

NORTH DAKOTA CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY

Base Data Form

27)

1. County Grand Forks, North Dakota 2. Site Number CK 47
3. Site Name (s) Bu. Bldg. 312 Kittson Ave. (Hebron Brick)
4. Type of Resource: A. Archaeological  Historical  Architectural  Paleontological   
 B. District  Site  Building  Structure  Object
5. Map Reference: USGS Quad. Grand Forks, N. Dak-Minn, 7.5' 1963 (photorevs'd 1979)
6. Location: 312 Kittson Avenue Sec. 3 T 151 N / R 50 W  
 Plat: Original Townsite Block 26 Lot Rear 18' of  
 UTMG: A. 14 647240 5309530 B. Lot 15 and vac'd  
 C.  D. St. to said 18'  
(2.85' x 18')
7. Access: visible  
Location: north side of Kittson Ave. between S. 3rd St. and S. 4th St. The west elevation is on an alley, and the east and north elevations (side and rear) abut another brick commercial bldg. Front facade faces south.  
Acreeage: less than one acre  
Verbal boundary: above legal description (roughly 18 x 50 feet)
8. A. General description of site: This is a two storied building of commercial vernacular style with classical detailing, over a basement. The front and corners of the building are Hebron Brick with a butter joint laid in a stretcher bond; the side and rear elevations are Grand Forks common yellow brick. The first story of the front facade is a common storefront: a frame door and recessed bay window with wood moldings, except that the whole window-door unit is framed with painted limestone molding (dark green). The Hebron brick under the storefront windows has been replaced with cheaper and incompatible brick and the replaced brick has been capped by aluminum molding around the window. (cont.)  
 B. Condition of site: excellent (original site)
9. Owner's name/address: Robert J. and Lynda Evenson 312 Kittson City 58201
10. Occupant's name/address: same
11. Historic Register value: Nat.  State  Untd.  None  On Reg.  In District  District   
Multiple Resource
12. Open to public: Yes  No  13. Preservation Underway: Yes  No
14. Endangered by: Nothing
15. Survey Project: Title Hist. and Arch. Survey of G.F., ND Director Norene and Joe Roberts  
 Other surveys in which included none
16. Recommendations: being nominated to NRHP in MRN: Historic Resources of downtown Grand Forks, North Dakota (Partial Inventory: Historic and ARchitectural Properties
17. Environment: Elevation  Nearest Water: Type   
 Name  Distance  Direction   
 Soil conditions:   
 Soil Texture:

Site Number \_\_\_\_\_

17. Environment, Cont.

Ground Cover: \_\_\_\_\_

Terrain: \_\_\_\_\_

18. Local contact person or organization: \_\_\_\_\_

19. Photos: No B/W X Color Prints Slides Comments/ID code \_\_\_\_\_

Contact print (attached): Roll 4 Frame 14

8 x 10 Glossies (attached): Roll 50 Frames 11, 12

Negatives stored at: Division of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

State Historical Society of North Dakota

In space below attach and identify a picture or contact print of the site.

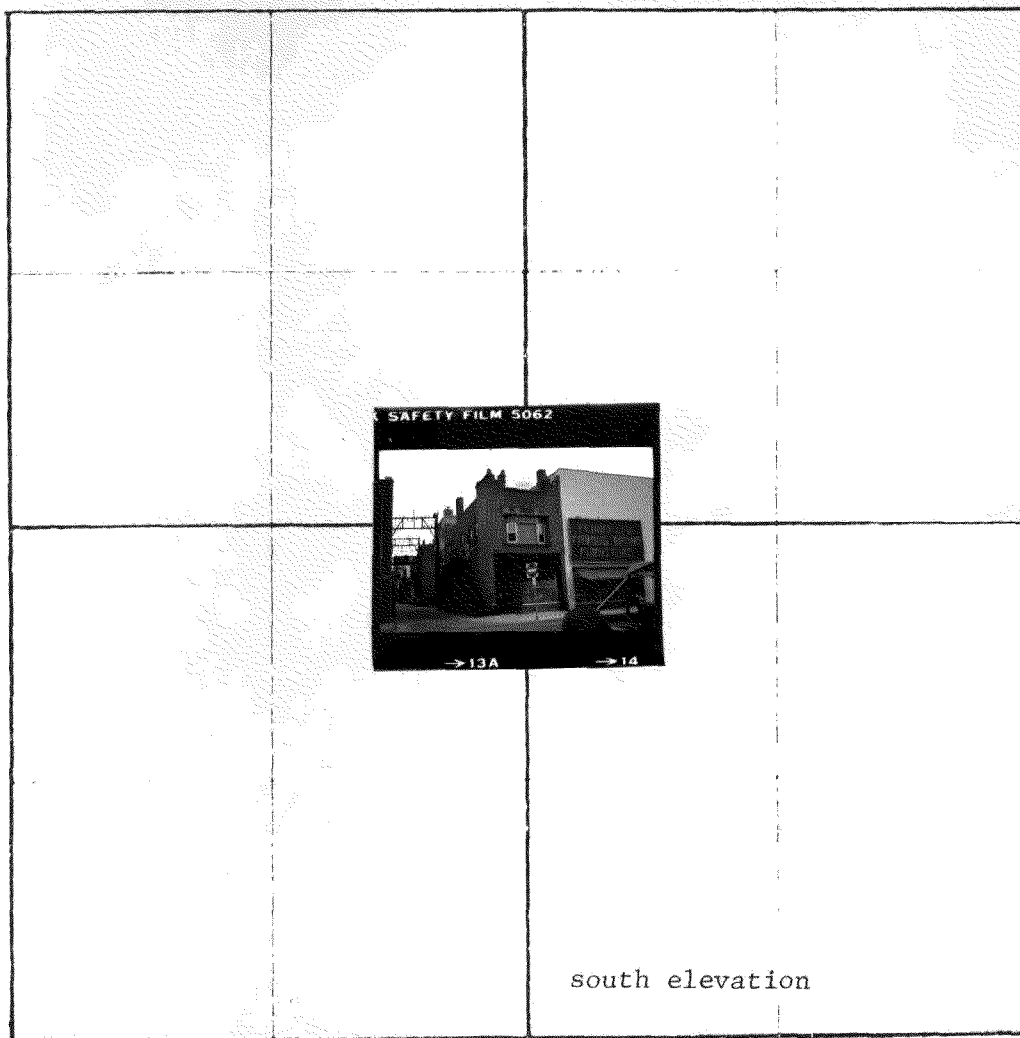
20. Sketch Map of Site:

Scale: \_\_\_\_\_

N

W

E



S

Recorded by: C. Kudzia Date 7/81

Revised by: Norene and Joe Roberts and Gary Henrickson Date 9/81

Historical Research, Inc. 5406 Penn Avenue S.  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55419

27. Thematic category Architecture/ history 28. Date or period 1907
29. Structures: Number standing \_\_\_\_\_ Number collapsed \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of foundations only \_\_\_\_\_ Number of earthworks \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of basement depressions \_\_\_\_\_ No structural remains observed \_\_\_\_\_
30. Architectural/Structural Detail:
- A. Style or design Early 20th century commercial with classical details
- B. Architect/engineer \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Contractor/builder Sander Johnson with carpenter Pete Larson
- D. Original use residential/ commercial
- E. Present use residential/ commercial
- F. Number of stories 2 G. Basement: Yes  No  Partial
- H. Foundation Material brick
- I. Wall Construction brick
- J. Wall Treatment Hebron brick on front facade; common brick on remainder
- K. Roof type and material flat
- L. Number of bays: Front Side M. Plan shape rectangular
31. Frontage 18' 32. Distance from road 0
33. Number of outbuildings none 34. Description of outbuildings \_\_\_\_\_  
This building takes up the entire lot it sits on.

35. Changes brick under front window has been replaced on ground floor
36. Information sources/References According to an oral interview with the current owners, Bob and Lynda Evenson (9/13/81), Lynda Evenson is the granddaughter of the original builder, Sander Johnson. On 9/24/81, Lynda's father, Walter Johnson was interviewed. Walter was the son of Sander Johnson. Sander Johnson was born 2/25/84 and died in 1972. (cont.)
37. Reason for significance: This was the first building which Sander Johnson built in his long 60 year career as a builder and contractor in eastern North Dakota. It was constructed only 5 years after he came to the United States from Sweden and the building's ambience is European. This building is significant for the quality of the workmanship, brickwork and carpentry, both inside and out.

Recorded by C. Kudzia Date 7/ 81

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Continuation form

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8A, cont. Architectural Description:

The second story front facade features a six-part bay window of wood, flanked by recessed brickwork and accented by a stone sill and a keystone lintel of limestone. The bay window has 4 and 16 pane fixed lights. The central window in the bay is a single pane fixed light. The flanking side windows of the bay are 4/2 double hung windows and have been covered with aluminum storm windows.

Above the bay window, the center coping is decorated by an egg and dart limestone cap topped with a wrought-iron cresting which incorporates the building date "1907." This cresting is flanked by two corner merlons which are capped by limestone moldings and antefixes.

The west elevation is undecorated except for a cast-iron staircase to the second floor apartment. The risers on this staircase are formed in a flower-shaped grill-work. The basement windows of the west elevation have been bricked in, and aluminum screens and storm windows have been added. The south and west elevations abut the neighboring building and are not visible.

The interior of the upstairs apartment is almost wholly original. Floors are oak, as is the trim in all rooms but the kitchen. Kitchen trim and cabinets are maple. There is a row of high casement windows between the kitchen and dining room that are unusual: faced with maple on the kitchen side and oak on the dining room side. The fireplace mantle and trim is carved Art Nouveau with tall finials standing above the mantle in the shape of stylized pineapples. All woodwork has been left original or recently stripped with care and refinished to the original by the current owners.

The current owners are in the process of rehabbing the first floor store into a restaurant. The original tin ceiling has been painted and the plaster walls have been hand painted with a garland and swag flower pattern where the ceiling coving meets the walls. At present, this area is vacant.

36, cont. Information sources/ references:

According to Lynda, Sander Johnson came to North Dakota from Sweden in 1902 to homestead in a sod house in the Red River Valley. After a year, he moved to Grand Forks. He became a bricklayer for Dinnie Brothers construction company and worked as a bricklayer teaching himself the trade. He did work for Dinnie Bros. all over the Red River Valley. The building at 312 Kittson was the first building Sander Johnson did on his own. The Grand Forks City Directory for 1905 (Pettibone Company, Grand Forks), shows that Sander Johnson was a boarder at the McClellan Hotel in Grand Forks in 1905 and he is listed as a bricklayer.

According to the Walter Johnson interview, his father Sander Johnson was one of 5 brothers. Sander's older brothers, Henry and Anton, came to Grand Forks in 1891 and 1900, respectively. Henry Johnson worked for the Dinnie Brothers who were Irish. James Dinnie used to go to the Scandinavian boarding houses in Grand Forks along the Great Northern tracks and call up to the windows asking if there were any "roundheads" (Scandinavians) who wanted work. This is how Dinnie obtained his day labor on contract jobs.

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36, cont. Information sources/ references:

Walter Johnson said that his father and Pete Larson, a carpenter, got together informally in a shortlived partnership in Grand Forks and built 312 Kittson. The partnership did not last. Sander worked for the Dinnie Brothers as a bricklayer for about 10 years. During that time, Sander worked on the Masonic Temple (1913) which he probably did for Dinnie, and on buildings all over the Red River Valley. About 1915-16, Sander joined a partnership with George Thorvaldson as Thorvaldson Johnson Construction Company. They worked all over North Dakota, including western North Dakota and as far west as Wolf Point, Montana through the teens and twenties. In 1931, Thorvaldson Johnson company did the brickwork on the Grand Forks Herald building (1931) for Theo. B. Wells, architect. During this time, the partnership broke up when Thorvaldson retired. William Gillanders was a Scots-Canadian who went to work for Thorvaldson-Johnson in 1916. He then went off to the First World War, and returned after the war to continue with the firm, with a part interest in the company. In 1931, when Thorvaldson retired, the firm became Johnson-Gillanders company, and continued in the building business until Gillanders died in 1965. One of the last buildings constructed by the company of Johnson-Gillanders was the Chester Fritz Library at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. In the mid-1930s, Sander's brother, Henry Johnson, took over Dinnie Brothers as president when Dinnie died.

Sanborn Insurance Maps for 1912 and 1916 show that the building at 312 Kittson housed a millinery shop during those years. The 1916 Pettibone City Directory shows the **Vogue** Millinery shop at 312 Kittson. The 1928 Polk City Directory shows F. W. Green Co., paint store at this address. Tenants in the building have not been distinguished in any way, and do not contribute to the significance of the property.

References:

Interview with Walter Johnson, Sept. 24, 1981.

Interview with Lynda Johnson, September 13, 1981.

Sanborn Map Company.

Sanborn Maps for 1912, 1916, and 1927 corrected through 1927.

City Directory of Grand Forks, for years 1905, 1909, 1911, 1916. Pettibone Company, Grand Forks.

City Directory of Grand Forks, 1928, 1936. R.L. Polk and Co., publishers, Detroit, Michigan.