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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 Edgerton Depot


other names/site number Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railway Depot

2. Location

street & number	20 South Main Street	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Edgerton	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Rock	code 105 zip code 53534

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
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

2/17/98
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 commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Edgerton Depot
Name of Property

Rock County, WI
County and State

Wisconsin

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National Register.

other. (explain:)

Beth Boland

4/13/98

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

building(s)
 district
 structure
 site
 object

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

contributing	noncontributing
1	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	0 total

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

None

Number of contributing resources is previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/Rail Related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture/Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19 & Early 20 Century

American Movements

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Concrete

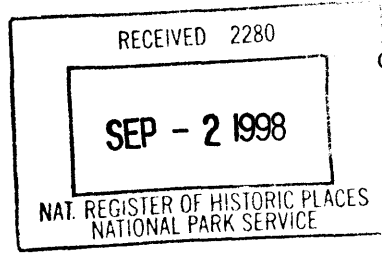
walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Narrative Description

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



**United States Department of Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
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city or town	<u>Edgerton</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>vicinity</u>						
state	<u>Wisconsin</u>	code	<u>WI</u>	county	<u>Rock</u>	code	<u>105</u>	Zip Code	<u>53534</u>

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[Signature] 2/17/98
Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer-WI 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 commenting official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau

Edgerton Depot
Name of Property

Rock County, WI
County and State

Wisconsin

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 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):

replacement nomination, collecting information from original (in lieu of SER)

Beth Boland

10/15/98

already listed 4/13/98

Beth Boland

Signature of the Keeper

10/15/98

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- structure
- site
- object

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

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	sites
	structures
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1	0 total

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

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0

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Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)
Transportation/Rail Related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)
Recreation and Culture/Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)
Late 19 & Early 20 Century
American Movements

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)
Foundation Concrete
walls Brick
roof Asphalt
other Wood

Narrative Description

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

Edgerton Depot
Name of Property

Rock County
County and State

Wisconsin

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.)

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Transportation

Period of Significance

1906-1947

Significant Dates

1906-07*, 1938-39*

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Loweth, C.F.**

*dated plans

**engineer, C.M.St.P&P Ry, name on plan

Edgerton Depot
Name of Property

Rock County
County and State

Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

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

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- 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:

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less Than One Acre _____

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

1	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/3/0/8/0/0</u>	<u>4/7/4/4/1/8/0</u>	3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____
	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	Jane Eiseley	date	Feb. 15, 1997
organization		telephone	608-249-8818
street & number	3433 Richard Street	zip code	53714
city or town	Madison	state	Wisconsin

Edgerton Depot
Name of Property

Rock County
County and State

Wisconsin

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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

Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	Tobacco City Museum	date	2/20/97
organization		telephone	608-884-8892
street&number	PO Box 287	city or town	Edgerton
city or town	Edgerton	state	Wisconsin
		zip code	53534

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

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

United States Department of the Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Edgerton Depot

Rock County, WI

Section 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION

The Edgerton Depot was built in 1906-07, and remodelled in 1939. It was designed by railroad engineer C.F. Loweth, whose name appears on the 1906 plans (drawn on silk,) in the possession of the City of Edgerton. The building consists of a rectangular main section, 24' wide and 100' long, and an attached portico that adds 30' to its length. Its appearance is reminiscent of the Arts and Crafts styles of the period, with a low-pitched hipped roof over the center section and lower hipped roofs over the baggage section to the west and the portico to the east. There are wide overhanging eaves supported by massive carved brackets, and large windows in pairs. The interior was originally furnished in "mission style entire, with the walls darkly tinted to match and furniture of the same popular order." The local newspaper also reported that the grounds had been "graded, parked and planted to shrubbery, presenting an attractive appearance."¹ A brick platform running parallel to the tracks provides pedestrian access from Main Street (to the east) leading to the portico and the south-facing entrances and telegraph window. Vehicle access to the baggage area is from Henry Street, which runs south from Fulton Street parallel to the west end of the building and ends at the tracks.

On the north side of the depot a rectangular bay approximately 16' long extends outward about 8 feet. This bay contains the lavatories. Opposite it on the south side, facing the tracks, the telegraph office and ticket office occupy another bay which has cutaway corners and decorative glazing in a large diamond pattern. (The windows have been boarded over from the outside. The sash and glazing, however, are intact.) Both bays are encompassed beneath the overhang of the main roof.

¹ Tobacco Reporter, June 21, 1907

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Edgerton Depot
Rock County, WI

Section 7 Page 2

At the east end of the building is an open portico, supported by wooden columns that rest on brick and concrete piers approximately 5' high. The columns occur in groups of three at the two outermost corners of the portico, and in pairs midway along its length, with single pillars where it joins the main building. The brick platform extends to floor the portico.

The depot is built of a "dull red vitrified brick" (rather than the locally manufactured cream brick) which contrasts with whitish stone trim, identified as "Bedford stone" in the contemporary newspaper account, but which appears to be cast concrete. The openings in the building are surrounded by restrained but quite elegant brickwork, with a quoin and keystone pattern. The corners of the building are also marked by "quoins" worked in brick. A belt course of "Bedford stone" extends around the building at the level of the bottom of the windows, forming the sills. The "stone" foundation skirting forms another horizontal line in the composition of the building. The foundation consists of poured concrete footings, supporting a wooden floor. The roof is covered in asphalt tiles. The wide eaves, running around the entire building and portico are supported by large wooden brackets with scrolled carving.

Two brick chimneys with corbelled brick top courses are shown in a postcard photo sent in 1910, and in the photo published by the Tobacco Reporter in 1907: on the north side of the main section over the bay containing the lavatories and at the junction of the main roof and the roof over the west section. Only the former is visible on the exterior of the building today. The 1910 picture also shows a semaphore signal mounted on a metal tower on the roof above the south bay. The tower has since been removed.

The depot is situated along the north side of the railroad tracks, on land originally donated by townspeople to the railroad. The railroad yards are surrounded on the south, east and west by large brick and

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Edgerton Depot
Rock County, WI

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frame tobacco warehouses. A row of 19th century business buildings faces the depot across Fulton Street. A parking lot approximately 100' deep lies between the depot grounds and Fulton Street. This lot is shown with a bandstand and labelled "Railroad Park" in Sanborn maps for 1891 and earlier. The map for 1904 shows two brick veneer warehouses (glimpsed to the north of the depot in the 1910 postcard picture) between the depot and Fulton Street. These were later demolished and the lots again became open space.

The interior of the depot is currently in poor repair, having been disused since 1971. However the dark, heavy wooden window and door surrounds, with architrave moldings, and the chair rail and baseboard are intact. The narrow width hardwood flooring is damaged but appears to salvageable. The walls are plaster over expanded metal lathe. The main section of the building is divided into a waiting room at the east end, reached from the platform by a single door, an enclosed office, ticket and telegraph area, containing painted built-in cabinetry, remodelled in 1939 using the original materials, lavatories and, running between the office area and the lavatories, a passage leading to the west end of the building. This area is now closed off by a partition and a door and is outfitted for freight, with wide wooden doors on three sides and a scale in the floor. Prior to 1939 it contained a men's waiting room and a baggage room, areas still separated by a large chimney, a boiler room and a coal room.

Plans for the 1939 remodelling show that a high window in the west end wall was replaced by a large opening with a wooden sliding door. On the north side large double windows were partially bricked up and a wood sliding door installed in a new opening. A double-hung window was partially bricked up and replaced by a small, high window in the style of the original high window in the west wall. On the south side, an original freight door is intact. Two double hung windows in the west end of the north wall were replaced by small, high windows. On either side of the south bay in the main section of the building, two double

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Edgerton Depot

Section 7 Page 4

Rock County, WI

doors that originally led from the platform to the men's and general waiting rooms, respectively, were partially bricked up and replaced with very narrow doors with transoms. These now open into the office area, which was expanded in the remodelling. At the east end of the south wall a double hung window was replaced by the present doorway into the waiting room. It has a transom, and a panelled, single-light door. The building was originally centrally heated with steam radiators. The 1939 remodelling plans show the radiators being removed from the former men's waiting room. Perhaps it was somewhat later when the central heating system was abandoned in favor of a space heater, still located in the main waiting room, and the chimney in the west end removed above the roof. New platforms and a raised floor in the west end of the building completed the remodelling.

Although the remodelling made several changes in the interior and exterior of the building, the work was carefully matched to the original materials and design and completed during the period of significance. The building today does not present a "remuddled" appearance. The present owner, the Tobacco City Museum Inc., hopes to restore it to its 1907 appearance.

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Continuation Sheet**

Edgerton Depot
Rock County, WI

Section 8 Page 1

INTRODUCTION

The Edgerton Depot is locally significant under Criterion A for its role in the economic and social life of the city between 1906 and 1947. The depot is also locally significant under Criterion C as an example of small town depot design.

Construction of the depot occurred at the apogee of both the tobacco trade in Edgerton, and of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul railroad (CM&StP.)¹ The depot is a symbol of the heyday of the city's tobacco industry and the dependence of that industry on the railroad. Edgerton's tobacco industry began in 1854 and grew exponentially during the succeeding decades. By 1906, when the present depot was built, Edgerton had become an international center of tobacco growing and trade, and its newspaper a trade paper that was widely read.² Agents came by train from eastern and European cigar manufacturing firms to do business at the warehouses crowded around the depot, and the tobacco

¹ Thus on November 8, 1907, the local paper, whose fortunes were closely tied to the national and international trade in cigar tobacco ran a news item: "The popularity of the Edgerton Cigar Shop does not seem to wane, even if trade is falling off in other quarters...eight cigar makers are kept busy...honest goods that maintain the standard of excellence will always win." Meanwhile the same paper was reporting with enthusiasm the advance of the Good Roads movement: e.g. "...good results follow so rapidly that its promoters are encouraged to keep it up." (Sept 7, 1906)

² Rock County, Wisconsin, A New History... William Fiske Brown, ed. Chicago, C.F. Cooper, 1908, p. 649-50. "Very large amounts of money, considering the size of the place pass through (the Tobacco Exchange Bank) because of the immense trade in cigar leaf tobacco, which centers here...The Tobacco Reporter...goes all over the United States and across the ocean and is a recognized authority on the tobacco market."

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Section 8 Page 2 Edgerton Depot
Rock County, WI

crop was shipped out by train. The 1906 depot is the result of a campaign by local businessmen to persuade the railroad to replace an earlier structure.³ Designed by an engineer with the CM&StP railroad, the depot is also architecturally significant as a fine expression of station design at the culmination of its evolution between 1830 and World War I.⁴

RAILROAD ARCHITECTURE AND RAILROADING IN WISCONSIN

The railroad itself is central in the history of Edgerton: the city bears the name of the engineer who routed the tracks through what was

³ The Tobacco Reporter editorialized in 1905, "The depot here is one of the very few early day structures remaining on this division, nearly all having been replaced by more modern stations. Edgerton has long been known as one of the best paying stations...the promise of better facilities has so often been postponed that the patrons of the railway here have taken this means (a petition) to remind the railway officials of their neglect..." Tobacco Reporter June 1, 1906: "The people of Edgerton have for years cherished the opinion that they were entitled to better station accommodations...Surveys have frequently been made but the many sidings required here made the problem of placing the freight depot a matter of delays and conferences...A few months ago the Advancement Association took up the matter, causing a petition to be circulated among the businessmen of Edgerton...With but a single exception every business firm in the city joined in the appeal."

⁴ Dated plans in the possession of the City of Edgerton

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Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 3 Edgerton Depot
Rock County, WI

then a hamlet.⁵ Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin⁶ identifies the Milwaukee and Waukesha as the first railroad line laid in the State, in 1847. This is the line that, as the Milwaukee and Mississippi, reached Edgerton (then Fulton Station) in 1853, connecting through Stoughton to Madison. Edgerton was fortunate to be one of the few Wisconsin communities served by rail before 1870. Hard times, scandal and the Civil War slowed further development until the end of the 1860s. By the mid-70s mileage had doubled, and it doubled again by 1890. In 1874 the Milwaukee and Mississippi became the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul. (In 1927 it became the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific.) This line owned both bridges over the Mississippi from Milwaukee and competed with the Chicago and Northwestern for the expanding wheat trade in the Dakotas. It was by 1880 one of three "dominant railroad carriers in the state." Ownership of the railroad was actually in Europe and New York, but the president in the 1860s and 70s was Alexander Mitchell, who as president of Milwaukee's oldest and most powerful bank played a powerful role in preventing the legislature from enacting effective regulation of the railroads.⁷

In this period there were three passenger trains and two freights in each direction, daily. In Edgerton as elsewhere in Wisconsin, the depot became "the nerve center of nearly every city and village...it profoundly affected the economics, life styles, and employment opportunities of everyone who even remotely came within its orbit. It

⁵ Paper by Miss Angie Towne, "Interesting History of Edgerton's Early Days," given before the Women's Club of Edgerton, December 1, 1903, reproduced by the Tobacco Reporter circa 1904.

⁶ Vol. II "Transportation" 5-1,6-1 Madison, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986.

⁷ Nesbit, Robert C. History of Wisconsin, Vol III, 1873-1893. Madison, State Historical Society, 1985 pp. 90-105.

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Rock County, WI

created an information explosion by making metropolitan newspapers and national magazines available in the post offices along the line...The railroad brought the theatrical troupe, the drummer, new products, fashions, the itinerant lecturer, the statewide political candidate, the circus...and seemingly the whole wide world." And it "...tied the rural populace to the commercial industrial economy."⁸ For Edgerton this latter process began early, and related predominately, although not exclusively to tobacco. (The area raised and shipped sugar beets as well as hogs and wheat.)

THE EDGERTON DEPOT AS AN EXAMPLE OF DEPOT DESIGN

According to a survey in the files of the State Historical Society⁹ there were at one time 150 depots in southern Wisconsin, of which 75 survived in 1976. The first depot built was in Milwaukee, in 1850, only three years before the first depot in Edgerton.

Carroll L.V. Meeks has quoted Building News, in 1875: "Railroad termini and hotels are to the 19th century what monasteries and cathedrals were to the 13th century."¹⁰ The design criteria of these grandiose structures did not apply to the modest needs of small places: "Generally the company engineer provided the plans, which were then used repeatedly, sometimes for forty years without change...Such shelter as was provided over the platform came from the over-hanging eaves extended much farther than usual; these eaves became an identifying characteristic of stations."¹¹ The Edgerton depot lies somewhere between these two extremes of train station design. The overhanging eaves are certainly there. But the low, hipped shape of

⁸ Ibid p 475

⁹ Vogel, John, "The Railroad Depot in Southeastern Wisconsin," ms. 1976

¹⁰ Meeks, Carroll L.V., The Railroad Station, An Architectural History, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1956 p.90

¹¹ Ibid., p. 48-49

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Edgerton Depot

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the roof, the use of red vitreous brick and heavy ornamental brackets, the horizontal lines created by belt courses of Bedford stone and the large, paired windows are Prairie School inspired as are the pillars set on piers, supporting the "commodius portico" mentioned by The Tobacco Reporter in its enthusiastic description of the station.¹²

Meeks¹³ notes that there was no precedent for railroad station design. Some early stations were built in the Greek Revival style, and toward the end of the century the Beaux Arts style influenced station design, but for much of the period of railroad expansion, the Victorian picturesque styles were in favor. The Reporter stated that "Architecturally the new depot follows the general plan of the stations at Madison, Janesville and other places, but on a smaller scale." But a comparison with the station at Madison, shows that while the plan is similar, the Madison depot is stylistically related to classical modes rather than the picturesque. In the evolution of depot design, a classical tradition vied with picturesque styles. Meeks credits 19th century eclecticism with the principle that the exterior should be an expression of interior form, and with freedom and independence in design. And he credits H.H. Richardson's many stations with these qualities, being "creatively eclectic, resembling nothing in the historic past." An illustration of Richardson's North Easton, Massachusetts station shows overhanging eaves on a long, low, structure with a prominent hipped roof. Meeks ties Sullivan and Wright to the 19th century picturesque tradition in their "avoidance of the bald," "devoted attention to richnesss," and "new materials used decoratively." The Edgerton Depot shows these influences in its long, low silhouette, prominent hipped roof, use of ornamental brick laid in quoins and window surrounds that emphasize the division of the interior

¹² June 21, 1907

¹³ pp. 10 and 17, illus. #136

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Edgerton Depot
Rock County, WI

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of the building by function, and the carved brackets that support the roof. In addition to such modernities as lavatories and radiator heat, the Reporter took note that "The interior is finished in mission style entire, with the walls darkly tinted to match and the furniture of the same popular order," confirming that the designer's intention fell within what Meeks classifies as a return to Picturesque styles, but in a "lithic" mode of "inert masses and (a) quiet sense of permanence."

THE RAILROAD IN THE HISTORY OF EDGERTON

In 1903 a speaker before the Edgerton Women's Club recalled, "Edgerton probably owes its importance and perhaps its existence to the greed and avarice of the landowners about Fulton and Indian Ford. The exorbitant price asked for land in those places induced the railroad company to change its route and lay the line three miles further north, where it now runs. Enterprising citizens in this city gladly donated 23 acres of land for the depot grounds and railroad purposes...The completion of the railroad brought immediate results. Many laborers on the railroad became permanent settlers...Mr. Burdick sawed the oak frame for the first depot which was built in 1853. When the depot was completed the waiting room was the only building used for church services, elections and public meetings." ¹⁴ The town was originally known as Fulton Depot; the change to "Edgerton" came in 1859. The chosen route was less than ideal: passengers were sometimes ferried from the marshy site of the depot to the local hotel¹⁵ and an often repeated story tells how one of

¹⁴ Paper by Miss Angie Town, Women's Club of Edgerton, Dec 1, 1903. The 1879 History of Rock County records that the Primitive Methodists held their first services in the depot "before it was enclosed."

¹⁵ The Edgerton Story. Official Program, Centennial Week, 1953. Edgerton Centennial Inc. p. 34-36. The arriving passengers were often fed on ducks shot from the back porch of the hotel.

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Edgerton Depot
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the first passenger trains had to be pulled into town by oxen after snow made the grade into town too much for the engine.¹⁶

Loyalty to the railroad and its employees is reflected in early issues of the Edgerton Independent, precursor to the Tobacco Reporter: "The Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad is now one of the best equipped roads we ever rode over. The conductors and assistants are perfect gentlemen...The road is doing a lively business as they convey passengers by way of Milwaukee to Chicago as cheap as the Chicago and Northwestern does..."¹⁷ Enthusiasm was not unalloyed, however. We can imagine the harangue that led an author in the 1879 History of Rock County, Wisconsin¹⁸ to write "There is one outrage which is daily practiced upon the (tobacco) agents by the astute owners of the Chicago, Milwaukee and Saint Paul R.R. and that is charging by them of one-quarter cent upon every pound of tobacco shipped to Milwaukee or Chicago, while the rates from Milwaukee to New York, or Chicago to New York vary from 15 to 40 cents per hundred. But they have to accept their fate, as there is no other way by which they can get their crops carried to the first cities for shipment."

¹⁶ The Edgerton Story. Official Program, Centennial Week 1953 Edgerton Centennial Inc. 1953 pl 34-61; "D.W. North Gives Early History of Edgerton.." Tobacco Reporter, September 12, 1940.

¹⁷ August 11, 1876. The rivalry was with Milton Junction, the nearby connection to the C&NW. Both ran to Janesville. The CM&St.P offered three passenger trains each day in each direction, and two freights. On December 1 the paper reported "...It (CM&St.P) is one of the most popular roads in the State."

¹⁸ Chicago, Western Historical Society, p. 678 The section on Edgerton begins by noting that it is "situated on the line of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul R.R."

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Edgerton Depot
Rock County, WI

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When the new depot was built a quarter century later the ambivalence remained. After enthusiastically reporting that a new station was to be built,¹⁹ the paper followed developments: "More improvements are soon to be made at the depot grounds. It is reported on good authority that the large water tank will be removed and two stand pipes erected...The express office will be moved to rooms in the freight depot and the small building now used by the express company will be removed. With this clearing out the ground around the depot will present a far more sightly appearance," and "Supt. E.D. Wright and Mrs. McCree, the landscape gardener for the St. Paul system, were in Edgerton for a short time Tuesday...Mrs. McCree would like to see a nice little park...We have an attractive depot building now, and would like to see the company trim it up with nice surroundings."²⁰ Still there was skepticism: "After a wait of four weeks for heating stoves to come from

¹⁹ June 1, 1906: "The following letter addressed to the Advancement Association however, indicates that everything is now satisfactorily arranged and the new passenger station is now only a question of a few months." The letter contained an assurance: "...you may rest assured that the building will be a very substantial one that will be appreciated by the people of your city...It gives me great pleasure to inform you in regard to this matter as I feel that your city is entitled to this improvement."

²⁰ March 1 and April 19, 1907 The water tank collapsed in January of 1904, damaging the old express office and nearly killing the baggageman. The paper reported that, "...much of the wood in tank was found to be badly rotted and hoops rusted and the wonder is that it stayed together so long as it did." (January 22, 1904) A week later it was reported that the company was building a new, larger tank and was "negotiating with the Electric Light Co. for motor current to operate the pump for the new plant." Evidently the railroad could act expeditiously when it chose to.

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Edgerton Depot
Rock County, WI

the company's storehouse, masons were able to start plastering on the new depot Wednesday. The building will scarcely be ready for occupancy for the first of the year."²¹ A few months before the depot was completed ²² the paper had direct cause to complain of the arrogance of the railroad company: "Newspapers are dropping the railroad time tables which will soon be a thing of the past... (while timetables are placed as ads in the city papers) the railroad treats the country newspapers differently--giving them permission to run the time tables as news matter only," and "A slight change in the time of morning trains on this division went into effect on Sunday last. But as long as the railroad declines to advertise these changes the public will be in ignorance of them as far as the newspapers along the line are concerned." The Reporter eventually ran the timetables again, in the meanwhile reporting schedule changes in brief news items. At this time there were four passenger trains in each direction, daily.

In June, 1907, at last, The Tobacco Reporter²³ was happy to report that "The company has spared no expense to produce a modern passenger station, not only beautiful in design and surroundings but supplies the conveniences of the traveling public as well...Edgerton has waited long for depot accommodations commensurate with the business it furnishes the company, but the company has now given us a station equal to any town of our standing along this great system, and one every citizen feels pride in."

"negotiating with the Electric Light Co. for motor current to operate the pump for the new plant." Evidently the railroad could act expeditiously when it chose to.

²¹ December 14, 1906

²² January 18, and February 1, 1907

²³ June 21, 1907

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Edgerton Depot

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Rock County, WI

There may have been animosity toward railroad management, but events on the railroad, and in the lives of railroad personnel were another matter. The Reporter reported frequently items such as the failing health of conductor George C. Prescott, who had worked on the line since its inception and who died in 1906, the frequent freight collisions in the yard, the amazing survival of a tramp thrown from the train on a fast curve near town, and a humorous item on "depot sprinting," brought on by the late arrival of the Milwaukee train. (The sprinters thought it was the next train, to Chicago, and one citizen actually rode the wrong train.) A hint of things to come is discernable in the space given to the hot issue of railroad regulation, in the failed hopes for an interurban electric railway through Stoughton to Madison, and in reports of the Good Roads movement. That the railroad was feeling the winds of change is evidenced by the new bargain rate for passengers: members of a family could ride 500 miles for \$10 and there was a special rate to California of \$33. The Reporter complained, too of delays in passenger service caused by the use of large freight engines with enormous strings of cars. On one occasion it reported that the 9:56 had had to help push the freight off the main line.²⁴

The first depot had served in early days as a community center. The new depot was perhaps more specialized in its function, but according to Brian Ziegler, former president of the Tobacco City Museum, which hopes to restore the building as a museum:²⁵

"The depot was a popular spot for children walking home from school to warm up on cold days...And in the early part of the century, men used to take the train on Sundays to Stoughton, since it was "wet" seven days a week. Edgerton at the time

²⁴ March 15, December 20, 1907.

²⁵ "History of Edgerton's Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Depot," Edgerton Reporter, December 28, 1994, by Brian Ziegler. Mr. Ziegler led an effort to save the depot.

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Edgerton Depot

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had "blue laws" keeping the taverns shut on Sunday.

The line remained an important feature of life in Edgerton throughout the first half of the century, as did the growing and marketing of tobacco. When the town celebrated its centennial in 1953, tobacco and early railroad history were prominently featured in the program.

In 1939, the year the station was remodelled, the Milwaukee Road (as the line was then called) introduced the streamlined train, the Hiawatha. It did not, however, serve Edgerton. The Tobacco Reporter printed the story released by the railroad through its local passenger agent, including the news that after two months of service "there are still thousands of people who daily line the railroad tracks and crossings in the cities along its route to watch it flash by." The mail still traveled by train. The tobacco trade news had been relegated from the front page to page 7.

The tobacco trade was recovering from the Depression. As evidence the Reporter ran a picture of trucks pulled up to the warehouses near the depot. The caption states, "Reminiscent of the scene of years ago when Edgerton was first given the title of "The Tobacco City," is the above picture...This is the busiest year this city has experienced in the tobacco industry in almost a decade...At the present time two warehouses have crews of women engaged in sorting tobacco."²⁶ But when the depot was extensively remodelled the Reporter failed to carry a single story about it, although it reported the construction of the new high school building and the WPA post office in great detail, as well as the paving of Hwy 51 and the installation of curbs and gutters on the city's streets. Brian Zeigler states:

²⁶ February 17, 1938

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"By the 1930s, the automobile had started to affect business on the railroad, and the number of passenger trains per day had been cut to eight. The popularity of buses arriving and departing from the Hotel Carlton had also hurt, and by the 1940s, approximately 15 arrived and departed from Edgerton every 24 hours...The onset of World War II and its effects of gasoline rationing had helped increase business...a special train was used to transport members of the 32nd Infantry Division of the National Guard for war maneuvers in early December 1941...Throughout the war the depot was a beehive of activity as gasoline rationing made riding the train a better alternative.

In the years after the war, sleek diesel streamliners greeted Edgerton, replacing the familiar steam engine. Speed became more important by then, and the track on the line was built to allow speeds of up to 70 mph in some places in an effort to compete with alternate forms of transportation.

Only two daily passenger trains in each direction went through Edgerton by the late 1950s...The Varsity, as the name implies, was mainly used by students coming to and from the University of Wisconsin...

Though rail travel waned dramatically during the 1950s and 1960s, the depot still was an important part of Edgerton. During the mid-1960s for Christmas every year, Santa Claus travelled by train to meet throngs of wide-eyed small children waiting at the depot....

In spite of the efforts by the Milwaukee Road and other railroads to provide appeal...doomsday was close at

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Section 8 Page 13

Edgerton Depot
Rock County, WI

hand...The Johnson Administration dealt the railroads a nearly fatal blow when government mail contracts were given to help the...airlines. In 1969 the Milwaukee Road petitioned the federal government to cease running passenger trains on the line that served Edgerton...

Fate spelled out the end of passenger service in Edgerton on April 30, 1971. The telegraph went silent. The ticket agent sold his last ticket. The last passenger sat down on one of the wooden seats in the waiting room. The semaphore signal outside waved its last goodbye."

SUMMARY

The Edgerton depot is a particularly well designed and attractive example of a small town depot built near the end of the period when the railroad was the chief means of transportation between towns and was the point at which outside contact took place by means of travellers, newspapers, mail and telegraph. The depot is particularly significant in the history of Edgerton because of the tobacco trade for which the town was famous. The crop was shipped by train and marketed through agents who came and went from the depot and who did their business in a number of warehouses built conveniently close to the town's business district, hotels and the depot.

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Edgerton Depot
Rock County, WI

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Section 10 Page 1

Edgerton Depot
Rock County, WI

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

A part of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ - SW $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 3, Township 4 North, Range 12 East, City of Edgerton, Rock County, State of Wisconsin, more fully described as follows:

Commencing at the southeast corner of Lot 1, Block 11, Swift's Addition to Edgerton, said point being the boundary of the former Depot Grounds and the northwesterly right-of-way line of Main Street;

Thence S26°-19'W, 66.00 feet, crossing that part of the said former Depot Grounds occupancy by Fulton Street;

Thence N63°-06'W, 268.00 feet, parallel to the southwest Boundary of said Block 11, Swift's Addition to Edgerton (also recorded as N56°15'W) to a point which is on the southeasterly right-of-way line of Henry Street extended;

Thence S26°-45'W, 100 feet along the said right-of-way line of Henry Street extended to the point of beginning;

Thence S63°-06'E, 268.76 feet to the northwesterly right-of-way limits of the highway currently designated as U.S.H. 51 (Main Street);

Thence S26°-19'W, 73 feet to a point 20.25 feet, more or less northeasterly of and normal to the centerline of the main railroad track through said quarter-quarter;

Thence N63°-06'W on a parallel line to the southwest boundary of said Block 11, Swift's Addition to Edgerton to a point on the extended southeasterly right-of-way line of the said Henry Street extended;

Thence N26°-45'E to the point of beginning.

Excepting therefrom the following:

Commencing at the southeast corner of Lot 1, Block 11, Swift's Addition to Edgerton, said point being the boundary of said Depot Grounds and the northwesterly right-of-way line of Main street,

Thence N26°-19'W, 66.0 feet, crossing that part of the said Depot Grounds occupied by Fulton Street;

Thence continue S26°-19'W, 100.0 feet along the northwesterly right-of-way line of Main Street;

Thence N63°-06'W, 1.0 feet to the southeasterly face of a brick warehouse which is the point of beginning of exception;

Thence continuing N63°-06'W, 73.0 feet through said warehouse;

Thence S26°-19'W, 17.5 feet;

Thence S63°-06'E, 74.00 feet, to the northwesterly limits of Main Street;

Thence N26°-19'E, 17.5 feet,

Thence N63°-06'W, 1.0 feet to the point of beginning of said exception.

Also reserving an easement for vision purposes over the following described traverse:

Beginning at the southeast corner of the above exception and the northwesterly limits of Main Street;

Thence S26°-19'W, to the southerly line of the property conveyed;

Thence N63°-06'W on said property line 64 feet to a point;

Thence easterly, on a straight line, to the point of beginning.

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Section 10 Page 2

Edgerton Depot
Rock County, WI

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary defines the property purchased in 1994 from the railroad by the City of Edgerton and subsequently sold on land contract to the Tobacco City Museum. It consists of a narrow lot lying next to the east-west path of the railroad tracks and encompassing the depot, a narrow strip of landscaped grounds to the north of the depot bordering a parking lot owned by the City of Edgerton, and the platforms adjacent to the depot.

The easement for vision purposes reserves a corridor between Main Street and the depot. This was the pedestrian route from Main Street to the depot in the period when the current parking lot was occupied by warehouses.

The current boundary excludes part of the brick paved platform between the depot and the tracks, this being still owned by the railroad. The Tobacco City Museum plans to seek an easement for the platform to ensure that the historic brick pavement will be preserved and to prevent a fence from being placed between the tracks and the depot.

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Section Photos Page 1

Edgerton Depot
Rock County, WI

Photo 1 of 6
EDGERTON DEPOT
Edgerton, Rock County, WI
Photo by Jane Eiseley, February, 1997
Neg. at State Historical Society of Wisconsin
View from the Southeast

Photo 2 of 6
EDGERTON DEPOT
Edgerton, Rock County, WI
Photo by Jane Eiseley, February, 1997
Neg. at State Historical Society of Wisconsin
View from the Southwest

Photo 3 of 6
EDGERTON DEPOT
Edgerton, Rock County, WI
Photo by Jane Eiseley, February, 1997
Neg. at State Historical Society of Wisconsin
View: entrance to waiting room

Photo 4 of 6
EDGERTON DEPOT
Edgerton, Rock County, WI
Photo by Jane Eiseley, February, 1997
Neg. at State Historical Society of Wisconsin
View: telegraph window, platform and tracks

Photo 5 of 6
EDGERTON DEPOT
Edgerton, Rock County, WI
Photo by Jane Eiseley, February, 1997
Neg. at State Historical Society of Wisconsin
View: interior, waiting room

Photo 6 of 6
EDGERTON DEPOT
Edgerton, Rock County, WI
Photo by Jane Eiseley, February, 1997
Neg. at State Historical Society of Wisconsin
View: interior, telegraph office

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Two Sanborn Maps, showing the depot grounds in 1891 and 1909, are included. The 1909 map shows the depot as it is today in relation to Fulton and Main Streets, and the railroad tracks. Two warehouses, shown standing between the depot and Fulton Street in 1909, and labelled "C.F. Mabbett" and "Conway Bros." on the map, have been demolished. The 1891 map shows the location of the earlier depot building, which was demolished when the present building was built (1906-07.) It also shows a park and bandstand in the area later occupied by the Mabbett and Conway warehouses. Today this is again public land, mostly paved, with an ice-skating rink, and some landscaping near the depot and tracks. The 1891 map also shows the area in relationship to the business district. Fulton Street was then known as Front Street.

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Section Owner Page 1

Edgerton Depot
Rock County, WI

The owner of the Edgerton Depot is

City of Edgerton
12 Albion Street
Edgerton, WI 53534

and

Tobacco City Museum
PO Box 287
Edgerton, WI 53534

The Tobacco City Museum is buying the depot from the City of Edgerton on a land contract.

Edgerton Depot
Name of Property

Rock County, WI
County and State

Property Owner

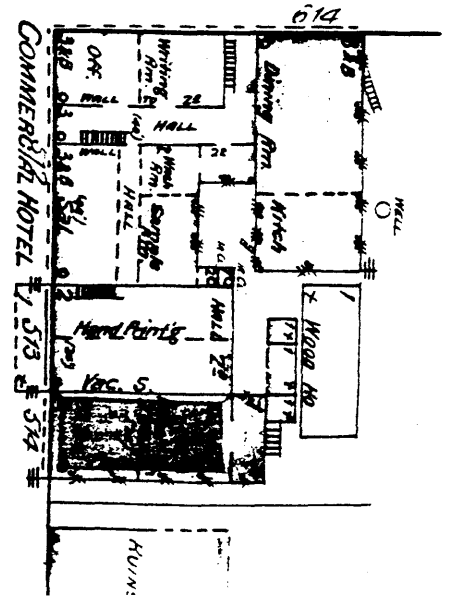
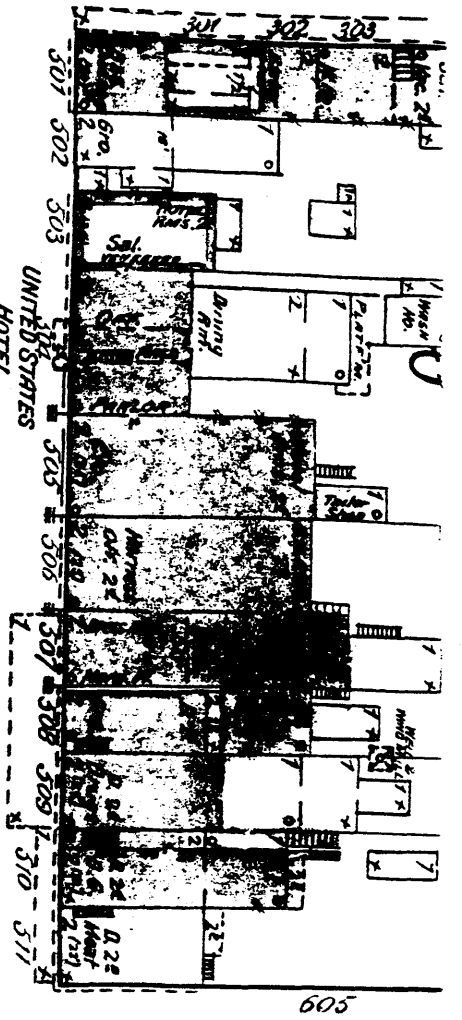
Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Edgerton
street & number 12 Albion Street telephone 608 884-8892
city or town Edgerton state WI zip code 53534

(also the Tobacco City Museum, PO Box 287, Edgerton, WI 53534)

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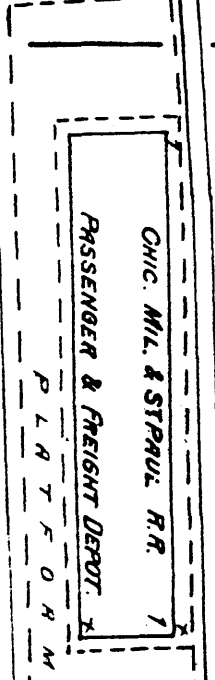
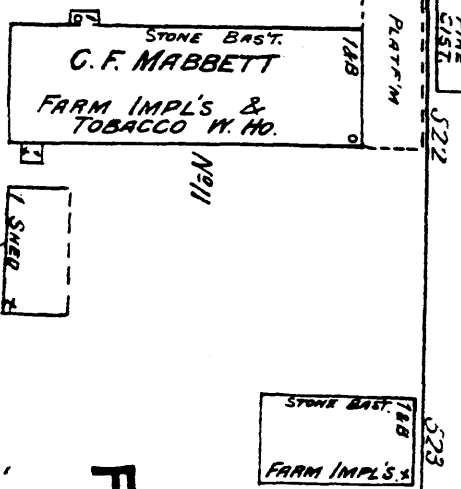
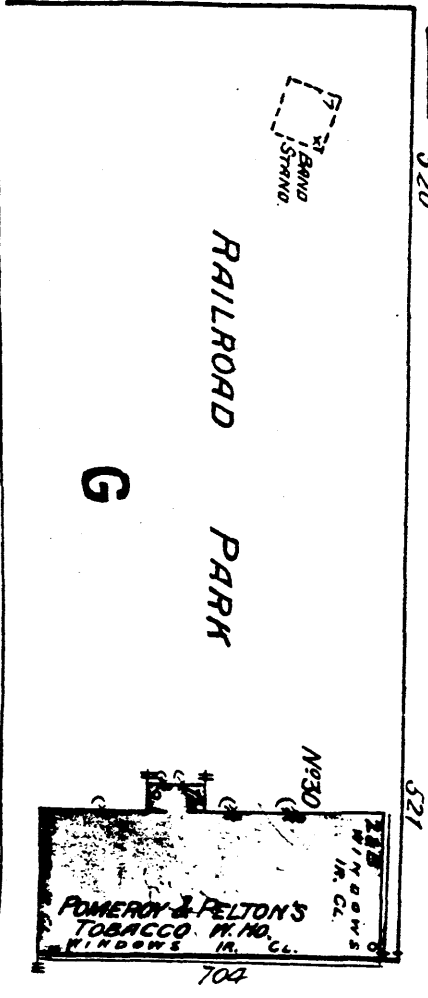


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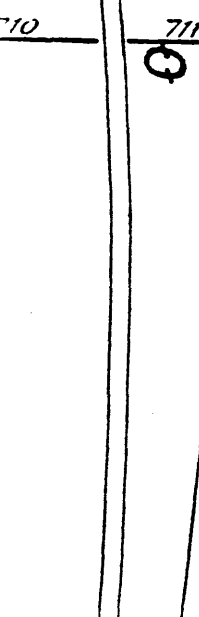
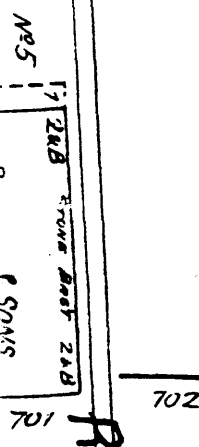
MAIN

FRONT STREET

FRON



Sanborn Map of
EDGERTON 1891



99

(12)

(10)

161

66'

GRASSIUM
WELL
990 241/0

FIRE
CIST.

520

521

RAILROAD
PARK

G

704

POMEROY & PELTON'S
TOBACCO W. HO.
WINDOWS IN. CL.

MAIN

713

STONE BAST.
G. F. MABBETT
FARM IMPL'S &
TOBACCO W. HO.

N 211

SHEED

STONE BAST.
FARM IMPL'S &

714

FIRE
CIST.

522

523

F

605

614

COMMERCIAL HOTEL V. 513 514

HENRY

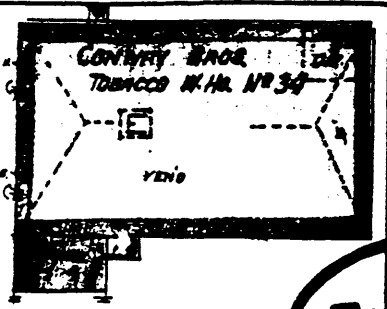
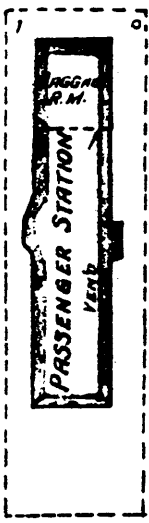
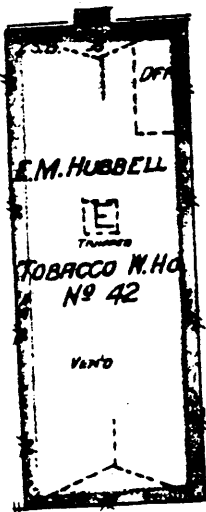
66'

12

6" W. PIPE

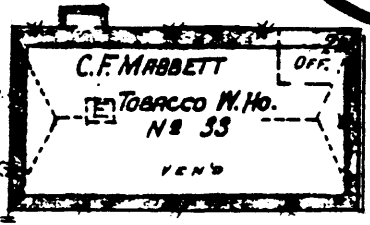
66'

D.H.



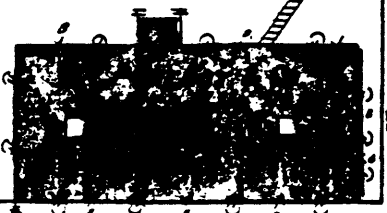
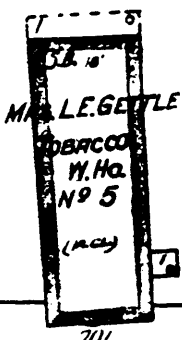
570

DEC. 1909
EDGERTON
WIS.



5725

G



525

Fulton Street

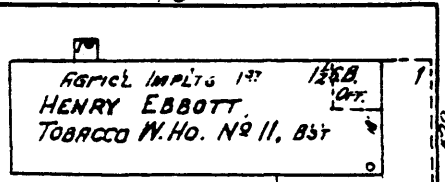
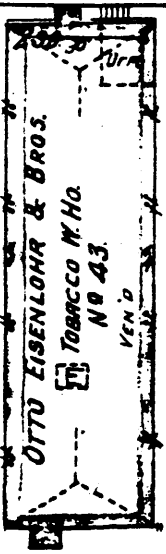
Main Street

10" W. PIPE

60'

10

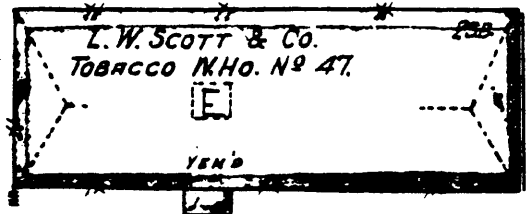
D.H.



572

Sanborn Map of
EDGERTON 1909

N



525

F

Edgerton Depot
Edgerton, Rock County
Wisconsin
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