

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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building still dominates Kalamazoo's downtown skyline.

**Significance:**

Period: 1900-

Areas of Significance: architecture, commerce

The Bank of Kalamazoo Building is notable as one of Kalamazoo's largest office buildings and a visual landmark in the downtown and as a fine Art Deco Structure designed by the Chicago firm of Weary and Alford, which specialized in banks and office buildings. Designed by the same firm responsible for Kalamazoo's fine Art Deco City Hall, the fifteen-story tall building was built for the Bank of Kalamazoo (formed in 1928 from a merger of the Kalamazoo National Bank and the Kalamazoo Trust and Savings Bank) on the eve of the Great Depression. Like so many others, this bank failed in 1933. In 1933 it was succeeded by the American National Bank, which still conducts its business here. The majority of the building is currently devoted to office space.

**Bibliography:**

Kalamazoo Gazette: 5-7-1930; 4-20-1975.

**Geographical Data:**

Acreage: Less than one acre

Quadrangle Name: Kalamazoo

Quadrangle Scale: 1:24000

UTM Reference: 16 616865 4682890

**Verbal Boundary Description and Justification:**

Original Plat part of lots 91-93; commencing on S line of E. Michigan Ave. 232.4 ft. E of E line Burdick St., S 100 ft., W 74 ft., N 100 ft., E 74 ft. to P.O.B. This is the entire lot on which the building stands.

**Historic Name:** Lawrence & Chapin Building (photo 88)

**Common Name:** Vermeulen's Furniture

**Location:** 201 N. Rose Street

**Date of Construction:** 1870-72

**Architect:** Lemuel Dwight Grosvenor

**Builder:** Bush and Patterson

**Classification:**

**Category:** building

**Ownership:** Vermeulen Furniture Co.

205 N. Rose St.

Kalamazoo, MI 49006

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Public Acquisition: N/A  
Status: occupied  
Accessible: yes: restricted  
Present Use: commercial

Description:

Condition: fair  
Altered  
Original site

The Lawrence & Chapin Building is a massive, Second Empire block with a dormered mansard roof with a central tower. A four-story, brick structure 68 feet in front width and 188 feet in depth, the building has round-headed windows and robust cornice brackets set in pairs above the capitals of the broad piers which subdivide the facade. Some of the structure's historic fabric has been altered: many of the windows have been boarded up, the first-floor exterior has been modernized, and the building's entire southern elevation has been obscured by a modern parking structure which extends over Water Street. Even with these modifications, however, the Lawrence & Chapin Building is the landmark structure of the Second Empire style in the Kalamazoo area.

Significance:

Period: 1800-1900  
Areas of Significance: architecture, industry

The Lawrence & Chapin Building is significant as the one time main building of the Lawrence & Chapin Iron works, one of Kalamazoo's largest, nineteenth-century industries, which manufactured plows and other agricultural implements, as well as steam engine and mill machinery. The building is also important as the landmark structure of the Second Empire style in the Kalamazoo area.

Iron manufacturing (at first using iron ore mined along the banks of the Kalamazoo River to the north of town) was Kalamazoo's first heavy industry and soon after the middle of the last century a factory building was built on this site. William S. Lawrence and Dr. L. C. Chapin had the present structure built between 1870 and 1872; the company became successful quickly. For three decades, the entire process of transforming raw materials into finished products was carried out in this building. But late in the nineteenth century iron was giving way to steel and Kalamazoo's position as a prominent manufacturer of iron goods in the region diminished. Chapin had since died and Lawrence lost his fortune and sold his home and this factory about the turn of the century. The building then housed, in succession, a mission, a skating rink, and an interurban railway station. For the last half century, it has been the home of the Vermeulen Furniture Company. This massive Second Empire block is without peer in the Kalamazoo area. The structure was designed by L. D. Grosvenor, a Kalamazoo (later Jackson), architect whose work is as yet little known but whose architectural talents were considerable, if we can judge them by the structures of his thus far identified in Jackson, Lansing, Jonesville, and Homer. The Lawrence & Chapin Building was built by Bush and Patterson, a Kalamazoo firm which built many of the city's finest structures, including the Ladies Library Association and Desenberg buildings.

Bibliography:

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Topp, Darol W., A History of the Bog Iron Industry 1837-1862, Kalamazoo College History Seminar, #46, January, 1953 (an unpublished paper available at the Kalamazoo Public Library Local History Room).

Kalamazoo Gazette: 12-30-1870; 5-11-1881; 7-25-1931.

Kalamazoo Weekly Gazette, 9-3-1897, p. 11.

**Geographical Data:**

Acreage: Less than one acre  
Quadrangle Name: Kalamazoo  
Quadrangle Scale: 1:24000  
UTM Reference: 16 616640 4683040

**Verbal Boundary Description and Justification:**

Original Plat; lots 5, 6, 7, 8; block 4. This is the property on which the building stands.

Historic Name: Old Fire House No. 4 (photo 89)

Common Name: Same

Location: 526 N. Burdick Street

Date of Construction: 1887

Architect: Martin W. Roberts

Builder: Alexander Robbins

**Classification:**

Category: building

Ownership: Johnson-Howard Co.  
500 N. Edwards St.  
Kalamazoo, MI 49006

Public Acquisition: N/A

Status: occupied

Accessible: no

Present Use: warehouse

**Description:**

Condition: fair

Altered

Original site

Fire House No. 4 is a two-story, brick, Late Victorian structure with corbelled- and panel-brick details and a pyramid-roof tower at one corner. The original two-bay structure was built in 1887; a third bay, similar in style, was added in 1901. Although the historic integrity of the structure has not been permanently damaged, the structure does suffer from poor maintenance and inappropriate modifications (the windows are boarded up and the brickwork has been painted).

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Page 2 of 3

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Kalamazoo Multiple Resource Area  
State Michigan

Nomination/Type of Review	Date/Signature
11. Bank of Kalamazoo Building <i>Substantive Review</i> <b>DOE/OWNER OBJECTION</b>	Keeper <i>Eligible: Beth Grosvenor 5/27/83</i> Attest _____
12. Lawrence and Chapin Building <i>Entered in the National Register</i>	Keeper <i>for Melons Byers 5/27/83</i> Attest _____
13. Old Fire House No. 4 <i>Entered in the National Register</i>	Keeper <i>for Melons Byers 5/27/83</i> Attest _____
14. Prentice, Alonzo T., House <i>Entered in the National Register</i>	Keeper <i>for Melons Byers 5/27/83</i> Attest _____
15. Cobb, James B., House <i>Substantive Review</i> <b>DOE/OWNER OBJECTION</b>	Keeper <i>Eligible: Beth Grosvenor 5/27/83</i> Attest _____
16. Welsh, William L., Terrace <i>Entered in the National Register</i>	Keeper <i>for Melons Byers 5/27/83</i> Attest _____
17. Appeldorn, Peter B., House <i>Entered in the National Register</i>	Keeper <i>for Melons Byers 5/27/83</i> Attest _____
18. Roberts, Martin W., House <i>Substantive Review</i>	Keeper <i>Beth Grosvenor 5/27/83</i> Attest _____
19. Potter, Allen, Octagon House <i>Substantive Review</i> <b>DOE/OWNER OBJECTION</b>	Keeper <i>Eligible: Beth Grosvenor 5/27/83</i> Attest _____
20. Shaffer, Enoch, House <i>Entered in the National Register</i>	Keeper <i>for Melons Byers 5/27/83</i> Attest _____

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Lawrence and Chapin Building (Kalamazoo  
MRA)  
Kalamazoo County  
MICHIGAN

Working No. 4/13/83  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2-7-84  
Date Due: 5/19/83 - 5/24/83  
Action:  ACCEPT 5/27/83  
 RETURN  
Entered in the National Register  REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria \_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_  
Discipline \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for:  technical corrections cited below  
 substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category      Ownership      Status      Present Use  
Public Acquisition      Accessible

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

Condition      Check one      Check one  
 excellent       deteriorated       unaltered       original site  
 good       ruins       altered       moved date \_\_\_\_\_  
 fair       unexposed

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates

## 8. Significance

Period \_\_\_\_\_ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates \_\_\_\_\_ Builder/Architect \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

## 10. Geographical Data

Average of estimated property \_\_\_\_\_

Geographic name \_\_\_\_\_

USIT References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

## 11. Form Prepared By

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is

\_\_\_\_\_ national \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_

Site \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

## 13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

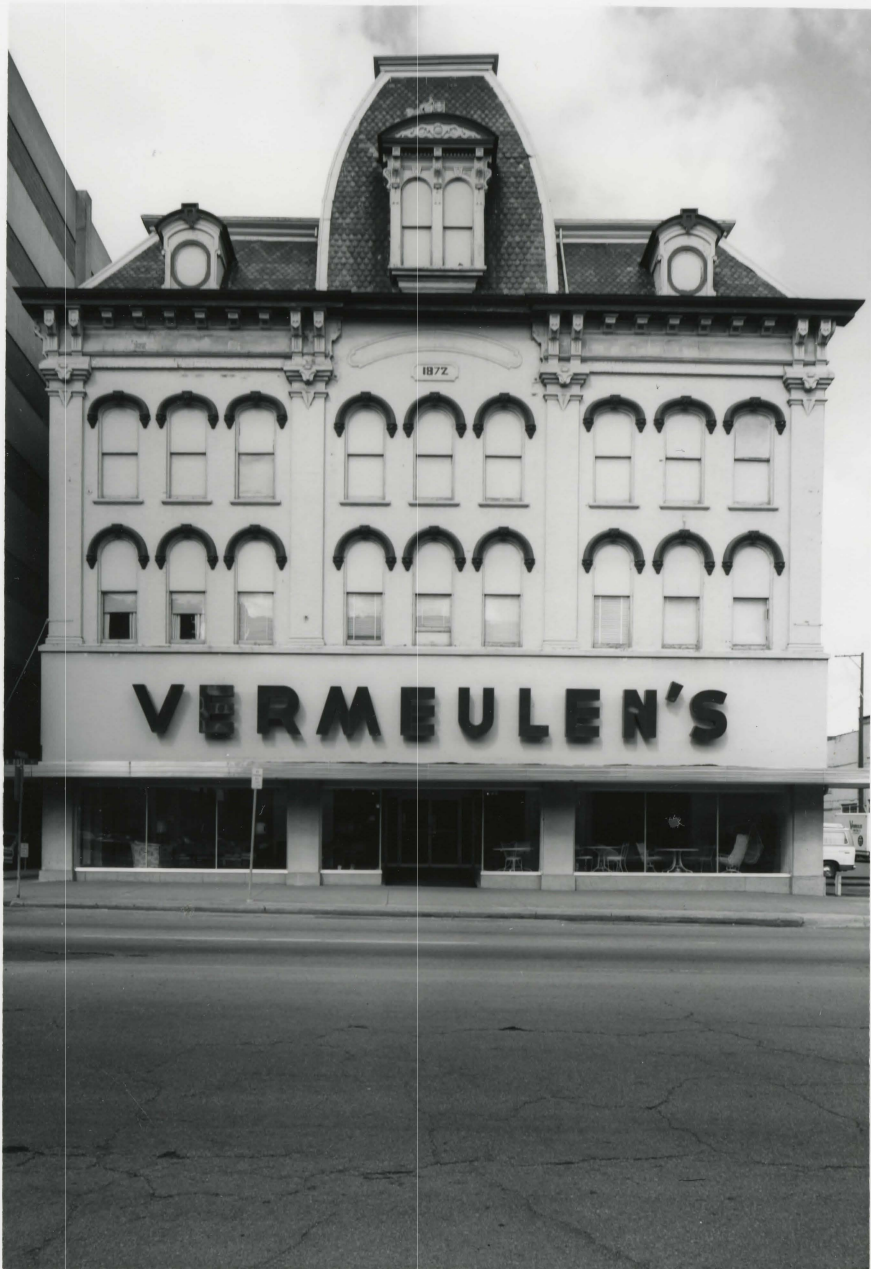
Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: 202 272-3500

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet

PHOTO: LAWRENCE + CHAPIN BUILDING

88

83000862



1872

**VERMEULEN'S**

#61

Lawrence & Chapin Building  
201 North Rose Street  
Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County, Michigan

Gary Cialdella April 1981  
Neg.: Kalamazoo Historical Commission

Exterior from the east  
Photo no. 88 of 105

78

88

Please refer to the map in the  
Multiple Property Cover Sheet  
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000327

2-23-82 ✓

FEB 18 1982

MICHIGAN HISTORY DIVISION

# VERMEULEN

FURNITURE COMPANY

205 NORTH ROSE STREET • KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN, 49006

February 17, 1982

Martha M. Bigelow, Director  
Michigan History Div.  
Michigan Dept. of State  
Lansing, Mich. 48918  
Attn: Kathryn Eckert

Dear Ms. Bigelow:

We received your letter of January 19th in regards to our building we own, which is the Lawrence Chapin Iron Works building, at 201 N. Rose St., Kalamazoo, Michigan.

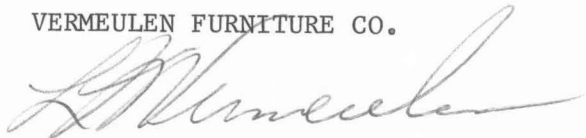
We would be very happy to have the building listed in the Michigan Historic Registry, under the name of: VERMEULEN FURNITURE COMPANY, Harold J. Vermeulen and Leslie N. Vermeulen.

If there is any other information you need, we would be willing to answer your questions.

I have contacted Mr. Perzyck in Kalamazoo and he will probably attend the meeting in Lansing on February 24th as I will be out of town at that time.

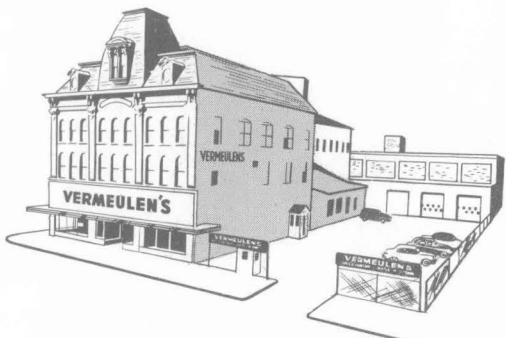
Very truly yours,

VERMEULEN FURNITURE CO.



L. N. Vermeulen

LNV/cr



Our free parking lot saves you time