

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

NOV 14
DEC 23 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse

and/or common N/A -

2. Location

street & number 619 W. Mifflin St.

not for publication

city, town Madison

vicinity of

state WI

code 55

county Dane

code 025

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N.A.	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Randall P. Alexander

street & number 802 Regent St.

city, town Madison

vicinity of

state WI 53715

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds, City-County Building

street & number 210 Monona Ave.

city, town Madison

state WI

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title WI Inventory of History Places

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983

federal state county local

depository for survey records SPHO, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison

state WI

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse is a large, U-shaped building consisting of three sections: the original two-story tan brick structure, a tan brick addition, and a modern steel-frame, steel-clad addition. The building sits on a fairly large lot just west of Madison's downtown commercial center. This area has a concentration of small industrial-commercial buildings with businesses approximately the same size as the Wiedenbeck company. The area is also close to one section of Madison's railroad corridor, an area originally bustling with railroad activities, but largely vacant now.

The original two-story tan brick structure on the site was built in 1907 and designed by the Madison architectural firm of Claude and Starck. It is a plain rectangular building with a very low-pitched, almost flat gable roof. The building has an industrial appearance; its only detail being segmental arches, sometimes multiple arches, over openings of the building. The building has a concrete foundation punctuated with small, square windows. Most of the original openings of the building have been retained and windows are tall, four-pane sash types decorated by multiple segmental arches. Doors are varied, some being simple industrial-type wooden doors. The only alteration to this section of the building is a brick and glass one-story addition over the main entrance at the northwest corner of the building.

The first addition to the main building is directly to the west at the south end of the original structure. It is almost totally obscured by a steel-frame loading dock which covers it. It was built in the 1910s and may also have been designed by Claude and Starck. The type of construction of the addition is similar to the main building. It is one-story in height, of tan brick, and has a concrete foundation, flat roof, and multi-paned metal and glass industrial-type windows. There is no decoration over the openings as seen in the original structure, though. Attached to the west facade of this addition and running north to form a U to the entire structure is a steel-frame, steel-clad addition built in 1963. This plain section of the building is non-contributing. There is a "courtyard" created by the U shape of the complex which is paved and used as a parking lot for the business.

The original Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse has an almost intact historic interior. On the first floor there is an office and counter area, along with warehouse space. Beyond the counter, which is located immediately after entering the building is the office area. The counter area and office area received their present appearance in the mid-1950s when the area was remodeled. There are paneled and plaster walls, lowered ceilings, and glass and paneled wall partitions in this area. The warehouse area of the first floor exposes the plain brick exterior walls and large wooden support beams of the original building. The second floor is almost entirely vacant and the original brick exterior walls and large wooden support beams are exposed as well. It is on this floor that the building reveals most of its original "warehouse" interior. The first addition has the same utilitarian appearance as the original building and its support beams and exterior walls are also revealed. Other than the steel-frame additions and the remodeling in the office and counter area, the building has been little altered during its history.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1930	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Period of significance: 1907-30

Specific dates 1907, c. 1915¹ Builder/Architect Claude and Starck²

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse is significant for commerce because it was the main building for an important and unique business in Madison, the Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Company, a long-time wholesale supplier of blacksmith and wagon-making materials to these industries. The building is one of a few in Madison that has a relationship to the horse transportation era and the important commercial activities that served the era. The company was also part of the important regional commercial trade that Madison developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The building is also significant for architecture because it is an intact example of a turn of the century commercial-warehouse building designed by an important Madison architectural firm, Claude and Starck. It is one of the best examples of its type of construction in Madison.

Architecture

The original section and brick addition of the Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse is significant for architecture because it is one of the best and most intact early twentieth century commercial warehouse buildings in Madison. It has a simple, functional design with a high quality of construction similar to that of an industrial building instead of a commercial block that would be found on main street. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, many utilitarian buildings of this type were built in Madison, some of wood and others of brick. Most have had significant remodeling or are no longer extant. The Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse has the best integrity and best represents this type of construction.

The architects of the warehouse were Claude and Starck, one of the most important and prolific architectural firms in Madison. Between 1896 and 1929, Claude and Starck practiced in Madison. They were progressive architects who were influenced by Prairie School designers such as George Maher and Frank Lloyd Wright. Their most important work lies in their designs for homes and libraries in the midwest. They are particularly known for their fine work in the Prairie Style. Claude and Starck also designed commercial or other non-residential buildings as well, although these designs have not been as lauded as their Prairie houses. The Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse is not the best of Claude and Starck's work, but it is important as a relatively intact example of the firm's non-residential work. The exposed interior support system is of interest to those who would study the firm's structural support design concepts.

The Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse is not important as a fine example of a particular architectural style, rather it is significant because it is an intact example of a type of construction important to a community growing in its importance as a regional commercial center. The design met the needs of a specific business without frills but with a quality suitable to durability and function.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation pages

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1

Quadrangle name Madison West, Wis.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	6	3	0	5	0	5	0	4	7	7	1	0	0	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification Same as legal description: Original plat, Lots 4, 5, 6, Block 24 and Part Lot 7 of the University Addition.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carol Lohry Cartwright, Consultant

organization prepared for the Alexander Co.

date October 7, 1986

street & number R. 2, 5581A Hackett Rd.

telephone (404) 473-6820

city or town Whitewater,

state WI 53290

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *[Signature]*

title

date 11/4/86

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Beth Groswend

date 12/23/86

Keeper of the National Register

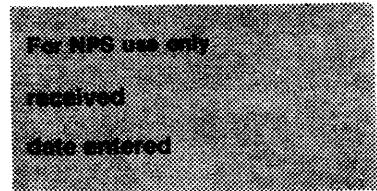
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse

Continuation sheet Madison, Dane County, WI Item number 8 Page 1

Commerce

The Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse is locally significant for commerce because it was the most impressive structure built for the firm and it is the only extant building associated with the firm that was an important and unique business in Madison. The firm was a specialty supplier of materials to blacksmiths and wagon-makers in the area and is one of only a few resources remaining in Madison to be directly related to the commercial activities surrounding the horse transportation era. The firm was also a part of the development of Madison as an important commercial center in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.

After working for the hardware firm of Sumner and Morris in Madison, Theodore E. Wiedenbeck, along with another Sumner and Morris employee, Charles W. Dobelin, began their own business called the Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Company in 1896. The firm specialized in supplies for blacksmiths and wagon-makers. There were no other specialty firms of this type listed in the city directories prior to 1896. Wiedenbeck and Dobelin saw a need for a specialty business serving these important industries and they were the only firm to serve them between 1896 and the 1920s. Wiedenbeck and Dobelin's firm rapidly became successful. By 1902 they had three warehouses serving their blacksmith and wagon-making customers. Their main building was located near their current complex in the railroad corridor off West Washington Avenue, a major thoroughfare at the turn of the century, and close to the extensive railroad connections important to their regional trade. In 1907 the firm incorporated their business and built the original section of this building. After construction was completed the firm consolidated their spread-out operations and between 1907 and the mid-1920s, Wiedenbeck-Dobelin achieved considerable success, building an addition to their original structure during the 1910s. By the mid-1920s, the automobile and related equipment began to permanently replace horses and wagons and blacksmiths and wagon-makers were less in demand. While remaining in the blacksmith and wagon-making supply business, Wiedenbeck-Dobelin branched out into the "heavy hardware" line. Heavy hardware supplies are used in the construction industry. The firm has continued in the heavy hardware business up to the present time.³

There are two historic themes that apply to the commercial significance of the building. The first is the importance of horses and horse-drawn equipment to the economy of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse is one of only a few extant resources connected to this era left in Madison today. The second theme is that of the development of Madison as an important commercial center during the period of significance and the development of specialty businesses meeting a regional need. The development of the Wiedenbeck-Dobelin company was indicative of Madison's growing role as a large trading center, large enough to support specialty businesses.

Horses and horse-drawn equipment were a vital part of the lifestyle and economy of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The dominance of the automobile and its related equipment has eliminated the horse and horse-related resources from the American scene, other than for recreation. Because there are so few historic resources connected to the horse economy today, the ones remaining take on increased

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Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse,
Madison, Dane County, WI

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Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page

2

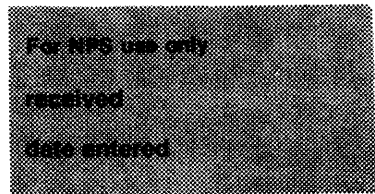
significance. In Madison, only four other buildings have been identified as the most important and intact resources related to the historic horse and wagon era. These are the Wisconsin Wagon Company (602 Railroad St.), the Heitkamp Wagon and Blacksmith Shop (811 Williamson St.), the city horse barn (202 N. Blount St.), and the Hoffmann horsebarn (2049-1/2 Atwood Ave.). The Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse can be added to this group of important extant horse-era buildings because the firm provided materials to two important horse-era industries: blacksmiths and wagon-makers. The success of the firm indicates that their specialty service of providing supplies to blacksmiths and wagon-makers was a significant and important commercial activity in the horse-era economy of Madison.⁴

The Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse is also an important extant example of Madison's growing commercial activity during the period of significance, and an important indicator of the type of activity taking place in the business community. During much of the nineteenth century, Madison attempted to find that one economic base that would make the community prosperous. During the 1880s and 1890s, Madison merchants and businesspersons worked to develop a successful regional commercial trade. Madison's good railroad connections during this era helped foster this regional trade. As Madison drew more trade, its businesses were able to grow and specialize. There were enough customers to spread out merchandize generally found in small town general stores to several businesses. Then each business could expand the specialty line to include more and diverse merchandize, further enhancing the commercial draw to the community. This is exactly what Wiedenbeck and Dobelin did in 1896. No doubt many blacksmith and wagon-making supplies were available at retail prices from hardware stores. Wiedenbeck and Dobelin worked for a large hardware store before they began their own business. By expanding one specific line of merchandize and offering it at wholesale prices, Wiedenbeck and Dobelin were able to grow and develop into an important business, serving a wide range of clients.⁵

The Wiedenbeck-Dobelin firm represents the wide range of business services available to customers coming to Madison to engage in trade. It also represents the increasing specialization of commercial activity going on in Madison during the period of significance.

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Continuation sheet Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse, Madison, Dane County, WI Item number 8 Page 3

The original section of the Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse and the first addition to this building have maintained their original appearance over the years despite the change in the firm's business activities. The interior of the building is much as it would have been in the early twentieth century. Because of the significant historical associations of the firm, the Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse is an important historical resource in Madison's commercial history.

Notes:

¹The original date of construction was determined by documents in the Wiedenbeck family papers in possession of the family, specifically an architect's billing dated 1907 for the construction of the original building. The addition date cannot be specifically determined, but indications are that it occurred during the 1910s.

²Claude and Starck was determined to be the architect from the documents in the Wiedenbeck family papers in possession of the family.

³Madison City directories, 1886-1937, Library, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison; Madison Past and Present, Wisconsin State Journal Semi-Centennial, 1902, p. 223; Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse file, Madison Preservation Planner's Office, Municipal Building, Madison, WI; Wiedenbeck family papers in possession of family, Madison, WI.

⁴Katherine H. Rankin, Addendum to Landmark Nomination for the Hoffmann-Kennedy Dairy Horse Barn, February 11, 1986. On file in the Madison Preservation Planner's Office, Municipal Building, Madison, WI.

⁵David V. Mollenhoff, Madison A History of the Formative Years, Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1982, pp. 178-180.

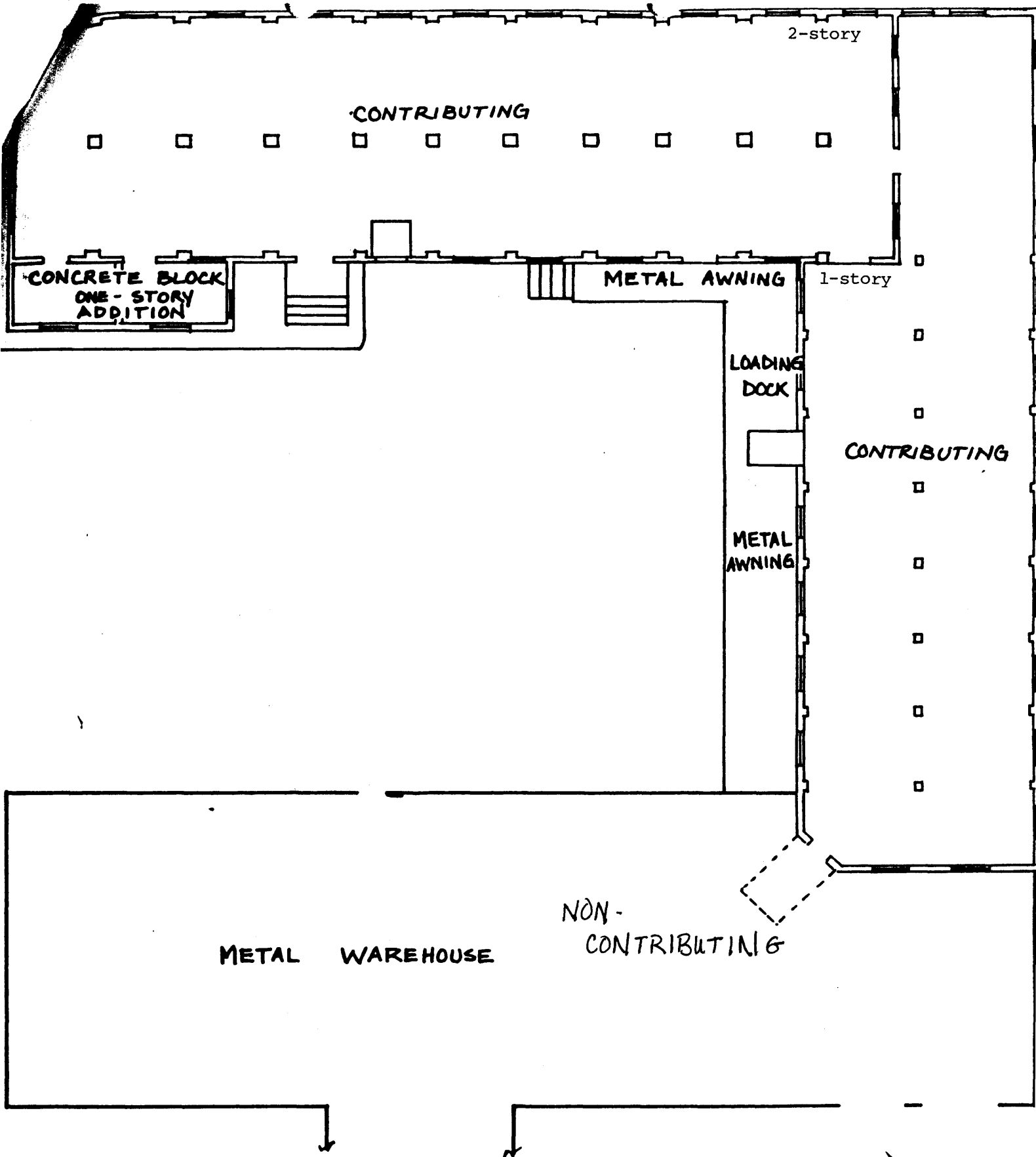
ITEM 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Madison Past and Present, Wisconsin State Journal Semi-Centennial, 1902.

Mollenhoff, David V. Madison A History of the Formative Years. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1982.

Rankin, Katherine H. Addendum to Landmark Nomination for the Hoffmann-Kennedy Dairy Horse Barn, February 11, 1986. On file in the Madison Preservation Planner's Office, Municipal Building, Madison, WI.

Wiedenbeck family papers. In possession of the Wiedenbeck family, Madison, WI.



WEIDENBECK-DOBELIN WAREHOUSE
619 W. MIFFLIN ST
CONTRIBUTING / NONCONTRIBUTING BUILDING STRUCTURES

