

MINNESOTA HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY FORM

HISTORIC NAME: Itasca Lumber Company Superintendent's

COUNTY: Itasca **MAR 15 1982**

CURRENT NAME: Residence

CITY/TWP.: Deer River City

LEGAL DESC.: Lots 36-39, Block 3, Second Addition to
Deer River

ADDRESS: 506 Fifth St. SE

CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Building <u>X</u>	Excellent _____	Local <u>X</u>	Primary <u>Industry</u>
Structure _____	Good <u>X</u>	State _____	Secondary <u>Settlement</u>
Object _____	Fair _____	National _____	Others _____
District _____	Deteriorated _____		

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Yes _____ No X Restricted _____

PRESENT USE:

VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD: Yes X No _____

Residence

OCCUPIED: Yes X No _____

DATE CONSTRUCTED: 1904

ORIGINAL USE: Residence

ORIGINAL OWNER: Itasca Lumber Company

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: unknown

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Theodore W. Olson
506 5th St. SE
Deer River, MN 56636

ACREAGE: Less than one acre X

LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.: Itasca County Historical Society,
P.O. Box 664, Old Central School Grand Rapids, MN 55744

UTM REFERENCE:

Deer River Quad. 7.5

FORM PREPARED BY: Mark Haidet

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DATE: March 1981

DESCRIPTION:

The Itasca Lumber Company Superintendent's log residence is a local landmark in Deer River, an historic logging town characterized by small frame residential structures. The house occupies a corner location on the community's south side immediately west of the public school building.

The 1904 gable-roofed square structure is constructed of Norway pine logs measuring approximately 18" in diameter and 30' in length with saddle-notch corner-timbering. About 1919 both sides of the roof were raised to create extra space on the second story. Shingle sheathing adorns the gable ends and the walls of the raised second level. An enclosed hipped porch featuring vertical log construction and multi-paned windows extends the length of the west (front) facade. Fenestration is irregular; windows vary in size and the number of lights. A recent shingled shed addition is located at the rear of the structure. Despite the additions, the house retains its rustic character.

SIGNIFICANCE:

1 The Itasca Lumber Company Superintendent's Residence is significant for its association with the Itasca Lumber Company. The company, the foremost logging concern in the region, had a tremendous impact on the initial development and settlement of Deer River and western Itasca County. Founded by prominent Minneapolis lumberman H.C. Akeley in 1886, the firm established its local headquarters in Deer River ten years later. The company constructed the region's longest logging railroad (incorporated as the Minneapolis and Rainy River Railroad in 1904) from Deer River northward to Craig between 1896 and 1906. Several small unincorporated communities were established along the line and the company widely promoted settlement of its cutover lands. At its peak shortly after the turn of the century, the company operated between fifteen and twenty camps a season and cut over 100,000,000 ft. of timber a year which was then transported by rail to the Mississippi River south of Deer River and floated downstream to the firm's large Minneapolis mill. In 1904, David Joyce, president of the Itasca Lumber Company, and John S. Pillsbury, former Minnesota governor and prominent Minneapolis lumberman and miller, erected a large mill in Deer River to saw the company's lower grades of timber which could not be floated downstream. The Itasca Lumber Company platted a large addition to Deer River and constructed several houses for employees of the mill, then operating under the name Deer River Lumber Company. With the closing of its Minneapolis mill in 1910, the Itasca Lumber Company acquired the Deer River mill and operated

(see continuation sheet)

Itasca Lumber Company Superintendent's Residence

Itasca County
Deer River, Minnesota

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it until its discontinuation in 1921. The log superintendent's residence, erected in 1904, housed the firm's chief local administrator, W.R. Wallace. With the disappearance of the large combination depot-office and the mill, and substantial alteration of the housing district, the Superintendent's Residence is the most identifiable remaining link to this important firm.

Bibliography:

Deer River News, September 4, 1958.

Wallace, Franklin (Son of William Wallace). Conversation with Mark Haidet, February 1981.

Zetterstrom, John. "The Story of a Logging Town", 1932.

Zetterstrom, Lydia. "The Itasca Lumber Company and Minneapolis and Rainy River Railway", 1932.