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The Prospect Hill & Conrad Cottages historic districts : a guide. 1992

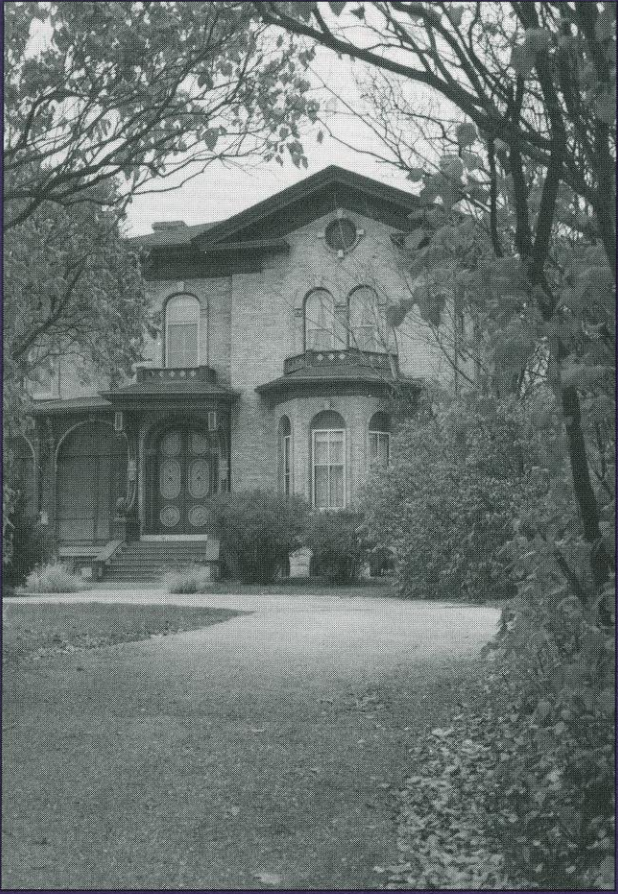
Zellie, Carole; Janesville Historic Commission
Janesville, Wisconsin: The Commission, 1992

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The Prospect Hill
&
Conrad Cottages
Historic Districts

🌿 *A Guide* 🌿

Prospect Hill & Conrad Cottages Historic Districts Tour Map



Prospect Hill Historic District Tour Sites • 317

Conrad Cottages Historic District Tour Sites • 317

The tour sites are listed by area, in alphabetical order by street name. Some additional sites discussed on pages 4-7 are also shown.

The Prospect Hill
&
Conrad Cottages
Historic Districts:
A Guide

Prepared
by
Landscape Research
for
The Janesville Historic Commission
Janesville, Wisconsin

1992



...there are in every direction, and on almost every street, neat and tasteful residences, located upon ample lots, and altogether, showing a collection of comfortable homes, not excelled by any of our Western towns of like magnitude...

Janesville City Directory and Business Advertiser, 1859-1860.

Above, opposite: the 300 block of Cornelia Street, 1992.

The PROSPECT HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT



The Prospect Hill Historic District is situated atop and around one of Janesville's highest hills, overlooking the Rock River and downtown. The hill is perched above an early bridge across the Rock River, where two early roads merged for the crossing. This area had some pioneer settlement by 1845, but only twenty-five of the 129 buildings still standing in the District were built before 1870. At least thirty-nine date between 1870 and 1900. The steep slope was apparently one of the factors which delayed residential development in this area.

Prospect Hill is rich in excellent residential examples of the Italianate and Queen Anne styles, ranging in scale from simple vernacular cottages to a large, highly ornamented mansion. The District, which encompasses approximately fifteen blocks, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1992, Janesville's fourth historic residential area to be so recognized.

Prospect Hill, like neighboring Courthouse Hill, was witness to the early growth of Janesville along the banks of the Rock River. The city's first foundations were laid with Henry Janes' plat of lots on the east side of the river in 1835. The subsequent development of a water-power and milling district, and the establishment of the Rock County seat of government reflected the region's early prosperity based on agriculture, manufacturing, and trade. By the 1850s, residential construction was well established on both sides of the Rock River but particularly on the west side, in the Old Fourth Ward and in the Old First Ward (Look West Historic District). These wards were home to the city's business leaders as well as their employees, and mansions sometimes occupied the same block as simple worker's houses.

In the late 1850s, and then with the economic recovery following the Civil War, a number of Janesville's prominent families erected elegant houses on the steep hills overlooking the river on the city's east side. The improvement of new streets after the War made the steeply-situated area more accessible. While Courthouse Hill attracted many builders who chose lots framing the Rock County Courthouse and its spacious grounds, attorneys and businessmen such as John J.R. Pease (1855), Alan C. Bates (1858) and Issac Woodle (c. 1855) chose well-elevated sites on Prospect Hill for the construction of their handsome residences, and set the tone for some of the early development which followed. A variety of one-story worker's houses also appeared before 1870, primarily along Milton Avenue, Milwaukee Street, and E. Centerway.

The PROSPECT HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT



The Prospect Hill Historic District includes a portion of the original plat of Janesville, as well as portions of Pease's Addition and the Hickory Glen Additions. It is bounded by two busy avenues which were part of Janesville's connection to Milton, Milwaukee and other eastern points. East Centerway (and adjacent Caroline Street) and Milton Avenue are lined with at least nine houses built in the 1850s or 1860s. These streets show a good record of the pre-Civil War development which radiated from Janesville's center. Several early houses along N. Parker Drive, at the foot of Prospect Hill, are also of note. They are representative of vernacular Civil War-era residential development once quite typical of the downtown area, and which has largely disappeared with the construction of commercial buildings.

St. Mary's Catholic Church has been an important architectural and religious focus of Prospect Hill since 1876, when the first church was completed at 317 E. Wall Street. The present St. Mary's was completed in 1902 and designed by architect Frank Kemp. St. Mary's tallest spire is visible from many points within the city, and prominently marks the location of Prospect Hill against the Janesville skyline. Another neighborhood landmark on Caroline Street, the Second Ward School (Adams) was built about 1855 and its replacement built in 1888. The school site is now Adams Park.

Business owners and professionals were well represented among the residents of the District in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but people of many occupations have made their homes here. The architectural inventory and research conducted in 1990-1991 revealed that a small but significant group of architects, builders, and masons resided on Prospect Hill, particularly on E. Centerway and Cornelia Street. Carpenters Charles Nowlan resided at 303 Cornelia and Oscar Nowlan at 309 Cornelia; John Peters at 303 E. Centerway. Architect Frank Kemp resided briefly at 305 Eisenhower Avenue, and other Prospect Hill resident architects included William H. Blair at 15 N. Atwood, and George Airis at 403 E. Wall.

With the progress of the research and architectural survey conducted on Janesville's historic residential areas since 1985, it is possible to trace some early residents and families through a succession of two or more houses across the city. Hamilton Richardson, for example, first built a house in the Old Fourth Ward, close to downtown. His migration to the scenic hills of the east side in 1871 is typical of a number of his contemporaries.

The PROSPECT HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT



Research on ownership patterns in the District reveals that many houses have had only a few owners during their hundred-year histories. During the Depression many of the larger houses were subdivided into apartments and are still in multi-family use. Some of the largest houses were razed in the 1930s. In some cases, the sites have been redeveloped with modern buildings.

Since the 1970s, many historic houses on Prospect Hill have been restored by their owners. Rehabilitation work on exteriors has included removal of asbestos shakes or aluminum siding to reveal original clapboards and details, and the maintenance and reconstruction of elaborate porches. City of Janesville rehabilitation loan programs have assisted some property owners with certain types of repairs. Property owners interested in learning about the Historic District and housing improvement programs should call 755-3078.

Early views and maps of Prospect Hill:

Above, opposite: A view of development on Prospect Hill (background, right) and Courthouse Hill (foreground, left) in 1888. The original St. Mary's Catholic Church is at far right. (From Picturesque Janesville Illustrated, 1888.)

Above, top: Prospect Hill as it appeared on the bird's eye view "Janesville, Wisconsin: Looking Down the River in 1877." Lithographed and printed by C.H. Vogt and Co., Milwaukee, Wisconsin. (An ink spot on the original view obscures part of the Cornelia-Centerway intersection.) Above, bottom: A portion of Prospect Hill in 1893 from the Atlas of Rock County.

A BRIEF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

Examples of Prospect Hill's architectural styles and building types:



Early Side Gable :
408 E. Centerway
1860

Prospect Hill's nineteenth-century houses include examples of simple vernacular houses best described by their basic form (cross-gable, side-gable or gabled ell) rather than their architectural style. Side gable houses present their long wall to the street.

This side-gable form house on E. Centerway is typical of simple buildings constructed in Janesville before the Civil War. The low-pitched gable roof and small attic windows are seen on a number of houses from this period. The graceful porch is carried by slender posts and has filigree trim.



Italianate Style:
Henry & Mary Rogers
402 Prospect Avenue
1882

The Italianate style was popular in southern Wisconsin between 1850 and 1880. Round-arched windows, slender porch posts with chamfered corners, and brackets at the eaves are among its typical features.

The cream brick Rogers House is a simple exposition of the late Italianate style in Janesville. It has a cross-gable form, windows with round arches or label moldings of brick or stone, and an Italianate style front porch. The rear ell porch is of later construction and has turned posts, brackets, and a spool-and-spindle frieze. Henry Rogers, a painter, was a partner in the Rogers and Hutchinson paint store. He and Mary Rogers lived in this house until 1925.



Queen Anne Style:
309 Cornelia Street
Oscar and Jennie Nowlan
1893

The 1890s were the high point of the popularity of the Queen Anne style in southern Wisconsin. A rich variety of surface textures and details, including walls clad with clapboards and patterned shingles, and elaborate brackets, porch posts, and gable-end trim are typical of the style.

The Nowlan House is an excellent example of the style. Gable ends and the corner tower are decorated in scalloped shingles, and brackets define the rooflines. Nowlan, a New York native, attended Milton College and came to Janesville in 1866. He built the Fredendall Block, the Janesville Cotton Mills, and the Rock County Insane Asylum as well as a number of residences in the city.

A BRIEF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY



Carol Cartwright

Cross Gable:
408 Prospect Street
1885

This house form is usually a two-story, square-plan building with two intersecting, identical roofs. The late nineteenth-century cross gable form was often combined with Queen Anne details.

With its intersecting roofs and simple arrangement of windows and entry, this Prospect Street house is a good example of the cross gable form popular in Janesville. Intact clapboards contribute to its historic integrity.



Bungalow:
George & Mary Esser
323 Pease Court
1920

Residential architectural styles inspired by the American Arts and Crafts movement, including the Craftsman house and the Bungalow, were very popular in Janesville between 1910 and 1930. Their simplicity and straightforward use of materials marked a departure from previous styles.

Wide overhanging eaves supported by knee-brace brackets, a gable-roofed dormer with small sash windows, and narrow clapboards and vertical muntins in the upper sash of the main windows are among Bungalow style characteristics of this twentieth-century Prospect Hill house. A companion garage at the rear is also of note. George Esser was a Janesville soda bottler.



Arts and Crafts/Foursquare
George & Maude Homsey
320 Cornelia Street
1920

The Foursquare, usually an Arts and Crafts variant, has a solid appearance and a horizontal emphasis.

This brick example of a Foursquare house has strongly horizontal features which are accentuated by a hipped roof with wide, flared eaves and hipped dormers. Heavy brick piers support a low-pitched porch roof. Such spacious houses were popular in Janesville between c. 1900 and 1930. George Homsey was a well known confectioner who, with his brother, operated a shop next to the Jeffris Theater.

LOST PROSPECT HILL: *missing landmarks*



John J.R. Pease
211 Prospect Avenue
ca. 1855
Razed 1939

J. J. R. PEASE WILLIAM RUGER.
PEASE & RUGER,
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
office in Jackman & Smith's Block,
JANESVILLE, WISCONSIN.

The house in 1888.

This nineteen-room, cream brick Italianate style house was built by attorney John J.R. Pease on a prominent Prospect Hill site. The house interior featured six fireplaces with marble mantels and surrounds, and a black walnut staircase. A three-sided porch provided views of the river valley. Mrs. Adelaide Pease Pierce and Miss Mary Pease were the last descendants to occupy the house, until about 1932. After a period of vacancy, it was razed in 1939. One observer of the demolition noted that "the old house must feel a little bit sorry for itself, for it and for its crumbling glory as the crowbars of the wreckers bite at it."

The Pease site was redeveloped with modern houses in the 1950s. Old concrete steps, which apparently led to the original house, remain on Prospect Street.



A Pease family portrait taken on the porch of the house, c. 1910.



Skip Drew

The steps, 1992.

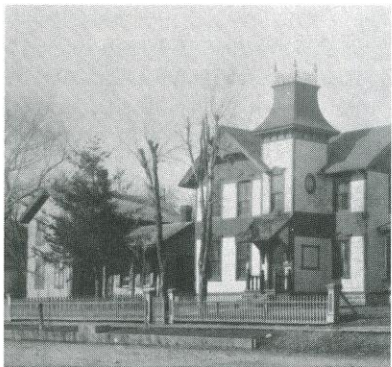
LOST PROSPECT HILL: *missing landmarks*



A. H. Smith/W.H. Knowlton
N. Parker Drive
c. 1855

*Exact date of photograph unknown;
after conversion to church c. 1890.*

A. H. Smith was a pioneer Janesville attorney. About 1890, his ca. 1850 Greek Revival house was remodeled into a church for the St. John's German Evangelical Lutheran Congregation. In 1913 a new church was built on the site, and again replaced in 1965.



Dr. William H. Judd
208 N. Parker Drive
c. 1870s

1888

Picturesque Janesville Illustrated

The Judd House (at right) boasted a mansard-roofed tower and elaborately decorated gable ends. It was located just south of the Ott house, which still stands at 214 N. Parker Drive and which is visible at left. Dr. William Judd was the son of Dr. Samuel Judd, who resided at 219 Prospect Street (see p. 14). The William Judd House was destroyed in a 1979 fire.



Issac Woodle
418 Harding
ca. 1855



As shown on Janesville, Wisconsin: Looking Down the River in 1877.

This extensively altered Italianate style house is situated on a slope known as Hickory Glen at the District's northern edge District. Built by Issac Woodle, an attorney, the brick house was described in the 1859 *Janesville Directory* as "convenient and snug." Now converted to apartments, it has been covered over with aluminum siding and nearly all of its historic architectural features are hidden.

NORTH ATWOOD AVENUE



21

Frank & Margaret Strickler
1894

Among notable features of this Queen Anne style house are a classical veranda which wraps around the southeast corner and an octagonal tower which projects from the main roof. While Frank Strickler lived in this house, he was an executive of the Janesville Hay Tool Company, which later became the Strickler Hay Tool Company. The Stricklers resided here until 1925.



25

William H. Palmer
1893

This house was built for Dr. William H. Palmer, who was the son of noted Janesville physician and Mayor Dr. Henry Palmer. The William Palmers lived here until 1910. (The Henry Palmer house is located at 237 Madison Street in the Look West Historic District.) Dr. Guy Waufle and his wife Maude lived here from 1917-1950.

The Palmer House exemplifies many of Janesville's well-detailed Queen Anne style houses from this period. The roof has several gables and projections, and a large bell-roofed circular turret. The exterior of the house is sided with very narrow clapboards and the gables are shingled. A Palladian window is a dominant element of the facade and a veranda carried by paired Tuscan columns wraps around the northeastern corner. The building has been recently rehabilitated for use as a law office.



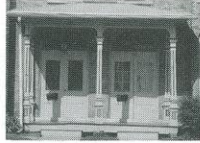
The veranda.

NORTH ATWOOD AVENUE



Judith Adler

102-4
John & Susan Watson
1876



This distinctive cream brick duplex was built by John Watson, a prominent Janesville contractor and bridge builder, to house the families of two of his daughters. The low-pitched hip roof, wide overhanging eaves, and projecting bays and slender posts at the porch are among its important features. The side-by-side duplex form is quite unusual for buildings of this period in Janesville.

John Watson came to Janesville from England in 1855, where he had worked on railroad construction. In Chicago, he worked for the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad on bridge and track projects. He left Chicago for California, where he unsuccessfully tried gold prospecting. His first venture in Janesville was as a hotel proprietor, but he soon turned to railroad construction for the Milwaukee and St. Paul R.R.

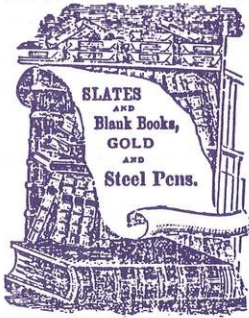
Watson became an expert in tunnel construction and assisted the City of Janesville with mill race maintenance and flood control along the Rock River. Over the course of his career, he built bridges for many towns and cities in Wisconsin.

In 1866, Watson's son-in-law, Orion Sutherland, purchased this building and continued to reside here until about 1915. Sutherland was a partner in J. Sutherland and Sons, and was also active in local politics.

J. SUTHERLAND,

Wholesale and Retail Dealer in

1870 advertisement, *Janesville Directory*



SLATES
AND
Blank Books,
GOLD
AND
Steel Pens.

Books, Stationery,

—AND—

Paper Hangings,

Wall and Curtain Papers,

Writing and Wrapping Papers.

Janesville, - - Wis.

EAST CENTERWAY



Judith Adler

219

Issac and Cornelia Woodle
c. 1840-45

This corner house is the oldest in the District. The Woodles lived here during the first years of their marriage and the building has become known as the "honeymoon cottage." In 1840, Cornelia Sheldon Woodle became Janesville's first school teacher. Issac was an attorney. A decorated Gothic-style bargeboard adorns the eaves, and the entry is flanked by sidelights. The Woodles later resided nearby at 418 Harding (see p. 6).



303

John and Kathryn Peters
1860, remodeled 1884

A elaborate Swiss Style porch is an intact feature of this unique Prospect Hill house. Pierced wooden screens and trefoil motifs are among a variety of wooden details at the upper story. In partnership with Oscar F. Nowlan, John Peters was a well known contractor. He built a number of turn-of-the-century public buildings in the area, including the Rock County Jail (1899).



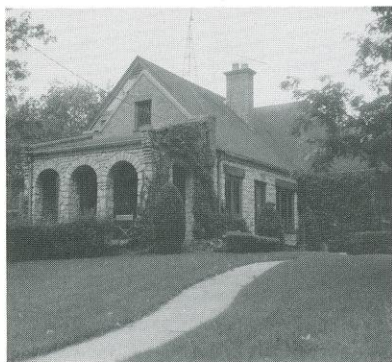
405-7

Carlos Brown
1855, remodeled c. 1890



This picturesque house is situated on one of the highest points of land in the District. It was originally constructed as a gabled-ell form building with Gothic Revival details. It was altered around 1890 in the Queen Anne style. Its square and scalloped shingles at the second story, two-story square tower and spool-and-spindle-trimmed porches are evidence of the transformation. A small carriage house at the rear is also of note. Carlos Brown was a carpenter.

CORNELIA STREET



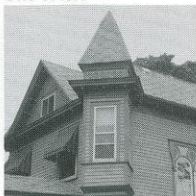
211
Joseph and Marian Gagan
1928

Period Revival style houses were among the last additions to Prospect Hill. This Tudor Revival example has been owned by the Gagan family since its construction. The complex jerkinhead and gable roofline, and brick, limestone and half-timbered exterior are combined to a very picturesque effect. The limestone-clad porch has arched openings which face Cornelia Street. Joseph Gagan was a sign painter.



217
Edwin C. Johnson
1893

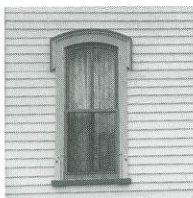
The oriel.



This fine Queen Anne style house features decorative glazing, a square corner oriel and, at the roofline and porch, a variety of turned and scroll-cut trim. The house was built for hardware merchant Edwin Johnson, who resided here only briefly. It was then the home of Rev. George Dunbar until 1903, followed by Mary Warren, the widow of Janesville physician John H. Warren. John Warren served as Collector of Internal Revenue under President Abraham Lincoln.



303
Charles Nowlan
1870



Among the most architecturally significant houses in the District is this Gothic-Revival house built by Charles Nowlan, a Janesville carpenter, as his own residence. The round-arched windows, and the label mouldings at the first story windows are among its interesting features. The small carriage house at the rear, which is clad in board and batten siding, is one of only a few in the city to survive.

EISENHOWER AVENUE



301

James H. & Mary Burns

1894

Frank Kemp, architect

One of two prominently-sited houses at the eastern edge of the District, and facing a tiny triangular park, this Queen Anne style example retains much of its original detailing at the upper stories. A recessed, arched balcony is a distinctive feature. This house was built by James and Mary Burns as a rental property. James Burns was a Janesville real estate and loan dealer.



305

Frank Kemp

1894

Frank Kemp, architect

Architect Frank Kemp, who is credited with the design of both of these Eisenhower Avenue houses, resided briefly in this one. The steeply-pitched gable roof with wide, sweeping eaves and sawtooth-shingled wall surfaces are of note.

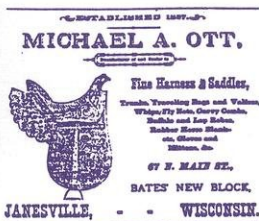
Kemp studied architecture in Milwaukee and St. Louis. He practiced in Madison, Janesville, and Beloit, and lived in Janesville between 1892 and 1896. He designed St. Mary's Catholic Church on Prospect Hill and a number of houses on Courthouse Hill.

Between 1931 and 1960, 305 Eisenhower was the home of Nevada and Rose McCarthy. Nevada, a druggist, was an early collector of old Janesville photographs and views.

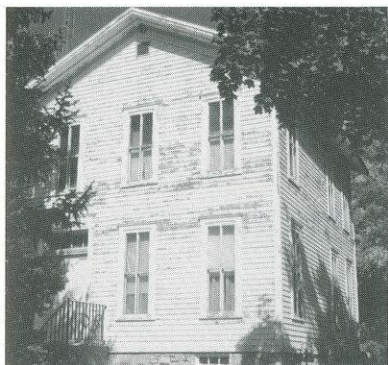
NORTH PARKER DRIVE



214
Michael & Sarah Ott
1863



This clapboard-clad house is significant for its Civil War-era construction, and is an excellent example of the "gabled ell" form of building popular in Janesville in the 1850s and 1860s. Details are simple, including the peaked lintels above the large, regularly spaced windows. Michael Ott began working as a saddle and harness maker in Janesville in 1852 and established his own business in 1857. His shop was located at 67 N. Main Street. (See historic photograph, p. 7.)



424
Wm. & Martha Lawrence
1865

This is the second house built by the Lawrences on N. Parker Drive; the first is no longer standing. The low-pitched gable roof, tall narrow windows with simple cornice moldings, and transom-topped entry are among its important Italianate style features.

William Lawrence, a native of Vermont, arrived in Janesville in 1844 at the age of 22. He operated a large hardware store from 1845 to 1883. He was also an investor in a shoe factory, a knitting factory, a life insurance company, and served as a director of the Janesville Machine Company. Lawrence was also a founder of the Republican Party in Wisconsin, and served as Mayor of Janesville (1858-1862).

LAWRENCE & ATWOOD,
Dealers in
Hardware, Stoves & Tinware
Coal, Stucco, Cement, &c.,
No. 7 South Main Street,
JANESVILLE, WIS.

Other notable houses along N. Parker Drive (but not included in the Prospect Hill Historic District) are the Jonas Trimbley House, (455; built in 1860), and the Myers-Newhoff House, (121, built in 1848). The Myers-Newhoff House is individually listed on the National Register in recognition of its architectural and historical significance.

Left: A Lawrence Hardware advertisement in Holland's Janesville Directory, 1870--71.

PROSPECT AVENUE

219
Samuel and Helen Judd
1865



This Italianate style house was built for prominent Janesville physician Samuel S. Judd, and was later the home of businessman John Thoroughgood. The low pitched, hipped roof has wide overhanging eaves and the front porch has elaborate square posts and a spool-and-spindle balustrade. A two-story octagonal tower is missing its original roof but the current owners are planning to restore this feature.

Samuel Judd (1829-1887) was born in Connecticut and graduated from medical school in Ohio in 1857. He established a practice in Janesville after the Civil War. He practiced what was known in the nineteenth century as eclectic medicine, and served as the president of the National Eclectic Medical Society. Samuel Judd was the father of Dr. William H. Judd (see page 6).

John and Annie Thoroughgood purchased the house in 1893. A native of England, Thoroughgood arrived in Janesville as a carpenter. He became a partner in the Thoroughgood & Company cigar box and cigar box lumber manufacturing firm. By 1889, this company employed 50 workers and manufactured a variety of tobacco-related goods.

The current owners have extensively rehabilitated the house and site. The wooden siding and brackets have been restored, and there are plans to replicate the low balustrade and metal cresting which once decorated the front porch. Earlier landscape features have been recreated, and a low post and railing fence follows the lines of the original ornamental fencing.

The Judd-Thoroughgood House as it appeared in 1888.



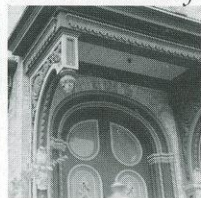
PROSPECT AVENUE



429

Hamilton & Caroline
Richardson
1871

Details at the entry



Hamilton Richardson was one of Janesville's most successful late nineteenth-century businessmen. As the 1992 National Register nomination noted, "the house he had built for him and his family in 1871 was befitting his status in the community." The cream brick, Italianate building is the best conserved of the large houses which remain in the District. Among the most eye-catching historic features are the oculus windows with brick and stone surrounds in the gable ends and massive paired entry doors which have oval, round, and teardrop-shaped panels.

A native of Genesee County, New York, Hamilton Richardson (1820-1906) arrived in Janesville in 1846 via Milwaukee and Racine. In 1850 he invested in the Excelsior Mills, which burned, prompting Richardson to try the shipping business in California. He returned to Janesville in 1856 during a period of economic boom. His investments in downtown commercial blocks and industries were very successful, and he was also elected a State Senator and a State Representative. In 1858 he married Caroline Pease (?-1912), a native of Enfield, Connecticut. Caroline's father, John R. Pease, was a prominent Janesville attorney and one of the earliest land developers and builders on Prospect Hill. Caroline and Cornelia Streets, and Pease Court all reflect family names.

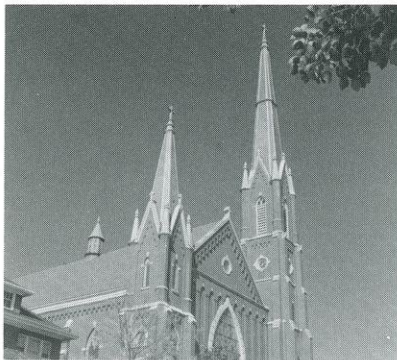
Members of the Richardson family occupied the house until 1934. It was subsequently divided into apartments. The current owners of the property began restoration in 1978. Historic photographs have provided the basis for recreating some important missing features and restoring others.

The Hamilton Richardson House in 1888.



Mary Dimock (center) married Victor Pease Richardson, the eldest of the Richardson's six children, in 1885.

EAST WALL STREET



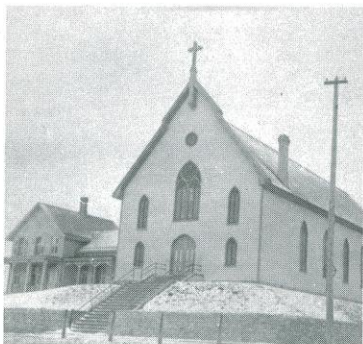
317
St. Mary's Catholic Church
1902
Frank Kemp, architect

This High Victorian Gothic church is the centerpiece of the District. The 201-foot spire may be seen from many parts of the city. Designed by architect Frank Kemp (1864-1944) at a cost of approximately \$50,000, the building features stepped buttresses, brick corbelling, and slender pointed arch windows filled with stained glass. A steeple rises from each corner of the main elevation, and the taller southeast corner tower contains a belfry with arched, louvered openings. Architect and congregation member Fred Roesling Sr. donated the Waukesha stone used in the foundation and supervised the building's construction. The copings, pinnacles, buttress caps, keystones, belting and arches are of Indiana Bedford stone. The walls are of dark red Menominee hydraulic pressed brick, with over 900,000 used in construction.

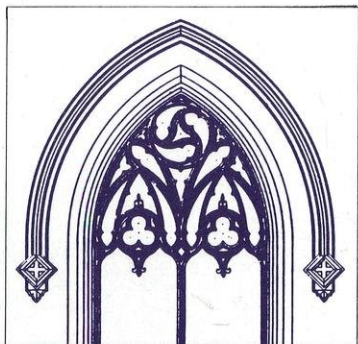
The interior is decorated with onyx and Italian marble columns. The ornamental plaster was executed by Montellatici and the Associated Artists of Milwaukee.

St. Mary's congregation grew from St. Patrick's, which was organized in the Old Fourth Ward in 1847. (The church built by the St. Patrick's congregation in 1864 still stands at 315 S. Cherry Street.) In 1876, St. Mary's was organized and a small church built at this site. A brick rectory was constructed in 1878. In 1900, the present building was commissioned to house the growing membership, and the first St. Mary's was moved and later demolished. A portion of the original rectory survives at 403 Pease Court.

The Collegiate Gothic style St. Mary's School at 311 E. Wall was constructed in 1928, and the Rectory at 313 E. Wall in 1918.



The first St. Mary's Church as it appeared in a photograph of 1888.



Window as drawn by Fred Roesling and published in his Guide for the Construction of Gothic Details. However, Roesling's exact role in the design of details for St. Mary's is not known.

EAST WALL STREET



308
Patrick Connors
1883

The Connors residence was cited in the National Register nomination as an example of the cross-gable house form. With its round-arched windows, intact clapboard siding, and prominent hillside site, it contributes to the character of the Historic District. Patrick Connors was listed in the 1880 City Directory as a wine and liquor dealer.



312
c. 1895

Early maps suggest that this small one-story residence was moved to this site about 1895. It was noted in the 1992 National Register nomination as an excellent example of the side-gable house form. The original appearance of this house was probably quite different than it is today, but the six-over-six lights in double-hung sashes, and the entry porch carried by decorative turned posts may be historic features.

MILTON AVENUE / CONRAD COTTAGES

...the neat cottage of Major Hiram Taylor, with its large vegetable, flower and fruit garden--an evidence of the taste, the thrift, and energy of its proprietor.

Janesville City Directory and Business Advertiser, 1859-1860

When this description of the Greek Revival style house at 306 Milton Avenue was written for an early Janesville city directory, Milton Avenue (originally known as Milton Road) was at the eastern edge of the city. The Conrad Cottages Historic District contains a small group of buildings fronting this historic route. The district includes four nearly identical workers' cottages, dating from 1882, and three other early houses. The buildings represent several phases of east-side residential construction: from early country estates to streetcar-era "tract-house" development.

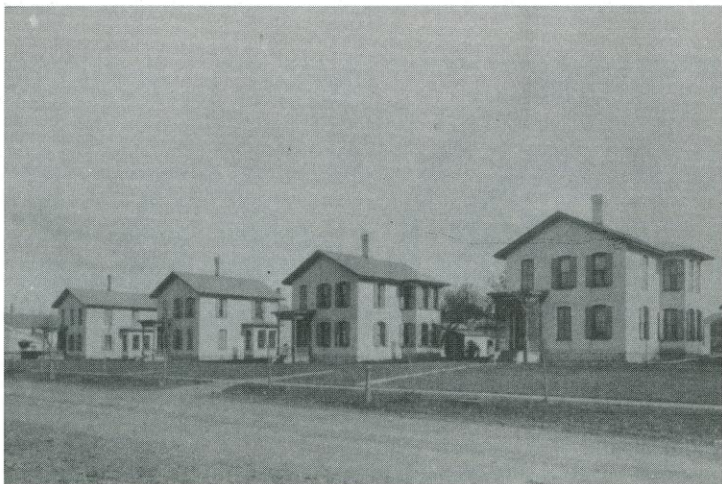


312, 318, 324, and 330
1882
(324 shown)

Window detail, 330.



These four cream brick houses are known as the Conrad Cottages after their builder, Charles B. Conrad. They have been used as rental properties throughout much of their history. Conrad was a Janesville grocer and son of the previous owner of the Milton Avenue land on which the houses are built. Although the architectural details vary slightly from house to house, the tall windows decorated with brick label arch moldings are an important feature common to all.



The Conrad Cottages in a view of 1888.

MILTON AVENUE/CONRAD COTTAGES



306
Hiram Taylor House
c. 1845

The Taylor House is a survivor of the first years of Janesville's settlement. Notable Greek Revival features are the low-pitched gable roof, returns at the cornice, and the sidelit entry. The veranda is probably a c. 1900 addition. Hiram Taylor was a Janesville attorney and lived in this house until his death in 1875. Since then, it has been owned and occupied by only three families .



235
John Nichols
1855

A 1976 survey of Rock County noted this house as the "finest small Gothic cottage in the city." It has a number of details influenced by the Gothic Revival style. Tall, double-hung sash at the upper story have nine-over-nine lights. Thin label window moldings and the sidelit entry, also trimmed with a label molding, are other distinctive features. John Nichols, the first owner, was an early Janesville attorney. The house has been well cared for by a succession of later owners.



327
John C. Jenkins
1870

This compact cottage is one of only a few in the city with a mansard roof. The roof is pierced by dormers with round-arched windows, and the porch is carried by thin columns and an arched cornice. John C. Jenkins owned the house until 1875. He was an owner of Dow, Jenkins and Co., a Main Street business which advertised "thermo-water cures." Members of the Zeininger family lived here between 1877 and 1939.

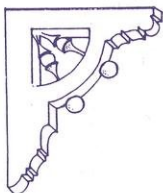
GLOSSARY

Baluster

A small column which supports a staircase, porch, or landing rail.

Bracket

A projecting member which supports or appears to support a load, usually at eaves or overhangs.



Chamfered

An angle formed by flattening out or beveling the corner of a wooden porch post or bracket.

Clapboard

A long narrow board, overlapped to cover the outer walls of frame structures.

Corbel

A bracket or block which projects from the face of a wall.

Cream Brick

A distinctive buff-colored brick which is seen throughout southern Wisconsin. It was popular for residential and commercial construction between c. 1850 and 1880.

Dormer

A window projecting from a pitched roof.

Finial

An ornament which terminates the point or a spire of a tower.

Gable

The triangular wall at the end of a double-pitched or gabled roof.

Hood Molding

The projecting molding over a door or window.

Jerkinhead Roof

A roof "clipped" at the end gables.

Keystone

The central voussoir of an arch.

Label Molding

A form of hood molding over a window or door, in which the lower ends are turned away from the opening horizontally.

Light

Individual pane of glass in a window or door.

GLOSSARY

Lintel

A horizontal crosspiece resting on two vertical support pieces at either end that carries the weight of a beam over a window or door.

Mansard roof

A roof that has two slopes on all four sides.

Molding (moulding)

A continuous decorative band, carved or applied to a surface.

Oriel

Projection on a house containing windows and supported by brackets or other means.

Palladian window

A triple opening; the arched center opening is usually the widest.



Sash

Parts of a window or door that hold the glass, or lights, and generally operate to open and close.

Sidelight

Fixed glass alongside a door or window opening.

Spindle

A turned wooden element used for decoration, often at the porch.

Transom

A horizontal frame, usually glazed, above a window or a door.

Turret

A small, slender tower, usually with windows, usually at the corner of a building.

Voussoir

Wedge-shaped stones, which form an arch.

For Further Reading

An excellent discussion of the architecture of Rock County is contained in *Rock County Historic Sites and Buildings*, written by Nancy B. Douglas and Richard P. Hartung and published by the Rock County Historical Society in 1976. Much of the information contained in this guide is found in the Prospect Hill and Conrad Cottage Historic District research reports and nominations to the National Register of Historic Places prepared by Carol L. Cartwright for the Janesville Historic Commission (1991-2). These nominations are available at the Janesville Community Development Department, 18 N. Jackson Street (755-3180) and at the Division of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State Street, Madison, Wisconsin, 53706, (608) 264-6498.

Among many general guides dealing with the development of American architectural styles are McAlester, Lee and Virginia McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986) and Poppliers, John C. *What style is it?* (Washington, D.C.: Preservation Press, 1983).

For further information on historic preservation programs in the City of Janesville, contact the Janesville Historic Commission, 18 North Jackson Street, Janesville, Wisconsin 53545 (608) 755-3085 or 755-3065.

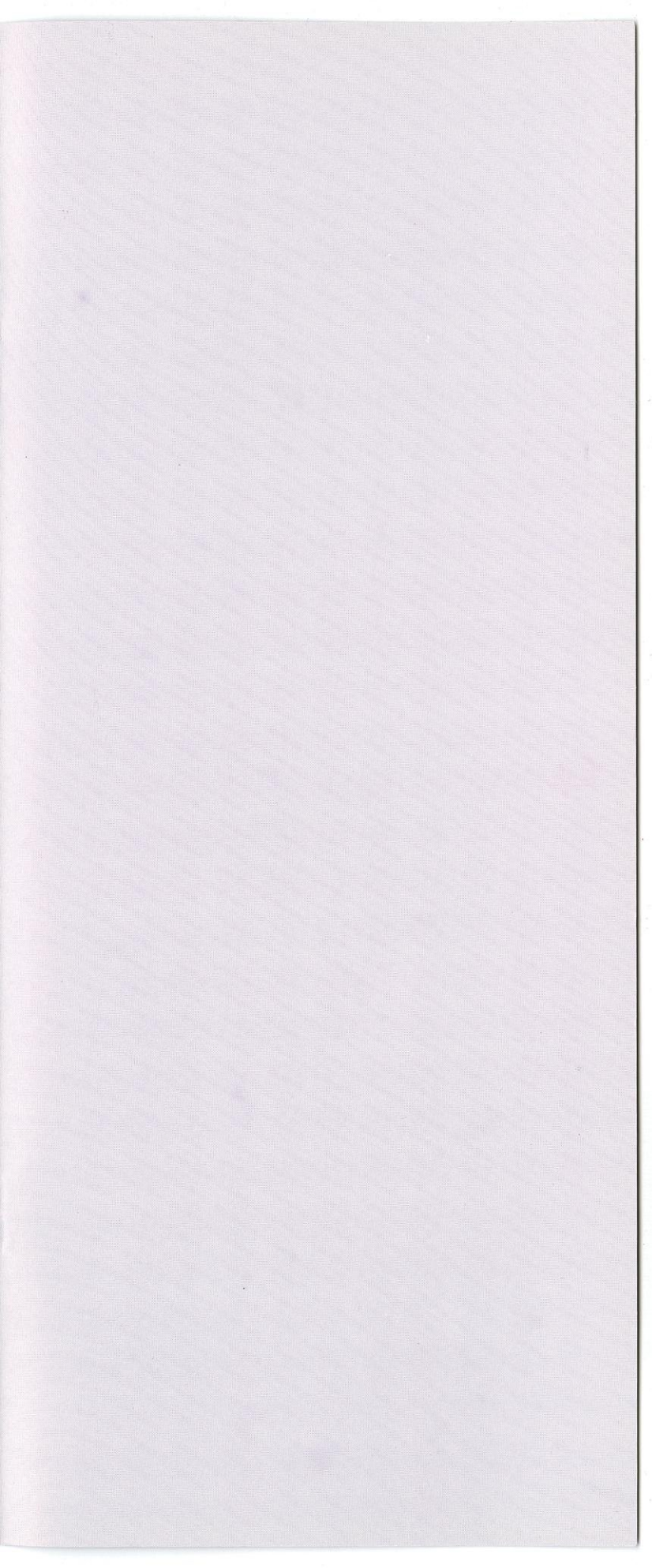


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The Janesville Historic Commission

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