United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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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   Orfordville Depot

other names/site number   Milwaukee Road railroad station;
        Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul railroad depot

2. Location

street & number   Beloit street   n/a not for publication

city, town   Orfordville   n/a vicinity

state   Wisconsin   code   WI   county   Rock   code   105   zip code   53576

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property

Ownership of Property
- [ ] private
- [ ] public-local
- [x] public-State
- [ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
- [x] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
        none

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 [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. [ ] See continuation sheet.

X _____   3/23/88
Signature of certifying official   Date
    State Historic Preservation Officer- WI
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:
- [x] entered in the National Register.
  - [ ] 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:) _____

_____   Entered in the
                    National Register   10/13/88

_____   _____
Signature of the Keeper   Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation - Rail related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Other: storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian - Stick

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Limestone

walls Weatherboard

roof Asphalt - composition

other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Orfordville is a small rural village of approximately 1,400 residents located in Rock County, south central Wisconsin and within commuting distance of Beloit and Janesville Wisconsin. Once primarily an agriculturally based community, Orfordville now has a mixed service and light industry based economy.

The Orfordville depot is a single story, wood frame, side gabled building standing near the center of downtown Orfordville next to a small park and the city library. The architectural style is predominantly Stick with some Italianate influence. The depot served as the passenger and freight station for the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway Co. from 1886 to July 19, 1976, at which time it was closed. Construction began on the present railroad depot on April 30, 1886 after the original 1856 depot was destroyed by fire on April 15, 1886 (Broadhead Independent, April 16, 1886). The Broadhead Independent also stated that "It will stand on the site of the old one and will be 22 x 72 1/2 feet, and furnished, no doubt, with 'all the modern improvements'". The original site for the 1886 depot was located within the boundaries of Center and Beloit Street and in 1914 was moved 60' to the west at the request of the community in order to extend Center street.

The building today is in good condition and relatively unaltered. Sitting on a limestone pier foundation, the 22'x 72' wood frame structure is longitudinally oriented east and west, parallel with the railroad tracks. The exterior walls are sided with 6" clapboards and are about 15' in height from the ground line up to the top plate and 21' up to the peaks. The medium pitched gabled roof has approx. 4' overhanging eaves with decorative braces and brackets every 6' and decorative trusses in the apex of the gables. Originally, finials adorned the roof peaks but have since been removed and the exterior roofing material now consists of asphalt shingles. All the windows and doors have bracketed crowns. The front facade faces north with a typical trackside bay for the station master located off center to the left side. Centered in this 12' wide bay are two, 6 over 6, double

X See continuation sheet

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Orfordville, Rock County, Wisconsin

hung windows and within each side wall of the bay are one, 2 over 2, double hung window allowing the station master a view down the tracks. To the left of this bay is the passenger waiting room with a paneled door with transom lites and another 6 over 6 double hung window. Flanking the bay on the right is a double paneled door with transom lites serving as the entrance to the baggage room. A 6' wide, sliding, paneled door providing exterior access to the freight room occupies the right third of the front elevation. The elevation facing east has two equally spaced double hung windows identical to the other 6 over 6. The peak has a decorative truss and a vintage sign for Orfordville hangs above the windows. The south elevation is rather simple with a door on the right leading to the ticket office and flanked by another 6 over 6 window and on the left another sliding door similar to the one in the north elevation. The west elevation has a third 6' sliding paneled door centered in the wall with a fixed, 2 over 2 window directly above it and another sign above that. The peak is not adorned with a decorative truss.

The interior of the depot is laid out from east to west with the passenger waiting room on the east end, the ticket office adjacent to the waiting room, then the baggage room and freight room on the west end. The interior of the waiting room has 4 1/4" wide hardwood flooring and 3 1/4" wide wainscotting walls and ceilings. Between the waiting room and the ticket office is a ticket window and the only access to the passenger room is through the exterior door. Entrance to the ticket office is through the rear door or through the baggage room. The ticket office also has painted wainscotting on the walls and ceilings and 1 3/8" wide hardwood flooring. The original desk in the bay and the cupboards are in excellent shape. Between the ticket office and freight room and one step down is the 11'x14' baggage room. The flooring in the baggage and freight rooms are 10" wide wood planks and the interior walls are covered with 1" by 8" horizontal boards. Wall studs, 1 7/8" by 8" and 16" on center, can be seen from within the 36'x20' freight room above the 6'-6" high horizontal boards. Three 6' wide sliding paneled doors provide access for freight from three directions. What appears to be the original floor scale is located in the southeast corner.

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According to photographs and Sanbourn maps, the Depot originally had a platform extending around the perimeter on all four sides with a ramp on the northeast side, but portions of this platform were subsequently removed between 1914 and 1919, and again prior to 1929. There also was a canopy, approx. 22 feet square, on the West side which, according to Milwaukee Road records in Chicago, was removed on July 19, 1938 (John Gruber, per com.)

The removal of the platform and canopy has had a minor impact on the historic appearance of the depot, perhaps leaving it a bit less integrated with the environment. However, the fine architectural and functional integrity of the depot has been little altered, especially considering that these changes took place during the historic period.

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

Transportation

Period of Significance
1886

1886 - 1938 [3]

Significant Dates
April 16, 1886 [1]
1914 [2]

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown

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

The Orfordville Depot is locally significant under criterion A for the vital contribution that the railroad had in the development and growth of the community during the 19th and 20th centuries. Architecturally, the depot is locally significant, typifying a distinctive and functional style common to many small, wood frame railroad stations for that time.

Historical Background

The first railroad company to construct a line in Wisconsin was the Milwaukee & Waukesha, charted in 1847. In 1851 the same company, but with the new name Milwaukee & Mississippi, started the first railroad line west into the interior of Wisconsin from Milwaukee, and by 1854 extended to Janesville and Madison.[4] By 1857 the railroad had reached Monroe and Orfordville on a southern route and Prairie du Chien on a more northerly route.[5]

The ownership of the depot and rail changed hands from the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad to the Milwaukee & Prairie du Chien Railway Company on January 18, 1861. On Feb. 15, 1868 it was again sold to the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad and on Feb. 11, 1874 the name was changed to the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway Company.[6] In July 19, 1976 the depot was retired from service and sold to the State of Wisconsin in 1980. The Pecotonica Rail Commission bought the depot in 1981 and the Department of Transportation currently administers the railroad right of way.[7]

Transportation

The importance of the railroad to the growth of Orfordville is underscored by the fact that the village was platted in 1855 by J.T. Dodge when it was known that the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad would be routed through the village. The railroad depot was often one

☒ See continuation sheet

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of the first structures to be built in a preplanned town and the most important because it was the link to the outside world and provided a focus for the community. The first depot was built in 1856 and the railroad completed in 1857.[8] The present Orfordville Depot was built in 1886 when the earlier building was destroyed by fire.[9]

Julian Cavalier remarks on how important the railroad station was to the communities "Rural settlements saw the station as their primary link with the rest of the world. The station offered instant communication and news through its telegraph wire, and brought the thrill of a traveling circus or a one-night-stand theatrical. Indeed, practically everyone and everything arriving in town from distance came by way of the railroad station".[10]

The presence of the railroad and a depot provided a transportation link to larger commerical centers like Chicago and enabled Orfordville to establish agricultural markets like tobacco. At one time the tobacco industry nearly supported the town, employing 110 people with four warehouses and two cigar factories.[11]

In earlier days, before the advent of the telephone and television, centers of transportation like the depot often became the centers for the exchange of news and ideas. The Brodhead Independent, Jan 18, 1884 in Orfordville items has a very revealing comment, "It is hard to measure the amount of influence for good, or evil, which that old Depot of ours exerts over the community here. Be its influence good or bad, it is certainly a most potent factor in the education of the rising generation. There the dignity and intelligence of the town assemble around the coal-fire in the waiting-room, to discuss philosophy, religion, politics and all the current topics of the day, while in the inner room, in peaceful seclusion from the rest of the world and their daddies in the outer room, Young America is quietly discussing the merits of a game of euchre. From that center emanate law, the odor of home-raised tobacco, gospel, and carefully assorted profanity."[12]

The founding of the village of Orfordville, Wisconsin and it's subsequent history is intimately tied to the establishment and growth of the railroad service in southern Wisconsin. The railroad Depot in Orfordville is a reminder of this era and, more than any other surviving structure, symbolizes the significance of the railroad's influence in the town's growth and identity. During the period of significance, from 1886 to 1938, the Orfordville Depot served as the major transportation hub for Orfordville and the surrounding area and

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was an essential element in the communities economic development. The Depot served as a conduit for the export of raw materials, most notably tobacco, and the import of finished goods from larger cities. As the major "people mover" of its time, the Orfordville Depot was a de facto community center and social center for the community. It retains a high degree of integrity and is a notable local landmark in this small community.

Architecture

The Orfordville Depot is a well preserved example of a typical combination of functional design and vernacular Victorian style common to railroad architecture in the late 19th century. The Depot is neither unique in its architecture as far as depots go nor grand in its scale but rather is representative of many depots once found in small towns in southern Wisconsin as well as the greater Midwest region. Functional requirements for handling freight, passengers and baggage as well as the need to present an appropriate community image to travellers were incorporated into the designs of stations, producing architectural forms unique to railroad structures. Railroad station architecture varied widely in its style and size but had a common ground in it's functionality. The stations included a waiting room or rooms, ticket office, freight room, baggage room, restrooms, platform, and the roof that protected people waiting outside. Flattering styles were used to express the status of the railroad and the communities during the period of prosperity in the late 1800's.

The asymmetry of the layout of the Depot with the bay off to one side and the eclectic blending of decorative styles characterizes this building as late Victorian. Bracketed crowns embellishing the windows and paneled doors, the ornamental braces and brackets under the eaves of the roof and the accentuated facia molding impart an Italianate flavor to the design. In combination with the elaborate gable end trusses the style can be considered late Victorian - Stick. This style reflects a blending of Italianate and Stick Victorian styles with utilitarian design producing a simple yet elegantly handcrafted building.

Very similar clapboard sided wood frame depots with overhanging eaves supported by braces and decorative gable-end trusses were found at one time around southern Wisconsin but these examples are fast disappearing or falling into disrepair. John Vogel (1976) in his study of railroad depots in southern Wisconsin reports that there once

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were 180 depots but by 1976 only 75 remained. When compared to other extant depots on the Milwaukee and Mississippi line in the area, the Orfordville Depot is fairly unique in representing a small, well preserved, wood frame passenger-freight depot. The Brodhead Depot (NRHP 1984), 6 miles away, is constructed from stone; the Janesville Depot, 507 Laurel St. in Look West Historic District (NRHP 1987), is constructed with brick, is larger and has been altered; in Monroe, only the freight Depot remains, determined eligible in 1977; and the Browntown Depot was demolished in 1969.

The Orfordville Depot is locally significant as a representative example of late 19th century Depot design. While its form is functional and utilitarian, the style reflects the eclecticism typical of the late Victorian period. The Depot retains a notable degree of integrity, including original siding, fenestration and interior features. Also of note is the excellent condition of the exterior details such as the braces and molding. Not only do the large and grand stations need to be preserved but so do the stations like the one at Orfordville that represent the many smaller communities around the country that were intimately linked to the railroads for their growth and economy.

Criteria Considerations

The relocation of the Depot 60' to the west in 1914 in order to extend Center street was over such a short distance and done in an historical period that it did not adversely effect the buildings historical setting and siting.[13] The depot retained it's original orientation to the tracks and continued to serve as the communities central rail facility.

1.Brodhead Independent, April 16, 1886.

2.Orfordville Village Board minutes, June 26, 1914.

3.This period corresponds to the time of construction for the Depot up to the 50 year rule for historic consideration. 1938 is also considered to be around the time that the railroads began to significantly diminish in influence according to Julian Cavalier, North American Railroad Stations, 1979.

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4. Barbara Wyatt, ed. 1986. <u>Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin.</u> Vol2, Transportation Section, p. 5-1.

5. Daniel Lanz. 1985. <u>Railroads of Southern & Southwestern Wisconsin.</u>

6. Ibid.

7. Personal communication with Dennis Black, Wisconsin Dept. of Transportation and John Gruber, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

8. <u>Orfordville Journal</u>, August 30, 1939.

9. <u>Brodhead Independent</u>, April 16, 1886.

10. Julian Cavalier, 1979. <u>North American Railroad Stations.</u>

11. <u>Orfordville Journal</u>, August 30, 1939.

12. <u>Brodhead Independent</u>, Jan 18, 1884.

13. <u>Orfordville Village Board minutes</u>. June 26, 1914.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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:
_____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property __less than one acre_____

UTM References
A |1,6| |3|1,4|9,8,5| |4,7|2,1|7,8,0| B |_,_| |_,_,_,_,_| |_,_,_,_,_,_|
  Zone Easting   Northing   Zone Easting   Northing
C |_,_| |_,_,_,_,_| |_,_,_,_,_,_| D |_,_| |_,_,_,_,_| |_,_,_,_,_,_|

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

☒ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

☒ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title _Tom McClintock Landscape Architecture student - U.W. Madison_
organization _____ date _June 20, 1988_
street & number _1329 Crowley ave_ telephone _(608) 249-0619_
city or town _Madison_ state _Wisconsin_ zip code _53704_

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Major Bibliographical References

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    1886. Brodhead, Wisconsin.

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    Barnes and Co., Inc., Cranbury, New Jersey.

Lanz, Daniel J. 1985. Railroads of Southern & Southwestern
    Wisconsin. Daniel J. Lanz, Monroe, Wisconsin.

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Orfordville Village Board minutes. September 26, 1913; June 26,
1914.   Orfordville, Wisconsin.

Sanborn-Perris Maps of Orfordville, Wisconsin for 1894, 1904, 1919 and
1924. State Historical Society. Madison, Wisconsin.

Vogel, John N. 1976. The Railroad Depot in Southeastern   Wisconsin.
Independent Study - 699. University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee.

Wyatt, Barbara, ed. 1986. Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin.
Vol. 2, Transportation Section, p.p. 5-1 to 6-8. State Historical
Society. Madison, Wi.

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Verbal Boundery Description

Starting at a point where the northern set of railroad tracks cross the west curbline for Center Street, then Southeast along that curbline approximately 45 feet to a point where the southern set of tracks cross said line, then West along south railroad tracks 100 feet, then north to northern set of tracks and then East along said tracks to point of begining.

Boundary Justification

Since the Wisconsin Department of Transportation owns the railroad right of way and the Pecatonica Railway Commission owns the Depot it seems appropriate to only include the building and a parcel in the immediate proximity in the nomination.

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Orfordville Depot
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<u>Ownership</u>

Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Madison, Wisconsin
(owns the right of way)

Pecatonica Rail Commission
426 Karmann Library
Platville, Wisconsin 53813
(owns the building)

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Figure 1

North

WAITING
ROOM

TICKET
OFFICE

DESK

BAGGAGE

FREIGHT

22'-6"

72'
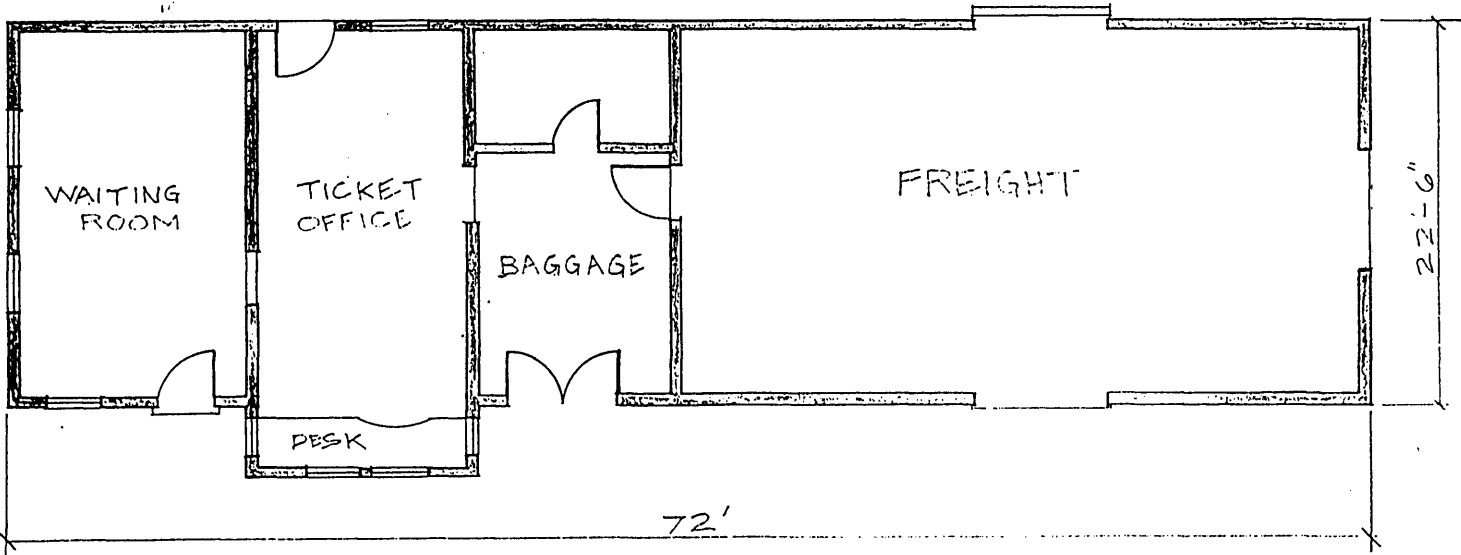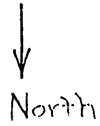
ORFORDVILLE DEPOT   PLAN VIEW
SCALE 3/32" = 1'-0"

73'

x 1

Cigar Mfy. x

2½

302

303

ENNIS HOTEL.

Confec. & Gro.

304 305 306

Gen'l. S. x

big Gen'l S.

307

Harn.Sh. POST OFF. TR. CL.

308

Barber. x

309

1½

O. B. O.

310

Gen'l. S. x

M. Hoo

311 312

24

125

BELOIT

60'

110

111

x 1

Vac. S.

2

313

W. Ho

314 315 316 317

99'

329 330

x 1 Z

331 332 333 339

x Mill.

x B. & S.

2 Z

x 2

x 1

FOUNDATION.

Hardw.

Coop. Sh.

6

50 40 30 20 10 0
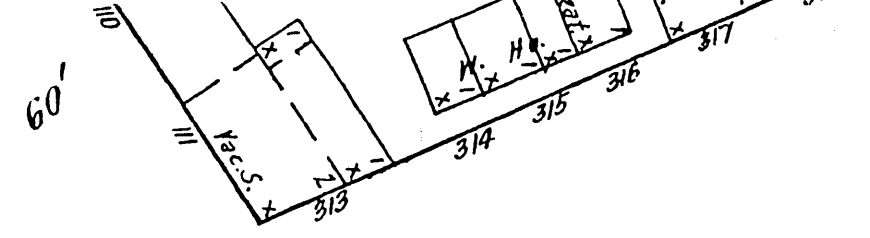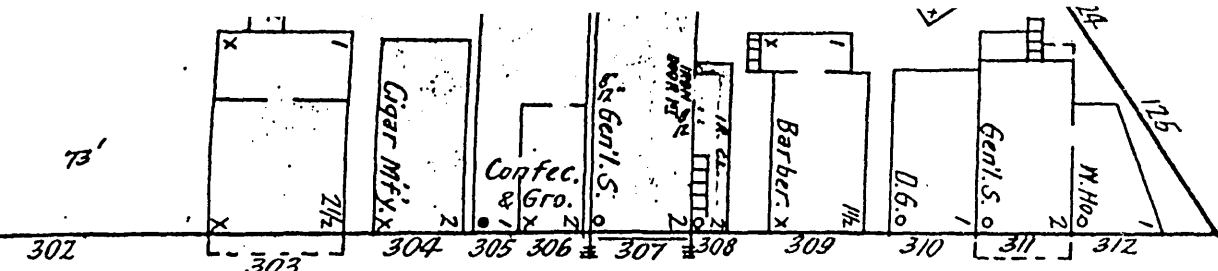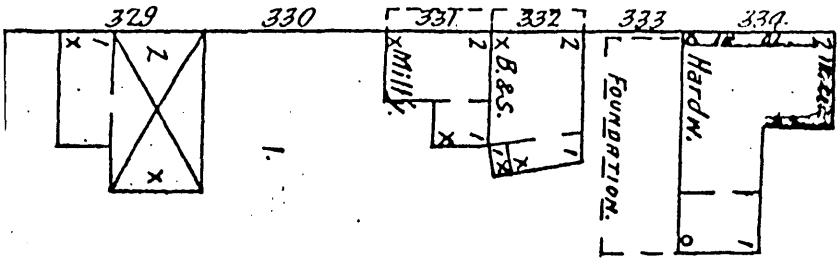
Scale of Feet.

50

100

150

C. M. & ST.

ORFORDVILLE STATION.
C. M. & ST. P. R. R.

x

Lumber.

BRITTINGHAM AND HICKSON,
Lumber Yard.

Lumber.

Lumber.

Lumber.

C. Off.

Lumber Shed.

x D.

Z

x x

x 1

HOTEL (FEDERS)

331

332

333

334 335

336

337

338

339

310 311 312

125

Gen'l S.

Bank 28'

Gen'l S. 28'

SHED

POST OFFICE

Meat

313 314 315 316 317

D 2

D

2

(W.C.Y.) d.w. yard

WARE Ho.

(Hardware) WARE Ho.

Cobbler.

FIRE DEPT.

CITY HALL & FIRE DEPT. H&L TRUCK & BR. & 2 EXT'G'RS. CHEM. & 2 GAL. CHEM.

BELL TOWER

7

CHICAGO MILWAUKEE & ST. P

340

341

6

C. M. & St. P. R.R.
PASSENGER STATION.

PLATFORM.

LUMBER SHED.

CEMENT WARE Ho.

JOHN SOULMAN.
LEAF TOBACCO WARE Ho.

BRITTINGHAM & HIXON LUMBER CO.

LUMBER SHED.

AUTO.

LUMBER SHED.

SALT.

COAL Ho.

LUMBER SHED.

OFF.

SCALE.

66'

A

C

P O

S

E

66'

N O

66'

110 TO 2 STY. FR. D.

BELOIT

99'

99'

OPERA Ho.

SAL
NO

76 TO 2 STY. FR. D.

D

8 20 21

LUTHE
CHU
HEIGHT: I
LIGHTS
20 TO I

Orfordville Depot
Orfordville, Rock Co., WI
Figure 3
Sanborn-perris 1919