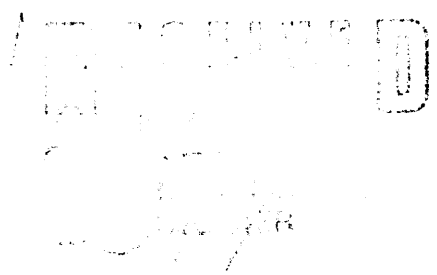


NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8/86)
Wisconsin Word Processor Format (NRF.txt)
(Approved 3/87)

OMB No. 1024-0018



United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

**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 COLUMBUS DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number SEE INVENTORY N/A Not for Publication

city, town COLUMBUS N/A vicinity

state WI code WI county COLUMBIA code 021 zip code 53925

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>60</u>	<u>16</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
		<u>60</u>	<u>16</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 3

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] Signature of certifying official 1/22/92 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.
 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:)

Entered in the National Register
[Signature] 3/5/92

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant
GOVERNMENT/city hall
EDUCATION/library

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant
GOVERNMENT/city hall
EDUCATION/library

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)Materials
(enter categories from instructions)

ITALIANATE

foundation LIMESTONEwalls BRICKLIMESTONE

PRAIRIE SCHOOL

roof ASPHALTother STONEWOOD

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

DESCRIPTION

The Columbus Downtown Historic District contains 79 resources that comprise virtually all of the surviving buildings in the historic downtown core area of the city of Columbus that are associated with commercial activity. The great majority of these resources are cream brick two and three-story Italianate style and Commercial Vernacular form buildings that were built between 1852 and 1938. Mixed in with this highly intact group are several good examples of Neo-Classical Revival and Romanesque Revival style buildings and the district is especially notable for its two Prairie School buildings: the Columbus Public Library (NRHP - 11/15/90) and the internationally known Farmers and Merchants Union Bank (NHL - 1/7/76) designed by Louis Sullivan.

The district covers an area of approximately 10 acres, the center of which is formed by the intersection of James Street and Ludington Street. This intersection is known locally as the "four corners" and it defines the historic hub of commercial activity in the city. James Street in particular corresponds to the "Main Street" of Columbus and divides downtown streets into north and south portions. The resulting district is cruciform in shape and extends for a block in all four directions from this center: north to Mill Street and south to Harrison Street; east to Water Street and west to Dickason Boulevard. Also included are three buildings on the west side of Dickason Boulevard; the Public Library, the City Hall and Brokopp's Meat Market (#1, 74 & 75), and several commercial buildings on the east side of North Dickason Boulevard across from the City Hall and Brokopps (#70, 71A, 71, 72, 73).

The first impression one gets when driving through the district is of a very intact and architecturally coherent area that is comprised largely of two and three-story Italianate and commercial vernacular form cream brick buildings. This unified impression is in large part due to the fact that so many of the district buildings were built by a man named Richard Vanaken, who apprenticed to the carpenters and joiners trade in New York for ten years before coming to Columbus in 1856. With few exceptions, he built his buildings of the cream brick so readily available in Milwaukee and Watertown. As general contractor Vanaken

 X see continuation sheet

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often worked with a German-trained mason named Henry Boelte, who came to Columbus in the early 1850s. Usually Boelte built the foundations of these buildings out of the local limestone and he and Vanaken then did the brick work together. When Vanaken died in 1918, his obituary stated that he had erected nearly half the residential and business buildings in Columbus.

The "four corners" at the intersection of James and Ludington Streets, (the site of the city's only stoplights) is anchored by four cream brick buildings, two of which (#45 & #8) were built by Vanaken and display his typically elaborate brick work and (in this instance) Italianate detail. The other two earlier 1850s buildings (#67 & #26) are much less elaborate and more stolid-looking Commercial Vernacular examples.

Going north from this intersection on Ludington Street, the eye is attracted to an excellent 1877 Italianate style double building on the east side of the street that is distinguished by its brick trim and elaborate tin cornice (#46). The other (west) side of the street is dominated by the red brick three-story Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style Tremont Hotel building (#53) built in 1892.

Going south on Ludington Street from the "four corners," more of the buildings date from the early twentieth century than do those to the north. Several of the facades on these buildings have now been totally or partially modernized, although at least one hides a great deal of history (#22). An excellent unaltered example is located at the end of the block, on the corner of Harrison Street. This is a commercial vernacular form two-story white brick garage building (#15) that was built in 1910.

Going east on James Street from the "four corners," the north side of the street has an exceptionally fine group of very similar two and three-story Italianate style cream brick buildings (#40, 41, 42, 43 & 44). On the south side, where the streetscape is made up of a more eclectic mix of one, two and three-story buildings, the standout building is a tan brick 1898 commercial vernacular saloon that features an excellent Richardsonian Romanesque Revival entranceway (#29).

Going west on James Street from the "four corners" towards Dickason Boulevard, the buildings on either side form an especially interesting and intact streetscape that includes two fine early twentieth century

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commercial vernacular form buildings situated across the street from each other. The building on the south side is constructed of tan and red brick (#4), the one on the north side of tan brick and red sandstone (#66). The west end of the block then forms a second "four corners" at the intersection of James Street and Dickason Boulevard. The pivotal buildings here are the 1892 Richardsonian Romanesque-Revival City Hall with its clock tower (#74), a lovely Vanaken Italianate style commercial building (#68), the excellent Prairie School style Columbus Public Library (#1), and a delightful surprise; the last of Louis Sullivan's banks, his jewel box-like Farmers and Merchant's Union Bank (#2). Each of these four buildings is nicely exposed to view, thanks to the width of Dickason Boulevard with its tree-lined median. Thankfully, the district is enhanced, not overpowered, by these buildings.

The Columbus Downtown Historic District is made up of seventy-nine structures, sixty-two of which are contributing and fifteen of which are non-contributing. Of the non-contributing buildings in the district, two on the north and south ends of Ludington Street (#51 & #16) are of recent construction and do not fit either the scale or the character of the others. Two more are the modern James Street addition to the Farmers and Merchants Union Bank ((#2A), and the bank's modern drive-in (#2B). Two others are small, altered buildings (#73 & #36) of fairly recent construction, #73 being a non-contributing residence and #36 being a former gasoline filling station. Two others are non-contributing garage outbuildings located in the backs of their respective lots (#38A & #48A) and still another consists of a small barber shop (#59). The remaining non-contributing resources are buildings that have been partially resided, the original building still being extant beneath the new material. In one instance, two older buildings (#71-71A) are hidden behind a single modern facade.

As is true of other Wisconsin communities that have similar resources dating from the same period, many of the buildings in the district have principal facades whose first stories have been altered or partially covered and whose second story window openings have been partially infilled. These remodelings are not believed to affect the potential significance of the district, however, since they are typical of the kinds of changes that many such resources have incurred and most are reversible. Also, the great majority of the most important features such as cornices and window surrounds are still extant.

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The following is an inventory of all the buildings in the district, indicating the map number (which is also the tax number), the address, the common or historic name, the date or approximate date of construction and the classification code of each building. If the source of the date of construction is not footnoted it is because it is shown on the building or the building date is recent enough to be generally known. For the date, as well as the name, old photographs were used as were interviews with older citizens, but these sources were always verified if possible.

MAP#	ADDRESS	HISTORIC OR COMMON NAME	DATE	CLASS
1	112 S. Dickason Blvd.	Public Library (NRHP)	1912	C
2	159 W. James St.	F & M Bank (NRHP) (NHL)	1919	C
2A	151 W. James St.	F & M Bank Addition (NC)	1979	
2B	c119 S. Dickason Blvd	F & M Drive Through Bldg	1958	NC
3	147 W. James St.	Langs Grocery	1907 ¹	C
4	141 W. James St.	J.C. Penney Bldg.	1904 ²	C
5	131-137 W. James St.	Anderson Bldg.	1870 ³	C
6	125 W. James St.	Jones Block	1896 ⁴	C
7	c121 W. James St.	Griswold Bldg.	1888	C
8	100 S. Ludington St.	Griswold Bldg.	1888 ⁵	C
9	100 S. Ludington St.	Griswold Bldg.	1868 ⁶	C
10	110 S. Ludington St.	Fuller Bldg.	1857 ⁷	C
11	118 S. Ludington St.	Ace Hardware	1962 ⁸	NC
12	122 S. Ludington St.	Desert Inn	1983 ⁹	NC
13	126 S. Ludington St.	Heidke Sweet Shop	1889	C
14	132 S. Ludington St.	Wake Bakery	1895 ¹⁰	C
15	158 S. Ludington St.	Lien's Garage	1910	C
16	159 S. Ludington St.	Callahan & Arnold Law Office	1960	NC
17	147 S. Ludington St.	Volpano's Restaurant	1947	NC
18	141 S. Ludington St.	Zilmer Metal	1938	C
19	137 S. Ludington St.	Babcock Bldg.	1888 ¹¹	C
20	133 S. Ludington St.	Bissell Bldg.	1870 ¹²	C
21	131 S. Ludington St.	Wilshire Plus	1870 ¹³	C
22	125 S. Ludington St.	Bouquet Shop	c1853 ¹⁴	NC
23	123 S. Ludington St.	Bonnett's Millinery	1903	C
24	115 S. Ludington St.	Moll's Appliances	1906 ¹⁵	C
25	111 S. Ludington St.	As Wee Grow	1900 ¹⁶	C

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MAP#	ADDRESS	HISTORIC OR COMMON NAME	DATE	CLASS
26	101 S. Ludington St.	Whitney Bldg.	1858 ¹⁷	C
27	112 E. James St.	Zahn's Bakery	1927 ¹⁸	C
28	114 E. James St.	Barber Shop	c1916 ¹⁹	C
29	120 E. James St.	Kurth Tavern	1898	C
30	128 E. James St.	Blackhawk Tap	1914 ²⁰	C
31	136 E. James St.	Earl's Cafe	1927 ²¹	C
32	140 E. James St.	Mrs. Peter's Palmgarden	1890 ²²	C
33	148 E. James St.	Parsons & Goebel	c1865 ²³	C
34	152 E. James St.			C
35	158 E. James St.	Firemen's Tavern	c1852 ²⁴	C
36	159 E. James St.	Garage/Realty	1928	NC
37	145 E. James St.	Turner & Blumenthal	1894	C
38	141 E. James St.	Hawkos Bldg	1947	NC
38A	141 E. James St.	Garage		NC
39	131 E. James St.	Hawkos Plumbing	1926	C
40	125-127 E. James St.	Lueders & Krause Commission Store	c1858 ²⁵	C
41	119 E. James St.	Lohr's Tavern	c1858 ²⁶	C
42	115 E. James St.	Schaeffer Block	c1858 ²⁷	C
43	111 E. James St.	Farnham Block	c1858 ²⁸	C
44	107 E. James St.	Bassett & Davies	c1868 ²⁹	C
45	101 E. James St.	Sargent Block	c1866 ³⁰	C
46	114-118 N. Ludington St.	Bassett & Davies	1877	C
47	124 N. Ludington St.	Altschwager's Meat Mkt.	c1880 ³¹	C
48	130 N. Ludington St.	Voelker's Wear for Women	1875 ³²	C
48A	130 N. Ludington St.	Garage		NC
49	132 N. Ludington St.	Earl's Shoe Shop	1940	C
50	136 N. Ludington St.	Paust Law Office	1910 ³³	C
51	150 N. Ludington St.	Anchor Savings & Loan		NC
52	153 N. Ludington St.	Leitch Bldg.	1875	C
53	143 N. Ludington St.	Tremont Hotel	1892	C
54	138 N. Ludington St.	Fountain Tavern	c1897	C
55	133 N. Ludington St.	Restaurant	c1880 ³⁴	C
56	125 N. Ludington St.	Topps Grocery	c1858 ³⁵	C
57	125 N. Ludington St.	Topps Dry Goods	1886 ³⁶	C
58	117 N. Ludington St.	Sam's Barber Shop		NC
59	115 N. Ludington St.	Altschwager's Saloon		NC
60	107 N. Ludington St.	Beier & Steinfeldt	c1856 ³⁷	C

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MAP#	ADDRESS	HISTORIC OR COMMON NAME	DATE	CLASS
61	103 N. Ludington St.	Corner Drug Store	c1852 ³⁸	C
62	116 W. James St.	First National Bank (Facade, 1916) ³⁹	c1865	C
63	122 W. James St.	Brown Block	1876	C
64	128 W. James St.	McNulty's Grocery	1864 ⁴⁰	C
65	132-140 W. James St.	Sawyer Hardware	1883 ⁴¹	C
66	146 W. James St.	Mercantile Bldg.	1903 ⁴²	C
67	152 W. James St.	Bellack's Clothing	1895 ⁴³	C
68	156 W. James St.	Union Bank/Telephone Building	1861 ⁴⁴	C
69	116 N. Dickason Blvd.	Bellack's Clothing Add.	1900	C
70	126 N. Dickason Blvd.	Blaska's Bar	1912 ⁴⁵	C
71	140 N. Dickason Blvd.	Bowling Alley	1916 ⁴⁶	NC
71A	140 N. Dickason Blvd.	Bowling Alley	1920	NC
72	154-160 N. Dickason	Nothelpers Hotel	c1885 ⁴⁷	C
73	137 W. Mill St.	Residence		NC
74	105 N. Dickason Blvd.	City Hall	1892	C
75	117 N. Dickason Blvd.	Brokopp's	1892 ⁴⁸	C

INVENTORY ENDNOTES

1. Mercantile Appraisal Card 1949 - City Hall, Columbus, WI
2. Columbus Tax Roll 1904, City Hall, Columbus, WI
3. Abstract: Charles Anderson, owner, Columbus, WI
4. Mercantile Appraisal Card 1949 - City Hall, Columbus, WI
5. Republican Journal, June 6, 1888: on file at Columbus Library.
6. Mercantile Appraisal Card 1949 - City Hall, Columbus, WI
7. Stare, F.A., The Story of Columbus, Vol. I., pg. 179: newspaper articles compiled by the Columbus Library.
8. Mercantile Appraisal Card 1949 - City Hall, Columbus, WI
9. Paul Jenkins, owner - Columbus, WI
10. Mercantile Appraisal Card 1949 - City Hall, Columbus, WI
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Stare, Vol.I, pg. 176.
15. Mercantile Appraisal Card 1949 - City Hall, Columbus, WI
16. Columbus Tax Roll 1900 - City Hall, Columbus, WI

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INVENTORY ENDNOTES (continued)

17. Butterfield, C.W., The History of Columbia County, 1880, pg. 689.
Western Historical Co., Chicago, Illinois.
18. Columbus Democrat, June 15, 1927: on file in Columbus Library.
19. Mercantile Appraisal Card 1949 - City Hall, Columbus, WI
20. Ibid.
21. Abstract: Sharon Breyer, owner, Columbus, WI
22. Columbus Tax roll 1890, City Hall, Columbus, WI
23. Abstract: Delores Klokow, owner, Columbus, WI
24. Ibid.
25. Mercantile Appraisal Card 1949 - City Hall, Columbus, WI
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. Abstract: John Ganga, owner, Columbus, WI
31. Sanborn Map 1885.
32. Abstract: Rosalie Voelker, owner to 1989, Columbus, WI
33. Mercantile Appraisal Card 1949 - City Hall, Columbus, WI
34. Ibid.
35. Republican Journal, Jan. 22, 1881: on file Columbus Library.
36. Photograph of Topp's Store showing date on building: City Hall
file.
37. Abstract: Elaine and Bernard Baerwald, owners, Columbus, WI
38. Ibid.
39. Mercantile Appraisal Card 1949 - City Hall Columbus, WI
40. Columbus Democrat, Feb. 3, 1883 and Stare, Vol. II, pgs. 232-234.
41. Ibid.
42. Abstract: Robert Morris, owner - Columbus, WI, and Stare, Vol. I
pg. 113.
43. Stare, Vol. III, pg. 535
44. Ibid. pg. 417.
45. Mercantile Appraisal Card, 1949 - City Hall, Columbus, WI
46. Ibid.
47. 1885 Sanborn map.
48. Abstract: Doris Miller, owner, Columbus, WI

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A description of the more architecturally significant buildings follows.

Moll's Appliance (#24) 115 South Ludington Street 1906

This main facade of this rectilinear plan two-story Commercial Vernacular building adds variety to the streetscape with its horizontal lines and use of an orange colored brick. The second story has four one-over-one-light flat-arched windows which are grouped in pairs. A broad stone stringcourse stretching right across the building forms the second story lintels and another thinner one forms the sills. Above the windows corbelled brick courses fills in the spandrel area that is terminated by a simple, denticulated tin-covered cornice. A stepped brick parapet above the cornice comes to a small rectangle at the center and is squared off at the ends, creating an interesting skyline. In 1985 the first story was modernized with a shed roof, new display windows and stone veneer - a front which was also extended across the first stories of two adjacent buildings (#23 & #22).

Brown Block (#63) 122 West James Street 1876

We know more about the construction of this two-story Italianate commercial building than almost any other building in Columbus because the story of it's construction was written in the local paper (the Columbus Democrat, Dec. 6, 1876) at the time.

This rectilinear plan building was designed by W. W. Boyington of Chicago (well known for his Chicago hotels and the Water Tower) and built by local contractor Richard Vanaken. The Joliet stone used was cut and carved by local monument maker W. J. Turner (#37). The zinc cornice was put up by Dempsy and Burghoffer. The building cost \$4500, which was extravagant for Columbus. The person who wrote about it must have known and admired Col. Brown as he moralizes at the end of the article that "only such a person as Brown, who walked from Madison to Columbus in 1851 - without money for stagecoach or dinner - could appreciate such luxury", and that "he had various experiences all have who earn what they get and save what they earn."

In 1969, the original first story of the building was completely altered by the addition of red brick facing, new display windows, planters and a large pent roof that spans the facade. The second story above is still largely intact except for infilled window openings. Four large

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rectilinear-shaped window openings are placed on this story and their flat-arched heads are decorated and linked by an incised cut stone label course. The facade is then surmounted by an elaborate bracketed and denticulated metal cornice. The name "H.M. Brown" is centered on the frieze of the cornice and this is then surmounted by a triangular pediment whose tympanum bears the date "1876."

Built as a book, stationery and jewelry store by Col. H.M. Brown, who was an early and influential developer in Columbus, the store remained a "gift" store until 1969, when it was remodeled to house an optometrist. There has often been a photographer located in the second story, which was originally designed to make space for W. Hoskins, one of Columbus's early photographers and a man who considered himself an artist.

Whitney Hotel (#26) 101 South Ludington Street 1858

This large cream brick Italianate style building is important as an anchor on the "four corners". It is also important as one of the oldest brick buildings in the city, as the oldest hotel, and as a longtime (over sixty years) social center. The present building replaced the original hotel built by H.A. Whitney in 1848 and destroyed by fire in 1857. A rectangular plan building placed on a corner lot, the Whitney is three-stories in height and the slope of the lot permits a partially exposed basement story. The principal Ludington and James Street facades (above the now altered first stories) consist of multiple flat-arched window openings (now filled either with wood or with smaller modern windows) that have decorative metal-covered sills and lintels decorated with medallions. The building is surmounted by a simple corbelled brick cornice that was itself originally surmounted by an elaborate metal cornice. The north-facing corner of the building faces the intersection of James and Ludington Streets. This corner is curved, has windows set into its second and third stories, and it was originally decorated with a now-vanished cupola.

In the 1950s, the first floor store front was faced with plastic tile and stone capped by an aluminum strip. The James St. first floor facade is also mostly covered by the backing of a huge sign which is no longer in place. The building, which served for years as a hotel/restaurant with a third floor ballroom, and in the '20's, '30's and '40's as a restaurant with offices and an apartment above, became increasingly

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deteriorated. It has recently been purchased after more than a year of being vacant.

Bonnett's Millinery Shop (#23) 123 South Ludington Street 1903

This cream brick two-story rectilinear plan Commercial Vernacular building has the date 1903 carved into a small stone plaque that is set into the tympanum of the arched center portion of the parapet that terminates the main facade. A denticulated stone stringcourse marks the base of the parapet and the letter B (for Bonnett) is carved into a block that is centered on the stringcourse. The second story has two flat-arched window openings placed on either side of a larger, centrally placed window opening that originally held a pair of identical windows. These openings each have cut stone lintels and sills and they are now filled with modern aluminum-framed windows. Narrow brick pilasters run down the corners of the building, their length being interrupted by decorative stone blocks. The original first story was divided into two halves in the seventies (the halves being reallocated to the stores on either side) and in the eighties it was resurfaced with stone veneer like its neighbors (#22 & 24) and it too was given a pent roof.

Mrs. Bonnett was a popular milliner in town and her husband was a tailor. Her grandson, Earl Smith, a local musician, grew up in the second floor apartment and owned the building into the eighties. The store contained a barber shop for a number of years.

First National Bank Building (#62) 116 West James St. c.1865/facade,
1916

This sixty-foot-wide Neo-Classical Revival two-story building adds a note of dignity to the downtown streetscape. This building is actually two 1860s buildings that had their facades replaced in 1916 with the imposing Bedford limestone facade that is visible today. Care was taken to make the denticulated cornice of the new facade match up with the similar cornice of the Brown Building (#63) next door, and the words "First National Bank" are carved into the frieze below this cornice. Four fluted pilasters divide the facade into five bays, the center bay being wider than the others so as to contain the pedimented main entrance. This entrance is flanked by two small engaged Tuscan order columns that support a triangular pediment, the frieze of which bears the lettering "Founded in 1861." Each of the remaining four first-story

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bays contains a single tall flat-arched window opening. All of the original windows have now been replaced with modern triple-hung metal frame sash except for the right-hand opening, which now contains a second entrance door that leads up to the second floor. All the window openings on the second story are less tall than those on the first story. The center bay on the second floor contains a triple group of small six-over-one-light windows, the second and fourth bays each contain a single eight-over-one light double hung window, and the first and fifth bays each contain a single six-over-one light window.

The bank moved into new quarters on the edge of town in 1975 and since then the building has been empty much of the time.

Corner Drug Store (#61) 103 North Ludington Street c1852

This three-story Commercial Vernacular building has some Italianate features and it is important to the district because it occupies an important corner lot that is one of the "four corners." Unlike the later commercial buildings in the district, this building is constructed of red brick which has now been painted. The building is typical of its form in having a symmetrical main facade whose first story is given over entirely to two large display windows that flank a centrally placed and recessed entrance. The cast iron framework that surrounds the windows and the entrance door appears to be original although the door and the windows themselves are of modern design. These elements are then surmounted by a cast iron cornice that separates this story from those above it. The two upper stories are three-bays-wide and each bay contains a single segmental-arched window opening, those of the second story being less tall than those of the story above. Each opening is crowned with a heavy segmental-arched corbelled brick head, and the second story window openings are especially notable for having corbelled brick sills that are five courses tall. The second story window openings have now been filled with modern windows while the third story openings have been bricked shut. The facade is then terminated by a fine embossed tin cornice that also extends around the corner and terminates the James Street elevation as well. The raising of the sidewalk on the James Street side elevation has obliterated what was once a side entrance leading down to a basement oyster bar but another side entrance on this elevation is still intact.

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Like several other buildings in the district, this one also has an extant third-story meeting hall. The floors in the upper stories are made of maple and the first story still has its partly tiled floor and its embossed tin ceiling.

Young Fashions (#60) 107 North Ludington Street c1856

These two-story rectilinear plan Italianate style brick buildings were combined internally into one store in 1968, but prior to that time they had separate histories. Both buildings were built within a few years of each other and although the left-hand building is three-bays-wide and the right-hand building is two-bays-wide, each was obviously built to resemble the other. Both buildings are identical in height, are flat-roofed, and they each utilize the exact same corbelled brick cornice design. Each bay in the second story of both buildings contains a semi-circular arched window opening that is topped by a corbelled brick head. The second bay from the left (which is the center bay in the left-hand building) is slightly wider than the other four windows, and all five openings still retain their original one-over-one-light double hung windows. Shallow strip pilasters ornament the corners of the two facades and shorter partial pilasters of similar design extend downward from the main cornice and link with the ends of the second story window heads, forming spandrels above each window. The first stories of both buildings have large display windows and recessed entrance doors. The first story on the left-hand building, while not original, dates from the period of significance. The first story on the right-hand building, however, is of more modern date.

Cook Block (#65) 132, 136, & 140 West James Street 1883

These cream brick commercial vernacular building was built for A. G. Cook, a pioneer developer in the city, to replace several earlier wooden buildings. The building contains three first-story storefronts and it was probably built for Cook by Nelson Sawyer (whose own hardware store first occupied the right-hand store) since Sawyer had worked for Cook before, having built his home. In this instance, one building has the appearance of three since the combined main facade is actually comprised of three nearly identical smaller facades, the left-hand two of which share a common second floor entrance that is placed between them. Together these three facades make a strong impact on the streetscape. Each facade is surmounted by a panelled brick cornice that is decorated

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with a centered triangular pediment. An arcaded corbel table runs below this cornice and each facade is separated from the others by a thin pilasters strip that runs from the cornice to the ground. The second story of each facade is three-bays-wide, consisting in each instance of two flat-arched window openings that flank a double-width segmental-arched central opening. A smooth-faced masonry stringcourse runs the width of the three facades just below the sills of the second story window openings and another links the window heads. All these openings have now been either partially or completely infilled.

There is a secondary entrance located between the two left-hand facades. This gable-roofed entranceway projects slightly from the main facade and it contains an entrance door that is surmounted by a transom that is itself surmounted by a semi-circular arched fanlight. The cast iron framework that encircles all the elements of the first story storefront of the middle facade is original to the building and is almost completely intact. These elements include the cast iron framework that encircles the transoms lights, display windows, kick panels, the centered and recessed doorway, and the glass and panelled double entrance doors. The storefront of the left-hand facade is equally original but it dates from the early twentieth century. The first story of the right-hand facade been more significantly altered with a flat full-width canopy and aluminum doors and windows that were added when it was combined with the store just to the east (#64, Sawyer's first store) in 1970.

McNulty Building (#64) 128 West James Street 1864

This two-story Italianate style cream brick rectilinear plan building was a separate store until 1970, when it was combined internally with the building to its west (#65). The first-story storefronts of the main facades of both buildings were also altered at this time, the earlier storefronts being replaced with large aluminum-framed plate glass display windows and entrance doors; all of which were then sheltered with a new flat-roofed metal-trimmed canopy. The roof line of the McNulty Building is even with that of #65 and its corbelled brick cornice is also identical although it lacks the centered triangular pediment of the newer building. An unusual feature of this facade is the placement of a blind, recessed, segmental-arched window opening in the center of this cornice. The three semi-circular-arched second story windows below resemble those on the adjoining building (#65), but they

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are placed lower on the facade than those of its neighbor, indicating a lower first floor ceiling height.

This building is an important part of the streetscape and historically it is one of the downtown's oldest brick buildings. It was the first hardware (and glassware) store of Lewis Sawyer, a civic-minded man who was the first mayor of Columbus in 1874. The store was known as McNulty's Grocery store from 1918 to 1955. Robert McNulty started it and ran the store with various partners until his sons took over.

Farmers & Merchants Union Bank (#2) NHL 159 West James Street 1919

This building, a National Historic Landmark since 1976, was designed by Louis Sullivan and was the last of the eight small banks he designed between 1907 and 1919. Sullivan referred to this as his "Jewel Box", and it is certainly the architectural gem of Columbus. It was built during the bank presidency of John Russell Wheeler (grandson of the bank's founder), and it was Wheeler's wife who convinced him to engage Sullivan instead of building a bank in the more typical Classical Revival style. The architect lived in the Wheeler's home during much of the construction time so he could personally supervise the work.

This compact, rectilinear plan one-story building is located on a prominent corner lot and it still gives the impression of stability and accessibility that Sullivan intended. The exterior walls are clad in dark brown tapestry brick that was selected to give a shaded effect. The exterior is also elaborately decorated with the terra cotta ornamentation for which Sullivan is justly famous, terra cotta that in this instance is glazed in a pale green mottled with specks of brown.

The narrow main facade of the bank faces east onto W. James Street and it is as tall as the neighboring two-story buildings even though it contains just a single story. The slightly asymmetrical design of this facade features a very large, elaborately decorated terra cotta-clad lintel that divides the facade horizontally into two unequal-sized portions. This lintel has a large panel of polished green marble centered upon it and the name of the bank is incised into this panel in gold letters. On either side of the panel and framed in extraordinarily elaborate terra cotta ornamentation is a smaller circular plaque, each of which is surrounded by patterns of geometric design and curling leaf tendrils. The left-hand plaque bears the date 1861 (when the bank was

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founded) and the right-hand one the date 1919 (the date of the Sullivan building). Two small terra cotta lions are then placed above the lintel and they each hold a small shield - one with the letter "F" and the other with the letter "M". Three short symmetrically placed pilasters (one at either end and one in the middle) support the lintel and they divide the first floor into two equal-width halves. The left half contains a single large oblong display window while the right half contains a pair of entrance doors. Centered on the upper portion of this facade above the lintel is a large semi-circular-arched window that is recessed deeply into the facade. A series of inset arches of similar radii form a frame for this window, which is made of stained glass that lights the interior of the bank in shades of yellow, green and red.

The longer north-facing side elevation of the building faces Dickason Boulevard and its principal feature is a series of five arcaded semi-circular arched stained glass windows. This series of windows is flanked at either end by a battered brick buttress and the spandrels between the individual arches are filled with remarkably elaborate terra cotta ornamentation. The rear elevation of the building features another semi-circular-arched stained glass window that lights a balcony inside the bank that now is used as a small Sullivan Museum. The extraordinary interior, with its tellers cages all on the left side, has undergone few changes.

A sympathetic addition was built onto the rear in 1958 to a design by the Madison, Wisconsin architectural firm of Law, Potter & Nystrom, who had access to the original blue prints provided by the man who manufactured the original bricks. The wood trim and the grass cloth wall coverings found in the interior of the original building were replicated and an attempt was also made to make the drive-up window and drive-through areas beyond similar to the building by using brick that was similar to the original brick.

This building relates well to the Prairie School-influenced Columbus Library (#1) across the boulevard and also to the Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style City Hall (#74) across the intersection, a building whose arched windows echo those used in Sullivan's masterful design.

When the bank opened, the June 19, 1920 issue of the Columbus Republican reported that Mr. Sullivan himself was on hand as was the president of

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the Marshall & Ilsley Bank of Milwaukee, John Puehlicher. The article gave enthusiastic details about the occasion and noted that "the entire building was most tastily decorated".

Tremont Hotel (#53) 143-147 North Ludington Street 1892

Built in the same year as the City Hall (#74), this rectilinear plan red brick 28-room hotel building stands out in the streetscape because of its color and its height. Considered rather grand in its time, this three-story hotel is a story taller than its neighbors and it is designed in the Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style. The main facade is divided into three bays by four full-height pilasters, each of which is capped by a cut stone finial above the cornice line. The first and third bays are identical to each other. The narrower middle bay is terminated by a small triangular brick pediment into whose surface a lunette-shaped sandstone block has been set that bears the date 1892. Just below that, incised into a larger sandstone block, is the name TREMONT. This facade makes considerable use of red sandstone trim, most notably as an edging around the semi-circular arch of the centered opening that shelters the deeply inset centered front entrance, and as stringcourses that act as the sills and lintels of the windows on the second and third stories.

All of the window openings on this elevation have been altered, those on the second and third stories now being filled with wooden panels into which smaller double hung windows have been inserted. The two windows in the second and third stories of the middle bay are narrower than the two windows in each of the two flanking bays and they open onto small iron balconies. A metal ladder then connects these balconies, forming a fire escape. The main entrance is placed in the base of the middle bay and the original paired entrance doors are still intact and are deeply inset into the facade. These doors are flanked on either side by identical single doors that open into other spaces that are placed on either side of the entrance and while the single transom light above the main doors is still intact, the transom lights above the other two doors have now been covered.

Griswold Block (#8 & 9) 100 S. Ludington St. & (#7) 121 W. James St.

Historically this block is actually two buildings (#7 & #8 - 9), both of which were originally erected for the Griswolds in 1868. The two

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buildings form a single L-plan block which originally had three storefronts facing onto Ludington St. (#8 & 9), and one facing onto W. James St. (#7). The Griswolds soon sold the south one (#9) to John Swarthout, a druggist. In 1888, the entire James Street facade (#7 & 8) and the east two storefronts (#8) on the Ludington St. facade were remodeled, leaving only the remaining Ludington St. storefront (#9) in its original condition.

This two-story, L-plan, Italianate building is a pivotal one in the district as one of the "four corner" buildings at the intersection of James and Ludington streets. It is a handsome cream brick building built by local pioneer builder/architect Richard Vanaken. The building displays a corbelled cornice. Its second floor windows all have segmentally arched windows (the original windows have been removed and smaller units replace them in the 1888 remodeled portion), and a corbelled brick lintel course links the heads of these openings.

The longer James St. facade has four small segmentally arched window openings placed high on its first floor. These openings are now filled with wood, and small lanterns have been centered on them as decoration. The two stories of each of the two main facades are divided horizontally by a corbelled brick beltcourse and vertically by brick pilaster strips that divide the facades into bays. A single, more ornate corner pilaster decorates the corner of the building.

Besides the alterations to the windows, another major change made in 1968 consists of the addition of a large shingle-covered pent roof across the width of the Ludington St. facade and across the James St. storefront. The wall surfaces below this roof have also been resided in a dark brown brick.

The sole remaining portion of the original 1868 facade design (#9) is the westernmost of the three storefronts on James Street. The first story has been remodeled, but the second story is two-bays in width and has two semi-circular arched window openings with keystone lintels and original one-over-one-light sash.

Fuller Building (#10) 110 South Ludington Street 1857

The design of this Italianate two-story cream brick building is similar in a number of ways with the larger Whitney building (26) located at 101

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South Ludington St. The most obvious similarity is that both buildings have lintels that are covered in stamped metal sheeting. This sheeting is panelled and each lintel has a small paterae design centered on it. Since both buildings were built at about the same time, they may well have been built by the same person.

Lein's Garage (#15) 158 South Ludington Street 1910

This highly intact two-story rectilinear plan 30' x 80' commercial vernacular form garage building was built on a corner lot in 1910 and it is faced in white brick. The first story of the main facade is two-bays in width and the left-hand bay contains a pair of wood garage doors that are surmounted by a large transom that is filled with lattice pattern muntins. The right-hand bay is only slightly wider than the first and it contains a single large display window that is also surmounted with a lattice work transom. Both the window and the doors are then topped by a with an iron lintel.

The second story is four-bays in width and each bay contains a single flat-arched window opening, all four of which share a single common concrete sill. These openings have had their original sash removed and they are now partially infilled and contain smaller modern metal sash window units instead. A decorative oblong panel filled with brick laid in a checkerboard pattern is then placed above the two middle windows.

The full basement of the building is enclosed by cut stone walls, the stones of which can be seen on the Harrison Street elevation. This elevation contains seven flat-arched window openings, each of which has a concrete sill. The two first floor windows nearest the front are wider than the others. Also, instead of having equal-sized double hung sash, both of these windows have an upper sash that contains one row of four panes and a lower sash that contains three rows. The parapet that hides the flat roof is stepped in four sections from front to back as seen from the Harrison St. side. The ceiling of the garage still has its original pressed tin panels interior and the building is still owned and operated by the Lein family.

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Union Bank/Telephone Bldg. (#68) 156 West James Street 1861

This fine rectilinear plan, two-story cream brick building was designed in the Italianate style and it is an important building, being one of the "anchors" of the second "four corners" (along with the City Hall, Library and the Farmers and Merchants Union Bank) at the intersection of Dickason Blvd. and W. James St. Constructed by local builder Richard Vanaken, the building is in excellent condition and is rather ornate in design, its notable features including its bracketed overhanging eaves and its wide metal-covered cornices.

The second story of the main James Street facade of the building is three-bays in width and the slightly projecting wall surface of its center bay is continued up through the cornice line, where it is surmounted by a bracketed semi-circular arched pediment that repeats the curve of the windows in the story below. The three second-story window openings are each surmounted by decorative heads, the center of which is accented with a cut stone keystone and the stone sills have a small rectangular stone bracket at each end, recessed under the sill. These openings have all now been infilled with wood panels, each of which contains a smaller modern window. A wide tin-covered cornice encircles the main facade and the Dickason Blvd. side elevation just above the first story window heads and acts as a beltcourse that divides the first from the second stories. The first story of the main facade, which once had two flights of stairs flanking a central window, now has one set of steps on the right leading to a recessed door, this entrance being flanked by two large windows to the left. The first story of this facade has also been altered by the addition of a large modern pent roof that spans the facade and that also turns the corner, where it shelters the windows in the first three bays from the right.

All the window openings on the west-facing Dickason Blvd. side elevation are identical with the three stilted arch second-story window openings on the main facade and they have all been filled in the same way. The first story is eight-bays in width, the second-story is seven-bays in width and the three center bays in each story are placed in a slightly projecting full-height pavilion that is surmounted by a broad triangular-shaped pediment. The basement story is partially exposed and on the Dickason side there is a flight of steps that parallel the elevation and that descend to the basement, exposing the segmentally arched basement window openings and a door.

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Mercantile Building (#66) 146 West James Street 1903

This two-story commercial vernacular form building has a very modern appearance that adds variety to the streetscape. This modern appearance derives in part from the straight-forward way in which the underlying structural framework of the highly intact second story is suggested by the use of materials that differ in type and in color. The second story is faced in tan brick and it is three-bays in width and is divided into bays by four rock-faced red sandstone pilasters. Each bay contains a large flat-arched window opening that is filled with a pair of one-over-one-light double hung windows. A single dressed sandstone sill is placed below each pair of these windows and an identical element is then used as a transom bar that separates each pair from a large oblong single light transom window that is placed above it. A broader sandstone lintel is placed above each transom, crowning the window opening. These windows are then surmounted by a tan brick-faced frieze that is decorated with oblong panels filled with red brick, one of which is placed above each pair of windows. This frieze is then terminated by a broad metal-covered denticulated cornice and by a solid parapet that is treated like a classical balustrade. The first story was completely altered in 1955, when an aluminum-trimmed main entrance door (which is recessed and located on the far right) and aluminum-trimmed display windows replaced the original windows and door.

This building was constructed to be a furniture/undertaking establishment and today, despite several changes in ownership, it is still used as such. The interior is unusually intact and "original". The 16-foot ceilings and moldings are covered in panels of pressed zinc. A maple stairway in the back of the first story leads to a mezzanine where caskets were originally displayed.

Sargent Block (#45) 101 East James Street 1866

This handsome Italianate style rectilinear plan cream brick building replaced an older wood building that was originally owned by Daniel Bassett and Josiah Arnold. The present building was probably built by Harvey Loomis, a builder who bought the land from Bassett in 1865. Loomis did not purchase the existing building on the property - a building that was owned by F.F. Farnham in 1865 and that was moved by him at the time of sale. Loomis then built the present building and sold it in 1867 to P.K. Sargent, a saloon/restaurant/hotel keeper who

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kept it until 1878, when he sold it to John Black. In 1886, Black then sold the building back to Sargent.

This building is two-stories in height and it occupies a prominent corner lot that was formed by the intersection of James and Ludington Streets. As a result, the building has two main elevations, both of which are pilastered and surmounted by an elaborate overhanging bracketed metal-covered cornice. The principal facade faces onto E. James Street and its second story is one-bays in width and its cornice is interrupted by a centered, steeply pitched triangular pediment. The two pilasters that enframe the second story of this facade are then terminated by a full-width spandrel of equal depth. These three elements thus create a frame for the recessed wall surface and this surface is then pierced by the three window openings that fill this bay. The stilted arch center opening is wider and taller than the two segmental-arched openings that flank it and it contains a pair of smaller windows of identical shape. All three window openings are further accented by being chamfered and each has a cut stone sill.

The first floor of the James St. facade was altered in 1980. Originally, this facade featured a deeply recessed canted corner entrance that was flanked by display windows. The entrance was then sheltered by the overhanging second story, which was supported by a corner post. This entrance is still intact but the original door and windows have now been replaced with aluminum framed ones and the wall surface that surrounds them and the corner post have now been covered with vertical wooden boards. The first floor ceilings were then lowered and the second floor window openings and all the side elevation window openings were infilled at the same time.

The Ludington Street side elevation of the building is twice the length of the main facade and it is four-bays in width. Each bay is two-stories in height and equal in width and these bays are defined by pilasters and spandrels in the same manner as the bay on the main facade. This elevation has five pilasters, one on each end and three more that separate the bays. The second story's seven segmental-arched windows are identical to those that flank the center window of the second story on the main facade while the two first story window openings are taller and less elaborately trimmed. Here too, all the sills are stone. The cornice that surmounts this elevation is identical in design to the one on the main facade (it also exactly matches the

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cornice used on the building that is located next door [#46] on Ludington St., which was built about ten years later). Here too, a triangular shaped pediment interrupts the cornice, only this one is wider and more gently pitched than the one on the main facade.

This building is important because it is one of the pivotal buildings on the "four corners" and because it is an especially handsome example of an Italianate style commercial building. Its importance is enhanced by its excellent condition.

City Hall (#74) NRHP 105 North Dickason Boulevard 1892

This sizeable Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style building is rectilinear in plan, three-stories in height, and it is surmounted by a hip roof that is itself surmounted by a large deck roof. The building was erected on the corner of W. James Street and S. Ludington Street in 1892 to house the municipal offices, the police department and the fire department. Its architect was T. D. Allen of Minneapolis, Minnesota. The city offices and police department are still housed in the building but the fire department moved to a separate building in 1948.

Its corner location gives the City Hall principal elevations that face southwest onto James Street and southeast onto Ludington Street. The exterior walls of the building are clad in the Watertown cream brick whose use is all but ubiquitous in Columbus, but its raised foundation is fashioned from rock-faced Waukesha limestone. The south corner of this building consists of a circular plan three-story tower that is topped by a conical roof. This roof is itself surmounted by a smaller circular plan arcaded wooden belvedere and this element is in turn surmounted by a square plan cupola that acts as a clock tower. This cupola has canted corners and each of its four surfaces is decorated with a large illuminated clock face. The east corner of the building consists of a three-story square plan tower that is topped by a pyramidal roof while the upper stories of the west corner are corbelled out over the first story, forming a square plan turret that was once surmounted by a fire bell tower - removed when the fire department moved.

All the building's window sills and lintels are fashioned from Doylestown red sandstone and the same stone is used to fashion the voussoirs that enframe the several large semi-circular arched window and

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door openings that are used on the first story. Two of these arches are centered on the southeast-facing James Street elevation and they cover a no longer used recessed entrance that still contains its original paired oak doors and also a triple window group. Three large flat-arched entrance door openings that were originally used by the city fire engines are placed to the left of these two arched groups. These openings were (and still are) partly outlined by sandstone. When the fire department moved from the building these openings were each partially filled with large multiple window groups and the wall surface below each group was then filled with stone and brick that matched the original cladding material. There is also a large horseshoe-arch shaped door and window opening on the southeast elevation that contains both a triple-light transom in its upper portion and the principal (recessed) main entrance below. Here too, the opening is outlined in sandstone.

A wide oak stairway ascends to the second floor auditorium, which also has a mezzanine or balcony. There is an attic story above this. The auditorium was used for school functions (plays, commencement exercises, etc.), plays, musicals, movies, etc. until 1936, when a stage in the gym of a new school building took its place. This building was listed in the NRHP on September 4, 1979.

Columbus Library (#1) NRHP 112 South Dickason Boulevard 1912

The Andrew Carnegie-funded Columbus Library is an excellent, although somewhat atypical example of a small Prairie School style-influenced library building. It was designed by Claude and Starck, a Madison, Wisconsin-based architectural firm that was well known as a regional specialist in the design of small libraries, many of which are excellent examples of Prairie School designs.

The Columbus Library achieves its architectural significance as one of the more original designs of this firm. Many elements of the building design such as low pitched, side-gabled roof, the horizontal emphasis, and the broad overhanging eaves are characteristic of the Prairie School; but the design is also strongly influenced by the English Arts and Crafts movement as well. The combination of stucco-clad walls above a brick foundation and the use of Tudor Revival style-like ornamentation is more closely related to the design philosophy of the Arts and Crafts movement and to the work of English architects associated with this movement such as Charles F. A. Voysey.

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A "cottage"-like appearance results from the residential size and massing of the library and from the fenestration pattern used. Other "residential" elements include such things as the centered front porch and the placement of wooden flower boxes below the windows, both of which create an inviting and home-like ambience. The residential feel of the building is also accentuated by setting the library well back on its lot in a manner similar to the residences that surround it.

The Columbus Library has been in continual use as a library since its construction in 1912, the only change to the exterior being the concrete front steps that now replace the original wooden ones. The floor plan features an open reading room, a center circulation desk and a lecture room and offices to the rear of the building. This interior is unaltered, except for the addition of suspended florescent lighting, a dropped ceiling in the office, carpeting in the reading rooms and linoleum tile on the lecture room floor. These changes do not detract from the overall integrity of the building, which was added to the NRHP on November 15, 1990.

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)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

ARCHITECTURE

1852-1940¹

N/A

COMMERCE

1852-1940²

N/A

SOCIAL HISTORY

1852-1920³

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Sullivan, Louis H.⁴

Claude, Louis W. & Starck, Edward F.⁵

Vanaken, Richard⁶

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

SIGNIFICANCE

The Columbus Downtown Historic District covers portions of a six-block area located in the heart of the small city of Columbus and it is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under National Register (NR) criteria A and C as a district of potentially local significance. Research designed to assess the district's potential for eligibility was undertaken using the NR significance areas of Architecture and Commerce, themes which are also identified in the State of Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP). This research centered on evaluating the district's resources by utilizing the Italianate, Prairie School, and Commercial Vernacular subsections of the Architectural Styles study unit of the CRMP.⁷ Other research was also undertaken to determine the importance of the district's resources in relation to the overall commercial history of Columbus. The results of this research is detailed below and demonstrates that the Columbus Downtown Historic District is locally significant under criterion A as a collection of fine, largely intact resources which illustrate nearly the entire history of commercial activity in this community. The research also shows that the district is locally significant under criterion C as a representative collection of nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial and institutional buildings, including an internationally famous bank building (#2 - NHL) designed by Louis D. Sullivan.

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The Columbus Downtown Historic District is cruciform in shape and it is centered on the intersection of Ludington and James Streets, historically the principal commercial thoroughfares of the city. With the exception of the Columbus Public Library (#1) and the Columbus City Hall (#74), the district is comprised entirely of commercial buildings. The district's contributing resources were all constructed of brick between 1852 and 1940 and they were intended to house commercial activities that were typical of smaller communities of the period such as harness shops, dry goods stores, drug stores, furniture stores and undertaking establishments, barber shops, tailor shops, commission stores, hotels, saloons, etc. Most of these buildings are two-stories in height (although there are also a few one-story and three-story examples), and many of these upper stories were originally given over to offices that housed the city's pioneer professional population - its lawyers, bankers, doctors, photographers, etc. A few of these upper story spaces also housed "meeting halls" that were used by the community's various fraternal orders and civic groups.

ENDNOTES

1. The period of significance for Architecture spans the years between the construction date of the oldest contributing buildings in the district (#35 & 61) and the newest (#49).
2. The period of significance for Commerce spans the same period as that for Architecture and for the same reason.
3. The period of significance for Social History spans the period during which social and fraternal organizations in Columbus are known to have occupied space in district buildings.
4. Columbus Republican. June 19, 1920.
5. Orr, Gordon D. Jr. Louis W. Claude: Madison Architect of the Prairie School. The Prairie School Review, Volume XIV, pg. 28.
6. Butterfield, Op. Cit., pg. 689.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

On February 18, 1839, John Hustis and Lewis Ludington, both from New York state, entered claims at the land office in Green Bay, Wisconsin. The land involved, 960 acres, was the first claimed in the area that is now Columbus. Ludington entered the SE quarter of Section 12 and the NE

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quarter of Section 13, which adjoined Hustis' land, but Ludington's claim encompassed most of the present day downtown. Both of the men were speculators and neither really settled in Columbus.¹ Ludington, however had a great deal to do with early settlement here. He and his son James and brother Harrison, who later became Governor of Wisconsin, set up an office in Milwaukee, from which they speculated in land, most of which was bought for \$1.25 an acre.²

The first person to settle in Columbus was a Major Elbert Dickason, a Virginian by birth and a veteran of the Blackhawk War, who was persuaded by Ludington to buy land fronting on the Crawfish River in Columbus. Dickason built a cabin and set up a small farming operation and he then dammed the river in order to provide power for a mill. He also staked out some lots near his cabin for a village (which never materialized) and named it "Columbus", or so the story goes.³

Dickason didn't succeed as a farmer and couldn't pay Ludington for the land. Never-the-less, it was his mill that "established" Columbus. Ludington now rented the mill to a Jeremiah Drake, an enterprising and politically oriented New Yorker who had been a promotor of the Erie Canal. Drake repaired and enlarged the mill and the new mill prospered along with the expanding settlement.⁴ Then, in 1844, Ludington platted his land, a part of which now comprises the downtown portion of Columbus.

The early settlers were mostly transplanted "Yankees" from the east, most of whom were from New York state, but others of whom came from Vermont, Maine, Connecticut and Massachusetts. Many of these people were educated in public or in college preparatory schools, and a few had even gone on to eastern colleges where they were typically trained in the law, in medicine, or in business. Others apprenticed for a number of years in a trade. In general, these people were not destitute nor were they driven here for political or social reasons. Mostly they moved west in order to take advantage of the plentiful public lands that were then available and to make a better living. Some also felt that the west offered a better way of life when compared with the increasingly industrialized East. These pioneer settlers were then followed by a large influx of Welsh settlers who tended to live to the north of the city but who fit well into the evolving commercial life of the village. The Welsh were then followed in the 1850s and 1860s by settlers of German origin, many of whom had either just gotten out of

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the military in Germany or had left that country in order to avoid military service. These settlers typically became farmers or tradesmen.

In 1846, when Portage County was divided by an act of the Territorial Legislature, the new county that was created would have been named "York" but for the intervention of James Lewis (the future Civil War governor), who persuaded those involved to name it "Columbia."⁵ In the first county elections several people from Columbus gained office: Jeremiah Drake (Whig) was elected to the first Constitutional convention and to the first school commission; T. Clark Smith (Democrat) was elected Sheriff; John Swarthout (a Democrat, and the first druggist in Columbus) was elected tax collector; and Daniel Bassett (Whig, and a pioneer merchant) was elected coroner. This election was subsequently declared illegal, but the Legislature legalized it in February, 1847, and James Lewis, the first lawyer in Columbus, was made a representative to the second Constitutional Convention. Columbus was also the county seat for four years, from 1847-51.

In March, 1848 Wisconsin adopted a constitution and became a state. James Lewis (who's law office was located where building #60 is now) was a member of the Assembly in 1852 and of the Senate in 1853. William Griswold, a pioneer merchant and lawyer (#8) was a member of the Assembly in 1858, '59 and '60 and a member of the Senate in 1871-2 and in 1873-4. Alfred Topliff, another merchant, was a member of the Assembly in 1854-5.⁷ The first copy of the Columbus Journal in February, 1855, states that there were then 800 people in the village, seven stores and no cholera.

Columbus adopted the village form of government in 1864 and was chartered as a city in 1874. Emmons E. Chapin (office in the second story of building #61), a lawyer who came to Columbus from Cayuga County, New York, in 1856, drafted the city charter and he, R.W. Chadbourn the banker (#62) and William Huggins the druggist (#65), took the charter to Madison to be approved by the legislature. For years Chapin was a member of the State Democratic Central Committee and he participated in every Congressional and State convention from 1857 to 1879 as a progressive liberal. When the legislature authorized free high schools in 1875 and Columbus voted to adopt a high school system in 1876, Chapin became the first president of the Board of Education.⁸ He was also the first City Attorney.

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The 1874 city charter authorized a volunteer fire department, which was organized in 1877. Actually there were three fire fighting groups for a short time. Today there is still a volunteer fire department.

Columbus prospered up to the 1940's, although the loss of the Kurth Brewery and later of the Borden's Dry Milk Plant and the Stokely Canning Company among others, were all signs that commercial stagnation was on its way. The development of modern highway systems, the decline of the railroads, and changes in farming, all took their toll. It was not until the 1960's, however, that it became evident to most that small towns were in trouble.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE ENDNOTES

1. Stare, Vol. 1, pg. 10.
2. Ibid. pg. 14.
3. Butterfield, pg. 508.
4. Ibid. pg. 511.
5. Ibid. pg. 376.
6. Ibid. pg. 378.
7. Ibid. pg. 381-389.
8. Ibid. pg. 959.

ARCHITECTURE

The Columbus Downtown Historic District is significant architecturally for being an excellent collection of nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings, most of which are fine, representative examples of the Italianate style and of the various manifestations of the commercial vernacular form. The district also contains several fine examples of Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style-influenced buildings and two examples of Prairie School Style buildings, one of which, the Farmers & Merchants Union Bank (#2 - NHL), is one of the finest of the celebrated group of small midwestern bank buildings designed by Louis D. Sullivan towards the end of his career.

The district contains 63 contributing buildings and 16 non-contributing buildings, which, taken as a whole, constitute the great majority of the historic resources in Columbus that are potentially eligible for their associations with both the significance areas of architecture and commerce. Ninety percent of these buildings are two-stories in height

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(the remainder are either one or three-stories in height), and an even higher percentage are clad in brick, of which number nearly half are constructed out of Watertown or Milwaukee cream-colored brick. The large number of brick buildings in the district is typical of most communities of this size and age in the southern half of Wisconsin and reflects the usual historic progression in such communities towards larger buildings made of increasingly permanent materials. In Columbus - as in other communities that developed in this period - the earliest buildings built to house commercial activity were typically constructed out of wood. These first buildings were then usually replaced with larger, more permanent buildings. Consequently, many of the district's brick buildings are actually the second (and sometimes even the third) ones to have been built on their respective lots. Stylistically, the buildings in the district follow the usual chronological progression that has been noted in other communities in the state, with Italianate style and Italianate style-influenced vernacular buildings making up the bulk of the district's earliest resources.

Italianate Style

The predominant architectural style in the district is the Italianate style. In fact, of the district's sixty-three contributing buildings, about 70% are either typical examples of this style or exhibit features that are strongly influenced by it. This is in line with the results of surveys undertaken in the downtowns of other southern Wisconsin cities, many of which have also been found to possess similar concentrations of buildings of Italianate commercial design. The Italianate style subsection of the CRMP states that commercial manifestations of this style in Wisconsin were constructed between 1850 and 1880 and notes that such buildings typically exhibit "bracketed cornices, which often rises above a flat or shed roof," and distinctively shaped windows that "frequently have hoodmolds or even pediments, and (that are) sometimes roundheaded."¹ Segmentally arched and flat-arched window heads are also frequently employed on the main facades of these buildings as well, most typically on the second stories. Three of the district's best examples of Italianate commercial buildings are the Sargent Block (#45 - 101 E. James St.), the Bassett and Davies Building Addition (#46 - 114-118 N. Ludington St.), and the Union Bank/Telephone Building (#68 - 156 N. Dickason Blvd.).

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The Columbus Downtown Historic District is particularly rich in fine examples of commercial vernacular buildings whose designs were influenced by the Italianate style. These buildings contain many of the same basic elements as the high style ones listed above, but their most characteristic feature is the use of round-arched windows in their upper stories. The five contiguous buildings (#40, 41, 42, 43, and 44) that stretch from 107 to 127 E. James St. are all excellent examples of such buildings, but there are many other fine examples in the district that are of equal importance.

Commercial Vernacular Form

Simply designed commercial buildings built between 1850-1920 are presently called commercial vernacular form buildings. Such buildings typically have some stylistic similarities with more high-style examples but not enough to merit placing them within those categories. Commercial vernacular buildings are usually two or three-stories in height, although one and four-story examples can also be found. "All varieties, if not radically altered, include large retail show windows on the ground story. Upper stories, whether meant to serve business or residential uses, are characterized by simple window openings. Doors to serve ground story shops and upper-stories are simple and, when original, are generally of panelled wood with a single window above. An emphatic cornice with some decorative treatment (compound brick corbeling, wood moldings, or metal friezes, with finials or thick corbels at the ends) and a cornice or I-beam above the storefronts are usually the only decorative touches. Simplified period motifs are implied, but without any overt stylistic reference."² In addition, some decoration is occasionally found around upper story window casings and it is usually limited exclusively to the main facade.

In general, commercial vernacular form buildings in Wisconsin were built between 1850-1920, and they are most often built of brick although both wood and stone examples are also found. Individual buildings may mix two or more cladding materials, but most examples usually feature just one material.

The understanding of commercial vernacular form buildings in Wisconsin and elsewhere is still in its infancy and it is probable that this form will be subdivided into smaller, more descriptive categories in the future. For now, these buildings can be roughly differentiated from

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each other on the basis of the date of their construction. Generally speaking, nineteenth century examples of the form are taller and/or narrower than twentieth century counterparts having the same number of stories and they may also be somewhat more elaborately decorated as well. Twentieth century examples tend to be broader, less tall, and some may have period revival style elements incorporated into their designs. The district's examples of this form include both older and newer buildings such as the Babcock Building (#19 - 137 S. Ludington St., 1888) and the Lien's Garage Building (#15 - 158 S. Ludington St., 1910).

Richardsonian Romanesque Revival

The district contains three buildings that exhibit elements associated with the Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style. "This style is characterized by masonry construction, a general massiveness, simplicity of form, and impressive strength and durability. Like its Romanesque prototype, it is a round-arched style."³ Most Wisconsin examples of this style were built between 1880-1900 and this is true of the district's examples as well. These buildings are: the City Hall Building (#74 - 105 N. Dickason Blvd., NRHP 9/4/79); the Kurth Tavern Building (#29 - 120 E. James St.); and the Tremont Hotel (#53 - 143-147 N. Ludington Street). All three buildings embody the typical characteristics noted above, the most notable of which is that all three have main entrances that are set into distinctive round-arched openings.

Prairie School

Two of the most important buildings in the Columbus Downtown Historic District are the Prairie School-influenced Arts and Crafts style Columbus Public Library (#1 - 112 S. Dickason Blvd., NRHP-11/15/90) and the Farmers and Merchants Union Bank (#2 - 159 W. James St., NRHP-10/18/72, NHL-1/7/76). Both of these buildings are listed in the NRHP and they are more fully discussed in their respective nomination forms. The Public Library is an interesting Arts and Crafts style variant of the notable series of Prairie School style library designs developed by the well-known Madison, Wisconsin architectural firm of Claude and Starck. It is also noteworthy that Louis W. Claude, one of the principals in the firm of Claude and Starck, received his early professional training in the celebrated Chicago office of Louis D. Sullivan; the architect of the Farmers and Merchants Union Bank. Louis

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D. Sullivan, of course, is world-renowned for his pioneering role in the development of modern architecture, and his Farmers and Merchants Union Bank is both the architectural gem of Columbus and one of Wisconsin's most important Prairie School buildings. Of particular interest is Sullivan's highly individualized use of the round-arched motif, a motif that is associated with the earlier Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style, but which many Prairie School architects recycled in their later, more modern designs.

For the most part, the buildings in the district are exemplary of the commercial buildings that were once found in most southern Wisconsin communities of this size and they are of significance for this fact alone. These buildings are also notable, however, for both their individual and their collective integrity. Despite changes to windows and cornices, most of the district's individual resources still retain a high degree of integrity and as a result, the historic streetscapes in the district are still largely intact as well. As a consequence, the downtown of Columbus still retains much of its historic appearance, a circumstance that allows Sullivan's bank building design to be fully appreciated. Sullivan's bank building is the architectural high point of the Columbus Downtown Historic District and its designation as a National Historic Landmark attests to its international reputation. The importance of this celebrated building is enhanced, however, by the intact survival of the neighborhood it was designed to relate to.

ARCHITECTURE ENDNOTES

1. Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin. Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, 1986. Vol. 2, 2-6 (Architecture).
2. Ibid. Vol. 2, 3-10 (Architecture).
3. Ibid. Vol. 2, 2-12 (Architecture).

COMMERCE

Columbus did not benefit from the availability of minerals, proximity to a major body of water, to timberlands or to special institutions. Instead, Columbus owed its early success as a small but locally important commercial center to its location on early rail lines and particularly to the development and prosperity of the surrounding farmland.

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The most important factor leading to the establishment of Columbus was the harnessing of the Crawfish River to power a flouring mill that served the surrounding area. The Crawfish was also considered for inclusion in a projected network that would have linked rivers like the Crawfish with canals in central and southeastern Wisconsin, thereby connecting the Great Lakes with the Mississippi, but this ambitious scheme never became a reality.¹ The central location of Columbus between the early settlement of Green Bay to the north and Madison (later to be the capitol) to the south on the one hand, and Milwaukee (on Lake Michigan) and La Crosse (on the Mississippi River) on the other hand, resulted in several highways passing through the city. This, in turn, proved to be the determining factor that led to Columbus being located on one of the first major east/west railroad lines in Wisconsin.²

In 1857, the Milwaukee and Watertown Company completed a railroad line from Portage to La Crosse and a second line, the Watertown line, was also completed from Milwaukee to Columbus. This construction was the result of an 1856 Congressional grant (the first to Wisconsin) that was to aid in the construction of a railroad line from Madison or Columbus to the end of Lake Superior. This grant had been awarded to the Milwaukee and La Crosse Company, a consolidation of the previously separate Watertown and La Crosse companies. The result was the first railroad into Columbus, a railroad that an 1858 legislative investigation revealed had been granted when "enough members of both houses were 'propitiated by pecuniary compliments' (in the form of \$5000 and \$10,000 bonds for those who voted right) for the Legislature to give the grant to that Company."³ In 1864, the connection was made from Columbus to Portage, thus linking Columbus to communities to the east and to the west, but by then the company had been sold and had become the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad.⁴

Columbus, of course, benefitted from it's position on a railroad line and at one point there were five companies in the village that stored grain near the tracks.⁵ Wisconsin first started exporting wheat in 1841, and by 1876 Milwaukee (to which Columbus had been connected by rail since 1857) was the greatest wheat market in the world. Although wheat was the biggest crop in Wisconsin, (100 million bushels in 1860-1865, feeding not only the east and the Union Armies but England and France as well) corn, oats, rye and barley were shipped out as well.⁶ Hops were also an important crop in the Columbus area from 1860 until

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1865, after which time the bottom dropped out of the market and production moved to other states.⁷ But in 1862 there were more Wisconsin hops in the New York market than from anywhere else.⁸

By 1877 the dairy industry in Wisconsin and in Columbia County was growing rapidly and cheese and butter production was becoming increasingly important as a result. Columbus never had a cheese manufacturing facility, but it did, however, thrive as a shipping point for milk (most of which went to the large Chicago market), and it also engaged in the manufacture of dry milk.⁹

The brewing of beer also played an important role in the commerce of Wisconsin, there being 292 breweries in the state by 1872.¹⁰ Columbus too, had a part in this activity. Henry John Kurth, born in Witzenhausen, Germany in 1821, came to Columbus in 1859 and started the city's first brewery. This brewery remained in the Kurth family until it finally ceased production in the 1940s. Its heyday, however, when it was one of the bigger breweries in the state, was in the years just before 1916, when a bad fire and prohibition effectively killed it. The brewery not only owned several saloons in Columbus - (#35) 158 E. James St., (#29) 120 E. James St., (#59) 115 N. Ludington St. - but also quite a few in surrounding towns as well. Its beer was also sold on the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad and as far east as Pennsylvania.¹¹

Another industry, connected with the agriculture of the area, and one which had a great impact on the community, was the Columbus Canning Company, which was founded in 1900. For several years this was the largest pea canning plant in the world and it supported forty families year round and many more seasonal workers. Its early officers and investors were all established downtown businessmen: W. C. Leitch, President (Leitch Block, #52), A. H. Whitney, Vice President (Whitney Building, #26), A. M. Bellack, Secretary (Bellack's Clothing Store, #67), F. A. Chadbourn, Treasurer, (President, 1st National Bank, #62), J. R. Wheeler (President, Farmer & Merchants Union Bank, #68), S. W. Andrews and W. W. Williams. These same officers remained on the board for 23 years.¹²

In 1909 a group of Columbus businessmen, spurred on by the success of the canning company, got on the automobile manufacturing bandwagon. They formed a stock company, the "Automobile Experimental Association," and backed a man who set about assembling automobiles in Columbus.¹³ In

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May, the local newspaper announced the trial run of the first "Badger" automobile and predicted that Columbus would become a manufacturing center.¹⁴ Several of the same businessmen were involved: A. M. Bellack, W.C. Leitch, and J. R. Wheeler. A grocer, Charles Fowler (#11) was also involved. By 1911, however, the company had failed, partly because its cars did not place well in some long distance races designed to "rate" new cars.¹⁵

Columbus has been fortunate in its banking history. In 1836 the Territorial Legislature of Wisconsin incorporated two banks, both of which failed in the ensuing panic. For the next fifteen years the legislature was so fearful of banks that anti-banking provisions were inserted in every legislative act which incorporated anything, even churches. But in 1839, an act was passed incorporating the Marine and Fire Insurance Company of Milwaukee, with the right to receive deposits, issue certificates of deposit and lend money (which they did). The new Wisconsin Constitution of 1848, however, specifically prohibited the State from incorporating banks and Governor Farwell challenged the Marine Company in court. Happily for the economic well being of Wisconsin, the people voted "for banks" in an 1851 referendum, making the court case moot. In 1852, the first general banking laws were passed, modeled after those in New York. By 1853 there were two strong banks in Milwaukee, the Marine Bank and the Marshall & Ilsley Bank. During the panic of 1860-61, which was caused by the threat of war and by the depreciation of bonds issued in the southern states, many banks in this state and elsewhere, failed, but the two strong banks in Milwaukee survived and helped save the system.¹⁶

Moneylending in Columbus, as elsewhere, was originally a private affair. The first lender was an Isaiah Robinson, a lawyer about whom little is recorded, though he had an office in building #22. The second lender was R. W. Chadbourn, who had been born in York County, Maine in 1819. In 1849, Chadbourn came to Columbus after teaching in Virginia and he also engaged in real estate and was a justice of the peace.

The first "real" bank in Columbus, and the second in the county, was started by a bank promoter named C. C. Barnes in 1856. The local paper reported that "such an institution is needed in this place and Mr. Barnes knows his business and will do it right."¹⁷ The board was made up of local businessmen and the bank located above Elliot's store (#22). In 1857 the bank moved to the second floor of the new Fuller Building

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(#10), and in 1860 the Bank of Columbus (as it was named) built its own building, which was half of what is now the First National Bank Building before these two buildings were refaced and combined (#62). Barnes then sold out his interest in the bank to two men from Illinois just before the panic of 1861, which forced the Bank of Columbus to close. Later in 1861, Mr. R. W. Chadbourn, who had been renting rooms upstairs, moved down into the space occupied by the Bank of Columbus and started his own bank. In 1863 Chadbourn's bank was reorganized under new Federal banking laws and became the First National Bank of Columbus, the 178th bank in the U.S. to become a National Bank.¹⁸ The same issue of the paper¹⁹ that announced the opening of the Chadbourn Columbus Bank also announced the opening of the Union Bank by John R. Wheeler, who came from New York state for the express purpose of starting a bank. Wheeler, who had two brothers-in-law (A. G. Cook and Lester Rockwell) already established here, first located his bank in a building (non-extant) on W. James St., but he soon moved into a new building built by Richard Vanaken (#68) on the corner of James and Dickason Streets, where it stayed until 1920. The building became known as the Union Bank Building, the word "Union" being used because Wheeler was such a strong supporter of Lincoln and the Union. A. G. Cook was cashier and Samuel Marshall and Charles Ilsley were both stockholders.

Both the First National Bank and the Farmers and Merchants Union Bank attest to the fact that Columbus was a thriving community, capable of supporting two banks, and that capable men managed them. Both banks are still in operation today and are still independently operated.

Although other enterprises became self-perpetuating and the commercial life in Columbus developed many facets, the survival and wealth of the community ultimately depended on farming and the related dairy industry. It was, and to a lesser extent still is, these farms that created the financial base for all the other activities. As R. W. Chadbourn, the banker, wrote in a letter to a Mr. Hood who was located back on the east coast: "Our fertile lands will always be a stock in trade that will yield a profit sufficient to supply all our wants and necessities. We have only to follow the earth and commit the seed to the soil to insure a bountiful reward of labor."²⁰ Many people like R. W. Chadbourn grew wealthy on this assumption when they moved west to the frontier.

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The following are some of the more important commercial buildings in the Columbus Main Street Historic District.

Commercially Significant Buildings

Bassett and Davies Block (#44) 107 East James Street 1873

This building (#44) is commercially significant because of its associations with several of Columbus's earliest settlers and their pioneering commercial enterprises. In 1845, Daniel Bassett, a redheaded and hot-tempered man and a native of New York came to Columbus after having spent some time in Janesville and in the little village of Danville, which is located just east of Columbus on the Crawfish River. Bassett and his partner, Josiah Arnold (a Welshman), paid \$30.00 for a 150-foot-wide piece of land that faced north on East James St. This amounted to one half of the block and was the land upon which buildings #45, #44, #43, #41 & #40 now stand. The two men then opened the second general store in Columbus (the first one belonged to A. H. Whitney and it was located on the opposite side of the street where #27 is now). Arnold left Columbus in 1851, selling his share to E. P. Silsbee, who was a brother-in-law of Bassett. Uriah Davies (another Welshman, and a very pious one) clerked in this store until 1853, when he and Silsbee started a competitive store. In 1865 Silas Axtel bought out Silsbee and Dan Bassett then bought out Axtel, bringing Bassett and Davies back together again. In 1873, they built the much longer brick building at 107 E. James St. (Bassett & Davies building, #44). Then, in 1877, the partners built an addition (#46) which extended westward from the rear of the original building, giving them frontage on N. Ludington St. and more display area. In 1888, Bassett and Davies both died and Davies' son, Luther, came home from Harvard to run the business. Davies hired William Pietzner to assist him and by 1901 Pietzner was running this thriving business with Fred Kettlehon.²¹

Bassett and Davies Addition (#46) 114 & 118 N. Ludington St. 1877

This excellent building was built as an addition to the building around the corner at 107 E. James St. (#44) and its design repeats many of the features used in the design of the corner building at 101 E. James St. (#45). The first story of this two-story Italianate cream brick double building contains two identical storefronts that are separated by an interior staircase that ascends to the second story. The west-facing

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main facade of the building is symmetrical in design and it is distinguished by an elaborate denticulated and bracketed metal-covered cornice which is broken in the center by a triangular pediment. Another second smaller metal-covered cornice spans the facade and separates the first and second stories. A prominent date stone (1877) is centered in the wall surface of this facade just below the cornice.

The seven second-story window openings are each topped by a Tudor arch, the designs of which are echoed in the arcaded brick corbel table that is placed just above the openings and below the main cornice. The center window opening has been bricked in and the upper parts of the other six have been infilled. Seven slightly more elaborate Tudor arches that each enclose a transom light form an abbreviated arcade above the first floor display windows and the entrance doors. Decorative cast iron columns are then used to enframe the display windows and the doors of the two storefronts. The centrally placed door leads to the second story of the building and to the second story of the "parent" building built by Bassett and Davies on E. James Street (#44).

This building, which is largely unaltered both inside and out, makes a strong architectural statement and it serves as an anchor for this side of N. Ludington Street.

Farnham Block (#43) 111 East James Street c1858

This three-story building, which was originally known as the Farnham Block and later as the Schaeffer Block, housed the store of one of Columbus' most successful businessmen and earliest merchants. Born in Vermont, but brought up in Canada and New York state, Frederick Farnham came to Columbus, where his three sisters lived, in 1847, at the age twenty-five. At first, Farnham clerked in the only store on the north side of East James St., for Messrs. Arnold and Bassett. He later left this store and, after taking his brother-in-law, James F. Allen, as a partner, engaged in the produce business. Ultimately, the two men owned a big grain warehouse with a horse-operated elevator that was and is located next to the railroad tracks (still extent and still in use) and they also owned a lumber yard.

When Fred Farnham died in 1871, he left an estate of \$100,000. His timing was right. His partner, James Allen, went into voluntary

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bankruptcy in 1893, but in the meantime the store on East James had been sold to Schaeffer.²²

Lueders & Krause Building (#40) 125 - 127 East James Street

Established in 1871, the Lueders & Krause Commission Store (#40) did a thriving business until 1931. The January 22, 1881 issue of the Republican Journal reported that the business "now aggregates \$80,000 to \$100,000 a year, specializing in butter, eggs, hides, barley, seeds, potatoes and wool. Transactions extend to Chicago and southern and eastern cities." The store even had an elevator in back to handle the produce, a rare convenience.

In 1931 Milo Lange's Milk and Ice Cream Company located there and in recent years the store has been divided in two parts and has had various owners and renters.

Turner and Blumenthal Building (#37) 145 East James Street 1894

Once considered one of the more important marble working establishments in the "interior" of the state, this property (#37) originally extended to Water Street and consisted of stone cutting sheds and a display yard. The present building was erected in 1894, but William T. Turner started his business on this site in 1867. Turner came to Columbus from Yorkshire, England, where he apprenticed in the cutters trade, practicing it in Scotland and on the Island of Jersey. In 1878, Turner was joined by Herman M. Blumenthal, who was born in Prussia and came to Columbus in 1868.²³

It is known that Turner and Blumenthal did stone and marble work for numerous buildings (including #34 - the Brown Building) although the exact number is not known. Turner's son, William R. Turner, also went into the business, which lasted until the 1950's. Starting in 1918, R.L. Leitch and Jack Roberts rented the second story to print the Columbus Republican. Art Jorgenson later began printing his Shopping Reminder, a weekly "shopper" in this building.²⁴

Bellack Building (#67) 152 West James Street 1895

This rather plain looking building was erected in 1895 by Louis Sawyer to house the men's clothing business of Albert M. Bellack, which had

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been a thriving business in Columbus since Herman Bellack, A. M.'s father, started H. Bellack & Sons at 119 E. James St. (#41) in 1883. In 1884 the business moved to 115 E. James St. (#42) and was renamed for A. M. Bellack when the other son, Bernard, chose to quit the business and go to medical school in Chicago. In 1890 Bellack moved his business into an older frame building on West James St. and stayed there until his new building (#67) was being completed. He remained in business until 1935, changing its name to A. M. Bellack and Son in 1920 after his son Willard joined him. The building remained a men's clothing store under various proprietors until the 1980s.

A. M. Bellack was one of the city's most active businessmen. He played an important role in organizing the Columbus Canning Company and the Badger Motor Car Company. He was active in the Masonic Lodge, the Knights of Pythias, The Rotary Club, the City Council, the Board of the County Normal School and he was a member of the building committee of the first Columbus Hospital. He also was an organizer of the "Advancement Association," the forerunner of the Chamber of Commerce.

Firemen's Tavern (#35) 152 East James Street 1852

Originally two buildings, but now one, these buildings are of importance as two of the city's earliest commercial buildings. These were the earliest buildings on the block (which was the first block in the city to be developed). The first establishments here belonged to Joseph Atwood, a cooper (1852) (on the east side) and Samuel McLarity, a tailor, and for a short while by David Rosenkrans, a lawyer and book store owner (on the west side). By 1861, the buildings had been combined and they served farmers as a place to "lay over" when they had to wait for the use of the grist mill. Mathias Winter bought both halves and ran them as a saloon/restaurant/boarding house until he and his wife Caroline took over the Columbus House in about 1885. The Kurth Brewing Company then bought the building in 1895 and leased it to various people up to 1946 (as one of the saloons where their beer was sold). In 1946 Herman Brill bought it, along with all the other buildings on that half of the Block. He then sold it to the present owner, Delores Klokow.²⁵ This is still a popular bar and restaurant today with about fifteen varieties of soup on the menu at unbeatable prices. The name "Firemen's" was first given to it in the 1930s when Henry Krenz, the fire chief, ran it for the Kurth Company.

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Anderson Building (#5) 137 West James Street

Ole Anderson worked for some years for other merchants before constructing his own building and starting a general store in 1858 (#5). By 1878 he was specializing in produce and had a thriving business in this, the oldest building on the block. He made even more money with his beans and hides business, which employed twelve women who process the goods that were then sent by rail to Anderson's son in Chicago to be shipped east. When Anderson's wife died in about 1880, he sold off the east half of his building to a barber shop (Henk & Andrus), and the building has been divided ever since. Anderson's son, Alvin (also called Ole) studied to be an electrician in Chicago and opened the first (and for many years the only) electric store (Anderson Electric) in Columbus. He did all the electrical work in the city for years and his sons carried on the business until 1975.²⁶

Corner Drug Store (#61) 103 North Ludington Street

Built in 1852 by A. G. Cooper, a carpenter and cabinet maker from Onedago County, New York, this building is important commercially as one of the oldest, if not the oldest commercial building in the city and it has also been continuously occupied by a drug store for 123 years. In its earliest years the building housed a grocery and dry goods store, and there was an oyster bar run by Carl Sampson in the basement and Jacob Smith's tailor shop and a jeweler were located in the rear.²⁷

In 1865, Cooper sold the building to John Williams, a druggist, for \$4,000.²⁸ Williams, a native of Wales, had apprenticed to an apothecary there. He then came to America in 1864, and with his brother opened the third drug store in Columbus (the first being John Swarthout's store and the second, Frank Huggin's). The building Williams occupied from 1861-1865 was an old wood building just west of the Corner Drug Store building, whose site later became the east half of what is now the First National Bank (#62). It was Williams who named his building the Corner Drug Store and he remained there until 1901, after which it was briefly owned by a druggist named Waterhouse.²⁹ Between 1908 and 1920, John A. Jones, who owned another drug store in the Jones Block (#6), owned it. The business then passed to a William Kalk, who owned both it and the one across the street (#8). Ernest Schultz, who worked for Kalk, bought it next, and the present owner, Lyle Sampson, bought it from Schultz.

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While Williams was there, Dr. Earll, the second doctor in town, had his office on the second floor, as did E. E. Chapin, one of Columbus's first attorneys.

Griswold Block (#7) 121 West James Street 1868

This important building was, along with building #8 & 9 to its south, originally built in 1868. It was then remodeled in 1888, as was most of building #8 & 9. The two buildings, however, have separate commercial histories and until the present owner combined them in 1968 they were physically separate buildings.

The Griswold family, consisting of two brothers, George and William, and a half brother, Eugene, all came to Wisconsin from Salisbury New York. George, who was going blind, came first in 1850. William followed in 1853 and together they built a home in 1858 that was a replica of their home in New York so George could find his way when he was blind. Both men graduated from Union College and both were lawyers. They built the Griswold Block (#8 & 9) on the site of their prior wooden building and used the north building (#7) for the Griswold Mercantile Store. Eugene was often a business partner of George and William, and a young cousin, Addison, operated the village post office in this store from 1854-6. The mercantile store was run by the Griswolds until 1915. During this time the Griswolds were also active in real estate, probably practiced some law, and were involved in politics and farming.³¹

The building remained in the Griswold family until 1930, when it became the Baumgartner Hardware Store. Burr Wright and Sanderson then operated the store from 1938 to 1955. It then became the Kroger Grocery Store until the present owners, Sharrow Drugs, expanded into it in 1968.

The store is important because the Griswolds came early and figured heavily in the early business life of Columbus. They owned most of the block where the library stands and they were also active in the city, both politically and culturally.

Griswold Block (#8 & 9) 100 South Ludington Street

This building (along with #7) was probably also built for the Griswolds since it was originally referred to as the Griswold Block and Butterfield says that Vanaken built two buildings for the Griswolds.

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John Swarthout must then have bought it shortly after its completion to house his drug business.

John Swarthout, the city's first druggist, came to Columbus from New York in 1846. He first established himself on East James Street (then the main commercial thoroughfare in Columbus) in a wooden building located where building #32 now stands. He then moved across the street to another wooden building located where building #41 is now. Then, in 1868, Swarthout moved into one of the stores in the new brick building on Ludington Street (#8 & 9) located next to the Griswold Store (#7). In 1902, he took as a partner James Quickenden (who began work there as an errand boy) and the business was renamed Swarthout and Quickenden. James Quickenden, who was born in Columbus in 1855, owned the store (or his estate did, as he died in 1955 at 100 years) from 1905 to 1923, when Lloyd Sharrow bought the business.³² In 1968, Phillip Sharrow took over the business and remodeled it, incorporating the Kroger Grocery Store (#7) and the meat market behind it.

The building is important to the commercial history of Columbus because of its associations with the city's first druggist and because it has been a drug store continuously for 122 years.

Whitney House Hotel (#26) 101 South Ludington Street

H. A. Whitney, a Yankee peddler from Vermont who came to Columbus via Illinois, built the first wood frame store building in Columbus on the land where this hotel building now stands (#26). He built this building in 1845 and it also served as the village's first post office, with Whitney acting as the first postmaster.

Besides being the proprietor of this combination store/tavern/rooming house and post office, Whitney was also a live-stock dealer, ran wagons for hauling supplies, furnished horse and ox teams for logging operations, and took produce north to the "Pineries" to trade for lumber. He also traded with the Indians, carried wheat to Milwaukee, was a member of the Village Board and later of the City Council, and he owned nine or ten farms in the area.³⁴

The present building, which replaced Whitney's first one, was erected in 1858. It was the center of social activity and entertainment in Columbus and in the surrounding area from 1858 through the turn-of-the-

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century. All sorts of elaborate social occasions, traveling musicals, plays, and demonstrations were held in the lovely third-story ballroom whose long windows looked out over the city.

After Whitney left, the building was owned by Julius Fox, who called it the Fox House. Fox owned it from 1860's, when Whitney left, to 1883, when he sold it to Sheldon Hewins and it became the Hewins House. As the Hewins House in 1884, the hotel was linked to the railroad depot by one of the city's first telephone lines. In 1889, L. E. Greenleaf bought the building and called it the Columbus House. Whitney's son and H. M. Brown (the owner of the book store, building #63) then bought the building and remodeled it and by 1896 a man named Vanderpool owned it.

In 1903, however, the building was remodeled, with the first story being converted into stores and the upper stories into offices. It continued in this fashion throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the first story being occupied by a successful restaurant (Muellers) and the second story was being rented to lawyers, but after the 1940s the building was owned by a succession of people who let it deteriorate. It now has a new owner and needs restoration.

Brokopp Meat Market (#75) 117 North Dickason Boulevard

Eugene Sutton and F. O. Goodspeed bought this land in 1893 from John Sutton. Wekes Refrigeration then built a cold storage building (#75) for them. The "ice house" was located on the second story and storage space and a small butcher shop were located on the first story. There is still a tackle beam (projecting from the gable end of the roof) that was used to haul the ice upstairs. A chute was then used to send the ice into the cooler. The walls of the cooler are very thick and tightly packed with cork.

This business is now owned and operated by the fourth generation of the Brokopp and Miller families. Fred Brokopp bought it in 1923, and Doris Brokopp (who married Gene Miller) ran it until 1982, when the Miller's sons purchased it. They are still in business and provide custom butchering.

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Dering's Commission Store (#52) 153 North Ludington Street

This building is significant because for years it was a successful and well known produce/commission store. Its longest term owner (1908 - 1921) was Guy Vance Dering, a prominent Columbus resident whose business dealings in grain, feed and seed reached far beyond Columbus.

Guy Dering was the only child of Oscar Dering and Oscar Dering's second wife, Sarah Vance, who was a pioneer milliner (1858 - 1913) in Columbus. He attended St. John's Military Academy in Delafield, Wisconsin and stayed on there as commandant of the cadets for some years.

In 1908 Dering bought the Columbus grain and feed business of Churchill and Sexton, which had been established in 1875. Dering established his new business in the Leitch Building (#52), where the original owner, C. Leitch, and later a Mr. A. Wilke had had commission/produce stores earlier. Churchill's business had once been a thriving one, the Republican Journal of January 22, 1881 having referred to it (Churchill's grain business) as a "trade paramount to all others - owning a large warehouse with a capacity of 20,000 bushels." The same article also stated that C. Leitch dealt in "seeds, hides, pelts, lard, tallow, butter, eggs - and was associated with the grain trade." It went on to say: "Mr. Leitch is a man of experience, well informed as to the condition of the various markets of the country and will always pay the highest prices for produce, grain, etc."

Besides his new store, Dering also owned grain elevators near the railroad tracks, and his business thrived. Dering spent a great deal of time involved in civic affairs. He was also a director of the Farmers & Merchants Bank for many years and was several times a state and national champion trapshooter besides being an active Mason, a member of the Knights of Pythias, a Modern Woodsman, a Rotarian, and a member of the 1492 Club.

COMMERCE ENDNOTES

1. Stare, Vol. II, pg. 220.
2. Butterfield, pg. 175.
3. Ibid. pg. 173 - 284.
4. Stare, Vol. I, pg. 72.
5. Butterfield, pg. 485 - 493.

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COMMERCE ENDNOTES (continued)

6. Stare, Vol. I, pg. 223 & 217.
7. Butterfield, pg. 209.
8. Stare, Vol. III, pg. 507 & Columbus Democrat, Dec. 10, 1862.
9. Butterfield, pg. 203.
10. Ibid. pg. 205
11. Kurth Brewing Company Records provided by John Kurth, Columbus, Wisconsin.
12. Journal Republican, July, 1940 Centennial Edition.
13. Stare, Vol. II, pg. 383.
14. Columbus Democrat, May 28, 1909.
15. Stare, Vol. II, pg. 387.
16. Butterfield, pg. 195.
17. Ibid.
18. Stare, Vol. III, pg. 462.
19. Journal Republican, Oct. 2, 1856.
20. Stare, Vol. II, pg. 220.
21. Ibid. pg. 222.
22. Ibid. pg. 226.
23. Butterfield, pg. 979.
24. Stare, Vol. I, pg. 50-52 & Vol. II, pg. 276.
25. Abstract: Delores Klokow, Columbus, Wisconsin.
26. Charles Anderson, son of Alvin Anderson.
27. Republican Journal, February 27, 1885.
28. Stare, Vol. II, pg. 355.
29. Columbus Democrat, May 10, 1869.
30. Republican Journal, January 22, 1881.
31. Stare, Vol. I, pg. 71, 86 & 115.
32. Stare, Vol. IV, pg. 744.
33. Republican Journal, January 26, 1859.
34. Butterfield, pg. 955 - 982.
35. Stare, Vol. III, pg. 536-542.

SOCIAL HISTORY

If the district's buildings themselves expressed an optimism and assurance that Columbus would be successful and would keep on growing commercially, so too did the social and fraternal organizations whose activities were centered in these downtown buildings. It was indicated early on that the settlers needed and meant to have a social structure

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that enabled them to fraternize, to help each other, and to feel politically and culturally part of the mainstream. They had come here to make a better life, having left behind what for some had been more oppressive societies. R.W. Chadbourn, the banker from Maine, expressed these feelings in a letter written in 1851 to a friend, Mr. Wood, who still lived back east.

"Situated in the midst of a prosperous farming community, we experience but few of those anxieties and cares incident to a manufacturing population. While you are trembling with fear occasioned by low tariff our farms continue to yield their golden harvests, thus remunerating us for our labor, and supplying all the necessities of life.

Manufacturing corporations can never connive to reduce our wages, nor oblige us to submit to their oppressive mandates. The blighting touch of a soulless corporation can never affect the prosperity of the independent pioneers of the fruitful west. Our fertile lands will always be a "Stock in Trade" that will yield a profit sufficient to supply all our wants and necessities. We have only to follow the earth and commit the seed to the soil to insure a bountiful reward of labor."¹

Besides fulfilling their social needs, these pioneers also set about securing places where they could give expression to their political opinions, their ethical outlooks, and their altruistic and cultural leanings. Some of these persons, of course, certainly considered themselves to be a new elite (mostly those from the east coast) and they sought to create social institutions that reflected this, but most still believed in the democratic ideal of literacy, education and possible success for all.

The owners and occupants of the buildings in the Columbus Downtown Historic District were the city's commercial entrepreneurs; its businessmen, lawyers, bankers, land brokers, and professionals, and its important craftsmen (builders, carpenters, masons etc., skills so necessary to the community). It was from these persons that the city's political leaders and the founders of its social and fraternal organizations were drawn.

There was also a nameless mark made on the downtown by those men who simply wanted to socialize together and needed a place where they could cope with the difficulties of life. The number of downtown saloons

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which did (and still do) flourish in Columbus is a testament to this need and to the early presence of German brewers in the city.

The earliest known fraternal organization was the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) which had its beginning in Wisconsin in 1847. The Columbus Lodge of the I.O.O.F. was organized in September 1849. Its members met in Farnham Hall (sometimes known as Odd Fellow's Hall) above Silsbee's and Swarthout's drug store (#41). This organization disbanded in 1872,² but another was formed in 1896.³

The Sons of Temperance, organized in 1850 in Columbus, met every Tuesday evening in the Odd Fellow's Hall above Silsbee's and Swarthout's Drug Store at 119 E. James St. (#41). Having organized a library with their wives, and having allowed them to vote, this group finally had to surrender its charter, so they moved over to the Independent Order of Good Templars instead.

The Knights of Pythias, a fraternal order founded in 1864 to sponsor public speaking contests and do humanitarian work, have their monogram, "K of P" embossed on the top of the Bellack building where they met on the second floor (#67).⁴ After the Knights of Pythias disbanded the Knights of Columbus met there. The K. of C. was founded in New Haven, Connecticut in 1882, for the purpose of associating Catholic men in religious and civic affairs. The Columbus Council No. 1609 was the fourth to be established in Wisconsin (after Fond du Lac, Watertown and Beaver Dam). There were 51 charter members and by 1929/30 there were 217 members.⁵

The largest and most durable of the fraternal orders in Columbus was the Masons, probably because lodges of this ancient order had been established in the east since as early as the 17th century. Another reason may have been its purpose of mutual aid to its members. "The principal tenets of this society became Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. They helped each other in employment and unemployment."⁶

In Wisconsin the first chapter was formed in 1824 in Green Bay (though Green Bay was then part of Michigan Territory). A Grand Lodge was formed in Madison in 1843.⁷ In Columbus, Frank McCauley Black was elected the first Master of Lodge #75 of the Free and Accepted Masons in 1856⁸ and the early meeting place was in the Odd Fellows Hall (#41) "on Monday evenings at or preceding the full moon." Starting in 1880, the

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Masons meets in a "well appointed hall" located in the second story of the Griswold building (#8) and they continued to meet there until 1937, when they took over the old German Methodist Church.

In looking at the membership of these organizations it is interesting to note that many of the members belonged to more than one society and were also active in the political organizations as well. They were men who wore many hats.

The Volunteer Firemen of Columbus, first organized in 1877⁹ (for a short time there were three such organizations), had and still have strong fraternal ties. Until 1982 they managed the local Firemen's Park and its pavilion, and they still organize the Fourth of July activities. The Firemen's Tavern (#35) is so named because its long time proprietor Henry Krenz was the fire chief and his tavern was a hang-out for firemen. Earl Witthuhn, proprietor of Earl's Cafe (#31), was more recently Secretary of the Firemen's Association and his cafe was a popular gathering place. Taking part in the hose-running competition in Milwaukee over the years gave the firemen the reputation and ties of an athletic team.

In 1877 the Columbus Library Association was organized in Henderson's Opera House, formerly the Nothelfers Hotel (#72), and the organizers were well-known downtown business and professional men: Eugene and William Griswold (general store, #8), Lester Rockwell (banker, #2), R. W. Chadbourn (banker, #62), John Topp (groceries and dry goods, #56), J. Q. Adams, Lucius Fuller (general store, #10), Dr. Earll (the second physician in the city), Uriah Davies (one of the first merchants, #44), Emmons Chapin (lawyer, active Democrat, writer of the city charter) and Guy Dering (Commission Store, #52).¹⁰ Eugene Griswold offered two upper story rooms in his building (#8) for use as a library and Mattie Walsh was elected librarian. In January, 1897 the library was moved to the City Hall (#74) and it was then supported by public subscription. It remained there until November, 1912 when it was moved to the present Prairie style building (#1), which sits on land purchased from the Griswold's.

The most fashionable places to eat were in the two downtown hotels, the Whitney House (#26), which was built in 1858, and the Tremont Hotel (#53), built in 1892. The Whitney Ballroom, on the third floor, was used for all sorts of occasions and exhibits, and especially for dances,

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into the first two decades of the twentieth century. The 1492 Club was a social group, started in 1907, which conducted its balls there.¹¹

The Bassett and Davies Building (#44) was used for meetings and entertainment as it also had a second floor "hall." The Nazareth Presbyterian Church held services there for some years, while the Baptists met in the "hall" over Cooper's store (#61).¹²

The Schaeffer Building (#42) in the early 1900's housed the Lyric Theatre, where "live shows", medicine shows, Mutt and Jeff performances, etc. could be seen.

The City Hall Auditorium (#74), on the second floor of the 1892 City Hall provided space for plays and for silent movies, which had live musical accompaniment. This auditorium could seat 600 people and the first World Series was telegraphed to an audience who listened to the play-by-play here.¹³

There was even an early attempt to provide public music. In August, 1856 the paper reported that five men had got together to form a band. They were D. L. Thayer (who published a newspaper in the rear of Elliott's Store, #22), Milo Waterhouse (killed at Antietam), Frank Black (first Master of the Masonic Lodge), Harvey Loomis (general store, #11) and James McConnell (tailor). In its November issue the newspaper claimed that "the Columbus Sax-Horn Band is a fixed fact. They have been practicing for several weeks and know several tunes even though not one even knew the scale, but in a short time they will be equal to any band in the state."¹⁴

In 1883, the Cornet Band was formed and it practiced over Uriah Davies' Store (#44). The Democrat of May 30, 1884, reported that the Band went through town with new uniforms and a new band wagon. The same paper, in its September 12th issue, described a competition held in Columbus with other philharmonic bands arriving from neighboring cities by train and being escorted to the Hewins House (Whitney Bldg. #26) by the home band. At this same time there was also a Philharmonic Society (mixed chorus) and a drum corp.¹⁵

Saloons, bowling alleys and billiard halls provided recreation and socialization. The saloons were often connected to restaurants with separate entrances for women and children. Fireman's Tavern, (#35),

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Mrs. Peter's Palmgarden (part of #32), and the Tremont Hotel, (#53, with the saloon to its north #52) were set up this way. There were no bar stools or tables in the saloons, just rails. The Kurth Brewing Company saloons (#35, #29 and #59) were well outfitted, as can be seen in old photographs.¹⁶ The wooden bars themselves were finely crafted and polished, and the back bars were quite elaborate, with mirrors and carving. The spittoons and rails were polished brass.

There was a billiard hall in the 1850's on Ludington Street where building #25 now stands next to the Whitney Hotel. In the early 1900's there was a pool Hall in "Duke" Lohr's bar (#41, where Swarthout's first drug store was located). Lohr himself had been a member of Sousa's Band.¹⁷ There was also a bowling alley on the second story of Heidke's Sweet Shop (#19) which Heidke started after Prohibition forced him out of the Kurth Tavern (#29).

"Talk" was a major recreation and a number of downtown buildings were especially known for it. Some of it was politically oriented and the participants formed clubs of sorts. A person's "politics" was part of his resume. The leaders of the community, no matter what else they did, were known by their political persuasion and their church affiliation. Political discussions were carried on regularly in two of the drug stores. John William's drug store (#61) was a gathering place for the Republicans (formerly Whigs) from 1861 (when he was in a small building just north of #61 for four years) until 1901 and George Griswold's office (which stood about where the Library (#1) now stands) was their "clubhouse." John Swarthout's drug store (building #9 from 1868 - 1905 and, from the early 1840's, where #41 now is) was where the Democrats met. Their "clubhouse" was in Harvey Brown's jewelry store (#63). Swarthout's store was also the place where the Civil War news was read aloud by someone sitting on the chair on the counter.¹⁸ In 1880, the Henk and Andrus Barber Shop (one half of the Anderson Building, #5) became the center for political talk - up through World War II.

Columbus newspapers had this same lively interest in the politics of the day, and between 1868 and 1940 this small city supported two weekly papers. The first paper of record was the Columbus Weekly Journal (Vol. No. 1, February 27, 1855), printed in the rear of Elliott's Store on S. Ludington St. (#22). This paper was Republican in politics and it was published by Daniel Mallo and his son-in-law, Delaney Thayer.

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Thayer retired the next year and Mallo's son then joined him, but he died in 1860 and the Columbus Journal came to an end in 1864. From 1864 to 1868 there was a Republican paper called the Weekly Transcript, published in the second story of the Griswold building (#7). In 1868, Henry Bath purchased the Transcript and started the Columbus Democrat, first in the Cook Building (#68) and later above Kroger's Market in the Griswold Building (#7). In the same year, 1868, J. R. Decker came to Columbus to set up an entirely new printing office and the first "job press" in the city in the second story of the Schaeffer building (#42). His paper was called The Republican. Decker had been publishing a paper in Waupun and he was "induced" to come to Columbus with a signed list of "good" Republicans who pledged to buy his paper. Bath called these Republicans "Radicals." The Columbus Republicans at this time apparently found it unconscionable that the city should have only a Democratic paper. In 1908 R.C. Leitch purchased the paper and published it for thirty years, the last twenty of which took place in the Turner and Blumenthal Building (#37). In 1940, the Republican and the Democrat merged and became the Columbus Journal Republican.

SOCIAL HISTORY ENDNOTES

1. Stare, F. A., Story of Columbus, Vol. 1, pg. 220.
2. Stare, Vol. III, pg. 416.
3. Stare, Vol. 1, pg. 74.
4. Encyclopedia of Associations 1986, 20th ed. Vol. 1., part 2, (section 7-17) pg. 1409.
5. Stare, Vol. I, pg. 74, and Centennial Edition, Journal Republican.
6. Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia, pgs. 38 and 486.
7. Ibid. pg. 486.
8. Journal Republican, April 5, 1856.
9. Stare, Vols. II and III, pg. 399-405.
10. Stare, Vol. 1, pg. 99.
11. Stare, Vol. III, pg. 542.
12. Stare, Vol. III, pg. 582.
13. Tape of George Eichberg, on file, City Hall, Columbus, Wisconsin.
14. Journal Republican, August 7, 1856.
15. Stare, Vol. III, pg. 422-428.
16. Photograph on file at City Hall, Columbus, Wisconsin.
17. Tape of Elmer Vessey, on file, City Hall, Columbus, Wisconsin.

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SOCIAL HISTORY ENDNOTES (Continued)

18. Stare, Vol. 1, pg. 71-73.
19. On file, Columbus Public Library, Columbus Wisconsin.

Archeological Potential

The extent of any archeological remains in the district is conjectural at this time. No information about possible prehistoric remains in this area was found in the course of the research and it seems likely that any remains of pre-European cultures that might once have been located within the district have since been greatly disturbed by subsequent building activity. The district may well contain remains dating from the early settlement period, however, since a number of non-extant buildings are known to have been located within the district boundaries.

9. Major Bibliographical Reference

Butterfield, C.W. The History of Columbia County. Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1888.

Coil, Henry W. Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia. New York: Masonic Supply Company, Inc., 1961.

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

 Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property _____ 11 Acres

UTM References

A	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/3/6/7/0/0</u>	<u>4/8/0/0/3/2/0</u>	B	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/3/6/8/1/0</u>	<u>4/8/0/0/1/0/0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/3/6/6/5/0</u>	<u>4/8/0/0/0/0/0</u>	D	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/3/6/5/2/0</u>	<u>4/8/0/0/2/3/0</u>

_____ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See Continuation Sheet 10 - 1

 X See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See Continuation Sheet 10 - 2

 X See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Poser/Columbus Landmark & Historic Preservation Comm.

organization Columbus Preservation Comm. date 01/30/90

street & number 105 N. Dickason Blvd. telephone (414) 623-5900

city or town Columbus state WI zip code 53925

NPS Form 10-900a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processor Format
Approved 2/87

United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

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Section number 9 Page 1

Major Bibliographical References Continued

Drake, Levi. "Plat of Columbus", July 25, 1866.

Columbia County Agriculture, Extension Education and Resource
Developments Commission, 1914.

Jones, J. E. History of Columbia County, Vol. 2, Chicago: Lewis
Publishing Company, 1914.

Kurth Company Records, provided by John Kurth, Columbus, Wisconsin.

Lowe, David. Lost Chicago, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1975.

McCafferty, Imogene St. John. Reminiscences of the Early Days of
Columbus, Columbus: Imogene McCafferty, May 22, 1916.

Mercantile Appraisal Card File, Columbus: City Hall.

Newspapers: The Columbus Democrat, Columbus: 1868-1940.
The Republican Journal, Columbus: 1855-1868.
The Republican, Columbus: 1868-1940.
The Columbus (Centennial Edition) Journal Republican,
Columbus: 1940. All on file, Columbus Public Library.

Maps: City Map - Columbus, Brewster & Associates, Portage, Wisconsin.
Sanborn-Perris Maps - Columbus, 1885,
1904, 1915, 1927.

Stare, Fred A., The Story of Columbus, Vols. 1-4, Columbus: Compiled by
the Columbus Library from Columbus Journal Republican, Columbus,
Wisconsin, from Installment #1, April 5, 1951, through Installment #569,
May 9, 1963.

Tax Rolls, 1855-1990. Columbus, Wisconsin: City Hall.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET
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Major Bibliographical References Continued

Title Abstracts, Columbus, Wisconsin: owners of district buildings:

Anderson, Charles	Klokow, Delores
Baerwald, Elaine & Bernard	Lund, Willard
Boness, Elizabeth	Miller, Doris Brokopp
Breier, Sharon	Morris, Robert
Ganga, John	Voelker, Rosalie

United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Columbus Downtown Historic District, Columbus, Columbia County,
Wisconsin

Section number 10 Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description Continued

The Columbus Downtown Historic District is part of the original nine blocks platted by Levi Drake for Louis Ludington in 1844. It includes most of the original four downtown blocks plus three buildings on the two blocks to the west, fronting on Dickason Boulevard.

Starting on the west side of the intersection of South Ludington and West Harrison Streets (at the corner of 158 S. Ludington St.), the boundary line goes northwest along West Harrison Street to the corner of the block, then turns northeast along Dickason Boulevard to a point a little over halfway down the block, at the end of the parking lot, where it crosses S. Dickason Boulevard and continues in a northwest direction along the property line of the library. At the rear property line of the library the boundary turns northeast following the property line and continues to the middle of W. James Street where it jogs southeast to a point even with the back property line of the City Hall (105 N. Dickason Boulevard). The boundary then turns northeast along said property line and the rear property line of 117 N. Dickason Boulevard and then turns southeast continuing across N. Dickason Boulevard to the sidewalk (at the alley). There it goes northeast along N. Dickason Boulevard to the end of the block at the corner of N. Dickason and W. Mill Street. here it turns right on W. Mill Street and continues southeast to the end of that block where it crosses N. Ludington Street and continues about half way down the next block to a point marking the rear of the Anchor Savings and Loan parking lot (behind 150 N. Ludington St.). There it makes a sharp right turn (southwest) to a point in the middle of the block (behind a garage belonging to 130 N. Ludington Street), then turning southeast behind another garage, to the end of the rear property line of 141 E. James Street. Here it turns southwest to the rear property line of 145 E. James Street and then southeast, continuing on to N. Water Street. It then continues southwest on N. Water Street, crossing E. James Street to S. Water Street and continuing past the building on the corner of S. Water Street and E. James Street (158 E. James Street) to a point (in the right-of-way) on the rear property line of the buildings facing E. James Street. Here it turns northwest and follows the right-of-way to the point where the right-of-way turns southwest. Here the boundary also turns southwest and follows the right-of-way to E. Harrison Street where it turns northwest, going along E. Harrison and across S. Ludington Street to the point of beginning.

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Boundary Justification

The boundary of the Columbus Downtown Historic District is drawn to contain the commercial buildings on the original four blocks of the historic downtown. In addition, it includes the library, city hall and Brokopp's Meat Market on the adjoining blocks facing Dickason Boulevard. The residential areas are excluded. The district is cohesive and the boundaries are clearly delineated by different building types and usages.

Local Preservation Activities

- 1975 A volunteer group (eventually amounting to 75 people) worked on the restoration of the first story of the City Hall. The same group cleaned up the second story auditorium and began collecting money for its restoration.
- 1986 The City Council passed an ordinance creating a Landmarks and Preservation Commission.
- 1987 The ordinance was changed to include "neighborhoods" and "districts".
- 1988 Work started on research for National Register application. Main Street Committee formed.
- 1990 City hired a group from the University of Wisconsin Department of Urban Development to update the City's Master Plan. The group will cooperate with the Preservation Commission.

Commission Activities

1. Declared a few local landmarks
2. Restored clock on City Hall tower
3. Preliminary plans for restoration of auditorium
4. Presented certificates of "appreciation" and "recognition" of "restoration efforts"
5. Organized Historic Tours
6. Published historic calendar

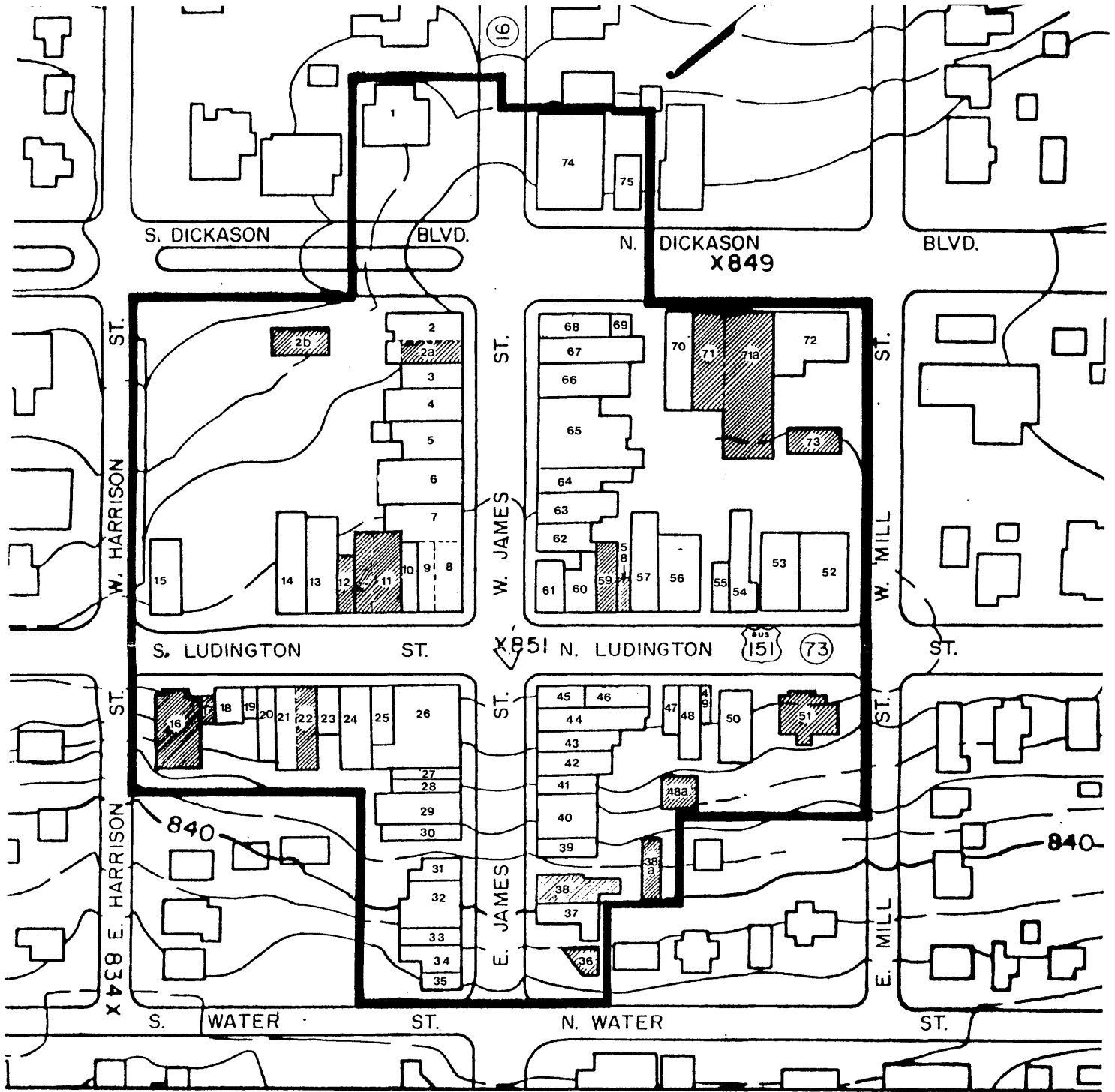
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7. The Commission has begun working with the local public school teachers on preservation awareness programs.

Private Activities

1. Many home owners have made a major effort to preserve or restore homes.
2. The old canning company has been converted to an "antique mall".
3. The original Kurth home has been restored and is an antique shop.
4. A "Friends of Preservation" group started - Not yet very involved.



COLUMBUS DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT

CITY OF COLUMBUS, COLUMBIA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

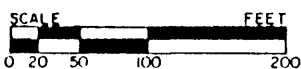
LEGEND

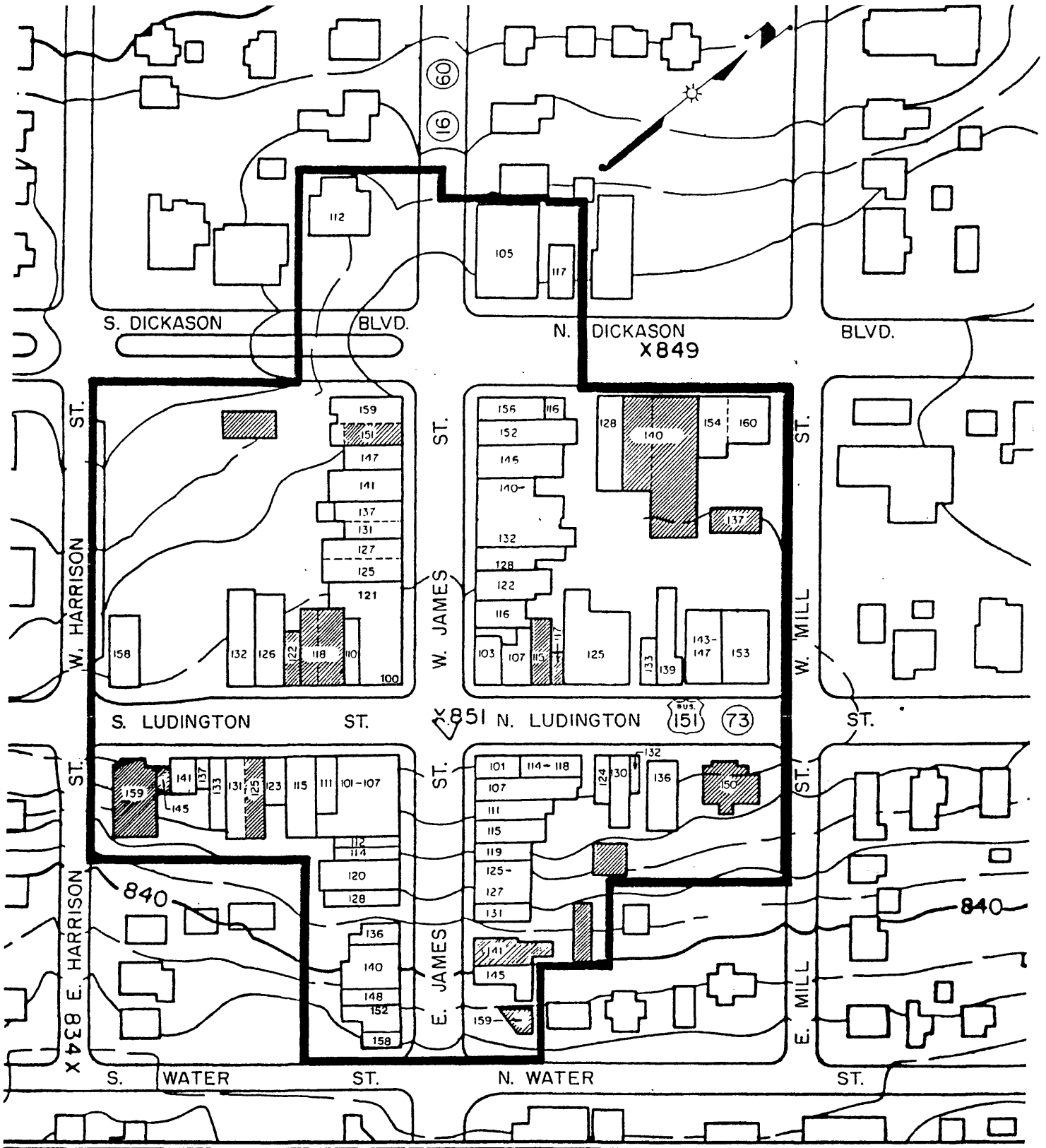


NON CONTRIBUTING



DISTRICT BOUNDARY





COLUMBUS DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT

CITY OF COLUMBUS, COLUMBIA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

STREET ADDRESS MAP

LEGEND



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DISTRICT BOUNDARY

