

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** Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.

**other names/site number**

**2. Location**

**street & number** E4541 County Road C

**city or town** Town of Dunn

**state** Wisconsin **code** WI **county** Dunn

N/A

**not for publication**

N/A

**vicinity**

**code** 033 **zip code** 54735

**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.)

  
Signature of certifying official/Title

11/11/2016  
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

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*

1.17.17

*[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	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)  
SOCIAL/meeting hall

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)  
Work in progress

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation sandstone

walls sandstone

roof asphalt

other

**Narrative Description**

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

Name of Property

County and State

**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)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Social History  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 1908 - 1968  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 1908  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**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.)

Name of Property

County and State

**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:**

X State Historic Preservation Office

- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** less than 1 acre

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

1 15 584585 4958484  
 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**

<b>name/title</b>	Patricia Lacey	<b>date</b>	4-16-2016
<b>organization</b>		<b>telephone</b>	715-743-4799
<b>street &amp; number</b>	W5055 US HWY 10	<b>zip code</b>	54456
<b>city or town</b>	Neillsville	<b>state</b>	WI

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.)

<b>name/title</b>	Town of Dunn – Clerk Sally Rasmussen E4391 State Road 72 Menomonee, WI 54751	<b>date</b>	4-16-2016
<b>organization</b>	(Town Hall under construction)	<b>telephone</b>	715-308-1830
<b>street &amp; number</b>	State Highway 25	<b>zip code</b>	54735
<b>city or town</b>	Downsville	<b>state</b>	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.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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**Introduction**

The Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F., constructed in 1908, is located at E4541 County Road C in the west-central unincorporated village of Downsville, Wisconsin. Downsville was founded on the Red Cedar River by the Knapp, Stout & Company Lumber Company, headquartered eight miles north of Downsville in the City of Menomonee, Wisconsin. The lumber company sent their millwright Burrage B. Downs to the area now known as Downsville to construct a dam across the river. After the dam was completed, Knapp, Stout & Company expanded their lumbering operations. The picturesque town of Downsville grew nestled between the bluffs of the Red Cedar River on acreage still well above the river.

The building was constructed for Downsville's chapter of the International Order of Odd Fellows, a fraternal organization. The building is interchangeably referred to as the Downsville Lodge No. 196 I.O.O.F., the Odd Fellows Lodge, and the Downsville Lodge. For clarity and consistency, the nomination will refer to the building as the Downsville Lodge.

The Downsville Lodge is representative of a two-part, stand-alone commercial style building that was built in cities across America during the late-nineteenth century. Two-part commercial buildings are divided into two distinct areas or zones which reflect the interior configuration. The first-floor zone is normally designed as the public space with the second floor often used for private offices, meeting spaces or apartments.<sup>1</sup>

Many fraternal lodges built two-story vernacular commercial blocks whereby they rented the lower commercial retail space to generate monies for lodge activities and held their lodge meetings on the second floor. The Downsville Lodge was designed in contrast to other small town fraternal lodges in that the lower level was devoted to community uses, "[a]...good size dance hall suitable for entertainment of various kinds and general community meetings."<sup>2</sup> The second floor of the lodge provided a sanctuary for lodge meetings and ceremonies.

The Downsville Lodge is a fine example of commercial vernacular architecture which exhibits characteristics of Romanesque Revival architecture. Romanesque Revival architecture was utilized mostly in churches and on university campuses but is occasionally found in residential construction. The style maintained popularity from 1880 to 1900. Architect Henry Hobson Richardson is known for advancing the style in the 1880s - in fact the Richardsonian Romanesque style is named for him.

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street*, (Alta Mira Press, Walnut Creek, Ca., 2000), pages 24-54

<sup>2</sup> F. Curtis Wedge, *History of Dunn County Wisconsin*, (H. C. Cooper Jr. & Co., Minneapolis/Winona, MN, 1925), page 208

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 2

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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Romanesque Revival buildings often feature semicircular Romanesque arches which spring from short, squat, engaged columns.<sup>3</sup> Romanesque buildings often support massive thick walls clad with quarried blocks which feature vermicular rustication. The sandstone blocks and decorative stone appointments that are found on the Downsville Lodge were produced by the Downsville Cut Stone quarry.

In *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: Volume 2*, the characteristics of commercial vernacular architecture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century are described. It notes that commercial vernacular buildings exhibit main façade entries, an emphatic cornice and simple window openings on the second story. Simplified period motifs are implied without any overt stylistic character.<sup>4</sup>

### **Exterior**

The Downsville Lodge is a rectangular, two-story commercial block building which is 50' in depth by 26'-6" in width. It is situated on a prominent corner lot facing south toward the main street of Downsville, Wisconsin. The building exhibits the elements of the Romanesque Revival style which is enhanced through the use of quarried ashlar blocks featuring vermicular rustication. The walls are of square and rectangular shaped blocks of rock-faced masonry, rough-cut to emphasize its texture, set in rows with a thin, raised mortar joint. Extant windows are of wood and double-hung. Some of the windows on the first floor have been obscured, as has the transom above the main door.

The building does not have a basement; its foundation consists of footings which support the stone of the walls. A vented air space has been created between the dirt base and the joists of the first floor. The stand-alone nature of the lodge building allows all four of the building's façades to be visible. The roof is flat and gently sloped toward the rear of the building; it is covered with asphalt rolled roofing material.

### Primary (South) Façade

The south-facing primary façade is symmetrically designed with vertical orientation. The influencing characteristics of the Romanesque Revival style are reflected in the large Roman entry arch. The Roman arch resides over the 6'-5" wide double-door entry. The arch springs from two squat 15" wide pilasters which rest on simple bases. The pilasters are topped with foliated Corinthian capitals. Etched on the north pier are the names of the Odd Fellow officers who held office at the time of construction.

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<sup>3</sup> Virginia & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1997), pages 301-307.

<sup>4</sup> Barbara Wyatt, ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: Volume 2, A Manual for Historic Properties*, (Wisconsin Historical Society, June 1986) page 3-10.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 3

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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The arch is comprised of voussoirs with a larger keystone at the apex of the arch. The keystone is topped with a cornice. An inner arch of rectangular blocks, which rises from the entry platform, is located under the main arch. The sandstone of the inner arch, voussoirs, keystone, pilasters and piers are carved with worm-like stippling. The two wood paired entry doors are topped with a semi-circular light which currently features the name of a museum which has moved to Menomonee, Wisconsin.

A single, double-hung window is located and evenly spaced at either side of the main entry on the first floor. The 4'-3" wide windows are deeply inset into the masonry of the building and support a 10" deep sandstone sill. A sandstone lintel tops the window. The lintel has been placed flush to the wall of the building, blending in, rather than being obvious.

The second floor features two, double-hung windows that are shorter than the windows of the first floor. The windows are each centered above the two windows of the first floor. A string course traverses the top of the second floor. The string course is comprised of identical narrow sandstone rectangular blocks which project slightly from the surface of the building on the east and south-facing façades. The string course wraps around the southwest corner of the building and extends approximately twelve feet on the west-facing façade. The stringcourse becomes the base of a very simple entablature with a narrow projecting cornice and a parapet wall above. Centered on the face of the entablature is a carved sandstone plaque which features the interlocking ring symbol of the Odd Fellows atop the block letters: I. O. O. F., for Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

The parapet begins above the projecting cornice, which also wraps around to both sides of the building. The parapet walls are gently stepped and at the center the wall is slightly higher and arched. The top of the parapet has stone coping. The arched center has a circular cartouche of carved stone and having an etched date of 1908, marking the construction date of the building.

All four corners of the lodge have quoins. The quoins do not project from the building but like the lintels are flush to the wall. The quoin pattern consists of a tall vertical block which is alternated with a short square block. Each side of the quoined corner becomes a mirror image to the other side of the corner.

Side (East) Façade

The east side of the building has four, double-hung windows on the first floor. They are paired, two left of center and two right of center. A door which is topped with a single-light transom is at the northeast corner of the east-facing façade. A sloped ramp provides handicap accessibility to the building.



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 4

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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Six, double-hung windows are on the second floor. They are grouped together in units of three and evenly spaced on the second floor. The windows and the door are deeply set into the masonry of the building. The windows are identical to those at the front of the building and are appointed in an identical fashion. The top of the parapet on this side has a lower central portion which is flanked by a parapet step at each side.

Rear (North) Façade

The rear wall has one, double-hung window on the first floor, right of center. Two, double-hung windows are evenly spaced on the second floor. The windows are identical to those at the front of the building and are appointed in an identical fashion. The rear wall does not have a parapet wall which allows for the sloped roof to shed water to the rear of the building. The surface of the roof is asphalt.

Side (West) Façade

The west side is similar to the east side of the building. The first floor fenestration consists of four, double-hung windows and a door in the northwest corner which mirrors the east façade. The exception is that this door does not have a transom. The second-floor fenestration supports five windows instead of the six found on the east façade. The windows are grouped in a unit of two windows and a unit of three windows. Currently, the window which is the furthest north in the three window group has a fire escape placed through it in order to provide another means of egress from the second floor. The windows and door are deeply set into the masonry of the building. The windows are identical to those on the front of the building and are appointed in an identical fashion.

The string course and the cornice only extend approximately twelve feet along the wall on this side. It seems they may have thought that another building, when built to the west of the lodge, would block the view of the west wall. The ridge of the parapet on this side has four steps which maintain the greatest height at the south edge of the building and decline in height toward the north edge of the building.

The use of the high quality carved sandstone from the local Downsville Cut Stone Quarry with its rich, warm, soft-brown color and its hand carved detailing truly achieves a strikingly handsome building. All of the finished sandstone components used on the building were created by the highly skilled local quarry carvers including the vermicular rustication found on the square, rectangular and step-shaped blocks and the worm-like stippling found on the elements of the Roman arch.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 5

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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**Interior**

First Floor

The interior of the first floor consists of one large room with an enclosed stairway located at the rear (or north end) of the large hall. Currently, the first-floor windows are encapsulated within the walls of exhibit areas that were created by the museum which occupied the building at the time this nomination was written. At some time after construction, a small bathroom was placed under the stairway. The first floor has a narrow board hardwood floor.

Second Floor

The second floor consists of a large 26'-6" x 28'-6" lodge room which is located at the front (or south portion) of the second floor. Two slightly elevated stages are extant in the room. An L-shaped stage transverses the south wall of the building wrapping approximately 4' onto the west wall. A much smaller elevated stage is on the north wall of the room. A large 15'-4" x 26'-4" room, presumed to be the kitchen area for the lodge, is located to the north of the lodge room between the lodge room and the enclosed stairway. Two smaller rooms are between the west wall of the kitchen and the west wall of the building.

The enclosed stairway opens onto a landing area at the top of the stairs. A small section of balustrade travels from the top of the stairs to the east wall of the landing area. The balustrade features turned balusters and a single newel post which is topped by a round finial. The door located on the south wall of the landing area has a peep hole that appears at eye level.

The second floor has a pine plank floor. The doors and deeply inset window surrounds are identical on both the first and second floors. Simple flat wood surrounds which have corner blocks featuring a target motif finish each door and window opening. The door surrounds have simple plinths and each door is comprised of five stacked panels. A wide base molding is found throughout the building. All of the wood is naturally stained and varnished.

**Alterations**

Little, if any, alteration has been made to the building. Due to the masonry exterior alterations to the exterior would have been difficult to achieve. Some of the windows have been repaired or replaced. The new owners of the building are considering removing the first-floor exhibit walls to allow more light to enter the first floor area.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 6

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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The second floor of the lodge is like a time capsule, offering a glimpse into the traditions of the Odd Fellows lodge.

**Integrity**

The building retains a tremendous amount of integrity as can be seen in comparing the historic photos to the current photos of the building. The most noticeable change is that the transom window over the main door has been obscured as have windows on the first floor. The openings have not been altered and the remaining windows are extant. The windows were obscured to accommodate the first floor use as a museum. Despite this alteration the remainder of the building has a high level of integrity.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 1

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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**Introduction**

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I.O.O.F. is being nominated, at the local level, to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Social History for the role the organization played in the community and as the headquarters of a fraternal organization. Benevolent fraternal societies played an important function in the lives of early Americans. They were a vehicle for social interaction as well as providing financial assistance to its members and families in times of need. The occupations of the men of the Downsville, Wisconsin area were dangerous ones. Many worked for logging companies. Some worked in the sandstone quarries, while others cleared and farmed the land. One accident could doom a family to a life of poverty.

The social and entertainment needs of all of Downsville were met by this facility, as the Odd Fellows set aside the lower level for use by the community. That generosity was extended to other local fraternal organizations. Anyone could use the building for dances, parties or meetings, making it the center of activity for the Downsville community.

**Summary of Significance**

The Independent Order of Odd Fellow's objective was to provide assistance to its members in times of sickness or distress. Although not a religious organization, its founding principles were based on the teachings of the bible. The Odd Fellows strove to alleviate the plight of man. This helping hand was extended to members, their families and close relatives. In the case of death, widows and orphans were taken care of. These practices provided a valuable service during a time before the existence of public welfare or medical disability. Organizations such as the Odd Fellows were the precursor to health and life insurance companies. Additional social significance is gained through the generosity of Downsville Odd Fellows members by opening their lodge to the community for gatherings and activities, making this a center of social life in the community.

Period of Significance

The period of significance extends from 1908 to 1968. This period of time begins with the year of construction and ends with the year 1968 when the building ceased being used as a fraternal hall and social gathering place in the community. The Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F. remained in continuous operation for this entire period.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Information on file at the Independent Order of Odd Fellows Grand Lodge, Green Bay, Wisconsin and provided by Joyce Proulx, Secretary.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 2

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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**History of Dunn County and Downsville**

Dunn County was formed with land set apart from Chippewa County on February 19, 1854. At this time the boundaries of Dunn County still included Pepin County. Dunnville was designated as the county seat. The land encompassing Pepin County was removed in 1858, leaving Dunn County with its present borders. The county seat for Dunn County was then moved to Menomonee. The court house in Dunnville was destroyed by fire the same year as separation and Menomonee was more centrally located.<sup>6</sup>

The topography of the southwestern portion of the county, including the area surrounding Downsville, consists of gently rolling terrain dotted with forest covered hills. Downsville rests in the Red Cedar River valley surrounded by tall bluffs which overlook the valley floor. Currently the area surrounding Downsville supports large farms. At the time that Dunn County was being settled, the land supported prairies which were interrupted by hard wood and virgin white pine forests. Large lumber firms, such as the Knapp, Stout & Company, headquartered in Menomonee (eight miles to the north), owned thousands of acres of land in Dunn County including large land holdings in the area of Downsville. Knapp, Stout & Company operated several large saw mills throughout the county along with saw mills at Menomonee and Downsville.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to the timber resources, very high quality sandstone deposits are found in the Red Cedar River Valley from Downsville south to Dunnville. During the construction of the railroad bed along the east bank of the river, these deposits of sandstone were exposed.

On June 22, 1855 Ebenezer Thompson (b.1820, d.1898), great grandson of Revolutionary War soldier Alexander Cochran, purchased 100.8 acres of land in Section 34 in and around where Downsville is currently located. Thompson cut a short ditch across the bend in the Red Cedar River. He then utilized the ditch as a mill race to operate a small sawmill he had constructed. When the river flooded, the river enlarged the ditch to the point where it became the main channel of the river. On February 24, 1858,<sup>8</sup> Thompson sold his mill, river interests and land near the mill to Captain B. B. Downs, who built a dam across the Red River in 1860. Downs was operating on the behalf of the Knapp, Stout & Company Lumber Company located eight miles north in Menomonee, Wisconsin.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> F. Curtis Wedge, *History of Dunn County Wisconsin*, (H. C. Cooper Jr. & Co., Minneapolis/Winona, MN, 1925), page 28.

<sup>7</sup> A. T. Andreas, *History of Northern Wisconsin*, (Western Historical Company, Chicago, 1881), pages 272, 273.

<sup>8</sup> F. Curtis Wedge, *History of Dunn County Wisconsin*, (H. C. Cooper Jr. & Co., Minneapolis/Winona, MN 1925), page 204, 205.

<sup>9</sup> A. T. Andreas, *History of Northern Wisconsin*, (Western Historical Company, Chicago, 1881), page 289.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 3

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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The Knapp, Stout & Company was comprised of four savvy lumbermen; Henry L. Stout who oversaw the marketing of the lumber product down the Mississippi River, William Wilson who oversaw the rafting of the lumber to market, John H. Knapp who supervised the mills, and Andrew Tainter who procured the timber.<sup>10</sup> When the firm incorporated on March 18, 1878 they issued capitol shares worth two million dollars, which was doubled by the company by 1882. The company annually harvested 90 million feet of lumber.<sup>11</sup> Knapp, Stout & Company employed 2,400 workers who worked in their saw mills, logged their forest land and clerked in their businesses. In addition to forest land that they owned they also owned an additional 30,000 acres of crop and pastureland. This land was used to produce meat to feed their men and hay and grain to feed their horses. The six million dollar operation was surpassed only by Weyerhaeuser who offered to buy the Knapp, Stout & Company in the 1880s for \$7.5 million dollars, but was turned down.<sup>12</sup>

The first survey of Downsville which comprised 22 blocks in Sections 34 and 35 was executed in May of 1859. The survey was overseen by Burrage Downs, who was representing the Knapp, Stout & Company Lumber Company, and Ebenezer Thompson. Burrage Downs oversaw a second survey that comprised 20 blocks which was conducted on January 7, 1861.

Once Burrage Downs had completed the new dam, Knapp, Stout & Company greatly expanded their presence in Downsville. Besides enlarging the existing saw mill, a shingle and planing mill were built, as well as a boarding house and a company store. The Knapp, Stout & Company employed over 100 men who just worked in Downsville.

The first Downsville Post Office was housed in the Knapp, Stout & Company store. The community of Downsville built a school, a Methodist Church and a Lutheran Church. Additional small businesses began building frame buildings. The Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad constructed a branch line up the Red Cedar River. This was a spur of the Chippewa Valley Division, which arrived in Downsville in 1882. The rail line continued northward where it connected with the West Wisconsin Railroad four miles north of Menomonee, Wisconsin. The West Wisconsin Railroad line extended from Milwaukee to Tomah to St. Paul, Minnesota giving Dunn County access to a large regional area.

In the spring of 1883, a flood again washed out the dam and also demolished the Knapp, Stout & Company store, sleeping shanty and several of their other buildings. What the lumber company could salvage was moved into the company owned Hennemmyer house. The Knapp, Stout & Company

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<sup>10</sup> *Our Story, Vol. II – Knapp-Stout Co. - - perfect combination*,  
<http://www.usgennet.org/usa/wi/eauclaire/history/ourstory/vol2/knappstout.html> pages 1-4.

<sup>11</sup> *Knapp – Stout Company Founders*, <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~widunn/knapp-stout-founders.htm>, pages 1-4.

<sup>12</sup> C. Ford Runge, *Wisconsin Northern Pineries A Narrative Economic History*, Prepared for the 8<sup>th</sup> Joint Conference on Food Agriculture and the Environment, August 25-28, 2002, University of Minnesota.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 4Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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directed millwright Burrage Downs to immediately rebuild the dam. Also in 1883, a third plat of Downsville was ordered by the Knapp, Stout & Company on land previously known as the Creaser farm. The survey was executed by county surveyor D. W. Waite. When completed, the plat added a First Addition to Downsville. The survey was recorded on July 8, 1885.

Downsville continued to prosper due to the lumbering activity. That came to an end when the timber harvest was completed at the turn of the century. The Knapp, Stout & Company Downsville sawmill was closed and dismantled in 1900<sup>13</sup>. The Knapp, Stout & Company saw mill, located at Menomonee, was closed one year later. The last log raft from the Knapp, Stout & Co. was floated down the Red Cedar River on August 12, 1901.<sup>14</sup>

Although the lumber company leaving was a tremendous blow to Downsville, the community continued on. Sam and John Kyle purchased the Knapp, Stout & Company store. George Whinnery purchased another Company building and he opened a store in the lower level. The upstairs was provided to the Modern Woodmen for their meetings. A new lumber yard was opened by Frederick Borm that sold lumber, cement and general building materials.

In 1903, the Downsville Co-operative Creamery was incorporated by a number of large area dairy farmers. A 20' x 60' building was constructed, which was enlarged as the business expanded. In 1904, the creamery produced 114,645 pounds of butter. That amount grew to 242,289 pounds of butter in 1905 and by 1924 the creamery was yearly producing 1,155,273 pounds of butter with a retail value of \$455,851.34. During the first twenty years of operation, the Downsville Co-operative Creamery generated \$4,282,983.82 for their participating dairy farmers.

Downsville acquired telephone service in 1903. A third flood occurred on the Red River on June 7, 1905, washing out two wagon bridges, the railroad bridge and the east side of the dam.<sup>15</sup> Although the boom days of logging had come to a close, the flood permanently ended any possibility of a major lumber mill building on the site.<sup>16</sup> A small waterworks system was put in during the summer of 1921 utilizing an artesian well. Downsville did not have electricity until after 1925. During the height of the logging harvest, the population of Downsville was 500 residents. The population dwindled in the

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<sup>13</sup> F. Curtis Wedge, *History of Dunn County Wisconsin*, (H. C. Cooper Jr. & Co., Minneapolis/Winona, MN, 1925) pages 92-93, 204-208, 237.

<sup>14</sup> *Our Story, Vol. II – Knapp-Stout Co.—perfect combination*,

<http://www.usgennet.org/usa/wi/county/cauclaire/history/ourstory/vol2/knappstout.html>, pages 1-4.

<sup>15</sup> F. Curtis Wedge, *History of Dunn County Wisconsin*, (H. C. Cooper Jr. & Co., Minneapolis/Winona, MN, 1925), pages 204-208.

<sup>16</sup> John Russell, *Scenes of Yesterday: How Down's Mill became Downsville*, June 29, 2012,

[http://chipewa.com/dunnconnect/news/local/history/scenes-of-yesteryear-how-down-s-mill-became-downsville/article\\_7ea6abcd-c23e-11e1-b6c0-0019bb2963f4.htm](http://chipewa.com/dunnconnect/news/local/history/scenes-of-yesteryear-how-down-s-mill-became-downsville/article_7ea6abcd-c23e-11e1-b6c0-0019bb2963f4.htm).

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 5Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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ensuing years as people sought employment elsewhere. The 2016 population of Downsville is 146 residents.

**Burrage B. Downs (b. 1814, d. 1888)**

Burrage B. Downs, the man for whom the small town of Downsville was named, was born in Maine. Burrage, together with his wife, Laura (b. 1820, d. 1898) traveled from Maine to Menomonee, Wisconsin, in 1849, to work for the Knapp, Stout & Company Lumber Company.<sup>17</sup> Upon arrival, Downs purchased several shares of the Knapp, Stout & Company (which he sold back to the company years later).<sup>18</sup> Burrage B. Downs became the millwright for the Knapp, Stout & Company. From 1850 to 1854 Downs oversaw the construction of the “Upper Mill” dam and sawmill at Menomonee.<sup>19</sup> In 1860, Downs was enlisted to construct a dam across the Red Cedar River at Downsville. When high water in the spring of 1883 washed out the dam at Downsville, Downs was brought back by the Knapp, Stout & Company to rebuild their dam.

In the later part of the 1860s, Downs was partners with William Carson and Eldridge D. Rand in the lumber firm of Carson, Rand & Company.<sup>20</sup> They purchased thousands of acres of land in Dunn, St. Croix, Pierce, Eau Claire, Chippewa, Pepin and Clark counties.<sup>21</sup>

Burrage and Laura had two children: William W. (b.11-7-1851) and Frank B. (b. c1855).<sup>22</sup> The Downs family located to Eau Claire, Wisconsin in 1868. Son William W. Downs attended public school in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Upon graduation he attended the University of Wisconsin where he earned a law degree in 1874. William married Alice Daniels in 1874 and they set up residence in Eau Claire, Wisconsin where William practiced law.<sup>23</sup> By 1880, William’s father, Burrage, mother Laura and brother Frank were living with William and his wife. The 1880 United States census indicated that Burrage B. Downs was still an active millwright.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> William F. Bailey, *History of Eau Claire County Wisconsin: Past and Present*, (H. C. Cooper Jr. & Co., Chicago, 1914), pages 296, 297.

<sup>18</sup> A. T. Andreas, *History of Northern Wisconsin*, (Western Historical Company, Chicago, 1881), page 275.

<sup>19</sup> *History of Knapp, Stout & Company Part 2*, rootsweb.ancestry.com/~widunn/History.htm.

<sup>20</sup> William F. Bailey, *History of Eau Claire County Wisconsin: Past and Present*, (H. C. Cooper Jr. & Co., Chicago, 1914), pages 296, 297.

<sup>21</sup> Ancestry.com, U. S. General Land Office Records, 1796-1907.

<sup>22</sup> Ancestry.com, 1860 United States Federal Census.

<sup>23</sup> William F. Bailey, *History of Eau Claire County Wisconsin: Past and Present, Including an account of the Cities, Towns and Villages of the County*, (H. C. Cooper Jr. & Co., Chicago, 1914), pages 296-297.

<sup>24</sup> Ancestry.com, 1880 United States Federal Census.



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 6

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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William and Alice Downs moved to Bayfield County, Wisconsin in 1886 where William practiced law as well as serving one term as the District Attorney for Bayfield County. William Downs returned to Eau Claire in 1911 where he continued to practice law until his death on November 19, 1922.<sup>25</sup> Burrage B. Downs and his wife Laura remained living in Eau Claire, Wisconsin until their deaths. Both are buried in the Downs family plot at the Lakeview Cemetery in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.<sup>26</sup>

**History of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF)**

The theory as to the earliest organization of the Odd Fellows dates back to a meeting which took place in the Globe Tavern in England in 1748. Common eighteenth century working class men in England formed a fraternity designed to provide social unity, fellowship, and mutual support. Their main ambition was to provide assistance to its membership in times of sickness or distress. By 1796, there were numerous Odd Fellow organizations throughout England, each one independent of the other. In 1803, the London Union of Odd Fellows (Grand Lodge of England) was organized assuming the authority over all Odd Fellow Lodges. In 1809, the Victory Lodge of Odd Fellows in Manchester declared independence from the Grand Lodge of England and by 1814 the six Manchester Odd Fellow Lodges formed a joint mission.

The first recorded formation of an Odd Fellows Lodge in America was when five fraternal brothers from the English order, three boat builders, a comedian, and a vocalist, met in New York City in 1806 and formed Shakespeare Lodge No. 1. Unfortunately, this lodge made more merry-making than substantial contributions to the community and they disbanded in 1813.

The Independent Order of the Odd Fellows as it is known today began in Baltimore, Maryland. Five members of an English Order formed Washington Lodge No. 1 on April 26, 1819. Thomas Wildey became the first Noble Grand and is credited as being the founder of the society. A charter was received from the Duke of York Lodge in Preston, England in 1820.

In 1821, Thomas Wildey titled the first Odd Fellows organization in America the "Grand Lodge of Maryland and of the United States of America, of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows". Odd Fellow lodges were forming throughout the eastern United States unbeknownst to one another due to the limitation of travel and communications between areas. At this time, all of these lodges still owed their allegiance to the English Order. In 1824, the Grand Lodge of the United States separated from

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<sup>25</sup> William F. Bailey, *History of Eau Claire County Wisconsin: Past and Present, Including an account of the Cities, Towns and Villages of the County*, (H. C. Cooper Jr. & Co., Chicago, 1914), pages 296-297.

<sup>26</sup> Ancestry.com, U.S. Find A Grave Index 1600's - Current.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 7

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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the Grand Lodge of Maryland. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) separated from the English Order in 1834.<sup>27</sup>

Thomas Wildey was born in London, England on January 17, 1783. At five years of age he became an orphan. He became the recipient of the generosity of the Odd Fellows, who as part of their mission, provided education for orphans. At twenty-one years of age he joined the Odd Fellows. At thirty-four years of age, restless and seeking adventure, Wildey came to America. Missing companionship, Wildey took out an ad in a newspaper seeking other Odd Fellows who might be living near him. He requested that if anyone was out there to meet him at the Seven Stars Inn. Four men responded and together they began the first Odd Fellows Lodge in America.

Wildey is attributed to adding “Educate the Orphan” to the Odd Fellows pledge, honoring the help he had received as a young boy from the Odd Fellows. Wildey spent much of his life traveling the country setting up new Odd Fellows Lodges. At the time of his death in 1861, there were more than 200,000 members in 34 states.<sup>28</sup>

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows became the first fraternity in the United States to welcome women as members when it adopted the “Beautiful Rebekah Degree” on September 20, 1851. The Odd Fellows are not a religious organization although many of its principles and tenets are based upon the teachings of the Bible. They were a benevolent organization who attempted to alleviate the plight of man. The founding principles of the organization still remain in practice: provide members with aid when suffering for the needs of life because of illness, unemployment or other misfortunes; and, provide relief or sustenance to members, their families, close relatives, widows and orphans in case of death.<sup>29</sup> These principles provided a valuable service to its membership during a time before the existence of public welfare and medical disability. Organizations such as the Independent Order of Odd Fellows were the precursor to health and life insurance companies.

The Odd Fellows established homes for the elderly and for orphaned children. They also built and managed community cemeteries, believing that everyone should have a decent burial. In many instances, the Odd Fellows worked to achieve statehood for several states including Texas and California. The Odd Fellows lodges also became community centers for many newly emerging communities.

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<sup>27</sup> Don R. Smith and Wayne Roberts, *The Three Link Fraternity – Odd Fellowship in California*, (Linden Publications, Fresno, CA., 1993), pages 1-64.

<sup>28</sup> *Thomas Wildey: Founder of North American Odd Fellowship*, <http://173.213.228.4/wcm/IOOF/AboutUS/ThomasWildey.aspx>, page 1.

<sup>29</sup> Don R. Smith and Wayne Roberts, *The Three Link Fraternity – Odd Fellowship in California*, (Linden Productions, Fresno, CA, 1993), pages 1-64.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 8

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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The Independent Order of the Odd Fellows is sometimes referred to as the “Three Link Fraternity”. Many Odd Fellow Lodges are adorned with the fraternal symbolism of three links of chain connected together, as is the case with Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F. In some instances the center of a link will contain the letters F – L – T which stand for Friendship, Love, Truth.<sup>30</sup>

The first Odd Fellows lodge established in Wisconsin was located in the southwest corner of (what is now) Wisconsin in 1835. Lead had been discovered in La Fayette and Iowa counties causing hundreds of miners to flock to the area. Several of these miners were from Pottsville, Pennsylvania, and they sought to establish an Odd Fellows Lodge similar to the one that they belonged to in Pennsylvania. Twelve men from the mining community of Mineral Point petitioned the Grand Lodge of the United States for a charter. They were authorized to institute the Iowa Lodge No. 1 Independent Order of Odd Fellows.<sup>31</sup>

The outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 saw membership greatly decrease as men were off to war and many lodges were unable to continue their missions. After the end of the war in 1865, the onset of the Industrial Revolution and the beginnings of the perceived deterioration of society, large numbers of people joined fraternal organizations, including the Odd Fellows. The years from 1860 to 1920 was known as the Golden Age of Fraternalism in America. At its peak, it was estimated that 40% of the adult population held at least one membership in a fraternal organization.<sup>32</sup>

The Great Depression (1929-1939) brought a decline in membership when the average working man could not afford the membership fees. In 1971, the Odd Fellows removed the provision that banned blacks from membership.<sup>33</sup>

Membership has seen a dramatic increase in the twenty-first century. Annually, the Odd Fellows contribute \$775 million for student loans and scholarships; donate to the American Heart Association; the Arthritis Fund and the Visual Eye Research Foundation. They manage eighty homes for the elderly and orphaned; oversee several camps and parks, and manage the SOS in Cambodia which houses one-hundred-fifty orphaned children or children with AIDS. The Odd Fellows have planted eight million trees worldwide. They sponsor a float each year in the Rose Bowl Parade. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows are the only service organization which is allowed to conduct an annual pilgrimage to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> *What is an Odd Fellow?* <http://www.ioof.org>.

<sup>31</sup> *WI IOOF History*, <http://ioof.org/OOF/about/wioff-hist/index.html>, pages 1-2.

<sup>32</sup> Harriett W. McBride, *The Golden Age of Fraternalism 1870-1910 Volume 13*, 2005, pages 1-24.

<sup>33</sup> *Santa Rosa Rebekah #263, The History of the Order*, [iooftxgreaterhouston6.weebly.com/santa-rosa-rebekah-263/html](http://iooftxgreaterhouston6.weebly.com/santa-rosa-rebekah-263/html).

<sup>34</sup> I. O. O. F. Membership video, YouTube.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 9

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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**History of the Downsville Lodge No. 196 I.O.O.F.**

Several benevolent fraternal organizations or lodges were established in Downsville, offering security for their membership. Many men of this time period had dangerous occupations. Such was the case in Downsville as many local men worked in the lumber industry, the sandstone quarries, and on the emerging farms.

The Downsville Modern Woodmen of America (MWA) was chartered on June 18, 1894.<sup>35</sup> The MWA was founded in January of 1883 for a restricted membership of white males between the ages of 18 and 45. The purpose of their organization was to provide life insurance and family aid to their membership. During the Tuberculosis epidemic of the early-twentieth century, the MWA opened a \$1.5 million dollar 1,000 acre Tuberculosis sanitarium in Colorado Springs, Colorado which provided treatment for its members.<sup>36</sup> Their lodge facility (the second story of the Whinnery Store) was destroyed by fire in March of 1904, also destroying their charter document which was reinstated on February 7, 1905.

The Downsville Riverside Camp No. 3115 of the Royal Neighbors of America was chartered on June 28, 1902. Their charter was destroyed in the same fire as the MWA and received a reinstatement document on February 7, 1905.<sup>37</sup> The Royal Neighbors of America was an insurance organization which provided life insurance and assistance to women and their children. Women recognized that they were living longer than their husbands and needed financial protection for themselves and their children. The organization also supported the women's suffrage movement. On September 1, 1922 the group received a charter for a children's organization known as Juvenile Camp No. 3115.<sup>38</sup>

The Downsville Colony of Beaver's No. 286 received their charter on January 20, 1902.<sup>39</sup> The Fraternal Order of Beavers was founded in 1911. They admitted white males between the ages of 16 to 55. Their membership compensations included building and loan assistance, contingency funds for members in distress and funeral benefits. A ladies auxiliary known as the Golden Rod Colony No. 135 was also chartered in 1902.

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<sup>35</sup> F. Curtis Wedge, *History of Dunn County Wisconsin*, (H. C. Cooper Jr. & Co., Minneapolis/Winona, MN, 1925) page 208.

<sup>36</sup> *Modern Woodmen Founded*, Modern Woodmen Through the Years, , [www.modern-woodmen.org/AboutUs2/History/Pages/Timeline.aspx](http://www.modern-woodmen.org/AboutUs2/History/Pages/Timeline.aspx) .

<sup>37</sup> F. Curtis Wedge, *History of Dunn County Wisconsin*, (H. C. Cooper Jr. & Co., Minneapolis/Winona, MN, 1925), page 208.

<sup>38</sup> *Royal Neighbors*, [www.royalneighborsfoundation.org/RoyalNeighborsOfAmerica.aspx](http://www.royalneighborsfoundation.org/RoyalNeighborsOfAmerica.aspx).

<sup>39</sup> F. Curtis Wedge, *History of Dunn County Wisconsin*, (H. C. Cooper Jr. & Co., Minneapolis/Winona, MN, 1925), page 208.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 10

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F. was chartered on May 20, 1893. The Downsville Odd Fellows lost their first lodge building to fire along with their original charter. Their second charter was reinstated on March 27, 1908. Marie Lodge No. 142 of the Rebekahs, the women's organization of the I. O. O. F., was chartered on January 28, 1896. They lost their charter in the lodge fire and also had it reinstated on March 27, 1908. This was the same year in which they began the construction of a new two-story lodge. The new lodge was a free standing two-story building clad entirely with locally quarried sandstone. The building's architectural design was representative of the Romanesque Revival style.

Construction was overseen by general manager W. H. Melvor and H. Walter was the contractor. At the time of the construction of the new lodge, the Board of Directors consisted of W. E. Dean, President; C. E. Fisher, Vice President; Al Fayerweather, Secretary; O. M. Laughlin, Treasurer; and W. H. McIver, General Manager. The names of the 1908 Board of Directors are etched into the base of the north pier of the Romanesque arch on the primary façade of the building. The 1908 Downsville Lodge No. 196 I.O.O.F. building was utilized for lodge meetings, community events and the lodge meetings of other local organizations.

The Downsville Odd Fellows organization met in the Downsville Lodge No. 196 I.O.O.F. until surrendering their lodge charter on November 15, 1968. Subsequently, the building was purchased on February 20, 1969 by the Empire in the Pines Museum.<sup>40</sup> The building is currently owned by the Town of Dunn who is seeking this nomination. This is the only building in Downsville associated with this important history of fraternal organizations.

### **History of the Dunn Township Sandstone Quarries**

In 1882, when the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad built a branch line alongside the Red Cedar River in Dunn Township, Dunn County, Wisconsin, the railroad construction crews unearthed deposits of high quality sandstone. These sandstone deposits were located between Dunnville (now nonexistent) and Downsville in Dunn Township. The tightly-bound fine-grain sandstone was comprised of almost pure silica. It was extremely soft when removed from the wet-ground deposit and fairly easily carved by a skilled stone carver. As the sandstone dried, it increasingly became harder and harder, to the extent that the stone created its own hardened shell protecting it from exposure to the elements.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Document on file at the University of Stout, Menomonee, WI.

<sup>41</sup> *Historic 19<sup>th</sup> Century Quarry Reopens*, [www.stoneworld.com/articles/82096-historic-19th-century-quarry-reopens](http://www.stoneworld.com/articles/82096-historic-19th-century-quarry-reopens) pages 1-6.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 11

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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Four sandstone quarries began operation along the east bank of the Red Cedar River, harvesting the same high quality Dunn Township sandstone. These included Lange's Dunnville Quarry, located ¼ mile north of Dunnville; Ulmer's Quarry (or the Middle Quarry), located 1½ miles north of Dunnville; and the Downsville Cut Stone Quarry, and located 2 miles south of Downsville. The fourth quarry known as the Salahan quarry was the quarry that provided the sandstone for the 1889 Mabel Tainter Theater in Menomonee, Wisconsin.<sup>42</sup> The four quarries harvested sandstone in Dunn Township from 1889 to 1950.

Many wonderful Wisconsin buildings were constructed utilizing Dunn Township sandstone. The list is long but a sample of buildings includes: the 1889 Mabel Tainter Theater, Menomonee, Wisconsin; the 1890 Louis Smith Tainter House, Menomonee, Wisconsin; the 1905 Al Ringling House, Baraboo, Wisconsin; the 1915 Carson Park Grandstand, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and the 1908 Downsville Lodge No.196 I.O.O.F.

Perhaps the most famous order went to the St. Thomas Church, 505 Fifth Avenue, New York. The church was designed by the architectural firm of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson. In 1917 Stanley Borm, a partner in the Downsville Cut Stone Company received a letter from one of the St. Thomas Church contractors. World War I had halted stone shipments from Cannes, France and the church needed large slabs of high quality sandstone for their eighty foot high and forty-three foot wide reredos high alter wall. Huge slabs of Dunn Township sandstone were shipped to New York and set in place on the wall behind the altar.<sup>43</sup> French stone carvers who worked for three years on the reredos wall carved sixty life-size figures and the surrounding lattice decoration. It is believed to be the most elaborate example of ecclesiastical statuary and carving in America.

Aaron Keopple purchased 107 acres of land encompassing the Ulmer's quarry in 1999. In 2003 a church that had used the quarry's sandstone in the construction of their church approached Keopple for a piece of stone that they needed for a repair. He told them to just go to the quarry and take a left-over block, which they did. This precipitated thoughts of reopening the quarry. Keopple did not have any prior experience in the stone industry. After researching the process, and developing a business plan, the Dunnville Cutstone Company was incorporated in 2005 and has begun providing high quality Dunn Township sandstone for various uses.<sup>44</sup>

**Conclusion: Criterion A - History**

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<sup>42</sup> *Dunn County News*, "Dunnville" October 6, 1976, article by John M. Russell.

<sup>43</sup> Unknown newspaper unknown date containing an interview with Stanley Borm.

<sup>44</sup> *Historic 19<sup>th</sup> Century Quarry Reopens*, [www.stoneworld.com/articles/82096-historic-19th-century-quarry-reopens](http://www.stoneworld.com/articles/82096-historic-19th-century-quarry-reopens) pages 1-6.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 12

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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The first accident insurance in the United States was offered by the Franklin Health Assurance Company of Massachusetts. Founded in 1850, the firm offered insurance policies to railroad and steamboat workers due to the dangerous nature of their work.<sup>45</sup> The Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of House from Loss of Fire was founded in 1752. They insured the many Philadelphia houses and commercial buildings which were wooden structures built in close proximity to one another.<sup>46</sup> The first employer sponsored group disability policy was issued in 1911, but it only provided for lost wages and did not include medical expenses.

Rural and emerging America did not have the established institutions that could offer property, disability or death insurance. Fraternal lodges began to form in the 1800s, organized by a parent organization which had branches located in many cities across America. The local branches would receive charters from the parent organization and operate under the rules and traditions set by the parent organization.

The Revenue Act of 1913 extended tax exemptions to fraternal benevolent organizations and defined their lodge systems as: "A fraternal beneficiary society whose members have adopted the same or very similar calling avocation, or profession, or who are working in union to accomplish some worthy objective, and who for that reason have banded themselves together as an association or society to aid and assist one another and to promote the common cause...As a general rule, such associations have been formed for the purpose of promoting the social, moral and intellectual welfare of the members...and these associations make a practice of assisting their sick and disabled members and of extending substantial aid to the families of deceased members."<sup>47</sup>

The Social Security Act of 1935 provided for economic assistance to the unemployed and the elderly over the age of sixty-five. During World War II (1941-1945) employer sponsored health care began to emerge. The Federal Government had imposed wage and price controls on businesses and manufacturers. Businesses began to offer workers benefits such as sick leave and health insurance in order to attract the few available workers.

Fraternal organizations such as the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F) were organized as a vehicle for social interaction and for the mutual purpose of providing financial assistance to its members in times of need. Before the development of independent life, health, and home insurance

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<sup>45</sup> *Comprehensive History of Health Care Reimbursement*, [www.demarlearning.com/comparison/content/1111035180/s-resolve](http://www.demarlearning.com/comparison/content/1111035180/s-resolve) page 1.

<sup>46</sup> *The History of Insurance in America*, by Andrew Beattle, <http://www.investopedia.com/articles/financial-theory/08/american-insurance.asp#> pages 1-2.

<sup>47</sup> *Fraternal Beneficiary Societies and Domestic Fraternal Societies*, IRC Overview, December 2002, <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-tege/estopicf04.pdf>, pages 1-10.



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 13

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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companies or the governmental initiation of the “social safety net” whereby government provided welfare, food stamps, unemployment and healthcare benefits to Americans experiencing difficult times, fraternal organizations conveyed financial assistance to their members during times of job loss, death or illness.

Benevolent fraternal societies played an important role in the lives of early Americans. Members of these organizations paid membership fees and participated in lodge meetings. Then, if a member became ill and could not work, the organization would help to tide the family over until employment was resumed. If a member or his wife died, a burial plot and burial ceremony would be provided. In the case of the death of a male member, his wife and children would receive compensation. These intercessions would prevent the woman and her children from falling into hopeless poverty and instead remain as successful members of society.

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I.O.O.F. stands as a testament to the many benevolent fraternal societies which were formed by local individuals, under a guiding lodge organization. These organizations offered peace of mind to their members that if a calamity occurred, their wives and children would be cared for. The building continues to convey the essence of time and history. The Odd Fellows lodge retains excellent integrity both on the interior and exterior as well as location, design, setting and significant architectural features which leads to the judgment of eligibility. This building represents the history of fraternal organizations in the small, unincorporated village of Downsville and is the only remaining building associated with fraternal organizations in the community.



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 1

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 2

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 3

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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*Thomas Wildey: Founder of North American Odd Fellowship*,  
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*WI OOF History*, <http://ioof.org/OOF/about/wioff-hist/index.html>, pages 1-2.

*What is an Odd Fellow?* <http://www.ioof.org>.

**Oral Interviews**

Interview with Joyce Proulx, Secretary, Independent Order of Odd Fellows Grand Lodge, Green Bay, Wisconsin. This location maintains an archive of documents related to the organization's history.

Interview with the University of Stout archivist, documents on file at the University of Stout, Menomonee, Wisconsin.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 1

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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**Verbal Boundary Description:**

Part of Government Lot Two (2), Section Thirty-five (35), Township Twenty-seven (27) North, Range Thirteen (13) West, described as follows:

Beginning at a point 33 feet West and 33 feet North of the initial point of the survey of the Village of Downsville, as surveyed and platted by Daniel W. Waite, County Surveyor, in May 1882, said initial point being located at the intersection of the center line of Downs Street and the center line of 1<sup>st</sup> Street in the Village of Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin; thence North on the West line of said Downs Street, 70 feet; thence West 60 feet; thence South 70 feet to the North line of said 1<sup>st</sup> Street; thence East on said North line 60 feet to the point of beginning.

**Boundary Justification:**

The boundary above encloses the Downsville Lodge No. 196 I.O.O.F., eliminating extraneous resources not associated with the historic property.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section photos Page 1

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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Name of Property:	Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.
City or Vicinity:	Downsville
State:	Wisconsin
Name of Photographer:	Patricia Lacey
Date of Photograph:	April 2016
Location of Original Digital Files:	State Historic Preservation Office, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, WI
Number of Photographs	14

Photo 1  
South façade.  
Camera facing north.

Photo 2  
West façade.  
Camera facing northeast.

Photo 3  
East façade.  
Camera facing southwest.

Photo 4  
Roman arch over main entry.  
Camera facing north.

Photo 5  
Names of officers in 1908.  
Camera facing north.

Photo 6  
Interior, first floor hall.  
Camera facing northwest.

Photo 7  
Stairway to second floor.  
Camera facing west.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section photos Page 2

Downsville Lodge No. 196 I. O. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin

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Photo 8  
Second floor balustrade.  
Camera facing southeast.

Photo 9  
Five-panel door with peephole.  
Camera facing south.

Photo 10  
Hallway to lodge room.  
Camera facing south.

Photo 11  
Lodge room with stage.  
Camera facing southeast.

Photo 12  
Lodge room with smaller stage.  
Camera facing northeast.

Photo 13  
Former kitchen and fellowship room.  
Camera facing southeast.

Photo 14  
North façade; view of the building from the rear.  
Camera facing southwest.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

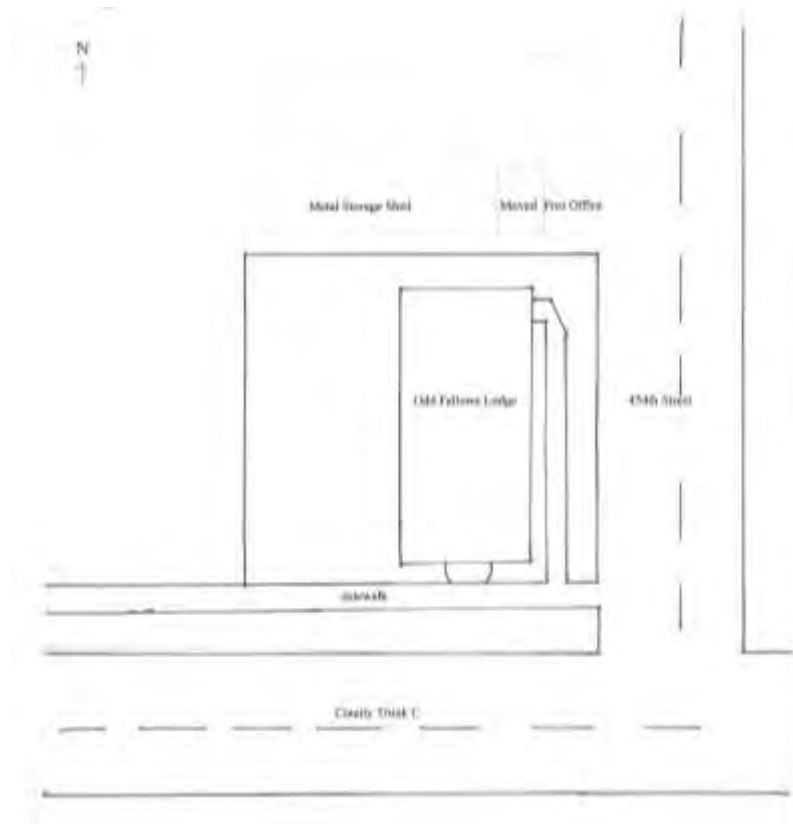
Section figures Page 1

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**List of Figures**

- Figure 1: Site sketch plan
- Figure 2: First floor sketch plan
- Figure 3: Second floor sketch plan
- Figure 4: Historic photograph, c1908, east side view
- Figure 5: Historic photograph, c1908, front view
- Figure 6: Historic photograph, c1908, west side view
- Figure 7: Historic photograph, c1910, membership group photograph

Figure 1: site sketch plan  
Not to scale



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section figures Page 2

Figure 2: First floor sketch plan

Not to scale

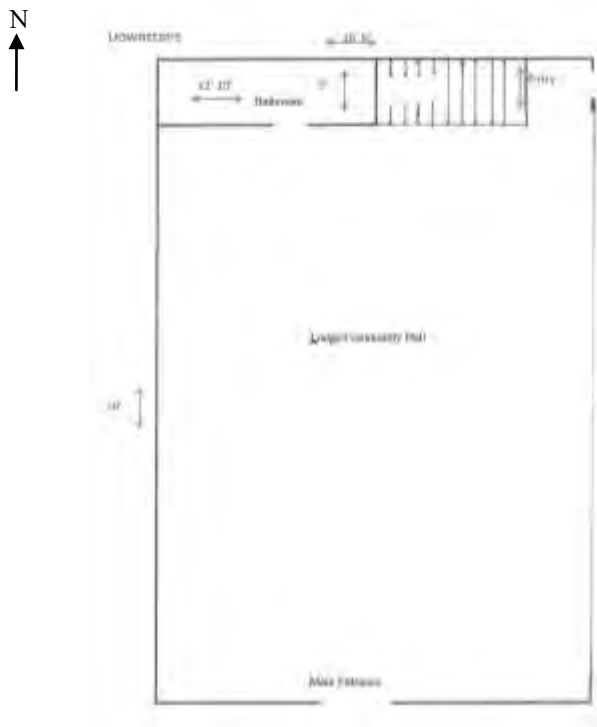


Figure 3: Second floor sketch plan





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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section figures Page 3

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Figure 4: Historic photograph, c1908, east side view



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 4

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Figure 5: Historic photograph, c1908, front view

Downsville Lodge No. 196 L. O. F.  
Downsville, Dunn County, Wisconsin  
Photo c1908  
Photo provided by the Dunn County  
Historical Society



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 5

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Figure 6: Historic photograph, c1908, west side view





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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

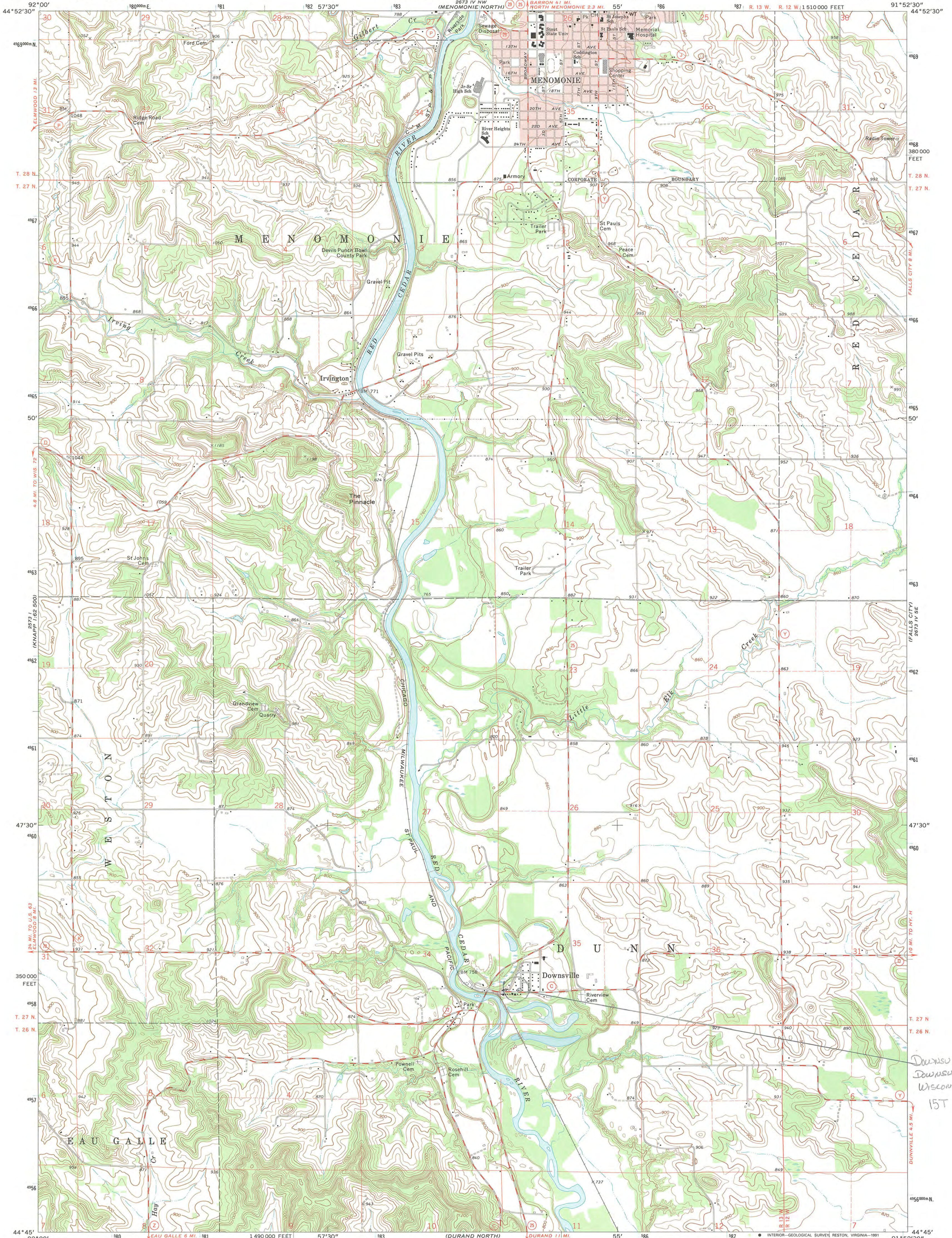
Section figures Page 6

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Figure 7: Historic photograph, c1910, membership group photograph



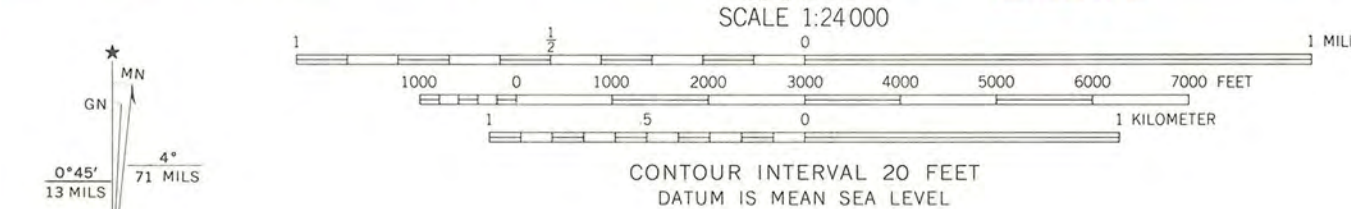




Maped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey in cooperation with the Wisconsin Highway Commission and Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey. Control by USGS and USC&GS.

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1972. Field checked 1972. Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Wisconsin coordinate system, central zone (Lambert conformal conic). 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue. 1927 North American datum.

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown. Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is un-checked. Map photoinspected 1981. No major culture or drainage changes observed.



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

MENOMONIE SOUTH, WIS.  
SW/4 MENOMONIE 15' QUADRANGLE  
N4445—W9152.57.5

1972  
PHOTOINSPECTED 1981  
AMS 2673 IV SW—SERIES V861

*Dunnville Lodge No. 196 I.O.O.F.  
Dunnville, Dunn County,  
Wisconsin  
15T 584585E  
4958484N*





1908

10017

EMPIRE LUMBER MUSEUM

6354

COP ROAD





1908

Leach

LUMBER MUSEUM

454  
1ST AVE





POST OFFICE

STOP

COUNTY ROAD C

POST OFFICE



EMPIRE IN PINE  
LUMBER  
MUSEUM

Board of Directors  
1907  
W. E. Dean, Pres.  
C. E. Fisher, V. Pres.  
A. J. Sawyercather, Secy.  
O. M. Laughlin, Treas.  
W. H. McLean, Gen. Mgr.  
H. Walter, Cash.



Board of Directors  
I.O.O.F.

W. E. Dean, Pres.

C. E. Fisher V. Pres.

Al. Fayerweather Secy.

O. M. Laughlin Tres.

W. H. McIvor Gen. Mgr.

H. Walter Contr.





ITEMS Price  
COFFEE \$1.00  
WATER \$0.50  
SODA \$1.50  
BUTTER \$0.50  
ICE CREAM \$2.00

ITEMS Price  
COFFEE \$1.00  
WATER \$0.50  
SODA \$1.50  
BUTTER \$0.50  
ICE CREAM \$2.00









GEO. H. O'BRIEN ROOM

























STOP

HOTEL & PERK

HOTEL & PERK



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: 12/2/2016      Date of Pending List: 12/27/2016      Date of 16th Day: 1/11/2017      Date of 45th Day: 1/17/2017      Date of Weekly List: 1/25/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      1/17/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Edson Beall      Discipline Historian

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

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



W I S C O N S I N  
H I S T O R I C A L  
S O C I E T Y

TO: Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Peggy Veregin  
National Register Coordinator

SUBJECT: National Register Nomination

The following materials are submitted on this Eleventh day of November 2016, for the nomination of the Downsville Lodge No. 196 I.O.O.F. to the National Register of Historic Places:

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

COMMENTS:

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