

213 Sibley Ave. N. This building was erected in 1920 and has had minimal alterations. During World War II, it was the local War Bonds office.

207-209 Sibley Ave. N. 207 Sibley was originally a two-story wooden structure. It has been combined with its neighbor at 209.

205 Sibley Ave. N. This 1890 building was altered before World War II. It was a hardware store from 1900 to 1981.



201 - 205 Sibley Ave. N., Litchfield, 1899.

201 Sibley Ave. N. The Meeker County Bank is a Neo-Classical Revival style building, constructed in 1898. A storm damaged the building in 1993. It was thought the building would be lost, however only the back third of the building was removed. You can still view the remaining storefront pillar at the southwest corner of the building.

25 W. Second St. This two story building was constructed in 1923 by Olaf M. Olson. Litchfield had so many Olsons that they were frequently referred to by nicknames that described their occupation. Olaf was referred to as “Feed Ole” because he operated a feed store here (not to be confused with “Music Ole” who had a music store during the same period).

Cross Second St. and continue on Sibley Ave.

135 Sibley Ave. N. Constructed as a bank in 1963, it replaced the 1891 bank on the site. The Litchfield Public Library was located here from 1979 to 2000.



123 - 135 Sibley Ave. N., Litchfield, 1936

129 Sibley Ave. N. T.P. McClure constructed this building in 1885. He was a banker and also built the historic home at 215 Sibley Ave. S. Later Dewey Johnson added a “Morgue Room” to the then current furniture store, making it the first viewing room in Litchfield, outside of people’s homes.

127 Sibley Ave. N. Col. Howard was the Receiver at the Meeker County Land Office during the development of Litchfield. He built this building in 1890. In 1904 the Scherer Cigar Factory was located upstairs.

115-119 Sibley Ave. N. Circa 1885, Italianate in style, this symmetrical building was built for \$10,000.

119 Sibley Ave. N A movie theater and restaurant shared this building in 1907. In 1915 the Scherer Cigar Factory was located upstairs.

115 Sibley Ave. N. The downstairs of this building was a general store for many years. Upstairs was the office of real estate agent, A.T. Koerner. He was called the “pioneer realtor” for his work with early settlers.

113 Sibley Ave. N. Built circa 1882, the second floor served as court offices until the Meeker County Courthouse was built in 1885. In 2008, the first floor interior underwent extensive rehabilitation. The second floor remains largely unaltered.



105-135 Sibley Ave. N., Litchfield, 1910.

109 Sibley Ave. N. William Bierman operated a clothing store here from 1904 to 1908. His son Bernie was a star LHS football player and head football coach at the University of Minnesota for 16 seasons (1932 -1941 and 1945-1950).

105 Sibley Ave. N. This stucco-covered building was built circa 1981. A large hotel called the Howard House or Lenhardt Hotel originally stood on this lot.

Turn left and proceed down Depot St. (Hwy 12).

19 Depot St. In February 1870 the Railroad sold this lot for \$50. The owner resold it in April 1871 for \$500. The R. Welch Building was constructed here in 1907 and housed Litchfield’s telephone exchange until 1959. Back then calls were all answered with the phrase “NUMBER PLEASE” and were set up manually by the operator. During the Armistice Day Blizzard in November of 1941, a telephone operator worked three days straight.

21 East Depot St. In 1917, F.L. Scherer built this building for his cigar factory. To date it has been heavily modified and storm damaged.

Return to the corner and cross Sibley Ave. On the eastern side of the block you will notice a concentration of newer buildings and empty lots. This block housed many of Litchfield’s saloons. Before Litchfield went dry in 1914, the saloons were mainly on the east side of the street; “respectable” citizens walked on the west side. Many of these pre WWI wooden saloon structures were demolished burned, and/or replaced.



100 Sibley Ave. N., Litchfield, 1906

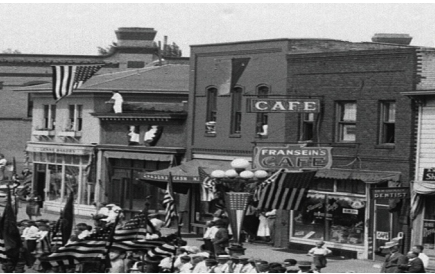
100 Sibley Ave. N. This ornate Commercial Queen Anne building is prominently located at the southeastern corner of the commercial district. The brick and metal-corbelled cornice contains the building completion date “1882.” This building originally housed the Wells Brothers General Store and was later known as Greep-Trueblood store.

110 Sibley Ave. N. Keller’s Barbershop was built here in 1962. The structure still serves the trade as Kellogg’s Barbershop. The brick façade actually joins two buildings.

120 Sibley Ave. N. J.C. Penney built this concrete block, brick faced building built in 1970.

126 Sibley Ave. N. Built circa 1916 and is remembered as the Black Cat Hotel and Café.

130 Sibley Ave. N. For 85 years a meat market operated here. The first emporium, Koerner’s Meat Shop, began in 1889 and ended trade service as Sam’s Super Market in 1974.



126 - 134 Sibley Ave. N., Litchfield, ca. 1933

134 Sibley Ave. N. This, stucco-covered wood frame building, was constructed about 1870. It contained the first public ladies restroom in 1900.

Cross Sibley Ave. and walk east, down Second St.

18 E. Second St. The first story of this brick Commercial Style was built in 1915. The second story appears to have been added circa 1938.

26-28 E. Second St. John Snell built the “Snell Block” in 1879. It started at the east side of the alley and continued to the end of the block. The popular Horseshoe Café was here from 1938 to 1960.

35 E. Second St. Constructed in 1935, the Post Office was funded by an \$85,000 federal relief grant. It is a one-story Georgian Revival style building, which is basically intact.

This brochure was funded by a Minnesota Cultural and Heritage Grant, a Certified Local Government Grant, and generous contributions from the City of Litchfield and Meeker County Historical Society.

Past to Present... Experience our History



Litchfield Historic Commercial District Walking Tour

Provided by the Litchfield Heritage Preservation Commission

Welcome to the Litchfield Historic Commercial District. Designated in 1996 by the National Register of Historic Places, buildings in the period of significance date between 1882 through 1945. The District is comprised of more than 40 properties that serve as a collective example of a late nineteenth/early twentieth century business district in a small Midwestern farming community.

Begin your tour on the corner of Sibley Avenue and East Second Street, across the street from 202 Sibley Avenue North (featured on cover). To fully experience the district, please view all buildings from the opposite side of the street.



202 Sibley Ave. N. Built in 1884 for a cost of \$10,000, the ‘Brown Block’ is considered one of the most handsome buildings in town. M.A. Brown’s store originally carried a large line of dry goods coming from New York and Chicago. This building was elaborately constructed in the Italianate style, composed of cream-colored brick with red brick accents.

208 Sibley Ave. N. Under the current covering of stucco is an 1871 wooden building with a false front. This building has served as United States Land Office and a men’s only barbershop.

210 Sibley Ave. N. The 1935 Hollywood Theater is an Art Deco style building designed by famed theater architects Kaplan and Liebenberg. The theater storefront still retains a dramatic marquee and intact façade.



210 Sibley Ave. N., Litchfield. ca. 1935

214 Sibley Ave. N. Two-story Commercial style constructed in 1929.

222 Sibley Ave. N. Erected in 1915, this structure began as John’s Hardware. In 1940 it became Litchfield’s first self-service grocery store.

226, 230, and 234 Sibley Ave. N. These three structures were built in the late 1880s as identical buildings.



226-242 Sibley Ave. N., Litchfield, 1889.

226 Sibley Ave. N. This building still retains the feeling of its original entrance with a recessed doorway and large display windows.

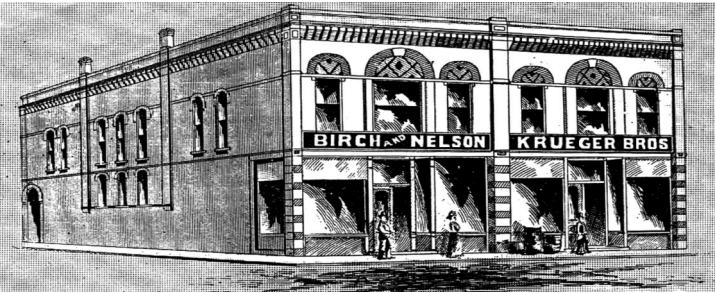
230 Sibley Ave. N. The façade of this building was altered when Sibley Ave. was resurfaced in the early 1950s.

234 Sibley Ave. N. This building had a significant fire in 1955. Initially it was thought the building would be a loss but the façade was rehabilitated and the structure was saved.

236 Sibley Ave. N. Built in 1935 as Dan’s Eat Shop, this two story, Commercial Style brick building retains many of its original features.

240 Sibley Ave. N. Constructed in 1950, this building has always served as a dry cleaning business.

242 Sibley Ave. N. This two-story Romanesque Revival style building stands at the northern edge of the district. It has an ornate brick cornice with corbelling and checkerboard brickwork. At the northeastern corner of the building there is a large, rounded arched entrance, carved with Masonic symbols. The building has housed the Golden Fleece #89 Masonic Lodge throughout its history.



242 Sibley Ave. N., Litchfield, 1889.

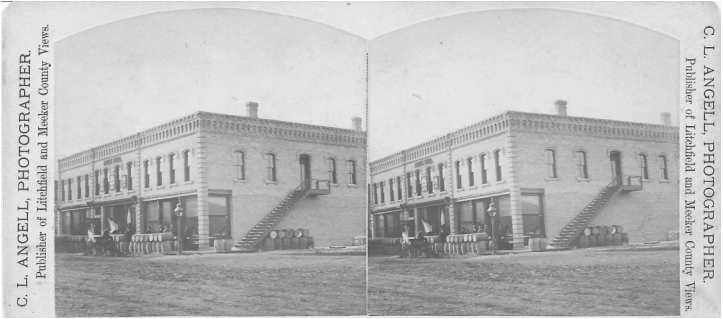
Please cross Sibley Avenue and Third Street to view the next block.

301 Sibley Ave. N. Built as a hospital by Dr. Robertson in 1909. The first floor held retail and the second floor housed patient rooms with electric bell cords and a “well-equipped operating room.” The hospital’s laundry, kitchen, and dining areas were in the basement.

309 Sibley Ave. N. This commercial Queen Anne building served as a bakery for much of its life. Area residents recall attending shorthand and typing classes and eating doughnuts in the basement of this building when the local school burnt down in 1929.

311 Sibley Ave. N. Built in 1932, this art moderne building was the first example of modern architecture on Sibley Avenue. Janousek’s and “whatdoyawant?” are memories of the popular hamburger joint.

Please cross Third Street to view the next block.



231 – 241 Sibley Ave. N., date unknown.

231- 241 Sibley Ave. N. These three structures were identically built. Historical photographs document that the central third of the building block, 237, was constructed first in 1878 with the flanking sides erected in 1885.

241 Sibley Ave. N. Originally housed the City Grocery. In 1906 it became home to the second Ben Franklin franchise in the United States. When the Litchfield highschool needed space after the 1929 fire, home economic classes were held in the basement.

237 Sibley Ave. N. Beginning about 1915, Judge Harris had a confectionary here with a perpetual card game in the rear. A popular soda fountain was located in the building in the 1950s.

231 Sibley Ave. N. The St. Paul & Pacific Railroad sold this lot for \$50 in 1869; in 1885 it sold for \$1050. The structure was built as a bank, owned by E.O. Campbell. His home is on the Litchfield Historic Home Tour.

229 Sibley Ave. N. Built around the turn of the century, this one story building was home to the fabled McGowan Millenry. Most every morning you would see one of the sisters walking down the street to get milk in her robe and nightgown, modeling a new hat.

227 Sibley Ave. N. Nearly identical to its neighbor at 229, this building had its beginnings as a jewelry and optical store. It has always served this trade.



215 - 229 Sibley Ave. N., Litchfield, ca. unknown.

225 Sibley Ave. N. Historically named the Cairncross Block. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F) Hall was located on the second floor of this building and the building to the south at 223 N. Sibley.

223 Sibley Ave. N. Built to match 225, a severe storm damaged the building in the 1980s and the cornice was removed. It is now covered in stucco and has an altered storefront.

219 Sibley Ave. N. In 1946, this Commercial Style building was constructed on the site of an alley closed by the City of Litchfield.

217 Sibley Ave. N. Home to the *Litchfield Independent Review*, the oldest business in the district. It’s predecessor, *The Litchfield Independent*, was launched on May 30, 1876, and was published for decades. It merged with the *Litchfield Review* in 1939 to become the *Litchfield Independent Review*.



217 Sibley Ave. N, Litchfield. Ca 1939

215 Sibley Ave. N. Palm General Merchandise store was built in 1894. The pediment on the storefront was added in the early 1960s when the building became a ladies dress shop.



209 - 215 Sibley Ave. N., Litchfield, ca. 1944.