

**BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM**

DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
NEW YORK STATE PARKS AND RECREATION  
ALBANY, NEW YORK (518) 474-0479

FOR OFFICE USE \_\_\_\_\_  
UNIQUE SITE NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
QUAD \_\_\_\_\_  
SERIES \_\_\_\_\_  
NEG. NO. \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR NAME: Matt O'Brien DATE: May 11, 1992  
YOUR ADDRESS: 106 W. Sibley Hall, Ithaca, NY TELEPHONE: (607) 255-6851  
ORGANIZATION (if any): Cornell University

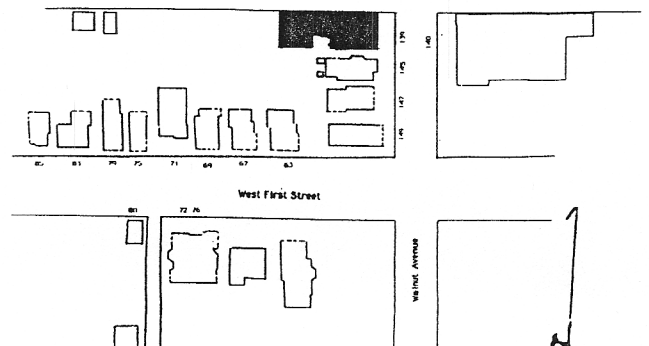
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**IDENTIFICATION**

- 1. BUILDING NAME(S):
- 2. COUNTY: Steuben TOWN/CITY: Corning VILLAGE:
- 3. STREET LOCATION: 139 Walnut Street
- 4. OWNERSHIP: a. public [ ] b. private [ x]
- 5. PRESENT OWNER: D. O'Brian and J. Rotsell ADDRESS: 139 Walnut St, Corning
- 6. USE: Private Residence PRESENT: Funeral Home
- 7. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes [ X ] No [ ]  
Interior accessible: Yes [ ] No [ X ] Explain: Private Business.

**DESCRIPTION**

- 8. BUILDING MATERIAL
  - a. clapboard [ ] b. stone [ ] c. brick [ x ] d. board & batten [ ]
  - e. cobblestone [ ] f. shingles [ ] g. stucco [ ] other:
- 9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
  - a. wood frame with interlocking joints [ x ]
  - b. wood frame with light members [ ]
  - c. masonry load bearing walls [ ]
  - d. metal (explain)
  - e. other
- 10. CONDITION:
  - a. excellent [ ] b. good [ x ] c. fair [ ] d. deteriorated [ ]
- 11. INTEGRITY:
  - a. original site [ ] b. moved [ x ] if so, when? Between 1836 and 1857.
  - c. list major alterations and dates (if known):
- 12. PHOTO:
- 13. MAP:



14. THREATS TO BUILDING: a. none known  b. zoning  c. roads   
d. developers  e. deterioration   
f. other:
15. RELATED OUT BUILDINGS AND PROPERTY: a. barn  b. carriage house  c. garage   
d. privy  e. shed  f. greenhouse   
g. shop  h. gardens   
i. landscape features  
j. other:
16. SURROUNDINGS OF THE BUILDING (CHECK MORE THAN ONE IF NECESSARY)  
a. open land  b. woodland   
c. scattered buildings   
d. densely built-up  e. commercial   
f. industrial  g. residential   
h. other:
17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDINGS AND SURROUNDINGS:  
(Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district)
- See Continuation Sheet
18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE:  
(Including interior features if known):
- See Continuation Sheet

**SIGNIFICANCE**

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: Between 1836 and 1845.

ARCHITECT: Unknown.

BUILDER: Unknown

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

See Continuation Sheet

21. SOURCES:

See Continuation Sheet

22. THEME:

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Corning, New York

11. INTEGRITY:

This house has undergone significant changes since its construction in the 1840s by Nelson Lockwood Somers. Between 1888 and 1893 the northern section of the house was enlarged from a single story to two stories. By 1903 the back porch was converted into an extension of the house. By 1908 the extension on the northwest face of the house was widened along one half of its length. Before 1921 this extension was further lengthened and widened to provide for automobile parking. This part of the house was no longer labeled on the Sanborn maps as being part of the dwelling but as automobile storage.

The one-story porch on the northeast part of the Walnut Street facade was enclosed in brick and an entry portico was constructed after 1948.

17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS:

The section of Walnut Street between the alley to the north of West First Street and West First Street itself has a total of six buildings, none of which are used as a primary residence by the owners of the properties. There are three social organizations, an orthodontist and a funeral home, among others, in this area. There is no consistent massing or style of building in this one block area of Walnut Street and the buildings on the west side of Walnut are overshadowed by the two larger buildings on the east side of Walnut Street.

Walnut Street is a busy thoroughfare that serves as a major arterial into the Southside neighborhood. On-street parking further divides Walnut Street into two unrelated halves, adding to the lack of identity in this neighborhood. One of the buildings on this side of the street dates from 1857 or earlier, unlike the other side of West First Street. Finally, there is a church in this row of residences that further detracts from the whole.

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE:

This two-story side gabled Federal house of brick construction dates from the 1840s when it was built by Nelson Lockwood Somers. The Federal Style is characterized by

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18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE, continued:

double hung sash windows with thin muntins, symmetrically aligned windows (both horizontally and vertically), a roof ridge line that parallels the roadway, and heavy stone or brick lintels above the window openings. All of these characteristics are present on the Beilby Funeral Home. The original house is the southern section of the Walnut Street facade, framed by stepped gables on both ends which reflect Dutch origins. Additions to the house start were made primarily on the northern side of the Walnut Street facade and, from there, proceed back along the alley facade.

The brick on the original house is run in common bond style and has been painted over. The brick on the post 1948 additions is unpainted and laid in the running bond pattern. As a result, the more recent brick is very apparent from the street and detracts from the historic exterior.

The roof is covered with composition shingles.

The additions to the rear of the house are clad with two different materials. The ca. 1908 modification is constructed of stone and the later ca. 1921 automobile storage addition is clad with wood clapboards. Each of these two extensions is covered with asphalt sheet roofing.

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

Nelson Lockwood Somers was the manager for Hiram Bostwick, the first president of the First Corning Bank, and was involved in the organization and construction of the Christ Episcopal Church, originally located just north of this property. Mr. Somers, a former deputy sheriff in Otsego County, New York, had, among other things, managed the Corning House Hotel and operated a general store in Corning during his long life in Corning at this address. Nelson died in 1886 and as late as 1893 his widow, Eliza still resided at this address.

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20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE, continued:

Today, and since 1948, the building has been used as a funeral home. Today it is the "Beilby Funeral Home."

21. SOURCES

Texts and Miscellaneous:

Boyd's Corning City Directories 1872-73, 1874-75.

Clayton, W. W. History of Steuben County, New York, With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers. Philadelphia: Lewis, Peck and Company, 1879.

Corning Building Company. 100 Years in Corning: The Corning Building Company, 1848-1948, Corning (?): Cartwright and Sons, 1948.

Corning City Hall Tax Assessment Rolls.

Corning Painted Post Historical Society photographic files.

Dimitroff, Thomas P. and Lois Janes. History of the Corning Painted Post Area: 200 Years in Painted Post Country. Corning: Corning Area Bicentennial Commission, 1977.

Hakes, Harlo. Landmarks of Steuben County, Syracuse: D. Mason and Company, 1896.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Adolph A. Knopf, 1990.

McMaster, Guy H. History of the Settlement of Steuben County, New York, Including Notices of the Old Pioneer Settlers and their Adventures. Bath, New York: R. S. Underhill and Company, 1853. (Reprint: Geneva: Humphrey Press, 1975).

Roberts, Millard F. Historical Gazetteer of Steuben County, New York with Memoirs and Illustrations, Syracuse: By the author, 1891. (Reprinted in two parts by the Steuben County Historical Society, 1979).

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21. SOURCES, continued.

Maps and Directories:

Atlas of Steuben County, New York. M. Levy. Philadelphia: J. E. Gillette,  
publisher, 1857.

City of Corning. Corning: Harry C. Heermans, City Engineer, 1893.

Fire Insurance Maps of Corning, New York 1888, 1893, 1898, 1903, 1908, 1913, 1921,  
1930, 1948.

Steuben County directory. Syracuse: Hamilton Child, 1868-69.

View of Corning, New York, Looking Toward the South. Philadelphia:  
Philadelphia Publishing House, C. J. Corbin, Field Manager,  
1882.



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Walnut