other four units at 304-310 West Grand Avenue. The corner bay windows and brick chimney provide interior amenities not seen in the other four units. The floor plan of 302 West Grand Avenue includes an entry, living room, dining room, and kitchen with a  $\frac{3}{4}$  bath and  $\frac{1}{2}$  bath downstairs. Upstairs rooms include four bedrooms, a parlor, and a full bath. The more detailed descriptions below are for those rooms on the first floor of 302 West Grand that still display their original historic characteristics and appearance.

From the open porch entry an ornate solid oak entry door with a central arched window and recessed panels leads in to the foyer at 302 West Grand Avenue. The highly decorative foyer has leaded glass sidelights and a transom window. Framing the interior of the foyer is a classical frontispiece with fluted columns and projecting cornice. The floor in the foyer has the original hard maple flooring. Lath and plaster walls and ceilings are covered with period appropriate wallpaper and paint. The original wooden stairway with oak spindles and railing leads from the foyer to the second floor. Framing the passage between the foyer and the living room/front parlor is a classically detailed solid maple doorway with recessed panel pocket doors.

Moving from the foyer into the living room, the most distinctive feature of this room is the original fireplace with ornately carved wooden mantel and colored glazed tile surround and threshold. The bay window in the southeast corner of the living room has the original hardwood trim and provides an abundance of natural light. The passageway from the living room to the dining room is framed with the original maple trim and highlighted with ornate scrollwork along the cornice. The dining room also retains much of the historic appearance of the foyer and living room. The bay window on the east wall illuminates the dining area as the corner bay does in the living room. Hardwood trim and period appropriate floor, wall and ceiling finish in the dining room contribute to the late Victorian appearance of all three of the main rooms on the first floor. Another distinctive late Victorian design element is the curved interior wall that separates the dining room from the bathroom. The kitchen, laundry room and bathrooms on the first floor no longer retain their historic character.

Following the stairway from the foyer to the second floor in the owner-occupied unit on the east end of the row house a hallway leads to four bedrooms, full bath, and living room. As in the first floor, the ceiling height and lath and plaster walls on the second floor reflect the original design from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the living room and hallway the hardwood floors show an unusual zebra-like geometric pattern of strips of mixed light and dark woods. The upstairs living room has a bay window and fireplace with tile surround similar to the living room on the first floor. The upstairs bath is not currently in use.

The other four units are currently rental apartments, a use for which they were originally designed. The design and finish of the interior of the rental units is plain compared to the high-style interior of the owner-occupied unit. The rental units had central heating, plumbing and electricity similar to the owner's apartment. The floor plan in the four rental units is uniform, and each unit is a mirror image of the twin next door. As in the main

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unit on the east end, these four units have an entry, living room, dining room, kitchen and ¾ bath downstairs, and four bedrooms and full bath upstairs. The downstairs ¾ bath in the rental units was not in the original design. These bathrooms were likely added at the same time that the extra bathrooms were added to the owner-occupied unit on the east end. Also like the main unit, the stairway that leads upstairs from the entry to the second floor hallway continues along the same wall downstairs to the other side of the building to provide rear access to each unit. However, unlike the owner occupied unit the rental units have no fireplaces or bay windows. The interior finish of the rental units has been altered from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century appearance, especially in the bathrooms and the kitchens. Painted hardwood trim, lowered ceilings and vinyl or carpeted floors are found in all of the rental units.

There is a full, unfinished basement under the row house with original limestone walls, full dimension floor joists and original concrete floor. There is a natural gas forced air heating system for 302 West Grand Avenue; the other units at 304-310 West Grand Avenue have the original hot water heating system with radiators. Every unit has updated wiring with 100 amp electric service and electric hot water heaters. Each unit is served by city water and sewer.

Integrity

No historic images of the Salsbury Row House have been located that would show what exterior elements may have been removed over the years. It appears likely that the top of the bay on the southeast corner was removed. With an extension above the existing bay the three-story bay would have appeared more like a tower, an element typical of Queen Anne style buildings of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Other decorative trim elements also may have been removed. The original siding was horizontal tongue and groove drop siding as evidenced by one historic photo that was found. The light blue aluminum siding and white aluminum window trim was applied before the current owner's family purchased the building in the late 1970s. The original siding may be intact under the modern siding.

Over the past 15 years the current owners have maintained the overall structure of the row house and the interior finish of the rental units in manner typical of rental properties in the neighborhood. The owners have also done extensive restoration and replication where necessary of windows, doors, trim, and flooring in the first floor rooms described above.

While the building has been altered with the application of modern siding, the form, massing and openings all remain. The importance of the building is the uniqueness of the property type and the elements that define it as a type remain extant.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Salsbury Row House, built in 1891, is eligible for listing at the local level on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for Architecture as a well-preserved example of a late Victorian era row house property type. The period of significance corresponds to the date of construction. This row house is the only surviving example of a 19<sup>th</sup> century row house in the City of Eau Claire and one of the few row houses extant in the state of Wisconsin.

The Salsbury Row House is located on the northwest corner of Grand and Oxford avenues just west of the small Grand Avenue commercial district and one block north of the Randall Park Historic District (NRHP 1983). The current and historic location of the Eau Claire County Courthouse is on the opposite corner. The property two doors to the west is the Queen Anne style Clarence Chamberlain House (NRHP 2000) located at 322 West Grand Avenue. There are two more NRHP listed Queen Anne style homes within two blocks of the Salsbury Row House at 415 and 459 West Grand Avenue.

Historical Overview

The early history of the City of Eau Claire is closely associated with the development of the lumber industry in the Chippewa Valley. Logs were rafted down the Chippewa River as early as the 1820s, and in 1846 the first sawmill in Eau Claire was erected at the confluence of the Chippewa and Eau Claire Rivers. Several sawmills were in full operation by 1855, and immigrants from Europe and Canada poured into the region to work in the mills and clear farmland. By 1857 one small village had developed on the west bank of the Chippewa just downstream from the confluence with the Eau Claire River. Divided from each other by two unpredictable rivers, two other small communities grew up on the north and south sides of the Eau Claire River. Nelson Chapman and Joseph Thorp were the developers of the land on the west bank of the Chippewa River where the Salsbury Row House is located.<sup>1</sup>

By 1861, the three small villages of Eau Claire had a combined population over 3000 compared to a relative handful of residents just ten years earlier. Reliable bridges were completed across the Eau Claire River in 1859 and the Chippewa River was spanned in 1869. The first railroad line came to the area in 1870 and in 1872 the three communities incorporated as the City of Eau Claire. With westward migration and settlement booming after the Civil War, Eau Claire produced nearly one-half of all the lumber manufactured in the Chippewa Valley. Within two decades, Eau Claire became a major center of commerce and settlement in western Wisconsin with a population of 21,000 in 1885 and Wisconsin's 3<sup>rd</sup> largest city. As the timber resource was depleted faster than anyone had anticipated, the Lumber Era in the Chippewa Valley reached its zenith in the early 1890s. Eau Claire, more successfully than many other cities in northern and western Wisconsin, switched

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<sup>1</sup> Chapman and Thorp organized the Eau Claire Lumber Company in 1866 that grew to be one of the largest lumber producers in the Chippewa Valley. Their partnership also acquired nearly 3000 acres of land that included half of the platted land in the city.

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from lumbering to manufacturing, retail and other service industries in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>2</sup>

The architectural legacy of the “Gilded Age” of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century was manifest in grandiose mansions and highly ornate commercial and public buildings that were seen in cities across the United States. In Eau Claire, many of these buildings constructed in the three decades from the 1870s to the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have been lost, but several significant examples remain. Most of these architecturally and historically significant buildings are located within several blocks of the Salsbury Row House.

In the vanguard of entrepreneurs who came to the Chippewa Valley to take advantage of the expanding business opportunities were young men from New England. James Freeman Salsbury (sometimes spelled Salisbury) was one of those young men. Eau Claire city directories show a listing for James F. Salsbury at several locations in the city beginning in 1880, all on the west side of the Chippewa River in the Randall Park neighborhood. The first appearance of 302-310 West Grand Avenue is in the city directory for 1891-1892, with Salsbury listed as the occupant of 302 West Grand Avenue. The Sanborn Fire Insurance maps from 1883, 1885 and 1889 show no evidence of the row houses on West Grand Avenue.<sup>3</sup> However, the 1894 Sanborn map clearly shows the footprint and house numbering of the row house. The 1891 Bird’s Eye map of Eau Claire shows what appears to be a four to five unit apartment building on the northwest corner of Bridge and Oxford streets. The evidence from the city directories, bird’s eye map and Sanborn maps indicates a strong likelihood that the Salsbury Row House was built in 1891.

James F. Salsbury (1849-1925) occupied the “owner's unit” at 302 West Grand Avenue from 1891 until at least 1900. His occupation from the 1880s through 1891 is identified as a lawyer. From 1893 through 1900 he is identified as manager and then president of the Wisconsin River Land Company and later additionally the president of the Ideal Land and Loan Company. After 1904 Salsbury does not appear in the listings for lawyers, land developers or as a resident of Eau Claire. His obituary indicates that he “has for many years been a resident of Eau Claire with the exception of a few years spent in the West.”<sup>4</sup>

One might speculate that Salsbury came to the Chippewa Valley with a law degree in hand looking to eventually invest in real estate, which he did at 302-310 West Grand Avenue. The row house was conveniently located across the street from the county courthouse and jail if he chose to continue to practice law. The fact that he switched the listing of his occupation from lawyer to land developer and that he later moved to the “West” indicates that real estate was his major occupational interest. The oral tradition of the row house on Grand Avenue indicates that the building was referred to as “Salsbury Flats” for many years, with the assumption that Salsbury was the developer and first owner/occupant of the row house.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> “Eau Claire Landmarks,” Eau Claire Landmarks Commission, Eau Claire, WI, 1986; updated 2002.

<sup>3</sup> Bridge Street was renamed West Grand Avenue in 1893.

<sup>4</sup> Obituary in the Eau Claire Leader, 22 October 1925, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with current owner, John Curtis, 10 April 2008.

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There is a much more complete historical record about the Kelley family who owned and occupied the row house at 302-310 West Grand Avenue for over 25 years from 1908 until the mid 1930s. Will Swift Kelley (1882-1941) and his older sister Mae E. Kelley (1875-1946) were well known in Eau Claire business, political and social circles through the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Will and Mae were born in Lake Crystal, Minnesota and came to Eau Claire with their Irish-American parents in 1896. After graduating from high school in Eau Claire, Will went to work as a salesman for several years until going into business for himself as a retailer of cigars and other tobacco products. He opened Kelley's Smoke Shop at 213 South Barstow Avenue in 1906 and continued in the tobacco business at that location for 35 years. His shop was considered the "most popular cigar and tobacco house in Eau Claire."<sup>6</sup> He was elected to the Eau Claire County Board in 1918 and served continuously for the next 23 years, including chairmanship of the board from 1934 until his death in 1946. Will Kelley had several other business and real estate interests and was considered a man of considerable influence in civic affairs.<sup>7</sup>

Mae Kelley was 21 years old when her family moved to Eau Claire. She clerked in several ladies clothing stores in downtown Eau Claire before starting her own millinery business at 318 South Barstow in a building purchased by her brother Will soon after he began his smoke shop one block away in 1906. Mae Kelley not only sold ladies hats, but also handkerchiefs, jewelry and other "notions" likely found in a shop patronized by women of means in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Mae was described as a stylish "grande dame" who enjoyed taking buying trips to fine stores in downtown Chicago in search of high style merchandise for her discriminating clientele.<sup>8</sup> Mae Kelley operated the millinery shop in the same location for over 30 years until her death in 1941.<sup>9</sup>

Neither Will nor his sister Mae ever married. According to listings in the city directory they both occupied the two-story row house unit at 302 West Grand Avenue during most of the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They had a sister Angie Belle Kelley (1879-1974) who married Archie Burton Carter in 1906 and had a son, John (Jack) Kelley Carter (?-1964). Soon after Jack was born, Angie and Archie were divorced and later Jack Carter moved in with his aunt Mae and uncle Will and lived with them through his childhood. Uncle, aunt, nephew, and a live-in housekeeper rounded out the Kelley family at 302 West Grand Avenue for most of the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>10</sup> A photograph of the Kelleys and their guests taken in the living room of 302 West Grand Avenue in 1910 gives some indication of the social status of the hosts and their friends and the turn-of-the-century high style appearance of the interior of the row house at that time.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> History of Eau Claire County, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 1914, pp. 752-754.

<sup>7</sup> Obituary in the Eau Claire Leader, 27 May 1941, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Personal recollections of Hilda Carter Fletcher, widow of John (Jack) Kelley Carter in a copy of a three page letter dated 2 September 1993 that is now in the archives of the Chippewa Valley Museum.

<sup>9</sup> Obituary in the Eau Claire Leader-Telegram, 18 October 1946.

<sup>10</sup> Fletcher recollections, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Photograph from the private collection of owner John Curtis.

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Salsbury Row House  
Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin

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Historical research on the Salsbury Row House centered on the “owner’s unit” at 302 West Grand Avenue because of the predominant architectural and historical significance of that unit. Research of the city directories indicates that the rental units at 304-310 West Grand Avenue had a great deal of turnover of occupants. Research further indicates that they were primarily single men or single women who presumably were working in businesses or factories close-by in downtown Eau Claire. In recent decades, these units have often been occupied by students attending the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire.

Architecture

The multi-unit row house plan is a rare property type in Wisconsin. This form of housing is found mostly in high-density urban areas where lots sizes are small and population is high. The great majority of row houses found in Wisconsin are in Milwaukee.

The row house style has roots in 17<sup>th</sup> century England. This two-story attached style of housing became popular after the Great Fire of 1666 destroyed large parts of London and the need to rebuild quickly and efficiently led to the development of the row house form. This housing style was transplanted to the English colonies in America over one hundred years later. The first row houses in the United States were reportedly built by architect/builder Thomas Carstairs in Philadelphia in the early 19th century. The row house quickly spread throughout the colonies as a very common form of urban residential architecture. Today, there are many well maintained examples of the row house in Philadelphia, Boston, New York, and Washington D.C. in the east, and in San Francisco in the west.

A simple definition of the row house is “a series of individual houses, having architectural unity and a common wall between each unit.”<sup>12</sup> Other terms often used to describe this style of housing are “townhouse” and “terraced house.”<sup>13</sup> In New York and Boston, a row house with a brown sandstone façade is referred to as a “brownstone” and in the South, the term “row home” is often used for similar buildings. A row house is distinguished from other attached housing styles in that a row house unit is two or more stories high, with both front and rear separate entries, sharing a common wall with adjacent units and also sharing a common architectural style and appearance. Row houses in the U.S. connote a higher style than apartment buildings or tract housing, which can share some of the elements listed above.

The Salsbury Row House in Eau Claire is one of a very few surviving row houses in Wisconsin. A search of the Architecture and History Inventory indicates ten Queen Anne style row houses in the state: the Salsbury Row House in Eau Claire and nine others in Milwaukee. The Matthew Uhl Row House (1871) at 609-619 Main Street, La Crosse was a four-unit red brick Italianate style row house that was the only surviving example of a

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<sup>12</sup> Boyce, Byrl N., editor, *Real Estate Appraisal Terminology*, Ballinger Publishing Company, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1975.

<sup>13</sup> Architectural and History inventory card (AHI #41356) indicates a reference in the 1902 Eau Claire City Directory for 302-310 West Grand Avenue as “Terrace Row.”

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19<sup>th</sup> century row house in La Crosse. It was a city landmark property, but had deteriorated past the point of restoration and was razed in September of 2004. The Roosevelt Terrace (1890) row house in Superior was listed on the National Register in 2005 and is the only 19<sup>th</sup> century row house in Wisconsin outside of Milwaukee that is listed on the National Register.

The Salsbury Row House displays elements of the Queen Anne style which very popular in Wisconsin when Eau Claire reached the zenith of late 19<sup>th</sup> century Lumber Era prosperity. As previously mentioned, there are several well-preserved Queen Anne style homes in the nearby Randall Park Historic District and several individually listed Queen Anne style homes within several blocks of the Salsbury Row House.

The Salsbury Row House is eligible for listing at the local level on the National Register under Criterion C for architecture as a significant surviving example of a 19<sup>th</sup> century row house. This urban architectural form is rarely found in Wisconsin and reflects Eau Claire's aspirations to become a major metropolitan center and Wisconsin's "Second City" in the early 1890s. In its design and plan, the Salsbury Row House reflects the property type, with a spinal organization of the individual units and an overall unifying composition of the exterior.

John Curtis and his family have owned 302-310 West Grand Avenue for over 25 years and support the city of Eau Claire in seeking listing of the Salsbury Row House on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Salsbury Row House  
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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The boundary of the Salsbury Row House is defined by the lot line of Lot 8, Block 12, Chapman and Thorp's Corrected Second Addition of the City of Eau Claire. Lot 8, Block 12 is a uniform rectangular parcel with 66 feet facing Oxford Avenue to the east and an alley on the west and 133 feet facing West Grand Avenue to the south. The parcel size is estimated to be about 8800 square feet or about .20 of an acre.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The nominated boundary corresponds to the platted parcel for the property, Lot 8, Block 12. The current ownership of the parcel also includes Lot 9, Block 12. However, the Salsbury Row House sits entirely on Lot 8 and no part of the building is located on Lot 9, Block 12 just to the north. In addition, no part of Lot 9 or the buildings situated on Lot 9, Block 12 is part of this nomination.

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Salsbury Row House  
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**The following information pertains to all ten photographs:**

**Salsbury Row House**  
**Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin**  
**Photographer: Eric J. Wheeler, June 2008**  
**Negatives in the collection of the Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin**

Photograph 1 of 10  
Street scene

Photograph 2 of 10  
South façade

Photograph 3 of 10  
South façade

Photograph 4 of 10  
South façade

Photograph 5 of 10  
West façade

Photograph 6 of 10  
East and North façade

Photograph 7 of 10  
Interior

Photograph 8 of 10  
Interior

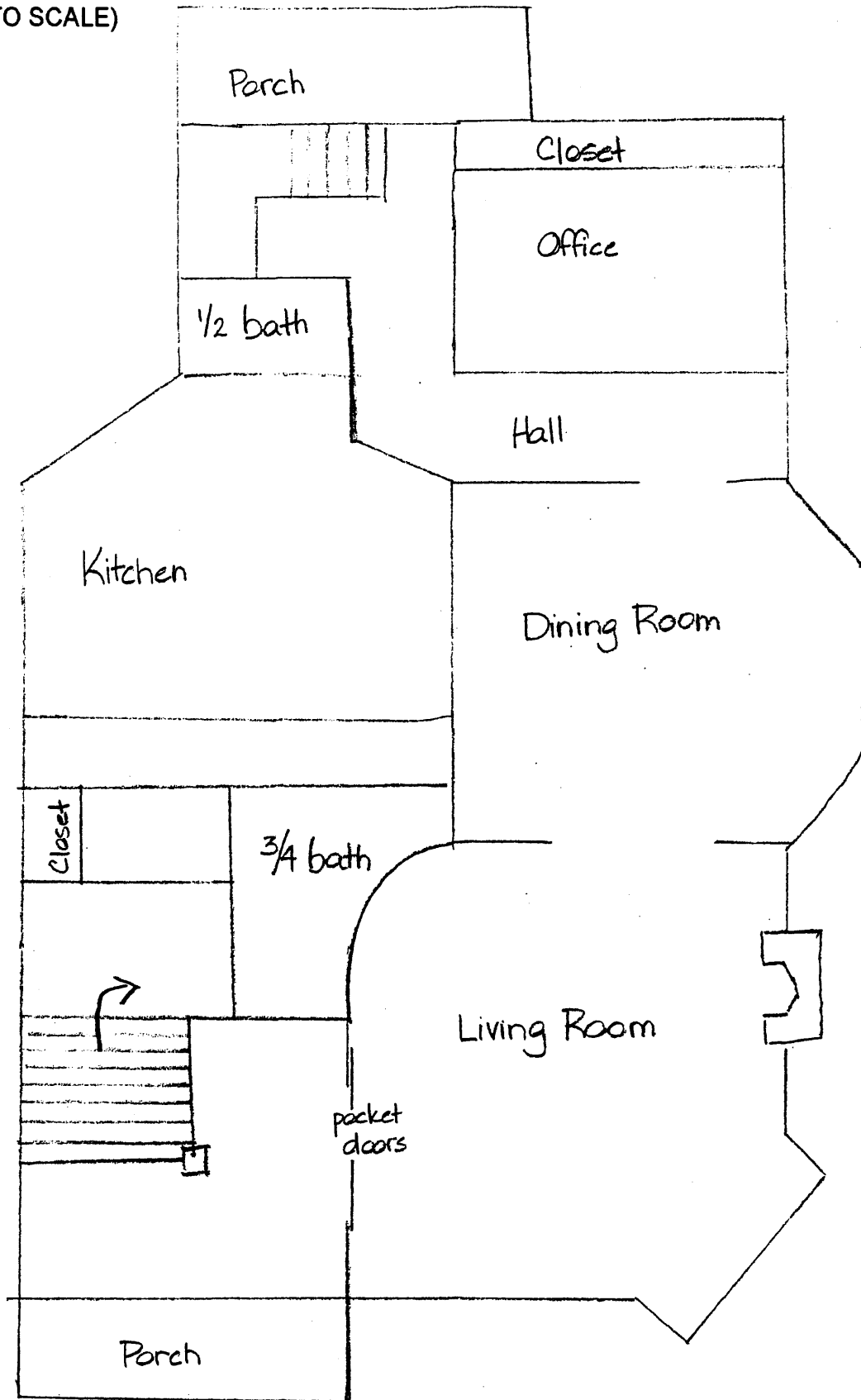
Photograph 9 of 10  
Interior

Photograph 10 of 10  
Interior

**FIGURE #1:**  
**SALSBURY ROW HOUSE**  
EAU CLAIRE, EAU CLAIRE COUNTY, WI

302 WEST GRAND AVENUE  
-MAIN UNIT, FIRST FLOOR

(NOT TO SCALE)



**FIGURE #2:**  
**SALSBURY ROW HOUSE**  
EAU CLAIRE, EAU CLAIRE COUNTY, WI

302 WEST GRAND AVENUE  
-MAIN UNIT, SECOND FLOOR

(NOT TO SCALE)

