NPS Form 10-900 (January 1992) Wisconsin Word Processing Format (Approved 1/92)

United States Department of Interior National Park Service

1. Name of Property

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.

historic name Fi	reeman, Roscius	S. and	Lydia R.,	House						
other names/site nu	mber N/A				·					
2. Location	•									
street & number city or town state Wisconsin	220 North Th River Falls code	ird Str WI	eet county	Pierce			code	N/A N/A 093	not for p vicinity zip code	oublication 54022
3. State/Federal	Agency Cert	ificat	ion					1 10 10 0		
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Signature of commen	nting official/Titl	e				*********	Date			
State or Federal agend	cy and bureau									

Freeman, Roscius S. and Ly	dia R., House	Pierce	County	Wisconsin
Name of Property		County	y and State	
4. National Park Service	ce Certification		10	
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.	Colom	H-Boa		5/30/0
removed from the National Register.	1			
other, (explain:)	- lou			
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5. Classification				
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6. Function or Use				
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Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Name of Property

County and State

8. Sta	tement of Significance	•

(Mar	icable National Register Criteria k "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria fying the property for the National Register listing.)	Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions) ARCHITECTURE
_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.	
<u>x</u> 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.	Period of Significance 1908
_D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	Significant Dates
	ria Considerations c "x" in all the boxes that apply.)	
Prope	erty is:	Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)
_ A	owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	N/A
_B	removed from its original location.	
_C	a birthplace or grave.	Cultural Affiliation
_ D	a cemetery.	N/A
_E	a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	
_ F	a commemorative property.	Architect/Builder
_ G	less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.	Symes, Arthur

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

Name of Property

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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.	Geogra	phical Data				· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
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					See C	ontinuation S	heet	

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 organization

street & number

Marlys A. Svendsen.

Svendsen Tyler, Inc

N3834 Deep Lake Road

WI state

date

telephone

August 2006 715/469-3300

Sarona city or town

zip code

54870

Freeman, Roscius S. and Lydia R., House

Pierce County

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

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.)

name/title

Marge and Paul Stokke

organization

220 North Third Street

date

August 2006 715/425-5141

street & number city or town

River Falls

state WI telephone zip code

54022

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 20503.

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Freeman, Roscius S. and Lydia R., House, River Falls, Pierce County, Wisconsin

7. Narrative Description

Site Description: The Roscius S. and Lydia R. Freeman House is located on a mid-block lot (Lot 2, Block 2, Thayer's Addition) on the east side of North Third Street between Pine and Maple streets in the city of River Falls, Pierce County, Wisconsin. The Freeman House site is approximately three blocks northeast of downtown River Falls and four blocks north of the University of Wisconsin-River Falls Campus. The parcel containing the Freeman House measures roughly 4 by 8 rods or 66 feet by 136 feet. The densely landscaped lot is level with a slight downward slope extending west towards Third Street. The house is centered on the lot with a concrete paved driveway along the south side leading to the garage. A short poured-concrete retaining wall (12 inches maximum height at west end near the public sidewalk) lines the north side of the driveway. A public sidewalk extends along Third Street with three steps connecting to the private walk that leads to the front porch. Mature shade trees in the yard include maple and horse chestnut trees in the front yard and along the boulevard with a locust tree, white spruce, and pine tree in the rear yard. A prominent landscape feature of the property is the Dutchman's pipe vine (Aristolochia macrophylla) located adjacent to the front face of the south half of the front porch. This vine was originally established along a metal arbor at this location in the 1930s. Perennial planting beds extend along the foundations of the house and garage as well as along the rear property lines.

North Third Street is a two-lane asphalt paved street with curb and gutter and narrow parking lanes. It is 80 feet wide with parallel parking located along both sides. This section of the street is flat and well-shaded by mature deciduous trees. Houses are placed on spacious lots with the surrounding neighborhood containing a mix of two-story frame and masonry buildings dating from the late 19th century through the 1930s with a few from more recent decades. Some buildings on both sides of North Third Street have been altered through the years as a result of period updating, the most common changes including porch enclosures, synthetic siding, and window replacements.

South of the Freeman House a section of North Fourth Street was identified as a potential historic district during completion of the River Falls Historical and Architectural Survey completed in 1991. The boundaries of this district have been evaluated for National Register inclusion and do not extend along the 200 block of North Third Street. Though not a part of the North Fourth Street district, the Freeman House's design and time period of development is consistent with the area. The district contains a variety of late nineteenth and early twentieth century historic architectural styles and vernacular forms, including Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Craftsman, American Foursquare, Tudor, Front Gabled, and Gabled Ell. Primary and secondary buildings in the district include a mix of frame and masonry structures with frame buildings the most common.

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Contributing & Noncontributing Resources: The Freeman House property contains one contributing and one non-contributing resource:

- Primary residence (C)constructed in 1908 and altered with the addition of a sleeping porch ca. 1918 and
- Garage (NC) built sometime between 1912 and 1927 and altered in ca. 1936

Building Description: The Roscius S. and Lydia R. Freeman House is an early 20th century two-story frame dwelling built at a time of transition between architectural styles. It is a blend of the Queen Anne and the Shingle Style with Colonial Revival features. Its basic form and ornamentation are found in the Free Classic variation of the Queen Anne Style that was introduced in the 1890s and continued in popularity until after 1900 in River Falls. Its classic ornamentation and fenestration are typical of Colonial Revival dwellings from the period. The house's heavy, sweeping rooflines tie it to the Shingle Style. The house has an irregular foot print with overall dimensions of approximately 41 by 56 feet. When originally built in 1908, the building had no sleeping porch at the northeast corner. This one-story addition was constructed ca. 1918 according to a previous owner. Sanborn Company maps for 1912 and 1927 confirm construction between these years. An incomplete set of floor plans and elevation drawings for the original 1908 residence survives. The design for the house and the execution of these drawings are attributed to builder of the house, Arthur Symes of River Falls. The Symes family contracting business is also believed to have constructed the sleeping porch and perhaps the garage.

The Freeman House has an 18-inch thick foundation built of a double course of sandstone blocks with sand fill in between. The foundation surrounds a full-height basement that underlies the first floor, excluding the sleeping porch and front porch, both of which have concrete footings. A pair of 8-inch thick frame bearing walls set 17 feet on center extend down the center of the house from the front to the rear. The central heating system was originally located in the center section with coal bins midway along the south side, a laundry room on the southeast corner and the cellar in the northeast corner. Access to the basement is by a single set of interior stairs that extend from the rear entrance foyer to the west beneath the main staircase.

A complex roof pattern includes a moderate-pitched hipped roof over the main block and an adjoining steeply pitched hipped roof section extending over the front porch. A short conical roofed tower is centered above the front porch with contiguous hipped dormers on each side of the towers semi-circular wall. The lower hipped wings extending to the north and south give the illusion of attic dormers on these façades though they actually provide the house with a full second floor that includes storage space in the low-ceiling areas at the corners. The rear façade has hipped cornice returns between the first and second floors giving the center section of the rear wall the appearance of a hipped wall dormer. A shed roof extends over the bay window on the south side and a hipped roof entrance porch is centered on the rear façade. The one-story sleeping porch at the northeast corner of the house

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has a low-pitched hipped roof. Exterior walls of the house are covered with narrow lap siding on all façades with corner board trim at all outer edges except those of the sleeping porch. Wider corner boards with recessed panels are found on the main outer corners of the first floor. Those on the front façade match the design of the front porch's corner piers. Narrow corner boards are used on the upper level.

Fenestration in the Freeman House consists mainly of 1/1 double-hung sashes of various sizes and several other sashes configured in Queen Anne Style patterns. The cottage window group on the front façade (in the living room) includes a wide rectangular projecting bay with 1/1 double-hung sashes flanking a large square sash with a decorative header that has a curvilinear design in leaded and beveled glass. Another shorter double-hung window facing the front located in the alcove off the living room has a leaded diamond light design in the upper sash but no beveled glass. A similar design is found in the double-hung sashes in the shed-roofed window bay on the south facade (in the dining room). Here, four identical tall, narrow, double-hung sashes are located in a box bay supported by five scroll-cut brackets. The upper sashes have a similar combination of leaded diamond lights and six-sided lights. Elsewhere on the first floor, unusual sashes include the 10 single-hung sashes lining the sleeping porch walls. These sashes (seven 1/1 and three single-light) operate by sliding down into the walls providing full-screened openings for cooling as needed.

On the second floor, fenestration includes a mix of size and configuration in window openings as well. The most important window group is found in the front tower façade. Here, three shorter 1/1 double-hung sashes with flat lights are set into the gently curving bowed wall and curved window frames. At each end of this group is a single fixed sash with leaded diamond lights. Extending the group at each end in the flat wall sections to either side are horizontal fixed sashes with matching diamond lights. The window group and wall widths on the tower wall section have a slight asymmetrical arrangement. The use of diamond-light leaded sashes is repeated in the other second floor window groups. Both the north and south bedrooms have 1/1 double-hung sashes flanking a double-hung sash with diamond lights in the upper sash. Another impressive window group is located in the house's rear wall. It includes a group of three tall single-light fixed sashes topped by horizontal sashes configured with a combination of leaded diamond lights and six-sided lights similar to those in the dining room. The location and dimensions of the window group is explained by its position at the landing of the central staircase, which is set between floors. To either side of this triple-window group are short 1/1 double-hung sashes located above the hipped roof returns. They open into a second floor bath and a closet.

The front porch is centered of the west façade beneath a low-pitched hipped roof that ties into the house's main roof slope in front of the tower window group. The porch placement, like the second floor tower window group, is slightly asymmetrical. The porch has a closed, clapboard-clad balustrade that matches the body of the main house and extends to the ground level. The porch's corner piers have recessed panels that match the nearby corner board designs. Half-columns with smooth wood

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shafts and Ionic capitals fashioned of terra cotta are inset slightly from either side of the entrance stairs so that when viewed from the street, the columns frame the front façade's highly decorated cottage window. The original open porch was enclosed with screen panels soon after construction according to a historic view of the front porch dating from ca. 1910. The front porch enclosure was changed from screen panels to 1/1 combination storm windows and a screen door sometime between 1933 and 1967 during the ownership of the house by Gertrude and R.W. Freeman. They also infilled the entrance opening and the area above the balustrade. The porch contains all of the original finishes including the columns, piers, tongue-and-groove flooring, and narrow bead board finish on the balustrade wainscoting, ceiling, and bottom surface of the architrave. In the 1930s a metal arbor was built along the south half of the west side of the front porch approximately three feet out from the balustrade with the top curving towards the eave. The arbor has provided a successful structure for the Dutchman's pipe vine that covers the face of the arbor in 2006.

The interior arrangement of the Freeman House reflects a shift seen in floor plans for turn-of-the century houses built with modern appointments integrated into the original design. The first floor has tongue-and-groove maple and oak floors, plaster walls, oak trim and decorative moldings in most rooms, interior passage doors (five horizontal panel design), and elaborate window ornamentation.

Rooms on the first floor include an entrance foyer at the northwest corner off the front porch, which is equipped with a row of original wall hooks for coats and hats and the original brass Mission Style ceiling light. The foyer opens into a large L-shaped living room that has a small alcove at the southwest corner that balances the foyer in the floor plan. The spacious living room is dominated by the large rectangular window bay on the west wall that looks out to the street through the pillared front porch. Opposite this window grouping, which features an elaborate beveled glass cottage window, are a pair of wide pocket doors that lead to a rear cross-hall and central staircase. Because of the oversize windows on the landing between floors, the living room is afforded spectacular lighting through the double-wide pocket door opening. The wide central staircase has an unusual feature — a pocket door with a width of nearly 5 feet and a height of 8 feet at the bottom of the steps. It has horizontal panels in the bottom half and a multi-light upper half measuring 48 inches by 53 inches. It contains a combination of leaded beveled glass, clear glass, and two textures of etched glass in a band surrounding a textured glass rectangle. With the pocket door closed, this design allowed the family to close off the upper level and reduce heating costs in the winter season.

The cross hall also connects the living room to the master bedroom and master bath located at the north end and the dining room and kitchen at the south end. The master bedroom is located in the northeast corner of the house. It has a pair of 12-light French doors that open onto the sleeping porch, which was added sometime between 1912 and 1927 according to Sanborn maps. Gertrude Freeman, daughter-in-law of original owners R.S. and Lydia Freeman, indicated in an interview with the present owners that the sleeping porch was added in ca. 1918. As noted previously, the porch has single-hung sashes lining the exterior walls that operate by sliding down into wall pockets and leaving full-height screened

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openings free for passing breezes. The French doors replaced a single 1/1 double-hung window visible in the original east façade elevation drawing. Across the hall from the master bedroom is the master bath. Its fixtures and finishes were updated in the 1980s.

At the opposite end of the cross hall on the south is the dining room. It features original oak floors and trim and a large bay window with leaded light diamonds and rectangles in the upper sash. The dining room leads directly into the kitchen, located in the southeast corner of the house. The kitchen cabinetry, plumbing fixtures, and wall finishes were updated prior to 1972. The floors are the original maple. Entrance to the basement and the rear yard are via a small rear entrance hall. This room has a small door that opens to the exterior for making ice deliveries. A passage door with three horizontal panels below and a square single light above leads to the rear yard. The basement stairs are accessed through a five-panel by-pass door designed to preserve usable space by minimizing the number of swinging doors in the small space.

The second floor is accessed by the central staircase. It consists of a 57 inch wide flight of steps set between plastered walls leading up to a central landing located beneath the monumental window group described previously. At each end of the central landing, short return-flights lead to the large rectangular upper hall. The return flights and upper hall are lined by six massive pointed newel posts placed where direction changes occur and balustrades composed of 1 inch by 1 inch balusters set closely together. All staircase parts are fashioned of oak. The oral tradition passed down by the family of the builder is that the staircase in the house was so expertly fitted that at the time the finishing was to be done, it was noticed by the finishers that it had not been nailed in place. This observation came after the stairs built by Arthur Symes himself, had been used daily by the workers for several months without their noticing.¹

Rooms on the second floor include three bedrooms including the tower bedroom that extends across the front of the house and has oak trim and 3 inch wide fir tongue-and-groove floor boards and two smaller bedrooms at the north and south ends of the upper hall finished with fir trim and matching fir floors. A second floor bathroom located in the southeast corner contains the original pedestal sink, wood medicine cabinet, and matching fir floor. One of the modern features of the house was the inclusion of walk-in closets in each bedroom with secondary closets accessed from inside the main walk-in closets via short doors. Storage areas were located beneath the sloped roof lines and behind half-walls. The house has a total of seven full-height walk-in closets on the second floor and three more on the first floor, including several on each floor with windows.

The original basement plan described above remains largely intact. The cellar space in the northeast corner of the basement in now used as a workshop. The original coal heating furnace has been replaced and the coal bin area is used for storage. Wall storage in the center section and work room

¹Interviews by Marge Stokke with Kirby Symes, grandson of Arthur Symes, various dates pre-2006.

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includes several oak cabinets and a work bench salvaged from the Freeman Drug Store in River Falls. The cabinet doors have Prairie Style art glass designs and likely date from the 1910s or 20s.

The garage for the Freeman House is located in the southeast corner of the lot. It is a two-car, one-story frame building with a very low-pitched hipped roof with a short decorative metal ridge cap extending north and south. The building has a concrete foundation and floor and its walls are clad in narrow wood lap siding of two dimensions. The west façade has the narrowest siding with a single double-wide wood and glass paneled overhead garage door. A vertical support centered in the opening gives the illusion of two doors. Ornamentation is limited to corner board trim. Sanborn maps suggest the current building was constructed between 1912 and 1927 replacing an earlier smaller building located further north. This information conflicts with recollections of the son of the second owner, Richard Freeman, who recalls the present structure being built in the 1930s by local contractor Fred Chinnock. During repairs made by the current owners in early 2006, newspapers and magazines dated 1936 were found in the walls where they had served as insulation.

Alteration Summary: Changes made to the Freeman House are minimal. On the exterior, the front porch had the entrance area and the space above the balustrade enclosed with screen panels prior to 1910. Sometime prior to 1972, combination storm windows and a new wood screen door were installed. Changes in fenestration include the installation of two awning sashes on the north façade of the first floor's master bedroom done sometime prior to 1972. Glass block infill and a window air conditioning unit were installed sometime prior to 1972 in the north window in the entrance foyer. This original configuration of this opening was restored in 2001 with the installation of a 1/1 double-hung wood window to match other openings in the house. A wind storm in 2001 damaged 19 storm sashes and required replacement of four frosted glass sashes in the first floor bathroom with new frosted lights. None of the leaded or beveled glass was damaged. In 2002, the front porch had new foundation footings installed and matching siding installed on the south side to replace deteriorated clapboards. New wood steps were installed on the front to replace poured concrete steps in 1994. Masonry changes have included tuck pointing of the chimneys and the sandstone foundation in 2002. Repairs made to the garage including replacement of deteriorated studs and sills, were completed in the past few years with the replacement of the overhead doors completed sometime prior to 1972.

As with the exterior, changes made to the interior of the Freeman House are few and have generally been limited to redecorating and repairs. Exceptions are the remodeling of the kitchen cabinetry and closure of the opening to the rear hallway from the kitchen completed prior to 1972; remodeling of the master bath on the first floor completed prior to 1972; and replacement of several light fixtures. Three original elevations and a basement floor plan along with floor plans for first and second floor of the Freeman House as it currently appears are included with the nomination.

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8. Statement of Significance:

Summary: The Roscius S. and Lydia R. Freeman House is locally significant under National Register Criterion C. It is a well-preserved example of a period in domestic architecture that saw the transition from late nineteenth century styles to those of the new century. The house is a blending of the Free Classic variation of the Queen Anne Style with the Colonial Revival Style that was being experimented with at the turn of the 20th century. In its massing and heavy roof forms, the design also draws from the Shingle Style. The house was designed and constructed for the Freeman family by local contractor Arthur Symes, who is responsible for the construction of dozens of houses and churches in River Falls in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Though not being nominated under Criterion B, both Roscius S. Freeman and his son Roscius W. Freeman were prominent drug store owners in River Falls beginning in the 1870s. The business continues in operation in 2006. R.S. and R.W. Freeman, along with their respective wives, Lydia and Gertrude, were also civic and social leaders in River Falls during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Historical Overview of River Falls (1852-1920): The community of River Falls is situated on the banks of the Kinnickinnic River approximately 10 miles east of the Mississippi River and 25 miles southeast of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota in west central Wisconsin. The town spans portions of both St. Croix County (north) and Pierce County (south) with the Freeman House located in the south half. The town, first platted as the village of Kinnickinnic in 1854, grew up after water power from the river of the same name was harnessed for sawmill operations by brothers Nathaniel and Oliver Powell. They received a U.S. land patent in 1852 and platted a village along the river two years later. By the late 1850s the village had grown to include ten commercial establishments as well as an assortment of flour mills, sawmills, and planing mills.² The population grew dramatically from 312 in 1860 to 1,191 in 1870, and by the late 1870s the village had a total of five flour mills producing 150,000 barrels annually.³ Portions of the villages of Greenwood Falls and East Troy were eventually incorporated along with Kinnickinnic to form River Falls.

In addition to milling, two other developments in the decades prior to 1900 contributed to the overall growth of the community: the construction of rail service to the town and the establishment of a state normal school. The first rail connection came in 1878 when the Hudson and River Falls Railroad completed a short line from Hudson, Wisconsin to River Falls. The railroad was extended to the county seat of Ellsworth in 1885 and the H&RF RR was absorbed by the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha Railroad a short time later. In addition to transporting passengers, the railroad

²River Falls Journal. River Falls. Wisconsin. June 17, 1857.

³U.S. Census Records, 1869 and 1870; Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1879, (Milwaukee: William Hog, 1879); River Falls Journal, River Falls, Wisconsin, March 4, 1886.

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became essential for shipping wood products and flour.

After the Civil War River Falls residents began lobbying for establishment of a state-sponsored normal school in their city. In 1874, the River Falls State Normal School – Wisconsin's fourth such institution – was built on Cascade Avenue several blocks south of the future location of the Freeman House. In 1897, after the Normal School was destroyed by fire vigorous attempts were made to persuade the Board of Regents to relocate the school to another Wisconsin community. The regents committed to rebuilding the school at River Falls the following year and 15 years later added a department of agriculture to the school. Enrollment expanded, the school's reputation was enhanced, and as a result, the Normal School provided a stabilizing influence on the local economy after the turn-of-the-century.

By the mid-1880s, River Falls' growth was beginning to slow. Wheat production in the area declined dramatically in the wake of insect infestations in 1884-1886 and River Falls' most important flour mill closed. The Panic of 1893, coupled with a major local flood the following year, saw the economy of River Falls flag. Efforts were made to find new industries such as potato starch production and brick manufacturing to replace the flour milling. Despite these attempts, jobs remained scarce. Between 1890 and 1910, population dropped 20 percent from 2,474 to 1,991. After 1900 dairy farmers began to move into west central Wisconsin and a local creamery to process milk was established in 1912 by the River Falls Cooperative. It introduced a period of renewed agricultural prosperity. By 1920 River Falls saw growth in its numbers resume with population increased to 2,273.

Neighborhood Development: It was during the last half of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century that many of the city's residents built permanent houses that survive in River Falls more than 100 years later. Homebuilders included a cross section of factory owners, downtown business owners, a range of professionals, working class tradesmen and their families, and administrative and teaching staff affiliated with the State Normal School. Early commercial building had been built along the spine of Main Street with residential development extending to the east and west. Industrial sites along the town's rivers and mill ponds were generally not considered good residential building sites. Instead, the locations of early churches, the first public school and the State Normal School drew residential development. Their scattered locations resulted in dispersed residential development in the early years. Infill of vacant blocks and isolated empty lots came over time.

The pattern of development east of the downtown, including stretches of North Third Street, followed a fifty year course. It began in 1866 when River Falls founder Oliver Powell and his wife Elmina sold a parcel of ground east of the original plat of the village of Kinnickinnic (by then renamed River Falls) to Josiah Thayer for \$500. Thayer occupied a house on the property (Lot 4, Block 2) and on October 4,

⁴River Falls Journal, River Falls, Wisconsin, June 11, 1914 and September 10, 1875.

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October 4, 1870 platted the area as Blocks 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Thayer's Addition. Each block had ten lots measuring 4 by 8 rods, or 66 by 136 feet, with an alley running roughly north and south through the block. In subsequent years Thayer would sell off the lots and blocks for residential lots.

Though Oliver Powell sold the land to Thayer, Powell's impact on the neighborhood was not finished. In 1867, along with his brother Nathaniel, Oliver gave a square block of land to the Congregational Church for a new building. The church block was located one block south of the Freeman House site and was bounded by North Fourth, North Third, East Elm, and East Maple streets. Two years later, in 1869, Oliver and Lydia Powell built their own house at 204 North Fourth Street. No building appeared on the church block immediately and only two houses (both nonextant) were added south of the Powell house during the 1870s. Residences appeared on the west side of North Third Street by the end of the decade, but only the home of Josiah Thayer was in place on Block 2 north of the church block.

Population growth during the decade of the 1880s prompted by the arrival of the railroad and the founding of River Falls Normal School encouraged residential growth along North Third and North Fourth streets. Completion of the first Congregational Church (nonextant) at 102 North Third Street came in 1884 stimulated further development in the neighborhood. One of three 200-barrel municipal cisterns was built in 1888 east of the Congregational Church at the corner of North Fourth Street and East Elm Street to provide a source of water for the volunteer fire department. This cistern was 1½ blocks south of the future Freeman House site. During the 1890s, scattered houses continued to be built along North Third and Fourth streets and around the church block.

In the two decades following 1900, residential development in the neighborhood surrounding the Congregation Church reached its peak, with more than a dozen houses built along a two block stretch of North Third and North Fourth streets. These included three built on empty lots sold for development by the Congregational Church on the church block. Electric power, indoor plumbing, and central heating were available in all of these houses. On Block 2 in Thayer's Addition in 1907, when R.S. Freeman purchased Lot 2 and started the his new house, there were already five houses in place on Lots 3, 5, 8, 9, and 10. They ranged in value from \$1,200 to \$2,400 according to 1907 tax roll records for the city of River Falls.

Although most residential construction was completed in the neighborhood by the 1920s, two major religious buildings were still to be added. Trinity Episcopal Church at 103 North Fourth Street was erected a block and a half southeast of the Freeman House in 1924 on an empty corner lot purchased from the Congregational Church. Less than a decade later, the nearby 1884 Congregational Church was destroyed by fire. The present First Congregational Church was rebuilt on the same site in 1933.

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Freeman House History: The chain of title for the Freeman House property began with its platting as Lot 2 in Block 2 of Thayer's Addition in 1870. The following year it was part of a land transfer from Josiah Thayer and his wife Hatie to Randall S. and Fred J. Burhyte. The land sale included all of the ten lots in Block 2 of Thayer's Addition for consideration of \$1,000. Four years later, in 1875, the Burhyte brothers split ownership of the block in half with Randall taking the north half. The 1877-78 Atlas of Pierce County shows Block 2 as the "Burhyte" block. In 1898, Fred repurchased the four north lots – Lots 1, 2, 9 and 10 from his brother for \$10,000. The following year, on August 20, 1899, Fred Burhyte died and the lots passed to the Bank of River Falls who held a mortgage on the property. On August 30, 1901 the bank sold Lots 1 and 2 to Henry A. Adrian who resold the still vacant lots the following spring for \$665 to Allen Weld. Weld was a River Falls lawyer, judge, and city clerk during his career and likely bought the property on speculation.

A construction date of 1903 for the Freeman House has been passed down through three generations of Freeman family members. In 1972 when the house was sold by Gertrude Freeman Kettelkamp (daughter-in-law of Roscius and Lydia Freeman) to the current owners, she provided these years. The same date was given by the grandson of the original designer and contractor, Kirby Symes, who is very familiar with the work of both his grandfather, Arthur Symes, and uncle, Bert Symes. The construction date of 1903 for the Freeman House was also suggested in 1991 by historian Michael Koop when he completed the River Falls Architectural and Historical Survey Project.

A closer examination of primary sources for the property, however, confirms a later date. Property transfer records show that Lot 2 containing the Freeman House did not actually change hands until September 16, 1907 when Allen and Alice Weld sold the lot to R.S. Freeman for \$300. This value indicates that no house was on the lot at that time. Accounts in the *River Falls Journal* show that the Freemans sold their house on the west side of town about September 12, 1907, held an auction of household goods a short time later, and "broken ground for a new house" on North Third Street by October 10, 1907. Information in R.S. Freeman's obituary and other stories about the history of the Freeman Drug Store suggests that Freeman retired from an active role in ca. 1908, turning it over to his son Rosh. Construction of the North Third Street as a retirement home at that time is consistent with the property transfer dates and newspaper accounts cited above.

Freeman Family History: Roscius S. "R.S." Freeman was born in Buck's Bridge, New York in 1844 and moved to River Falls with his parents, Munson and Jane Freeman, in 1866. Roscius had worked as a druggist in Madrid, New York before coming to River Falls. When he arrived in Wisconsin, he went to work at the Davis Drug Store. Five years later, in September 1872, he opened Freeman's Drug Store, one of the first in Wisconsin to be licensed under the state pharmacy law. In 1879, Roscius returned east where he married Lydia R. Wright, a native of Pottsdam, New York. The couple returned to River Falls a short time later where Freeman's pharmacy business was well-established.

⁵"Local Items," September 12, 1907; "Auction," September 19, 1907; and "Local Items," October 10, 1907, *River Falls Journal*, River Falls, Wisconsin.

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The Freemans had one child, Roscius W., who went by "R.W." or Rosh. In 1898, Rosh graduated from the Minnesota School of Pharmacy and joined his father in business. Two years later he earned a degree from the Chicago College of Pharmacy (University of Illinois). The drug store operated under the style "R.S. Freeman and Son" after R.S. and R.W. became partners ca. 1900. In 1904, the firm expanded when Barnard & Clough Co. of River Falls and Heinzel Drug Store of Hudson were bought out by Freeman and Son. Acquisition and expansion of the company came at about the same time that the senior Freemans completed construction of their new house at 220 North Third Street. About 1908, R.S. Freeman retired and Rosh continued the family drug business as "Freeman Drug Company."

R.S. and Lydia Freeman were active members of River Falls society. Newspaper accounts at the turn of the 20th century suggest that their social circle included social gatherings and events, many hosted in their home. The Freemans were also members of the River Falls Methodist Episcopal Church and local Masonic and Eastern Star organizations. Lydia was also active in the Tuesday Club. In 1907, Rosh Freeman married Ingebor Bergum who died during the influenza pandemic of 1918. Six years later he married Gertrude Gregerson. In 1928, Lydia Freeman died and, a short time later, her son Rosh and daughter-in-law Gertrude moved in with the senior Freeman at the house at 220 North Third Street. Ownership of the property was transferred from R.S. to R.W. in 1933 a few months before R.S. Freeman died following a fall.

R.W. Freeman continued to operate the family drug store after his father's retirement continuing to observe a policy of "no substitutions" in his pharmacy trade. During the 1930s, the drug store took on several other associates, including John Knapp and Mr. Hurd. Among his other business endeavors was partnership with William Elmer Tubbs in the Tubbs Medicine Company, which had begun in the late 1870s by William's father, Thomas Emerson Tubbs. This patent medicine concern became an important manufacturing concern in River Falls and was incorporated in 1902. The company "produced remedies for just about every ailment of man or beast," successfully distributing them throughout the country under such brand names as "Tubbs Elixir of Life," "Ready Relief to Pain," "Little Laxative Pills," "Tubbs Pain Stop Hot Drops," and "Tubbs Bilious Man's Friend." R.W. bought half-interest in the company in the mid-1920s and ultimately all of the stock, manufacturing some of the patent medicines under the R. W. Freeman Company name. It appears the products went out of favor before World War II. By the late 1950s, Rosh Freeman took on a partner to operate R. W. Freeman Company. Gerald Belisle became a co-owner and Ivan C. Iverson joined the firm as a pharmacist.

⁶"Dies at 89--Rosh Freeman Was Active on Main Street for 68 Years," *River Falls Journal*, River Falls, Wisconsin, September 11, 1969; "River Falls Patent Medicine Company Prospered for Over 50 Year; Was Known Throughout Midwest" in Joan Kremer Bennett's *River Falls: A Frontier Community Grows Up*. Articles reprinted from the *River Falls Journal*, 1977, pp. 37-39; and "Pierce County, Wisconsin Biographies & Historical Sketches Web Site," available at: http://piercebios.tripod.com/surnamesT.htm, accessed August 1, 2006.

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During his career, Rosh was active in community affairs in River Falls, serving as an alderman and as a volunteer fireman for nearly two decades. His second wife Gertrude was also active in civic affairs, serving as a founder of the local Business and Professional Women's Organization and a leader in various Red Cross activities. During World War II she led local efforts in bandage production and served as the Pierce County chair of the Red Cross' Home Service Unit. The early 1940s also saw her organize free swimming lessons through the Red Cross at the newly completed municipal swimming pool – one of the first such programs in the country. In 1969 Rosh Freeman died and three years later in 1972 Gertrude sold the house to current owners, Marge and Paul Stokke.

Architectural Background and Significance: As was noted above, the original design for the Roscius S. and Lydia R. Freeman House was prepared by River Falls designer and longtime building contractor Arthur Symes (1850-1924). Together with his son Bert Symes (1875-1972), Arthur's firm was one of several prominent builders identified in the River Falls Historical and Architectural Survey completed in 1991. His firm is credited with designing and building dozens of architecturally significant houses in River Falls beginning before the turn of the 20th century. They include examples of Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman style houses as well as eclectic blends that incorporate vernacular house forms such as the Cross-Gable Roof and American Four-Square. Important buildings designed and built by Arthur Symes and identified in Michael Koop's 1991 survey include the following:⁷

- Methodist Episcopal Church (1896-1897), 127 South Second Street
- Ellerton House (1893), 320 East Elm Street
- Putnam House (1895), 214 North Third Street
- White, Ferris, House (1903), 518 West Walnut Street
- Tozer, Sarah, House (1903), 215 North Fourth Street
- Freeman, Roscius S. and Lydia R., House (1908, corrected date), 220 North Third Street
- Freeman, R.W., House (1912), 220 South Fourth Street
- Ramer, P.W., House, 104 South Third Street
- Symes, Silas, House, 309 North Third Street

The Roscius S. and Lydia R. Freeman House was identified by Koop as one of 24 individual buildings having architectural or historical significance in River Falls. Arthur Symes' design for the house is an example of a blend of styles present at the turn of the 20th century – the Free Classic variation of the Queen Anne Style, the Shingle Style and the Colonial Revival. Popularity of the Free Classic variation of the Queen Anne Style began in the 1890s and continued through the turn of the century. The primary features of this variation in evidence in the Freeman House are the dominant hipped roof with a complex pattern of lower hipped-roof sections, the circular tower that appears to grow from the main

⁷Koop, Michael H. "River Falls, Wisconsin Intensive Survey Report, Architectural and Historical Survey Project," (River Falls, Wisconsin: Main Street Project 2000), September 1991, pp. 131 and 170.

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Freeman, Roscius S. and Lydia R., House River Falls, Pierce County, Wisconsin

house, and the simple, classical elements of the porch including the closed balustrade and Tuscan half-columns used instead of turned posts in earlier Spindlework variations of the Queen Anne Style. The heavy sweeping roof forms and the tower like projection are also found in many examples of the Shingle Style. The Colonial Revival elements most obvious in the design are in the richly embellished fenestration on all façades of the house that include window groups in rectangular and semi-circular bays containing beveled glass designs and leaded glass and diamond-light patternwork.⁸

Though Symes received no professional training in architecture, the Freeman House design along with others listed above are well-executed examples of the domestic styles that dominated this period. Like other designer-builders who practiced in smaller communities such as River Falls, it is likely that Symes' house concepts were influenced by the ready availability of pattern book designs and millwork catalogs. For self-taught designers like Symes, these sources enriched their design vocabulary while inspiring further architectural creativity.

Summary: The Roscius S. and Lydia R. Freeman House is locally significant as a well-preserved example of the blending of the Free Classic variation of the Queen Anne Style, the Shingle Style and the Colonial Revival Style. The Queen Anne and the Colonial Revival are two domestic styles that were popular in Wisconsin and River Falls in the years leading up to and following 1900. The Shingle Style is rare in Wisconsin, especially as a pure expression of the style. Traces of the Shingle Style are found more commonly as an expression that is restricted to either the surface material, or as a design that relies on the prominent roof form.

The floor plan of the house also demonstrates the transition from the more formal designs of the nineteenth century to the more informal and open plans of the twentieth century. The direct entrance to the living room from the porch and the distribution of zones (eating and sleeping) on the first floor relate to the emerging popularity of the Bungalow.

The house was designed and constructed for the Freeman family by local designer/contractor Arthur Symes, who is responsible for many other well-executed examples of domestic architecture from the late 19th and early 20th centuries in River Falls. Both Roscius S. Freeman and his son "Rosh" W. Freeman were prominent River Falls drug store owners and businessmen. Along with their respective wives, Lydia and Gertrude, both generations of Freemans were civic and social leaders in River Falls for more than a century.

⁸McAlester, Virginia and Lee, A Field Guide to American Houses, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf), 2000, pp. 262-281 and 321-329.

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10. Verbal Boundary Description

Lot 2, & North 3 Ft Lot 3 Block 2 Josiah Thayer Addition; Also, West 1/2 Vacated Alley Adjoining On E To SD Lots Per V 46 P 611; City of River Falls, Pierce County, Wisconsin.

Boundary Justification

This parcel includes the residential lot originally and currently occupied by this house when it was erected in 1908 and an adjoining vacated section of alley along the east side of the lot.

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Freeman, Roscius S. and Lydia R., House, Pierce County, Wisconsin

Photographs:

Photographs taken June 2006 by Marge Stokke, owner, and Marlys A. Svendsen

with Svendsen Tyler, Inc., Sarona, Wisconsin.

Negatives stored with Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin

- 1. Exterior, front, looking northeast
- 2. Exterior, front, looking east
- 3. Exterior, front, looking southeast
- 4. Exterior, south facade, looking northwest
- 5. Exterior, rear, looking west
- 6. Interior, living room, looking west towards front porch
- 7. Interior, sliding door at foot of central stairs, looking west
- 8. Exterior, garage, looking southeast

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Freeman, Roscius S. and Lydia R., House, Pierce County, Wisconsin **PHOTO KEY** Not to Scale Garage (NC) Driveway

NORTH THIRD STREET

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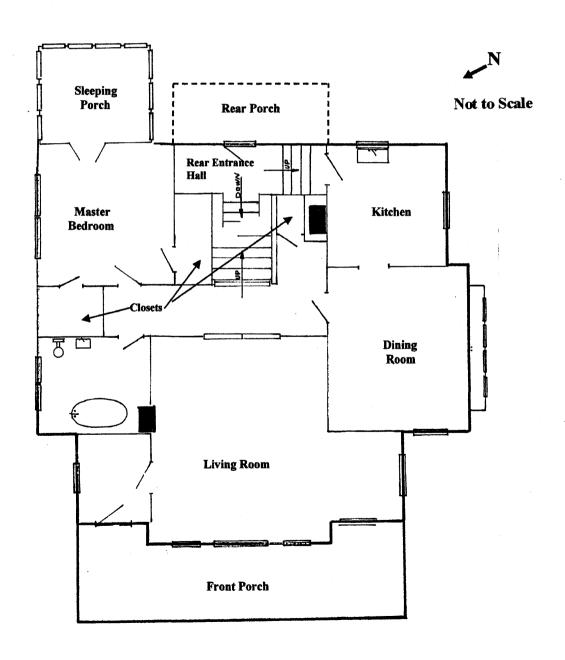
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Roscius S. and Lydia R. Freeman House, First Floor Sketch Plan, 2006 (Plan prepared by Marge Stokke, owner)



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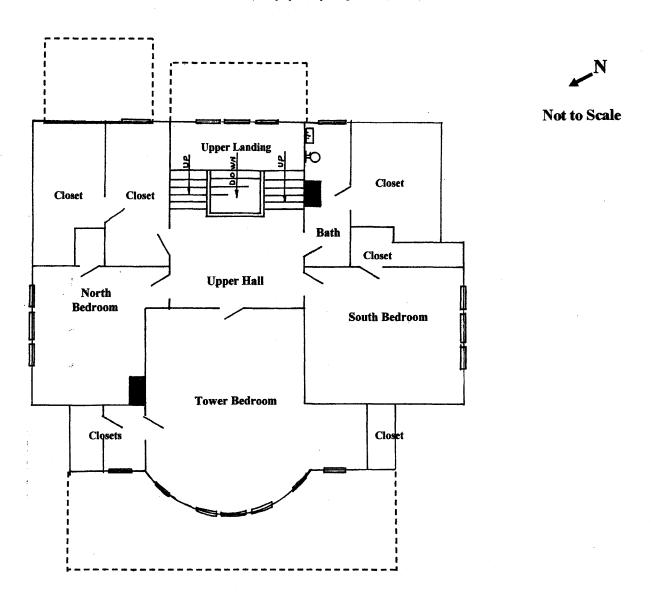
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Freeman, Roscius S. & Lydia, House, Pierce County, Wisconsin

Roscius S. and Lydia R. Freeman House, Second Floor Sketch Plan, 2006 (Plan prepared by Marge Stokke, owner)



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Freeman, Roscius S. & Lydia, House, Pierce County, Wisconsin

Historic view of front porch of Roscius S. and Lydia R. Freeman House, looking northeast, ca. 1910 (Photo courtesy of Marge Stokke, from Gertrude Freeman Kettelkamp)



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Historic view of front porch of Roscius S. and Lydin R. Freeman House, looking northeast, ca. 1910 (Thoto country of Marge Stokke, from Gertrade Freeman Ketzikana)



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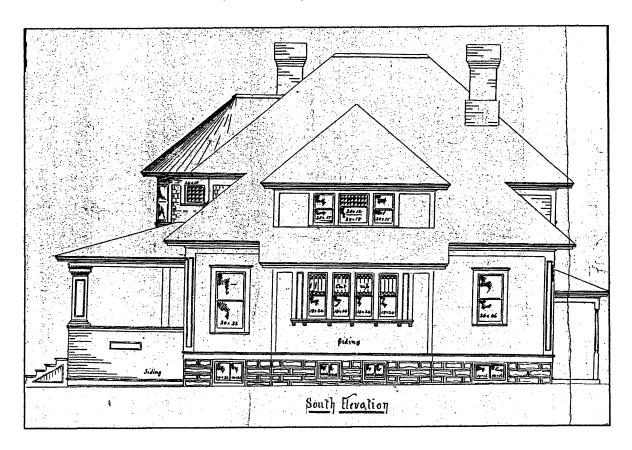
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Freeman, Roscius S. & Lydia, House, Pierce County, Wisconsin

South Elevation, Roscius S. and Lydia R. Freeman House, original drawing by Arthur Symes, 1907 (Collection of Marge & Paul Stokke, owners)



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East Elevation, Roscius S. and Lydia R. Freeman House, original drawing by Arthur Symes, 1907 (Collection of Marge & Paul Stokke, owners)



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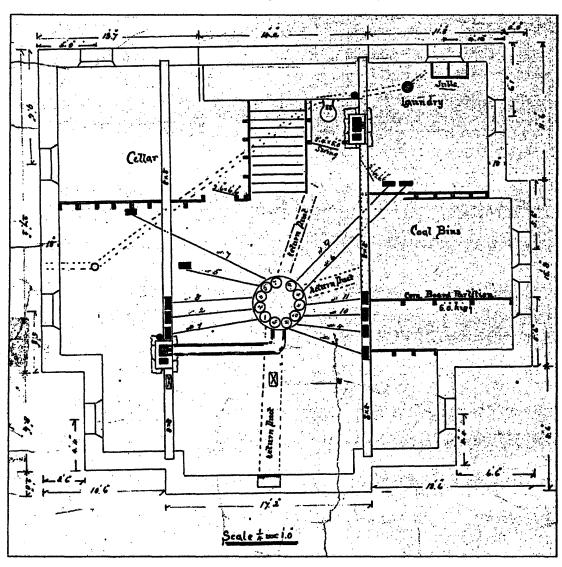
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Roscius S. and Lydia R. Freeman House, Basement Floor Plan, original drawing by Arthur Symes, 1907 (Collection of Marge & Paul Stokke, owners)



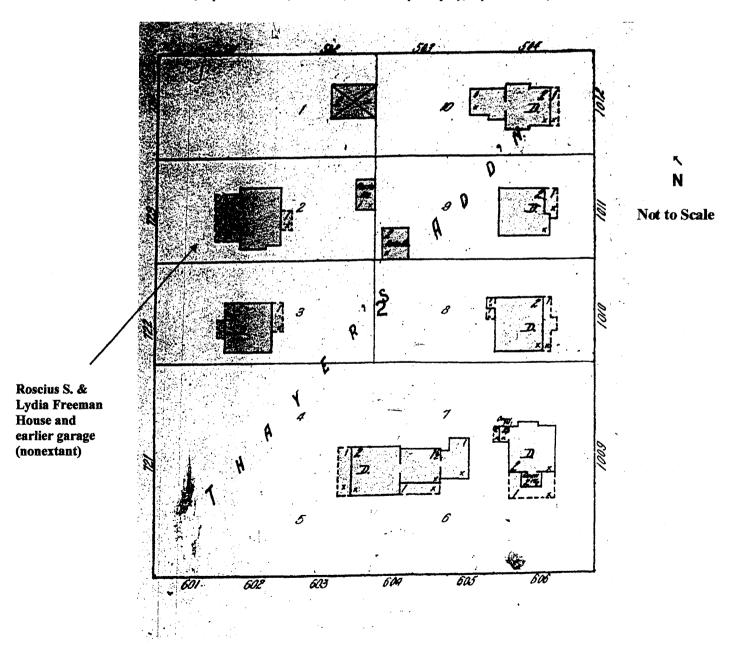
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Freeman, Roscius S. & Lydia, House, Pierce County, Wisconsin

Roscius S. and Lydia R. Freeman House, 1912 (Map of River Falls, Wisconsin, Sanborn Map Company, September 1912)



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Roscius S. and Lydia R. Freeman House, same in both August 1927 & 1945 update (Map of River Falls, Wisconsin, Sanborn Map Company, August 1927 & 1945 Update)

