

17^{916 CHARLES STREET}
The Otto C. Schonath house was built in 1939 in the Colonial Revival style.

18^{919 CHARLES STREET}
John Richards' House/Octagon House Museum. Built in 1854, the Octagon House is owned by the Watertown Historical Society and is part of a



public museum complex that includes the First Kindergarten in America, a restored pioneer era barn as well as a tour center with gift shop. A Massachusetts native, John Richards was a pioneer settler who served as Jefferson County's first district attorney and a mayor of Watertown. The house was designed by Richards based on plans made popular in the 1850s by New York architect Orson Fowler. Built on a 17-inch thick foundation, the house features a central cantilevered spiral staircase and early forms of running water, ventilating and heating systems. The Octagon House is one of the largest pre-Civil War homes built in Wisconsin.

19^{1003 CHARLES STREET}
The Dr. Felix Zimmerman house was built in 1934 in the French Provincial style. It is the only example of this style of architecture in Watertown. Built to resemble the French farmhouses of Normandy, the Zimmerman house is characterized by an octagonal tower with a polygonal conical roof, a three-sided bay window, dentil trim at the eaves and a massive chimney wall.

RICHARDS HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT WALKING TOUR HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Compiled by W. F. Jannke, III

In the southeastern part of Watertown lies the quiet suburb known as the Richards Hill Historic District. As the name implies, the area was once part of a 104 acre farm belonging to pioneer settler John Richards, who had arrived in what is today Watertown in 1837. He purchased the land from Silas W. Newcomb, who purchased the land from the U.S. government in 1836.

The land was covered in forest and was known for its fertile soil. Richards, a former lawyer and school teacher in his native Massachusetts, was determined to own the land and there build a dream home for his bride, Eliza. In 1845 he made the purchase and by 1854 finished what was, for that time, the most elaborate home in south-central Wisconsin. Today his home is Watertown's public museum, the Octagon House. It is comprised of five stories, 57 rooms (including halls and closets), and rudimentary forms of air conditioning and running water. The museum is open daily from May through October.

The Richards Hill land was owned by the Richards family until the 1890s, when it was drawn up into lots and offered for public sale. A diverse array of architectural styles makes up the area, ranging from bungalows to Tudor Revival and Federal styles. Interestingly enough, there are several houses located in this area that were kit built in the 1910s and 1920s. These house kits came from such catalog sellers as the Montgomery-Ward Co. and Sears-Roebuck Co.

A prominent feature of this area is Washington Park, which was originally known as Richards Picnic Grounds, a prime gathering spot as early as the 1860s. William Thomas, John Richards' grandson, developed his ancestor's land into a city park and by the early 1900s it became a center for sporting events, such as baseball and football games. It is still one of the most popular parks in the city.

WALKING TOURS Richards Hill



*A Guide to the Historic Neighborhoods
of Watertown produced by the:*

Watertown Tourism Council

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1 1211 WESTERN AVENUE
This Mediterranean Revival style home was built in 1927 for Max Kusel, who was affiliated with the Schempf Brothers Department Store. This home is one of two fine examples of Mediterranean Revival-style architecture in Watertown. The other is located at 213 S. Fifth St., currently the Pederson-Nowatka Funeral Home.

2 1215 WESTERN AVENUE
Frederick Wilhelm & Frances Amelia Winkenwerder House. Built in the Federal style in 1870, this brick house is characterized by stepped gable ends, or parapets, rising above the roofline that incorporate four chimneys – one on each end of the parapets.

3 812 RICHARDS AVENUE
Built in 1919, this house, along with those located at 810 & 814, was built by Northwestern College as faculty housing.

4 827 RICHARDS AVENUE
This Tudor Revival style house was built in 1938 for Raymond F. Volkmann.

5 829 RICHARDS AVENUE
Fred W. Kehl House. Built in 1927, this Tudor

Revival style house features a partially projecting façade, large chimney wall and gabled entrance with arched door.

6 900 HARVEY AVENUE
This brick Tudor Revival house was built in 1932 for Reinhold C. & Clara K. Budewitz. The house features both multi-paned and diamond-shaped leaded glass windows.

7 1316 THOMAS AVENUE
This Tudor Revival style brick house was built in 1931.

8 812 HARVEY AVENUE
Irvin A. Hooker House. This Dutch Colonial style house, built in 1928, is accentuated with decorative brick patterns and a gabled entrance with arched door.

9 1325 WESTERN AVENUE
This Gothic Revival style house built in 1856 is among the oldest homes in Watertown. Originally constructed for Heber J. Smith, a prominent



businessman affiliated with the Rough and Ready Dam, it was sold to Mr. and Mrs. William Livsey in 1867. (Note that Livsey Place, which runs to the south of this property, was named for them.) In 1876, the home passed to the Livseys' daughter and her husband, Charles Jones, and remains inhabited to this day by members of the Jones family.

10 1332 LIVSEY PLACE
This brick Tudor Revival style house was built in 1927 for George W. Janskey.

11 1333 LIVSEY PLACE
Built in 1922 for Dr. Theodore C. Ablemann, this Cotswolds Tudor Revival English Cottage features a stucco-covered exterior and a rare, distinctive false thatched cedar roof created by rolling the cedar shingles around the eaves.

12 1326 THOMAS AVENUE
Hans David and Helen Gaebler House. Built in 1926, this brick Tudor Revival house was designed by Architect George Fred Keck, a native of Watertown. The Gaebler house is characterized by its steep gabled roof, half-timbering, central chimney and multi-paned windows. Hans Gaebler was the first president of the Watertown Historical Society, founded in 1933.

13 900 CHARLES STREET
This Dutch Colonial style house was built in 1929 for John H. Bubnitz. Bubnitz was a manager at the Ira L. Henry Company between 1929 and 1936.

14 904 CHARLES STREET
Israel Waldemar and Luella Olson House. Built in 1941 in the Tudor Revival style, this house is one of only a few examples of stone construction in a city dominated by brick buildings for many years.

15 908 CHARLES STREET
Built in the Tudor Revival style in 1930 for Franz William and Edna Keppler, this house features a large fieldstone chimney wall, a steep gabled entrance with round, arched door and a second-story wrought iron balcony. It also boasts multi-paned windows and an arched gateway. Franz Keppler was an insurance salesman.

16 910 CHARLES STREET
This Tudor Revival style house was built in 1938 for Emil Doerr. It features a projecting gabled entrance with arched doorway and a three-sided bay window topped by a copper roof.