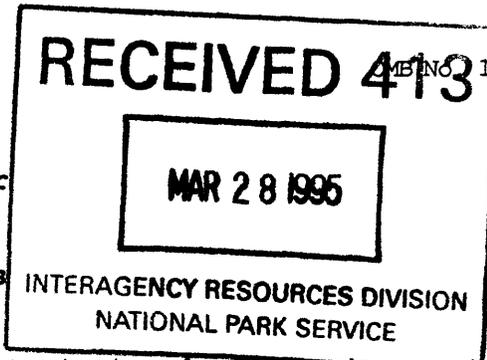


109-111NPS Form 10-900  
0018  
(January 1992)



MEMO 10024-

United States Department of Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Portage Retail Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

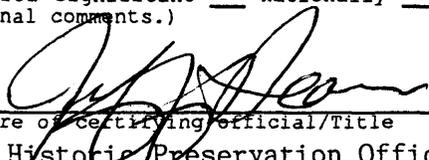
street & number See Inventory N/A not for publication

city or town Portage N/A vicinity

state Wisconsin code WI county Columbia code 021 zip code 53901

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

  
Signature of certifying official/Title  
State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

3/23/95  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

Portage Retail Historic District Columbia County, Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

Entered in the

National Register

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

*Edson H. Beall*

4-27-95

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include listed resources within the count)

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal
- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
63	20	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
63	20	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Business  
COMMERCE/TRADE/Professional  
SOCIAL/Meeting Hall  
DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE/Business  
COMMERCE/TRADE/Professional  
SOCIAL/Meeting Hall  
DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate  
Classical Revival  
Art Deco

foundation STONE  
walls BRICK  
roof ASPHALT  
other WOOD  
METAL

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Portage Retail Historic District  
Name of Property

Columbia County Wisconsin  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

Applicable National Register Criteria  
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the  
criteria qualifying the property for the  
National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations  
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE  
ARCHITECTURE  
SOCIAL HISTORY  
ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Period of Significance

1855 (1)-1934 (2)

Significant Dates

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person  
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

None

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

multiple (see text)

Portage Retail Historic District  
Name of Property

Columbia County, Wisconsin  
County and State

Previous Documentation on File (NPS):  
 preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:  
 State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State Agency  
 Federal Agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository:  
Portage Public Library

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 14 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/0/1/0/2/0</u>	<u>4/8/2/3/5/0/0</u>	3	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/0/1/4/0/0</u>	<u>4/8/2/3/4/3/0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/0/1/1/2/0</u>	<u>4/8/2/3/3/4/0</u>	4	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/0/1/4/2/0</u>	<u>4/8/2/3/6/0/0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Joyce McKay, Cultural Resources Consultant  
organization private consultant date 9/7/1993  
street & number P.O. Box 258, 21 Fourth St. telephone 608-424-6315  
city or town Belleville state WI zip code 53508

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

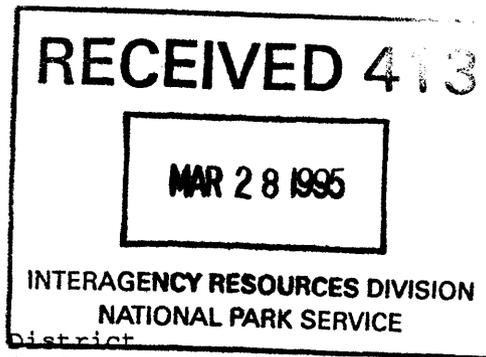
NPS Form 10-900-a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processing Format  
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Portage Retail District  
Portage, Columbia Co., Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 1



The Portage Retail Historic District includes most of the main business district of the City of Portage, Columbia County, Wisconsin. It contains portions of six blocks divided into the common, long, narrow rectangular but occasionally triangular lots. The heart of the district lies along east and west Cook west of Main Street and one half block west of W. Wisconsin. The district extends north up DeWitt and W. Wisconsin to approximately Conant and south along the two streets to Edgewater. The Portage Retail Historic District is located on a gentle northwest-southeast hillside just northwest of the Portage Canal which is a National Register property. Streets also run northwest-southeast and northeast-southwest. Building facades face the streets. The district is surrounded on the east, north, and west by residential neighborhoods which contain a large number of nineteenth and early twentieth century dwellings and churches. Since portions of these neighborhoods may be potentially eligible for the National Register themselves, the district lies within an appropriate physical context.

The Portage Retail Historic District includes a total of 83 buildings. With the exception of two residential properties along W. Conant, the remainder are commercial buildings functioning primarily as retail spaces, but also as professional and recreational areas. Meeting halls occur above a comparatively large number of retail buildings. Of these buildings, 63 resources are contributing buildings and 20 are noncontributing buildings. Dating from 1855 (1) to 1933-34 (2) but principally from the commercial expansion which followed the Civil War and continued into the early 1890s, the district incorporates a large number of Italianate Commercial and vernacular commercial buildings. It also includes Classical Revival and Art Deco style commercial buildings. Containing predominately mid- to late nineteenth century commercial buildings, the district possesses a unified appearance and character. As in many nineteenth century Wisconsin commercial districts, building fronts have undergone alteration and remodeling since their construction.

The architecture of commercial, industrial, and some of the large public buildings generally follows the architectural trends of the periods in which they were built. However, functional needs such as large areas of open space and/or the conservation of room on narrow lots of the retail district as well as the desire to elaborate the functionally important buildings of the city as a symbol of commercial progress and importance of the retail area in the development of Portage led to stylistic variations. The commercial buildings in the retail district are generally long and narrow and enclose large and high open spans. And, while some of the commercial and public buildings are comparatively elaborate, many owners lacked the financial backing to erect elaborate buildings. A majority of the buildings in the Portage Retail Historic District are two and occasionally one or three stories, usually rectangular but infrequently triangular, Portage cream brick buildings. Foundations are stone, stone covered with concrete or concrete. Roofs are flat or slope gently away from the street to which they are oriented and covered with asphalt or tar and gravel. Double hung windows illuminate the upper stories and plate glass store fronts characterize the first level.

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Portage Retail District  
Portage, Columbia Co., Wisconsin

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The dominant styles evident along the main retail area also reflect a period of economic growth within the community. Portage received its primary modes of long-distance transportation in the early and late 1850s. The Portage Canal was first completed and used to a limited extent in the early 1850s. Although a building boom did occur along DeWitt and Edgewater and Cook near DeWitt and Main, the buildings no longer remain. The railroad connected Portage to Milwaukee and LaCrosse in 1856 and 1858 at the beginning of a nation-wide depression which was followed by the Civil War. A second commercial building boom began in the late 1860s and continued into the 1870s and 1880s as Portage expanded its retail and commercial services to Columbia County and a large area to the north. The depression of the early 1890s ended the rapid development of Cook and adjacent DeWitt, Main, and W. Wisconsin. By that date, much of the building space was occupied. Later development slightly extended the boundaries of the commercial district and occurred as occasional building replacement.

The building described below provide examples of the building types and styles within the district.

**Vernacular Commercial Forms (1850-1920)**

The examples discussed below are divided primarily by function, for example retail buildings, hotels, and car dealerships. The different functions possess different spacial requirements which are frequently limited by the constraints of the building location, the long commercial lots whose narrow end front along the main street. These requirements heavily influenced building form.

The typical Portage retail building is a long and narrow, brick building with a stone or concrete foundation. It is one and two stories high, covered with a flat or shed roof, and opened with display windows along the first floor and double hung windows along the second. The building displays limited decorative elaboration along the facade, primarily along the cornice and between floors. Each level exhibits few interior divisions.

Erected in 1886, the retail building at 213 DeWitt (25/4) first housed James Brodie, a shoemaker, and after 1907 the Crystal Bottling Works occupied the building until about 1918. The Portage Steam Laundry then located there through 1955. Although the first floor display windows are filled and altered and a shingle canopy extends over the first floor, the upper story appears relatively intact. Decorative elements include string courses and a cross motif at the juncture of the floors, a plain oriel window centered just above, pilasters along each corner and brick corbeling below the parapet. The office of Mohr's Lumber Company (201 DeWitt, 25/0) which also stored some of wood products was erected between 1899 and 1900 (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1898-1900]). This retail building retains much of its original storefront. Two display windows occur on either side of a recessed entrance. The cast iron pilasters along the inside of the display windows were fabricated by the Portage Iron Works in 1900 (stamp). Sidelights flank the wood and glass door, and a transom crosses the upper portion of the first floor front. The juncture of the two floors is marked by a string course and recessed, brick panels. The parapet no longer carries detailing but

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Portage Retail District  
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the corbeling below it remains. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) erected the retail building at 124 E. Cook (57/27) between 1916 and 1918. Their hall occurs above the retail space on the first floor. When the building opened and for several years thereafter, Henry A. Schultz opened a farm implement store in the first floor (Farrell 1917; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863 [1916-18]). The glass storefront has been altered, but the brick corbeling between the floors and the stepped parapet with pediment remains. The name block identifies "WAUONA LODGE/NO. 132." The major window represents an alteration, likely replacing windows similar to the two flanking windows.

A small number of one to two story, low red and cream brick vernacular commercial buildings utilized as garages and car dealerships were erected in the second and third decades of the twentieth century in Portage. The Loomis and Weinke Motor Sales Company garage represents an example of this building function in the district. Built in 1917 or 1918, the first portion of the current building complex is the garage constructed of tile supported with iron columns at 109 E. Edgewater (24/19). This building is the north portion of the current dealership. In 1924, E.A. Weinke added a new automobile showroom and service department, the two story, steel truss and tile portion standing in front of the earlier garage. The E.A. Weinke dealership became the Whitney Motor Company Ford-Mercury dealership by 1937 (Register Democrat 2/19/24; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1901; 1910; 1918; 1929; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1918-30]). The one and two story complex is simply elaborated with a pedimented parapet, decorative brickwork, and recessed brick panels. The first floor building front composed of plate glass and metal frame windows is intact as built. The Wright and Robbins Garage at 205 DeWitt was erected in 1919. The A & P later occupied the building (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1919]; Commonwealth Telephone Company 1937; 1948). Originally open, a glass front and shingled canopy replaces the original front across the one story, red brick building. A stepped parapet with concrete coping and paneled brickwork remains above. Pilasters divide the building into horizontal sections.

The Raulf or Ram hotel also belongs to the commercial vernacular style. After the Corning House was razed in 1926, the Raulf Realty Company, a Milwaukee construction company, built the Raulf or Ram Hotel following the design by C.J. Keller and Son, Architects in 1927 (207 W. Cook, 31/21). The Raulf originally contained locations for eight retail businesses and additional office space on its first floor and a banquet room, meeting rooms, tavern, dining room, and bowling alley in the basement. The top four stories contain 100 hotel rooms and seven apartments and offices (Butterfield 1880: 589, 898, 928; Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; 7/1/1950; 7/2/1952: 27; Portage Public Library n.d. [Mrs. Arthur Swanson, 1952]; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1885; 1889; 1894; 1901; 1910; 1918; 1929; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1926-30]). The tile front and cream brick building with flat roof displays a simple parapet with concrete coping and belt course; brick quoins and concrete belt course defining the area above the first floor; canted east wall with entrance projecting slightly from the plane of the building defined by quoins; horizontally and vertically aligned windows divided by pilasters which organize the building; and altered storefront along the street level.

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Portage, Columbia Co., Wisconsin

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**Italianate Commercial Style (1865-1900)**

Italianate commercial buildings dominate the streetscape of the district. The building form which displays the Italianate detailing parallels the vernacular commercial retail building. These long and narrow, cream brick buildings with stone or concrete foundations reach two or three stories and are closed with flat or shed roofs. Display windows usually divided in the center by the entrance occupy the first floor, and double hung windows illuminate the upper floors. Elaboration occurs between floors and along the parapets, the building corners, the lintels, and occasionally the wall of the upper facade.

In 1851-1852, Carl Haertel established his City Brewery which eventually occupied much of the west half of block northeast of the intersection Clark and W. Cook. Although most of the buildings were removed, the brewery's office, saloon, and retail spaces, the Haertel or Eulberg Block at 137-139 W. Cook (56/26) remains. This three story, cream brick commercial building along with adjacent 135 W. Cook (56/25) were constructed about 1866-1867 (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1863-68]; Rugen 1868). Although the cornice has been removed, this early example of the Italianate Commercial building at 137-139 W. Cook retains a portion of the parapet with its corbeling as well as the cast iron window hoods. A continuous sill and corbeling divides the two floors. The plate glass front along the first floor has also been altered. The two story cream brick retail building at 131 W. Cook (56/24) has also undergone considerable alteration, but it continues to display its cast iron window hoods, the corbeling along the base of the parapet which has lost its cornice, and string course between the floors. Erected between 1868 and 1873, this building contained the tailor and clothier operations of Buckley and Leisch from 1908 to 1921 (Register-Democrat 9/3/1909; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1868-73]; Rugen 1868; Harrison and Warner 1873; Moore, S.H. 1908-09; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1921).

Several of the retail buildings along the south side of W. Cook between W. Wisconsin and DeWitt were erected in the late 1860s and 1870s. Erected in 1869 and 1867-1868 respectively (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1866-70]), the two story, cream brick, small commercial blocks at 124 (57/17) and 130-132 (57/13) W. Cook display very similar upper story facades. Although the cornice has been removed, the parapet continues to display brick panels and a string course. Round arch window surrounds with key stones along the second floor and continuous sills between the floors complete the detailing. Constructed in 1869 (date stone), the example at 118-122 W. Cook (57/18) is very similar in its composition except that alternating round arch windows include window hoods and all window lintels display a keystone. Additional decorative brickwork details the parapet. The first floor storefronts of all three blocks have been altered.

The building at 136 W. Cook (57/11) housed a jewelry retail store, William Bard & Company, at the time of its construction in 1869-1870 (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1868-70]; Rugen 1868). The building remained a jewelry store under the operation of Carl R. Michel and then George C. Michel from at least 1908 through 1929. This two story, cream brick, triangular-shaped building displays a portion of the brick parapet which is elaborated with brick panels and cast iron window hoods along the second floor. A continuous string course defines the top of the

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Portage Retail District  
Portage, Columbia Co., Wisconsin

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first floor storefront which was remodeled with carrara glass. Although its first floor storefront has been altered, the retail building at 214 W. Wisconsin (24/24) retains most of its second floor details including the parapet with its overhanging wood cornice, double brackets, the cross motif along the frieze, and "dog-tooth" type brickwork. The 4/4 light, round arch windows with window hoods and continuous sill dividing the two floors remain. Built in 1869-1870, the building served a number of functions. George Port may have located his agricultural implement business here between 1870 and 1875. The Portage Underwear company occupied the building between 1897 and about 1910. In ca. 1915, Wright and Robbins opened a garage in the building. John Helmann briefly operated a garage and then began his tavern in the building in 1926.<sup>1</sup> The retail building at 301 DeWitt (25/6) has housed the Graham Drug Store since its construction in 1873. The two story, cream brick building rests on an oak post and beam frame. Although the cast iron cornice no longer remains, a portion of the parapet including the brick panels and the round arch window lintels with keystone incised with a mortar and pestle symbol survives. The first floor storefront has also undergone alteration.<sup>2</sup> Michel Huber alternately operated a bakery, hotel, and bowling alley in the Huber Building (113 E. Cook, 56/5) from at least 1884 to 1920. R.P. Peschel placed his bakery in the building between at least 1929 and 1937, and by 1949 it became the Quality Bakery (Farrell 1929; Commonwealth Telephone Co. 1937; 1948). Constructed in 1879 (date stone; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1879-30]), the two story, cream brick building displays a relatively complete parapet accented by denticulation, corbeling, and corbel stops. Pilasters occur along each corner of the building. Segmental arch window lintels with cast iron keystone connected by arched brickwork further characterize the upper level. The first floor storefront was altered.

Expansion along Portage's retail district continued in the 1880s. The two story, cream brick building at 122 E. Cook (57/25) was erected in two stages: the west side in ca. 1881 and the east side in ca. 1895 (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1880-1896]). As suggested by the painted sign along the west elevation, the building functioned as the harness shop and shoe repair shop of James S. Williams and Vern Yonkey from at least 1908 through 1929 and by 1927 as Hoffman's Dry Cleaning (Moore, S.H. 1908-09; Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1927-28). Both sides are simply composed with overhanging, bracketed cornice and corbeling along the parapet and corbeling dividing the two floors. The first floor storefront has undergone some alteration. Erected in ca. 1885, the example at 121-123 E. Cook (56/3) displays a similar design. During the twentieth century, it housed the grocery of Bryan & Son and the harness shop of William Bunker (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1880-90]). The retail spaces at 314, 316,

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<sup>1</sup> Register-Democrat 6/6/1924; 5/5/1941; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1901; 1910; 1918; 1929; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1869-70]; Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1913-14; 1917-18; 1919-20; 1927-28; Farrell 1917-18; Voshardt 1910.

<sup>2</sup> Wisconsin State Register 6/13/74; Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; 1908 [2/8: 3/6]; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1873]; Daugherty 1898-1992.

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Portage Retail District  
Portage, Columbia Co., Wisconsin

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and 318 DeWitt (25/13) were owned by different individuals at the time of their construction but appear very similar in composition and were all erected in 1883 (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1883]; Stoner 1882). The three two story, cream brick buildings, perhaps conceived as a single block, retain much of their upper story, simple Italianate Commercial style details. The parapets with their cast iron cornices and end brackets and the brick string courses, corbeling, and denticulation remain as do the second floor segmental arch windows and the corbeling separating the two floors. Although most of the first story front have been altered, the corinthian cast iron columns at 314 DeWitt remain. The Hillyer Block at 320 DeWitt (25/12) was completed in 1889 (date block; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1889]). Between 1890 and 1901, Porter H. Shaver operated the High Priced Grocery in the building. Herbert Slowey ran the grocery until 1920 when it became the Mulcahy Grocery and then Whalen's Cafe (Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Register-Democrat 12/4/1920; Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889). This two story, cream brick, Italianate Commercial building displays a high degree of integrity. Its parapet includes a wood entablature with single brackets, decorated panels along the frieze, and denticulated cornice. Except for the two oriel windows, the second story, facade windows carry a pedimented lintel. A denticulated cornice divides the two floors. The storefront with the cast iron columns and the canted, wood and glass door entrance is original except for the plate glass.

Although building construction along Cook slowed during the depression of the early 1890s, some significant examples of the Italianate Commercial Style were constructed. The elaborate, three story, cream brick Beattie Building at 305 DeWitt (25/7) was constructed in 1891. Its high parapet includes a metal, denticulated and bracketed cornice, a decorative fan pattern along the frieze, and corbeling. Additional details include diamond brickwork and date block, cast iron pedimented window hoods with rosettes, two oriel windows detailed with corner blocks and stained glass transoms, the glass storefront with cast iron pilasters, and sidelights and transom along the recessed entrance. William Beattie, its original owner, maintained a shoemaker's shop in the building until about 1901. P.W. McDermott then operated a saloon in the building until about 1924. A meeting hall occupied the third floor (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1891-1930]; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1893-1924; Voshardt 1910; Farrell 1917). The two story, cream brick retail building at 100 E. Cook (25/20) has undergone substantial alteration along both levels. However, the upper floor cast iron window hoods and the brick pilasters which divide the building horizontally as well as the cast iron pilasters behind the more recent storefront remain along this 1892 building (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1892]). The Johnson Block at 101 W. Cook (25/23) was constructed in 1893. It served as the quarters of the First National Bank until 1907. A series of shoemakers also occupied the block. In 1914 into the early 1950s, Rhyme Drugstore located at this corner. The Wisconsin State Register placed its office in the second floor in 1894 for an unknown period of time<sup>3</sup>. Although the first floor storefront has been altered,

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<sup>3</sup> Mohr 1952; Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952; 2/24/73; 1908 [2/20: 3/5; 8/4: 3/1]; Register-Democrat 7/21/1951; 1/19/1919; 1/21/1919; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1889; 1894; 1901; 1910; 1918; 1929.

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this building retains its upper story decorative detailing. It displays a bracketed metal cornice and a canted wall with oriel window above the entrance. Pilasters divide the walls, and the second floor windows retain their metal window hoods. Erected in 1892, the example at 212 W. Wisconsin (24/23) functioned as the McDonald flour and feed store from 1893 to ca. 1904, the grocery of D.W. Shanks between 1908 and 1921, and the M. and M. Dairy from 1922 to 1950<sup>4</sup>. It retains most of its original elements above the first floor. The two story, cream brick building exhibits a brick parapet with corbeling, enlarged end corbeling and recessed brick panels; an oriel window with bracketing; shaped lintels with corbel stops; and an elongated, corbeled recessed panel between the two floors.

A number of simple Italianate commercial buildings were constructed at the turn of the century. Erected in 1896-98, the two story, cream brick building at 203 DeWitt (25/1) displays a parapet with corbeling, enlarged end corbeling, and denticulation, round arch lintels with keystone, a denticulated string course between the floors, and two entrances with transoms placed on either side of a display window. The Charles Gieseler cigar factory occupied the building from about 1901 through 1910 (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1901; 1910; Voshardt 1910; Moore, S.H. 1908-09). A slightly more elaborate two story, cream brick example stands at 211 DeWitt (25/3). Built in 1899, the building housed the flour and feed store of G.D. Wood and J.W. Smith between 1899 through 1901, Gieseler's Cigar factory from 1910 through 1918, and Jowett's paint store from ca. 1924 through 1930 (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1898-1930]; Voshardt 1910; Farrell 1917; Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1894; 1901; 1910; 1918; 1929). Its detailing includes a parapet with cast iron cornice, corbeling below the cornice, oriel window, stone lintel, stone string course with recessed brick panels between the two floors, original display windows with cast iron pilasters produced by the Portage Iron Works in 1900, and a recessed entrance with one sidelight and overlight. Erected in 1899-1900, the two story, cream brick retail building at 220 W. Wisconsin (24/27) functioned as a saloon (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863 [1898-1900]; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1894-1929). Missing its cornice, the parapet includes a series of sting courses and brick corbeling at the base of the parapet, an oriel window, a shaped lintel with corbel stops, and piers along the corners of the building. The segment arch display windows and fanlight above the door with piers between them produce an arcaded effect along the first floor facade. Except for the plate glass, the storefront appears original.

**Period Revival Commercial Style (1900-1940)**

The Period Revival Commercial style buildings erected after the turn of the century in Portage did not necessarily retain the two to three story, long, narrow form. While the Portage Theater was erected to serve a non-retail

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<sup>4</sup> Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1892-1930]; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1889-1929; Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952; Register-Democrat 6/3/1921.

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function in a relatively large space freed by the demolition of extant buildings, the style of the Beehive resulted from the remodeling of two earlier buildings. Classically derived details were applied to the buildings in both instances.

Erected in 1927 by the Fisher Paramount Theater Company, the red brick, tile veneer, Portage Theater at 314-322 W. Wisconsin (31/20) displays several classical elements reflecting the Period Revival style (Columbia County Treasurer 1863- [1927]; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1929). They include pilasters decorated with swags which are evenly spaced along the facade and double pilasters outlining the entrance area which support a simple entablature embellished with rosettes. Between them occur a pedimented window lintel with consoles and a swag positioned beneath a round arch with keystone.

#### **Art Deco Commercial Style (1925-1945)**

The Art Deco style is also applied to tall, narrow retail buildings in Portage. Common in the mid-1920s to 1940s, the style provides a vertical emphasis to the building and incorporates futuristic detailing in its design. Erected in 1929-1930, the City Bank of Portage, now First Star Bank, occupies a two story, massive, limestone and granite veneer building with rounded front at 202 W. Cook (57/8). The St. Louis Bank Building and Equipment Company designed and constructed the building. The Art Deco motifs include the symmetrical facade, full length, fluted pilasters which rise to the building's denticulated cornice, the circular motifs above the second floor windows, and copper, double door entrance located in stepped set-back. The last element provides a more vertical appearance to the building (Wisconsin State Register 11/8/1929 [by Zona Gale]; Register-Democrat 4/30/1930; 5/1/1930; City Bank of Portage 1949).

#### **Physical Integrity of the District**

Although the Portage Retail Historic District contains a high proportion of retail buildings erected prior to 1943, changes have occurred. Businesses remodeled their first floor fronts beginning in 1923 and continuing into the 1960s. Along with nine other buildings in the block between W. Wisconsin and DeWitt along the south side of W. Cook, the Klenert Pharmacy initiated the remodeling of first floor building front by Mittelstaedt Brothers and Carl Kutzke in 1923 (Register-Democrat 4/27/1923). As the many brick and metal cornices began to deteriorate, they were removed rather than repaired. Although some buildings were replaced, this activity has been relatively limited within the proposed district. One gap representing building demolition occurs within the district. As this nomination was being prepared two buildings were destroyed by fire. The two buildings were located at 102 W. DeWitt and 108 W. Cook. Despite local efforts to save the facade of 108 W. DeWitt, the two buildings were demolished in 1994. The area is now a vacant lot. All other spaces in which large building complexes were removed are excluded from its boundaries. Building replacement after 1943 has occurred at nine locations: 208 W. Wisconsin (24/20), 226.2 W. Wisconsin (24/20), 315-17 DeWitt (25/11), 313 DeWitt (25/10), 311 DeWitt

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(25/9), 312 DeWitt (25/17), 102 E. Cook (57/24), 108 E. Cook (57/32), 112 E. Cook (57/31) and 129 E. Cook (56/2). And, extensive alteration of the entire building front is limited to 115-117 E. Cook (56/5), 107 E. Cook (57/0), 117 W. Cook (56/17), 123 W. Cook (56/20), 129 W. Cook (56/23), 128 W. Cook (57/15), and 208 W. Wisconsin (24/21). Despite these changes, the Portage Retail Historic District continues to be dominated by its late nineteenth century commercial buildings. The district retains many of its retail buildings from the mid-1860s through the turn of the century. Importantly, Cook, W. Wisconsin, DeWitt, and Edgewater continue to create the feeling of a nineteenth century, Wisconsin retail district.

Built primarily in one period from the mid-1860s through the turn of the century, the district also presents a very unified appearance. This district contrasts clearly with surrounding buildings and neighborhoods. Because it encompasses most of Portage's retail area, the commercial buildings contrast clearly with the surrounding residential neighborhoods to the east, north, and west. The Portage Canal flows close to although not along the southern tip of the district. Rapid deterioration in the integrity of the commercial buildings at the west end and building replacement at the east end define these portions of the boundary. E. and W. Edgewater separate the district to the north from a series of altered or replaced commercial buildings to the south. The north boundary is marked by building replacement at the northwest side and by a residential neighborhood and replaced and altered retail buildings at the northeast side.

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PROPERTY INVENTORY FOR THE PORTAGE RETAIL HISTORIC DISTRICT

<u>Address</u>	<u>Building Date<sup>5</sup></u>	<u>Map Code</u>	<u>Contributing/ Noncontributing</u>
108 E. Conant	1903	30/23	contributing
110 E. Conant	1933-34	30/24	contributing
100 E. Cook	1892	25/20	contributing
102 E. Cook	1939-49	57/24	noncontributing
107 E. Cook	1889-94	57/0	noncontributing
108 E. Cook	1957	57/32	noncontributing
109 E. Cook	ca. 1881	56/9	contributing
111 E. Cook	1911-12	56/8	contributing
112 E. Cook	post-1955	57/31	noncontributing
113 E. Cook	1879	56/7	contributing
115-117 E. Cook	1879	56/5	noncontributing
118 E. Cook	1938	57/30	noncontributing
119 E. Cook	1882-85	56/4	contributing
121-123 E. Cook	ca. 1885	56/3	contributing
122 E. Cook	1895 (E), 1881 (W)	57/25	contributing
124 E. Cook	1916-18	57/26	contributing
126 E. Cook	1917	57/27	contributing
129 E. Cook	post-1980	56/2	noncontributing
141 E. Cook	1900-01, 1913	56/1	contributing
101 W. Cook	1891	25/23	contributing
105-107 W. Cook	1888-89	56/13	contributing
109-115 W. Cook	1887-1888	56/14	contributing
114-116 W. Cook	1876	57/33	contributing
117 W. Cook	1890-91	56/17	noncontributing
118-122 W. Cook	1867	57/18	contributing
119 W. Cook	1883-85	56/18	contributing
121 W. Cook	1883-85	56/19	noncontributing
123 W. Cook	1864	56/20	noncontributing

<sup>5</sup> Many of these dates are derived from the comparison of a wide range of sources but predominately tax assessment data (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863-), nineteenth and twentieth century maps, especially the Sanborn-Perris maps dating between 1885 and 1929, and a series of state and city business directories. References are also drawn from the Wisconsin State Journal, Register-Democrat, and Portage Daily Register and occasionally the date stone on the building.

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<u>Address</u>	<u>Building Dates</u>	<u>Map Code</u>	<u>Contributing/ Noncontributing</u>
124 W. Cook	1867-70	57/17	contributing
125 W. Cook	1870-71	56/21	contributing
126 W. Cook	1867	57/16	contributing
127 W. Cook	1863-70	56/22	contributing
128 W. Cook	1867, 1920-25	57/15	noncontributing
129 W. Cook	1945-46	56/23	noncontributing
130-132 W. Cook	1867-68	57/13	contributing
131 W. Cook	1868-73	56/24	contributing
134 W. Cook	1867-70	57/12	contributing
135 W. Cook	1866-67	56/25	contributing
136 W. Cook	1869-70	57/11	contributing
137-139 W. Cook	1866-67	56/26	contributing
202 W. Cook	1929-30	57/8	contributing
207 W. Cook	1927	31/22	contributing
210 W. Cook	1876	55/7	contributing
214 W. Cook	1869-70	57/6	contributing
218 W. Cook	1880	57/5	contributing
220 W. Cook	1867	57/4	contributing
222 W. Cook	1893	57/3	contributing
233 W. Cook	1900-01	49/24	contributing
201 DeWitt	1899-1900	25/0	contributing
203 DeWitt	1896-98	25/1	contributing
205 DeWitt	1919	25/2	contributing
208-210 DeWitt	1895	24/33	contributing
211 DeWitt	1898-99	25/3	contributing
212 DeWitt	1924	24/34	contributing
213 DeWitt	1886	25/4	contributing
215 DeWitt	1921	25/5	contributing
301 DeWitt	1873	25/6	contributing
305 DeWitt	1891	25/7	contributing
309 DeWitt	1908	25/8	contributing
310 DeWitt	1880, 1892, 1917	25/18	contributing
311 DeWitt	1950-55	25/9	noncontributing
312 DeWitt	1948-50	25/17	noncontributing
313 DeWitt	post-1950	25/10	noncontributing
314 DeWitt	1883	25/14	contributing
316 DeWitt	1883	25/15	contributing
318 DeWitt	1882-82	25/16	contributing
315-317 DeWitt	1950s	25/11	noncontributing
320 DeWitt	1889	25/12	contributing

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<u>Address</u>	<u>Building Dates</u>	<u>Map Code</u>	<u>Contributing/ Noncontributing</u>
109 W. Edgewater	1917-18, 1924	24/19	contributing
233 W. Edgewater	1925, 1950s	23/23	contributing
208 W. Wisconsin	post 1950s	24/20	noncontributing
210 W. Wisconsin	1905-06	24/21	noncontributing
212 W. Wisconsin	ca. 1892	24/23	contributing
214 W. Wisconsin	1869-70	24/24	contributing
216 W. Wisconsin	ca. 1888	24/25	contributing
218 W. Wisconsin	1913	24/26	noncontributing
220 W. Wisconsin	1899-1900	24/27	contributing
224 W. Wisconsin	1886-89	24/28	contributing
226 W. Wisconsin	1923-24	24/29	contributing
226.5 W. Wisconsin	post-1955	24/30	noncontributing
228-230 W. Wisconsin	1869-70	24/31	contributing
238 W. Wisconsin	1855	24/32	contributing
314-322 W. Wisconsin	1927	31/20	contributing

Total number of properties: 83

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**Significance Statement**

The Portage Retail Historic District gains significance under criteria A in the areas of commerce, entertainment/recreation, and social history and under criteria C in the area of architecture. Within the historical context of commerce, the district illustrates the kinds of nineteenth and early twentieth century retail businesses, small industries, professions, and crafts which occupied Portage's main retail center. The rapid expansion and shift in emphasis of these types of enterprises indicate the ways in which the city's economy shifted to first take advantage of available opportunities such as the logging industry and then compensate for its loss. Its development also shows the tremendous impact of the arrival, expansion, and decline of the railroad industry on the city's economy. Under the context of social and political movements, the halls above some of the retail buildings represent the importance of voluntary organizations within the community. These halls and the Portage Theater also illustrate ways in which the community of Portage informally associated for recreation under the context of entertainment/recreation. In the context of architecture, the Portage Retail Historic District preserves a concentration of Italianate commercial and vernacular commercial architecture in addition to the small number of Period Revival commercial and Art Deco style buildings. Of particular significance is the large number of 1860s and 1870s examples of the Commercial Italianate style buildings. Because the Portage Retail Historic District illustrates a typical Wisconsin late nineteenth and early twentieth century retail district, it gains significance at the local level. The period of significance between 1855 and 1934 represents the beginning and end building dates of the contributing buildings in the district: 236 W. Wisconsin (24/32) (1) and 110 E. Conant (30/24) (2).

**Historical Background**

The City of Portage lies along the watershed between the Fox and the Wisconsin rivers in northwest Columbia County. While Ward I of the city occupies the one and a half mile wide lowland between the rivers, the main part of the city lies along the hill just northwest of this lowland. Connecting the two rivers, the Portage Canal runs near the base of this hill. This section of land between the two rivers served as a portage, or carrying place, permitting the transportation of goods across Wisconsin from Lake Michigan at Green Bay to the Mississippi River at Prairie du Chien during Wisconsin's European occupation and prior to that by its Native American inhabitants. Listed on the National Register, the portage gained significance as early as the 1670s as part of the Fox-Wisconsin waterway. It carried furs gathered in Wisconsin and west of the Mississippi to eastern markets. Attracted by its importance as a transportation point in the fur trade, temporary settlement at the Portage did not occur until the 1760s when use of the portage as a minor rendezvous point had probably begun. A deserter from a French garrison in Illinois, Pinneshon, transported goods across the portage by 1766 when Jonathan Carver noted his presence as he crossed the portage. Active fur trading at the Portage began by the 1770s, and by the 1790s a small number of traders and those active in the transport business permanently occupied the portage and adjacent areas (Jones 1914 [1]: 40; WPA 1938: 25-26;

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Thwaites 1882: 148-50; 1908b: 10-15, 22-25, 135-39, 323; 1908a: 280-282, 333-34; Vieau 1888: 218-23; Turner, F.J. 1963 [1893]: 73; Turner, A.J. 1904: 45; Grignon 1901 [1857]: 286-87).

Civilian settlement gradually increased at the portage after the U.S. army established Fort Winnebago at the east end of the portage in 1828. With forts Howard and Crawford, Fort Winnebago provided a vital line of military defense and protected military and civilian communications and trade between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River. The government placed the post at the strategic communications link along the waterway. The 1827 Winnebago uprising resulting in part from the expansion of the lead settlements into Winnebago territory in southwest Wisconsin and the petition of John Jacob Astor for protection of the Portage from the Winnebago led to the establishment of the fort (Powell 1978: 20-21; Clark 1908 [1879]: 309-10; Turner, A.J. 1898b: 66-67, 70). The fort functioned as a small community and served as an important point of contact between the Euro-American and primarily Winnebago communities. It was a small commercial center periodically receiving goods from Green Bay. The fort sutler and for a time Daniel Whitney sold goods to traders, and the Indian agent paid the Winnebago annuities for the acquisition of supplies. When troops were needed in the Mexican War, the army permanently abandoned Fort Winnebago. However, it and the area along the Wisconsin River remained the center of the Portage community until after the acquisition of the Menominee lands in 1848 (Kinzie 1948 [1856]; Merrell 1908 [1876]: 374; Turner, A.J. 1898b: 98; Wisconsin State Journal 12/13/1923; Powell 1978: 34-39; Schultz 1941; Clough 1957 [1924]; River Times 1853 [6/27: 1/6]).

In 1836, the Wisconsin Territory created Portage County which then included most of Columbia and parts of Dodge and Sauk counties. The portage or the Town of Winnebago then served as the county seat. Even though designated as the county seat, the portage remained unorganized as a platted community until 1849. After 1838 to 1841, Portage County appears to have had no legal county seat, and no permanent county seat was designated for the Columbia County until 1852. Columbia County legally received its lands in the Menominee Territory in 1851. The Town of Winnebago portage which included the south part of the portage as well as that part of the portage north of the canal even though still nominally part of the Menominee land became the Town of Fort Winnebago in 1850. Later the same year, the town's name was altered to the Town of Portage City. In 1852, the Town of Portage City became the permanent county seat. The Town of Portage City was incorporated as Portage City in 1854. The city council altered the name to Portage in 1875 (Smith 1973: 204-206; Jones 1914 [1]: 80, 103-106; Butterfield 1880: 362-68, 378, 603-604; Turner, A.J. 1898a; 1904: 14-37, 73, 76; Nesbit 1973: 124; Titus 1930: 783; Murtagh 1987).

Although almost all of the lands within the city of Portage were essentially not available for individual land purchase until 1852, three informal communities totaling about 200 residents emerged within or adjacent to it beginning in the 1830s. The earliest gathered along the Fox adjacent to Fort Winnebago by the time of Henry Merrell's arrival in 1834. Portage's early retail and commercial services and a mill were located in this area. These businesses served both the civilians and military personnel as well as those working along the first canal

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in 1835 and 1838. Few private dwellings were built here. During the late 1830s and 1840s, a second community emerged in Ward 1. This settlement located near the site of the first canal and slightly later along the Wisconsin River from the site of the current canal south to Wauona Trail. This community included hotels, taverns, mercantile stores, a warehouse, a sawmill, and steamboat landing. Many of the enterprises emerged to serve the lumber trade then developing to the north along the Wisconsin River.

The third community began along current Main Street and adjacent Cook in the late 1840s and became the nucleus of the current city. Retail enterprises in the late 1840s and early 1850s included the Veeder House first built in 1850 and replaced in 1860; the Old City Hotel; the mercantile stores of Smith and Wilson, C.J. Pettibone, and at least one other; a grocery; butcher shop; the drugstores of Carleton McCulloch and Best; a barber; tin shop; numerous law offices; and several taverns. A small number of houses were scattered along the hill around this retail district. The community adjacent to Fort Winnebago declined in the mid-1840s when the military evacuated the fort. Not far from the main business district, the second community failed to develop as rapidly as the area along Main and Cook and eventually merged with it (Butterfield 1880: 430-32, 439, 589, 591-93; Portage Public Library n.d.; Portage Daily Register 8/19/1972; Wisconsin State Register 1874 [6/13, 10/13]; Curtis 1974: 45; De La Ronde 1908 [1876]: 345-52).

Portage finally emerged as a platted, incorporated community in the early 1850s. Benjamin Webb and Alvin Bronson, non-resident investors, purchased the 648 acre Claim No. 21 or the portion of the current city south of the Menominee lands and directed John Mullett to survey the Webb and Bronson Plat of the Town of Fort Winnebago in 1849. The Menominee lands were open for settlement in 1851. The federal townsite law of 1844 permitted citizens acting as a corporate body through representation by a county judge to enter improved lands as a townsite. Acting in such a role, Judge Joshua Guppy had the original part of the city platted by Henry Merton in 1852. This plat included the business district and adjacent residential lands north to Oneida, west to MacFarlane, and east to the canal.

Settlement within the city limits began in the mid to late 1830s along E. Wisconsin and in a few isolated locations northwest of the current canal well before the first plat of 1849. However, settlement remained sparse and temporary. The first unsuccessful attempts by the Portage Canal Company to excavate the Portage Canal in 1835 and as a reorganized company in 1838 attracted much of this transient population. First settled in the late 1840s, the community centered at the business corner of Cook and Main; by 1850 it remained limited to an area east of DeWitt, south of E. Pleasant, north of the canal, probably west to Jefferson. A second effort to excavate the canal under the state Board of Public Works between 1849 and 1851 produced a waterway of limited utility. It was used to transport goods until the arrival of the railroad in December, 1856. Afterwards, it continued to carry bulk goods, especially lumber and grain. The completion of the canal by the Army Corps of Engineers in 1876 continued its use through the turn of the century (Schaffer 1937: 90, 93, 99-103; Wisconsin HPD n.d.c [memo from Richard W. Henneger, 3/31/76]; Mermin 1968: 25-49;

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Butterfield 1880: 436, 449; River Times 1851 [7/20: 1-2/1]; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1981: B-126-127). The River Times of 1850 (1850 [11/4: 2/2]) reported that as the canal rapidly neared completion in the central business district,

Good buildings have been erected and are still going up at all seasons for a little over a year. The number built within that period is over two hundred. Among them are stores of all descriptions, mechanics' shops, taverns, offices, &c., &c.

Although the description is likely exaggerated, growth in both population and the number of buildings and the amount of trade was clearly proceeding at a more rapid pace than the preceding decade (Wisconsin State Journal 6/13/1874). With promise of railroad connections, expansion in business and small industry continued until the panic of 1857. Although rail connections located at the north side of Portage by the Milwaukee and LaCrosse Railroad, later the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, became established in this year, rapid business expansion did not immediately follow. The depression of the late 1850s and the Civil War checked development until after 1865. By this period, Portage served a growing rural population within a distance of about 20 miles to the south, perhaps as many as 40 miles to the east and west, and 50 or more miles to the north (Smith 1973: 188; Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul ca. 1944; Scribbins 1987a: 19-21; Butterfield 1880: 485-89; Jones 1914 [1]: 100-101; Wisconsin State Register 1863 [8/17: 3/1]).

During the 1850s, Portage became a supply center for the lumber trade operating to the north along the Wisconsin River and provided services to the lumbermen taking rafts to the Mississippi. Residential settlement around the business district expanded in a scattered manner along Main, Dewitt between Edgewater and Conant, Cook between Adams and Clark, and Edgewater between Adams and W. Wisconsin. Rapid commercial expansion filling vacant lots along Cook and DeWitt and spreading along W. Cook from W. Wisconsin to Lock occurred from the second half of the 1860s into the early 1890s as Portage developed as a railroad and regional trade center. In 1867, the Wisconsin State Register (1867 [5/4: 3/1]) observed perhaps with some exaggeration that

Four elegant blocks on the burnt district are now taking shape, and when completed will add a vast deal to the appearance of Cook Street, and the City generally....The vacant lots on both sides of Cook Street from the hardware store to the Catholic Church [near Lock] have all been disposed of. With the buildings which have been moved on them together with the new ones to be built immediately every lot will be in a few weeks occupied.

**Area of Significance: Commerce**

In nineteenth century America, the commerce or more correctly the economy of a community such as Portage divided into four areas: retail businesses or goods and services; commerce or wholesale business; crafts; and industry. In reality, these divisions are constructs which simplify a mass of data and allow the

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operation. A craft usually depended on a small number of artisans, for example blacksmith, cooper, gunsmith, cabinetmaker, cobbler, and wagonmaker. The craftsman, perhaps with one or two others, made the whole product with few unskilled operators to assist him. He often worked in a shed or part of a building. The simple machinery and hand tools were used by each craftsman in the shop. Raw materials were often, but not always secured locally. The craft enterprises often retailed their goods from the shop and supplied local merchants but not purchasing agents distributing products beyond the immediate area. Such craft shops remained common through the 1850s and 1860s (Gorman 1982: 63-65; Nesbit 1985: 219; Taylor 1951: 208-209; Atherton 1954: 41). However, as isolation declined, the marketing pattern of such craftsmen entered a transitional phase. Rather than producing custom-made goods, the larger craftsmen removed himself from the retail business and sold more standardized products to the middleman such as the local general merchant. To compete successfully with establishments in growing urban areas, these craftsmen enlarged their shops, reduced wages by hiring laborers to perform unskilled tasks, and produced more standardized goods. The early industries then employed a modest work force, occupied relatively small quarters, often the second floor of a retail building or shed-like building, utilized materials readily available in the area, and served a local area which consumed a limited amount of each product. Therefore, the industries produced a variety of goods rather than a specialized line of production. Even early industries tended to make at least a small percentage of custom-made goods. The ability to move from the craft setting toward a manufacturing enterprise depended on the density of settlement, transportation facilities, the availability of natural resources, and the state of the economy (Taylor 1951: 250; Fehrenbacher 1969: 72-73; Bogue 1963: 93, 95, 131; Nesbit 1985: 219, 231). Several of Portage's crafts survived and expanded because they had access to bulk shipping along the canal and the railroad and a large market in north central Wisconsin (Nesbit 1985: 152-53, 177, 200-202; 1973: 84-85; Current 1976: 479; Wyatt 1986 [vol. 2, industry]: 1).

The scarcity of capital on the frontier proved to be one of the most limiting factors for industrial development. During settlement, credit, if available, was short term and derived from local merchants. They, not the craftsmen, often became the owners of local industries. Portage's outstanding example is R.B. Wentworth who founded the Wentworth elevator and in partnership with Llewelyn Breese and others established the Portage Hosiery. Craftsmen later turned to operating such industries or to repairing and/or retailing what they had once created. As late as 1890, Wisconsin lacked adequate investment capital and sufficiently developed legal avenues to finance large industries. Few corporations created to finance industrial enterprises existed prior to the turn of the century. Partnership financed large establishments. These local financiers invested small amounts in several or more concerns as partners with other men. If one failed, their interests in the others ensured their survival. Corporate enterprises then required a special act of state legislation. As a consequence, businesses were family owned or operated under partnerships. Industrial growth frequently suffered from the lack of transportation facilities, sufficiently large markets to absorb production, and labor shortages. The existence of an early, well-developed transportation system and growing markets to the north facilitated the development of Portage's large crafts and small

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historian to generalize about the development of a community's economy. And, they are certainly not mutually exclusive. Containing primarily retail and craft enterprises, the Portage Retail Historic District was analyzed from this perspective.

The goods and services or retail businesses of a community include stores where goods are sold in small volume; later repair or service businesses such as real estate offices or electrical supply stores; and professional offices such as those occupied by lawyers. Commercial businesses or commercial trades in a community such as Portage are primarily wholesale dealers. They buy specific commodities such as grain or livestock in large quantities and ship it to larger commercial centers for processing. Or, they may warehouse a variety of related goods and sell them to retail stores within their region.

The central business enterprise for early trade centers such as Portage remained the mercantile store, later identified as the general store. Not only did it offer a wide variety of goods, but it often fulfilled other retail and commercial functions which were later absorbed by more specialized retail and commercial businesses. For example, the mercantile store frequently offered retailing, some banking functions, insurance, purchasing of local products, their storage, packing, sorting, and forwarding or shipping. It received stock only a few times per year from eastern wholesalers in, for example, New York and Buffalo and therefore stored a large inventory. Local farmers exchanged their products for credit or loan payment. The merchant stored their products on the upper floors and/or in small warehouses, processed some of them, and shipped them to distant markets. He purchased in bulk, reselling his stock to smaller establishments in adjacent communities. The merchant also served as local agents for insurance companies which sold primarily property insurance and might invest income in real estate (McKay 1985: 209, 345; Independent 1856 [4/17: 2/4]; Nesbit 1985: 45; Merrell 1908 [1876]: 368-71).

The industrial base of many communities settled in the mid-nineteenth century was often difficult to distinguish from and often grew from its craft enterprises. During early settlement and frequently lasting well into the late nineteenth century, the number of craft enterprises in a community usually exceeded the number of industries. Those enterprises "...housed in factory structures where raw materials were transformed into bulk-finished or semi-finished goods..." constituted manufacturing establishments (Gorman 1982: 63). Examples include textile manufacturing, foundries, and brick yards. This distinction not only involved the form and size of the building, permitting large, open spaces in which to house machinery to perform repetitive tasks. Complex machinery and clearly segregated operations were evident in an industrial setting. The difference also involved the manner of operation in which no one individual completed the product; the skill of the personnel with reliance on a high percentage of unskilled labor; the manner of sale and distribution in which products were not usually sold directly to retail operations but to wholesalers who achieved a distribution radius beyond the local area; and the acquisition of raw materials from a radius larger than the local area.

The distinction between a craft and industry is one of scale and complexity of

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industries (Nesbit 1973: 277, 322-23; 1985: 154-55).

An understanding of the level of representation of the areas within a community's economy characterizes its development and its economic interaction with other communities. This network of communities surrounding Portage, for example, included the rural communities or hinterlands, smaller surrounding hamlets such as Pacific, those competing communities of a comparative size such as Baraboo, and larger commercial centers such as Milwaukee. The rural communities provided agricultural goods and raw materials needed for Portage's commerce and industry. The radius served by Portage varied in time, direction, and the kinds of commodities being sold or purchased. The farmers of these rural areas utilized Portage's retail businesses, commercial, and craft shops. In the early years of development, Portage provided many but certainly not all of its own economic needs and the needs of those within a radius of 20 to 50 or more miles. As the transportation system became more complex through railroad connections, Portage's network of local, weekly, rural retail trade probably shrank, but, it gained a broader network for its industrial goods. At the same time, Portage likely maintained a wide radius for occasional purchases since it received more ready-made goods and supplies from eastern markets. These goods replaced those made by the craftsmen and small industries many of which disappeared. Several succeeded and began to serve an increasingly large area outside the county and often the state. And, as the transportation network grew, some agricultural goods were shipped to larger centers and no longer processed locally. Since Portage sat at the crossroads of a number of transportation systems, it developed its wholesale businesses at an early date to move the agricultural goods along the canal and railroad from the interior to eastern markets. Thus, communities such as Portage usually shifted from a low investment, sheltered, small enterprise economy with generalized businesses, to a large craft base, small industries, and a rapidly developing commercial base in its early years of settlement. It developed a large number of retail businesses, few crafts functioning mostly as repair shops, several large, long-established industries with a number of ephemeral industries, and a strong commercial or wholesale trade (Nesbit 1973: 84-85, 342; 1985: 127, 148-49, 154-56, 165, 175; Wyatt 1986 [vol. 2, industry]: 1; WPA 1938: 7; Butterfield 1880: 593).

Substantial economic growth was often confined to the periods between depressions and recessions of the second half of the nineteenth century and heavily affected by the development of transportation. The community of Portage began with a mixed, poorly developed retail, craft, commercial, and industrial area adjacent to Fort Winnebago. In the late 1830s and 1840s, its retail center and craft businesses shifted away from the fort area to E. Wisconsin south of the canal and by the end of the 1840s to Main and Cook. In the same period, the community's industrial or large craft and commercial trade developed along the canal on either side of Wisconsin. The canal allowed the movement of bulk goods to Green Bay. The retail and many of the smaller craft businesses slowly shifted to the expanding area along Cook and adjacent streets between 1849 and the mid-1850s. Although Portage did not itself become either a lumber or grain milling center, the development of the lumber trade to the north stimulated growth. Although not mutually exclusive, two distinct areas developed: the retail and small craft enterprises north of the canal and the small, local industrial or large craft

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enterprises south of the canal. These industries included small sawmills and gristmills, foundries, a tannery and a brewery. Established in the early 1850s, one brewery developed at what was then the west edge of the retail district.

Thus, with its access to river ports on the Great Lakes and Mississippi provided by several local shipping companies as well as overland freighting to Milwaukee after 1852, Portage established itself as a regional retail and commercial center with a craft and small industrial base during the prosperous era of the 1850s prior to the depression of 1857 (Butterfield 1880: 588-89, 593; Jones 1914 [1]: 650; WPA 1938: 43-44; Wisconsin State Register 6/13/1874; Register-Democrat 12/19/1923; Democrat 2/30/1897: 1; Schaffer 1922: 130-32; Merrell 1908 [1876]: 368-71; Libby 1895: 310). By 1853, Portage enterprises included (Hart 1853: 177-78):

... 12 stores, 7 hotels, 1 steam saw mill, 2 harness makers, 4 waggon [sic] makers, 6 blacksmiths 3 cabinet, 3 paint, 8 shoe, 3 tin and sheet iron, 3 butchers, 6 millinery and 4 tailor shops, 2 breweries, 2 livery stables, 2 jewelry stores, 2 drug stores, 1 brick yard, 1 iron foundry, 1 blind and sash factory, 1 chair factory, and 1 tannery; 12 lawyers and 5 doctors....

Like many communities in Wisconsin, growth halted in the late 1850s and early 1860s. Its economy lacked sufficient time to respond to the presence of the railroad which arrived late in 1856. Its retail center with small crafts shops and its commercial trade began rapid expansion again in the second half of the 1860s prior to the 1873 depression as the agricultural lands became settled. Portage's retail businesses as well as its large crafts, commerce, and manufacturing base entered a significant period of development from the second half of the 1860s into the early 1890s. At the end of this period, the Cook Street retail area and the commercial and industrial center along the canal were fully developed. The depression of the early 1890s closed smaller industries and crafts and some of Portage's businesses. The late 1890s and early twentieth century saw the restructuring of Portage's businesses; the continued expansion of several of the city's industries and the emergence of new ones; and the disappearance of most of its craftsmen. The turn of the century saw the proliferation of small, often ephemeral specialized services. More stable department and later chain stores offering a general stock of goods threatened long established mercantile stores in the retail center. These trends continued into the 1930s (Nesbit 1973: 84-85; 1985: 165, 178, 267, 573-74; Current 1976: 96, 374-75; WPA 1938: 45; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1894; 1901; 1910; 1918; 1929).

The following discussion describes the retail and craft functions and the limited industrial and commercial development represented by the buildings in Portage's Retail District.

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**Hotels<sup>6</sup>**

As the commercial and political center of the county and the trading center serving the region to the north, Portage supported numerous hotels. Constructed by the late 1830s, Portage's initial hotels served business travelers supplying the fur trade and fort, the laborers working along the canal, and the growing lumber trade developing to the north along the Wisconsin River. As the 1850 census suggests, some of the early hotels functioned more like boarding houses than hotels (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1850: population schedule]). The spacious second floor of the Merrell House which stood across the Fox from Fort Winnebago between the mid-1830s and the 1860s (505 E. Cook) and Gideon Low's Franklin Hotel erected in 1838 near 1316 Wauona Trail provided the identified lodging prior to 1840. The Franklin House occasionally served as an early meeting place for the county officials. The two and a half story, three bay, frame building with side addition was demolished ca. 1895. As Portage grew as a commercial and retail center in the 1840s, hotels also clustered along E. Wisconsin south of the canal. They primarily served raftsmen and lumbermen operating along the Wisconsin. Erected in the 1840s at the west end of Wauona Trail by Henry Carpenter, the United States Hotel housed many of the community's social functions. The hotel burned in 1852. The construction of the plank road along E. Wisconsin beginning in 1851 kept those already built in this section of Portage in operation and attracted other hotels. Built by M. VanWinter in 1851, the Wisconsin House stood just south of the United States Hotel. Additional hotels along E. Wisconsin included Meyer's Hotel; the Washington House constructed by Edwin Sylvester in 1850 and the Lee House both adjacent to Riverside Park; the Sylvester House; and the McTigh House extant after 1863 (Merrell 1908 [1876]; Register-Democrat 12/11/1923; 12/18/1923; Wisconsin State Register 6/13/1874; 1863 [4/25: 3/1]; 1897 [7/30: 1]; Portage Daily Register 1/3/1959; 11/13/71; Portage Public Library n.d. [Mrs. Arthur Swanson, 1952]; Jones 1914 [1]: 185; Ogle, Geo. A. & Co. 1901: 738; Butterfield 1880: 429, 642; Clark 1908 [1879]: 320; Turner, A.J. 1896: 79; River Times 1851 [1/23: 4/1]).

As the retail center at the intersection of Cook and Main expanded, hotels also located here to serve not only those trading at the adjacent businesses but also visiting salesmen and in its early years lumbermen and arriving settlers. Although some of these hotels also functioned like boarding houses with taverns, those in the main retail center were often built as elegant establishments. These hotels not only maintained rooms but also restaurants and/or taverns, meeting rooms, and sample rooms and often maintained adjacent stables.

Among the first hotels built in Portage's retail center, Richard Veeder's hotel and tavern was constructed at the south end of Main about 1850 and replaced

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<sup>6</sup> In addition to the listed citation in this section, the following references were frequently used: Sanborn-Ferris Map Co. 1885; 1889; 1894; 1901; 1919; 1918; 1929; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863-; Johnson Printing Co. 1955; Commonwealth Telephone Co. 1937; 1948; Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1884-85 to 1927-28; Voshardt 1910; Moore, S.H. 1908-09; Wright 1890; Rockwell and Goodell 1886; Platt 1873; Farrell 1917-18; Chapin 1870; Hawes 1865.

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following a fire in 1862. The Veeders operated it as a hotel and boarding house and tavern until 1870. It was dismantled after the turn of the century (Wisconsin State Register 6/13/1874; 1862 [7/5: 3/1]; 1863 [1/24: 3/1]; Sanborn-Perris Map 1894; Butterfield 1880: 642). Converted from the Arnold Block in February, 1862, the City Hotel, also known as the Eastern House, stood at the northwest corner of Adams and Cook. Stephen Gage who purchased the building in 1864, probably constructed a second hotel adjacent to it in 1873. It was burned and rebuilt about 1895. The second hotel was known as the Columbia by 1901 and then the Tremont by 1929. Preceded by the Farmer's Hotel which was constructed in the 1860s, the Planters' Hotel was erected along the canal at 200 W. Edgewater in 1897. In 1914, it became the Portage Hotel which burned in 1978. An additional Farmer's Hotel, also later known as the Planter's Hotel, stood at the site of the creamery by 1889 (Butterfield 1880: 899; Portage Public Library [Mrs. Arthur Swanson, 1952]; Harrison and Warner 1873; Ogle, Geo. A. & Co. 1901: 431; Murtagh 1985; Wisconsin State Register 1861 [2/22]; 1862 [6/21: 3/1]; 1864 [1/23: 3/1]; Wisconsin Visual and Sound Archives n.d.).

Several businesses along Cook operated hotels, or more appropriately rented rooms, in connection with their businesses. Michael Huber ran the European Hotel above his bakery at 113 E. Cook (56/7) as early as 1884-1885 to 1903-1904. After this date, he operated a bowling alley instead of or in conjunction with his bakery. The building itself was erected in 1879 (date stone). In 1885, F.W. Schulz, then owner of the Haertel Brewery buildings, operated a hotel in the upper floors of 137-139 W. Cook (56/26) which was probably built in 1866-1867 (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1885; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1885-90, 1866-67]).

Constructed in 1855 as the Ellsworth House, W.W. Corning probably added a three story, frame building to the existing hotel about 1865. The Corning House became one of the more elegant hotels in Portage. Noted citizens of Portage such as W.D. Fox operated the hotel from 1876 to 1880 when he sold it to A.E. Smith. Between 1884 and 1896, Edgar C. Fosgate ran the Corning House, and Russell C. Fosgate followed him as proprietor. After burning in 1901, it was rebuilt and used for retail businesses. After the Corning House was razed in 1926, the Raulf Realty Company, a construction company in Milwaukee, built the Raulf or Ram Hotel following the design by C.J. Keller and Son, Architects in 1927 (207 W. Cook, 31/22). The Raulf contained locations for eight retail businesses and additional office space on its first floor and a banquet room, meeting rooms, tavern, dining room, and bowling alley in the basement. The remaining four stories contained 100 hotel rooms and seven apartments and offices (Butterfield 1880: 589, 898, 928; Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; 7/1/1950; 7/2/1952: 27; Portage Public Library [Mrs. Arthur Swanson, 1952]; Democrat 7/30/97; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1926-30]; Hawes 1865; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1884-85; 1895-96; 1897-98).

From 1859 to 1870, Henry Emder operated the National Hotel south of the canal along E. Wisconsin. In 1870, he may have moved this frame building to the site of the Emder House at 228-230 W. Wisconsin (24/31). In 1870, Emder either enclosed the frame building or constructed a new three story, cream brick building. The hotel included sleeping rooms on the second and third floors and a saloon, offices, a dining room and kitchen, game rooms, and sample rooms on the first floor. Emder later expanded his hotel rooms into the second floor of the

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adjacent Vandercook Building (236 W. Wisconsin, 24/32) which was constructed about 1855. The two buildings were connected by a balcony. In 1891, Emders sold the hotel to J.H. Wells, T.J. Wells, R.N. and McConochie. Jabez H. Wells managed the hotel until 1917 after which James Fleming oversaw its operation. The hotel served as the bus station prior to 1929 when it closed (Butterfield 1880: 896; Wisconsin State Register 1862 [11/8: 3/1]; Democrat 7/30/97; Register-Democrat 1/23/1928; 10/14/1929; 10/17/1929; Jones 1914 [2]: 593; Turner, A.J. 1903: 15; Harrison and Warner 1873; Rugen 1868; Hawes 1865; Chapin 1870; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1893-94; 1915-16; 1917-18; 1929).

An early transportation, commercial, and retail center which served Columbia County and the region to its north, Portage attracted a large transient population. The city's numerous hotels illustrate this important role.

**Restaurants**

Many of the more prosperous hotel managers in Portage opened dining rooms in their establishments. For example, the Raulf, its predecessor the Corning House, and the Emders House operated restaurants. Therefore, few businesses functioned solely as a restaurants prior to the 1890s. Restaurants proliferated during the second decade of the twentieth century. They often operated in conjunction with bakeries, ice cream parlors, and saloons.

Michael Huber operated a bakery, hotel, and restaurant at 113 E. Cook (56/7) about 1885 (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1885; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1885). Buglass & Co. Bakery (224 E. Wisconsin, 24/28) similarly ran a restaurant with its bakery business between at least 1921 and 1928 (Polk, R.L. & Co. 1921; 1927-28). P.W. McDermott ran a restaurant in conjunction with his saloon about 1910 at 305 DeWitt (25/7). Also in the same period, William H. Fuller operated a restaurant along with his saloon at 218 W. Cook (57/5) (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1910; Voshardt 1910). C.E. Peterson maintained a restaurant probably in conjunction with his saloon at 107 E. Cook (57/0) between at least 1928 and 1937 (Polk, R.L. & Co. 1927-28; Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929; Commonwealth Telephone Co. 1937). Kerr's Restaurant, now T.J.'s Restaurant, occupied 100 E. Cook (25/20) from at least 1937 through 1955 (Columbia Co. Historical Society 1982; Commonwealth Telephone Co. 1937; 1948; Johnson Printing Co. 1955). The Modern Restaurant operated next door at 102 E. Cook (57/24) during the same period between at least 1937 and 1948 (Commonwealth Telephone Co. 1937; 1948). Eugene Jadna opened the Pig'N Whistle, a candy, ice cream, and light lunch establishment with marble soda fountain, in the Porter Building at 313 DeWitt in 1917 through 1929. The Porter Building burned in 1950 (Portage Daily Register 2/28/1917; 10/9/1929; Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863-). After 1929, Whalen's Restaurant occupied the block at 320 DeWitt (25/12) (Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929).

**Saloons and Taverns**

From the 1840s, the communities at The Portage have supported a substantial

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number of saloons. As the lumber industry expanded along the Wisconsin River, the number of saloons expanded along E. Wisconsin in the 1840s to accommodate growing trade. Many of the hotels in this area as well as those located along the Cook Street retail district after 1850 included taverns in their establishments. A tavern was operated in the Agency House by 1836, and a Grog Shop was established along the Wisconsin River by 1839 (Butterfield 1880: 427; Webster 1839). The Veeder House (Butterfield 1880: 593), the Corning House and later the Raulf Hotel (207 W. Cook, 31/22), and the Emdor House (236 W. Wisconsin, 24/32) included taverns.

The Haertel or Eulberg Brewery (137-139 W. Cook, 56/26) and the Fort Winnebago or Epstein Brewery (401-403 W. Edgewater) (Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952; Butterfield 1880: 664) included beer halls. John Hettinger, the proprietor of the Fort Winnebago Brewery, established a beer hall on Cook Street adjacent to the brewery in 1867 (Wisconsin State Register 1867 [5/18: 1/3]). A saloon manager operated the tavern at 137-139 W. Cook (56/26) for the Eulberg Brewing Company for many of the years between at least 1885 and 1947. The company also placed its office in this building from at least 1885 through 1901 (Sanborn-Perris Map Co 1885; 1889; 1894; 1901; Commonwealth Telephone Co. 1947; Farrell 1917-18; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1911-12; Voshardt 1910). Since beer did not travel well, the brewery industries sold their own products locally.

These breweries also owned several other taverns in the retail district and presumably supplied their managers with their product. Constructed in 1878 at 115-117 E. Cook (56/5), the Dullaghan, Portage or Eulberg Opera Hall enclosed a double store on the first floor. One and sometime both sides of this building served as a saloon for much of the period between 1885 and 1929. Between about 1912 and 1929, the Eulberg Brewing Company owned the building (Mohr 1952; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863 [1912-30]). The Eulberg Brewing Company also owned the double store building at 131 W. Cook (56/24) between at least 1876 and about 1915. Between 1895 and perhaps as late as 1917, Henry Windus operated a saloon in the east side of the building. Similarly, the Epstein Brewing Company owned the building at 117 W. Cook (56/17) between about 1890 when it was constructed and 1915. A saloon was operated at this location from at least 1894 to 1918 (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1894; 1918; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1890-1905]). Henry Epstein also owned 218 W. Cook (57/5) when it was constructed in 1880. Peter Bartosz became owner of the building between 1885 and 1890. Since his name is included in the date block, he probably operated the saloon and associated billiard hall from 1880 through 1903. Mrs. Peter Bartosz in turn owned the business and operated it between 1903 and 1906 and perhaps as late as 1913 to 1917. Between these dates, managers such as Fink and Connor and William H. Fuller who also ran a restaurant operated the business under her ownership. Paul Luek purchased the building between 1920 and 1925. Through 1929, Herbert Witt later joined by Luek ostensibly maintained a billiard hall during Prohibition which lasted between 1919 and 1933. He operated a saloon in the building after Prohibition (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1885; 1910; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1880-1930]; Johnson Printing Co. 1955; Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1893-94; 1901-02; 1903-04; 1905-06; 1911-12; 1928; Farrell 1917; Voshardt 1910; S.H. Moore; Wright 1890; Eulberg 1993).

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The following establishments represent the additional identified saloons which generally operated for several or more years prior to 1940 in the retail district of Portage. Patrick Lennon established a mercantile store in 1864. Lennon and after his death in 1895 his son Patrick J. Lennon operated a saloon in combination with a general store at 125 W. Cook Street (56/21) between 1885 and 1928. Patrick J. Lennon specialized in meats and continued to run the saloon (Jones 1914 [2]: 594; Turner, A.J. 1903: 23; Portage Daily Register 1/17/72; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1885; 1918; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1885-1925]). Constructed in 1899 or 1900, the building at 220 W. Wisconsin (24/27) was owned by Ludwig Baerwolf and operated by Baerwolf and George Helmann as a saloon from at least 1901 through 1906. Baerwolf continued to own the building until at least 1930 but hired different managers to run his business. During Prohibition, the business is no longer advertised as a saloon, and finally appears as a soft drink establishment operated by Fred S. Koroch in 1929 (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1901; 1918; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1898-1930]). Peter McDermott opened a saloon known by 1908 as The Club at 305 DeWitt (25/7) from 1900 through at least 1918 (Jones 1914 [2]: 729; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1901; 1918; Farrell 1917-18; R.L. Polk & Co. 1901-02). William Helmann also ran a saloon at 218 W. Wisconsin (24/25) about 1917 and at 214 W. Wisconsin (24/24) between 1937 and 1955. The tavern at 218 W. Wisconsin remained in operation between 1894 and 1918. George Helmann operated the saloon at 220 W. Cook (57/4) between 1908 and 1955. D.M. Griffey and Julius Schwantz separately managed the saloon at 126 W. Cook (57/16) between 1910 and 1918. The managers of the saloons at 314 DeWitt (25/13) in business in 1889; at 127 W. Cook (56/22) operating between 1885 and 1918; and at 136 W. Cook (57/11) extant between 1885 and 1910 were not identified.

In the nineteenth and well into the twentieth century, the taverns and especially the beer halls served more than the obvious function. They became the centers of informal social gatherings for the different segments of the predominately German ethnic community as well as other community groups.

**Transportation Related Facilities**

Prior to the use of the automobile at the turn of the century, several small cities moved on electric street cars during the last two decades of the century. However, most relied on their own horse drawn vehicles or those operated by and rented from liveries. Although only one identified livery remains in Portage, they were once quite numerous. Many of the larger hotels such as the Emdor House and the Corning House maintained liveries to serve their customers (Democrat 7/30/97). The most commonly identified liveries in the historical literature include the Stephen Gates Livery and the Hyland Livery. Owner of the City Hotel, Gates operated his livery primarily between the railroad depot which lay one mile from the main business district and the Cook Street retail district between about 1860 and 1910. His livery stood at the southwest corner of E. Cook and Main by 1885 until ca. 1917 (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1885; Democrat 4/1/1922). Serving the Corning House, the Hyland Livery stood at the northeast corner of W. Wisconsin and W. Conant near the site of the current post office. The livery was established at this site by 1889 and remained there through 1918 (Democrat 7/30/97; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1889; 1918). Samuel Stain also operated a livery

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at the site of 240 W. Cook just to the west of the district. Established by 1889, the livery added auto storage in 1918 and was converted to the garage of Studebaker Sales and Service by 1929 (Portage Daily Register 1952 [7/2/: 13/7-8]; 7/17/71; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1889; 1918; 1929). An unidentified, one story brick livery with loft has stood at the northwest corner of W. Wisconsin and W. Conant behind 235 W. Conant since 1894 (Meindl 1991 [Leo Frederick 1990]; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1894; 1929). These liveries either operated horse-drawn buses to and from the depot and other locations or provided facilities to maintain the necessary animals for small operators. Horse-drawn delivery services hauling groceries and other goods within the city also operated from liveries or from their own private barns. Operated by Chris and Albert Johnson between 1915 and 1930, the Cooperative Delivery Service maintained its horses in the livery of Samuel Stain. Motor buses began to replace the horse-drawn counterpart in 1917 (Portage Daily Register 7/17/71).

The first automobile appeared on the streets of Portage at the turn of the century. By the late 1920s, most families in Portage owned an automobile (Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Portage Daily Register 5/22/71). Liveries either closed their doors or converted to automobile repair as did the Stain Livery between 1918 and 1929.

During the 1930s, the city council passed a large number of ordinances allowing the construction of gas stations within the city limits (e.g. Portage, City of 1930-41 [1930-31: 118, 120, 122; 1932-33: 106-07, 109, 111; 1937-38: 65]). Between 1921 and 1925, probably in 1921, the Washburn Fuel Company located at 210 W. Wisconsin, the former location of a blacksmith (24/21). Walter and Bertha Washburn leased the building and the station area to the Walker-Wolfram Garage by 1929. This garage both sold gas and serviced automobiles. The Washburn Fuel Company remained at this location through 1937 (Commonwealth Telephone Co. 1937; 1948; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1919-21; 1924-25; 1927-28; Farrell 1917-18; Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1920-30]; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1918; 1929).

Additional automobile supply and repair locations appearing in the 1920s included Art Williams, vulcanizer at 210 W. Wisconsin (24/26) between 1924 and 1929, the Portage Boat and Engine Company which began at 105 W. Mullett by 1908 and moved to its new garage at 126 E. Cook (57/27) about 1917. The company remained there through 1937. By 1948, Marachowsky's Portage Store had expanded into the building. The Portage Engine and Boat Company repaired automobiles in addition to boats. Their shop at 126 E. Cook possessed a capacity of 35 cars (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1910; 1918; 1929; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1915-30]; Commonwealth Telephone Co. 1937; Moore, S.H. 1908-09; Voshardt 1910). The first floor of 214 W. Wisconsin (24/24) provided a number of automobile-related services. The space functioned as the Portage Hotel Garage by 1917 and perhaps as early as 1910. The Portage Hotel once stood at 200 W. Edgewater. By 1919 and probably as early as 1915, Wright and Robbins operated a garage at this location before moving to 205 DeWitt (25/2) in 1917. Wright continued to own the building until after 1925. Between 1926 and 1929, John Helmann purchased the building and operated Helmann's Garage for a short period before he converted it to a tavern (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1901; 1910; 1918; 1929; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863-

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[1920-30]; Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1913-14; 1917-18; 1927-28; Farrell 1917-18; Voshardt 1910).

Two automobile dealerships located in Portage's retail district. Hill Ford Mercury Company at the intersection of W. Wisconsin and W. Edgewater began as the Loomis and Weinke Motor Sales Company garage in 1917 or 1918. Rodney C. Loomis, president, and Ernest A. Weinke ran the operation. The company first replaced the furniture store of Schultz and Company with a garage constructed of tile and supported with iron columns about 1917 or 1918. This building is the north portion of the current dealership. After Nash dealer E. A. Weinke bought out his partner, he opened a new automobile showroom and service department in 1924. The two story, tile and steel truss addition sits at the intersection of W. Wisconsin and W. Edgewater (109 W. Edgewater, 24/19). Constructed between 1901 and 1910, a brick warehouse probably related to Schultz's store continues to stand at the rear elevation of these attached buildings. The E.A. Weinke dealership became the Whitney Motor Company Ford-Mercury dealership by 1937 (Register Democrat 2/19/24; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1901; 1910; 1918; 1929; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1918-30]; Farrell 1917; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1924-25; Commonwealth Telephone Co. 1937; Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952).

The Wright and Robbins Garage was located at 205 DeWitt in 1917-1918. Edward T. Wright and Jacob E. Robbins replaced this building with a new garage (25/2) in 1919. They continued their auto service and repair operation from 1919 through 1924 or 1925. The Wright Motor Company, a Ford Sales and Service operation, formed by 1927 and remained in these quarters through 1937. By 1948, the A & P occupied the building which is now Roger's Gift and Gallery (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1910; 1918; 1929; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1919]; Eulberg 1993; Commonwealth Telephone Co. 1937; 1948; Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929; Farrell 1917-18; R.L. Polk & Co. 1919-20; 1924-25; 1927-28).

**The Mercantile Store**

The mercantile store was among the first businesses established in Portage and in most early Wisconsin communities. Later also described as general stores, these businesses sold a broad range of goods from groceries, clothing, dry goods and notions, to hardware, agricultural implements, some furniture, and stationery. As noted, they offered a broad range of services in addition to retailing. In the late nineteenth century, more specialized stores began to carry part of the stock of the general store. As profits gained from local general merchandising declined, these stores slowly evolved into the department store and chain store which carried a more restricted line of goods. By the 1890s, several of the large mercantile stores established by local businessmen in Portage began to refer to their stores as department stores. National chain stores entered Portage and replaced the mercantile or general store by the 1920s. They followed a new approach to merchandising. These national companies served as a middleman distributing its stock to its local dealers. These stores successfully competed with resident stores by selling a large volume of goods quickly at a low price (Glad 1990: 196-97).

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The early Fort Winnebago sutlers carried a general line of goods adjacent to the fort by the 1830s. For example, Henry Merrell began as sutler in 1834 in a building within the fort and in 1837 or 1838 moved across the Fox and erected a store adjacent to or as part of his dwelling. It now stands at 505 E. Cook. Between 1840 and 1846 or 1848, his brother Gordon Merrell joined him in business. Merrell received his goods from New York through Buffalo, Detroit and Green Bay and up the Fox River on Durham boats (Butterfield 1880: 588, 915; Merrell 1908 [1876]: 367-73; Turner, A.J. 1903: 27). Keegan and Moore on the Fox River in the fort's commissary between 1849 and 1850, Berry located at the fort, T. Dean & Co. of Madison, John B. Strong, and C.H. Smith also carried a general line of goods before 1851 (River Times 1850 [8/26: 4/3; 9/9: 4/1]; 1851 [1/23: 1/4, 2/4]; Butterfield 1880: 593; Democrat 3/1/1915). Gideon Low kept a small stock of goods in the Franklin House near 1316 Wauona Trail by 1838 (Ogle, Geo. A. & Co. 1901: 738). Vandercook and Helmes maintained a supply of dry goods, groceries, clothing, boots and shoes, hats, and medicine for cash by 1851 (River Times 1851 [1/23: 1/4]).

Several large mercantile companies which located at Portage after 1850 remained during much of the nineteenth century. N.H. Wood first began his business as an auction house in a small building on Portage's Main Street in 1850. In 1851 to 1853, he moved his business to a frame building erected in Pacific. Rodney O. Loomis worked for Wood as a clerk between 1853 and 1857. In January, 1864, Wood moved the business to W. Wisconsin in Portage. He moved into the store building erected by Michael Van Winter which once stood at 208 W. Cook, the current site of the First Star Bank, in 1856. In 1868-1869, N.H. Wood & Co. advertised as "Importers and Dealers in General Merchandise, Dry Goods, Groceries, Hats, Caps, Boots, and Shoes. Manufacturers of Clothing....Agents for Fairbanks' Scales and Singer's Sewing Machines" (Farnham and Vivian 1868-69).

After 1857, Wood formed a series of partnerships. In that year, the business was known as Wood, Loomis & Osborn, and in 1858, he became Wood & Loomis. In 1859, N.H. Wood & Co. included N.H. Wood, R.O. Loomis, George H. Osborn, and Frank E. Wood. The name altered again in 1861 to Wood, Loomis, and Osborn, and between 1863 and 1865 it became Wood, Loomis & Co., then including partner C.R. Gallett. When Osborn retired from the business in 1865-67, it again became N.H. Wood & Co. The name remained unchanged with the addition of L.H. Breese to the partnership in 1867. Wood retired from the mercantile business in 1869, and the name of the firm became Loomis, Gallett, & Breese, Wholesale and Retail Merchants. After R.O. Loomis's death in 1883, the business operated as Breese, Loomis & Co. with Ll. Breese, C.J. Loomis, and Wm. Ll. Breese as members of the firm between 1883 and 1889. R.O. Loomis had died in 1883. The firm established a branch in Augusta, Wisconsin in the early 1880s. The partners discontinued the business in 1914. N.H. Wood's firms never occupied the building which he erected at 210 W. Cook in 1876 (55/7). In its name block, he established his dislike for dishonest politicians, applauding those who supported lower taxes. However, probably as early as 1877 to 1915, the firm of Loomis, Gallett, and Breese expanded into this building which stood adjacent to the original store (Butterfield 1880: 527, 663, 911; Wisconsin State Register 1863 [3/14: 3/1]; 1864 [12/3: 3/1]; 1865 [1/30: 3/1]; 6/13/74; Register-Democrat 3/2/1915; 9/5/38; Portage Daily Register 12/23/89; Gregory 1870: 249; Wisconsin Necrology vol. 26,

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52; Jones 1914 [2]: 644; Turner, A.J. 1903: 23-24, 36-37, 43; Merrill, Woodward & Co. 1877).

C.H. Pettibone arrived with his clerk Edward L. Jaeger in 1850 and established a mercantile store in Portage. Jaeger had worked with him several years before in Ohio. Pettibone first occupied a building at the corner of Edgewater and Main associated with the Veeder House. In 1852, Pettibone located his mercantile store in a Greek Revival retail building which may have been the Pettibone Block at the southwest corner of DeWitt and Cook. W.W. and Alexander Forbes also opened a mercantile business in this block between 1856 and 1870 (Butterfield 1880: 599, 897). The building burned in 1880 and was replaced by the Phoenix Block (102 W. Cook, 25/21). When Pettibone opened a branch at Oxford in 1856, he formed a partnership with Jaeger and sent him to the Oxford store. In 1862, the two stores were consolidated at Portage. In 1868 and 1869, Pettibone and Jaeger advertised as dry goods merchants, "Wholesale and Retail Dealers in Dry Goods, Notions, Groceries, Ready Made Clothing, Boots and Shoes, Hats and Caps, Carpets, Oil Cloths &c. DeWitt Street" (Farnham and Vivian 1868-69). The partnership dissolved in 1869 when Pettibone left Portage, and Jaeger maintained his own mercantile business which he called The Fair between 1870 and 1892. He may have operated at 121 W. Cook (56/19), but there is no clear evidence to support this attribution. Jaeger retired in 1892 and probably sold his stock to William Roehm<sup>7</sup>.

William Roehm appears to have sold the business to Otto Meyer by about 1904. By 1905, Otto Meyer operated a grocery which he called the Fair. He occupied 121 W. Cook (56/19) by 1908. Meyer expanded this business to a general merchandise store, also called The Fair, by 1909 and continued to operate in the building through 1930. By 1937, the Badger Paint Company occupied the property (Jones 1914 [2]: 615; City Bank of Portage 1914: 10; Register-Democrat 2/2/1924; Democrat 7/30/1897; Jones 1914 [2]: 560-61, 615; Portage Daily Register 9/25/71).

The firm of Bebb & Parry established their business in 1856 as dealers in staple and fancy dry goods, notions, boots and shoes, and hats and caps. By conducting business solely on a cash basis rather than permitting credit purchases, it offered low prices. In 1865, the business became Parry, Bebb & Muir and W.T. Parry and D.G. Muir continued this mercantile business after 1869 through 1889. Bebb and Muir first occupied the Pettibone Block at the southwest corner of Cook and DeWitt. In 1869, Conrad Collipp supported the construction of a two story, 22 by 115 feet, brick store at 124 W. Cook (57/17). Collipp rented the building to Parry and Muir sometime before 1880, perhaps between 1869 and 1889 (Butterfield 1880: 891; Merrill, Woodward & Co. 1877; Butterfield 1880: 663, 916, 918; Portage Daily Register 12/23/89; Register-Democrat 3/15/1940).

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<sup>7</sup> Portage Daily Register 8/19/72; Wisconsin Visual and Sound Archives n.d.; Butterfield 1880: 590, 593, 663; River Times 1852: [6/22: 3/3-5]; Wisconsin State Register 6/13/1974; Turner, A.J. 1903: 29; Merrill, Woodward & Co. 1877; City Bank of Portage 1914: 10; Register-Democrat 2/2/1924; Democrat 7/30/1897; Jones 1914 [2]: 560-61, 615.

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Frederick W. Schulze and Gerhard Schumacher operated as the firm of Schumacher & Schulze, wholesale and retail dealers of general merchandise, from 1867 to 1869. In 1869, Ferdinand Schulze joined the firm which then became known as Schumacher & Schulze Bro. When his brother left in 1873, the business returned to Schumacher & Schulze. Between 1886 and 1890, it was known as Schulze & Co. By 1873, the company operated as a wholesale and retail cash department store or mercantile store. Its stock included dry goods, notions, clothing, carpets, boots and shoes, and hats. Moving from a location on W. Cook, the store probably occupied the east portion of the Phoenix Block after it was built in 1880 (108 W. Cook, 57/34). In 1893, Schulze & Co. was re-organized and incorporated as the Bee Hive with Ferdinand Schulze as the senior member of the firm. The store offered its customers 26 departments of general merchandise. After Schulz died in 1907, Alvin C. Taylor became president of the Bee Hive Company which remained in business through 1914 (Portage Daily Register 12/23/89; 12/13/1917; Butterfield 1880: 663, 926; Democrat 7/30/1897: 5; Jones 1914 [2]: 627; Merrill, Woodward & Co. 1877).

James A. Carroll and Charles A. Klug opened their clothing and dry goods establishment by 1889. They located it in the building west of Schulze & Co. (108 W. Cook, 57/34). The Voertman Block had replaced the previous building west of the Phoenix Block in 1897-98. August Voertman sold the block to the Carroll and Klug Department Store in 1908, and they extensively remodeled the building. They arranged their store so that the entrances into the men's and women's clothing departments were completely separate. In 1908, the store advertised "...dry goods, clothiers, men's furnishings, merchant tailors" (Moore, S.H. 1908-09). In 1918, Carroll and Klug purchased the building to the east of them previously occupied by the Bee Hive, the west third of the 1880 Phoenix Block, remodeled the building, and extended their department store into it. They placed their men's and boys' clothing in the new store, and the women's clothing remained in the west portion of the store. Carroll and Klug closed their business in 1937. F.W. Woolworth then occupied the west portion of 108 E. Cook, and J.C. Penny was located in the east side after 1948 through 1955 (Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; 11/29/1918; 1/25/1937; Jones 1914 [2]: 622; Register-Democrat 1908 [2/8: 1/3; 3/2: 3/1]; 3/2/1915).

In 1883, L.W. Barden sold to Charles and William Mohr the building at 119 W. Cook (56/18). They replaced the building standing at that site in 1883 or 1884. Charles Mohr & Bro. with Charles and Christian Mohr had previously established their dry goods business by 1873. By 1886, Charles Mohr may have run the business alone. With his sons Charles Jr. and August, he then operated as Charles Mohr & Co. by 1890. The two sons maintained the business as Charles Mohr & Bro. from 1893 through 1910. Although Charles died between 1910 and 1915, the company operated under the same name in the same building until at least 1920. By 1929, J.C. Penny occupied the building and remained there through 1937. Gambles replaced the department store by 1948 through 1955 (Butterfield 1880: 663; Murtagh 1987).

A series of short term mercantile companies also located in the main retail district. Frank B. Ernsberger established a mercantile store known as Ernsberger & Co. in the Opera House at 115-117 E. Cook (56/5) in 1879 for one year before

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moving to Cambria (Butterfield 1880: 663, 896; Democrat 7/30/97). Michael J. Howard and Charles Sharkey, general merchants, opened their business in 1895, and operated it as late as 1909. However, in 1905 to 1906, D.J. Leary appears to have replaced Sharkey as a partner. Carrying dry goods and men's clothing and furnishings, they located 126 W. Cook (57/16) in 1908 and 1909. Prior to 1908 and perhaps as early as 1897, Howard and Sharkey occupied the building owned by M.J. Howard at 214 W. Cook (57/6) (Democrat 7/30/1897). In 1897, Moran and Arthur or the Cash Store represented a dry goods firm ran by Edward C. Moran with partner Miss Grace E. Arthur. The store was located part of the newly erected Register Building at 309 DeWitt (25/8) by 1908. It included dry goods, dress goods, underwear, hosiery, tin and granite ware, china, groceries, and sheet music (Democrat 7/30/97: 4; Voshardt 1910: 25; Moore, S.H. 1908-09; Portage Daily Register 1908 [8/4: 3/1]). Finally, Emile E. Lieder opened a dry goods and men's furnishings store for a short period in part of the double store at 131 W. Cook (56/24). He probably remained at that location between 1919 and 1929.

Several of Portage's general merchants established branch stores, for example Loomis, Gallett, and Breese established one at Augusta in the early 1880s, and C.J. Pettibone sent E.L. Jaeger to Oxford between 1856 and 1862. Carroll and Klug and Schulze's Bee Hive grew from mercantile business and advertised themselves as department stores in the 1890s. But, the department store chains were not established in Portage until the 1920s. Marachowski, Inc., a Portage store, opened between 1921 and 1924 at 136 E. Cook (57/11). It also operated stores in other small cities such as Richland Center by 1931 (192 East Court, RI15/21). After fire completely destroyed the store in Portage in November, 1937, the building was replaced in that year (Republican Observer 2/26/1931; Portage Daily Register 11/15/1937). Carey's Variety Store opened in the remodeled Moran Grocery at 130-132 W. Cook (57/13) in 1929 (Register-Democrat 11/15/1929). Lloyd Atkinson's Atkinson Federated Store was established as a local department store at 117 W. Cook (56/17) in 1937. The retail building underwent expansion and remodeling in 1946 when a second floor and balcony were added (Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952: 22; 4/19/75). J.C. Penney opened a store in Portage in 1923 at 108 E. Cook (57/32). The store also occupied quarters at 119 E. Cook (56/4) between about 1929 and 1937. Robert Lohr, local manager of the chain, purchased the Home Theater in the 1960s (Eulberg 1993) and the new J.C. Penney store was built at 112 E. Cook (57/31) (Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Portage Public Library n.d.). Gambles followed J.C. Penney at 119 W. Cook by 1948 (Murtagh 1987). Montgomery Ward occupied the remodeled Dullaghan or Eulberg Opera House (117 E. Cook, 56/17) in 1930 and remained through 1955 (Register-Democrat 9/11/1930). Spurgeon's was established as a nation-wide chain in 1907. The company located at Portage in 1927. By 1929, it occupied 206 W. Cook prior to Kroger's location at the building. Located just west of the City Bank building at 202 W. Cook (57/8) and now replaced by an addition to the west side of the building, the Kroger Store burned in 1947. Spurgeon's moved to the center of the Phoenix Block at 102 W. Cook (25/21, not extant) by 1954 when the chain remodeled the building's front and interior (Register Democrat 6/15/1954; Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952). The First National Bank later expanded into this location. F.W. Woolworth occupied 118-122 W. Cook (57/18) by 1917 through 1937. It then moved next door to the west side of 108 E. Cook (57/32) in 1937 and remained there through 1955.

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**Clothing Retail**

In most communities, clothing retail usually separated from the mercantile business at the turn of the century. However, probably because Portage possessed a large tailor industry, clothing retail stores appeared early. In addition to the tailor operations, some of the large mercantile stores at Portage including Loomis, Gallett and Breese maintained a tailoring department. Because tailors generally made all or most of each piece of clothing, the clothing industry at Portage should be viewed as a large craft operation rather than a manufacturing establishment. This generalization does not include the hosiery or underwear industry at Portage.

Cornelius Buckley and Jacob C. Leisch operated as merchant tailors at the turn of the century until 1906. By 1908, they had formed a men's clothiers and furnishings store at 131 W. Cook (56/24). By 1910, although the name of the firm remained the same at least for a time, the partnership included J.C. Leisch and Otto Kirsch who advertised as tailors and clothiers. They remained at 131 W. Cook through 1917 and probably until 1921 when the firm now recently named Leisch and Kirsch moved to 128 W. Cook (57/15). J.C. Leisch as sole owner sold the store to William J. or Dietz Eulberg and D.W. O'Leary in 1929. The business remained Eulberg and O'Leary until 1939 when Eulberg bought the business and altered the name to Eulberg's Men's Store. The building was remodeled in 1948 and 1957. By 1952, Eulberg added a boy's department and completed interior alteration in the store. The business incorporated in 1960 under the name of Eulberg's Men's and Boys' Shop, Ltd. David Eulberg joined the business in 1962. In 1980, he expanded the store east into the Towne Shop (Register-Democrat 9/3/1909; 7/29/1954; Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952; Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Eulberg 1993).

Adam Jacob Rebholz founded the A.J. Rebholz Co. in 1895 to sell men's clothing and furnishings. He located his business by 1908 at 114-116 W. Cook (57/33) where it remained until about 1916 when he moved his store to 210 W. Cook (55/7). The business was later continued until 1944 at 210 W. Cook by Edward Adam Rebholz (Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Register-Democrat 3/2/1915; 3/1/1923; Portage Daily Register 1908 [5/19: 2/2-3]; 4/22/1952).

In 1916, Otto Isberner purchased the building 109 W. Cook (56/14) and opened the Fashion Store as the first specialty, ready-to-wear clothing store for ladies in Portage. In 1920 when he purchased the building at 126 W. Cook (57/16), Isberner probably moved his business there. He sold the store to G.A. Pearson in 1950 (Register-Democrat 4/1/1948; 5/13/1950).

**Retail Shoes**

During the first years of settlement, cobblers made and sold shoes to order and general merchants carried ready-made shoes in their stores. Retail shoe stores did not appear until the turn of the century. A number of comparatively early, short-lived boots and shoe establishments existed in Portage in the late

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nineteenth century and during the early twentieth century. Although not verified, those from the nineteenth century probably also made custom order shoes. For the most part, their owners were not determined (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1885; 1929).

William Ketchum opened his boot and shoe business as a salesman of shoes, hats, and handbags at 134 W. Cook (57/12) in 1895. He may have also served as the boot shop for Breese, Loomis and Co. By 1900 through 1910, he operated under the name of Ketchum and Parry. His daughter, Rhea Ketchum, continued his business until 1976 at the same location. In that year, she sold the store to Barbara Kaiser. The business became Barbara's Inc. of Portage in 1981 (Portage Centennial Committee 1952; Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Portage Daily Register 10/8/1970; Democrat 1900 [7/13: 8/6]).

Anton Lohr, Jr. worked as a shoemaker who also repaired and sold shoes by 1895. He located at 222 W. Cook (57/3) by 1908 and remained there through 1917. In 1920, he purchase 214 W. Cook (57/6) and probably located his business in that building through 1948. By 1955, the business operated under the name of Mattke Shoe Shop. Mattke's Shoes was founded by Paul Mattke and later continued by his son Lawrence (Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Portage Centennial Committee 1952). Otto Schwart located his boot and shoe retail business at 111 E. Cook (56/8) about 1917 (Farrell 1917-18).

### Groceries

Although the mercantile store carried groceries as a primary line of goods, grocery stores generally began operation as a separate retail business in Wisconsin in the 1870s (Nesbit 1985: 485). However, in Portage, groceries existed as early as the late 1830s. Silas Walworth located a small grocery at E. Wisconsin and Wauona Trail near the U.S. Hotel in 1837. By 1880, nineteen grocers served Portage. These small groceries not only retailed their goods but delivered them. Private individuals within the city did not always possess the means to transport their purchases (Butterfield 1880: 588, 663; Jones 1914 [1]: 185; Portage Daily Register 9/25/71).

An early groceryman in Portage, August Voertman ran his business from 1853 to 1878. Between 1853 and 1858, the business included a partner, Mr. Weiskirch. Voertman located his store at the sight of the Carroll and Klug Department Store at 108 W. Cook (57/34, not extant). This building was replaced in 1897. Voertman also sold goods wholesale to lumbermen (Turner, A.J. 1903: 38; Jones 1914 [2]: 611).

William Niemeyer engaged in the grocery and fruit business in 1861 through 1890. He owned 130-132 W. Cook (57/13) between 1867 when the building was constructed and about 1895 and probably occupied the building between at least 1867 and 1890 (Butterfield 1880: 918; Portage Public Library n.d. [photo, 1880s]).

Thomas Drew entered the grocery business in 1859 and operated except for the years 1861-1865 as an individual proprietor until 1879. In that year, he added

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T.D.Pugh as a partner. He then also dealt in farmers' produce. By 1890, Drew was located at the site of northwest corner of Edgewater and DeWitt. Sometime prior to 1908, he moved to 314 DeWitt (25/13) and probably remained there until the store became F. Cushing Grocery by 1917. F. Cushing operated at that location through 1929 after which he moved to 316 DeWitt (25/13) and remained there through 1937 (Butterfield 1880: 663, 895).

Henry Bolting moved his stock into his new store on W. Cook in October, 1863. From at least 1870 to 1876, he owned the building at 127 W. Cook (56/22), perhaps the location of his store. He was a wholesale and retail dealer in groceries, wines, liquors, and cigars (Wisconsin State Register 1863 [10/17: 3/1]).

In 1871-1872, William Fulton in partnership with Alexander Thompson purchased the grocery business of his uncle John Fulton who had established the store by 1853. In 1879, he acquired his partner's interest. Fulton dealt in staple and fancy groceries. He occupied 122 W. Cook (57/18) between about 1885 and about 1905. By 1910 and through 1917 and perhaps to 1920, William Fulton located at 124 W. Cook (57/17) (Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; Democrat 7/30/97: 5; Jones 1914 [2]: 592; Butterfield 1880: 898).

Edward W. Moran and Martin Moran began a grocery in Portage as Moran Bros. by 1873. In 1880, Edward Moran continued the business as sole proprietor through 1917. By 1890, Moran carried crockery and glassware as well as groceries. The store may have occupied 128 W. Cook (57/15) by 1890 and was at that location between 1908 and 1910. Sometime after 1910 through 1918, Moran had located his store at 130-132 W. Cook (57/13) (Democrat 7/30/97; Butterfield 1880: 663).

Selling staple and fancy goods, Porter H. Shaver ran a grocery known as the High Priced Grocery in the Hillyer Block at 320 DeWitt and Conant (25/12) by 1890. He remained in business occasionally with partners such as Charles C. Jaeger between 1887 and about 1901 when he sold the grocery to Herb Slowey, his former clerk. The business then operated under either the name High Price Grocery or P.H. Shaver and Co. By 1917, it became the White Market Grocery with Slowey remaining as proprietor until 1920. He sold the grocery to M.C. Hettinger and Thomas Mulcahy. By 1929, Whalen's Cafe occupied the building (Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Register-Democrat 12/4/1920; Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889).

Additional, more short-term groceries located in the main retail district at and after the turn of the century. Frank L. Kiefer ran his grocery and crockery store known as F.L. Kiefer & Co. between at least 1893 and 1896 with several different partners. He probably operated at 134 W. Cook (57/12), a building then owned by Andrew Kiefer who operated a real estate and insurance business. William R. Deakin located his grocery store between 1910 and about 1920 in the west portion of 122 E. Cook (57/25) (Farrell 1917; Voshardt 1910; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1910). Between 1910 and 1917, Otto C. Kopplin ran the grocery in the Eulberg Building at 137 W. Cook (56/26). An unrelated establishment, the Universal Grocery Company, occupied the adjacent space in this block at 139 W. Cook in the late 1920s. John Welsh purchased the grocery of John O'Keefe located near 301 W. Wisconsin in 1915. He and Ray Welsh relocated their grocery several

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times including at 101-115 W. Cook (56/14) by 1929 (Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929; Portage Daily Register 9/25/71). Established by 1948 at 205 DeWitt (25/2), the A & P represented a chain grocery emphasizing self-service and lower prices.

**Meat Markets**

Like the grocery, retail stores specializing in meats also separated from the general mercantile store at an early date. Anton Klenert first came to Portage in 1849 and settled in the city in 1857 when he opened his meat market at 109 Edgewater, the site of Hill Ford (24/19). In 1864, Klenert's Meat Market occupied a new two story, cream brick, 30 by 60 building at 123 W. Cook (56/20). The meat market continued to occupy the same building until 1950. Anton Klenert remained in business with a number of different partners from the mid-1880s onward. Between 1884 and 1885, his brothers Alois and perhaps Charles took over the business for a brief period. Anton returned in 1886 and Louis Klenert, his son, worked with his father as a partner beginning in 1888. In 1889, H.S. Richmond joined the firm forming Richmond and Klenert until 1898. Anton J. Klenert replaced Louis in the partnership in 1892. Frank Klenert entered the business at Anton's retirement in 1892. Anton Klenert died in 1897. By 1901, the brothers had formed Klenert Brothers. After A.J. Klenert's death in 1923, Frank Klenert continued the business as a sole proprietor until his death in 1947. His son, Sidney Klenert operated the business until its sale to Gordon Mitchell in 1950. By 1955, Sears Roebuck occupied the building (Portage Daily Register 12/23/89; Democrat 7/30/97; Wisconsin State Register 1864 [7/30: 3/1; 4/2: 3/1; 10/15: 3/1; 11/26: 3/1]; Register Democrat 2/21/924; 8/18/1950; Portage Centennial Committee 1952; Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Turner, A.J. 1903: 22).

By 1908 through 1909, Joseph H. Bryan ran a meat market adjacent to the harness shop of William Bunker in 121-123 E. Cook (56/3). He had been in business at a different address on the north side of Cook since at least 1884 (Wright 1890). By 1910, the business was operated by Joseph H. and Harry Bryan, as Bryan and Son, at 119 E. Cook (56/4). Joseph H. Bryan remained in business until at least 1917 and owned 119 E. Cook through 1930.

John A. Bryan also operated a butcher shop by 1870 (Chapin 1870). He owned the property at 119 E. Cook (56/4) from 1868 through 1904 and presumably ran his business in the building on the property which was replaced between 1882 and 1885. Between 1908 and 1910, John A. Bryan had moved to 109 E. Cook (56/9) and purchased that building during the interval. By 1911-1912, John A. Bryan had moved into his new building at 111 E. Cook (56/8). He remained in business through 1914.

The building at 109 E. Cook (56/9) remained the site of a meat market from 1873 through 1920. George Krech established his meat market in 1861. In 1873, Krech was located in a building at 109 E. Cook. This building was probably replaced about 1881. Krech continued his meat market in the building until its purchase by John A. Bryan about 1908. Bryan occupied the building through about 1911. Neil Brown who also operated a meat market purchased the building but not Bryan's

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business in about 1913. He remained in business to about 1920. Matt Wipperfurth, butcher, occupied this location prior to 1928 when the Leeg and Thuss Electric Company, the current owners, purchased the building (Portage Public Library n.d. [Catherine Krech, 1953]; Columbia County Historical Society 1982).

Established about 1886, A.L. McDonald & Co. dealt in fresh and salted meats and game. By 1892 when the building at 212 W. Wisconsin (24/23) was constructed, McDonald also or exclusively dealt in flour and feeds. David Shanks operated a meat market and grocery in the building by 1905. His brother, A.V. Shanks, joined him in the partnership of Shanks Bros., grocers in 1914. The business remained in operation through 1921 in the same building (Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889). Additionally, Fred Denninger ran a meat market at 137 W. Cook (56/26), part of the Eulberg Block, for a brief period about 1929 (Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929).

**Bakeries**

Portage supported several long-established bakery companies some of which supported additional services such as a restaurant or confectionery. Edward Fink arrived in Portage in 1859 and established a bakery, restaurant, and confectionery in that year. From at least 1885 and probably well before that date, he operated his business in the building which preceded the current Register Building built in 1909 (309 DeWitt, 25/8). His bakery business closed by 1905-06 (Butterfield 1880: 897; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1907-10]; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1905-06).

David Buglass, Sr. who arrived in Portage in 1882 conducted a bakery and boarding house until 1887. At least part of that time, he operated the business with his son on Cook Street. Although he departed in 1887, David Buglass, Jr. and his brother Robert G. Buglass continued the bakery and confectionery business of their father as D. & R. Buglass between 1887 and 1894. At that time, it was known as the Scotch Bakery. By 1892, they purchased 224 E. Wisconsin (24/28) which had been erected between 1886 and 1889. In July, 1894, Robert Buglass purchased the bakery from his brother and in December of 1894 sold the business back to his brother. After the brothers dissolved the partnership, David Buglass carried on the business as David Buglass & Co. with Peter Cockroft as baker. In 1908, Robert re-established himself in the bakery business incorporating it as R.G. Buglass Baking Company in 1909. He located outside the district at 312 E. Pleasant. By 1910, David Buglass also ran a lunch room in conjunction with his bakery. The Robert G. Buglass Baking Company ceased operations shortly after 1921. David Buglass continued his bakery and restaurant at 224 W. Wisconsin (24/28) through 1929 (Portage Public Schools 1948-51; Jones 1914 [2]: 620-21; Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889).

M. Huber arrived in Portage in 1854 and engaged in the bakery trade in that year at the site of 113 E. Cook (56/7). In 1879, a building housing his hotel, eating house, and bakery was erected on this property. Huber operated the European Hotel on the second floor above his bakery until at least 1903-1904. Between 1908 and

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at least 1912, he opened a bowling alley with or instead of the bakery. By 1917, the building appears to be vacant, but between 1929 and 1937, R.P. Peschl ran a bakery in the Huber Building. By 1948, it had become the Quality Bakery which occupied the building through 1955 (Butterfield 1880: 906).

**Hardware and Implement Retail**

The mercantile store carried a limited supply of agricultural implements. As agricultural settlement became established adjacent to Portage in the 1850s, farmers supported a more specialized hardware retail store carrying a larger inventory and wider range of tools and hardware. Hardware companies often employed a tinsmith within their shop who produced and repaired tin, iron, and copper housewares. Although hardware stores often sold larger agricultural implements, agricultural implement dealers also specialized in this equipment. Portage's hinterlands supported three agricultural implement dealers by 1880 (Butterfield 1880: 662).

W.W. Corning, the proprietor of the Corning House, operated a general hardware store at the corner of W. Cook and W. Wisconsin by 1859 through 1880. He advertised as a "...Wholesale and Retail Dealer in Heavy and Shelf Hardware, Stoves, Tin and Sheet Iron Ware, Agricultural Goods, &c, &c." (Farnham and Vivian 1868-69; Butterfield 1880: 663, 892).

In 1863, Joseph E. Wells entered the hardware business as a clerk for I.W. Bacon who began his hardware in 1856. Bacon appeared in the 1860 census as a manufacturer of tin and sheet iron ware. In 1874, Wells purchased the inventory of the Bacon estate, and with partners P.J. Barkman and H.W. Williams he began his own hardware business. Between ca. 1856 and 1880, Wells and perhaps Bacon before him located in the Pettibone Block at the southwest corner of Cook and DeWitt. J.E. Wells & Co. operated in 1877 as "Wholesale and Retail dealers in General Hardware, Stoves, Farming Implements, and Manufacturers of Tin, Copper, and Sheet Iron Ware" (Merrill, Wood & Co. 1877). In 1880, Wells opened his store in the center of the new Phoenix Block at 102 W. Cook (57/24). By 1885, the hardware company placed its show room on the first floor and its tin shop, tinware, stoves on the second floor. By 1880, Wells had also established a branch firm in Waupaca. After 1903, Thomas Wells possessed an interest in the hardware company, and P.J. Barkman became the owner of the company in 1912. About 1917, Charles Kutzke of the Kutzke-Senger Hardware Store founded in 1908 purchased the stock and building of J.E. Wells & Co. at 102 W. Cook. The Kutzke-Meyer hardware remained at that location through 1929 (Butterfield 1880: 933; Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; 2/7/1922; Democrat 7/30/1897; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1860: population schedule]; Jones 1914 [2]: 622, 638-39; Portage Public Schools 1948-51; Register-Democrat 3/15/1940).

Between 1870 and 1892, E.H. Warner established a hardware business at 118-122 W. Cook (57/18) which was probably constructed in 1869. By 1885, the hardware store included a tin shop on the second floor. Frank and Louis Schulze purchased and ran the store between 1892 and 1909. In 1909, Louis Schulze sold his interest to Herman Schulze. After his brother's departure, Frank Schulze operated the

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store as a sole proprietor between 1914 and 1917. In 1917, Herman Senger of Senger-Kutzke Hardware and Martin Heller purchased the business and established Senger & Heller Hardware. After buying Heller's interest in 1927, Senger ran the store until his death in 1948. His son Jack Senger operated the business in 1949 and sold it to Don Lee who continued the business as Senger Hardware through 1955. In 1955, the building underwent remodeling (Register-Democrat 4/27/55; Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889).

H.G. Lewis established a hardware business at 208 DeWitt (24/33) from the date of his building's construction in 1895 through 1910. He remained in business after 1913 as Lewis and Theil, dealer in farm implements and hardware. By 1917, J.E. Wells & Co. located in the building at 208 DeWitt although Lewis continued to own it until after 1920. By 1925, the Portage Printing Company replaced the hardware business.

Several implement dealers served Portage's agricultural hinterlands for brief periods. George Port may have conducted his implement business at 214 W. Wisconsin (24/24) immediately after its construction in 1869-1870 until about 1875. George Jackson sold agricultural implements at 141 E. Cook (56/1) after the building's completion in 1900-1901 until 1907. After construction between 1915 and 1918 until ca. 1925, the building at 124 E. Cook (57/26) contained the farm implement dealership of Henry A. Schultz. By 1929, Schaefer and Meyer Hardware had replaced the implement dealer.

**Retail Furniture**

During much of the nineteenth century, cabinetmakers or general merchants but not usually furniture retail merchants sold furniture. Earl & Lathrope, furniture dealers at the corner of DeWitt and Cook, proved the exception in Portage. They probably occupied the Pettibone Block by 1868-1869 and carried parlor and bedroom suits, tables, bureaus, bedsteads, spring beds, lounges, and looking glasses (Farnham and Vivian 1868-1869). As improving railroad connections provided access to ready-made goods late in the century, local furniture manufacturers turned to selling furniture and retained their former function as funeral directors.

George and Alexander Murison, Scotch cabinetmakers, opened their shop in Portage in 1853. George Murison continued the shop as sole owner after 1857-1858. In 1880, he moved from the Emporium Block at the northeast corner of DeWitt and Conant to his new building at 310 DeWitt (25/18), the south portion of the current building. In 1892, Murison replaced a frame grocery with the north wing, of his building. Portage contractor Alexander Carnegie completed the addition. At the turn of the century, Murison purchased furniture from wholesalers and closed his craft shop. His undertaking business had also grown from fabricating occasional coffins for home funerals to managing the funeral itself. Wallace Murison joined him as Murison and Son Company in 1893. In 1914, the partnership incorporated as George Murison and Sons' Company with George Murison, Sr. and his two sons Wallace and George A. Murison. After George Murison's death in 1914, the firm included Wallace Murison as president and director of the funeral parlor

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and ambulance service and George A. Murison as its secretary and treasurer and director of the furniture portion of the business. In 1917, the company remodeled Murison's Furniture Emporium, adding the two story glass front and the third floor. George Murison, Jr. sold the business to Jack Weiss and Saul Black in December, 1950. Otto Pflanz became employed with the Murison Funeral Service in 1944. In 1946 at Wallace Murison's retirement, he purchased this portion of the business which became known as the Murison-Pflanz Funeral Service. One year after Weiss and Black purchased the store, Pflanz moved the funeral service to the former J.B. Wells home at 430 W. Wisconsin. By 1955, Black and Wells ran Black's Furniture Mart. Black's Furniture Mart closed in 1983 (Portage Daily Register 12/13/1917; 1943 [9/15: 1/3-4]; 1944 [9/15: 1/5-6]; 1/12/83; 8/8/1950; Democrat 9/14/1928; Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Milwaukee Journal 1951 [4/1: 4/1-3, 6/1-2]).

Murrills and Taylor, furniture, located their business in both sides of 114-116 W. Cook (57/33) in 1915 after remodeling their building. Arthur E. Murrills had purchased the furniture department of the Bee Hive and formed the firm of A.E. Murrills & Co between 1910 and 1914. Alvin C. Taylor entered the business as his partner in 1914, and it became known as Murrills and Taylor. The store with its plate glass front included two floors and a basement of furniture as well as victrolas, pianos, china, carpeting, rugs, tapestry, and linoleum (Register-Democrat 11/4/1915). J.J. Eickner placed his Portage Furniture Company at 212 DeWitt (24/34) between 1924 when he had the building constructed through 1930. He undertook furniture repair and upholstery. In the 1930s, several funeral parlors unrelated to furniture manufacture or retail became established. Established by 1915, the Ingle Funeral Home located at 236 W. Cook by 1929 and placed its green houses which are no longer extant at 807 W. Conant in the same period. By 1937, the funeral parlor occupied the Raulf Hotel (207 W. Cook, 31/22) (Commonwealth Telephone Company 1937; 1948).

**Drugstores**

In the 1850s into the 1880s, the larger drugstores at Portage sold not only drugs but a wealth of other miscellany to ensure the success of their enterprise. When operated by physicians such as Dr. Best, whose drugstore stood at the south corner of Conant and Main in the early 1850s, the store likely included simply drugs (Butterfield 1880: 593). However, in 1867-1868, John Graham advertised as a (Farnham and Vivian 1867-68):

...Wholesale and Retail Druggist and Grocer. Dealer in Stationery, Yankee Notions, Fine Liquors, cutlery, Wall Paper and Crockery, Paints, Oils, Varnishes, Water Lime, Land Plaster, Builders' and Painter's Materials. Garden and Field Seed, Window Glass and Glassware. Agents for Mail, Steamship and Sail Vessels to all parts of the world.

In 1853, John A. Graham and William K. Miles clerked at the drug and grocery store of Samuel Edwards who established his business in that year in the Pettibone Block. After Edward's retirement from the business in 1856, Miles and

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Graham continued the drug company under the name of Miles & Company. The company occupied the Vandercook Block at 236 W. Wisconsin (24/32) by at least 1865 to 1867 (Portage Public Library n.d. [photo]; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1863-73]). At the death of Miles in 1867, John Graham acquired the company and maintained the business at 236 W. Wisconsin. In 1873, Graham completed his two story and basement, wood post and beam, brick block at 301 DeWitt (25/17) (Harrison and Warner 1878 [date block]). Serving as apothecary and druggist, Graham manufactured his own medicines. He served as the agent for the Anchor, Cunard, White Star, Inman, and State Line steam ship companies, maintained a Minnesota Paint dealership, and continued a broad line of goods such as wall paper, stationery, books, varnishes, tar, picture frames, glassware, shades, and engravings through the nineteenth century. Graham also printed a small, tabloid known as the Graham Quarterly Review between 1861 to 1872. John A. Graham, Jr. joined his father in 1895. John Graham, Sr. incorporated the business as the John Graham Drug Company to conduct a mercantile business and manufacture and sell medicines before his death in 1916. After his death, his son operated the store under a lease from the drug company. J.C. Stegman and Bryon Taylor purchased the company and building from John Graham, Jr. in 1926. Clinton Daugherty and B.Y. Taylor acquired the drugstore in 1962. Daugherty bought Taylor's interest in the store in 1969 and the building from Mrs. Norman Stegman Brenner in 1981. He sold the building in 1992.

By 1885, the second floor of the Graham Block also included the offices of physicians William Meacher who began practice in 1870 and later William and Stuart Taylor until about 1952. Graham also rented space to the Portage Loan and Trust Company prior to 1908 and the Singer Sewing Machine Company in 1908. The basement provided storage space for the large inventory of stock carried by early merchants such as Graham who ordered their goods only several times a year. A barber shop with entrance on Cook Street also occupied a small room in the basement about 1908 to 1918. William Windus located his shop here in 1908-09. The Graham Block received a new front which included the entrance along the DeWitt Street elevation in 1953. The interior remodeling of the store in 1965 included the removal of the soda fountain from the northwest corner of the building. The carbonator remained in the basement at the sale of the building in 1992 (River Times 1853 [8/15: 2/3]; Wisconsin State Register 6/13/74; Farnham and Vivian 1867-68; Jones 1914 [2]: 631-32; Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; 1908 [2/8: 3/6]; 7/21/73; 8/23/1969 Register-Democrat 10/27/1953; Democrat 7/30/97; Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Graham 1875; Daugherty 1898-1992).

Waterhouse and Davis established their drug company on the south side of W. Cook near W. Wisconsin in 1867-1868. A clerk with the drug company since 1867, Edmund S. Purdy purchased the business in 1871. With partner Henry Merrell, he formed the drug company of Purdy and Merrell. At the death of Merrell in 1876, he maintained the business as sole proprietor of the Purdy Drug Company. The Purdy Drugstore located at 102 W. Cook (25/21, not extant) after the building of the Phoenix Block in 1880. The business remained there until 1907 when replaced by the First National Bank. While at that corner, it occupied both floors and basement of the 20 by 100 foot business space. In 1877, Purdy advertised their business as "...Wholesale and retail dealers in Drugs, Medicines and Chemicals,

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Books and Stationery, Paints, Oils and Dye Stuffs" (Merrill, Woodard & Co. 1877). By 1889, the drugstore also manufactured and sold soft drinks including Purdy's Carbonized Root Beer, Ginger Ale, and Kahla Cream. They were advertised as temperance drinks. Ben D. Merrell joined the Purdy Drug Company by 1890. The company moved to the 132 W. Cook (57/13) in 1907. In 1909, Oscar A. Klenert's drugstore succeeded the Purdy Drug Company. Along with nine other building fronts in the block between W. Wisconsin and DeWitt and south of W. Cook, the Klenert Pharmacy underwent a remodeling program by Mittelstaedt Brothers and Carl Kutzke in 1923. By 1929, the Johnson Drugstore and by 1948 the Service Drug Company located at 130-132 W. Cook (Butterfield 1880: 663, 920-21; Portage Public Schools 1948-51; Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; Register-Democrat 2/2/1924; 4/27/1923; Democrat 7/30/1897: 7; Portage Public Library n.d. [photo]).

Frank A. Rhyme purchased the drug company and store of Clifford Arnold in 1886. Arnold remained in Portage with Rhyme for a brief period following the purchase. Perhaps as early as 1890 (Wright 1890) and by 1908, the business had located at 114-116 W. Cook (57/33) in the Voertman Block. Frank A. Rhyme bought the building constructed in 1893 at 101 W. Cook (27/22) in 1914 from the John A. Johnson Estate and established his drug company at this location. Rhyme soon added the stucco and glass block exterior and placed a fountain in his store. William Rhyme took over the Rhyme Drug Company at the death of Frank Rhyme in 1919. By the mid-1920s, the drugstore also included a lunch counter. Frank Rhyme acquired the drug company from his father in 1950 and maintained the Rhyme Supply Company at the 101 Cook Street address. Rhyme Drugstore occupied 117 E. Cook (56/5) after 1955 (Portage Public Schools 1948-51 [1950]; Mohr 1952; Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952; 2/24/73; Register-Democrat 7/21/1951; 1/19/1919; 1/21/1919).

### Barber Shops

Although there were certainly earlier ones, most of the identified barbers worked in the 1890s or later. They required limited physical space and, like William Windus, many perhaps worked in places poorly recorded by the written record. For example, Andrew Kiefer maintained a barber shop in Portage by 1856 until 1886. Kiefer was a well known citizen of Portage, but the location of his shop remains vague. Until 1861, it was located in the basement of the bank block, probably at the southwest corner of Wisconsin and Cook. In 1861, he moved to the south side of Cook, perhaps to 118-122 (57/18) or 126 W. Cook (57/16). Andrew Kiefer owned the first by 1866, and Jacoline Kiefer owned the second building by 1880. Andrew Kiefer advertised: "Shaving and Hair-Dressing done in the latest style. Has constantly on hand a large assortment of Gent's Furnishing Goods, Perfumeries, &c...." (Farnham and Vivian 1868-1869; also Merrill and Woodard & Co. 1877; Butterfield 1880: 663, 909; Jones 1914 [2]: 623; Wisconsin State Register 1861 [8/24: 3/1]). Although a barber occupied the location at 226 W. Wisconsin (24/29) from 1889 through 1929, the building was replaced in 1923-1924. Thomas Baird probably worked there in 1927-1928, and Charles Baird located in that building in 1929. Additionally, a barber was located at 107-109 W. Cook (56/13) between at least 1910 and 1955. In 1910, E.J. Carnegie and in 1927-1928 John Helmann worked as barbers at this address. It became Doc's Barber Shop by

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1955.

A barber in Portage since 1892, William Windus operated in a basement room of the Graham Block (301 DeWitt, 25/6) in 1908-1909. A barber shop remained at this location until at least 1918. Windus continued his business through 1955 when he was located at 112 E. Cook (57/31) (Daugherty 1898-1992; Portage Centennial Committee 1952). Fred Denizen operated as a barber at 111 E. Cook (56/14) in 1910 and 107 E. Cook (57/0) in 1927-1928. Ray Thalacker opened his barber shop in the Raulf Hotel (207 W. Cook, 31/22) in 1927 and remained there until 1959 when he moved to 218 W. Cook (57/5) (Columbia County Historical Society 1982).

**Jewelry Stores**

Like other retail businesses of the 1850s through the 1870s, jewelers retailed a variety of related goods and services in addition to jewelry. Jewelers located at Portage by 1868. Louis Eltermann advertised as a dealer in watches, clocks, jewelry, silver and plated ware, and spectacles. He also completed engravings and repairs (Farnham and Vivian 1868-69). Portage supported several jewelry stores which remained in operation for a relatively long period.

J.C. Forbes was established at Portage as a jeweler and watchmaker in 1867. By 1883 until 1890, he was located at 316 DeWitt (25/13). In 1890, he moved to the east side of the street (Portage Public Library n.d. [photo]; Butterfield 1880: 597, 663; Wright 1890).

William Bard & Co., manufacturers of jewelry and watches, located in Portage in 1869. By 1889, Chester M. and William Bard ran the firm which then carried both jewelry and musical instruments. The business remained under the ownership of William Bard until 1901-1902. This business probably occupied 136 W. Cook (57/11) which was constructed in 1869 or 1870. Carl R. Michel located his jewelry business in this building by 1908. Under the operation of George C. Michel by 1927, the business occupied the same building through 1929. Between 1948 and 1955, Quinn's Jewelry was located at 136 W. Cook (57/11) (Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889).

A.D. Knippel operated a jewelry store at 107-109 W. Cook (56/13) between 1924 and at least 1948. By 1955, Porter's Jewelry Store appeared at that address (Murtagh 1989). Established in the jewelry business by 1919, Edward A. Jones located at 127 W. Cook (56/22) between 1929 and 1937. By 1948 through 1955, Maloney's Jewelry Store occupied the same location.

Established by 1903, Thomas H. Gadsen and L. Earle Grant, jewelers, occupied 118 W. Cook (57/18) in 1908 and 1909. Operating by the same year, Charles Roskie located in the east side of 124 W. Cook (57/17) between 1908 and 1910. By 1917-1918, he had located at 128 W. Cook (57/15).

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Ira A. Ridgeway, photographer, arrived in Portage shortly after 1870 and left a valuable historical record of Portage. After 1870 he associated with Frank Treadway at the Jolly Gallery. He sold his photography business to Plumb and Loomis by 1873 but remained associated with the business until about 1875. Plumb and Loomis made "...all kinds of Pictures known to the Art. A good assortment of Frames and Albums constantly on hand" (Farnham and Vivian 1867-69). Ridgeway then purchased his own gallery and remained in business until 1898. He was followed by Edward L. Memhard who maintained his studio on the second floor of 132 W. Cook (57/13) in 1908-09. Since a photographer's studio had existed on the second floor of 132 W. Cook between 1885 and 1910, Ridgeway may have also maintained his studio here. By 1910, Memhard moved to 136 W. Cook (57/11) (Democrat 7/30/1897; Portage Daily Register 4/22/1972). The August F. Kleist Studio located at 105 W. Cook (57/13) about 1908 to 1920. A photography business known as The Studio followed by the L.F. Downie Art Studio replaced A.F. Kleist about 1921 and remained at that location through 1930.

**Banks**

The presence of banks within the community provided a means for its citizens to make long-term investments in large enterprises. Their initial presence thus suggests an expanding economic outlook. While mercantile stores might offer limited amounts of short-term credit, they lacked the resources to support major growth. Marshall and Ilsley of Milwaukee formed Portage's first bank, the Columbia County Bank, in 1853 and incorporated it in 1854. They located the bank in a frame building at the corner of Wisconsin and Cook, the site of the Corning Block and in 1927 the Raulf Hotel (207 W. Cook, 31/22) and in 1855 moved into the Columbia County Bank Building at the site of the 1929-1930 City Bank Building (202 W. Cook, 57/8). The bank failed during the panic of 1873. Decatur Vandercook established the city's second bank, the Bank of Portage, in 1857 locating it in the 1855 Vandercook Block at 236 W. Wisconsin (24/32). It also closed during the panic of the 1873 (Butterfield 1880: 585; Register-Democrat 7/13/1923; River Times 1853 [8/27: 6/4]; City Bank of Portage 1949; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863-1866)). The German Exchange Bank was organized in 1874 as a private bank by Charles Haertel and F.W. Schulze. Schulze replaced Haertel as president after Haertel's death. The bank was placed at 129 W. Cook which was replaced in 1945-1946 (56/23). It provided several other services including a general insurance and ticket agency. The bank failed during the depression of 1893 (Stoner 1882; WPA 1938: after 8 [photo]; Butterfield 1880: 644, 663; Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; 1966 [5/9: 10-11]; Jones 1914 [1]: 201-202).

Established with a capital of 75,000 dollars, the First National Bank received its charter from the United States Treasury in 1890. It also served as a depository of Columbia County and the City of Portage. When first formed, the bank occupied space in the site of the west half of 108 W. Cook (57/34, not extant). Thomas Armstrong, Jr. served as its first president until 1892 when J.E. Wells replaced him and remained in that office until 1906. In 1893, the bank moved to 101 W. Cook (25/22) which was also completed 1893. The bank relocated to 102 W. Cook in the Phoenix Block (25/21, not extant) in 1907 (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1907]) where it remained until fire destroyed the

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building in 1993. In 1907, the bank added the savings deposit to its services. In 1914, it joined the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. The First National Bank received a permanent charter in 1922 when the federal government extended national bank charters from every several years to 99 years. To survive the 1929 depression, the bank sold a majority of its stock to the Wisconsin Banking Shares Corporation in 1930. Like other national banks, the First National Bank of Portage became a member of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation in 1935. Major remodeling of the interior of the bank building at 102 W. Cook occurred in 1933, 1945, and 1954. Brick and concrete replaced the wood coping in 1934 (Portage Daily Register 9/26/1936). In 1963, the bank expanded west, purchasing the property from the Wright estate. Remodeling of the building continued into 1965 (Portage Public Schools 1948-51 [1950]; Portage Daily Register 1966 [5/9: 10-11]; First National Bank of Portage 1966; Jones 1914 [1]: 202).

The City Bank of Portage received its charter from the state in 1874. Llywelyn Breese, Robert B. Wentworth, E.L. Jaeger, Rodney Loomis, W.D. Fox, and Andrew Weir organized the bank. Ll. Breese served as its first president until 1914. By that year, the bank offered checking accounts, saving accounts, loans, money orders, and safe deposit vaults. The bank was re-organized in 1909 and 1929. William Breese served as its new president and Harlan B. Rogers became its vice president in 1929. In 1931, the City Bank applied for and received fiduciary powers from the state which allowed it to form a trust department. In 1969, it became known as the City Bank and Trust Company. It is currently known as the First Star Bank. The City Bank occupied the Columbia County Bank building at 202 W. Cook. The bank replaced this building in 1929-1930 (58/8). The new, two story building was constructed of Bedford limestone veneer placed on a St. Cloud, granite veneer base. The St. Louis Bank Building and Equipment Company designed and constructed the building. Suggesting the importance of the building, its classical detailing included full length pilasters rising to its cornice, copper spandrels placed between the vertically aligned windows, and entrance gained through copper, double doors placed in the stepped setback. The interior was originally finished with black walnut, Italian Botticino marble, and bronze (Wisconsin State Register 11/8/1929 [by Zona Gale]; Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; Register-Democrat 4/30/1930; 5/1/1930; Jones 1914 [2]: 448; Ogle, Geo. A. & Co. 1901: 229; City Bank of Portage 1914; 1949; Columbia County Historical Society 1982; City Bank of Portage 1949).

The Portage Mortgage, Loan and Trust Company formed in 1905 to provide loans using real estate as its major collateral. Prior to 1908, the company occupied the upper story of the Graham Block (301 DeWitt, 25/6). By 1908 through 1917 and perhaps as late as 1925, the company located at 135 W. Cook (57/25) (Jones 1914 [1]: 202).

**Attorneys**

Like many communities of the period, Portage supported a large number of attorneys particularly through the 1860s. Litigation concerning land contracts during the transfer of the public domain into private ownership produced a considerable demand for legal representation. In 1880, nine lawyers continued

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to serve the city (Smith 1973: 401-03; Butterfield 1880: 662).

Baron Steuben Doty, brother of Governor James Duane Doty, settled at Portage in 1855 and practiced in the city until his death in 1871. During this period, he formed partnerships first with David J. Puttling and then with Alva Stewart (Turner, A.J. 1903: 13-14). Joshua Guppey settled in Portage in 1851. While living at Columbus, he was elected county judge of probate and became county judge in 1847 and 1854. He again served as county judge between 1865 and 1881 (Turner, A.J. 1903: 17-18; Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952: 15).

Josiah H. Rogers opened his law practice at Portage in 1871. Between 1871 and 1879, he maintained his practice with G.J. Cox. He later included his son Harlan B. Rogers in his practice. Rogers was elected to the position of district attorney between 1874 and 1880 and served as the city attorney in the 1880s and as mayor in 1887. Associated with the Republican Party in the county, he became a delegate to several state conventions. From 1873 through 1917, his offices were located at 139 W. Cook (56/26). By 1929, they occupied 135 W. Cook (56/25). By 1937, H.B. Rogers located his offices above the City Bank Building at 202 W. Cook (57/8) and in 1948 through 1955 over 236 W. Wisconsin (24/32). His law firm continues to the present under the name of Miller, Rogers, and Owens at 311 DeWitt (25/9) (Butterfield 1880: 923; Ogle, Geo. A. & Co. 1901: 722-24; Jones 1914 [2]: 536-37; Portage Centennial Committee 1952).

Edmund S. Baker practiced law in Portage between 1870 and 1927. He placed his offices over 134 W. Cook (57/12) between 1890 and 1918. In 1927, Ross Bennett continued Baker's legal practice. He served as the county district attorney between 1929 and 1933. He formed a partnership with John Taras between 1931 and 1934. In 1956, he established the firm of Bennett and Bennett when David Bennett joined his law practice. By 1929, Bennett's offices were located in the Register Building (309 DeWitt, 25/2). The law offices of David Bogue were also located at 309 DeWitt between 1917 and 1929 (Columbia County Historical Society 1982).

Established in 1878, the firm of Smith and Derring, including Silas S. Smith and Charles L. Deering, purchased and ran the abstract company of Alverson and Yule and also sold insurance. Purchasing abstracts of title to the lands in Columbia County, Miles Alverson and Yule had established their abstract business in 1872. In 1879, Charles Deering also established his legal practice in Portage. The office of Smith and Deering occupied 318 DeWitt (25/13) between 1883 when the building was constructed until about 1910. After that date, the two partners appear to have separated with Charles Deering, lawyer near the site of 108 or 112 E. Cook in 1910 and 316 DeWitt (25/13) between 1917-1920 and the abstract company at 318 DeWitt (25/13) from 1910 until 1955. Between 1910 and 1916, Smith operated the company as a single proprietor. It became the Smith-Andrews Abstract Company in 1917 and the Smith-Rogers Abstract Company by 1921 through 1929 (Butterfield 1880: 875, 894, 928).

W.S. Stroud became a member of the firm of Armstrong and Stroud of Portage by 1882. In 1898 and 1910, he was served as judge of Columbia County, and retired from the law practice in 1920. W.S. Stroud maintained his offices at the City Bank Building at 202 W. Cook (57/8) by 1890 until 1918 (Democrat 7/30/1897;

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Register-Democrat 8/11/1936).

Alonzo F. Kellogg practiced law in Portage by 1903 and was also the city attorney prior to 1910. Between 1908 and 1910, he located his offices over 114-116 W. Cook (57/33). From that date to 1939, he served as county judge (Register-Democrat 12/10/1939).

The industrial base of many communities recently settled in the mid-nineteenth century was often difficult to distinguish from its craft enterprises. During this early settlement period, the number of crafts frequently far exceeded the industries in a single community. And, some of the enterprises which are normally associated with industries in fact developed from a craft setting. Because of its location along two transportation systems which reached the city before or coincident with the significant development of industry in Milwaukee and the growth of trade along the Great Lakes, Portage's crafts were short-lived in comparison with less accessible Wisconsin communities. These craft shops either turned to the retail of the mass-produced goods they once made or the craft shop expanded into industrial enterprises (Smith 1973: 132). The Portage Retail Historic District contained some of Portage's craft shops. Additional shops, most of which are now gone, occurred along the canal and to its southeast, and a small number were likely located in the residential areas.

**Wood and Metal Products**

Although Portage lacked a large wood milling industry, the city did have access to an abundant supply of timber to the north. It therefore developed several crafts related to the wood products industry. Since they operated at a craft level, most of Portage's wood products industries served a local trade. As the furniture industry expanded in larger cities such as Sheboygan, Milwaukee, and Oshkosh which served not only Wisconsin but frontier areas to the west, these products were shipped to Portage via the railroad established by 1857. The growth of large furniture industries which eventually ended the production of hand-crafted furniture in Portage commenced by the 1860s. The small cabinet maker shops disappeared between 1870 and 1910. By the 1890s, the cabinetmaker and undertaker became the furniture retailer and funeral parlor (Wyatt 1986 [vol. 2, industry]: 7).

George Murison became the primary craftsman of furniture in Portage. In 1853, George and Alexander Murison opened their cabinetmaking shop at the site of 108 W. Cook (57/34, not extant). They hand-crafted household furniture and caskets (Portage Register-Democrat 9/14/1928). Alexander Murison left Portage in 1857. In 1858, George Murison moved his shop to the Emporium Block at the southeast corner of DeWitt and Conant. The Emporium Block burned in 1915. In 1880, Murison expanded his craft enterprise a second time and moved to his recently constructed shop at 310 DeWitt (25/18), the south part of the current building. Until the 1890s, Murison hand-crafted most of the household furniture and caskets to order. He used a limited amount of hand-operated machinery to complete each

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piece from available woods. His operation served a local clientele. Murison operated a small shop, employing two additional workers in 1860 and 1880. After the Civil War, he purchased very common pieces such as kitchen chairs, bedsteads, and small bureaus which were mass-produced at Baraboo. By the time of his second building expansion to the north in 1892, Murison had shifted to retailing mass-produced furniture. In 1893, George Murison included his son Wallace in the business which became Murison and Son Company. The business incorporated in 1914. In 1917, the building attained its final form with third story and plate glass storefront under the name of George Murison Sons' Company and funeral parlor. The business continued until 1950 (Portage Daily Register 12/13/1917; Democrat 9/14/1928; 12/30/1922; Register-Democrat 9/14/1953; Jones 1914 [2]: 565-66; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1860; 1880: Industrial Schedule]).

Philetus S. Hollenbeck in the partnership of Ryan and Hollenbeck crafted furniture by 1860. He employed two workers in his hand-craft enterprise by 1870. In that year, his shop produced chairs, tables, bureaus, stands, lounges, and coffins and included some upholstered furniture. However, Hollenbeck did not advertise his trade until 1873 and had retired by 1886. About 1881, Hollenbeck placed his shop in his newly constructed building at 122 E. Cook (57/25). Charles Schenk also maintained a cabinetmaker's shop by 1870 which produced bureaus, tables, chairs, coffins, and some upholstered furniture. He employed only one additional individual. The location of his shop has not been identified (Butterfield 1880: 663, 912; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1860; 1870; 1880: Industrial Schedules]).

Most early communities supported craftsmen who manufactured carriages and wagons on a small scale from locally available hardwoods. They served their community and adjacent rural areas from the settlement of these hinterlands until the 1890s. The operation often occupied small one and a half to two story buildings with an adjacent blacksmithing area or shop. Occasionally, carriage makers operated in the same or adjacent shop to the blacksmith who supplied him with the necessary iron parts. While three wagonmakers operated in Portage in 1860, the number grew to only four by 1880. After this decade, mass-produced wagons and carriages available through hardware stores and implements dealers probably replaced this craft (Smith 1983: 532; Wyatt 1986 [vol. 2, industry]: 13; Nesbit 1973: 180-81, 275). In Portage, George Jackson advertised as a producer of carriages and wagons and also did blacksmithing and painting and repairing of wagons (Farnham and Vivian 1868-69). Jackson primarily manufactured carriages and buggies and some wagons using oak, iron, paints and varnishes with the assistance of six occasional hands by 1880. He remained in business between at least 1860 through 1880. In 1900, Jackson occupied the recently constructed west half of 141 E. Cook (56/1). However, by this date until 1907, Jackson no longer crafted carriages and wagons but had shifted to the sale of agricultural implements (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1860; 1870; 1880: industrial schedules]). A wagon shop was located at 210 W. Wisconsin (24/21) by 1885. The building was replaced in 1905-1906. Between that date and about 1921, blacksmith Jacob Rupp who owned the building and wagon and carriage maker N.J. Behnkie occupied its first floor and probably a building to the southwest which is now replaced by a gas station.

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Until the turn of the century, blacksmiths crafted custom-made agricultural implements and other housewares, they repaired iron materials, and they corroborated with other craftsmen such as wagon and carriage makers to produce additional custom-made wares. By the 1890s and 1900, blacksmiths primarily repaired metal parts and becoming mechanics often converted their shops to automobile repair. Portage supported few blacksmiths during the 1850s and 1860s perhaps because the city was also served by several foundries. The industrial schedules listed two blacksmiths in 1860 and 1870. There were likely others who maintained a small craft not counted by the industrial census. In operation by 1860, James Collins ran a shop with five employees and manufactured carriages and wagons as well as maintaining his blacksmith enterprise by 1870. In 1877, he also became an agent for McCormick reapers and mowers and manufactured iron fences (Merrill and Woodard & Co. 1877). As noted, George Jackson engaged both in blacksmithing and carriage making between 1860 and 1880. By 1880, Portage supported about four blacksmiths. In addition to Jackson and Collins, H.O. Lewis advertised as a blacksmith by 1873. By 1880, Lewis operated a shop with four employees. He continued to work as a blacksmith until 1898 by which time he worked with Louis Prehn and also produced agricultural implements. By 1895, his son, Hugh G. Lewis, opened a hardware store near the site of his father's forge at 208 DeWitt (24/33). As noted, Jacob Rupp worked as a blacksmith between about 1895 and 1921 and occupied 210 W. Wisconsin (24/21) and the adjacent building with carriage maker N.J. Behnkie after 1905. Established in 1893 and operating through 1912, the William Sarbecker blacksmith shop stood at the southwest corner of Conant and Wisconsin at the site of 304 W Conant, near the Wisconsin Power and Light building (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1860; 1870; 1880: industrial schedules]; Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Portage Public School 1948-1951). Although blacksmiths were usually the most common craftsmen present in a community, the number of blacksmiths in Portage during any given period appears comparatively low.

The manufacture of tin, copper, and sheet iron wares remained at the craft level in Portage. The industry grew from a single operator, Alexander Whirst and his single hand in 1850 to four private shops employing one to three hands in the 1870s. Four shops also existed in 1880. However, while the two private shops employed only one individual, the two shops associated with the hardware stores of J.E. Wells and Schulz Brothers employed two or three hands. With an assured outlet, the later two craftsmen maintained a slightly larger enterprise (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1850; 1860; 1870; 1880: industrial schedules]). Schultz Brothers, a mercantile store at 108 W. Cook (57/32), employed a tinsmith in 1880. The Warner Hardware which later became the Schulze Hardware Company at 118-122 W. Cook (57/18) also employed a tinsmith from at least 1885 through 1901. I.W. Bacon began his career in Portage as a manufacturer of tin and sheet iron wares, and he operated a hardware by 1856. J.E. Wells purchased his business in 1874. By 1877, J.E. Wells & Co. operated as manufacturers of tin, sheet iron, and copper ware. By 1880, the store occupied 102 W. Cook (25/21, not extant). This building contained a tin shop on the second floor by 1885 through 1901 (Merrill, Wood & Co. 1877; Butterfield 1880: 933; Jones 1914 [2]: 622, 638-39). H.G. Lewis who operated a hardware at 208 DeWitt (24/33) from 1895 to 1910, also employed a tinsmith on the second floor. J.E. Wells continued to employ a tinsmith when he took over the shop by 1917 and operated it until about 1920.

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**Merchant Tailors**

Most communities supported small custom tailor shops of one tailor and an apprentice or workman... The large operations generally manufactured a mix of ready-made and custom clothing (Smith 1973: 531). Beginning after the Civil War, reaching its peak production in the late 1870s and 1880s, and disappearing in the early twentieth century, a substantial number of merchant tailors work in the Portage shops. Merchant tailoring perhaps achieved its importance in Portage because of its location at the juncture of several rail lines and its function as a relatively isolated trade center serving a large radius, particularly to the north. This reason and the high quality of workmanship exhibited by the Portage tailoring establishments allowed the craft shops to compete with the large tailor industry in Milwaukee and at the turn of the century with ready-made clothing. Most of these tailors emigrated from the German states. In addition, the craft employed migrant German seamstresses and apprentices. About 125 tailors worked in Portage by 1880. These craft shops employed both a small and a comparatively large work force of skilled craftsmen who completed a large portion but not all of each custom-made pieces of clothing, primarily wool suits and coats. For craft level operations, their products served a relatively wide radius in central and north central Wisconsin. By the late nineteenth century, the shops sent salesmen to take orders for custom clothing in central and northern Wisconsin cities such as Phillips, Hayward, Wausau, Superior, and Merrill. Although the larger shops might utilize an entire building, they frequently occupied the upper stories of the retail stores along Cook and adjacent streets. Several of the larger general merchants such as Carroll and Klug and Breese, Loomis and Gallett supported a tailor section in their stores.

The tailors belonged to Local No. 55 of the Journeymen's Tailors' of America established in 1890. It was affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. Functions of the group included death benefits for burials and support of the family; social activities such as an annual ball, parades, picnics, and dances; and the maintenance of a camp at Swan Lake. Regular dues supported the activities. Although they were among one of the highest wage earners of the city, forty-five tailors in Portage struck for increased wages in 1894 without success. Because the shops remained unable to fill orders for a considerable period, their business declined and never recovered. Many shops closed, and tailors began to leave the city (Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952; 3/7/1961; 2/28/1970).

Born in Bavaria, Philip H. Goodman entered the shop of L. Funkenstein, merchant tailor, in 1867. Funkenstein had begun operation in Portage by 1860 employing seven workers. At the retirement of his employer, Goodman established his own shop. In the 1870s, he employed 24 workers in the second floor of the Pettibone Block. He then dealt both in ready-made and custom-made men's, women's, boys' and children's clothing. He claimed that (Graham 1875):

It is not flattery to state that for variety of patterns, quality of goods, style of making and cheapness of price, he can suit any one in want of good cloths. Also a fine stock of GENT'S FURNISHING

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GOODS, Hats, Caps, Valises, Trunks & Traveling Bags, &c. Has also added to his stock BUCKSKIN UNDERCLOTHING, a necessity, and is beginning to be appreciated by those exposed to the weather and of delicate health.

By 1884 through 1894, the company had located at 135 W. Cook (56/25). After Goodman's death in 1886, the enterprise was continued through his estate. In 1887, Maurice Goodman with J.A. Carroll and C.C. Buckley established the Ph. Goodman Company. C.C. Buckley began employment as a traveling salesman for the Goodman shops in 1875. J.C. Leisch had worked in the Goodman shop as a cutter from 1885. In the late 1880s, the Ph. Goodman Company then employed about fifty tailors. Buckley and Leisch formed from this company in 1895 then employing sixteen tailors. In the late 1890s, Buckley and Leisch were the largest merchant tailors in Portage and much of Wisconsin outside Milwaukee. They served customers in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota. By 1908, Buckley and Leisch had located a men's clothiers and furnishings store at 131 W. Cook (56/24). By 1910, Leisch with Otto Kirsch operated the store under the same name employing a merchant tailor as well as retailing clothing. The firm remained at the 131 W. Cook location through 1921 (Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; 9/3/1909; Democrat 7/30/1897; Butterfield 1880: 900; Turner, A.J. 1903: 17; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1880: industrial schedule]).

Men's clothiers also employed merchant tailors to supplement their ready-made clothing. James Carroll of the firm of Carroll and Klug worked as a salesman for Ph. Goodman in 1881 and began his own merchant tailor business in 1889. Carroll and Klug employed five coat makers, three pants makers, and two vest makers in 1889 (Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; Democrat 7/30/1897). It continued to employ merchant tailors through 1908. The department store occupied the west half of 108 W. Cook (57/34, not extant) from 1908 through 1937. Loomis, Gallett, and Breese also included a merchant tailor department by 1870 which they employed five male and 25 female workers. As early as 1877 until 1915, a portion of the department store was located at 210 W. Cook (55/7) (Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1870; 1880: industrial schedules]). Migrating from Germany, Jacob Rebholz arrived in Portage in the 1850s and worked as a merchant tailor. His son founded A.J. Rebholz Company clothing in 1895 to sell men's clothing. As late as 1915, Charles Vesly worked as a merchant tailor in the A.J. Rebholz Company clothing store. Prior to 1915, it occupied 114-116 W. Cook (57/33) and replaced Loomis, Gallett, and Breese at 210 W. Cook in 1915 (Register-Democrat 3/2/1915; Columbia County Historical Society 1982).

Several small tailoring firms employing one or several craftsmen operated in Portage in the second half of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century. For example, A. Koenig, a Prussian, opened a merchant tailor shop about 1864. By 1880, he employed one other operator (Butterfield 1880: 909; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1880: industrial schedule]). Evan H. Hughes who immigrated from Wales in 1838, opened his own shop in Portage in 1864. Between 1908 and 1915, he occupied a new location in the 1852 Emporium Block at the southeast corner of DeWitt and E. Conant which burned in 1915 (Butterfield 1880: 907; Portage Daily Register 4/17/1950; Portage Daily Register 1908 [5/18:

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3/1]). Mathiesson began as a tailor working for Loomis, Gallett, and Breese in 1868. He established his own shop in 1892 in the Emporium Block. After it burned in 1915, he moved to 134 W. Cook (57/12) and remained there through 1929 (Register-Democrat 11/17/1923). In 1908-1910, August Rampson operated as a merchant tailor at 236 W. Cook. Between 1908 and 1929, A. and Charles Wilkie located at 117 W. Cook (56/17). Tailoring operations also occurred in the west side of 121-123 E. Cook (56/3) about 1885, 111-115 W. Cook (56/14) about 1889, and at 222 W. Cook (57/3) about 1894.

**Cobblers and Harness Makers**

Shortly after settlement, tanneries located along the Portage Canal. Shoe and boot manufacturers operating at a craft level and harness makers became two of the largest consumers of this material. In Portage as in other early communities, master cobblers, many of whom were German, made custom-order shoes by hand in small shops. These shops which might employ up to four to eight skilled craftsmen often occupied small frame buildings or the upper stories of more substantial commercial buildings. By 1850, 76 such shops existed across the state. During the Civil War and in the 1870s, large factories began to serve a growing Wisconsin population. In the 1870s, hand operations became unable to supply the demand. As large shops expanded and began to acquire newly patented shoe manufacturing devices, smaller shops closed. And, as the size of shops expanded, the number declined beginning in the 1870s. The counties of Fond du Lac, Dane, Milwaukee, and Racine became centers of the shoe industry (Wyatt 1986 [vol. 2, industry]: 12; Smith 1873: 531). Small cobbler shops served Portage at a craft level from the 1850s through the 1880s. In 1860, two cobblers operated in Portage, and by 1870 five served the city. By 1880, the census recorded eleven cobblers (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1860; 1870; 1880: industrial schedules]).

In 1870, partners Beattie and Brodie produced boots and shoes with six employees. Operating between 1875 and 1898 as proprietor of his own shop, William Beattie crafted and dealt in custom-made shoes and boots. He also carried leather findings. Beattie employed four male workers in 1880. Before he occupied his commercial building erected at 305 DeWitt (25/7) in 1891, Beattie operated in an earlier building at that site by 1875 (Merrill and Woodard & Co. 1877; date block; Daugherty 1898-1992; Graham 1875; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1880: industrial schedule]). Beginning his operation in 1866, James R. Brodie, who had combined with Beattie between about 1870 and 1875, retailed and crafted boots and mens' and ladies' shoes. Serving the northern part of the state, he was also a jobber and dealer in leather findings, mittens, gloves, and notions. Brodie employed four individuals two of whom were skilled craftsmen or cobblers in 1880. He occupied a two story brick building with display room on the first floor and storage and shoe manufacturing on the second. This building at 213 DeWitt (25/4) was erected in 1885 when Brodie owned the property. He continued his craft in the building until about 1907 (Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; Butterfield 1880: 880; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1880: industrial schedule]).

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Joseph Ludwig operated a tannery in Portage along with his shoe shop in 1858 at the site of the C.F. Mohr lumber office at 201 DeWitt (25/0). While at this location in 1868-1869, he advertised as (Farnham and Vivian 1868-69):

Tanner, Currier, and Manufacturer of Boots and Shoe, Gloves and Mittens. Dealer in Sole Leather, Findings, Upper Leather, French and American Calf Skins, Hides, Furs, &c., &c. The highest price paid in cash for Hides, Furs and Sheep Skins, and Wool DeWitt Street.

In 1870 and 1880, Ludwig employed six to eight workers in his operation. According to the number of employees and value of product sold, Ludwig ran a large craft operation in comparison to the other ten boot and shoe makers in Portage (Portage Daily Register 9/3/1909; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1870; 1880: industrial schedules]).

In 1908, John Dalton established a cobbler shop in the Johnson Block (101 W. Cook, 25/22) in conjunction with the Ole Johnson Shoe Company (Jones 1914 [2]: 631). Gus Salem arrived in Portage in 1911 opening his shoe shop at the same location. After a brief interval, he moved adjacent to the harness shop of Peter Cockroft at the site of 108 E. Cook (57/32). He remained in business until he sold his shop to Richard Salem in 1926. In 1948, William Hoffman acquired the business and continued it to 1957 when the Taylor Clinic replaced the frame building moved from Oxford about 1875 (Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Register-Democrat 6/19/1957).

Anton Lohr worked as a shoemaker who also repaired and retailed shoes by 1895. He located at 222 W. Cook (57/3) by 1908 and remained there through 1918. In 1920, he purchased 214 W. Cook (57/6) and probably located his shop in that building through 1948. Edward Klug worked as a cobbler at 124 W. Cook (57/17) perhaps as early as 1904 through about 1921.

Between at least 1889 and 1894, William Bunker, harness maker, shared 121-123 E. Cook (56/3) with a cobbler (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1889; 1894). Originally a harness maker, James Williams also produced shoes by 1918 at 122 E. Cook (57/25). By 1927, Vern T. Yonkey replaced Williams with his shoe repair business. He remained there through 1929.

The early harness shops also utilized products from the local tannery. During the 1850s into the 1870s, small shops crafted harnesses and other custom-order leather goods by hand. Like the shoe craft, this enterprise also moved to larger shops beginning in the 1870s (Wyatt 1986 [vol. 2, industry]: 12). The number of harness shops in Portage grew from two in 1860 to three in 1880 (U.S. Department of the Interior 1860; 1870; 1880 [industrial schedules]).

William Bunker established his harness shop in 1866 and occupied his new brick building at 121-123 E. Cook (56/3) in 1885. By 1877, he carried stable goods, horse clothing, robes, saddles, harness oil, carriage umbrellas, and whips, as well as harnesses. By 1880, he employed one other worker (Democrat 7/30/97; Butterfield 1880: 881; Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; Register-Democrat

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5/31/1919; Merrill and Woodard & Co. 1877; U.S. Department of the Interior 1880 [industrial schedule]). Several of those engaged in tanning also crafted leather goods to supply their shops. Erected in 1869 or 1870, 214 W. Wisconsin (24/24) was used by Ferdinand Schulz of the mercantile company of Schulz & Co. to either sell or store hides and wool between at least 1885 and 1894. Constructed about 1881, the west section of 122 E. Cook (57/25) carried hides and leather furnishings and appears to have briefly served as an outlet for local hides. It became the City Harness Shop by 1908. The west, outside wall of the building continued to advertise this early function in 1993.

Although the retail district did not include many of Portage's major industries, several manufacturers located at the edges of the district and small industries occupied a small number of the retail buildings.

Frederick H. De La Ronde established the Portage Rug Company at 141 E. Cook (56/1) in 1905. Employed by W.G. Weldon since 1903, De La Ronde then purchased Weldon's interest in the business. He added dry cleaning to his business in 1910 and later included dyeing and pressing. In 1913, he placed the east wing on the building. De La Ronde then employed twenty operators and six salesmen in Wisconsin and adjacent states (Jones 1914 [2]: 641-42). Charles Gieseler operated a cigar factory at 203 DeWitt (25/1) by 1901 to about 1910. In 1910 through 1918, he located at 211 DeWitt (25/3). A cigar factory also occupied 114-116 W. Cook (57/33) for a short period about 1889. By 1889, the Purdy Drug Company at 102 W. Cook (25/21, not extant) manufactured and sold soft drinks including Purdy's Carbonized Root Beer, Ginger Ale, and Kahla Cream. The company advertised soda pop as a temperance drink. It manufactured the soda pop in the basement of the building for sale at the fountain. When the Purdy Drug Company moved to the 132 W. Cook (57/13) in 1907, Henry Purdy operated the soda pop company at 213 DeWitt (25/4) until 1919 (Portage Daily Register 12/23/1889; Register-Democrat 2/2/1924; 4/27/1923; Democrat 7/30/1897: 7; Sanborn-Perris Map Company 1910; 1929). The Portage Underwear Company was established in 1891. The company manufactured Vivette brand underwear and supplied local retailers and national wholesalers. In 1925, the company employed fifteen individuals. The factory occupied several existing retail buildings in the city. Between 1891 and about 1897, it was located in part of the building later replaced by the Bee Hive at 108 W. Cook (57/34, not extant). About 1897, the company moved to 214 W. Wisconsin (24/24) and remained there until about 1910. It also utilized the second floor of adjacent 216 W. Wisconsin (24/25), the city police station, about 1901. By 1910, the company located on W. Conant, and by 1918 the factory moved to 312 W. Conant where it remained until about 1941 when the factory closed. This small factory building is now gone (Portage Public Library n.d. [trade catalogue dated 1929]; Portage, City of 1930-41 [1934-35: 78]; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1894; 1929; Register-Democrat 6/6/1924; 5/5/1941; Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Wisconsin Power and Light ca. 1925: 6).

Although the Haertel or Eulberg Brewery, a major industry in Portage, owned offices and a saloon at the northeast corner of W. Cook and Clark which continues to stand (137-139 W. Cook, 56/26), the buildings associated with the industry no longer remain. Their former location lies just north of the current district boundary line.

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As area farmers shifted from mixed farming to the raising of dairy herds and feed grains in the 1880s, Portage also acquired a number of dairy-related industries. Following the drop in cheese production in the late 1880s, Wisconsin dairy manufacturers shifted to the production of butter. The manufacturing of dairy products dominated Wisconsin's industry between 1900 and 1920. To protect the market, the Wisconsin Dairymen's Association formulated standards for production to ensure uniform quality products. Butter became a predominant dairy product through the first decade of the twentieth century. However, as oleomargarine overshadowed the butter market, this growth became stunted. By 1912, Wisconsin regained its cheese market. During the second decade of the twentieth century, fluid milk sales also became a significant segment of the dairy economy. Improved production techniques permitted and production standards increasingly required greater sanitation in milk processing which eliminated animal odors and the threat of disease. Consumption then gradually rose between 1890 and 1910 (Wyatt 1986 [vol. 2, agriculture]: 11).

Before the turn of the century, cream stations dotted the towns adjacent to Portage. From here, the milk was hauled to the creamery in Portage. A creamery occupied the southeast corner of W. Edgewater and Lock by 1894. By 1910, it was known as the William Fulton Creamery and became the Knack Brothers Creamery by 1910 and the W.C. Cutting's Creamery by 1918. Processing the milk of 1260 cows, the creamery produced 201,688 pounds of butter in 1914. Local farmers formed and incorporated the Co-operative Creamery and Warehouse association in 1919 and used the facility of the private plant at Lock and W. Edgewater. Cooperative creameries in which area farmers jointly owned the establishment became one means of eliminating the middleman and raising the real price received for milk. In 1919, the company received milk from 150 farmers and manufactured 183,502 pounds of butter in that year. By 1923, the creamery had expanded production to 610,634 pounds of butter, processing milk gathered from 498 patrons.

The cooperative creamery completed a new plant at 233 W. Edgewater (23/2) in 1925. The City of Portage provided the company with a title to the land. C.W. Kanpfer of Kanpfer-Beutow, engineers and architects of St. Paul, designed the plans for the building (Portage Public Library n.d. [Register-Democrat 8/1924]). The new creamery opened for public inspection in May, 1925. This plant pasteurized and bottled fluid milk for home and store delivery, manufactured butter and cottage cheese, and furnished sweet and sour cream. During World War I when the butter market declined, the company added a powdered milk operation and maintained its fluid milk operation. Placing an addition on the west side of the plant, it doubled the size of the plant to accommodate these operations. In 1950, a warehouse was also added to the building. In 1954, the Portage Co-operative Creamery modernized its plant adding new butter making machines and new bottling equipment and remodeling offices. In 1963, Ray-O-Vac purchased the plant to manufacture batteries and dry cells. Since the company moved to Portage's industrial park in 1976, the building has stood vacant (Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952; Jones 1914 [1]: 126-27; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1894; 1901; 1910; 1918; Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Portage Daily Register 12/30/1954; Register-Democrat 1/25/1919; 2/5/1924; 1/8/1925; 2/13/1930; 5/12/1954).

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Lee Manley began his ice cream company as a small concern on his farm just south of Portage in 1917. As his local market expanded, Manley formed a partnership with Thomas McNaughton in 1921 known as the M & M Dairy. During the 1920s, the M & M Dairy adopted the trade name Red Circle Ice Cream for its product. In 1921, the partners purchased the Purity Ice Cream plant in the former Stotzer building at the southeast corner of W. Wisconsin and W. Conant. After relocating the firm to the 212 W. Wisconsin (24/23) in 1922, the company began to ship its product to communities in south central Wisconsin. By 1923, the firm converted its operations to complete mechanical refrigeration. In 1935, Everett Bidewell purchased the company maintaining the Red Circle trade name until 1950 when the product became Bidewell Ice Cream. He erected a new concrete and red brick veneer plant at the southwest corner of W. Wisconsin and W. Edgewater, now the site of the First Wisconsin Bank Drive-in, in 1950. Bidewell operated the company until 1977 (Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952; Register-Democrat 6/3/1921; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1918).

**Area of Significance: Social History**

Voluntary organizations or formally organized groups of private citizens grew increasingly prevalent after the Civil War. As communities became more diverse in composition, this institutional form began to replace community action through common consensus. Thus, these voluntary organizations formed to accomplish duties once done cooperatively and informally by the community. Each organization defined a few specific shared goals, duties, values, and rules and frequently expressed them in the form of a constitution. This formal organization allowed groups to last beyond the commitment of the individual, and it permitted the maintenance of social order in an increasingly mobile society. Such joint commitment also gave the individual members social identity. The proliferating number of voluntary organizations eventually acquired and performed many community functions. And, since these groups formed for specific purposes and joint action, they both segregated and crosscut and reinforced the lines of community divisions, particularly religious and ethnic cleavages. The voluntary organization, then, became the major means of association, joint action, and unity in the twentieth century.

Voluntary organizations accomplished a wide range of community tasks. They entertained, provided fellowship, organized sports, took care of the dead and ill and their families, assisted the working man to improve his working conditions, protected the farmer from unfair market prices and provided him a means to buy cooperatively, reformed society, furthered civic betterment and beauty, and promoted the qualities of the community. Such organizations included bands and singing groups; debating, literary, and dramatic societies; lyceums; professional societies; temperance organizations; fraternal lodges; women's groups; farm cooperatives such as creamery companies; farm associations; and cooperative telephone companies. Organized but not formalized activities such as tent shows, musical performances, lectures, circuses, the Chautauqua, concerts, and fairs multiplied providing entertainment and occasions for visits in public buildings, private halls, opera houses, theater, parks, and open squares. All these activities brought together communities becoming too large and too diverse to

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associate informally (McKay 1985; Wyatt 1986 [vol. 3, social and political movements]: 5; Current 1976: 525-26, 535; Nesbit 1985: 484-93; Smith 1973: 391).

Portage supported a large and diverse number of voluntary organizations beginning in the 1850s. The examples discussed below include those which were associated with noted standing buildings in the retail district. These voluntary organizations serving Portage included fraternal organizations, service groups, business and trade organizations, women's organizations, and health services. The fraternal organizations, service groups, and business and trade organizations located in the buildings in the Portage Retail Historic District. These groups include the Masons, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Modern Woodmen of America, Elks, Knights of Pythias, Liederkranz Society, the Catholic Knights, Knights of Columbus, the Foresters, Grand Army of the Republic, American Legion, Kiwanis, and the Portage Area Chamber of Commerce.

Although some groups maintained their own buildings, most met in private homes, halls above commercial buildings, churches, and hotels. The Portage or Eulberg Opera House provided space for concerts, lectures, locally produced plays, commercially produced entertainment (115-117 E. Cook, 56/5). The public hall above the fire station at the corner of Clark and W. Pleasant, the Armory and city hall along W. Wisconsin, and in the nineteenth century the Columbia County Courthouse functioned as important gathering places for voluntary organizations. The Corning House and its replacement the Raulf Hotel (207 W. Cook, 31/22) and the Ender House (228-230 W. Wisconsin, 24/31) hosted many meetings. Early halls which no longer stand include Pettibone Hall at the southwest intersection of DeWitt and W. Cook and Veranda Hall at the northeast corner of DeWitt and Cook (Register-Democrat 2/2/1924). Voluntary organizations also held meetings in the many private halls above retail buildings: the Eulberg Block (137-139 W. Cook, 56/26), the Graham Block (301 DeWitt, 25/17), the Hillyer Block (320 DeWitt, 25/12), the Odd Fellows Hall (124 E. Cook, 57/26), the Knights of Columbus Hall (228-230 W. Wisconsin, 24/31, later 238 W. Wisconsin, 24/32), Knights of Pythias Hall above the Helmann Building (214 W. Cook, 24/24; later 131 W. Cook, 56/24), the Masonic Temple (115 W. Conant, 31/15), Modern Woodmen of America Hall (122 E. Cook, 57/25; later 210 W. Cook, 55/7), Maccabee Hall (131 W. Cook, 56/24), the Johnson Block (101 W. Cook, 25/23), Vandercook Hall (238 W. Wisconsin, 24/32), the City Bank Building (202 W. Cook, 57/8), the Grand Army of the Republic Hall (214 W. Wisconsin, 24/24), the Phoenix Block (102 W. Cook, 25/21), Beattie or McDermott Hall, used as a dance hall (305 DeWitt, 25/7), the Michel Building (136 W. Cook, 57/11), the Register Building (309 DeWitt, 25/8), and the Telephone Building (308 W. Conant, 31/19) (Farrell 1917: 19; Smith Baumann Directory Company 1929: 30; Murtagh 1989).

Reaching their peak activity after the Civil War to 1910, fraternal organizations were one of the first and most popular types of voluntary organizations. Their comparatively small size and intimacy and religious and moralistic overtones established a needed sense of order and cohesion which small midwestern communities were losing by the late nineteenth century. Initially, fraternal organizations primarily existed to provide companionship and offer welfare services such as health and death benefits for its members and improve working conditions. These latter responsibilities were later assumed by the government.

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They provided a new mode of identity as their position in family, church, and community became threatened by the women's movement of the late nineteenth century. The lodges occasionally organized along ethnic cleavages. While some groups supported nativism activities in the nineteenth century, others, for example German and Irish lodges, formed in part as protective organizations and groups which eased the transition into a new culture. Such groups in Portage included the Masons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Good Templars, and Elks. By the 1890s, fraternal organizations also began to perform a large number of social, political, and economic functions including community reform movements, social welfare projects, and the promotion of local business. Women's groups often initiated action in these areas. Fraternal organizations thus became a social focal point of the male community providing another avenue through which the community could act and sustain itself as informal, joint community action declined. These services and business organizations included the Chamber of Commerce, businessmen's associations, and other civic improvement groups such as the Kiwanis. Because of their weak, financial position, the voluntary organization began to decline during the depression of the 1930s. Fraternal organizations met in their own lodge halls and halls above commercial buildings (Wyatt 1986 [vol. 3, social and political movements]: 5; Nesbit 1985: 686; McKay 1985; Smith 1973: 572).

The Masons, one of the oldest fraternal organizations, were formed in England as the Free and Associated Masons and established in America by the 1730s and in Wisconsin in 1823. The Grand Lodge of Wisconsin formed at Madison in 1843. They maintained a highly-structured organization, conducting their meetings with much ceremony and ritual. Membership in the group offered community status and prestige. Its hierarchy and rules provided apparent order to a highly-mobile, midwestern society. Thus, the Masons formed mainly a social organization which established strict rules of conduct for its members both within the lodge and in public. In the late 1860s, the Masons organized the Order of the Eastern Star to open membership to wives and daughters of members (Wyatt 1986 [vol. 3, social and political movements]: 5-2-4; Smith 1973: 571).

Three masonic organizations formed in Portage. Organized as a chapter of Royal Arch Masons, the Portage Chapter formed in 1856 and received its charter in 1857. In 1862, the group altered its name to Fort Winnebago Lodge No. 14, R.A.M. and continued to exist in 1883. Fort Winnebago Commandery No. 4, K.T. formed by 1861 and continued through 1883. Fort Winnebago Lodge No. 33, was chartered in 1850. By 1880, they occupied the hall above the Vandercook Block at 238 W. Wisconsin (24/32). With a membership of 115, the Masonic Lodge with the Guppy Guards organized in 1876 erected a two story, brick Italianate Commercial lodge hall at the northeast corner of DeWitt and E. Conant in 1883. Until the completion of the city hall in 1902, the first floor served as the armory. After the removal of the armory, it became the post office. In 1936, the masons constructed their current lodge hall or temple at 115 W. Conant and dedicated the building in 1937. E.J. Potter, architect of Madison, provided the design for the Art Deco, two story concrete temple (Wisconsin State Journal 11/5/1929; 5/9/1937; Butterfield 1880: 653, 656; Portage Public Library n.d. [undated photograph]; Register-Democrat 6/9/1950; 1950 [12/14: 1/7, 2/6; 5/25/1937; 5/27/1937; Portage Public Library [Democrat, 1883]; Jones 1914 [1]: 220-221; Portage Daily Register

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7/2/1952; Democrat 7/30/1897; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1885; 1901).

The Masons organized a chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star, Star of Bethlehem No. 100, in 1897. Expanding to forty members, the organization received its charter in 1898. The group met in 1898 above 124 W. Cook (57/17) and moved to 101 W. Cook (25/23) above the Johnson Block in 1905. In 1906, the Masons invited the group to use their temple at the corner of DeWitt and W. Conant for their meetings. In 1936, they then moved with the Masons into the new hall at 115 W. Conant. The group functioned primarily as a social organization and raised funds for charitable causes (Naset 1973).

An English institution begun in 1774 to benefit laborers, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) was founded in the United States in 1819. Membership grew rapidly in the 1830s. The ten lodges then existing in Wisconsin created the Grand Lodge of Wisconsin at Milwaukee in 1847. The organization originally provided its members sickness and death benefits and assisted members' families through a case-by-case decision. Later, the society formed more for interpersonal interaction emphasizing good moral conduct among its members and engaging in considerable ritual at the meetings. Assuming a religious character, the Odd Fellows required adherence to the tenets of the Bible. It thus fulfilled a private need for a definition of order and place in the rapidly-changing communities of the Midwest as did the Masons (Wyatt 1986 [vol. 3, social and political movements]: 5-4; Graebner 1927: 131; Whalen 1966: 124; Smith 1973: 571).

The first Odd Fellows group, Portage Lodge No. 61, formed in 1854 and was dominated by German-speaking members. Its English-speaking members gradually withdrew. The English-speaking members reorganized a lodge in 1862. Wauona Lodge No. 132 of the Odd Fellows became formally organized in 1867 with nineteen members. In 1868, the German lodge consolidated with this group. Wauona Lodge No. 132 eventually absorbed the Decorah Lodge of Poynette and the Dells Lodge in 1953. By 1868, the organization included 75 members, and it hosted the state assembly meeting in 1869 and in 1898. This group occupied the hall above the Pettibone Block at the southwest corner of DeWitt and Cook for an unknown period prior to 1880. Following the burning of the building and its contents, the Odd Fellows received a new charter in 1881. Later, the Odd Fellows rented the hall above the Haertel or Eulberg block (137-139 W. Cook, 56/26) in 1881. By 1897, the organization had relocated in the hall above the First National Bank (102 W. Cook, 25/21). The Odd Fellows purchased 124 E. Cook in 1916 and replaced and dedicated the new building (57/26) in 1916. The second floor hall included a club room, kitchen, dining room, and main hall. They leased the first floor retail area and rented their hall to other community voluntary groups such as the Equitable Fraternal Union. The Odd Fellows formed its auxiliary, Rebekah Lodge No. 106, in 1893. The Portage Odd Fellows joined a higher branch of their order known as the Excelsior Encampment about 1869 and in 1876 a small group from the Odd Fellows organized the Portage Battalion of Uniformed Patriarchs. Primarily a social group, the lodge sponsored box socials, oyster suppers, and dances. More recently, the lodge also contributed to the support of youth camps and other causes (Portage Daily Register 1908 [4/16: 3/1]; 7/2/1952: 8; 7/15/1967; Register-Democrat 12/20/1916; 2/25/1948; 1/22/1954; Butterfield 1880: 659; Jones

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1914 [1]: 221-22; Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Farrell 1917: 17; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1885; 1889; 1894).

Founded in 1883 and popular mainly in the Midwest with their headquarters at Fulton, Illinois until 1892 and then at Rock Island, the Modern Woodmen of America primarily formed to offer sickness and death benefits to workmen. They also required good moral character for entrance into the organization and practiced some religious ceremony (Scott 1972: 144). Portage Camp No. 646 organized in 1898 and by 1910 maintained their own hall (122 E. Cook, 57/25; later 210 W. Cook, 55/7). They continued to meet through 1917 (Voshardt 1910: 24; Farrell 1917: 17).

The Knights of Pythias Lodge No. 35 formed as a secret fraternal organization at the state level in 1864. Portage Lodge No. 35 was founded in 1882 with 22 members but ceased to meet by 1886 and lost its charter by 1888. A second lodge, Portage McQueeney Lodge No. 104, formed in 1893 at the Masonic Temple located at the corner of DeWitt and E. Conant. In 1928, it became known as Portage Lodge No. 104. The Pythian Sisters Lodge, E.C. Gottry Lodge No. 52, was initiated with seventy members in 1922 at the Methodist Church. The lodge held its meetings in the Grand Army of the Republic hall above the Helmann building (214 W. Wisconsin, 24/24) from at least 1885 to about 1918 when it had moved to the Vandercook Block (238 W. Wisconsin, 24/32) and about 1920 relocated in the Eulberg Building (137-139 W. Cook, 56/26) (Scott 1972: 112, 144; Register-Democrat 4/20/1922; Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952; Jones 1914 [1]: 222; Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929: 28; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1885; 1889; 1894).

The Portage Lodge of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks No. 675 (BPOE) became established in 1901. By 1914, it maintained a membership of 252. The order functioned as a social fraternity dedicated to conducting their behavior by the principles of "Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love, and Fidelity" (Columbia County Historical Society 1982). In 1901, the Elks established their club room in the Corning House, the site of the Raulf Hotel (207 W. Cook, 31/22). By 1917, the Elks had located in the hall on the second floor of 135 W. Cook (56/25). In 1923, they purchased the Sprecher or Gowran house at 201 W. Conant to serve as their lodge hall. In addition to functioning as a social group, the Elks participate in community assistance programs and charitable projects (Register-Democrat 8/28/1930; Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1923]; Jones 1914 [1]: 223; Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952; Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929: 27).

The Germans of Portage formed several organizations commonly associated with this immigrant group in other Wisconsin communities. They frequently founded musical, theatrical, gymnastic, and literary groups. A male, choral group, the Liederkrantz Society of Portage, formed in 1856. Although composed primarily of German immigrants, the organization did not restrict itself to this ethnic group. Its founder, John Bassi, was Italian who later operated a musical instrument and home furnishings store at 233 W. Cook (49/24). In 1867, the society established a select German-English school which emphasized German culture and music. To house the school, the group purchased the Berry Mercantile Store which stood at the corner of DeWitt and Edgewater and moved it to 201 W. Conant (Wisconsin State Register 1867 [6/29: 3/1]). After the school experienced financial problems, the

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society sold the property to R.A. Sprecher who moved the building and erected his dwelling on the property. It later became the Elks' Lodge (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1870-1882]). After 1872, the Liederkrantz Society continued to practice their singing accompanied by instrumental music on the second floor of the city fire station. The society provided concerts for special occasions and held annual balls on New Year's Eve. By 1910, they met in the Eulberg Block (139 W. Cook, 56/26). The society remained active through 1914 with 35 members (Wyatt 1986 [vol. 3, social and political movements]: 5-4; Portage Daily Register 7/11/1970; Butterfield 1880: 661; Jones 1914 [1]: 225; Nesbit 1985: 503).

The Catholic Knights, the Knights of Columbus, and the Foresters were tied to the Catholic Church which forbade association with secret fraternal orders outside the church structure. In 1885, the St. Joseph branch of the Catholic Knights of Wisconsin was organized with 36 members. It functioned as a fraternal insurance order offering stipends to the beneficiaries of deceased members. By 1897, the organization had a membership of 57. In 1910, it included 38 members and continued to meet through 1929. The Portage Knights of Columbus Council No. 1637 organized with 63 members as an affiliate of St. Mary's Catholic Church in 1912. The group functioned as a benevolent society and community service group. The lodge, with other Catholic organizations, held its meeting in several halls in the retail area including 228-230 W. Wisconsin (24/31) and 238 W. Wisconsin (24/32) by 1918 until it purchased and remodeled the Underwear Factory Building at 312 W. Wisconsin in 1940. This building no longer stands. The Catholic Order of Foresters, Columbia Court No. 319 formed in 1892 with 67 charter members. The Foresters also functioned as a fraternal insurance and social order. One identified meeting place includes the hall over the first City Bank Building (site of 202 W. Cook, 57/8) (Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952; Jones 1914 [1]: 224; Democrat 7/30/97; Voshardt 1910: 23; Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929: 29; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1918).

Particularly by the late nineteenth century, male societies began to focus their efforts on service to their community or other community groups. Some of the early service organizations such as those formed to assist veterans of war resembled the earlier fraternal groups. Organized originally for the Union soldiers and sailors of the Civil War, the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) patterned itself after secret fraternal organizations. It provided mutual assistance and aid for its members and participated in extensive ritual. But its early political role on behalf of Civil War veterans and its patriotic demeanor separated it from other fraternal lodges. The GAR formed in Springfield, Illinois in 1866, and its auxiliary, the Women's National Relief Corps, was organized in 1883 at Denver (Stevens 1972: 369). Later, the GAR expanded its role to honor those who patriotically served in any war and made contributions to veterans hospitals and scholarships. Portage's Rousseau Post No. 14 established its lodge hall in the Helmann Building (214 W. Wisconsin, 24/24) by 1885 and probably continued to meet there until at least 1910. By 1929, the GAR gathered at the courthouse. The auxiliary, the Women's Relief Corps, organized in 1884 and met at the same location. This local chapter formed to assist disabled veterans and their dependents and promote child welfare. The group raised money through a multitude of ice cream socials and dinners to support the Wisconsin Home for Veterans and other projects designed to provide services for

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disabled and elderly veterans (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1885; 1894; Voshardt 1910: 24; Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929: 28; Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Grand Army Publishing Co. 1890: 565; Register-Democrat 7/30/1934).

The American Legion was originally formed by World War I veterans in Paris. The Legion assisted veterans and performed additional benevolent work in the community. The Richard Mulcahy Post #47 organized in 1919 with fifteen members. The Legion received its charter in 1924. In 1919, the group gathered at the Armory on W. Wisconsin and later it met in the hall over the First National Bank (102 W. Cook, 25/21). After 1936 until 1974, the Legion held its meeting over the fire station at the corner of W. Pleasant and Clark. The Legion Auxiliary formed in 1922 (Register-Democrat 3/7/1958; Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952). The Cleary-Krech Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars organized in 1929. In that year, the group met above the police station on 216 W. Wisconsin (24/25) which it purchased in 1949. The post later erected a hall on Collins Road. The organization supports community projects and assists indigent veterans and their families (Columbia County Historical Society 1982; Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952: 25; Murtagh 1986).

Several business associations organized during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries to promote Portage as a trade center. Portage businessmen formed the Portage Business Men's Association in 1890 to promote the city as a center of commerce. Composed primarily of city merchants, the Portage Kiwanis formed in 1921 as a service organization which frequently championed Portage's business interests. It promoted the city to the growing number of tourists, established several campsites utilized primarily by tourists, improved the Silver Lake Beach area, and strategically placed signs directing tourists to locations of interest. As a service organization, the Kiwanis provided scholarships and supported youth organizations and projects. The organization established its office at the Raulf Hotel (207 W. Cook, 31/22). Seventy-five businessmen of Portage formed the Chamber of Commerce in 1929. Established at the onset of the Depression, the Chamber's main goals included the attraction of new industries to the city, the expansion of the city's retail services, and the support of civic improvements. Except for a brief interval, the organization also located its office in the Raulf Hotel. The Chamber of Commerce placed its information center at Riverside Park along E. Wisconsin and Pauquette in the 1930s and may have continued the service into the early 1950s (Murtagh 1986; Register-Democrat 11/16/1922; 8/31/1923; 6/13/1929; 6/25/1929; 1/22/1940; Portage Public Schools 1948-51 [1951]; Portage, City of 1930-41 [1932-33: 37]; Columbia County Historical Society 1982).

Thus, numerous fraternal organizations appeared in Portage particularly during the second half of the nineteenth century. They formed for specific purposes to accomplish many civic goals, to acquire companionship, to promote proper decorum within the community, and to further business interests. These organizations accomplished what neither single individuals nor at that period the government could achieve. They replaced action by informal association, and they offered a means by which to bring greater order to their society. During the 1930s as the Depression made the organizations less fiscally viable, the federal government began to perform some of the service activities once accomplished by

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those formal voluntary organizations.

**Area of Significance: Entertainment/Recreation**

In addition to the voluntary associations which formally organized community activities including amusement, entertainment also occurred on a more informal basis. A private individual, organization or business hosted the activity for a minor fee. For example, Mr. Emdler held his annual Fancy Dress and Masked Ball in midwinter at Pettibone Hall by 1864 (Wisconsin State Register 1864 [1/9: 3/1]). Dances with a hired band occurred in the local halls on a frequent basis. The entertainment included instrumental performances, singing, lecture series and addresses, and dramatic performances and recitals. The Chautauqua had become an annual event at Portage in the second decade of the twentieth century. The meetings occurred in Portage by 1885. Professional troupes and minstrel shows presented performances as early as 1867. Churches held ice cream socials and strawberry festivals to raise money. The Baptist Church held a strawberry festival in 1867 at Pettibone Hall to improve their meeting house.

The number of entertainment halls rose rapidly in the 1870s as Wisconsin communities expanded and provided a sufficiently large audience to support them. Elaborately constructed opera halls placed along the main streets displayed the prosperity of the community and attracted well-known performers. The construction of railroad lines across the state by the 1870s also provided an economical means to transport the professional troupes long distances. The kind of entertainment also shifted during last quarter of the century as the size of the middle class expanded and demanded improved performances. Prior to 1870, stock companies with a visiting star playing the lead role characterized these performances. They depended on the community to supply the remainder of the cast. However, as theater productions became profitable, traveling troupes produced the entire show (Newby 1993).

Many of the concerts and other entertainments occurred at the Portage or Eulberg Opera House (115-117 E Cook, 56/5). John Dullaghan, a private businessman, erected the two story, cream brick building in 1879. Originally, it displayed relatively elaborate, Italianate Commercial detailing. Samuel Stotzer of Portage's Stotzer Granite Company carved the marble name and date stone under the center gable. A wide, central stairway led to the second floor hall placed above a double retail space. The hall seated 350 guests, the stage measured 29 by 51 feet with an orchestra pit placed before it, and it included four, rather small dressing rooms. John Dullaghan managed and owned the Portage Opera House until 1886 when the Hadfield Company purchased the building and Alexander Carnegie replaced him as the manager. Carnegie continued to arrange programming and John Thompson maintained the Opera House until about 1920. The Eulberg Brewing Company acquired the building about 1915 after its ownership by A.W. Stark beginning in 1901. Julius Eulberg served as the manager and booking agent of the Eulberg Opera House or Empire Theater.

Dullaghan opened his opera house with a grand ball presented by the Guppy Guards on September 15, 1879. Located on the main Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul

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Railroad line, Portage had ample access to traveling performances. Performances booked at the opera house included musical performances frequently advertised the preceding noon by parades along Cook Street. Stock companies accompanied by their own bands remained up to a week performing a different repertoire each evening. Professional performances included melodrama, musicals, slapstick comedy, minstrel shows, travel lectures, fashion shows by local clothing shops, Shakespearian tragedies, and in later years movies. Local, amateur drama groups and organizations also presented home talent shows. About 1913 after Zona Gale wrote "The Neighbors," a drama teacher at the high school produced the play with local talent at the Opera House. Voluntary associations frequently presented fund raising performances. The Liederkrantz Singing Society presented benefit concerts. High school graduations occurred in the Opera House before the construction of the 1917 high school. An orchestra was made available for each show. The Opera House closed in 1929 as movies rose in popularity. The building was then remodeled on both the exterior and interior to house Montgomery Ward (Portage Daily Register 1960 [3/7: 8/4-8]; 1967 [2/18: 1/1-7, 3/4-5]; 2/7/1970; 7/10/71; Butterfield 1880: 654; Voshardt 1910: 22; Mohr 1952).

Silent motion pictures first became available in the mid-1890s when they were shown for their novelty as much as for their content. These early movies proved to be short, poor in quality, and usually illustrated some scene from daily life. Longer films illustrating a story with a central plot awaited the first years of the twentieth century. Theaters first utilized them as fillers between the acts of Vaudeville shows. During the first decade of the twentieth century, they gradually became the entire show. Retail buildings and warehouses served as the early movie theaters or nickelodeons, a name which denoted the fee charged for admission. Seating, if any, and the screen, a white wall or piece of material, were primitive. As the popularity of movies rose in the first decade, managers of opera houses responded to the decline in their audience by adding movies to their performances. Buildings intended to show only movies opened after 1905, and quickly multiplied thereafter. Like the opera houses, these theaters stood along main street. By 1906, businessmen began constructing chains of nickelodeons and movie theaters in the Milwaukee area. With the construction of more elaborate movie theaters by 1910, the comparatively meagerly furnished nickelodeons fell into disfavor. By the mid-1920s, the movie palace began to replace the movie theater. The movie theater retained a stage on which live entertainment supplemented the movie while the stage was absent from the movie palace. The interiors grew more elaborate and by 1927 some theaters known as atmospheric theaters were designed according to historical and or cultural themes. In 1927, the first motion pictures with sound were introduced in Milwaukee. The building of movie theaters also peaked in this year. Attendance continued to climb rapidly even during the Depression and did not decline until after 1946 (Newby 1993).

After the turn of the century, the Portage retail district also contained several theaters. Fred Fink and H.H. Niemeyer opened a nickelodeon or the Electric Theater in the Emporium Block at the southeast corner of DeWitt and E. Conant just after the turn of the century. Fink and Niemeyer later moved their theater to 213 DeWitt (25/4), the Brodie Building, about 1910. Then, it became known as the Crystal Theater. Also by 1910, John Hettinger and others ran the Majestic

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Theater in the Corning House Block, the current location of the Raulf or Ram Hotel at 207 W. Cook (31/22). S.J. Huber managed the Gem Theater in the Huber Block at 113 E. Cook (56/7). These theaters probably operated like Nickelodeons. Walter Judson, H.M. Comstock, and F.G. Avers erected the Home Theater Company at 112 E. Cook in 1910-1911 (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1910]). It was probably the first building erected as a movie theater in Portage. This building was replaced by the J.C. Penney building (56/7) in the 1960s. These theaters also included live entertainment between the shows, some of which were Vaudeville acts (Voshardt 1910: 22; Portage Public Schools 1948-51; Portage Daily Register 4/11/1950; 4/22/1972; Columbia County Historical Society 1982).

The Fisher Paramount Theater Company erected the Portage Theater at 314-322 W. Wisconsin (31/20) in 1927. The brick veneer and tile, Period Revival building included a stage, scenery, asbestos curtains, and dressing rooms. During the Depression, the theater closed for several years until purchased by F.J. McWilliams of the Portage Theater Corporation. When it opened, it provided live entertainment with the Barton Organ. Over the years, the theater played not only movies but Vaudeville acts and live stage performances and provided space for community activities. In 1985, the interior was divided into three theaters and the exterior was enlarged along its northwest elevation using a size and color brick and detailing similar to the original building (Murtagh 1989; Columbia County Treasurer 1863- [1927]; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1929). Although this theater appears more elegant than its predecessors, the Portage Theater was still a movie theater rather than a movie palace.

**Area of Significance: Architecture**

The dominant styles evident along the main retail area generally reflect the periods of economic growth within the community. Portage received its primary modes of long-distance transportation in the early and late 1850s. The Portage Canal was first completed and used to a limited extent in the early 1850s. The retail, craft, and industrial buildings which emerged at this time along the canal, E. Wisconsin, and Main and DeWitt streets adjacent to Edgewater and Cook no longer stand. The railroad effectively connected Portage to Milwaukee in December, 1856 at the beginning of a nation-wide depression which was followed by the Civil War. A second commercial building boom began in the late 1860s and continued into the early 1890s as Portage expanded its retail and commercial services to Columbia County and a large area to the north. The depression of the early 1890s ended the rapid development along Cook and adjacent DeWitt, Main, W. Wisconsin, and Edgewater. By that date, most of the current retail building spaces were occupied. Later development slightly extended the boundaries of the commercial district and occurred as very occasional building replacement. Totalling 85 properties, the proposed Portage Retail Historic District contains most of these retail buildings in this area. The buildings in the district display the commercial styles in vernacular forms and the Italianate, Period Revival, and Art Deco styles.

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The term vernacular commercial refers to a rather wide range of simply designed commercial buildings displaying little stylistic detailing. They were erected in the last half of the nineteenth and the first three decades of the twentieth century. Almost all of these buildings include large display windows along the first floor building front and plainly designed, rectangular window openings along the upper floors. Original doors along the building fronts leading into the retail areas or to upper floor rooms are usually paneled wood and glass occasionally with unelaborate transoms above them. Decorative elements are limited to detailing immediately above the storefront and a more emphatic cornice treatment such as brick corbeling, denticulated brick, or wood molding. Minimal decorative brick work may appear along the upper story. Additionally, a transom may occur across the facade below the juncture of the two floors to assist the illumination of the first floor (Wyatt 1986 [vol 2, architecture]: 3-10).

Portage's vernacular commercial buildings date between the 1880s and 1927. Variation in appearance within the general building form in part reflects different functions. Such different functions, for example retail stores, hotels, car dealerships, and small industrial buildings, possess different spatial requirements which may be limited by lot size. These requirements may produce variation within the broad vernacular type. The cream brick retail buildings in the Portage Retail Historic District are primarily two stories and possess the typical long and narrow massing and display windows along the building front. The limited decorative elaboration includes corbeling along the parapet, corbeling visually dividing the two floors, pilasters defining the corners and organizing the building's front, and cast iron pilaster adjacent to the storefront. Display windows often flank a centered, recessed entrance with transom and perhaps sidelights. Examples include 201 DeWitt (25/0), 213 DeWitt (24/34), and 124 E. Cook (57/26). The car dealerships and auto repair businesses are located in one to two story, cream and red brick buildings elaborated by stepped or pedimented parapets, pilasters, and decorative brickwork. The buildings at 205 DeWitt (25/2) and 109 E. Edgewater (24/19) provide examples. The Raulf or Ram Hotel at 207 W. Cook (31/22) is a five story building organized by vertically and horizontally aligned windows, pilasters, quoins along its edges, belt courses, and a parapet with simple coping. Many of the craft or small industrial functions in the district were fulfilled in the typical vernacular or Italianate commercial retail buildings. However, one industrial vernacular commercial or astylistic utilitarian building at the edge of the retail district, the Portage Cooperative Creamery (233 W. Edgewater, 23/23), is simply ordered with horizontally and vertically aligned windows and pilasters and detailed with a hood over the entrance.

**Italianate Commercial**

The Italianate Commercial style is frequently visible on the tall, narrow, two to three story, shed or flat roof retail buildings in Wisconsin's retail areas. Stylistic treatment usually occurs around the windows and along the cornice line, juncture of the first and second floors, and the corners of the building. The segmental or round arch windows tend to be long and narrow and lintel detailing is composed of metal, brick or stone. Ornamentation is often heavily applied. The cornice, frequently metal, follows the entablature design, including architrave, frieze, and cornice. The building design spatially separated the

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first floor facade from the upper floors through ornamented beams or surface molding placed on top of the display windows. Quoins, pilasters, piers or half columns might elaborate the corners of the building.

These basic units, then, received characteristically Italianate detailing. The most common detailing associated with the style is the projecting cornice rising above the roof. Brackets and/or modillions often elaborate the cornice and a triangular or semi-circular pediment may be centered along it. Corbeling and patterned brick courses may also elaborate the lower part of the parapet. The upper floor windows often receive wood or iron hoodmolds. Or, stone or iron, segmental arch window lintels may carry keystones with incised detailing. Pedimented upper floor lintels were also common. The dividing element between the floors which may be associated with a transom across the facade may include bracketing, corbeling or a metal cornice. Corners may be emphasized by pilasters or piers which may also receive corbeling or metal capitals. Further detailing may occur through the application of decorative brick work created by contrasting or offset brick along the exterior walls of the upper floors. Entrances, perhaps flanked by iron columns or surmounted by transoms, frequently occur in the center of the facade and may be recessed between the display windows. Often, these decorative elements are overstated in a manner similar to their domestic counterpart in the High Italianate style (Wyatt 1986 [vol. 2, architecture]: 2-6,10; Gottfried and Jennings 1985: 239-41).

Portage's Italianate Commercial style buildings date between the mid-1860s and the turn of the century. Examples are two to three story, long and narrow, cream brick retail buildings with flat or gently sloping roofs. First floor levels are opened by display windows on either side of a recessed entrance while the upper floors carry double hung windows. They display their ornament along the cornice and upper story windows, occasionally as brickwork below the parapet or between the windows, between the floors, and along the corners of the building. Examples of the style dating from the mid-1860s through the 1870s are comparatively simply detailed with metal or brick cornices or overhanging wood cornices with brackets along their parapets, cast iron window hoods or round arch brick window lintels often with keystones, occasional pilasters along the corners, and corbeling or string courses dividing the floors. The retail buildings at 137-139 W. Cook (56/26), 124 W. Cook (57/17), 130-132 W. Cook (57/13), 118-122 W. Cook (57/18), 136 W. Cook (57/11), 214 W. Wisconsin (24/24), 301 DeWitt (25/6), and 113 E. Cook (56/7) fall within this time period.

The Italianate Commercial buildings in the retail district become more elaborate in the 1880s and 1890s. Some, such as the example at 121-123 E. Cook (56/3) continue to display a wood overhanging cornice with bracketing and corbeling. The retail building at 212 W. Wisconsin (24/23) is somewhat more elaborate. It exhibits a brick parapet with corbeling and enlarged end corbeling and recessed brick panels; an oriel window with bracketing; shaped lintels with corbel stops; and an elongated, corbeled recessed panel between the two floors. The 1883 retail buildings at 314, 316, and 318 DeWitt (25/14-16) include a cast iron cornice, brick string course, corbeling, and denticulation along their parapets as well as round arch window lintels. The 1886 example at 213 DeWitt (25/1) displays a brick parapet with corbeling, enlarged corbel stops, and denticulation

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as well as round arch window lintels with keystones and a denticulated string course between the floors. The 1889 Hillyer Block at 320 DeWitt (25/12) possesses a wood entablature with single brackets, decorative panels along the frieze, and a denticulated cornice. It includes oriel windows and pedimented window lintels. Cast iron pilasters occur along the storefront of the first floor. Erected in 1888, the retail building at 211 DeWitt (25/3) exhibits a parapet detailed with cast iron cornice and corbeling, oriel window, stone lintels, stone string course with recessed brick panels below, and cast iron pilasters. The 1891 example at 305 DeWitt (25/7) illustrates a comparatively elaborate retail building within the district. Its high parapet includes a metal, denticulated and bracketed cornice, a decorative fan pattern along the frieze, and corbeling. Additional detailing includes diamond brickwork and date block; cast iron pedimented window hoods with rosettes; two oriel windows detailed with corner blocks and stained glass transoms; storefront with cast iron pilasters; and sidelights and transom along the recessed entrance. The example at 101 W. Cook (25/23) also has a bracketed metal cornice, oriel window along its canted entrance, and metal window hoods. A late example of this style dating to 1899-1900 at 220 W. Wisconsin (24/27) displays similar features.

**Period Revival Commercial Style (1900-1940)**

Like the domestic period revival styles, the commercial variation combines motifs primarily inspired by past architectural styles including the colonial and classical styles including the Georgian and Federal styles of the eighteenth century. And, like the domestic counterparts, architects did not usually precisely copy the architectural detailing, style, or examples of the style, but provided creative interpretations of them. They were inspired by the past. The classically inspired elements of this style gained impetus from the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. Architects adapted the rectangular plan, symmetrical organization of building front, and classical details such as the denticulated cornice, elliptical fanlight, sidelight along the main entrance, Palladian window, broken pediments above doors and/or windows, classical columns, pilasters, and motifs such as ogee arches, urns and finials, swags, and wreaths (Wyatt 1986 [vol. 2, architecture]: 2-28, 33).

In the Portage Retail Historic District, one building exhibits an interpretation of the Period Revival style. Erected in 1927, the Portage Theater at 314-322 W. Wisconsin (31/20) displays a red brick veneer front with several elements reflecting the Period Revival style (Columbia County Treasurer 1863- [1927]; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1929). The ornamental detailing of theaters often drew on the classical revival details for inspiration. Here, they include pilasters decorated with swags symmetrically placed along the facade and double pilasters outlining the entrance area which support a simple entablature embellished with rosettes. Between them, occur a pedimented window lintel with consoles and a swage positioned beneath a round arch with keystone.

The Portage Retail Historic District also includes one Georgian Revival domestic building. Erected between 1933 and 1934 (Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1931-33]), the two and a half story, tile Porter Apartments (110 E. Conant, 30/24) is

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covered with a gable roof and its entrance occurs under the eaves. It displays a rather simple interpretation of the Georgian Revival style. Stylistic elements include bands of windows with fanlights above them along the facade of both floors. Sidelights occur along both sides of the centrally located, recessed, main entrance. Interior end chimneys occur in the center of each side elevation, and the two dormers are finished with returned cornices and 6/6, double hung windows lights.

**Art Deco Commercial Style (1925-45)**

The Art Deco style incorporates rather futuristic or highly stylized historical motifs. Angular and hard edges intended to express the capacities of the mechanical age characterizes Art Deco designs. Low-relief, geometric designs such as shallow, fluted columns or pilasters, chevrons, stylized sunbursts and some floral designs and the use of multiple colors in a rather suppressed fashion commonly appear on buildings of this style. Because the style emphasizes the vertical dimension, stepped setbacks are common. Such materials as granite, terra cotta and ornamental metals including bronze were utilized (Wyatt 1986 [vol. 2, architecture]: 2-34). Erected in 1929-1930, the City Bank of Portage, now First Star Bank, occupies a two story, limestone and granite veneer building with rounded front at 202 W. Cook (57/8). The Art Deco motifs include the symmetrical facade, full length, fluted pilasters which rise to the building's denticulated cornice, the circular motifs above the second floor windows, and an entrance closed with copper double doors located in a stepped set-back (Wisconsin State Register 11/8/1929 [by Zona Gale]; Register-Democrat 4/30/1930; 5/1/1930; City Bank of Portage 1949).

**Architects and Builders**

Few of those responsible for designing and constructing buildings in the Portage Retail Historic District or the details of their work have been identified.

The small number of identified professional architects include C.J. Keller and Son, C.W. Kanpfer, and the St. Louis Bank Building and Equipment Company. After the Corning House was razed in 1926, the Raulf Realty Company, a Milwaukee construction company, built the Raulf or Ram Hotel following the design by C.J. Keller and Son, Architects in 1927 (207 W. Cook, 31/21) (Portage Daily Register 7/2/52: 27). Erected at 233 W. Edgewater in 1925, the Portage Cooperative Creamery is a two story, tile, vernacular commercial building designed by C.W. Kanpfer of Kanpfer-Beutow, engineers and architects of St. Paul (Register-Democrat 8/1924; 2/5/1924; 1/8/1925). The St. Louis Bank Building and Equipment Company designed and built the Art Deco City Bank of Portage, now the First Star Bank, in 1929-1930 (Wisconsin State Register 11/8/1929 [by Zona Gale]; Register-Democrat 4/30/1930; 5/1/1930; City Bank of Portage 1949).

Local builders and contractors, the most active of whom were Alexander Carnegie and the Kutzke family, probably erected many of the properties in the district. However, for the most part, the identification of exactly which buildings these

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two contracting firms constructed remains unknown.

A native of Scotland born in 1820, Alexander Carnegie, Sr. immigrated to Vermillion County, New York in 1840. In 1848, he settled with his brother-in-law, James Learmonth, in Milwaukee. They arrived in Portage in 1850, and Carnegie became a permanent resident of Portage in 1855. Carnegie learned his trade as a builder in Scotland. By 1850, Carnegie and Learmonth began a milling business which would provide much for the lumber of Portage's buildings. In 1857, Learmonth retired from the partnership. In 1865, Carnegie formed a partnership with James O. Prescott, a mason, who had located in Portage from New Hampshire in 1856 and advertised as a builder and mason between 1870 and 1901-02 (Polk, R.L. & Co. 1901-02; Chapin 1870; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1870: population schedule]). In 1868, Carnegie advertised his services (Farnham and Vivian 1868-69):

Proprietor of the Portage City Planing Mill. All kinds of Planing and Sawing done on short notice. Architect and Builder. Special attention given to Plans and Specifications for Public Buildings, Business Houses, and Private Residences.

And, in 1885 he still offered his services as an architect as well as serving as the city's assessor (Mahen and Eckstein 1885).

Carnegie and Prescott was Portage's major building firm during its expansion from the late 1860s to the 1880s. However, the only building specifically linked to Carnegie's work is the north wing along the Murison furniture store at 310 DeWitt (25/18). It was erected in 1892, one year before his death (Portage Daily Register 12/13/1917; 1943 [9/15: 1/3-4]; 1944 [9/15: 1/5-6]). Carnegie and Prescott also constructed several of Portage's important early buildings which no longer stand including the 1883 masonic temple located at the corner of DeWitt and W. Conant, the 1864 high school building, the 1865 county jail at the east end of Cook, and the Columbia County Courthouse in 1864-1865. The partners also erected the foundations of several unidentified dwellings owned by Mr. Klenert and Mr. St. John in 1864. In 1882, they built the Sprecher House following the design of T.N. Philpot of Milwaukee. It is now the Elk's Lodge at 201 W. Conant (31/16). Outside of Portage, Carnegie constructed the warden's dwelling associated with the state prison at Waupun (Portage Daily Register 7/2/1952; Butterfield 1880: 881, 920; Wisconsin State Register 1864 [10/15: 3/1]; Democrat 12/15/1893; Register-Democrat 4/6/1938; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1897-98; 1901-02).

Born in Germany in 1826, William Kutzke trained as a stone and brick mason prior to emigrating to the United States. Kutzke continued to operate as a builder and contractor for much of the late nineteenth century, working until his death in 1903. Within the district, Kutzke erected the unidentified Arthur Block and the Johnson Block at 101 W. Cook (25/23) as well as numerous Portage dwellings. By 1895-96, he had included his son Herman in his business as William Kutzke and Son. Prior to 1895, Herman may have worked independently (Wright 1890). William Kutzke advertised that he provided plans and estimates for both public and private buildings. They completed mason work including stone and brick laying as well as plastering. They were owners of the Fort Winnebago sandstone

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quarries, perhaps the one opened two miles west of Fort Winnebago during the construction of Fort Winnebago in 1829-1830 and utilized for foundation stone by builders in Portage (William ca. 1900). His sons Herman and Charles J. Kutzke continued the stone contracting business as Kutzke Brothers by 1905 through 1921 (Jones 1914 [2]: 638; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1895-96; 1897-98; 1901-02; 1903-04; 1905-06; 1919-20). Apparently formed sometime after 1921 when the partnership between Herman and Charles had ceased, H. Kutzke and Sons including Benjamin and William operated as cement contractors between at least 1924 and 1929. The Kutzke Construction Company constructed the Portage Roll of Honor in 1943. Additional buildings constructed by the company after William Kutzke's death have not been identified (Smith-Baumann Directory Co. 1929; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1921; 1924-25; Register-Democrat 5/21/1943; 5/22/1943).

Born in Banbury, England in 1821, George Shackell came to Portage in 1853. He became one of Portage's first masons, building the Judge Dixon house, an unidentified brick house, in that year. In 1855, he erected the Vandercook Block at 238 W. Wisconsin (24/32) and the first City Bank Building which was replaced by the current building (202 W. Cook, 57/8) in 1929-1930. Although he continued to operate as a builder and contractor in Portage through 1897-98, additional buildings constructed by him remain unidentified (Butterfield 1880: 927; Register-Democrat 11/5/1929; Wisconsin State Journal 11/5/1929; Polk, R.L. & Co. 1897-98; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850-1910 [1870; 1880: population schedule]).

#### **Architectural Integrity**

The Portage Retail Historic District preserves a substantial number of Italianate Commercial and vernacular commercial buildings, especially from the mid 1860s to the early 1890s. The alteration of first floor building fronts visible in the district is common to most nineteenth century Wisconsin retail districts. However, examples of well preserved first floor building fronts also remain, for example at 201 DeWitt (25/0) and 211 DeWitt (25/3), 305 DeWitt (25/7), 320 (25/12) DeWitt, 220 W. Wisconsin (24/27), 314-322 W. Wisconsin (31/20), 109 W. Edgewater (24/19), 233 W. Edgewater (23/23), and 207 W. Cook (31/22). The removal of deteriorating building cornices occurred in the 1950s and 1960s. But, examples of these brick, wood, and metal cornices remain and many of the second floor building fronts are also intact. Few buildings were replaced after 1943. Because the Portage Retail Historic District illustrates a retail district common to Wisconsin in the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, it gains significance at the local level. The period of significance, 1855 to 1933-34 (1-2), represents the beginning and end building dates of contributing properties within the district.

#### **Conclusion**

The Portage Retail Historic District, then, gains significance as a typical Wisconsin retail district at the local level during the period of building construction between 1855 and 1933-34. The district acquires significance under criteria A and C in the areas of commerce, social history,

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entertainment/recreation, and architecture. The district primarily illustrates nineteenth century buildings utilized for retail, professional, and craft functions. Several housed light industry. A large number of these buildings included meeting halls on their second or third stories. Several of the buildings once provided facilities or at least space for the performing arts and movie productions. The district includes examples of the commercial vernacular type and commercial Italianate, Period Revival, and Art Deco styles.

(1) Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1863]; Rugen 1868; (Wisconsin State Register 11/8/1929 [by Zona Gale]; Register-Democrat 4/30/1930; 5/1/1930; City Bank of Portage 1949).

(2) Columbia Co. Treasurer 1863- [1933-34]; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1929.

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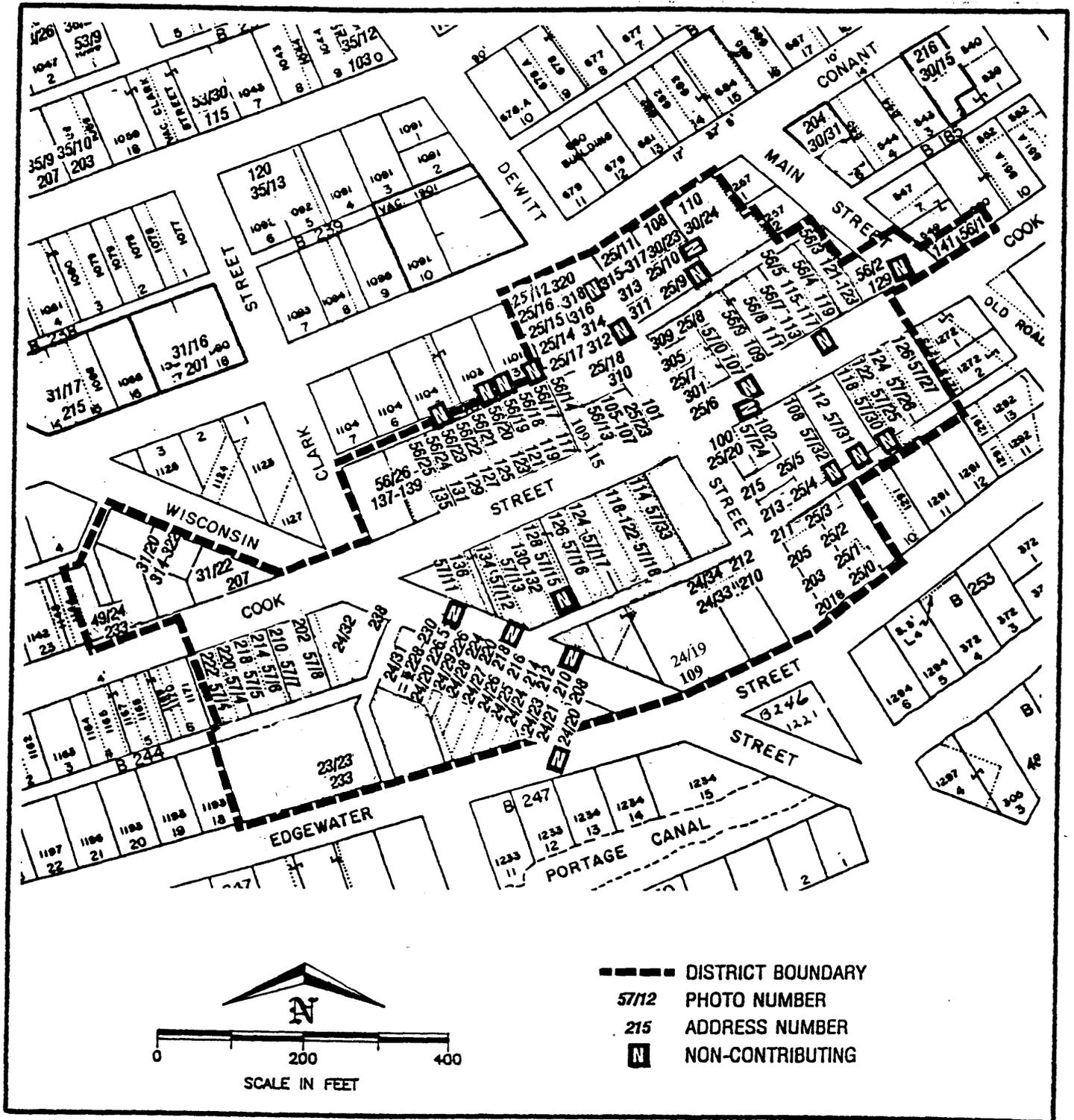
Photographic Documentation

Name: Portage Retail Historic District  
Location: Portage, Columbia County, Wisconsin  
Photograph's Name: Joyce McKay  
Date: 1992-1993  
Location of Negatives: State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Photographic Identification and Camera Direction:

1. The south side of W. Cook between W. Wisconsin and DeWitt facing southeast (58/6).
2. The north side of W. Cook between W. Wisconsin and DeWitt facing northeast (58/7).
3. The west side of W. Wisconsin between W. Cook and W. Edgewater facing southwest (58/5).
4. The south side of W. Cook, west of west Wisconsin facing southwest (58/1).
5. The north side of E. Cook between DeWitt and Main facing northeast (58/8).
6. The south side of E. Cook between DeWitt and Main facing southeast (58/14).
7. The east side of DeWitt between Conant and Cook facing southeast (56/33).
8. The Bee Hive at 108 W. Cook facing southwest (57/34, not extant).
9. James S. Williams, harness at 122 E. Cook facing south (57/25).
10. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows Lodge at 124 E. Cook facing south (57/26).
11. Schulze Hardware at 118-122 W. Cook facing south (57/18).
12. Murrills and Taylors, furniture at 114 W. Cook facing south (57/33).
13. City Bank at 202 W. Cook facing southwest (57/8).
14. Michels Jewelry at 136 W. Cook facing south (57/11).
15. George A. Helmann Saloon at 220 W. Cook facing southeast (57/4).
16. Eulberg Brewery Saloon and Office at 137-139 W. Cook facing north (56/26).
17. The Raulf Hotel at 207 W. Cook facing northwest (56/27).
18. The Johnston Block at 101 W. Cook facing north (25/12).
19. Huber's Bakery at 113 E. Cook facing north (56/7).
20. Graham's Drugstore at 301 DeWitt facing northeast (56/11).
21. Gieseler's Cigar Factory at 203 DeWitt facing east (25/1).
22. Wright and Robbins Garage at 205 DeWitt facing northeast (25/2).
23. Lewis Hardware at 208 DeWitt facing northwest (24/33).
24. G.D. Wood and J. W. Smith Flour and Feed Dealer at 211 DeWitt facing southeast (25/3).
25. Beattie's Boots and Shoes at 305 DeWitt facing northeast (25/7).
26. Murison's Furniture Store at 310 DeWitt facing southwest (25/18).
27. Retail stores at 314-316-318 DeWitt facing southeast (25/13).
28. A.A. Porter Apartments at 110 E. Conant facing south (30/24).
29. Portage Cooperative Creamery at 233 W. Edgewater facing northwest (23/2).
30. Whitney Motor Company at 109 W. Edgewater facing northwest (24/19).
31. McDonald Flour and Feed at 212 W. Wisconsin facing west (24/23).
32. Ludwig Baerwolf's Tavern at 220 W. Wisconsin facing west (24/27).
33. Emdor House at 228-230 W. Wisconsin facing northwest (24/31).
34. Fisher-Paramount Theater at 314-322 W. Wisconsin facing southwest (31/20).

**PORTAGE RETAIL DISTRICT  
HISTORICAL DISTRICT  
City of Portage Intensive Survey  
1992-1993**



PORTAGE INTENSIVE ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORICAL SURVEY  
1992-1993

CITY OF PORTAGE  
COLUMBIA COUNTY, WISCONSIN