

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name PAYNE - CRAIG RESIDENCE  
other names/site number Century Elms; Saxer, John Residence

2. Location

street & number 2200 West Memorial Drive N/A not for publication  
city, town Janesville N/A vicinity  
state Wisconsin code WI county Rock code 105 zip code 53545

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> objects
			<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official [Signature] Date May 11, 1987  
State Historic Preservation Office  
 State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. Beth Crovener 7/2/87  
 See continuation sheet.  
 determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.  
 determined not eligible for the National Register.  
 removed from the National Register.  
 other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic / Single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic / Single dwelling

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Greek Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Weatherboard

roof Metal

other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Century Elms is a finely preserved two-story hip-roofed house in the Italianate style, crowned with a glazed observatory. It enlarges an earlier gabled-roofed farmhouse and is enhanced by a richly landscaped setting of approximately 1.3 acres.

Century Elms crowns an eminence on the north side of Memorial Drive. The original farmstead of 60 acres has been subdivided and developed on all sides with post second World War ranch homes, largely screened from view by trees and hedges of honeysuckle and by the eminence of the house. Large oak trees abound in the yard, and a sweeping curved drive from Memorial Drive leads up to the veranda. A central walk from the front door is framed with hedges of privet and bayberry enclosed with sunken stone edging, broken midway by a fountain which is a replacement of an earlier 20th century fountain on the site. Privet also borders the early 20th century fence across the front. Scattered on the lawn are plantings of pine, juniper, spruce, magnolia and fruit trees; there is also a perennial garden.

Beyond the main house to the north are two outbuildings, a non-functioning windmill on a pumphouse with a jerkinhead roof and another small shed, both on concrete foundations. These small remnants of rural outbuildings are considered contributing parts of the nomination. Situated as it is with extensive lawns, large trees, hedges and curving drive, the house illustrates an Italianate villa in an appropriately rich and varied setting.

The house itself is a composite. The earliest "L" shaped rear portion (north) is Greek Revival in character with the main north-south wing two stories in height, while the east-west wing is a low one story. Both have returned cornices and narrow corner boards and are clapboard sided. Wood brackets support the eaves of the gabled roof and the windows are shuttered 6/6 double-hung sash with simple wood surrounds.

The main front portion is an Italianate style cube of two stories with a hip roof and center cupola. Wide overhanging eaves with an unadorned frieze and cornice are trimmed with regularly spaced brackets. On the roof on the east and west slopes are paired chimneys of cream brick with a corbelled chimney cap. Openings in the walls are regularly spaced, three per side east, west and south. On the east and west sides the central opening on the upper floor has been filled with clapboards, although the

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ornamental trim (projecting architraves) is unaltered. The windows are four-over-four double hung sash set in simple frames with a cornice hood. On the west facade near the south corner is a large plate glass window with leaded overlight and cornice hood. The central entry is framed by leaded sidelights and a transom set between Doric columns. The west facade has a large projecting pilastered bay with overhanging bracketed eaves, surmounted by a balustrade with corner pedestals and pommels. A wide veranda wraps around the front (south) and east elevations. Topped by a finely detailed balustrade (similar to the west bay), the porch is supported by doric columns and features denticulated trim and turned spindles.

The interior retains some Italianate features, most noticeably the winding walnut staircase in the center hall, and windows and doors crowned with cornice hoods like those on the exterior. Victorian Roman-arched fireplaces of white marble remain in the large parlor on the east side of the house and in the west den, which has a small dining room immediately behind.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

INDUSTRY

Period of Significance

1870- 1893

1927-1937

Significant Dates

1858 <sup>1</sup>

1870 <sup>2</sup>

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Payne, William

Craig, Joseph A.

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The residence is being nominated to the National Register under criteria B and C.

Century Elms is locally significant architecturally as representative of a period of construction. With the start of the 1860's an era of Italianate residential architecture began in Janesville that produced a large number of homes that reflected not only the popularity of the style but the ingenuity and imagination of local builders. Of the five large Italianate houses in the city of Janesville which retain their centrally placed observatories<sup>5</sup>, Century Elms has best retained a harmonious unity with its ample parklike setting of ca. 1.3 acres.<sup>6</sup> Historically it is significant in the community because of its association with two major industrialists of the city; industry has provided an important base for the growth of the community.<sup>7</sup>

Architecture: Janesville during the 1850's to 1870's experienced a building boom witnessed in the erection of many homes in the then popular Italianate style. "By the late 1850's Janesville was the second largest city in Wisconsin..., while the 'suburbs' ...were building up with commodious villas and numerous cottages."<sup>7</sup> The evolution of Century Elms began with the erection of a comfortable "farm homestead" by Christopher F. Arnold, a young gentleman farmer who was also joint owner of a three-story brick store in Milwaukee.<sup>8</sup> He died in 1858, soon after construction of the house, a two-story gabled block with an intersecting one-story wing both with Greek Revival returned cornices.<sup>1</sup> William Payne purchased the ten-acre farm from Arnold's widow in late 1860<sup>3</sup> and began improving the property, culminating in the addition of the large front or south portion of the house in the fashionable Italianate style by 1869-70.<sup>2</sup> Its well preserved features include the block-like design with hip roof, which culminates in the glazed observatory, and which integrated the blocks of the earlier wings; the smooth clapboard walls punctuated by tall four-over-four windows; the broad and bracketed eaves; also the west loggia. A one-story projecting bay on the west is also bracketed. Early 20th century alterations, a broad Doric-columned and balustraded veranda topped in the center of the facade by a small second-story porch, a new south entrance door and glazing at the front west parlor, are a harmonious adjunct to the building and a significant part of the nomination.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

PORTRAIT AND BIOGRAPHICAL ALBUM OF ROCK COUNTY WISCONSIN, Chicago: Acme Publishing, 1889.

THE HISTORY OF ROCK COUNTY WISCONSIN, Chicago: Western Historical Co, 1879.

Douglas N., Hartung, R., ROCK COUNTY HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS, Janesville, 1976.

Janesville Daily Gazette, various issues (see notes)

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:  
Negatives/Text-NRHP files Historic Preservation Division.

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 1.3

UTM References

A 

1	6
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3	3	12	2	6	10
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4	7	2	8	8	4	10
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 Zone Easting Northing

C 

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B 

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 Zone Easting Northing

D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 15, 16, 17 & 18 of Century Elms, an addition to Janesville Wisconsin, embracing part of the North West 1/4 of section 26 T3N, R12E.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary represent the intact portion of the Century Elms property reflecting its historic visual appearance, without inclusion of modern intrusive buildings.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Nancy Belle Douglas, Maurice Montgomery  
 organization Rock County Historical Society date March 1, 1987  
 street & number P.O. Box 896 telephone (608) 756-4509  
 city or town Janesville, state WI zip code 53563

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The landscape setting is a significant part of the over-all design, retaining essentially the same path of the curved driveway up to the front entrance as ca. 1870 and the spacious scattering of shade trees, of which may large old oaks remain.<sup>9</sup> (The elms are gone.) The stone-edged walk on a central axis, broken in the center by a circular garden, and the straight iron fence with large square posts across the front of the property were established by ca. 1915<sup>10</sup>, as were the honeysuckle hedge to the west and some of the privet and bayberry hedges, which have been extended across the front since then. The remaining 20th century outbuildings, a non-working windmill pumphouse and a frame shed, insignificant in themselves, are contributing elements to the nomination as reminders of the once rural setting, which since 1853 has been within the expansive limits of the city of Janesville.<sup>11</sup>

The now-demolished structures outside the present limits of the property, greenhouse, barns and/or a tenant farmer's house, were the greater indications that for the first ninety years of its existence this was a gentleman's farm.<sup>12</sup>

The house remained a private residence except for a four-year period as a tea-room before its purchase by the present owners in 1959,<sup>13</sup> who returned it to a residence and have maintained the basic integrity of the house.

Industry: association with locally significant persons: Two individuals of local prominence and significance in the industrial development of Janesville have been associated with Century Elms.

William Payne is associated with expansion of the textile industry in Janesville.<sup>14</sup> He came to Janesville in 1860 after retiring from a successful career in retail sales. He bought the ten acres of land which included the Greek Revival portion of the house and later extended the acreage to forty.<sup>15</sup> Payne was something of a self-made man who at the age of eleven had been thrust into the world of business to make a living for himself and his widowed mother. At thirteen he had found employment with the Meriden Britannica Co. and launched himself on a business career.<sup>16</sup> Ostensibly retired when he arrived in Janesville, by 1868 Payne, with William Cannon, W.D. Hastings and George McLean, purchased Frank Whittaker's four-story brick woolen mill at Monterey.<sup>17</sup> The venture was called Janesville Wollen Mills under the proprietorship of Payne, Hastings and Co.; Payne was president.<sup>18</sup> The mill turned out 12,000 yards of fine cloth per month.<sup>19</sup> During the various name changes over the years the corporation prospered and became one of the largest mills in the city, eventually becoming the large packaging complex which houses Panoramic Corporation.<sup>20</sup>

Joseph A. Craig is the Janesville industrialist most closely associated with bringing the Chevrolet division of General Motors to the city by 1923. His industrial activities enabled him to purchase the Payne farm in 1927. He renamed it Craigknoll; it is still the residence most closely associated with him locally and from which he expanded his agricultural and philanthropic interests.<sup>21</sup> J.A. Craig began his association with Janesville in 1892 as a salesman for the Janesville Machine Co., then the largest industry in the city engaged in the manufacture of plows and farm implements. By 1897 Craig had been selected by A.P. Lovejoy, chairman of the board, to become general manager of the company and to coordinate its various manufactures

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and sales. The General Motors Corp., looking to the farm implement field, took over the farm equipment division of the Janesville Machine Co. and the California-based Samson Co., consolidating them as General Motors Samson Tractor Co. on March 15, 1918 under Craig's leadership as president. In 1923, again under Craig's leadership, the Chevrolet division of General Motors Corp. took over the operation of the Samson Tractor Co., beginning in Janesville the largest manufacturing interest in the city. Ostensibly retired when he purchased Craignoll, he expanded the land to 60 acres and began the importing and raising there of purebred champion Jersey cattle.<sup>22</sup> In 1929 the "old" Janesville Fairgrounds Assn. was in financial straits, and Craig purchased the fairgrounds, founded the Rock County Fair and Livestock Assn., becoming its first president, and introduced 4-H club work to the county. In 1937 he gave approximately half of the fairgrounds to the Rock County 4-H clubs and of the profits from subdividing the rest, he created a revolving trust fund for the education of rural youth. Also, near the end of his life in 1953, Craig purchased the home of A.P. Lovejoy (NRHP 1980), who had given him his start as general manager of Janesville Machine Co. in 1897, and presented it to the Janesville Y.W.C.A. for its headquarters. With generous monetary contributions he enabled the "[Y]" to renovate and restore the house, preserving one of the historic landmarks of the community for future generations.<sup>23</sup> The Century Elms property is clearly associated with two local personalities who had tremendous impact on the industrial growth and economic development of the community. Janesville throughout its history, from 19th century flour milling community to 20th century automobile manufacturing center, has been a dynamic center of industrial development in the state. During the past 125 years Janesville has been able to retain a highly acknowledged leadership role in manufacturing output in the region. Among the better known of Janesville industrial pursuits have been lumber production, textile manufacturing, tobacco, agricultural machinery and carriage production and automobile manufacturing. William Payne and Joseph Craig are two of many individuals whose life efforts in Janesville have carried its reputation forward. Century Elms is the most widely recognized resource associated with both individuals.

1. City of Janesville tax roll, 1856-57, 1858.
2. City of Janesville tax roll, 1868, 1869, 1870.
3. William Payne's acquisition of the site, 1860; abstract of title.
4. With the donation of the land of the present Rock County 4-H fairgrounds on Craig Avenue on the east side of Janesville.
5. The others are the Tallman house, 440 N. Jackson (NRHP); the Jackman-Hough house, 55 S. Atwood, part of the Courthouse Hill historic district (NRHP); the Dr. Judd house at 1005 Sutherland, the city's first hospital; and the greatly remodeled 255 S. Jackson. Douglas and Hartung, Rock County Historic Sites and Buildings, pp. 206,213,216,217; illus. pp. 47,49.
6. The grounds of 55 S. Atwood and 255 S. Jackson are so greatly shrunken as to be insignificant. The grounds of the Tallman Restorations are benefitting from restorative planting, yet the site is altered by the incorporation of the Greek revival "Stone House." Spacious wooded lawns are still part of 1005 Sutherland and also such fine Italianate houses as the Richardson-Berg house at 429 Prospect and the Lappin-Gessert house at 404 St. Lawrence (Court House Hill historic district), yet the planting at Century Elms is more complete on a larger site. Ibid., pp. 216,217; illus. pp. 47,49.

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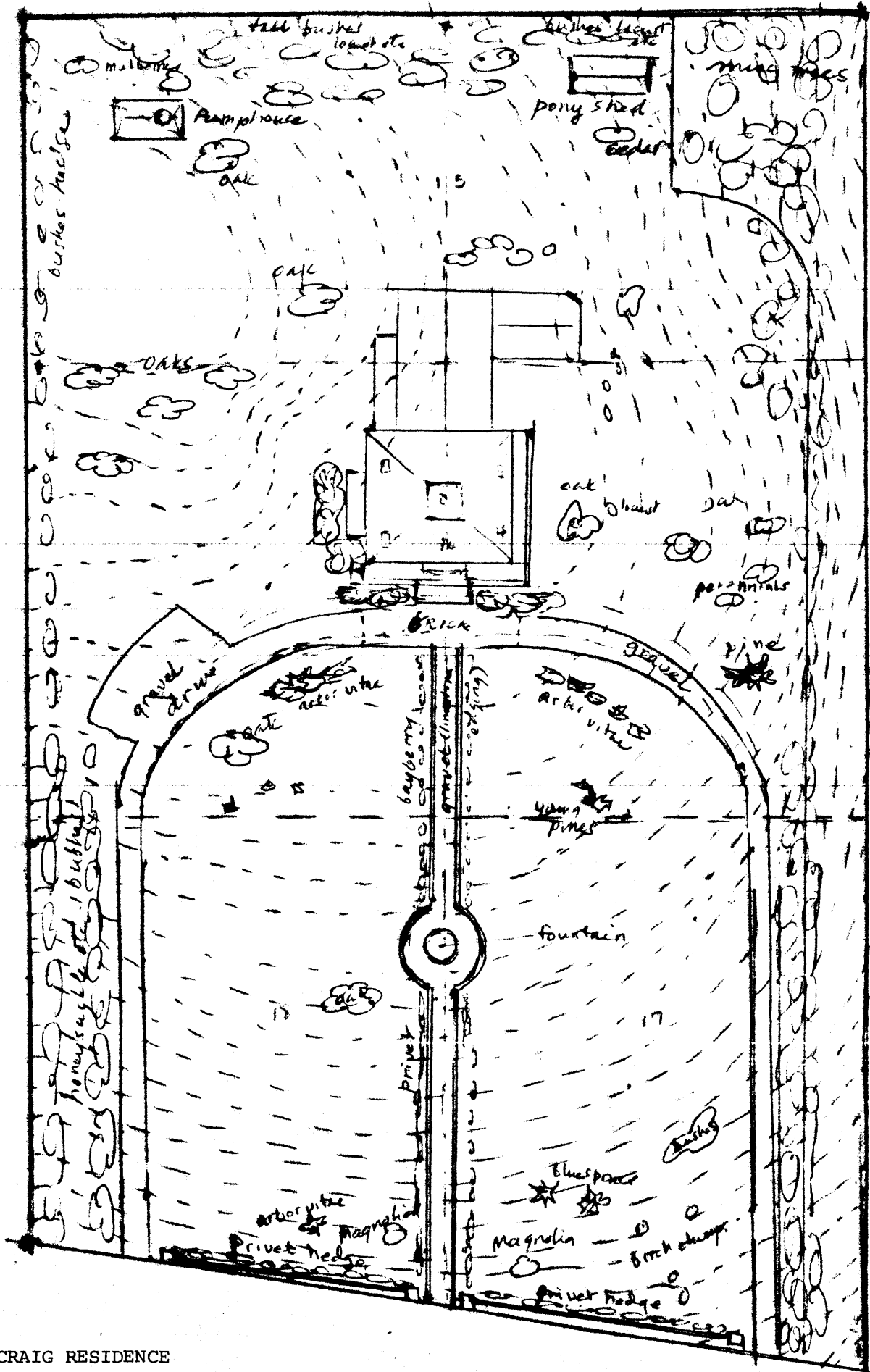
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7. Ibid., p. 202.
8. Abstract of title; Rock County probate records, C.F. Arnold file, inventory.
9. Photograph, Wilkins Studio, Oshkosh, dated by clothing to ca. 1870.
10. Photograph, Wilkins Studio, Oshkosh, dated by clothing to ca. 1915.
11. Douglas and Hartung, Op. cit., p. 206.
12. Abstract of title; Janesville city directories, *passim*; interview with Isabel Craig, daughter-in-law of J.A. Craig, Oct. 1986. Other owners were: Oscar D. Rowe, Rock County registrar of deeds, 1893-1901; James and Louise Page of Janesville, 1901-13; Edgar A. and Carolyn Potter and daughter, Chicago, who used it largely as a summer residence, 1913-27.
13. Genevieve Bowers, abstract of title; Janesville Daily Gazette, July 10, 1959 and January 27, 1968.
14. For other textile mills in Janesville, see Janesville Cotton Mill, 1874 (N.R.H.P.), Rock River Manufacturing, etc. Two factories in the city now make high pile fabrics.
15. Portrait and Biographical Album of Rock County Wisconsin, 1889, p. 550 abstract of title.
16. Ibid., p. 549.
17. The History of Rock County Wisconsin, 1879, p. 564.
18. Portrait..., p. 550.
19. History..., p. 564.
20. "Pre-Civil War building razed," Janesville Daily Gazette, Nov. 30, 1968; Douglas and Hartung, Op. cit., p. 202.
21. Craig lived from ca. 1910-27 at 603 E. Court Street, Court House Hill historic district, Historic Janesville, Courthouse Park Historic District, Janesville, 1982, p. 63, No. 8. His final Janesville residence was a lannon stone house at 205 S. Division Street. Interview with Isabel Craig, Feb. 1987; Janesville city directories, *passim*.
22. City of Janesville tax rolls, 1930's; Janesville Daily Gazette, Sept. 11, 1945.
23. Material for this section on J.A. Craig is taken from "J.A. Craig dies at 91: leader in many fields," Janesville Daily Gazette, Dec. 31, 1958. In honor of his work with the 4-H movement, a Craig Room was dedicated at the National 4-H Club Foundation building, 7100 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D.C. 1968 (RCHS files).





PAYNE-CRAIG RESIDENCE  
Janesville, WI