

**MINNESOTA HISTORY / ARCHITECTURE INVENTORY FORM**  
**NORTHFIELD COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
**Rice County, Minnesota**

| PROPERTY LOCATION                                |                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Property Name:</b> Second Mergen Building     | <b>Inventory No.:</b> RC-NFC- 320                              |
| <b>Address:</b> 323-25 Division Street           | <b>PIN:</b> 2206225009                                         |
| <b>QTR/QTR/T/R/S:</b> NW NW Section 6 T111N R19W |                                                                |
| <b>USGS Quad:</b> Northfield, Minnesota          | <b>Plat Name:</b> Original Town <b>Block:</b> 23 <b>Lot:</b> 8 |
| <b>UTM Z 15 487295E, 4922592N NAD 83</b>         |                                                                |

| PROPERTY INFORMATION                                                                 |                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Construction Date:</b> 1883, 1886                                                 | <b>Style:</b> Queen Anne-Eastlake                                                   |
| <b>Historic Use:</b> commercial                                                      | <b>Current Use:</b> commercial                                                      |
| <b>Property Type:</b> commercial                                                     | <b>Historic Context:</b> "Commerce, 1856-1945"                                      |
| <b>Architect/Builder</b>                                                             | <b>Survey Name:</b> Northfield Historic District Survey Revision Project, 2016      |
| <b>Previous NRHP Status:</b> Contributing to Northfield Commercial Historic District | <b>NRHP Recommendation:</b> Contributing to Northfield Commercial Historic District |
| <b>Form Prepared by:</b> C. Zellie Landscape Research LLC                            | <b>Survey Date:</b> 3/2016                                                          |



2016, looking southeast



ca. 1980

### Description

This two-story, flat-roofed brick building is comprised of two red brick structures that share a party wall. The existing building was extensively remodeled at the ground floor, and the upper stories were covered with corrugated metal (ca. 1950s?). The current façade is the result of an extensive recent restoration. The deep bracketed cornice has a peaked date plaque trimmed with rosettes and filigree. The Eastlake style trim on the cornice includes decorated, incised brackets capped with finials. The cornice surmounts deep brick corbels. The façade is decorated with a rusticated limestone beltcourse and blocks on the shallow piers between the slender windows. The sash includes leaded, double-hung units. The new glass, wood and steel storefront, with paired wood doors, is compatible with the historic features of the building.

### History

The south half was built in 1883 by G.M. Phillips and Barney Mergen built the north half in 1886. Greaves, then Greaves and Crary's book, stationery, and paint store initially occupied the south half (1882-1909), and Mergen's dry goods store operated in the north half, followed by the Alex Marshall and McKay and Company dry goods firms. Mergen (1847-) was a native of Luxembourg (U.S. Census). A

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succession of owners, including John C. Nutting, and various tenants followed. Between 1911 and 1947, the Unique, a confectionary operated in the south half. It was a variety store ca. 1917-1960. N. B. Thomson acquired it for a drugstore but it reverted to variety store use and was Northfield Variety when pictured with a corrugated metal façade with a large metal awning in ca. 1979.

**Significance and Historic Context(s)**

This building is associated with the second period of Northfield's commercial development, from ca. 1880 to 1900, when 29 of the 65 historic district buildings were constructed. It is associated with the Northfield historic context, "Commerce, 1856-1945" (Northfield Preservation Plan, 1992).

**Evaluation**

This property was listed on the NRHP in 1979 as contributing to the Northfield Commercial Historic District. Following its rehabilitation in recent decades it retains historic significance and excellent integrity and is contributing to the district.

**References**

Edwins, Steve, ed. *Northfield Downtown Guidebook*. Northfield Heritage Preservation Commission, 1982, 25.

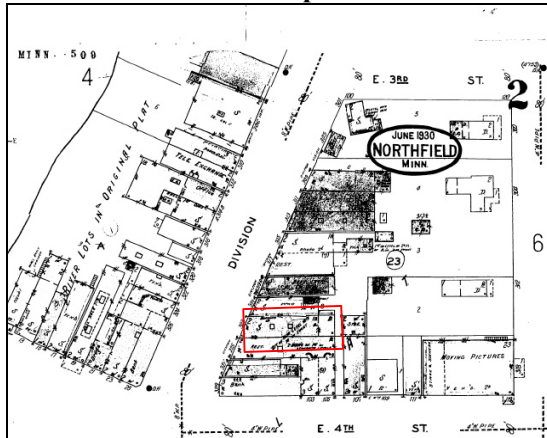
"Northfield Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1979.

Northfield Historical Society. Photograph and research files. Northfield, Minnesota.

Sanborn Map & Publishing Company, New York. Northfield plates, 1886-1943.

Zellie, Carole. "Northfield Heritage Preservation Plan." Prepared for the Northfield Heritage Preservation Commission, Northfield, Minn. by Landscape Research, 1992.

**Sanborn and USGS Maps**



Sanborn Map and Publishing Co., 1930, updated to 1943.



USGS: Northfield 1984.



H. L. Greaves & Co., 325 Division Street, ca. 1883

Historic photographs: Northfield Historical Society