

NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 8/86)  
Wisconsin Work Processor Format (1331D)  
(Approved 3/87)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

RECEIVED  
OCT 09 1992

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 25% or greater cotton content bond paper.

1. Name of Property

historic name Water Street Commercial Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Various - See Item 7

N/A not for publication

city, town Sparta

N/A vicinity

state Wisconsin code WI county Monroe

code 081 zip code 54656

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>58</u>	<u>28</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		<u>    </u> sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>  1</u>	<u>  1</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		<u>    </u> objects
		<u>59</u>	<u>29</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 x meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

[Signature]  
Signature of certifying official  
State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

7/3/92  
Date

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 or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

entered in the  
National Register

[Signature] 11/12/92

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register. \_\_\_ See continuation sheet

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register.

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register.

\_\_\_ other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper

Date

6. Functions or use

Historic Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade

Commerce/Trade

Government/Government office

Government/Government office

Post office

Post office

Social/Meeting Hall/Clubhouse

Social/Meeting Hall

X See continuation sheet

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number   6   Page   1   Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Functions or Use continued

Historic Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

Education/Library

Education/Library

Recreation/Theater

Recreation/Theater

Transportation/Road-Related

Transportation/Road-Related

---

## 7. Description

---

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials  
(enter categories from instructions)

Italianate  
Romanesque  
Queen Anne

foundation Brick  
walls Brick  
Stone  
roof Asphalt  
other Concrete Block

---

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

### Description

The Water Street Commercial Historic District encompasses the early commercial areas in the small City of Sparta that were established in the mid-nineteenth century on Oak Street and around the early mill site located on the banks of Beaver Creek. A mill was located at the intersection of Beaver Creek and North Water Street until it was removed after the 1943 flood.

The historic district is confined to an approximately three block area on both sides of Water Street. The district is crossed by streets that extend generally about a block to either side of Water Street on Jefferson Avenue, Oak Street, Main Street and Franklin Streets and on Court Street between the intersections of West Main Street and Jefferson Avenue.

The district consists mostly of two-story brick buildings that are interspersed with several one-story brick buildings and with one three-story stone courthouse building. Several early 20th century rock-faced concrete block buildings and an iron-clad building also characterize the historic buildings in the district. Composed mainly of commercial buildings, the Water Street Commercial Historic District also contains several governmental buildings, buildings related to the social history of Sparta, and small industrial buildings.

Although the designs of the buildings in the proposed Water Street Historic District exhibit mainly a vernacular or functional emphasis, many show the influence of the architectural styles popular at the time. Italianate, Romanesque, Queen Anne, Classical and early 20th century historic and modernistic styles all influenced the architectural environment of Sparta's commercial district. Constructed during the period from the late 1860s through the early decades of the 20th century, as well as the present period, the historic structures in the district are representative of the development of commercial architecture in Sparta.

Placed along Water Street, which runs in a north and south direction, the densely packed nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings create a definite historic environment in the commercial district (see district map). Although the commercial district extends variously one to two blocks on either side of Water Street as well as on the parallel Court Street, Water Street, the center of the district, exerts the greatest visual impact on the area. Few intrusions detract from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century character created by the buildings constructed within a period of 70 years. Of the 91 properties located in the Water Street Commercial

X See continuation sheet

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 1 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Commercial Style

Mediterranean Revival

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 2 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Historic District, 28 buildings and one structure do not contribute to the overall historic architectural character of the district either because their exteriors have been covered by modern siding and/or the original architectural details have been removed, or because of their recent construction date.

Some buildings that are architecturally or historically significant are listed according to address as follows:

1. MONROE COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 108 South Court Street, 1896, Addition: 1965. The red sandstone courthouse is characterized by ornamentation associated with the Richardsonian mode of the Romanesque Revival. This well-preserved building, topped by a tower ornamented with open oriel windows and round turrets, displays a facade that is articulated by three projecting gabled pavilions. The corner pavilions feature gabled dormers on their roofs. The center entrance pavilion, topped by a steep shouldered gable, is further characterized by an open entrance porch with round polished granite inner columns and rectangular corner columns of wood. The figure of "Justice" presently placed on the flat roof of the entrance porch originally topped the center pavilion. Romanesque styled round arched openings ornament the windows on the third story courtroom and form an arcade on the attic level of the center pavilion.

The interior of the Courthouse continues to exhibit the grand staircase in the center pavilion, which features the original newels, iron treads and decorative railings. The terrazzo floors and painted plaster walls and ceilings also generally are retained.

A one-story brick jail and office building added to the rear of the building in 1965 was enlarged in 1988. The Monroe County Courthouse was designed by noted Chicago architect Mifflin E. Bell in 1895, and constructed by contractors M. Yaeger and Son of Danville, Illinois during the year 1895-1896. It was dedicated on March 13, 1896. This architecturally and historically significant building, the second courthouse built on the site, was added to the NRHP in 1982.

2. LANHAM FUNERAL HOME, 106 West Franklin Street, 1932, Addition: 1981. This Modernistic styled, rust-colored brick building is characterized by cubic shapes and flat surfaces exhibiting a notable lack of ornament. A two-story pavilion projecting from the facade, groups of plain rectangular windows, and a pair of medallions of abstract design further characterize the simple shapes and surfaces. A one-story flat-roofed entrance pavilion displaying an abstracted round pediment and a pent roof that follows the shape of the entrance facade projects from the front of the main

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 3 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

facade.

The architectural significance of this building, the only example of the Modernistic architectural styles in the commercial district, has been marred by the stucco-sided addition added to its east side in 1981. This building was built as a funeral home for Maurice Lanham. He purchased this undertaking and furniture business in 1920 from the Letson family, who operated a planing mill and furniture store on the property as early as the 1870s.

3. FRANKLIN STREET BRIDGE, Beaver Creek and West Franklin Street, 1927. This concrete girder bridge displays one span of reinforced beams that rest on massive concrete piers. This well-preserved bridge crosses the narrow Beaver Creek channel and it exhibits a Classical Revival influenced balustrade comprised of ornamental concrete classical-styled balusters, similar to those used for many early 20th century spans, which, for the most part, are no longer extant. Located in a semi-residential neighborhood, this bridge was designed by La Crosse, WI, engineer Frank Davy, and constructed by the A.F. Coften Construction Company.

4. UNITED STATES POST OFFICE, 121 West Main Street, 1915. Constructed of beige brick, this one-story post office building features a mezzanine story designed to accommodate a 28-foot-high interior lobby. Built on a high basement, the main facade of this Neo-Classical Revival post office is characterized by a projecting Beaux Arts-influenced pavilion or pilastrade. It is ornamented by a plain entablature decorated by a row of dentils and inscribed "United States Post Office". The entablature, also topped by a brick parapet, rest on colossal two-story brick pilasters, which are paired on the ends and, which enframe window bays. The entablature and the pilasters are carried around to the side elevations. The entablature at the top of the east and west elevations also rest on a series of pilasters enframing the center bays of the elevations. The brick pilasters feature plain stone capitals and short stone bases. The pilasters rest on the elevated foundation, which serves as a podium for this classically derived design.

The interior of this architecturally and historically significant building continues to display its original marble wainscotting, terrazzo floors and stained woodwork. Designed by the "supervising architect" of the Treasury Department, this federal building was constructed by the James DeVault Contracting Company of Canton, Ohio.

5. SPARTA FREE LIBRARY, 126 West Main Street, 1902, Addition: 1982. This Neo-Classical Revival style library, a one-story brick building raised on a high white stone foundation, features an open Palladian portico with a center-arched entrance supported on short Ionic columns and Doric piers. The portico is reached from the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 4 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

west and the east by a divided stair of rusticated stone. The rust-colored elevations contrast with the white stone cornice, frieze and corbeled mouldings along the top of the facade and portico, the quoins at the ends of the building and the parapet at the top of the portico. In addition, white stone surrounds the oculi on the portico and the arched windows on the facade and side elevations. The words "Sparta Free Library" is inscribed on the parapet and the name "Carnegie", inscribed as a memorial to Andrew Carnegie in 1904, is located on the front of the entrance stairway.

The interior space of the building, which displays much of the original character, is divided only by large mahogany arches springing from paneled mahogany columns. The vestibule opens to an interior space that is lighted by a skylight and that is divided from the reading rooms and stack room by arches. The south wall features a full-length brown brick fireplace that is characterized by a half-mantel with a stained ceramic three-quarter bas-relief portrait of Andrew Carnegie. The original Mission style oak lounge chairs, library tables and chairs have been retained.

Designed by La Crosse, WI, architects Schick and Roth, the Sparta Free Library was constructed by the talented local master mason, L.V. Huschka. It was added to the NRHP in 1982. In 1982, the Sparta Library received a rear addition designed in a manner similar to the Neo-Classical style of the original building.

6. MASONIC TEMPLE, 200 West Main Street, 1923. Featuring the low hipped roof form with overhanging eaves typical of the Prairie School, the symmetrically designed cream brick Masonic Temple is covered by a red tile roof and trimmed with Bedford stone. This early 20th century Classical Revival style meeting hall is decorated by abstract Classical ornament such as two-story pilasters that vertically divide the brick elevations into slender bays. The pilasters, ornamented by inset stone panels, stone copings and stone bases, enframe windows located on the upper and lower stories of the bays. In addition, the entrance projecting from the facade features a Bedford stone classically frontispiece comprised of a broken-pediment resting on paneled pilasters, composed with dentil trim on the cornice returns and classical urns on the corners of the roof. Original double-hung windows have muntins that create an "octagonary paned" light in the upper half of the second-story windows. The roof deck, eaves troughs, and spouts are constructed of copper.

Exceptionally well-preserved on the interior as well, the Masonic Temple continues to exhibit the original fireplace in the lounge, dark oak woodwork, Tennessee marble wainscotting, and a curved lodge room ceiling with ornamental plaster beams. This building, designed by Albert Parkinson of Parkinson and Dockendorff [La Crosse] and constructed by the local contracting firm, the Naset Brothers, was placed on the NRHP in 1987.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 5 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

7. WILLIAM HOFFMAN BUILDING, 113-115 East Oak Street, 1899. This small two-story commercial vernacular brick building's characterized by a facade recessed between the brick applied pilasters at the ends of the building that are ornamented by white stone accents. The facade is characterized further by a wide cornice of ornamental brick work. Contrasting chiseled white stone window lintels and sills accent the three windows on the upper story.

This building has been altered by the addition of a contemporary storefront and replacement windows; however, this building is among the best preserved of the small commercial vernacular buildings in the district. This turn of the century building, built as rental property for W.C. Hoffman, originally housed the Knudson Shoe Store and the Backer and Mueller Cigar Factory.

8. HOFFMAN MEAT MARKET, 117 East Oak Street, 1890. This Italianate style two-story red brick commercial building is characterized by a massive projecting bracketed iron cornice, which is ornamented by large end brackets, block modillions, a row of dentils and a paneled frieze. Projecting iron window heads ornament the two narrow windows enframed in the recessed panel of the upper facade. An iron storefront, one of the best preserved storefronts in the commercial district, comprised of a full length lintel and iron pillars or shafts flanking the central recessed entrance, remains on the building. This small commercial building, originally constructed to house W.C. Hoffman's meat market, was used as a meat market until at least the 1920s.

9. JEFFERSON TOBACCO WAREHOUSE, East Oak and Spring Streets, 1917. This warehouse is a frame, gable-roofed vernacular building that is covered by metal siding and constructed on a raised concrete block foundation. Original rectangular windows with wooden sashes and two-over-two lights are located on the east elevation.

This vernacular building, located on the banks of Beaver Creek, was built for the historically significant Jefferson Tobacco Company, which was established in 1909 in warehouses across the street on the north side of Oak Street. This fairly well-preserved warehouse presently is used as a warehouse for the Sparta Co-op Exchange.

10. I.O.O.F. AUXILIARY BUILDING, 103 West Oak Street, 1895. An eclectic building typical of the late 19th century, this brick [presently painted] two-story building is characterized by an Italianate projecting iron cornice with bracketed ends as well as by a Classical Revival-influenced pavilion projecting from the upper facade. One of Sparta's few commercial buildings to display the influence of the late 19th century Classical Revival, this building was designed by local architect Frank D. Foote. This I.O.O.F. Building, constructed to be an extension of the lodge's rooms on the upper

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 6 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

floor of the adjacent building at 101 West Oak, had commercial space on the lower story originally rented to the Gender Cigar Palace.

11. W.E. FOOTE GROCERY AND BAKERY, 123 West Oak Street, 1902. The main facade of this two-story Queen Anne influenced vernacular building is dominated by a three-sided oriel window in the west bay of the second story. This red brick facade is flanked by end piers rising above the roof line and ornamented by a corbeled brick cornice. Two windows with one-over-one lights located in the east bays of the upper story are topped by a common white stone lintel.

This well-preserved building has been altered slightly by a replacement storefront, the pediment, inscribed with the owners name "W.E. Foote" and the construction date "1902", has been removed from the top of the building. This turn-of-the-century building, constructed in a style complementary to the adjacent 1896 Olin building at 125 West Oak Street, was built to house Foote's store and personal residence.

12. OLIN BLOCK, 125-127 West Oak Street, 1896. Located on the corner of Oak and Court Streets, this two-story Queen Anne commercial building features an iron-clad, one-and-a-half story octagonal turret overhanging the street corner. The turret features an overhanging pavilion roof and is also ornamented by pressed metal designs including Classical swag designs on the panels under the roof overhang and geometric designs on the metal spandrels between the windows. The turret is further ornamented by stained glass in the windows of its attic story. The remainder of the building is ornamented by a metal cornice, a frieze decorated with pressed metal designs in a scroll pattern, and a brick corbel table below the cornice. Flat white stone lintels top one-over-one light windows on the upper story. Principal window groups on the facade are comprised of one large window divided from two smaller flanking windows by iron mullions. Entresol windows [presently filled with wooden panels] are located on the lower story of the west elevation.

This generally well-preserved building has been altered by the replacement of its original double iron storefront. Also, a garage addition was constructed c. 1920 at the rear of the building. The Olin building was constructed by the local contractor L.V. Huschka, and was designed by Racine, WI, architect J.C. Chandler. The lower story of this architecturally significant building was built to house Olin's grocery store and a store for rental purposes. The upper story was Olin's residence.

13. CAMP McCOY USO RECREATION CLUB, 201 West Oak Street, 1943. This brick recreational building is essentially an early modern building that exhibits minimal abstract Classical Revival characteristics. It is comprised of a lounge and office

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 7 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

areas at the front and a gymnasium at the rear. Characterized by plain brick cladding and simple windows, the building features overhanging wooden eaves or cornices, frieze boards and brick pilasters on the elevations of the gymnasium. The centrally located main entrance is recessed between the east and west wings that project in the front of the building. Window groups with multiple, horizontally divided lights form window bands on the side elevations as well as the facade and on the inside walls of the wings.

The interior of this former USO Club continues to display the stage and gymnasium as well as the fireplace and lounge present in the original building. This building was constructed by Johnson and Kramer of St. Charles, Minnesota. This former federal building, built as a USO Club to serve the military at nearby Camp McCoy, presently serves as the Sparta City Hall.

14. T.C. LONGWELL BUILDING, 103 North Water Street, 1904. This two-story commercial building features a brick facade recessed between brick pilasters at the ends of the building. The facade is ornamented by a cornice of decorative brick work and a frieze panel inscribed "T.C. Longwell". A Queen Anne style oriel window with an asphalt shingled roof in the left-hand bay and white stone lintels over two narrow windows in the right-hand bay characterize the upper story.

This small commercial building, although fairly well preserved on the upper story, has been altered by the addition of a contemporary storefront. Built to house Longwell's harness shop, this building was associated with Heineck's Restaurant for many years in the early 20th century.

15. GEORGE PHARMACY, 112-114 North Water Street, 1930, Foundation: 1944. This brick-clad Mediterranean style commercial block is characterized by a red tile pent roof resting on console brackets over the center bays of the facade. The center bays are flanked by curvilinear brick gables rising above the roof line at both ends of the facade. Groups of rectangular six-over-one-light windows are located on the upper story. Decorative brick enframes the blind arches that are inset into the wall surface above the pair of windows in the end bays and white masonry panels decorate the area below the upper story windows. One of the few buildings in the commercial district with its original storefront, this Period Revival building displays a double storefront featuring a full-width transom window with art glass lights and a tile-covered apron. An arched white masonry surround enframes the entrance to the upper floor.

This architecturally significant building originally was built several feet above

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 8 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Beaver Creek on a concrete basement story that was erected on piles by the Arnold Construction Company of Eau Claire, WI. When this foundation was damaged in the 1943 flood, the George building received a new foundation with a smaller basement in 1944 designed to accommodate flood control on Beaver Creek. At this time, the George building was placed on steel girders resting on concrete piers. This well-preserved brick veneered, 60-foot-deep x 68-foot-wide building, was built to house Otis George's drug store and his personal residence, which was on the second story. Originally, the north store space was rented to the Francis Hutson Clothing Store. In addition, Dr. Sutherland's office and three other apartments in addition to the George apartment were located on the second story.

16. UNION BLOCK, 132-136 North Water Street, 1875. This nine-bay two-story brick [presently painted] commercial block is characterized by an Italianate projecting iron cornice rising above the roof line inscribed with the name "Union Block" and the date of construction, "1875". The facade is articulated by a brick arcade comprised of round arches resting on capped pilasters. The arches divide the upper facade into nine bays.

The Union Block has been altered considerably by the addition of smaller replacement windows on the upper story and by the addition of contemporary storefronts; however, it has sufficient integrity to be viewed as a historically significant building. This Italianate building was built through the cooperation of three property owners [J. Moffat, Mrs. Robinson, and H. Palmer] after a fire on January 7, 1875, destroyed the previous frame buildings on the site. This early commercial block has been used for varied and multiple commercial enterprises over the years. Originally, the Union Block was used by the Blakeslee Dry Goods and Grocery Store, and the R.S. Ellis Confectionery, while space on the second story housed the millinery and dressmaking shop owned by Lottie Lender.

17. PALMER BUILDING, 144 North Water Street, 1880, Rebuilt: 1889. This Italianate style red brick [presently painted] two-story commercial building is characterized by a wide, projecting, bracketed iron cornice and a compartmentalized facade. Two recessed bays created by brick work in the form of shouldered arches are further articulated by long narrow windows topped by iron segmental-arched window heads that have abstract floral designs incised into them.

This small commercial building, among the best preserved of the Italianate influenced buildings in the commercial district, has been altered by the addition of a contemporary storefront. This building was part of the series of buildings referred to historically as the Commercial Block. It was rebuilt in the same style when it was

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 9 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

damaged by a basement fire in 1899 that left the front and rear walls intact. Originally, this building was rented to the H.S. Howell Drug Store.

18. DODGE AND DAVIS DEPARTMENT STORE, 100 South Water Street, 1870s, 1897, 1900, 1940s. Located on the corner of Water and Main Streets, this red brick, Romanesque Revival style commercial block is mainly characterized by an arcade of round arches placed above rectangular window openings on the second story. Three-bay pavilions that project from the brick surface, comprised of an entablature resting on capped applied pilasters, (presently filled with wood panels) interrupt these arcades on the upper Water Street and Main Street facades. This turn-of-the-century building is further ornamented by a row of dentils below the cornice, the name "R.S. Dodge" on the frieze of the Water Street facade and entresol window opening (presently filled with wood panels) on the Main Street side. The architectural character of this historically important building has been altered extensively by the replacement of its windows with wood panels and the addition of a contemporary storefront.

This commercial brick block was essentially built in three parts. The main part (the northeast corner of the building, constructed as the last part of the block) was built by local contractor Harry Knauss as a Romanesque Revival building in 1900 in place of the original frame Dodge Store that R.S. Dodge purchased in 1872. The brick and masonry work was executed by the local master mason L.V. Huschka. Previous to the 1900 building project, Dodge had purchased the adjacent 1870s Italianate style brick store (south side of the present building) in 1893. In 1897, preparatory to the future construction of a new store that was to replace the frame building, Dodge built a one-story addition at the rear of the frame building and a two-story addition to the rear of his brick building. The older sections were then incorporated into one large brick block when the section on the corner was built in 1900. However, the facade of the Italianate style building-the south two bays of the present building-retained its earlier Italianate style features until it was remodeled in a manner similar to the 1900 Romanesque Revival style building in the 1930s or early 1940s. R.S. Dodge, who established a dry goods store in partnership with his brothers in 1872, took in Davis, a young employee, as his partner in 1898.

19. BANK OF SPARTA, 106 South Water Street, 1906-1907. This one-story Neo-Classical style bank building has a Bedford stone facade that is characterized by a portico that projects from the facade. The portico features a triangular pediment ornamented by modillion blocks along its raking and horizontal cornices that rest on fluted Greek Ionic columns in antis (presently under a false front). The stone facade is characterized further by a parapet rising above the portico.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 10 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

The architectural significance of this historically significant building has been altered by substantial, although reversible, remodeling when the bank building was changed to a mercantile establishment in 1966. The lower portion of the facade, originally featuring an elaborate classical frontispiece and arched overlight, has been replaced by a contemporary metal and glass storefront. Constructed by J.G. Schneider of Arcadia, WI, the Sparta Bank was designed by the La Crosse architectural firm of Parkinson and Dockendorff. Built on the site of the earlier Bank of Sparta, this bank building was constructed as a memorial to former presidents of the bank, Ira Hill and Thomas Tyler, by their descendents.

20. W.C. HOFFMAN BUILDING, 107-109 South Water Street, 1895. This Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style-influenced vernacular two-story building displays a brick facade divided vertically on the upper story into two bays by full length pilasters. The facade is ornamented by decorative brick work including a corbeled brick cornice. Decorative brick work also ornaments the tops of the pilasters. In addition, the tympanums of the blind round arches above the stone lintels of the paired windows, in each bay are filled with of ornamental brick work.

This building, one of the better preserved buildings in the commercial district, has been altered by the addition of a contemporary metal and glass storefront and by the addition of metal sash windows on the upper story. A historic wooden storefront featuring a recessed off-set entrance flanked by an iron column remains on the small north store. This building, designed by local architect Frank Foote, was constructed by the local master mason L.V. Huschka as rental property for W.C. Hoffman.

21. CANFIELD GROCERY AND WILLOW WARE STORE, 118 South Water Street, 1877, 1914. This two-story Italianate style commercial building is characterized by a wide projecting iron cornice decorated by brackets. The entablature also features a metal frieze ornamented by blind arches that are accented by articulated keystones and by arched mouldings pressed into the metal. The brick facade is further articulated by three recessed bays on the upper story that enframe three single segmental arched windows. Iron window heads in the form of round-arched pediments resting on a projecting cornice further accent the long narrow windows.

This small Italianate building has been altered by the addition of metal storm windows on the upper story and by the addition of a contemporary storefront. In addition, the original stone basement was replaced with a concrete basement and the first story floor was lowered to the level of the sidewalk in 1914. The Canfield building was constructed at the same time as the three adjacent Italianate buildings located south of it on the same block (two have less integrity). This small architecturally

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 11 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

significant commercial building originally housed Canfield's Grocery Store, which was followed by the Stringham Grocery Store.

22. SCHRAM DRY GOODS STORE, 120 South Water Street, 1877. This two-story brick Italianate style commercial building is characterized by an exceptionally elaborate cornice. It displays a projecting iron cornice decorated by brackets that is articulated further by raised designs, block dentils, and a row of dentil trim. The paneled frieze of the entablature is decorated by medallions and raised mouldings. Two shouldered basket handled-arched recesses in the brick work on the upper facade enframe single segmental-arched windows that are ornamented further by elaborate iron window heads decorated with raised designs.

The Schram building has been altered by the addition of a contemporary storefront. It is significant because it continues to display more of its original architectural character than similarly designed Italianate buildings constructed in the same year in Sparta. This building, built for J. Schram to house his dry goods store, also housed the Sparta Free Library on the second floor from 1892 until 1902.

23. WILLIAMS BLOCK, 125 South Water Street, 1896. This two-story red brick commercial block was constructed on the corner of Water and Oak Streets in the Victorian Romanesque Revival style. It's most visible feature is a corner turret topped by a conical roof that overhangs the street corner. The main facade on Water Street is divided horizontally by, white stone lintel and sill courses. This facade is characterized further by an ornamental center bay that features a classical entablature resting on capped pilasters. The center bay is accented by a rectangular pediment rising above the roof line inscribed with the date of construction "1896" and decorated with applied classical swag designs. A Palladian-styled window on the second story displays a tympanum having applied floral ornament. The south facade on Oak Street is characterized by two smaller bays of similar design.

The architectural integrity of this historically significant commercial block has been compromised by the replacement of the windows on the upper story and on the turret with stuccoed panels in 1972. The original iron storefront, which extended around to include one bay of the Oak Street facade, has been replaced and is now partially filled with brick and partially with metal and glass windows. The interior stairway to the second floor also has been removed.

The brick commercial building, designed by La Crosse architects, Stoltze and Schick, was constructed by local contractors L.V. Huschka and H. Davenport. Built by

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 12 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

W.G. Williams for rental purposes, this commercial block originally housed a variety of enterprises including the Robert and Jones Grocery in the south store, the Leader Dry Goods Store in the north store and the City Council Hall and the medical offices of Doctors Beebe, Sarles, and Beebe on the upper floor.

24. DOMKE BUILDING, 221 South Water Street, 1922. This well-preserved small two-story building is an early 20th century commercial vernacular brick building ornamented only by paneled brick work along the top of the plain brick facade. Plain rectangular window groups with wooden sashes and the original wood storefront remain on the building. This building, built for the property owner F.J. Domke, was used originally as a retail tire shop.

Notes on Sources

Dates of construction were determined by analyzing a combination of resources including tax records, newspaper articles, historic photographs, Sanborn Maps and local histories. Additional information on the historic names and uses were researched in the state business directories and through oral histories. Research of the properties in the Water Street Commercial Historic District was gathered during the 1989 Intensive Survey of Sparta. Further information about these properties and the remainder of the resources included in the Sparta Survey can be found on the intensive survey forms completed on each property.

LIST AND CLASSIFICATION OF PROPERTIES IN THE WATER STREET COMMERCIAL  
HISTORIC DISTRICT

C - contributing  
N - non-contributing

PROPERTY NAME	STREET ADDRESS/MAP CODE	N/C	DATE
Gleiss-McAlpine, Attorneys	111 South Court St.	N	1966-1967
Monroe County Courthouse	108 South Court St. NRHP	C	1896
		N Add.:	1965
Lanham Funeral Home	106 West Franklin St.	C	1932
		N Add.:	1981
Franklin Street Bridge	West Franklin/Beaver Creek	C	1927

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

United States Department of the Interior  
 National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
 CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 13 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
 Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

Baldwin Estate Building	110 East Franklin St.	N	1944
Baldwin Blacksmith and Wagon Shop	114 East Franklin St.	C	1914
William Baldwin Garage Buildings	115 East Franklin St.	C	1925
Fayette Baldwin Blacksmith Shop	116 East Franklin St.	C	ca.1920
Gary Mueller Building	102 Jefferson Ave.	N	1978
Sparta Co-op Oil Company Car Care Center	108-112 Jefferson Ave.	N	1962
Atkinson-Nash Auto Sales and Service	114-116 Jefferson Ave.	C	1922
Seren Steel Blacksmith Shop	109 East Main St.	C	1928
Harold Lawler Dental Office	108 West Main St.	N	1966
Monroe County Telephone Exchange/Ray's Sparta Supermarket	114 West Main St.	N	ca.1920 1966
U.S. Post Office	121 West Main St.	C	1915
Sparta Free Library	126 West Main St. NRHP	C	1902
Masonic Temple	200 West Main St. NRHP	N	Add.: 1982
William Wettstein Building	108 East Oak St.	C	1923
Sahrt Furniture Store	110-112 East Oak St.	N	1944
Davis and Jones Furniture Store	111 East Oak St.	C	1899 1913
William Hoffman Building	113-115 East Oak St.	C	1899
Hoffman Meat Market	117 East Oak St.	C	1890
Sparta Police and Fire Department	121 East Oak St.	N	1953
Sparta Fruit Growers Association Building	127 East Oak St.	C	1910
Jefferson Tobacco Warehouse	East Oak/S. Spring St.	C	1917
Heller-IOOF Building	101 West Oak St.	C	1876-1877
IOOF Auxiliary Building	103 West Oak St.	C	1895
Francis Dry Goods Store	105 West Oak St.	C	1869, 1877 1985
Foster and Co. Building	107 West Oak St.	C	1869, 1877
Ralston Grocery and Confectionery Store	109-111 West Oak St.	C	1896
Lehman Building	112 West Oak St.	C	1937

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

United States Department of the Interior  
 National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
 CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 14 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
 Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

Monroe County Publishers	113 West Oak St.	C	ca.1930
Hoppy's Bowling Emporium	114 West Oak St.	N	1942
H.W. Jefferson Building	115 West Oak St.	N	1920
Teasdale Estate Building	117 West Oak St.	C	1923
J.J. McDonald Building	121 West Oak St.	C	1912
W.E. Foote Grocery and Bakery	123 West Oak St.	C	1902
Olin Block	125-127 West Oak St.	C	1896
Union National Bank and Trust Co.	124 West Oak St.	C Rear	Add:c.1920
Camp McCoy USO Recreation Club	201 West Oak St.	N	1972
First Masonic Temple	100-102 North Water St.	N	Add.: 1979
Mannis-Harris Clinic	101 North Water St.	C	1943
T.C. Longwell Building	103 North Water St.	C	1891
John Marquardt Building	105 North Water St.	N	1958
C.E. Rich Stationary Store	106 North Water St.	N	1904
			1944
			1896
			2nd Floor: 1903
			Front: 1966
Jessie Nichol Building	107 North Water St.	C	c.1940
C.E. Rich Building	108-110 North Water St.	N	1902-1903
			Front: 1944
		N Rear	Addition: 1958
George Pharmacy	112-114 North Water St.	C	1930
			1944
Sparta Cafe	119 North Water St.	N	Mid-1940s
Sparta Theater	120 North Water St.	C	1937-1938
L.A. Herrick Jewelry Store	122 North Water St.	C	1899
Hemstock Auto Livery and Garage	123 North Water St.	C	1925-1926
Sugden Building	124 North Water St.	N	1899
Kollertz Confectionery and Toy Store	126 North Water St.	C	1907
M.E. Steele Building	127 North Water St.	C	1929
L.J. Youngman Meat Market	128 North Water St.	C	1905
		N Rear	Addition: 1946
Union Block	132-136 North Water St.	C	1875
W.W. Vau Dell Building	138 North Water St.	C	1927
Zaharte-Palen Building	140 North Water St.	C	1927

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

United States Department of the Interior  
 National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
 CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 15 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
 Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

H.O. Palmer Building	142 North Water St.	C	1880
			Rebuilt:ca.1920s
Palmer Building	144 North Water St.	C	1880
			Rebuilt: 1889
First Bank of Sparta	145 North Water St.	N	1965
		N	Addition: 1974
Moffat Building	146 North Water St.	N	1880
			Remodeled: 1967
		N	Rear Addition: 1944
Dargel Garage	208 North Water St.	C	1911, 1919
		N	Additions: 1948, 1966
Water Street Bridge	Water Street/Beaver Creek	N	1943
Dodge and Davis Department	100 South Water St.	C	ca.1870s
			1897, 1900
			Remodeled South Facade:ca.1940s
C.E. Rich Building	101 South Water St.	C	1890
Gambles Hardware Store	103 South Water St.	N	1967
Bank of Sparta	106 South Water St.	C	1906-07
			Remodeled Facade: 1966
W.C. Hoffman Building	107-109 South Water St.	C	1895
Bancroft Hardware Store	110 South Water St.	C	mid-1860s
W.C.T.U. Temple	111 South Water St.	N	1895
			Facade: 1974
		N	Rear Addition: 1971
C.B. Styles Dry Goods Store	112 South Water St.	C	mid-1860s
John Swartzlow Building	113 South Water St.	C	1867-69
			1921
		N	Rear Addition: 1968
L.D. Merrill Jewelry Store	114 South Water St.	N	1897
			Siding: 1980
Millegan Building	116 South Water St.	N	1897
			Siding: 1983
Canfield Grocery/Willow Ware Store	118 South Water St.	C	1877
			Remodeled: 1914
William Kerrigan Building	119 South Water St.	N	pre-1870
			1899
			Remodeled Facade: 1977, 1981
Schram Dry Goods Store	120 South Water St.	C	1877

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 16 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

J.A. Harvey Saloon and Grocery Store	122 South Water St.	C	1877
Hoffman Building	123 South Water St.	C	1896
Thayer and Co. Bank	124 South Water St.	N	1877
		N Rear Addition:	1960
		Siding:	1989
Williams Block	125 South Water St.	C	1896
Jackson Health Mart Drug Store	201 South Water St.	N	1968
Bell Theater	210 South Water St.	C	1919-1920
E.J. Kowitz Building	211 South Water St.	C	1910-1911
J.C. Frazer Building	213 South Water St.	C	1912
Owens Pool Hall	214 South Water St.	N	1947
Manuel-Hoffman Building	215 South Water St.	C	1914, 1917
Abbott Brothers Barber Shop	218 South Water St.	N	1968
Domke Building	221 South Water St.	C	1922

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 X G

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1868-1943

Significant Dates

N/A

Commerce

1868-1942

Education

1902-1942

Industry

Politics/Government

Cultural Affiliation

Social History

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Bell, Mifflin E. \*

Parkinson, Albert; Dockendorff, Bernard\*\*

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

The Water Street Commercial Historic District is locally significant under Criterion C because it is an assemblage of significant examples of buildings and structures that are representative of various periods of construction in Sparta during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These mostly commercial buildings were united by a common function; to serve the growing agricultural and urban community and local industries. Characterized by late 19th century and early 20th century architectural styles, the district visually suggests a specific historic period extending from the late 1860s when the first extant buildings were constructed until the end of the historic period in 1943. Few intrusions detract from the largely 19th century character created by the 91 properties. Although the majority of the storefronts have been remodeled and the original windows have been replaced, many of the buildings still retain a significant amount of their original integrity. The buildings in the commercial district represent the largest concentration of architecturally significant commercial buildings in the city.

The Water Street Commercial Historic District is also locally significant under National Register Criterion A for being a typical 19th century and early 20th century trading center. Other themes that served communities in Monroe County associated with this significance area include: Commerce, Education, County and Local Government, Industry and Fraternal Organizations. These themes are associated with the National Register significance areas of COMMERCE, EDUCATION, INDUSTRY, POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT, AND SOCIAL HISTORY. The period of historical significance begins with the earliest commercial extant buildings built after the completion of the railroad in 1858 and it ends in the early 1940s.

\* Sparta Herald, 17 March 1896

\*\* Sparta Herald, 11 September 1923

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 1 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

**State Significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria consideration, and areas and periods of significance noted above. (continued)**

A complete discussion of how the district properties specifically meet the National Register criteria listed above and how the district properties relate to Wisconsin's cultural resource management plan will be given under each theme listed above after a brief discussion of the district's historical background.

Historical Background

Located along the La Crosse River valley in west central Wisconsin, Sparta is approximately twenty-five miles due east of the Mississippi River. The landscape forming the setting for Sparta is striking. One nineteenth century newspaper writer tried to capture Sparta's scenic beauty for his readers. In 1876, he wrote: "Imagine a fertile valley through which flows a river fed by numerous trout-brooks, its clear water babbling of springs in the highlands where they were born. Scarcely more than a mile away [from Sparta] are forest-covered bluffs whose outlines, combining with the misty distance, create an effect as though the valley were entirely surrounded by a coronal of hills. The flat land, smooth and grassy, is dotted with clusters of graceful trees. From the spot where I view the picture, the near-by prospect is one of tasteful village residences and comfortable farms". [Gregory, Vol. 2: 698-699.]

The history of the "pioneer Anglo community" of Sparta really begins in 1849 with the construction of a military or state road by the United States Army from Prairie du Chien to Hudson or Lake St. Croix. Two years later, in 1851, another rough road was constructed through Sparta running between Portage City and La Crosse, Wisconsin [Koehler, 1977: 8; Barney: 5; and McMillan: 389.]

The first permanent settlers to make land claims in Sparta were the Petit (a.k.a. Pettit) family, who were first drawn to this crossroads in 1849-1850. From this nucleus, a small settlement grew, which became an important farming/grazing region of Wisconsin. Before a railroad was constructed through Sparta in 1858, many of the first settlers coming to Sparta came by way of the Mississippi River to the town of La Crosse. Other settlers came by packet boat along the Erie Canal to Buffalo, New York. From there, they boated across the Great Lakes to Milwaukee and then overland to Sparta. ["Early Welsh Settlers", Monroe County Historical Society (June 1989): 5-7.]

The earliest settlers were mostly farmers and they represented a number of nationalities.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 2 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

However, between 1853 and 1855, a large group of settlers (some 250 or so) arrived in the burgeoning community of Sparta from Cattaraugus County, New York. They were largely Welsh in national origin and sought land for farming purposes. Eventually, some of them also became the community's earliest merchants. Hotels, sawmills, hardware and furniture stores, as well as grocery stores, were all started by this New York contingent. Sparta soon became the center of a large trade area, reaching from Black River Falls to Viroqua [Koehler, 1977: 3, 17-19 and 30; Monroe County Democrat, 20 July 1933 and "Early Welsh Settlers", Monroe County Historical Society (June 1989): 5-7].

The initial growth of Sparta was slowed because of the Panic of 1857, which caused agricultural prices to drop and some Spartan settlers to move on to other parts of the country in an attempt to escape their debts. However, in the same year, Sparta received a stimulus to the community. When surveyors laid out the line for a railroad between Milwaukee and La Crosse--Sparta's first. In 1858, the La Crosse and Milwaukee (later renamed the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul) railroad arrived in Sparta. The completion of the La Crosse and Milwaukee railroad gave impetus to greater immigration and business in Sparta, and many new businesses opened and the population grew [Monroe County Democrat, 20 July 1933; and Koehler, 1977: 30-31 and 65].

Prior to the Civil War, the village of Sparta had several comfortable hotels and taverns for the weary traveler getting off the stage or the railroad, a bank, many merchants, a local newspaper, a sash, door and blind factory, and a grist mill. Thereafter, the community's growth continued to be gradual and "paralleled the development of nearby communities like Viroqua, Richland Center, and Reedsburg". Sparta boasted much progress from its early pioneer days. By this time, several stage lines passed through the village. With the advent of the Black River Falls-Sparta stage line, and the St. Paul-Sparta stage line (Western Enterprise line), Sparta improved its trade ties to northern Wisconsin [Gregory, Vol. 2: 709-710; Koehler, 1977: 13-16; Koehler, 1977: 30-31; and "Taverns and Stages of Early Wisconsin", Monroe County Historical Society (February 1989): 5-7].

The War of the Rebellion interrupted business and personal affairs in Sparta as it did in much of the nation. Like other Wisconsin farmers during the War, Sparta area farmers experienced economic depression due to the declining price of wheat. At a time when prices of goods were going up, purchasing power dropped for most farm families, making it difficult for them to get the bare necessities of life. The Civil War setback the growth of Sparta in a more vital way. It drew its healthy men from their labor in the community to fighting and dying in battles. Close to 150 men from the village of Sparta responded to the call for arms and formed other

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 3 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

companys for the war effort, and Spartans served in several key battles [Koehler, 1977: 60; Barney: 25-26; and Richards: 266].

After the Civil War, the tide of progress returned to Sparta, and the village went through a second period of sustained growth. This growth was steady and uniform in terms of population, agricultural prominence, commerce, and industry. In this time period, renewed immigration, new agricultural markets, the rise of Sparta as a mineral spring resort, and transportation improvements all contributed to Sparta's growth.

In the period 1865 to 1875, many people immigrated to Sparta. These new immigrants were mostly German and Scandinavians. Many new names were also added to the village's roster from Civil War veterans who migrated to Sparta and prospered (N.A. History of Northern Wisconsin: 635; and Richards: 269-270]. In addition to immigration, Sparta farmers also experienced a localized and regional agricultural boom immediately after the Civil War. First, hop growing fever hit Sparta, lasted for about ten years. Several Spartans prospered through this enterprise and they were responsible for erecting new buildings in the community [Barney: 29; Unknown Newspapers "Sparta, Wisconsin: A Northern Town with a 'Western Feel' of Pines and Bluffs" N.D.; Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951; "History of Sparta" installment 30; and Koehler, 1977: 61]. Second, there was also a post-Civil War improvement in wheat production which hit not only Sparta but all of the rest of Monroe County at this time as well. By 1870, the town of Sparta had doubled production levels of ten years ago [Koehler, 1977: 61].

In addition to immigration and a surge in agricultural production, Sparta also experienced growth from a most unique source--the discovery of artesian mineral water nearby. The discovery of artesian mineral waters occurred indirectly when an oil fleecing scandal inadvertently led to the discovery of these springs. The drilling property of a defunct petroleum company fell into the hands of local men, who decided to drill a well to furnish a fountain in North Park on East Montgomery Street. Water was reached the first time, and a jet of artesian water sprayed forth. Thereafter, the Sparta Artesian Well Association was formed to promote the drilling of new wells throughout the community [Sparta Eagle, 15 August 1867; Map of Sparta: 1875; Historical Atlas of Wisconsin: 1878; Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951; Barney: 30-31; Koehler: 33-34; Richards: 271-272; and "Mineral Water of Artesian Wells Brought Health Resorts in Sparta", Monroe County Historical Society Vol. 23, No. 2 (September 1989): 3-8].

Over the next few years, the resultant waters were found to be high in mineral content, and according to the statements of several Spartan citizen's, had cured them

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 4 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

of specific ailments such as rheumatism, dyspepsia and chronic diarrhea. By 1869, pamphlets on the medicinal value of the artesian springs were being distributed nationwide. With a little boosterism, this situation led to a tourist boom in Sparta, which was promoted as both a watering spa and as a resort. Before long, Sparta featured two major hotels that advertised mineral baths with the medicinal artesian waters. Here, one could receive Turkish, Russian, sitz, and plunge baths [No Author, Medicinal Artesian Spring, Sparta, Wisconsin (1869); Sparta Eagle, 5 May 1871; and Beebe, Dewitt C., Sparta as a Resort for the Invalid (1873)].

With the discovery, Spartans took to calling their town the "Saratoga of the West" after the famed spa in New York. Promotion of Sparta as the "Saratoga of the West" lasted well into the 1880s. People from all parts of the country annually visited its "magnetic mineral springs", especially from the South. The health-resort business faded in the 1880s, but regained its popularity at the turn-of-the-century, then "faded once again, apparently because the pressure for the artesian water flow faded" [Barney: 30-31; Koehler, 1977: 34-35; and Richards: 271-272].

The last important economic development to sway the tide of progress came in 1873, when the Chicago & Northwestern railway built a line through Sparta and onward to La Crosse. This added to Sparta's prosperity in many ways [Barney: 33-34]. Now at the junction of two major railroads, Sparta soon became the distribution center for a large agricultural region which constantly increased in extent and wealth as good roads connected it with other parts of the region. The railroads also brought travelers to this Wisconsin mineral water resort center [Map of Sparta: 1875; N.A. Historical Atlas of Wisconsin: 1878; Monroe County Democrat, 20 July 1933; Koehler, 1977: 53-54; Unknown Newspapers "Sparta, Wisconsin: A Northern Town with a 'Western Feel' of Pines and Bluffs", N.D.; Jones: 8; and Barney: 33.34]. Welsh Settlers", Monroe County Historical Society (June 1989): 5-7.]

By the late 1870s, the development of rail links, encouraged the growth of slaughterhouses in Sparta. Eventually, butchered livestock became an integral part of Sparta's economy. At one point, Sparta became the "largest wholesale market for the buying and selling of pork in Wisconsin west of Milwaukee" [Koehler, 1977: 62; and Jones: 7-8].

Agricultural development, the "mineral water boom", and new transportation links were important to the growth of the community, but other businesses balanced off Sparta's growth so that Sparta did not suffer a bust cycle. For instance, several grist mills

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 5 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

and grain elevators in Sparta served the neighboring farm community, taking advantage of Sparta's proximity to water power sources such as Beaver Creek and the La Crosse River [Barney: 31, 34 and 40; "History of Sparta" installments 29-30; and Koehler, 1977: 43].

Sparta also had a number of other important businesses that gave the thriving town a diverse economy. A paper mill (1868), a stave factory (1870), several glove and mitten factories (pre-1870), an iron foundry (1867), and later several lumber yards (1870s) added to Sparta's economic strength. In addition, an important carriage and wagon works in Sparta (1865) and several important agricultural implement dealerships also contributed to its economy [Barney 31, 34 and 40; "History of Sparta" installments 29-30; Koehler, 1977: 43; and Jones: 6-7].

Because Sparta was a market and distribution center for supplies to farmers in the adjoining valleys, many merchants established commercial businesses in Sparta. As a consequence, Sparta became a regional banking center as well [Barney: 31, 34, and 40; "History of Sparta" installments 29-30; and Koehler, 1977: 43].

The decades of the 1880s and 1890s witnessed steadfast prosperity in Sparta. Some economic mainstays disappeared, and other economic pursuits in the vicinity simply tapered off. However, new agricultural economic pursuits always seemed to replace them. From the late 1870s to 1890s, Sparta farmers shifted from hops and wheat production to dairying and dairy products to make a living. By 1895, Monroe County had become a part of a new butter producing region in Western Wisconsin [Koehler, 1977: 61-62, and 64; Jones: 6; and Cultural Resource Management, Volume 2, section 11-5].

In addition, many Spartan farmers also began to engage in small scale fruit production, such as strawberries, blackberries, and raspberries. By the turn of the century, Sparta was the center of Wisconsin's small fruit belt, reportedly shipping more berries than any other city within the same territory. In the 1890s, other farmers moved to growing tobacco and vegetables on a commercial basis, providing the resources to open a pickle salting house and a tobacco processing plant in Sparta by the turn of the century [Koehler, 1977: 61-62; Jones: 10; and Richards: 279]. There were other mainstays in Sparta's economy in the 1890s and early 1900s, like the lumber industry, which was an important factor in Sparta's economy as well [Standard Atlas of Monroe County, Wisconsin: 1897; and Atlas of Monroe County, Wisconsin: 1915].

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 6 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

In 1885, Sparta also acquired a new and different type of asset when by legislative act, it became the home of the Wisconsin State School for Dependent Children, a large facility which housed dependent and neglected children and trained them in domestic science, manual training, music, and arts and crafts. Throughout most of the twentieth century, this school added significantly to Sparta's economy.

The 1890s continued as a decade of growth and building in Sparta. During this decade, Sparta improved its municipal assets. Streets were paved, electricity and telephone systems were developed and improved, and a city water works was installed [Jones: 13-14]. In the decade of the 90s, the year 1896 marked the "greatest growth that Sparta has ever enjoyed". In this banner year, \$115,400, was put into the construction of new business, residential, civic and church buildings or the improvement of standing structures. The Water Street Commercial Historic District was greatly altered with the construction of the W.G. Williams Block (125 South Water Street), Hoffman Building (123 South Water Street), E.E. Olin Block (125-127 West Oak Street), C.E. Rich Building (106 North Water Street), and other buildings. In this same year, the Monroe County Court House (108 South Court Street) was also completed [Richards: 277].

In summary, by the turn-of-the-century, Sparta could advertise several advantages, including: water power, cheap fuel, fertile and productive soil for the growing of small fruit and lands adapted to dairying, stock raising and sheep husbandry as well. It also had several other advantages, including: wagon roads to every section of Monroe County and adjacent counties; two main railroads (Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul and the Chicago & Northwestern) and a trunk line to Viroqua. By 1900, Sparta had 150 businesses and mercantile houses, an excellent system of water works, and telegraph and telephone lines connected to all parts of the world. It also was the seat of the State School for Dependent Children. Sparta no longer saw itself as the "Saratoga of the West", but now saw itself as the "Gem City of Western Wisconsin" [Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951; Sparta Driving and Agricultural Association (1900)].

In the first half of the twentieth century, Sparta's economic strength depended on it being a center of dairy production and small fruit production. But at the turn-of-the-century, the city of Sparta also had several lines of manufacturing, including a foundry and machine shops, that made special lines of well-drilling apparatus and furnaces as well as engines, boilers and all kinds of machinery. At this time, Sparta also had five good hotels, important department stores and other commercial establishments to serve the surrounding rural region. However, these commercial interests and light industries were not as important as regional dairying and

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 7 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

agricultural pursuits and those new industries related to agriculture [Unknown Newspapers "Sparta is Like a Southern City"; Richards: 284; and Monroe County Democrat, 20 July 1933].

Contributions of Sparta's growth in the twentieth century also came from another direction. The establishment of U.S. Army's Camp Robinson (later called Camp McCoy) was another important step in Sparta's future development. The history of Camp Robinson (Camp McCoy) was one of incremental growth. Prior to World War I, the Camp Robinson became important, Sparta grew at a steady pace. As it did, the city added a number of civic and municipal improvements, which made the city a better place to do business and to live. For instance, in 1902, the Sparta Free Library (126 West Main Street) was built. By 1908, a centralized sewer system had been installed in Sparta, and by 1915, a new U.S. Post Office (121 West Main Street) across from the Sparta Free Library had been built. Both the new library and post office enhanced the area of the Courthouse district. By the time World War I arrived, Sparta was a well-developed flourishing city.

During World War I, Spartans demonstrated their patriotism as well as any other community in western Wisconsin and World War I stimulated the growth of nearby Camp Robinson, which grew to more than 100-square miles in the area. Later, it became known as Camp McCoy. The growth of Camp McCoy stimulated Sparta's economy, but Sparta was not totally tied to this military base for its growth. With the close of World War I, the country tributary to Sparta continued to be largely devoted to farming and dairying. For instance, by the 1920s, the dairy industry had developed to a high state of perfection and the Pet Milk Company was a major payroll for the city and a major source of income for farmers in five counties [Unknown Newspapers "Sparta, Wisconsin: A Northern Town with a 'Western Feel' of Pines and Bluffs" N.D.; and Sparta Centennial: 44].

As late as 1933, the main industries in Sparta continued to be tied to the region's agricultural base. However, by the second half of the twentieth century, the economy of Sparta shifted from one based solely on serving regional agricultural needs and one based on state and federal institutions, such as the State School for Dependent Children and Camp McCoy, to one increasingly dependent on light industry for economic growth and strength.

Diversification of the city's economy became a clear priority, when problems arose in different sectors of Sparta's economy. One problem was the deactivation of Camp McCoy in 1953. This was a serious blow to Sparta and the immediate area, affecting the employment of some 2,000 civilians. Slowly over time, Camp McCoy regained some of

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 8 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

its strength, but it never fully regained the critical role that it played in Sparta's economy during World War II ["Fort McCoy, Wisconsin: Circa 1905-1981" Monroe County Historical Society Vol. III, No. 11 (August 1981): 1-4; Sparta Herald, 8 March 1953; and Sparta Centennial: 25]. The second problem in Sparta's economy arose in regard to the Wisconsin State School for Dependent Children (1885). The school eventually lost its usefulness for the State of Wisconsin, slowly declined, and then was closed in 1974 [Sparta Centennial: 31].

Sparta survived these community setbacks for several reasons. First, Sparta continued to be a transportation hub for the region with two railroads serving it, and the principal Milwaukee-Twin Cities highway (Highway 16 and later Interstate 90) passing nearby. It also survived because it started to diversify its economy with light manufacturing [Sparta Herald, 8 March 1953]. Starting in the 1950s, several important light industries began to grow up in Sparta, including the founding of the Sparta Manufacturing Co., which specialized in manufacturing of "cast iron cylinder liners (sleeves) for the small engine industry" ["Ex-Host to Soldiers Seeks New Horizons"; Milwaukee Sentinel, 8 March 1953; and Sparta Centennial: 43]. In the 1960s, other manufacturing concerns became as important to Sparta's economy, such as Northern Engraving Co., which made name plates and decorative metals for national and export markets and which is now Sparta's major employer [Sparta Centennial: 56-57].

As Sparta attracted light industry like Northern Engraving and Sparta Manufacturing, Co., the city's population grew at much the same pace as it had during most of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Indeed, the history of the growth of Sparta is one with few major population disruptions or major economic dislocations. Sparta has never experienced such a thing as a real boom. Instead, it has enjoyed a steady and remarkably healthy growth pattern. Historically, Sparta's existence has been one of adaptability to the economic, social and political demands of each decade it has faced.

### Architecture

The Water Street Historic District represents the architectural development of the city from its establishment in the mid-1850s through the early decades of the 20th century. The last major historic building was constructed in 1943. It is comprised of most of the significant commercial and governmental buildings in Sparta.

A combination of late nineteenth and early twentieth century architectural influences characterize the visual environment of the Water Street Historic District. The buildings in Sparta's commercial center were constructed generally with a functional

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 9 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

emphasis; however, many exhibit at least some influence of the architectural styles popular at the time of their construction. Following the 1857 and 1873 financial disasters that occurred throughout America, building construction in Sparta was encouraged by the commencement of railroad transportation to Sparta as well as industrial growth and the increased agricultural business from the rich surrounding farmlands. According to the local newspaper, the Sparta Herald, no substantial buildings were present in the village in the 1850s; however, in the decade after the arrival of the railroad beginning in 1858, the population increased from 600 to 3,500 people. It further reported the following business buildings comprised the commercial district: 8 mercantile [two wholesale], 3 clothing and fancy goods, 5 hardware, 10 groceries [two wholesale], 4 drug, 2 barber, 1 printing office, 2 tailor, 2 millinery, 2 watch and jewelry, 1 crockery, 2 saddle and harness, 2 book, paper and stationery, and 6 hotels (Sparta Herald, 20 April 1869).

Eleven buildings constructed in the commercial district during the period before 1880 are extant while 18 of the remaining buildings were added to the district in the 1890s. In the 20th century, 33 buildings represent the period between 1900 and 1930. Another 8 buildings were added to the district in the early 1940s during the WW II era and the reconstruction period following the disastrous flooding of Beaver Creek in 1943. Building activity in the Water Street Commercial Historic District has slowed considerably since the historic period. Only 12 buildings have been constructed since the early 1940s.

As a result, a combination of late nineteenth and early 20th century architectural influences characterize the buildings located in the Water Street Commercial Historic District. Italianate, Romanesque, Queen Anne, Classical, Mediterranean and early modern styles are among the design sources shaping the architectural environment of Sparta. Compatibility of character exists because the buildings were constructed in a mostly vernacular interpretation of the popular architectural styles.

The proposed Water Street Commercial Historic District, distinguished by a uniformity of scale, is composed of small two-story brick buildings interspersed by one-story brick buildings and one three-story building. Approximately two-thirds of the commercial district, which was characterized by a predominance of wood buildings in the mid-nineteenth century, was reconstructed of brick by the turn-of-the-century. Presently, no wooden buildings remain in the commercial district. Two stone

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 10 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

buildings, one iron-clad and several concrete block buildings contribute to the variety of construction materials displayed in the commercial district. (Sanborn [map], 1884, 1889, 1894, 1900, 1911, 1922, 1931; City of Sparta Tax Records, 1868-1945).

The historic buildings in the district maintains good integrity of scale, materials and design despite a variety of functions and the span of years. Historic photographs housed in the Monroe County history room show the buildings have retained window ornamentation, pediments, and cornices. Most of the deterioration of the integrity of the district results from both the complete, and/or in some cases, the partial filling in of window openings and the replacement of original window sashes on the upper stories with smaller windows on a large number of the commercial buildings. Alteration of the windows and window openings have occurred in several of the largest and most visually prominent commercial buildings in the district such as the Dodge and Davis Store at 100 South Water Street, the Williams Block at 125 South Water Street, and the Union Block at 132-136 North Water Street. In addition, the storefronts of most of the buildings in the district have been altered for contemporary use in a manner that is typical of commercial districts in the State of Wisconsin. The Hoffman Building at 107-109 South Water, the Hoffman Meat Market at 117 East Oak, and the Domke Building at 221 South Water continue to exhibit well-preserved historic storefronts. Remodeling in which contemporary siding has eliminated the historic character of the building also has occurred. Ten buildings, including the historically important Thayer Bank at 124 South Water, exhibit facades covered by such siding and, as a result do not contribute to the historic character of the commercial district. Although alterations, most of which are reversible, have taken place, the buildings within the boundaries of the district create a late 19th and early 20th century architectural environment.

The majority of the buildings constructed in the 19th as well as the early 20th centuries are the handiwork of local masons, carpenters, contractors, and early architects whose works were recorded infrequently. However, several of the more substantial 19th century buildings are known to be designed by local "architect" builders. A few of the prominent buildings, particularly the large public buildings, were designed by professional architects from outside the city.

Two local builders, referred to as "architects", drew the plans for some of the more significant buildings constructed in the late 19th century. N.W. Huntley designed the Heller Building at 101 West Oak Street in 1876. Later he drew the plans for the Conover Building at 106 North Water Street in 1888 (not extant) and the Masonic Temple

(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 11 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

at 100-102 North Water Street in 1891. Born in Vermont in 1830, Huntley moved to Chicago where he became the master mechanic and later the assistant superintendent of the C.M. and St. Paul Railway. Upon his arrival in Sparta in 1871, he took up the profession of contractor-builder. Huntley was listed in the late 19th century State Gazetteer as a builder-contractor; however, he was referred to as the "architect" in the newspaper accounts of local construction news (Sparta Herald, 19 December 1876, 3 April 1888, 23 June 1891; Polk, 1879, 1888-89, 1895-96; "Sparta Up-To-Date", Monroe County Democrat, 30 June 1891). Huntley died in 1901 (Monroe County History Room, Records).

Franke D. Foote, who worked in Sparta during the same period, designed the W.C. Hoffman Building at 107-109 South Water Street in 1895. In the same year, Foote designed the I.O.O.F. Auxiliary Building at 103 West Oak Street. Foote, also drew the plans for the greatly altered W.C.T.U. Temple at 111 South Water Street as well as the Armory (not extant) formerly at 121 East Oak Street (Sparta Herald, 30 April 1899, 5 February 1895, 4 June 1895, 16 April 1895, 21 May 1895). Frank Foote, born in New York in 1835, moved to Sparta in the 1860s. Foote, undoubtedly, the designer of other presently unknown buildings in the commercial district, was described in the local press as "the leading architect and builder of the city" at the time of his death in 1903. The Sparta Herald further reported that he was among the prominent builders of those days (1860s - 1880s) and that "many residences and business buildings of this city are of his design and construction, and also a number of the best in neighborhood towns". (Sparta Herald, 10 March 1903; U.S. Census, 1870; Polk, 1879-1901).

Several of the district's buildings are known to have been designed by architects who maintained offices in larger cities nearby. Sparta, located within "the market area" served by the city of La Crosse, was in a position to easily obtain the services of professional architects in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The prominent La Crosse, WI, architectural firm of Stoltze and Schick, active in La Crosse during the late 19th century, designed the Romanesque Revival-styled Williams Block in 1896 at 125 South Water Street (Stoltze and Schick also designed Williams' house at 220 East Franklin), (Sparta Herald, 21 July 1896). Stoltze and Schick worked in partnership during the years 1887 to 1899. After the termination of his association with Stoltze late in 1901, Schick worked in partnership with Andrew Roth until his death in c. 1910. The design of the Neo-Classical Revival Carnegie Library at 121 West Main Street was produced by Schnick and Roth in 1902 (Sparta Herald, 10 June 1902). Gustav Stoltze, born in Germany in 1854, immigrated to Boston in 1872 and moved to La Crosse in 1885. Stoltze received his architectural training in Boston and worked in the Boston offices of Ware and Van Brunt and in the offices of Rotch and Tilden for two years. Hugo Schick, a native of Austria, completed his architectural

(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 12 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

training at the Polytechnical School and Academy of Arts of Vienna in 1877. Schick, who immigrated to America in 1880, arrived in La Crosse in 1886. Andrew Roth, previous to his partnership with Schick, worked for 20 years in La Crosse as a carpenter-builder (Rausch and Zeitlin, 1984: 73/75).

Another La Crosse firm, Parkinson and Dockendorff, established in the early 20th century, is credited with the 1906 Neo-Classical design for the Bank of Sparta at 106 South Water Street as well as with the eclectic design for the Masonic Temple constructed in 1922-1923 at 200 West Main Street (Sparta Herald, 30 January 1906, 11 September 1923). Born in England in 1870, Albert Parkinson was trained in the practice of architecture by his father and by the schools of Scranton. Parkinson established his architectural career in Sparta around 1897. In c. 1905, Parkinson formed a partnership with a young La Crosse architect, Bernard Dockendorff, who had recently returned from six years of training and work in Europe. Parkinson moved his office to La Crosse where he practiced until his death in 1952. Bernard Dockendorff, an employee of the prominent architectural firm of Stoltze and Schick from c. 1895-1897, worked and studied in Europe from c. 1897 until c. 1905 during which time he attended the Technicum at Darmstadt, Germany. Credited with the design of over 800 public buildings in the upper Mid-west, the firm of Parkinson and Dockendorff specialized in church, school, hospital and large commercial structures (Rausch and Zeitlin, 1984: 76). In Sparta, Parkinson and Dockendorff also designed St. Patrick's Catholic Church at 114 South L Street in 1905, the Sparta High School at 201 East Franklin Street in 1922 and the facade of the Rich Building at 108-110 North Water Street reconstructed in 1944 in the aftermath of the 1943 flood (Sparta Herald, 18 April 1905, 24 January 1922, City of Sparta, Building Permit File).

The prominent La Crosse architect Otto Merman also contributed to the architectural character of Sparta's commercial district. Merman designed the Modernistic styled Lanham Funeral Home at 106 West Franklin Street in 1932. Otto Merman, most often noted for his association with La Crosse's regionally important Prairie School architect Percy Bentley, created architectural designs in a wide variety of historic styles as well. Merman, born in La Crosse in 1890, received his architectural training in the offices of Parkinson and Dockendorff from c. 1907 to 1910. When Bentley permanently withdrew from La Crosse in 1919, Merman assumed the practice and worked alone until his death in 1935, except for a brief partnership with Herbert Skogstad from 1924-1928 (Rausch and Zeitlin, 1984: 77-78).

J.C. Chandler, a Wisconsin architect from Racine, designed the architecturally significant Olin Block in the Queen Anne style in 1896 (Sparta Herald, 7 April 1896). Brought to Sparta earlier to design the Sparta High School and the Ward School in

(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 13 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

1895, Chandler, in 1899, created the design for the Monroe County Alms House located approximately one mile north of Sparta's city limits (Sparta Herald 6 August 1895, 23 May 1899). James C. Chandler, born in New Hampshire in 1856, moved to Minnesota with his family at age five. Chandler, a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Architecture around 1875, worked as an apprentice for three years with the noted Madison architect D.R. Jones. He established his practice in Racine in 1879, forming a partnership with Linus Parks in 1880. Specializing in school architecture, this firm built schools in Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, and Minnesota. Chandler died in 1924 (SHSW, Architect Files).

Prominent architects, mainly from Chicago or the St. Paul-Minneapolis area were often employed by the smaller cities in the upper mid-west to design their large public buildings. In Sparta, the Monroe County Court House, one of the most significant buildings in the city, was designed in a Romanesque Revival style in 1896 by the noted architect, Mifflin E. Bell (Sparta Herald, 22 January 1895, 17 March 1896). Mifflin Bell, born in Iowa in 1846, worked with Alfred Piquenard on the Illinois Capitol during the 1870s. He followed Piquenard as U.S. Supervising Architect in Washington D.C. from 1881-1885. Bell died in 1904 (SHSW, NRHP Nomination File).

Eight of the significant buildings in the Water Street Commercial District are the work of the local master mason L.V. Huschka, who built many of the prestigious brick buildings in the city in the late 19th century. Buildings in the commercial district exhibiting the craftsmanship of Huschka include: the Masonic Temple Building at 100-102 North Water Street built in 1891, the I.O.O.F. Auxiliary Building constructed in 1895 at 103 West Oak Street, the W.C. Hoffman Building constructed in 1895 at 107-109 South Water Street, the Williams Block and the Hoffman Building constructed at the same time in 1896 at 123-125 South Water Street, the Olin Block built in 1896 at 125 West Oak Street, the Dodge and Davis Department Store built in 1900 at 100 South Water Street, and the Sparta Free Library constructed in 1902 at 126 West Main Street (Sparta Herald, 23 June 1891, 28 August 1891, 30 April 1895, 25 June 1895, 31 March 1896, 21 July 1896, 5 June 1900, 12 August 1902). Louis Huschka, most often referred to as a mason, was one of Sparta's most prominent and skilled builders in the 1890s and at the turn-of-the-century. Huschka was the sole proprietor of his contracting business. However, he worked in partnership with other contractors such as C.E. Lake in 1890 and Hiram Davenport in 1896 for some of the larger construction projects. Apparently Huschka retired from the contracting business in the early 20th century when he became the proprietor of the Wisconsin House Hotel (Sparta Herald, 3 June 1890, 21 July 1896; Sparta Directory, 1897: 7; Polk, 1909-10).

Many of the buildings in the proposed district reflect vernacular building traditions.

(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 14 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

The vernacular building tradition also tempers most of the popular architectural influences. Vernacular buildings with minimal ornament suggestive of a particular style were built throughout the early commercial history of Sparta. Often constructed according to local customs, buildings and structures are described as vernacular when they are not designed by an architect and when they cannot be described in terms of a particular accepted style or as at least influenced by a recognized style of the period in which it was constructed. Simple, fairly well preserved vernacular brick buildings ornamented mainly by a band of decorative brick work forming a cornice across the top were constructed with minor variations in Sparta's commercial district throughout the late 19th century. Among the least ornate representative of the 19th century vernacular commercial form is the building constructed in 1890 as rental property for C.E. Rich at 101 South Water Street (City of Sparta Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald, 8 April 1890). Ornamented only by a corbeled and moulded brick cornice, this building also exhibits the plain segmental arched window typically found in the 19th century vernacular brick form.

Local masons and builders in Sparta continued to construct commercial buildings in this rather traditional building form in the early decades of the 20th century. A wide cornice of decorative brick work and straight lintels of chiseled stone characterize the recessed red brick facade of the building constructed in 1899 as rental property for William Hoffman at 113-115 East Oak Street (City of Sparta Tax Record, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald, 11 April 1899, 20 June 1899, 9 January 1900). Reminiscent of scaled-down interpretations often seen at the end of an architectural style, the Davis and Jones Furniture Store, built in 1913 at 111 East Oak Street, is characterized by a minimal cornice and simple stone lintels displayed on a plain recessed brick facade.

Plain vertical brick pilasters continued to articulate the increasingly simplified brick facades of commercial vernacular brick building forms in the early decade of the 20th century during the period of transition between the historic styles and the early modern styles. Practically devoid of ornament, the Kowitz Building constructed in 1910 at 211 South Water Street, the Hemstock Auto Livery and Garage built in 1926 at 123 North Water Street and the 1927 Zaharte-Palen Building at 140 North Water Street are characterized mainly by full-length brick pilasters that divide their brick facades into recessed bays (City of Sparta Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald, 27 July 1920; Sanborn [map], 1922, 1931; "A Centennial Portfolio", Sparta Herald, 6 June 1983). Corbeled borders decorate the overhang at the top of the recessed bays. Unfortunately, all of the above commercial vernacular brick buildings have altered lower stories and metal replacement or altered windows.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 15 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Much of the commercial architecture in Sparta in the 19th century reflected the Italianate fashion, generally popular in Wisconsin from 1850 to 1880. Featuring articulated decorative window treatment, the flat-roofed, Italianate style commercial building is crowned at the eaves by a projecting cornice with modillions or brackets. Classical architectural details and motifs are used for ornament.

The Italianate style characterizes 13 of the commercial buildings in the Water Street Commercial Historic District, all of which are of brick construction. The earliest extant commercial buildings in the Water Street Commercial Historic District, the Bancroft Hardware Store at 110 South Water Street and the similarly styled adjacent Styles Dry Goods Store at 112 South Water Street display a restrained Italianate style more dependent on Renaissance design sources than on the more exuberant Victorian Italianate mode found later in the 19th century. Both these early Italianate commercial buildings were built in the late 1860s after the early settlement period, during which time a number of citizens began to accumulate wealth and gain status in the community (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald, 28 December 1869). The Bancroft Hardware Store and the Styles Dry Goods Store display classical round-arched windows on the upper story ornamented by thin arched moulding rather than the highly decorated window heads typical of the later Victorian Italianate mode. Although these buildings have retained their Italianate character, both buildings have lost architectural significance because of the replacement of their windows with smaller metal windows and the addition of contemporary storefronts.

The more highly decorated Victorian mode of the Italianate style influenced the commercial buildings constructed in Sparta in the 1870s. Among the more elaborate Italianate-influenced buildings from this period are two adjacent similarly styled buildings constructed in the same year, 1877, on South Water Street. The Schram Dry Goods Store at 120 South Water, and the less well-preserved J.A. Harvey Saloon and Grocery Store at 122 South Water Street, are characterized by wide, exceptionally ornate, projecting, iron cornices that are decorated by brackets, block dentils, raised designs, dentils and a paneled frieze (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald, 15 May 1877, 28 August 1877, 4 September 1877). In addition to the prerequisite projecting cornice typical of the style, the Schram Store also displays the compartmentalized facade and the highly articulated window heads typical of the Italianate commercial style. Two adjacent Italianate-style commercial buildings similar in design to the 1877 Harvey and Schram buildings were constructed for H.O. Palmer in 1880 at 142 and 144 North Water Street (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald 30 December 1879, 13 January 1880, 8 June 1880, 10 August 1880). The Palmer Building at 142 North Water was reconstructed in its original Italianate style after its partial collapse, along with two adjacent buildings in 1920 (Sparta

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 16 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Herald, 27 July 1920; Sanborn [map], 1911, 1922, 1931). The Italianate style generally began to decline in popularity by the 1880s in America. However, Sparta's commercial buildings continued to be influenced by the Italianate style until the turn-of-the-century. The Hoffman Meat Market, architecturally significant as one of the better preserved examples of the Italianate style remaining in the commercial district, was built in 1890 at 117 East Oak Street (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald, 5 August 1890, 30 September 1890; Sanborn [map], 1884, 1889, 1894). It is the only Italianate building that continues to exhibit its historic iron storefront.

Buildings often took on an eclectic appearance (mixed styles) in the late 19th century when a great variety of styles became acceptable to American architects and the American public. Although the iron cornice of the I.O.O.F. Auxiliary Building at 103 West Oak Street suggests the Italianate style, this design by local architect Frank Foote also incorporates elements that are more commonly associated with the Classical Revival style. The Classical Revival styles typically employed symmetrical compositions that were ornamented by historically correct stylistic devices associated with the classical orders such as cornices, pediments, parapets, enriched mouldings, colossal columns and projecting pavilions. The late 19th and early 20th century combination retail and lodge building constructed in 1895, is characterized by Classical Revival motifs and a projecting pavilion or bay on the upper story (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald, 21 May 1895, 30 April 1895, 25 June 1895, 3 September 1895; Sanborn [map], 1894, 1900, 1911, 1922, 1931). Unfortunately, the architectural significance of this building has been diminished by the metal replacement windows on the upper story and by the addition of a contemporary storefront on the lower story.

Although the Italianate style had the greatest influence on the 20th century commercial buildings in the Water Street Commercial Historic District, Romanesque Revival and Queen Anne styles were among the other sources which shaped the architectural environment of Sparta. The revival of Romanesque architecture, a round arch medieval style, began in the 1840s in America. Used for all openings, the semi-circular arch form was repeated in miniature in the arcaded corbel tables under the string courses and eaves. The miniature arched corbel table was used below the cornice on the brick facades of two the oldest buildings remaining in the commercial district that were built by local builder J.H. Atty in 1869. The Francis Dry Goods Store at 105 West Oak as well as the similarly styled Foster and Company Harness Shop at 107 West Oak are vernacular brick buildings that are characterized further by classical round arched window openings and ornament. Apparently originally painted to protect the brick surface, these buildings were described as a "truly ornamental

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 17 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

style...painted deep red and beautifully penciled with white paint, white keystones in the arches above the door and windows" when under construction in 1869. (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald, 11 May 1869, 18 May 1869, 13 July 1869, 17 August 1869). In addition to the replacement of the historic storefronts, these two buildings have been altered by the replacement of the brick cornice and parapet with plain brick sometime after 1920 (Monroe County History Room, Photographs #396, #1428).

The W.C. Hoffman Building constructed in 1895 at 107-109 South Water Street is among the best preserved of the small commercial buildings displaying Romanesque Revival influence (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald 5 February 1895, 19 March 1895, 15 April 1895, 30 April 1895). Round blind arches featuring tympanums composed of decorative brick work are located above the upper story windows of this small brick commercial building.

More substantial examples of the Romanesque Revival style were built in the commercial district at the turn of the century. Two of the largest commercial brick blocks, both constructed on highly visible street corners, were built exhibiting varying amounts of Romanesque influence. The Williams Block, distinguished by a corner turret overhanging the street corner, is characterized by round arched window openings on the upper story and a miniature arcade design pressed into the metal cornice along the top of the facades. This commercial block, designed by La Crosse architects Stoltze and Schick, was built in 1896 at 125 South Water Street (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald, 9 June 1896, 7 July 1896, 21 July 1896). The Dodge and Davis Department Store constructed in 1900 at 100 South Water Street also exhibits Romanesque Revival and other Classical Revival influences (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald, 27 April 1897, 19 October 1897, 10 April 1900, 15 May 1900, 22 May 1900). This eclectic building displays the round-arched openings associated with the Romanesque Revival style. Unfortunately, the architectural character of these historically important buildings has been altered extensively by the replacement of the window sashes and lights with wood and stucco panels and by the addition of contemporary storefronts.

The most significant example of the Romanesque Revival in the Water Street Commercial District is the massive red sandstone Monroe County Court House, designed by noted architect Mifflin Bell, and constructed in 1895-1896 on South Court Street (Sparta Herald, 18 December 1894, 22 January 1895, 17 March 1896; Sanborn [map], 1900, 1911, 1922, 1931). The over-all design of this exceptionally well-preserved court house is in the manner of the Richardsonian interpretation of the Romanesque style and depends on mass, volume and scale rather than on enriched or decorative detailings. Round-

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 18 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

in the arches above the door and windows" when under construction in 1869. (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald, 11 May 1869, 18 May 1869, 13 July 1869, 17 August 1869). In addition to the replacement of the historic storefronts, these two buildings have been altered by the replacement of the brick cornice and parapet with plain brick sometime after 1920 (Monroe County History Room, Photographs #396, #1428).

The W.C. Hoffman Building constructed in 1895 at 107-109 South Water Street is among the best preserved of the small commercial buildings displaying Romanesque Revival influence (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald 5 February 1895, 19 March 1895, 15 April 1895, 30 April 1895). Round blind arches featuring tympanums composed of decorative brick work are located above the upper story windows of this small brick commercial building.

More substantial examples of the Romanesque Revival style were built in the commercial district at the turn of the century. Two of the largest commercial brick blocks, both constructed on highly visible street corners, were built exhibiting varying amounts of Romanesque influence. The Williams Block, distinguished by a corner turret overhanging the street corner, is characterized by round arched window openings on the upper story and a miniature arcade design pressed into the metal cornice along the top of the facades. This commercial block, designed by La Crosse architects Stoltze and Schick, was built in 1896 at 125 South Water Street (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald, 9 June 1896, 7 July 1896, 21 July 1896). The Dodge and Davis Department Store constructed in 1900 at 100 South Water Street also exhibits Romanesque Revival and other Classical Revival influences (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1930; Sparta Herald, 27 April 1897, 19 October 1897, 10 April 1900, 15 May 1900, 22 May 1900). This eclectic building displays the round-arched openings associated with the Romanesque Revival style. Unfortunately, the architectural character of these historically important buildings has been altered extensively by the replacement of the window sashes and lights with wood and stucco panels and by the addition of contemporary storefronts.

The most significant example of the Romanesque Revival in the Water Street Commercial District is the massive red sandstone Monroe County Court House, designed by noted architect Mifflin Bell, and constructed in 1895-1896 on South Court Street (Sparta Herald, 18 December 1894, 22 January 1895, 17 March 1896; Sanborn [map], 1900, 1911, 1922, 1931). The over-all design of this exceptionally well-preserved court house is in the manner of the Richardsonian interpretation of the Romanesque style and depends on mass, volume and scale rather than on enriched or decorative detailings. Round-arched windows light the court room on the upper floor and form an arcade on the attic

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 19 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

arched windows light the court room on the upper floor and form an arcade on the attic story.

The Queen Anne style, a style initiated in the 1860s in England by Richard Norman Shaw, was popular, particularly for residential architecture, in America from the 1870s until 1900. Characterized by irregularity of surface, texture and plan, the Queen Anne stylistic devices include turrets, projecting bays and windows, and surface ornament such as decorative shingles, stained glass and applied decoration. A varied and decorative picturesque style, the asymmetrical Queen Anne style was manifested in the commercial architecture of Sparta very late in its period of popularity mainly through stylistic devices such as turrets, projecting bay windows, and irregular form. The Olin Block, one of a very few buildings in the commercial district to exhibit the Queen Anne style, was constructed in 1896 at 125 West Oak Street (Sparta Herald, 31 March 1896; City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1879-1930). Designed by Racine architect J.C. Chandler, the Olin Block is characterized by an overhanging octagonal turret that establishes the irregularity of form essential to the Queen Anne style (Sparta Herald 31 March 1895, 7 April 1896). Stained glass windows, geometric designs pressed into the metal cornice, classical designs pressed into the iron sheeting covering the turret and a brick corbel table below the cornice create the irregularity of surface and the contrasting textures associated with the style. The oriel windows on their upper stories are the only Queen Anne stylistic device that characterize the small vernacular brick W.E. Foote Grocery and Bakery built in 1902 at 123 West Oak Street and the brick commercial building constructed for Thomas C. Longwell in 1904 at 103 North Water Street (Monroe County History Room, Photograph #101; City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1870-1930; Sparta Herald, 30 January 1900, 12 July 1904, Sanborn [map], 1900, 1911, 1922, 1931).

The buildings constructed in the early 20th century in the Water Street Commercial Historic District reflects the conflicting trends of historic architecture and the new modern styles that characterized the period. Classicism was the major design source for the prominent early 20th century historic styled public and commercial architecture in Sparta. Frequently used by public institutions to symbolize stability and status in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Neo-Classical Revival of the 1890s and early 20th century was based more on the Greek orders than the Roman, employing linteled doorways and windows and pedimented porticos with Greek columns rather than Roman columns. Four of the large public and social buildings and one commercial building constructed in Sparta in the early decades of the 20th century were designed using the classical architectural vocabulary.

Schick and Roth of La Crosse, WI, designed the Sparta Free Library at 126 West Main

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 20 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Street in 1902 to appear as a small classical temple (Sparta Herald, 10 June 1902, 17 June 1902, 12 August 1902, 19 August 1902; Sanborn [map], 1900, 1911, 1922, 1931). Among the best of the examples of the Classical Revival in the city, the library placed on an elevated foundation displays the essential characteristics of the style including a Palladian portico featuring Ionic columns. Intending to suggest stability and prestige through the use of an ancient style, the United States Post Office displays a scaled-down, more abstract design than the Neo-Classical Revival-style Public Library constructed a decade earlier. The brick post office, built in 1915 at 121 West Main Street, is characterized by a Beaux Arts-influenced projecting facade featuring a plain entablature. The entablature, also topped by a brick parapet and adorned only by a row of dentils, rests on colossal order brick pilasters on the front as well as the side elevations (Sparta Herald, 3 November 1914, 10 November 1914, 22 December 1914, 27 July 1915, 1 December 1915, 11 January 1916).

The hold of the Classical styles on public and large social buildings lessened as the lifestyles of society became more informal. Under these circumstances, abstracted, scaled-down and eclectic interpretations of the Classical style became acceptable. Featuring the low hipped roof form with overhanging eaves typical of the Prairie School, the symmetrically designed, cream brick Masonic Temple is decorated by rather abstract Classical ornament such as applied pilasters and a Bedford stone classical frontispiece comprised of a broken pediment resting on paneled pilasters. Designed by La Crosse architects Parkinson and Dockendorff, the exceptionally well-preserved Masonic Temple was built in 1922-1923 at 200 West Main Street (Sparta Herald, 14 August 1923, 11 September 1923). The influence of Ecole des Beaux Arts-trained architects and of the Classical Revival style on public buildings had run its course, for the most part, by the time the Camp McCoy USO Club at 201 West Oak Street was constructed in 1943 (Sparta Herald, 19 January 1942, 20 April 1942, 8 March 1943, 1 April 1943, 21 June 1943, 9 August 1943, 6 September 1943, 20 September 1943). Essentially an early Modern movement design, this governmental building is characterized by cubic forms ornamented by minimal and abstract classical cornices and frieze boards on the one-story cube forms and by applied pilasters on the tall gymnasium form in the center of the building. Built for a total cost of \$95,000, this USO Club building was constructed by Johnson and Kramer of St. Charles, Minnesota, under the supervision of the Federal Works Agency (Sparta Herald, 8 March 1943, 20 September 1943). Originally planned as a frame building, this federal project was re-specified as a brick building at the request of the City of Sparta. The community raised the extra funds for brick construction within a few weeks by popular subscription (Sparta Herald, 19 January 1942, 20 April 1942, 8 March 1943, 19 April 1943).

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 21 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

The only substantial example of a Neo-Classical styled commercial building in the historic district is the Bank of Sparta built at 106 South Water in 1906-1907. Designed by La Crosse, WI, architects Parkinson and Dockendorff, this one-story building is characterized by a projecting Bedford stone portico with fluted Ionic columns in antis. Unfortunately, the architectural significance of this small temple building was seriously altered by the partial covering of the facade in a later remodeling project (Sparta Herald, 23 January 1907, 22 January 1906, 13 March 1906, 21 May 1907).

Historic styles other than the Classical Revival exerted minimal influence on the buildings of the Water Street Commercial Historic District. During the Period Revival era, only the Spanish Colonial-Mediterranean Revival style was employed in addition to the Classical Revival style. The term "Period Revival" is often used to describe a wide variety of past motifs and styles that architects borrowed from during the first four decades of the 20th century, but particularly in the 1920s. The design of George Pharmacy at 112 North Water Street utilizes principally the red tile roof and the curvilinear shaped gables of the Spanish Colonial style to suggest the exotic Mediterranean style popularized in the 1920s and early 1930s, a style more frequently used for residential architecture. Characterized by the brick surfaces that are more often associated with the Mediterranean Revival than the Spanish Colonial Revival, this building continues to display its original storefront featuring a Spanish Colonial-styled round-arched entrance to the apartments on the upper story. The George Building, originally constructed over Beaver Creek, was built by the Arnold Construction Company of Eau Claire in 1930 on a reinforced concrete bridge and piers. This building was placed on iron I-beams and its foundation was modified in the aftermath of the 1943 floor of Beaver Creek (Sparta Herald, 6 February 1930, 31 July 1930, 7 August 1930, 31 May 1943, 2 August 1943, 30 August 1943, 4 October 1943, 15 November 1943, 6 March 1944, 24 July 1944; Sanborn [map], 1922, 1931).

The trend toward a new modern style, fueled by a distaste for decorative and historic styles of the past, was displayed in the majority of the few commercial buildings constructed or remodeled in the early decades of the 20th century in Sparta. Generally built in a simple rectangular form, these early modern buildings exhibited a minimal amount of ornament derived from the commercial Chicago School and its residential counterpart, the Prairie School, which were popular in the 1890s and the early decades of the 20th century. Generally built using modern steel construction methods, small buildings constructed in the 1920s such as the Domke Building constructed around 1922 at 221 South Water Street, the 1923 Teasdale Estate Building at 117 West Oak Street, the W.W. Vau Dell Building built in 1927 at 138 North Water Street and the Steele Building constructed in 1929 at 127 North Water Street exhibit

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 22 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

the plain wall treatment and unadorned window treatment typical of early Commercial style building (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1870-1930; Sanborn [map], 1911, 1922, 1931). However, the articulation of the brick surfaces to suggest the presence of stylized and abstracted cornices and frieze bands suggest the transition from Neo-Classical antecedents.

By the 1940s, the remnants of historic ornament found in the earlier decades of the 20th century in Sparta no longer ornamented the commercial buildings constructed there. Simple plain brick surfaces and plain rectangular windows characterize all the buildings built or reconstructed after the 1943 flood including the 1944 William Wettstein Building at 108 East Oak Street, Hoppy's Bowling Emporium at 114 West Oak Street designed by La Crosse architect Frank Fuchs in 1942 and the John Marquardt Building constructed in 1944 at 105 North Water Street (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1945; Sparta Herald, 23 March 1942).

Enjoying a brief popularity before WW II, Art Moderne was characterized by the streamline look and materials (used in the machine age) while Art Deco has similar smooth wall surfaces but were characterized by hard edges and ornamented by stylized and geometric motifs. In the Water Street Commercial Historic District, the Lanham Funeral Home designed by La Crosse architect Otto Merman is the only building clearly exhibiting a modernistic style. Constructed at 106 West Franklin Street in 1932, this funeral home, characterized by a series of set backs that emphasizes its geometric form, displays the hard edge or angular composition associated with the Art Deco style (City of Sparta, Tax Records, 1868-1945; Sanborn [map], 1931; Lanham-Kann Funeral Home, Office Files). However, this brick building's one-story entrance pavilion displays an abstracted round pediment over the door and a pent roof that is more typically associated with earlier commercial vernacular designs.

The Water Street Commercial Historic District contains an architecturally significant concentration of historic commercial structures which together reflect the local architectural history of Sparta from the late 1860s to 1943. The structures represent both high style architecture designed by professional architects, as well as vernacular interpretation of the prevailing architectural styles by local contractors and craftsmen and are representative of the range of styles and construction methods prevalent during the period. Together they form the largest and best concentration of commercial and civic architecture in the city.

Commerce

The majority of the properties in the Water Street Commercial Historic District relate

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 23 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

to the Goods and Services Section of the Commerce Theme. Many of the commercial buildings standing today in the city can be associated with Sparta's early businesses. The District's present resources reflect the service businesses, such as banks, and the retail businesses, such as dry goods stores, grocers, hardware and drugstores that have come and gone in Sparta.

Commerce and business success in Sparta over the years encouraged the development of banking enterprises in Sparta and the community boasted several historic banks in its past. They included: Bank of Sparta, M.A. Thayer & Co. Savings Bank, Monroe County Bank, and the Farmers National Bank.

The oldest bank in Sparta and in western Wisconsin is the Bank of Sparta. The Bank of Sparta was started in the wake of the great panic of 1857, and its history is closely tied with that of the community [Sparta Centennial: 34; Sparta Herald, 21 May 1907; and Gregory, Vol. 3: 425-427].

Since its establishment, the Bank of Sparta has co-operated with the people of Sparta and vicinity in bringing growth and development to the community. The Bank of Sparta was organized as a state bank and passed through the Civil War without difficulty. However, with the establishment of a national banking system, in 1865, the Bank of Sparta reorganized as the First National Bank of Sparta. It continued as a national bank until 1878 [Ellsworth: 29; Monroe County Democrat, 30 June 1899: 31; Sparta Herald, 21 May 1907; Monroe County Democrat, 20 July 1933; "History of Sparta" installment 15; Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951; Richards: 301-304; and Gregory, Vol. 3: 425-427]. However, "because of heavy federal taxation, the expense of redeeming circulation, and the bitter opposition of partisan politics to all national banks", the First National Bank of Sparta reorganized as a state bank once again, surrendering its national charter. As a state bank, the Sparta Bank safely passed through the succeeding panics of 1893 and 1907. Throughout these early years, the Bank of Sparta had several homes, but in 1906-1907, it erected the Bank of Sparta Building (106 South Water Street) made of Bedford stone, which became its home for most of the twentieth century [Sparta Herald, 21 May 1907; Bank of Sparta; Richards: 301-304; Koehler, 1977: 42; Monroe County Democrat, 20 July 1933; and Sparta Centennial: 34].

M.A. Thayer & Co. Savings Bank which was begun in 1868 to compete with the Sparta Bank was the second bank to establish itself in Sparta. In 1877, M.A. Thayer Bank & Co. built the Thayer and Co. Bank Building (126 South Water Street). However, due to the Panic of 1893, the M.A. Thayer & Co. Bank fell into difficult times and was taken over and reorganized as the Monroe County Bank [Barney: 35 and 41; Ellsworth: 37; Koehler, 1977: 42; and Sparta Centennial: 35]. The Monroe County Bank (Sparta's

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 2.4 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

third banking business) began business on October 26, 1894, in the former Thayer and Co. Bank Building (126 South Water Street), and remained there until 1969, when it merged with another bank and moved elsewhere [Richards: 301-304; Gregory, Vol. 3: 35-36 and 669-670; Monroe County Democrat "Sparta Up-To-Date", 30 June 1899: 41; and Sparta Centennial: 35].

The fourth important bank to open its doors in Sparta was the Citizens State Bank, which later changed its name to the Farmers National Bank. The Citizens State Bank was formed on May 25, 1907 with capital stock of \$25,000. At first, the Citizens State Bank opened in rented quarters of the Heller-I.O.O.F. Building (101 West Oak Street). It remained at this location until 1911, when it bought a building elsewhere. In 1918, the name of Citizens Bank was changed to the Farmers National Bank and was recapitalized at \$50,000, and by 1953, the Farmers National Bank was still considered a prominent bank in Sparta. In 1969, the Farmers National Bank merged with the Monroe County Bank to become the Union National Bank & Trust Co. [Richards: 301-304; Gregory, Vol. 3: 77-78, and 109; Milwaukee Sentinel "Ex-host to Soldiers Seeks New Horizons" 8 March 1953; and Sparta Centennial: 35].

Banking has been a vital commercial enterprise in Sparta and a continuing success. Besides banking institutions, general merchandise, dry goods and department stores and furniture/mortuary establishments have played an important role in the development of the Water Street Commercial Historic District.

In the 1850's, the general store was the predominant store in Sparta and they did the most business. However, by the 1860's, these general merchandise stores were replaced by dry goods stores. In the 1870's, many of these dry goods stores freighted merchandise to settlements and lumber camps north of Sparta and to larger cities like Black River Falls and Eau Claire. This trade laid the foundation for steady economic growth in the nineteenth century [Koehler, 1977: 16 and 29; and French: 70-74].

Several dry goods merchants either constructed or were occupants of important buildings in the district that continue to dominate Sparta's cityscape. They include: M.L. Heller, C.C. Blakeslee, James Francis, J. Schram, Jr., George D. Dunn, and Rufus S., and H.K. Dodge. Only three of these individuals later became prominent in Sparta's commercial history. The three individuals, who built important structures in Sparta's past, but whose dry goods stores did not last long into the twentieth century were: M.L. Heller, C.C. Blakeslee, and James Francis. In 1869, James Francis built the Francis Dry Goods Store (105 West Oak Street). In 1875, C.C. Blakeslee's dry goods was one of the original occupants of the Union Block (132-136 North Water Street). And, in 1876-1877, M.L. Heller, a prominent dry goods merchant, began the

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 25 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

block of buildings on the southwest corner of West Oak known as the Heller-I.O.O.F. Block (101 West Oak Street) [French: 70-74; and Koehler, 1977: 16].

Four dry goods establishments made a steady contribution to Sparta's past as well as contributed to today's Water Street Commercial Historic District. The first merchant, J. Schram, Jr. started his dry goods business sometime prior to 1875, and by 1877, Schram built his trade up to the point where he was able to build a three-story brick building known as the Schram Dry Goods Store (120 South Water Street). J. Schram, Jr.'s dry goods store thereafter became a community fixture until at least 1904 [Monroe County Republican, 31 August 1877; French: 71; Business Directory: 1897; and Business Directory: 1903-1904]. The second merchant, George Dunn, began his dry goods business in 1861 and operated at least until 1916. Dunn came to Sparta with considerable experience in the dry goods business, having worked in stores in Elmira, New York and Janesville, Wisconsin. He and others were the original occupants of the John Swartzlow Building (113 South Water Street). This building became widely known also as the Dunn Building as well [French: 70-74; Sparta Herald, 6 March 1894; Monroe County Democrat, 20 May 1898; "History of Sparta", installments 16 and 24; and Gregory, Vol. 2: 710]. The third long-lived dry goods store in Sparta that needs to be mentioned is the J.J. Mason Dry Goods Business. It was located in the Union Building (132-136 North Water Street) from sometime prior to 1889 to 1916 or later. [Annual Directory of Sparta, Wisconsin. Vol. 1., Chicago: Interstate Directory Co., 1897; Sparta City Directory, 1903-1904., Sparta: R.C. Glover, Publisher, 1904; and City Directory of the City of Sparta, Wisconsin. Sparta: Compiled and Published by E.D. Bell. 1916.]

Unlike the early three dry goods merchants the fourth merchant made the transition from dry goods store to department store. In 1872, G.T., Rufus S., and H.K. Dodge started out on the southwest corner of West Main and South Water Street as a dry goods store. Since its origination, there have been periodic additions and enlargements to the building, until the Dodge Brothers Department Store became one of Sparta's premier businesses. By 1898, the business was called the Dodge & Davis Department Store (100 South Water Street). The final store was divided into various departments, such as dress goods, silks, notions, cloaks, clothing, gent's furnishings, carpets, curtains, draperies and many others. The Dodge and Davis Department Store operated well into the twentieth century at this location [Sparta Herald, 6 March 1894; "History of Sparta", installment 31; Koehler, 1977: 29 and 43; Monroe County Democrat "Sparta Up-to-Date", 30 June 1899: 32-36; and Gregory, Vol. 3: 203-204].

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 26 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

In the mid-1890s, a number of new department stores opened in Sparta, such as the Leader Department Store, which opened in the Williams Block (125 South Water Street) in 1896. However, none reached the prominence of the Dodge and Davis Department Store, which served much of the western region of Wisconsin for several generations. [Koehler, 1977: 96; Monroe County Democrat, 8-15 January 1897, 26 February 1897; Monroe County Democrat, 13 September 1895; Monroe County Democrat, "Sparta Up-to-Date" 30 June 1899: 21; and Monroe County Democrat, 1 September 1899].

Furniture/mortuary stores were also important to Sparta's commercial past. The most prominent furniture store was Letson's Furniture and Mortuary business. This establishment was started sometime before 1871 by William Letson, and continued to be operated by his son S.C. Letson until 1920, when he turned over the business to Maurice James Lanham. In 1932, Lanham erected a separate mortuary and parlors just to the rear of the store. Today, the Lanham Funeral Home (106 West Franklin Street) remains standing as a legacy to the Letson furniture/mortuary [Monroe County Democrat, 24 March 1871; Monroe County Democrat "Sparta Up-to-Date" 30 June 1899: 27-28; and Gregory Vol. 3: 173-174].

Two other important furniture stores in Sparta at the turn of the century were the Sahrt Furniture Store (110-112 East Oak Street) and the Davis and Jones Furniture Store (111 East Oak Street). William J. Sahrt began his business sometime around 1899 and in that year built his building on East Oak Street as a combination furniture store and mortuary. Sahrt stayed in business there until 1911, when he sold the business and building. D.F. Davis and John Jones started their furniture store sometime around 1913. They were the first occupants of this building on East Oak, which they later bought [Tax Assessment Records, 1870 to 1930: City of Sparta; Business Directory: 1903-1904; Business Directory: 1916; Sanborn-Perris Map: 1900; and Sanborn Map: 1911].

Hardware stores, grocery stores as well as confectioneries are important commercial businesses in any small rural community. The number and longevity of such establishments varied in Sparta, but some of these types of businesses left their impression on Sparta's Water Street Commercial Historic District.

Of the hardware stores that served the community, the L.H. Bancroft hardware store was a significant establishment. Bancroft was a Vermonter by birth and a Civil War veteran, who started his business with his sons in 1865. By 1867, in the days when Sparta was a supply point for northern Wisconsin, Bancroft prospered to the point that he was able to build the Bancroft Hardware Store (110 South Water Street).

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 27 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Bancroft's business occupied the basement, and the first and part of the second floors of the building, which was 25 x 70 feet in dimensions. Bancroft's Hardware occupied this building until at least 1891. Sometime after 1891, H.D. Baldwin took over the store, renaming the business the Baldwin Hardware Company. Baldwin continued at this location at least until 1903 [Monroe County Democrat, 5 June 1867; Sparta Herald, 8 September 1891; Business Directory: 1897; Business Directory 1903-1904; and Business Directory: 1916].

In the late 1860s and mid-1870s, there were a number of groceries serving Sparta and the surrounding region [French: 70-74]. By the turn of the century, several of these groceries were still carrying on business and new ones had begun. Three groceries should be noted for their historical significance and contribution to the Water Street Commercial Historic District. They are: Burton and Graves, E.E. Olin's, and Robert and Jones groceries.

On April 1, 1868, William Burton opened his grocery store with Asa Rice on the southwest corner of North Water and West Franklin Streets. By 1872, the grocery store was known as the Rice & Burton Grocery. In 1880, they became the first occupants of the Moffat Building (146 North Water Street) that now stands on this corner. In 1887, William E. Graves became a member of this firm, and as late as 1903-1904, the grocery was known simply as the Burton & Graves Grocery Store ["History of Sparta" installment 31; Jones: 8; and Business Directory: 1903-1904].

E.E. Olin's grocery originally began before 1875. At some point in time, he moved his establishment to the corner of West Oak and South Court Street. In 1896, Olin built a block of buildings thereafter known as the Olin Block (125-127 West Oak Street). At that address, E.E. Olin, Jr. continued to run a grocery until at least 1900 [French: 70-74; Business Directory: 1897].

The last important grocery in Sparta was the Roberts and Jones Grocery Store, which began sometime before 1888 and was operated by Stephen J. Roberts and William R. Jones. The Roberts and Jones Grocery had a full line of staple and fancy groceries, as well as boots, shoes, etc.. In 1896, the Roberts and Jones Grocery became an original occupant of the Williams Block (125 South Water Street). It occupied the Williams Block as late as 1935 or even longer [Wisconsin Gazetteer, 1888-1889; Barney: 41; Sparta Herald, 8 September 1891; Business Directory: 1897; Business Directory: 1903-1904; Business Directory: 1916; Wisconsin Gazetteer, 1927-1928; and "Roberts and Jones", Monroe County Historical Society, Vol. IV, No. 9 (February 1985): 4].

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 28 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

The town's many confectioneries also provided food services for Spartans. While Sparta had many confectioneries, none had such a long history as the Gustave Kollertz Palace Confectionery. This business originally was started in 1862 by John E. Kollertz, and in 1875 was known as the Kollertz Variety and Soda Fountain Store. Kollertz conducted the business until 1884, when Gustave Kollertz became associated with it. In 1907, Gustave Kollertz replaced the business' old building with the present standing Kollertz Confectionery and Toy Store Building (126 North Water Street). After 1907, the building remained the Gustave Kollertz Palace Confectionery until at least 1916 or later [Monroe County Democrat "Sparta Up-to-Date", 30 June 1899: 43; Business Directory: 1897; Business Directory: 1903-1904; and Business Directory: 1916].

Some of the properties in the Water Street Commercial Historic District relate to the Information Services and Utilities Topics of the Commerce Theme.

The early settlers of Sparta were intrigued with the outside world. Sparta's thirst for knowledge for national and world news was met by several newspapers. Throughout its history, Sparta has had many newspapers to satisfy this need. Some of them, like the Monroe Citizen, Sparta Eagle, Wisconsin Greenback, Sparta Tribune, Sparta Independent, and the Sparta Advertiser, have come and gone. While papers like the Sparta Herald and the Monroe County Democrat have a long publishing history in Sparta.

The lineage of the Sparta Herald began in 1855, when Milton Montgomery and J.D. Condit started the first regular newspaper in Monroe County. At that time, it was called the Sparta Watchman, later the Monroe County Freeman, and finally in 1858, the paper was renamed the Sparta Herald by David McBride. Thereafter, with only a brief respite as the Sparta Democrat, it has been a strong Republican paper. The Sparta Herald has been the primary newspaper in the Sparta region and served as opposition to several other smaller and shorter term newspaper publications. The newspaper has had several historic homes but none exist today [Gregory, Vol. 3: 373-374; Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951; Richards: 91-94; and Barney: 20].

The history of the Monroe County Democrat began in 1873, when D.W.C. Wilson bought the old Sparta Eagle (a Republican paper) and renamed it the Monroe County Republican (a Democratic paper). In 1879, Wilson sold this paper to Messrs. Brown and Foster, who combined it with the Monroe County Democrat, a paper they moved from Tomah. Since 1879, the newspaper has changed hands several times and combined with other Democratic papers. It even has been called by several other names, such as the Sparta Democrat and the Sparta News. Nevertheless, these papers had their roots in the earlier Monroe County Democrat. In its history, the Monroe County Democrat was printed from

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 29 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

several different locations. For instance, the Monroe County Democrat was printed from 1896 to at least 1916 on the second floor of the Hoffman Building (123 South Water Street) [Richards: 91-94; Barney: 20; Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951; Richards: 92-93; and Gregory, Vol. 3: 37-40].

In 1933 the Sparta Herald and the Monroe County Democrat newspaper printing operations were consolidated into a single plant--the Monroe County Publishers Building (113 West Oak Street). In the building, both newspapers retained their identity but shared the cost of a printing facility [Sparta Herald, 8 March 1953].

Thus, the properties in Sparta's Water Street Commercial Historic District reflects associated with commerce and newspapers reflect the important economic role which this county seat played in western Wisconsin from the 1860's to 1940. The district contains the highest concentration of historic buildings of this nature, including banks, dry goods stores, department stores, groceries, hardware stores, confectioneries and buildings related to information services (newspapers) as well. The wide range of activities that these buildings represent demonstrates the changing prosperity and growth of the City of Sparta as a regional center of trade.

### Education

The community of Sparta has always valued its education system, and its attention to the building of schools and other educational facilities attest to this. Of its high schools, junior highs, parochial schools and public libraries, many are historically and architecturally noteworthy. One in particular that should be noted is the Sparta Free Library (126 West Main Street).

The development of this building has its roots in Sparta's long involvement and interest in libraries. For instance, in 1860-1861, several prominent citizens of Sparta gathered together to start a library association for collecting and renting books. It was known as the "Young Men's Library Association", and was managed under that name until 1874, when a new state law was passed which gave villages and cities the power to establish free public libraries. The town agreed to this proposition and organized the Sparta Free Library, perhaps the first library in the state of Wisconsin to take advantage of the new legislation [Sparta Free Library (1974); Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951; Unknown Newspapers "Sparta Library has Unique Background" N.D.; Koehler, 1977: 26 and 41-42; and Richards: 312-315].

Over the years, the Sparta Free Library has had several homes in the community before the construction of the separate facility. For instance, the second floor of the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 30 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Schram Building (120 South Water Street) was used for this purpose for an undetermined period of time before 1902, when the present Sparta Free Library building was constructed. Attempts to secure this permanent library building began in 1900, when it was learned that the Andrew Carnegie Foundation was seeking funding applications for library building projects around the country. The Carnegie Foundation approved Sparta's application for \$10,000, when the City of Sparta agreed to make a permanent provision for an annual amount equaling 10 percent of the gift. Under similar conditions, Carnegie granted an additional \$2,000 to the city to grade and seed the grounds and to build sidewalks. The northeast corner of Court Street at 126 West Main Street was selected as the site for the new Sparta Free Library. The doors of the new library opened in April 1903, becoming one of more than 1,600 libraries that Carnegie helped build across the country [Sparta Free Library (1974); Gregory, Vol. 2: 714; Koehler, 1977: 41-42; Richards: 312-315; Unknown Newspapers "Sparta Library Has Unique Background" N.D.; and Monroe County Democrat, 20 November 1924; Monroe County Democrat, 17 September 1975; Jones: 19; Rice (1983); and Sparta Centennial: 23].

By 1915, the Sparta Free Library housed some 18,000 books and was a strong educational factor in the community, upholding Sparta's historic library tradition. This educational facility enhanced living in Sparta and contributed to the character of the Water Street Commercial Historic District in the years between 1902 and 1942.

### Government

Sparta has had a number of buildings housing federal, county, and local governmental facilities located within the Water Street Commercial Historic District which merit attention. The concentration of these types of buildings within the district is significant and reflects the government history of Sparta.

It wasn't until 1915 that Sparta could claim to have a single federal building in the community. However, in 1915, a U.S. Post Office (121 West Main Street) was erected in Sparta. Prior to the erection of this federal building, Sparta's post offices were housed in a variety of buildings. Many of these buildings are no longer extant, but from 1891 to 1911, the post office was in the Masonic Temple Building (100-102 North Water Street). Nevertheless, around 1910, Congressman John J. Esch secured an appropriation to purchase a site and erect a government post office building in Sparta, and the Post Office sent a representative to Sparta to select a site. Finally, in 1914-1915, the federal government set aside \$60,000 for the purpose of constructing a new post office building, the site of which was the corner of Court and Main Streets across from the Sparta Free Library (126 West Main Street). In 1915, the present U.S. Post Office (121 West Main Street) was constructed by James DeVault

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 31 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

and Son of Canton, Ohio at a cost of \$46,638.00. At the time of its construction, the U.S. Post Office may also have housed offices for officials from Camp Robinson, a military reservation to the east of Sparta. Construction of a federal building in Sparta marked a major development for the community. [Sanborn-Perris Maps: 1889, 1894, 1900, and 1911; Jones: 24; Richards: 285; City of Sparta: "Tour Historical Downtown"; and Sparta Centennial: 24].

Some years later, Sparta would again take on construction for a federal building. In 1942-1943, at the height of World War II, the U.S. Army decided to build a USO center in Sparta to support the troops at Camp McCoy. For this center it needed a building. Sparta's old city hall, which had been housed in a former Baptist church, was offered to the government, provided that the new USO could be turned back into a city hall after the war. Armed with this agreement, the U.S. Army razed the Baptist building there and built the present day Camp McCoy USO Recreation Club (201 West Oak Street) at the corner of South Court Street. The new Camp McCoy USO replaced a temporary one at a home on the northeast corner of East Oak and South Benton Streets. The USO, as constructed, contained four club rooms, a kitchen, a locker room and social hall and cost approximately \$100,000. In 1946, the Army offered the building to the City of Sparta as they agreed to and after some negotiations, the city took over the building. The City of Sparta paid the Federal Works Agency somewhere between \$27,500 and \$35,000, for the former USO center. Now, it is known as the West Oak Street City Hall Building [Sparta Herald, 8 March 1953; City of Sparta: "Tour Historical Downtown"; City of Sparta: City Council Minutes for September 22, 1942 and March 2, 1943; Sparta Centennial: 51; and Middleman: Summary of Sparta School History: 2, 8, and 10].

Besides federal facilities, Sparta also retains a county building which reflects the governmental history of the community. In 1854, Monroe County was organized and Sparta became the temporary county seat. Sparta remained the temporary county seat for a long time because county board supervisors from the eastern part of Monroe County wished Tomah to be the seat. However, in 1863, the county board system was abrogated and Sparta was made the permanent county seat. Sparta however received challenges to this position from Tomah and politicians from eastern Monroe County as late as 1885 and 1890 [Koehler, 1977: 57].

A number of courthouses were erected to serve the county. Replacing edifices erected in 1856-1857, and in 1865, the Monroe County Courthouse (108 South Court Street) was constructed in 1896. The first courthouse (1856-1857), a one-story frame structure, did not grace the present-day courthouse square, but instead was located on Spring Street between Pine and Pearl Streets. The second courthouse (1865-1895) was built on the present-day courthouse square. In addition to a courthouse, there was a

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 32 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

sheriff's dwelling and a county jail on the courthouse square [Barney: 19' "History of Sparta" installment 17; Koehler, 1977: 31; Middleman: Summary of Sparta School History: 1 and 2; "The Monroe County Court House", Monroe County Historical Society Vol. 1, No. 6 (March 1976): 1; and Sparta Volunteer Fire: 6].

The present day red sandstone Monroe County Courthouse on South Court Street sits in a square with big trees and lawn and was built in 1896 at a cost of \$53,417.00. It was designed by early mid-west architect Mifflin E. Bell, the older brother of Charles E. Bell. The dedication of the courthouse was a gala event with dignitaries, including Governor W.H. Upham and Congressman John J. Esch and Robert B. McCoy. By 1915, a separate jail and sheriff's home, which complimented the courthouse in architectural style, was built at the southwest corner of the square (not extant). At the time the courthouse was built, the courthouse was the most prestigious public building in the city of Sparta. By 1915, a large artesian fountain, was located on the lawn in the southeast corner of the square with a beautiful iron center. There also was a tennis and croquet court on the grounds [Unknown Newspapers "Sparta, Wisconsin: A Northern Town with a 'Western Feel' of Pines and Bluffs.", N.D.; City of Sparta: Tour Historical Downtown Sparta; Jones: 24; Monroe County Democrat "Sparta Up-to-Date", 30 June 1899: 6; "The Monroe County Court House", Monroe County Historical Society Vol. 1, No. 6 (March 1976): 1; National Register Nomination: Monroe County Courthouse (1981); and Unknown Newspapers "Sparta is Largest Monroe County City": 6].

Today, the Monroe County Courthouse remains a structure of interest and beautiful design, and reflects the importance of the nineteenth century county courthouse.

Although the history of local government in Sparta is interesting, few buildings associated with local government still exist in Sparta.

Sparta was organized as a township on October 3, 1854, one of the first five townships in Monroe County. Sparta was later incorporated as a village on May 11, 1857, under Chapter 52 of the revised statutes of Wisconsin. Subsequently, the first Village Board of Trustees was elected. By 1866, Sparta had sufficient population to qualify as a town. The first elections under the town's charter were held on April 9, 1866. Sparta continued under town government until 1883, when the township was incorporated as the City of Sparta with a mayoral-aldermanic type of government. Sparta started out with four wards. Water Street acted as the north-south dividing line and Franklin and Main Streets acted as the east-west division line [Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951; Koehler, 1977: 57; and Barney: 16, 21, 28, and 37; Sparta Centennial: 1, and 3-4; and Monroe County Democrat "Sparta Up-to-Date" 30 June 1899: 4].

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 33 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

The earliest town hall for Sparta was located on North K Street. It was a frame structure, which originally had been the first Congregational Church in Sparta. Between 1876 and 1896, the first town/city hall and the engine-house for the Sparta Fire Department were combined in one building, which was located on West Main Street just east of the Sparta Free Library (126 West Main Street) and west of the Masonic Temple building (100-102 North Water Street). From 1896 to around 1911, the council chambers were relocated in the Williams Block (125 South Water Street) [Jones: 24; Ellsworth: 27; Gregory, Vol. 2: 716; Koehler, 1977: 44].

Sometime between 1911 and 1931, City Hall moved into a former Baptist church on the corner of Court and West Oak Streets and remained at this location until 1942, when it was razed for the new Camp McCoy USO Recreational Club (201 West Oak Street). In 1946, the City of Sparta purchased the USO building at the southwest corner of West Oak and Court Streets and made it its home. Today, this building is still Sparta's City Hall [Sparta Herald, 8 March 1953; City of Sparta: "Tour Historical Downtown"; City of Sparta: City Council Minutes for September 22, 1942 and March 2, 1943; Sparta Centennial: 51; and Middleman: Summary of Sparta School History: 2, 8, and 10].

Sparta's governmental history is reflected in the Water Street Commercial Historic District by several significant structures, including the U.S. Post Office, Camp McCoy USO Recreation Club, and the Monroe County Courthouse. Federal buildings, such as the post office, and county courthouse are always important assets to any community. The Camp McCoy USO Recreation Club is also a significant building associated with Sparta's governmental history because the building was intended from the day of its construction to replace the city's existing city hall, which was located on the site. In addition, the USO Club can also be associated with the impact of World War II and the federal government on Sparta. All of these government-related buildings clearly enhance the character of Sparta's Water Street Commercial Historic District.

### Industry

Over time, Sparta has enjoyed a variety of industrial pursuits. For instance, in the 1860s, Spartans bragged about their paper mill, their two grist mills, their foundry, their sawmill, and their planing mill, sash, door, and blind factory. By the 1880s, Spartans continued to boast about their foundry, paper mill and saw mill, but the town also was proud of a number of new business enterprises, including woolen mills, carriage works, and several grain elevators. However, by the turn of the century, Spartans were more interested in describing their new fruit, vegetable and tobacco production facilities. These industrial enterprises and many small pursuits, such as blacksmithing, plumbing and icemaking played an important parts in Sparta's economic

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 34 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

growth [Sparta Eagle, 15 August 1866 and 29 August 1867; N.A. History of Northern Wisconsin: 633-634].

Many of Sparta's industrial pursuits are not reflected in Sparta's Water Street Commercial Historic District either because there are no remnants of them in the district or because they were located in other parts of the community. This category of buildings include structures related to: lumber milling, pulp and paper production, wood products, milling, brewing, vegetable processing, textile production, carriage and wagon works, agricultural machinery, manufacturing, and implement dealers and primary metal processing and metal products, ice harvesting, and fishing. In addition, a number of miscellaneous small businesses, such as nurseries and greenhouses, glove, mitten, and fur factories are not represented in the district.

However, despite this, several significant nineteenth and twentieth century industrial pursuits that were part of Sparta's economic history, are still reflected in the district. The Water Street Commercial Historical District contains many buildings related to industries that illustrate the growth of Sparta as an agricultural and regional trade center.

While there was not a quarry in the immediate area of Sparta, like most communities, Sparta had several monument works which served local cemeteries. These works were one of many small scale industrial pursuits that served a mostly local clientele in Sparta and the surrounding counties in Western Wisconsin. These businesses provided for the stone and masonry needs of the community for many years. In the nineteenth century, the Sparta Marble Works and the J.O. Brooks and Son Marble Works were substantial monument works in Sparta. In the twentieth century, the Melgard Monument Works and the Welker-Sparta Marble Works began manufacturing headstones in Sparta. They handled foreign and domestic marbles and granites, and designed and manufactured all kinds of monuments and headstones. Their territory extended over Monroe, Jackson, Trempealeau, and other counties. Other marble works located in Sparta in the early twentieth century included F.L. Dieke on Central Avenue and Israel H. Ady, who had his office in the Thayer and Co. Bank Building (126 South Water Street) [Sparta Eagle, 11 July 1866; Monroe County Republican, 25 August 1876; French: 81; Map of Sparta: 1875; Barney: 41; Ellsworth: 35; "Sparta Recollections" Monroe County Historical Society 20th edition (April 1978): 4; Koehler, 1977: 96; Monroe County Democrat "Sparta Up-to-Date", 30 June 1899: 27; Sanborn-Perris Maps: 1889-1911; Business Directory: 1903-1904; and Business Directory: 1916].

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 35 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Meatpacking plants and butcher shops were industrial pursuits that contributed substantially to the local economy of Sparta in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Substantial quantities of meat were dressed and shipped from Sparta and the many butcher shops serving the area made meat products an important industry to Sparta. Many of Sparta's downtown buildings were related to these successful enterprises.

Historical documents indicate that one noteworthy meat packing operation in Sparta was the John Moffat, D.N. Cargill and [W.H.?] White meatpacking company. In 1875, this business operated a substantial pork and beef packing plant in Sparta. Moffat, Cargill, and White advertised that they were dealers in pork, beef, lard, tallow, hams, and shoulders. During the fiscal year of 1873-1874, Sparta shipped nearly 200,000 pounds of dressed hogs. Most of this trade probably was the product of this meatpacking operation [Map of Sparta: 1875; French: 70-74; Jones: 7; and Sparta Centennial: 22].

However, in 1875, Sparta also boasted four butcher shops as well. They were: James Bubser's "Sparta Meat Market" on Oak Street; M. Hefte's on Main Street, William Potter's on Water Street; and O.D. Steven's on Water Street. The O.D. Stevens butcher shop was the oldest, having been established as early as 1853, the date when Stevens came to Sparta. By 1877, Sparta had only three meat markets, the most substantial was the Hoffman Brothers butcher shop. George Hoffman came to Sparta in 1876, when he began to learn the butcher trade from O.D. Stevens. Later, George became associated with his brother William and together they acquired the William Potter butcher shop. By 1888, the Hoffman brothers had moved to East Oak Street, and at that location they dealt in meat, fish and poultry. Finally, in 1890, the Hoffman brothers built a new building called the Hoffman Meat Market (117 East Oak Street), where they did business until sometime after 1904, when it turned into the Hollinbeck & Streeter meat shop. This latter firm operated in Sparta at this address until at least 1916 [French: 70-74; "History of Sparta" installment: 9; Koehler, 1977: 64; Ellsworth: 42; Barney: 41; Gregory, Vol. 3: 451; Business Directory: 1897; Business Directory: 1903-1904; and Business Directory: 1916].

The Hoffman brothers were successful businessmen. In time, they were able to invest their profits in a number of other commercial buildings in downtown Sparta, including the W.C. Hoffman Building (107-109 South Water Street) in 1895, the Hoffman Building (123 South Water Street) in 1896, and the William Hoffman Building (113-115 East Oak Street) in 1899.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 36 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

In 1897, beside the Hoffman Brothers, there were several other butcher shops in Sparta including: Herrington & Hatch meat market on West Oak Street, Youngman Brothers on North Water Street and Jonathan Wettstein's Meat Market in the Millegan Building (116 South Water Street). By 1904, only the Wettstein and the Youngman butcher shops were in operation. By 1905, the Youngman Brothers were located in their own building-- L.J. Youngman Meat Market (128 North Water Street) [Business Directory: 1897; and Business Directory: 1903-1904].

Not only meat, but fruit and vegetables were processed in Sparta. In fact, by 1900, Sparta was a major center in Wisconsin's berry and small fruit industry region. Small fruit and vegetables were indeed no small industry in Sparta.

Starting in the late 1860s, several Spartans began experimenting with raising small fruit, such as strawberries, blackberries and raspberries, and by the mid-1870's, fruit growing began as an important horticultural industry to Monroe County. In 1874, it was E.W. Babcock who introduced the cultivation of the strawberries into Monroe County for commercial sale. Babcock's move and the work of others set Monroe County on its course to becoming an important fruit growing area. By 1900, Sparta had become the center of Wisconsin's great berry and small fruit industry. Fruit buyers from commission firms in Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, and St. Louis came to Monroe County to purchase fruit, and Sparta played a major role in this process [Koehler, 1977: 63].

In time, cooperative fruit-growing organizations began to organize in Sparta in order to handle transactions. In 1896, a group of berry entrepreneurs formed the Sparta Fruit Growers' Association, whose purpose was to "stop the commission firm practice of pitting the various fruit growers against one another to pay the lowest price", and to "foster and encourage the growing of fruits". They also formed in order to promote "uniform prices for berries and pickers, (and) to secure cheaper rates from the express companies". Lewis S. Fisher helped organize the group and was the general manager of the group as well. By 1899, there were 175 members to the group. This group helped local growers to reach new heights of production. By 1904, Sparta was shipping over 70,000 cases annually and paying \$17,000 a year to its pickers. In 1910, the Sparta Fruit Growers' Association built the Sparta Fruit Growers Association Building (127 East Oak Street), which contained their office and a warehouse. Between 1920 and 1925, the Sparta Fruit Growers Association changed its name to Sparta Produce Exchange Inc., [Monroe County Democrat "Sparta Up-to-Date" 30 June 1899: 23; Koehler, 1977: 63; Jones: 10; and Unknown Newspapers "Sparta is Like a Southern City"].

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 37 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Like many small communities in America, the drugstore was an important part of mainstream life in Sparta. There were several early drugstores that were important in Sparta's early history. One of the most notable establishments was the Hagerman Palmer Drugstore. In 1857, Hagerman Palmer established Sparta's second drugstore which he managed until the early 1870s. In the 1860s and 1870s, according to one historian a person could visit Hagerman Palmer's drugstore for "sulphur, camphor, and goose grease to treat the always recurring common cold, wool fat (corona) to help heal cuts and abrasions, and whiskey, which he (Palmer) used to cure all types of illness, both real and imagined". He was in the business for some fourteen years [Koehler, 1977: 19 and 28; Monroe County "Sparta Up-to-Date" 30 June 1899: 39; N.A. History of Northern Wisconsin: 638; and "History of Sparta" installments 14 and 21].

Sometime between 1871 and 1877, W.P. Palmer (perhaps a son of Hagerman) took over the establishment. Ten years later, in 1877, W.P. Palmer associated himself with a Mr. Gross, turning the establishment into the Palmer & Gross drugstore. It was located in the J.A. Harvey Building (122 South Water Street). By 1897, the business had become the Gross & Schaller drugstore. In 1899, besides carrying a normal line of stock, they also manufactured a line of patent medicines and flavoring extracts which were distributed throughout Monroe and surrounding counties by wagon. On the sides of their wagons they advertised their malt cough cure and quaker tea for stomach, kidney and liver complaints. Schaller's drugstores lasted at this address probably until the 1930's [Ellsworth: 41 and 44; Sparta Herald, 8 September 1891; 1903 Directory; 1916 Directory; Sanborn-Perris Map: 1889; Sanborn-Perris Map: 1900; Sanborn Map Company: 1911; Sanborn Map Company: 1922; and Sanborn Map Company: 1931].

Another early drugstore in Sparta's past was the Newton Brothers Drugstore which O.I. Newton started circa 1871 on the southwest corner of East Oak and Water Streets. Eventually, his son, F.N. Newton, took over the establishment. In 1888, F.N. Newton offered drugs, medicines and chemicals as well as a complete line of homeopathic remedies, but had relocated to the C.B. Styles Brick Block (112 South Water Street). Newton's Pharmacy continued in this building until at least 1903. From 1903 to 1916, another pharmacy operated by F.H. Chamberlain occupied this address. Chamberlain, at this time, owned the building as well. Chamberlain's Pharmacy continued until 1925, when H.O. Taylor took over the building and pharmacy ["History of Sparta" installment 31; Barney: 36 and 41; Map of Sparta: 1875; Sanborn-Perris Maps: 1900-1931; Business Directory: 1897, 1903-1904, and 1916].

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 38 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

In the twentieth century, three important drugstores opened for business in Sparta. First, there was the George Seidel Apothecary which opened in the Masonic Temple Building (100 North Water Street). Seidel's pharmacy was located here until at least 1922 [Business Directory: 1916; and Sanborn Map Company: 1922]. Second, there was the Taylor Drug Company established by Robert J. Taylor in the Williams Building Block (125 South Water Street). The Taylor Drug Company began circa 1906 and occupied one floor and the basement of the Williams Building. The Taylor Drug Company carried not only all lines of drugs, but also wallpaper, cut glass, mixed paints, and sundries, including "stationery, school supplies, perfumes, toilet articles, souvenir post cards, cigars and confectionery in the leading brands, especially Lowney's chocolates of Boston, Mass". Sometime around 1925, the Taylor Drug Company moved to a different location ["Taylor Drug Company" Monroe County Historical Society Vol. 2, No. 8 (June 1978): 2]. Third and last, there was the D.D. Cheney Drugstore. Cheney had entered the drugstore business in 1913 and was engaged in the business until 1919, when he sold the business to Otis Franklin George. In 1930, Otis Franklin George built the present-day George Pharmacy Building (112-114 North Water Street) which is situated directly over Beaver Creek [City of Sparta: Tour Historical Downtown Sparta; and Gregory, Vol. 4: 39-40 and 184].

When artesian wells were flowing and Sparta thought of itself as the "Saratoga of the West", the plumbing industry also thrived in Sparta. One early plumbing business which took advantage of the situation was Crowley & Winterfield on East Oak Street. Crowley & Winterfield were dealers in wood and iron pumps, and they also bored wells with special attention given to sinking artesian wells [Ellsworth: 26]. However, the plumbing industry fell off in Sparta by the twentieth century. Nevertheless, there was one plumbing firm at the turn of the century that deserves note. That establishment was the Flock Brothers Plumbing Co.. In 1896, the Flock Brothers began a plumbing and gas-fitting establishment in Sparta. The Flock brothers started their business in 1896 in the John Swartzlow Building (113 South Water Street), but by 1899, they had relocated to the Sugden Building (124 North Water Street). They were the original occupants of the latter building. Besides plumbing, they worked on steam and hot water heating, and gas-fitting [Koehler, 1977: 96; Business Directory: 1897; and Monroe County Democrat "Sparta Up-to-Date" 30 June 1899: 22].

There was also an assortment of important small industries and some light manufacturing concerns in Sparta's past. Some of these businesses were typical to small traditional rural communities. Others were associated with agricultural and horticultural production in the region. Still others were light manufacturing concerns that operated out of Sparta.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 39 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

In the nineteenth century, blacksmithing and harnessmaking were important traditional occupations in any small rural community. The presence of several blacksmithing and harnessmaking firms in Sparta made a lasting impression on Sparta's economy and on its built landscape.

In Sparta, the first blacksmith was Richard Casselman, who in 1852, worked out of a log cabin located at the northwest corner of Oak and Water Streets. By 1855, William Kerrigan (who was an apprentice to Casselman) began his own blacksmith shop on East Oak Street. By 1870 or earlier, William Kerrigan succeeded to the point where he erected the Kerrigan Building (119 South Water Street). Another important small business in Sparta in the late 1860s was the Henry Foster Harness Shop. Foster started his business in 1866 and built his Foster and Co. Building (107 West Oak Street) in 1869. From 1869 to around 1897, Foster's Harness shop was a community fixture. Thereafter, the Foster building housed a number of harness making businesses besides his own. Harness shop owners included: W. Blanchard (circa 1897), Julius H. Hoffman (circa 1897), H.T. Roggensack (circa 1903-1904) and the Moughmer harness shop (circa 1916). One other important Sparta blacksmith shop/harness shop was the A. Fayette Baldwin wagon and blacksmith shop on East Franklin Street. This site also became a traditional location for blacksmithing, beginning as early as 1866, when blacksmith and wagon maker F. Herbst worked there. In 1914, Baldwin replaced his old wooden blacksmithing shop with the current Baldwin Blacksmith and Wagon Building (114 East Franklin Street). Baldwin occupied the building until at least 1916. He was able to build a number of related buildings in the community in the 1920s, including the William Baldwin Garage Buildings (115 East Franklin Street) and the Fayette Baldwin Blacksmith Shop (116 East Franklin Street). However, by the mid-twentieth century, there was little use for blacksmiths and harness shops, and they faded from Sparta's past [N.A. History of Northern Wisconsin: 636; Sparta Herald 16 July 1951; Koehler, 1977: 16, 28, and 64; Barney: 10; "Reminiscences of Early Sparta", Monroe County Historical Society Vol. 4, No. 9 (February 1985): 1; Business Directories: 1897, 1903-1904 and 1916; and Monroe County Democrat "Sparta Up-to-Date" 30 June 1899: 41].

In Sparta, there were a number of small businesses associated with horticultural and agricultural production in the region, but the production and processing of tobacco was probably one of the most important enterprises to the city of Sparta.

Near the turn of the century, tobacco manufacturing started to become very important to Sparta's economy. Two cigar manufacturing companies opened up in Sparta. The first was the Gender Cigar Factory which Harry Gender began in 1884 on West Oak Street. Eleven years later, in 1895, the Gender family moved into the I.O.O.F.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 40 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Auxiliary Building (103 West Oak Street). The first floor housed their busy factory, while the second floor was used by the Odd Fellows. In the first fourteen years of its existence, the Gender Cigar Factory turned out over two million cigars. However, little is known about its history after 1897. The second cigar manufacturing factory in Sparta was the Bennett Cigar Factory located in the William Hoffman Building (113-115 East Oak Street). Very little is known about this operation or the length of time it was there [Monroe County Democrat, 21 January 1898].

Because the Sparta region had become an important tobacco leaf producing area, it was not long before several tobacco leaf processing plants opened up in Sparta.

In 1901, the American Cigar Company established the first tobacco processing plant in Sparta after the city donated land to induce the company to locate there. The American Suppliers, Inc. tobacco company had operations for sorting and grading tobacco throughout the country. In 1901, they erected several large brick warehouses near Sparta's Chicago and Northwestern depot. On January 12, 1902, they opened for business with a capacity for handling 1,800,000 pounds of tobacco, or some 60,000 cases. Farmers from the surrounding regions brought their tobacco to these warehouses, which were erected between the two railroad depots in Sparta [Monroe County Democrat, 20 July 1933; Richards: 279 and 322; Koehler, 1977: 96; Gregory, Vol. 2: 854; and Jones 10 and 11].

The success of this operation, led W.T. Jefferson, a former manager of the American Tobacco Company, who also had considerable experience in the tobacco industry in Virginia and in Wisconsin, to incorporate with his son Harley W. and several other individuals and start the Jefferson Leaf Tobacco Company. The Jefferson Leaf Tobacco Company conducted their business of buying and selling tobacco on a large scale on East Oak Street. Associated with this business were a number of warehouses where drying, grading, and sorting took place, including the Jefferson Tobacco Warehouse (East Oak Street/South Spring Street). Here and elsewhere, approximately fifty to one hundred seasonal workers handled the tobacco. By 1920, the company grew to the point that it also had a large branch in Black River Falls and also built an office building in Sparta--the H.W. Jefferson Building (115 West Oak Street). By 1933, the Jefferson Leaf Tobacco Company and the American Tobacco Company processing warehouses in Sparta were still going strong, and Sparta continued as a center for tobacco processing for sometime thereafter [Richards: 284 and 323; Gregory, Vol. 2: 854; Gregory, Vol. 3: 197 and 215-216; Koehler, 1977: 96; Jones: 10 and 11; and Monroe County Democrat, 20 July 1933].

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 41 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Over the course of Sparta's history, there have been a number of small but very diversified manufacturing operations in Sparta. For instance, in 1868, Mrs. D.A. Reynolds began a hoop skirt factory in Sparta, so that Spartan women could be more fashionable. In 1883, a match factory was started in Sparta. And in 1919, the Stay-On Hook Co., was organized, which produced a hook for fastening chains to automobile tires. The hook was invented by E.J. Brooks, who had a factory on Central Avenue. Other light industries like them have come and gone in Sparta over the years [Sparta Centennial: 44; Koehler, 1977: 37; and Jones: 8].

Nevertheless, one significant light industrial operation in Sparta's past needs mentioning--brush manufacturing. In 1905, Edgar Nichols started the Sparta Brush Company in Sparta in a small building on East Oak Street. It was not the first brush factory in Sparta. A brush factory started in 1871 in Sparta, but it had died out by 1883. Unlike this earlier factory, the Sparta Brush Company operation continued--though in 1910, the Brush Company moved to Eagle River, Wisconsin for awhile. When the factory returned to Sparta, it was owned by the Shattuck Brothers and was located on North Water Street. In 1921, this building was destroyed by fire. After the fire, the Sparta Brush Company moved first to a building on West Oak Street, and then to the Baldwin Blacksmith and Wagon Shop Building (114 East Franklin Street). The company remained there as a small operation until 1949. Thereafter, annual sales for the Sparta Brush Company jumped from \$16,000 in 1949 to \$135,000 in 1952. This jump was due to specialization in brushes for dairy plants and dairy farms. Because of its rapid growth, the Sparta Brush Company needed larger quarters. In 1949, it moved into the Lakeland Egg Plant Building on Wisconsin Street. However, by 1956, it moved again. This time the Sparta Brush Company constructed a new building on South Black River Street. Today, it is a manufacturer of specialized brushes (from 3 inches to 6 feet in length) for dairy plants and dairy farms [Sparta Herald, 8 March 1953; Jones: 8; Middleman: "Summary of History Sparta Brush Company"; "Ex-Host to Soldiers Seeks New Horizons", Milwaukee Sentinel, 8 March 1953; and Sparta Centennial: 82].

Sparta's Water Street Commercial Historic District contains a significant amount of structures related to the nineteenth and twentieth century industrial history of Sparta. The businesses represented by the present day buildings cover a wide range of industrial pursuits including: masonry products, meat markets, fruit processing, patent medicine and drug industry, plumbing, blacksmithing and harnessmaking, and a number of miscellaneous light industries, such as the production and processing of tobacco and brush manufacturing. These industries and others not mentioned are critical to our historical understanding of the changing economic environment of the community as outlined in the section on Sparta's historical background.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 42 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Social History

Over the years, many social movements that generally affected the nation as a whole also affected Sparta's citizens. For instance, in the nineteenth century, many American men in rural communities joined fraternal organizations, business, trade and professional associations in order to find social and recreational outlets and to promote their communities. At the same time, women in the community were often active in church, civic, and especially in temperance affairs. Altogether, Sparta's men and women typically followed national trends in most social matters during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The oldest fraternal groups in Sparta were the Freemasons and the International Order of Odd Fellows, which followed statewide patterns for fraternal organizations. The Freemasons and the Odd Fellows were types of fraternal organizations that served the community's social and recreational needs. These types of groups were popular and widespread in mid-and-late nineteenth century America. By the 1880's, almost 20% of the population of Sparta belonged to one fraternal association or another. As one historian aptly stated: "nearly every man belonged to some fraternal group and the leaders of these groups were invariably businessmen" [Koehler, 1977: 41]. They remained active in most Wisconsin communities until after World War II, when support for them declined.

In 1854, shortly after the village's founding, Free Mason and Odd Fellow groups organized in Sparta. The first Masonic lodge (Valley Lodge, NO. 60) was instituted on August 17, 1854, and granted a charter on June 15, 1855. Four years later, in 1859, a second Mason group--the Sparta Chapter of Royal Arch Masons was formed in Sparta. This group had fifteen members, some of whom were previous officers of Valley Lodge, No. 60. On February 3, 1860, this latter group received their charter. By 1880, the original fifteen Masons in Sparta had increased to 95 persons, a membership it maintained until at least 1912 [Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951; McMillan: 391; "History of Sparta" installment 9' and Koehler, 1977: 40-41; and Richards: 307-308].

At the same time the Masons convened in Sparta, the International Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) also formed a lodge in Sparta. It existed during the 1850's, but was disbanded during the Civil War years. In 1869, I.O.O.F. encampment (No. 36) was permanently established in Sparta. By 1880, the encampment had grown to over 100 persons. In January 1899, Sparta Lodge No. 94, I.O.O.F. was formally chartered, and by 1912, had at least 150 members. The Mineral Springs Lodge of Rebeccas, a woman's organization noted for charitable deeds and social entertainment associated with the I.O.O.F., was organized in Sparta in 1874 as well. The group

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 43 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

chose Mineral Springs as its name because of the many artesian springs in the area which contributed to Sparta's reputation as a health resort. In the same year that the I.O.O.F. Encampment was established, the Knights of Pythias organization also established a lodge in Sparta. On July 9, 1874, Knights of Pythias Lodge No. 18 was formed in Sparta [McMillan: 391; Koehler, 1977: 41; Richards: 309-310 and Sparta Centennial: 37].

The fraternal organizations listed above were primarily recreational and social by nature, but Sparta also had fraternal organizations which were instrumental by nature. On September 6, 1882, the Knights of Templar were chartered in Sparta. The Templars strove to achieve two goals: "the securing of personal abstinence from alcohol on the part of its members, and obtaining government prohibition of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors and spirits" [Jones: 26-27; Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: Volume 3, section 5-3].

Many past and present buildings housed these fraternal organizations. Today, there are several buildings standing today that housed fraternal organizations in the past. They include the Heller-I.O.O.F. Building (101 West Oak Street), the I.O.O.F. Building (103 West Oak Street), the Masonic Temple Building (100-102 North Water Street), and the Sparta Masonic Temple (200 West Main Street).

The Heller-I.O.O.F. Building (101 West Oak Street) was constructed in 1876-1877, seven years after the I.O.O.F. encampment (No. 36) was permanently established in Sparta, and only three years after the Mineral Springs Lodge of Rebeccas, was established in Sparta. The adjacent property--the I.O.O.F. Auxiliary Building (MO25/33)--was acquired in 1877 by Sparta Lodge No. 94, I.O.O.F.. However, the Lodge did not erect that building until 1895. The first floor of the new building was occupied by business tenants, while the second floor of the building served as a suite of lodge rooms, including a dining room [Richards: 309]. The Masonic Temple Building (100-102 North Water Street) was erected in 1891. In 1891, various Masonic associations formed a corporation with shares held by different Masonic bodies and purchased several lots of land on the northwest corner of Water and Main Streets. Thereafter, they erected the Temple on the corner, which was used by all the Masonic bodies, including Valley Lodge, No. 60, Free and Accepted Masons, the Commandery of Knights of Templar, and the Order of the Eastern Star. By 1910, the Valley Lodge took over the building completely [Richards: 306-307]. The Sparta Masonic Temple (200 West Main Street) at the corner of Main and North Court Streets was constructed in 1923, when it was decided that their former building was too small for their purposes. Thereafter, the various Masonic bodies sold their former building at the corner of Water and Main Streets to the Knights of Pythias.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 44 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

As of 1983, the Sparta Masonic Temple housed Valley Lodge No. 60, the Royal Arch Masons, Knights of Templar, and the Order of the Eastern Star [Sparta Centennial: 36-36; and National Register Nomination: Sparta Masonic Temple (1987)].

These social organizations served to bring the community together in an association where entertainment and charitable activities benefitted the community at large. They gave a sense of community order and cohesion, and promoted civic activities and goals that no individual person could accomplish.

Over time, many other social groups formed in Sparta. However, little is known about them. They either did not leave any written records behind, or the written documents they produced were destroyed or lost.

Some of these groups in the nineteenth century socialized in sporting and recreational clubs. Among them were: the Sparta Driving Park Association, Sparta Polo Club, Sparta Archery Club, and the Sparta Sporting Club. These groups formed around a mutual activity or interest. For instance, the Sparta Driving Park Association organized in 1873 to promote horse-trotting races, a very popular form of entertainment at the time. The Sparta Sporting Club organized in the mid-1870's to protect area wildlife from poachers and to conserve fish and game in the area from overexploitation by local farmers, who often sold illegal game meat. Other groups used intellectual interests or other mutual interests to form social bonds. For instance, in the 1890's, there were no less than a dozen clubs organized for the purpose of promoting sociability, culture and refinement in Sparta. During the long and dreary winter months, people looked forward to these clubs with great pleasure [Koehler, 1977: 40-41; and Monroe County Democrat, 24 December 1897].

Business, trade and professional associations who existed in Sparta. One early area of interest was the promotion of farming in the Sparta area. For instance, as early as 1857-1858, Sparta merchants and Monroe County farmers formed the Monroe County Agricultural Society. Under the laws of the state providing for state and county agricultural societies, the Monroe County Agricultural Society formed to "promote and improve the condition of agriculture, horticulture, and the mechanical manufacturing and household arts". The focus of the Society was the annual Monroe County Fair, which was held in Sparta. The Monroe County Agricultural Society continued to exist until 1892, when interest in the fair lagged. In 1894, the Monroe County Agricultural Society was succeeded by the Sparta Driving and Agricultural Association, which took over the former fairgrounds on Black River Road South and constructed a large racetrack there as well as an exhibition hall for the fairs. The Sparta Driving and Agricultural Association was succeeded by the Sparta Fair Association which NPS Form

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 45 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

continued to hold agricultural fairs in Sparta at least until World War I or perhaps even longer [Koehler, 1977: 67; Sparta Driving and Agricultural Association (1900); Standard Atlas of Monroe County: 1897; Atlas of Monroe County: 1915; Jones: 8-10; Barney: 23-24; and Richards: 316-319].

Little surviving information about early and later business, trade, and professional associations in Sparta such as the Sparta Fair Association now exists. These types of organizations tended to be ephemeral by nature, centering around a common issue. They also often met informally in homes, social halls, churches, schools, or other locations, keeping no official records of their activities. One business association, however, which did meet regularly in one location was the Sparta Board of Trade. This group was formed in 1880 to advance the mercantile and manufacturing interests of Sparta. This organization existed only for a short time, and then disbanded because of lack of interest. However, in 1908, another businessmen's club like the Sparta Board of Trade was incorporated and met occasionally in the Schram Building (120 South Water Street) to discuss promoting the general prosperity of Sparta. However, it disbanded in 1911 because interest in it waned as well [Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951; and Richards: 306].

Throughout the nineteenth century, temperance was a social issue that concerned the nation as a whole. In Sparta, temperance was also an important issue. As early as its pioneer days, there were citizens who agitated for abolishment of the sale of liquor in Sparta.

During its pioneer years, many Spartans thought that Sparta should be a temperance village, and up until 1857, the Monroe County Board of Supervisors refused to grant licenses for the sale of alcohol. Temperance advocates even went so far as to start a Temperance Union in 1854, which a year later reorganized as the Good Templars Lodge. According to one historian "a few prominent men and all of the ladies of Sparta joined the lodge". Nevertheless, the majority of Sparta's men continued to pursue "Demon Rum" ["History of Sparta" installments 12 and 13; Barney: 18; Koehler, 1977: 25-26; and Richards: 259-260].

During and after the Civil War, beer and liquor establishments continued to open and operate in Sparta, and the annual price of a license fell as low as \$30 a year for liquor and \$15 a year for wines and beer. Consumption of alcohol in Sparta increased to the point that two breweries opened to bring beer quickly to local customers. This situation was exacerbated by the fact that the Sparta region had become a major hop-producing region after the Civil War [Koehler, 1977: 25].

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 46 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

In the nineteenth century, other attempts were made to make Sparta a temperance town. In the 1870's, many temperance lecturers were brought into Sparta, but the Good Templars fraternal organization was the only temperance group opposing alcohol consumption in the community. Finally, in March 1874, reportedly after a stirring lecture by Frances E. Willard of the national Women's Christian Temperance Union (W.C.T.U.), at the Methodist Episcopal Church, women in Sparta formed a chapter of the W.C.T.U.. In 1878, a male counterpart to the organization was organized [Koehler, 1977: 52 and 56 a-b; and Monroe County Democrat "Sparta Up-to-Date" 30 June 1899: 44].

However, forming a temperance group and succeeding in prohibiting alcohol consumption in the community proved to be two different matters. Though the W.C.T.U. marched on saloons and prayed and sang before them, and also complained about gambling in them, Sparta's W.C.T.U. was not successful in reaching its objective for many years to come [Koehler, 1977: 52]. By the 1890s and into the 1910s, the prohibitionist movement swept into Sparta with new vigor. Sparta's aldermen passed a series of ordinances designed to force the town's saloons out of business. They included specific ordinances regarding seating, hours of operation, advertising on buildings and the serving of food. Sparta's W.C.T.U. exerted a good deal of force in their arguments. They expanded their activities by conducting evangelistic meetings. They purchased a former saloon, razed it, and built the W.C.T.U. Building (111 South Water Street), which they used for their meeting hall and temple. They also had a W.C.T.U. restaurant in the basement of the building. By 1899, there were 160 members in the group, which at the time, reportedly was the largest individual W.C.T.U. organization in the state of Wisconsin. Through their activities, annually between 1890 and 1911, the issue of banning saloons came before the Sparta City Council. With support from the elite in Sparta, who considered drinking a "low-class pursuit", the Women's Christian Temperance Union persuaded a majority of Spartans to ban saloons from Sparta in 1891, 1892, and 1908. However, in 1893 and again in 1909, a limited number of saloons (six) were allowed to reopen in the community, but under strict regulations and a heavy license fee [Koehler, 1977: 37, 47, and 54-55; and Monroe County Democrat "Sparta Up-to-Date" 30 June 1899: 44].

Prohibition efforts to regulate the morality of the community and boost the community's clean image through regulation of saloons continued until the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment (1918) which prohibited intoxicating beverages and the Volstead Act in 1919, which defined them as any beverage containing more than one-half of 1 percent of alcohol.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 47 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Fraternal groups, such as the Free Masons, International Order of Odd Fellows and social and business groups, such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Sparta Board of Trade constructed and used various buildings in the Water Street Commercial Historic District to house their activities. These groups represent several key elements in the social history of Sparta. Their activities significantly increased the business, social and recreational environment of Sparta and the advocacy of issues such as temperance were instrumental in fostering the betterment of the community as well. Undoubtedly, there were meeting halls in many other of Sparta's buildings than those mentioned here. However, the buildings discussed herein embodied the spirit of these organizations and are representative of Sparta's local social history.

Archaeological Potential

No systematic archaeological work has been done to date within the district boundaries. Because the Water Street Commercial Historic District has been developed since the 1860's, it is possible that significant archaeological resources survive.

Preservation Activity

An awareness of the value of the city's historical significance by the community has existed for some time as evidenced by the establishment of a History Room in the Monroe County Community Services Building, Rt. 2, Sparta, WI. As part of the movement by the community toward active historic preservation, an intensive architectural and history survey was commissioned by the City of Sparta in 1989. Several excellent steps toward the goal of the preservation of its historic resources have already been implemented, such as the establishment of a Historic Sites Commission and the passing of a local Historic Preservation Ordinance by the City Council. In addition, Sparta was recently selected as a participant of Wisconsin's Main Street Program.

Criteria Exception G

The Camp McCoy USO Recreation Club is being nominated because of its local association with WW II, an exceptional historic event that was a significant impact on Sparta as its economic and social life. It is also being nominated for architecture because it is a significant representative of early modern architecture in a public-governmental building in the City of Sparta that will comply with the 50 year rule within the next few years.

---

9. Major Bibliographical References

---

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

See continuation sheet

N/A preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

N/A previously listed in the National Register

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic preservation office

N/A previously determined eligible by the National Register

Other State agency

N/A designated a National Historic Landmark

Federal agency

N/A recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

Local government

N/A recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

University

Other

Specific repository: \_\_\_\_\_

---

10. Geographical Data

---

Acreage of property 22 acres

---

UTM References

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

C	<u>1/5</u>	<u>6/7/5/6/7/0</u>	<u>4/8/6/7/9/9/0</u>	D	<u>1/5</u>	<u>6/7/5/4/9/0</u>	<u>4/8/6/7/7/7/0</u>
---	------------	--------------------	----------------------	---	------------	--------------------	----------------------

See continuation sheet

---

Verbal Boundary Description

The Water Street Commercial Historic District in the City of Sparta begins at the northeast corner of West Oak Street and South K Street continuing north along the east

See continuation sheet

---

Boundary Justification

The Water Street Commercial Historic District boundaries encompass the great majority of the best preserved examples of architecturally and historically significant

See continuation sheet

---

11. Form Prepared By

---

name/title Joan Rausch, Architectural Historian/Anthony Godfrey, Historian

organization Architectural Researches, Inc. date October 16, 1990

street & number W5722 Sherwood Drive telephone (608) 788-5932

city or town La Crosse state Wisconsin zip code 54601

---

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 1 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

9. Major Bibliographic References (continued)

SPARTA HISTORICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

**PRIMARY SOURCES**

Unpublished Manuscripts and Pamphlets

- Bank of Sparta Bank of Sparta: A Successful Fifty Years: 1858-1908.  
Sparta: 1908. Pamphlet.
- Beebe, DeWitt C. Sparta as a Resort for the Invalid: The Turkish Bath, as a Curative Agent Given in Connection with the Mineral Spring Waters of Sparta, Wisconsin. Sparta, Wisconsin: D. McBride & Son, 1873. Pamphlet, State Historical Society of Wisconsin.
- Condit, J.D. Warner House--Sparta, Wisconsin: Splendid Summer Resort.  
Pamphlet Circa 1875.
- Ellsworth, C.S. Views in and around Sparta, Giving a Brief History of the City and Setting Forth Its Advantage for Manufacturing and as a Place of Residence, Together with some Account of Its Celebrated Magnetic Mineral Water Portage, Wisconsin: Register Printing Company, 1888.
- No Author Medicinal Artesian Spring, Sparta, Wisconsin. 1869.  
Pamphlet, State Historical Society of Wisconsin.
- Sparta Driving Agricultural Association Premium List of the Sparta Driving and Agricultural Association, September 11,14, 1900. Pamphlet.

Government Documents

- City of Sparta Tax Assessment Records. City of Sparta, 1870 to 1945.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number   9   Page   2   Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office. Mss.  
Population and industrial schedules for Monroe County.  
Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1860, 1870.

Building Permit File, City of Sparta, 1943-1970. City Hall,  
Sparta, Wisconsin.

Business Directories

- 1865-1866 Wisconsin and Minnesota Gazetteer and Business Directory. Indianapolis: Hawes, F.W., 1866.
- 1873 Wisconsin Business Directory (pp. 214-215).  
Milwaukee: M.T. Platt, 1873.
- 1876 Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory (p. 380).  
Milwaukee: The Sentinel Company, 1876.
- 1879 Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory (p. 443).  
Milwaukee: William Hoag, 1879.
- 1891-1927 Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory. Chicago:  
R.L. Polk & Co., 1891, 1895, 1901, 1903, 1905, 1907, 1909,  
1911, 1913, 1915, 1917, 1919, 1921, 1924, and 1927.
- 1888-1889 Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory Chicago:  
R.L. Polk and Co., 1888-1889.
- 1897 Annual Directory of Sparta, Wisconsin. Vol. 1. Chicago:  
Interstate Directory Co., 1897.
- 1903-1904 Sparta City Directory 1903-1904. Sparta: R.C. Glover,  
Publisher, 1904.
- 1905-1906 Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory Chicago:  
R.L. Polk and Co., 1905-1906.
- 1916 City Directory of the City of Sparta, Wisconsin. Sparta:  
Compiled and Published by E.B. Bell. 1916.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 3 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Articles

- French, Bella "History of Sparta, Wisconsin". The American Sketchbook.  
La Crosse: Sketch Book Company, Publishers, 1875.
- McMillan,  
Morrison "Early Settlement of La Crosse and Monroe Counties (July 16,  
1859)." Collections of the State Historical Society Vol. 4,  
1906.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Books and Thesis

- Barney, Tyler "A History of the Growth of Sparta, Wisconsin, 1850 to 1890."  
B.A. Thesis. University of Wisconsin, 1922.
- Buckley, Ernest Ornamental Stone of Wisconsin: Madison: Robertson  
State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1898.
- Buckley, Ernest The Clays and Clay Industries of Wisconsin: Robertson  
Madison: State of Wisconsin, 1901.
- Current, Richard N. The History of Wisconsin: The Civil War Era, 1848-1873 Vol.  
II. Madison, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1976.
- Gregory, John G. West Central Wisconsin: A History. Indianapolis: S.J.  
Clarke Publishing Company, 1933. 4 Vols.
- Hagan, William T. The Sac and Fox Indians. Norman: University  
of Oklahoma Press, 1958.
- Josephy, Jr. The Patriot Chiefs: A Chronicle of American Indian  
Resistance New York: Viking Press, 1969.
- Koehler, Lyle P. From Frontier Settlement to Self-Conscious American  
Community: A History of One Rural Village (Sparta,  
Wisconsin) in the Nineteenth Century. Evansville, Indiana:  
Unigraphic, Inc. 1977.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 4 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

- Jones, Ida Lucille "A History of Sparta, Wisconsin." B.A. Thesis. University of Wisconsin, 1915.
- Nesbit, Robert C. The History of Wisconsin, Urbanization and Industrialization, 1873-1893. Vol. III. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1985.
- No Author History of Northern Wisconsin Containing an Account of its Settlement, Growth, Development and Resources. An Extensive Sketch of its Counties, Cities, Towns and Villages...Etc. Chicago, The Western Historical Company, 1881.
- No Author Biographical History of La Crosse, Monroe, and Juneau Counties (Chicago, 1892).
- Rausch, Joan  
Zeitlin, Richard Intensive Architectural/Historical Survey, City of La Crosse. La Crosse, N.P. 1984.
- Rausch, Joan  
McKay, Joyce Richland Center, Wisconsin, Architectural and Historical Intensive Survey Report. Platteville: Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, 1988.
- Rausch, Joan  
Cartwright, Carol Lohry Water Town, Wisconsin, Architectural and Historical Intensive Survey Report. La Crosse, N.P. 1987.
- Richards,  
Randolph A. History of Monroe County, Wisconsin: Past and Present, Including an Account of the Cities, Towns and Villages of the County. Chicago: C.F. Cooper & Co., 1912.
- Smith, Alice E. The History of Wisconsin, Exploration of Statehood. Vol. I. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1973.
- State Historical  
Society of  
Wisconsin Wisconsin Domesday Book: Town Studies, Vol. I Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, (1924).
- Thompson,  
William F. The History of Wisconsin, Continuity and Change, 1940-1956. Vol. VI. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1988.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 5 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.) Cultural Resource Management of Wisconsin (3 volumes).  
Madison: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin, 1986.

Articles

Koehler, Lyle P. "History of Cataract, Wisconsin," Studies in State and Local History, History Department of Wisconsin State University:  
La Crosse, Wisconsin. Vol. 1., no. 6., (1967).

Kuhm, Herbert "Pioneer Dentistry in Wisconsin", Wisconsin Magazine of History Vol. 27, no. 2 (December 1944): 154-168.

Rice, Barbara "The Making of a Library", Wisconsin Library Bulletin Vol. 78, no. 3 (Fall 1983): 89-93.

Wells, R.W. "Chautauqua and the Midwest", Wisconsin Magazine of History Vol. 33, no. 2 (December 1949): 152-163.

Wesson, Katherine "Early Overland Routes of Travel to La Crosse", La Crosse County Historical Sketches, Series 2 (1935).

Unpublished Manuscripts and Pamphlets

City of Sparta "An Historical Tour of Sparta: A Self-Guided  
Tour." Pamphlet.

City of Sparta "Tour Historical Downtown Sparta: A Self-  
Guided Tour." Pamphlet.

Middleman,  
Julia E. "Summary of Sparta School History, 1852-1980: With Bits of  
Early Sparta History." (1980) Typescript.

Middleman,  
Julia E. "History of Sparta's Parochial Schools." (1980) Typescript.

Middleman,  
Julia E. "Summary of History of Sparta Brush Company." (N.D.)  
Typescript.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 6 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Sparta Free Library	"100 Years of Service, 1874-1974." Sparta, Wisconsin: Sparta Free Library, 1974. Typescript.
Sparta Volunteer Fire Department	"Sparta Volunteer Fire Department Centennial, 1879-1979." May 19, 1979. Pamphlet.
Sparta Centennial Celebration Committee	<u>Sparta Incorporation City Centennial: 1883-1983</u> (1983) Pamphlet.

Monroe County Historical Society

- "The Monroe County Courthouse", Monroe County Historical Society Vol. I, No. 6 (March 1976): 1.
- "Sparta Recollections", Monroe County Historical Society 20th edition (April 1978): 4.
- "Taylor Drug Company", Monroe County Historical Society Vol. 2, No. 8 (June 1978): 2.
- "Post Card Review", Monroe County Historical Society 21st edition (July 1978): 3.
- "Western Wisconsin Creameries Association", Monroe County Historical Society Vol. 2, No. 11 (January 1979): 1-2.
- "Ice Harvesting", Monroe County Historical Society Vol. 3, No. 1 (June 1979): 1.
- "Fort McCoy, Wisconsin: Circa 1905-1981", Monroe County Historical Society Vol. 3, No. 11 (August 1981): 1-4.
- "Reminiscences of Early Sparta", Monroe County Historical Society Vol. 4, No. 9 (February 1985): 1.
- "Roberts and Jones", Monroe County Historical Society Vol. 4, No. 9 (February 1985): 4.
- "The Taverns and Stages of Early Wisconsin", Monroe County Historical Society (February 1989): 5-7.
- "Early Welsh Settlers", Monroe County Historical Society (June 1989): 5-7.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 7 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

"Mineral Water of Artesian Wells Brought Health Resorts in Sparta", Monroe County Historical Society Vol. 23, No. 2 (September 1989): 3-8.

"Controversy on the Capitol Fence and the Move to the Sparta Home", Monroe County Historical Society Vol. 18, No. 3 (November 1989): 3-5.

Newspaper Articles

Monroe County Democrat

- 6/30/1899 "Sparta Up-to-Date" Souvenir Supplement of the Monroe County Democrat, 30 June 1899.
- 11/20/1924 "Early Years of the Sparta Library." Monroe County Democrat, 20 November 1924.
- 7/20/1933 "The Bank of Sparta Observes its Seventy Fifth Anniversary." Monroe County Democrat, 20 July 1933.
- 8/17/1975 "Believe Sparta Named in Tribute to Early Monroe Co. Settlers." Monroe County Democrat, 17 September 1975.

Sparta Herald

5/4/1860 - 6/26/1944 Sparta (WI) Herald.

Titled Articles

- 9/8/1891 "Business Men of Sparta." Sparta Herald, 8 September 1891.
- 3/6/1894 "Business Men: The Manufacturers and Prominent Merchants of Sparta." Sparta Herald, 6 March 1894.
- 5/21/1907 "The Bank of Sparta." Sparta Herald, 21 May 1907.
- 7/16/1951 "City Lawyers of 100 Years Put Stamp on Court Politics." Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951.
- 7/16/1951 "Horse and Buggy Doctors of Sparta Worker After Chores." Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 8 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

- 7/16/1951 "Monroe Citizen was 1st Paper Published in City." Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951.
- 7/16/1951 "Remembers Indian Camp in Sparta Beside Perch Lake." Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951.
- 7/16/1951 "Sparta Grows Up: A History of Our Town, Two Brothers Were First Settlers as Early City Beginning." Sparta Herald, 16 July 1951.
- 6/6/1983 "Sparta: A Centennial Portfolio", 6 June 1983
- La Crosse Tribune
- 1/28/1934 "Monroe County Settlers Saw Value of Historical Society at Early Date." La Crosse Tribune, 28 January 1934.
- 7/21/1938 "Business Opportunities Brought In Rush of Pioneers to Sparta." La Crosse Tribune 21 July 1938.
- 3/7/1971 "Monroe Courthouse is 75 Years Old." La Crosse Tribune, 7 March 1971.
- 12/14/1975 "Cost of Center Closing Put at \$1.3 Million." La Crosse Tribune, 14 December 1975.
- 3/6/1983 "Oil Scam Led to Development of Sparta." La Crosse Tribune, 6 March 1983.
- 4/27/1985 "Family Marking 50 Years of Delivering Sparta Suds." La Crosse Tribune, 27 April 1985.

Miscellaneous Newspapers

- 5/20/1899 "Monroe County Poor Farm Purchased." Daily Republican and Leader, 20 May 1899.
- 6/6/1899 "Landmark Removed." Daily Republican and Leader, 6 May 1899.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 9 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

- 3/8/1953 "Ex-Host to Soldiers Seeks New Horizons." Milwaukee Sentinel,  
8 March 1953.
- 4/3/1960 "Bogus Oil Deal Sparked Sparta." St. Paul Pioneer Press 3  
April 1960.
- 12/2/1985 "Library Friends Salute Changes." Milwaukee Journal,  
2 December 1985.

Articles in Unknown Newspapers

- Circa 1909-1910 "Sparta is Like a Southern City."
- Circa 1964 "Sparta is Largest Monroe County City, Hub of Railroads,  
Highways."
- 1976 "Hospital Has Come a Long Way in 60 Years."
- N.D. "Sparta Library Has Unique Background."
- N.D. "Sparta, Wisconsin: A Northern Town with a 'Western Feel' of  
Pines and Bluffs."
- N.D. "History of Sparta, August 1851 to 1873." Thirty-two  
installments.

Maps

- 1875 Map of Sparta, Wisconsin. Milwaukee: Phoenix Map Company of  
Milwaukee, 1875.
- 1878 Historical Atlas of Wisconsin. Milwaukee: Snyder, Van  
Vechtent Company, 1878.
- 1899 Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin, 1899. New York: Sanborn-  
Perris Map Company, Ltd., April, 1899.
- 1894 Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin, 1894. New York: Sanborn-  
Perris Map Company, Ltd., August, 1894.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 10 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

- 1897 Standard Atlas of Monroe County, Wisconsin. Chicago: Georg A. Ogle and Company, 1897.
- 1900 Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin, 1900. New York: Sanborn-Perris May Company, Ltd., March 1900.
- 1911 Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin, 1911. New York: Sanborn Map Company, February, 1911.
- 1915 Atlas of Monroe County, Wisconsin. Chicago: George A. Ogle and Company, 1915.
- 1922 Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin, 1922. New York: Sanborn Map Company, April, 1922.
- 1931 Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin, 1931. New York: Sanborn Map Company, September, 1931.

Photographic Material

- Sparta Local History Room Photographic Album of Sparta Churches, Sparta Children's Center.
- Sparta Local History Room Photographic Album of Sparta Hotels, Depots, and Other Buildings.
- Sparta Local History Room Photographic Album of Sparta, Wisconsin, Sparta Schools.
- Sparta Local History Room Photographs from Wisconsin State Historical Society.
- City of Sparta Community Development Office Photograph and clipping file

National Register Nominations

- NRHP Monroe County Courthouse. National Register Nomination Survey Form.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 11 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

NRHP Sparta Free Library. National Register Nomination Survey Form.

NRHP St. John's Espiscopal Church. National Register Nomination Survey Form.

NRHP Sparta Masonic Temple. National Register Nomination Survey Form.

Oral Interview

Middleman 511 South L Street, Sparta, Wisconsin, June 6, 1990.  
Julia E.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 10 Page 1 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Verbal Boundary Description (continued)

side of South K to the southeast corner of South K and West Main Street, then east along the south side of West Main for one-half of the 200 block of West Main, the north across West Main to the north side of the street to a point at the southeast corner of the property line of 200 West Main, then north along the west lot line of 200 West Main to the rear property line, then east to the west side of North Court Street, then east across North Court Street to the rear lot line of 126 West Main, continuing east across the rear lot lines of 126, 114 and 108 West Main, then continuing North along the east bank of Beaver Creek, and the rear lot lines of 112-114, 120, 122, 124, 126, 132-136, 138, 140, 142, 144, 146 North Water, then west to the west end of Franklin Street Bridge, then north across West Franklin to the north side of the street, then east along the north side of the bridge to the west lot line of 106 West Franklin, then north along the east side bank of Beaver Creek and the west lot line of 106 West Franklin to the rear lot line of 106 West Franklin, then east along the rear lot line of 105 Franklin to the rear lot line of 208 North Water, then north along the rear lot line of 208 North Water to the north boundary line of 208 North Water, then east to the west side of North Water Street, then south along the west side of Water Street to the intersection of Franklin and Water Street, then east to the southeast corner of the intersection, then continuing east along the south side of East Franklin Street and the north lot line of 145 North Water Street for approximately 75 feet, then north across East Franklin Street to the southwest corner of the lot located at 110 East Franklin, then continuing north along the west lot line of 110 East Franklin to the rear lot line of 110 East Franklin, then east along the rear lot lines of 110, 114, and 116 East Franklin, then south along the west lot line of 116 East Franklin, continuing southwest across East Franklin Street to the northeast corner of the lot located at 115 East Franklin, continuing south along the east lot line of 115 East Franklin to the rear lot line of 115 East Franklin, then west along the rear lot line of 115 East Franklin, continuing west across the alley to the rear lot line of the First Bank of Sparta parking lot, then south along the alley and the rear lot lines of 127, 123, 119 North Water Street, then continuing south across Beaver Creek, then continuing south across the rear property line of 107, 105, 103, and 101 North Water, then continuing south across East Main Street to the northeast corner of the lot located at 109 East Main, then continuing south along the rear property line of 109 East Main, continuing south along west side of the alley and the rear property lines of 103, 107-109, 111, 113, 119 South Water Street, continuing south along the alley and along the east lot line of 110--112 East Oak Street to the north side of East Oak Street, continuing southeast across East Oak Street to the south side of the street and the front lot line of 121 East Oak, then east along the south side of East Oak and the front property line of 121 and 127 East Oak Street

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 10 Page 2 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

to the intersection of East Oak and South Spring Street, then continuing east across South Spring to the northwest corner of the property line of the Jefferson Tobacco Warehouse, then east to the west bank of Beaver Creek, then south along the west bank of Beaver Creek to the rear lot line of the warehouse, then west along the rear lot line of the warehouse to South Spring Street, continuing west across South Spring Street to the rear lot line of 127 East Oak, continuing west across the rear lot lines of 127, 121 and 117 East Oak Street to the rear lot line of 215 South Water Street, then south along the rear lot line of 215 and 221 South Water, then west along the south lot line of 221 South Water, continuing west across South Water Street to the northwest corner of the intersection of South Water and Jefferson Avenue, then west along the north side of Jefferson Avenue and the south lot lines of 218 South Water, and 102, 108-112, and 114-116 Jefferson Avenue, then north along the west lot line of 114-116 Jefferson Avenue to the rear lot line of 121 West Oak, then west along the rear lot lines of 121, 123, and 125-127 West Oak Street, continuing west across South Court Street to the west side of the street and the east lot line of 201 West Oak Street, then south along the east lot line of 201 West Oak Street and the west side of Court Street to the rear lot line and the northwest corner of the intersection of South Court Street and Jefferson Avenue, then west along the rear lot line of 201 West Oak and the north side of Jefferson Avenue to the alley and the west property line of 201 West Oak, then north along the alley and the west property line of 201 West Oak to the south side of West Oak Street and the front lot line of 201 West Oak, continuing north across West Oak Street to the north side of the street and the south lot line of 108 South Court, then west along the north side of West Oak and the south property line of 108 South Court to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification (continued)

buildings in Sparta's downtown commercial area.

In addition, the boundaries include the area that has been the commercial center of Sparta since the settlement period in the 1850s. The district is clearly bounded by residential properties on the west, on the north, and on part of the east and south boundaries. A few insignificant commercial buildings mixed with new construction also border the district on part of the south side and at the east end of Oak Street. Some new construction also abuts the northeast corner of the district. The southeast boundary of the district is further reinforced by the presence of Beaver Creek which angles across the northern part of the district beginning at West Franklin and exits at the southern end of East Oak Street.

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Photo Page 1 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

WATER STREET COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin  
Photographs by Joan Rausch  
1989 November  
Negatives at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin

The above information applies to all of the following photographs:

Photo #1 of 48

200 Block of South Water Street (east side), right to left, view from southwest.  
221 South Water Street, Domke Building  
215 South Water Street, Manuel-Hoffman Building  
213 South Water Street, J.C. Frazer Building  
211 South Water Street, E.J. Kowitz Building  
201 South Water Street, Jackson Drug Store

Photo #2 of 48

200 Block of South Water Street (east side), right to left, view from northwest.  
221 South Water Street, Domke Building  
215 South Water Street, Manuel-Hoffman Building  
213 South Water Street, J.C. Frazer Building  
211 South Water Street, E.J. Kowitz Building  
201 South Water Street, Jackson Drug Store

Photo #3 of 48

100 Block of South Water Street (east side), right to left, view from southwest.  
125 South Water Street, Williams Block  
123 South Water Street, Hoffman Building  
119 South Water Street, William Kerrigan Building  
113 South Water Street, John Swartzlow Building  
111 South Water Street, W.C.T.U. Temple  
107-109 South Water Street, W.C. Hoffman Building  
103 South Water Street, Gambles Hardware Store  
101 South Water Street, C.E. Rich Building

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Photo Page 2 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Photo #4 of 48

100 Block of South Water Street (east side), left to right, view from northwest.  
101 South Water Street, C.E. Rich Building  
103 South Water Street, Gambles Hardware Store  
107-109 South Water Street, W.C. Hoffman Building  
111 South Water Street, W.C.T.U. Temple  
113 South Water Street, John Swartzlow Building  
119 South Water Street, William Kerrigan Building  
123 South Water Street, Hoffman Building  
125 South Water Street, Williams Block

Photo #5 of 48

100 Block of North Water Street (east side), right to left, view from southwest.  
101 North Water Street, Mannis-Harris Clinic  
103 North Water Street, T.C. Longwell Building  
105 North Water Street, John Marquardt Building  
107 North Water Street, Jessie Nichol Building

Photo #6 of 48

100 Block of North Water Street (east side), right to left, view from northwest.  
North Water Street/Beaver Creek, Water Street Bridge  
119 North Water Street, Sparta Cafe  
123 North Water Street, Hemstock Auto Livery  
127 North Water Street, M.E. Steele Building

Photo #7 of 48

100 Block of North Water Street (east side), left to right, view from northwest.  
146 North Water Street, First Bank of Sparta Parking Lot  
127 North Water Street, M.E. Steele Building

Photo #8 of 48

200 Block of North Water Street (west side), view from southeast  
208 North Water Street, Dargel Garage

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Photo Page 3 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Photo #9 of 48

100 Block of North Water Street (west side), right to left, view from northeast.  
146 North Water Street, Moffat Building  
144 North Water Street, Palmer Building  
142 North Water Street, H.O. Palmer Building  
140 North Water Street, Zaharte-Palen Building  
138 North Water Street, W.W. Vau Dell Building  
132-136 North Water Street, Union Block  
128 North Water Street, L.J. Youngman Meat Market  
126 North Water Street, Kollertz Confectionery  
124 North Water Street, Sugden Building

Photo #10 of 48

100 Block of North Water Street (west side), left to right, view from southeast.  
100-102 North Water Street, Masonic Temple  
106 North Water Street, C.E. Rich Stationary Store  
108-110 North Water Street, C.E. Rich Building  
112-114 North Water Street, George Drugstore  
120 North Water Street, Sparta Theater  
122 North Water Street, L.A. Herrick Jewelry Store  
124 North Water Street, Sugden Building  
126 North Water Street, Kollertz Confectionery  
128 North Water Street, L.J. Youngman Meat Market  
132-136 North Water Street, Union Block  
138 North Water Street, W.W. Vau Dell Building  
140 North Water Street, Zaharte-Palen Building  
142 North Water Street, H.O. Palmer Building  
144 North Water Street, Palmer Building  
146 North Water Street, Moffat Building  
208 North Water Street, Dargel Garage

Photo #11 of 48

100 Block of South Water Street (west side), right to left, view from northeast.  
100 South Water Street, Dodge and Davis Store  
106 South Water Street, Bank of Sparta  
110 South Water Street, Bancroft Hardware Store  
112 South Water Street, C.B. Styles Dry Goods Store  
114 South Water Street, L.D. Merrill Jewelry Store  
116 South Water Street, Millegan Building  
118 South Water Street, Canfield Grocery/Willow Store

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Photo Page 4 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

120 South Water Street, Schram Dry Goods Store  
122 South Water Street, J.A. Harvey Saloon and Grocery Store  
124 South Water Street, Thayer and Co. Bank

Photo #12 of 48

100 Block of South Water Street (west side), left to right, view from southwest.  
124 South Water Street, Thayer and Co. Bank  
122 South Water Street, J.A. Harvey Saloon and Grocery Store  
120 South Water Street, Schram Dry Goods Store  
118 South Water Street, Canfield Grocery/Willow Store  
116 South Water Street, Millegan Building  
114 South Water Street, L.D. Merrill Jewelry Store  
112 South Water Street, C.B. Styles Dry Goods Store  
110 South Water Street, Bancroft Hardware Store  
106 South Water Street, Bank of Sparta  
100 South Water Street, Dodge and Davis Store  
100-102 North Water Street, Masonic Temple

Photo #13 of 48

200 Block of South Water Street (west side), right to left, view from northeast.  
101 West Oak Street, Heller-I.O.O.F. Building  
210 South Water Street, Bell Theater  
214 South Water Street, Owens Pool Hall  
218 South Water Street, Abbott Brothers Barber Shop

Photo #14 of 48

200 Block of South Water Street (west side), left to right, view from southeast.  
101 West Oak Street, Heller-I.O.O.F. Building  
210 South Water Street, Bell Theater  
214 South Water Street, Owens Pool Hall  
218 South Water Street, Abbott Brothers Barber Shop

Photo #15 of 48

100 Block of South Court Street (east side), right to left, view from southwest.  
124 West Oak Street, Union National Bank and Trust Co.  
111 South Court Street, Gleiss-McAlpine, Attorneys  
121 West Main Street, U.S. Post Office  
126 West Main Street, Sparta Free Library

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number      Photo      Page   5   Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Photo #16 of 48

100 Block of South Court Street (west side), left to right, view from southeast.  
108 South Court Street, Monroe County Court House  
200 West Main Street, Masonic Temple

Photo #17 of 48

200 Block of South Court Street (west side), left to right, view from southeast.  
201 West Oak Street, Camp McCoy USO Recreation Club  
108 South Court Street, Monroe County Court House

Photo #18 of 48

100 Block of Jefferson Avenue (north side), left to right, view from southwest.  
114-116 Jefferson Avenue, Atkinson-Nash Auto Sales and Service  
108-112 Jefferson Avenue, Sparta Co-op Oil Company Car Care Center  
102 Jefferson Avenue, Gary Mueller Building

Photo #19 of 48

100 Block of East Oak Street (south side), right to left, view from northeast.  
111 East Oak Street, Davis and Jones Furniture Store  
113-115 East Oak Street, William Hoffman Building  
117 East Oak Street, Hoffman Meat Market

Photo #20 of 48

100 Block of East Oak Street (south side), left to right, view from northeast.  
127 East Oak Street, Sparta Fruit Growers Association Building  
121 East Oak Street, Sparta Police and Fire Department  
117 East Oak Street, Hoffman Meat Market  
113-115 East Oak Street, William Hoffman Building  
111 East Oak Street, Davis and Jones Furniture Store  
201 South Water Street, Jackson Health Mart Drug Store  
101 West Oak Street, Heller-I.O.O.F. Building

Photo #21 of 48

200 Block of East Oak Street (south side), view from northeast.  
East Oak Street/South Spring Street, Jefferson Tobacco Warehouse

Photo #22 of 48

100 Block of East Oak Street (north side), right to left, view from southeast.  
110-112 East Oak Street, Sahrt Furniture Store  
125 South Water Street, Williams Block

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number      Photo      Page   6   Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

124 South Water Street, Thayer Bank

Photo #23 of 48

100 Block of West Oak Street (south side), right to left, view from northwest.  
125-127 West Oak Street, Olin Block  
123 West Oak Street, W.E. Foote Grocery and Bakery  
121 West Oak Street, J.J. MacDonald Building  
117 West Oak Street, Teasdale Estate Building  
115 West Oak Street, H.W. Jefferson Building  
113 West Oak Street, Monroe County Publishers  
109-111 West Oak Street, Ralston Grocery and Confectionery Store  
107 West Oak Street, Foster and Co. Building  
105 West Oak Street, Francis Dry Goods Store  
103 West Oak Street, I.O.O.F. Auxiliary Building  
101 West Oak Street, Heller-I.O.O.F. Building

Photo #24 of 48

100 Block of West Oak Street (north side), left to right, view from southwest.  
124 West Oak Street, Union National Bank and Trust Co.  
114 West Oak Street, Hoppy's Bowling Emporium  
112 West Oak Street, Lehman Building  
124 South Water Street, Thayer Bank  
125 South Water Street, Williams Block

Photo #25 of 48

100 Block of East Main Street (south side), right to left, view from northwest.  
101 South Water Street, C.E. Rich Building  
109 East Main Street, Seren Steele Blacksmith Shop

Photo #26 of 48

100 Block of West Main Street (south side), right to left, view from northwest  
121 West Main Street, U.S. Post Office  
100 South Water Street, Dodge and Davis Department Store  
101 South Water Street, C.E. Rich Building

Photo #27 of 48

100 Block of West Main Street (north side), left to right, view from southwest.  
126 West Main Street, Sparta Free Library.  
114 West Main Street, Monroe Co. Telephone Exchange/Ray's Supermarket  
100-102 North Water Street, Masonic Temple

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Photo Page 7 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Photo #28 of 48

100 Block of East Franklin Street (north and south sides), left to right, view from west.

110 East Franklin Street, Baldwin Estate Building  
114 East Franklin Street, Baldwin Blacksmith and Wagon Shop  
116 East Franklin Street, Baldwin Blacksmith Shop  
115 East Franklin Street, William Baldwin Garage

Photo #29 of 48

100 Block of West Franklin Street (north side), left to right, view from southwest.  
West Franklin Street/Beaver Creek, Franklin Street Bridge

106 West Franklin Street, Lanham Funeral Home  
110 West Franklin Street, Baldwin Estate Building

Photo #30 of 48

100 Block of South Water Street, General view, view from south.

Photo #31 of 48

View from east  
108 South Court Street, Monroe County Court House

Photo #32 of 48

View from northwest  
West Franklin Street/Beaver Creek, Franklin Street Bridge

Photo #33 of 48

View from southeast  
106 West Franklin Street, Lanham Funeral Home

Photo #34 of 48

View from south  
200 West Main Street, Masonic Temple

Photo #35 of 48

View from southwest  
126 West Main Street, Sparta Free Library

Photo #36 of 48

View from east  
126 West Main Street, Sparta Free Library, Interior

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Photo Page 8 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

---

Photo #37 of 48  
View from northwest  
121 West Main Street, U.S. Post Office

Photo #38 of 48  
View from west  
121 West Main Street, U.S. Post Office, Interior

Photo #39 of 48  
View from northeast  
117 East Oak Street, Hoffman Meat Market

Photo #40 of 48  
View from northwest  
125-127 West Oak Street, Olin Block

Photo #41 of 48  
View from northeast  
201 West Oak Street, Camp McCoy USO Club

Photo #42 of 48  
View from northeast  
201 West Oak Street, Camp McCoy USO Club, Interior

Photo #43 of 48  
View from north  
201 West Oak Street, Camp McCoy USO Club, Interior

Photo #44 of 48  
View from east  
112-114 North Water Street, George Drug Store

Photo #45 of 48  
View from east  
138 North Water Street, W.W. Vau Dell Building

Photo #46 of 48  
View from east  
118 South Water Street, Canfield Grocery/Willow Ware Store

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Photo Page 9 Water Street Commercial Historic District  
Sparta, Monroe County, Wisconsin

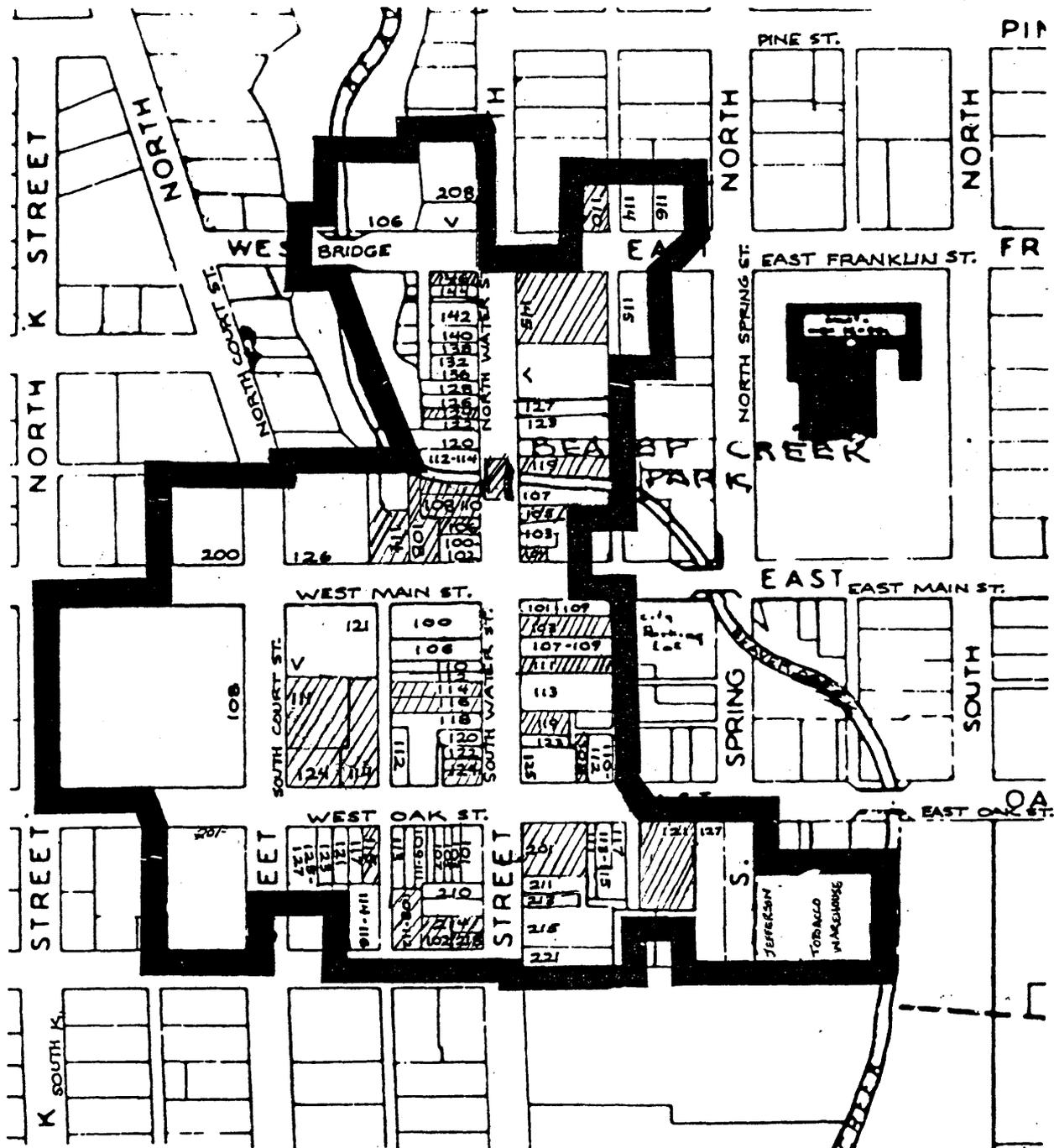
---

Photo #47 of 48  
View from east  
120 South Water Street, Schram Dry Goods Store

Photo #48 of 48  
View from west  
221 South Water Street, Domke Building

WATER STREET  
 HISTORIC DISTRICT MAP  
 SPARTA, INTENSIVE SURVEY  
 1989

WATER STREET COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT  
 MONROE COUNTY, WISCONSIN



**LEGEND**

- DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- CONTRIBUTING
- ▨ NON-CONTRIBUTING
- V VACANT LOT

WATER STREET COMMERCIAL  
 HISTORIC DISTRICT



• NOT TO SCALE •