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- [Properties](#)
- [About the Program](#)
- [Rehabilitation](#)
- [Search](#)

[Property Information](#)

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## Randall-Willim-Densmore House



Stillwater HPC

7/29/2008

**Site Address:** 504 Holcombe St S

**Parcel Identification Number (PIN):** 2803020340115

**SHPO Inventory Number:** [WA-SWC-1705](#)

**Construction Date:** [Circa 1852](#)

**Builder:** \_

**Architect:** \_

**Architectural Style:** [Greek Revival](#)

**Narrative:**

According to the Washington County Assessor's Office, this modest, Greek Revival style house was constructed circa 1852, when

Stillwater was still part of Wisconsin Territory. The one-and-a-half-story, front gable house appears on the 1870 Bird's Eye View of the City of Stillwater. The frame residence has a limestone foundation, clapboard siding, and six-over-six double-hung windows, one of which is prominently centered in the front gable end. The house retains many of its Greek Revival details, including the wide trim band under the eaves, the sidelights and a transom windows around the door, and the six-over-six windows. At some point in time, prior to 1900, based on the form and materials of the additions, a hipped-roof front porch, rear one-story front gable ell, and south one-story side gable addition were added to the house. A brick chimney, located on the north elevation, appears to date from the early to mid-twentieth century. The current ell-shaped form of the house appears today as it did on the 1956 Sanborn Map; this is the first map in which this neighborhood, Williams Division of Holcombe's Addition, is represented. The spindlework detailing on the porch is evocative of the Folk Victorian style that was popular in the United States in the late nineteenth century, and reflects the porch's late nineteenth century construction date. A one-story, front gable, clapboard sided garage is located in the rear yard; based on its form and materials, the garage was built circa 1930. This interesting garage retains its original, paired doors. Dr. Andrew Randall, a medical doctor and geological surveyor for the Wisconsin Territory, was the original owner of the house (personal communication with Michael Mikkelson). William Willim, a skilled craftsman and laborer who built many houses in Stillwater, came into possession of the property in 1860 (personal communication with Michael Mikkelson). Mr. Willim was a member of the sixth Minnesota Territorial Legislator and served as mayor of Stillwater in 1856, 1866, and 1867 (Peterson & Thilgen, Stillwater: A Photographic History 1843-1993, 1992:105). In 1868, John D. Densmore and his wife, Sarah Palmer, purchased the property. Mr. Densmore fought in the Civil War and survived the Battle of Gettysburg. Densmore and his wife raised six children in this house (personal communication with Michael Mikkelson). According to the 1876-1877 city directory, Densmore was employed as a lumberman. Densmore passed away on July 5, 1879, and was buried in Stillwater's Fairview Cemetery (Nick Coleman, Star Tribune, July 5, 2008). Densmore left the property to his wife and two surviving children. Sarah Palmer Densmore sold the property in 1910 to Christian Henningsen (personal communication with Michael Mikkelson). According to the 1912-1913 city directory, Henningsen was a policeman. The Henningsen family retained the property until 1969.



**Property information and narrative was compiled by:** The 106 Group