

**89-91 NORTH MAIN STREET
ST. ALBANS, VERMONT**

HISTORIC DOCUMENTATION

I. INTRODUCTION

Location: The building to be removed is located at 89-91 North Main Street in downtown St. Albans, which is located in Franklin County, Vermont.

Date of Construction: The front brick main block building was built c. 1820 and the wood frame rear addition was constructed between 1857 and 1871. The front façade was renovated in the late 1970s.

Present Owner: The City of St. Albans

Present Use: Vacant

Historic Use: Commercial on the first floor, residential on the second floor. Rear addition was primarily used as storage on the first floor.

Significance: The building at 89-91 North Main Street is a contributing building, #24, in the St. Albans Historic District which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The building dates from an early period of growth in St. Albans in the first half of the 19th century. This building is part of a collection of buildings on the east side of Main Street between Bank and Congress Streets that survived a devastating fire in 1895 that destroyed most of the buildings on the west side of Main Street from the south side of Kingman Street to Hoyt Street. While the building's front façade was altered in the late 1970s, design references to its early construction period convey its role in the early development of the City.

Location of Documentation Report: St. Albans Historical Society

Historian: Suzanne C. Jamele
August 2018

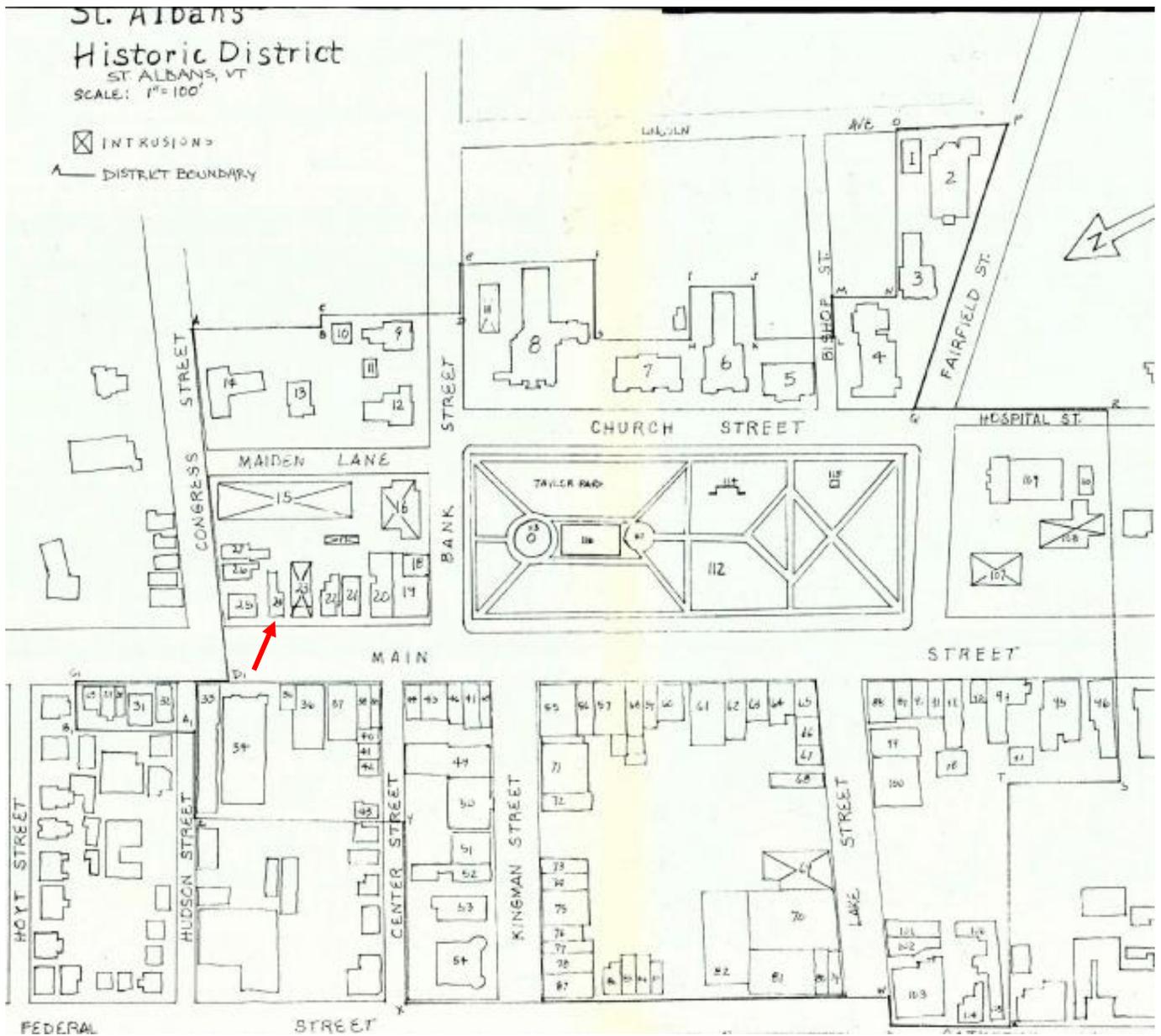
II. PROJECT SUMMARY

The City of St. Albans proposes to remove the vacant building at 89-91 North Main Street in St. Albans in order to construct a new multi-use building on several lots at the corner of North Main Street and Congress Street and on Maiden Lane. The building at 89-91 North Main Street is one of several altered historic buildings on the parcel that will be removed. The new building is expected to provide commercial and residential space that will stimulate the economy in the downtown historic district. Re-use of the existing buildings would not provide the necessary spaces to serve the program needs of the anticipated occupants of the new building; therefore, it was determined necessary to remove the existing buildings and build new.

The building at 89-91 North Main Street was built in the early decades of the 19th century and has played a role in the commercial history of the City for over 150 years. Despite late 20th century alterations to its front facade, it is a contributing building, #24, in the St. Albans Historic District which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

This documentation package meets the intent of St. Albans's zoning regulations, (e) i.1, related to the demolition of historic structures. The report meets accepted historic preservation documentation standards as established by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation's *Photographic Documentation Standards for Historic Buildings*. A copy of the report with printed photographs, and a CD containing the report and photographs saved as .jpg images, is on file at The St. Albans Historical Society.

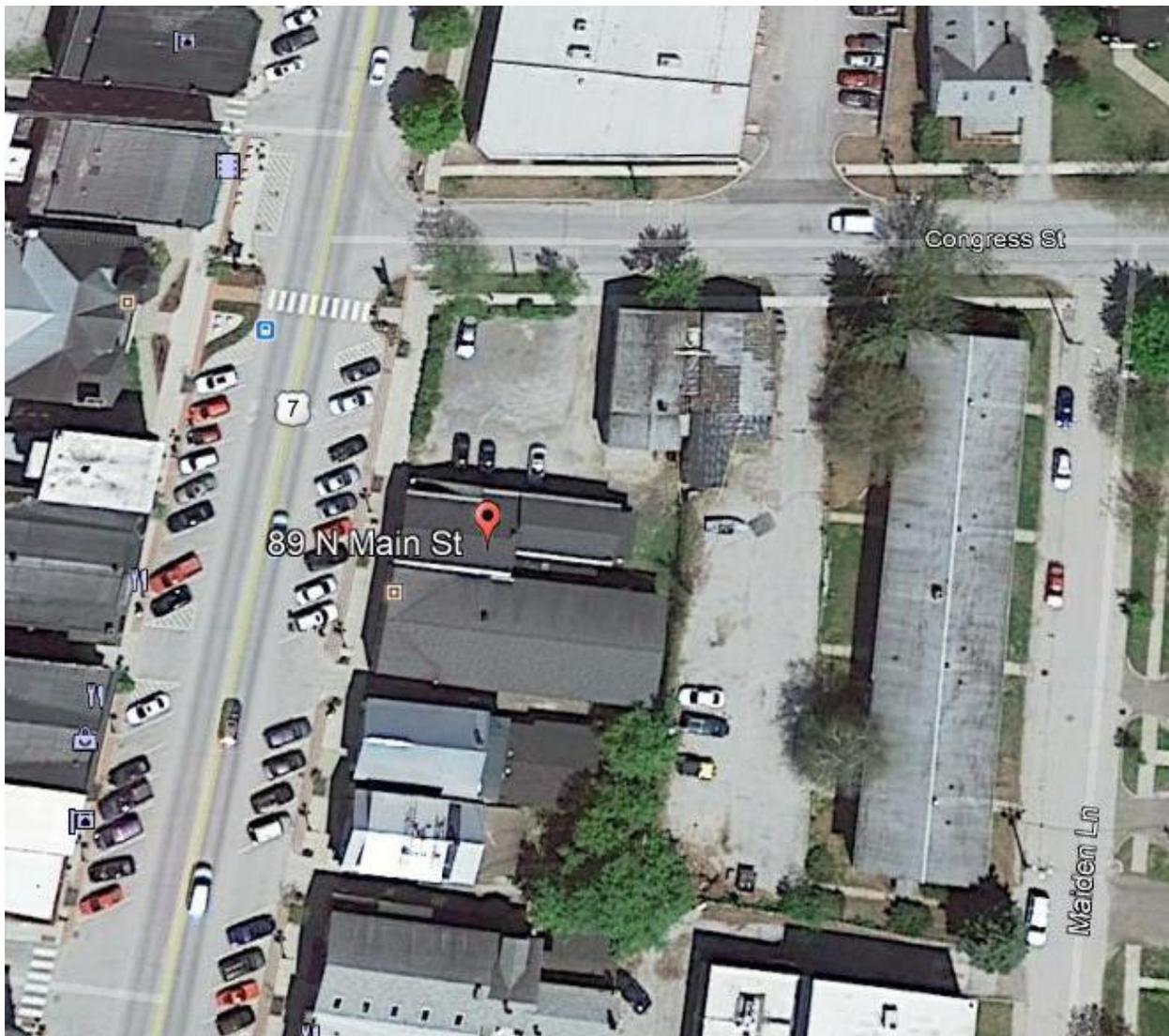
Suzanne Jamele, historic preservation consultant, conducted a site visit of the project area on March 27, 2018. All photographs were taken at that time. Research for this documentation was conducted at the St. Albans Free Library, the Vermont Historical Society's Leahy Library in Barre, the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation's Online Resource Center, and on-line images of the Landscape Change Program of the University of Vermont.



Location Map

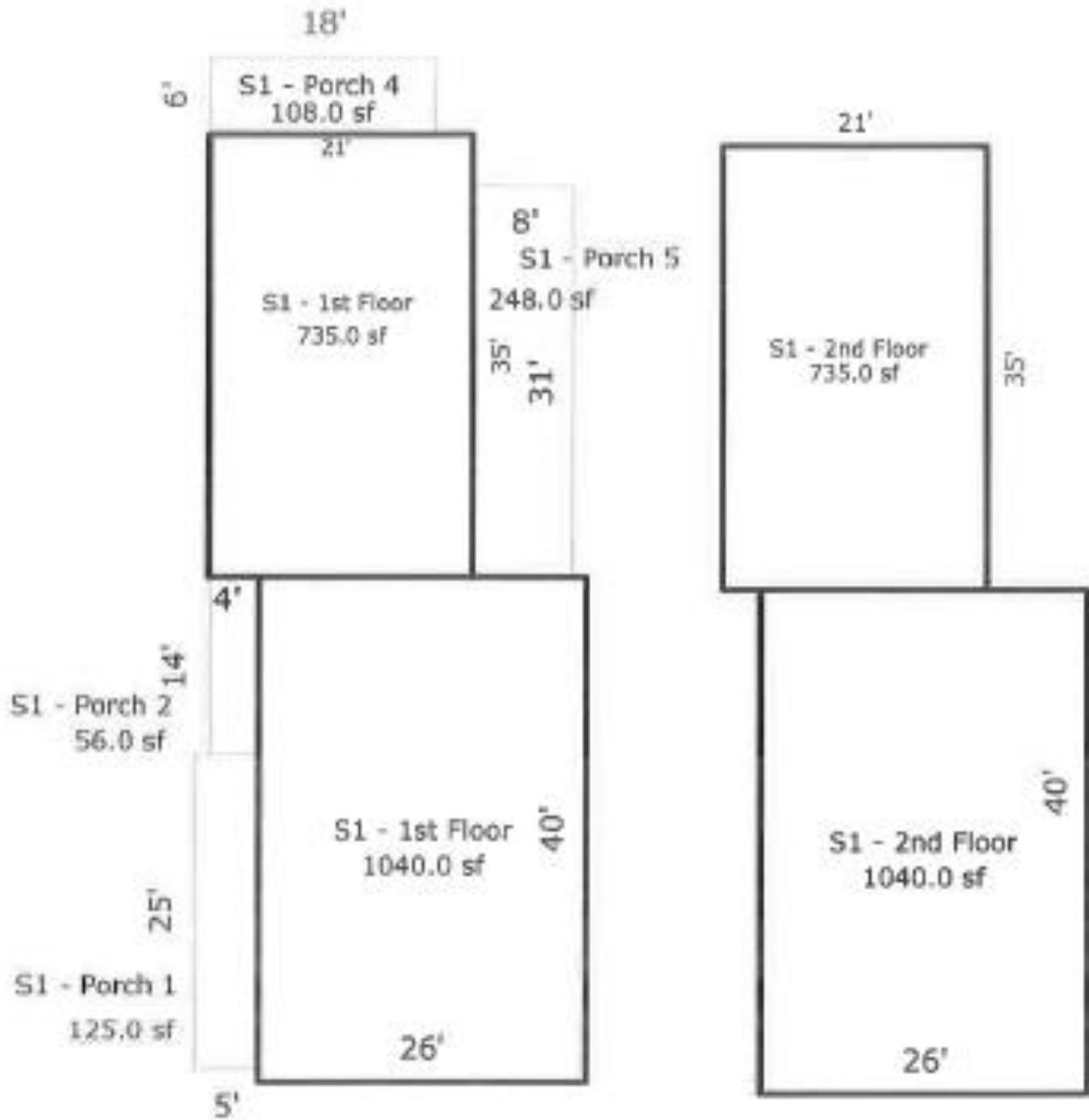
III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The building at 89-91 North Main Street is located on a small urban lot on the east side of North Main Street, near its intersection with Congress Street, and is within the core of the City's downtown. This portion of the city was developed in the early to mid-19th century and survived a devastating fire in 1895 destroyed many of the downtown buildings. The building is situated one block to the north of Taylor Park, a large open space that is the focal point of the city's downtown. The city sidewalk runs next to the front of the building and the structure largely fills its entire lot. The building to the south, 85-87 North Main Street, stands immediately adjacent to the structure. To the north is a vacant lot where a c. 1910, three-story, brick, Colonial Revival style office and apartment building once stood. It burned in the late 20th century and the remains were removed. Behind the building at 89-91 is a small patch of grass and to the east is a parking lot for a large apartment building located at 10 Maiden Lane.



Exterior

This c. 1820, Federal/Greek Revival style, 2½ -story, 3x 5 bay, brick gable front commercial building has a 1½ -story, 2x3 bay, wood frame, gable roofed addition on the rear offset to the north. The addition appears on the 1871 Beers map and may have been extant at the time of the 1857 Walling map as the building is shown with a much longer rectangular footprint than what would match that of the main block. The 1853 Presdee & Edwards map shows the building with a footprint that conforms to that of the main block.



The main block of the building has a stone foundation and an asphalt shingle roof. The cornice on the front (west) and rear (east) elevations are molded and have returns. The molded cornice overlaps the upper corners of the splayed lintel of the window in the front gable indicating it is a wider cornice than what was originally on the building. The c. 1901 photograph shows the building with 2/2 windows and a much narrower molded cornice with returns on the front elevation. On the north and south elevations, it is not molded and is likely a replacement. There is a brick chimney on the ridge at the east end of the roof. The front elevation's northwest and southwest corners have wide flat cornerboards. The two corners on the back of the building do not have cornerboards.

The front (west) elevation facing North Main Street has a central recessed wood door with a large single pane of glass into the storefront area. The door has narrow flat wood trim. Flanking the central door are angled brick walls and on either side of the angled walls are large, wood, 9 pane, fixed-glass display windows with brick header sills. A broad wood signboard stretches across the building spanning both windows and resting just above them. The signboard has a narrow molded cornice. On the second floor are three six over six (6/6) windows with splayed lintels and brick header sills. All 6/6 windows have modern louvered shutters affixed to the building. On the north side a similar window rests on the second floor at its west end. A similar but narrower window rests in the front gable peak. On the rear elevation there is a 6/6 window on the second floor on the rear (east) end. It does not have shutters. The south side of the building is not visible from the street. The building at 85 North Main stands very close to the south wall and louvered panels cover the opening between the buildings from roof to ground level.

The building was substantially renovated c. 1978, particularly the front (west) façade. The brick on the main block is laid in a stretcher bond. The brick on the front façade, the exposed brick on the north façade, above the enclosed staircase, and a portion of the brick on the south elevation were all sandblasted c. 1978 and have pockmarks resulting from that cleaning. The south elevation has a painted vertical white line that appears to mark the end of the sandblasting. Bricks in the sandblasted areas were repointed with Portland cement and with wider and flatter tooling than the original. There are several areas of similar repointing on the south side east of the line marking the end of the sandblasting. In addition, in order to accommodate new windows installed on the front elevation, bricks were re-laid and changes were made to the sills. The 1901 photograph indicates the windows originally had granite sills and there was a granite band at the base of the building. These are all gone and the windows have brick sills. On the north side, brick that is sheltered by the enclosed staircase has not been sandblasted and is painted. It retains the historic narrower mortar tooling.

A clapboard-sided enclosed staircase rises to the second floor of the main block on the north side. Its front (west) side has a wood frame, clapboarded wall, with modern glass and panel door, that rises above the staircase roof to form a parapet. The staircase appears on their first Sanborn fire Insurance map of the area dated 1884 and a c. 1901 photo (see page 9) shows this wood frame parapeted front wall. The trim on the current wall is wide and flat, a simplified version of the original trim which included paneled pilasters with brackets on either side of the door and a molded cornice at the roofline with brackets. A small open porch supported by a single post on the first floor has a modern railing and spans the rear portion of the brick main block's north side, providing exterior access from the enclosed stairs to the second floor of the main block and

wood frame rear addition. This porch first appears on the Sanborn map of 1926.

The rear, wood frame, three bay long addition has three 1/1 double hung windows on the upper floor of the north side; there are no windows on the first floor. The rear (east) side has a modern shed roof open porch that spans the upper floor. Open stairs access the porch from the ground level and a door opens into the building from the porch on the rear, east wall. A window on this wall is boarded over. This rear wall retains wood clapboard on the first floor and historic faux brick sheet metal siding on the upper floor. Most of the south elevation is not visible due to its close proximity to the adjacent building at #85 North Main Street. There are two 1/1 double hung windows on the second floor near its junction with the main block. There is a nonhistoric, single story, shed roofed addition at the eastern end of the south side of the wood frame addition. The rear addition has T1-11 siding and an asphalt shingle roof. The rear addition, enclosed staircase, and second floor porch have flat stock trim at the corners and around windows and doors, and boxed flat cornices. Windows are 1/1, exterior doors are modern glass and panel replacements and the roofs are asphalt shingle.

Interior

The first floor of the main block contains a single open commercial space with modern finishes except for a pressed tin ceiling that has been painted. The floor is carpeted, walls are sheetrock and have bands of horizontal wood applied over them. Some sections of the wood are wider board than others and some have curved bases that extend over a single shelf that runs the length of the store on both the north and south sides. At the back of the first floor, stairs descend into the stone basement. The first floor of the rear addition is storage space.

The enclosed staircase to the second floor that rises along the north side of the brick main block has wood stairs and a beadboard wall on the north side. Two 1/1 windows with flat stock trim open into the second floor landing. An historic glass and panel door with three horizontal panels under a pane of glass opens into the second floor of the main block. The living unit in the main block has hardwood flooring, narrow beaded trim and flat stock trim around windows and doors, wide flat baseboards, c. 1925 doors with five horizontal panels. The second floor of the rear addition has an historic door with a square pane of glass with a horizontal panel above it, a row of three square panels below it and two horizontal panels below that. This unit has a mix of historic and modern materials. Doors are c. 1925 with five horizontal panels, floors are hardwood and sheet vinyl, trim is both wide and narrow flat stock.

IV. SIGNIFICANCE

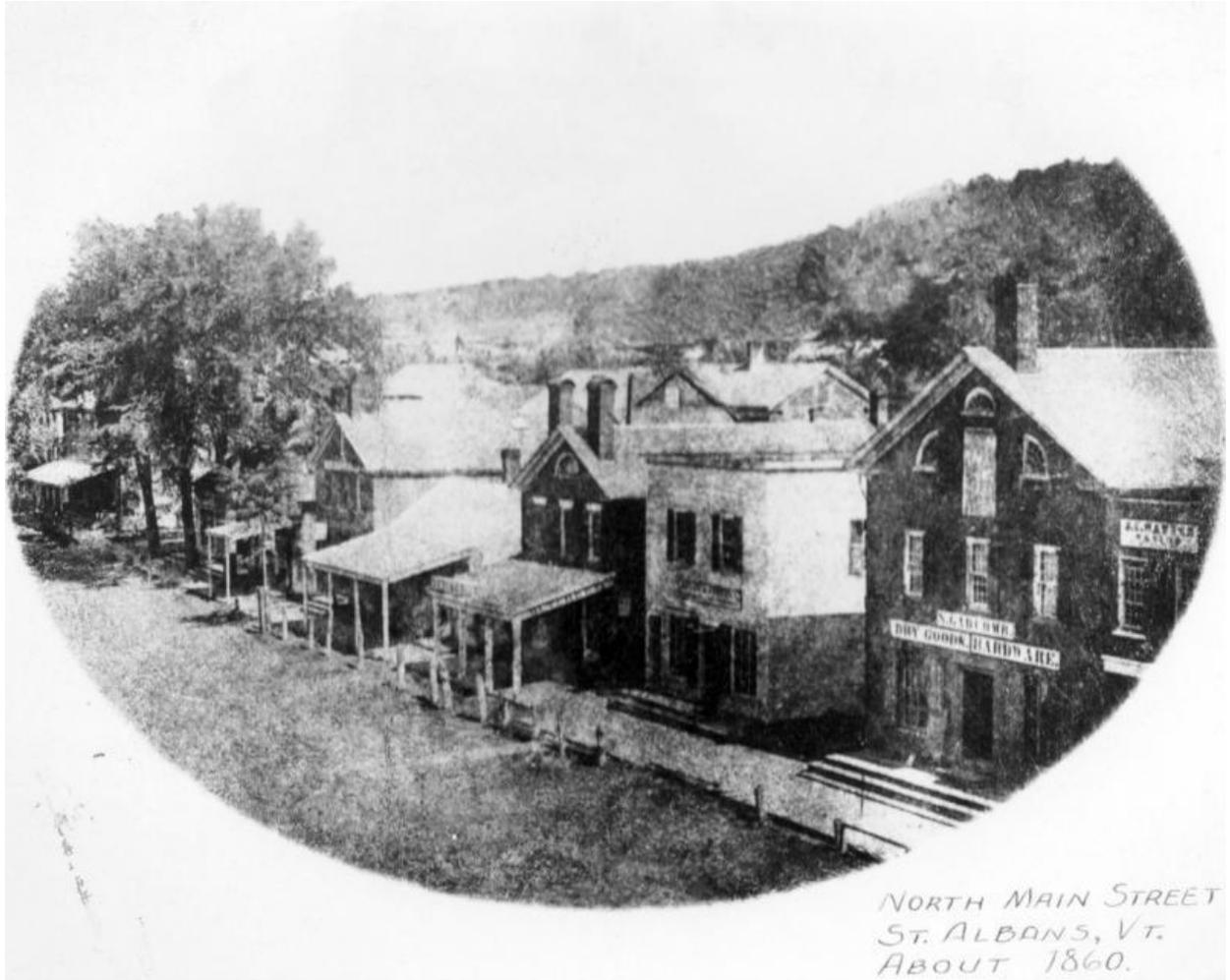
The building at 89-91 North Main Street is a contributing building, #24, in the St. Albans Historic District which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The c. 1820 building dates from an early period of development in St. Albans but was significantly altered c. 1978, particularly the front façade. The building's footprint appears to match that on historic maps and it may contain traces of earlier fabric behind modern materials. The main block's form, scale and placement on the street are typical of other commercial blocks dating from the early period of downtown development. While the building has been altered, retention of some early design features including the splayed brick lintels over the windows and a replacement molded cornice with returns on the front elevation convey the building's early presence on North Main Street. Its history helps fill out the understanding of commercial development along North Main Street.

This building is also significant as part of a collection of buildings on the east side of Main Street between Bank and Congress Streets that survived a devastating fire in 1895 that destroyed most of the buildings on the west side of Main Street from the south side of Kingman Street to Hoyt Street.

In addition to the building's commercial history, this block of North Main Street was the scene of action during the Confederate Raid on St. Albans that took place during the Civil War on October 19, 1864. Following the bank raids, Elinus Morrison, a contractor supervising construction of the Welden House Hotel on nearby Bank Street, was shot by the Confederate Raid's leader Lieutenant Bennett Young. Morrison and his crew had run to Main Street to see if they could help apprehend the raiders. Morrison was shot outside of Miss Beattie's Millinery Store, just north of 89-91 on the same block of North Main Street. This building is no longer standing. Badly wounded, Morrison was carried to Dutcher's Drug Store which was two buildings to the south of 89-91. He was given first aid at Dutcher's and then taken to his room at the American Hotel on the corner of Main and Lake Streets where he died two days later.

The building appears on the 1853 Presdee and Edwards map of St. Albans as well as the 1857 Walling map and the 1871 Beers map. The earlier two maps identify the building owner as G.A. Jaques (Jacques) who operated a shop providing groceries, provisions, boots and shoes. On the earliest map, the building does not appear to have a rear addition. The Beers map does not include building owner names and by this time the rear addition had been constructed. Its street number was 101. The *Pocket Directory of the Village of St. Albans, 1877 & 1878* indicates that the building housed Messenger Steam Printing and E. B. Whiting, a dealer in books and stationery.





Looking northeast on North Main Street c. 1860. 89-91 is the fifth building from the right. Dutchers Drug Store is two buildings its right. This photograph shows these early buildings with their Federal style design including 12 over 12 windows and fanlight windows. *Courtesy: University of Vermont Landscape Change Program.*



North Main Street, c. 1880. 89-91 is at the far left, next to the flat roofed building. Nearby buildings have had changes to their rooflines and have been updated with Italianate trim and windows replacing Federal style windows. *Courtesy: Images of America- St. Albans, page 123.*



This c. 1901 image by W. D. Chandler facing east with Congress Street at the far left, shows the building at 89-91 at the far right with a grocery store in the front commercial space. *Courtesy: Images of America- St. Albans, page 31.*

Sanborn Fire Insurance maps provide further information regarding commercial uses of the building and periods of renovation. The main block contained a single commercial space in 1884 and had been converted to two spaces by 1901. It remained two shops until sometime between 1929 and 1936 when it became a single storefront again. In 1884 a Book and Stationery store was located in the building, likely E. B. Whiting's establishment. By 1889 a millinery shop occupied the space but was gone by 1895. In 1901 there was a plumbing shop on the north side and a grocery on the south side. The 1906 map indicates there was a grocery in the northern storefront and the southern shop was vacant. The 1911 *St. Albans and Swanton Directory* indicates H.L. Chandler, an upholsterer occupied the northern shop and J. Newton Herrick, a fish and oyster dealer was in the southern storefront. In 1920 M.E. Devarney had a machine shop in the northern storefront (see additional discussion about his shop in the discussion about the rear addition in following paragraph). A tailor was in the southern storefront. The 1926 Sanborn map shows a bicycle shop (run by M. E. Devarney) in the northern space and a store in the southern space. *Houghton's Standard City Directory of St. Albans, Vermont* published in 1928 record's Devarney's machine shop in the northern space and Aram Sarkissian, a tailor, in the southern shop, as well as two residences above. The *Standard Directory of St. Albans City, 1936* records The Fashion Shop in the storefront space and two residences above. By 1946 there was a paint shop in the commercial space.

In 1884 the long rear addition had small single story additions on the northwest end and at the back. These small additions were removed some time between 1901 and 1906. The rear addition was used as storage except for a period of time in the early 20th century when it housed a bicycle and machine shop run by M. E. Devarney who did general repair of small machines, see add from the *St. Albans and Swanton Directory, 1911-12* below.

M. E. DEVARNEY

General Machine Work

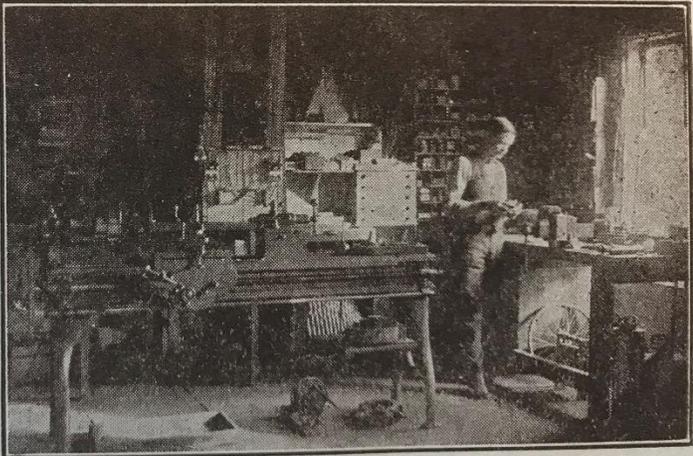
BICYCLES

AND GENERAL REPAIRING

Repairing of Sewing and Talking Machines, BICYCLES, Lawn Mowers, Typewriters, Guns, Locks etc., a specialty.

If you have any tinkering you want done, bring it to me.

91 Main St., St. Albans, Vt.



The machine shop appears in the rear addition on Sanborn maps in 1906 and 1912 but by 1920 had moved to the northern storefront in the main block. The 1926 Sanborn map shows Devarney's bicycle shop in the northern storefront and the 1928 *Houghton's City Directory of St. Albans, Vermont* indicates Devarney was still running his machine shop in this space.

V. REFERENCES

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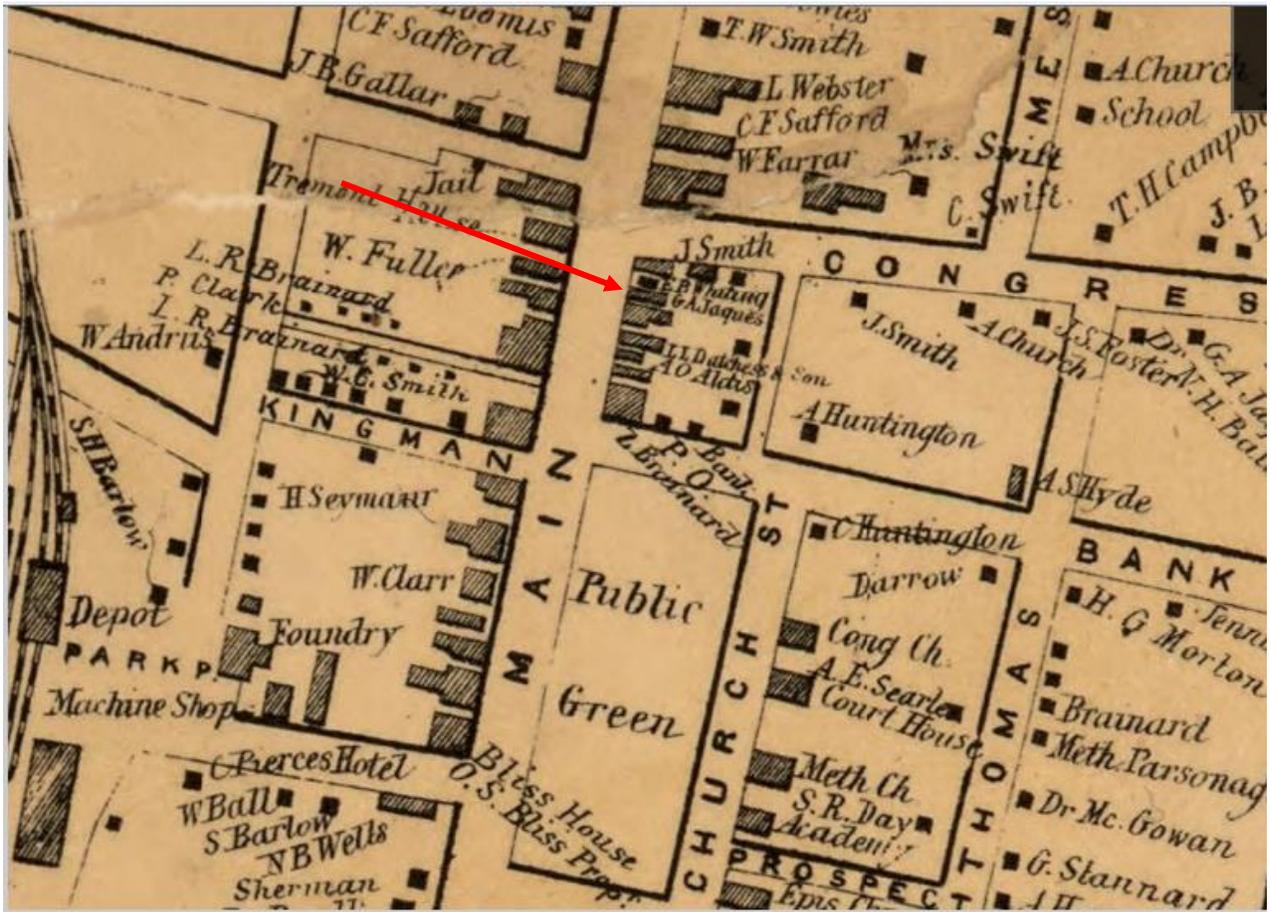
Walton's Vermont Register & Farmer's Almanac. S. M. Walton: Montpelier, Vermont, 1862 and 1867.

VI. INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS ON CD

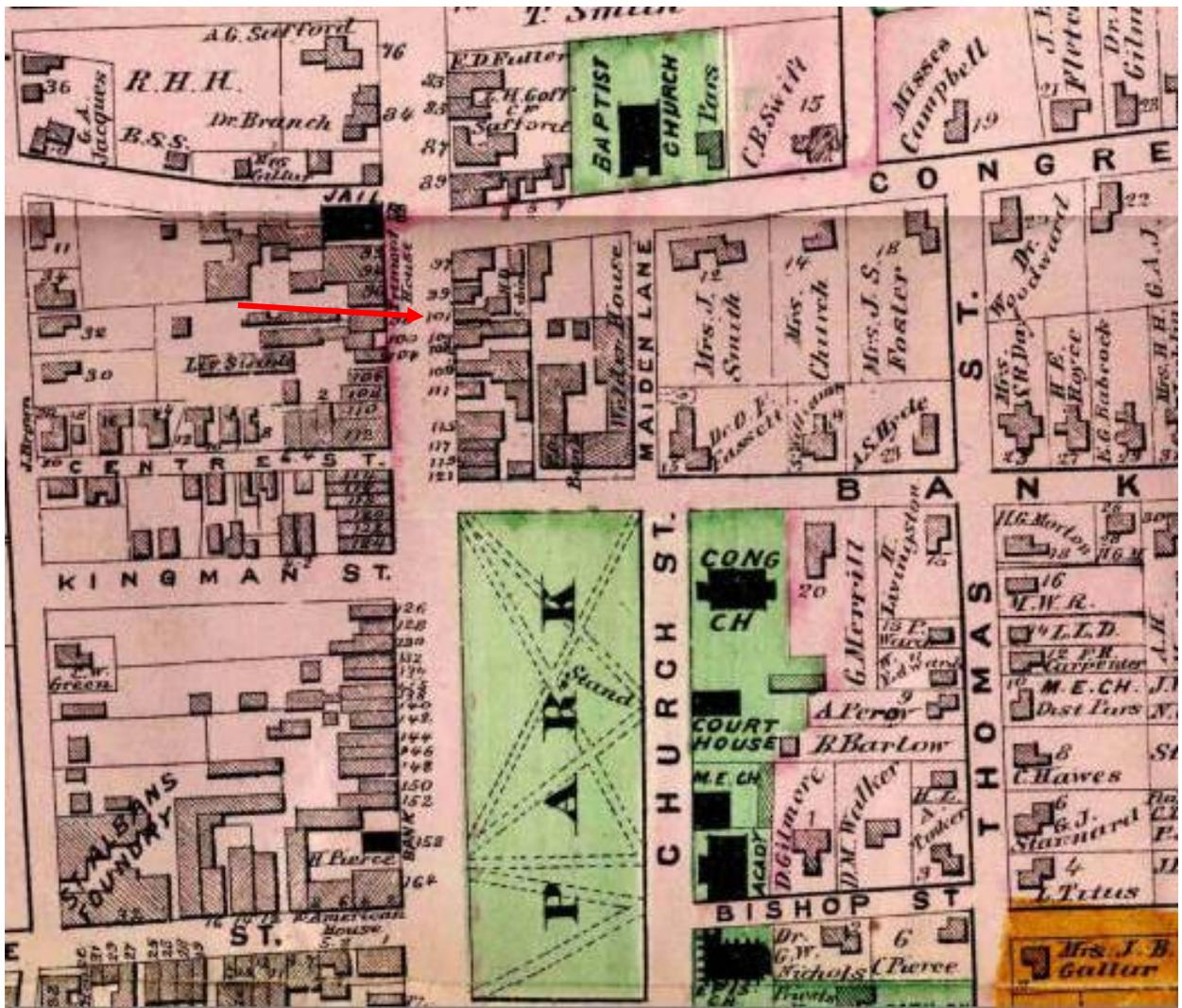
87-89 North Main Street
St. Albans, Franklin County, Vermont

Photographs were taken by Suzanne Jamele, March 27, 2018 except for photographs # 1,4,10 and 11 taken August 12, 2018.

- 1.** View south on North Main Street, 89-91 is first building on the left.
- 2.** View east, 89-91 North Main Street at center.
- 3.**
View east at front (west) and north sides.
- 4.** View east at front (west) side.
- 5.** View east at south brick wall of main block. White line marks end of sandblasting and changes to brickwork other than repointing with Portland cement.
- 6.** View west at back side of brick main block and south side of rear addition.
- 7.** View west at back of main block and rear addition.
- 8.** View east at second floor on south side of rear addition. T1-11 siding.
- 9.** View south at north side including enclosed stairs.
- 10.** View south at north side of main block, stairs, second floor porch, and rear addition.
- 11.** View south at rear (east) wall of rear addition.
- 12.** View east in first floor commercial space.
- 13.** View west in first floor commercial space.
- 14.** View north in first floor commercial space.
- 15.** Detail of remnant pressed tin ceiling in first floor commercial space.
- 16.** View south at remnant tin ceiling in first floor commercial space.
- 17.** View south at stairs to basement at back of first floor.
- 18.** View east at enclosed exterior stairs to second floor of main block and rear addition.
- 19.** View south at detail of historic brick on main block within enclosed exterior staircase.
- 20.** View east at re-worked brick on front façade. Pockmarks on brick from sandblasting, wide mortar joints and Portland cement. Brick windowsills added in renovation.
- 21.** Detail of historic door to second floor unit in main block.
- 22.** View west in second floor front room in main block. Hardwood floors, flat trim.
- 23.** Typical beaded trim.
- 24.** Typical doors and finishes on second floor of main block.
- 25.** Second floor of main block, typical finishes include hardwood floors, flat trim, five panel doors.
- 26.** Detail of door in unit on second floor of rear addition.
- 27.** View north in unit on second floor of rear addition. Finishes include flat trim, five panel doors, hardwood floors.
- 28.** View east in second floor unit of rear addition.

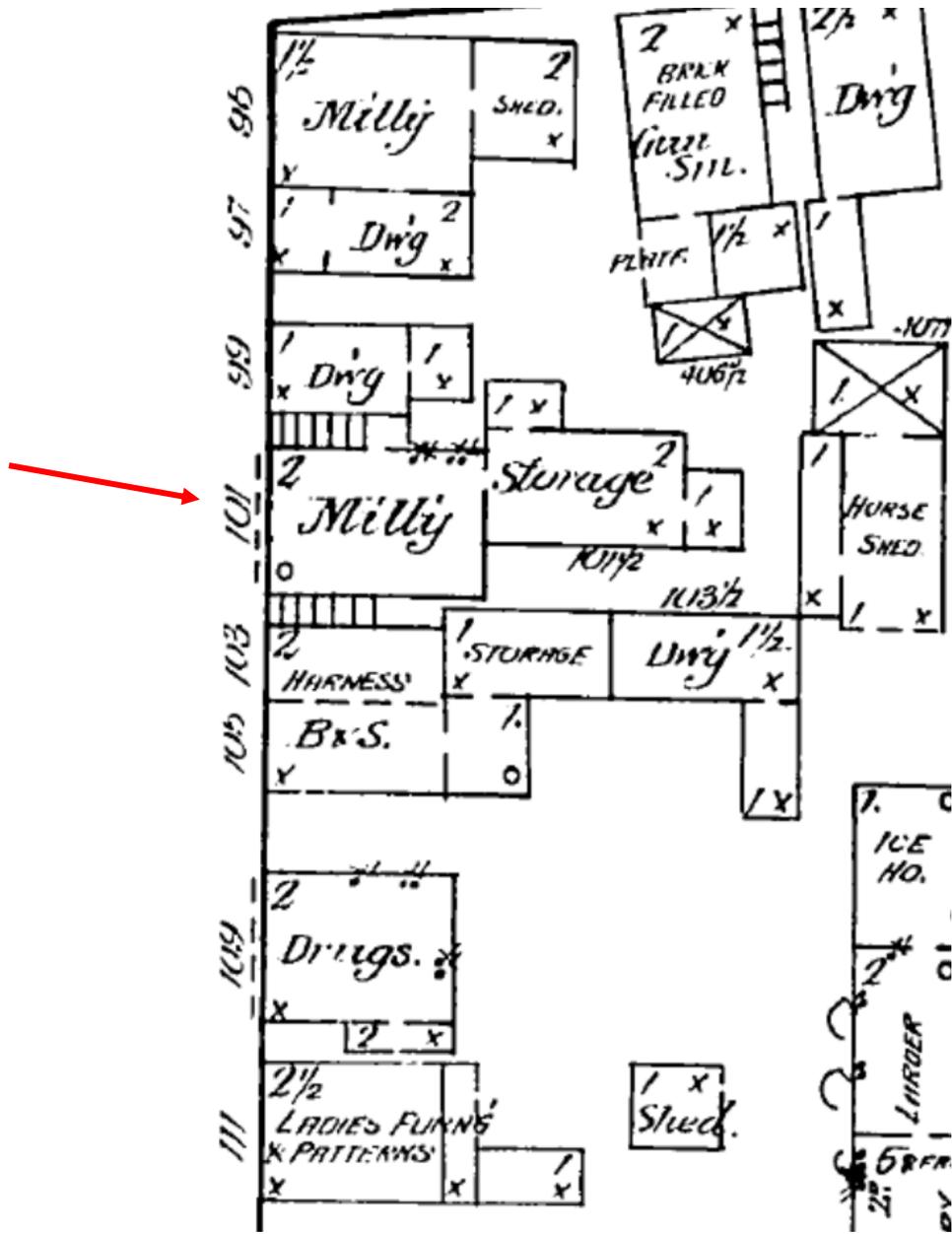


1857 H. F. Walling map of St. Albans

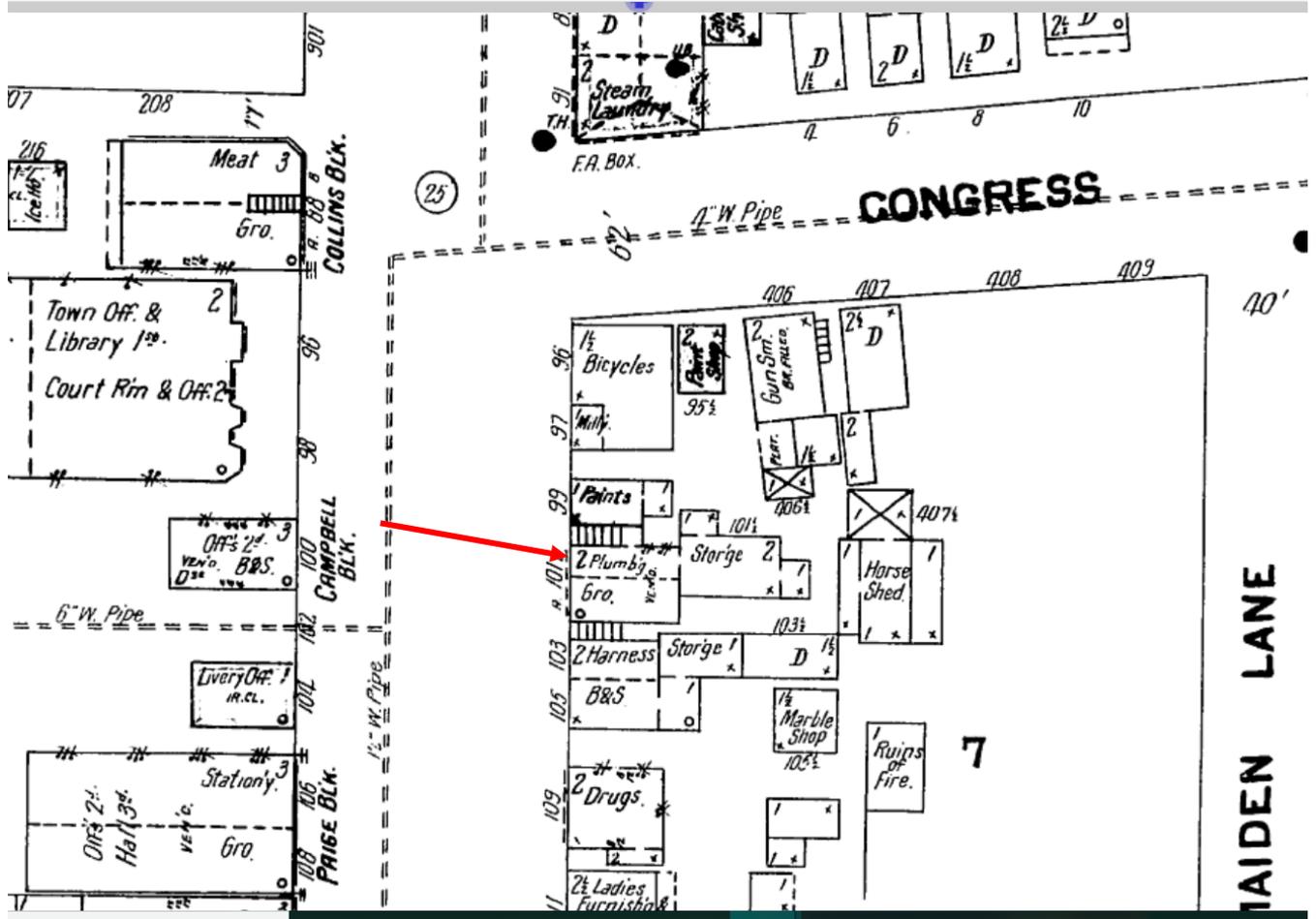


1871 Beers Atlas of St. Albans

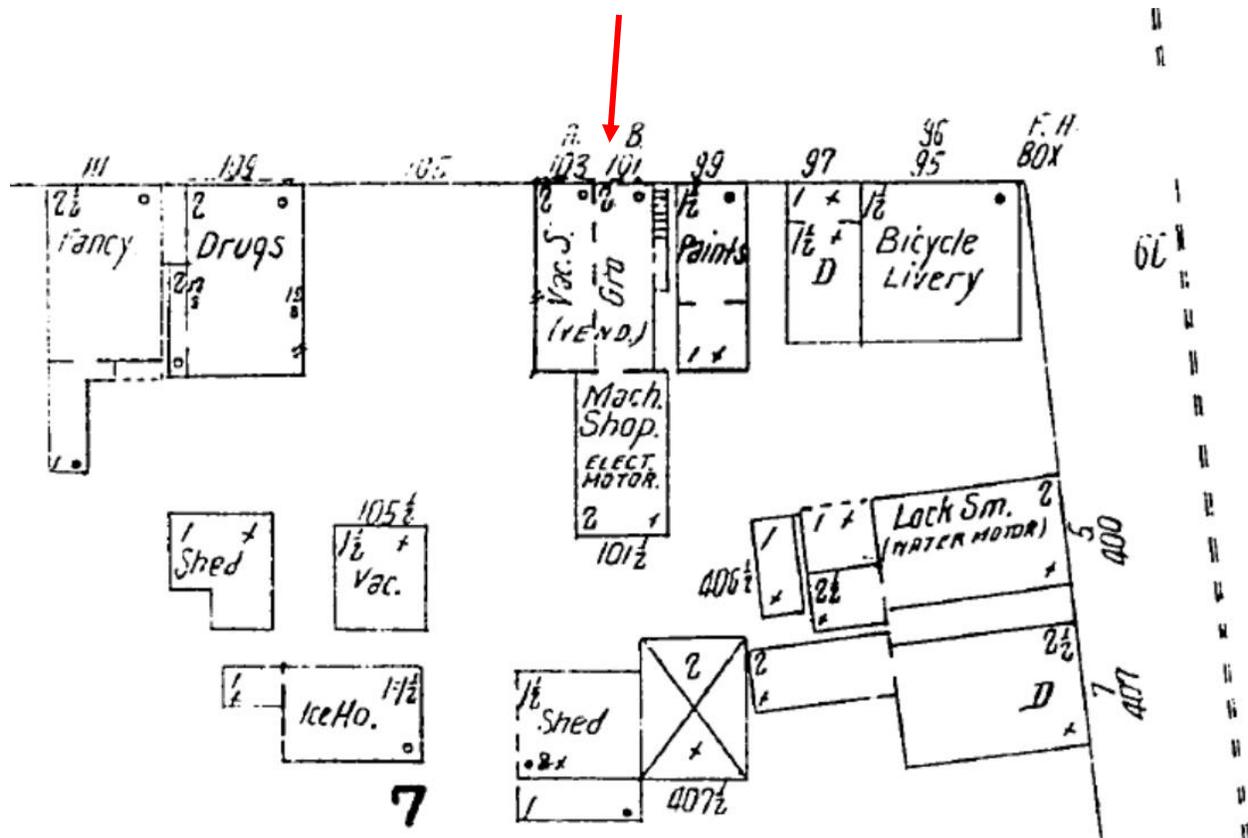




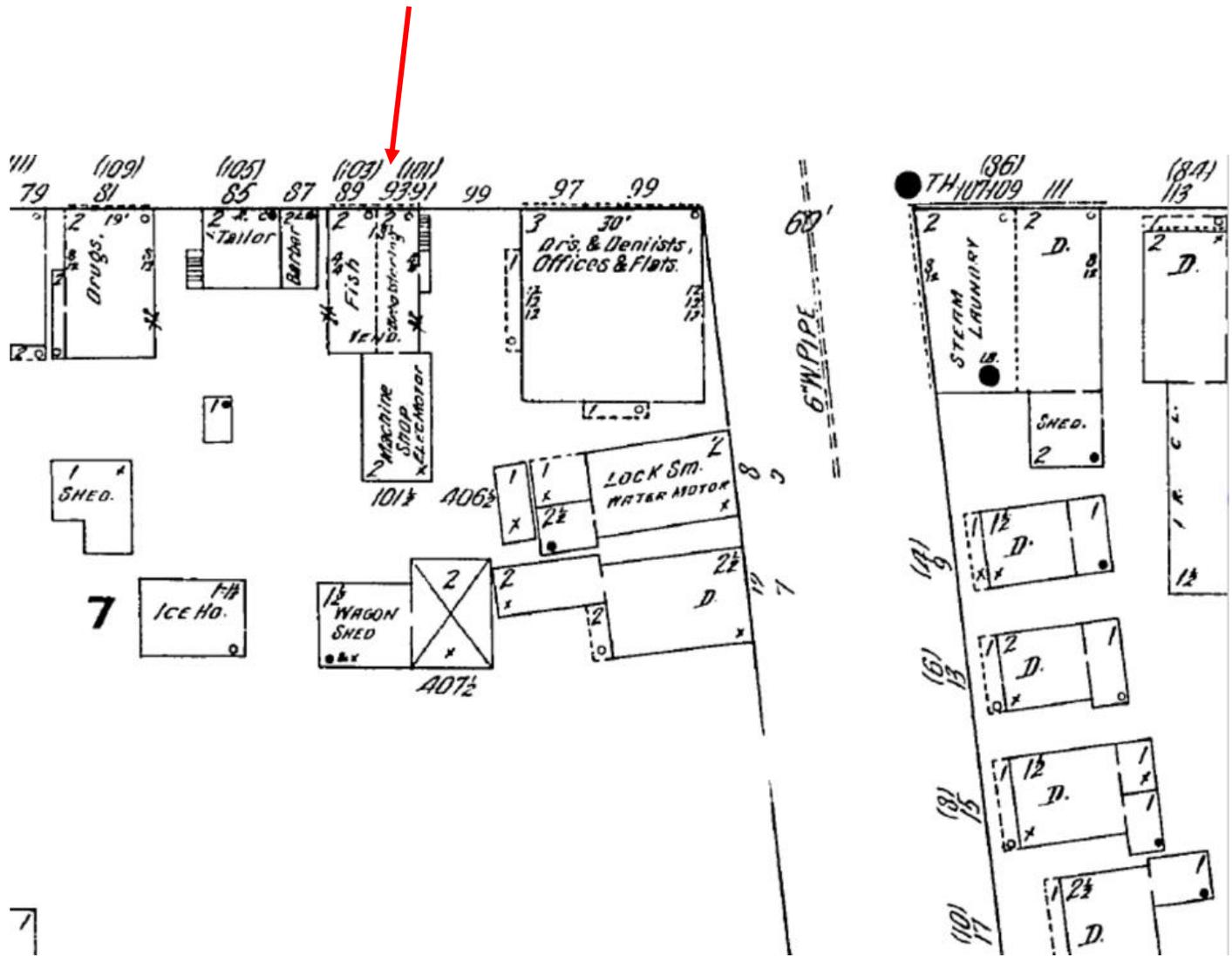
1889 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1895/96 the millinery shop is gone but the rest remains the same.

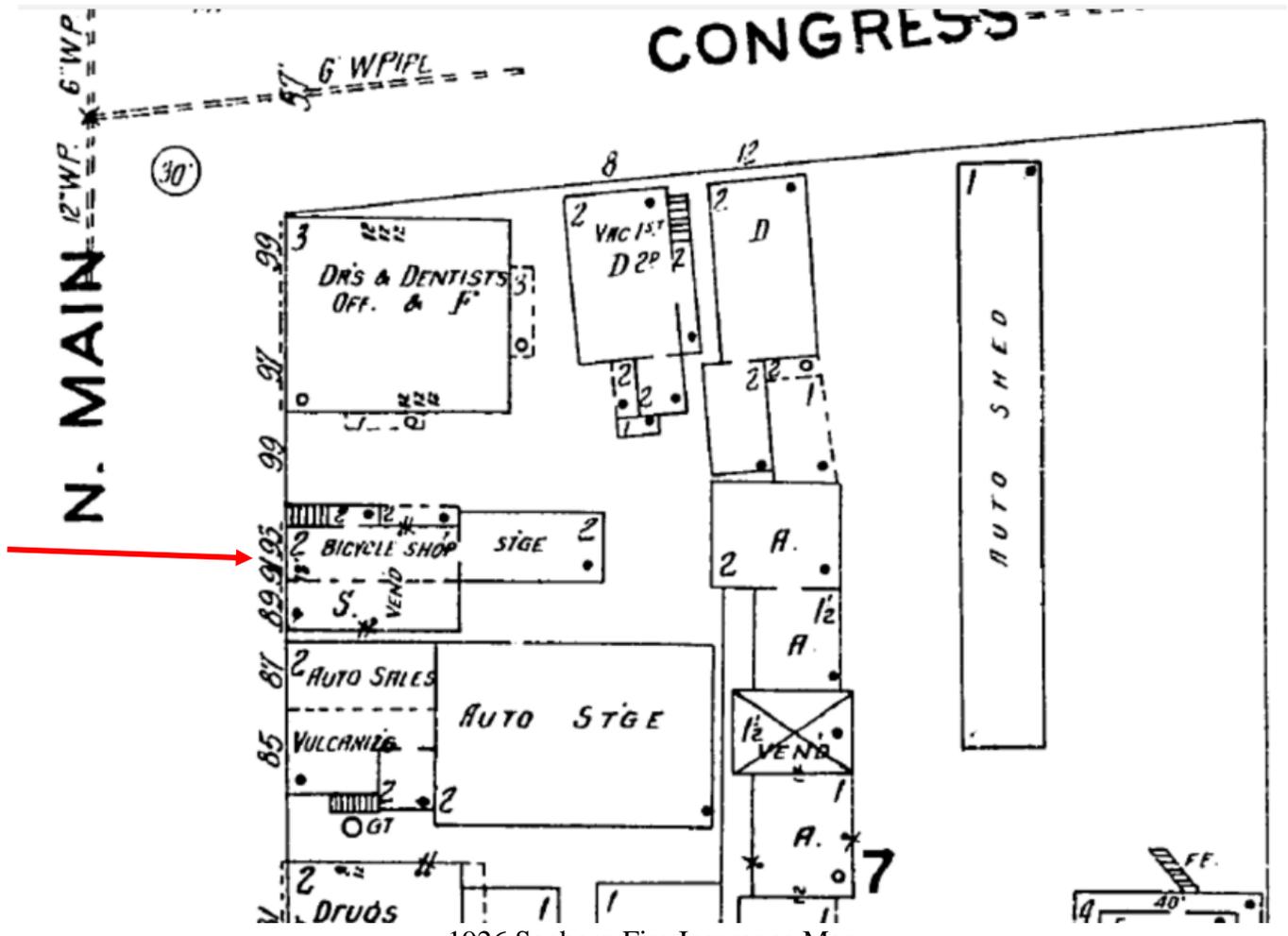


1901 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



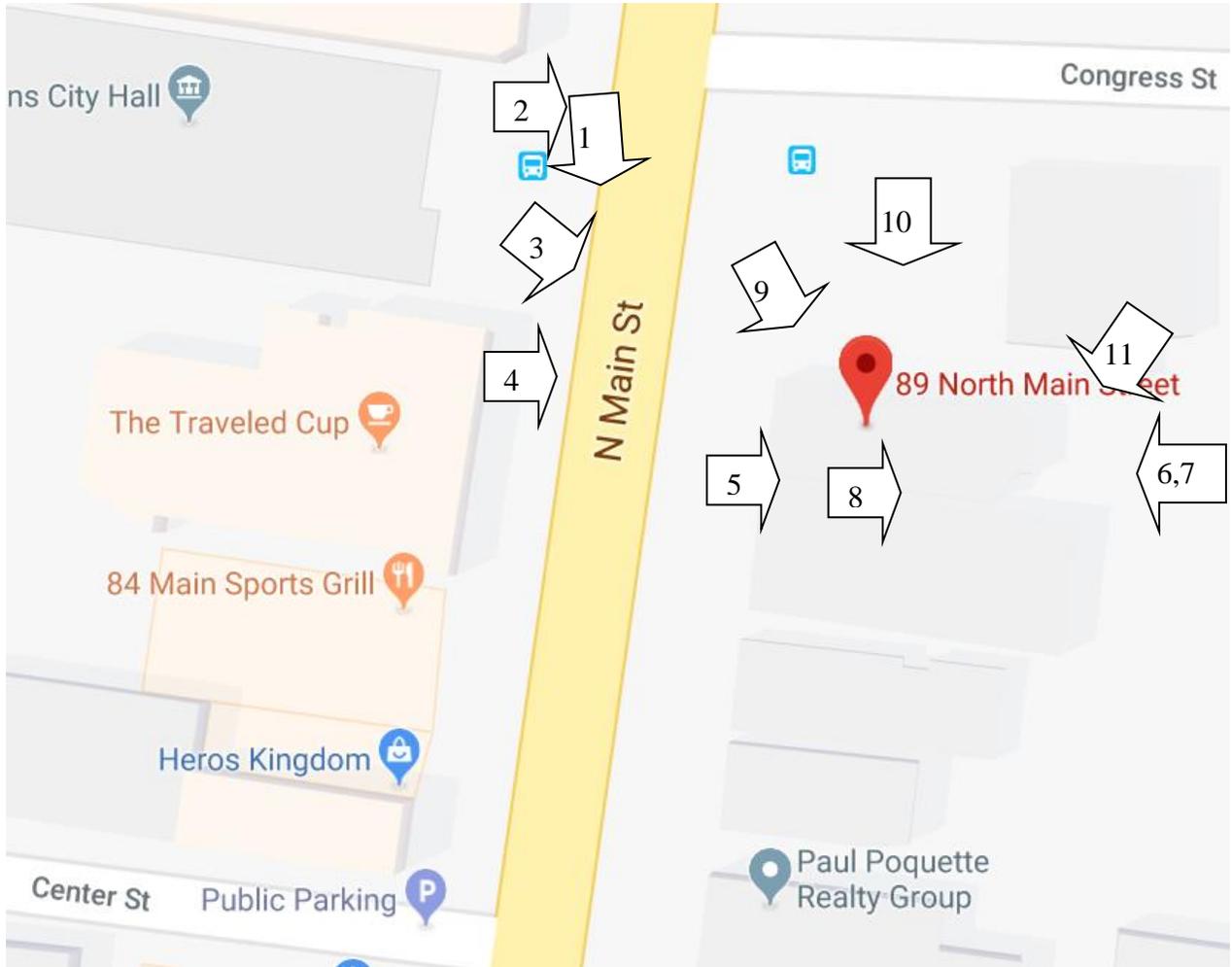
1906 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map





1926 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

Photograph Location Map
Exterior





1. View south on North Main Street, 89-91 is first building on the left.



2. View east, 89-91 North Main Street at center.



3. View east at front (west) and north sides.



4. View east at front (west) side.



5. View east at south brick wall of main block. White line marks end of sandblasting and changes to brickwork other than repointing with Portland cement.



6. View west at back side of brick main block and south side of rear addition.



7. View west at back of main block and rear addition.



8. View east at second floor on south side of rear addition. T1-11 siding.



9. View south at north side including enclosed stairs.



10. View south at north side of main block, stairs, second floor porch, and rear addition.



11. View south at rear (east) wall of rear addition.



12. View east in first floor commercial space.



13. View west in first floor commercial space.



14. View north in first floor commercial space.



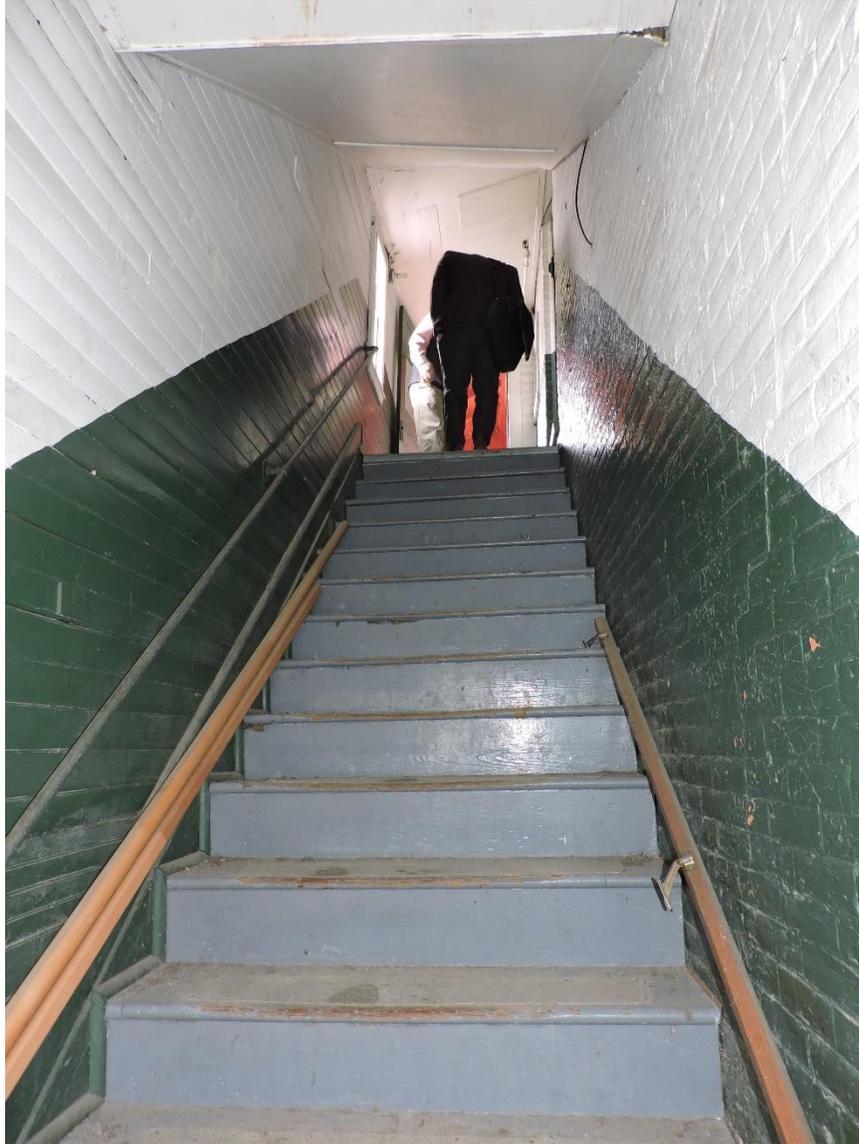
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16. View south at remnant tin ceiling in first floor commercial space.



17. View south at stairs to basement at back of first floor.



18. View east at enclosed exterior stairs to second floor of main block and rear addition.



19. View south at detail of historic brick on main block within enclosed exterior staircase.



20. View east at re-worked brick on front façade. Pockmarks on brick from sandblasting, wide mortar joints and Portland cement. Brick windowsills added in renovation.



21. Detail of historic door to second floor unit in main block.



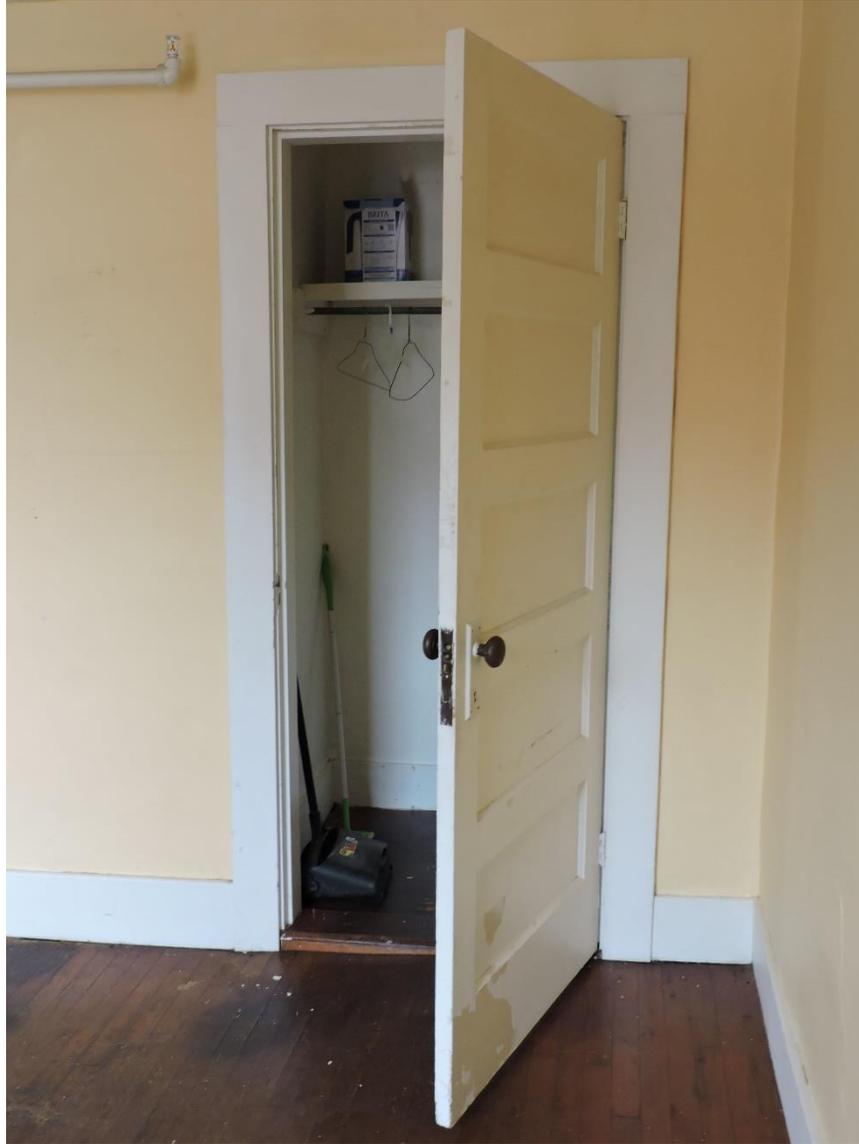
22. View west in second floor front room in main block. Hardwood floors, flat trim.



23. Typical beaded trim.



24. Typical doors and finishes on second floor of main block.



25. Second floor of main block, typical finishes include hardwood floors, flat trim, five panel doors.



26. Detail of door in unit on second floor of rear addition.



27. View north in unit on second floor of rear addition. Finishes include flat trim, five panel doors, hardwood floors.