

# EXCELSIOR SPRINGS HISTORIC RESOURCES

Resource No. 2

1. Property name, present

Property name, historic The Inn; Fowler's Inn

2. Address/location

118 W. Excelsior  
Excelsior Springs, MO

3. Owner's name and address

Robert Whitacre; Lora Kingery  
118 W. Excelsior  
Excelsior Springs, MO 64024

4.  Building Structure  
Site Object

5. Use, present Residence

Use, original Hotel/boarding house

6. Location Map



7. Date of construction (or estimate)

8. Changes

Altered  Addition  Moved

9. Architect/engineer/designer

10. Contractor/builder/craftsman

11. Style: High Style Elements  
 Vernacular

12. Plan Shape Irregular

13. Number of stories 2

14. Roof type and material Hip with cross gable;  
rolled composition sheeting

15. Type of construction Frame

16. Exterior material(s) Stucco; clapboard

17. Foundation material(s) Stone

18. Porch(es) Wrap-around

19. Additional physical description

118 W. Excelsior is a two-story, hip roof structure with cross gables and multiple additions, also with gable roofs. The majority of the building is covered with stucco, although a portion of rear addition still retains its clapboard siding. The 1-story, flat roof porch wraps around the full length of the front (south) and a portion of the west. The porch supports are square, and form triangular arches. The solid balustrade has been covered with stucco, and has a stone coping. On the first story, south elevation, a bay window is underneath the porch roof. The windows have simple surrounds with molded hoods, some with stone sills. The windows are either single or paired, and are 1/1, double-hung. There are two entry doors on the west, and the main entry on the south has wood door with glass lights, as well as sidelights and a transom. A central chimney has been covered with stucco, as has the foundation. The structure is in fair condition.

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20. Description of environment and outbuildings.

118 W. Excelsior is on the northeast corner of Marietta and Excelsior Streets. Several overgrown trees and shrubs are at the foundation. A vacant lot is to the east, and an alley is immediately behind the structure to the north.

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21. History and significance

Local oral history states that this structure was moved from Kansas. It was at this site by 1894, and was added to several times over the years. A majority of the changes occurred before 1905, and others between 1913 and 1926. It was known as Fowler's Inn in the 1900's, and simply The Inn in the 1910's and 1920's. A 1903 article notes of a "new" spring located on the lawn of Fowler's Cottage, known as Fowler's Magnaferro Spring. "The water is very rich in iron but is not as "hard" as water from the other springs, which will give it a decided advantage to invalids with delicate stomachs. It is of undoubted medicinal value." When the additions were made to the structure, they extended over the well, closing it to the public.

William Ellsworth Fowler was a lawyer and probate judge, but is probably best remembered as an author. He wrote a number of poems, generally about local people and occurrences. Upon his death, his wife ran the Inn. It had 20 rooms for guests, with rates in the 1920's ranging from \$2.00 to \$2.25 per day. The building remained in the family's possession at least until the 1960's.

118 W. Excelsior has undergone several alterations and additions, but all appear to have occurred during its historic period. Also, in spite of it being a "moved" structure, it has achieved its significance since its arrival to Excelsior Springs. It is a good example of a residential style of the "Hotel - 2nd class" property type. However, as there were a number of 2nd class hotels, further survey is necessary to determine whether this structure is individually eligible for the National Register. However, a thematic nomination focusing on the many boarding structures could include 118 W. Excelsior. In addition, it would be eligible for local designation. It is doubtful that a district nomination is possible due to the vacant lots between the structure and the nearest historic buildings. Again however, additional survey is necessary before that determination can safely be made.

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22. Sources of information.

Sanborn maps. City directories. "Fowler's Inn" file, Excelsior Springs Historical Museum. Oral interviews.

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23. Prepared by

Deon Wolfenbarger  
Three Gables Preservation  
9550 NE Cookingham Drive  
Kansas City, MO 64157

24. Date of survey

July, 1991

25. On National Register  
Eligible for listing  
 Individual  
District  
Local designation  
 Eligible for local designation

23. Prepared by

Excelsior Springs HPC  
City of Excelsior Springs  
201 East Broadway  
Excelsior Springs, MO 64024

24B. Date of survey

January, 2005

- 25B. On National Register  
Eligible for listing  
 Individual  
District  
Local designation  
 Eligible for local designation