

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER

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 Quasdorf Blacksmith and Wagon Shop

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Train & West Railroad Streets N/A not for publication

city or town Dows N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Wright code 197 zip code 50071

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.)

David C.
Signature of certifying official/Title

12/9/93
Date

State Historical Society of Iowa
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:)

for Signature of the Keeper Entered in the Date of Action
Guymon Rapley National Register 12/24/93

Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Name of Property

Wright, Iowa
County and State

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	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/manufacturing facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION/CULTURE/museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls BRICK

roof SYNTHETICS/rubber

other

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.)

- 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.
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)

- INDUSTRY
COMMERCE
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1899-1943

Significant Dates

1899

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

J.B. White, Architect

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(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:

Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Name of Property

Wright, Iowa
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

15	459660	4722020
Zone	Easting	Northing

2

Zone	Easting	Northing

3

Zone	Easting	Northing

4

Zone	Easting	Northing

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 James C. White, President Dows Historical Society

organization Wright County Historical Society date October 12, 1993
Dows Chapter

street & number 300 South Eskridge telephone 515/852-3879

city or town Dows state Iowa zip code 50071

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 Wright County Historical Society, Dows Chapter

street & number Train & West Railroad Streets telephone 515/852-3595

city or town Dows state Iowa zip code 50071
Dows Welcome Center

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1 Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Wright County, Iowa**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION:**

Located a short distance north of the Dows commercial district, the Quasdorf Blacksmith and Wagon Shop is a two story rectangular shaped brick edifice with foot thick walls resting on rubblestone foundations. It is capped with a flat roof surrounded by a raised and stepped parapet, with the front facade faces south. In designing this building, completed in 1899, its architect J.B. White, gave far greater attention to designing a functional, safe, and attractive industrial building than to following the dictates of style. Stylistically, it exhibits the influence of the Victorian Romanesque with its polychromatic exterior finish provided for by the use of contrasting colors and types of brick on the facade and side and rear walls, the utilization of rusticated limestone for pier caps and lintels and lugsills on the front facade; the use of rounded windows and doors set in arched brick surrounds; and the raised roof parapet with highly decorative brick cornice. More importantly, White attempted to create a safe and attractive industrial working environment by designing an edifice with thick walls and foundations and iron anchored floor joists; sufficient lighting through the use of well spaced nine-over-nine movable sash windows; and some degree of fire proofing for the roof by utilizing roofing materials made by the Chicago Fire Proofing Company--all to meet the needs of the blacksmithing and wagon making activities to take place inside. Except for changes to the entry doors, the building has undergone little alteration over the years. Interior alteration appears to have been minimal as well, and much of the original blacksmithing and wagon making equipment and materials still remain.

The original 1898 drawings and specification sheet have been preserved properly and are on display in the Quasdorf building.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Wright County, Iowa**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION CONTINUED:**

The differences in drawing and the actual construction are mainly in the interior and tend toward greater soundness. For instance the plans show 4-10"X10" center posts supporting the second floor--actually they measure 12"X12" and the second floor center posts show as 8"X8" when indeed they measure 10"X10". However, most of the other measurements shown on the specification sheets appear to be accurate. Contrary to the few changes of the exterior, the interior has exhibited many changes in equipment and arrangements. While still maintaining the older tools and equipment there is abundant evidence of using "new" equipment (and methods) as needed to survive in the ever changing agriculture arena.

In 1992 a matching grant from the Department of Cultural Affairs, State Historical Society of Iowa made it possible to restore and preserve this 1899 treasure. In our 1992-93 restoration project it was decided, by both the State Historical Society staff and the Dows Historical Society members, that the south entry should remain as it appears today, with two overhead doors. The reason for this decision was twofold. No good clear picture of the south end of the building could be found earlier than 1940, and also because we planned to present this building and its contents as a "progressive" business and museum. To maintain the property's integrity the restoration procedure was to do only what needed to be done to protect and preserve the building from further weathering and to retain its old (but sound) appearance. Tuck pointing and brick repair amounted to about 22 percent of the total area. The 29 windows and sills, three small and two overhead doors, however, needed extensive work, using liquid and Apoxwood (wood epoxy) in accordance with state recommendation. The well worn floor was left as is. At some unknown date a partition on the east side of the main floor was built to provide an office area and bins for a wide selection of nuts, and bolts, etc.

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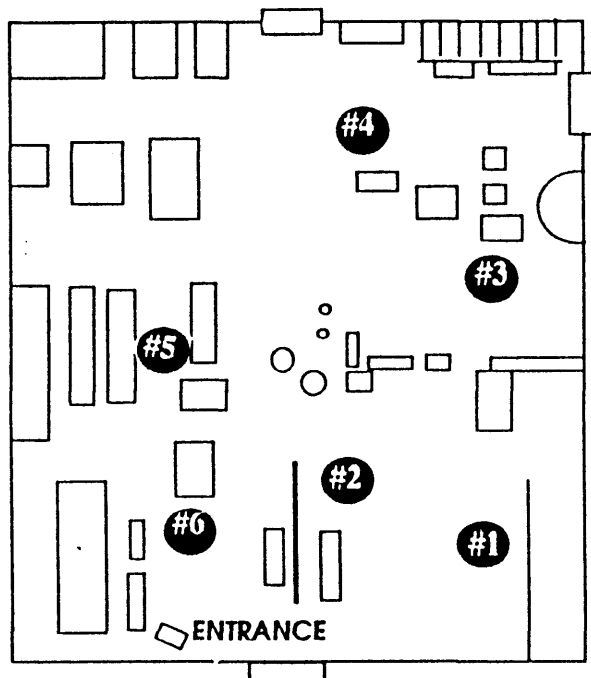
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Wright County, Iowa

Self Guided Tour Brochure of Quasdorf Museum, Dows, Iowa
Listing Tools, Equipment, Materials & Locations

LAYOUT OF THE SHOP



#1 - ORIENTATION AREA

- Guest Book - Please sign
- Showcase - "The Quasdorf Story" and memorabilia
- Wall Display of You-Name-It
- 1899 Original Blueprints (on east wall)
- Gas Forge and Office
- Information Notebooks are located in each of the 6 areas.

#2 - HORSESHOING AREA

- Displays of different shoes, tools, and methods
- NOTE: Frank Quasdorf gave many tools to the Living History Farm in Des Moines, Iowa.

SEE NOTEBOOKS LOCATED
IN EACH AREA FOR DETAILS

#3 GRINDING WHEEL & FORGE AREA

- 1,000 lb. - 52" grinding wheel
- Working forge, bellows, anvil, tongs, clippers, cutters, punches, hammers, trip hammer, assorted hand hammers, plow shares and former, and sledge hammers
- Sickles and riveter, bolt and shoe vise, mandrel, swage block, box vise, portable forge, and belt line system and motor.

#4 MACHINES - PAST & PRESENT

- Horizontal electric saw, foot operated grinder, mower reel sharpener, 2 ended grinder/polisher, milling machine, tire changer (metal to rubber), bolt threader, and lathe
- Welders table, torches, electric welders, welding tools and masks, and wheel dressers

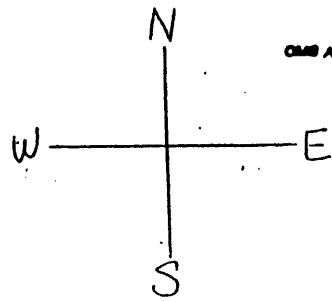
#5 TOOL CABINET AREA

- Belt driven band saw, blacksmith drill, machinist drill and bits, and old drill and shears.
- Sheet roller - hand operated, Sheet roller - electric, foot squaring shear, press, grinder (west wall), old cabinet with tools and wagon and buggy wheel parts.

#6 WHEEL & WAGON AREA

- Table saw (belt driven)
- 1900 Wagon (Quasdorf wagon), wagon jack, and attachments
- Spoke buck
- Wheel assembly jig
- Miscellaneous tools (on wall) used in wheel construction, pointers, drills, measuring wheel
- Tire bender
- Tire shrinker
- Oiling trough

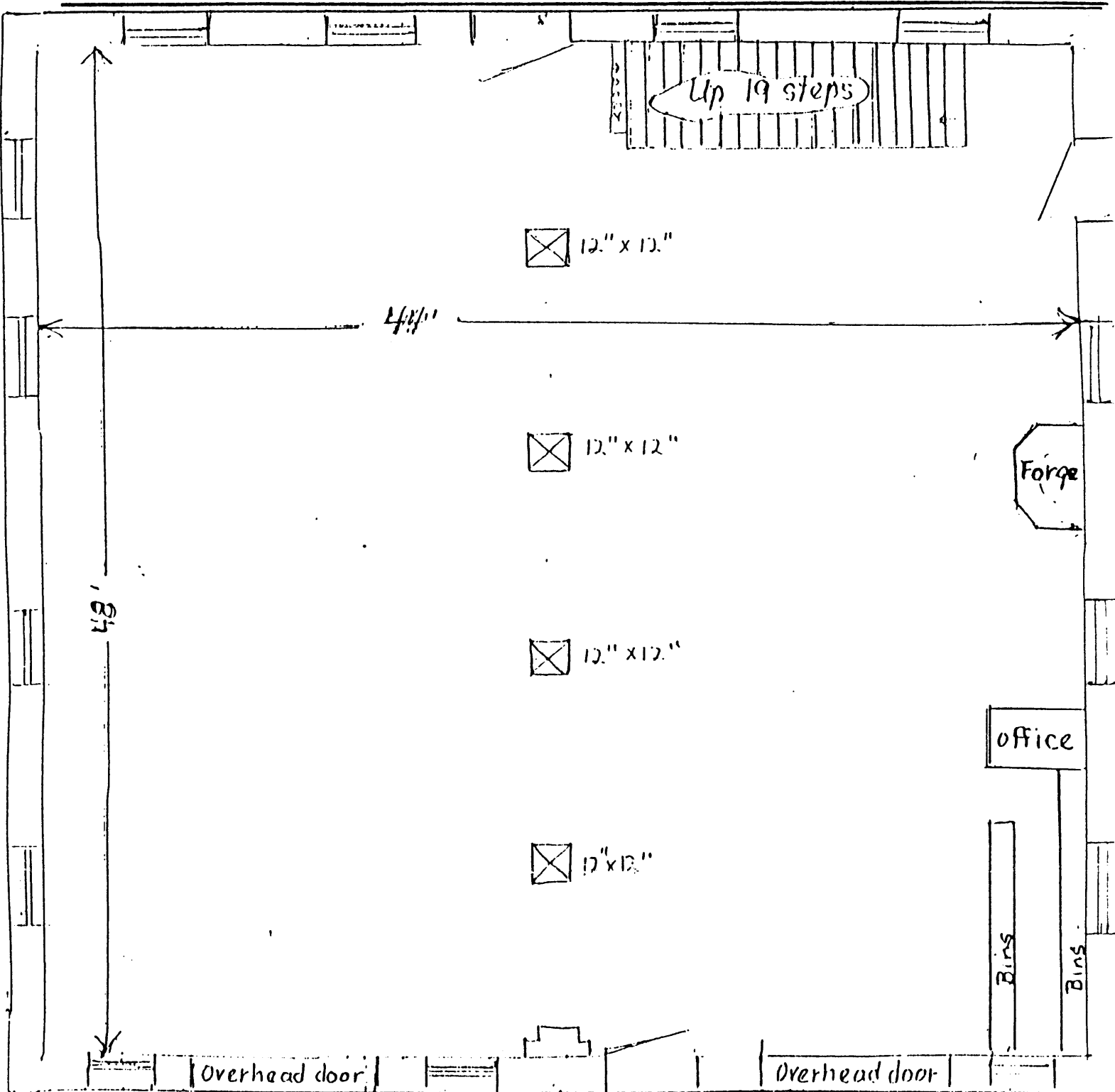
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Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Wright County, Iowa



*Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
First Floor*

8-10-93
Jim White

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National Park Service

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Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Wright County, Iowa

Front Sheet of Architect's Plans 1898

SPECIFICATIONS FOR

Solid Brick Shop Building

TO BE BROUGHT FOR

Quasdorf Dows

J. W. White

J. B. WHITE,
CLARION,
IOWA

ARCHITECT

*Plans, Elevations, Details and Specifications
made for Dwellings, Stores, Churches, School
Houses, Etc.*

*Will give Personal Attention and Supervision
of all work in my line entrusted to me.*

United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 6Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Wright County, Iowa**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

The Quasdorf Blacksmith and Wagon Shop is locally significant under National Register Criterion C as the best preserved example of a brick Victorian Romanesque influenced industrial building in Dows and probably in Wright County. Constructed in 1899 and designed by J.B. White, an architect who practiced his profession for nearly 20 years in the nearby county seat of Clarion, this building was constructed four years after a disastrous fire causing Dows to enact an ordinance requiring brick construction in the downtown area. The utilization of Victorian Romanesque detailing likely related to the 1894 fire as well. In the fire's aftermath, the Exchange block, a rather elaborate, two story 100 foot wide building was reconstructed in this mode, and local businessmen agreed informally among themselves to utilize that building's design in planning new construction in the commercial area.

The building is also significant under Criterion A as an intact expression of a bygone era when much agricultural small town industry and commerce centered in the manufacturing of wagons and the providing of blacksmithing services. George F. Quasdorf operated the shop from 1899 until his death in 1933. Thereafter, until 1990, his son Frank A. Quasdorf operated it as a blacksmith and welding business. In earlier times the local demands of an agricultural economy gave opportunity to small town wagon makers. In 1905 "carriages and wagons" were rated as twelfth among the state's manufacturing industries. Of the 97 manufacturers listed then, 4 were located in the town of Dows.

Dows is situated in a soil rich area and farmers cultivating it required know how and the services of a full service blacksmith and repair shop.

There were five shops in Dows to offer such services. The Quasdorf shop outlasted the others over the years because of excellent service, fairness, and a progressive attitude toward "keeping up" with the needs of the community and the growth of Iowa.

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Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Wright County, Iowa

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE CONTINUED:

As farms became larger and established blacksmith facilities on their own premises, shops like Quasdorfs sold and serviced agricultural hardware type commodities.

Over the past 90 years there have been many and varied jobs done at this shop; wagon making and repairing from 1899 to 1940; shoeing horses from 1899 until 1930; and welding and machine work from 1933 until the late 1980s. The Quasdorfs and their helpers were always there ready and able to serve the community.

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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 8 Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Wright County, IowaQUASDORF FAMILY HISTORY

AUGUST QUASDORF, (Frank's Grandfather) was born November 12, 1841. He came from Germany at age 13 to Wisconsin - then in 1864 to Iowa, Franklin County, and married in 1877.

GEORGE FRANK QUASDORF, born January 31, 1863, in Dodge County, WI, (second son of nine children) worked for his blacksmithing brother, C.A. (Carl August) Quasdorf at age 18 for twelve years. Then he opened his own shop in 1900. G.F. Quasdorf was a church going man known for his "absolute honesty and fairness." G.F. Q. had three children, Hazel, Mildred and Frank A. G.F. Q. died January 23, 1933.

FRANK A. QUASDORF was born March 15, 1907, lived all his life in a house built by his father in 1892, married Milly in 1940. They had no children. He attended Iowa State University and Idaho State University after graduating from Dows High School majoring in electrical engineering. (Frank's father didn't want Frank to become a blacksmith). Frank left school when his father died in 1933 to run the wagon shop and blacksmithing business. His uncle, C.A. Quasdorf, helped Frank learn the business. Frank was active in church and community affairs and was past president of the Blacksmith Association. He died February 13, 1990.

Frank willed the wagon and blacksmith shop and its contents to the Dows Historical Society because of their efforts in restoring the Dows Rock Island Depot and Main Street buildings.

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Section number 8 Page 9 Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Wright County, Iowa

DOWS ADVOCATE

September 30, 1980

Recognizing Frank Quasdorf's 47th Year as Blacksmith & Welder



The blacksmith business may have changed throughout the years, but the name associated with it has remained the same in Dows since 1898.

That was the year G.F. Quasdorf built his blacksmith and repair shop west of the Rock Island railroad depot, and that is where son, Frank Quasdorf, has continued to work. Although he only works part of the time these days, Frank Quasdorf has remained in business longer than any living Dows

businessman today. He is currently in his 47th year as a blacksmith and welder.

When his father built the shop, Quasdorf explained, he did a lot of work on wagons, built wagon boxes, did horse shoeing and other things "every blacksmith needed to do." The upper floor was used for woodworking and wagon making by Bill Wedtbing while G.F. Quasdorf did horseshoeing and machinery repairs on the lower floor.

Frank worked with his father while he was young, then left Dows after graduating from high school to attend college in Idaho for two years. G.F. Quasdorf died in January, 1933, and Frank took over the following month.

"When I first started, I did general repair work, mostly on wagons and plows. No horseshoeing," Quasdorf said. "As times changed, I added new tools and welding and iron work became the main items of the business."

Since 1933, the shop has added electric welders, a gas forge, a metal cutting bandsaw, grinders, lathes, a mig wire welder, a sheet metal roller, various tools and parts and a "good assortment" of steel.

"I always kept a good stock of stuff," Quasdorf mentioned. "I'd get new tools to keep up with the changes. But I still have all the old equipment, too."

A knee ailment forced him to stop working in 1976. He was hospitalized for three months in Mason City and returned home in March, 1977.

"Everything changed then," Quasdorf said. The shop was closed for two years and since reopening, he has been limited mostly to selling a few materials and doing some repairs. He cannot do any heavy lifting, he said, so he is mostly just "on call."

The blacksmith business has gone through many changes in Quasdorf's lifetime.

"There's still a lot of iron work to be done, but I used to set a lot of wagon tires and fix a lot of sickles, which I don't do anymore. Farming has changed so much that they don't use sickles much," he said.

Quasdorf belongs to both the state and national Blacksmith and Welders Association. The state chapter helped him build a float displaying some of the old equipment which will be in the centennial parade as well as other parades in several surrounding towns.

The 73-year-old blacksmith was able to stay in business so long, he mentioned, because he always managed to take a month's vacation in the summer.

"That didn't make some farmers too happy!" he laughed.

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Wright County, Iowa

DOWS ADVOCATE

April 12, 1934

**Blacksmith and Wagon
Repairing**

PLOW WORK A SPECIALITY
WE DO WELDING

Frank A. Quasdorf
DOWS, IOWA

DOWS ADVOCATE

August 16, 1934

Blacksmith & Wagon

Let Blackie Warner Repair Your Plow

All Work Guaranteed

ACETYLENE WELDING

Frank A. Quasdorf

DOWS ADVOCATE

January 6, 1939

This article was reprinted in the "Remember When" section of the newspaper, which reflects on past events in the area.

80 YEARS AGO

G.F. Quasdorf has his force at work on the first wagon to be built in Dows in five years. Time was when the Quasdorf wagon was one of the standard makes in this part of the state and was made and sold in large lots, but high priced timber and factory competition crowded them out of the market.

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Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 11 Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Wright County, Iowa

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Peterson, Fay. The History of Dows, Iowa, 1880-1980, Iowa: Ackley Publishing, 1980. PP 7, 10, 28 31.

Remember Our Heritage: A Pictorial History of the Cities, Towns & Communities in Wright County, Iowa. 1776-1976. Iowa: Goldfield Publishing, 1976. PP 124, 130, 136.

Seymour, John. The Forgotten Crafts, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1984. PP 69-77, 78-85.

1910 Illustrated Catalog #3, Sligo Iron Store Co., St. Louis, MO, 1910. PP 66-286.

NEWSPAPER SOURCES

DOWS ADVOCATE, ADS AND NEWS ARTICLES

December 3, 1886 C.A. Quasdorf--Wagons, sleigh, blacksmith, etc.
Also see article in January 26, 1930 Dows Advocate
regarding 1880 shop.

January 6, 1989 Clipping--Wagon information

July 9, 1897 G.F. Quasdorf Ad

July 28, 1899 G.F.Q. "Old stand" ad

January 26, 1900 G.F.Q. New shop opened

August 10, 1900 G.F.Q. Wagon article

April 1, 1904 G.F.Q. Ad, change of wording

May 5, 1905 G.F.Q. Ad, change of wording

February 10, 1906 G.F.Q. Article about new grinding stone

August 31, 1906 G.F.Q. Ad, change of wording

January 26, 1930 G.F.Q. Historical sketch, for Silver
Anniversary

January 23, 1933 G.F.Q. Obituary

April 12, 1934 Frank A.Q. Ad, added "welding"

August 16, 1934 Frank A.Q. Ad, added "acetylene"

May 23, 1940 Frank A.Q. Ad, Quasdorf Repair Shop, added
"electric"

December 31, 1952 Frank A.Q. Ad, Happy New Year

Little advertising was done after the late 1940's and early 1950's.

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Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Wright County, Iowa

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The property consists of Block 7, Lot 8 of the original town of Dows.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Quasdorf Blacksmith and Wagon Shop.

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Quasdorf Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Wright County, Iowa

