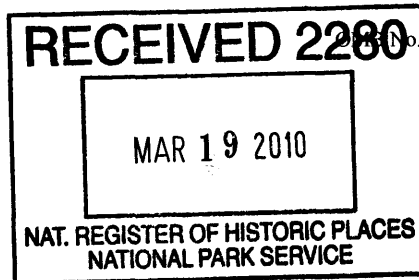


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10024-0018

**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 McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number	301 South Blount Street	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Madison	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Dane	code 025
			zip code 53703

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.)

3/16/10
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Officer - 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

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House | Dane County | Wisconsin
 Name of Property | County and State

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:)

Edson H. Beall

4.27.10

[Signature]

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (check as many boxes as apply)

private
 ___ public-local
 ___ public-State
 ___ public-Federal

Category of Property
 (Check only one box)

building(s)
 ___ district
 ___ structure
 ___ site
 ___ object

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

contributing	noncontributing
1	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	0 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 is previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions)
 COMMERCE/TRADE/ Business

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions)
 COMMERCE/TRADE/ Business

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Stone
 walls Brick

roof Synthetics

other Stone

Narrative Description

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

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
Name of Property

Dane County
County and State

Wisconsin

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)

Commerce

Period of Significance

1898-1953

Significant Dates

1898

1910

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
Name of Property

Dane County
County and State

Wisconsin

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

Acreeage of Property 0.55 acre

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

1 16 306780 4771950
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
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	Gary Tipler	date	February 4, 2010
organization	Tipler & Associates	telephone	(608) 286-1844
street & number	807 Jenifer Street	zip code	53703
city or town	Madison	state	WI

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House

Dane County

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

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	Martin Rifken	date	February 3, 2010
organization	The Rifken Group, Ltd.	telephone	(608) 258-4640
street & number	14 West Mifflin Street, Suite 300		Cell: (608) 575-9562
city or town	Madison	state	WI
		zip code	53701

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.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House is sited on the near-east side of Madison in an industrial area adjoining the south edge of the rail corridor. It was built in 1898 with an addition in 1910, at the northwest (plan north) edge of Lots 1 and 2, Block 129, City of Madison, original plat.

The building façade is oriented along S. Blount Street, with a passage door entrance near the center-north of the Blount Street façade. Originally, rail and subsequently truck loading docks stood along the north (two loading dock doors), east (four loading dock doors) and south (three loading dock doors) sides of the building.

The utilitarian three-story cream brick building is set above a raised basement of dressed rusticated limestone, built in a partly mill type of construction. The side walls give way to rubble stone foundation with brick bearing walls above. A simplified Greek key design in polychromatic brick detail runs across the top of the street and north (track) sides of the building. Parapet walls hide a flat roof.

The original windows, according to old photos, consisted of double-hung wood windows. On the street-front of the building they were arranged in sets of three, with narrower windows on either side of larger center windows. The upper floor windows had muntins further dividing most sashes into four equal parts, except for the center of the three-window units facing Blount Street. On the trackside and rear, the paired older wood double-hung windows predominated, while on the south side, original paired steel-frame, fire-resistant wire-mesh windows remained until 2008 on the second level. Prior to the 2008 renovation, the rear or east side masonry openings had been blocked with brick, the window openings of the street front and trackside had been partly blocked with brick masonry and smaller windows had been installed as part of a renovation for office use. That unsympathetic renovation had been done in the late 1970s. In 2003, the windows of the third floor south side were replaced in a manner to be sympathetic to the original steel windows on the upper floors on that side of the building. The 2008 renovation, done according to Historic Tax Credit standards, involved removing all but the south side third-floor windows, and reopening most of the masonry openings. New aluminum windows with moldings, mullions, muntins, and offsets to closely match the details of the original wood windows, as shown in historic photos, were installed.

Also at that time, the street front entrance was given a new storefront with aluminum frames and glazing. Just inside the original street front entrance a half-flight stair leads to the first floor and a door set in an angled wall. A previous stair had led up to the second floor, though had been removed prior to the 2008 renovation. In 2008, a new staircase was installed adjoining the rear of the north wall in the

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Section 7 Page 2

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

location of an original elevator. At that time, a second staircase was built, partly inside of the freight elevator, which remained in the rear adjoining the south wall of the 1910 addition. At that time, a narrow utilitarian wooden staircase was removed from the rear south wall of the 1898 building.

The substantial brick addition on the southeast side of the original McCormick building was built by International Harvester Company. Completed in 1910, the addition closely matched the construction and exterior detail of the old McCormick building, and extended the street front façade another 56 feet south along S. Blount Street. The depth matched the 116 feet depth of the McCormick building. Additional loading doors along the south side of the building were then served by a second rail siding. A large industrial elevator in a brick shaft served the south side of the building.

Original exterior painted signs remain on the north and south sides of the building. The first, OIL TRACTORS, is a vertical sign painted on the brick at the front edge of the south elevation facing Williamson Street. The second, INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER COMPANY OF AMERICA is located on the north side between the second and third floor windows. Previously a similar sign ran across the top of the south side of the building. Another weatherworn block letter sign on the north side is less legible though the words FARM and TRACTORS are easily read.

At the time of the 1910 expansion, the floor plan of the old McCormick building was reconfigured. The ground-floor, street-front office was moved from the first floor to the second floor; the masonry bound safe produced by the Herring-Hall-Marvin Safe Company was relocated to the second floor. The front half of the second floor of the old McCormick building was refurbished for offices. A wood-and-glass-panel-enclosed lobby was located at the top of the (former) stair, which featured a cashier's window and four entrances, all of which remain. Sales and administrative offices were located along the north or trackside and the street front side of the building. Along the Blount Street side of the second floor, adjoining offices in the 1910 part of the building likely served as sales staff rooms. These open to a large showroom (largely intact, except for the interior east wall, which had long been removed). The showroom occupied the balance of the second floor front of the 1910 addition. Some of the office areas along the trackside have an open floor plan, while three others likely served the finance and sales departments.

All offices have windowed partition walls, which maintain openness and light communicating among the rooms. The interior and exterior windows and doors are all trimmed with a dark brown stained and varnished pine casing with little detail.

Other office finishes include the stamped tin ceilings and encased beams, found throughout the offices and showroom. Maple floors are found not only in the offices but also throughout the three floors.

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Section 7 Page 3

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Virtually all of the original partition walls and finishes of the offices and showroom (except the east wall) remain or were replicated in the 2008 renovation.

There are no original finished spaces other than those of the entrance and the second floor offices and showroom. Roll-down steel fire doors, no longer present, were originally found over passage and freight doors connecting the two buildings on each level.

The wide column spacing of the 1910 addition was made possible by the use of a laminated floor system, with pine three-by-sixes spiked together to create a shallow floor-to-floor structure. The floor structure was described as an International Harvester Company standard for their new agency or branch houses in 1911.¹ The floor-to-floor heights are approximately 14 feet. In the office area of the old McCormick building, a large masonry shaft extending to the basement supports the safe structure above. The large industrial elevator and brick shaft remains in the 1910 addition. A landing at the first floor Blount Street entrance is small and opens only into the first floor.

Alterations

Prior to the recent renovation, the building had remained largely unchanged except for the removal of the majority of wood double-hung windows and steel fire-safety windows on the third floor of the south elevation, and the infill of masonry openings and the installation of smaller replacement windows. The masonry infill on the street front and north side and the installation of windows took place in about 1978. The more sensitive replacement of the third story steel fire-safety windows on the third floor of the south elevation took place in 2003. The removal and alterations to the wood loading docks along the track-sides of the building took place during the period of significance to accommodate truck loading, and a steel-sided connector was later built to join with the building to the south of the subject building. The rear and south side dock doors were infilled with masonry during the period of significance. The first and second floors of the interior were renovated to install modern offices in the 1970s. Those installations were recently removed to reveal the original 1910 installations of the administrative and sales offices and the showroom on the second floor. The original enclosed front stair to the second floor had been removed, and a utility stair between the second and third floor was removed in the recent renovation.

The 2008 renovation included the complete refurbishment of the building and changed the use from office and warehouse to fully accommodate offices throughout. The exterior was altered by removing the first-floor connector to the building to the south, reopening most of the brick in-filled masonry openings, and adding to the north side a new elevator tower with a small one-story windowed entrance pavilion. That addition was done with mottled vintage cream brick. The recent window installations

¹ Harvester World, March, 1911, pp. 4-6.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 4

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

were replaced with new aluminum windows with details to match original according to historic photos. Utilitarian windows replaced similar windows in former loading docks openings on the south side of the building. The parking lot on the track side was paved and minimally landscaped. A small sign was installed. The original painted signs and the soot-stained exterior brick walls were left as is. The interior has largely been refurbished to install new office uses, hallways, restrooms, a new elevator and stairwells. Ceiling structures and columns and masonry walls were largely left exposed.

Integrity

Following the 2008 renovation of the property, the building retains a remarkable degree of integrity from the period of its association with the McCormick-International Harvester Company, from 1898 to 1953, through the period of significance. The administrative, sales and showrooms of the second floor are a rare example of the agricultural implement branch house and have been carefully preserved. The window replacement recreated the historic exterior appearance of the building.

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Section 8 Page 1

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

SIGNIFICANCE

The McCormick-International Harvester Co. Branch House is locally significant under Criterion A for its history as regional branch house for sales and distribution of agricultural implements for both the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company and the International Harvester Company. A few years later it was expanded to serve the International Harvester Company, a corporate extension of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company.

The McCormick Harvesting Machine Company had been a long-standing manufacturer and had a network of sales offices and branches. The branch house building was built in Madison by McCormick in 1898, in the developing "Implement Row" of Madison's East railroad district and more than doubled in size with a large addition by the corporate successor, the International Harvester Company, in 1910.

In August 1902, McCormick Harvesting Machine Company joined its chief competitor, Deering Harvester Company and several other companies in a corporate merger to become the International Harvester Company, the largest and most influential manufacturer of agricultural implements in the Twentieth Century. International Harvester, then under the direction of Cyrus Hall McCormick, Jr. as its president, set upon a campaign of building a network of regional branch houses to better serve the company and its clients.

The McCormick-International Harvester Co. Branch House is one of the only two remaining branch houses built in Madison by an agricultural implement company. It is the only known branch house remaining that was built by the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company. Even in Chicago, the home of the company's manufacturing plant, none of the buildings associated with McCormick Harvesting Machine Company remains.²

The period of significance of the building is the period during which it was associated with the McCormick Harvesting Machine Co. and the International Harvester Co., from its construction in 1898 through 1953 when International Harvester Co. moved to a new building at the periphery of the city.

² Notes from a conversation in January 2008 with Lee Grady, archivist for the McCormick-International Harvester Company Collection, Library-Archives Division, Wisconsin Historical Society.

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Section 8 Page 2

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

“Implement Row” - a center for agricultural implement businesses in Madison

“Madison was recognized for its central location and it developed into a major distribution center for agricultural implements. The large manufacturers found it more profitable to have branch locations from which their stock could be supplied without delay, rather than shipping directly from their factories. Fortunately for Madison, railroad lines reaching in nine directions tied it to the prosperous communities and fertile farmlands of Wisconsin, Iowa, and northern Illinois.”

R. Jay Shockley on Implement Row in Madison.³

Due to its location in the central southern part of the state, Madison’s network of nine rail lines, which radiated from the city, caught the attention of manufacturers as a shipping and distribution center. Early on in 1866, Madison’s importance in its shipping of farm implements was noted – 70,000 pounds were shipped eastward and 2.6 million pounds were shipped westward.⁴ The areas near the East Madison depots and near the rails on the 500 through 700 blocks of Wilson and Williamson streets and in the inexpensive marshy lands along the Madison to Watertown Railroad (later Milwaukee Road) and the Chicago NorthWestern Railway attracted the development of wholesale and distribution houses. As many as forty trains a day around the clock ensured the quick shipment of products to destinations in the expanding western states and Canada.

Beginning in the late 1880s, a number of farm implement companies located in the East Madison depot area, including Advance Thresher Co., J.I. Case among others, generally located in frame and timber buildings, often rented quarters. The first outside branch house was located in the Gill Brothers frame ice house converted for that use on the 600 block of Williamson Street on the shore of Lake Monona and within a block of the depots. In 1897, the Timothy Brown Estate bought the Gill property and erected the first masonry building at 601-603 Williamson expressly for wholesale farm implement businesses on “Implement Row.” It was built in a Romanesque Revival commercial style, designed by prominent Madison architects Alan Conover and Lew Porter. The first and long-term tenant was the Advance Thresher Company, which was located in the turreted anchor building at Blair at Williamson. A few years later, International Harvester was located at 609-611 Williamson, the fifth section of the six sections of the building, built between 1897 and 1909. The fifth section was completed during or after 1902.⁵

³ Shockley, Robert Jay. National Register nomination, Machinery Row, 601-627 Williamson Street, Madison, Dane County, WI. NRHP Certification: 4-12-1982.

⁴ Madison City Directory, 1866.

⁵ Shockley; Madison Past and Present, 1852-1902, p.26.

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Section 8 Page 3

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

The second notable building built in the Implement Row area, and the first company-owned branch house building, was built by McCormick Harvesting Machine Co. at the tracks and S. Blount Street. It was hailed as the "King of Implement Row" as late as three years later by the editors of the Wisconsin State Journal.⁶ It was the only branch house to have been built in Madison by an implement manufacturer that remains today.

By 1902, 30 implement dealers, branch houses, and related businesses were located nearby. The territory served by them included all of Wisconsin and part of Northern Illinois. They employed some 300 people, among them many sales representatives who traveled widely. Also, at that time, twelve hundred rail cars of farm implements were shipped to branch houses in Madison for distribution, according to Thomas A. Coleman, the McCormick's first branch manager.⁷ While some of the Madison distributorships, branch houses and dealers served the northwestern states and parts of Canada, the International Harvester Company served a dozen or so counties nearest Madison, which merited it the second largest farm implement sales center in Wisconsin.⁸

The area was alternately referred to as Implement Row and Machinery Row, and even as Stony Island Avenue, referencing Chicago's south-side implement district.⁹ By 1898, Implement Row contained fifteen businesses with combined sales of over a million dollars a year.¹⁰ The area maintained its farm implement and supply businesses until they began to leave for newer quarters beginning in the 1950s.

McCormick's Reaper and the McCormick Harvesting Machine Co.

Cyrus Hall McCormick devised a mechanical means of cutting wheat in 1831 and patented it in 1834. By the early 1840s he had refined his reaper and contracted to bring the machine into commercial production, among the earliest of the farm implement inventors and manufacturers to do so. The McCormick Harvesting Machine Company was established in Chicago in 1847, and the company quickly grew to become one of the largest manufacturing plants in the region, and one of the two largest manufacturers of farm implements – Deering Harvesting Company was its chief competitor. The McCormick Company played a significant role in the mechanization of harvesting and related farm work, and its products were marketed and sold worldwide.

Cyrus McCormick's earliest experiences in marketing and distributing the harvesting machines world wide lead him and his son Cyrus Hall McCormick II, to adopt the "branch house" system. It was employed in the 1870s by the developing meat packing industry, which was spurred by the invention

⁶ Madison Past and Present, 1852-1902, p.224.

⁷ Madison Past and Present, 1852-1902, p.26.

⁸ Curtis, W. D., "Review of Madison Jobbers and Distributors, 1915." Wisconsin State Journal, Jan. 2, 1916, p.15.

⁹ Wisconsin State Journal, July 20, 1897.

¹⁰ Wisconsin State Journal, Sept 19, 1898.

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Continuation Sheet

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McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

of refrigeration and the growth of the railroad shipping networks. The McCormicks shifted from the jobber system of sales to the branch house system in the 1880s. Following Cyrus McCormick's death in 1884, Cyrus Hall McCormick II further adapted the system as did other agricultural implement manufacturers and businesses.

Agricultural Implement Branch Houses

Agricultural implement manufacturers established branch house systems in order to more efficiently accommodate the sale, financing, delivery, and maintenance of their products in a manner most suitable to both manufacturer and customer. The branch house system developed in the late nineteenth century and was well suited to the bulky and expensive farm equipment trades. Branch houses, as agents for the manufacturer, sold the products to the independently owned retail dealers, whose sales were made directly to farmers. Some manufacturing companies developed company owned and operated retail outlets, but these only handled a minor part of equipment sales. The branch houses became full line distributors, and provided access to the fullest range of farming equipment possible. They were highly competitive against smaller manufacturers, which specialized in only a few lines of equipment, and were often incorporated into the mergers and aggregation of the larger companies.

On the sales side of the business, branch houses employed a number of salesmen, canvassers, machinery experts, and "blockmen." "The salesmen are called 'blockmen' because each of them operates one section or block of the branch territory. The blockmen supervise and solicit trade with the dealer, the canvassers solicit trade with the farmer and assist the dealer and blockmen, while the experts aid in the installation, adjustment, and repair of machines."¹¹

To accommodate the limited capital resources for the highly seasonal sales, manufacturers financed a large share of their retail dealers' inventories, often on liberal credit terms. The manufacturers' credit operations were often closely bound with the work of the sales department. The functions of the district sales managers, branch managers and blockmen were responsible not only for farm equipment sales, but also for developing credit extension and collections.¹² Judging from the employment listings of the International Harvester Co. this was the case, as well. The office spaces reflected a significant sales and credit collection staff.¹³

As president of International Harvester Company, beginning in 1902, Cyrus Hall McCormick II further formalized and developed the branch house system during the first two decades of the latter company's

¹¹ Marquand, H. A., The Dynamics of Industrial Combination, p.51.

¹² Diesslin, Howard, Agricultural Equipment Financing, p. 24.

¹³ Madison City directories.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 5

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

business. The program further decentralized and relegated the sales, promotion, instruction, delivery, and repair of the farm implements to district centers, closer to the farmers.¹⁴ The International Harvester Company's facilities grew from 65 agencies in 1902¹⁵ to as many as 93 branch houses in the United States by mid-1920.¹⁶

McCormick Harvesting Machine Co. in Madison

The McCormick Harvesting Machine Company first established a branch in rented quarters in Madison to serve the southwestern region of Wisconsin in the fall of 1895. Unable to find suitable quarters in 1897, the company bought parts of Lots 1 and 2 on Block 129 from the Madison & Watertown Railroad in the fall of the same year, and in the following spring built the building for about \$4500.¹⁷ The New McCormick Block, the "King of Implement Row," was one of the two most attractive of those built for farm implement dealers in the area near the East Madison depots, but the only one that was company owned. General agent Thomas A. Coleman first operated the branch.¹⁸ The company sold binders, mowers, reapers, hay rakes, corn harvesters, corn huskers, and binding twine.¹⁹

The building had a frontage on S. Blount Street of 40 feet and 116 feet adjoining the Madison & Watertown Railroad tracks. An elevator served the loading dock, which was along the trackside or the north side of the building. A frame horse shed was built along the south end of the lot. The office and shipping departments were located on the first floor.

International Harvester Co. Branch House

The Madison agency's branch house of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company was part of the assets of the company, which became part of the International Harvester Company's holdings when the corporation was established, with McCormick as one of the principal partners. It became perhaps the largest corporation in the United States at that time.

On August 12, 1902, the International Harvester Company was formed under New Jersey laws, with the merger of McCormick Harvesting Machine Co., McCormick's largest rival Deering Harvester Co.,

¹⁴ Price, W.D., "Construction Work for International Harvester Company of America, 1910." Harvester World, March 1911, pp 4-6.

¹⁵ United States. Bureau of Corporations, and Luther Conant, Jr. The International Harvester Co., p.334.

¹⁶ Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette, June 25, 1920.

¹⁷ Dane County Tax rolls, 1897; Wisconsin State Journal, "Over Half Million, Building Improvements in Madison During the Past Year." Jan 3, 1899, p.4.

¹⁸ Madison Past and Present, 1852-1902, p. 224.

¹⁹ Advertisement, Madison, Wis. and Its Points of Interest.

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Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 6

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

along with Plano Harvester Co., Milwaukee Harvester Co., and Warder, Bushnell & Glessner Co. Cyrus H. McCormick (junior) was named President, and Charles Deering, Chairman of the board.²⁰

While the new company maintained some separate lines to meet anti-trust regulations that the company engendered, it also developed a line of gasoline tractors in 1906, making it the first company in the small tractor business.

The business outgrew the original Madison building and in 1908 the company rented a part of the Timothy Brown Estate's building at 609-611 Williamson Street.²¹ The following year International Harvester Co. began the expansion of the Blount Street building.

Under the direction of Cyrus Hall McCormick II, the International Harvester Co. developed a concerted expansion program of leasing, buying, and for the most part, building branch houses. The company had acquired many of the assets of McCormick Harvesting Machine Co. including the Madison branch building on Blount Street in 1902. The company built branch houses as early as 1904 and increased its expansion program significantly from 1909 through 1911 to keep up with the growth in products and sales.

In November 1909, International Harvester Co. let contracts for the expanding the facility and upgrading of the old McCormick building to the newer branch house standards. The large addition, 56 feet fronting on S. Blount and 116 feet deep, more than doubled the space of the old McCormick building. The cost was estimated to be about \$35,000. The offices were moved to the second floor and given much more space. The large show room was finished out adjoining the sales rooms. The addition included a large second elevator to serve the new freight dock on the south side of the building adjoining the new siding, which doubled the capacity to six rail cars.²² The building incorporated all the main components of the branch house program, with its double trackage, two elevators, wide post spacing, and floor use plan. The architect is unknown, though the building was listed among the works of only a few architects interviewed for the year end report in the state Wisconsin State Journal, including Claude and Starck, a Madison firm which often served as executive architects for the projects of out-of-state architects and clients.²³ The building was completed in early 1910, but with some difficulty from the winter weather.²⁴

²⁰ United States. Bureau of Corporations and Luther Conant, Jr. "The International Harvester Co." Summary statement.

²¹ Sanborn maps.

²² Harvester World, December, 1909, p.19. Originally reported in Farm Implement News, Nov. 15, 1909, published in Chicago, IL.

²³ Wisconsin State Journal, "Great Building Year Was 1909." January 11, 1910, p.8.

²⁴ Wisconsin State Journal, January 11, 1910, p.8.

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McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

In the March 1911 issue of Harvester World, an article by W. D. Price, Superintendent of Construction for International Harvester Company, described the criteria the company had developed for a standardized economical branch house. Almost all of the following criteria and methods of order, layout and construction had been incorporated into the Madison branch house renovation and expansion during the previous year. As Price described them, the typical building would have a wider than standard column spacing and rail trackage on two sides of the building to expedite shipping and receiving on the ground floor. On the second floor were offices for sales and accounting, as well as a showroom. There may also be spaces for assembly instruction (as was the case in the Madison branch house).²⁵ The third and sometimes fourth floors were for parts warehousing. Depending on the regional market, the building was most often sized to accommodate 60 to 100 carloads of products and sometimes more. The wider column spacing was made possible by the use of a laminated floor system, where pine three-by-six's were spiked together to create a shallow structure to maximize vertical storage, and with only half the overhead beams. Maple flooring was installed on top over a building paper to prevent dust from falling through.²⁶ This system was basically the one used in designing the addition to the old McCormick building designed in late 1909 and completed in 1910.

The Madison branch house was one of three such additions to existing International Harvester of America agency houses in 1909. Also, five new ones were built and real estate was acquired for five more warehouses in the same year.²⁷

The Madison branch house served the pattern the McCormick family had established of sending their sons off to learn the trade. International Harvester Company president Cyrus Hall McCormick, Jr. did that with his sons. Born in 1890, graduated from Princeton in 1912 and a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford from 1912 to 1914, Cyrus Hall McCormick III was then indoctrinated in the business at the company's Madison branch house. The following year he was sent to Wichita, Kansas, as a salesman and in 1916 he was appointed its branch manager. Following his service in World War I, he returned to the company and was the manager of the factories from 1919 to 1922, after which he became a director of the company and a vice-president of manufacturing until he retired in 1932.²⁸

The International Harvester Company operated in the Blount Street building until 1953, at which time the company moved to a one-story building at 2320 Darwin Road, near the airport. Direct shipping had

²⁵ Harvester World, "Madison Agency Building." Chicago, Ill.: International Harvester Company of America. May 1913, p.16. Photo caption: "An interior at the Madison General Agency, showing how line shafting has been arranged to permit four shredders or threshers to be demonstrated in operation at one time."

²⁶ Price, W.D., "Construction Work for International Harvester Company of America, 1910." Harvester World, March, 1911, pp 4-6.

²⁷ Annual Report of the International Harvester Company, December 31, 1909, p.11.

²⁸ Ingham, Biographical Dictionary of American Business Leaders, p.890.

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McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
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eliminated the need for branch houses to house the large equipment, and they were relegated to housing offices and parts.

Soon after that time, the Reynolds Transfer and Storage Company bought the building. It was partly renovated for offices by the Reynolds company in the late 1970s, though never fully occupied. Among its tenants was the Pleasant Company, which gave rise to the American Girl Company and its line of dolls and related products.

Summary of Significance

The McCormick-International Harvester Co. Branch House is locally significant for its history as a regional branch house for sales and distribution of agricultural implements for both the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company and the International Harvester Company. It is also locally important as the only known remaining branch house of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company. Branch houses such as these were an important link in the commercial chain of the agricultural implement business.

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Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property is described as Lots 1 and 2 on Block 129, in the Original Plat of the City of Madison, Wisconsin.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The property boundary is the same as that which defined the property from 1898 and through 1953, the period of significance. This was the parcel through the early 1990s when an adjacent parcel the formerly belonged to the rail line along the north edge was acquired. This later expansion of the parcel is excluded from the nominated boundaries.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
301 S. Blount Street, Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin
Photos by Gary Tipler, August 2009.
Negatives on file at the Wisconsin Historical Society.

- 1 of 12. Exterior, North (plan North and trackside) elevation, looking East.
- 2 of 12. Exterior, sign detail on North elevation, looking East.
- 3 of 12. Exterior, view of North elevation, looking Southeast.
- 4 of 12. Exterior, view of rear (left) and North elevations, looking South.
- 5 of 12. Exterior, view of rear elevation, looking West.
- 6 of 12. Exterior, view of Blount Street (front and West) elevation and South alley elevation, looking North.
- 7 of 12. Exterior, sign on South alley elevation, looking North
- 8 of 12. Exterior, Blount façade entrance looking North.
- 9 of 12. Interior 2nd fl. North, NW corner open office looking South.
- 10 of 12. Interior 2nd fl. North, NW corner open office looking East toward original 2nd fl. stair foyer and offices.
- 11 of 12. Interior 2nd fl. South, Showroom looking West toward offices along Blount.
- 12 of 12. Interior 3rd fl. South, looking West in former warehouse space.

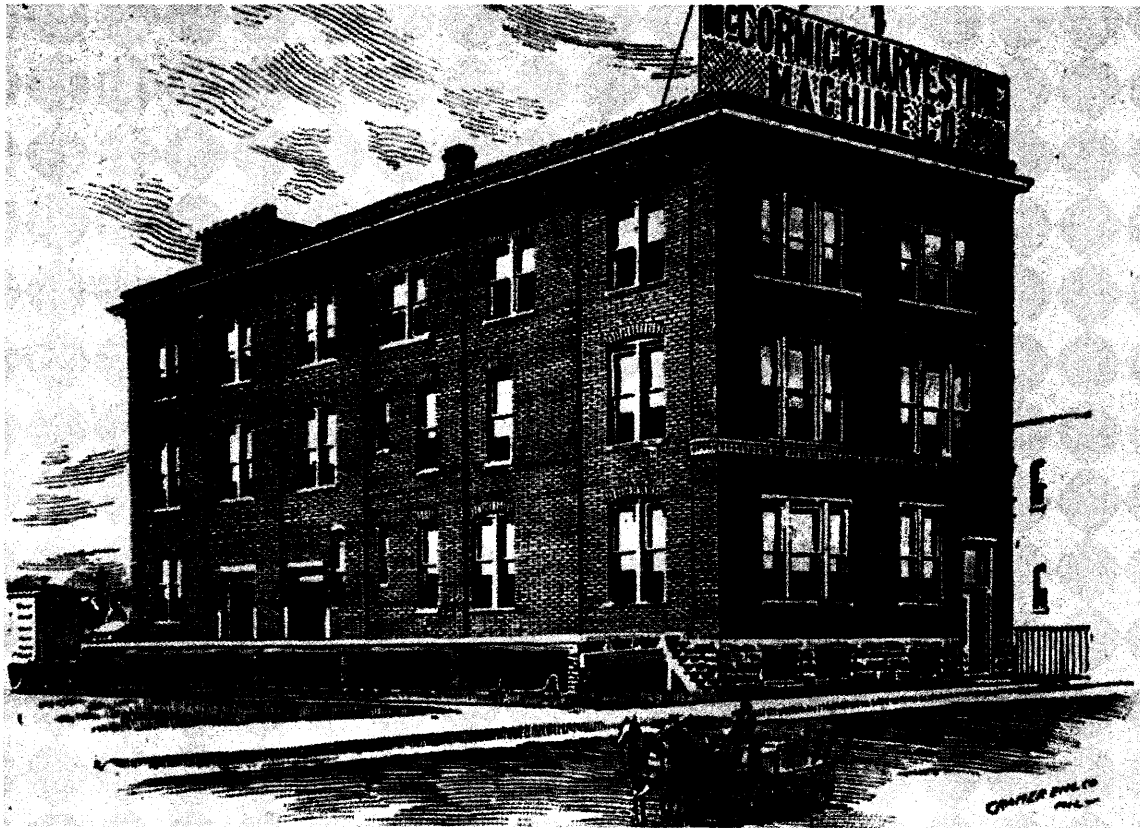


Figure A: Top: Perspective, Cramer Eng., Milwaukee

Figure B: Bottom: McCormick Branch House, Wisconsin Historical Soc. WHI-9707.

**McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
301 S. Blount Street, Madison, Dane Co., Wisconsin**

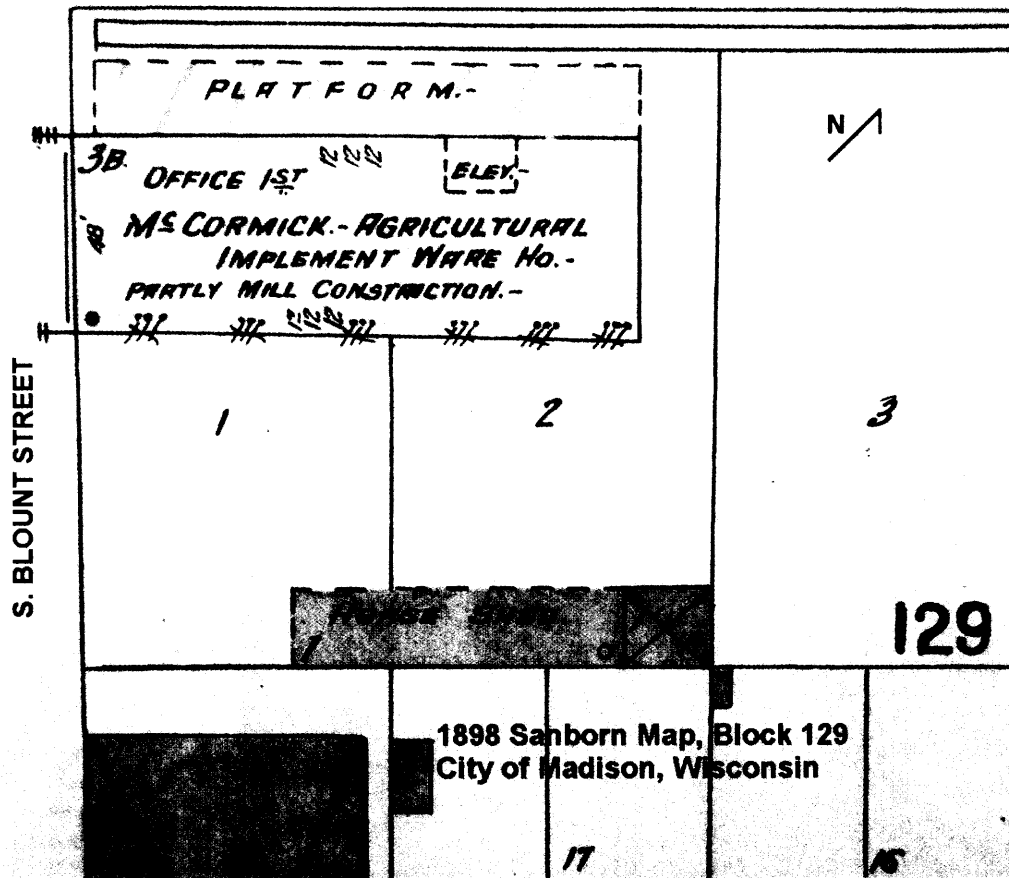


Figure C: Sanborn Map, 1898. Block 129, City of Madison, Wisconsin. Original McCormick building.

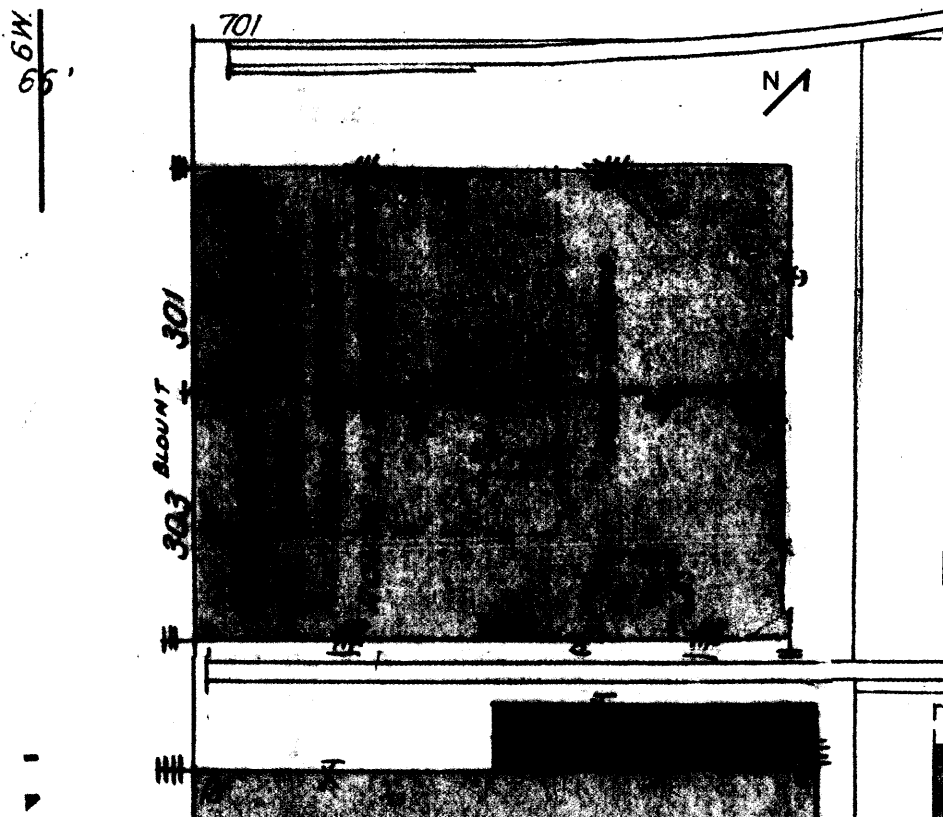


Figure D: Site showing original 1898 McCormick building (north building) and 1910 International Harvester addition. Modified 1942 Sanborn map updated to 1972.

McCormick-International Harvester Company Branch House
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