

HISTORIC DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT

MILO P. JEWETT HOUSE

(Written Summer, 1984)

I. NAME

Historic: Milo P. Jewett House

Common: Same

II. LOCATION

Street Address: 800 N. Marshal Street
Milwaukee, WI

Tax Key Number: 392-1700-000

Legal Description: Plat of Milwaukee in SEC (28-29-33)-7-2-2 Block 102 W ½ Lot 7 & S 24' of
W 1 2 Lot 8

III. CLASSIFICATION

Structure

IV. OWNER

Thomson Bartlett
Silver Springs, Florida
c/o Ogden & Company
1234 North Prospect Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202

V. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Milo P. Jewett House is a well-preserved example of an Italianate Style residence constructed about 1872. It is located on Milwaukee's lower east side in the former Yankee Hill neighborhood. Yankee Hill was a prestigious residential neighborhood of the 19th century that was largely inhabited by Anglo and Native Americans.

The Jewett House is a two-story masonry structure with a foundation of coursed, ashlar limestone. It is clad with Milwaukee cream brick that is now painted gray in color. It is asymmetrical in plan with a series of hipped roof blocks that are intersected by two prominent gables on the west and south facades. On the main façade is an elaborate Classical Revival bracketed porch that is supported by Corinthian columns and pilasters. Recessed behind this is the original entry; a double-leaf door set in a round arch. At the attic level in the gable end is a circular window decorated with a wood carved foliated design. This pattern also appears along the frieze boards of both gable ends. On the south façade under the gable is a two-story segmental bay. The windows are wood, double-hung sash with brick surrounds and sills.

Alterations to the Jewett House have been minimal. All of the original sash or possibly just the glazing has been replaced, as was the original front porch with the present one. Otherwise, it has retained its original appearance.

VI. SIGNIFICANCE

Date of construction: c1872

Architect: Unknown

The Milo P. Jewett House is significant for both its architectural and historical associations. Architecturally, it is exemplary of the Italianate Style and is one of the few remaining examples from that period in Milwaukee. Historically, this was the residence of Milo Parker Jewett who was a leading Milwaukee businessman and who also made significant contributions in the areas of education and religion.

VII. HISTORY

Milo Parker Jewett was a distinguished Milwaukee resident of the nineteenth century. He was not only a successful businessman and community philanthropist, but Jewett was nationally recognized for his roles in both female higher education and the American Baptist Church. Jewett, a native of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, was born in 1808. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1828 and was Professor of Letters at Marrietta College, Marrietta, Ohio from 1834 to 1838. In 1839 he went to Marion, Alabama where he founded Judson Female College. He remained there until 1855 when he moved to Poughkeepsie, New York. It was while he was at Marion that he was ordained as a minister of the American Baptist Church in 1842. He immediately became a national church spokesman on the issues of temperance, parochial education and Bible reading. At Poughkeepsie he purchased a financially dependent women's college and convinced Matthew Vassar to endow an institution for female higher education. This resulted in the establishment of Vassar College in 1861. Jewett was appointed the college's first president and maintained that position until 1864.

In 1867 Jewett moved to Milwaukee and with William Sherman founded the Jewett & Sherman Company. Originally located on East Water Street, the company was a wholesale purveyor of coffee and spices. It was also known as Merchants' Coffee and Spice Mills. As the company expanded, the extant Victorian Gothic office and warehouse building at 343 North Broadway was constructed in 1875. According to several 19th century Milwaukee histories, Jewett & Sherman was the largest wholesale shipper of coffee and spices west of the Alleghenies.

Jewett did not concern himself only with his business interests, but continued his devotion to the cause of education and to his church. This list of accomplishments would probably rank him as one of Milwaukee and Wisconsin's educational and rigorous leader's of the 19th century. For ten years he served on the Board of Trustees of the Milwaukee Female College and five years as its president. He was also the Commissioner of Milwaukee Public Schools, chairman of the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin; president of the Milwaukee Board of Health; president of the Wisconsin State Temperance Society; president of the Milwaukee County Bible Society; member of the Western Advisory Committee of the American Baptist Educational Commission; and chairman of the State Baptist Centennial Committee. He was also widely published in national periodicals and served on several presidential commissions. When Jewett died in 1882, eulogies poured in from all over the United States.