

PS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8/86)
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6

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL
REGISTER

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets. (Form 10-900a). Type all entries. Use letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only archival paper (20 pound, acid free paper with a 2% alkaline reserve).

1. Name of Property _____

historic name C.A. Lawton Company

other names/site number Novelty Manufacturing Co., C.A. Lawton, Lawton Company

2 Location: _____

Street & number: 233 North Broadway N/A Not for Publication

city, town: De Pere N/A vicinity

state: Wisconsin code WI county: Brown county 009 zip code 54115

3 Classification

Ownership of property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>3</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public - Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

none

No. of contributing resources
previously listed in the
National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. ___ See continuation sheet.

[Signature] _____ 11/25/91 _____
Signature of certifying official Date
State Historic Preservation Officer-WI
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. ___ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. [Signature] 1/30/92
___ 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 Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions) Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Industry/Processing/Extraction vacant/not in use
manufacturing facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

foundation stone

walls brick

roof asphalt

other wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The C. A. Lawton Company foundry and machine shop is located on a full block in the center of De Pere, Wisconsin. The block is circumscribed by Broadway Street on the east, James Street on the south, Front Street on the west, and William Street on north. The site lies a block from the east shore of the De Pere harbor of the Fox River. A slight hill from Broadway down to Front Street creates a stepped profile of the buildings from the north and south views. The C. A. Lawton Company complex historic district consists of three contributing buildings. The 1964 addition at the south of building 3 is a non-contributing addition. The complex evolved in an L-shaped pattern as the company grew. Due to the connection of two buildings, it presently appears in plan as two units with a variety of roof lines. The three buildings are best understood, and therefore described below as 1a) the original foundry (built between 1881 and 1884)¹, 1b) the original machine shop (circa 1886)², 2a), the second foundry (built in 1903)³ and 3a) the second machine shop and offices (constructed 1906).⁴ Each of these main units has abutting additions, also described below. See appendices 1-3 for graphic representation of the buildings and additions.

The C. A. Lawton complex follows the stylistic utilitarian industrial design of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some areas of the buildings show commercial Italianate detailing. In particular, the cornice and main entrance on the 1906 office (2a), and the segmentally arched lintels around the entire complex.

X See continuation sheet

¹Sanborn-Perris Insurance Maps, De Pere, 1884, 1890, 1895, 1900, 1914, 1925, 1934-40; Edward Lawton, History of the C. A. Lawton Company (privately printed, 1933).

²Ibid.

³C.A. Lawton Company Minute Book, 31 March, 1903, quoted in Schafer Williams, "C.A. Lawton Company Chronology", 1979, archived in Lawton Company Records room, De Pere, Wisconsin.

⁴Ibid., 9 January, 1906.

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The complex components vary in size and shape relative to their function and the time at which they were built. The size of the building components also increased as the machines being manufactured increased in size. For example, the boiler room (1g) is considerably smaller than the 1906 machine shop (3a). The overall organization of the complex was dictated by the lots owned by the C.A. Lawton Company, and was constricted by the shape of Block 13, bounded by Broadway, James, Front, and Williams Streets as described above.

In general, construction is of brick laid in a common running bond. The clerestories of C and D are wood frame. The support systems for all but the 1964 addition are wooden post and beam. The support systems are still intact, and are especially visible in the open area of building 3a. Gable and shed roofs are used throughout the complex, creating monitor and sawtooth profiles in buildings C and D. Fenestration patterns vary. Painted white signs identifying the property are located on many of the exterior walls. The signs were painted at various unknown dates.

All of the components discussed below, except for 3d, are contributing to the significance of the district.

Components of Building 1

1a) Foundry (circa 1880)

The original foundry was built between 1880 and 1884 according to company history and the Sanborn Insurance Maps for De Pere. Constructed as a tall, one story building with a low gable roof running east-west, it is rectangular in plan. Measuring thirty-feet by sixty-feet, it has a composition roof, brick and rubblestone walls, a rubblestone foundation, and a concrete floor. The south and west elevations are obscured by later historic additions. On the north elevation, eight vertical windows with segmental arch lintels of radiating brick voussoirs are divided into a group of five and a group of three by a wide doorway also topped by a segmental arch of radiating brick voussoirs. The east elevation abuts a terraced driveway, but may originally have been freestanding. Access to a second story created by the addition of a dropped ceiling is through a simple door opening encasing a double-leaf wood door.

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1b) Machine Shop (1886)

The Machine Shop was added to the west elevation of the foundry in 1886.⁵ A one story building forty-feet wide by seventy-feet long, it is oriented north-south, parallel to North Front Street. A low gable composition roof becomes a shed roof where the machine shop abuts the foundry. The brick walls rest on a rubblestone foundation. Fenestration is irregular, with five evenly spaced windows on the north end of the west elevation, one window at the south end of the west elevation, and one window on the east elevation just north of building 1a. Original access to the machine shop was through an opening just north of the window on the south end of the west elevation.

Additions:

South:

Three additions extend across the entire south elevation of the Machine Shop and Foundry, and were constructed between and 1890 and 1895.⁶ From west to east, they are the twenty-one by forty foot blacksmith shop (1c), the core oven⁷ and cupola room (1d) and the coke house (1e) (total of twenty-one feet by sixty feet)⁸. The shed roof of the blacksmith shop follows the line of the machine shop at its juncture with the foundry. The core oven and cupola room and the coke house are covered by an irregular north-south oriented gable roof with parapet walls. The walls of the additions are brick and rubblestone and rest on rubblestone foundations. The material appears to be re-used salvage. Access to these areas is through the garage door on the south end of the west elevation or the door just to the north. Original fenestration can be seen from the interior. In the blacksmith shop three large windows surmounted by low segmental arch lintels pierced the south elevation. The proportion of window space to wall space in building 1 would have been greatest in

⁵Lawton, Edward.

⁶Sanborn Maps; Lawton, Edward.

⁷The core oven was used to bake "cores". Cores are individual units which were set inside a mould to create the complex interior configurations of the metal castings. A wide variety of castings could be made using the same outer mould if the interior cores were changed.

⁸names as rooms were originally used, from Sanborn-Perris Insurance Maps, De Pere, 1884, 1890, 1895, 1900.

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this area. The core oven and cupola room had two windows piercing the south elevation. The openings are simple, unembellished rectangles.

North:

A forty-foot by fifty-foot two story Pattern Shop and office (1f) was added to the north elevation of unit B between 1890 and 1895, probably in 1891.⁹ The composition gable roof running north-south is supported by brick walls which rest on a rubblestone foundation. A cornice of four courses of recessed brick is located beneath slightly projecting eaves. The fenestration pattern varies, but includes tall, fifteen-pane windows on the south end of the west elevation, first story; replaced one-over-one double-hung wood sash windows on the north end of the west elevation and on the north elevation, first story; and twelve-over-twelve double-hung wood sash windows on the west north, and east elevations¹⁰, second story. The line shaft which used water power, and later electricity to power machines is located on the north end of the machine shop.

East:

On the east elevation of the machine shop, at the juncture with the pattern shop, two small, one-story brick units flank a tall, one-story brick boiler room (1g, built between 1914 and 1925, perhaps 1918).¹¹ The Erie City boiler¹² which heated the buildings is situated on a metal frame in the center of the boiler room. On the north of the boiler room is the enamel spraying room (1h, built between 1925 and 1934), and on the south is the engine room (1i, built 1900 and 1914).¹³ Composition roofs cover the additions, gable on the boiler room, shed on the two smaller additions. The enamel spraying room has two sixteen-pane windows in simple rectangular openings.

⁹Sanborn Maps; Lawton, Edward.

¹⁰The windows on the east elevation, second story, have been boarded up.

¹¹Sanborn Maps; Lawton, Edward.

¹²Rau Appraisal Co. "Valuation Report of Chronometric cost inventory for the C.A. Lawton company, De Pere, November 14th, 1922" Archived in the Lawton Company records room, De Pere, Wisconsin.

¹³Sanborn-Perris Insurance Maps, De Pere, 1884, 1890, 1895, 1900, 1914, 1925, 1934-40.

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The boiler room has two doors crowned by segmental arch lintels of radiating voussoirs. Both door openings originally accommodated double leaf wood doors. One opening is located on the north elevation, one on the east elevation.

Components of building 2:

2a) Foundry (1903)

The eighty-foot by one-hundred-twenty-foot foundry was constructed in 1903. A gable composition roof crowns a raised wood-frame monitor running the length of the building parallel to William Street. Shed roofs cover the brick one-story sections at the base of the monitor roof. Wood posts support the structure. The earthen floor is exposed.

The fenestration varies throughout the building. On the west elevation large multipane, fixed sash windows are found in simple openings. On the ground story, the openings are surmounted by segmentally arched brick lintels, while the second story lintels are simple and unornamented. Other windows are obscured by plywood, however, it may be assumed that on the ground floor, north elevation, they are similar to those on the west elevation, and on that on the second story, north and south elevations, they are similar to those in the monitor of building 3a (see below).

Access to the building is provided through a door on the south-end, west elevation, and a garage door on the west end of the north elevation. This large entrance accommodated a railroad spur from the adjacent railroad line.

A two-story cupola house is located on the east end of the south shed roof. The two-story Whiting cupola¹⁴ is made of three layers: "gunnite" lining on the inside, refractory brick in the middle, and sheet metal on the outside. The foundry features the Pawling and Harnischfeger overhead crane¹⁵ used to move large pieces of machinery and containers of molten metal, and a floor-level scale for weighing metal.

Additions:

When the new machine shop was constructed in 1906 (see below), a sixty-six foot by sixty-seven foot Core Room was added to the south elevation of the foundry (2b). A sawtooth composition roof of three peaks crowns the brick walls resting on a

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

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rubblestone foundation. On the south and west elevations of the sawtooth addition the windows are nine-over-nine fixed sash in simple openings with segmentally arched lintels.¹⁶

Also in 1906, a twenty-four-foot, eight-inch by forty-foot, two-story coke and sand room (2c) and a twenty-four-foot by twenty-eight-and-a-half-foot core oven room (2d) were constructed at the east side of the Core Room. These additions are constructed of brick and surmounted by composition shed roofs.¹⁷

3a) Machine shop and offices (1906)

Completed in 1906, the machine shop and offices is a one-hundred-foot by one-hundred-twenty-foot brick building covered by shed and gable composition roofs. The machine shop mirrored the 1903 foundry with a similar two-story wood-frame monitor roof. To the north of the monitor, a shed roof covers a single story. To the south, two parallel shed roofs create a sawtooth. The Broadway Street-oriented offices (east elevation) appear as one story from the street, but on the interior, a second story is suspended above the open work area of the machine shop. Brick corbelling at the cornice wraps around the northeast corner of the building, further delineating the office space from the work shop to the west. A rubble-stone foundation and wood posts support the building.

The fenestration varies throughout the building. On the east elevation and east end of the north elevation, one-over-one double-hung wood sash windows are housed in openings with simple sills and segmental arch lintels. They are grouped in pairs over small rectangular windows, also with segmental arch lintels, which provide light to the machine shop work area. Large multipane, fixed sash windows are found in simple openings on the north elevation, both in the monitor, which is a continuous band of windows, and on the ground story, where the wall to window proportion is greater. The original windows on the west and south elevations are now obscured by additions. The outlines of these windows can be seen from the interior of the building.

Access to the offices is gained through the most highly embellished area of the building. Opening on to Broadway Street, the main entrance is denoted by a heavy

¹⁶Lawton, Edward.

¹⁷Ibid.

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basket arch of raised brick. At the crown of the arch the word "Office" is visible. The semicircle of the basket arch is filled with a fanlight. Double-leaf doors with glass panels are located beneath the fanlight.

The Pawling and Harnischfeger overhead electric crane is in place, suspended on tracks at the base of the monitor roof. No other machinery remains in the machine shop.

Additions:

South:

In 1918¹⁸ a forty-foot by one-hundred-twenty-foot blacksmith shop (first floor), pattern shop (second floor) and office (suspended second floor) (3b) were added to the south elevation of the machine shop and office. The new office facade imitated the original office facade in material, height, cornice, and fenestration pattern. In contrast, the pattern shop is a two-story, gable roof building. The only visible fenestration is on the west elevation, where both segmental arch and flat lintels are found. A metal fire escape provides egress from the second story pattern shop.

In 1964,¹⁹ another addition was made to the south side of the machine shop (3d). The addition included a brick one- and two-story office block, and a two-story concrete block machine shop. While not contributing to the significance of the C. A. Lawton Company complex, they do not negatively affect the site, nor detract from the ability to understand the late nineteenth and early twentieth century industrial buildings.

West:

Originally constructed as distinct buildings to segregate the dust and heat producing foundry from the clean precise machine shop,²⁰ the foundry and the machine shop were joined sometime between 1925 and 1934²¹ to provide easier access from one work area

¹⁸Lawton, Edward.

¹⁹Randall Lawton, president of the Lawton Company, conversation with the author, 14 September, 1991.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Sanborn-Perris Insurance Maps, De Pere, 1884, 1890, 1895, 1900, 1914, 1925, 1934-40.

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to the other. The connection (3c) continued the monitor and shed roof combination of the machine shop, except in the extension of the south sawtooth section, which was given a flat roof. A stepped parapet wall on the west side of the connection abuts the east side of the foundry.

The integrity of the C.A. Lawton Complex is very high. All of the original main buildings remain on site. Some auxiliary buildings have been replaced or enlarged, particularly in the area of building 1, sections g-i. As at most continuously used industrial sites, some windows have been boarded over, filled, or replaced and some doors have been replaced or a previously double-leaf door has had one half removed. The alterations and post-1941 additions do not diminish the overall integrity of the site.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: nationally statewide X locally

Applicable National Register Criteria X A B X C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

 Industry
 Architecture

Period of Significance Significant Dates
 circa 1880 - 1941

Cultural of Affiliation
 N/A

Significant Person
 N/A

Architect/Builder
 unknown

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

Statement of Significance

The C.A. Lawton Company Foundry and Machine Shop is significant under criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places. As an industrial complex which produced manufacturing presses, air compressors, and custom machines, the foundry and machine shop achieve local significance for their contribution to the metal products theme of the industry context of Criterion A. The building complex represents the swells and contractions of the local economy reflected in the history of the Lawton Company. Constructed in a utilitarian manner with some Italianate detailing, the complex also achieves local significance under criterion C in the area of architecture as an excellent example of its property type. Both the exterior and interior retain a high degree of integrity. The period of significance extends from the time of original construction around 1880 to 1941, the National Register of Historic Places cutoff date for a continuously used building complex.

 X See continuation sheet

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1835, under the authority of the legislative council of the territory of Michigan, the Fox River Hydraulic company¹ was organized by William Dickenson, Charles Tuller, and John P. Arndt. In that year, the company platted 114 acres on the east side of the Fox River, registering it as the "Plat of the Town of De Pere" and constructed a dam across the Fox River for the creation of water power.²

De Pere was ideally located to take advantage of the water and railroad transportation networks as it is situated on the Fox River seven miles inland from the river mouth on Lake Michigan, and has been serviced by two rail lines since 1873.³ The river harbor received improvements in 1906 and 1926 to accommodate ever larger shipping vessels.⁴ The Chicago and Northwestern Railroad arrived in De Pere

¹One source, "Once Upon a Time" (see below), referred to the company as the De Pere Hydraulic company, but other sources indicate that "The De Pere Company" was later used by Joseph G. Lawton to refer to the 1850s successor to the 1830s Fox River Hydraulic company.

²"Once Upon a Time - There Were Two Cities at De Pere, and Even Before That De Pere Was the County Seat of Brown County", The Wisconsin Magazine. Special De Pere edition. April, 1931; Joseph G. Lawton Papers, introduction and biography, Area Research Center, University of Wisconsin Green Bay; Deborah B. Martin, History of Brown County Wisconsin, Past and Present. (S. J. Clarke Publishing Company: Chicago, 1913), 305.

³Martin, 305.

⁴Hugo S. Wells, "De Pere's Harbor Development Means Everything to the Industrial Welfare of the Community" The Wisconsin Magazine De Pere Supplement, April 1931, 15.

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in 1864 and was followed by the Milwaukee Northern (later the Chicago, Minneapolis and St. Paul) in 1873.⁵

De Pere was voted the county seat of Brown County in 1837. At that time, Brown County included all of eastern and northeastern Wisconsin. By March of 1838, the Fox River Hydraulic company boasted that the area where a solitary dwelling had stood eighteen months before "is now the seat of justice of Brown county, with a splendid court house, jail, a three-story public house, a schoolhouse, postoffice, warehouse and dock, one store, one grocery, one blacksmith shop, one cabinet shop, and twenty-eight dwellings."⁶ The village of De Pere was incorporated in 1857 and in 1883 the City of De Pere was incorporated by an act of the state legislature.⁷

Manufacturing in De Pere increased rapidly. The city's first flour mill was established in 1843 by Joel Fisk. It was located between the Fox River and Front Street between James Street on the north and George Street on the south.⁸ In 1855, Square and Sabine built a saw mill on the west side of the Fox River, and Elias Sorenson founded De Pere's first shipyard. William Kinsley built a mill on the east side of the Fox River in 1856, and in 1858, Randall Wilcox and Eugene Wager built a stone mill on the river at the end of James Street. In 1864, Seldon and Bliss constructed a stave factory on the west side of the river. By this time, the E. E. Bolles Woodworking Company, the Marsh shingle mill, the Wilcox sawmill, Ryan's flour mill, Kingsley's sawmill, the Ritchie mill, and Andrew Reed's sawmill were all operating at full capacity. When the Civil War was over, the industrial business slowed, and De Pere's growth stagnated. By 1870, business revived and more industries were established in De Pere. The new businesses included Collette's stave and sawmill, the Fox River furnace, the National furnace, and the De Pere Steam Forge and the De Pere Iron Works. The panic of 1873 again slowed the progress of all of these industries. By 1881, the Novelty Manufacturing Company had been established by C. A. Lawton, and was joined by the De Pere Mills, Dunham and Davis flour mill,

⁵1857-1907 Souvenir City Blue Book, De Pere, Wis., 1907-8, n.p.

⁶Ibid.

⁷"Once Upon a Time."

⁸Sanborn-Perris Insurance Maps, De Pere, Wisconsin, 1884, 1890, 1895, 1900, 1914, 1926, 1934.

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Fox River Mills, and Arndt Brothers and Company's Mill. The opening of the Shattuck and Babcock division of the Kimberly Clark Corporation paper mill in 1892 provided De Pere with a stable industry. Regionally, the paper industry secured the success of the Fox River Valley. The Shattuck and Babcock mill required new machinery, securing the success of the C.A. Lawton Company⁹

Metal Products Industry in Wisconsin¹⁰

Wisconsin's foundry industry began in 1839 with the establishment of a foundry in Milwaukee. Industrial growth was arrested in 1857 as the nation felt the economic panic of that year. After the Civil War and the Panic of 1873, the industry swelled to strength between 1880 and 1913. During this time, the foundry and machine shop industry was transformed from a collection of small operations with a primarily local clientele to a technologically innovative industry with an international client base.¹¹

The metal products industry had been successful because of the growth of grain, wool, and paper milling, and the mills' need for machinery. Eventually, the proximity of Michigan's mineral-rich Upper Peninsula relaxed the need for long-distance transportation of raw material. The machine shops and foundries of the Upper Fox River supported growing industry in the region. Other important areas of metal product production were Milwaukee, the lower Rock River, and the eastern shore of the Mississippi in the areas of La Crosse and Eau Claire.¹²

⁹Martin, pp. 306-307.

¹⁰Although the Metal Products Industry study unit of the Industry theme in Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin has not been completed and therefore this context has not been fully developed, other sources provide background regarding this topic. In particular, the 1952 master's thesis Men of Metal provides an in depth analysis of the foundry and machine shop industry.

¹¹Robert Taylor Hilton, Men of Metal: A History of the Foundry Industry in Wisconsin. Master's Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1952.

¹²Ibid.

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It was not unusual for machine shops and heavy equipment plants to be established in close proximity to Wisconsin's paper mills. The communities of Beloit and Appleton are representative of this relationship through the firms of Merrill and Houston in Beloit and the Appleton Machine Company, the Valley Iron Works, the Appleton Wire Works, the Wisconsin Wire Company, and the Appleton Woolen Mills in Appleton.¹³

In nearby Green Bay, the machine shop of David Hudson and Alexander Sharp provided sawmilling machinery and later papermaking equipment to the lumber and paper industries. Other Green Bay equipment manufacturers included the Paper Converting Machine Company and the Alwin Manufacture Company. Many such manufacturers invented and designed the equipment they made.¹⁴

The Lawton Company

In 1879, Charles A. Lawton and E. W. Arndt formed the Novelty Manufacturing Company with the intent to service other industries in the area. They located in an unused two story wood frame building located on the Fox River west of Front Street between James and George streets. Arndt was in the flour milling business, and suggested the invention of a machine that would separate the bran from the wheat after the stone milling process. Lawton took out a patent for the "Bran Dresser" which would become one of the company's first products. Enthusiasm for the bran dresser waned after the 1881 introduction of the Stevens Rolling Press by John Stevens of Neenah, Wisconsin. Lawton and Arndt also began to make the roller mills, and in the ensuing three years were successful enough to require improved facilities. Sometime between 1881 and

¹³Barbara Wyatt, Project Director. Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: Volume 2, A Manual for Historic Properties (Madison, Wisconsin: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), Industry Theme, 6-8 - 6-9.

¹⁴Ibid.

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1884, the company moved one block northwest, and constructed the thirty foot by sixty foot foundry at the back of lot 8, block 13 of the original plat of De Pere.¹⁵

The Jones Bank, from whom the Novelty Manufacturing Company had received a \$7,000.00 loan, had financial difficulties and demanded full payment on its loans in 1886. At the time, the Novelty Manufacturing Company could not make such payment, so it collected its outstanding accounts and made a payment agreement for the balance of the note.¹⁶ In order to retain the manufacturing business in De Pere, local business and tradesmen contributed to Lawton's solvency by settling the debt with the bank, purchasing the machinery and reselling it to Lawton at a quarter of its value, and contributing building materials for a new building.¹⁷

Lawton proceeded to build a new machine shop abutting the west wall of the foundry. In this venture, he had no partners, and dubbed his enterprise "C.A. Lawton, Machine Shop and Foundry".¹⁸ In 1889, C.A. Lawton's son Edward joined the family business. In the same year the brick foundry and machine shop survived a fire which destroyed most of the other buildings in downtown De Pere.¹⁹ A contract from the Kimberly Clark Company (Shattuck and Babcock division) for machinery for their new De Pere paper mill spurred growth in 1890-91, as an item in the local newspaper relates:

Work in C. A. Lawton's foundry is being pushed with extraordinary speed, Mr. Lawton having secured the contract for a large quantity of castings

¹⁵Sanborn-Perris Insurance Maps, De Pere, 1884, 1890, 1895, 1900, 1914, 1925, 1934-40; Edward Lawton, History of the C. A. Lawton Company (privately printed, 1933); Barbara Wyatt, Industry, 8-6.

¹⁶Lawton, Edward.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.; Sanborn-Perris Insurance Maps, De Pere, 1884, 1890, 1895, 1900, 1914, 1925, 1934-40.

¹⁹Patricia Brault and Linda Wanless, History of the C.A. Lawton Company, 1879-1920. Paper for HS 255, 29 October, 1982, located in Local History department, Brown County Public Library, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

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for the Shattuck and Babcock papermills.²⁰

The increase in business mandated the addition of a two story pattern room to the north end of the machine shop.²¹

Edward Lawton became a partner in the business in 1898, and the name was changed to C. A. Lawton and Company.²² In 1901, C.A. Lawton and Company advertised as Founders and Machinists, Shafting, Machine Mounded Pulleys, Hangers, Rope Sheaves, etc. Manufacturers of Saw, Paper and Pulp Mill Machinery, castings of all kinds.²³

The company was renamed again in 1902 after incorporating, this time as the C.A. Lawton Company.²⁴ During the year following incorporation, the National Bank of De Pere loaned the C.A. Lawton Company \$35,000.00 with which the new foundry was built (building 2). Three years later, the company acquired lots 1 and 2 of block 13, and proceeded to building the new machine shop (building 3) and additions to the new foundry (2b,c,d).²⁵ By this time, the machines were run with electricity, and no longer required the line shaft which had powered the machines in the first generation machine shop (1b).

²⁰De Pere Democrat, 23 April, 1891.

²¹Lawton, Edward.

²²Ibid.

²³A.G. Wright, Wrights Directory of Green Bay with De Pere and Brown County, 1901, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1901, p. 333.

²⁴20 November, 1902, C.A. Lawton Company Minute Book, quoted in Schafer Williams, "C.A. Lawton Company Chronology", 1979, archived in Lawton Company Records room, De Pere, Wisconsin.

²⁵Lawton, Edward.

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In 1918, the year after C.A. Lawton's death, under the presidency of Edward W. Lawton, the C.A. Lawton Company added a two story pattern shop (building 3, b) to the south side of the machine shop (building 3a).²⁶

During the Depression, the Lawton Company laid off workers and cut employee and management salaries. By developing V-belt sheaves, the Lawton flat belt pulley system kept competitive with the rest of the market. In 1937, the Lawton Company established themselves in the Hydraulic Press market with their Rotar Stator press. This line of products, and the toilet paper roll wrappers (the Twist and Tuck machine), developed in 1939, have been a mainstay of the company's products ever since.²⁷

In 1939, Edward D. Lawton relinquished the company presidency to his son, C.A. Lawton II. During World War II, the C.A. Lawton Company supplied a ship builder in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, with a variety of ship propellers and submarine parts. After the war, the Lawton company shop and foundries employees were unionized. The 1950s and 60s brought prosperity to the Lawton Company. Their major product - the hydraulic press, was bigger and heavier than those made previously. To accommodate the large machines, the company expanded once again with a large two story addition at the south end of the machine shop (3d).²⁸

The Lawton Company remained in the complex at 233 North Broadway Street until 1988, at which time the City of De Pere purchased the site for redevelopment and gradually relocated the company to the De Pere Industrial park. The last Lawton Company employees moved from the Broadway Street location in July of 1991.²⁹

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Lawton Company History prepared by the company for its 100th anniversary, 1979. Archived in the C.A. Lawton Record Room, De Pere, Wisconsin.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Lenore Erickson, Administrative Assistant, Lawton Company, conversation with the author, 14 September, 1991.

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Local Industrial Comparisons

De Pere had only one foundry/machine shop of historical longevity and it was the Lawton Company. It also has the highest integrity of any industrial site in De Pere.

More modest in size than the other industry of importance in De Pere, the Nicolet Paper Company mill, the C.A. Lawton Company complex has proportionally more original building mass than the Nicolet. The four story Nicolet Paper Company mill was built in 1892 as the Shattuck and Babcock Division of Kimberly Clark. At the time they made high-grade writing paper entirely from cotton rags. Line shafts and belts driven by water wheels provided power to all the machines in the mill. The property was owned by the American Writing Paper Company from 1899 to 1927 when it was sold to an industrial group who renamed the mill the Nicolet Paper Company. In 1946, when Nicolet became a subsidiary of Millprint Inc, the wooden beams and floors were replaced with steel and concrete. The firm was taken over by Philip Morris Industrial Products in 1957.³⁰

Other metal products industries have come and gone in De Pere. In 1884, while the Novelty Manufacturing Company was the only metal-related enterprise on the east side of the Fox River, there were three on the west side. The West De Pere Agricultural Works had a wood frame foundry and a brick machine shop, the De Pere Steam Forge Works was also in a wood frame building, and the Fox River Furnace of M.B. Rogers consisted of two brick casting houses flanking a wood frame stock house and crusher. These enterprises were located near the Fox River, just west of the present site of the Nicolet Paper Company. By 1890, none of the three metal-related operations on the west side of the river were operating.³¹

Between 1900 and 1914, two new De Pere factories were established. They were located on either side of Main Avenue between Fifth and Eighth Streets. The D. Kidney and Son Boat Builders occupied a large brick complex on the north side of Main Avenue. The office and shop were constructed in 1900. Additions were made in 1905 and 1914.

³⁰Nicolet Paper Company NAER Inventory Card, Fox River Valley Industrial Survey, July, 1979. On file at the Division of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.

³¹Sanborn-Perris Insurance Maps, De Pere, 1884, 1890, 1895, 1900, 1914, 1925, 1934-40.

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The company closed during the Depression and was reopened as the Fox River Boat Works in 1941. Between 1951 and 1952 this company went out of business. In 1959, the current occupants, the Palmer Manufacturing Company moved into the complex. The Kidney and Sons site has received numerous recent additions.³²

John Roffer, maker of dairy barn equipment and steel gates, began a more modest operation in a brick building on the south side of Main Avenue in 1906. From 1911 to 1919 the building was operated by Western Steel and Iron Works. In 1920, the Hudson Manufacturing Company, still making farm equipment, took over the property and remained there until 1964. Badger Wood Products now occupies the site. Since 1989, the site has undergone extensive remodeling to unify the varying facades of later additions. Little of the complex is recognizable.³³

The C.A. Lawton Company complex represents late nineteenth and early twentieth century industrial buildings with greater integrity and higher clarity than either of these sites.

De Pere's industries were based primarily on milling of grain and manufacturing of paper. The A. G. Wells Company had the longest life of any grain mill in the community. The A. G. Wells company was established in 1873 and was incorporated in 1893. The company erected a grain elevator and also handled coal and building materials. After 1900 the A. G. Wells company began milling formula feeds, cleaning and processing seeds, and shipping grains.³⁴ These buildings were destroyed in the

³²Kidney and Sons Boat Builders/Palmer Manufacturing Corporation, NAER Inventory Card, Fox River Valley Industrial Survey, July, 1979. On file at the Division of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison; William Patske, City Planner, De Pere, Wisconsin, conversation with author, 23 September, 1991.

³³Iron and Steel Grate Company/Western Steel and Iron Works, NAER Inventory Card, Fox River Valley Industrial Survey, July, 1979. On file at the Division of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison; Patske.

³⁴"Farm Community has Depended Upon A. G. Wells Company for 73 Years" Wisconsin Magazine 1951, special Green Bay edition, p. 111.

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1980s as part of the De Pere redevelopment program which also threatened the Lawton Company complex.³⁵

Significance - Industry

The C.A. Lawton Company and its direct precursors, the Novelty Manufacturing Company; C.A. Lawton; C.A. Lawton and Co., have been producing industrial machines since at least 1879. The company remained in the same location through the late 1980s, with the last component of the company vacating the Broadway Street site in July of 1991. The buildings in the Lawton complex reflect the rises and falls of the local economy over much of De Pere's history.

The company provided needed products to local industries, including most particularly the Shattuck and Babcock division of the Kimberly Clark Corporation paper mill (presently the Nicolet Paper company). They also provided power transmission machinery to many other companies. Their gas generators and air compressors provided rural America with access to electricity before electrical lines were ubiquitous.

The history of the company also reflects advancements in technology. As an example, while the process for making castings has remained much the same, there have been some adjustments in the mould materials. In the nineteenth century, molten metal was poured directly into a mould of sand bound with seacoal, bentonite, and a small amount of moisture. If there was too much moisture, it would turn to steam, creating holes in the metal casting. Currently the the company uses a solution of soybean extract, water and acid to create polymer bonds which harden the sand into a mould. The company also uses the more ephemeral styrofoam mold for one-time castings.³⁶

None of the original manufacturing equipment remains at the complex. Four features vital to production do remain, however, as integral parts of the building. These are: the overhead cranes in buildings 2a and 3a; the cupola in building 2a, the boiler in building 1g, and the line shaft in building 1b.

³⁵William Patske, City Planner, De Pere, Wisconsin, conversation with author, 23 September, 1991.

³⁶Randall Lawton, president of the Lawton Company, conversation with the author, 14 September, 1991.

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The 1903 foundry (2a) and 1906 machine shop (3a) features the Pawling and Harnischfeger overhead crane³⁷ used to move large pieces of machinery and containers of molten metal. It is suspended on tracks at the base of the monitor roof in each building.

Both the original foundry and the foundry built in 1903 depended on a "cupola" for a consistent supply of metal. The cupola is the oven in which the metal for casting is heated to become molten. The cupola in the 1903 foundry was loaded with pig iron and metal scraps by wagon from the second floor. The cupola consists of three layers: the metal outer shell, the refractory brick inner core, and a lining - known colloquially as gunnite. Both buildings were also equipped with coke ovens. Traditional coal does not heat metal high enough to pour. Coke is coal with most of the gases removed by heating. When burned and fanned with air from a thirty horsepower fan system (not extant), it achieves the high temperatures required. The Lawton Company made their own coke from coal in the coke oven.³⁸

The tall one-story brick boiler room (built between 1914 and 1925, perhaps 1918)³⁹ houses the Erie City boiler which heated the buildings.⁴⁰

The line shaft which used water power, and later electricity to power machines is located on the north end of the machine shop. It provided energy to multiple machines from a single power source. A series of ever smaller concentric circles increased the speed and therefore the power derived from one large water wheel. The location of the original water wheel is unknown. When electricity became available, rather than purchasing new individually-motored machinery, the C.A. Lawton Company converted the line shaft to electricity and were therefore able to continue using

³⁷Rau Appraisal Co. "Valuation Report of Chronometric cost inventory for the C.A. Lawton company, De Pere, November 14th, 1922" Archived in the Lawton Company records room, De Pere, Wisconsin.

³⁸Randall Lawton.

³⁹Sanborn Maps; Lawton, Edward.

⁴⁰Rau Appraisal Co.

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previously water powered machines. The initial power source was upgraded to electricity, but the individual machines remained the same.⁴¹

Products:

After the company abandoned making the bran dresser, they continued to make flour milling machinery. Parts were produced as components of C.A. Lawton Company machines, other companies' new machines, and as replacement parts for existing machinery. They also made gas engine generators, air compressors, power transmission machinery (gears and pulleys), hydraulic presses for molding consumer products, and custom machines such as paper mill machinery, toilet paper roll wrappers (the Lawtomatic "Twist and Tuck" machine), and cranberry pickers.⁴²

The C.A. Lawton Company foundries and machine shops are significant for their contribution to local industrial history. By providing machinery and parts to paper mills, other manufacturers, and farms, they became an integral part of a multi-layered industrial community in the upper Fox River Valley. The manner in which the complex grew mirrored the progress of the inter-related industries in the area. The C.A. Lawton Company complex illustrates the technological progression of the industrial process, seen in the transition from water power to electricity and their development of increasingly larger machines and facilities. The complex achieves local significance under criterion A under the metal products unit of the Industrial theme identified in Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: Volume 2, A Manual for Historic Properties. Both the exterior and interior retain a high degree of integrity. The period of significance extends from the time of original construction circa 1880 to 1941, the National Register of Historic Places cutoff for a continuously used building complex.

⁴¹Randall Lawton.

⁴²"Lawton Company Makes Paper Mill Machinery" The Wisconsin Magazine. Special De Pere edition, April 1931.

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Significance - Architecture

The Lawton Company manufacturing complex illustrates common industrial architecture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; the open interior spaces required for machinery assembly, and the typical growth by accretion for a continually used site. Constructed of brick, the primarily utilitarian buildings exhibit some commercial Italianate detailing. In particular, the cornice and main entrance on the 1903 office, and the segmentally arched lintels around the entire complex.

Sanborn Insurance Maps of De Pere indicate that other contemporary metal working shops in the area were composed of small interdependent foundries and machine shops. Companies which began after 1900 initially had larger buildings than the post-Civil War companies. Foundries and machine shops were rectangularly massed one or two story buildings containing trabeated open work spaces. Wood posts and beams provided structural support. Banks of windows allowed light into the work area. Packed earth or concrete floors were employed throughout the complexes.⁴³

The C.A. Lawton Company building complex is an intact representation with few post-1941 alterations of the industrial complex type described above. Brick loadbearing walls rest on rubblestone foundations. Two story, tall one story, and standard one story buildings comprise the complex. The pre-1900 buildings have vertical windows with a high wall to window proportion. The post 1900 buildings have significantly larger windows with a lower wall to window proportion. Exterior architectural detailing is minimal. Cornices and windows reflect the popular Italianate commercial style in their respective corbelling and segmental arched lintels. In buildings 2a and 3a, the trabeated structural system is intact. The wood posts, beams, and metal "u" plates are particularly apparent in building 3a. In other areas, notably the south sawtooth section of the 1903 foundry (2b), the steel trusswork is evident.

None of the original manufacturing equipment remains at the complex. However, four features vital to production do remain as integral parts of the building. These are: the overhead cranes in buildings 2a and 3a; the cupola in building 2a, the boiler in building 1g, and the line shaft in building 1b. While room functions changed as the complex grew, the functions remained related to the size of the interior space. For example, in building 2a one open room served two purposes: large castings were made

⁴³Sanborn-Perris Insurance Maps, De Pere, 1884, 1890, 1895, 1900, 1914, 1925, 1934-40.

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in the two story high space beneath the monitor roof, while small (less than ten pounds) castings were made in the one story space under the shed roof on the north.⁴⁴ Therefore, in some cases, room function can be interpreted from remaining features and room size.

Constructed in a utilitarian manner with some Italianate detailing, the complex achieves significance under criterion C as an excellent example of an industrial building complex as a property type. Both the exterior and interior retain a high degree of integrity. The complex is significant on the local level. The period of significance extends from the time of original construction around 1880 to 1941, the National Register of Historic Places cutoff date for a continuously used building complex.

⁴⁴Randall Lawton.

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County Public Library, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

X See continuation sheet

 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

 X Other

Specify repository:

Lawton Company Records, 1860

Enterprise Road, De Pere, WI

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 2 acres

UTM References

A 1/6 4 1/5/5/6/0 4/9/2/2/0/0 B 1/6 4/1/5/5/6/0 4/9/2/2/3/0/5
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

C 1/6 4/1/5/6/2/5 4/9/2/2/3/0/5 D 1/6 4/1/5/6/2/5 4/9/2/2/1/9/5

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the C. A. Lawton Company foundries and machine shops define block 13 of the original plat of De Pere, Wisconsin. This block is bounded by North Broadway Street on the east, James Street on the south, North Front Street on the West and William Street on the north.

Boundary Justification

Block 13 is the entire parcel which has been historically associated with teh C.A. Lawton Company.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rebecca Sample Bernstein, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization for the Alexander Co., Madison date September 24, 1991

street & number 309 Norris Court telephone (608) 251-4615

city or town Madison state WI zip code 53703

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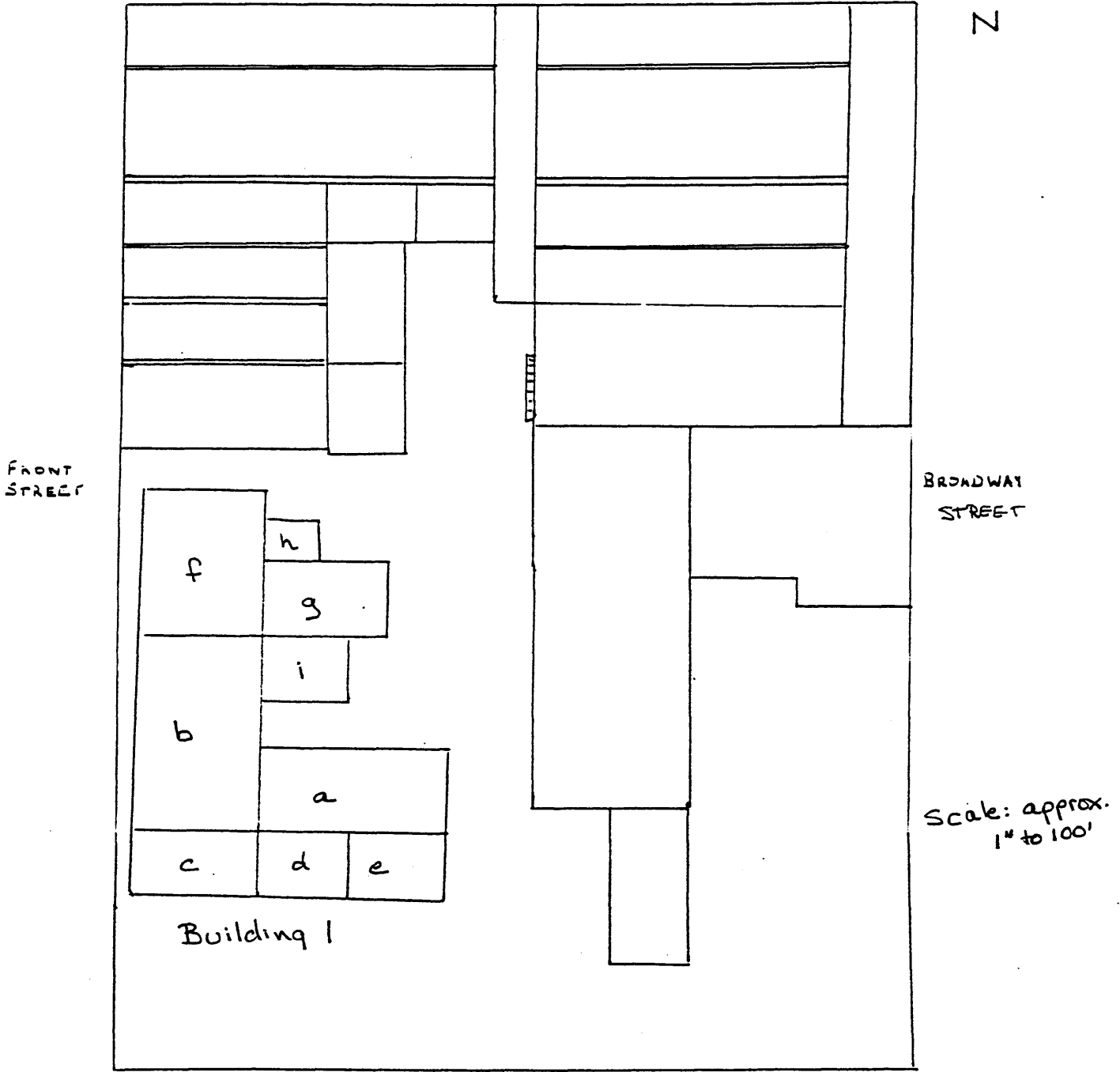
Section Number photos Page 1

Photographs:

Property: C.A. Lawton Company
Location: De Pere, Brown County, Wisconsin
Photographer: Rebecca Sample Bernstein
Date: 13, 14 September, 1991
Depository: State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

1. The east facade of the C.A. Lawton Company offices, building 3a,b, and d, facing southwest.
2. The east facade of the C.A. Lawton Company offices, building 3a,b, and d, facing northwest.
3. The main entrance, east facade of the C.A. Lawton Company offices, building 3a, facing west.
4. The north facade of the C.A. Lawton Company offices, building 3a,b, c, and 2a, facing southwest.
5. The interior southwest corner of building 3a, facing southwest. Showing wood post and beam construction and metal "u" plate.
6. The west elevation of buildings 2a and b, facing southeast.
7. The cupola room and tower, exterior, south wall of building 2a, facing northwest.
8. The base of the cupola, interior south wall of building 2a, facing south.
9. The interior of building 2b, showing trusses and sawtooth roof, facing west.
10. The west elevation of building 1f, facing east.
11. The west facade of building 1b, facing northeast.
12. The line shaft, interior of building 1b, facing northeast.
13. The northeast corner of building 1, facing southwest.

Appendix I; C.A. Lawton Company; National Register of Historic Places nomination
WILLIAM STREET



JAMES STREET

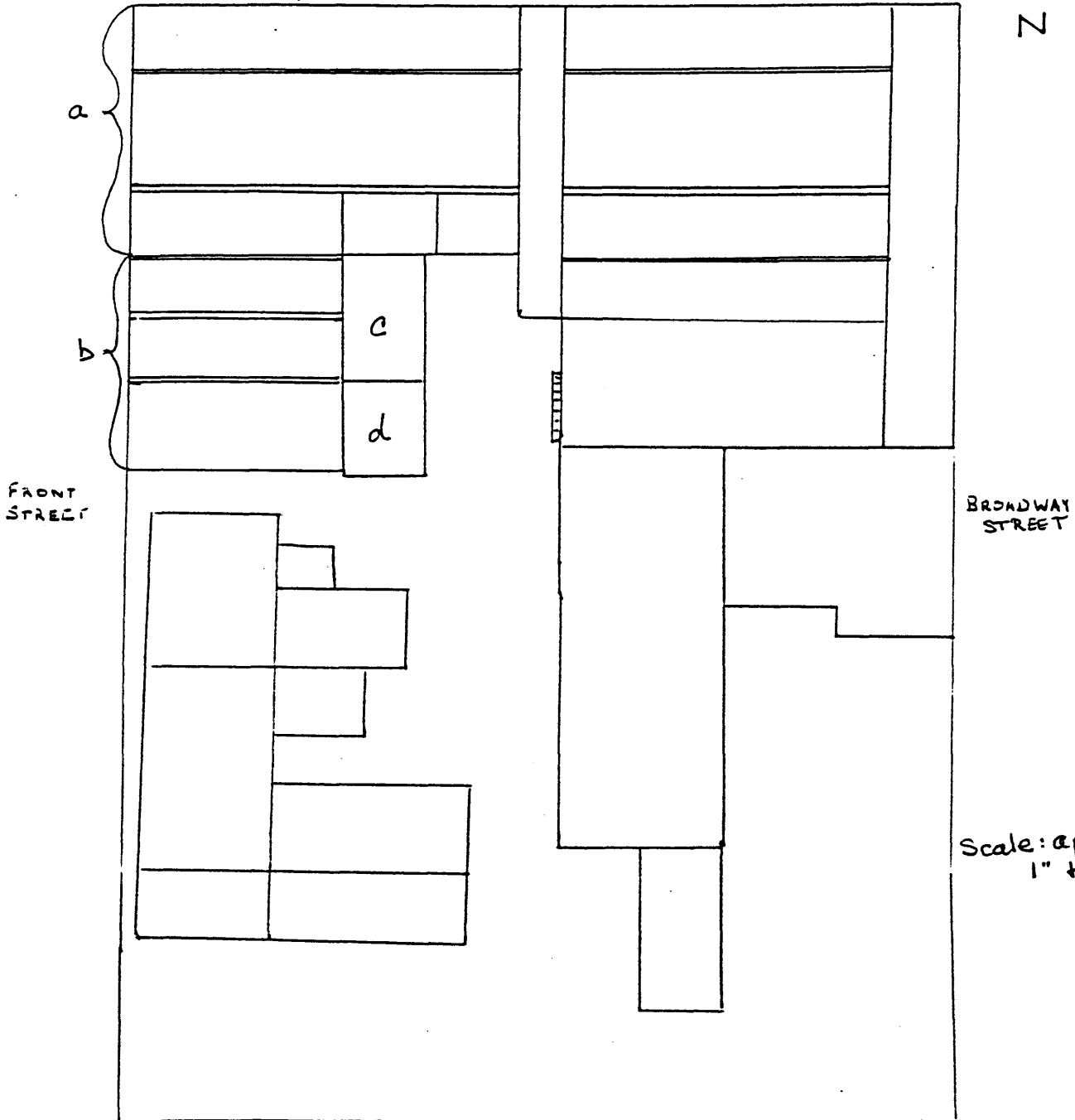
C. A. LAWTON COMPANY
FOUNDRY
MACHINE SHOP
233 N. Broadway Street
DE PERE, WISCONSIN

Sketch map of
components of
Building 1

Appendix 2; C.A. Lawton Company; National Register of
Historic Places Nomination
WILLIAM STREET



Building 2



JAMES STREET

C. A. LAWTON COMPANY
FOUNDRY
MACHINE SHOP
233 N. Broadway Street
DE PERE, WISCONSIN

Sketch map of
components of
Building 2

Appendix 3; C.A. Lawton Company; National Register of Historic Places Nomination

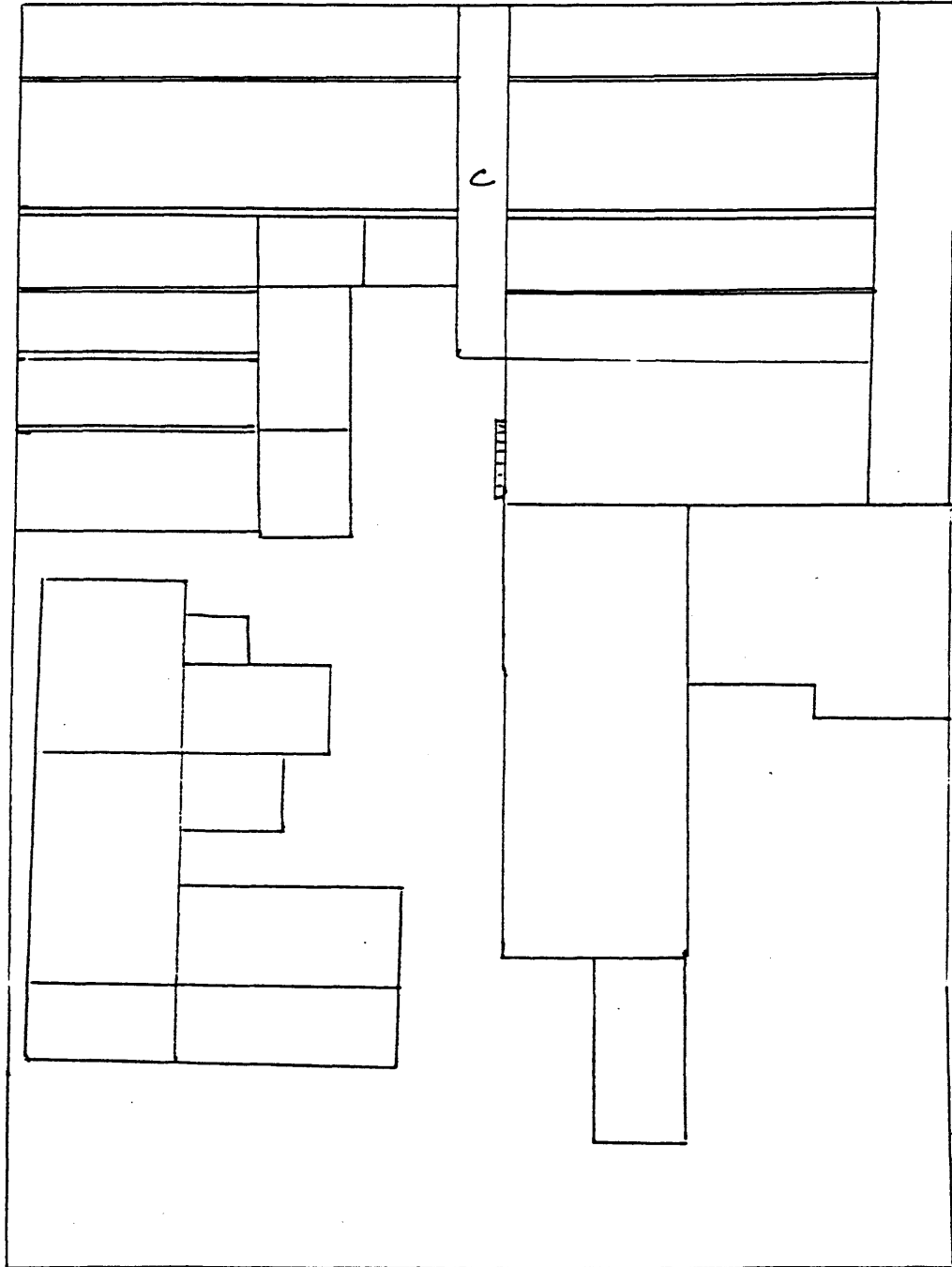
WILLIAM STREET

Building 3



N

FRONT STREET



BROADWAY STREET

Scale: approx.
1" to 100'

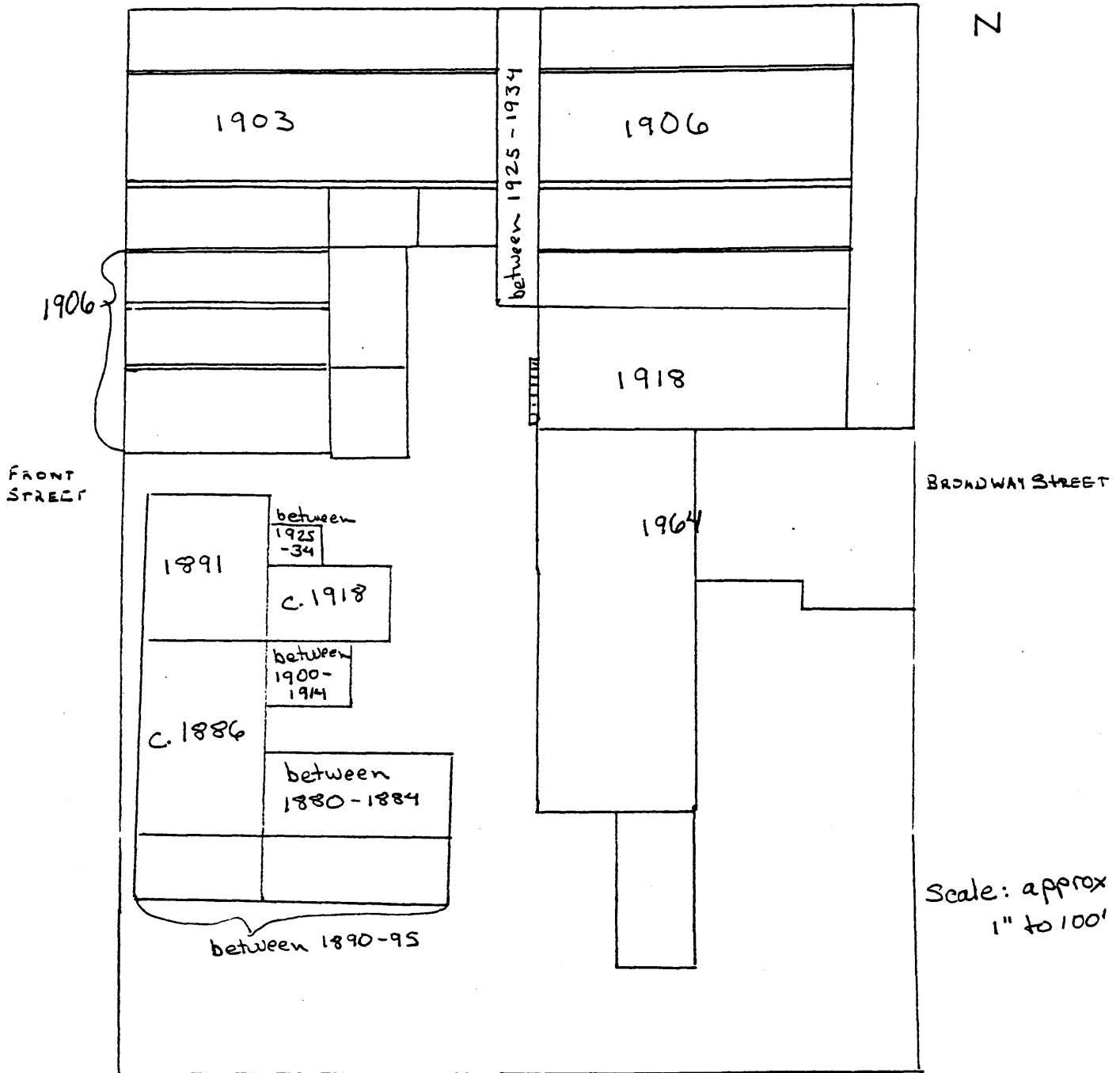
JAMES STREET

C.A. LAWTON COMPANY
FOUNDRY
MACHINE SHOP
233 N. Broadway Street
DE PERE, WISCONSIN

Sketch map of
components of
Building 3

Appendix 4; C.A. Lawton Company; National Register of Historic Places Nomination

WILLIAM STREET



JAMES STREET

C.A. LAWTON COMPANY
FOUNDRY
MACHINE SHOP
233 North Broadway Street
DE PERE, WISCONSIN

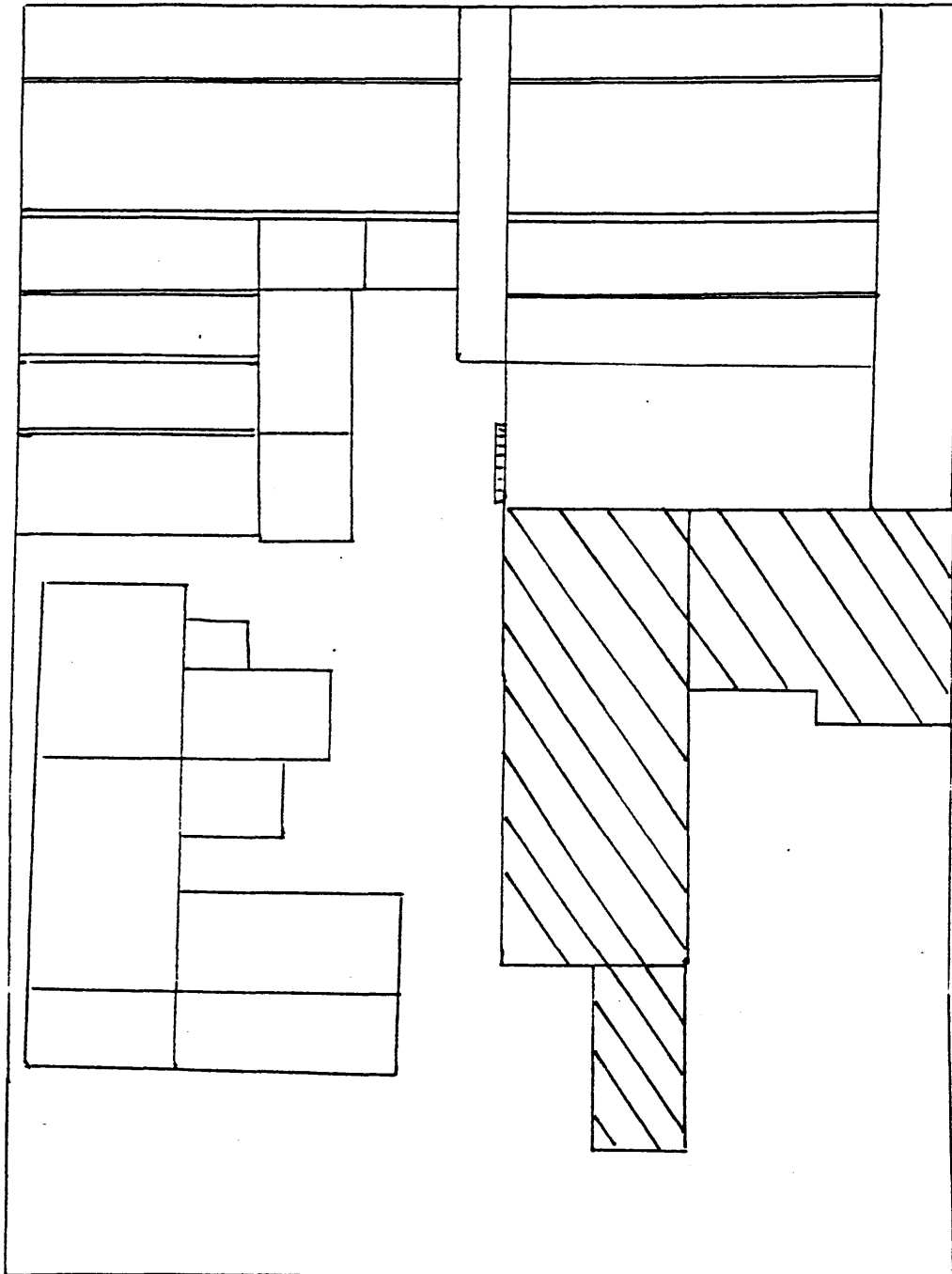
Sketch map of
Building Additions and
Construction dates

Appendix 5; C.A. Lawton Company; National Register of Historic Places nomination

WILLIAM STREET



FRONT STREET



BROADWAY

□ contributing

▨ non-contributing

Scale: approx
1" = 100'

JAMES STREET

C.A. LAWTON COMPANY
FOUNDRY
MACHINE SHOP
233 N. Broadway Street
DE PERE, WISCONSIN

Sketch map showing
contributing and
non-contributing buildings