

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Wisconsin</b>
COUNTY: <b>Rock</b>
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE <b>OCT 25 1973</b>

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Cooksville Historic District**

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: *Both sides of street bordering the Public Square*  
**Boundaries as shown on appended maps and Rock Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Cooksville** CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: **Wisconsin 1st**

STATE: **Wisconsin** CODE: **55** COUNTY: **Rock** CODE: **105**

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Multiple private**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Route 1**

CITY OR TOWN: **Evansville** STATE: **Wisconsin** CODE: **55**

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Rock County Courthouse**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Janesville** STATE: **Wisconsin** CODE: **55**

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

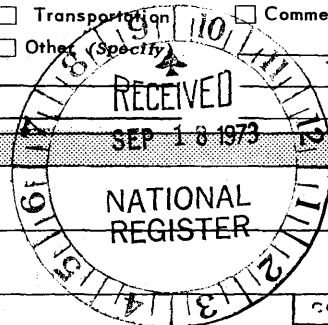
TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**Wisconsin Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings**

DATE OF SURVEY: **1969-1972**  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**State Historical Society of Wisconsin**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**816 State Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Madison** STATE: **Wisconsin** CODE: **55**



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: <b>Wisconsin</b>
COUNTY: <b>Rock</b>
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DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
(Check One)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered
(Check One)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The district is perhaps best characterized by Perrin, who states, "What might be termed a community of brick houses is Cooksville in Rock County. Cooksville is one of the most charming communities in Wisconsin, although, in a way, a ghost town in that its potential was never realized because the railroad bypassed the village in 1857." It was originally settled in 1840, and "most of the first residents came from New York State, second-generation pioneers whose fathers and grandfathers had left New England for the new territory opened up in northern New York early in the 19th century. The houses in Cooksville were built of a locally made brick of excellent vermilion color. The houses were built around a square block set aside in the center of the village and reserved for the use of the inhabitants of the village as a common in the traditional New England manner. The Duncan house is an excellent square house in the Greek Revival Style, but with strong indications of New England lineage. The Isaac Porter, Hoxie, and Backenstoe-Howard houses are in modified Gothic Revival Style but treated with domestic feeling, individuality and simplicity not always evident in this period. Cooksville is the sort of unspoiled community that would lend itself admirably to a historic preservation project..."

As a matter of fact the people of Cooksville have maintained their houses well and carried on a virtual preservation project on their own initiative for many years. Minor alterations have occurred through the years, some consisting of additions that were made nearly a century ago when wings were added. Otherwise only one of the brick houses has been changed recently by the addition of a wood-shingle-sided attached garage at the west end. This modified the appearance but not the structural integrity of the house, and the fact that the shingle siding has been kept dark colored lessens the visual effect on the general character of the house.

One structure was built by Thomas Morgan about 1847 and is a frame house. It is an excellent small Greek Revival Style house and, since it is contemporaneous with the brick houses, contributes to Cooksville's architectural character on its own merit. Another frame house of simple style but not particularly important architecturally, the Van Vleck house, is historically significant in originally being the home of Daniel Cook, one of the early residents for whom the village was named. It dates to about 1850. Finally, the old Congregational Church, built by Benjamin Hoxie in 1879, is also listed among the significant buildings of the district. It is currently undergoing restoration to its original Gothic Revival Style by its architect-owner, who is faithfully following details shown in early photographs and illustrations of the church. The significant buildings are indicated by number and identified on an appended hand-drawn map.

The public square is entirely open on the south half but on the north side is covered with a grove of oak trees. At the northernmost side, the heavy, undisturbed undergrowth around these trees completely obscures the street on the north side of the square--a portion of Dane Street--quite effectively isolating the two houses in that block.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

important

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Wisconsin	
COUNTY	Rock	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE
		OCT 25 1973

(Number all entries)

COOKSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT

7. DESCRIPTION OF BOUNDARIES OF HISTORIC DISTRICT: (see maps appended)

Basically a nearly square area of approximately 24 acres in the community of Cooksville, including at the center the unoccupied public square, and bounded on all four sides by lines parallel to the sides of the square and extending along the rear lot lines of the houses on the streets surrounding the square, said lines being extended to their points of intersection on the northwest, northeast, and southeast. This basic area is modified by a small rectangular extension at the southwest as follows: Beginning at the point where the south and west boundaries described above would intersect, the south boundary is extended westerly across Main Street (State Trunk Highway 138) and continues along the south edge of the property occupied by the old Congregational Church building at the southwest corner of Main and Rock streets (State Trunk Highways 138 and 59, respectively) to the rear (west) lot line of the property, thence northerly along the west lot line, continuing across highway 59 to the highway right-of-way line on the north side, thence easterly along said right-of-way line to the rear lot line at the southwest corner of the property occupied by the Duncan house. The streets bordering the public square are Dane on the north and east, Rock (State Trunk Highway 59) on the south, and Webster on the west. The Duncan house occupies the northwest corner of Rock and Webster streets.



**4. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

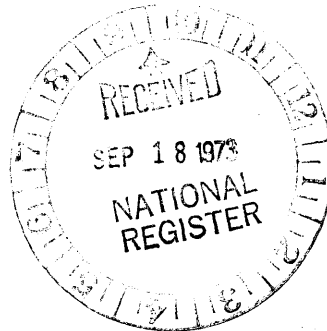
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Cooksville Historic District is significant for its architecture, mostly for the vermilion brick houses built there in the 1840's and 1850's and today still well preserved and inhabited by people who are interested in keeping the community looking much as it did more than a century ago. Any of these houses individually would be significant enough for inclusion in the National Register on architectural merit; a collection of them takes on an even greater meaning as a preservation of part of our patrimony.

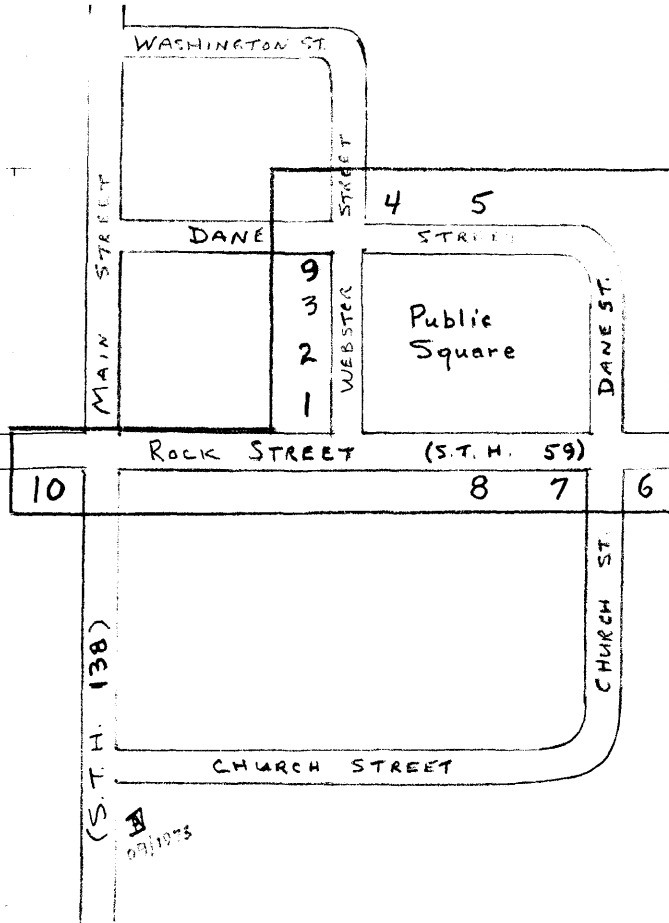
In plan, the district is significant because the community was platted with a public square which was donated by Isaac Porter, one of the community's founders, with the stipulation that it be used forever as such. Cooksville amounts to a transplant in Wisconsin of a typical New England village of earlier vintage and uncommon in this state. The square has always been used as a common and in general the little community has remained unspoiled, little changed, and has retained a <sup>unique</sup> charm and attractiveness difficult to be found elsewhere in Wisconsin.

The brick houses have been credited with physically preventing Cooksville from disappearing from the map after the town was bypassed by the railroad in 1857. Neighboring communities of the same period which did not have brick houses were actually moved, house by house, to new locations closer to the railroad so that the original communities indeed disappeared. Besides being important for their architecture, therefore, Cooksville's vermilion brick houses are probably responsible in great part for having anchored the settlement to its original mooring to remain today as part of the presence of our past.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS





Not drawn to scale

NW N 42° 50' 13"	SE N 42° 50' 04"
W 89° 14' 29"	W 89° 14' 09"
NE N 42° 50' 13"	SW N 42° 50' 04"
W 89° 14' 09"	W 89° 14' 29"

COOKSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT



1. Duncan House. Built in 1848. An excellent square house of vermilion brick in Greek Revival Style.
2. Backenstoe-Howard House. Built in 1847. Modified Gothic Revival Style in vermilion brick.
3. Hoxie House. Built in 1852 by Benjamin Hoxie. Another modified Gothic Revival Style in vermilion brick.
4. Isaac Porter House. Built in 1850. A handsome modified Gothic Revival house in vermilion brick. Possibly the second house built by Porter in 1850.
5. House. Built in 1850, perhaps by Isaac Porter for his family to live in while the larger house was being built. Also an excellent modified Gothic Revival Style, rather diminutive in size but nicely proportioned. Altered by addition of a wood-shingle-sided small garage on the west side. Main house retains its character and is of the same vermilion brick as the others. Now W. R. Brunsell, Sr. house.
6. Morgan House. Date unknown but probably contemporaneous with the houses listed above. One of few frame houses within the district. Nicely proportioned Greek Revival house, painted white. Outer walls have vermilion brick infill between studs.
7. Seaver House. Probably built in the 1850's. Another local vermilion brick house, in Greek Revival Style.
8. Longbourne House. Built in 1856. The last of the surviving vermilion brick houses in the district (i.e., last in order as one proceeds clockwise around square from intersection of Webster and Rock streets). Gothic Revival Style in the American mode. Somewhat altered.
9. Van Vleck House. Simple 1½ story clapboarded frame house probably built c. 1850. Probably built by Daniel Cook as his second home in the community named for him and his brother John.
10. Old Congregational Church. Built by Benjamin Hoxie in 1879 a block away from the public square, this was intimately connected with the lives of the people who lived in the vermilion brick houses. Gothic Revival Style. Undergoing restoration.

## 7. Description

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

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

#### Introduction

The 19th century development of the community of Cooksville is the theme of this nomination. The area's architecture and environs, including several archeological sites, reflect this developmental theme, and the historical resources of the community are clear evidence of its 19th century social, economic, and architectural history. The architectural theme is reflected in the Greek and Gothic Revival styles brought to Wisconsin by the Yankee settlers, and construction of many of the village residences and surrounding farmhouses, built of locally-made, vermilion-colored brick, reflects the craftsmanship of the local builders and self-taught architects. The social and economic history of the Cooksville area is reflected in the relationship between the village, as the hub of activity, with the outlying farmsteads, mill sites, and cheese factory--all of which, taken together, illustrate the interdependent economic and cultural relationships of this early Wisconsin settlement.

#### The Cooksville Historic District

Cooksville is a relatively unspoiled southern Wisconsin village of about 35 dwellings, a store, an active church, and several outbuildings. Less than one-fourth are of 20th century construction. Situated on the south side of Badfish Creek, a tributary of the Yahara and Rock Rivers, it is surrounded by farmland. Its environs are rural, although it is only 25 miles south of the state capital, Madison, and 19 miles northeast of the county seat, Janesville.

What is now the unincorporated village of Cooksville consists of two adjacent plats, divided by Main Street (HWY 138) on the north-south center line of Section 6, Town of Porter.<sup>1</sup> That to the east was platted in 1846 as Waucoma, while that to the west was platted in 1842 as Cooksville.<sup>2</sup> Although the name of Waucoma still exists on property records of Rock County, the entire settlement is known now as Cooksville.<sup>3</sup> The historic district includes most of the three blocks of the original plat of Cooksville and all or portions of nine of the original 14 blocks of Waucoma, or those on which a concentration of historic buildings still stands. The northeasternmost portions of Waucoma were never settled and remain farmland and lowland to this day.

The most consistent concentration of historic houses lies around the village square, or common, whose south boundary is Rock Street or Wis. Hwy 59. The square is Block 8 of the original plat of Waucoma. This may be considered the heart of the district; in fact, the square with the houses which surround it, as well as a corridor which extends from the south side of the square on Rock Street as far as the southwest corner of Rock and Main Streets, was designated as a historic district in 1973 (NRHP 10/25/73). However the original district did not include the plat of Cooksville and that portion of Waucoma which flanks Main Street north of Rock Street and across the street from original Cooksville. This portion, with its 19th century general store and Greek Revival houses, is an integral part of the village. It should be included in the historic district, although in general these 19th century houses have suffered severer alterations than those around the square, and here there are also a limited number of intrusive ranch houses, which at least are not incompatible in size and in use with the historic buildings on Main Street. While the majority of houses around the square are of brick, the 19th century houses on Main Street, with one exception, were built of frame.

While a variety of building materials characterizes the nomination as a whole, with Cooksville as its core, the flavor of the community is probably best described by Perrin, who stated:

What might be termed a community of brick houses is Cooksville in Rock County. Cooksville is one of the most charming communities

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Thematic Resources of the Cooksville Area

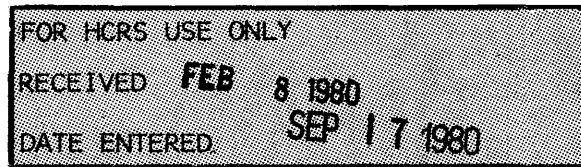
CONTINUATION SHEET

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<u>Property</u>	<u>Owner Name &amp; Mailing Address</u>
1 <u>Lovejoy-Duncan House</u> Cooksville Historic District	Chester Holway Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
2 <u>Backenstoe-Howard House</u> Cooksville Historic District	E. Marvin Raney Route 1, Evansville, WI 53536
3 <u>Benjamin S. Hoxie House</u> Cooksville Historic District	Helen N. Toigo Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
4 <u>Cure-Van Vleck House</u> Cooksville Historic District	George & Eunice Mattakat Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
5 <u>Isaac Porter House</u> Cooksville Historic District	Carl M. Larsen, Jr. Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
6 <u>Chambers-Porter House</u> Cooksville Historic District	William R. Brunsell Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536'
7 <u>Cooksville School</u> Cooksville Historic District	Michael Saternus, Secretary Cooksville Community Center Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
8 <u>Public Square or Commons</u> Cooksville Historic District	Richard Towns, Chairman Town of Porter Route 4 Janesville, WI 53545
9 <u>Morgan House</u> Cooksville Historic District	Helen N. Toigo Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
10 <u>Frank Seaver House</u> Cooksville Historic District	Philip & Lynn Bednarek Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536



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Thematic Resources of the Cooksville Area

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<u>Property</u>	<u>Owner Name &amp; Mailing Address</u>
11 <u>John Seaver House</u> Cooksville Historic District	Dorothy T. Richardson Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
12 <u>Longbourne House</u> Cooksville Historic District	Maurice Gras Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536  A. H. Bova Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
13 <u>Blackman-Woodbury House</u> Cooksville Historic District	A. P. Hamacher Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
14 <u>Blackman-Graves Building</u> Cooksville Historic District	A. P. Hamacher Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
15 <u>Parker-Newell House</u> Cooksville Historic District	Lawrence J. McDonnell Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
16 <u>Gunn-Breckenridge House</u> Cooksville Historic District	Stephen & Karen Smay Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
17 <u>Fisher-Van Buren House</u> Cooksville Historic District	Michael Saturnus & Larry Reed Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
18 <u>Ranch House</u> , Lots 1 & 2, Block 2 and 19 <u>Isaac Hoxie House</u> , Lot 4; plus Lots 3, 5 & 6, Waucoma plat, Cooksville Historic District	Carroll D. Wall Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
20 <u>Ranch House</u> , Lot 7, Block 2, Waucoma plat Cooksville Historic District	James McCarthy, Jr. Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536

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## Thematic Resources of the Cooksville Area

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<u>Property</u>	<u>Owner Name &amp; Mailing Address</u>
21 Ranch house & concrete block building, Lot 2 & west 1/2 of Lot 1, Block 3, Waucoma plat Cooksville Historic District	Edwin Julseth Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
22 Ranch house, E 1/2 of Lot 1, Block 3, Waucoma plat Cooksville Historic District	Donald & Gloria Martin Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
23 <u>Lovejoy and Chambers House</u> Cooksville Historic District	Gordon Page Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
24 <u>John Collins House</u> Cooksville Historic District	Edward E. Ortman Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
25 <u>Houfe-Sturtevant House</u> Cooksville Historic District	Gordon A. Starks Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
26 <u>Betsey Curtiss House</u> Cooksville Historic District	Mrs. Frances Norby Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
27 <u>Cooksville General Store</u> Cooksville Historic District	Waucoma Hall c/o Wayne Buss Route 5, Box 562 Stoughton, WI 53589
28 <u>Blacksmith Shop</u> Cooksville Historic District	Francis H. Hatch Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
29 <u>Smith-Galt House</u> Cooksville Historic District	George & Eunice Mattakat Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
30 <u>John Cook House</u> Cooksville Historic District	George & Eunice Mattakat Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

## Thematic Resources of the Cooksville Area

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<u>Property</u>		<u>Owner Name &amp; Mailing Address</u>
31 <u>William Porter Farmhouse</u> Cooksville Historic District	4	Sidney Anderson, Jr. Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
32 <u>Cooksville Congregational Church Bldg.</u> Cooksville Historic District		Michael Saternus Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
33 <u>Frame House, Lot 7, Block 9, Waucoma plat</u> Cooksville Historic District		Keith & Ilene Axford Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
34 <u>Cooksville Cemetery</u> Cooksville Historic District		Cooksville Cemetery Association c/o Marvin Raney Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
35 <u>Norwegian Lutheran Church</u> Cooksville Historic District		Cooksville Lutheran Church Omar Haakenson, Council President Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536
<del>36 <u>Billings House, Lot 10, Blk 4 Waucoma plat</u> Cooksville</del>		<del>John Star Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536</del>
<del>37 <u>"Searle Barn," Lot 2, Blk 4, Waucoma plat</u> Cooksville</del>		<del>Art Hanson Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536</del>
38 <u>Cooksville Mill &amp; Pond Site (RO 221)</u> Cooksville vicinity		Carl & Jennifer Gutknecht Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536  Mary Anderson Estate, Mrs. Earl Anderson Estate c/o Lavern Anderson 109 Jefferson Street Janesville, WI 53545  Karl Wolter Route 1 Evansville, WI 53536

*deleted - see  
continuation sheet  
received 9/16/80  
with corrections*

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Thematic Resources of the Cooksville Area, Evansville, Wis., vicinity

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 1

in Wisconsin, although, in a way, a ghost town in that its potential was never realized because the railroad bypassed the village in 1857....

The houses in Cooksville were built of a locally made brick of excellent vermilion color. The houses were built around a square block set aside in the center of the village and reserved for the use of the inhabitants of the village as a common in the traditional New England manner. The Duncan house is an excellent square house in the Greek Revival Style, but with strong indications of New England lineage. The Isaac Porter, Hoxie and Backenstoe-Howard houses are in modified Gothic Revival Style, but treated with domestic feeling, individuality and simplicity not always evident in this period. Cooksville is the sort of unspoiled community that would lend itself admirably to a historic preservation project....<sup>4</sup>

As a matter of fact the people of Cooksville have maintained their houses well and have carried on an informal preservation project on their own initiative for several decades. Since the core of the district was listed on the National Register in 1973, further restoration projects have been initiated on several brick or frame buildings, sometimes with the aid of federal funding. The few contemporary intrusions are houses which are similar in size if not in proportion to the historic buildings. Enlargement of the district to include the major boundaries of historic building in the village would give added protection to the community.

Waucoma Plat

The area around the square is intact, with no intrusions. Seven of the houses around it are of mid-19th century vermilion brick, while four are 19th century frame. Of the brick dwellings, the Duncan, Backenstoe-Howard, Isaac Porter, and Longbourne houses are the best known, but the other buildings are also of merit and contribute to the district.

The Thomas Morgan house on the southeast corner was built of frame, ca. 1848; the builders may have been Benjamin and Isaac Hoxie, as Morgan was their brother-in-law.<sup>5</sup> It is an excellent small Greek Revival style house and contributes to Cooksville's architectural character on its own merit. The Cure-Van Vleck house, ca. 1851, is also of frame, but is now covered with wood shingles. The two other frame houses and another brick house on the south side of the square show later 19th century additions. There is also a 19th century frame and yellow-pink brick building now used as a garage. One house to the southwest of the square presently exhibits 20th century stucco and a dormer window, though the basic proportions of this house are intact. A small 19th century frame house was moved a block west from its original location on the south side

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Thematic Resources of the Cooksville Area, Evansville, Wis., vicinity

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of the square and restored and enlarged attractively with compatible contemporary brick.

The frame schoolhouse was a replacement in 1886 of the original brick schoolhouse. The school has always been the only building on the east side of the square. The square is open green on all but the north side, where a significant grove of virgin bur oaks with heavy, undisturbed undergrowth obscures the street on the north side of the square (a portion of Dane Street), quite effectively isolating the two Gothic Revival houses on that block. The smaller of these, to the east, has rather unfortunate modern additions, but the body of the house is still there.

The east side of Main Street in Waucoma includes some intrusive ranch houses and a cement block building; however, four Greek Revival houses remain there. On the southeast corner of Hys. 59 and 138 is a frame house of fine proportions which is being restored by its owner, who is also the restorer of the Congregational Church. The two houses in the middle of each of the two blocks to the north of this house are also of merit, although each has noticeable 20th century additions. The frame Greek Revival house of Isaac Hoxie (built 1848-61) in the first block retains its returned cornice but was enlarged with wings and a broad porch across the front. The Collins house (ca. 1850) on the next block is a pivotal building near the north edge of the district. It is a fine vermilion brick Greek Revival house, with however a 20th century carport to its south. It is flanked with a simple Greek Revival house to the south and a 19th century frame house to the north.

Cooksville Plat

The original plat of Cooksville consists of three blocks on the west side of Main Street (Hy 138) and north of Rock Street (Hy 59). The Congregational Church, a pivotal building, is located at the southwest corner of Main and Rock Streets, just south of the Cooksville plat. Between the church and the north edge of the district are a 19th century farmhouse, and two vernacular frame houses of the period of early settlement, a new Blacksmith Shop, a country store, and a simple Greek Revival house. The vernacular-Late Picturesque character of the farm house is now partly obscured by aluminum siding, but the house retains historic significance because of its association with William Porter, an early settler of Porter Township. The two small vernacular frame houses to the north of the William Porter house were built in the 1840's; they are relatively little altered. A dark frame shop to their north is a 1978 replacement of a former blacksmith shop on the site. This shop blends to a certain extent with the significant buildings, yet it is a new building.

The Cooksville General Store, to its north, is of primary historic significance. It is a two-story gabled vernacular building in good condition with a one-story porch. Though its core dates from ca. 1847, its present appearance dates largely from 1864, when Benjamin Hoxie enlarged it. The large six-paned front store windows date from 1882.<sup>6</sup> Of the few country stores left in Rock County, this is one which has retained its architectural integrity and is still in use for its original purpose.<sup>7</sup>

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

Historical Resources of Cooksville - Partial Listing

Continuation sheet

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The aluminum sided Greek Revival house to its north is of some historic interest for its association with early Cooksville; it is also a visual buffer at the north side of the district.

Cooksville Historic District - Outside Original Plats

In the immediate environs of Cooksville but outside the original plats are several sites which are part of the integral history of the village. The Congregational Church, already mentioned as just south of the plat of Cooksville, is included in the historic district as a pivotal building at the jogged southwest corner of the district. This handsome building is undergoing restoration, and its belfry, spires, and 19th century color scheme have been restored.

Two sites which are adjacent on the south side of the original plat of Waucoma may also be considered as part of the district. They are the Cooksville cemetery and the Norwegian Lutheran Church. The cemetery, with its stately trees, is the resting place of many of the early settlers of the village and so is considered part of the Yankee heritage of the village. It occupies the southeast leg of the district. The Lutheran church on its west boundary is more recent than the cemetery. It is associated with the Norwegian immigration to the nearby Stoughton area through the latter part of the 19th century. The church was established in 1892 but the present structure was rebuilt after a fire in 1896. A small southwest leg of the district contains a historical archeological site where an early brickyard and associated house stood more than a century ago.

On the east side of Tolles Rd., between the Miller house and Church Street, is the site of the Champney brickyard (R0222).<sup>10</sup> It occupied two acres at the southwest corner of the southeast quarter of Section 6 in the Town of Porter. It is located on the southwest corner of a field which is just south of the district. It furnished much of the vermilion brick for the Cooksville houses. Burnt brick sherds may still be seen on the surface of the field which has occupied the site for over one hundred years. They indicate the location of the brickyard; it is corroborated by abstracts. Brick sherds, as well as pieces of pottery and glass, lie on the surface about 300 feet to the northeast of the brickyard, this was the site of the Champney house, which is included as part of the same archeological site.

Cooksville District Boundaries

The boundaries (see sketch map) encompass the significant portions of the original plats of Cooksville and Waucoma which contain historic buildings and related open land which is integral to the rural character of the community. Beginning at the southwest corner of the Congregational Church property (#32), the district line runs east to the east side of Tolles Road, thence south to the south section line of Section 6, T-4-N, R-11-E, thence east along said section line 350 feet, thence due north to the south side of Church Street, thence east to the west lot line of the Lutheran Church (#35), thence south 132.9 feet, thence east 115.5 feet to the eastern boundary of the cemetery, thence south 415 feet, thence east 244 feet, thence north 547.5 feet to the south side of Church Street, thence continuing along the southern and eastern sides of Church Street northward to the intersection with the south boundary of Lots 13 & 14, Block 10, thence east to the eastern boundary of said lots, thence north along said boundary and continuing to the north side of Rock Street (Hwy. 59), thence eastward to the east boundary of the school property (#7), thence north to a point 198 feet

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

Historical Resources of Cooksville - Partial Listing

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 4

north of an eastward extension of the north side of Dane Street, thence west to the west side of the alley at the southeast corner of Lot 24, Block 3, thence northward to the north line of Lot 25, Block 3, thence west to the east side of Main Street, thence south to a point east of the north edge of Lots 2 and 5, Block 1, platted village of Cooksville, thence west to the northwest corner of said Lot 5, Block 1, Cooksville plat, thence south along the western limit of the platted village to its intersection with the north side of Rock Street (Hwy. 59), thence easterly approximately 120 feet to a point north of the west property line of the Congregational Church, thence south across Rock Street to the point of beginning.

Cooksville District Intrusions

The few 20th century buildings in Cooksville generally blend in scale and use with the historic buildings of the district. However, there are five buildings in the plat of Waucoma and one in the plat of Cooksville which may be listed as intrusions within the district: a brick ranch house (#18, Block 2, Lots 1 and 2) built diagonally on the northeast corner of Rock and Main Streets (hwys. 59 and 138); a ranch house at the southeast corner of Main and Dane Streets (#20, Lot 7, Block 2); a concrete block shed at the northeast corner of Main and Dane Streets (#21, W 1/2 Lot 1, Block 3), and a ranch house east of the concrete building (#22, E1/2 Lot 1, Block 3); and finally, a c. 1940 frame house (lot 2, Block 3) north of the concrete block building, all of the above being located in the platted village of Waucoma. The Cooksville Blacksmith Shop, so-called, (#28, on Block 2, part of Lot 2), located in the platted village of Cooksville, blends in scale and material as a one-story frame building with the historic buildings, but since it was built in 1978 near the old shop site, it does not qualify as a historic building.

INVENTORY: COOKSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT

W: Waucoma plat  
C: Cooksville plat

Addresses: Route 1, Evansville, WI 53536  
(R 1 EV) unless otherwise indicated

Houses 1-4 form a continuous street-face opposite the square that, as an entity, symbolize the Cooksville character.

1. Lovejoy-Duncan house 1846-48 Pivotal  
W: Bl 2, Lots 13, 14  
Owner: Chester Holway, R 1 Ev

A square two-story local vermilion brick house with a hipped roof, this house is of pivotal architectural significance as one of the finest and certainly the best known of the Cooksville houses. It was built ca. 1846-48 in the Greek Revival style with Federal influences, for Daniel Lovejoy, local merchant and entrepreneur. (The partnership of Lovejoy and Chambers built many of the brick houses in and near Cooksville.) It was owned and lived in from 1852-75 by Henry Duncan, who was listed as a "private gentleman" in the tax rolls. He added the one-story frame wing. Hubbard Champney, the brickmaker, owned it a short time afterward.

The house was long associated with Ralph Warner, an antiquarian and collector, who designed and created the gardens and owned and lived in the house from 1911 to 1941, meanwhile retaining its archaic character. While such amenities as plumbing and electricity have been added since, the house still retains its integrity and may be considered in fine condition.

The house has been owned since 1941 by Chester Holway, the dean of the Cooksville preservation-oriented community, who occupied the house as a second home until his retirement to Cooksville in recent years. The sensitive modernization of the structure has been under the direction of E. Marvin Raney, who has been a tenant in the house for over 30 years. Raney is well-known as the recognized authority on numerous aspects of Rock County history including especially that of Cooksville.

The horse barn to the west of the house was built in 1846; it was restored and embellished in the 1960's by E. Marvin Raney, who based the design on an outbuilding in Lovejoy's home county in Vermont. A window for the restoration was salvaged from the Van Vleck corn planter factory building (Bl 3, Lot 14). The barn is contributory to the nomination.

(House Beautiful, Jan. 1923; Raney, Cooksville Walking Tour, 1953; Holway, "Our Village...", Philadelphia Town Journal, Aug. 1954, pp. 20-21; B. K. White, Wisconsin Heritage, 1954, pp. 274-84; Perrin, Historic Wisconsin Buildings, 1962, pp. 56-57; Perrin, The Architecture of Wisconsin, 1967, pp. 65-66; Douglas and Hartung, Rock County Historic Sites and Buildings, 1976, illus. p. 27, pl 8c, pp. 140-41.)

2. Backenstoe-Howard house ca. 1847, ca. 1862 Pivotal  
W: Bl 2, Lots 11, 12  
Owner: E. Marvin Raney, R 1 Ev

Of primary architectural significance, this two-story vermilion brick house with a long one-story portion shows Gothic Revival cottage influences in its steep gables. The lintels however are straight, and there were never any decorated bargeboards, according to the present owner, who has conducted extensive research on Cooksville. The one-story part was built first, ca. 1847, as a double house for two brothers-in-law, whose wives were Hoxie sisters. Howard was a barn builder and Backenstoe was a plasterer.



The more imposing 1½ story part was added ca. 1862. Susan M. Porter, a daughter of early settler William Porter, obtained the house in 1910, and it was occupied as a permanent and second home by locally well-known members of the Porter family until acquired by the present owner.

(Raney, Tour, 1953; Perrin, Historic Wisconsin Buildings, 1962, illus. p. 57; RCHSB, pp. 140-41.)

3. Benjamin S. Hoxie house 1852 Pivotal  
 W: Bl 2, Lots 9, 10  
 Owner: Helen N. Toigo, R 1 Ev

This vermilion brick Gothic Revival cottage is also of primary architectural interest, for its connection with a well-known local architect and builder. Benjamin Hoxie, a carpenter and self-taught architect, came to Cooksville in 1846 from Maine and built the house in 1852. It is 1½ stories high with two intersecting steep-gabled brick blocks. Lintels are straight. There is an elongated two-story window in the east front elevation; the main entrance is on the south side of this block, nestled near the intersection of the two blocks. A 1½ story frame wing with a back entrance and simple mansard roof was added to the rear by the same builder before 1873. A south bay has been added since to this addition, but it does not detract from the house. Hoxie designed the Cooksville Congregational Church and enlarged the Cooksville store and built houses in Albany and Evansville. He was also an avid horticulturist and an officer of the State Horticultural Society. The workshop to the north of the house was razed some time ago. The garage is not part of the nomination.

(Atlas, 1873, illus. p. 54; Raney, Tour; Perrin, Historic Wisconsin Buildings, illus. cover, p. 58; RCHSB, pp. 140-41.)

4. Cure-Van Vleck house 1851 Pivotal  
 W: Bl 2, Lot 8  
 Owner: George and Eunice Mattakat, R 1 Ev

Though Cure was a mason, he could have built this simple 1½ story frame Greek Revival house, which was constructed ca. 1851. He lived there 12 years, before selling to the Van Vleck family, which owned the house until 1935. Van Vleck patented a swinging farm gate; the Van Vleck corn planter and wagon factory was once located just north (Bl 3, Lot 14). The 1½ story frame horse barn is one of the two original ones remaining on property built around the square. It is contributory to the nomination.

(Interviews with Mattakat and Raney, Oct. 1978.)

5. Isaac Porter house ca. 1855 Pivotal  
 W: Bl 7 (vacated); NE corner of Dane and Webster  
 Owner: Carl M. Larsen, Jr., R 1 Ev

This two-story vermilion brick house with four gables is the largest Gothic Revival house in the village. It was probably built for John Chambers (partner of Lovejoy), who bought the land from Dr. John Porter in 1855. Isaac Porter, who bought it in 1867, was the youngest of the three brothers, nephews of Dr. John Porter, who settled in Cooksville. The farm buildings north of the house are not part of the nomination.

(Portrait and Biographical Album of Rock County, 1889, p. 409; Perrin, Historic Wisconsin Buildings, 1962, illus. p. 57.)

6. Chambers-Porter cottage ca. 1855 Pivotal  
 W: Bl 7 (vacated), east of No. 5  
 Owner: William Brunsell, R 1 Ev

This small two-story Gothic cottage of local vermilion brick may have been built by John

Chambers ca. 1855 as a "dower house" for his widowed mother. It was later part of the Isaac Porter homestead. The one-story addition of shingled garage and living space with an unfortunate decorative metal porch obscures the basic house, which is very handsome.

(Raney interview, Oct. 1978)

7. Cooksville School 1886 Contributing  
 W: Bl 11, Lot 1  
 Owner: Cooksville, Inc., R 1 Ev

This vernacular frame schoolhouse, facing the common, is topped with a bracketed bell tower. The present building was built in 1886 on the site of a previous brick school. It was raised on new concrete foundations in the 1930's, and may now be entered at a rear wing. This building served as the community school over three-quarters of a century, and remains in use as a community center.

(Raney interview, Oct. 1978)

8. Public Common 1846 (plat) Pivotal  
 W: Bl 8  
 Owner: "Residents of Waucama" (i.e. Town of Porter)

Block 8 of Waucama was set aside in perpetuity by Dr. John Porter for the use of the residents of the village. It is a virtual New England village green located in the midwest. The fine virgin bur oak grove on its north quarter is a remnant of the "oak openings" which interspersed Rock County's prairies.

(Abstracts; Raney interview, Oct. 1978)

9. Morgan house 1848-50 Pivotal  
 W: Bl 10, Lots 13,14  
 Owner: Helen N. Toigo, R 1 Ev

This 1½ story frame Greek Revival house with vermilion brick nogging between the studs was built 1848-50 by or for Thomas Morgan, a "jack carpenter", who married a Hoxie. Her brothers, Benjamin and Isaac, both carpenters, may have contributed to the building of the house. Morgan lived there until his death in 1905. The house has been restored by its present owner.

(Raney, Tour, 1953.)

10. Frank Seaver house ca. 1850 Pivotal  
 W: Bl 9, Lot 8  
 Owner: Philip and Lynn Bednarek, R 1 Ev

This 1½ story Greek Revival house of local vermilion brick was built ca. 1850 on a corner lot. Lintels are slightly curved. In 1946 a front porch was enclosed and a wing was added to the rear. A recent preservation grant has enabled some restoration, including a wood shingled roof and 6-over-6 windows.

(Saternus interview, June 1979)

11. John Seaver house ca. 1849 Contributing  
 W: Bl 9, Lot 11  
 Owner: Dorothy T. Richardson R 1 Ev

John W. Fisher, a carpenter and a relative of the owner, may have built this 1½ story frame Greek Revival house for John D. Seaver, the father of Frank Seaver, who built on the corner. The Seavers came from Chautauqua County, New York. The house is presently

sided with aluminum.

(Raney interview, Oct. 1978)

12. Longbourne house ca. 1854 Pivotal  
 W: Bl 9, Lot 12  
 Owner: Maurice Gras and A. H. Bova, R 1 Ev

This charming 1½ story Gothic Revival vermilion brick cottage with decorated bargeboards was probably built by John Fisher for Thomas W. Longbourne, an Englishman, who operated the local flour mill. Longbourne sold the house in 1866 to Charles Woodbury, who operated the Cooksville store; from 1870-1900 it belonged to John Robertson, a farmer and storekeeper. A contemporary wing to the rear, designed by Michael Saternus in 1974, enhances the livability and does not detract from the integrity of the house. The former rear wing has been moved to the south and converted to a garage. It is still sympathetic to the house.

(Raney, Tour, 1953; RCHSB, pp. 35, pl. 11c; 140-41.)

13. Blackman-Woodbury house ca. 1853, 1870's-1910 Contributing  
 W: Bl 9, Lot 13  
 Owner: A. P. Hamacher, R 1 Ev

This vernacular Gothic, steep-gabled frame house with Late Picturesque additions and trim grew in stages. The core was built for Dr. William M. Blackman by 1853. It was rented in the late 1850's to Philarmon P. Livermore, the school teacher, who later became the principal of Milton Academy. From the 1870's through the 1890's, it belonged to Charles Woodbury, Cooksville grocer and postmaster, who had sold Lot 12. He enlarged the house and added the one-story porch.

(Raney interview, Oct. 1978)

14. Blackman-Graves building ca. 1850, ca. 1870's Contributing  
 W: Bl 9, Lot 14  
 Owner: A. P. Hamacher, R 1 Ev

Now a garage, in poor condition, it was built in two stages as a one-story house in simplified Greek Revival style, with returned cornices. The older, frame wing was built ca. 1850, and owned by Dr. Blackman. It was sold to William Graves, a blacksmith, in 1865. He presumably added the wing, a new room of cream-pink, but non-Cooksville brick, in 1886 after the local brickyard had closed.

(Raney notes)

15. Parker-Newell house ca. 1848 Pivotal  
 W: Bl 1, E ½ Lots 8-10 (and west ½ vacated Webster St.)  
 Owner: Lawrence J. McDonnell, R 1 Ev

A pleasant 1½ story frame Greek Revival house, entered on the broad side by a door with lights, was built for Nahum Parker ca. 1848. The Newell family owned the house about a century, from 1857 to 1958. They had it "pebble-dashed" (stuccoed) in the 1930's and added a front dormer, the latter which the current owners intend to remove. A skylight and an attractive addition to the rear, designed by Michael Saternus, do not detract from the integrity of the house.

(Interview with McDonnell, June 9, 1979.)

16. Gunn-Breckenridge ("Breckhurst") 1852; 1952 Contributing  
 W: Bl 1, W ½ Lots 8 & 9 (house)  
 Owner: Stephen and Karen Smay, R 1 Ev

This attractive, rambling, one-story house is built around a small, 14' x 21' gabled frame house built of oak ca. 1852. In poor condition and threatened with demolition, it was moved to its present site from a block west in the 1940's. Elton Breckenridge, then an interior designer who was on the faculty of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, designed the enlargement ca. 1952 and constructed it of russet Chicago brick, which blends well with the native brick of Cooksville. He used the residence as a second home for more than 20 years. He also laid out formal gardens with attractive planting and eclectic objects which interact well with the site.

(Janesville Gazette, Aug. 13, 1968; Ev. Review, Oct. 9, 1975.)

17. Fisher-Van Buren house 1848 Pivotal  
 W: Bl 1, Lot 7; N ½ Lot 8  
 Owners: Michael Saternus and Larry Reed, R 1 Ev

This 1½ story frame Greek Revival house was probably built for his own use by John Willis Fisher, Jr., a carpenter, in 1848 and sold in the 1850's to Dr. Roswell Van Buren, a physician. Post and beam construction with some brick nogging was revealed during restoration by its present owner, an architect who has done much work in Cooksville. The horse barn on the site is contributing.

(Interview with Saternus, June 9, 1979; Raney notes)

18. Ranch house 1970's Intrusive  
 W: Bl.2, Lots 1-2  
 Owner: Carroll D. Wall, R 1 Ev (owns Lots 1-3)

This ranch house is built of a subdued red brick which blends well with the village houses, but it is set at an angle to the corner and is considered intrusive in an historic district. It occupies the approximate site of the long-gone Cooksville hotel. Its owners presently manage the general store.

19. Isaac Hoxie house ca. 1850 Contributing  
 W: Bl 2, Lot 4  
 Owner: Carroll D. Wall, R 1 Ev (owns Lots 4-6)

This 1½ story frame Greek Revival house is of historic interest for its connection with Isaac Hoxie. It was probably built for Seaver by John Fisher, his brother-in-law, ca. 1850, and bought by I.A. Hoxie in 1856. He, a carpenter like his brother, had a sash and door factory in Cooksville (1848-1861) and undoubtedly did work in the village. He also established the Evansville Review in 1866.

The house was enlarged with wings on either side, and a simple porch was added all across the front, probably in the early 20th century. It is presently rental property.

A shed to the north of the property ~~is not part of~~ the nomination. *does not contribute to* (KOC - see correction sheet rec'd 9/16/8)

(Port. & Biog. Album of Rock County, 1889, p. 390; Raney interview, Oct. 1978)

The following buildings, although by definition intrusive in the historic district; do not visually detract significantly from the overall character of the community:

20. Ranch house Intrusive  
 W: Bl 2, Lot 7  
 Owner: James McCarthy, Jr. R 1 Ev
- One story white ranch house.
21. Ranch house and concrete block one-story building ca. 1940's Intrusive  
 W: Bl 3, Lot 2 and W ½ Lot 1  
 Owner: Edwin Julseth, R 1 Ev
22. Ranch house Intrusive  
 W: Bl 3, E ½ Lot 1  
 Owner: Donald and Gloria Martin, R 1 Ev
23. Lovejoy and Chambers "speculation" house 1851-4 Contributing  
 W: Bl 3, Lot 3  
 Owner: Gordon Page, R 1 Ev

This 1½ story frame Greek Revival house is now covered with false brick asbestos siding. It was probably built by Lovejoy and Chambers, who bought this lot, as well as Lots 4-7, in 1851. It was sold in 1854 for \$500.00. It is believed that it was used as a store by Newman and Woodbury after 1858.

(Raney interview, Oct. 1978)

24. John Collins house ca. 1850 Pivotal  
 W: Bl 3, Lot 4  
 Owner: Edward E. Ortman, R 1 Ev

This handsome 1½ story vermilion brick Greek Revival house is of architectural significance for its construction. It was built ca. 1850-54, with a simple gable roof, straight lintels, and six-over-six windows. It also was probably built as a speculation property of Lovejoy and Chambers. English born John Collins, storekeeper and early postmaster, owned the house from 1854 through the 1870's.

It is now fronted with a "Doric" porch of ca. 1965, which blends well with the front door with side lights. The carport adjacent to the south, however, is less compatible.

(Raney notes.)

25. Houfe-Sturtevant house ca. 1851-54 Contributing  
 W: Bl 3, Lot 5  
 Owner: Gordon A. Starks, R 1 Ev

This two-story vernacular frame house visually terminates the north edge of the historic district. The entrance is on the long side. It is fronted with a small Late Picturesque porch, on concrete foundations. It is now covered with brown shingled siding. Lovejoy and Chambers bought the lot in 1851; they or Houfe may have built the house for speculation. Richard Houfe, known as a brickmason, sold it in 1854 for \$500. From 1862-88 it belonged to the Sturtevant family who were farmers.

(Raney Correspondence, Nov. 1978.)

26. Betsey Curtiss house ca. 1845-46 Contributing  
 C: Bl 1, Lot 3  
 Owner: Mrs. Frances Norby (owns Lot 2-5), R 1 Ev

This simple frame Greek Revival house, although now covered with aluminum siding and remodeled with a picture window, is of historic significance for its association with

early settlers. On land owned by Betsey Curtiss, a widow, it was probably built ca. 1845-46 for her and her family. She was at various times owner of the Cooksville and the Leedle mill properties; John Curtiss, her son, is credited with building the first half of the Leedle Mill in 1861. Mrs. Curtiss also owned the Champney brickyard in the 1850's. Lovejoy and Chambers owned the house from 1847 to 1851; they probably made improvements on it before they sold it for \$650. In the meantime they may have utilized this building for their store and post office.

(Abstracts; Raney notes and correspondence, Nov. 1978.)

27. Cooksville General Store ca. 1847, 1864 Pivotal  
 C: Part of Bl 2, Lot 1  
 Owner: Waucoma Hall, c/o Wayne Buss, R 5, Box 562, Stoughton, WI

The Cooksville General Store is of primary historic importance for its long association with the economic-commercial life of Cooksville. It is also of architectural interest for its association with Benjamin Hoxie, self-taught Cooksville architect. John Cook, the founder of Cooksville, may have erected a building on the site when he platted it in 1842, but the front portion of the first story of the present building may date from 1847, presumably built by Charles Smith or his brother-in-law, John W. Fisher. It was a store through the 1850's, operated by Woodbury and Seaver. In these years it was also used by the Masons of Waucoma Lodge, who bought the building in 1864. In that year it was enlarged by Benjamin Hoxie to two stories, with a simple gable roof. The Waucoma Lodge Hall is upstairs.

The present windows date from 1882; a wing to the rear was added ca. 1890. The store is fronted with an old one-story porch on concrete foundations. Little altered since the turn of the century, it remains in use as a general store, the longest in operation in the community. Cooksville has had at least one store continuously since 1845.

(Evansville Post, July 12, 1973; Raney interview, Oct. 1978.)

28. Blacksmith Shop Intrusive  
 C: Bl 2, Lot 2 (part)  
 Owner: Francis H. Hatch, R 1 Ev

This one-story dark frame building, constructed of old lumber in 1978 on the general site of the 19th century blacksmith shop, blends well with the historic buildings but is not one of them.

29. Smith-Galt house ca. 1848-49 Contributing  
 C: Bl 2, Lot 3  
 Owner: George and Eunice Mattakat

This simple 1½ story frame salt box, with its entrance on the long side, is of architectural interest for its almost unaltered simple vernacular construction. It may have been built by John Willis Fisher, Jr., the brother-in-law of Charles Smith, who owned the building by 1848. It belonged to John Galt from 1864 to 1880. It is presently unoccupied and in need of restoration.

(Raney notes, Oct. 1978.)

30. John Cook house ca. 1842 Pivotal  
 C: Bl 2, Lot 4  
 Owner: George and Eunice Mattakat, R 1 Ev

This 1½ story vernacular frame house of post and beam construction is of primary historic importance, for it was built by John Cook, village founder. Until 1888 it belonged to John Willis Fisher, Sr., a millwright, whose son may have added the one-story

wing on its north. It has been an antique shop, the Red Door, since 1958.

(Janesville Gazette, Aug. 12, 1968; interviews with Raney and Mattakat, Oct. 1978.)

31. William Porter farmhouse ca. 1855 etc. Contributing  
C: Bl 3  
Owner: Sidney Anderson, Jr. R 1 Ev

Though the land was first owned and platted by John Cook, village founder, and a Mr. Gideon Newman lived there by 1858, the house is historically significant for its long connection with William Porter (1818-93), the oldest of the three brothers who were early settlers. After going west during the California Gold Rush (1850-52), Porter "improved" the two-story frame vernacular farmhouse, which is now obscured by aluminum siding except for a Late Picturesque porch and east bay. The barn on limestone foundations, located south of the house, contributes to the nomination; the other farm buildings on the site are not part of it contributing elements. (KO'C - see corrections rec'd 9/16/80)

(Portrait and Biographical Album of Rock County, 1889, pp. 409-410)

32. Cooksville Congregational Church 1879 Pivotal  
SW corner Rock and Main Streets, NE SW S. 6; 140.25' EW x 115.5' NS  
Owner: Michael Saternus, R 1 Ev

The Cooksville Congregational Church of 1879 is of architectural significance as the work of a local architect, Benjamin Hoxie. It is also of historic interest for its connection with the life of the villagers, who were transplanted New Englanders of the first, second and third generations. Benjamin Hoxie designed the church and did the carpentry and painting; a Mr. Kelley of nearby Oregon was the mason for the limestone foundations. It was constructed of frame in a mixed style, with elements of the Italianate: tall, round-arched windows and a plastered, barrel-vaulted ceiling, and of Gothic Revival: steep gabled roof and vertical spires. Supposedly Jenkin Lloyd Jones, the famous Unitarian minister, who had preached previously in the old schoolhouse, spoke at the dedication of the church. It was first used as a church and in later years served as the town hall.

The building has been under restoration by the present owner since 1971. An early 20th century bell is now workable in the belfry, with the use of long ropes. The spires and belfry have been restored, and the building has been repainted with its 19th century color scheme of tan with brown trim.

(Rock County, 1879, p. 698; Janesville Daily Recorder, March 12, 1879; Porter, Choice Seed, p. 189; RCHSB, pp. 140-41; interview with Saternus, June 1979.)

33. Two story frame house 1941 Intrusive  
W: Bl 9, Lot 7  
Owner: Keith & Ilene Axford, R 1 Ev

This two-story vernacular frame house on concrete foundations faces east on Church Street, south of the Frank Seaver house, on the block between the square and the cemetery. Though built in 1941, it blends in proportion and materials with the historic houses of the village. However, it is not one of them.

34. Cooksville Cemetery Pivotal  
2.52 A, 244' x 415', south of Church St.  
Owner: Cooksville Cemetery Assn. c/o E. Marvin Raney, R 1 Ev

Established in 1861, this site is important historically and visually as an integral part of the community. Many early settlers' remains are buried here, including those of Dr. Isaac Porter, father of founding Porter brothers, who died of cholera almost immediately after his arrival in the village in 1854. Bodies and stones were moved





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY NAME: Cooksville Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: WISCONSIN, Rock

DATE RECEIVED: 1/25/02 DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/12/02  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 73000254

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 3/4/02 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Additional Documentation Accepted*

RECOM./CRITERIA

REVIEWER

*Edson A. Beall*

DISCIPLINE

*History*

TELEPHONE

DATE

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

Cooksville Historic District  
Town of Porter, Rock County, Wisconsin

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**Additional Documentation**

The following contributing resources are located within the boundaries of the Cooksville Historic District, listed 25 October 1973. These resources were not enumerated in the original count, but were included in the resource list of the 1980 boundary increase to the district as part of the listing of the Historical Resources of Cooksville.

**1 site:** Public Common, 1846

**7 buildings** (All of the buildings, with the exception of the Cooksville School, are located on Rock Street, between Tolles Road and Church Street):

Cooksville School, 1886, corner of Dane and Rock streets  
Seaver, John, House, ca. 1849  
Blackman-Woodbury House, ca. 1853, ca. 1870s-1910  
Blackman-Graves Building, ca. 1850, ca. 1870s  
Parker-Newell House, ca. 1848  
Gunn-Breckenridge House, 1852  
Fischer-Van Buren House, 1848

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 2

Cooksville Historic District  
Town of Porter, Rock County, Wisconsin

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X 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.)

Alicia J. Gow \_\_\_\_\_ January 24, 2002  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer - Wisconsin  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

U.S. Department of the Interior