

OMT NO. 1024-0018
EXP. 10/31/84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received JAN 31 1984
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Brewster Randall House

and/or common Upson-Williams House

2. Location

street & number 1412 Ruger Avenue not for publication

city, town Janesville vicinity of ~~congressional district~~

state Wisconsin code 55 county Rock code 105

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> in process | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA | <input 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 William and Mary Williams

street & number 1412 Ruger Avenue

city, town Janesville vicinity of _____ state Wisconsin 53545

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Rock County Courthouse

street & number 51 South Main Street

city, town Janesville state Wisconsin 53545

6. Representation in Existing Surveys (con't)

Wisconsin Inventory of
title Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1975 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The main mass of the house is a two-story frame cube facing north, attached to a rear wing of one-story plus attic. The southeast and south sides are augmented by shallow, one-story bracked frame sections. A small open porch with denticulated cornice and roof-top balustrade was added to the west side, but does not detract from the overall integrity or appearance of the structure. The front facade is composed of three units of openings: the recessed double-door, off-set to the left (east) side, is framed by thick pilasters and a denticulated cornice, a post-1945 abbreviation of the original front porch. The low hipped roof overhangs wide eaves, supported by large paired brackets, modillions, and denticulation.

Simple profiled wood moldings and bracketed sills frame the double-hung windows around the house. The paired brackets on the two-story cube and rear wing are articulated with beads, rosettes, and lobed consoles, and the soffits are trimmed with reels. The building is supported by a low stone foundation, dressed only at the front. Tall red brick chimneys occur at the southwest and southeast corners of the two-story cube, and on the west-side extension. The reduction of the original porch to the current door frame, undertaken by former owners, the Donald Upsons, was a common solution in Janesville to the problem of serious deterioration.

Significant features of the interior include a curved stair with fine balustrade and newel in the front hall; a front parlor with paneled window frames, original ceiling moldings, and classical white marble fireplace; an additional two white marble fireplaces in back parlors; and much of the original hardware.

The forty-three-acre farm that once surrounded the house has been replaced by homes of 1920s and 1930s-vintage. The buildings vary in style and construction material, but generally are of the same scale and are well-maintained. The Upson-Williams house property is lush with trees and low shrubs.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> social/ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

Specific dates 1862¹ **Builder/Architect** Garrie Nettleton² (attributed)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Brewster Randall is architecturally significant as one of the best-preserved examples in Janesville of the transitional Greek Revival-Italianate period of construction. The simple design, with enriched bracketed cornice, is attributed to local carpenter/architect Garrie Nettleton, the known or suspected designer of a number of surviving architecturally-distinguished buildings of the later nineteenth-century in Janesville.

Originally the home of Brewster Randall, the Upson-Williams house is one of a great variety of Italianate-era house types in Janesville, a city distinguished by the quality and volume of building activity of that time. With its augmented cubic form, three apparent-bay system of fenestration, low hipped roof, and prominent bracketed cornice, the building is one of perhaps a dozen buildings of the transitional Greek Revival-Italianate type surviving in the city. The form pre-dates more assymetrical pedimented Italianate houses in the area, but post-dates Janesville's pre-eminent Italian villa, the William Tallman House (NRHP 1970) of 1857-59. When General Brewster constructed the house in the early 1860s, it stood on a forty-three-acre farm.

About the builder/architect of the house, Garrie Nettleton, little is known. It is known that he was in Janesville as a carpenter in 1857-58, and that by 1862 he listed himself in the city directory as an architect. He must have left Janesville by 1870 as³ the directory of that year lists Schulze as the successor to Nettleton and Schulze.³ It is known that Nettleton built the Lappin-Gessert House and also Christ Episcopal Church, now demolished.⁴ Nettleton is also credited as the architect of the First Congregational Church in Janesville (both in the minutes of the church society and the lithograph engraving of the church fabric) of 1869. From the Tallman papers⁵ it is also known that Nettleton was employed by William M. Tallman as an architect and builder of at least two downtown stores, neither of which is standing, and of the elaborate frame constructed fencing and gates to Tallman's home on Jackson St. (N.R.19.15.70). (While the fence no longer is in place, fragments of it are displayed in the Horse Barn at the Tallman Restorations.)

Historical Background

Original owner Brewster Randall came to Janesville in 1862 in the fifty-sixth year of his life, having retired from politics in Ohio. Randall received his education in law in the offices of Joshua R. Giddings, the fiery abolitionist who in the "Creole Case" of 1841 declared that the negroes who mutinied on the ship Creole "in resuming their natural rights of personal liberty....violated no law of the United States."⁶ Randall attained some prominence at law, and was elected to the State Senate of Ohio, and soon became president of that body. In the Wade-Chase controversy over an election to the United States Senate, Randall is believed to have cast the deciding vote in favor of Chase. Randall was a friend of President Hayes and remained so during their lifetimes. Upon his retirement in Janesville he led a quiet life, seeking no political office, although greatly admired in the community. Because any historical contribution made by Randall predates his residence in the house and in Wisconsin, he cannot be claimed as a significant person associated with the house.

(continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(See continuation sheet.)

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Janesville West Quadrangle

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 19, 20, Uplands addition to the City of Janesville.

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

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By (cont.)

name/title Ruth Ann Willis, Preservation Officer
Maurice J. Montgomery, Assistant Director

organization Rock County Historical Society date December 2, 1980

street & number P. O. Box 896 telephone 608/756-4509

city or town Janesville state Wisconsin 53545

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *[Signature]*

title Director, Historic Preservation Division date JAN. 25, 1984

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| For NPS use only | |
| I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register | Entered in the |
| <i>[Signature]</i> | National Register |
| Keeper of the National Register | date 3/1/84 |
| Attest: | date |
| Chief of Registration | |

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Upson-Williams House, Janesville, Rock County, Wisconsin

Continuation sheet Significance

Item number 8

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Footnotes

¹City of Janesville Tax Records-1862.

²The attribution of this house to the local architect/builder Garrie Nettleton is based upon the similarity in handling of the ornamental features, particularly the overhanging eaves with their cornice of modillions and dentils, to his known handling of like details in the Lappin-Gessert House of 1864.

³Rock County Gazetteer, Directory and Business Advertiser, 1857. Janesville Directory, City Record and Business Advertiser, 1862. Holland's Janesville City Directory, 1870.

⁴Janesville Daily Gazette, March 18, 1864, pg.3. The History of Rock County Wisconsin, 1879, pg. 556.

⁵Tallman Papers, Rock County Historical Society Library.

⁶Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 10, pg. 338.

⁷The Janesville Gazette, May 4, 1880, pg. 4.

