

PH068 4058

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	SEP 11 1978
DATE ENTERED	DEC 21 1978

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Spaulding Manufacturing Company

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

500-610 4th Ave.; 827-829 Spring Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Grinnell

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Iowa

VICINITY OF

CODE

COUNTY

Poweshiek

CODE

157

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

__DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

__STRUCTURE

__SITE

__OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

__PUBLIC

__PRIVATE

BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

__IN PROCESS

__BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

OCCUPIED

__UNOCCUPIED

__WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

__YES: UNRESTRICTED

__NO

PRESENT USE

__AGRICULTURE

COMMERCIAL

__EDUCATIONAL

__ENTERTAINMENT

__GOVERNMENT

__INDUSTRIAL

__MILITARY

__MUSEUM

__PARK

__PRIVATE RESIDENCE

__RELIGIOUS

__SCIENTIFIC

__TRANSPORTATION

__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Multiple ownership: see continuation sheet

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Poweshiek County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Grinnell

STATE

Iowa

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Spaulding Manufacturing Company complex contains five brick buildings, dating from c. 1880 to 1910. They are the remains of a substantially larger complex of a dozen or so buildings which housed the activities of this local carriage and wagon, and later small-scale automobile, manufacturer. The complex is located at the extreme western edge of Grinnell's central business district, with residential areas to the north and west. The bulk of the complex (four buildings) is located on one block, with an additional member of the complex on the northwest corner of the block directly to the east.

The oldest building (#1A) dates from before 1883 (date of earliest fire insurance map available). It is three stories high (originally 2, the third story added in 1909), with narrow arched windows with brick hoods, and a 4-story elevator at the rear. The first floor windows on the front (Spring St.) are paired between pilasters which suggest an arcade, and have thistle motifs on the keystones. This building predates the Spaulding Company's occupancy, and was originally the foundry for the Craver, Steele, and Austin header works. It is presently occupied by a welding and repair shop.

Building #1B was added to the old foundry structure in 1909, giving the whole block total dimensions of about 75' x 200'. 1B is also three stories, with sash windows paired beneath wide brick arches. Engaged brick piers running the full height of the front and side elevations divide them into three distinct sections.

Following a major fire in 1893, building 1A was left empty, until about 1906, when Spaulding installed a woodworking shop on the first floor. After 1909 (when the third floor was added, and 1B erected) this block became the "automobile department"; apparently nearly self-contained, with machine shops, assembly areas, and storage and display facilities for the cars. Toward the end of the Spaulding era, the structure was used for auto repair, farm implement manufacture, and general storage.

Building #2, built c. 1905, housed the offices of the Spaulding Manufacturing Company. It is two stories high on a raised basement, approximately 50' x 75'. Windows are 2/2 sash, with broad, rock-faced stone lintels and narrow sills. First story windows are taller than those of the second story. The main entrance is at the southeast corner, beneath a rounded arch formed by stone voussoirs. The corbelled brick cornice extends across the north and east elevations. During the Spaulding period, offices were located on the first floor, with sales areas above. The building is now an American Legion hall.

See continuation sheet

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1876-1929

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The history of the Spaulding Manufacturing Company presents a case study in the early history of American automobile manufacture, and thus may be considered a locally-significant example of a national phenomenon. In the 1870's, the automobile was as yet largely a European toy; by the financial crash of 1929, innovative manufacturers in Detroit were well on the way to making the automobile the predominant industry in the U.S. Between these times, particularly in the early decades of the 20th century, many local entrepreneurs sought to enter the then fledgling market for automobiles: while perhaps successful at first, in a small-scale way, these men were unable to meet the challenge of mass production, on a scale hitherto unknown in the country, which eventually forced most of them into bankruptcy or into other fields of endeavor.

John B. Rae, in American Automobile Manufacturers: The First Forty Years (1959) has said that many of the earliest auto manufacturers had existing operations, generally bicycles or wagons and carriages, and thus had a readily available physical plant as well as some familiarity with mass production techniques (pp. 8, 19). Such was the case with the Spaulding Manufacturing Co. H.W. Spaulding came from his native Vermont to open a blacksmith and wagon repair shop on Main Street in Grinnell in 1876. He soon began to manufacture wagons (350 in 1882) in his shop, and sold them via the "Trailing System". This, his own innovation in distribution and sales, involved stringing 4 or 5 wagons together and hauling them around the countryside until all were sold. During the 1880's, Spaulding's modest success attracted additional capital, and the little company entered several partnerships. In 1887 or 1888, the then partner, M. Snyder, sold his share in the Spaulding concern to the local Craver, Steele, and Austin Header Works, but this latter firm sold its interest in 1889 and moved to Illinois. In 1890, H.W. Spaulding again sought partners (M. Snyder again, and William Miles) and moved his growing wagon works to the old Craver plant at the corner of Spring St. and 4th Avenue.

At this time, the Craver plant occupied nearly the whole block on the southeast corner of Spring and 4th, with a few warehouses on the southwest corner block -- giving Spaulding excellent facilities for his wagon works. In 1893, however, fire destroyed all but the foundry on 4th Avenue, the brick-veneered warehouse on Spring, and a warehouse near the railroad tracks (See Sanborn maps for 1888 and 1893), and Spaulding was forced to rebuild. He concentrated his expansion on the southwest corner block, beginning with woodworking, blacksmith, paint and trim and storage facilities (the latter is the south part of building #3), leaving the old Craver foundry vacant.

1900 saw the reorganization of the firm to include Spaulding's sons, F.E. and E.H., and the inauguration of a major building phase. By 1906, the office block

see continuation sheet

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Grinnell, Iowa: 1883, 1888, 1893, 1898, 1906, 1911, 1922.
 Rae, John B. American Automobile Manufacturers: The First Forty Years. Philadelphia: Chilton Co., 1959.
 Grinnell -- A Century of Progress. Grinnell: The Herald-Register, July, 1954.
 "Grinnell, One of Iowa's Thriving Cities," Iowa Factories IV (April, 1915), pp. 10,11,14)
 "Spaulding Manufacturing Company", Iowa Factories I, #8 (August, 1912), pp. 9-12.

See continuation sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 4

QUADRANGLE NAME Des Moines, Iowa

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:250,000

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	5	5	2	2	8	0	0	4	6	2	1	1	0	0
ZONE	EASTING			NORTHING										

B

ZONE	EASTING			NORTHING										

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

All of the area defined on the west by Pearl St., on the north by 4th Avenue, and on the east by Spring Street that is north of the Chicago Rock Island and Pacific Railroad right-of-way; and the area 188' east and 150' south of the southeast corner

of Spring Street and 4th Avenue, Grinnell, Iowa

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Ned Shank / M.H. Bowers, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Grinnell Coll./ Division of Historic Preservation

DATE

August 1978

STREET & NUMBER

26 East Market Street

TELEPHONE

319/353-6949

CITY OR TOWN

Iowa City

STATE

Iowa 52240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

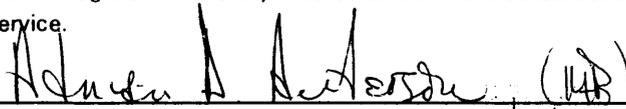
NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE Director, Division of Historic Preservation

DATE

9/4/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER



KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

12-21-78

ATTEST:

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

William H. Bramham 12-18-78

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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- 527 120 GRINNELL IOWA 50112
- ✓ Building #1A/1B (610-618 4th Ave.): Board of Supervisors, Poweshiek County, Grinnell, Iowa 50112
 - ✓ Building #2 (829 Spring St.): American Legion, 829 Spring St., Grinnell, Iowa 50112
 - ✓ Building #3 & 4 (827 Spring St.: Agri-Business, Inc. 2010 6th Ave., Grinnell, Iowa 50112
 - ✓ Building #5 (500 4th Ave.) Vernon and Loretta Van Wyk, 1711 Reed St., Grinnell, Iowa 50112

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Spaulding Manufacturing Co., Grinnell, Poweshiek Co., Iowa

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Buildings #3, 4, and 5 are the remains of a much larger complex which contained the buggy/wagon manufacturing processes. Building #5 was the 'woodworking shop', in which lumber was unloaded from flatcars directly into a system of dry kilns, and from there into the mill room, where it was cut into the various parts of the 'vehicles'. The pieces were assembled, and seats installed, in the upper floors of this building.

Directly east of building #5 (and no longer extant) were blacksmith, wheel, and gear assembly shops, which made and assembled the various metal components of the buggies and wagons. The paint shops filled all of building #3, with the exception of the southern third of the first floor, which, located next to the tracks, served as the shipping area. Building #4 was used primarily for storage of the final products.

Building #3 was built in two stages. The southern third was in place by 1898, according to fire insurance maps of that date. It was originally attached to a long, brick-veneered frame building which was part of the old Craver Works. This latter building was removed c. 1905, and the northern 2/3 of building #3 erected in its place. Overall, #3 measures approximately 75' x 200', is two stories high with a very low hipped roof, on which are two cupolas which allowed ventilation of the interior (since this building was long used as a paint shop). The two building phases are distinguished primarily by window treatment, the older having single, 6/6 sash windows beneath curved arches, the later stage with windows paired beneath wide arches. The original arched doorways are intact on the south elevation, but are enlarged, and the arch removed, on the east. There is a two-story concrete-block addition of relatively recent vintage on the west side of #3. The building is presently used as a production and storage area for a styrofoam manufacturing firm.

Building #4, attached to the west wall of #3 at the south end, also dates from c. 1905. It is 15 bays across the south side, 3 stories high, with a stepped parapet. Windows are 4/4 sash, beneath curved brick heads. Starbolts are conspicuously in evidence, occurring both in pairs and singly. Original warehouse entrances have been filled in, and another entrance cut rather arbitrarily in a window bay. This building is now used only for storage.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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The final building of the Spaulding complex (#5) was erected about 1910 and presents the most "modern" character of the group. This building, originally the woodworking plant, measures approximately 75' x 200',* with three stories and a masonry chimney (originally 110' high) at the southwest corner. Broad brick piers rise to the corbelled cornice, and separate the windows, each of which is quite large, with many small lights. This building is now used for storage, a veterinary clinic, and small-scale sportswear manufacture.

All the buildings of the Spaulding complex appear structurally sound, although the strategic filling-in of windows on #4 and #1B suggest there may be some problems with these two. No machinery from the Spaulding era remains in any of the buildings, as they have seen an assortment of uses since the plant closed in 1929. Some interior structural features of interest can be seen, such as the almost "barnlike" arrangement of timbers in building #3, and the brackets and column caps found in building #5.

* and is constructed of concrete block with brick veneer,

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ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

(building #2), the Craver warehouse on Spring St. replaced (the rest of building #3), more trackside storage added (#4) and an elaborate plant in operation in buildings adjoining building #3 on the west. The manufacturing process was thus physically broken into its component parts, each in its own building, and production was well over 6000 wagons and carriages each year.

The wagon industry was still very strong in the early years of the 20th century, and, unlike many small-scale bicycle manufacturers, who were early entrants into the auto field, wagon men yet felt little pressure to add a new line of products (Rae, p. 16). Nonetheless, in 1909, the Spaulding Manufacturing Co. decided to diversify -- although on a very limited scale. The old Craver foundry was refurbished and enlarged, and soon began to produce a small line of Spaulding Cars and Trucks. Automobiles, however, were only a sidelight. In 1910-11, the company began its last major expansion: the large "vehicle" plant, with its kilns and extensive milling and assembly areas (#5), which earned Spaulding a reputation as "the largest vehicle manufacturing plant...west of the Mississippi River outside St. Louis" (Iowa Factories I, #8 (Aug. 1912), p. 10).

The enthusiastic writeup in Iowa Factories in 1912 came at the height of Spaulding's prosperity. Along with the thousands of wagons and carriages produced each year (and still sold through Spaulding's unique "Trailing System") the company turned out nearly 1000 "motor cars", with new models annually. The most interesting, perhaps, was the Spaulding Sleeper, advertised in 1915 as "the only regular touring car in the world made in quantities that can be made in one minute's time into a perfectly appointed SLEEPING BIRTH" (Iowa Factories IV (April 1915), p. 14).

Nonetheless, the Spaulding operation was not, in the long run, geared to survive the vagaries of the national economy nor the challenge from Detroit automakers. Ten years after the Iowa Factories feature, Spaulding's "vehicle" (i.e. wagons and carriages) and "motor car" plants had been converted to the manufacture of truck bodies and cabs, and the economic crash of 1929 forced the entire operation to close. The demise of this once-prominent local industry may have been caused by several factors. First, Spaulding specialized in wooden bodies, which, after about 1910, were increasingly passed over by other manufacturers in favor of metal (Rae, p. 47). Also, the auto business was never Spaulding's major activity: the bulk of the plant and capital investment lay in the production of wagons and buggies that by the end of WWI were well on the way to becoming anachronisms. By keeping auto manufacture as a sidelight, Spaulding was unable to take advantage of the economies of production on a massive scale which in the future would guarantee the dominance of Detroit in the auto field. In the face of the Detroit ascendancy, Spaulding, like many other small-scale auto manufacturers, turned to the production of commercial vehicles -- an area in which there was, for a time, still opportunity for specialization (Rae, p. 185). The 1929 crash destroyed many small producers, including Spaulding -- the economic crises

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ITEM NUMBER 8
9

PAGE 2
1

merely hastening the trend toward Detroit's total domination of the automobile field.

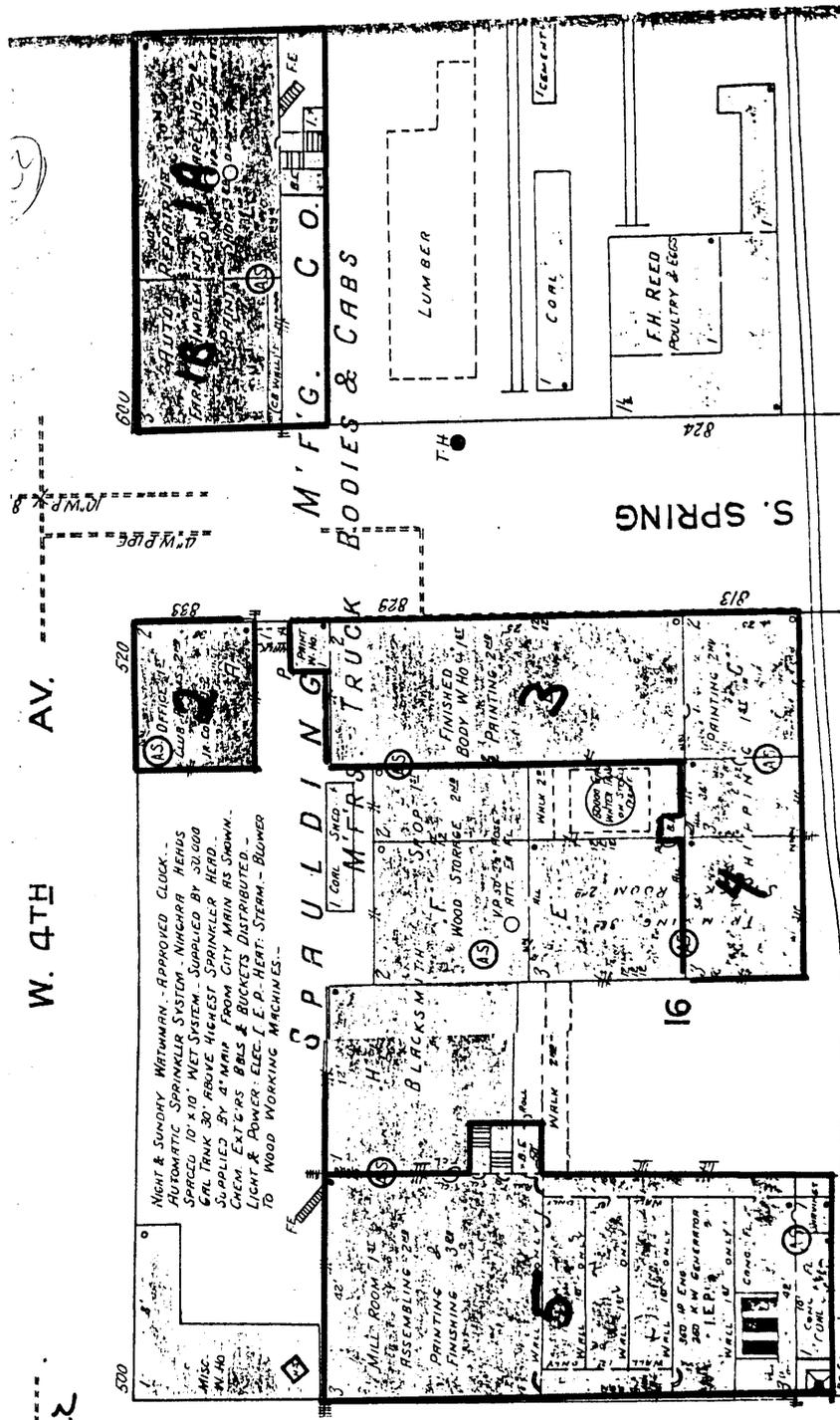
Bibliography, cont.

Parker, L.F. History of Poweshiek County, Iowa. Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1911, pp. 374-75.

1922
1

W. 4TH AV.

— indicates existing buildings



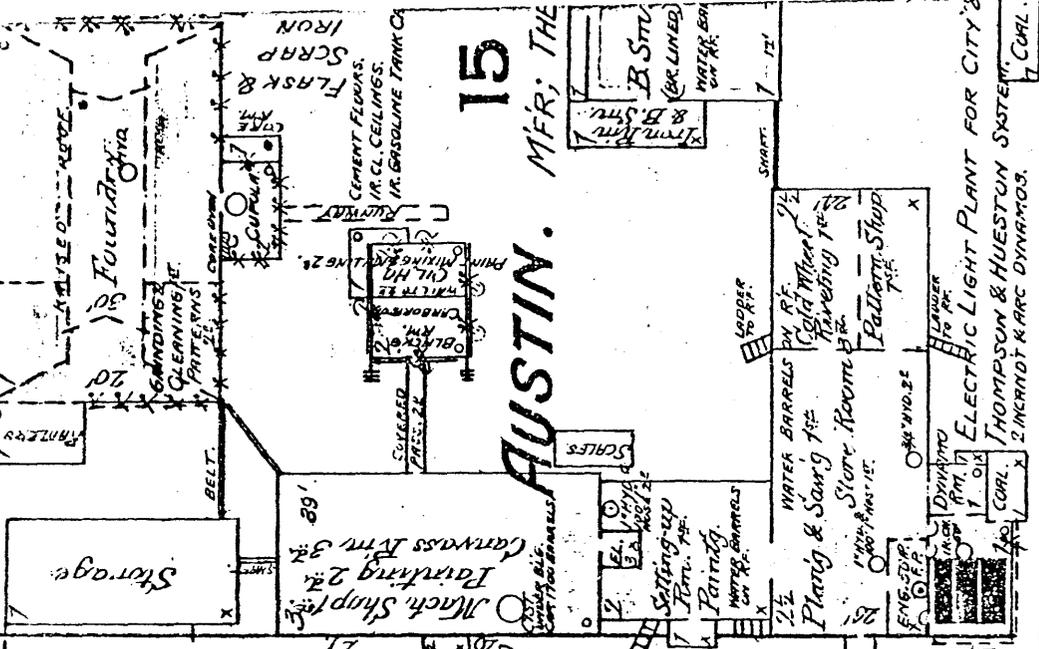
1922

212 4th Ave

1888

(See plat to 1883)

215



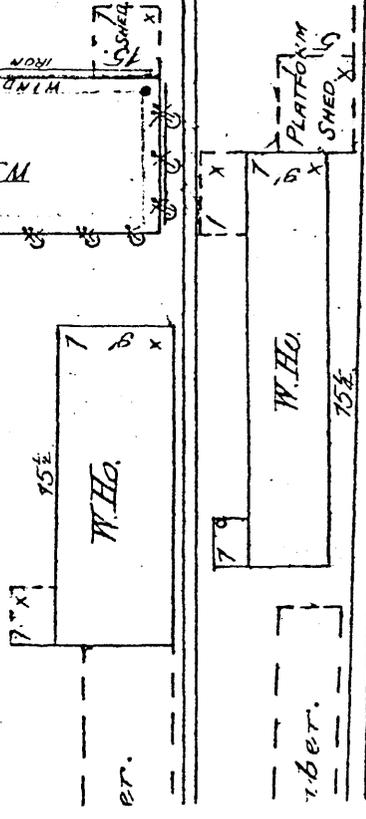
15 AUSTIN. MFR; THE

80' SPRING ST.

BRIDGE

16 CRAVER, STEELE (ND)

R. YARD.
750,000'

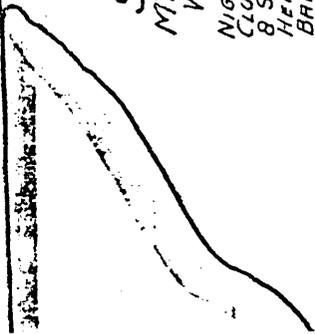


ELECTRIC LIGHT PLANT FOR CITY OF THOMPSON & HUESTON SYSTEM CORL. 2 MERRITT KARC DYNAMOS.

1893 (3 Plan Rev.)

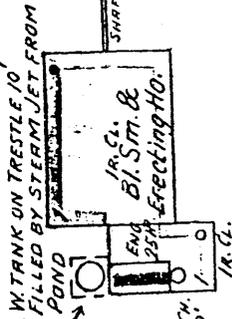
211

212

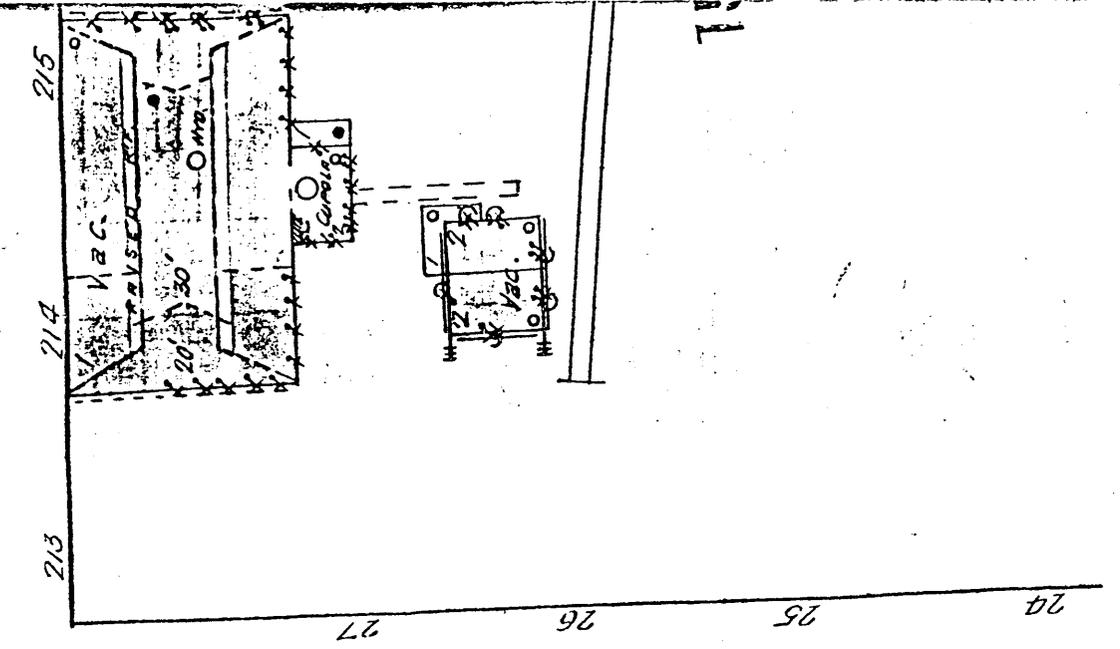


SPAULDING MFG. CO.
MFRS. CARRIAGES, SPRING
WAGONS, BODIES & GEARS.

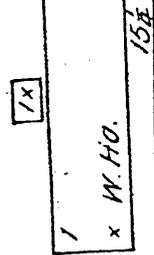
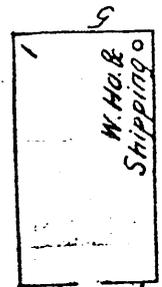
NIGHT WATCHMAN & IMMURSER
CLOCK, HALF HOURLY ROUNDS.
8 STATIONS, FUEL, COAL & SHAYGS.
HEAT, STEAM, NO LIGHT.
BARRELS OF WATER &
BUCKETS IN ALL BLOGS.



16



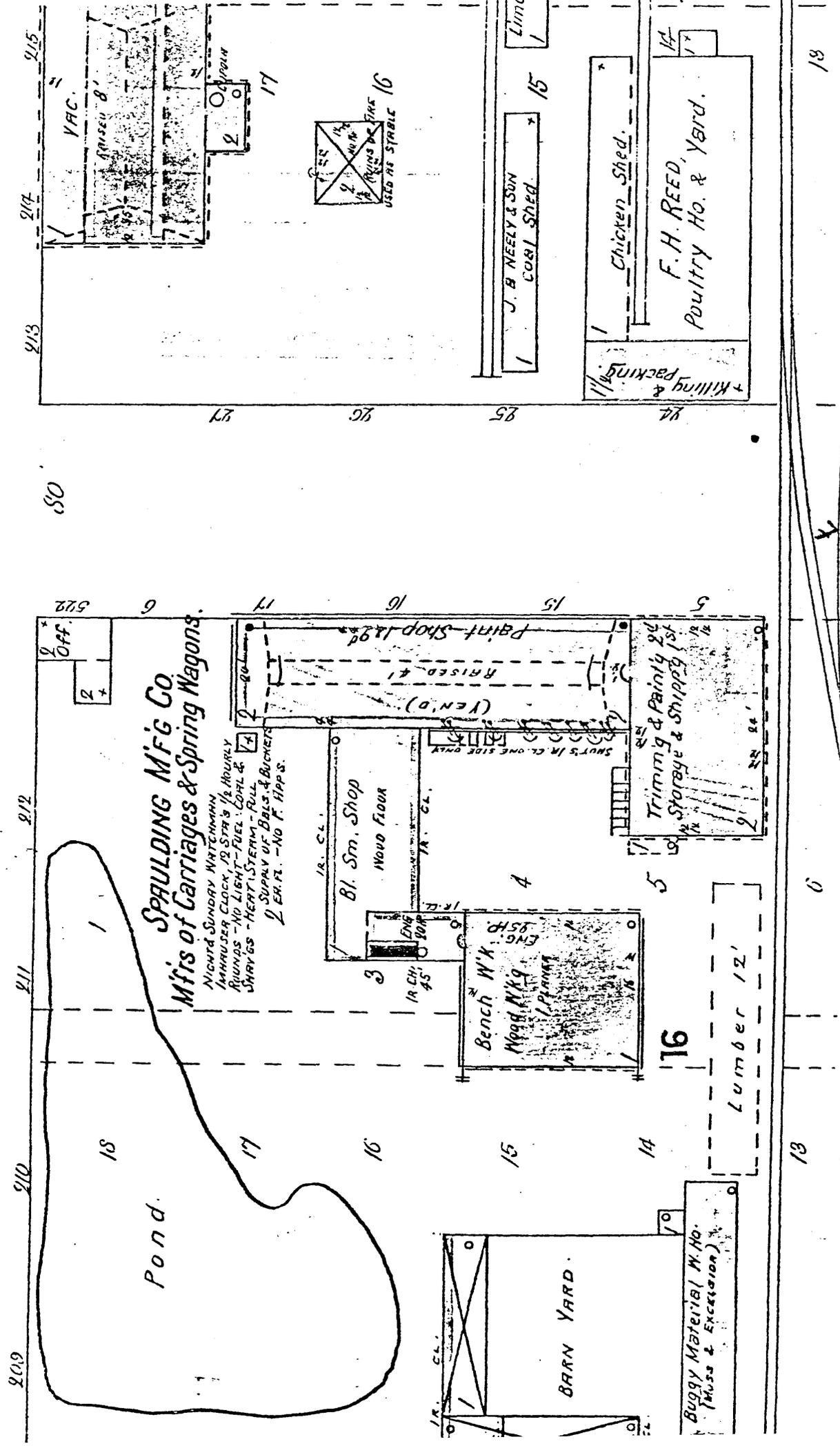
C.R.



6

AV. 6" MP.

1898



FEB. 1906

4" W. Pipe

6" W. Pipe

THE SPARULDING MFG. CO.

