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National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form

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This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic and Architectural Properties in Port Hope, Michigan

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Lumbering in Port Hope, 1857-1900
Forest Fires of 1881 and Relief Efforts in Port Hope, 1881-1884
Agriculture in Port Hope, 1857-1917
Transportation in Port Hope, 1857-1917
Ethnic History -- the Germans -- in Port Hope, 1861-1917
Architecture in Port Hope, 1858-1917

C. Geographical Data

Corporate limits of Village of Port Hope, Huron County, Michigan

See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

Marta M. Bigelow
Signature of certifying official
Director, Bureau of History
State or Federal agency and bureau

9/29/87
Date

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Patrick W. Anders
Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

11/20/87
Date

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Discuss each historic context listed in Section B.

See continuation sheet

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Section number E Page 1

Introduction and Summary of Historic Contexts

Port Hope is a small (population 369 as of 1980) village located on the shore of Lake Huron in the Thumb region of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. The Thumb, bounded on the east by Lake Huron north of Port Huron and on the northwest by Saginaw Bay, is a rural, agricultural area generally of low, slightly rolling topography. The principal part of Port Hope from approximately Main Street west lies on a nearly level plain that extends inland in all directions. East of Main Street the land drops off a short distance to a lower terrace along the lakeshore itself. The village is surrounded on the land side by farm country with scattered stretches of forest. A modern county park and several campgrounds and trailer parks occupy much of the lake frontage in the village, but to the north and south the shoreline is wooded and in some cases swampy. US-25 is the principal commercial street, passing through the small central business district in the two blocks between School Street and Portland Avenue. US-25 southeast of the point where Main Street cuts off from it follows a modern alignment which cuts diagonally across the historic platted pattern of streets. Main Street on either side of the business district and the streets to the west -- First, Second, Third, State, and School -- is the residential portion of town. The lakeshore terrace to the east historically was the site of mills and elevators and presently contains several elevator complexes and other commercial enterprises, but is largely park or undeveloped land. Port Hope was platted in the late 1860s, but it appears that many of the streets in the north and southeast parts of town shown in the 1890 map of the town as platted were never opened.

The focus of this nomination and of the inventory and research work that preceeded it has been the early development of Port Hope prior to about the time of World War I. The date of 1917, the date of America's entry into World War I, has been arbitrarily selected as the cut-off date for this project. Historic and architectural resources post-dating that cut-off date do exist in Port Hope, but were not considered as part of this project.

Port Hope began in 1858 with a saw mill and dock constructed by William R. Stafford, a partner in a firm established to lumber the area and market its products in Cleveland. Lumbering continued to be the area's chief industry until forest fires in 1871 and 1881 destroyed most of the remaining timber. The 1881 fires, coming after decades of lumbering had left mountains of timber debris in their wake, not only destroyed most of the remaining forests in the area, but also cleared much of the debris left from the lumbering activities, opening the Port Hope area and much of the Thumb to farming far more than the lumbering activities themselves. The land itself was fertile. As a result, in the 1880s and 1890s agriculture became the major livelihood of Port Hope's residents. Many early settlers in Port Hope in the 1860s and 1870s were Germans and in the late nineteenth century the Germans became Port Hope's largest ethnic group. Cheap water transportation on the Lakes made possible the community's economic growth in the nineteenth century. Lumber and, later, agricultural products were shipped to market exclusively by boat prior to the construction of a railroad line to the town. The opening of a rail link to the existing line at Harbor Beach in 1903 took place at the same time that commerce on the Lakes was in decline because of competition from the ever-growing railroad net. The railroad line gave Port Hope a greater market for its agricultural products and encouraged further development of agriculture in the area. Port Hope's architecture in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reflected the development of the town and the contemporary architectural tastes both of the nation at large and of Michigan's Thumb region.

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Historic Contexts -- 1

Lumbering

Commercial lumbering in Michigan began in the 1830s, 40s, and 50s with the development of improved sawmilling technology and the introduction of steam-powered sawmills. Extensive lumbering began along the east shore of Lake Michigan and the west shore of Lake Huron in the Lower Peninsula and gradually worked its way inland along the major waterways. The sawmills were located at the mouths of the streams and the logs driven downstream to them during the spring high waters. Chicago was from the first the principal destination of lumber cut along Michigan's west shore, while the mills on the Lake Huron side of the state served Detroit, Toledo, Cleveland, and Buffalo for the most part. In 1860 there were nearly 1,000 sawmills operating in Michigan producing in that year about 800 million board feet of lumber, principally white pine. The fine quality of the wood and the phenomenal growth of Michigan's and the Midwest's population in the years after 1860 led to rapidly expanding lumber production in Michigan. Production statewide reached a maximum of 4,292,000,000 board feet in 1888. Production began to decline thereafter because of the depletion of timber lands; however, Michigan continued to be the leading producer of lumber in the nation in 1900.

Commercial lumbering along the west shore of Lake Huron began in the 1830s and was well underway at Port Huron, Saginaw, Bay City, and other places by the late 1840s. Port Huron reached its high point of lumber production -- 56 million board feet -- in 1873. The Saginaw Valley reached its high point of production of more than one billion board feet in 1882. More northerly points such as Alpena and Cheboygan reached their peak production in the late 1880s and early 1890s. Much of the production from the east shore mill towns was sent to market in ships and barges, and Bay City and Saginaw in particular became large shipbuilding centers in the late nineteenth century.

Eastern investors, a number from Maine and New Hampshire, played an important role in the Michigan lumber boom beginning as early as the 1840s, if not before. These investors witnessed the gradual depletion of the northern New England pine woods in the mid-nineteenth century and the consequent rise in value of the remaining timber lands. They recognized the opportunities for profit from Michigan timber lands, which could still often be bought at bargain prices from Uncle Sam and the lumber inexpensively shipped by water to an ever growing market. Single investors or groups of investors often bought thousands of acres of lands, logged them off over many years, and then resold as much as possible while developing some themselves for agricultural purposes.

Huron County, at the tip of the Thumb between Lake Huron and Saginaw Bay, was established as a county in 1859. The first sawmills, small, water-powered affairs, were established in 1838 and 1839. John Hopson put up the first steam sawmill in 1850 at Rock Falls south of Harbor Beach. Lumber and shingle manufacturing quickly became the county's chief industries. The principal woods were pine, hemlock, cedar, bass-wood, beech, maple, birch, and ash. A series of forest fires burned over much of the county in October, 1871, at the same time as the Chicago Fire raged. Nevertheless, in 1874 the county produced 36 million board feet of lumber. In 1876 several planks cut at Verona Mills in the county were displayed at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. The planks were sixteen feet long, five feet two inches wide, four inches thick, and without knots or other flaws. In September, 1881, however, another series of disastrous fires burned over the bulk of Huron and much of several other counties and put an end to large scale lumbering in the county. Smaller scale operations continued for a few more years here and there.

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In Port Hope William R. Stafford was the pioneer lumberman. Stafford (1828-1916) came to Michigan from Bath, New Hampshire, in 1849 and settled in Lexington, on the Lake Huron shore between Port Huron and Huron County. In 1852 Stafford became a partner in a mercantile business that apparently involved lumbering. The business was reorganized in 1854 with Clark Haywood, another New Hampshire native and a former employee of Stafford's, as his partner.

In 1851 Stafford, Reuben B. Dimond, William Southard, and Josiah F. Wilson, all (with the probable exception of Dimond) New Hampshire natives who were personal friends and business associates, made purchase of timber lands in the area near what became Port Hope. In 1857 or 1858 Stafford, Haywood, and a third New Hampshire native, former United States Senator B. W. Jenness, then a resident of Cleveland, formed a partnership to exploit the timber resources of the Port Hope area. Stafford had charge of the sawmill the partners built in 1858 at what became the settlement of Port Hope. The mill produced lumber, lath, and shingles. Jenness ran a lumberyard in Cleveland that the Port Hope mill supplied. In some years prior to the 1871 fires the mill produced 7,000,000 board feet of lumber. The 1871 fire destroyed the mill, dock, and lumber on hand, a loss of \$100,000 to Stafford & Haywood (Jenness had withdrawn in 1868). Stafford & Haywood rebuilt the mill and dock in 1872. As of 1874 they produced 1,400,000 board feet out of the 36,000,000 produced in the county. At least four operations in the county were larger. The 1881 fire burned the mill and dock again, a \$40,000 loss, and in 1884 Haywood also withdrew from the firm, leaving Stafford as sole owner. Stafford built a third, smaller sawmill and planing mill and sash and door factory to supply primarily local needs.

In 1880 R. C. Ogilvie built a second sawmill and dock at a cost of \$8,000. This mill and dock were also burned in 1881. Ogilvie rebuilt by 1883, but the mill apparently closed for lack of timber by about 1889. Stafford's sawmill is listed in the Michigan State Gazetteer and Business Directory as late as the 1893 edition, and probably closed in the early 1890s. Perhaps some lumber and other wood building products were shipped to Cleveland until the very end of local sawmilling operations. Mrs. C. J. Bisbee in her 1915 historical sketch of Port Hope states that "The mills operated until every bit of virgin timber was nailed into Ohio houses."

A by-product of lumbering in Michigan was salt manufacturing. What is known to geologists as the Michigan Basin, which includes the Lower Peninsula, is one of the greatest areas of halite concentration in the world. Subsurface deposits of rock salt and brine occur in many places. In 1859 the Michigan legislature, hoping to encourage salt production, authorized a bounty of ten cents per bushel produced. This bounty was soon repealed, but not before it had done its work in generating real interest in salt manufacturing. Michigan soon became the nation's leading salt-producer, and by 1884 was producing half of the nation's salt.

Salt production in Huron County and elsewhere in Michigan was encouraged by the plentiful supply of wood that fueled the engines that pumped the brine from which salt was obtained up to the surface and powered the furnaces that evaporated water from the great pans or vats of brine. Cheap fuel made Michigan salt the most inexpensive in the nation. In Huron County salt manufacturing began in 1863 at Port Austin and continued until about 1890. In 1884 the county had eleven salt-manufacturing operations, several of them using more than one well. The decline coincided not with the depletion of the brine deposits, but with the destruction of the woods that provided the cheap fuel.

In Port Hope the first salt-manufacturing enterprise, the Port Hope Salt Company (in which W. R. Stafford was the principal owner) was established in 1874. Its plant appears to have been typical of the Huron County salt "blocks." The first year the company produced 16,000 barrels of salt at 280 pounds per barrel. In 1884 the company used 10,000 cords of wood to produce 60,000 barrels. It had a well 800 feet deep (Huron County

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wells ranged from 600 to nearly 2,000 feet in depth) and four and one-half inches in diameter. The brine was pumped to the surface into five evaporating "pans" and the brine allowed to settle to the bottom. So-called "bitter water" at the top was drained off. Furnaces provided the chief means of evaporation. A force of twenty coopers produced the needed barrels. Much of the salt produced went for dairy purposes, but the company also shipped much of its product to the mining regions of Montana. The Port Hope Salt Company closed in 1890.

Robert G. Ogilvie established a second salt-manufacturing concern in Port Hope in 1883. His operation had its own sawmill and barrel factory and produced 150 barrels of salt daily in 1884. Ogilvie's operation apparently closed by 1890.

The remains of the Port Hope Salt Company plant were dismantled in 1913-14, but the site has not been developed and some remains are still present. At the site of the Ogilvie salt block, some development has taken place and no remains are visible. No archaeological testing of either site has been done.

Historic Contexts -- 2

Forest Fires of 1881 and Relief Efforts

The great forest fire of September, 1881 was an important event in Port Hope's history that marked a watershed in the community's development by bringing the lumbering era to an end and opening up the area to farming. The fires that reached Port Hope on September 5 were part of a series of fires that began in Lapeer County on the last day of August but were fanned into firestorms by strong winds on September 5. The fires burned over the northeast part of Lapeer County, eastern part of Tuscola County, and most of Sanilac and Huron Counties. The fires burned more than 2,000 square miles and an estimated 280 people perished and 15,000 were made homeless. The following account of the fire at Port Hope is from the 1884 Portrait and Biographical Album of Huron County:

The fires reached Port Hope about two o'clock, running along in a current on the shore front and consuming everything. About this time the wind changed to the west. At this the people began to congratulate themselves upon being able to save some of their property lying back from the lake, as the west wind would hold the flames that way. They had not long to indulge in this hope, for soon there came a report that the whole country west of them was in flames. Mr. Stafford, who had large interests at the place, had his men out, and all others he could command, established a patrol and fought the fire all that day and the night following, and by great exertions the village was saved. The open fields back, or to the west, were in their favor, as they tended to check the great currents of fire. They by no means felt safe, as fire was still all around them until Wednesday night, when a heavy rain came on.

The fires destroyed the neighboring Stafford and Ogilvie sawmills and docks and burned the entire area behind the town, leaving only the village itself intact. On the following day, September 6, before the fires were totally out, a public meeting was held in Port Hope and W. R. Stafford was elected a representative to solicit aid. Stafford travelled to Detroit, departing by boat on September 10.

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Relief efforts to aid the fire victims throughout the Thumb were mounted by committees established in Detroit, Port Huron, and other places almost immediately. Within days food and clothing were being shipped. Port Hope became one of the centers of distribution. Julian B. Hubbell, field agent for the Red Cross, visited Port Hope on October 6 and apparently found the relief effort already well underway and well organized. The full details of the Port Hope relief operation are probably lost for good, but it is known that Port Hope's Masonic Temple served as a depot and distribution point for relief supplies.

The Port Hope area fared well from the various relief efforts and appears to have recovered fairly swiftly. Relief funds not only paid for the losses of houses and animals, but the residue went to build a school building for the Lutheran day school in 1883. Funds provided by the Relief Committee of the Presbyterian Synod of Michigan also paid for a Presbyterian church built in 1884. The church was one of ten in the burned-over area financed by the Presbyterian denomination.

The 1881 fires put an end to large scale lumbering in Port Hope by destroying the greatest part of the area's remaining timber. On the other hand, the fires opened the area to farming more than twenty years of lumbering activity had by clearing away not only the forest but the stumps and great piles of debris that covered the ground in the previously lumbered areas.

Historic Contexts -- 3

Agriculture

Agriculture in the Port Hope area probably began as soon as logging left cleared tracts of land, but the area's early agriculture almost certainly served only local needs. W. R. Stafford constructed the first grist mill at Port Hope at some undetermined time prior to the 1881 fire. Probably this served primarily a local market, but with some processing of wheat and other grains for shipping by boat to market.

The timber lands that Stafford and his business partners owned have particularly rich soil. By 1870 Stafford was beginning to clean up the logged-over portions of his and the firm's lands for farming purposes. Much of the land Stafford sold off to new settlers -- particularly the Germans who started arriving during the Civil War and came in large numbers at the time of the Franco-Prussian War. Stafford also developed the area's largest farming operation during the 1870s. In fact, his cleared lands west of Port Hope may have been the key factor in keeping the 1881 fires from destroying Port Hope.

The 1881 fires, which burned in the Port Hope area for several days, were instrumental in opening the area to agriculture. The fires removed the stumps and other debris from logging that had made clearing a slow and costly process. In the 1880s the country surrounding Port Hope settled rapidly and farming became (as it still is) the base of Port Hope's economy. By 1884 W. R. Stafford himself was growing hay and grain on 1,000 acres. Hay and wheat and other grains seem to have been the mainstays of the economy in the late nineteenth century. Stafford, and probably others, had their hay baled and shipped to market by lake boat. A growing amount of local wheat was milled into flour at Stafford's mill and shipped to eastern markets by boat. The processing of wheat into flour for the eastern market was a mainstay of the economy in many Lower Peninsula farming communities in the second half of the nineteenth century. The growth of the local farming economy is illustrated by the changes Stafford made to his grist mill in the 1880s. Built prior to the 1881 fire, the small grist mill was enlarged in 1882 to provide a more ample flour-milling capacity, then enlarged again in 1886. The original mill and 1882 enlargement used grindstones, but rollers may have been installed at the

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time of the 1886 renovation (an 1891 letterhead refers to the "Stafford Roller Flour Mills and Elevator"). The 1886 enlargement provided for the first time in Port Hope an elevator for the storage of local grains and products for shipment to market. A second grain elevator, owned by the Mihlethaler Co., was built about 1906.

The development of peas as a cash crop resulted in 1896 in the establishment of a pea mill by Gustave Marquardt for Brotherton & Brightmeyer (later the Jerome B. Rice Co.). The peas was bagged at the Stafford mill. In 1906 the pea mill operators leased the former Stafford planing mill building. They used it until 1912, when a fungus killed off the entire pea crop.

Construction of a railroad connection to the former railhead at Harbor Beach in 1903 gave a firm boost to Port Hope's agriculture-based economy by facilitating the shipment of agricultural produce to market. Within a few years after the opening of the rail connection, a second elevator, the Mihlethaler, was constructed inland, alongside the tracks, and a siding constructed to the Stafford mill and elevator (about 1912 the Stafford mill was renamed the Port Hope Roller Mills and Elevator). Shipping on the Great Lakes from small, shallow-water ports such as Port Hope declined by the early twentieth century and, when the Port Hope docks were destroyed in a storm in 1913, they were not rebuilt.

Sugar beets became an important crop with the opening of the railroad. Sugar beet production in Michigan was encouraged by the state legislature's passage in 1897 of an act establishing a "sugar bounty" of one cent per pound for sugar produced by Michigan manufacturers from Michigan-grown sugar beets. The act required that the sugar produced have a purity of at least ninety per cent and that the manufacturers pay the producers at least four dollars per ton for beets having a sugar content of at least twelve per cent. The state's first sugar beet plant was established in Bay City in 1898 and eight more plants were opened in 1899. Although the sugar bounty act was declared unconstitutional in 1900, the industry continued to grow rapidly in the first decade of the twentieth century. The Saginaw Valley and the Thumb were (and remain) the centers of sugar beet production in Michigan and the Thumb had three sugar plants -- at Sebawaing, Caro, and Crowell -- by 1906. The new railroad connection with Harbor Beach, making it possible for Port Hope producers to ship to the sugar plants, opened the Port Hope area to sugar beet production. Navy beans became an important cash crop in the early twentieth century (the Thumb is today the nation's center of navy bean production). Both the Stafford and Mihlethaler elevators acquired bean picking and sorting rooms in the first decade of the twentieth century. At the same time the raising of wheat for flour declined, as producers on the Great Plains took over the market. The Stafford mill ceased producing flour about the time of World War I.

Historic Contexts -- 4

Transportation

At the time of Port Hope's settlement in 1858, only a few other hamlets existed along the whole coast of the Thumb between Port Huron and Saginaw. A foot path which followed the shoreline was the only means of reaching the site by land. In this era before the expansion of the railroad network into the area, the Great Lakes were the principal transportation artery. Transportation by ship was the cheapest and most convenient mode and, in the early days of settlement in the Thumb, virtually the only means available. Thumb saw mill operators such as W. R. Stafford shipped their product to market in timber-poor lakeshore cities such as Detroit, Toledo, Sandusky, and Cleveland. If, as seems likely, W. R. Stafford's case was typical, the mill owners travelled frequently on business and out-of-town business associates also paid frequent visits. Thus Stafford, like all other sawmill operators along this coast, built a dock as soon as possible. By the early 1860s frequent, scheduled steamer service between Detroit and Saginaw was already in existence. These coast-

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wise steamers stopped in Port Hope and all the small ports along the Lake Huron shore. By 1884 four lines of ships made regular stops at Port Hope. As indicated in the lumbering context statement, most of the lumber produced by the Stafford mill went to Cleveland. In 1867 Stafford, Haywood & Jenness had their own ship, the B. W. Jenness, built to carry cargo and passengers between Port Hope and Cleveland.

Express and mail service between Port Huron and Port Austin, at the tip of the Thumb, was instituted in 1862. The stagecoaches used the beach and the old shoreline trail for most of the year, but in the winter followed the shoreline on the smooth, near-shore ice. About 1868-69, however, the state constructed a real road in place of the shore trail from Port Huron to Port Austin, with corduroy sections through the swampy spots. The road improved transportation along the east shore of the Thumb, but most of the commerce continued to move by ship.

As a shipping point, Port Hope must have quickly become the hub of its little piece of Lake Huron shore. The network of roads pointing outward from Port Hope in all directions like spokes from the hub of a wheel was apparently already in place by 1868, as a feature on Port Hope in a newspaper dated June 11, 1868 mentions the "roads diverging into interior towns."

In 1880 the Port Huron and Northwestern Railroad constructed its line from Port Huron northward through Minden to Harbor Beach, a few miles south of Port Hope. The railroad agreed with a Harbor Beach flour milling concern which had put up the money to extend the line the last leg of the way to Harbor Beach that they would not extend the line to Port Hope for at least twenty years. Daily stage service connected Port Hope to Harbor Beach and the railroad. A Harbor Beach and Port Hope Railroad finally began work on a connector line to Port Hope in 1903 and late in that year the line was opened. The coming of the railroad gave an enormous boost to local agriculture by opening up new markets and permitting for the first time the shipping of goods such as sugar beets to formally inaccessible processors elsewhere in and beyond the Thumb.

The development of railroad transportation to communities along the Great Lakes shores released towns such as Port Hope from dependence on lake shipping, which had the twin disadvantages of all-too-frequent shipwrecks, with the loss of cargo and passengers, and the disruption of service for three or four months of winter each year. Railroads decimated the coastwise lake traffic in the last years of the nineteenth and first years of the twentieth centuries, and the coming of the railroad to Port Hope killed off Port Hope's water-borne commerce within a few years. The Mihlethaler Elevator built shortly after the railroad was constructed was located directly on the railroad line and the Stafford Flour Mill and Elevator was almost immediately connected to the line by a siding. The Detroit and Cleveland Navigation Company's steamer State of New York apparently made regular stops at Port Hope as late as 1910. However, when the great storm of 1913 washed out the Port Hope dock, the dock was not reconstructed.

Early visitors to Port Hope may have been able to find accommodations at Stafford's boardinghouse. Contemporary accounts which mention the boardinghouse seem to suggest that it was not a typical lumber camp building, but a fairly large and substantial structure designed to be a permanent part of the community. Perhaps, like Charles Mears' boardinghouses along the Lake Michigan shore of Michigan, it was intended as a put-up for transient visitors. The first actual hotel in Port Hope may have been that established in 1875 by H. E. Facer in a new addition to his house. By 1881 Robert Winterbottom was operating a hotel. This may have been the same building that shows up on the 1890 plat map as being the property of Ferdinand Leese and that was called the Leese House in a 1900 newspaper article. Richard Herman began construction of his Herman House hotel, the only old hotel building still standing, in 1900, and enlarged the structure in 1902-1903, after the Leese House closed and perhaps in anticipation of the new railroad. The hotel became the Lake View Hotel in 1908 and ran under that name through the 1930s.

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Historic Contexts -- 5

Ethnic History -- Germans

German immigrants settled in Rubicon and Gore Townships in the Port Hope area beginning during the Civil War, filing claims on federal lands that the timber speculators had not purchased. One early settler family was the Holsteins. Ferdinand John and Maria Holstein immigrated to Michigan in 1864 from Danzig, Prussia, and settled on a farm in Rubicon Township. Their son, August Holstein, born in 1847 in Danzig, became W. R. Stafford's miller by 1884. Around the time of the Franco-Prussian War a second, larger migration of Germans to the area took place. They established farms in the cutover timberlands around Port Hope and many probably took employment with W. R. Stafford.

The Rev. Himmler, pastor of a Lutheran church at White Rock, near Harbor Beach, visited Port Hope in 1868 and established the St. John's congregation. The Rev. Himmler soon left the area and the congregation then applied to the Missouri Synod for a minister. The Rev. William Schwartz was sent in 1870. A donation party for the Rev. Schwartz following erroneous rumors that he had lost possessions in a fire led in 1871 to construction of the congregation's and village's first church building with the \$500 that had been raised. The church ran a German-language day school that reportedly had fifty or sixty pupils in 1884. The congregation built a Lutheran schoolhouse in 1883 (demolished 1953), using funds left over from the fire-relief effort, and in 1886 built a house for the teacher.

The original St. John's Church, described in 1884 as "a large, fine church building," was outgrown by the end of the century. A much larger church, built of red St. Clair brick, was completed and dedicated about the beginning of December, 1899. This building remains in use.

Port Hope also had a German Reformed congregation. It had thirty members in 1884 and built a small church building that same year. Both the congregation and church building have disappeared.

The Germans were the largest ethnic group in the Port Hope area by the end of the nineteenth century. They represented a cross-section of the community--including independent farmers, tradesmen, business owners, and workers in the Stafford farms and businesses. As late as 1917 the State Bank of Port Hope hired Ronald Eilber as assistant cashier in part because he could speak and write the German language.

Historic Contexts -- 6

Architecture

The first buildings in Port Hope presumably were associated with the sawmilling operation of W. R. Stafford and his partners and included the sawmill (and any ancillary structures) and one or more boarding-houses and barns. What little information exists suggests that these were utilitarian, wood-frame buildings and structures. An 1868 newspaper account refers to a single Stafford boardinghouse. The description of it as being "spacious and comfortable" suggests that the building was a cut above the usual lumber camp housing. It may have been similar to the two-story, clapboarded, nineteenth-century sawmill workers' boardinghouse that survives at Little Point Sable on Lake Michigan. This is an end-gable structure with double-hung windows and very little detailing. In 1864 Stafford built a two-story general store on what became after the town's platting in 1866-67 the main commercial street. This burned in 1902, but the surviving Masonic Temple (now Rubicon Township Hall) built in 1867 may be similar in appearance. The Masonic Temple is an end-gable, two-story structure with simple Greek Revival detailing on its facade. Few other evidences of the Greek Revival -- and none so well preserved -- survive in Port Hope.

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The oldest building in town that can be labelled Victorian is the William R. Stafford House, an L-shaped Italianate structure with gable roofs and a tower in the angle. Built in 1866-68 (it appears), the house is eclectic in its styling, with Tudor hood molds over the second-floor windows. Duncan McKenzie, later to be one of the proprietors of the planing mill, is credited in an August 5, 1869 notice in the Huron County News (Port Austin) as being the builder. Already listed in the National Register, the house continues to be maintained in fine condition by descendants of W. R. Stafford.

Flanking W. R. Stafford's house are Port Hope's two other prime examples of Victorian housing, the Isaac Leuty and Frederick H. and Elizabeth Stafford houses. The Leuty House, standing on School Street behind W. R. Stafford's house, is the town's most fully developed Gothic house. Built probably in the 1870s, the L-shaped, clapboarded Leuty House with its subsidiary gable in the front of the wing, has dentiled window cap, porch, and bay window cornices supported by paired brackets, pointed arch windows in the gables, and a decorative bargeboard fringe, displaying an undulating, vine-like form, all along the roof's lower edges. In its general form and detailing the house has more than a passing resemblance to the larger Langdon Hubbard House (c. 1882) a few miles away in Huron City. The Hubbard House, the only other significant example of Gothic housing in a large area around Port Hope, stands on the site of an earlier Hubbard House built after the 1871 forest fire and destroyed in the 1883 fire. It is possible the 1882 version largely reproduced the earlier structure, and that the Leuty House was also modelled after that earlier structure. This is all conjecture, however.

The Frederick H. and Elizabeth Stafford House, next door to the north of the W. R. Stafford House, is a large clapboarded and shingled, Late Victorian structure built in 1886. The house relies for interest as much on the contrast in color and texture between the white-painted clapboarding below and dark-painted, shingled gables and porch and bay window roofs as it does on its rather minimal detailing of turned porch posts, pediments over windows with applique work in the centers, and kingpost-design, openwork gable ornaments.

The houses in the Stafford "compound" are unique in Port Hope as full-blown manifestations of Victorian and Late Victorian housing design. All other nineteenth-century housing in Port Hope is more modest and vernacular.

Port Hope's other historic single-family houses are almost exclusively modest, frame buildings (some brick houses dating from the 1890s and early 1900s are also present) representing house forms and architectural styles typical of the Thumb shoreline towns. End-gable, side-gable, end-gable-with-side-wing, and gable-roof L-plan (some with the subsidiary, front-facing gable in the center of the side-gable wing that is a trademark of housing design in the Thumb and the part of Ontario across Lake Huron) house forms predominate among the late nineteenth-century housing. A very small number of Greek Revival and Gothic-inspired houses are present, and a number of houses with minimal bracketing or minimal Queen Anne detailing are present, but most houses are very simple in design and can be labelled only as Late Victorian. No historic boardinghouses or multiple-unit houses exist in the town. Much of the early housing stock has been substantially altered.

The best preserved example of early, vernacular housing is the so-called Blue Town House on Cedar Street dating probably from the 1870s. One of six houses on adjoining lots built for W. R. Stafford to house workers and their families, it is the last which survives at its original site and the only one that remains virtually unaltered. The two-story, end-gable structure has a living room across the front of the first floor and a dining room and kitchen, separated by the staircase to the second story, in back. The second floor is divided into large front and back sleeping rooms. (A small rear addition contains the sole bathroom.)

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Further assessment of vernacular housing in Port Hope remains to be done. It is possible that other houses could be nominated in the future.

Commercial development in Port Hope began with W. R. Stafford, and Stafford's general store built in 1864 was probably the first commercial structure in town. The small business district began to develop after the 1866-67 platting of the town. The oldest commercial building that now remains appears to be the Melligan Store (also known in its early days as Agriculture Hall) on Main Street. The original part of this two-story, clapboarded, false-front, bracketed Italianate block dates from c. 1884. The right-hand or south-side section was added in 1886, a new storefront constructed in 1893, and a large rear addition made in 1903. The Melligan Store is one of only two, frame, nineteenth-century blocks left in town and the only one that has not been drastically altered.

The block-long commercial district contains only two brick store buildings, both dating from about the turn of the century. The 1903 Schlichting Building at the corner of Main and School Streets is by far the better preserved of the two, retaining entirely intact its retardataire bracketed, wood storefront and cornice and most of the old store interior.

The Herman House, a hotel built in 1900 and enlarged in 1902-03, is the only other comparatively little altered commercial building in the "downtown." A two-story, square, brick block with its walls subdivided by belt courses and pilaster-like buttresses, the hotel, like the Schlichting Building, has bracketed eaves and segmental-arch-head window openings. The retardataire character of Port Hope's commercial architecture at the turn of the century was typical of the commercial architecture of the entire Thumb.

Churches constitute the final component of Port Hope's historic architecture. The town retains three historic church buildings. However, one, the Presbyterian Church, has been extensively altered. The oldest church building now standing is the former First Methodist Episcopal (now called the Red Church because of its red paint) built in 1880-82. The church is typical of Late Victorian Methodist churches in having a nominally Gothic exterior and an L-shaped plan that contained the sanctuary or auditorium in one arm and a lecture room, opening into the sanctuary through folding doors, in the other. Although the spire and interior church furnishings have been removed, the building is otherwise intact. Port Hope's third historic church building, St. John's Lutheran, built in 1899, is as typical of Midwestern Lutheran churches of its period as First Methodist is of Methodist churches of its era. St. John's is an aisleless, brick, Gothic church with a partly projecting, spire-topped tower in the center of the street facade. Inside, it has a simple plaster ceiling, flat in the center and sloping towards the side walls, and an organ gallery at the back. The pulpit and altarpiece have been replaced, but otherwise the church retains its original fabric.

F. Associated Property Types

I. Name of Property Type _____

II. Description

III. Significance

IV. Registration Requirements

See continuation sheet

See continuation sheet for additional property types

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

See continuation sheet

H. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- State historic preservation office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency

- Local government
 University
 Other

Specify repository: _____

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Associated Property Types -- 1

I. Sawmill/planing mill sites

II. The above-ground remains of one sawmill, with its related dock, and one planing mill survive in Port Hope. The sites are located a few hundred feet apart on the Lake Huron shore. The only prominently visible remnants at the site are square-plan, stone-base, brick chimneys. The sawmill site, located north of the planing mill site, also contains a few largely submerged stone and wood remnants of a dock which once extended about 1,000 feet into Lake Huron. At the planing mill site, a few foundation remnants are also visible. The full extent of subsurface remains at either site is presently unknown, since no full archaeological investigation of either site has thus far taken place. A more complete description of the sawmill and planing mill sites can be found in the description sections of the individual nomination forms for those two properties.

III. The sawmill and planing mill sites are related to the lumbering context. As explained in the lumbering context statement, lumbering was the reason for Port Hope's development in the late 1850s and the mills of which the chimneys are now the principal remnants were central elements in the lumbering history of the community. The Stafford sawmill was the first built and, through its reconstructions after the 1871 and 1881 fires, always the principal sawmill in Port Hope. The planing mill, apparently built after the 1881 fire to produce sash and doors and other architectural trim primarily for local use, is important for demarking the beginning of the end of the lumbering era. The local need for sash and doors and other trim items was directly related to the settlement and agricultural development of the area following the destruction of the forests by fire and years of lumbering. Additional particulars relating to the significance of these two sites may be found in the significance statements in the nomination forms for the two properties.

IV. These two properties are the only sawmill/planing mill sites in Port Hope for which any above ground remains now exist. No intact large-scale saw or planing mill operations from the nineteenth century are known to exist today in Michigan, the state which was the largest lumber producer in the nation for much of the second half of the nineteenth century. Chimney stacks -- these two in Port Hope and a third in Port Crescent, also in Huron County -- are the only above-ground remnants of the many large-scale operations which once existed in Michigan known to the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office.

Associated Property Types -- 2

I. Salt Blocks

II. Port Hope contains the sites of two salt "blocks" or salt-refining plants. The site of the Port Hope Salt Company plant (1874) is located on the Lake Huron shore about 600-800 feet south of the Stafford Flour Mill and Elevator, while the Ogilvie Salt Block (1883) site is situated on the Lake Huron shore a few hundred feet north of the Stafford Saw Mill/Dock site. In each complex, steam-powered, wood-fueled engines pumped brine from a deep well into large vats or "pans" where the solution was allowed to settle. The salty brine settled to the bottom, while other chemicals, forming what was called "bitter water," rose to the surface and were drained off. In the case of the Port Hope Salt Company plant, the sites of pools into which the waste was drained remain visible because only grass will grow there. Wood-fueled furnaces under the pans then evaporated the remaining water, leaving a very pure salt residue. Each complex also had its own cooper shop, which made the wood barrels in which the salt was packed. The Ogilvie block even had its own sawmill to provide the wood. The barrels were made, the salt packed in them, and the barrels sealed and labeled. Salt from

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the Port Hope Salt Company was shipped from the Stafford dock in front of the Stafford sawmill, while Ogilvie's dock was located directly in front of his salt block. In both cases some form of trackage connecting the salt block and dock is shown in the 1890 map of Port Hope. Probably horses or some other animals hauled cars along a set of rails.

Today the site of the Port Hope Salt Company plant is a level tract of scrub and woodland with one large circular area of grass with no trees or shrubs seemingly at the west end of the site and a second, small area of similar description seemingly more nearly in the center of the site. A small raised mound with some low stone remains probably was the site of one of the pans or buildings. Little else is visible on the surface. The site of the Ogilvie salt block seems to be devoid of any visible remains, and nothing remains visible of the Ogilvie dock. No archaeological testing of either site or of the site of any other Michigan saltworks of this period has ever been done. Thus, no evaluation of the significance of these sites can presently be made.

III. See Description section above.

IV. See description section above.

Associated Property Types -- 3

I. Flour mills/elevators

II. Port Hope contains two historic flour mill/elevator complexes, the W. R. Stafford Flour Mill and Elevator, located on the Lake Huron shore adjacent to the planing mill site, and the former Mihlethaler Elevator, located directly inland from the Stafford Elevator a few hundred feet and alongside the railroad right of way. The Stafford complex consists of an original flour mill built before 1881 with a larger flour mill addition built in 1882 and a still larger elevator built in 1886. The Mihlethaler Elevator, constructed c. 1906, is principally a storage elevator. Both structures have heavy, timber frames and both are now sheathed in sheet metal siding. The Mihlethaler Elevator is similar to the elevator portion of the Stafford mill in being a high, rectangular, gable-roof structure with a gable-roof monitor perched atop the central part of the ridge.

III. The flour mill and elevator structures are related to the agriculture context. As related in the agriculture context statement, agriculture became the principal business in Port Hope beginning in the 1880s after the two great forest fires and years of lumbering activity cleared much of the local area for farming. The Stafford flour mill, built at an unknown time before the 1881 fire, was greatly expanded in 1882 to meet the rapidly growing milling needs of the community. Then, in 1886, a grain storage elevator was added. The Stafford Flour Mill and Elevator thus reflects the early history of agriculture in the Port Hope area from the days prior to the 1881 fire when commercial agriculture in the area was in its infancy to the late 1880s, when the present agricultural domination of the local economy was rapidly becoming established. Construction of the area's second elevator, the Mihlethaler Elevator, about 1906 reflects the further growth of local commercial agriculture.

IV. The Stafford Flour Mill and Elevator and the Mihlethaler Elevator are the only two flour mill/elevator facilities in Port Hope. The Stafford Mill/Elevator contains Port Hope's only flour mill and its earliest elevator. It reflects, as stated in the significance statement above, the entire early history of commercial

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agriculture in Port Hope. The Mihlethaler Elevator, on the other hand, contains only the elevator, which was very similar in design to the Stafford one but built many years later. The two elevators are similar to one another in the alterations they have suffered: covering or replacement of exterior materials with sheet metal siding and replacement of most of the original equipment. Thus, we feel the Stafford Mill and Elevator possesses greater significance in the history of agriculture in Port Hope and retains at least as much of its original physical character as the Mihlethaler elevator.

Associated Property Types -- 4

I. Public Buildings (churches and halls)

II. Standing resources related to this type in Port Hope are the Masonic Temple (Rubicon Township Hall), former Methodist Episcopal church (Red Church), St. John's Lutheran Church, and former Presbyterian (now United Methodist) church. The 1867 Masonic Temple, a vernacular Greek Revival, frame structure, is the only hall building in Port Hope. The Late Victorian Gothic-style Methodist (1880-82) and Lutheran (1899) churches located at the west edge of Port Hope have been described extensively in the description section of the nomination forms for the buildings. The former Presbyterian church (1884) is also a Late Victorian, Gothic-inspired, frame building. Located at the north edge of town, the church is an asymmetrical structure with a tower containing the principal entrance projecting to the side from one of the building's front corners. The church has been clad in wide exposure aluminum siding, has lost its spire, and has awkwardly attached to it a painful ranch-style, modern addition.

III. The significance of these buildings relates to architecture, relief efforts related to the great fire of 1881, and ethnic history. The Masonic Temple is the only historic public hall building in Port Hope and the area's best example of Greek Revival design.

The three churches constitute the entire body of Port Hope's historic church architecture. The Red Church and St. John's Lutheran are significant in architectural terms in the local context as well preserved typical examples of small-town churches of their particular denominations, while the former Presbyterian church has lost enough of its historic appearance that it is no longer significant in the context of Port Hope's Late Victorian church architecture.

In terms of fire-relief efforts following the 1881 fire, the Masonic Temple and former Presbyterian church both possess significance. The Masonic Temple served as a depot for relief supplies following the fire and is the only standing building which can be identified as playing that role. The former Presbyterian church is significant as a product of the relief efforts. It was one of ten Presbyterian churches in the burned-over district built largely with funds collected by the Relief Committee of the Presbyterian Synod of Michigan for the purpose.

St. John's Lutheran Church is the only structure within the property type relating to the ethnic history context. Its construction in 1899 reflected the growth in the size and fortunes of the area's German population in the years since 1871 when the first German Lutheran church was built.

IV. The number of resources encompassed in this property type and within the two subtypes is extremely small. The properties within the property type which appear to possess significance within the local contexts of architecture, fire-relief efforts, and ethnic history total only four. Three retain their original physical character to a very high degree, while the fourth -- the former Presbyterian church -- has lost a good measure of its original character. This distinction in level of physical integrity between the Masonic Temple, Red

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Church, and Lutheran church on the one hand and the former Presbyterian church on the other led to the selection of the first three buildings for nomination and the rejection of the fourth as a candidate.

Associated Property Types -- 5

I. Commercial Buildings

II. Port Hope's historic commercial buildings are all located along the northeast side of Main Street between State Street and Portland Avenue and the southwest side of Main between School Street and Portland Avenue. This small central business district contains a handful of one- and two-story brick and frame, late nineteenth and early twentieth-century structures. For the most part, the early store buildings are narrow-fronted and deep buildings with flat roofs slanting downward toward the rear in the typical Late Victorian fashion. The oldest commercial building in the business district is the Melligan Store (or Agriculture Hall), a two-story, broad-fronted, frame block built in three sections beginning about 1884. Its false-front facade dates from 1893 and has been little altered. The 1903 Schlichting Building is more typical of Late Victorian store buildings in its narrow frontage, three-bay storefront, and bracketed cornice line. The much altered building next door to the southeast of the Schlichting Building is the only other example of the narrow-fronted and deep, two-story, brick, Late Victorian commercial building in Port Hope. Another two-story, wood example of the same genre stands across the street, but it has also been extensively remodelled. A few other much altered early twentieth-century commercial buildings also survive in the business district. The brick Herman House, a squarish, flat-roofed structure built in 1900 and enlarged in 1902-03, is the only historic (or modern) hotel building in town.

III. Port Hope's historic commercial buildings relate to the architecture and transportation contexts. The little altered Melligan Store and Schlichting Building are the two oldest well preserved historic store buildings in Port Hope's tiny central business district, while the Herman House is the only other little altered historic commercial building in town. W. R. Stafford's general store (1864) was probably Port Hope's first commercial building. Its site is encompassed by the central business district, but the store burned in 1902 and the brick replacement structure has been extensively remodelled and incorporated into a bank building. All other historic brick and frame commercial buildings have been destroyed or heavily altered.

The Herman House also relates to the transportation history of Port Hope. It is the only historic hotel building in Port Hope and it is significant for spanning two eras of transportation in town. It was built prior to the establishment of railroad service, when the community was served by boat and by stage from the nearest rail point at Harbor Beach, but remained in use in the railroad era after 1903. In fact, the Herman House was enlarged in 1902-03, probably in anticipation of the railroad's construction and the increased demand for accommodations.

IV. As indicated in the architecture and transportation context statements and the description and significance statements for the commercial building property type, the Melligan Store and Schlichting Building are unique examples of Late Victorian store buildings in Port Hope in that they have retained a high degree of physical integrity. The Herman House is unique in Port Hope as the town's only historic hotel building. The hotel also retains a high degree of its historic character despite some front and rear alterations.

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Associated Property Types -- 6

I. Housing

II. Two types of historic housing survive in Port Hope: single-family houses built for the owner's occupancy and single-family, rental houses. No historic boarding houses or multiple-unit houses exist in the town. Port Hope's historic single-family houses are almost exclusively modest, frame buildings (some brick houses dating from the 1890s and early 1900s are also present) representing house forms and architectural styles typical of the Thumb shoreline towns. End-gable, side-gable, end-gable-with-side-wing, and gable-roof L-plan (some with the subsidiary, front-facing gable in the center of the side-gable wing that is a trademark of housing design in the Thumb and the part of Ontario across Lake Huron) house forms predominate among the late nineteenth-century housing. A very small number of Greek Revival and Gothic-inspired houses are present, and a number of houses with minimal bracketing or minimal Queen Anne detailing are present, but most houses are very simple in design and can be labelled only as Late Victorian.

The W. R. Stafford, Isaac Leuty, and Frederick H. and Elizabeth Stafford Houses are by far the largest and most fully stylistically developed nineteenth-century houses in Port Hope, as has been stated in the architecture context statement. The W. R. Stafford House is the only house in town that can be labelled Italianate, the Leuty House the only one in town that has more than a pointed-arch window in a gable and a roof of steep slope to indicate its Gothic inspiration, and the Frederick and Elizabeth Stafford House the only one displaying Eastlake/Stick Style motifs.

Port Hope apparently once had a number of small rental workers' houses built for workers and their families, but the Blue Town House is the only such structure in Port Hope today that stands on its original site and retains its original appearance.

III. The housing cited above is significant within the context of architecture as stated in the architecture context statement and in the housing description statement directly above. Some of these houses also possess significance within the contexts of lumbering and agriculture, by virtue of their being the residences of people associated with those themes.

IV. Port Hope's historic housing appears for the most part to be typical of that of the shoreline areas of the Thumb. This judgment is based on the extensive body of reconnaissance-level survey data for the Thumb region which the Bureau of History possesses. However, no research or analysis of this body of vernacular architecture has as yet been done. For this reason, no "typical" examples of vernacular housing have been included in this nomination. Review of the survey data for Port Hope resulted in a determination that the Leuty and two Stafford houses were unique in town as full-blown examples of their architectural styles and that they had all remained very little altered over the years. The Stafford Worker's House or Blue Town House, although very much an example of vernacular housing, was selected as much for its historical associations and uniqueness as a survivor of a much larger body of housing having the same associations as for its as yet undefined significance within the context of vernacular housing.

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Identification and Evaluation Methods

This project was initiated in 1980 by Dean S. Smith, a descendant of Port Hope's founder, William R. Stafford, and owner of the Stafford House in Port Hope, which is listed in the National Register. In April, 1981, at Dean Smith's request, Janet Kreger, a Bureau of History regional preservation coordinator, viewed the town and made recommendations for survey, research, and possible future National Register nomination work. In the 1981-83 period a group of volunteers under the direction of a graduate student from Eastern Michigan University's Historic Preservation Program completed an inventory of architecturally significant properties together with other properties determined to possess historical significance to the community. Some researching of the background history of each inventoried property was carried out.

The inventory cards, mapping, and research materials were then reviewed by the Bureau of History's historic preservation staff and tentative decisions concerning properties to be nominated to the National Register made on January 9, 1984. A completed multiple resource nomination for Port Hope prepared by Diana Moran and Evelyn Bray, graduate students in the Eastern Michigan University historic preservation program, was submitted to the Bureau of History in September, 1986. The Bureau requested additional descriptive materials, historical research, and photographs of several of the properties included in the nomination. A review of the submitted material resulted in determinations by the Bureau of History that two of the properties did not appear to possess sufficient significance to merit National Register nomination. These two properties were accordingly deleted from the nomination.

The Port Hope multiple resource nomination was modelled after the earliest multiple resource nomination produced in Michigan and did not meet current National Register standards in many particulars. For this reason the Bureau's National Register Coordinator elected to entirely rewrite the nomination and re-cast it as a multiple property nomination. An in-depth history of the Port Hope area, prepared by James Hunter, Port Hope superintendent of schools, and available in draft form for the first time in the spring of 1987, was of enormous assistance. Hunter made liberal use of W. R. Stafford's diaries, unpublished reminiscences, old newspapers, village records, and other materials for the most part not used in the preparation of the multiple resource nomination. The National Register Coordinator made two visits to Port Hope in June and July, 1987 to review the properties proposed for inclusion in the nomination, to determine the present status of other properties of historic importance shown on the 1890 map (the earliest available) or discussed in the Hunter history, and to review the other standing resources of the town. As a result of these visits, the historic context statements prepared prior to the visits were materially revised in some cases, but no changes in the list of properties to be included in the nomination seemed advisable. The bulk of the re-written nomination was prepared between May and August, 1987.

The original multiple resource nomination contained an introductory history of Port Hope, but no formal definition or explanation of historic contexts. The six historic contexts contained in the multiple property nomination were established and the context statements prepared in the course of writing the multiple property nomination. The historic contexts selected reflect the dominant historic economic bases of the community, lumbering and agriculture; a highly important event in the historical transition of the town's economic base from lumbering to agriculture -- the fires of 1881 -- and the relief activities that followed; the community's one single most important ethnic group; the importance of transportation in Port Hope's economy; and the architectural heritage of the community. Commerce could have been selected as a key historical theme, but was not, since little now remains of the properties associated with W. R. Stafford's commercial endeavors and no

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other local commercial endeavors can be shown to have possessed a similar level of importance. By the same token, salt manufacturing could have been selected as a historical theme. This was not done because little remains above ground of the once highly important salt blocks and no archaeological investigation or evaluation of the below-ground remains of those sites has been made.

The typology of significant property types has been based on function. The small number of significant resources seemed to make any other approach unfeasible. The standards for physical integrity follow the standards set forth in the National Register criteria. The small number of significant resources made any amplification of the standards unnecessary.

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