

MINNESOTA ARCHITECTURE-HISTORY INVENTORY FORM

Property Location			
Property Name:	Well Brothers General Store	Inventory No.	ME-LTC-0006
Address:	100 Sibley Avenue North	County:	Meeker
City/Twp:	Litchfield	PIN	27-0825000
T-R-S Quarter:	T119N R31W Sec. 11 SW ¼	Block:	65
USGS Quad	Litchfield North, Minnesota	Lot:	13

Property Information			
Architect:	Unknown	Style:	Queen Anne
Date Const:	1892	Historic Context:	Railroad and Agricultural Development 1870-1940
Historic Use:	Commercial	Present Use:	Commercial
Property Type:	Building	Survey Name:	Downtown Historic Resources Resurvey
NR Status:	Contributing	NR Recommendation:	Contributing
Prepared by:	William E. Stark, based on National Register nomination by Susan Granger and Kay Grossman (1996)	Survey Date:	October 2009

Description:

This two-story building has a prominent site at the northeastern corner of Sibley Avenue and Depot Street and displays the Queen Anne style. The building is faced with medium brown brick and has a canted southwestern corner. The west and south facades have an ornate brick and metal cornice which was originally topped by decorative cresting. The cornice above the southwestern corner contains the date "1892." Flanking the date are two corbels which originally supported a triangular projection with three tall finials (since removed). The second story of the west and south facades have rectangular window openings arranged in singles, pairs and triples, which are topped by rounded and elliptical brick arches that are filled with checkerboard brick patterning. The window openings have rockfaced limestone sills and those on the first story have stained glass transoms. The windows are filled with 1/1 sash. The eastern façade is clad with metal siding, covering segmental-arched window openings. The north elevation, once adjoining a neighboring building, is clad with metal siding. The main (west) storefront retains a storefront cornice, a recessed entrance, and fluted storefront columns. It has modern display windows. A second storefront at the southeastern corner retains the display windows but is surfaced with vertical wood siding. Each of the storefronts has an asphalt-shingled pent roof over the upper portion.

History:

This building was originally constructed as a general merchandise store, and housed a number of businesses during its first several years. By 1895, the Wells Brothers General Store, Litchfield's largest general store, occupied this building. Wells Brothers was gutted by fire on November 11, 1908. The Wells Brothers were followed by Greenberg's general store in the late 1910s and early 1920s. In 1925, the Greep-Trueblood store, operated by the Osdoba family, opened in this building and continued here for 48 years. The building was home to an appliance store in the 1970s and 1980s, and has been an antique store since 1990.

Evaluation:

This building is a contributing property to the Litchfield Commercial Historic District.

Integrity: Good

A number of alterations have been made to this building over the year, although it clearly retains its prominent position at the important intersection and exhibits elements of the Queen Anne style. Changes include the loss of the cornice cresting and corner pediment and finials. Storefronts have been replaced, although they remain in their original configuration and locations. A pent roof has been added to the upper portions of both storefront areas, possibly covering the original storefront material and transom. Metal coping has been placed atop the cornice.

Condition:

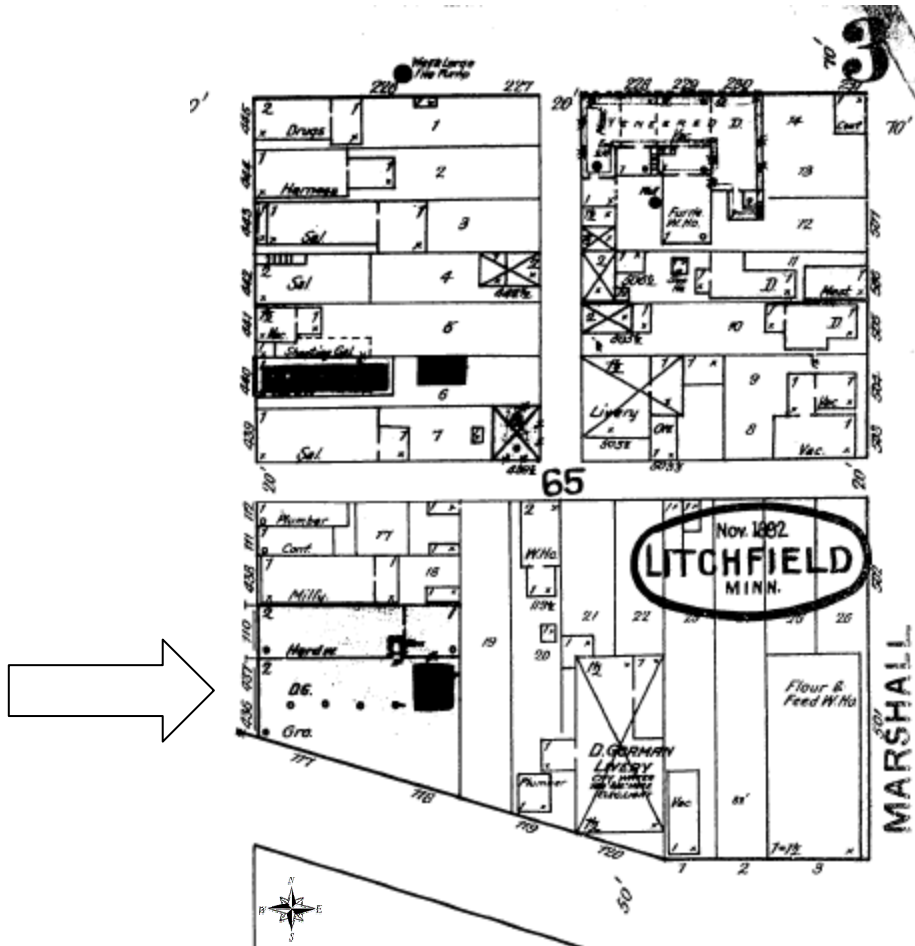
A number of minor condition concerns were noted for this building. Peeling paint and deterioration/rot on the wood windows was observed and should be repainted/repared to preserve the historic materials. Sheet metal on the cornice has been lost on the corner, and will cause the exposed brick to deteriorate. Although not severe, step cracks in the brick wall were observed under some of the windows. Mortar along the sills is deteriorated, and should be repaired to prevent further deterioration and water penetration. In general, the walls were found to be in good shape, although dirty. Gentle cleaning (never sand blasting) should be done. The etched graffiti in the brick demonstrates the brick's fragility and softness.



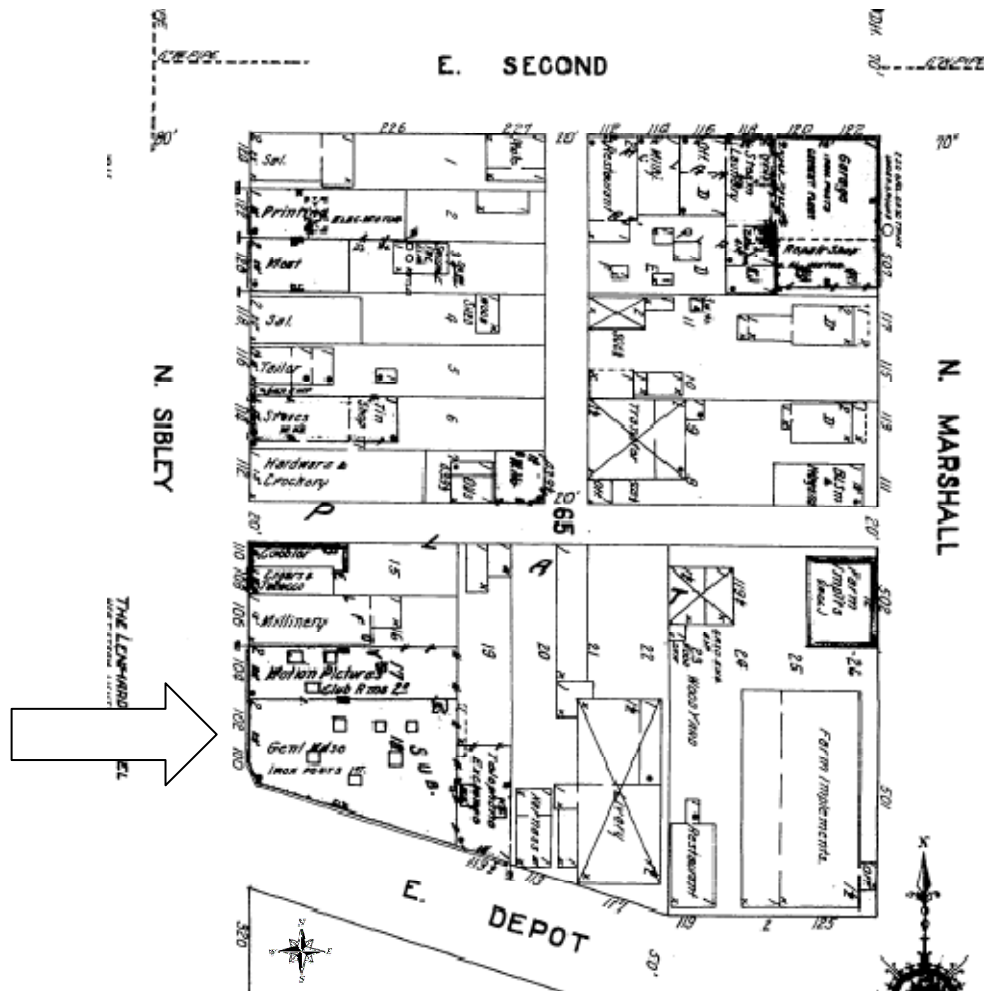
Facing NE



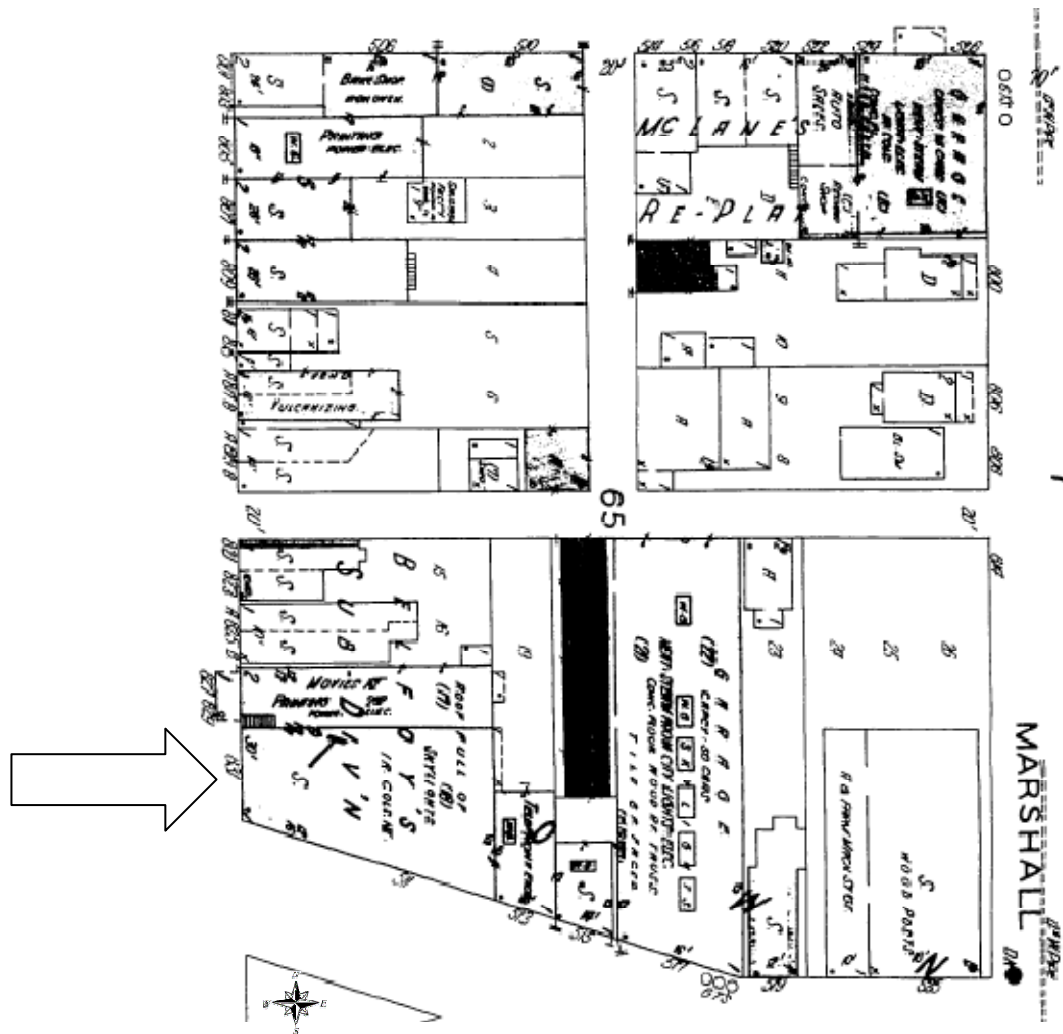
Facing SW



1892 Sanborn Map



1913 Sanborn Map



1930 Sanborn Map