

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAY 12 1986
date entered JUN 13 1986

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

1. Name

historic N.A.

and/or common MERCHANTS AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT

2. Location

street & number N.A. (see inventory) not for publication

city, town Fort Atkinson vicinity of

state WI code 55 county Jefferson code 055

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name see owner's list - continuation pages

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. N.A.

street & number

city, town state

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title WI Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1974 federal state county local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Div., State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state WI

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Merchants Avenue historic district is a long, narrow residential neighborhood of approximately five blocks on 11 acres directly southeast of Fort Atkinson's commercial district, the bulk of which is encompassed in the Main Street historic district. The district's buildings consist primarily of nineteenth and early twentieth century houses on spacious lots with large trees and mature lawns. The district is surrounded by an older, dense group of houses interspersed with post-World War II ranches and apartment buildings. Since the district was a popular area for the homes of many of Fort Atkinson's prominent merchants and professionals, the houses in the district are generally spacious, two or two and a half stories, and built of sturdy materials with stylistic details. These elements separate the district from its immediate neighbors.

Like much of Fort Atkinson, the Merchants Avenue historic district contains a variety of architectural styles including Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne, and period revival. In fact, of the 33 contributing (of 35 total) buildings the stylistic breakdown is as follows. Two houses are Greek Revival (6%), four are Gothic Revival (12%), four are Italianate (12%), two are Second Empire (6%), nine are Queen Anne (27%), three are period revival (10%), and nine (27%) are vernacular or a combination of styles. This eclectic group of houses obtains its cohesive nature not necessarily from a continuity of style, but from a continuity of scale and construction materials. Of the 33 contributing buildings, 23 are of frame construction (70%), nine are of brick construction (27%), and one building has a stucco exterior (3%). Of the 33 contributing buildings, eight are one and one-half stories (24%), 20 are two stories (61%), and 5 are two and one-half stories (15%). Of the 33 contributing buildings, 20 have gable roofs (61%), 11 have hipped roofs (33%), and two have mansard roofs (6%).

Many of the larger houses in the district are sited on double lots well set back from the street. Other houses have the more standard 60 foot lots. Many trees and shrubs surround the houses in the district, and new trees, replacing diseased elms, are beginning to shade the streetscapes. Particularly on Merchants Avenue, the fine older homes in the district have largely been well-maintained. These include the three beautiful houses in the 300 block of Merchants Avenue; the Italianate M. H. Ganong house (332 Merchants), the Italianate-Queen Anne George Marston house (323 Merchants), and the Second Empire Horace Willard-Della and Chester Caswell house (303 Merchants), now St. Peter's Episcopal Church rectory. On a similar scale elsewhere in the district is the fine Italianate Frank Allen house (507 Foster St.) and several large, well-maintained Queen Anne houses including the Herbert Vickery house (430 Whitewater Ave.), the O. W. Donkle house (506 Whitewater Ave.), and the George Quick house (427 Whitewater Ave.). There are also several large houses which are less stylistic, but impressive both in their size and level of preservation. They include the original Gothic/Italianate Reuben White-Frank Hoard house (407 Merchants Ave.), the Julius Stanhope house (415 Whitewater Ave.) with its Eastlake inspired porches, the imposing craftsman George Klein house (500 Whitewater Ave.), and the American foursquare Adelaide Bellman Lloyd house (425 Foster St.).

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On a smaller scale, there are a number of fine stylistic houses which complement the larger houses of the district. They include the three Gothic Revival cottages, all built in the 1850s, at 112 S. Milwaukee Ave., 200 S. Milwaukee Ave., and 513 Foster St. There are also two well-preserved Greek Revival houses, the Dwight Foster house at 414 Foster St. and the Daniel White house at 339 Merchants Ave. A charming small Second Empire house at 109 S. Third St., the Joseph Winslow house, completes this group of the outstanding small houses in the district.

There are a number of other architecturally modest houses in the district, mostly from the Queen Anne period and from the early years of the twentieth century. These houses are more vernacular, less detailed, examples of popular styles than the houses previously mentioned, but most are well-built and add to the architectural diversity of the district. Examples include the P. E. Hovey house (114 S. Third St.), an Italianate house now covered with asbestos shingles, but retaining its decorative brackets and Italianate porch; the G. W. McMillen house (115 S. Third St.), covered with aluminum siding, but retaining its decorated gables and porches; the Ferd Langhoff house (14 S. Third St.), a symmetrical building with Queen Anne 45-degree-angle corners, shingled gables, and spool and spindle work on the front porch; the foursquare residence at 348 Merchants Ave.; the large front gabled Arthur Edwards house (503 Foster St.); the two simple colonial revival houses at 338 Merchants Ave. and 110 S. Third St.; and the Spanish colonial revival St. Peter's Episcopal Church at 302 Merchants Ave.

Fort Atkinson has a large number of extant horse barns and carriage houses throughout the community. This district is no exception. These outbuildings are, for the most part, in good condition, and are various sizes. The best examples are on the lots of 430 Whitewater Ave., 500 Whitewater Ave., 503 Foster St., 407 Merchants Ave. (the brick building, now a garage), 311 Merchants Ave., 303 Merchants Ave. (a mansard-roofed garage to match the Second Empire house), 109 S. Third St., and 115 S. Third St. (a two-story horsebarn in excellent condition with details that match those on the Queen Anne house).

There are two major non-contributing elements in the district. One is a small, modern brick apartment building (317 Merchants Ave.). The other is the large addition and outbuildings of the Reuban White-Frank Hoard house (407 Merchants Ave.). The additions to the White-Hoard house include a rear wing added in 1968, and a north wing added in 1981. These additions are part of the Hoard Historical Museum's office and museum space which interpret the important influence of the Hoard family and others in the area on the establishment of the significant dairy industry in Wisconsin.

The district is primarily residential, the exceptions being the St. Peter's Episcopal Church (302 Merchants Ave.), the Hoard Historical Museum (407 Merchants Ave.), and the Dwight Foster museum house (414 Foster St.), part of the Hoard Historical Museum complex. An exact numeration of the buildings in the district and their classification is as follows: 35 total buildings in the district of which 33 (94%) are contributing; 25 outbuildings of which 16 are contributing (64%). Contributing buildings are those constructed within the period of significance and still retain most of their integrity. Non-contributing properties are those which are either

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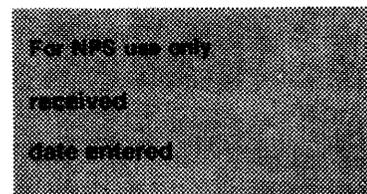
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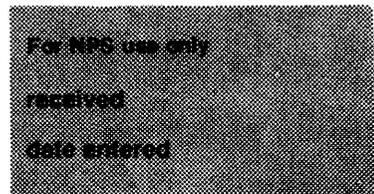


constructed after the period of significance or have lost most of their integrity due to inappropriate alterations. There is one house which fits the category of too much lost integrity (431 Whitewater Ave.) and has been classified as non-contributing.

INVENTORY

<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Classification</u>
414 Foster St.	Dwight Foster house	1841 ¹	Contributing
420 Foster St.	residence	c1870 ²	Contributing
424-6 Foster St.	Charles Rheineck house	1906 ³	Contributing
425 Foster St.	Adelaide Bellman Lloyd house	1910 ⁴	Contributing
503 Foster St.	Arthur Edwards house	1909 ⁵	Contributing
507 Foster St.	Frank Allen house	1876 ⁶	Contributing
513 Foster St.	Peter Craig house	1855 ⁷	Contributing
11 S. Fourth St.	O. B. Cornish house	1893 ⁸	Contributing
302 Merchants Ave.	St. Peter's Episcopal Church	1928 ⁹	Contributing
303 Merchants Ave.	Horace Willard-Della & Chester Caswell house	1881 ¹⁰	Contributing
311-13 Merchants Ave.	Halbert Hoard house	1900-01 ¹¹	Contributing
317 Merchants Ave.	apartment house	1970 ¹²	Non-contributing
323 Merchants Ave.	George Marston house	1853-65 ¹³	Contributing
		1898 add. ^{13a}	
332 Merchants Ave.	M. H. Ganong house	1871-73 ^{13a}	Contributing
333 Merchants Ave.	Chester May/Edna Hoard Tratt house	1867 ¹⁴ 1921rem.	Contributing
338 Merchants Ave.	Mildred Krebs-Marie Cornish house	1936 ¹⁵	Contributing
339 Merchants Ave.	Daniel White house	1854 ¹⁶	Contributing
344 Merchants Ave.	Art Hoard-William Ganong house	1901 ¹⁷	Contributing
348 Merchants Ave.	residence	1912-13 ¹⁸	Contributing
407 Merchants Ave.	Reuben White-Frank Hoard house	1864 ¹⁹	Contributing
		1875 wing	
		1906 rem.	
		1968 wing (NC)	
		1981 wing (NC)	
112 S. Milwaukee Ave.	Charles Allen house	1857 ²⁰	Contributing
200 S. Milwaukee Ave.	George Stafford house	c1855 ²¹	
		c1869 wing	
14 S. Third St.	Ferd Langhoff house	1895 ²²	Contributing
109 S. Third St.	Joseph Winslow house	1861 ²³	Contributing
110 Third St.	Fred Holstein house	1922-25 ²⁴	Contributing
114 Third St.	P. E. Hovey house	1869 ²⁵	Contributing
115 Third St.	G. W. McMillen house	1893 ²⁶	Contributing
415 Whitewater Ave.	Julius Stanhope house	1897 ²⁷	Contributing
423 Whitewater Ave.	August Wagner house	1904 ²⁸	Contributing
427 Whitewater Ave.	George Quick house	c1909 ²⁹	Contributing
430 Whitewater Ave.	Herbert Vickery house	1908 ³⁰	Contributing
431 Whitewater Ave.	J.R. Brown house	1871 ³¹	Non-contributing
439 Whitewater Ave.	residence	c1869 ³²	Contributing

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<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Classification</u>
500 Whitewater Ave.	George Klein house	c1905 ³³	Contributing
506 Whitewater Ave.	O. W. Donkle house	1910 ³⁴	Contributing

DESCRIPTION OF OUTSTANDING ELEMENTS OF THE MERCHANTS AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT

<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
339 Merchants Ave.	Daniel White house	1854

Built in 1854 by pioneer Daniel White, this well-preserved Greek Revival house has a gabled ell form. Greek Revival details include a frieze, cornice returns, and pilasters on building corners. The entry door is accented with sidelights and a bracketed overhang (later addition). There are six-over-six-light windows with decorative black shutters and simple cornice lintels. A narrow garage-recreation room building sits at the rear of this property. Decorated similarly to the house, it is, however, non-contributing.

414 Foster St.	Dwight Foster house	1841
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The Dwight Foster house was built by pioneer carpenter Charles Rockwell, who built many of Fort Atkinson's early frame buildings. The house was originally constructed on Main Street in 1841. Rockwell sold the house to Foster a few years after its construction. Along with his residence, Foster used the house as an inn and post office during Fort Atkinson's pioneer days. Later the house was moved several blocks away from Main Street, and in 1969, it was moved again, restored to its original appearance and opened as a museum house in the Hoard Historical Museum complex. The house has a gabled ell form with a full porch in the ell section. There is a simple frieze with cornice returns which give the house its Greek Revival details. Six-over-six-light windows are decorated with black shutters and plain lintels.

513 Foster St.	Peter Craig house	1855
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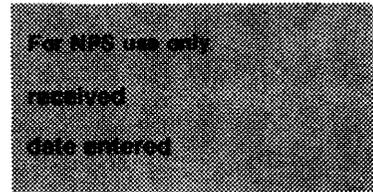
This small Gothic revival cottage was constructed for Peter Craig in 1855. Of cream brick construction, it is almost identical to two similar cottages located on Milwaukee Street. It features a steeply-pitched gable roof with a steeply-pitched front wall dormer. The eaves are decorated with delicate brackets and the plain sash windows have segmental arches. The entrance has a simple wooden label molding and surround. This well-preserved house was carefully restored in the 1960s.

112 S. Milwaukee Ave.	Charles Allen house	1857
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Merchant Charles Allen built this tan brick Gothic Revival cottage in 1857. The house has a main block with steeply-pitched gable roof and a steeply-pitched front wall dormer. Wide eaves are decorated with delicate brackets. The simple sash windows are topped with flat stone lintels and decorated with green shutters. There is a large two-story frame addition to the rear of the main block, probably built in 1869. This addition has a gable roof and sits on a stone foundation. Its six-over-six light sash windows are decorated with green shutters.

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<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
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200 S. Milwaukee Ave.	George Stafford house	c.1855
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This Gothic Revival cottage is of brick construction currently painted white. Like 112 S. Milwaukee St. and 513 Foster St., this cottage has a steeply-pitched roof with steeply-pitched central front wall dormer. Instead of brackets decorating the eaves, this cottage has a decorative bargeboard in a cross and triangle pattern along its roofline. The house also has a west side one-story bay window and enclosed front porch. There is a rear wing extending south of the house which has a stucco exterior.

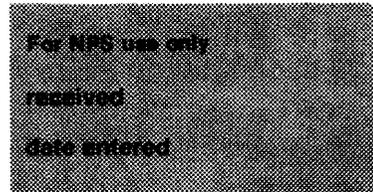
407 Merchants Ave.	Reuben White-Frank Hoard house	1864, 1875, 1906, 1968, 1981
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This house is a vernacular cream brick structure with the steeply-pitched roofline and delicate brackets of the Gothic Revival style. The original section of the house, the main block, was built in 1864 for merchant Reuben White. It had a gothic styled porch on the north side at that time. In 1875 the ell was added, along with a more Italianate style porch along the ell. In 1906 businessman Frank Hoard added a library and built the entry porch currently on the house. The building has nine-over-nine light windows with flat stone lintels and rough stone sills and decorated with green shutters. The Hoard family gave this house to the City of Fort Atkinson in 1956 and it was converted into the Hoard Historical Museum. A wing was added in 1968 for a meeting room and in 1981, a large addition to the north of the house was added to encompass the community's dairy shrine museum. In the rear is a brick garage, built after Frank Hoard purchased the house. It has bracketed eaves similar to those on the main house. There are also two frame sheds on the museum property which once belonged to two houses which have been demolished. These sheds are non-contributing to the property.

332 Merchants Ave.	M. H. Ganong house	1871-73
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Sitting on a large lot is this Italianate house built for prominent merchant M. H. Ganong. The cream brick house has a hipped roof with wide eaves under which is a simple wooden frieze. The front facade roofline is interrupted by an incomplete pediment with an oculus window in the center of the pediment. Similar round windows decorate the side wall facade of the building. The house's tall sash windows are decorated with delicately carved wooden hoodmolds. Second-story paired windows on the front facade have wooden segmental and carved hoodmolds and a wood surround. The original Italianate front and side entry porches have been removed and a classical front entry porch and entry door added. The entry porch has red brick steps and landing, grillwork balustrade, and round wooden columns. These changes were probably made in the 1930s when the house was remodeled by Harriet Hoard Becker. In the 1940s a library addition was added to the north of the house. The very large lot also features a formal garden to the north of the building, maintained by the current owners.

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<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
507 Foster St.	Frank Allen house	1876

Businessman Frank Allen built this cream brick Italianate house in 1876. It features a complex hipped roof, wide eaves with brackets, and a corner Italianate entry porch. The tall, narrow windows have segmental wooden hoodmolds and there is a two-story wooden bay window on the south facade. A small one-story rear addition includes a one-car garage.

323 Merchants Ave.	George Marston-Arthur Hoard house	1853-65, 1898 add.
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This Italianate-Queen Anne house (NRHP:1982) is the largest, most elaborate building in the district. The Italianate main block has a low-pitched hipped roof topped by an elaborate cupola. The wide eaves have brackets and a frieze underneath. Openings in this section feature carved Tudor-arched lintels. This main block is dominated, however, by a massive classical veranda which becomes the porte cochere on the south side of the house. This veranda has a stone foundation, spool and spindel balustrade on both first and second floors, grouped columns, and denticulated cornice and frieze. The veranda is part of an 1898 Queen Anne addition by then owner, businessman Arthur Hoard. The 1898 addition, except for the veranda, is primarily at the rear of the house and features classical details such as a full pedimented gable projection, beveled and leaded glass windows, and polygonal bays. A fire in 1980 did substantial cosmetic damage to the house, necessitating a careful restoration of the building. Its current appearance shows no ill effects from the fire.

303 Merchants Ave.	Horace Willard-Della & Chester Caswell house	1881
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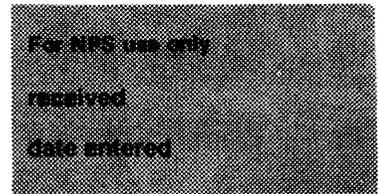
Physician Horace Willard had this house built for his daughter, Della Caswell and her banker husband, Chester Caswell in 1881. The house has the Second Empire's trademark mansard roof punctuated by small projecting roof dormers. The wide eaves are decorated with brackets. Other details on this cream brick structure include segmental arched windows topped with elaborate hoodmolds. There is a two-story bay window on the south side of the house, and a large enclosed veranda covers the entire front of the house along with some of the side facades. This elegant home on a large lot features a matching mansard-roofed garage on the property.

109 S. Third St.	Joseph Winslow house	1861
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This cream brick Second Empire house is a small, cottage-like structure of only two stories (the mansard roof being the second story). It features a mansard roof punctuated by gable-roofed dormers. A central front facade tower rises slightly above the roofline and is topped with a mansard roof. Windows have heavy wooden hoodmolds and "bracketed" wooden sills. A mansard roofed west side veranda is enclosed, and there is a small enclosed entry porch on the east side of the house.

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<u>Address</u>	<u>Historical Name</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
430 Whitewater Ave.	Herbert Vickery house	1908

This house is the best example of the Queen Anne style in the district. Of two and one-half stories, it has the hipped and gable roof, asymmetrical form, projecting tower and gable sections typical of the style. Not as rambling as many Queen Anne houses, the 1908-constructed building shows the influence of the later versions of the style, utilizing classical details such as the veranda with its round columns, and the returned eaves of the gable projections. The house was built by Maier and Wollet of nearby Jefferson for merchant Herbert Vickery. A large two-story horsebarn sits toward the rear of the large lot and is in very good condition.

506 Whitewater Ave.	O. W. Donkle house	1910
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O. W. Donkle, cashier of the Fort Atkinson Savings Bank, had this Queen Anne / Colonial Rev, house built in 1910. Its rather symmetrical form emphasizes height rather than length with a steeply-pitched gable roof and two-story bay projection topped by a projecting gable. This later Queen Anne features many classical details including a Palladian window, returned eaves, and a full front porch decorated by a pediment. The porch has heavy concrete piers supporting groups of small square columns supporting the roof. The house sits on a large sloping lot with many mature trees.

500 Whitewater Ave.	George Klein house	c.1905
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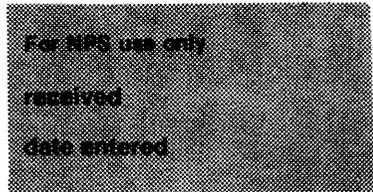
This house, like its neighbor, the O. W. Donkle house, emphasizes the vertical, and is more in the craftsman tradition, rather than expressing a distinctive style. It is two and one-half stories high and has a number of grouped windows throughout the front and side facades. The front gable is shingled and features a group of four windows, the center two higher than the outer two, almost a Palladian-like detail. There is a large, plain front porch across the front facade, also with a shingled gable. While not stylistic, this house has many of its original details, especially windows which feature vertical muntins, making it a striking dwelling in its streetscape. A small carriage house in good condition is at the rear of the spacious, sloping lot.

302 Merchants Ave.	St. Peter's Episcopal Church	1928
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Designed by Eschweiler and Eschweiler of Milwaukee, this unusual Spanish colonial revival church features a stucco exterior, wall buttresses, and narrow windows grouped in threes between the buttresses. The prominent feature of the church is the Spanish colonial bell tower, a stylized version of a Spanish mission church's bell tower. An enclosed entryway is stuccoed with a half-timber effect.

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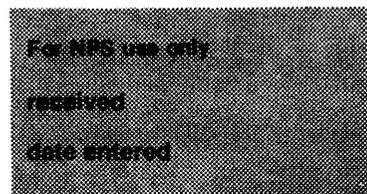
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Inventory Footnotes

- ¹Hannah Swart, Koshkonong Country Revisited Vol I, Muskego, WI: Marek Lithographics, Inc., 1981, p. 33.
- ²Analysis of 1900 plat map, field observation.
- ³Tax rolls for Fort Atkinson.
- ⁴Building abstract, Jefferson County Union, 1910.
- ⁵Tax rolls for Fort Atkinson.
- ⁶Jefferson County Union, March 17, 1876.
- ⁷Building abstract, Aetna Insurance volume, on file at the Hoard Historical Museum, Fort Atkinson.
- ⁸Building Abstract, Jefferson County Union, January 19, 1984.
- ⁹Building plans in possession of church.
- ¹⁰Jefferson County Union, May 6, 1881.
- ¹¹Tax rolls for Fort Atkinson.
- ¹²City of Fort Atkinson building records.
- ¹³Deed record for 1853, insurance policy for 1865 in the collections of the Hoard Historical Museum, Fort Atkinson, 1898 remodeling plans in the files of the Hoard Historical Museum, Fort Atkinson.
- ^{13a}Aetna Insurance volume, building abstract, bird's eye view for 1870, 1880, on file at the Hoard Historical Museum, Fort Atkinson.
- ¹⁴Tax rolls for Fort Atkinson.
- ¹⁵City of Fort Atkinson building records.
- ¹⁶Building abstract.
- ¹⁷Tax rolls for Fort Atkinson.
- ¹⁸Tax rolls for Fort Atkinson.
- ¹⁹Building abstract, Jefferson County Union, June 18, 1975, date of 1981 addition verified by Hoard Historical Museum staff.
- ²⁰Allen family papers housed at the Hoard Historical Museum in Fort Atkinson.
- ²¹Tax rolls for Fort Atkinson, field observation.
- ²²Building abstract.
- ²³Building abstract, tax rolls for Fort Atkinson.
- ²⁴Tax rolls for Fort Atkinson, Fort Atkinson telephone directory.
- ²⁵Tax rolls for Fort Atkinson.
- ²⁶Jefferson County Union, 1893.

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- 27 Tax rolls for Fort Atkinson.
- 28 Tax rolls for Fort Atkinson.
- 29 Tax rolls for Fort Atkinson.
- 30 Building abstract, plans in possession of owner.
- 31 Aetna Insurance volume.
- 32 Tax rolls for Fort Atkinson, bird's eye view for 1895.
- 33 Building abstract.
- 34 Jefferson County Union, October 19, 1909.

Archeological Resources: The Rock River area was inhabited extensively by numerous American Indian groups. One of the earliest groups were the mound-builders, whose mounds are in evidence in the area. In the city limits of Fort Atkinson, an effigy mound, the Panther Intaglio Effigy Mount (c. 1000 AD) is preserved and has been on the National Register since 1970. However, due to the constant construction between 1850 and the present time, the Merchants Avenue historic district area is most likely devoid of significant archeological resources. No systematic study of extant archeological resources has been undertaken in the specific district area as of this point in time.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400-1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500-1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/
___ 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	___ engineering	___ music	___ humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1936	___ communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	___ politics/government	___ transportation
		___ invention		___ other (specify)

Specific dates	Period of Significance	Builder/Architect
	1850-1936	see text

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Merchants Avenue historic district is significant for both architecture and history. The district contains the best concentration of nineteenth and early twentieth century architectural styles in the city, as well as some outstanding individual examples of the major styles during the period of significance. The district has historic significance because it has historically been identified as a residential area for prominent merchants, business persons, and professionals important to the economic growth and development of Fort Atkinson. Even the name of the district's most significant street--Merchants Avenue--reflects this historical association.

Historical Background

The land along the Rock River which is now the city of Fort Atkinson and the Merchants Avenue historic district was once inhabited by groups of American Indians. The mound builders left evidence of their occupation in the area in the mounds which archeologists have documented in the city and surrounding area. Later, other Indians, particularly Winnebago and Potawatomi groups established villages along the river and nearby Lake Koshkonong. During the Black Hawk War of 1832, General Atkinson erected a stockade and blockhouses in the area, hence the community's name--Fort Atkinson.¹

In 1836, a group of New Englanders formed the Rock River Land Claim Company in Milwaukee. These men were to claim and sell land near the terminus of a proposed canal to be dug between Milwaukee and the Rock River, Fort Atkinson. One of their group, Dwight Foster, established his homestead on the site of Fort Koshkonong in 1836. Foster claimed a large quadrant of land south of the Rock River and this original claim includes a good part of the Merchants Avenue historic district. Foster operated the first ferry across the Rock River and was the first postmaster in the community beginning in 1838. Other early settlers included Charles Rockwell, a carpenter who after trying farming, returned to his trade in the 1840s, and was responsible for the first frame buildings in Fort Atkinson. In fact, Charles Rockwell purchased land from Dwight Foster, built a frame house on Milwaukee Avenue in 1841, and after a few years, sold it to Foster. Later, after two moves, this early frame house is presently at 414 Foster St. in the district.²

Originally, though, the Foster house was not a part of the district. Some of the early residents of the district included Charles Allen, who came to Fort Atkinson with his brothers from Vermont to join cousins who had already settled in the area. Allen established a wagon shop on Main Street and in the 1850s built the Gothic Revival cottage at 112 S. Milwaukee Ave. and may have also built the two similar brick Gothic cottages at 200 S. Milwaukee Ave. and 513 Foster St. which have dates of construction around this time. Another early building in the district was the Greek Revival house at 339 Merchants built in 1854 by Daniel White. These modest houses reflected the early architecture of a pioneer community developed primarily by New Englanders who built in styles popular during the mid-nineteenth century.³

9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation pages

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approx. 11 acres

Quadrangle name Fort Atkinson, Wis

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>7</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>3</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>7</u> <u>5</u> <u>4</u> <u>1</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>7</u> <u>5</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>7</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>7</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

see continuation pages

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

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carol Lohry Cartwright, Historic Preservation Consultant

prepared for:

organization Fort Atkinson Historical Society

date 2/3/1986

street & number 945 Dane St.

telephone (608) 251-4784

city or town Madison

state WI 53713

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date APRIL 29, 1986

For NPS use only

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

Keeper of the National Register

Entered in National Register

date 6-7-86

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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In 1860 Fort Atkinson was incorporated as a village. By this time the community had a strong commercial base. In 1853, for example, the community had eight retail shops, three hotels, six physicians, three lawyers, and 14 service shops (blacksmiths, etc.). The coming of the railroad provided a means of shipping finished goods out of the area, and the decade of the 1860s saw the birth of large scale manufacturing in the community. In the 1850s and 1860s merchants and professionals increasingly began settling in the Merchants Avenue area, close to their Main Street businesses. One of these merchants was George Marston, who built the Italianate house at 323 Merchants sometime between 1853 and 1865. Marston owned a general store and had financial interests in a brewery and lumber company. Reuben White, a druggist, built the brick Gothic Revival house (the original section) at 407 Merchants Ave. in 1864. In the 1870s, merchant Chester May built a small house at 333 Merchants (which has since been remodeled). Between 1871-73, M. H. Ganong, a Main St. merchant and owner of a stagecoach line, built a beautiful Italianate house at 332 Merchants Ave.⁴

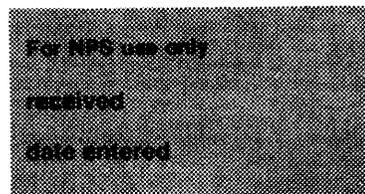
Some of Fort Atkinson's nineteenth century physicians, attracted to the growing prestigious neighborhood on Merchants Avenue, located in or built houses in the district. Dr. Joseph Winslow built a small, but attractive Second Empire home and office at 109 S. Third St. in the 1860s. Dr. Henry White purchased George Marston's house (323 Merchants Avenue) in 1871, and then in 1888 sold it to Dr. Horace Willard. Dr. Willard, in 1881, built a fine brick Second Empire home that he gave to his daughter Della and her banker husband, Chester Caswell.

By the turn of the century, Fort Atkinson was booming. The retail and industrial base established during the previous 50 years flourished and many local farmers, under the leadership of Fort Atkinson's W. D. Hoard, were successfully switching to commercial dairying, establishing a cash economy for rural people which would blossom into one of Wisconsin's leading industries. In the Merchants Avenue historic district, the sons and daughters of pioneer residents continued to move into the area. Chester and Della Caswell were part of this "second generation," as were the three Hoard brothers, Halbert, Arthur, and Frank, sons of W. D. Hoard. The sons achieved economic prominence in their own right as business leaders in the early years of the twentieth century. All three brothers lived in the district and Halbert's daughter once gave a glimpse of the ambience of the neighborhood during the early twentieth century, "Emma and Bert (Hoard) moved into a vine-covered, tree-shaded house on Merchants Avenue. There was little public entertainment to be had in the Fort Atkinson of that time, but a gay group of young couples created their own fun."

Other second generation businessmen who built houses or lived in the district included merchant G. W. McMillen (115 S. Third St.); O. B. Cornish of Cornish, Curtis and Greene dairy equipment company (11 S. Fourth St.); merchant Herbert Vickery (430 Whitewater Ave.); George Klein, son of a Main Street tavern owner and twice mayor of Fort Atkinson (500 Whitewater); and banker O. W. Donkle (506 Whitewater Ave.). In fact, one of the unifying factors in the district during the period of significance is that of family connections. For example, merchant H. A. Porter gave a part of his lot on Whitewater Avenue to his daughter when she married. She, in turn, gave a lot (348 Merchants Ave.) to her married daughter and willed another lot (338 Merchants Ave.) to two other

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daughters. The Ganong family, the Willard family, and the McMillen family also lived in the area for at least two generations.

After 1920, the district was fairly stable with only three houses built within the district boundaries; a colonial revival house at 110 Third St., the Spanish colonial revival St. Peter's Church at 302 Merchants Ave. in 1928, and the brick colonial revival house at 338 Merchants in 1936. In recent years some alterations have occurred within the district, along with some demolition of properties and changes in the population group living there. However, most of the houses in the district are remarkably well-preserved. Even after a major fire in 1980, the Marston-Hoard house at 323 Merchants Avenue was carefully restored to its pre-fire appearance. Today the National Register listed house is a landmark in the still-spacious neighborhood which is the Merchants Avenue historic district.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Architecture

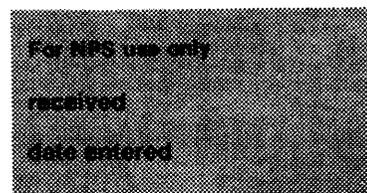
The Merchants Avenue historic district has the best concentration of nineteenth and early twentieth century architectural styles as well as the best individual examples of the Greek Revival, Gothic Revival cottage, and Second Empire styles in Fort Atkinson. And, overall, the district has the highest level of integrity and preservation of any group of houses in the community. The district also contains a number of brick houses, a popular method of construction fostered by the establishment of a local brickyard in 1867. Although other fine brick houses exist within the community, again, the best concentration of brick construction is in this district.⁵

The two examples of Greek Revival architecture in the district are typical of many such houses in the state, and are the best examples of this popular style in Fort Atkinson. They both have a gabled ell form with the Greek Revival detail being confined to simple friezes, cornice returns, and pilasters. The Dwight Foster house (414 Foster St.), as a museum house, of course has a high level of integrity. But, the Daniel White house (339 Merchants Avenue), privately owned, is an excellent example of how Greek Revival details created elegant homes out of what was basically a small, pioneer frame house. The white picket fence around the property is a picturesque touch to the well-preserved house.

The three Gothic Revival cottages are well-preserved examples of the country cottage popularized by Alexander Jackson Davis and Andrew Jackson Downing in the mid-nineteenth century. That they are in a town setting and generally unaltered is unusual. Constructed of brick, these houses are almost identical in scale and detail. Decoration is subdued, consisting of delicate brackets or bargeboard. The most pristine example is the Peter Craig house (513 Foster St.). Both the Charles Allen house (112 S. Milwaukee Ave.) and the George Stafford house (200 S. Milwaukee Ave.) have additions to the rear, the Allen house addition, frame with clapboards, is the most attractive. Also, the Stafford house has been painted. Charles Allen may have been responsible for all three houses, although no firm evidence exists to prove this theory. In any event, even though there are a few other examples

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of the Gothic Revival style in the community, these houses best express the Davis and Downing Gothic cottage form.

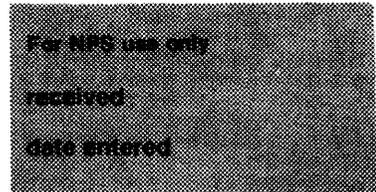
There are numerous examples of Italianate architecture in Fort Atkinson, but three fine and different examples are in the district. The main block of the Marston-Hoard house (323 Merchants Ave.), with its decorative cupola atop a low pitched hipped roof with wide eaves is a good example of the classic Italianate form, even though it is somewhat hidden behind the massive Queen Anne veranda. The M. H. Ganong house (332 Merchants Ave.) illustrates a later example of the Italianate style, and its well-preserved exterior, with delicate carved window hoods, illustrates the fine craftsmanship of the nineteenth century builder. The Frank Allen house (507 Foster St.) is also a later Italianate house, and is less decorative than the previous examples. But, the segmentally arched hoods topping tall, narrow windows, brackets and Italianate entry porch make the Frank Allen house a good example of the style.

Two distinctive Second Empire houses complement the architectural diversity of the district. The large Willard-Caswell house (303 Merchants Ave.), of cream brick, is a fine and somewhat typical example of the style. With mansard roof and classical details, the house has excellent integrity, only the enclosed veranda detracting from the original appearance. A more unusual version of the style is the Winslow house (109 S. Third St.). It is almost Second Empire in miniature, because it has most of the typical details of the style, yet its scale is not usually seen in well-known examples of the style. Again, the level of integrity and preservation of this house is high, and together, with the Willard-Caswell house, these two Second Empire buildings are highlights of the district.

The Queen Anne was an extremely popular style in late nineteenth century Wisconsin communities. The exuberance of the style fit those who built them--usually successful businessmen or professionals. Fort Atkinson has many fine Queen Anne houses scattered throughout the community, however, the best examples in the Merchants Avenue historic district rival them. The Herbert Vickery house (430 Whitewater Ave.) is the best example of the Queen Anne style in the district and is rather typical of late Queen Annes built in small towns throughout Wisconsin. It is a somewhat symmetrical block, with asymmetry expressed in the roof projections. It is classically appointed reflecting its 1908 construction date. The corner tower projection, veranda, and projecting gables, though, are classic Queen Anne details. The Donkle house (506 Whitewater) is even more symmetrical and classical, reflecting its construction at the end of the Queen Anne popularity, even in rural Wisconsin, 1910. However, the two-story projecting bay and veranda, along with steeply-pitched gables decorated with shingles are definitely Queen Anne. The house gives the impression of sturdiness and quality, suitable for its banker owner. Three more modest examples of the Queen Anne style complete the district and are mostly located along Whitewater Avenue. The Quick house (427 Whitewater Ave.) is rather plain, but has the corner tower, projecting gable section, and veranda, all elements of the style. The Stanhope and McMillan houses (415 Whitewater Ave. and 115 S. Third St., respectively), are less elaborate than those examples previously mentioned, but their spool and spindle porches and other detail illustrate the ornate decoration often used on Queen Anne houses..

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Three houses are good examples of the emerging influence of the craftsman era in early twentieth century architecture and building. As large as its Queen Anne neighbor, the George Klein house (500 Whitewater Ave.) is less decorative and features grouped windows with an abundance of upper pane muntins, details typical of craftsman houses. The almost foursquare house at 348 Merchants Ave. has a slightly projecting second story bay with leaded glass window prominent on the front facade, and with the full-blown American foursquare Lloyd house (425 Foster St.), they are both the best examples of craftsman quality in less decorative houses of the early twentieth century.

Three period revival buildings bear mentioning, as they complete the wide range of architecture found in this district. Two well-built, but not particularly distinguished examples of the colonial revival style are at 338 Merchants Ave. and 110 S. Third St. The Spanish colonial revival St. Peter's Church, however, is an unusual building in this district. Eschweiler and Eschweiler of Milwaukee designed the church, perhaps to complement the nearby 1916 Mediterranean revival Foster library (now significantly remodeled). In any event, the Spanish colonial revival building is a simple version of the style and does not represent the best of the Eschweiler and Eschweiler firm, although it has good integrity and is an attractive building nevertheless. Alexander C. Eschweiler (1865-1940) studied architecture at Cornell University, and began practicing in Milwaukee in 1892. In 1924, he partnered with his three sons, Alexander Jr., Theodore, and Carl, under the Eschweiler and Eschweiler name. Eschweiler was a popular architect in both Milwaukee and throughout the state. He alone, and with his sons, designed a number of private residences, commercial buildings, churches, and other public buildings. The firm was particularly adept at period revival styles, especially Tudor revival. A number of the firm's works in Milwaukee are part of the North Point South Historic District (NRHP:1979) and the firm's works in the Wausau area are listed in the National Register (1980) as the Eschweiler Thematic Resources of Marathon County. The Marathon County designs are primarily period revival designs, the best of the group being the Tudor revival half-timber buildings. While the St. Peter's Church design in Fort Atkinson may not be the firm's best work, the church has an unusual design, atypical in a small Wisconsin community.

Many of Fort Atkinson's most prominent citizens chose to live in various locations throughout the community. However, if Fort Atkinson can be said to have a "prestige" neighborhood, the Merchants Avenue historic district is it. Named appropriately for the first prominent people who built houses there, Merchants Avenue was the residence of choice for many of Fort Atkinson's residents who had an impact on the economy of the community, and on the architecture of the community as well.

Commerce and Industry--Association with Significant Persons

Because of its location on the Rock River, Fort Atkinson developed as a commercial center almost from the moment Dwight Foster established a cabin there in 1836, and began a ferry service in 1838. As the community grew in the nineteenth century, Fort Atkinson became a center for retailing and professional services. Manufacturing grew up during the 1860s, and along with the leadership of W. D. Hoard and others

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in the area, the surrounding agricultural economy successfully used commercial dairying to provide a stable cash income, further supporting the retail and service industry of the community. Although both agriculture and manufacturing have had some economic problems recently, Fort Atkinson still serves a wide area and maintains a thriving downtown commercial district. Many of the business persons who lived in the Merchants Avenue historic district were responsible for beginning and maintaining Fort Atkinson's strong retail and service sector.

Banking has always been an important force in a community's growth and development. In 1863, the First National Bank of Fort Atkinson was incorporated by four men who had ties to the Merchants Avenue historic district. They were George Stafford, a lawyer who lived at 200 S. Milwaukee Ave.; Chester May, a pioneer resident who had a home at 333 Merchants Ave. during the 1870s, and was the bank's early bookkeeper, as well as bookkeeper for the Northwestern Manufacturing Co.; George Marston, dry goods merchant who built the house at 323 Merchants; and physician Joseph Winslow, who served a term in the state legislature and was one-time president of the village of Fort Atkinson.⁶

Another important bank which was organized in 1884, was the Citizens State Bank. Chester Caswell, who lived at 303 Merchants Ave., was the son of prominent citizen L. B. Caswell, and began his career as the first city attorney in 1878. He entered the banking business, eventually became cashier at the First National Bank, and left this position to take a similar position at the bank he organized, Citizens State Bank.⁷

Other businessmen who made the Merchants Avenue historic district their home during the late nineteenth century included Reuben White (407 Merchants Ave.), who came to Fort Atkinson at 15, worked in a drug store, and in 1866 became part owner in that same drug store. In 1867 he built his own store on Main Street. White was also president, treasurer, alderman, and supervisor of Fort Atkinson during the mid-1870s. M. H. Ganong, who built the Italianate house at 332 Merchants Ave., owned both a stagecoach line and book and stationary store. He was also a long-time postmaster, village trustee, school district clerk, and active in the republican party. Frank Allen, who lived at 507 Foster St., owned and operated the Fort Atkinson Flouring Mills with his father, F. M. Allen during the 1870s. G. W. McMillen, 115 S. Third St., operated a meat market on Main St., and O. B. Cornish, who built the house at 11 S. Fourth St., worked in the family firm of Cornish, Curtis and Green, a dairy equipment company.⁸

Professionals who lived in the district during the late 1900s included physician Horace Willard, who lived at both 303 and 323 Merchants Ave. Willard was also a merchant (Willard & Co.), and was a director of the Northwestern Manufacturing Company. He was also a vice-president of his son-in-law, Chester Caswell's bank, the Citizens State Bank, and active in local politics. Also a resident of 323 Merchants were physician Henry White, and W. H. Rogers, an attorney, town clerk, district attorney, and justice of the peace in the 1860s and 1870s.

After the turn of the century, three other prominent businessmen made the Merchants Avenue historic district their home. They included Main Street grocer Herbert Vickery (430 Whitewater Ave.); O. W. Donkle, cashier of the Fort

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Atkinson Savings Bank (506 Whitewater Ave.); and Fred Holstein, lumber merchant (110 S. Third St.).¹⁰

The influence of the Hoard family in Fort Atkinson during the period of significance of the district was pervasive. W. D. Hoard began the family dynasty with the Jefferson County Union, and its page devoted to commercial dairy farming which became the influential Hoard's Dairyman. Along with the University of Wisconsin School of Agriculture, Hoard's Dairyman played an important role in convincing Wisconsin farmers that the alternative to cash crops which ravaged the land was commercial dairying which could provide a farmer the cash income he needed while better maintaining farmland growing a variety of feed crops for milk cows. By the turn of the century, dairying was big business in Wisconsin and it has remained one of Wisconsin's most important agricultural bases throughout the twentieth century. W. D. Hoard never lived in the Merchants Avenue Historic District, but all three of his sons did. These sons, Halbert, Frank, and Arthur, became successful in their own right and their activities in both commerce and manufacturing helped maintain the economic success of Fort Atkinson their father was partly responsible for.

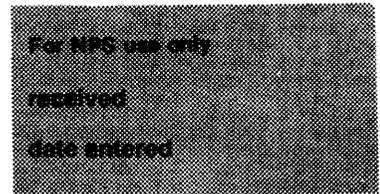
Halbert Hoard (311 Merchants Ave.) followed his father's footsteps in editing the Jefferson County Union. Halbert, considered a competent newspaperman, had wide-ranging interests from progressive political views to songwriting. He is perhaps best known for his invention of a therapeutic massage chair. The device, which Hoard patented and sold, was touted as a cure-all in an era before the wide acceptance of modern medical science. The chair's principals, however, do resemble modern chiropractic therapy, a health system popular with many Americans. Arthur Hoard (323 Merchants Ave.) was intimately involved with his father in the establishment of Hoard's Dairyman, and in 1886, he established Hoard's Creameries, an important manufacturer of dairy products. The creamery depended upon farmer's selling their milk in bulk to the factory for processing into dairy products. This system was the foundation for modern commercial dairying and was exactly what W. D. Hoard and others advocated as early as the 1870s for Wisconsin farmers. In 1912, Arthur Hoard purchased an interest in the Bettersox Knitting Mill, which he built into a thriving business. He also had interests in most of the other factories in Fort Atkinson, began a hotel operation on Lake Koshkonong, and served the community as mayor. Frank Hoard (407 Merchants Ave.) also worked with his father, serving as his secretary when W. D. Hoard was governor in 1888. In 1890 he became business manager of Hoard's Dairyman, and in 1918, he became president and general manager of the W. D. Hoard and Sons Company, a printing business. He was mayor for two terms and with H. H. Curtis, built a local hotel. Active in politics, he was urged to run for governor, but declined. It is Frank Hoard's house in which the Hoard Historical Museum is operated and which has a 1981 addition of a "dairy shrine", an appropriate testament to the Hoard family.¹¹

Notes

¹Hannah Swart, Koshkonong Country Revisited, Vol. I, Muskego, WI: Marek Lithographics, Inc., 1981, pp. 2-3; Jefferson County Wisconsin and its People, Vol I, Chicago: S. J. Clark Publishing Co., 1917, p. 201.

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²Swart, pp. 24, 33; Butterfield, C. W., The History of Jefferson County, Wisconsin, Chicago: Western History Company, 1879, pp. 340, 500, 501.

³Allen family papers in the collections of the Hoard Historical Museum, Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin.

⁴Jefferson County, Vol. I, p. 206.

⁵L. M. Roberts began the Fort Atkinson brickyard in 1867. The large number of brick houses in Fort Atkinson speaks to the success of this operation. Swart, Vol. I, p. 199.

⁶Butterfield, pp. 508, 700; Jefferson County, p. 248; Jefferson County Union, July, 1904 and March 17, 1911.

⁷Hannah Swart, Koshkonong Country Revisited, Vol. II, Muskego, WI: Marek Lithographics, Inc., 1983, p. 39.

⁸Butterfield, pp. 698, 691, 678.

⁹Butterfield, pp. 699-700, 696, 698.

¹⁰Wright's Directory of Watertown (including all of Jefferson County), Milwaukee: A.G. Wright, 1893, entries for Herbert Vickery, O. W. Donkle, and Fred Holstein.

¹¹Swart, Vol. II., pp. 274-281; Jefferson County, pp. 178-181, 144-148.

Inclusion of Exempted Properties

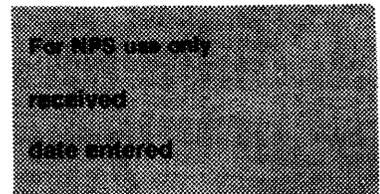
The Dwight Foster house (414 Foster St.) was included as contributing to this district even though it had been moved from its original location (twice) because it is sited appropriately to the original location and its significance in the district is primarily architectural as an excellent example of the pioneer Greek Revival style in Fort Atkinson. The inclusion of St. Peter's Church as contributing in the district was for its architectural significance as an unusual example of a Spanish colonial revival church in a small Wisconsin community.

Preservation Activity

There is considerable interest in the City of Fort Atkinson in preservation activities. The location of the Hoard Historical Museum in the district is symbolic of the leadership role the organization has played in the preservation of local history. A number of other properties in Fort Atkinson have been listed on the National Register, including the Main Street Historic District. A desire to preserve the Merchants Avenue area has led several property owners in the area to cooperate with the Museum in the preparation of this nomination.

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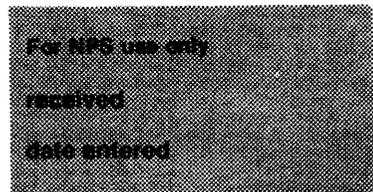
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Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the east lot line of 200 S. Milwaukee Ave., then south along said line to the rear lot line of 200 S. Milwaukee Ave., then along said line across Foster St. to the right of way line of Foster St., then south along said line to the rear lot lines of 110 and 114 S. Third St., along said line to the intersection of the rear lot line of 303 Merchants Ave., then generally south along the rear lot lines of 303, 311, 317, 323, 333, and 339 Merchants Ave., across S. Fourth St. to the right of way line of S. Fourth St., then east along said line to the intersection with the right of way line of Foster St., then south along said line to the north lot line of 425 Foster St., then east along said line to the intersection with the rear lot line of 425 Foster St., along the rear lot lines of 425, 503, 507 and 513 Foster St., then across Foster St. and Whitewater Ave. to the intersection with the right of way line along Whitewater Ave., then northwest along said line to the intersection with the south lot line of 506 Whitewater Ave., then southwest along said line to the intersection with the rear lot line of 506 Whitewater Ave., then northwest along the rear lot lines of 506, 500, and 430 Whitewater Ave. to the intersection with the north lot line of 430 Whitewater Ave., then northeast along said line to the intersection with the right of way line of Whitewater Ave. across the street, then northwest along said line, across S. Fourth St. to the intersection with the north lot line of 344 Merchants Ave., east along said line to the intersection with the rear lot line of 338 Merchants Ave., then generally northwest and north along the rear lot lines of 338, 332, and 302 to the intersection with the rear lot line of 14 S. Third St., then west along said line to the intersection with the west lot line of 14 S. Third St., then north along said line to the intersection with the right of way line of S. Third St., then east along said line to the intersection with the west lot line of 109 S. Third St., then north along said line to the intersection with the rear lot line of 109 S. Third St., then east along said line to the intersection with the west lot line of 112 S. Milwaukee Ave., then north along said line to the intersection with the right of way line of S. Milwaukee Ave., then east along said line to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The complex boundaries of this district were formed for two reasons: one, to capture the largest group of houses associated with nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial and business persons while maintaining as much historical integrity as possible; second, to capture the best examples of nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture which occur in this neighborhood. To the north of the district, an attempt was made to include the Gothic revival cottages on S. Milwaukee St. because of their architectural importance and their association with historical persons in the community. On Foster St., a large group of nineteenth century houses was drawn out of the district because their integrity was so low and there was considerable infill of Post-World War II construction; and, because no historic associations could be drawn between these houses and the prominent occupants nearby. The western boundaries of the district were drawn both because the district borders on the downtown commercial area of Fort Atkinson, and because there was significant loss of integrity and/or historic association with the neighbors along Whitewater Avenue.

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The southern boundary of this district was drawn because the nearby houses lacked integrity and historical association with the houses in the district boundaries. The northern boundary was drawn both because of the difference in architecture and building purpose to the northwest and north; and, because neighboring houses lacked either the integrity or the historical associations with the houses in the district. In particular, the houses/buildings adjacent to 109 S. Third St. and 112 S. Milwaukee Ave. which have been drawn out of the district, are all replacement structures for nineteenth century buildings, according to Sanborn and Perris maps. The Foster library, while at one time a significant architectural entity, has had extensive additions made which have caused the building to lose integrity.

Item 11.

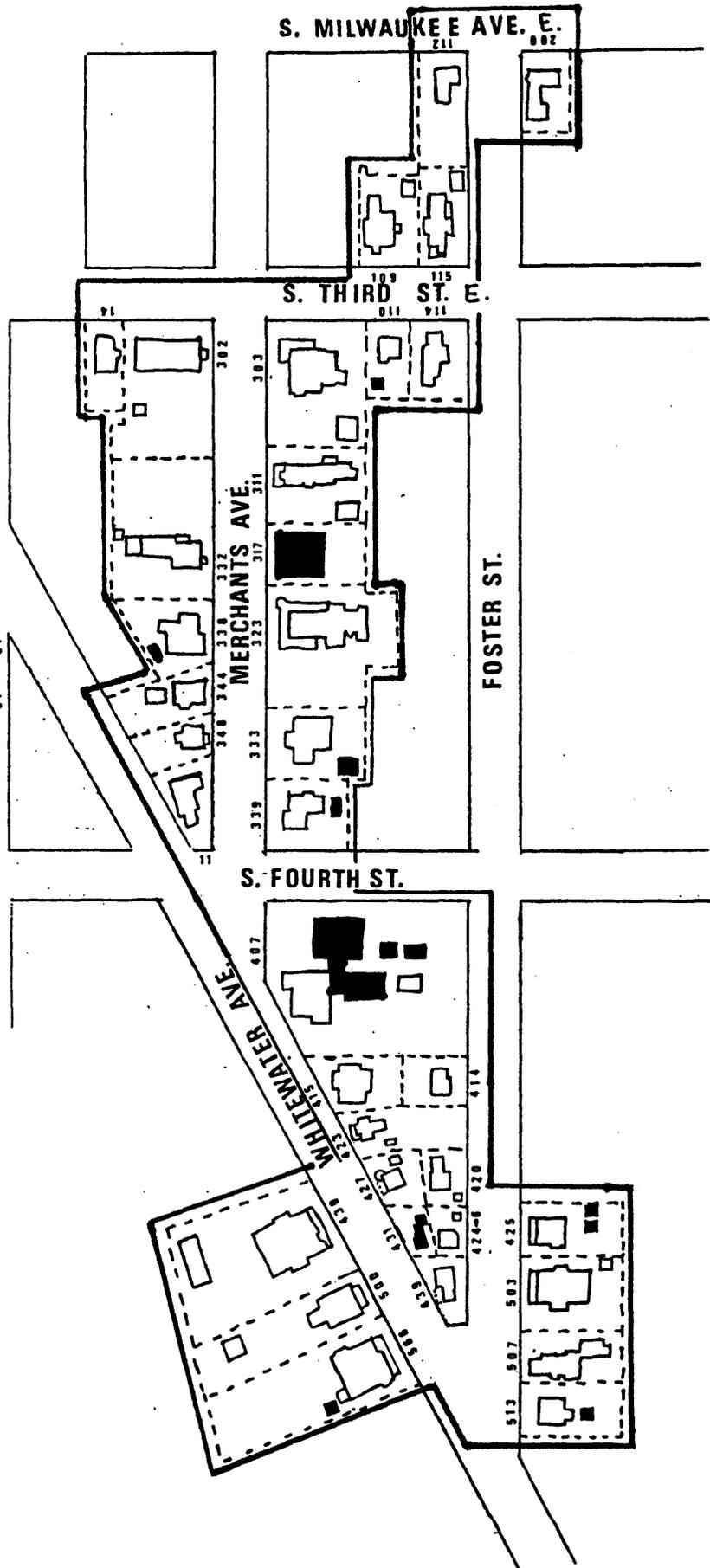
The following persons dated buildings and provided the consultant with historical data: Joan Jones, Helmut Kneis, and Nancy Wilcox.

MERCHANTS AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT

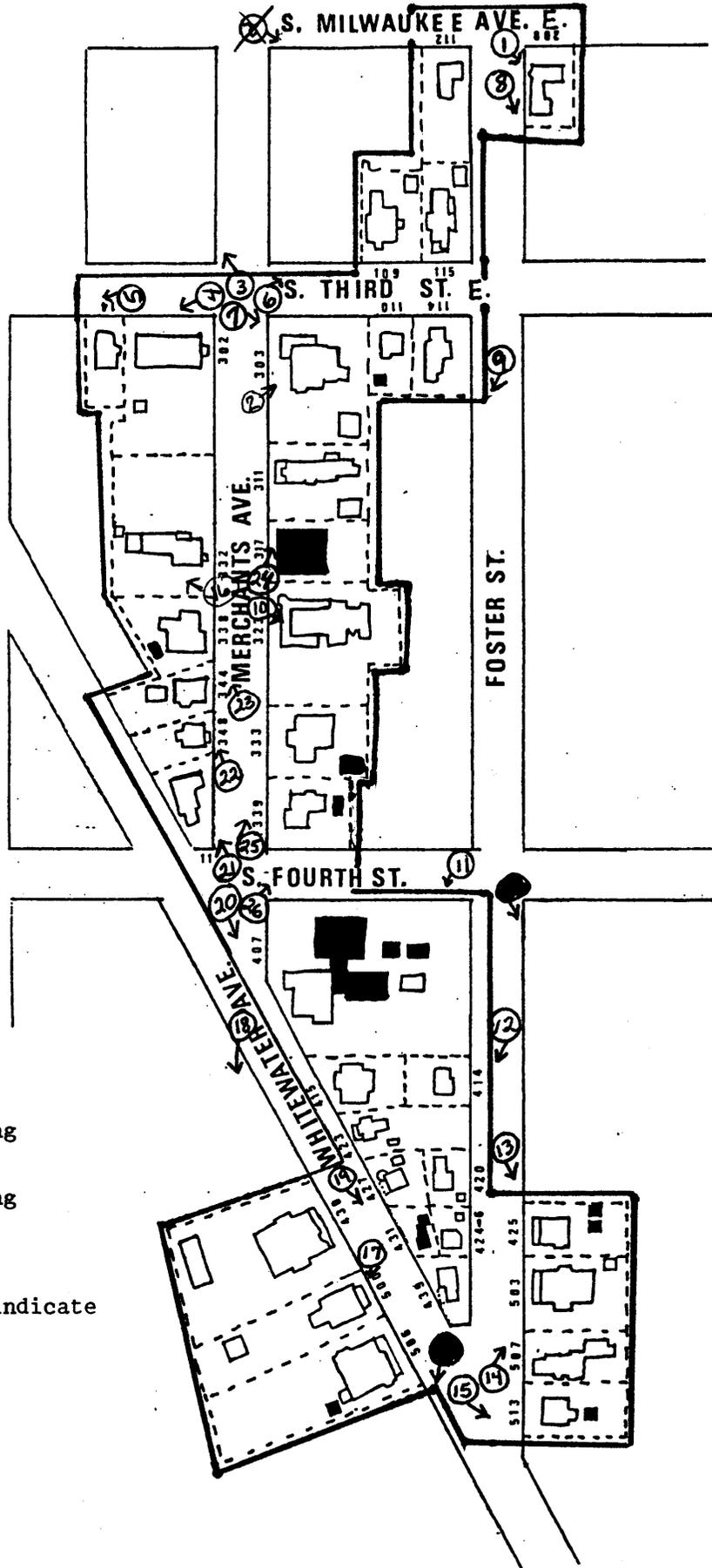


KEY:

- = Contributing
- = Non-contributing
- = boundary



MERCHANTS AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT



KEY:

- =Contributing
- =Non-contributing
- =boundary

Circled numbers indicate photo codes.