

**United States Department of Interior
National Park Service**

**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.

1. Name of Property

historic name **Loeffler, Otto and Ida, House**
other names/site number **033245**

2. Location

| | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| street & number | 1603 Main Street | N/A | not for publication |
| city or town | La Crosse | N/A | vicinity |
| state Wisconsin | code WI | county La Crosse | code 063 |
| | | | zip code 54601 |

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Loeffler House

La Crosse

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

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.

removed from the National

Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- structure
- site
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| contributing | noncontributing |
| 1 | 1 buildings |
| | sites |
| | structures |
| | objects |
| 1 | 1 total |

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources

is previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/Single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival: Georgian Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation STONE

walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Loeffler House
Name of Property

La Crosse
County and State

Wisconsin

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- 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.
- 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.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1909

Significant Dates

1909

ca. 1950

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Loeffler House
Name of Property

La Crosse
County and State

Wisconsin

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:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 651015 4767810
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

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 | Elizabeth L. Miller, Historic Preservation Consultant | date | 09/15/2018 |
| organization | | telephone | 608-354-5016 |
| street & number | 4033 Tokay Blvd | zip code | 53711 |
| city or town | Madison | state | WI |

Loeffler House
Name of Property

La Crosse
County and State

Wisconsin

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 | Jeffrey and Lisa Drexler | date | 09/15/2018 |
| organization | | telephone | 919-349-6051 |
| street & number | 1603 Main Street | zip code | 54601 |
| city or town | La Crosse | state | WI |

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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National Register of Historic Places
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Section 7 Page 1

Loeffler House
La Crosse, La Crosse County, Wisconsin

Start description on line below

INTRODUCTION

The Otto and Ida (Smith) Loeffler House is located at 1603 Main Street in the city of La Crosse, La Crosse County, Wisconsin. Completed in 1909,¹ it is a two-story, frame residence finished with cream brick (photo 1). The house represents the Georgian Revival subtype of the Colonial Revival style. The residence rests on a rock-faced ashlar basement, embellished with a rock-faced stone water table. The wide-eaved, hipped roof flares, and is surfaced with asphalt shingles. A hipped roof garage (photo 2) finished with cream brick is set about ten feet to the north (rear) of the house. The garage accommodates two cars and dates to ca. 1950.² It is a non-contributing resource.

DESCRIPTION

The Loeffler House stands on the northeast corner of Main and North 16th streets, about ten blocks east of La Crosse's central business district, and one block south of the campus of University of Wisconsin- La Crosse (figure 1). The Cass-King Street Historic District (NRHP 1997), the residential neighborhood in La Crosse during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries where most of the community business and civic leaders lived, is located just south of the Loeffler House. Single-family residences dating from the late-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries are found east, west, and immediately north of the house as well. A sidewalk runs alongside the property on both streets, and an alley runs behind (to the north) of the house. A pair of low, stone piers frame a short flight of stone steps rising to the brick-paved walkway that leads up to the front porch. A wrought iron fence with heavy stone piers encloses the back yard, which has been landscaped with a sunken patio and paved terrace. All these landscape elements were installed ca. 2009,³ and are not substantial enough to include in the resource count.

Contributing Resource

The house appears rectangular in plan, although its footprint is generally ell-shaped, measuring about 60 feet (north-south along North 16th Street, the leg of the ell) by 45 feet (east-west, the base of the ell, along Main Street). A broad, denticulated cornice wraps around the house (photo 1). Exposed rafters

¹ City of La Crosse Tax Rolls, UW-La Crosse Area Research Center, La Crosse, Wisconsin; *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1909*, (Milwaukee: Wright Directory Company, 1909); and *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1910*, (Milwaukee: Wright Directory Company, 1910).

² The garage does not appear on *Map of La Crosse, Wisconsin*, (Pelham, New York: Sanborn Publishing Company, 1906, pasted over through November 1949), 20.

³ City of La Crosse online mapping, https://gis.cityoflacrosse.org/maps/lacrosse_gis/, (retrieved July 30, 2018), shows the fence and landscaping elements in place in 2011; Google, https://www.google.com/maps/place/1603+Main+St,+La+Crosse,+WI+54601/@43.8119751,-91.2326345,3a,75y,90h,91.91t/data=!3m7!1e1!3m5!1s5lhmj06DRxkTvI7MPc_TNQ!2e0!5s20080901T000000!7i13312!8i665614m5!3m4!1s0x87f95517eb8d20cd:0x8896fb552c5efec3!8m2!3d43.8119828!4d-91.2323761, (retrieved August 5, 2018), shows no landscaping elements in September 2008.

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Loeffler House

Section 7 Page 2

La Crosse, La Crosse County, Wisconsin

embellish the eaves of the roof. Most of the windows are 1/1 sash, and display stone sills. Almost all the windows are original. The Loeffler House faces south, overlooking Main Street.

The south (front) façade (photo 3) is three bays wide, symmetrical about the central entrance. Sidelights with diamond panes flank the front door. Each sidelight possesses a wooden base decorated with a wreath and swags. A cottage window with diamond-paned header appears on either side of the entrance. At the second story, a boxy bay window with three, diamond-paned casement windows projects slightly from the center of the façade. A 1/1 window is set on either side. A triangular dormer perches on the roof. The dormer is clad with fish scale shingles and displays three, small casement windows and a raking, denticulated cornice. A flat-roofed porch extends across the front façade. It exhibits compound paneled posts with stylized scrolled brackets and clapboarded rails. The porch features a portico with a closed pediment. The pediment is ornamented with a wreath and swags and a raking, denticulated cornice. The porch is embellished with a denticulated cornice and exposed rafters.

The ell-shaped plan is evident on the north (rear) façade. The projecting section (west, photo 4) displays a shallow, one-story, flat-roofed porch, which is likely original. It rests on brick piers, and features a denticulated cornice that matches the one on the main block. The porch was open until at least 1950.⁴ It has been enclosed with narrow clapboards, and fitted with metal windows with false muntins that simulate a 3/3 configuration, probably ca. 2009. A plain, modern door appears at the east end of the porch. A single window can be seen west of the porch on the main block. At the second story, the projecting section displays a sleeping porch with wooden pilasters, and clapboarded closed rails, enclosed with pairs of vinyl windows with false muntins giving a 3/1 appearance. The recessed section (east, photo 5) of the main block exhibits a wide, fixed window at the first story, and a 1/1 window at the second story. The first-story window is a replacement dating to ca. 2009; the original, colorful, leaded-glass window has been stored in the attic. A small, one-story, hip roofed, enclosed entry porch finished with narrow clapboards is tucked into the ell, providing direct access to the basement. The entry porch likely dates to ca. 2009, constructed in concert with the landscaping and the remodeling of the basement.

The east façade faces the narrow side yard. The projecting section (north, photo 5, right) displays one window at the first story, and two pairs of windows enclosing the second-story sleeping porch. A small, shed-roofed dormer is set on the roof south of the sleeping porch. The main block (south, photo 6) exhibits a central, exterior brick chimney, flanked with a 1/1 window on either side at each story.

The west façade (photo 7) looks toward North 16th street. A two-story, polygonal bay dominates this elevation. It is finished with narrow clapboards and trimmed with slender pilasters. A cottage window with a diamond-paned header lights the west face of the bay at the first story. Above, a projecting,

⁴ *Map of La Crosse, Wisconsin*, 20.

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Loeffler House

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La Crosse, La Crosse County, Wisconsin

denticulated cornice appears. A diamond-paned header and a wooden panel embellished with wreaths and swags can be seen at the second story on the west face of the bay. The northeast and southeast faces exhibit a narrow, 1/1 window at each floor. On either side of the bay, two 1/1 windows light the first floor, and one 1/1 window appears at the second story. The paired windows enclosing the sleeping porch can be seen at the second story at the north end of the façade. A hipped dormer perches on the roof just south of the polygonal bay. The dormer is finished with fishscale shingles and displays a group of three, small windows.

On the interior, the first floor plan consists of a vestibule that opens into a broad, central hall. The hall leads back to the kitchen (north) and is flanked by a sitting room (southwest), a dining room (west-central), and a large parlor (east). The vestibule is small and features a built-in mirrored cabinet with decorated Doric columns. A paneled, wooden door flanked by sidelights opens from the vestibule into the hall (photo 8). This door matches the front door, with a large pane of glass, and a brass knob with a shaped escutcheon plate. The hall is embellished with a chair rail with compound moldings, and features a straight, wooden staircase with a paneled newel post, simple balustrade, and bottom stair with a projecting rounded lip (photo 9). Closets are tucked beneath the staircase. A broad, cased opening separates the hall from the parlor (east), and the hall from the sitting room (southwest). The parlor (photo 10) features a fireplace with a marbled black stone mantel and hearth, and a simple, classical, wooden mantelpiece. At the south end of the parlor, a built-in window seat with drawers and flanking bookcases can be seen. A pair of paneled pocket doors separates the dining room from the sitting room (photo 11, sitting room). The dining room (photo 12) is enriched with a beamed ceiling, and paneled wooden wainscot capped with a chair rail. The kitchen was enlarged (by removing the original butler's pantry) and remodeled ca. 2009.⁵ A partially-enclosed servants' staircase rises along the east wall of the kitchen. It is wooden, in quarter-turn-with-winders configuration, and displays a paneled newel post, plain balustrade, and a projecting rounded lip on the bottom stair. A wooden, quarter-turn-with-winders staircase descends to the basement beneath the servants' staircase, and has been carpeted. The doors and windows on the first floor display simple, classical surrounds with entablatures and cornices. Except for the kitchen, the first floor spaces are enriched with deep, crown moldings, and exhibit quarter-sawn oak flooring and tall baseboards. Walls and ceilings are finished with plaster; some walls have been papered. There are at least some original light fixtures, including wall sconces in the parlor, a pendant with frosted shades at the north end of the hall, and possibly the chandelier in the dining room.

The second floor plan mirrors the first, with a wide central hall that leads north to the sleeping porch. A simple balustrade with plain, corner newel posts runs around the staircase opening in the hall (photo 13). Two bedrooms are found on either side of the hall. At the south end is a tiny room that could have been a nursery. On the northwest end of the hall are two small bathrooms; one is attached to the master

⁵ Lisa Drexler, current owner, personal communication, August 4, 2018.

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Loeffler House
La Crosse, La Crosse County, Wisconsin

bedroom (photo 14, master bedroom), the other is entered from the hallway. It is likely these were created by partitioning the original bathroom, and most recently updated ca. 2009. The master bedroom retains its servant call-button. The baseboards, doors, and surrounds match those on the first floor but have been varnished, rather than painted. A narrower crown molding is found upstairs. Second floor finishes include quarter-sawn oak flooring (except in the bathrooms and the sleeping porch), plaster ceilings and walls, and some wallpaper. At the northeast end of the hall, the servant's staircase descends to the kitchen, and a door opens onto the wooden, quarter-turn-with-risers staircase to the attic. A wooden screen door inside this door allowed for ventilation from the attic during warm weather. The attic has wooden flooring, and an enclosed, low-height storage room, but is otherwise unfinished.

The basement was finished ca. 2009. A laundry room, a recreation room, a den with a wet bar, a bathroom, and storage rooms currently occupy the basement. Finishes include concrete and carpeted flooring, wood paneling, and dropped ceilings.

Non-Contributing Resource

The ca. 1950 garage (photo 2) does not contribute to the significance of the Loeffler House because it was erected after the period of significance (1909). The garage rests on a poured concrete slab, and the hipped roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The two-car garage exhibits a paneled, overhead lift door on the north façade, adjacent to the alley. A paneled wooden door with a glass upper sash opens into the garage at the west end of the south façade. A square window with a soldier course lintel and a stone sill can be seen to the east of the door. A group of three, square windows with a continuous soldier course lintel and a stone sill light the west façade. There are no openings on the east façade.

ALTERATIONS

Exterior alterations are limited to the enclosure of the rear porch and the sleeping porch, and the replacement of the leaded-glass fixed window in the parlor. These changes are all on the rear façade, and either not visible (the rear porch and the fixed window) or partially visible (the sleeping porch) from the street, minimizing their impact. In addition, the leaded-glass fixed window has been preserved, and could be re-installed. On the interior, the principal alteration is the remodeling of the kitchen and butler's pantry ca. 2009 to create a more spacious, modern kitchen. The upstairs bathrooms have also be remodeled, as has the basement. These changes are confined to a private, functional spaces, and allow the house to continue to serve its residents in the 21st century. In contrast, the grander, public spaces, including the vestibule, hall, parlor, sitting room, and dining room are intact, as are the second floor bedrooms and hall. Classical woodwork and other decorative features have been maintained. Overall, the Loeffler House retains a high degree of integrity to its period of significance, 1909.

End of Description of Physical Appearance

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Loeffler House
La Crosse, La Crosse County, Wisconsin

Insert Statement of Significance

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Otto and Ida (Smith) Loeffler House is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under *Criterion C* at the local level. It is an excellent and intact example of the Georgian Revival subtype of Colonial Revival style. The period of significance coincides with the date of construction of the house, 1909.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CITY OF LA CROSSE

French fur traders traveling the Mississippi River in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are believed to have been the first Europeans to visit the site that is now the city of La Crosse. The French called the area “Prairie La Crosse” because Native tribes played the game of lacrosse on the plain, which lay on the east bank of the Mississippi, bordered by bluffs and coulees (narrow valleys between high ridges). The first permanent Euro-American settler of La Crosse was Nathan Myrick, who established a trading post on Barron Island (presently Pettibone Park) in 1841. In 1842, Myrick constructed a log cabin at what is currently the intersection of Front and State streets. In 1843, Myrick became the first postmaster, and named the post office “La Crosse.” Few Euro-Americans settled in La Crosse until after the U.S. government drove many of the Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) west of the Mississippi River in the late 1840s, in compliance with the 1837 Winnebago Treaty that members of the Ho-Chunk nation had been forced to sign. In 1848, it is estimated that the Euro-American population of La Crosse stood at 20.⁶

In 1851, La Crosse County was organized, the settlement at La Crosse was named county seat, and the first school opened in the community. In 1852, the village of La Crosse was platted, and a wharf where steamboats could dock was built. In 1853, the federal government opened a land sales office in La Crosse, the first sawmill and gristmills were erected on the La Crosse River (at the north end of the current central business district), and the village counted 573 residents. La Crosse grew rapidly during the mid-1850s, developing as a shipping center, and an agricultural support community for the growing number of farm families in the area. In 1856, La Crosse was chartered as a city, with about 3,000 residents. The city organized a fire department in 1857, following a devastating downtown fire, and required that all buildings erected thereafter along Front and 2nd streets between Vine and Jay be of “fire-proof” masonry construction. The Milwaukee Railroad (later a part of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad) arrived in 1858, expanding the city’s transportation access. In 1860, the population of the city of La Crosse reached 3,860.⁷

⁶ *History of La Crosse County, Wisconsin*, (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1881), 475 and 477; Joan M. Rausch and Richard Zeitlin, “Historic La Crosse: Architectural and Historic Record,” Report prepared for the City Planning Department of the City of La Crosse, Wisconsin, August 1984, 2.

⁷ *History of La Crosse County, Wisconsin*, 477, 479, 501, and 514; and Rausch and Zeitlin, 3 and 5.

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Loeffler House
La Crosse, La Crosse County, Wisconsin

La Crosse boomed during the 1860s and 1870s, driven by flour milling and lumbering, and supplemented by brewing and other small industries, steamboat and railroad shipping, and a diversifying commercial sector. The population doubled between 1860 and 1870, rising to 7,785. It had nearly doubled again by 1880, increasing to 14,505 and making La Crosse the second largest city in Wisconsin. Hundreds of buildings were erected during this period. The fire-proof central business district expanded to 3rd Street in 1864, and 4th Street in 1869, while residential areas radiated easterly from the central business district. A new county courthouse and jail was erected in 1867, and a city hall and fire station built in 1868. In 1870, the city established a police department. A representative sample of businesses in La Crosse that year included 27 groceries, 21 hotels, 8 clothing stores, and 57 saloons. Industrial enterprises included foundries, machine shops, iron works, and several breweries. Lumber milling dominated the economy during the 1870s, as sawmills in La Crosse tripled production from 20 million board feet to 74 million board feet per year, and the city became one of the two or three most important lumbering centers on the Mississippi River. The Milwaukee Railroad erected a bridge across the Mississippi in 1876, and built a round house and railroad repair shops in La Crosse. The same year, two other railroads extended lines to La Crosse: the Chicago and North Western Railway and the Green Bay & Minnesota Railroad (later the Green Bay & Western). The first high school was built in 1878. Local investors also founded the La Crosse Street Railway Company in 1879, which would expand into the neighborhoods, making the commute to downtown accessible. Herman Loeffler, Otto's brother, settled in La Crosse in 1879, and went to work as a cutter (tailor) at the C.F. Klein Dry Goods and Clothing Store at 300 Pearl Street (extant).⁸

In 1880, ten lumber mills were in operation in La Crosse. The lumber industry thrived into the 1890s, attracting lumber-support manufacturing such as harnesses, bolts, clothing, and packed meats. Although flour milling declined, brewing increased. By 1884, La Crosse's beer manufacturers produced as much as Milwaukee's breweries. The retail sector also expanded, and the city added water mains, paved some streets, and installed sidewalks in the central business district. In 1884, Herman Loeffler opened his own clothing and tailor shop at 126 South 3rd Street; Otto would move to La Crosse and join him in business in 1885. The arrival of the Chicago, Burlington and Northern Railroad (later the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy) in 1888, and the construction of its extensive yards and large roundhouse, made La Crosse the largest rail center between Milwaukee and St. Paul. The Chicago, Burlington and Northern ran north-south along the Mississippi River, successfully competing with steamboats and soon driving them out of business.⁹

⁸ *History of La Crosse County, Wisconsin*, 501 and 504; Rausch and Zeitlin, 5-7; and *Morrissey & Bunn's La Crosse City Directory: 1880-81*, (La Crosse, Wisconsin: Morrissey & Bunn, Publishers, 1880).

⁹ *History of La Crosse County, Wisconsin*, 477; Rausch and Zeitlin, 7-8; *Bunn & Philippi's La Crosse City Directory*, (Winona, MN: Jones & Kroeger, Printers, 1884); and *Urban Publishing Company's La Crosse City Directory, 1885-86* (La Crosse: A.M. Lamborn, Job Printer, 1885).

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Loeffler House
La Crosse, La Crosse County, Wisconsin

In 1890, La Crosse numbered 25,090 inhabitants, but the city's phenomenal growth would slow in the following decade. The lumber industry began to decline in the late 1890s; the last lumber mill in La Crosse closed in 1906. In 1893, Otto Loeffler sold his interest in the clothing and tailoring business he had engaged in with his brother, and formed a new company with John Elliott. The Elliott-Loeffler Company imported and sold wines and liquors at 222 Pearl Street. The business prospered, and Otto and Ida Loeffler were able to build the house at 1603 Main Street in 1909. La Crosse remained an important retail, manufacturing, and transportation center from the 1890s through the 1910s. Residential neighborhoods continued to expand eastward, and La Crosse's municipal government embarked on a series of civic improvements. Forty blocks in the central business district were paved with brick during the first decade of the twentieth century. The City Council created the Board of Park Commissioners, which contracted with nationally-prominent urban planner John Nolen to make recommendations for a park system for La Crosse; many of his suggestions would eventually be carried out. A new high school was erected in 1907. Main Hall was built in 1908 for the La Crosse Normal School, a state teacher-training institution that is now the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.¹⁰

Between 1910 and 1930, La Crosse's population rose to 39,614. The city's economy prospered, despite the toll that Prohibition, in effect from 1920 to 1933, took on La Crosse's sizeable brewing industry. Manufacturers and sellers of beer, wine, and liquor converted their enterprises to non-alcoholic beverages; a number went out of business. By 1920, John Elliott had retired, and Otto Loeffler was selling tobacco, billiard tables, and non-intoxicating beverages. The business closed after his death in 1922. Other retail and industrial concerns thrived during the period. La Crosse Rubber Mills, makers of rubber boots, was a leading employer, with between 1200 and 1500 workers. The National Gauge and Equipment Company, producers of automobile gauges; Trane, makers of plumbing and heating equipment; and the La Crosse Plow Works (acquired by the Milwaukee-based Allis Chalmers Company) were other important manufacturers of the time. Construction boomed during the 1920s; more than 100 buildings were constructed annually.¹¹

The Depression of the 1930s derailed the economy nationwide, and La Crosse did not recover until after World War II. La Crosse grew rapidly in the first few years following the end of the war, reaching a population of 47,535 in 1950. The economy has diversified in the post-war era, and the number of residents has remained fairly steady since 1970, at slightly more than 50,000. La Crosse has become a regional medical, technology, and education center. Gunderson Health System and the Mayo Health Clinic are the largest employers, followed by Trane (now manufacturers of HVAC systems), and Kwik Trip (regional gasoline and convenience stores). The City Brewing Company (formerly

¹⁰ Robert C. Nesbit, *Wisconsin: A History*, (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1973), 549; Rausch and Zeitlin, 8-10.

¹¹ Rausch and Zeitlin, 9-10; and *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1922*, (Milwaukee: Wright Directory Company, 1922).

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Loeffler House
La Crosse, La Crosse County, Wisconsin

Heileman Brewery), municipal and county government, and the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse also employ many. The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse enrolls more than 10,000 students annually. Two other regional secondary institutions are located in La Crosse: Viterbo University (a Catholic college with about 2600 students, and an online presence), and Western Technical College (part of the state's system of vocational, technical, and adult education). Recreation is also a significant sector of the economy, due to the presence of Mississippi River and the beauty of driftless area with its towering bluffs, and narrow coulees. In 2010, the population of the city of La Crosse was 51,320.¹²

SIGNIFICANCE: ARCHITECTURE

The Loeffler House is an excellent example of the Georgian Revival subtype of the Colonial Revival style, reflecting the creative, pre-World War I interpretation of Federal and Georgian residences of the colonial era. The Georgian Revival was infrequently built in Wisconsin, but its era of construction coincides with that of the Colonial Revival, built between about 1895 and 1940.¹³

The Georgian Revival style was a current in the Colonial Revival movement, rising out of an interest in the American colonial period that followed the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876. In 1877, Charles F. McKim and his future partners, William R. Mead, and Stanford White, indulged their mutual curiosity about colonial buildings by taking a walking tour through communities along the Atlantic seaboard north of Boston. The Georgian and Federal architecture of the English colonies had been inspired by the Italian-derived Renaissance classicism of distinguished British architects such as Christopher Wren and Inigo Jones, and disseminated to America through pattern books. McKim, Mead and White produced two designs that inaugurated the Colonial Revival style: the Appleton House in 1883-84 (Lennox, Massachusetts); and the Taylor House in 1885-86 (Newport, Rhode Island).¹⁴ The Colonial Revival style took hold gradually and evolved over time, but would remain popular through much of the twentieth century.

Prior to World War I, Colonial Revival designs generally represented liberal interpretations of Georgian and Federal precedents. During the pre-World War I period, elements drawn from the Craftsman and Prairie styles were often incorporated into the design, most notably grouped windows,

¹² Rausch and Zeitlin, 10; Nesbit, 549; "Largest Employers (La Crosse County)," *La Crosse Tribune*, September 1, 2013, https://lacrossetribune.com/largest-employers-la-crosse-county/article_d312f82c-12bc-11e3-90bf-001a4bcf887a.html, (retrieved August 3, 2018); and U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "American Fact Finder," https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml, (retrieved August 3, 2018).

¹³ Barbara L. Wyatt, ed., *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*, (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), II:2-17 and 2-28.

¹⁴ Marcus Whiffen and Frederick Koeper, *American Architecture, Volume 2: 1860-1976*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1981), 269; and Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 432.

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front porches, broad eaves and exposed rafters. In contrast, Colonial Revival architecture of the post-World War I period typically displayed proportions and details that more accurately reflected historical precedents, as a result of the publication of a number of carefully researched books that provided photographs and measured drawings of colonial buildings. The Georgian Revival residence of both periods is characterized by a rectangular plan, and a formal, symmetrical façade embellished with details such as classical columns, front entrance with flanking sidelights, denticulated cornices, dormers, fanlights and Palladian windows. The front entrance is typically accented with a prominent classical surround or a one-story portico.¹⁵

The Loeffler House, erected in 1909, exemplifies the free-form Georgian Revival of the pre-World War I period. It displays distinguishing characteristics of the style: the rectangular plan; the formal, symmetrical façade; dormers; and classical details such as the front entrance with flanking sidelights, denticulated cornices, and the pedimented portico that projects from the front porch. The two-story polygonal bay and the cottage windows are Queen Anne components, although the diamond-paned headers (and sidelights) recall the medieval-European-influenced windows of the colonial period in the U.S. The Loeffler House also possesses wide eaves with exposed rafters, and a full-façade front porch, features drawn from the contemporaneous Craftsman and Prairie School, further testifying to the house's pre-World War I construction date. The form of the Loeffler House places it in the category that noted architectural historian Virginia Savage McAlester calls "hipped roof with full-width porch." She notes that this is the most numerous configuration for Colonial Revival residences erected prior to 1915, accounting for close to one-third of the examples of the style nationwide. McAlester adds that the house is typically two stories, and usually has hipped or gabled dormers. On the interior, the Loeffler House embodies the Georgian Revival with its central hall plan, and the simple, classical surrounds, baseboards, moldings, staircase elements, and fireplace mantelpiece.¹⁶ The house retains a high degree of integrity.

The Architecture/History Inventory (AHI) of the Wisconsin Office of Historic Buildings (SHPO) has identified 18 residences of the Georgian Revival in the city of La Crosse, including the Loeffler House. A review of these houses suggests that four fit better under other classifications. Twelve of the remaining 14 residences were erected prior to 1915, and each of these incorporates elements of either Queen Anne or Craftsman/Prairie School style, or both. Of these 12, only two, including the Loeffler House, are finished with brick. The other brick example is the James Taylor House (1902), at 210 South 14th Street, a two-story brick-veneered residence with a tall, hipped roof. It is a modest representative of the style, with a Doric-columned front porch, front door with sidelights, and a gabled dormer. As such, it is not comparable to the Loeffler House. Three residences that provide better

¹⁵ Wyatt, II: 2-28; McAlester, 406-432; and John J.-G. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945*, (Walnut Creek, California: AltaMira Press, 1995, revised edition), 18-19.

¹⁶ McAlester, 409, and 416-17.

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comparisons are the S.Y. Hyde House (1897) at 1224 King Street, the Frank and Thekla Funke House (1904) at 137 South 13th Street, and the Max and Louise (Hyde) Platz House (1903) at 314 South 15th Street. All are located nearby in the NRHP-listed Cass & King Historic District, and represent excellent and intact examples of pre-World War I Georgian Revival. The Hyde House was designed by the La Crosse architectural firm of (Gustav) Stoltze and (Hugo) Schick, and constructed in 1897 for Hyde's son-in-law and daughter, Max and Louise (Hyde) Platz. The Hyde House (figure 6) exemplifies the free-form interpretation of Georgian Revival, incorporating Queen Anne elements. It is a two-story residence, clad with narrow clapboards and capped with a flaring, hipped roof. The entrance with sidelights, two-story corner pilasters, boxy central bay at the second-story, gambrel dormer, and curvilinear porch with slender fluted Doric columns create an eclectic, Georgian-inspired appearance. The Funke House (figure 7) is a two-story, hip-roofed house finished with narrow clapboards and trimmed with two-story, corner fluted pilasters. A hipped-roof porch extends across the front façade and displays fluted Doric columns. The porch and the main block are enriched with deep, denticulated cornices. A boxy bay with small, round-arched leaded-glass windows is centered at the second story. Above, a gabled dormer with returned eaves and a Palladian window perches on the roof. The Platz House (figure 8) was designed by La Crosse architects (Hugo) Schick and (Andrew) Roth, successor firm to Stoltze and Schick. Interestingly, it was built for the same couple as the Platz House, Max and Louise (Hyde) Platz. It is a two-story, clapboarded house with a flaring, broad-eaved hipped roof. The full-façade porch features Corinthian columns, and a central rounded portico. A denticulated cornice enlivens the porch and the main block of the house. A two-story, rounded bay appears on the side elevation. Aside from the finish and the shape of the portico and two-story bay, the Platz House is quite similar to the Loeffler House. Although the architect of the Loeffler House has not been identified, the similarity to the Platz House suggests that it could have been designed by the same firm. In comparison with the Hyde, Funke, and Platz houses, the Loeffler House is as good an example of pre-1915 Georgian Revival design, and its integrity is just as good. Therefore, the Loeffler House merits inclusion on the NRHP.

Otto and Ida (Smith) Loeffler and the History of the Loeffler House

Otto Loeffler (1853-1922) was born in Pomerania, a region on the south shore of the Baltic Sea that is presently divided between Germany and Poland. Loeffler immigrated to Wisconsin with his parents, Johann and Mathilde, in 1868. The Loefflers initially settled in the Town of Lebanon, a farming region in southeastern Dodge County. In 1870, Otto worked as a servant in the household of Ferdinand Volkmann in neighboring Emmet township. By that time, the Loeffler family had relocated to the village of Watertown, Dodge County, and Otto soon followed.¹⁷

¹⁷ Otto Loeffler, obituary, *La Crosse Tribune*, October 15, 1922, 6; and U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Ninth Census of the United States, 1870*, <http://www.ancestry.com>, (retrieved July 12, 2018).

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In 1880, Otto married Emilie Richter (1853-1882). That year, Otto worked as a store clerk. Following Emilie's death, Otto married Dora (1862-1899). Their son, Arthur, was born in 1883. In 1885, Otto, Dora, and Arthur Loeffler moved to La Crosse. Otto's brother, Herman Loeffler, had settled in La Crosse in 1879 and worked as a tailor. Herman and Otto opened a men's clothing and tailoring business, and worked together until 1893, when Otto sold his interest in the firm.¹⁸

Loeffler and John A. Elliott (1862-1923) incorporated the Elliott-Loeffler Company in 1893. The business imported wines and liquors, selling them at 222 Pearl Street in downtown La Crosse. Loeffler would act as president of the firm throughout its existence, while Elliott would be secretary-treasurer until retiring in 1919. In 1900, Loeffler established another business, the La Crosse Steam Laundry Company, which he would direct until his death. He was also elected alderman of the 18th ward in 1900, and would sit on the La Crosse Board of Education from 1906 until 1910. In 1905, Arthur Loeffler (1883-1961) joined the Elliott-Loeffler Company as bookkeeper, a role he would continue through 1919, when he would succeed Elliott as secretary-treasurer. Otto Loeffler became a partner in the Tisch Brothers cigar and cigar box manufacturing business in 1907, and the Elliott-Loeffler Company would sell cigars as well as alcoholic beverages until Prohibition in 1920. The business prospered, reporting that it was grossing as much as \$300,000 a year in 1910. After Elliott retired, the business became the Loeffler Company, selling cigars and tobacco, billiard tables and supplies, and, in compliance with Prohibition, non-intoxicating beverages. The Loeffler Company dissolved following Otto Loeffler's death.¹⁹

Otto Loeffler had married again in 1902. His third wife was Ida Smith (1872-1950). She was born in La Crosse County, the daughter of German immigrants. In 1900, Ida was working at a seed company, filling orders. For the first few years of their marriage, the couple continued to reside at 1016 South 8th Street, where Otto Loeffler had lived for many years. In 1909, Otto Loeffler bought lot 7, block 23, in Metzger & Funk's addition to La Crosse, and had the house at 1603 Main Street erected. Arthur Loeffler had the house at 1610 Main Street built about the same time.²⁰

¹⁸ Loeffler; Wisconsin Historical Society, *Wisconsin Vital Record Index, pre-1907* [database on-line], (Provo, Utah: Ancestry.com, 2000), <http://www.ancestry.com>, (retrieved July 12, 2018); U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Tenth Census of the United States, 1880*, <http://www.ancestry.com>, (retrieved July 12, 2018); and *Urban Publishing Company's La Crosse City Directory, 1885-86*.

¹⁹ Loeffler; "Liquor House a Big Institution," *La Crosse Tribune*, July 29, 1910, 1:3; *Philippi's La Crosse City Directory*, (La Crosse: L.P. Philippi Company, 1893; 1897; 1900; and 1905); *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1907*, (Milwaukee: H.C. Wright, 1907); *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1909*; *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1910*; *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1915*, (Milwaukee: Wright Directory Company, 1915); *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1919*, (Milwaukee: Wright Directory Company, 1919); *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1922*; and *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1924*, (Milwaukee: Wright Directory Company, 1924).

²⁰ U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Ninth Census of the United States, 1870*; U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Tenth Census of the United States, 1880*; U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the

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Otto and Ida Loeffler lived at 1603 Main Street until he passed away. Ida inherited the property. Around 1925, Ida married John Krumme (1872-1931). Krumme was a traveling salesman, and had retired by 1930. Ida Krumme continued to live in the house after her second husband died, until shortly before her own death in 1950. Quincy and Helen Hale then purchased the house.²¹

Quincy Hale (1893-1987) was an attorney, born in Minnesota, and living in La Crosse by 1930. Helen Wilson (1893-1976) married Quincy Hale in Montana in 1923. The Loeffler House remained in the Hale family until 1987, when Donald and Donna Jobe acquired it. They sold to Brian and Ingrid Watkins in 2004. Steven and Stephanie Whitford-Hawkins purchased the property in 2006. The present owners, Lisa and Jeff Drexler, bought the Loeffler House in 2015.²²

CONCLUSION

The Loeffler House is eligible under *Criterion C* at the local level. It is an excellent and intact example of the Georgian Revival subtype of Colonial Revival style, reflecting the creative, pre-World War I interpretation of Federal and Georgian residences of the colonial era. The period of significance coincides with the date of construction of the house, 1909. The Loeffler House retains a high degree of integrity.

 End of Statement of Significance

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²¹ *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1926*, (Milwaukee: Wright Directory Company, 1926); *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1928*, (Milwaukee: Wright Directory Company, 1928); *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1950*, (Milwaukee: Wright Directory Company, 1950); *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1955*, (Milwaukee: Wright Directory Company, 1955); *Wright's Directory of La Crosse for 1959*, (Milwaukee: Wright Directory Company, 1959); and U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*, <http://www.ancestry.com>, (retrieved July 31, 2018).

²² U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930; Montana, County Marriage Records, 1865-1993* [database on-line], (Lehi, Utah: Ancestry.com, 2016), <http://www.ancestry.com>, (retrieved July 31, 2018); La Crosse County Deeds, 805:994, October 26, 1987; La Crosse County Deeds, #1452606, June 26, 2006; and La Crosse County Deeds, #1661513, August 12, 2015.

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___ Insert Boundary Descriptions

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Loeffler House is located in the city of La Crosse, La Crosse County, Wisconsin, on Lot 7, Block 23, Metzger & Funk's Addition to La Crosse. The legal and historic boundary follows the back line of the sidewalk along Main Street a distance of 60 feet, and the back line of the sidewalk along North 16th Street a distance of 150 feet. The boundary encloses a rectangular parcel of less than one acre.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary of the Loeffler House encloses all those resources historically associated with the property. It coincides with the legal boundary.

___ End of Boundary Descriptions

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Insert Photo Descriptions

Name of Property: Otto and Ida Loeffler House
City: La Crosse
County: La Crosse County
State: Wisconsin
Name of Photographer: Elizabeth L. Miller
Date of Photos: August 2018
Location of Original Data Files: Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, WI

WI_LaCrosseCounty_OttoandIdaLoefflerHouse_0001
South (front) façades, camera facing northerly

WI_LaCrosseCounty_OttoandIdaLoefflerHouse_0002
Garage, north (front) façade, camera facing southeast

WI_LaCrosseCounty_OttoandIdaLoefflerHouse_0003
South (front) and façade, camera facing north

WI_LaCrosseCounty_OttoandIdaLoefflerHouse_0004
North (rear) façade, west section, camera facing southeast

WI_LaCrosseCounty_OttoandIdaLoefflerHouse_0005
North (rear) façade, east section, camera facing south

WI_LaCrosseCounty_OttoandIdaLoefflerHouse_0006
East façade, camera facing north-northwest

WI_LaCrosseCounty_OttoandIdaLoefflerHouse_0007
West façade, camera facing east-southeast

WI_LaCrosseCounty_OttoandIdaLoefflerHouse_0008
First floor hall looking toward vestibule and front entrance, camera facing south

WI_LaCrosseCounty_OttoandIdaLoefflerHouse_0009
Principal staircase, first floor, camera facing northeast

WI_LaCrosseCounty_OttoandIdaLoefflerHouse_0010
Parlor, camera facing north-northeast

WI_LaCrosseCounty_OttoandIdaLoefflerHouse_0011
Sitting room, camera facing south

WI_LaCrosseCounty_OttoandIdaLoefflerHouse_0012
Dining room, camera facing north-northwest

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WI_ LaCrosseCounty_OttoandIdaLoefflerHouse _0013
Second floor hall, camera facing north

WI_ LaCrosseCounty_OttoandIdaLoefflerHouse _0014
Master bedroom, camera facing west

End of Photo Descriptions

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Insert Figures

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- Figure 3. Loeffler House, First Floor Plan with Photo Key
- Figure 4. Loeffler House, Second Floor Plan with Photo Key
- Figure 5. S.Y. Hyde House (1897), 1224 King Street, a comparison property
- Figure 6. Frank and Thekla Funke House (1904), 137 South 13th Street, a comparison property
- Figure 7. Max and Louise (Hyde) Platz House (1903), 314 South 15th Street, a comparison property
Photo by Joan Rausch, ca. 1996, AHI #33751

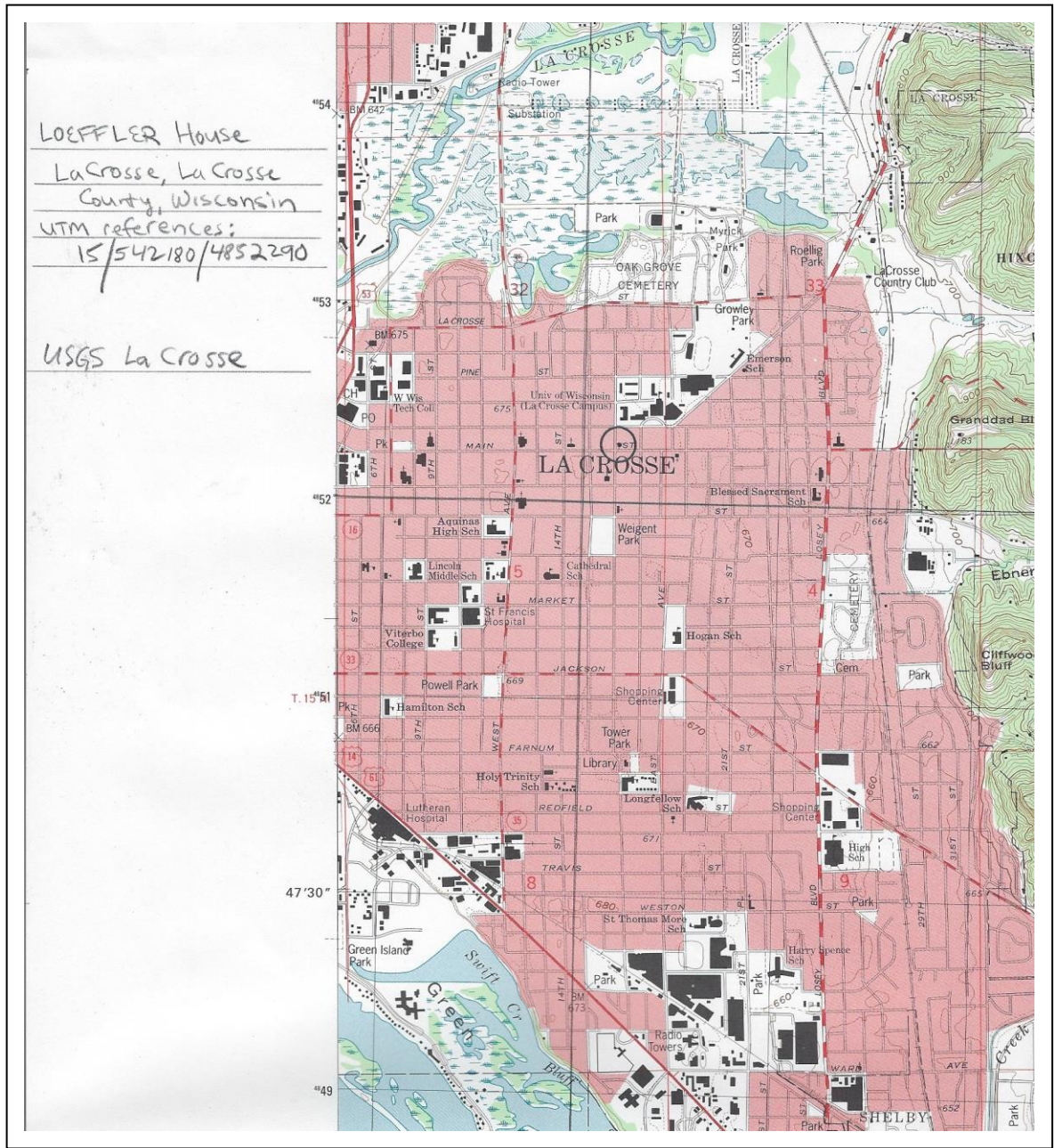
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Figure 1. Loeffler House, La Crosse, Wisconsin, USGS with UTM Reference



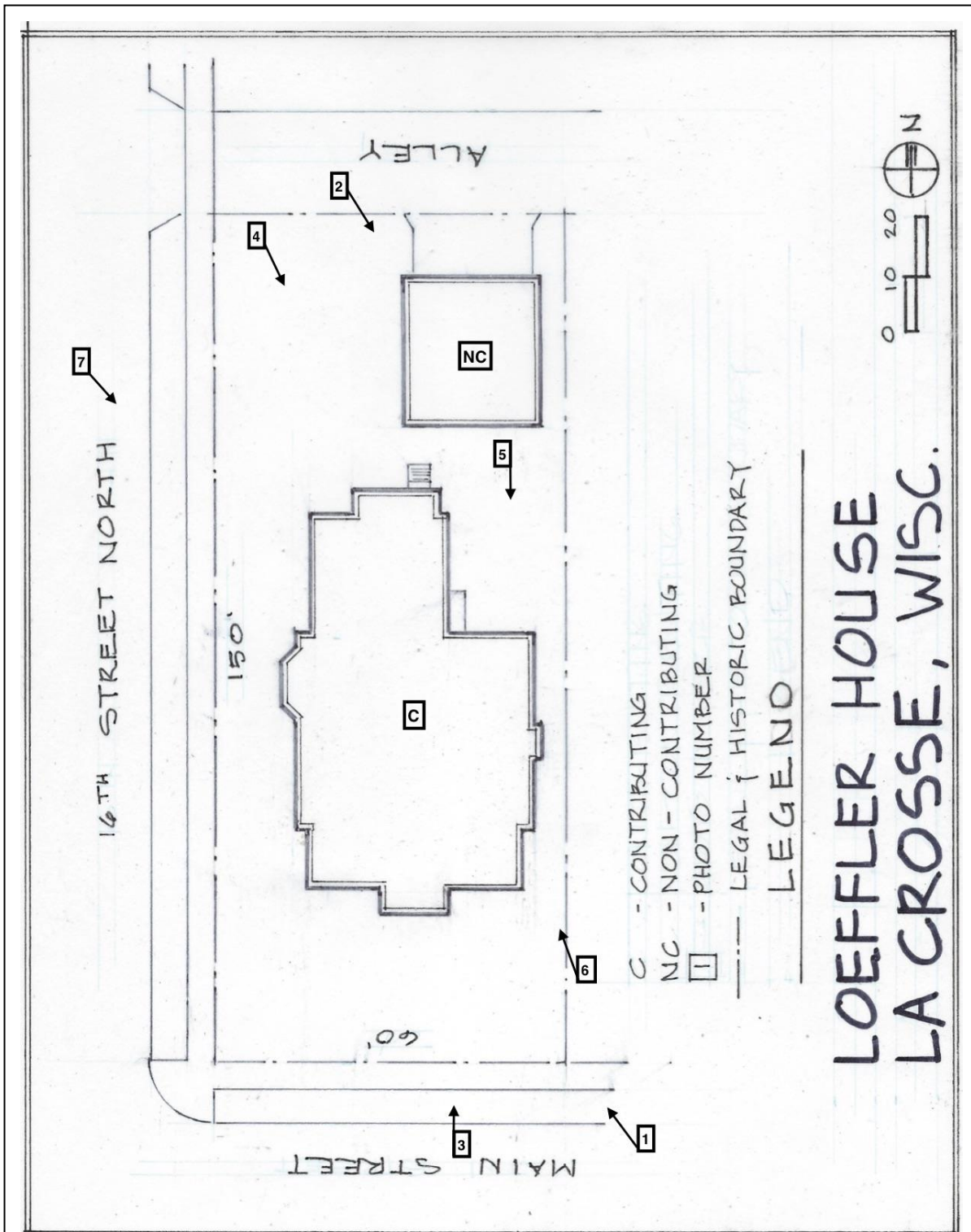
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Figure 2. Loeffler House, Site Plan with Photo Key



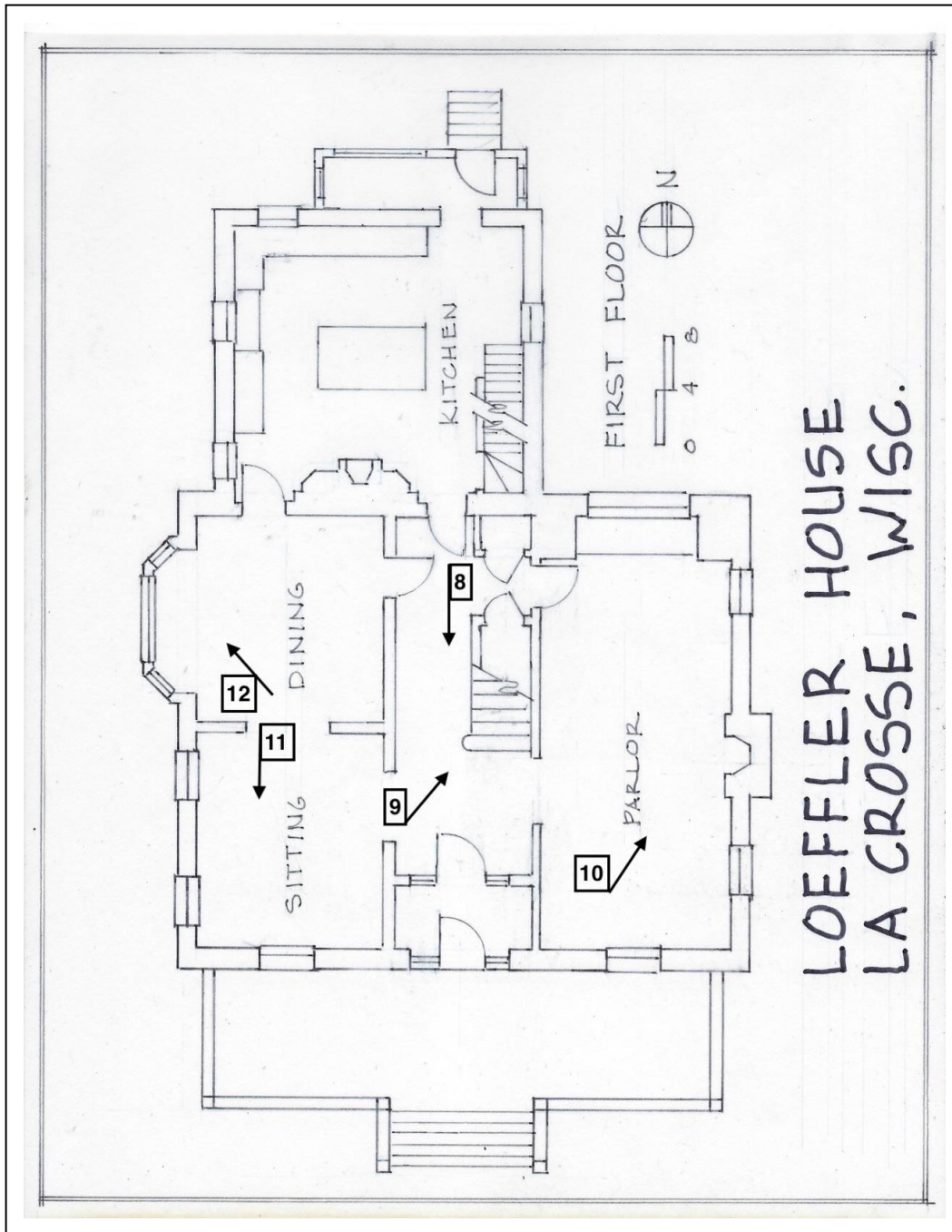
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Figure 3. Loeffler House, First Floor Plan with Photo Key



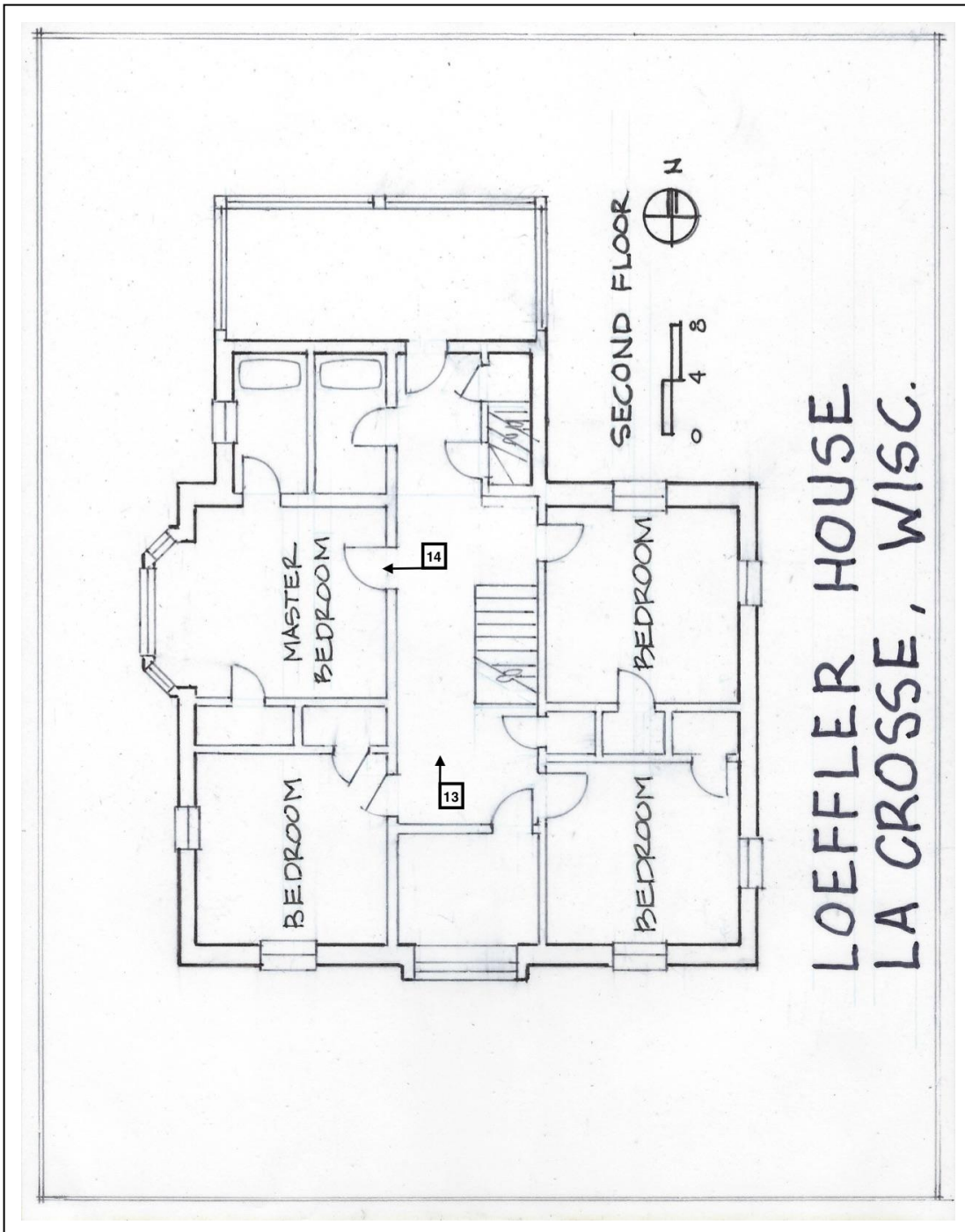
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Figure 4. Loeffler House, Second Floor Plan with Photo Key



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Figure 5. S.Y. Hyde House (1897), 1224 King Street, a comparison property



Figure 6. Frank and Thekla Funke House (1904), 137 South 13th Street, a comparison property



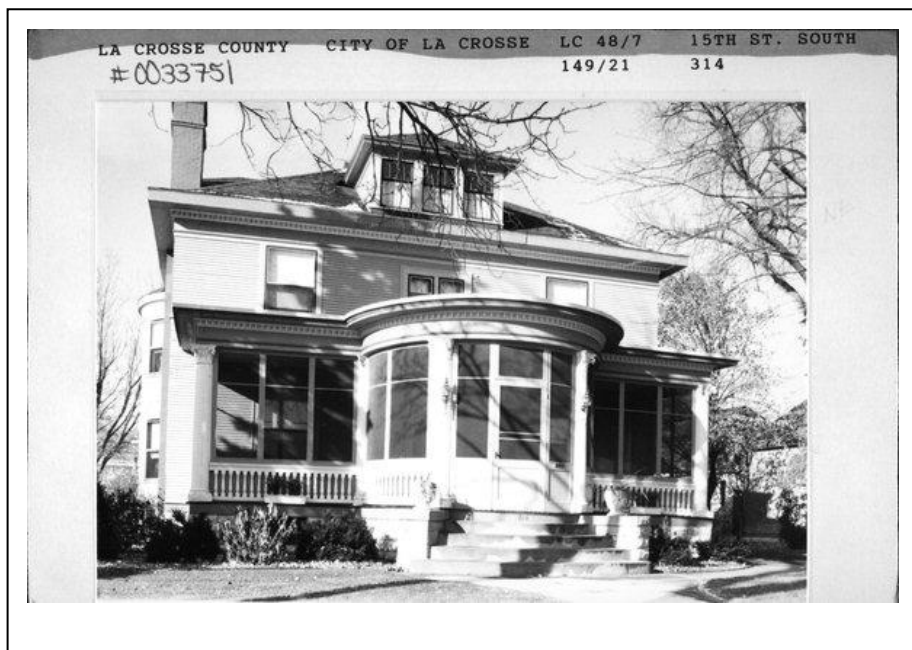
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Figure 7. Max and Louise (Hyde) Platz House (1903), 314 South 15th Street, a comparison property
Photo by Joan Rausch, ca. 1996, AHI #0033751



End Figures