

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Section number _____ Page _____

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 100002141

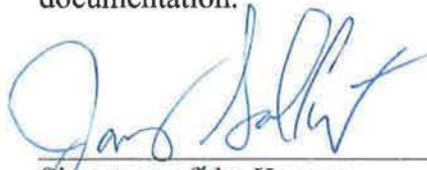
Date Listed: 2/21/2018

Property Name: Waite Grass Carpet Company

County: Winnebago

State: WI

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper
FS

2-21-2018

Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 5: Resource Count

The resource count is hereby changed to **3 contributing buildings**.

Identified as two buildings (North and South) in the nomination, the correct count should be three buildings. Identified as "J" on the site plan, the eastern-most building was historically separated from the others by a street. It was only connected after the period of significance by the non-contributing addition marked as "Q" on the site map. The "South" building comprises "A" and two additions, "B" and "C." The "North" building is made up of "G," "H," "I," and "L."

The Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file

Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

56-2141

Wisconsin Word Processing Format (Approved 1/92)



United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Waite Grass Carpet Company
other names/site number Waite Carpet Company, Lenox Candle Factory

2. Location

street & number 300 East Custer Avenue and 221 East Nevada Avenue N/A not for publication
city or town Oshkosh N/A vicinity
state Wisconsin code WI county Winnebago code 139 zip code 54901

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Daina Tenbaum
Signature of certifying official/Title

1/4/2018
Date

State Historic Preservation Office - Wisconsin
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Waite Grass Carpet Company

Winnebago

Wisconsin

Name of Property

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4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is: entered in the National Register.
- See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
- See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

2.21.2018

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	2	0 buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district		0 sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		0 structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> site	2	0 objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)
INDUSTRY/Manufacturing Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)
Vacant/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick, Steel, Aluminum, Asbestos

roof Metal, Synthetics

other Wood, Tin

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Name of Property

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Industry

Period of Significance

1910 to 1966

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Waite Grass Carpet Company
Name of Property

Winnebago County
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9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 5.187 Acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 377084 4876936
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title:	Matthew Wiedenhoef	date	August 28, 2017
organization	MartinRiley architects engineers	telephone	(920) 267-3600
street & number	2169 Carlton Road	zip code	54904
city or town	Oshkosh	state	WI

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	Susan van Houwelingen, Executive Director	date	August 28, 2017
organization	Oshkosh Housing Authority	telephone	(920) 424-1450
street & number	600 Merritt Avenue	zip code	54901
city or town	Oshkosh	state	WI

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

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Summary

The two, two-story, twentieth-century industrial buildings that make up the Waite Grass Carpet Factory are located north of downtown Oshkosh, Wisconsin, at 1402 Mount Vernon Street. This block of Mount Vernon Street has since been vacated and the 1402 Mount Vernon address, which was originally the front of the building, is no longer utilized (300 E. Custer Street and 221 E. Nevada Avenue are the current addresses of the two buildings). The two buildings consume the majority of a city block and total approximately 130,000 square feet. This primarily residential neighborhood has some commercial and industrial activity. North of the historic Waite Grass Carpet Factory are additional industrial and commercial complexes. The western edge of the parcel runs along Harrison Street, which was historically the location of the Wisconsin Central Railroad. The north boundary of the parcel is East Nevada Avenue, to the south the boundary is East Custer Avenue. The eastern edge of the property runs along Grand Street. East of the historic factory is a square residential lot with a house and garage facing Grand Street.

Built in 1910, the brick and concrete buildings are lacking in any significant stylistic details and were identified as “Astylistic Utilitarian Buildings”¹ in the inventory. The buildings are both comprised of a series of additions, but they were previously one building. In 2011, a previous owner selectively demolished parts of the carpet company’s factory and warehouse complex, creating two separate buildings. Today, they are distinguished as either the North Building (North Waite Plaza) along Nevada Avenue or South Building (Waite Rug Place) along Custer Avenue.

Site

A portion of Mount Vernon Street north of Custer Avenue and west of the building has been vacated by the City of Oshkosh. This portion of Mount Vernon gave the Waite Grass Carpet Company its original address of 1402 Mount Vernon and made the west façade of the building the original front entry to the offices, as is visible in a postcard (see Figure 8). A railroad spur (which no longer exists) can be seen on a Sanborn map as well as several photographs and a postcard. It connected to the Wisconsin Central Railroad line that traveled north-south parallel to Harrison Street, which now represents the western boundary of the site. The Wisconsin Central was leased to the Soo Line Rail Road in 1909, one year before the original factory was constructed, and was later purchased in whole by the Soo Line Rail Road in 1966, which coincidentally was the same time the buildings of the Waite

¹ Wisconsin Historical Society, Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory, “Oshkosh Grass Matting Co.,” Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin, 27426, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Content.aspx?dsNav=Ro:0,N:4294963828-4294963814&dsNavOnly=N:1073-4294963829&dsRecordDetails=R:HI27426>.

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Carpet Company were sold to the Vicrylite Candle Company. If the postcard is correct, the spur would have started north of the property and stopped just west of the southwest corner of the building with a path that ran parallel and along the east side of Mount Vernon between Mount Vernon and the western façade of the building.

Foundations of former buildings along Mount Vernon Street remain and extend to the edge of both the remaining north and south buildings. Records indicate these buildings (Buildings D, E, & F, see Figure 1, key plan under figures section) were used as warehouse spaces. A 1949 Sanborn Fire Insurance map lists Building F as “Baled Grass Warehouse Number 1, Wood Posts 16’ Apart” and lists the eastern portion of F as “Spinning Room.” Buildings D and E are listed on the same map as “Baled Grass Warehouse No. 2” and “Grass W.Ho. No. 3 respectively. The buildings are all listed as containing automatic sprinkler systems; a reasonable precaution considering the contents of the buildings were dried grass. A photo published in 1911 shows the factory building (Building A), the building with the heating plant (Building B) and at least one of the demolished warehouses to the north of the factory (Building F). This places at least one of the warehouse buildings as part of the original construction in 1910. The three warehouse buildings (D, E, & F) were demolished by a previous owner in 2011 separating the factory into two distinct buildings.

Currently the site has no fixed parking or landscape areas. Gravel areas between the north and south buildings are not clearly delineated for traffic versus plantings or other uses. Gravel is visible in areas where vehicles have recently traveled and are obscured by weeds over the remainder of the area. Surfaces are uneven with pot holes and no apparent or distinct plan for use. The existing gravel lot south of building Q (the 1967 block addition to the south building) was installed after the period of significance. At that time this block of Eastman Street was vacated and the truck docks were constructed. It is an area consisting of relatively flat gravel with weeds along both sides and two steel stairs leading to doors at dock height.

Landscaping along the main building facade (south facade of south building) on Custer Avenue is non-existent in a photograph from 1911 which shows only grass and an unpaved street. Currently vegetation along that same facade consists of grass, weeds, and a few volunteer trees or bushes obscuring the west corner of the red brick section at the east end (Building J).

South Building

Building Parts A, B, C, J, and Q on key plan (figure 1)

As it stands today, the South Building has five distinct parts (A, B, C, Q and J, see key plan under Figures 1), all resting on concrete foundations. The largest portion (A), built in 1910, is two stories and faces the vacated block of Mount Vernon Street that dead-ends on the property. This part has a low slope, gabled roof with the ridgeline running east-west and short brick parapets at the east and west

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ends; it originally housed both company offices and the factory. The west parapet is capped with terra cotta tiles while the east parapet has had its tiles removed and the parapet capped with ethylene propylene diene monomer (EPDM) roofing. The second part of the building (B) projects from the northwest corner of the first (A), and is also two stories tall of brick construction. Though vacant today, it originally housed the heating plant for the facility. A large brick chimney still stands connected to the north facade. The third segment (C) of the building is an extension to the east of the first section (A) with similar details. Part C was constructed in 1918 with an additional parapet on the east end of it. It is also two stories tall with brick construction with a low slope, gable roof. It has a short parapet at the east end capped with terra cotta tiles. East of the part C addition is a newer, one-story, concrete block hyphen with loading docks (part Q). This short hyphen constructed in 1967 connects the larger part to a smaller red brick factory section (part J), Pre-1949. The red brick section (J) has a north-south ridgeline with a front-gabled wall that faces south, toward East Custer Street. The red brick section has steel windows instead of wood, and no parapets.

Both floors of the west portion of the building include heavy timber columns, beams, trusses and purlins or joists that support either the floor of the upper story or the roof above. The first floor columns in the west portion of the building have steel plate connections to the beams above. The second floor columns in the west portion of the building have diagonal braces extending to a sub-beam which runs only the distance from brace to brace parallel to the beam above. The 1918 addition to the west portion of the building (part C) is trussed at the roof with steel plate connections from the truss to the columns below. Some columns are missing, mostly in areas of the second floor, and have been bridged with steel rod supports carrying the loads to the column on either side. Presumably these areas may have accommodated pieces of equipment installed over time that did not fit neatly between bays. The columns which remain after the collapse of the roof in the east portion of the building (Building J) have braces below the roof framing on the east and west sides of the columns. Columns show signs of decay where they encounter the exterior brick walls. Roof leaks in all buildings are still active and currently allow water to pour onto these connections further rotting the beams. Some have been braced with steel angles and steel plates or have been sistered with dimensional lumber.

Existing mechanical equipment for heating and cooling consists of unit heaters in some areas of the factory and a ducted forced air furnace in the eastern most office area. Cooling was performed through the use of individual room air conditioners placed in sleeves.

Four sets of rest rooms are apparent within the south building. Two were located on the first floor of the factory at the east and west ends in sections B and J. The other two were located in the office areas of the original building on the first and second floor. The two located in the factory have been gutted and used for other purposes. The rest room in the office area remains, but has been updated with modern fixtures, wall and floor coverings.

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The roof covering on all portions of the south building, which still have a roof is a 60 mil EPDM installed in 2011 by the previous owner (Davis Painting). Although the current owner has the warranty, the roof installation was of poor quality and the detailing at the parapets and roof penetrations has continued to allow water to enter the building since its original installation. The cast iron roof drains on the south side of the building sit loose on the deck and are clamped to the rubber membrane, which is the only thing that holds them in place.

Some original glazed tiles exist on the west parapet of building section A and the east parapet of building section C. The tiles of building A do not match those of building section C. A few glazed tiles are sitting on the first floor in the east portion of the building. Poor flashing and termination conditions of the EPDM roof of building section A continue to allow water to infiltrate the back side of the parapet and will eventually cause its demise if not corrected. Two other parapets on the building (between A & B and between A & C) appear to have lost their glazed tiles and been completely covered with oriented strand board and EPDM. Original roof drains for the original building and the 1918 addition (Building sections A, B, and C) appear to have been internal. The north side of building sections A and C has been reroofed to shed water directly off the roof without the PVC internal drains and cast iron internal drains which are still visible on the interior. Galvanized metal gutters are visible inside some areas at the edge of buildings sections A and C with additional gutters mounted below them. The secondary gutters may have been necessary to collect condensation which may have formed on the original gutters and affected work on the factory floor below. The EPDM roof atop the penthouse for the original elevator appears satisfactory; however, the penthouse door lacks the proper flashings to prevent water infiltration. The roof of the dock door connection (building Q) is also 60 mil EPDM, and was laid by the same contractor that laid the roofs of building sections A, B, and C. Details at edge conditions reflect the same conditions as seen on building sections A, B, and C. The roof of the east building has collapsed leaving only a portion of the west half in place. The roof appears to have been a four ply, built-up bituminous roofing system.

Facade

The exterior of building parts A, B, and C (see figure 1 key plan under figures section) are constructed of cream colored brick placed in a common or American bond pattern with a header course at every seventh row. Two and three inner wythes of brick form the backer wall (depending upon location). Each window opening has a stone sill and a steel lintel with running bond corbeling out at the head. Windows of the first two bays from the southwest corner of building A have arched heads of three courses of rowlock brick followed by a corbelled row of header brick. This is true on both the west and south sides. These two bays represent the windows and doors of the original offices within the Waite Grass Carpet Factory. Engaged brick pilasters form the areas between bays in which the large windows are located on the west portion of the building. The pilasters disappear below the first floor

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windows at a stone sill which runs continuous along the length of the south and west walls. Over two inches of mortar is missing from large portions of the south wall below the sill especially at every other pilaster that has a downspout extending through the wall bringing the roof water down from internal conductors. Mortar has also eroded from other areas across all facades of the south building.

Walls of the east portion of the building (section J) have a noticeable bend or curl to the inside toward the top. Building part J is in poor condition. This portion of the building has had vertical steel columns added to the exterior and covered with brick on the east side, presumably to help stabilize the wall. The roof above this area of the building has collapsed making it possible to see the steel inside the pilasters when viewed from the top of the wall.

Windows on the portion of the building east of the vacated Eastman Street right-of-way (building part J) are steel framed with a single operable section pivoting at the center allowing half of the operable section to swing in and half to swing out. Three sizes occur on the building. The largest is located at the first floor level and contains two units with eight light operable sections in each. Each of the two operable sections have four fixed lights below and eight fixed light above. The upper windows on the east and west are the smallest and consist of two, eight-light operable sections. Four of the six bays on the north and south walls have two eight-light operable sections with a row of four fixed lights beneath. This portion of the south building (Building section J) is in the worst condition. The roof has collapsed and the walls are bowed significantly. The steel windows have been abused and allowed to deteriorate. The steel has expanded and broken into layers of rust.

Four large openings (two on the north side of building section J and two on the south) appear to be the original warehouse door locations. One of these openings has an overhead door for almost the full height of the original opening which was installed after the period of significance. Anchor marks are visible in the brick on either side of the west opening located on the south facade suggesting possible strap hinges for swinging doors. None of the original doors remain. One of the other three has been replaced with a stud wall and plywood. The two openings on the south side have been filled in with modern storefront glass doors, brick, casement windows, and painted plywood.

No lighting is known to have been installed on the exterior of the south building when it was originally constructed in 1910. Oshkosh Gas Light had been operating since 1883 and received a franchise to sell electricity in 1885 bringing electrical service to the area. A photograph from 1911 shows powerlines and poles along the west side of the building. The east portion of the building has a single green porcelain enameled gooseneck lamp on the north side of the building which potentially dates from within the period of significance (1910-1966). A similar fixture is located on the west facade of building B.

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West Facade

The west side of the South Building was originally the front entry to the offices. As visible in a postcard, the name of the company was emblazoned on the west façade between the first and second floors. The gable-front portion of the west façade (Building section A) is divided into six bays, each separated by a brick pilaster that rises from a rough-faced limestone belt course. North of these bays is the two-story wing which housed the heating plant and a large brick chimney.

On the original office/factory portion of the building, each bay of the west elevation is accented by a double row of corbeling above the window openings. At the north end of the first story facade there is a pair of metal single-light doors with metal transom panel and a tall wood sash 18-light fixed window that rests on the belt course. The wall surrounding these doors and window has been partially replaced with red brick. Building parts A, B, and C were originally of cream colored brick. The next three bays to the south have been filled in with brick and have modern vinyl sliding sash windows, one in the first bay, two each in the bays to the south. The third bay from the south end of the façade has the primary entrance. The entrance has a large modern glass and metal storefront unit with two doors, sidelights and transoms. A large wood panel above the transoms covers the remaining space in the opening. South of the entry is a bay with two windows, both set into arched openings that extend below the belt course. One light has been boarded over, while the northern opening, which was originally a doorway, has two replacement one-over-one wood sash windows under the original arched four-light transom. The southernmost bay on this elevation has a single arched opening that extends below the belt course. A single vinyl sash sliding window has been set into the opening and the remainder has been filled in with brick. The first floor of these south two bays represent the original office area within the building.

Each bay on the second story has a limestone sill, and on the larger building (Building part A), three courses of brick corbel tops each bay. The northern addition has three small window openings with original wood sash 10-over-10 single-hung windows without sash weights. The windows are balanced using the opposite sash. As one opens the lower sash, the upper one drops. For the window to be open full both sashes would rest in the middle, half way between the top and the bottom of the frame. Each of the six bays of the larger building have been infilled with brick and either one or two vinyl sash sliding windows but with two exceptions still retain their individual limestone sills. The cornice above these six bays includes more corbeling topped by a band of tile. As mentioned earlier, the pedimented parapet is also capped with terra cotta tile.

The west elevation of the red brick one-story factory building at the east end of the South Building (Building part J) has two window openings in each bay on both the north and the south sides of Building part Q with a taller opening below a shorter opening that reaches the eaves of the roof. The northern half also has an additional half-bay without windows at the northern end. There are two bays

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south of the added docks and all four openings have been boarded over with asbestos panels. The two bays visible north of the dock addition also have their openings boarded over.

South Facade

Moving to the south facade of the 1910 office/factory portion of the building (Building part A) there are 11 bays, all separated by brick pilasters rising from the limestone belt course under the first story windows. These are followed by five additional bays that are part of a later addition to the building completed c. 1918 (Building part C)². At the far west end of the first story there are two bays with arched openings where offices were originally located. The westernmost opening has two replacement wood sash, one-over-one, single-hung windows with four-light wood sash storm windows and a limestone sill. The next bay to the east has a wood sash, one-over-one, light window with a four-light, wood sash, storm window, a boarded over window opening and a one-over-one wood sash window. The third window has an eight-light wood sash storm window. In the third bay there are wood sash, one-over-one, windows with eight-light, wood sash storm windows on either side of a partially boarded over one-over-one window. The fourth bay from the west has been partially filled in with bricks but also has two historic one-over-one wood sash windows and a modern glazed metal door with wood framing. All of the remaining 12 bays on the first story of the factory building have been boarded over with asbestos panels. On the second story, all 16 bays have been boarded over with asbestos panels. From the interior, some original sashes are visible through holes in the asbestos panels.

On the south side, connecting the two older brick factory buildings, is a one-story concrete block addition (Building part Q, see key plan) constructed in 1967. This addition has modern metal single-light entry doors at either end. Between the entry doors are five loading docks under a wide overhanging eave. Each loading dock has a modern overhead door. This building was constructed in 1967, after the then-owner requested that Eastman Street be vacated north of East Custer Avenue in order to expand their operations.³ When the street was closed and the loading dock was built, it connected the two brick factory buildings (Building parts C and J).⁴

The easternmost portion of the south elevation of the South Factory is the one-story red brick factory building with a south-facing gable roof (Building part J). Constructed of red brick, each bay is separated by a brick pilaster. There are two levels of windows in this building. Each bay has a large

² *American Contractor* 39, no. 48 (November, 1918): 42, 47, accessed July 28, 2015, <https://books.google.com/books?id=PCZYAAAAYAAJ&dq=american+contractor+november+1918&q=waite#v=onepage&q=waite&f=false>.

³ *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, January 5, 1967, accessed August 7, 2015, <http://newspapers.com/image/23948374>.

⁴ *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, February 4, 1967, accessed August 5, 2015, <http://newspapers.com/image/23965394>.

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boarded-over opening with a concrete sill above the concrete foundation. The second bay in from the west and the second bay in from the east have modern glazed metal doors added. These bays also have much taller openings, and the eastern bay has been filled in with wood panels, while the western bay has been partially bricked-in and has an added vinyl sash sliding window unit. Bolt holes and discoloration of the brick at the former edges of these openings represent anchor points for strap hinges of what were probably the original out-swing truck doors. Directly under the eaves of each bay is a second, shorter window opening that gets progressively taller as the bays converge to the center of the building's elevation. The third bay in from the west has the only upper window that has not been boarded over on this elevation. The original metal sash eight-over-four light window is visible.

East Facade

The east facade of the one-story factory building is divided into eight bays separated by brick buttresses (Building part J). Originally this wall had brick pilasters, however steel columns were added to the exterior and surrounded by brick of a slightly different color at a later date presumably to help stabilize the wall which curves in as it rises to be approximately eight inches out of plumb with the bottom. Each bay has a tall window with poured-in-place concrete sill and poured-in-place concrete head at ground level and a second smaller window above that reaches the location where the eaves once stood. The roof no longer exists over this portion of the building. The upper windows have poured-in-place sills and wood lintels. All of the openings on this elevation have been boarded over with asbestos panels except for the lower window in the northernmost bay. This opening has an original metal sash multi-light window. In 2013 a summer storm heavily damaged the roof and interior structure of this building. Some structural repairs have been performed, but more than half of the building is not covered by a roof, and the condition of the remaining roof, walls, windows, floor, and structural frame is poor.

On the 1918 addition to the office/factory building (Building part C), the east elevation is interrupted by the 1967 one-story loading dock addition (Building part Q). As with the south elevation, each bay on this side of the building is separated by a brick pilaster that sits on the low limestone belt course. Each bay is topped with rows of brick corbeling. The southern two first-story bays are not covered by the addition, but both openings are boarded over with asbestos panels. The remaining first story bays are interrupted by and covered by the dock addition. On the second story, all six bays are visible. Four of these bays are covered with metal siding. The bays furthest north and south are visible, but windows in these two bays have been replaced with non-matching sashes. Each opening has a pair of wood sash 15-over-15 light, single-hung windows. Based on a 1911 photograph of the building, some appear to be original windows.⁵ Above the windows is a band of brick corbeling that wraps around the building and the pedimented parapet.

⁵ *Only Oshkosh* (Oshkosh, Wisconsin: Hicks Publishing Company, 1911), accessed July 29, 2015, http://box2.nmtvault.com/Oshkosh/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=8578adfd-5747-46e8-9241-

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The east elevation of the building at the northwest corner (Building part B) is brick with three rows of windows in a two story building. Four window openings are visible on the second floor; the first two to the south are sheet metal framed tilt-outs with the fulcrum at the midpoint between the head and sill and frosted wire glass. The frames are filled with concrete, which is visible due to the deterioration of the original sheet metal frames. A metal tag on the interior indicates that they were constructed in Milwaukee and have a UL listing for fire resistance. Tags found on the windows read as follows: "Consolidated Sheet Metal Works, Patented May 2, 1905, Milwaukee, Wis." Also a UL tag on the windows reads: "Window frame for wired glass constructed under supervision of Underwriters Laboratories." The two openings to the north are covered with wood. The first floor has three openings over three similar openings and there is one additional opening to the north that spans from the lower window to a point midway through the upper windows of the first floor. The three lower openings have been filled with concrete masonry units. The three upper windows on the first floor are intact and are also constructed of sheet metal, concrete fill, and wire glass. The northern most opening contains plywood and a deteriorated wood window sash without a corresponding frame. Two thin diagonal lines of asphalt exist on this side of the building suggesting a roof was once attached to this side of the building as well. A 1949 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map could not confirm the existence of another attached building.

North Facade

At the east end of the north facade is the one-story red brick factory building (Building part J). Unlike on the east wall of this portion of the building the brick pilasters on this elevation have not been modified into buttresses. The second and fifth bays in from the east have taller openings on the lower level similar to those on the south elevation. In the second bay there is a modern overhead garage door, however the opening in the fifth bay has been boarded over. The remaining lower level windows and all of the upper window openings have been boarded over with asbestos panels, but still retain their concrete sills. From the interior, glazing is visible in many of these bays.

Moving west to the one story dock addition, there is a single metal glazed pedestrian-door at the east end under a metal roof canopy at grade level. Centered on the concrete block wall is a projected portion of the building with a flat overhang that shelters two modern overhead garage doors. The two dock doors fill the majority of a single opening in the concrete masonry wall. The remaining area between and surrounding the dock doors is filled with wood.

Further west, on the five-bay addition (Building part C) and the original office/factory (Building part A) there have been multiple alterations. The decorative corbeling above the windows on both floors resumes and once again each bay is separated by a brick pilaster rising from the low limestone belt course. Most of the second story openings have their original limestone sills, though some have been

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cut and brick below them removed to create doors and other openings. On the first story, the first four bays from the east have window openings covered by metal siding. From the interior steel studs are visible behind the metal siding and the windows and some of the sills and brick have been removed. The fifth bay has a modern overhead garage door and metal glazed pedestrian-door. Metal sheeting on wood framing fills in the remainder of the opening. The five remaining first story window openings have all been covered with metal siding. From the interior it can be determined that none of the windows exist and the metal panels are held in place with steel studs. On the second story most bays have been covered with metal siding, however some original windows exist. The second and fourth bays in from the east have been enlarged below the sill to accommodate doors, which are not intact. In the fifth bay there is a pair of original wood 16-light doors and a small covered window opening. The next bay to the west has a pair of original wood sash, 15-over-15, single-hung windows. Moving down to the ninth bay from the east there is another pair of original, 15-over-15, wood single-hung sash windows and an aluminum storefront door and frame with 15-light transom that leads to the metal fire escape. In the tenth and final bay before reaching the north addition to the office/factory building, there is a set of three original 15-over-15 wood sash double-hung windows which again lack window weights or window pockets and which utilize the opposite sash as the counterweight as is true for most windows in Building parts A and C.

The north wall of the northwest portion of the building (Building part B) is brick with one set of modern double doors in an opening which has a jack arched head. Four window openings are visible on the second floor. One is boarded over, but the original windows are visible in the other three. These windows are sheet metal framed tilt-outs with the fulcrum at the midpoint between the head and sill. The frames are filled with concrete which is visible due to the deterioration of the original sheet metal frames. As described earlier a metal tag on the interior indicates that they were constructed in Milwaukee and have a UL listing for fire resistance similar to those on the east wall. The chimney that served the long since abandoned coal fired boilers is located on the exterior wall of the northwest corner of the building. The chimney is brick, placed in a common or American bond pattern, articulated by an eleven course corbeled top. A wide band of asphalt is visible across the north wall of building part B dividing the brick into two colors and clearly delineating the location of the roof of the former warehouse building which was once attached to it (Building part F).

Interior

Interior factory spaces are largely open areas without subdivision. Exterior walls and some interior walls within these areas consist largely of brick and, in some cases, block which has been painted. Paint also covers columns, beams, purlins, joists, trusses, and the undersides of the second floor and roof decks.

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Windows in many areas are covered on the interior. The glazing compounds in the windows themselves may also contain asbestos. Office walls are of wood studs and paneling.

Flooring is a combination of concrete and wood. Existing concrete floors are cracked, pitted and uneven. The finish first floor heights vary from west to center to east (building parts A, B and C to Q and to J). The second floor occurs only in the west portion of the building (building parts A, B and C) and is composed of a 1 1/2" wood subfloor and a 3/4" wood finish floor except in the northwest portion of the building (building part B) which features a concrete second floor. The existing wood floor and subfloor have deterioration and wear issues. The existing concrete second floor is severely pitted and uneven with holes where various pipes or equipment may have extended through the floor. The floor level (floor height) changes by several inches across the floor.

Lighting in the west portion of the building contains a mixture of fluorescent and sodium halide fixtures. The offices contain fluorescent fixtures both lay-in and pendent styles.

The center portion of the building (building part Q) has high-bay sodium halide light fixtures that are currently operational and strips of fluorescent fixtures which have been abandoned.

The east portion of the building has some remaining high-bay sodium halide fixtures. Most of the lighting in this section of the building was destroyed when the roof collapsed. The remaining fixtures are currently exposed to the elements and are not operational. These fixtures do not date from within the period of significance (1910-1966).

A 1918 photograph of the west portion of the building taken on the second floor (Building C) shows green porcelain enameled pendent fixtures similar to the single gooseneck exterior fixture found on the eastern portion of the building (Building part J). None of the fixtures currently found on the interior of building match those of the photograph.

First Floor

In the southwest corner of the original portion of the South Building (Building part A) are the original offices as well as additional offices and restrooms. The offices have had engineered wood panels applied to the walls and acoustic-tile drop ceilings added below the original bead board panel ceilings or below the underside of the second floor depending upon the location. In most of the offices the ceiling tiles have been removed to expose modern wiring, plumbing and duct work. The asbestos tile flooring has been removed from the offices with concrete floors. In the restrooms on this floor there is ceramic tile flooring and wainscoting. The area of the original offices (two most southerly bays and two most westerly bays) have luan over a 2 1/4" maple floor resting on wood sleepers. The sleepers themselves sit directly on the earth below. Both flooring and luan subflooring has deteriorated, in

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some areas beyond recognition. Although modern dimensional lumber framing is present in the original office area creating subdivisions that were not originally present, the ceiling above would indicate that the original office may have been one larger room, or possibly one larger room with two offices. The original exterior door to the offices was located on the west side of the building (1402 Mount Vernon) in an opening which still exists, but has been modified into a window with the lower half filled with masonry. The doorway can be seen on a postcard of the building which shows the west and south facades. The original transom window above the doors still remains. Judging by the age of the windows this modification most likely took place within the period of significance (1910-1966). One bay within the office area contains four brick walls plastered on the exterior and a vault door. The plaster is in poor condition, and the brick beneath is of a redder color. Mortar between the bricks is soft and turns easily to dust if rubbed. The steel vault door and inner door are intact and the name of the manufacturer is still visible. The door is open, and the bolts are in the lock position. The front of the safe door is in fair to poor condition and reads "Halls Safe & Lock Co. Cincinnati & Chicago." Interior of the vault is empty with the exception of some wood shelves.

The newer offices are installed on top of a new concrete floor which was installed in 1967 placing them beyond the period of significance. Some of these offices overlap and obscure the area which originally housed the freight elevator for the company. The elevator penthouse still remains on the roof and contains the hoist beams and three pulleys (two larger and one smaller) for hoisting the cab. The location of the penthouse suggests that the elevator was originally north of the north wall of the vault. There is a stair located on the north side of the north vault wall currently, which may have been between the elevator and the vault. If this was the case, the original framing for the stairway has since been rebuilt with modern dimensional lumber and steel studs.

In the larger factory area and the two-story addition to this building (Building parts A and C) there is a poured concrete floor divided into six bays by square wood columns. Some columns have steel plating applied presumably to prevent fork-lift damage or due to failure of the column. Overhead beams and purlins frame the second floor. In some locations, rotted wood beams have been reinforced with steel beams or plates.

From the northeast corner of the two-story factory building (Building part C) there is a modern overhead door that enters into the northwest corner of the loading dock addition (Building part Q). The one-story loading dock addition has poured concrete floors including a ramp along the north wall that descends to the east, leading into the one-story factory building. The east and west walls of this addition are the historic brick of the earlier factory buildings. The historic openings on these buildings have been filled with wood panels, concrete masonry or brick. The north and south walls are constructed of concrete block and have all modern pedestrian-doors and overhead dock doors. A floor scale in the northwest corner of the room is still intact. Four steel columns run east to west

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approximately 17' from the north wall carrying a steel beam that holds bar joists with metal B deck above. There are five dock doors and two pedestrian doors on the south side and two dock doors and one pedestrian door on the north side.

In the oversized red brick one-story factory building at the east end of the complex (Building part J), the wide open space has a poured concrete floor with short concrete piers and square wood columns some of which are drastically askew from their piers. Steel beams have been added for additional structural support between the east wall and the eastern most row of posts. As indicated earlier, the east wall of the building is substantially out of plumb from top to bottom. In most of the bays the original metal sash windows exist, but the sashes and glazing have been painted. On the west wall a modern overhead door was installed to provide access to the loading dock addition. Along the south wall a wood frame addition was constructed to accommodate offices with a wood mezzanine above. The office rooms do not run the full width of the south wall and a wood stair at the east leads to the mezzanine. The walls are covered with wood paneling and include multiple modern doors and a vinyl sash one-over-one-window. These offices were heated with a high efficiency forced air furnace installed in the 1990s according to the manufacture date of the equipment. The construction of these offices does not date from the period of significance (1910-1966).

The two-story addition at the west end of the office/factory building's north elevation (Building part B) has a dirt floor with a concrete curb in the western portion of the space and a concrete floor in the eastern portion of the space. A fire door and concrete block wall divides the space. Small restrooms are located on the east wall along with a utility sink installed by the previous owner.

Second Floor

Only the original office/factory building, the addition and the north wing have second levels (Building parts A, B, and C). In the office/factory building the space is largely open, divided only by square wood columns. The former window openings on the east wall of the original building have been cut down to create openings to the 1918 addition (Building part C). Building part C has several trusses at the east end below the roof and the purlins span in the opposite direction from that of the rest of the building.

Offices were added at the west end of the second floor of Building part A after 1967. These rooms were constructed with modern wood framing, and have engineered wood paneled walls. Holes remain through the brick and block in-fill where air conditioning units were added in the 1970s. The construction of these offices matches that of the newer offices on the floor below. Wood 2x4 stud partitions covered in wood veneer 4x8 sheets of paneling. Doors are hollow core wood doors with ranch casing and base moldings. Ceilings are absent in many rooms or partially collapsed in others, but were 12x12 inch tiles and 24x24 inch tiles on wood furring strips with batt insulation above. 4'

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fluorescent light fixtures still remain in some areas. Condition of these offices matches the poor condition of those on the first floor. Roof leaks have allowed water to enter and stand in many areas rotting walls, ceilings, and flooring. Access to the second story is granted through an enclosed staircase next to the offices on the south wall or by a staircase made of modern dimensional lumber at the eastern end of the office/factory addition. The wood strip floor is intact; however, most of the areas have been severely damaged. Areas of the second floor have rotted away and are not safe for human traffic, let alone heavier loads. Other areas have buckled, warped, and been damaged by use. Much of the existing finish floor does not retain enough of its upper layer (the portion above the tongue) to be sand-able for reuse. A change in elevation of approximately three inches exists between the wood floor of Building A and the concrete floor of Building part B.

On the north wall, in the third bay east of the offices, is a doorway that leads to the north wing of the building. The north wing of the office/factory building (Building part B) is a large open space with a severely uneven and pocked concrete floor. A metal fire door separates the addition from the original building. In the southeast corner of the room, wood framing was used to create two restrooms. The ceiling joists in this room span north to south and have been reinforced and/or replaced with modern wood laminated veneer lumber (LVL) beams. A concrete block wall has been erected around a large steel flue and several of the new LVL beams rest on this new wall. The wall sits on the existing concrete floor, but it does not continue to the first floor, thus transferring the weight of this portion of the roof to the existing second floor. Two large metal tanks remain in the room. Several holes are cut in the floor.

North Building Buildings Parts G, H, I, K, L, M, N, O, P, R on key plan (figure 1)

The North Building is divided into nine distinct parts, constructed over a period of time from c. 1920 to c. 1980. The additions to the east are the most recent, completed after the building was sold to the Vicrylite Candle Company, which later became Lenox Candles in 1968. After the transfer of the property from the Waite Carpet Company alterations, updates and additions were completed in many parts of the old factory complex.

Each part of the North Building sits on a concrete foundation. Most parts of the North Building are constructed of either brick or concrete block with wood framing, but one addition (Building part R) has metal framing and metal siding. A variety of roof systems are represented in the North Building including gabled, low-slope, shed and arched. The roof of the southeast building (Building part R) is a low slope, exposed fastener trapezoidal panel on steel purlins. The roof of the northeast building (Building part K) is corrugated metal on bow-trusses with corrugated fiberglass panels as skylights, but the roof and framing is not immediately visible from the interior due to a chicken wire ceiling

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covered with a thin layer of batt insulation. The fiberglass roof panels provide light to the area above the chicken wire, but no longer provide light to the floor of the building itself. Flashing details along the intersection of building parts K and R are poorly constructed. Light is visible from the interior of building part R and water pours in when it rains. Roof curbs and flashings at roof penetrations leak. Some alterations have been completed in the last five years, including some new egress doors and windows.

The roof coverings on buildings parts G, L, O and N are a 60 mil EPDM installed in 2011. Although the owner has the warranty, the roof installation was of poor quality and the detailing at the parapets and roof penetrations are not installed to a professional standard. The roof of Building part P is partially 60 mil EPDM of the same date and partially three tab shingle on a sloped shed roof. Building part I has a slope of less than 3:12, but was still covered in shingles when the roofing was performed in 2011. Portions of EPDM are loose or have fallen away from their original locations. The transition from shingle to EPDM roofing between Building parts P and G has torn away from its original position leaving the wood nailers exposed to the elements. Portions of the roof of building part H are missing and the portions that remain no longer have a viable roof covering. The roof of building part H has the leftovers of older roofing membranes that are no longer functioning strewn about and still partially in place. For all roofs, the roof penetrations, terminations and flashings at roof penetrations are poorly executed and subject to failure. Roofs of building parts K and R are exposed fastener metal panels; part K has a corrugated pattern and part R has a more modern trapezoidal panel configuration.

The substrate on the roof of building part G was originally 1 ½" plank on timber purlins, but large sections of it have been replaced with oriented strand board which is visible from the interior. The roof framing over building part H is conventional wood joists with x bracing in some locations and a ¾" tongue and groove plank which is too rotten to traverse. A larger section of the center roof area is missing. Joists are broken and falling, and the deck is not salvageable. Building parts I and P are also conventional wood joist construction, but with plywood decking. Building part L has a wood truss structure and presumably a plank wood deck. Liner panels on the interior of the building cover the deck and prevent verification. The thickness is therefore also unknown. Building parts O and N have a metal bar-joist structure with metal 1 ½" B-Deck. As previously indicated, Building part K has a metal bow-truss structure with exposed fastener metal roofing. Building part R has a pre-engineered steel structure with steel purlins covered with an exposed fastener trapezoidal panel.

Concrete floor slabs still remain north and west of the western most buildings representing portions of the building that were demolished by the previous owner. The demolition of building part F has left building part H without a western wall. As mentioned above only portions of the roof of building part H remain.

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High-bay fluorescent fixtures are located in building parts G and L. High-bay HID fixtures are located in building part N and most fixtures are currently operational. Building part O contains strip fluorescent fixtures on both the upper and lower floors. Building parts I and P have no light fixtures. Buildings parts K and R have high-bay HID sodium and metal halide fixtures, which are currently operational.

Facade

Building part R represents the last major addition and includes an area constructed over the vacated block of Eastman Street. Existing siding on building part R is original painted steel siding on girts connected to steel structure. Areas of the siding have been damaged by vandals attempting to break into the building. Sections have been cut open exposing insulation to the elements.

Building part G and portions of building parts H, I, and N are constructed of red and cream colored brick placed in a common bond or American bond pattern with a header course at every seventh row. Two to four inner wythes of brick form the backer wall depending upon location along the given wall. These represent the oldest walls of the north building.

There are no existing windows in building parts G or H (two of the four buildings listed as historically significant). There are also no windows in building parts K and R. All of the existing doors in building parts G, H, I, K, L, N, P and R, are modern hollow metal doors in hollow metal frames.

No lighting is known to have been installed on the exterior of the historic buildings (Building parts G, H, I, and L) when they were originally constructed. The date of construction for building part L is late enough that it is more likely exterior lighting would be present (1955), but no photograph or plans have been found which show the full elevations of Building part L. Also the "borrowing" of walls from buildings which no longer exist means that the primary façade of the North Building which is visible from Nevada Avenue and visible from Harrison Street contains at least portions of walls that originally faced the interior of their respective buildings.

Currently the south and west egress doors of building parts L, N, O and P have a duel head flood lamp fixture above the doors which date from beyond the period of significance. Existing lighting on building parts K and R are modern in appearance.

West Facade

On the west facade, the exterior wall of a one story shed-roof building (Building part H) is missing and leaves building part H open exposing the steel beams and trusses of the structure to the elements. This occurred when the building to its west was demolished in 2011 by the previous owner. The west

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wall of building part H probably never existed. Judging by the lack of a foundation wall along this portion of the building and the smooth transition of the concrete floor from building part H to the former building to the west (Building part F), Building part H was open to the interior of the building directly to its west.

At the south end, a portion of the brick wall of the demolished building part F is intact and helps to partially close off the west side of building part I. A single window opening on building Part I has been covered with wood and the brick has been partially covered with concrete plaster. Plywood sheathing covers a doorway at the south end of the elevation. The window on the west wall of building part I may have originally been three units wide similar to those of building parts A and C on the South Building. One set of sashes may have been removed at a later date and the wall cut down to create the current opening. There is no door in the opening, but differences in mortar and brick color illustrate that the brick below the window at the edge of the opening has obviously been toothed-in.

Of the remaining two windows in the former three unit window, only three sashes remain. The window has three of the six, 10 over 10, double-hung wood sashes which are counter balanced with one another via a pulley and chain in the same manner as those of building parts A, B, and C in the South Building. This window sits in a wall that was originally part of the building to the west (demolished building part F). Consequently the stone window sill is on the interior side of building part I and the wood portion of the frame that would have been inside is exposed to the elements. The slope of wood and stone at the base of the window is also toward the interior of building part I allowing water to drain to the inside of the window sill and to the inside of the building. The west wall of part I and the remainder of the window within it therefore date to the original construction in 1910, which included Building part F. This opening has a steel header similar to those of building parts A and C in the South Building.

Further to the south and east, the west wall of building part L is similar to the east with pilasters visible on the exterior, but has two windows of different sizes and a single pedestrian door. One window is the same size as the windows on the east wall; the other is the same height, but half the width. Both are fixed steel windows with an operable hopper of the same size, but the hopper (or possibly ventilation duct) is missing from the larger unit. Lines within the masonry indicate that there was once an opening in the last bay to the north large enough for vehicular traffic. This would have led to building part M prior to its demolition. All three walls of this building have a short parapet and all were painted by the previous owner. A single pedestrian door exists on the west wall of building part L.

A small section of the west wall of building part O occurs and is visible when standing on the north side of building part G. Building parts O and N were both constructed after Eastman Street was

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vacated and after the period of significance. The portion of the wall attributable to building part O is borrowed from the former Building part E, but has several revised courses at the top of the wall which are of modern concrete masonry construction. Like building part O, the west wall of building part N is borrowed from the demolished building part E. This piece of wall is constructed of brick and appears to have been part of the former building that stood to the west of building part N. Some concrete masonry construction is visible on this section filling former window openings, door openings and at the parapet. Four openings are evenly spaced along the upper portion of the wall and appear to have been windows. These are also visible from the interior of part N and the sills, which now face inward, are still intact. Another area of in-fill is at the base of the wall and is clearly a former doorway. No openings remain in the section of the wall associated with building part N, but a single modern overhead door exists on the west side of part O with a steel head. Like the north walls of parts H and G, the west wall of part N has been painted by the previous owner on what is now the exterior side.

There is a small section of building part K with a western elevation. The elevation has no windows or doors. It is concrete masonry at the lower section of the wall and corrugated metal panel on the upper half from the roof eave to the crown of the bow truss roof, both of which are painted. A small ventilation hatch is located on the upper portion of the wall in the center of the building.

South Facade

Starting at the west end of the south facade there is a one-story brick room with a shed roof (Building part I). This room houses a well which is still active, is said to be 300 feet in depth and was supposedly used for the fire suppression (sprinkler) system. The south wall of part I contains one opening with a steel sash multi-light window with a concrete sill believed to be original to the structure. The steel window is a 20-pane, fixed window with an operable center, hinged in the middle. The steel window has surface rust, but the base of the frame visible from the exterior appears to be intact. The interior could not be viewed due to oriented strand board which has been secured over the opening on that side. The exterior sill is concrete and is in poor condition. Deterioration to the exterior face of the sill is extensive with rebar exposed to the elements and the sill no longer protrudes beyond the face of the brick at the east side. The south wall of Building part I is of a cream brick with some red brick mixed in.

Moving east past this small room is a second modern metal door with a single light and a pair of replacement, one-over-one, double-hung vinyl sash windows with solid transom panels and a limestone sill located on the south wall of building part H. The south wall of building part H is constructed of cream colored brick in the middle and bottom portions of the wall and red brick for the upper third. There is a parapet with a terra cotta tile coping.

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Moving to the east, there is a one-story concrete block addition with shed roof (Building part P). The south elevation of this portion of the building has two bays, each with a pair of vinyl sash sliding windows. East of these windows is a modern metal egress door with single light and another pair of vinyl sash sliding windows. Building part P is low in height compared to the others making up the north building and is constructed as a lean-to addition to building part G sharing walls with parts L, G, and H. The existence of a ramp on the interior suggests that the vinyl window closest to building part L (farthest to the east) was previously an overhead door or door way large enough for vehicular traffic. Masonry joints are visible on either side of this window and extend approximately 40 inches above the window's masonry opening.

A 1955 one-story concrete block wing projects from the south elevation and has an arched roof with parapet (Building part L). The south elevation of this wing has an opening at the west end that has been filled in with concrete blocks.

East of the projecting wing (Building part L), there is another metal sash multi-light window on a two-story concrete block wall (Building part O). There are two existing openings with windows, one on the first and one on the second floor. The windows are metal framed with 12 divided lights. There is a stair with railings that leads to a pedestrian door at the first floor level and an opening with an overhead door at dock-height. Building part O is constructed within the former right-of-way of Eastman Street which gives it a date at or beyond the date of the street closure in 1967 and beyond the date of the period of significance (1910-1966).

East of this wall is a one-story addition clad with metal siding (Building part R). A small alcove next to the concrete block portion of the building allows room for a fire hydrant and alarm bell. East of the alcove is a modern metal egress door with a single light and a metal overhead garage door. The level of the exterior grade in this location frequently allows ponding water to enter Building R around both the egress door and the overhead door. Past this garage door the elevation steps back, where it continues without interruption until it reaches a flush metal egress door. At the eastern corner of the elevation there is tall modern overhead garage door.

East Facade

At the north end of the east facade there are two modern overhead garage doors at dock height on the bow roof building (Building part K), separated by concrete block pilasters. South of the overhead doors is a modern metal glazed access door at ground level. Moving south there is a large gable-roof metal-sided building (Building part R). This building also has two modern overhead garage doors at dock height facing east. Currently no windows exist on the east end of the north building (Building parts K and R). Existing walls of building part K are painted concrete masonry. Cracks and damage exist, but they do not affect the functionality of the building. Vandalism has removed the downspouts

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from the building. Four concrete piers sit at the intersection of the two buildings and rise to the same elevation as the finish floor height. No equipment is mounted to them.

A very small section of the east wall of building part O is visible from ground level in an alcove created when building part R was constructed. Building part O is two stories and significantly taller than building part R allowing the upper portion of the east wall to be exposed. Like much of the building the wall was painted by the previous owner in 2010 and 2011. The paint remains intact on building part O but is peeling from some of the brick buildings. There are no openings in the east wall of building part O or building N to its north.

Immediately to the south and west of building part O is the east wall of building part L. Like building part O, this building is constructed of load bearing concrete masonry units. Both the east and west walls of building part L have pilasters in a repetitive manner running north to south. The east wall of building part L has four openings for windows and one opening with an overhead door. Building part L has four fixed steel windows on its east wall. Two have an operable hopper consisting of four panes in the center. Two have ventilation ducts in the same location in the center. All four are subdivided into 20 panes. A single modern overhead door exists on the east wall of building part L in the second bay from the south. The overhead door is not centered in the bay, but is instead alongside of the pilaster to its south. The wall is 27 courses of 8" concrete masonry units giving it a height of approximately 18 feet including the small parapet.

The east wall of Building part I is of a cream brick with some red brick mixed in. The east wall of part I contains one opening with a flush hollow metal framed door.

A small area of exposed east exterior wall for building part N exists on the north side along Nevada Avenue. This wall is also constructed of concrete masonry and is painted the same color as the others previously mentioned. There are no openings in this wall of part N.

North Facade

Facing East Nevada Street at the west end of the property is the north wall of the shed roof portion of the building that has no west wall to enclose it (Building part H). The first two feet of brick at the far west end is actually a remnant of the former building to the northwest, which was demolished by the previous owner (Building part D), and is the only remaining piece of building part D other than the floor slab and foundations. Cream colored brick is visible under the peeling paint and at the two foot mark there is a joint that runs from foundation to roof after which the brick is red in color. Continuing to the east the next section of wall is of red brick and this section of wall continues across both building parts H and G. One of the oldest portions of the North Building, (Building part G) was shown as a warehouse in the 1949 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. Featuring stepped brick parapets that

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hide a gabled roof covered in ethylene propylene diene monomer (E.P.D.M.), this building has only one floor, but it has openings at the second floor level and has had its entire second story openings filled in with brick or block. This wall is older than the building it now serves; also the exterior side of the wall is the former interior side of the now demolished building to its north (Building part E).

Two walls of building part E remain, one serving as the exterior wall of building part G and the other serving as the exterior wall of building part N. Second floor openings exist on both walls and it is likely that building part E was a two story structure. Holes in the existing slab for columns align with filled regions in the brick wall at an elevation of approximately nine feet which could have provided a floor to floor height of roughly 10 feet in the demolished building part E. On this wall is a shorter one-story white concrete block addition with shed roof approximately six feet wide and twelve feet in length. This block building formerly housed the fire protection riser for the sprinkler system in building part H. The room is empty with the exception of an eight inch water main which is capped directly above the floor.

The building was constructed by the owner directly previous to the Housing Authority after the northern most buildings were demolished. The structure does not have its own letter designation, and is considered part of building part G since that is the only way to enter the structure. The structure has no exterior openings. East of this is a modern metal egress door with a single light. Above the east corner of this small addition is a window opening that has been filled in with concrete blocks. The north wall of building part G has five existing masonry openings from floor to a height nine feet above the floor and approximately 13' in width. Four of these openings have been filled with wood stud framing and plywood. The fifth opening on the north wall of building part G contains one overhead door in a similar sized opening. Two pedestrian doors have been framed into two additional openings that were once larger. One is at the east end of the north wall of G and the other is at the west end of the north wall of part G as previously mentioned. The door at the east end has been framed in with conventional wood stud lumber and some cement-board siding. The door at the west has enclosed the remainder of its opening with concrete masonry units. The egress door on the east end is a modern metal replacement with a half light. In the second story there are outlines of small window openings with flat arch or jack arch lintels that have been filled in with brick. As indicated earlier, the brick walls on the north side of parts H and G have been painted on what is currently their exterior side.

Moving east along the north elevation is a two-bay-wide, concrete block addition constructed in the former right-of-way of Eastman Street (Building part N). The bays are separated by a concrete block pilaster. On the west bay there is a modern metal single-light egress door and in the east bay there is a modern overhead garage door. The location in the right-of-way gives this portion of the building a date of 1967 or later based on City records for the street vacation.

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Further to the east is a short one-story hyphen (the north portion of building part R) with metal siding and gable roof that connects to a large bow roof building (Building part K). This portion of building part R is also constructed in the former right-of-way of Eastman Street. Centered in the hyphen is a modern metal egress door with single light.

The north elevation of the one-story bow roof addition (Building part K) has no openings and is missing the downspouts which formerly connected to the gutter at the eave. The walls are non-load bearing concrete masonry units between load bearing steel columns.

Interior

All floors including the second floor of building part O are of concrete. The only exception is the partial wood mezzanine floor of building Part G, and the wood floor of the toilet rooms in building Part N. Ceilings in all of the spaces are unfinished with exposed decking or insulation except for building part L, which has a metal liner panel covering the underside of the deck.

Unit heaters exist in the eastern and central portions of the building (Building parts N, O, K and R) but are not operational. Currently there is no mechanical equipment to bring in outside air. High-bay fixtures are located in both building parts K and R and are currently operational. Building part L is currently heated with unit heaters to a temperature of 45 degrees in the winter and used by the Housing Authority for temporary storage and some minor maintenance work.

Two separate water services enter the building, a newer service on the north side from Nevada Avenue and an older service from the abandoned block of Mount Vernon which the City of Oshkosh intends to abandon as part of any renovation project to the site. Abandonment of the older service will require the modification of the sprinkler system in the north building. Currently three of the four risers are connected to the older water service. All would need to be redirected to the new service on Nevada.

First Floor

In the southwest corner of the North Building, the westernmost exterior entrance on the elevation opens to a small room with a 300' deep well (Building part I). The Oshkosh Housing Authority renewed the well permit, but is not expecting to use the well in the future and will need to have it properly abandoned and capped in accordance with Department of Natural Resources regulations. The interior of the well room is unornamented with exposed brick walls, concrete floor, and a conventionally framed roof with joists of modern dimensional lumber. A roof hatch approximately 30" wide and 48" long is located in the southeast quadrant of the single slope shingle roof. A door on the north wall of this room opens to part of the historic warehouse (Building part H).

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The westernmost addition to the warehouse (Building part H) is one-story with brick walls, however the west wall is absent as described earlier. Structural steel trusses sit atop steel columns on the west end and anchor to the brick wall on the east. The trusses support conventionally framed wood rafters of dimensional lumber. The rafters are embedded in the brick walls at the north and south ends. One of the trusses is damaged. A large portion of the roof is missing in the center of the building. The floor is poured-in-place concrete. The three existing walls are of brick. Multiple openings are visible on the east wall leading to both building G and building part P. On the east wall of this room a metal overhead door opens in to the larger warehouse space (Building part G).

In the warehouse (Building part G), tall wood columns rest on concrete piers and support the gabled roof with parapets on three sides. At the east end of Building part G one-story rooms built of concrete blocks run the width of the building and are accessed through wood doors and two single metal doors with half-lite glass. A wooden staircase of dimensional lumber provides access to a mezzanine with two levels. Half of the mezzanine floor is concrete. The other half is conventionally framed wood studs. There is a one foot elevational difference between the two with the concrete floor being the higher of the two. Below the mezzanine is a concrete masonry unit wall going north-south and another running east-west with a gypsum wall north of that dividing this area into two rooms and a corridor. The walls are painted brick and painted block. The ceiling is exposed wood decking and exposed oriented strand board. The interior structure is heavy timber columns with heavy timber beams and purlins.

On the south wall is a wide opening with a metal fire door that covers an opening to building part L. There is a ramp in Building part L to accommodate the change in grade.

On the south wall of the warehouse (Building part G), at the west end, is a doorway that leads to a shed roof addition (Building part P). This addition has been subdivided with unfinished wood framing and concrete block walls and three fixed sash windows, west of the door. East of this is a second large doorway, which leads to a shed roof addition on the south elevation (Building part P). Building part P is subdivided into a room with a ramp that formerly exited the building to the south, two smaller rooms that were once restrooms, but fixtures have been added while others have been removed. Temporary jack-posts hold up the roof trusses in the center room which has bare stud walls, and a room to the west has no entry from either parts G or P, but has a door from part H which has been boarded up to prevent entry by transients. This room is visible from a window in the south room of part P and is also constructed of stud framing on the east with the shared walls of parts G and H on the north and west respectively.

The 1955 southern addition to the North Building (Building part L) is a concrete block building with metal sash windows and a poured concrete floor. Insulated wood stud walls covered in plywood and

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metal liner panels were added to finish the interior walls. Building part L is one large volume without interior columns. Wood bow trusses span from wall to wall overhead and have been painted silver, giving the appearance of steel. The ceiling is also covered in liner panel hiding the construction of the roof deck.

East of the historic warehouse (Building part G) there are two rectangular additions with low slope shed roofs draining to the east (Building parts N and O). The southern addition has a large open floor with a single small office in the southwest corner. There is also a fire suppression room constructed of wood studs and oriented strand board in the southeast corner. Doors on the west wall provide access to the warehouse. A set of concrete stairs along the east wall leads to the second story. On the south wall there is a loading dock and an egress door. The north addition (Building part N) has an exterior entrance at the south end of the west wall. Two restrooms are located at the south end of part N. On the north wall there is an overhead door and an egress door.

A ramp leads up from building part R into and across the upper portion of Building part O. A doorway from building part O leads to the two restrooms located in building part N, which are constructed of light gauge wood framing and have their own lean-to roof within building part N. To the south of the ramp is a pedestrian doorway leading to a room in building O, which acts as a sort-of corridor to Building part G. From Building part G it is then possible to go back into the southern half of building part O through another opening. The ceiling of part N is the exposed metal B-Deck except if you are in the restrooms. With the exception of the restrooms, building part N is a single open space. The ceiling in part O is a precast concrete deck which provides the floor for the second floor of building part O.

From the east wall of the rectangular additions there is a metal access door and overhead garage door that lead to the large T-shaped gable-roof addition (Building part R). This addition has poured concrete floors and steel framing. A line of metal columns down the center of the building supports the roof system. The metal-sided building has walls that are partially finished with insulation and wood panels on steel girt framing. There are loading docks on the east wall and overhead doors at grade on the east and west corners of the south wall. An overhead door and a pedestrian door in what would be the west wall of building K leads to the bow roof addition. This addition has concrete block walls, steel framing, and a poured concrete floor. Two overhead doors at dock height and an at-grade exit on the south wall are some of this building's features.

Buildings parts K and R currently have no interior subdivision with the exception of a stud wall and oriented strand board room that houses the fire suppression riser in building part K along the west wall and a similar closet that houses the water main on the north exterior wall of building part R. There is a small basement in building part R approximately twelve feet wide and thirty feet in length that is

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covered in precast concrete planks and has an access ladder at the west end. The interior walls of part K are painted concrete masonry units. The interior walls of building part R are metal liner panels on the south and east and the exposed wall of building part K for the majority of the north. There is a chicken wire and exposed batt insulation ceiling in building part K tied to the undersides of the bow trusses preventing light from the semi-opaque fiberglass skylight panels from penetrating to the floor level. There is one overhead door and one pedestrian door at the west end of building part K leading into part R, and a 12' wide opening between the two on the south wall of part K.

Second Floor

The historic warehouse portion of the North Building (Building part G) has a mezzanine and one of the rectangular additions east of the warehouse (Building part O) has a second floor. The mezzanine described earlier is only on the eastern most bay of building part G, but does provide access to the second floor of building part O and a second means of egress. The second floor of part O has a precast concrete floor with a poured topping. The second floor of part O is a single room with a single concrete stair and a single window on the south wall. The walls are unornamented concrete masonry and the roof above is constructed of bar joists and 1 ½" metal decking covered in EPDM.

Integrity

Overall the building is largely intact and recognizable from its historic period when occupied by the Waite Grass Carpet Company. Industrial properties are commonly altered over time to accommodate the changing needs of its occupants, and this is true with the subject property. Non-historic alterations are limited to additions at the rear of the property, and door and window replacement and infill; however, most historic openings remain and historic wood and steel windows have been found intact. There was selective demolition on this property: three building sections that were material storage warehouses, spaces not considered significant to the manufacturing processes that occurred in this building. Overall, the property retains sufficient integrity to clearly convey its historic appearance as a manufacturing complex that has developed over time and is clearly identifiable as the manufacturing facility for the Waite Grass Carpet Company.

The complex overall is in good condition. At the exterior, areas of significant masonry deterioration have been noted and the roof sheathing is deteriorating. Existing roof monitors and windows range in condition, with areas of significant deterioration noted. Interior materials such as plaster, wood floors and wood trim appear to also be in good to fair condition, with some areas of bowed wood flooring noted. Despite some deterioration, additions, and outdoor areas that have been roofed over, the historic materials throughout the complex remain largely intact and the building continues to display the features that make it a significant early-twentieth century industrial property.

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The historic Waite Grass Carpet Company is locally significant as a reminder of the industrial heritage of the company and the grass matting industry in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Founded in 1905 by father and son, F.E. and O.T. Waite, the company manufactured rugs and carpets from the native wire grass that grew in the marshes of the Fox River Basin, west and south of Oshkosh, Wisconsin. The company flourished for over half a century before closing down its operations and selling the factory buildings. During that time, the Waite Grass Carpet Company, later known as the Waite Carpet Company, provided hundreds of local jobs while manufacturing a product that was sold throughout the country. Today, the factory exists as two separate contributing buildings that were used for manufacturing and warehousing.

The Waite Grass Carpet Company is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Industry for its association with grass carpet manufacturing. Grass carpet manufacturing was an important industry in Oshkosh in the first half of the twentieth century and the Waite Grass Carpet Company was one of two of the largest and most successful companies manufacturing these products in the Wisconsin/Minnesota region. The Waite Grass Carpet Company was a large employer in Oshkosh, continued to grow and expand production facilities at this location, and was an innovator, willing to adopt new technologies and processes – evidenced in numerous patents for production techniques, and in mention in the trade and advertising literature of the period.

Period of Significance

The period of significance is 1910 through 1966. This time period represents the years in which the Waite Grass Carpet Company operated within these buildings. The Waite Grass Carpet Company constructed these buildings, which were the original offices and manufacturing spaces, in 1910, and was headquartered at this location until 1966. After 1966, the company closed and the buildings were sold to a candle manufacturer.

Brief Developmental History of Oshkosh⁶

The area that later became the city of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, was first permanently inhabited by European settlers in 1836, the year that the Menomonee tribe ceded the area to the United States. The availability of inexpensive land and the site's strategic location along Wisconsin's Fox River, which linked the western inland markets to eastern markets via the Great Lakes, made it a popular settlement

⁶ This summary of Oshkosh's early developmental history is borrowed from: National Register of Historic Places, Fraternal Reserve Association Building, Oshkosh, Winnebago County, written by Danielle Euer. National Register #15001048.

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location in the early 1800s. Originally comprised of two separate settlements – Brooklyn, located south of the Fox River, and Athens, located north of the river – in 1840 the combined villages were renamed “Oshkosh” in honor of the area’s former Menomonee chief.

Originally a fur trading community, migration to the Oshkosh area increased throughout the nineteenth century as fur trading soon gave way to the burgeoning lumber industry as the city’s driving economic force. The Fox River which ran through the center of Oshkosh provided power for large riverfront lumber- and gristmills, which attracted capital and immigrants to the community. The city of Oshkosh incorporated in 1853 and six years later, the Chicago NorthWestern Railroad established a rail line from Fond du Lac into the city, allowing wider distribution of goods and products and firmly linking Oshkosh to Chicago, the nation’s leading lumber market.⁷

The exponential growth of Oshkosh’s lumber industry over the next decades inspired the city’s moniker “Sawdust City” as the number of mills grew from less than a dozen in the mid-1860s to over 60 by 1874.⁸ Early Oshkosh was also home to notable wood product manufacturers including the Morgan Company, a wood window and door maker established in Oshkosh in 1855, and the Buckstaff-Edwards Company, established in Oshkosh in 1865 and among the largest wood casket and casket trimming maker in the country.⁹ By 1890, the population of Oshkosh had grown to nearly 23,000 and was served by four different railroads.¹⁰

Many non-lumber and non-furniture related companies also called “Sawdust City” home. The area’s largest manufacturers of clothing, Grove Manufacturing Company, was established in Oshkosh in 1895 and later became better known as the OshKosh B’Gosh Overalls Company. The brewing industry was a great source of revenue for the city and was closely linked to the German heritage of the area’s immigrants. The city’s best-known brewery, the Oshkosh Brewing Company, was established in 1849. As early as the mid-1850s, the city also had many well-established small businesses including grocers, meat markets, blacksmiths, hotels, retail, hardware, and liquor stores with North Main Street on Oshkosh’s North Side becoming the city’s commercial center.¹¹ The diversification of Oshkosh’s industrial and commercial activity cemented the city’s economic success and by 1900, the overall population of Oshkosh and the surrounding Fox River Valley was second in size in the state only to the city of Milwaukee.¹²

⁷ WHS Library-Archives St., *Wisconsin-A Brief History*. Wisconsinhistory.org: 2009.

⁸ HNTB, *Final Report: Intensive Survey for the City of Oshkosh, Wisconsin*, N.p.: HNTB, 1981. p3.

⁹ Publius V. Lawson, *History, Winnebago County, Wisconsin: Its Cities, Towns, Resources, People, Vol. 1* (Chicago: C.F. Cooper and Company, 1908), 526-528.

¹⁰ HNTB, p3.

¹¹ Mead & Hunt, *Historic Resources Survey: City of Oshkosh*, N.p.: City of Oshkosh, 2006. p10

¹² Mead & Hunt, p21.

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Development of the Grass Carpet Industry in Wisconsin and Minnesota

For centuries, the wild marsh plant called wire grass (*carex stricta*) had no practical use. It has little use today outside of its positive environmental implications; however, for some fifty years it made up the raw material for an industry that gave work to thousands of people and delivered finished products around the world. It all began in Oshkosh, Wisconsin and it started with the making of twine.

Wire grass, typically considered a useless plant that grew in marshy areas of Wisconsin and Minnesota, grew abundantly near the city of Oshkosh. The plant was largely left alone until in the late-nineteenth century when enterprising individuals looked for ways to use this abundant resource. Experimentation showed that wire grass could be harvested, dried, and twisted into twine. Given that Midwest farmers had an endless need for binder twine, in 1898, the first attempts were made to manufacture baling twine by the Northwestern Grass Twine Company in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. The Northwestern Grass Twine Company soon merged with a farm implement company and changed the company name to the American Grass Twine Company. After realizing the grass could not be manufactured into a high quality twine, the American Grass Twine Company began producing grass rugs and wicker furniture in St. Paul, Minnesota, and changed their name to Crex Carpet Company.¹³ For a brief period, the American Grass Twine Company held a monopoly on the grass twine machinery patents and made it difficult for other companies to compete. This began to change when others challenged their monopoly.

Specialization of the Grass Carpet Industry in Oshkosh

The Oshkosh Grass Matting Company came on to the scene at the turn of the twentieth century and challenged the American Grass Twine Company's monopoly on the grass weaving industry. The Oshkosh Grass Matting Company, founded by Leander Choate, Emil H. Steiger, F.E. Waite and R.C. Brown obtained their own patents for twine machinery and began producing grass rugs in Oshkosh in 1902. Later, the Oshkosh Grass Matting Company became known as the Deltox Rug Company. Deltox eventually became one of the largest producers of grass rugs in the country, and in Oshkosh was followed close behind by the Waite Grass Carpet Company.¹⁴ The Oshkosh Grass Matting Company's challenge to the American Grass Twine Company's monopoly on the grass weaving

¹³ Minnesota Encyclopedia, Minnesota Historical Society, "Crex Carpet Company," accessed August 12, 2015.
<http://www.mnopedia.org/group/crex-carpet-company>

¹⁴ Oshkosh Grass Matting Company," Written Historical and Descriptive Data, Historic American Engineering Record, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1985, 3. From Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (HAER WIS, 70-OSH, 1) accessed July 29, 2015,
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/master/pnp/habshaer/wi/wi0100/wi0163/data/wi0163data.pdf>.

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industry eventually opened up the field to more competition, most of which was located in Wisconsin and Minnesota.¹⁵ The companies were centered here due to the vast acres of wire grass which grew wild in marshes in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Access to this raw material was critical, and given the quantities required for the manufacture of various products, it was a logical choice to establish production facilities in Oshkosh. The Oshkosh Grass Matting Company alone owned or leased twenty five thousand acres of wire grass marshes as their source for raw material.

The first grass mat company was the Crex Company, formed in Oshkosh in 1901 and quickly moved to St. Paul, Minnesota. The Oshkosh Grass Matting Company followed only a year later, (eventually changing its name to the Deltox Grass Rug Company in 1914, then to the Deltox Rug Company in 1924); and the Waite Grass Carpet Company (1908) was established by a former partner of the Oshkosh Grass Matting Company, Frederick Waite.¹⁶

Frederick Waite

Frederick Eugene Waite was born on December 11th, 1849 in Kenosha, Wisconsin to the parents of Thomas John and Rhoda Day Waite. Thomas was a publisher running the enterprise of Waite & Company in Chicago which published The Daily Tribune. The Daily Tribune later became the Chicago Tribune. Thomas Waite died in Chicago in 1852 at which time Rhoda took her son Frederick and moved out east. Three years later she married Ossian Cook and the couple, along with Rhoda's son Frederick, moved to Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Later Frederick would give the name Ossian to his own son. As an adult, Frederick gained experience in the grass rug industry as one of the founding partners in the Oshkosh Grass Matting Company. Despite the success of the Oshkosh Grass Matting Company, Frederick decided to part ways and establishes his own company: the Waite Grass Carpet Company.

History of the Waite Grass Carpet Company

Not long after the Oshkosh Grass Matting Company was established, Frederick E. Waite and his son, Ossian T. Waite, left the company to start their own grass matting enterprise. The Waite Grass Carpet Company was incorporated in 1908 and was located in Oshkosh, in a building at Pearl Avenue and Bond Street (between Jackson and Market).¹⁷ By 1910, the company had started construction on a new manufacturing building (the subject building) at 556 Mt. Vernon St (later known as 1402 Mt.

¹⁵ Publius Virgilius Lawson, ed., *History of Winnebago County, Wisconsin, vol. 1* (Chicago: C.F. Cooper and Company, 1908), accessed July 29, 2015, <https://archive.org/details/historywinnebag00lawsgoog>, 530.

¹⁶ Historic American Engineering Record, *Oshkosh Grass Matting Company*, HAER No. WI-11. This document provided the data and company information contained here.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 531.

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Vernon) in Oshkosh.¹⁸ Soon after the Waites' departure from the Oshkosh Grass Matting Company they were sued by their former company for patent infringement, but the Waite Grass Company eventually prevailed.¹⁹ The Waite Grass Carpet Company utilized a new method of weaving for their rugs and carpets that was developed by O.T. Waite, and was patented in 1916. The younger Waite's new weaving method allowed for designs to be incorporated in the carpet or rug without significantly increasing the cost of production.²⁰

Continuous innovation allowed the Waite Grass Carpet Company to manufacture rugs and carpets of varying sizes and with various designs from woven wire grass. Grass mats and carpets were in demand in the early twentieth century as durable and affordable floor coverings. Woven grass mats were popular choices for porches, summer cottages and in the bungalow-type homes that were popular during the same period.²¹ Advertisements for the Waite products tout their carpets and rugs as durable, sanitary and colorfast.²² By the early 1920s they had expanded their product line to include canvas rugs. This diversification became necessary as cheaper rugs woven from rice straw were being imported from Japan and cutting into the domestic grass rug market. At the same time the company name was shortened, eliminating "grass" from the title.²³ In addition to adding wool and canvas rugs to their product offerings, the wire grass used in the rugs was supplemented with a wood fiber material, and patented as Waitex Rugs.²⁴

The manufacturing of grass rugs and carpets, a desirable home good, employed a sizeable number of men and women in and around Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Not only were workers needed in the factory, but seasonal help was hired every year to harvest the wire grass in the marshes. In a trade publication from 1910 it is noted that with the construction of a new factory building the Waite Grass Carpet Company would add 150 new employees, bringing their total to almost 500.²⁵ The company continued to

¹⁸ *American Carpet and Upholstery Journal* 28, no. 4 (April 1910): 71, accessed July 29, 2015, <https://books.google.com/books?id=i3cxAQAAAMAJ&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

¹⁹ "Testimony is Taken," *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, October 4, 1910, accessed August 13, 2015, <http://newspapers.com/image9838252>, 1.

²⁰ United States Patent Office, *Official Gazette of the United States Patent Office*, vol. 224 (United States Patent Office: Washington, D.C., 1916), accessed August 13, 2015, https://books.google.com/books?id=B7QHiH7Ln4QC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false, 1353-4.

²¹ United States Department of Agriculture, *Farmer's Bulletin* 1219 (August, 1921): 25, accessed August 12, 2015, <https://books.google.com/books?id=vHdHAQAAMAJ&pg=PR3#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

²² *Dry Goods Economist*, no. 3639 (April, 1914): 102, accessed August 14, 2015, https://books.google.com/books?id=Lb1FAQAAMAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s.

²³ "Waite Grass Carpet Company," *Oshkosh Public Museum*, 2011, accessed August 13, 2015, <http://oshkosh.pastperfect-online.com/20004cgi/mweb.exe?request=record&id=993E7A0E-E3AD-4FF5-8176-883984510260&type=102>.

²⁴ *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, May 4, 1925, accessed August 13, 2015, <http://newspapers.com/image/17754878>, 8.

²⁵ *American Carpet and Upholstery Journal* 28, 71.

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
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flourish and by 1918 they added space to the factory building constructed in 1910 and built a new warehouse building.²⁶

After the initial construction of the factory and offices in 1910 and first additions in 1918, the Waite Grass Carpet Company periodically added on to the building to eventually create one large C-shaped warehouse/factory/office complex on East Custer Street between Mt. Vernon Street and Ashland Ave.

An associated factory building from circa 1918 and a machinery storage building were located in the northeast corner of East Custer Street and Ashland Avenue. The company's final significant addition to the building was completed in 1955 and was a concrete masonry addition with wood trusses and no interior columns.²⁷ This turned the former C-shape of the Waite Company building into a closed doughnut. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from 1949 indicates there were factory operations in the 1910 building and in the 1918 building east of Ashland Avenue. Other additions were used as warehouses for raw materials and finished products as well as a paint room and water tower (see image). Unlike most buildings of the day these buildings included a fire sprinkler system in both the factory and warehouse spaces, a reasonable precaution considering the contents of the building was dried grass.

While the Waite Grass Carpet Company did not engage in a large scale advertising campaign like their competitor, the Deltex Rug Company did,²⁸ the company did have a New York City showroom and their product was sold by dealers as far away as San Francisco, California.²⁹

According to information from the Oshkosh Public Museum and from a 1966 article in the *Post-Crescent* Ossian T. Waite died on May 15th, 1925 and his brother Phillip C. Waite along with his son Stanley E. Waite stepped in to run the company in conjunction with founding partner Frederick, three generations of the Waite family. Frederick died five years later on September 22nd, 1930 during the throes of the Great Depression. Phillip took his father's place as president and secretary. Phillip and Stanley were still running the company when it was sold to the Victrylite Candle Company in 1966, also known as Lenox Candle Company.

²⁶ *American Contractor* 39, no. 48 (November, 1918): 42, 47, accessed July 28, 2015, <https://books.google.com/books?id=PCZYAAAAYAAJ&dq=american+contractor+november+1918&q=waite#v=onepage&q=waite&f=false>.

²⁷ *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, December 31, 1955, accessed August 13, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/23381077>, 11.

²⁸ Deltex was notable for their advertising campaigns in national publications such as *Life* and *Better Homes and Gardens* publications, from "Oshkosh Grass Matting Company," HAER.

²⁹ *Price's Carpet and Rug News* 12, no. 6 (February, 1922): 4, accessed August 12, 2015, https://books.google.com/books?id=m8owAQAAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s, 4.

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
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Decline of the Grass Carpet Industry

Throughout the company's history it was known for high quality products and contemporary designs. Despite diversifying their product line and incorporating modern designs and trends in their rugs, the decline of the Waite Carpet Company mirrored the overall decline in the industry.

According to the *Oshkosh Grass Matting Company* Historic American Engineering Record report (HAER No. WI-11, 1985), the grass mat and carpet industry faced intense competition from Japanese rice straw rug manufacturers. While the rice straw rugs were less durable than wire grass rugs, they were much cheaper. One by one the grass mat companies ceased production due to Japanese competition, until even the leading manufacturer in Minnesota, the Crex Company, dissolved in the mid-1930s. The Oshkosh companies: Deltox and Waite, both survived by dropping full-grass rugs from their manufacturing line and diversifying their material content for carpets. By the mid-twentieth century though, changing tastes and the growing popularity of wall to wall carpeting, coupled with intense competition from southern states, led to the final decline of the Waite Carpet Company in 1966.

The Waite Carpet Company closed in 1966 and the buildings were sold to the Vicrylite Candle Company, a division of Paragon Products Corporation of Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Paragon Products was formed in 1935 and manufactured products made of paraffin wax. Vicrylite was formed in 1942 as a manufacturer of church candles and was purchased in whole by Paragon in 1947. Paragon grew to be one of the largest candle and wax specialty manufacturers in the nation. Vicrylite utilized the buildings primarily for warehousing and shipping purposes and continued to manufacture their candle lines at a different Oshkosh location.³⁰

Comparative Evaluation

Overall, the grass rug and carpet industry was a huge boon to the city of Oshkosh. In 1928, the grass rug industry was the second largest employer in the city, second only to woodworking trades. In that year over 1000 people were employed in the textile industry, split between the Oshkosh Grass Matting Company and the Waite Grass Carpet Company.³¹ These companies manufactured more grass rugs in Oshkosh than were made in any other city in the world.³² In total during this time period there were

³⁰ "Vicrylite Buys Waite Factory," *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, August 15, 1966, accessed August 5, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/21507270>, 26.

³¹ "Marked Growth in Oshkosh Industry is Revealed in Census," *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, April 21, 1928, accessed August 13, 2015, <http://newspapers.com/image/10985795>, 14.

³² "Textiles Now Have Important Place in Oshkosh Industry," *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, May 19, 1928, accessed August 5, 2015, <http://newspapers.com/image11008896>, 11.

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

five companies in the area producing grass rugs. Three original companies were in Oshkosh (Crex, Deltox, and Waite), and then followed one each in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin (DeLuxe Company), and Green Bay, Wisconsin (Willow Company). Crex moved to St Paul, Minnesota shortly after being formed in 1901. The Crex Company ceased operations in 1935 and that site is now an elementary school. The Deltox Company closed in 1968 and its manufacturing facility was demolished in 1984. Little is known about the other wire grass rug companies.

In Oshkosh, the Waite Grass Carpet Company is the only property associated with the important regional industry with historic integrity and is the best example of a manufacturing facility from the wire grass carpet manufacturing era.

Integrity

After the carpet company closed it was sold to the Vicrylite Company which made alterations to the building, as already described above. Despite these changes, the Waite Grass Carpet Company retains its historic identity and physical composition as manufacturing and warehousing spaces. Based on the 1949 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, the buildings that were demolished in 2011 were used as follows (see site key):

Building D – Baled Grass Warehouse
Building E – Grass Warehouse No. 3
Building F – Baled Grass Warehouse No. 1
Building M – No use, a connector listed as open on the 1st floor.

The remaining buildings that were present in 1949 were used as follows:

Building A – Factory, offices, machine shop, dye room
Building B – Drying room, paint shop
Building C - Sewing and painting
Building G – Grass Warehouse No. 4
Building H – Spinning room
Building I – Well Room
Building J – Factory building

Additionally, Building part L is listed in the 1955 permit records of the City of Oshkosh as a “new warehouse” for the Waite Carpet Company and represents the only free-span warehouse space (no internal columns) within the complex that was originally constructed by the Waite Grass Carpet Company and is the last major addition to the factory building completed during the Company’s existence.

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
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Despite the loss of some historic fabric, the remaining buildings associated with the Waite Grass Carpet Company represent areas where the bulk of the manufacturing took place. The use of the buildings demolished in 2011 was limited to warehousing. Manufacturing and sewing buildings, as well as some pre-1949 warehouse spaces still stand.

Conclusion

The Waite Grass Carpet Company is the most intact facility associated the Oshkosh's wire grass industry, and despite alterations, has sufficient integrity to reflect its history. The property includes two contributing, functionally-related industrial buildings associated with the grass matting industry in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

As it stands today, the Waite Grass Carpet Company in Oshkosh, Wisconsin is significant under National Register Criterion A, in the area of Industry for its association with the wire grass industry in the upper Midwest. The Waite Grass Carpet Company was one of a handful of enterprises in the upper Midwestern states that utilized a regionally abundant, but largely unusable, natural resource - wire grass, to produce and market nationally-distributed consumer goods. Grass carpet manufacturing was an important industry in Oshkosh in the first half of the twentieth century and the Waite Grass Carpet Company was one of two of the largest and most successful companies manufacturing these products in the Wisconsin/Minnesota region. The Waite Grass Carpet Company was a large employer in Oshkosh, it continued to grow and expand production facilities at this location, and was an innovator, willing to adopt new technologies and processes – evidenced in numerous patents for production techniques, and in mention in the trade and advertising literature of the period. It outlasted other regional competitors and its growth and innovation fueled its success as evidenced in the company's continued growth and expansion of its manufacturing facility. Of the associated industries in Oshkosh that were thriving in the early-twentieth century, the Waite Grass Carpet Company is the best physical reminder of this local industry.

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Section 10 Page 1

Waite Grass Carpet Company
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Verbal Boundary Description:

All of Block One, Lot's One through Fourteen of Block Two and Lot's One through Twelve of Block Three in Pleasant Home Land Co's First Addition, in the Fifteenth Ward, City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin, together with that portion of vacated Eastman Street between Blocks Two and Three and that portion of vacated Mount Vernon Street between blocks One and Two, all being located in the Southeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter, Section Thirteen (13), Township Eighteen (18) North, Range Sixteen (16) East, City of Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin.

Boundary Justification:

The chosen boundary for the Waite Grass Carpet Company is represented by the physical limits of the property on which the buildings occur. The buildings consume the majority of the city block bordered by East Nevada on the north, Grand Street on the East, Custer Avenue on the South and Harrison Street on the west. Within those four streets the boundary submitted for historic designation excludes the single family home at the southeast corner of the block (corner of Custer and Grand), and a parcel of land owned by the City of Oshkosh which was the former right-of-way of the Wisconsin Central Rail Road (later the Soo Line Rail Road) as well as a small triangle of land kept by the City of Oshkosh when the 1400 block of Mount Vernon Street was vacated. The parcel of land owned by the City of Oshkosh runs parallel to Harrison Street effectively limiting the western boundary of the historic designation to the property line of the former rail road.

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
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The following information is identical for each photograph:

Name: Waite Grass Carpet Company

Address: 221 East Nevada Avenue and 300 East Custer Avenue

City, County: Oshkosh, Winnebago County

Photographer: Matt Wiedenhoft

Location of original digital files: State Historic Preservation Office, Madison, Wisconsin

Photo 1 of 30

Camera facing east. View of North Building – West wall of Building L. Former opening visible in third bay to the left.

August 29, 2017, 2:19 pm

Photo 2 of 30

Camera facing east. View of North Building – West wall of Building I and Building H. Concrete floors of demolished buildings are intact and visible in the foreground.

May 15, 2017, 1:46 pm

Photo 3 of 30

Camera facing east. View of North Building – West wall of Building N (formerly east wall of Demolished Building E).

May 15, 2017, 1:52 pm

Photo 4 of 30

Camera facing south. View of North Building - North elevation of Buildings G and H. Concrete block addition constructed after demolition of Buildings D and E to house fire sprinkler riser. Slabs and foundations of former Buildings D and E visible in foreground.

August 20, 2015, 10:12 am

Photo 5 of 30

Camera facing south. View of North Building – North elevation of Building N and R. West elevation of building K visible at left.

August 31, 2017, 8:07 am

Photo 6 of 31

Camera facing south. View of North Building - North elevation of Building K. Steel frame building with concrete masonry unit in-fill between columns and bow trusses supporting the roof.

August 31, 2017, 8:06 am

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Photo 7 of 30

Camera facing west. View of North Building – East elevation of Buildings K and R.
August 31, 2017, 8:05 am

Photo 8 of 30

Camera facing west. View of North Building – East elevation of Buildings L, upper level of O and a portion of R (metal sided).
August 31, 2017, 8:04 am

Photo 9 of 30

Camera facing north. View of North Building – South elevation of Buildings O (Concrete Masonry Unit Building) on the left, and R (Metal Paneled building) on the right.
August 31, 2017, 8:04 pm

Photo 10 of 30

Camera facing northwest. View of North Building – South elevation of Building L (Concrete Masonry Unit wall. Former opening visible at west end of wall. Also view of South Building – East elevation of Building B. Original fire rated windows visible in five of the eleven openings. Windows are wire glass with sheet metal frames filled with mortar.
August 29, 2017, 2:21 pm

Photo 11 of 30

Camera facing north from atop South Building. View of North Building – South elevations of Buildings H, I, and P.
August 20, 2015, 9:21 am

Photo 12 of 30

Camera facing east. View of South Building – Building A and Building B's west elevations. The original front entry to the 1910 offices is now a window (right of the aluminum storefront entry). The original transom window remains intact and is visible in this view.
August 20, 2015, 10:26 am

Photo 13 of 30

Camera facing northwest. View of South Building – Building A's south elevation (1910) and Building C's south and east elevations (1918). Wide brick pilaster denotes the transition from the original 1910 building to the c. 1918 addition.
August 20, 2015, 10:22 am

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Photo 14 of 30

Camera facing northeast. View of South Building – South façade of Building Q and south and west facades of Building J.

August 31, 2017, 8:15 am

Photo 15 of 30

Camera facing southwest. View of South Building – East façade of Building J with steel columns encased in brick added to each pilaster. Roof of J has collapsed and east wall curves at the top.

August 29, 2017, 2:23 pm

Photo 16 of 30

Camera facing south. View of South Building – North façade of Building J.

August 29, 2017, 2:22 pm

Photo 17 of 30

Camera facing south. View of South Building – North elevation of Building Q (1967).

August 20, 2015, 10:18 am

Photo 18 of 30

Camera facing southeast. View of South Building – North elevation of Buildings C and A. Parapet at east end of A (visible at roofline) delineates the 1910 construction from the 1918 addition.

August 29, 2017, 2:19 pm

Photo 19 of 30

Camera facing south. View of South Building – North façade of building B. Original brick chimney at right. Black line of coal tar pitch indicates line of former roof of Building F. Original fire rated windows remain in three of the four second floor openings.

August 20, 2015, 10:28 am

Photo 20 of 30

Camera facing east. View of South Building - West elevation of Building J.

August 29, 2017, 2:20 pm

Photo 21 of 30

Camera facing east. View of North Building – Interior view of Building K. Batt insulation on chicken wire prevents sunlight from semi translucent roof panels from entering the space.

August 20, 2015, 9:48 am

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Photo 22 of 30

Camera facing northwest. View of North Building – Interior view of Building L. Wood trusses have been painted silver. Walls have been furred out with insulated wood stud walls covered in oriented strand board and steel liner panels.

August 20, 2015, 9:57 am

Photo 23 of 30

Camera facing east. View of North Building – Interior of Building G showing mezzanine at east end. Open doorway at rear of mezzanine leads to the second floor of Building O.

August 20, 2015, 9:59 am

Photo 24 of 30

Camera facing northeast. View of North Building – Photo shows interior second floor of Building O. Opening to Building G is immediately to the left of the duct visible on the far left side of the photograph. Railing on right is in front of a stair to the first floor.

August 20, 2015, 10:02 am

Photo 25 of 30

Camera facing west. View of South Building – Building C in foreground and Building A in background behind concrete piers representing the former exterior wall of A prior to the 1918 addition of C.

August 20, 2015, 8:49 am

Photo 26 of 30

Camera facing west. View of South Building – Interior view of Building Q showing traffic route of forklifts from J to Q to C to A. Former exterior wall of Building C visible in back ground and former exterior wall of Building A visible through doorway with overhead door.

August 20, 2015, 8:47 am

Photo 27 of 30

Camera facing north. View of South Building – Interior of Building J. Called out on 1949 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map as “factory space.” Roof has collapsed. Columns have been restored in an attempt to keep the east wall from collapsing. East wall is out-of-plumb by as much as eight inches.

August 20, 2015, 8:36 am

Photo 28 of 30

Camera facing south. View of South Building – Interior of southwest corner of Building A. Original offices were located in this corner of the building. Brick visible at far left is exterior of original vault.

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Original office floor was tongue and groove maple on a ¾" plank subfloor attached to joists embedded in the earth.

August 20, 2015, 9:00 am

Photo 29 of 30

Camera facing east. View of South Building – Second floor of Building A (1910). Opening at far end leads to Building C (1918).

August 31, 2011

Photo 30 of 30

Camera facing north. View of South Building – Second floor of Building C. Trusses run north-south and roof purlins run east west except in last bay to the east (shown in photo) where beams extend to east wall and roof purlins run north-south.

August 20, 2015, 9:18 am

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Insert Figures

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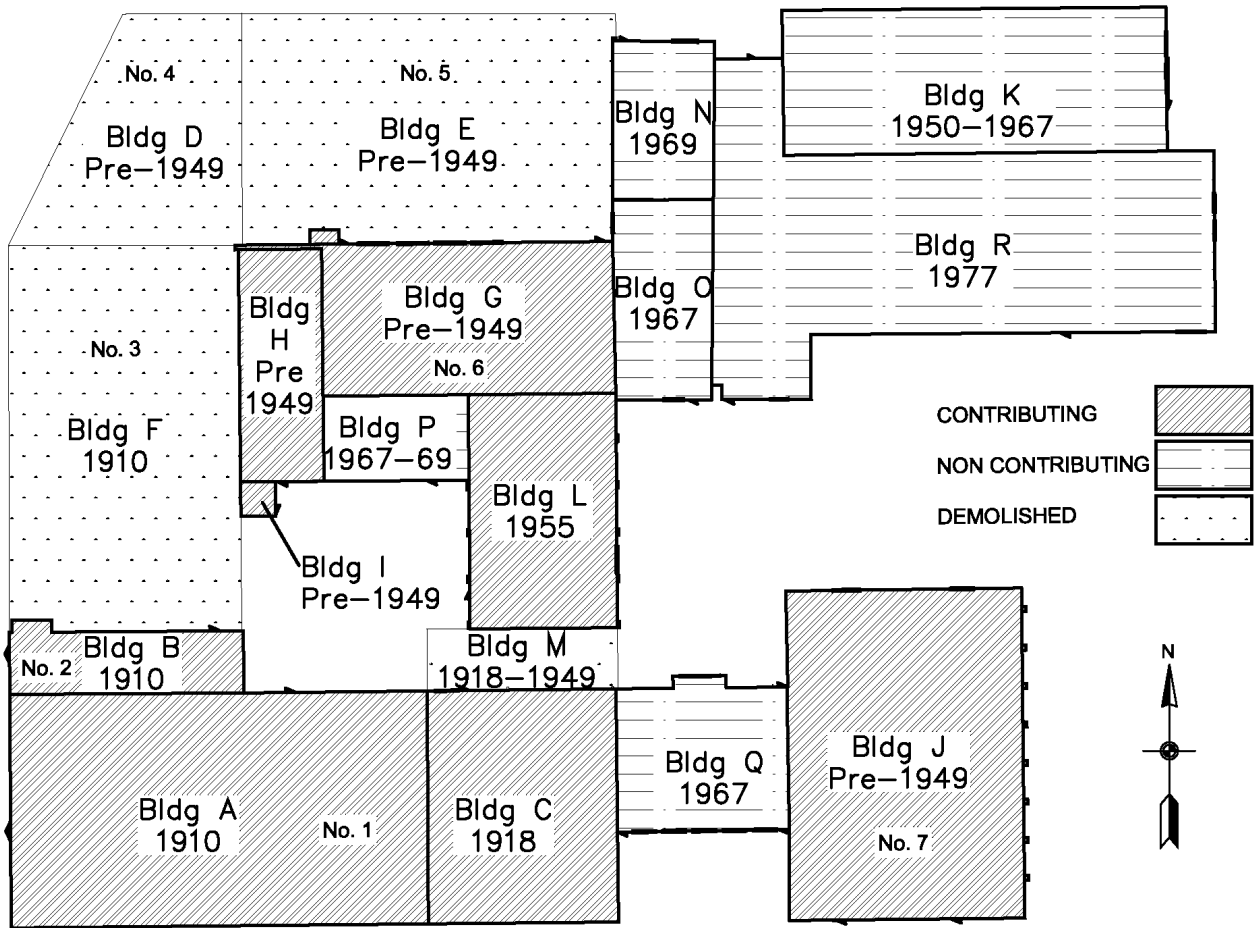
- Figure 1: Key Plan
- Figure 2: Photo Key 1, Site
- Figure 3: Photo Key 2, Floor Plan, North Building
- Figure 4: Photo Key 3, Second Floor, North Building
- Figure 5: Photo Key 4, Floor Plan, South Building
- Figure 6: 1949 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map
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- Figure 9: Aerial photo key plan
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- Figure 11: Photograph of a picture currently hanging in the Oshkosh City Hall
- Figure 12: Photo of color lithographic postcard showing the 1910 factory of the Waite Grass Carpet Company of Oshkosh Wisconsin
- Figure 13: Photo which appeared in the Post-Crescent in 1966 regarding the purchase of the factory by Vicrylite Candle
- Figure 14: 1962 photograph showing the corner of Building J prior to the closing of Eastman Street
- Figure 15: Price's Carpet and Rug News
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- Figure 17: Price's Carpet and Rug News
- Figure 18: Price's Carpet and Rug News
- Figure 19: Copy of grass rug patent US 1177555
- Figure 20: Copy of grass rug patent US 1177555
- Figure 21: Second page of grass rug patent US 1177555
- Figure 22: 1928 Waite Rug advertisement found on Ebay originally published in "The House Beautiful."
- Figure 23: Waite Rug advertisement found on Ebay
- Figure 24: Dr. Sphinx's Blog: <https://drsphinx.wordpress.com/tag/wire-grass/P>

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KEY PLAN

Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

NOT TO SCALE

Building numbers from 1949 Sanborn Map
Letters taken from 2010 permits and plans

Figure 1: Key Plan

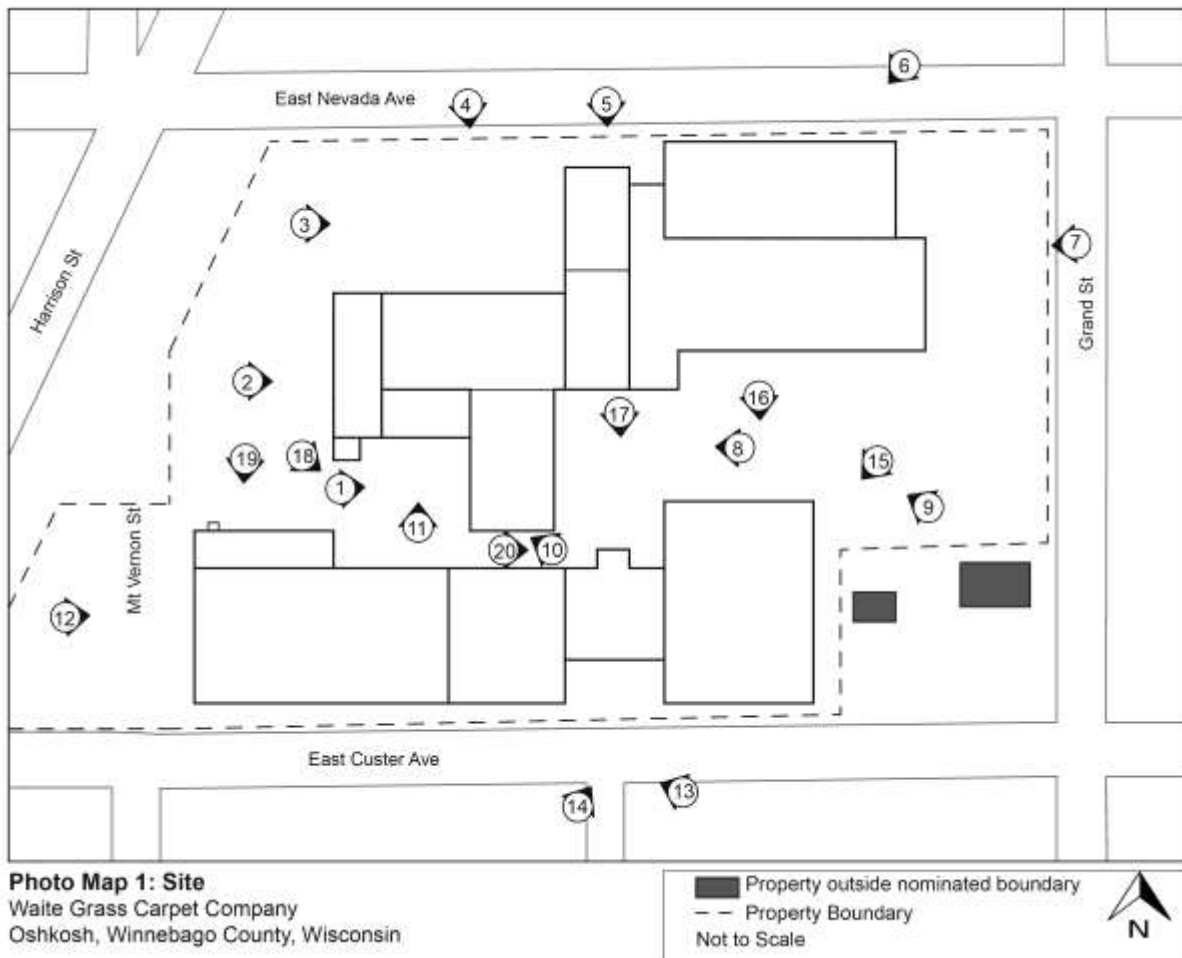
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Waite Grass Carpet Company
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Figure 2: Photo Key 1, Site



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Waite Grass Carpet Company
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Figure 3: Photo Key 2, Floor Plan, North Building

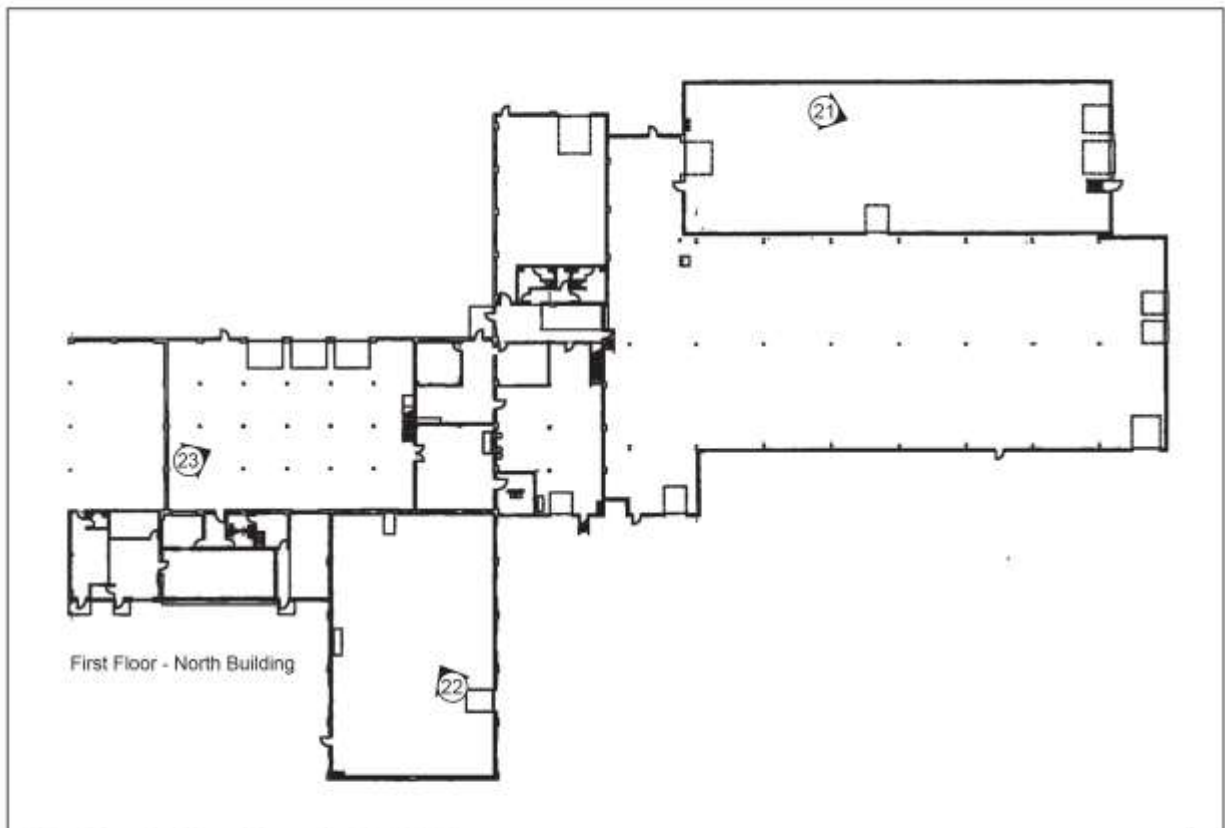


Photo Map 2: Floor Plan - North Building
Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin



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Waite Grass Carpet Company
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Figure 4: Photo Key 3, Second Floor, North Building

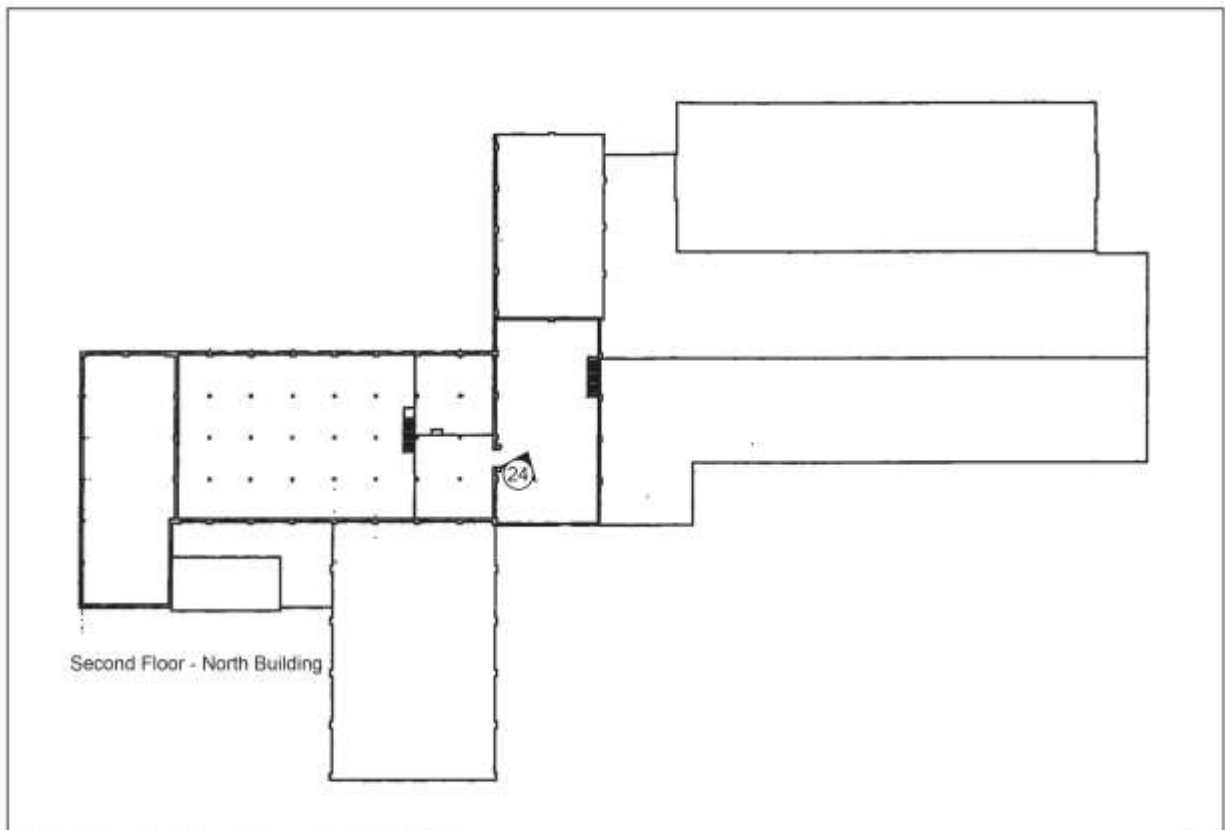


Photo Map 3: Floor Plan - North Building
Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin



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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 6

Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Figure 5: Photo Key 4, Floor Plan, South Building

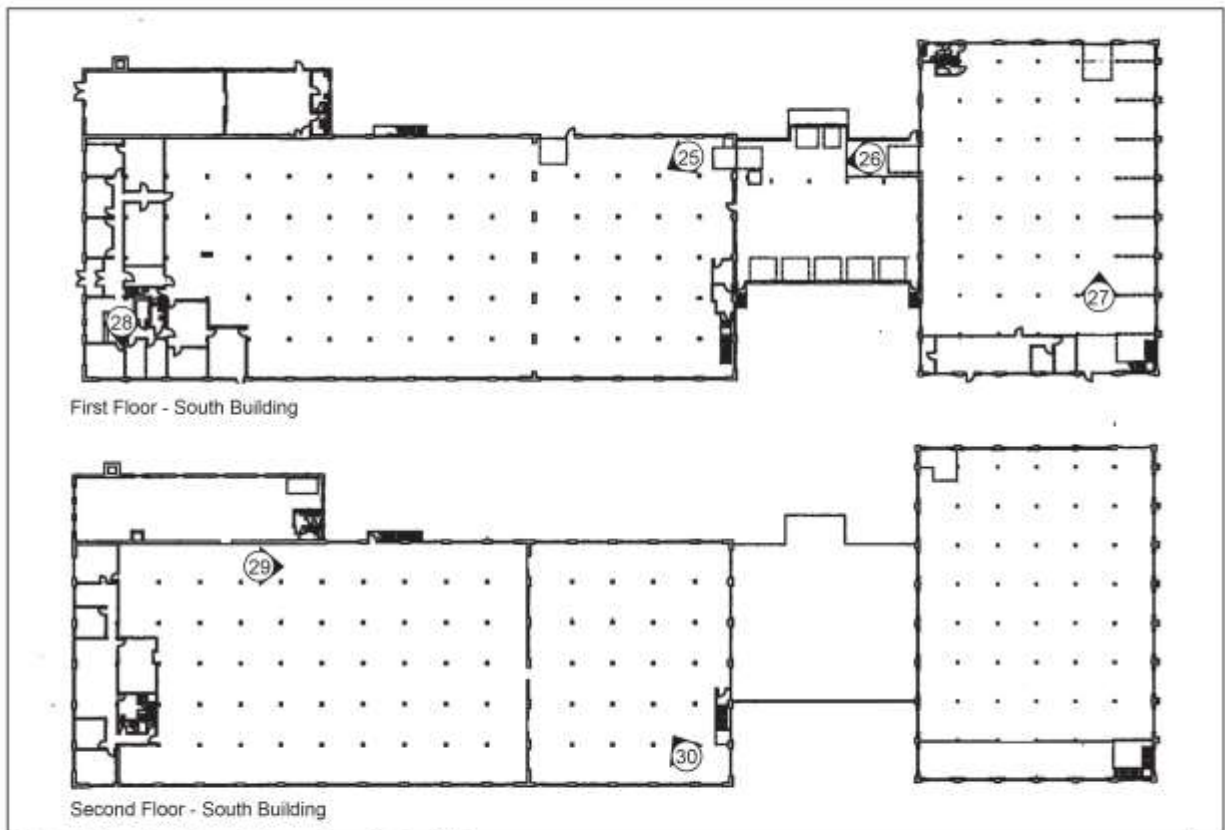


Photo Map 4: Floor Plan - South Building
Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin



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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 7

Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

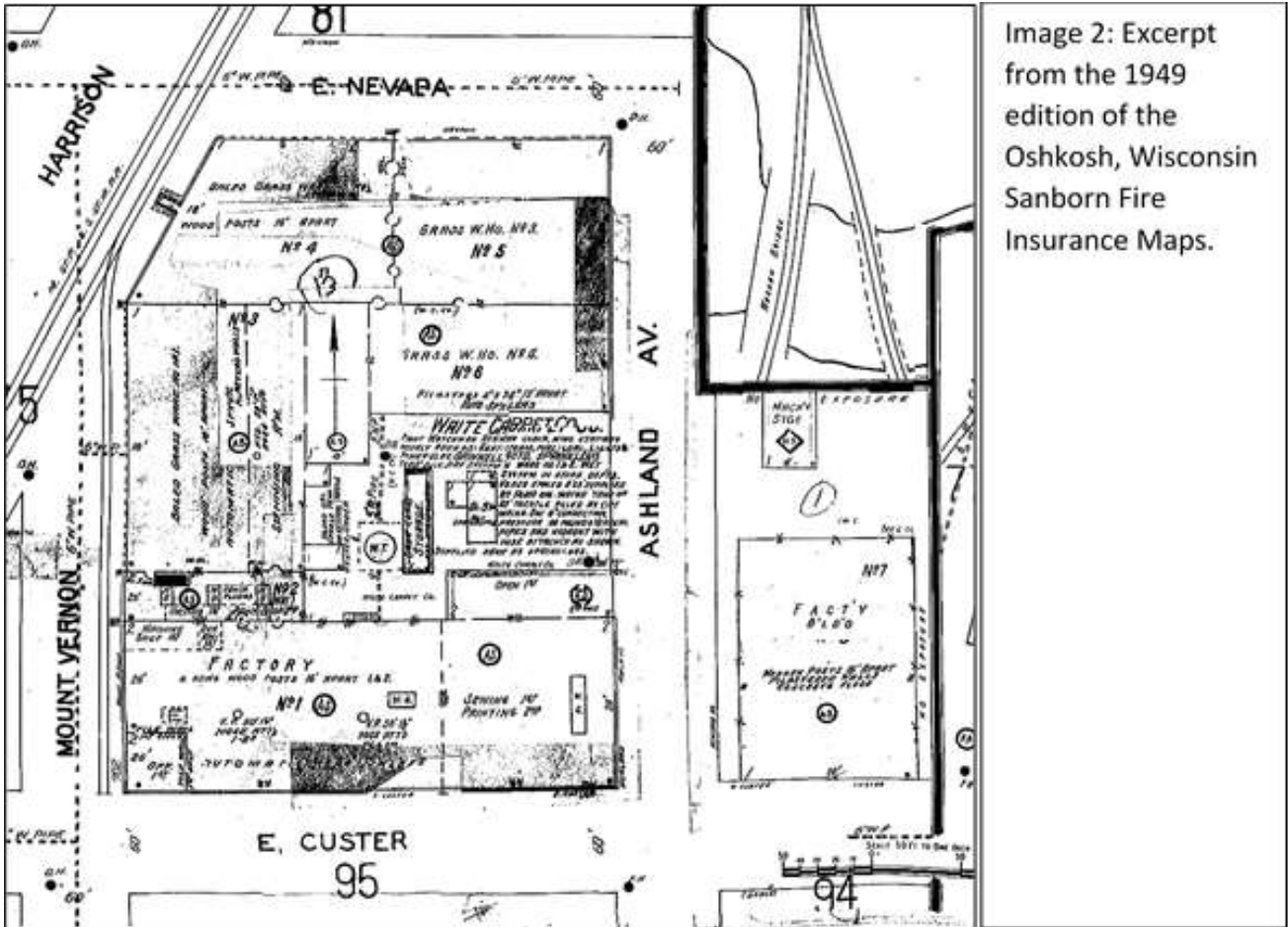


Figure 6: 1949 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the 1402 Mount Vernon Street Factory and Warehouses, as well as the rail spur extending south from the Wisconsin Central main lines, operated by the Soo Line since the buildings were constructed in 1909 and purchased by the Soo Line in the same year the factory complex was sold to the Vicrylite Candle Company.

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Section figures Page 8

Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin



Figure 7: 2005 aerial (doughnut shape with east wings).



Figure 8: 2011 aerial view after demolition (2 buildings).



Figure 9: Aerial photo key plan. North Building (Soon to be "North Waite Plaza"), Buildings G, H, I, K, L, N, O and P. South Building (Soon to be "Waite Rug Place" Apartments), Buildings A, B, C, J and Q. Photo taken from Google Earth.

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin



Recent Addition to Oshkosh Manufacturing Forces

Photo by T. Luch

Figure 10: 1911 photograph of Waite Grass Carpet Company Factory and Offices (South Building), Camera facing northeast showing both Mount Vernon and the Custer Avenue facades. Left to right: Bldg F, Bldg B, Bldg A.

Source: Only Oshkosh. Oshkosh, Wisconsin: Hicks Printing Company, 1911. Accessed July 29, 2015.

http://box2.nmtvault.com/Oshkosh/jsp/ReWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=8578adfd-5747-46e8-9241-17d8256f9f7f/oshkosh0/00000001/00000462&pg_seq=1&search_doc.



WAITE'S, C&L MACHINERY AND UNIVERSAL MOTORS AS SEEN FROM AIR

Figure 11: Photograph of a picture currently hanging in the Oshkosh City Hall. View from the air.

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National Park Service

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Section figures Page 10

Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

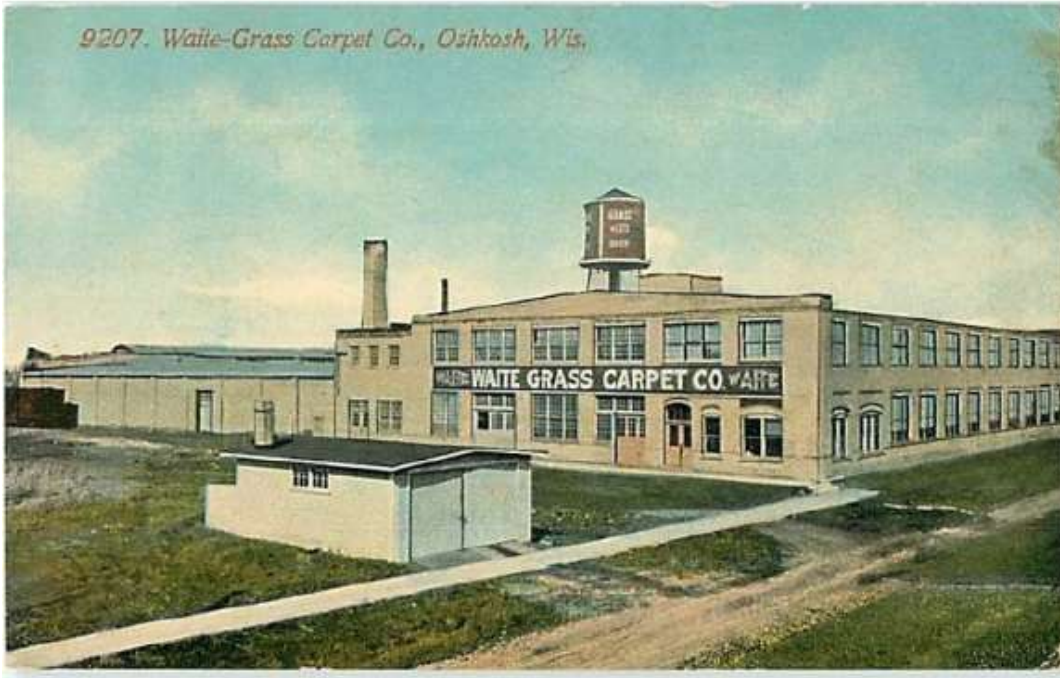


Figure 12: Photo of color lithographic postcard showing the 1910 factory of the Waite Grass Carpet Company of Oshkosh Wisconsin. Copyright, Oshkosh Public Museum. This image was also found as a postcard on Ebay for \$9.95 on August 21, 2017, <http://www.ebay.com/itm/Wisconsin-WI-Oshkosh-Waite-Grass-Carpet-Co-1910s-Postcard-/132198868149>



The Victrylite Candle Co., Oshkosh, which has been announced purchase of the structure this week. The Waite negotiating to buy this building, is expected to announce purchase of the structure this week. The Waite Rug. Co. owns the building. (Post-Crescent Photo)

Figure 13: Photo which appeared in the Post-Crescent in 1966 regarding the purchase of the factory by Victrylite Candle Co.

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin



Figure 14: 1962 photograph showing the corner of Building J prior to the closing of Eastman Street. Visible at the far left are three windows of building L and the East exterior wall of Building G and E. Building E has since been demolished, and several other buildings now fill the space which was occupied by the public right-of-way. This photo places building L within the period of significance. Wisconsin Historical Society, "Oshkosh Factories" Image ID: 104499

<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM104499>

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin



Figure 15: Price's Carpet and Rug News, "Growth of Grass Rug Industry in the United States," page 24. Vol. 9-10.
<https://books.google.com/books?id=YcowAQAAAMAAJ&pg=PT567&lpg=PT567&dq=American+Grass+Rugs+By+O.T.+Waite&source=bl&ots=DCrgDdbqNs&sig=ohF3bGZ1zq0W5Iih3rgWNoAjbIQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewj7orf13ujVAhVh4oMKHdERDfoQ6AEILjAB#v=onepage&q=American%20Grass%20Rugs%20By%20O.T.%20Waite&f=false>

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

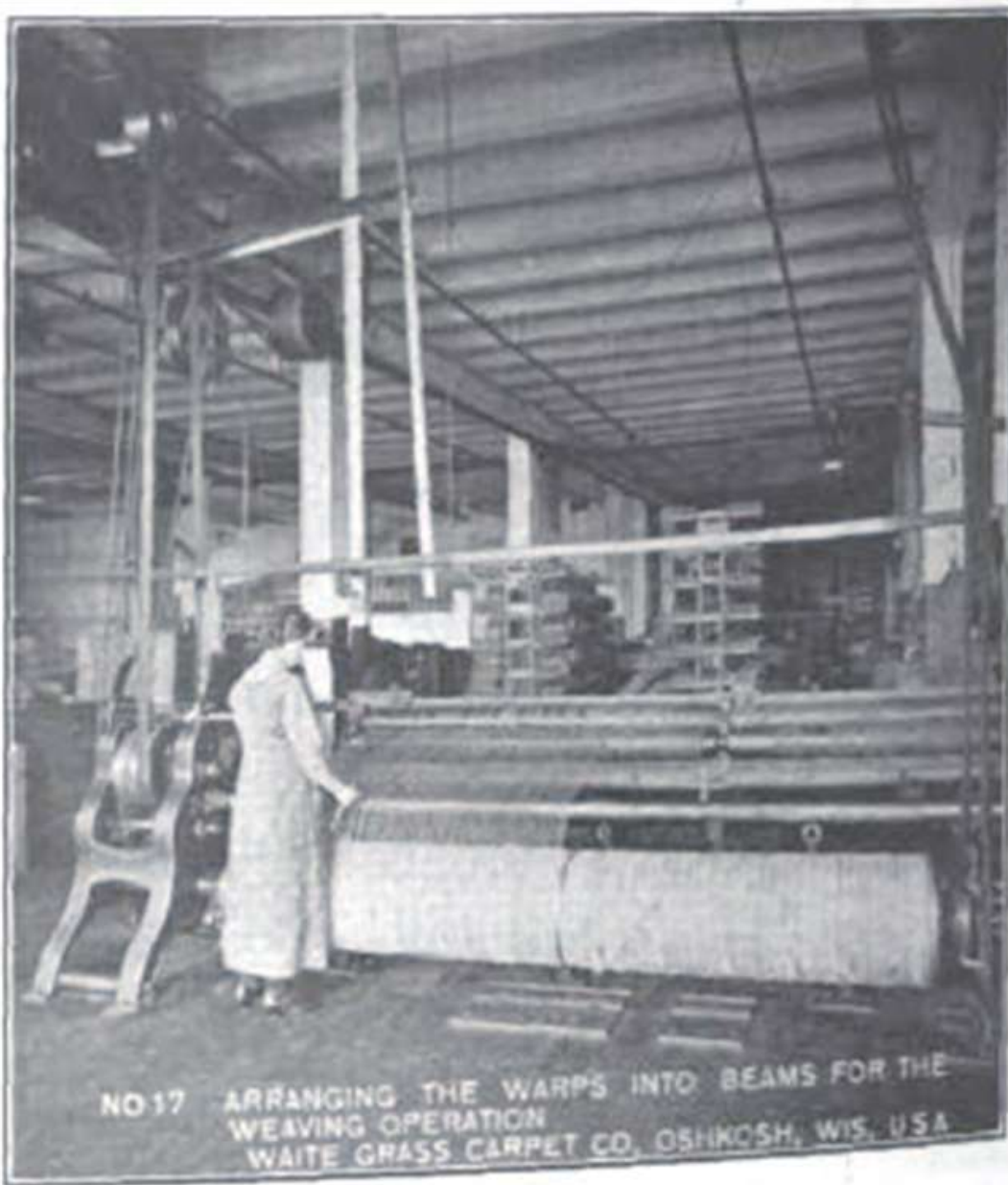


Figure 16: Price's Carpet and Rug News, "Growth of Grass Rug Industry in the United States," page 24. Vol. 9-10.
<https://books.google.com/books?id=YcowAQAAMAAJ&pg=PT567&lpg=PT567&dq=American+Grass+Rugs+By+O.T.+Waite&source=bl&ots=DCrgDdbqNs&sig=ohF3bGZ1zq0W5Iih3rgWNoAjbIQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewj7orf13ujVAhVh4oMKHdERDfoQ6AEILjAB#v=onepage&q=American%20Grass%20Rugs%20By%20O.T.%20Waite&f=false>

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin



Figure 17: Price's Carpet and Rug News, "Growth of Grass Rug Industry in the United States," page 24. Vol. 9-10.
<https://books.google.com/books?id=YcowAQAAAMAAJ&pg=PT567&lpg=PT567&dq=American+Grass+Rugs+By+O.T.+Waite&source=bl&ots=DCrgDdbqNs&sig=ohF3bGZ1zq0W5Iih3rgWNoAjbIQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj7orfl3ujVAhVh4oMKHdERDfoQ6AEILjAB#v=onepage&q=American%20Grass%20Rugs%20By%20O.T.%20Waite&f=false>

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin



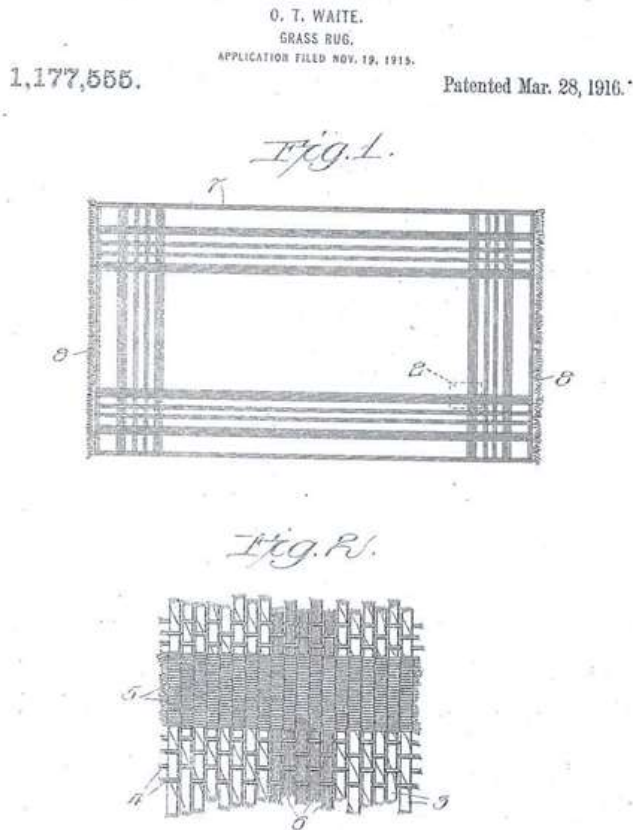
Figure 18: Price's Carpet and Rug News, "Growth of Grass Rug Industry in the United States," page 25. Vol. 9-10.
<https://books.google.com/books?id=YcowAQAAAJ&pg=PT567&lpg=PT567&dq=American+Grass+Rugs+By+O.T.+Waite&source=bl&ots=DCrgDdbqNs&sig=ohF3bGZ1zq0W5Iih3rgWNoAjbIQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewj7orf13ujVAhVh4oMKHdERDfoQ6AEILjAB#v=onepage&q=American%20Grass%20Rugs%20By%20O.T.%20Waite&f=false>

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin



Witnesses:
Harry S. Gaither

Inventor:
Ossian T. Waite
By *Samuel A. Quinn*
Attys

Figure 19: Copy of grass rug patent US 1177555.

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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 17

Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

OSSIAN T. WAITE, OF OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN, ASSIGNOR TO WAITE GRASS CARPET COMPANY, OF OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN, A CORPORATION OF WISCONSIN.

GRASS RUG.

1,177,555.

Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Mar. 28, 1916.

Application filed November 19, 1915. Serial No. 62,394.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, OSSIAN T. WAITE, a citizen of the United States, residing at Oshkosh, in the county of Winnebago and State of Wisconsin, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Grass Rugs, of which the following is a specification.

This invention pertains to a grass rug so woven as to introduce an ornamental design or pattern into the fabric of the rug without materially increasing the expense of weaving, and in such a manner as to materially increase the strength and durability of the rug, and greatly improve its appearance. Heretofore, grass rugs, of the kind now being woven from grass twine formed of marsh wire grass, have either been undecorated or decorated only with stencil patterns. Rugs of this character have enjoyed great popularity in trade, but by reason of their somewhat rustic appearance, have been used principally for porch coverings and the like, although well suited for other purposes.

The rug of the present invention is designed to afford a more elegant and durable appearance than has heretofore been secured, and thus better adapt the rug for interior use, and this without a sacrifice of those characteristics which distinguish grass rugs from those woven from other materials.

In the drawings: Figure 1 is a plan view of the grass rug, showing a border design woven in accordance with the present invention; and Fig. 2 is an enlarged detail of the dotted square designated 2 in Fig. 1.

As is customary in the weaving of grass rugs, the rug of the present invention is composed of wool strands 3 of grass twine of the kind universally employed at the present time in the weaving of grass rugs. These strands of grass twine are relatively thick or bulky, and are composed of the so-called wire grass or sedge, which grows wild in certain districts of the Northern States and elsewhere. This thick grass twine serves to give bulk or body to the rug, and is usually of a dull greenish color, which affords the base tone in the completed rug. The color is a neutral one, which well adapts the rug for use on porches and elsewhere, and heretofore this base tone has sometimes been slightly varied by employing cotton

warp threads of varying shades, such as red, blue, etc., but without any effort to introduce a border or other design into the completed fabric.

In the present invention, the warp threads 4 of the body of the rug of cotton yarn or the like are woven in and out through the grass wool strands in the usual manner; that is, in widely spaced relation to one another, which weaving exhibits the grass wool through the warp, which latter, if distinctly colored, serves only to slightly vary the tone of the rug without introducing any distinctive appearance in the rug.

In the present invention, the design is formed by laying the warp threads 5 of cotton yarn or the like in close relation to one another so as to entirely or substantially conceal the grass wool, with the result that a stripe or design of distinctive color and appearance will be introduced without materially altering the character of the weaving operation, since the warp threads in the pattern, like the remaining warp threads, will simply be passed over and under the wool strands, but in such relation as to dominate the color scheme.

Where a border is employed, around all sides of the rug, it is desirable to introduce a plurality of distinctively colored wool strands 6 into the fabric, which, of course, run counter to the pattern warp strands and serve to carry the pattern across the rug. The rug may be completed by running a selvage 7 composed of a plurality of closely spaced warp strands harmonizing with the pattern or design, and, if desired, the ends of the warp threads may be woven into a fringe 8 at each end of the rug.

The pattern shown in Fig. 1 consists of four parallel stripes running around the border of the rug, the side stripes being formed by the contiguous strands of the warp, and the end stripes by the use of distinctively colored wool strands, which are preferably formed of bundles of the warp yarn, each bundle of a size to correspond with the bulky grass twine, and the pattern may obviously be woven in red, blue, yellow, or other distinctive color, or in combinations of the same. Although the simplest form of weaving, as shown, requires that the pattern run at right angles to the weaving, it is obvious that diagonal or similar patterns

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

2

1,177,555

may be introduced by the employment of familiar methods of weaving, although, in the making of grass rugs, simple striped patterns of the kind shown are ordinarily the most satisfactory. In addition to improving the appearance of the rug, the method of weaving above described introduces elements of strength and durability into the completed rug, in that it reduces the grass surface exposed to wear and tends to break up this surface into smaller batches or areas with a corresponding increase in durability.

Rugs woven as above described present a neater and more elegant appearance than plain grass rugs or rugs decorated with stencil patterns, and in every way are improvements over the latter for many purposes.

I claim:

A patterned rug comprising a wool composed of relatively thick strands of grass twine and a warp composed of yarn, the warp threads composing the body of the rug being arranged in spaced relation to exhibit the grass wool, and the warp threads composing the pattern being arranged in contiguous relation to conceal the grass wool and exhibit stripes running counter to the wool, and wool strands of distinctive color composed of material other than grass and arranged to complete the warp pattern and running counter thereto, substantially as described.

Witnesses:
GEO. J. MEYER,
REED O. DAVIS.

ÓSSIAN T. WAITE.

Figure 21: Second page of grass rug patent US 1177555.

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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Section figures Page 19

THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL

\$13.85 Puts This Waitex Summer Rug in Your Home
A triumph of modernistic art—Happy, brilliant patterns woven in wearproof fibre and grass

Order direct from this page—
If there is no dealer near you carrying Waitex Summer Rugs, Money refunded if you are not satisfied.

6 x 9 \$13.85
Also in 9 x 12, 9 x 10,
6 x 12, 14 in. x 99 in.
2 x 6, 27 in. x 24 in.
Prices on request

MADE IN U.S.A. AND
LONDON, ENGLAND



TELEPHONE
TELEPHONE
TELEPHONE
TELEPHONE

THE surface of Waitex is a tough Kraft fibre that resists the scuffle of passing feet—within is the cushioned softness that American Wire Grass affords.

This exclusive Waitex combination weave—found in no other rug—has given new popularity and wearability to summer rugs.

Upon the neutral, fadeless background attractive designs are hid in striking colors. Offered this season are a series of new, modernistic designs that capitalize the sweeping trend of modernistic art. It is not a fad but a fundamental development, as characteristic of today as was Greek or Gothic influences of preceding eras. Shown on this page are examples. The freshness and brightness is retained for many seasons, thanks to the triple color surface.

Waitex Rugs are reversible and will not curl up. They are easy to clean as the hard-glazed Kraft fibre will not absorb dirt. Due to their style of construction, heavy tables or chairs do not mar their surface.

For porches, for summer homes—anywhere that a touch of cheerful color can advantageously be applied—they are unequalled.

The low price of \$13.85 will put one of these 6 x 9 "orientals of the summer rugs" in your home.

Every Waitex dealer has a complete range of these designs on his floor. If there is no dealer near you we will be glad to fill your order direct. Make your choice of color combinations from the natural color photographs pictured above. You have the privilege of inspection for five days in your home. If its striking pattern does not match your decorations, you may return it and your money will be refunded.

Catalog sent on request. A special proposition awaits dealers in territory not already covered.

NAME (PLEASE PRINT) _____
ADDRESS (PLEASE PRINT) _____
CITY _____ STATE _____
ZIP _____
PHONE _____
DATE _____



Figure 22: 1928 Waite Rug advertisement found on Ebay originally published in "The House Beautiful."

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National Park Service

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Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Section figures Page 20

The enchantment of a June morning brought indoors . . .

WAITEX SUMMER RUGS

OUTDOORS . . . the sparkle of dancing sunbeams, the dazzle of dew drenched flowers aflame with vibrant colors. But indoors . . . the breath of cheerless winter still clinging to every room. Time to redecorate!

Wouldn't you love to share the magic of this perfect June morning and bring it permanently into your home? Then do this:

Roll up your heavy winter rugs. Give them a well earned respite by sending them to the cleaners. Replace them for the season with inexpensive Waitex Summer Rugs. And you have a home transformed—a home radiating cheerfulness, coolness, style, without the need for further redecoration.

You'll be thrilled by Waitex modern design and brilliant colors. Patterns are subtle, intriguing—in perfect good taste and easy to live with. And Waitex differs from all other summer rugs not only in modern decorative appeal but also in durability.

The outer surface is woven of tough, mar-proof Kraft fibre; while inside there is springy American Wire Grass, soft and easy underfoot. An exclusive and patented type of construction you will find in no other summer rugs. Due to an exclusive raised wicker weave, Waitex is cool, dirt-resisting and easily cleaned.

A Waitex always lies flat. It can't curl. Abuse it. Wash it as often as you please. Expose it to sun and rain. Its non-fading colors will keep smiling through many seasons of hard wear. Yet, with all those outstanding qualities, Waitex Rugs are surprisingly moderate in price. You can buy a 6 x 9 for as little as \$14.50.

This is Waitex Summer Rug Pattern Number 72001 Black Design. Also available in blue, brown and green. Patent Applied for. There is no other rug like a Waitex. When ordering summer rugs from your dealer be sure you specify WAITEX.

Your dealer carries Waitex Summer Rugs in many patterns, colors and sizes. Better make your choice today. Or mail the coupon and receive a free catalog, showing natural color photographs of the full Waitex line.

WAITE CARPET CO. • OSHKOSH, WIS.

WAITE CARPET CO., Dept. HG4, Oshkosh, Wis.
Please send me a free catalog of Waitex Summer Rugs, Double Cotton Orbits and Wood Waitex Orbits.
I am planning the decoration of _____
which has an area of _____ The floor from which I usually purchase home furnishings is _____
Name _____
Street _____ City _____ State _____

Figure 23: Waite Rug advertisement found on Ebay.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section figures Page 21

Waite Grass Carpet Company
Oshkosh, Winnebago County, Wisconsin



Figure 24: Dr. Sphinx's Blog: <https://drsphinx.wordpress.com/tag/wire-grass/>











251

NO
PARKING
ANYTIME



















































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 1/9/2018 Date of Pending List: 1/29/2018 Date of 16th Day: 2/13/2018 Date of 45th Day: 2/23/2018 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 2/21/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : **Yes**

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

 **COPY**



RECEIVED
NOV 29 2017

BY:

NOVEMBER 27, 2017

Wisconsin Historical Society

Historic Preservation Board of Review
816 State Street
Madison, WI 53726

RECEIVED
JAN - 9 2018

Dear Members of the Board of Review,

Thank you for your consideration of the nomination for the Waite Grass Carpet Company at 300 East Custer Avenue / 221 East Nevada Avenue in Oshkosh. This industrial complex is the last remaining testimony to a business that found a use for wire grass, a worthless, natural resource that grew abundantly in the marshes of Winnebago County. This industry provided jobs for thousands of workers in a creative business that brought grass carpets made in Oshkosh to the national market. The ingenuity of the Oshkosh men who founded this successful industry should serve as an inspiration for our 21st century entrepreneurs.

We appreciate the experience and expertise of the Review Board as you study the nomination for the Waite Grass Carpet Company. If you award historic designation to this industrial complex of the first half of the 20th century, the city of Oshkosh will be greatly honored.

Sincerely,

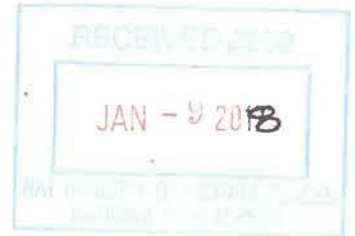

Shirley Brabender Mattox

Oshkosh Landmarks Commission, chairman



18th Senate District
(608) 266-5300, (888) 736-8720
Sen.Feyen@legis.wi.gov

PO Box 7882, Madison, WI 53707-7882
www.SenatorFeyen.com



November 30, 2017

Wisconsin Historical Society
Peggy Veregin, National Register Coordinator
State Historic Preservation Office
816 State Street, Madison, WI 53706

RE: The Walte Grass Carpet Company

Dear Ms. Veregin:

I am writing in support of the nomination for the National Historic Register of the Walte Grass Carpet Company, 300 East Custer & 221 East Nevada Avenue located in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

This factory complex is historically significant for its association with the wire grass industry. The Walte Grass Carpet Company utilized the abundant, unusable, wire grass that grew in the marshes near Oshkosh to create an industry that produced grass carpets in the early 20th century and marketed their products nationally for over half a century.

The preservation of this historical site is good for the community and our state. I strongly support this designation.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (608)266-5300

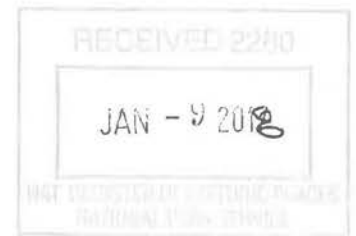
Sincerely,

State Senator Dan Feyen

18th Senate District



WISCONSIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



TO: Keeper
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Peggy Veregin
National Register Coordinator

SUBJECT: National Register Nomination

The following materials are submitted on this Fourth day of January 2018, for the nomination of the Waite Grass Carpet Company to the National Register of Historic Places:

<u>1</u>	Original National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form
<u>1</u>	CD with NRHP Nomination form PDF
<u> </u>	Multiple Property Nomination form
<u>30</u>	Photograph(s)
<u>1</u>	CD with image files
<u>1</u>	Map(s)
<u>24</u>	Sketch map(s)/figures(s)/exhibit(s)
<u>2</u>	Piece(s) of correspondence
<u> </u>	Other:

COMMENTS:

<u> </u>	Please ensure that this nomination is reviewed
<u>X</u>	This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
<u> </u>	The enclosed owner objection(s) do or do not constitute a majority of property owners
<u> </u>	Other: