OMB No. 10024-0018

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name __Redkey Historic District__

other names/site number __075-528-56000__

2. Location

street & number __See continuation sheet__   N/A not for publication

city or town __Redkey__   N/A vicinity

state __Indiana__ code __IN__ county __Jay__ code __075__ zip code __47373__

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

_____   7-20-92
Signature of certifying official/Title   Date

__Indiana Department of Natural Resources__
State of 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 certifying official/Title   Date

_____
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☑ entered in the National Register.
  ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the
  National Register
  ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the
  National Register.
☐ removed from the National
  Register.
☐ other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper   Entered in the National Register Date of Action

_____   9/17/92

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
- ☒ public-local
- ☐ public-State
- ☒ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
- ☒ district
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
25	5	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
25	5	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE: department store

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

GOVERNMENT: city hall

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

GOVERNMENT: city hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Romanesque Revival

Classical Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls BRICK

STONE

roof ASPHALT

other GLASS

METAL: Cast iron

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

[X] **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

[ ] **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

[X] **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

[ ] **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

[ ] **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

[ ] **B** removed from its original location.

[ ] **C** a birthplace or grave.

[ ] **D** a cemetery.

[ ] **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

[ ] **F** a commemorative property.

[ ] **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Period of Significance

1888 - c.1935

_____

_____

Significant Dates

NA

_____

_____

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

_____

Cultural Affiliation

NA

_____

_____

Architect/Builder

Sanders, Charles; Taylor and

Company

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibilography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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:

[X] State Historic Preservation Office
[ ] Other State agency
[ ] Federal agency
[ ] Local government
[ ] University
[ ] Other
Name of repository:

Indiana Historic Sites and
Structures Inventory

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ___7.5___

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

1 | 1,6 | 6,5,6,8,1,0 | 4,4,6,8,0,7,0 |
    Zone   Easting   Northing

2 | 1,6 | 6,5,7,2,0,0 | 4,4,6,8,0,8,0 |

3 | 1,6 | 6,5,7,2,0,0 | 4,4,6,8,0,8,0 |
    Zone   Easting   Northing

4 | 1,6 | 6,5,6,8,3,0 | 4,4,6,7,9,0,0 |

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title ___Laura Thayer, Historic Preservation Consultant for___

organization ___Historic Redkey, Ind.___   date ___February 28, 1992___

street & number ___3905 N. 500 W.___   telephone ___812/372-6806___

city or town ___Columbus___   state ___IN___   zip code ___47201___

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner
(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____   telephone _____

city or town _____   state _____   zip code _____

Roughly, High Street between Oak and Meridian Streets

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The Redkey Historic District is located in Redkey,
Indiana, in southwestern Jay County, in Richland Township.
The terrain of the township is generally flat. There are
two small towns in the township: Redkey, which in 1980
had a population of 1,537, and Dunkirk, which had a
population of 3,180. The county is in an agriculturally
rich area of Indiana. State Road 67 runs through Redkey
north of the historic district. State Road 1 runs through
the district on Meridian Street. There are two railroads
tracks through Redkey. These intersect just south of the
district.

The Redkey Historic District comprises most of the
historic commercial area of the town. It runs along High
Street, roughly between Oak and Meridian Streets. There
are a total of 30 buildings in the district. Three of
these were built after the period of significance and do
not contribute to the district's character. These are the
Masonic Building, built in 1986 and located on the
northeast corner of High and Oak Streets (left in photo
13); the GTE Building, built about 1960 and located at 120
W. High Street; and the U.S. Post Office, built in 1959
and located on the southeast corner of High and Oak
Streets (right in photo 14). Two historic buildings have
been altered to the extent that they do not contribute to
the district's character. These are the Jones Mortuary
Buildings located at 105 and 109 S. Meridian (right in
photo 3).

All but one of the historic buildings were built for
commercial uses. The exception is the City Building,
built in 1905, and located on the northwest corner of High
and Oak Streets. Historically, most of the commercial
buildings were stores, such as grocery stores, clothing
stores, meat markets, drug stores, jewelry stores, cigar
stores, and hardware stores. Two longtime store were
Appenzeller's Department Store, which occupied the
building at 101 W. High Street (photo 8) from 1906 to
1977; and Williamson Brothers Hardware Store, located in
the building at 119-123 W. High Street (photo 12) from
about 1905 to about 1930.

There are two buildings which housed banks: the K of P
Building (photo 4), built in 1911 and located at 102-104
S. Meridian Street, which housed the Union State Bank in

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the northeast corner; and the Farmers and Merchants First
National Bank Building (right in photo 10), built about
1910 and located at 102 W. High Street. At least two
buildings were hotels: the building located at 120-122 W.
High Street (fourth from left in photo 13), which housed
the Rees Hotel, built about 1890 and remodeled in 1910 for
use by the Masonic lodge; and the Gray Hotel (photo 5),
built in 1912 and located at 2-10 W. High Street. Several
commercial buildings had lodge halls on the second floors.
Among these were the I.O.O.F. Building (left in photo 9),
built about 1895 and located at 24-26 W. High Street; and
the K of P Building (photo 4). There were also
restaurants, such as one in the building, built about 1900
and located at 15-17 W. High Street (photo 6); and
garages, such as one, built about 1920, located at 110 W.
High Street. Many of the buildings had second story
offices for insurance companies, doctors, dentists, and
attorneys.

The buildings in the district are one to two stories high.
Most are brick. A few are concrete block. Although many
of the buildings are modest in character, there are number
of good examples of architectural styles. Among these are
several structures designed in the Romanesque Revival
style: the City Building (photo 15); the I.O.O.F.
Building (left in photo 9), and a commercial building,
built in 1892, and located at 101 S. Meridian Street (left
in photo 3). Examples of the Italianate style include the
Cultice-Mann Block, built in 1891, and located at 106-108
W. High Street (left in photo 10); and the Brown and Ellis
Block, built in 1888 and located at 45 S. Meridian Street
(photo 2). Among other styles represented in the district
are Neoclassical, in the Farmers and Merchants First
National Bank (right in photo 10); and Arts and Crafts, in
the Gray Hotel (photo 5).

The buildings were constructed between 1888, when the
Brown-Ellis Block (photo 2) was built, and about 1935,
when the Red Keychen Cafe was built (right in photo 12).
It is possible that some buildings may date from an
earlier time, but were remodeled. There are few buildings
in the district which date from before 1890. The town was
developed prior to that date, but several fires destroyed
most of the early commercial buildings.

The district generally has a high degree of integrity,

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with few alterations to the existing historic buildings.
A distinctive feature of the district is the large number
of store fronts which retain their original appearance.
Examples include the storefronts of the Gray Hotel (photo
5), Appenzeller's Department Store (photo 8), and the
Theime Block at 130 W. High Street (second from left in
photo 13).

Following are descriptions of representative buildings.

City Building, northwest corner of Oak and High Streets,
1905 (photo 15). The City Building is an outstanding
local example of the Romanesque Revival style. It is a
two story brick building, trimmed in Bedford limestone,
with a four story, square corner tower. The main facade,
which faces High Street, has two large garage doors on the
first level. Originally at this level, there were round
arched door openings similar to the windows on the second
floor. On the second level of this facade, and on the two
street sides of the tower, are round arched window
openings with stepped, stone window heads and stone sills.
Windows are double hung with one light in each sash, with
round arched transoms. Above the windows of the facade,
and wrapping around the tower, is a band of decorative
brick work with a stone band above. There are brick
pilasters at the corners of the main facade and at the
corners of the tower. There is a rounded parapet in the
center of the main facade, and stone coping at the top of
the facade. At the third level of the tower is a vented,
round-arched opening with a head like those on the second
level. Above this are two bands of decorative brickwork
separated by a stone band. There is a large clock, the
original Seth-Thomas clock which was installed in 1909, in
the fourth level of the tower. The tower has a pyramidal
roof and modillions under the eaves. The east facade of
the building is comparatively plain, with flat-arched
openings and plain stone sills and lintels. There is a
dentiled cornice on this facade. The building has
one-story brick additions on the rear and on the west
side. It is in good condition.

This building has continuously been used for town
government purposes since it was completed in 1905. The
contractor was Charles L. Sanders, who built the structure
for a cost of $3,287. The tower was originally shorter.

It was rebuilt in 1909 to accommodate the clock.

Cultice-Mann Block, 106-108 W. High Street, 1891 (left in photo 10). The Cultice-Mann Block is a two story, Italianate style, brick building with a flat roof. It has a four-bay main facade, separated into two stores, each two bays wide. The east cast-iron storefront is nearly intact, with an entry in the center and display windows on each side. Transoms above the door and windows have been covered. The west storefront retains some of its cast-iron elements, but the doors and window openings have been altered. A cast-iron cornice extends the width of the facade above the two storefronts. On the second story, a brick pier divides the two stores. There is also a brick pier at each end of the building. Windows are wood, double hung with one light in each sash. There are cast-iron window heads. A cast-iron cornice extends across the top of the building. The building is in fair condition.

Cultice was a merchant for many years on High Street. An earlier Cultice Building was located on this site but burned in an 1890 fire.

Farmers and Merchants First National Bank, 102 W. High Street, c. 1910 (right in photo 10). The bank is a one-story, Neoclassical style, brick building with a raised basement. It originally had a flat roof. A gabled structure has been built over the building as a temporary roof. The main facade is three bays wide. The entry is in the center. It is reached by a set of stone steps, and has wooden double doors with a multi-light transom. There is a brick portico on the entry bay, supported by stone columns. On each side of the entry is a double hung, wood window with a multi-light transom. The openings have stone sills. The building has stone elements, including the base, water table, column capitals, banding, and coping. The building is in poor condition.

This building was built to house Redkey's second bank.

I.O.O.F. Building, 24-28 W. High Street, c. 1895 (left in photo 9). This is a two-story brick building with a flat roof. The main facade is four bays wide. The building is divided into two parts. The storefronts have been

altered, but retain cast iron columns and cornice. The
building is located on the northeast corner of Union and
High. On the west half, elements of the facade wrap
around to the side of the building. The entry for this
half of the building is located in a 45 degree tangent.
The second story has large, round arched windows, which
have been boarded up. The upper half of the facade has
decorative brickwork and battlements which suggest a
castle. A Mail Pouch sign on the east side of the
building was restored in the 1980s. The building is in
fair condition.

This building had stores on the ground floor and lodge
rooms on the second floor.

Gray Hotel, northwest corner of High and Meridian Streets,
1912 (photo 5). The Gray Hotel is a two-story, Arts and
Crafts style, brick building with a flat roof. The
building has several wood storefronts, five facing on High
Street, and two on Meridian Street. The entrance to the
corner room is in a 45 degree tangent at the southeast of
the building. On the second story are paired and single,
wood, double hung windows with one light in each sash.
The windows have stone sills and lintels. The building
has stone banding and accents, a decorative brick cornice,
and battlements at the roof line. The building is in good
condition and is virtually unaltered on the exterior.

An earlier hotel was located on this site, but burned.
Gray's hotel was built in 1912. The hotel rooms were on
the second floor. There were several commercial
establishments located on the first floor.

Williamson Brothers Hardware Store, 123 W. High Street, c.
1905 (photo 12). This is a two-story brick building. It
is divided into two storefronts. The east store front is
four bays wide. The west storefront is two bays wide.
Between the two storefronts is a door which accesses a
stairway to the second floor. This is a wood and glass,
transomed door. The east storefront has a corner entrance
on the alley side. There is a cast-iron column at the
corner. There are large display windows, with transoms
which have been covered, in the other three bays.
The west storefront is in its original condition. It has
a recessed wood and glass door, large display windows, and
prism glass transoms. On the second story, windows are
double hung, with wood sashes. Upper sashes are

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multi-light. The window openings have segmental-arched openings and stone sills. The building has a decorative brick cornice. There is a brick pier between the stairway door and the west storefront, which extends the length of the building. There is a like brick pier at the west end of the building. On the east end, are the letters "WILLIAMSON," painted vertically.

Williamson Brothers Hardware Store was located in this building from about 1905 to about 1930.

Appenzeller's Dry Goods Store, 101 W. High Street, 1906 (photo 8). This building, located on the southwest corner of High and Union Streets, is a two-story brick structure with a four-bay facade. There is an unaltered, wood storefront with large display windows, prism glass transoms, and a central entrance. Second story windows are wood, double hung, with one light in each sash. There are stone bands above and below the windows which extend the width of the building. There is brick and stone pier at each end of the building. There is a decorative brick cornice, and battlements at the top of the building.

William Appenzeller came from Findlay, Ohio, during the gas boom era to establish a store in Redkey. After having his store for a few years at two other locations, he became the first renter of this building. In a short time, Appenzeller purchased and remodeled the structure. Appenzeller's son, Harry, took over the operation of the store in the 1930s. Harry Appenzeller sold the building in 1977.

Commercial Building, south side of High Street, east of Union Street, c. 1900 (photo 6). This is a one-story brick building with two storefronts. There are brick piers at each end of the building, and one which divides the two storefronts. The storefronts have been altered. There is a stepped brick cornice at the top of the building. On the east side, a painted Gold Medal Flour sign has been restored.

This building housed Shambarger's Restaurant until 1983. The restaurant, famous throughout Indiana, was a descendent of a French cafe and bakery, operated on this site by the same family since 1885.

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K of P Building, 102 S. Meridian Street, 1911 (photo 4).
The K of P Building is a two-story brick building with
stucco scored to resemble stone. The main facade is nine
bays wide. There are two storefronts. The south
storefront four bays wide. It is wood and glass, with
large, transomed display windows. The transoms have been
covered over. To the north of this storefront is a
recessed area, which has an angled entry to the south
store, and a staircase which accesses the second story.
The floor of this recessed area is white tile, with black
tile spelling out "PIERCE 1911" by the entry to the store,
and "K of P" in front of the stairway. The ceiling of the
recessed area is pressed metal. The north storefront was
altered in 1956. It has a limestone, glass, and aluminum
face. On the second story are wood, double hung windows
with one light in each sash. There are "quoins" at the
corners of this facade. There is also a row of "quoins"
between fourth and fifth bays from the south, and between
the sixth and seventh bays from the south, dividing the
facade into three parts: the south storefront, the
section which contains the recessed area on the first
story, and the north storefront. Around the top of the
building are a row of stuccoed panels, and battlements.

This building contained the Pierce Drugstore in the south
part, the Union State Bank in the northeast corner, and
the Knights of Pythias hall above. The drugstore and the
bank faced Meridian Street. There were also two small
stores on High Street, at the rear of the building. Union
State Bank was the successor of Redkey's first bank, the
Bank of Redkey, formerly located in a smaller brick
building on this site. The contractor for the building
was Taylor and Company of Muncie.

Brown and Ellis Block, 101 N. Meridian Street, 1888 (photo
2). The Brown and Ellis Block is a two-story building
with a three-bay main facade. The storefront has been
covered over. On the second story are wood, double hung
windows with one light in each sash. There are curved,
cast-iron window hoods, and stone window sills. There are
cast-iron "quoins" at each end of this facade, and a
cast-iron, stepped, curved, parapet.

The ground floor of this building housed the U.S. Post
Office from 1893 to 1959.

The Redkey Historic District is significant under
Criterion A in the area of Commerce, and under Criterion
C, in the area of Architecture. The district represents
commercial development in Redkey from 1888 to about 1935.
It is associated with industrial development starting with
the discovery of natural gas in 1886. There are few
intrusions and alterations in the district, making it an
excellent representation of commercial development within
this context.

Redkey was originally a small village called Halfway which
may have been settled as early as 1836, soon after Jay
County was organized. The settlement was first platted as
Mt. Vernon in 1854 by William Harrison Wade. This plat
consisted of two blocks and was bounded by present-day
Main Street, Meridian Street, Union Street, and an alley
on the south. When James Redkey first came to Redkey, in
1856, there were four dwellings, a sawmill, and a store.
The village was isolated because of the dense forests of
Jay County, and the lack of roads and railroads. Most
settlers in the area were farmers.

James Redkey owned land west of the plat of Mt. Vernon.
In the late 1860s, when the Columbus, Chicago, and Indiana
Railroad was surveyed south of the plat, Redkey platted
the area bounded by present-day Union Street, High Street,
and the railroad right-of-way. When the railroad came
through, the station was called Redkey. Soon after, the
name of the town was changed to Redkey to avoid confusion
with Mt. Vernon in Posey County. The railroad established
Redkey as a market town and shipping point. Lots in the
new addition sold quickly, and new industries were built.
In the 1870s, three new additions were platted.

The town was given a further boost in 1879 when the Lake
Erie and Western Railroad came through, intersecting the
earlier railroad - now the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and St.
Louis - just south of the Redkey plat. One local
historian reported that the town's population was about
200 before the second railroad arrived. In 1880, the U.S.
Census recorded it as 386. By 1881, Redkey had a saw
mill, a tile mill, and a stave factory. There were also
twenty stores, two hotels, three warehouses, and a livery
stable. In 1883, the Brown Handle Factory was founded.
The Jay and Company Grain Elevator was built in 1884.

In 1886, natural gas was discovered in Jay County. This was an event which was to have an impact on a 19-county region in east-central Indiana, often called the "gas belt." The gas boom was a key factor in accelerating industrialization in this part of Indiana. In the ten years following the discovery of natural gas, three thousand wells were drilled in Jay County alone. Approximately $3,000,000 was spent on drilling in the county, a tremendous economic investment for the time. New factories were built in the region. In 1893 it was estimated that at least 300 factories had been built in Indiana as a result of the gas boom. The population of the gas belt soared. The population of Redkey, for example, grew from 386 in 1880 to 2,206 in 1900. The nearby Delaware County seat of Muncie grew from 5,219 to 20,942 in the same period.

By 1896, the main period of drilling was over. The gas belt had become the largest natural gas field in the world. Unfortunately, much of the gas was wasted. Laws were passed in the 1890s to encourage conservation of the resource, but these were largely ignored. By about 1906, the supply of natural gas was depleted. As a result, many of the new industries moved out of the gas belt, closer to other fuel sources. The population of many of the region's cities and towns decreased, or at least showed a slower rate of growth.

The gas boom had a tremendous effect on Redkey. There were a number of wells located in the vicinity of the town. Several industries located there to take advantage of the abundant supply of the inexpensive fuel. The Redkey Gas, Oil, and Mining Company was organized in March 1887. Soon afterward, the company was acquired by the Ohio and Indiana Pipe Line Company, which controlled it until the gas was depleted, in 1906. Natural gas was particularly suited to the manufacture of glass. Among new industries which located in Redkey in the 1880s and 1890s were four glass factories. Other industries were attracted to the town as well. By 1887, the McKennett Flax Mill and the Ayers Lumber Company were located in Redkey. The same year, the New York Spoke Factory started construction. By 1893, there were 12 industries employing 155 people.

Industrial growth led to commercial development. Redkey's oldest existing business, the Jones Mortuary at 105-109 S. Meridian, was started as a furniture store and funeral home in 1886. The first bank, the Bank of Redkey, located on the southwest corner of High and Meridian Streets, opened in 1886. In 1887, there were approximately 30 stores, two hotels, two liveries, and two restaurants. Commercial growth resulted in a building boom on High Street. Prior to the discovery of natural gas, there were only a few commercial buildings. Many of these were wood. After 1886, many new brick buildings were constructed. A series of fires wiped out a large number of buildings between about 1890 and about 1905. As a result of these fires there are no known commercial buildings in the district which pre-date the natural gas era. The town was prosperous, and after the fires, the buildings were rebuilt to be larger and grander than before.

One of the oldest buildings in the district is the Italianate style Cultice-Mann Block (left in photo 10), located at 106-108 W. High Street, built in 1891 after an earlier Cultice building was destroyed by fire in 1890. Cultice was the postmaster for many years and also had a cigar and stationary store. Another Italianate style building, the Brown and Ellis Block (photo 2), constructed in 1893, is located at 101 N. Meridian Street. This building was the post office from 1893 to 1959. Other buildings constructed in the 1890s include the Theime Block at 130 W. High (second from left in photo 13), the Rees Restaurant at 126 W. High (third from left in photo 13), the Masonic Hall at 124 W. High (fourth from left in photo 13), the I.O.O.F. Building at 24-28 W. High (left in photo 9), and a commercial building at 101 S. Meridian Street (left in photo 3).

Prosperity continued into the 20th century, and a new town hall was completed in 1905. This is a Romanesque Revival style building located on the northwest corner of Oak and High Streets (photo 15). A large new store, Appenzeller's Department Store, was built in 1906 at 101 W. High Street (left in photo 8). The Muncie and Portland Traction Company completed an interurban line through Redkey in 1906. This line went through town on Main Street, one block north of High.

By about 1906, the natural gas was depleted. Many of
Redkey's industries closed or were relocated, including
all of the glass factories. The population dropped from a
high of 2,206 in 1900 to 1,386 in 1920. Despite this
economic decline, however, Redkey's commercial district
remained vital. On the Sanborn map of 1909, only three
stores on High Street are noted as vacant. City
directories of 1910, 1927, and 1937 show continuation of
existing businesses, and steady increases in the number of
new ones. There was still enough confidence in the town
for a large commercial building, which housed three
stores, a bank and the Knights of Pythias hall, to be
constructed. This was the K of P Building, located on the
southwest corner of Meridian and High Streets (photo 4).
An attractive new hotel, which contained several retail
spaces and a restaurant, was built in 1912. This was
Gray's Hotel, located on the northwest corner of High and
Meridian Streets (photo 5).

Factors which contributed to the stability of the
commercial district included Redkey's position on two
railroad lines; the increase in the value of agricultural
products during the first 20 years of the 20th century;
the growth of the canning industry which started in Redkey
in 1916, when Caar Canning Company was established; and
the development of the state highway system, which would
result in the establishment of two state highways, S.R. 1
and S.R. 67, through Redkey. Industries which remained in
Redkey after the gas boom era were related to agriculture
or lumber. Among these were a tile factory, saw mills,
elevator, feed mills, and a spoke factory.

The most noticeable change in the commercial district in
the early 20th century was the establishment of new
businesses related to the automobile. In the 1927 city
directory, there are eight businesses listed under the
headings of "Auto Accessories," "Auto Sales," or "Filling
Stations." One of these was Steed's Tire and Battery
Shop, which was located in the building at 110 W. High
Street, built about 1920. This building is operated as a
service station today. The last building to be
constructed within the period of significance was the Red
Keychen Cafe, a tiny brick building abutting the
Williamson Brothers Hardware Store (photo 12).

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The Redkey Historic District has a high degree of
integrity, because of few intrusions, alterations, and
demolitions. Only three buildings in the district were
constructed after the period of significance. These are
the Masonic Building (left in photo 13), located on the
northeast corner of Oak and High Streets, constructed in
1986; the U.S. Post Office (right in photo 14), located on
the southeast corner of Oak and High Streets, constructed
in 1959; and the GTE Building, located on the north side
of High Street, west of Union, constructed about 1960.
Only about four buildings in the district which are
recorded on the Sanborn map of 1924 are not extant. These
were all one-story, small-scale buildings. The district
is also distinctive for the large number of buildings
which retain their original storefronts.

Because of its high degree of integrity, the Redkey
Historic District is an excellent representation of
commercial development in Jay County during the late 19th
and early 20th centuries. It contains most of the
historic buildings associated with commerce in Redkey.
Buildings related to commerce outside the district include
the Merchants Hotel located on the southeast corner of
Main and Meridian Streets. This building was located on
the interurban line. There are several commercial
buildings on Meridian Street, in the block south of High
Street. These were not included in the district because
of extensive alterations. The depots associated with the
two railroad lines are gone. The factories and warehouses
associated with industries of Redkey are either gone, are
dilapidated, or have been extensively altered.

The Redkey Historic District is one of only three
commercial districts identified in the Indiana Historic
Sites and Structures Inventory in Jay County. The Dunkirk
Commercial Historic District is another of these. It is
also located in Richland Township, and has a history which
is similar to that of Redkey's. Dunkirk was first settled
in the 1830s, but had no significant growth until the
1850s. The railroad, which came through town in the late
1860s, resulted in establishment of Dunkirk as a market
town and shipping point, and a rapid increase in the
population. The gas boom brought new industry to Dunkirk,
whose population grew from 662 in 1880 to 3,187 in 1900.
The failure of natural gas resulted in the decline of

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industry and a drop in the population – which had fallen
to 2,532 by 1920 – but did not affect Dunkirk as severely
as it did Redkey. Dunkirk retained two natural gas era
glass factories, which remain important employers in
Dunkirk today. Dunkirk's commercial district is similar
in size and appearance to the one in Redkey. A large
number of the buildings date from the last decade of the
19th and the first of the 20th centuries. Possibly
because it was larger and somewhat more prosperous than
Redkey after the gas boom, there are a comparatively
larger number of intrusions and alterations to buildings
in the Dunkirk historic district.

The third commercial district in Jay County is the
Portland Commercial Historic District, located in the
county seat. As the center of county government, Portland
has historically had a larger and grander commercial
district than either Redkey or Dunkirk. Portland was laid
out in 1837 as the county seat. Located on the Salamonie
River, it has always been the county's most important
commercial and industrial center. The first railroad came
through Portland in 1871, resulting in increased
industrial development and economic growth. Portland was
affected in a positive way by the gas boom. Although not
located in the gas fields, as were Redkey and Dunkirk, it
had access to the fuel by pipeline. Industrial
development continued through the early part of the 20th
century, resulting in expansion of the commercial area.
The Portland Commercial Historic District has
approximately 65 historic structures, dating from about
1880 to 1940. A wide range of commercial uses and
architectural styles are represented in the district.
The district retains a fairly high degree of integrity,
but has a comparatively larger number of intrusions and
alterations than the Redkey district.

Eight other commercial buildings in Portland were
identified in the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures
Inventory. Two were given ratings of outstanding: the
Haynes Milling Company, built c. 1876/c. 1896, on E. Votaw
Street; and the Coca Cola Bottling Company Building, built
in 1938, on E. Arch Street.

Eight historic commercial buildings remain in other parts
of Jay County. None of these was given a rating of

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outstanding in the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures
Inventory.

The Redkey Historic District is significant for its
architecture. It contains the finest collection of late
19th century and early 20th century architecture in
Redkey. Many of the district's buildings are unusually
elaborate for a town the size of Redkey, reflecting the
town's wealth at the turn of the 20th century. Among fine
examples of academic styles are the Romanesque Revival
City Building (photo 15), and the Italianate Brown and
Ellis Block (photo 2). The architecture of the district
is discussed more fully in Section 7. Elsewhere in town,
there are only nine examples of academic styles. Two are
churches; seven are houses. Of these, only two were given
ratings of outstanding in the Indiana Historic Sites and
Structures Inventory: the Romanesque Revival Methodist
Church, built in 1896, and located on Main Street; and the
Free Classic Current House, built in 1901 and located at
32 North Union Street.

In the 1960s, the population of Redkey began to decline.
Factors such as the decline of the railroads, the
development of the interstate highway system, and the sale
of Caar Canning Company had a negative effect. Today, the
town has no industry. Its residents commute to jobs in
Portland and Muncie. Many of the buildings in the
district are vacant. Historic Redkey, Inc. is working to
revitalize Redkey. Seeking National Register status for
the commercial district is a step in this process.

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County Directory</u>. Peoria: National Directory Service,
1937.

Sanborn Map Company, Fire Insurance Maps for Redkey,
Indiana, 1909, 1915, 1924

Sanborn-Perris Map Company, Fire Insurance Maps for
Redkey, Indiana, 1895, 1900.

The Wall Street Journal, "The Food Is Very Good At Redkey,
Ind., Spot, But Don't Tell Anyone," July 8, 1968.

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the northwest corner of lot 32 of the
Original Plat of Redkey; thence east, along the south side
of the east-west alley north of High Street, to the west
side of Union Street; thence south to a point on the axis
of the rear property line of the building on the northeast
corner of Union and High Streets; thence east, across a
north-south alley east of Union Street; to the southeast
side of the right-of-way of the old L. E. and W. Railroad;
thence northeast along said right of way to the west side
of Meridian Street; thence south, along the west side of
Meridian to a point on the axis of the north property line
of the building on the northeast corner of Meridian and
High Streets; thence east along said property line to the
west side of a north-south alley east of Meridian Street;
thence south along the west side of said alley, across
High Street, to the south boundary of the property located
at 109 S. Meridian Street; thence west along said boundary
to the east side of Meridian Street; thence north along
the east side of Meridian Street to a point on the axis of
lot 1 of the plat of Mt. Vernon; thence west, across
Meridian Street, along the south boundary of said lot to
the west side of the north-south alley west of Meridian
Street; thence south along the west side of said alley to
the southeast corner of lot 11 of the plat of Mt. Vernon;
thence west 16 feet; thence north to the south boundary of
lot 12 of said plat; thence west, across Union Street, to
the west side of Union Street; thence south, along the
west side of Union Street to the north side of the
east-west alley south of High Street; thence west, along
the north side of said alley, to the west side of the
north-south alley east of Oak Street; thence south 12
feet; thence west to axis of the west boundary of lot 41
of the Original Plat of Redkey; thence north to the south
boundary of lot 42 of said addition; thence west along
said boundary to the east side of Oak Street; thence
north, along the east side of Oak Street to the northeast
corner of Oak and High Streets; thence west along the
north side of High Street to the west boundary of the
building on the northwest corner of High and Oak Streets;
thence north along said boundary to the south side of the
north-south alley north of High Street; thence east,
across High Street, to the point of beginning.

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Boundary Justification

The commercial area of Redkey has historically included
the two-and-a-half blocks west of Meridian Street; the
block of Meridian south of High Street; and the block of
Meridian north of High Street. The boundaries have been
drawn to include this area, except for the exclusion of
non-contributing properties along the edges.

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The following information is the same for all photos:

1. Redkey Historic District
2. Redkey, Indiana
3. Laura Thayer
4. February 1992
5. 3905 N. 500 W.
    Columbus, IN 47201

Additional information for individual photos:

Photo 1
1. South side of Meridian Street, south of High Street
6. camera facing northeast
7. 1of 15

Photo 2
1. Brown-Ellis Block, 45 S. Meridian Street
6. camera facing northeast
7. 2 of 15

Photo 3
1. Southeast corner of High and Meridian Streets
6. camera facing southeast
7. 3 of 15

Photo 4
1. Knights of Pythias Building, 102-104 S. Meridian
    Street
6. camera facing southwest
7. 4 of 15

Photo 5
1. Gray Hotel, 2-10 W. High Street
6. camera facing northwest
7. 5 of 15

Photo 6
1. Commercial Building, 17-19 W. High St.
6. camera facing southwest
7. 6 of 15

Photo 7

1. Southeast corner Union and High Streets
6. camera facing southeast
7. 7 of 15

Photo 8
1. Appenzeller's Department Store, 101 W. High Street
6. camera facing southwest
7. 8 of 15

Photo 9
1. High Street, east of Union Street
6. camera facing east
7. 9 of 15

Photo 10
1. Cultice-Mann Block (left) and Farmers and Merchants
   First National Bank (right), north side of High
   Street, west of Union Street
6. camera facing north
7. 10 of 15

Photo 11
1. South side of High, west of Union
6. camera facing southeast
7. 11 of 15

Photo 12
1. Williamson Brothers Hardware Store (left) and Red
   Keychen Cafe (right), South side of High Street, east
   of Oak Street
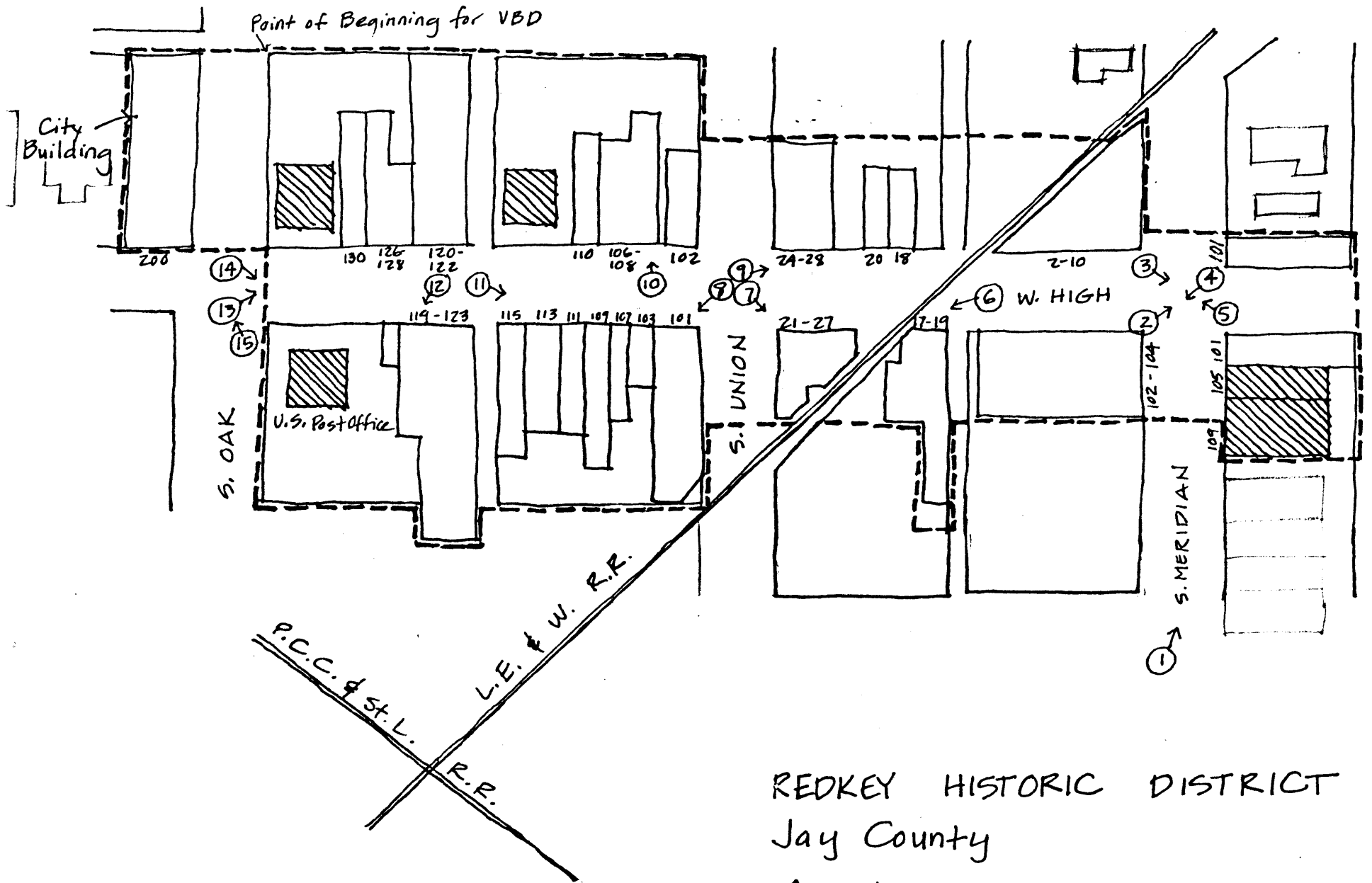6. camera facing southwest
7. 12 of 15

Photo 13
1. North side of High Street, east of Oak Street
6. camera facing northeast
7. 13 of 15

Photo 14
1. High Street, east of Oak Street
6. camera facing southeast
7. 14 of 15

Photo 15
1. Town Hall, 202 W. High
6. camera facing northwest
7. 15 of 15

Point of Beginning for VBD

City Building

S. OAK

U.S. Post Office

200

14
13
15

130   126   120-
       128   122

12   11

119 - 123

110   106-   102
       108

115 113 111 109 107 103 101

10

9
9 7

24-28   20 18

21-27   17-19

S. UNION

6   W. HIGH

2-10

3
4
5

2

102 - 104

S. MERIDIAN

109

105 101

1

P.C.C. & St. L.

L.E. & W. R.R.

R.R.

REDKEY HISTORIC DISTRICT
Jay County

↑ north

--- boundary

①↗ photo view

▨ noncontributing

IT 2/97