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DEC 22 1989

NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 8/86)  
Wisconsin Word Processing Format  
(Approved 2/87)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Form (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries on a letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only archival paper (20 pound, acid free paper with a 2% alkaline reserve).

1. Name of Property

historic name Calkins, Elias A., Doublehouse  
other name/site number Meddaugh, B. A., House (incorrect)

2. Location

street & number 1612-1614 East Kane Place N/A not for publication  
city, town Milwaukee N/A vicinity  
state Wisconsin code WI county Milwaukee code 079 zip code 53202

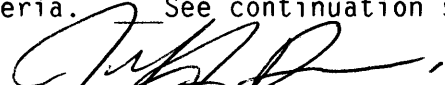
3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	contributing	noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

x 

Signature of certifying official

12/6/89  
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

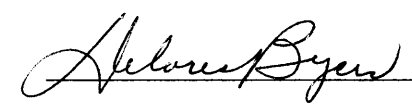
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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:)



1/18/90

for Signature of the Keeper Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Multiple Dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Domestic/Institutional Housing  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)      Materials (enter categories from instructions)

<u>Gothic</u>	foundation	<u>limestone</u>
	walls	<u>aluminum</u>
		<u>wood</u>
	roof	<u>asphalt</u>
	other	<u>wood</u>

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

### General Character

The Elias A. Calkins Doublehouse is located at 1612-1614 East Kane Place on Milwaukee's lower east side, about one and one-half miles northeast of the central business district. It is situated between two major thoroughfares, Oakland and Farwell Avenues, in what was once a prosperous middle class neighborhood that originally developed primarily from the mid-1870s to the late 1880s. The house occupies a 54-foot by 120-foot rectangular lot. Its principal elevation faces southwest onto East Kane Place. An 1890s apartment building borders the doublehouse to the west while the east side of the property is bounded by a public alley and an adjacent early twentieth century funeral home fronting on Farwell Avenue. Across the street from the Calkins house is a row of nineteenth century residences. The doublehouse is set back from the sidewalk behind a narrow lawn. The structure occupies most of its lot with a small area behind the building reserved for surface parking.

The Calkins Doublehouse is a two-and-one-half-story rectangular frame building with a combination gable/hip roof constructed in 1875. Only the roof slope facing the street is clad with decorative, cut wooden shingles while the rest of the roof is sheathed with asphalt singles. The building rests on a smooth ashlar stone block foundation. The design of the facade reflects the side-by-side townhouse layout of the interior. Two identical gabled bays are joined by a narrow central section containing the paired entrances to the two units. Paired windows are located above the doors at the second story with a large dormer, with a jerkin-head gable above at the attic story. Flanking the entrances, the gabled bays each feature a projecting polygonal bay window at the first story above which are paired windows at the second story and a small single window in the gable at the attic story. The prominent front gables and the gabled central dormer have pierced bargeboard trim with ornamental pendants. The flat decorative scrollsawn millwork enframing the doors and windows, give the building its Victorian-Gothic flavor. All of the windows are simple one-over-one sash. The six-paneled doors have rectangular windows in the upper panels. Prominent paneled brick chimneys project from the roof on the east and west elevations, and there is a smaller kitchen chimney at the rear.

The utilitarian east and west elevations are virtually identical to each other with gabled upper stories and simply enframed rectangular windows. These windows and gables were apparently never as ornamented as those on the

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principal facade. A long, two-story, gabled wing extends to the rear or north, and is slightly narrower than the front of the house. Behind that, a small, one-story kitchen addition with a hipped roof extends across the rear of the building.

Alterations to the exterior of the house appear to have been minimal. The building's clapboard siding was covered with aluminum siding some time in the mid-1970s although the wood trim was left exposed. The smooth-finished aluminum siding has been applied so expertly that it is virtually indistinguishable from the original wood siding even at close range. It appears that all of the wood trim has been retained. The installation of the siding occurred before the building was determined eligible for listing in the National Register in 1979 and, in our opinion, does not seriously detract from the visual integrity of the house. The rear two-story wing is original to the house, but some time between 1888 and 1894 the current one-story shed addition was added to the kitchen wing. Fire insurance atlases also show that a small one-story porch once sheltered the front entrance doors, but this has since been removed and replaced with the present shallow overhanging shed roof connecting the bay windows.

The interior of the Calkins house has undergone some changes. Inside the front door of each unit there was originally a vestibule and narrow hall containing the staircase to the second floor. Off the entrance hall was the door to the front parlor. Behind the parlor was a second sizeable room, that was used as the dining room. The kitchen was at the rear of the two-story portion of the house with a one-story service shed adjoining. Both the east and west units had mirror-image floor plans. The partitions on the first floor were altered in 1948 when the building was converted into a four-family structure. The staircases to the second floor became the main access to the upstairs apartments and were enclosed to eliminate the hallways that once extended to the back of the first floor. The front parlor retains its original dimensions in both units, but the west unit now has a kitchen in the former dining room while there are offices in the east unit. The original rear kitchen service sheds were converted into storage rooms during the 1948 remodeling. The second floor plan remains essentially as it was originally built with a number of rooms opening off the narrow upstairs hallway. Small winding staircases are located to the rear of the second floor units and provide access to the first floor where the kitchens were formerly located. A narrow staircase leads to the third floor from the upstairs hall.

Since 1977 a group home for runaway children called Pathfinders has occupied the entire building. They have made openings in the party walls between the two units on both the first and second floors to facilitate their

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use of the building as a shelter and counseling center for runaway teens and their families.

Original features remaining on the interior include the heavy rolled door and window mouldings, the tall baseboards, the paneled doors, the tall windows that extend to within eighteen inches of the floor, the original staircases with their massive turned newel posts and balusters, and some curved plaster walls such as those at the parlor bay windows and in the former dining rooms. The two front parlors each retain their original white marble mantels with incised Eastlake-style ornament. There are no ceiling mouldings. Although most of the building has wall-to-wall carpeting, some rooms have exposed hardwood floors.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: \_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_ statewide X locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B   X   C     D  
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G  
Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Architecture	1875 <sup>1</sup>	1875
	Cultural Affiliation	
	N/A	
Significant Person	Architect/Builder	
N/A	Douglas, James <sup>2</sup>	

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and period of significance noted above.

Significance

The Elias A. Calkins Doublehouse is being nominated to the National Register for its significance in the area of architecture, Criterion C. The building is an excellent example of a frame Victorian-Gothic doublehouse of the 1870s. The side-by-side doublehouse was a moderately popular middle-class housing type in Milwaukee, and the Calkins house is the most highly ornamented and intact of the remaining Victorian Gothic examples in the city. The Calkins Doublehouse also represents the work of the locally significant architect James Douglas. It was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places on August 20, 1979, when it was incorrectly identified as the B. A. Meddaugh House.

Architectural Significance

The Elias Calkins Doublehouse is architecturally significant as perhaps the city's finest remaining example of a Victorian Gothic style frame doublehouse. The doublehouse was one of the earliest multiple unit residential building types constructed in the city. Examples were built at least as early as the 1840s, and the side-by-side, two-unit, house type has remained popular down to the present.

A doublehouse is basically two multistory houses, each with a separate entrance, that share a common wall. The most typical examples are two and one-half stories tall and have the entrances paired in the middle of the facade, often sheltered by a common porch. The facades are often symmetrical with each half being the mirror image of the other, as is the case with the

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Calkins House. During the Queen Anne period the entrances were often moved to the ends and the facades of the two units were fenestrated differently to create a more picturesque, asymmetrical appearance. Doublehouses were usually intended for middle-class or upper-class occupancy and because of their greater size and the consequent need for a lot with a wider frontage were generally more costly to build and hence more expensive to rent than the more typical long, narrow, Milwaukee duplex with its upper and lower flat configuration. There were, in fact, at one time, a number of mansion-scale doublehouses built to house members of some of the city's wealthiest families, but these have all been razed. Most of the doublehouses, however, were built to house prosperous professionals, business executives or merchants. Some were built as owner-occupied structures while others were intended purely as rental properties, and the owners never lived in them. Doublehouses filled a special niche in the city's housing market by providing house-sized units with the desirable feature of separating the bedroom floor from the living room floor of the house, a much sought-after floor plan characteristic in Victorian times. They could often be built on a smaller lot and at less construction cost than would be required to construct two decently spaced, freestanding, single-family houses. The resulting building usually presented an attractive, even imposing, appearance because of the width of the facade and the greater opportunities for architectural expression.

The Calkins House is significant as an exceptional example of a frame Victorian Gothic middleclass side-by-side. It exemplifies the outstanding wood craftsmanship characteristic of the best Victorian Gothic design with its handsome bargeboards and ornamentally enframed window and door openings. Typical of many doublehouses built on interior lots, virtually all of the detailing is concentrated on the facade, while the side and rear elevations, largely obscured from view by the neighboring buildings, are relatively plain. The Calkins house is a rare surviving, relatively unaltered example of an imaginatively detailed wooden Victorian Gothic building that, in spite of its relatively modest size, is composed and ornamented to convey the peaky, richly sculpted, handcrafted qualities that were so integral to the Victorian Gothic style. There is no other surviving example of a frame Victorian Gothic doublehouse in Milwaukee that retains the degree of design integrity of the Calkins House.

James Douglas (1823-1894) was a prolific architect who started out as a bridge and house builder in the 1840s and developed into one of the city's more respected and popular architects. He retired from practice for nearly ten years and resumed architectural design in 1872. His commissions came from individual property owners and investors building income properties, and he is chiefly known for his residential design. The bulk of Douglas' designs were

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built on the city's lower east side. It was said that a part of the area was nicknamed "Douglasville" since so many houses were of his design.<sup>3</sup> Douglas popularized some of his house design concepts by writing two articles on the subject for the Milwaukee Monthly Magazine in 1874.<sup>4</sup> Douglas also designed a few churches and institutional structures before his death in 1894. The number of his extant Queen Anne-style buildings provides a pretty good picture of Douglas' later work, but known examples of his earlier work are rare. Among the few extant known examples of his work in the 1870s are the Collins-Elwell-Cary House (1876) at 1363 North Prospect Avenue and the Fisk Holbrook Day Residence (1874) at 8000 West Milwaukee Avenue in Wauwatosa (Sunny Hill, NRHP 5/7/80). These are both costly brick mansions distinguished by their complicated rooflines and profusion of dormers and gables. The Calkins Doublehouse, in contrast, is more modest in scale, but is an important document of Douglas' design versatility and is representative of the commissions that probably comprised the bulk of his output during the 1870s.

History of the Calkins House

Elias Ahira Calkins (1828-1904)<sup>5</sup> was a well-respected newspaperman who successively owned and edited a number of publications in Milwaukee, Madison, St. Paul, and Chicago during his lifetime. Calkins was born in Royalton, Niagara County, New York, in 1828. In 1843, at the age of 15 Calkins came west with his parents to Milwaukee. He studied the bookbinding trade with the local firm of Hale & Chapman and got his first newspaper job as the local editor of Sherman Booth's Wisconsin Free Democrat where he worked from the fall of 1850 until May of 1851. Calkins subsequently became editor of Cary and Round's Commercial Advertiser (later renamed the News) and served in this position until December of 1852 when he relocated to Madison.<sup>6</sup>

In Madison, Calkins worked as a clerk in the office of Dr. Azel P. Ladd, the superintendent of Public Instruction until January of 1854 when he landed a job as assistant editor of the Madison Argus & Democrat. With James R. Proudfit he became publisher and owner of the paper the following year. George Webb succeeded Proudfit in the business and Webb and Calkins published the paper until 1859 when the firm became Calkins & Co. In 1861 Calkins left his position to enlist in the Army and was appointed Major of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry. He was later promoted to Lt. Colonel. Calkins remained in active service in the southwest campaign through March of 1865.

After his military service Calkins returned to Madison and went into partnership with George Hyer to publish the Madison Capitol (later called the Union) and served as the paper's editor until 1867. From 1866 through March, 1867 Calkins also served in an appointed position as Acting Collector of



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Internal Revenue for the Second District of Wisconsin until the U.S. Senate rejected his nomination to the position.

Calkins subsequently relocated to St. Paul, Minnesota, to edit the Pioneer and remained in this job until 1870 when he returned to Milwaukee. It was while he was working as an editor of the Milwaukee News between 1870 and 1876 that he built the subject property. Calkins began a new publication, the Sunday Telegraph, in December of 1878 with C. C. Bowsfield. J. A. Watrous joined the firm in July of 1879 and bought out Bowsfield's interests the following October, and the firm became Calkins & Watrous. The Telegraph was said to have been Calkins' best project up to that time and was described as one of the most popular weeklies in Wisconsin.

In 1884 Calkins sold his interest in the Telegraph and moved to Chicago to become an editorial writer for the Evening Journal. He last worked for the Chicago Chronicle. During his lifetime Calkins was known for his interesting writing and his wide range of personal and business acquaintances and was described as a brilliant writer and witty and entertaining speaker. In his later years Calkins suffered considerably from the after effects of injuries sustained during the Civil War and was ill for some time before his death at the age<sup>9</sup> of 76 on November 25, 1904, at his home on Berkeley Avenue in Chicago.

The doublehouse at 1612-1614 East Kane Place was built during Calkins' second period of residency in Milwaukee between 1870 to 1884. Upon his return to Milwaukee, Calkins first lived in rented quarters on Jefferson Street and on North Sixth Street before constructing a house for himself.<sup>10</sup> On September 16, 1875, Calkins purchased eight lots from Alonzo Kane for \$10,000. The parcels included four lots at the northeast corner of Kane Place and Oakland Avenue and four lots at the northeast corner of Kane Place and Bartlett Avenue.<sup>11</sup> The Milwaukee Sentinel reported several weeks later on October 9th that Calkins would erect a \$4,000 doublehouse<sup>12</sup> on his property according to the designs of local architect James Douglas.<sup>12</sup> Fire insurance atlases, tax rolls, and city directories confirm that the building constructed is the one now standing at 1612-1614 East Kane Place.<sup>13</sup> Calkins lived in the east half of the duplex (1614) during the remainder of his residency in Milwaukee. Calkins left the city in 1884 and subsequently sold the house on September 16, 1889, for \$6,500<sup>14</sup> to William Wallis and Hamilton Townsend, both Milwaukee real estate brokers.<sup>14</sup> Hamilton sold his portion of the building to Wallis on April 3, 1892, and Wallis in turn sold the premises to house-mover Thomas Hanlin and his wife, Margaret, for \$10,000 on October 6, 1892.<sup>15</sup> Widow Margaret Hanlin sold the property two years later on June 14, 1894, to Clinton H. Wallworth of Ellenton, Manatee County, Florida.<sup>16</sup> City directories

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indicate that none of the owners after Calkins actually lived in the house. Society blue books from 1894 to 1911 and city directories, however, do list some of the tenants who occupied the doublehouse in later years.<sup>17</sup> For example, Samuel R. Kemper, a bookkeeper with the Wisconsin Trust Company, from 1896 through 1901, lived in the east half which Calkins had occupied (1614). With him were family members Gertrude, Sophia and Lucia and, in 1901, a Reverend William Pynell Kemper. Kemper was succeeded by George Warren Wilson (1902-1906) and John M. Fiske, Jr. (1907-1917). Wilson is variously listed as a investment broker, land agent, manager of the Florida Land Investment Co., and mining broker while Fiske was a sales agent for the Lehigh Valley Coal Co. School teacher John Treichler and his wife, Kunigunda, were the next occupants (1918-late 1920s), with other family members living in the house including bookkeeper William H. Treichler, Dorothy, Albert, Ella, Martin, and Waldemar Treichler. In the west half of the building (1612) the occupants included Rev. William G. Eliot (1897-1900), pastor of the First Unitarian Church; George B. Welser (1901-1910), a commercial traveler, and William Courtney Hinsdale (1918-1932), a claims investigator for the American Railway Express Company, whose family included music teacher Isabelle Hinsdale and Florence Hinsdale. The building was divided into four apartments in 1948 and has had a variety of occupants since that time.<sup>18</sup> Since 1977, Pathfinders has operated a shelter and counseling center for runaway teens in the entire building.<sup>19</sup>

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FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Milwaukee Sentinel, Oct. 9, 1875, p. 8, col. 4; City of Milwaukee Tax Rolls, 1875 and 1876; Milwaukee City Directories 1870-1876.

<sup>2</sup>Milwaukee Sentinel, Oct. 9, 1875, p. 8, col. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Howard Louis Conard, ed., History of Milwaukee County from its First Settlement to the Year 1895 (Chicago: American Biographical Publishing Company, [1895]), Vol. II, pp. 463-464; Annabel Douglas McArthur, "Memories of Yankee Hill," Milwaukee Sentinel, June 5, 1963, part 3, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>James Douglas, "A Modern Home," The Milwaukee Monthly Magazine, April, 1874, pp. 166-168; James Douglas, "Modern House," The Milwaukee Monthly Magazine, May, 1874, pp. 208-210.

<sup>5</sup>[Frank A. Flower], History of Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Chicago: The Western Historical Company, 1881), p. 632; Conard, Vol. II, p. 350; "Col. E. A. Calkins Is Dead," Obituary, Milwaukee Sentinel, Nov. 25, 1904, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>Flower, p. 632.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Conard, Vol. II, p. 350; "Death of Col. Calkins," Madison Democrat, Nov. 26, 1904; Wisconsin Necrology, Vol. 7, p. 199.

<sup>10</sup>Milwaukee City Directories, 1870-1876.

<sup>11</sup>Milwaukee County Register of Deeds and Mortgages, Vol. 146, p. 114.

<sup>12</sup>Milwaukee Sentinel, Oct. 9, 1875.

<sup>13</sup>Milwaukee Tax Rolls, 1875 and 1876; Rascher's Fire Insurance Atlas of the City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Chicago: Charles Rascher, 1888), Vol. 3, p. 169; Insurance Maps of Milwaukee, Wisconsin (New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., 1894), Vol. 1, p. 48.

<sup>14</sup>Deeds, Vol. 254, p. 401.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., Vol. 290, p. 420 and Vol. 306, p. 43.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., Vol. 336, p. 521.

<sup>17</sup> The Milwaukee Blue Book of Selected Names (Milwaukee: Milwaukee Elite Directory Co., 1894-1911).

<sup>18</sup> Milwaukee City Building Permit, 1612-1614 East Kane Place, Nov. 17, 1948.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., Apr. 6, 1977 through Oct. 14, 1987.

9. Major Bibliographical Reference

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Previous documentation on file (NPS): \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet  
 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

Specific repository:  
Historic Preservation Commission  
809 North Broadway  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A	<u>1/6</u>	<u>4/2/7/5/0/0</u>	<u>4/7/6/7/1/8/0</u>	B	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	D	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

A. L. Kane's Subdivision in NE 1/4 Section 21-7-22  
Block 234, S.E. 54 feet, Lots 13, 14, 15, 16

Boundary Justification

The boundaries include only the land upon which the Calkins Doublehouse now stands.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>Les Vollmert/Carlen Hatala</u>	Date	<u>April 25, 1989</u>
organization	<u>Dept. of City Development</u>	telephone	<u>(414) 223-5705</u>
street & number	<u>809 North Broadway</u>	state	<u>WI</u>
city or town	<u>Milwaukee</u>	zip code	<u>53202</u>

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"Death of Col. Calkins," Madison Democrat, Nov. 26, 1904; Wisconsin Necrology, Vol. 7, p. 199.

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\_\_\_\_\_. "Modern House," The Milwaukee Monthly Magazine, May, 1874, pp. 208-210.

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The Milwaukee Blue Book of Selected Names. Milwaukee: Milwaukee Elite Directory Co., 1894-1911.

Milwaukee City Building Permits.

\_\_\_\_\_ City Directory.

\_\_\_\_\_ City Tax Rolls.

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Rascher's Fire Insurance Atlas of the City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Chicago: Charles Rascher, 1888.

Milwaukee Sentinel.