

MINNESOTA HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY FORM

HISTORIC NAME: Rushford Wagon and Carriage Company

COUNTY: Fillmore **MAR 13 1982**

CURRENT NAME: Rushford Wagon Company Building

CITY/TWP.: Rushford City

LEGAL DESC.: Outlet 21 and Lot 1, Steven's Second Addition, City of Rushford

ADDRESS: Elm at Park, southwest corner

CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Building <u>  X  </u>	Excellent <u>      </u>	Local <u>      </u>	Primary <u>  Industry  </u>
Structure <u>      </u>	Good <u>      X  </u>	State <u>      X  </u>	Secondary <u>  Agriculture  </u>
Object <u>      </u>	Fair <u>      X  </u>	National <u>      </u>	Others <u>      </u>
District <u>      </u>	Deteriorated <u>      </u>		

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:	Yes <u>  </u> No <u>  X  </u> Restricted <u>  </u>	PRESENT USE:
VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD:	Yes <u>  X  </u> No <u>  </u>	storage and shop facilities
OCCUPIED:	Yes <u>  X  </u> No <u>  </u>	for City of Rushford

DATE CONSTRUCTED: 1872	ORIGINAL USE: Wagon factory
ORIGINAL OWNER: H.W. Holmes & A.J. Stevens	ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Unknown

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Arthur J. Miller 111 Jessie Street Rushford, MN 55971	ACREAGE: Less than one acre <u>  X  </u>
LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.: see owner	UTM REFERENCE: Rushford West Quad. 15 / 600170 / 4851220
FORM PREPARED BY: Robert M. Frame III, Ph.D	
DATE: February 9, 1981	

DESCRIPTION:

The Rushford Wagon and Carriage Company is located near the center of the small rural industrial community of Rushford. The surviving stone building (the "wagon factory") is part of a complex which once existed at the site and included a dry house, engine house, machine shop, carriage shop, painting shop, office, and lumber sheds. The wagon factory building originally measured 70 x 84 feet, but has existed in its present 70 x 40-foot size since at least the 1890s, according to insurance maps, and probably since 1892 when the company was reorganized and rebuilt following an 1878 fire. The two-story factory is constructed of rough coursed ashlar limestone with a flat roof and stepped parapet. Fenestration consists of six-over-six double-hung sash in segmental arched openings, arranged in six bays on the east facade and four bays on the north facade. There are large carriage doorways located in the north and south facades, including an original semi-circular arched doorway at the second story of the south facade which originally opened onto an elevated carriage ramp. The present west facade was originally an interior wall in the 1872 design, and the west ends of the north and south facades terminate in broken stone.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The wagon factory building of the Rushford Wagon and Carriage Company is significant as an important representative of the agriculturally-oriented industry which developed in Rushford and southeast Minnesota in the nineteenth century. Of particular note is the fact that in this building was constructed the Rushford Wagon, a sturdy and functional farm wagon used throughout Minnesota and the Upper Midwest. The company was formed through the consolidation in 1872 of two local wagon manufacturers. At that time they built the present stone building as the pivotal structure in a large wagon and carriage manufacturing complex. The complex burned in 1878 and the production was taken over by the Winona Wagon Company of Winona, Minnesota, which continued to market the design under the original name until well into the twentieth century. In Rushford, wagon manufacture resumed in 1892 with a new Rushford Wagon Company which rebuilt the interior of the wagon factory building. Automobile and farm implement sales gradually supplanted wagon production, which ceased entirely in 1939. The Rushford Wagon Company was dissolved in 1946, although the wagon factory building is still owned by a grandson of one of the 1892 entrepreneurs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

"Rushford Wagon and Carriage Works," in The Rushford Star, March 13, 1874.  
Modern Priscillas. Rushford Centennial, 1854-1954. Rushford, no date.