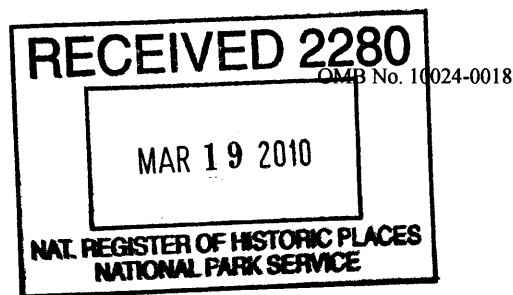


United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

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 Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number	237 North Main Street	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Rosholt	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Portage	code 097
			zip code 54473

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

Date March 4, 2010

State Historic Preservation Officer - Wisconsin

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

Rosholt, John Gilbert, House

Portage

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

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:)*Edson H. Beall*

4-27-10

hmc

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification**Ownership of Property**
(check as many boxes as
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

2

noncontributing

buildings

sites

structures

objects

2

0 total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources**is previously listed in the National Register**

0

6. Function or Use**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling

DOMESTIC/ secondary structure

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling

DOMESTIC/ secondary structure

7. Description**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Stone

walls

Weatherboard

roof

Asphalt

other

Wood

Narrative Description

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

Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
Name of Property

Portage
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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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development
Commerce

Period of Significance

1906-1929

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Rosholt, John Gilbert

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
Name of Property

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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

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

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

1 16 316800 4944500
 Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
 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 Mark R. Seiler
organization Portage County Historical Society
street & number 4409 Janick Circle North
city or town Stevens Point

state WI

date December 4, 2009
telephone 715-344-0168
zip code 54481

Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
Name of Property

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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	Glen R. Lockery	date	December 2009
organization		telephone	208-882-7668
street & number	812 South Blaine Street	zip code	83843
city or town	Moscow	state	Idaho

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 Reduction Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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

Section 7 Page 1

Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
Rosholt, Portage County, Wisconsin

Summary Paragraph

The John Gilbert Rosholt house, constructed in 1905/06 is a two and one half story gable roofed wood-frame late Queen Anne style house with classical detailing. It has a wrap around porch and massive rusticated granite foundation. It has been occupied continuously since its completion by members of the Rosholt family.

The house stands on a nearly one acre lot at 237 North Main Street on the site of J.G. Rosholt's first home that was built in 1888. The earlier home was moved to the north after the construction of the current house. The current house is also adjacent to J.G. Rosholt's State Bank building, constructed in 1920. Behind the house, in the northwest corner of the lot, is a garage built ca. 1908 when Rosholt purchased his first automobile.

The house has a rectangular plan, approximately 31 x 45 feet, with a steep gable roof with asymmetrical cross gables coming off of the single central ridge pole. It has matching bay windows on the north and south sides. The original narrow beaded clapboard siding is still solidly in place. The rusticated granite foundation is two to three feet above grade. The south cross gable is penetrated by a brick chimney. The original cedar shake roof has been replaced by composition roofing.

Narrative Description

East façade. The east façade is dominated by the main entrance in the center of a wrap around porch supported by unfluted Ionic columns. The porch was enclosed in the 1930s but restored by the owner in 2009, using the original pillars and capitals that had been stored away. To the right of the center is the front door, which consists of a wood frame with a large glass panel. South of the entrance is a large fixed sash window whose upper panel has beveled, leaded glass in an Art Nouveau pattern. To the north of the door is a diagonally placed box bay window with beveled, leaded glass in an Art Nouveau pattern on three sides. The second floor is dominated by two symmetrically placed large double hung windows whose upper panels are identical to the first floor window. The attic is framed by the steep central gable with a full pediment in which is set a Palladian window with a large keystone in its arch.

South façade. In the center of the south façade is a cross gable with a full pediment with a window in its center. On the first floor, beneath the gable, is a three-faceted bay window. The center of the bay is a large fixed sash window with a top panel of beveled, leaded glass, identical to the windows in east façade. On either side of the center fixed sash window are double hung windows. The bay window is flanked on the west by two double hung windows and on the east by the wrap around porch and a double hung window. On the second floor, above the bay window is a double hung window. On the west are four double hung windows; these light the former open balcony that was enclosed in the 1930s.

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Section 7 Page 2

Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
Rosholt, Portage County, Wisconsin

North façade. On the west end of the north façade is the second cross gable. Under the north gable with its full pediment, in the attic, is a simple double hung window. The first and second floors are punctuated by double hung windows. In the center of the north façade on the first floor is a bay window, identical to and opposite of the bay window in the south façade. Above it are two double hung windows. To the left of the pair on the second floor is a single double hung window. Within the project cross bay is a single centered double hung window on the second floor. Centered on the first floor of the bay is a large double hung window framed by two narrower windows. On the east end of the north façade is a diagonally placed box bay window that has triple pane of leaded beveled glass windows.

West façade. The west façade, or the back of the house, is utilitarian in appearance. It displays the main gable with a broken pediment and is punctuated by double hung windows, an entrance to the basement, the rear entrance porch, and an enclosed stair case that leads to the second floor. This staircase was added to the house in the 1930s when the second floor was converted to a second apartment.

Interior. With the exception of the bathrooms, the enclosed bedroom porch, and the kitchen, the interior of the house is in its original condition. Walls and ceilings, including the attic, are plaster on lath and in good condition. The first and second floors have 9 foot ceilings and the original maple flooring (with the exception of the bathrooms). All doors, windows and trim are in the original condition. Originally the house was wired for carbide lighting. In several rooms the pipes, to which the lighting fixtures were attached, still can be seen. Electrical lighting was installed ca. 1909 and has been updated in subsequent years.

First Floor. The first floor has five rooms, a kitchen, and a bathroom. The spacious entryway is dominated by the maple staircase with flowered newels to the second floor. On the first landing of the staircase is a diagonally placed box bay window that forms an alcove opening to the northeast onto the front porch. The three windows of the box bay window are leaded glass in an Art Nouveau pattern that compliments the leaded glass in the five other large windows in the house. The entryway leads on the south to a parlor and on the west to the dining room.

The parlor is finished in maple and has a double pocket door leading to the spacious living room.

The living room is finished in quarter sawn oak. On the south wall is a bay window. On the west wall is a mural painted by J.G. Rosholt's daughter Mable Lockery in the 1940s, depicting a historical view from the house looking north to J.G. Rosholt's sawmill operation as it appeared ca. 1906 when the house was built. On the north wall is a double pocket door leading to the dining room.

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Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
Rosholt, Portage County, Wisconsin

The dining room is finished in quarter sawn oak with the original dining table and two china cabinets, also in quarter sawn oak. The north wall is dominated by a bay window identical to the window in the adjoining living room. On the west wall is a built in china cabinet/buffet. A swinging door leads to the kitchen.

The kitchen was remodeled in the 1930s. A door on the west leads to the back entrance of the house and to stairs to the basement. A door on the south leads from the kitchen to a small hallway with doors leading to the living room, a bedroom, bathroom and the stairs to the second floor. The bedroom is finished in maple and has several built in closets. The bathroom was remodeled in the 1970s.

Second Floor. The second floor has a central hallway along which five bedrooms are arranged. The hallway and bedrooms are all finished in maple.

The two front (east) bedrooms have large double hung windows on the east. The southeast bedroom has a second, double hung window on the south. The southwest bedroom in the back of the house opens onto a balcony which was enclosed in the 1930s. The bedroom opposite was plumbed to accommodate a kitchen in the 1930s.

At the west end of the hallway are the staircase to the first floor and side by side doors leading to a bathroom and to the staircase to the attic. On the landing of the staircase to the first floor is a door to the exterior staircase constructed in the 1930s to provide private access to the second floor apartment.

Attic. The staircase from the second floor is guarded by a maple balustrade with dentiled newels. The attic is finished, with sloping plastered walls and ceiling. In the early years the attic room was used for entertainment. In the 1930s it was partitioned to provide for an additional bedroom.

Basement: The basement walls are constructed of granite nearly 24 inches thick. The basement is in its original state and has not been finished. It contains a modern boiler that heats the water for the original heating system.

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Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 1

Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
Rosholt, Portage County, Wisconsin

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The John Gilbert Rosholt house in Rosholt, Wisconsin is being nominated to the National Register at the local level of significance under *Criterion B* because the history of the Village of Rosholt in Alban Township is inextricably linked to the life of John Gilbert Rosholt and his descendants. For nearly 50 years, from ca. 1880 when Rosholt first came to Alban Township until his death in 1929, he played a central role in the settlement and founding of the Village of Rosholt, and its religious, social and commercial development. After his death, his descendants, individually and through his residual estate, continued to make contributions to the village. The bank he founded in 1904 continues to play a significant role in the life of the village under the leadership of a great-great-grandson, also named J. G. Rosholt. The period of significance begins in 1906 with the completion of the house and continues until 1929, the year of John Rosholt's death. While there are other properties associated with Rosholt in the community, it is this house that is most closely identified with him and with his contributions to the growing and prospering community that he was instrumental in starting.

Narrative Statement of Significance

John Gilbert Rosholt's involvement in the settling of the Town of Alban and the Village of Rosholt is part of the history of Polish and Norwegian immigration, the development of logging and lumber milling, and the building of railroads in the State of Wisconsin.¹ John Gilbert Rosholt—known locally to this day as J.G.—was born in 1850 to Norwegian immigrants in Pine Lake, west of Milwaukee. Later the family moved to a farm near Iola in Waupaca County.² In 1869 J.G. acquired controlling interest in a sawmill on nearby Graham Lake.³ Together with his partner Albert Anderson, J.G. first came to Alban Township in Portage County in the early 1880s with a steam traction engine and separator, which they hired out for threshing.⁴ It probably was during these forays into Alban Township that J. G. saw the extent of the timberland with its virgin white pines and the potential for investing his money. With his earnings from the sawmill on Graham Lake and his threshing operations, he began investing in timberland. When timber prices began to increase, he discontinued the threshing business, dismantled his sawmill on Graham Lake and moved it, ca. 1884, to Alban Township to a site on the South Branch of the Little Wolf River (known today as Flume Creek), today on the north end of Main Street in the Village of Rosholt.

¹ Wyatt, Barbara L., ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, Three Volumes*. Madison, Wisconsin: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986.

² Rosholt, Malcolm. *Town 25 North: A Brief History of Alban and the Village of Rosholt Wisconsin*, 1948. Reprinted 2008 by Higgenson Book Company, Salem MA: 175.

³ Michelson, Joel. "A Pioneer Norwegian Family." *Reach Section, Stevens Point Journal*, 7 November 1982.

⁴ *Town 25 North*: 167.

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Section 8 Page 2

Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
Rosholt, Portage County, Wisconsin

As he had done before, J.G. invested most of the earnings from the sawmill in the purchase of additional timberland in and to the north of the future Village of Rosholt and additional forties north of the Alban town line in Marathon County. In 1885, he already paid taxes on more than 500 acres of land. By 1900 he owned sufficient timberland to attract the interest of the Brooks & Ross Lumber Company of Schofield. In December 1902, J.G. sold his timber rights to about 2,500 acres to that firm for \$125,000.⁵ With this sale he not only became a wealthy man, but he provided for the founding of the future Village of Rosholt and its rapid growth in the ensuing decades. Importantly, his agreement with Brooks & Ross contained a clause, that Brooks & Ross "...build or cause to be built, a Rail-road into Section Twenty (20), Township Twenty-five (25) North...."⁶ J.G. realized that the future settlement and economic development in Alban Township and the Village of Rosholt was dependent on a rail link to the surrounding area. The Chicago and NorthWestern Railroad eventually built spurs from Eland in Marathon County southward through J.G.'s timber holdings in Marathon County and into his timberland in Portage County. Importantly, the main spur terminated in the Village of Rosholt where a depot was built.⁷

When J.G. ventured into the town of Alban in the early 1880s, the township was very sparsely settled and had minimal economic development. Alban was the last township to be organized in Portage County.⁸ In 1856, the Township of New Hope was organized with political control over a second, adjacent township, Town 25 North (Alban), which itself did not meet the requirements to be recognized as an independent township. To be recognized, a town had to have 40 resident freeholders, 25 of whom must be resident electors, and an assessed valuation of \$100,000.⁹ In 1858 there were only two resident taxpayers in Town 25 North.¹⁰ Indeed there were only 125 property holders in the combined Towns 24 and 25 in 1858. 22 years later, in 1878, when Town 25 North met the requirements, the independent Town of Alban was established. Even then, in 1878, there were only 43 taxpayers in Alban—three more than the minimum required—and a population of about 150.¹¹ This late development was due to the remoteness from other, earlier developed areas in the county and from any railroad. The only link from the site of the future Village of Rosholt to settlements served by the railroad was a former Indian trail that functioned as a stagecoach road (today Wisconsin Highway 66)—20 miles to the City of Stevens Point and some 16 miles to the Village of Amherst. With this primitive infrastructure, according to J.G.'s grandson Malcolm Rosholt, many of the early settlers came from locations like Stevens Point on foot. In 1878 there were only 32 horses and 36 vehicles

⁵ *Town 25 North*: 168-9.

⁶ Agreement between J.G. and Dorothea Rosholt and Brooks & Ross Lumber Company, Portage County Wisconsin Register of Deeds, Book 77: 316, recorded 22 April 1903.

⁷ Specht, Ray. *Central Wisconsin Railroads: Past and Future*. Stevens Point, Wisconsin: Antiquarian Press, 1981.

⁸ *Town 25 North*: 138.

⁹ *Town 25 North*: 21.

¹⁰ *Town 25 North*: 18.

¹¹ *Town 25 North*: 47-8.

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Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
Rosholt, Portage County, Wisconsin

(wagons, buggies or sleighs) which increased to 78 and 44 respectively in 1885. At the same time, 52 settlers had no vehicles whatsoever.¹² Because of Alban's isolation, Malcolm Rosholt surmises that there was more timber in Alban in 1878 than in any other township in the state of Wisconsin.¹³ In a report to the State of Wisconsin in 1878, about ¼ of the acreage in Alban township was still covered with virgin pine forests.¹⁴ Rosholt relates that "Old timers estimate[d] that every forty in the township averaged one million feet of timber," and that one individual claimed to have logged four million feet from a single forty.¹⁵

From 1858, when the first settler came to Town 25 North, until the early 1880s when J.G. Rosholt arrived, there were only a few clearings in the pine forests in the township. One of these clearings was on the South Branch of the Little Wolf where a pond had been formed by a beaver dam. As this clearing expanded, it would become the Village of Rosholt.¹⁶ In 1867, in this clearing at the north end of what would become the Village of Rosholt's Main Street, Jens Rasmussen had bought acreage from the brother of the first settler in Town 25 North and reinforced the old beaver dam so the pond could provide water power to drive his grist mill.¹⁷ In 1884, J.G. bought part of Rasmussen's clearing where he relocated his sawmill from Graham Lake and made a deal with Rasmussen to share the water rights. J.G. also built a shanty that functioned as a blacksmith shop and log cabin in which to live year round.¹⁸ In an old log cabin south of the mill pond, Adolph Torgeson, a brother in law of J.G., operated a small store.¹⁹ The northern part of the village's current Main Street consisted of an old tote road that did not extend south to present day Hwy 66. When J.G. platted the first part of the village, he extended the tote road to the south and named it Main Street.²⁰

The construction of J.G.'s mill in 1884 gave impetus to cutting more clearings in the central part of the township to provide agricultural land for new settlers.²¹ According to Malcolm Rosholt, there were only a few buildings in the vicinity of the future Village of Rosholt and nothing on the east side of Main Street until after 1890.²² By 1891, most of the pine trees had been cleared off of Main Street.²³ It is estimated that J. G. sawed between 550,000 and 700,000 feet of lumber each year,²⁴ providing

¹² *Town 25 North*: 61.

¹³ *Town 25 North*: 138.

¹⁴ *Town 25 North*: 43.

¹⁵ *Town 25 North*: 138.

¹⁶ *Town 25 North*: 181.

¹⁷ *Town 25 North*: 15.

¹⁸ *Town 25 North*: 170.

¹⁹ Rosholt, Malcolm Leavitt. *Our County, Our Story*, 1959:380.

²⁰ *Town 25 North*: 186.

²¹ *Town 25 North*: 181.

²² *Town 25 North*: 184.

²³ *Town 25 North*: 186.

²⁴ *Town 25 North*: 173.

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Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
Rosholt, Portage County, Wisconsin

employment for more than a dozen men in spring and early summer.²⁵ The sawed lumber was stacked to the south of the mill, sometimes to a height of 24 feet.²⁶ J.G. also custom sawed logs for farmers in the vicinity for a fee. His sawmill was expanded twice between 1884 and 1895. In addition to sawing lumber, the mill also manufactured shingles and lath and planed wood, all of which was a necessity as new settlers built barns and dwellings in the township. A year after the sawmill was opened, J.G.'s wife and children arrived from the family farm west of Iola to live in the log cabin J.G. had built the year before. In 1888 Rosholt built a new frame house on Main Street, south of this sawmill, on the same site where the J.G. Rosholt house stands today.²⁷

In 1897 or 1898, Jens Rasmussen built a new steam powered feed mill which attracted the business of farmers in the surrounding territory.²⁸ In 1901, the young settlement of Rosholt suffered a setback. A fire so intense that it reportedly was seen as far away as Waupaca destroyed J.G.'s sawmill and Rasmussen's grist mill. In addition to his sawmill, J.G. lost nearly a million feet of pine, hardwood and hemlock lumber, valued at \$35,000, which was not insured. J.G. immediately built a new, steam powered sawmill and planing mill on the south shore of the pond, in which he installed a "modern" band saw instead of the circular saw in the older mills.²⁹ Rasmussen also built a new, steam powered gristmill, this time in the village, east of Main and Randolph streets.³⁰ J.G. supplied slab wood to power the mill as compensation for the mill that had burnt down.

Until the population in the town of Alban grew sufficiently to attract merchants and other businessmen, local residents traveled significant distances for goods and services. Certainly they could buy some items in Jens Hanson's little store in Rosholt. Lumberjacks, for example, came frequently to buy boots, jackets, tobacco, and the like.³¹ Farmers in the area could have some feed ground at Rasmussen's small mill and lumber sawed at J.G.'s sawmill, but other goods and services were at distant locations. Originally, Alban residents got their mail in the town New Hope. In 1873, a post office was established in Alban, about a mile southwest of Rosholt near the New Hope town line.³² In 1893, the United States Post Office Department established a post office in the growing settlement around J.G.'s sawmill and officially named it the Rosholt Post Office.³³

Before the advent of the railroad it was very difficult to remove timber from Township 25 North. Logs

²⁵ *Town 25 North*: 187.

²⁶ *Town 25 North*: 172.

²⁷ *Town 25 North*: 171.

²⁸ *Town 25 North*: 187.

²⁹ *Town 25 North*: 171-3.

³⁰ Peterson, Lester. *Alban Settlers, 1857-1885*: Appendix A, 7.

³¹ *Town 25 North*: 187.

³² *Town 25 North*: 233.

³³ *Town 25 North*: 175.

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Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
Rosholt, Portage County, Wisconsin

had to be laboriously driven down the Little Wolf to the big Wolf to Fond du Lac, Oshkosh and Manawa.³⁴ Although pine logs floated on water, hardwood logs did not float unless cedar poles were strapped to them. Before 1872, sawmills on the Flume River had to depend mainly on lumber sales to local settlers who were clearing stumps from their farmland and building dwellings and farm buildings. From 1872-1903, larger markets were accessed only by hauling lumber by sleigh in winter to Amherst, which was the nearest railroad station.³⁵ The growing industry of potato farming was also inhibited by a lack of a railroad. Between 1885 and 1900, farmers east and west of Rosholt were still hauling their potatoes to Amherst, Stevens Point, and other places with railroad terminals.³⁶

When J.G. sold his timber to Brooks & Ross in 1902, and in 1903, once it became known that the Chicago & NorthWestern Railroad was going to build a 19 mile spur from Eland to Rosholt, a building boom and economic development ensued. In the winter of 1903, railroad surveying teams arrived in Alban.³⁷ Local farmers benefitted in that they were paid to do some of the grading and could sell hand hewn hemlock railroad ties to the railroad for 22-23 cents a piece. In September or October 1903, the engine could be heard north of the village and in a few days the track was finished. The first train arrived October 15th, 1903. There were two trains daily, transporting freight and passengers.³⁸

On June 1st, 1903, the first survey and platting in the village was completed for J.G. on the forty acres he had bought in 1883. This plat of 38 lots was followed by three additions to the village by J.P. Hanson (65 lots), Hans J. Fredricksen (41 lots), and in 1905 by J.G.'s "First Addition" (41 lots).³⁹ J.G.'s original plat laid out the street grid of the business district around Main Street, where he aggressively began to sell lots and even construct buildings. J.G. actively promoted the village in the vicinity. An article in the *Stevens Point Journal* in 1903 stated: "J.G. Rosholt was a visitor to our berg Saturday and of course claims the Village of Rosholt to be *IT*".⁴⁰ An article in the *Wisconsin Valley Leader* of Wisconsin Rapids, stated that J.G. would open a bank and construct two warehouses for grain and potatoes in Rosholt.⁴¹

³⁴ *Town 25 North*: 141.

³⁵ *Alban Settlers*: Appendix B.

³⁶ *Town 25 North*: 187.

³⁷ *Town 25 North*: 223.

³⁸ *Town 25 North*: 224-5.

³⁹ *Standard Atlas of Portage County including Plat Book of the Villages, Cities and Townships of the County*. George A. Ogle and Co., Chicago, 1915.

⁴⁰ *Stevens Point Journal*, 17 October 1903.

⁴¹ *Wisconsin Valley Leader*, 13 August 1903.

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Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
Rosholt, Portage County, Wisconsin

J.G. realized that economic development in the village was dependant upon the banking system. Until 1904 there was no bank in Alban Township. Settlers wanting to take a loan drove or walked the 20 miles from Rosholt to Stevens Point or 16 miles Amherst to secure a loan or take out a mortgage.⁴² To remedy this, J.G. decided to establish the State Bank of Rosholt. The *Stevens Point Journal* reported that the State Bank Commissioner approved the articles of incorporation of the State Bank of Rosholt, the incorporators being J.G., Carl, A. Jens, and Milton Rosholt, and that the bank would open on February 1, 1904.⁴³ On February 6, 1904, the bank opened with a capitalization of \$10,000. J.G.'s son Carl began as cashier in 1904 and continued in that role until 1937 and as president until 1958.⁴⁴ The Rosholts held all of the stock. Even before the bank was established, businessmen from Iola, Amherst, and Manawa, and farmers from New Hope and Alban bought lots from J.G. and began to build homes and businesses. At first the merchants lived behind or above their businesses, and only later built residences in the village. By the end of 1903, more than half the lots on the west side of Main Street and three lots east of Main were built.⁴⁵

Also in 1903, Brooks & Ross Lumber Company immediately began big logging operations on the vast timber holdings they had purchased from J.G. Logs that previously had to be driven down the river or hauled by sleigh to Amherst now could be loaded onto flat cars and transported by rail.⁴⁶ Between 1865 and 1908 perhaps not less than half a billion feet of timber were logged off in Town 25 North.⁴⁷ Once the cutting of the pine was complete, J.G. still owned the land, which he sold to immigrant farmers from Poland and Germany.⁴⁸

An article in the *Stevens Point Journal* reported on the impact of the railroad: "The new Village of Rosholt, recently put in direct touch with the outside world by means of a branch of the Northwestern road [...] is just now the scene of lively lumbering operations."⁴⁹ The article reports that the Brooks & Ross Lumber Company employed 100 men and shipped 100,000 board feet of lumber daily. Another article in the *Stevens Point Journal* entitled "Two trains in here every day now" extols the business expansion in the village: "P.N. Peterson will put in a wagon scale near his potato ware house. [...] The railroad company is putting in first class work on its depot and water tank. [...] The Village of Rosholt is four and one-half months old, and has two general stores, two hotels, one hardware store, one furniture store, one millinery store, one tailor shop, one harness shop, one blacksmith shop, one drug store, one barber shop, one pump shop, three potato warehouses, one bank building and several

⁴² *Town 25 North*: 62.

⁴³ *Stevens Point Journal*, 16 January 1904.

⁴⁴ *Our County, Our Story*: 382.

⁴⁵ *Town 25 North*: 191-2.

⁴⁶ "A Pioneer Norwegian Family."

⁴⁷ *Town 25 North*: 141.

⁴⁸ "A Pioneer Norwegian Family."

⁴⁹ *Stevens Point Journal*, 10 December 1903.

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residences nearly completed.⁵⁰

In 1904, the Rosholt Business Men's Association, of which J.G. was a member, lured the Alban Butter and Cheese Association to move its creamery to Rosholt. They offered to donate the creamery building and a piece of land. J.G. donated \$100 of the \$396 in subscriptions and undoubtedly supplied the lumber for the construction of the building.⁵¹

Until 1904 the children living near Rosholt attended the Alban school, about one mile from the village.⁵² In 1883 School District No. 3 was created in the northwestern sections of the township, about two miles north of Rosholt, known as the Simonis School, where J.G.'s wife Dorothea Rosholt taught in 1891/2.⁵³ When this school burnt ca 1893, J. G. offered the district land more centrally located, which was turned down. By 1904, the population of the village had grown sufficiently to justify the establishment of another school in Alban Township. With his original platting of the village, J.G. had provided a one acre lot, just west of the first plat, where the Village of Rosholt built its first school, a frame school house, which would be expanded in 1906.⁵⁴ In 1915, a second, brick building was constructed to accommodate grades 1-8; it later become the high school.

J.G. also realized how important religion was to the development of the village. The Norwegian Lutheran settlers had been worshipping at Concordia Lutheran Church about five miles northeast of Rosholt.⁵⁵ In 1903, at the urging of J.G., this church was relocated from the Section 15 site to the Village of Rosholt. J.G. offered to furnish a lot for the church building and land for a cemetery. The congregation accepted J.G.'s offer and the new church building was dedicated in 1905.⁵⁶ Malcolm Rosholt surmises that J. G. also provided the new lumber for the church building and matched dollar for dollar the funds need to relocate the church.⁵⁷

In addition to the bank, J.G. and his family were involved in other enterprises in the village and county. In 1905, J.G. built a new hotel in the village.⁵⁸ He did not operate the hotel, but rented it to others. At one point, however, the *Gazette* reported that J.G.'s son Milton and his wife took over the operation.⁵⁹ In January 1906, another son, Carl, signed a franchise for bringing telephone service to the village.

⁵⁰ *Stevens Point Journal*, 13 November 1903.

⁵¹ *Town 25 North*: 280-1.

⁵² *Town 25 North*: 217.

⁵³ *Town 25 North*: 132.

⁵⁴ *Town 25 North*: 213.

⁵⁵ Rosholt, Malcolm Leavitt. *Faith Lutheran Church Dedication*, August 27, 1972: 24.

⁵⁶ *Faith Lutheran Church Dedication*: 25.

⁵⁷ *Town 25 North*: 83.

⁵⁸ *Town 25 North*: 196.

⁵⁹ *Gazette (Stevens Point, Wis.)*, 4 August 1909.

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Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
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Once the line was extended to Rosholt, Carl sold the franchise to the Nelsonville Telephone Company.⁶⁰ Carl also was on the Portage County Board and served as treasurer of the Rosholt school board from 1903-1953.⁶¹ On the lighter side, Milton Rosholt organized the first football team in the village in 1905.⁶²

In first two decades of the twentieth century, before the advent of the automobile and trucking, everything came to Rosholt by train. Wausau wholesale companies did the lion's share of business, providing local merchants with fresh bread, fruits, and vegetables. By 1915, "drummers," or travelling salesmen, from numerous companies were coming to Rosholt. Among those represented were: Glass Fruit, Kickbusch Grocery, American Candy, Wausau Bottling Works, Carver Ice Cream, Quality Biscuit, La Crosse Cracker & Candy, Swift, Marshall Paper, and Armour.⁶³

Local farmers and potato brokers also benefitted from the railroad. A cattle yard had been built on the railroad right away in the village to contain the cattle and horses that were shipped out. Also potato warehouses were built on the railroad right of way to store potatoes bought from the growing number of potato farmers in the vicinity. Rosholt became one of the great potato buying centers of the state.⁶⁴

About 1904/5 J.G. sold his sawmill for \$3000 to George Scouler and Louie S. Jacobson, who sold it a year later to the W.J. Maxwell Lumber Company of Scandinavia.⁶⁵ When J.G. moved into his new house in 1906 he installed carbide lights since there was no electricity in the village. In 1909, the Maxwell Lumber Company installed a dynamo in the sawmill to provide electricity for its planing mill and later for the village.⁶⁶ The first electricity was turned on when it was too dark to read and went off at 11 pm. About 15 minutes before the lights went out, a slow blink was given to warn that the electricity was going off.⁶⁷

In September 1907, the Village of Rosholt was incorporated as the third village in Portage County.⁶⁸ Twenty years after J.G. came to the area, the population of the village had grown from a small settlement with a handful of residents to a village with a population of 382. On October 14, J. G. was elected the first president of the village.⁶⁹ He was reelected four times until 1913 when his son Carl

⁶⁰ *Town 25 North*: 199.

⁶¹ Obituary, "Carl Rosholt," *Stevens Point Journal*, 28 November 1958.

⁶² *Town 25 North*: 264.

⁶³ *Town 25 North*: 227.

⁶⁴ *Town 25 North*: 227-8.

⁶⁵ *Town 25 North*: 174.

⁶⁶ *Town 25 North*: 170.

⁶⁷ *Town 25 North*: 278.

⁶⁸ *Stevens Point Journal*, 13 November 1907.

⁶⁹ *Our County, Our Story*: 380.

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Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
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became village president.⁷⁰

During his first term as village president, the village board adopted an ordinance to provide fire protection for the fledgling village.⁷¹ As early as 1906, the village was attempting to organize a fire department. The *Stevens Point Journal* reported that a proposition to the City of Stevens Point "...from Rosholt to purchase the old hand fire engine for \$40 was voted down on sentimental grounds by a vote of 10 to 1."⁷² In 1908, the fire department was established and a horse drawn steam fire engine was purchased.⁷³ Also by 1908, the Village of Rosholt was participating in a traveling library in Portage County.⁷⁴ The county reported expending \$1.10 in January of 1908 to the National Express Company to carry a chest of books from Stevens Point to Rosholt.⁷⁵ The first automobile was J.G.'s Buick in 1908. Shortly after WWI, Carl Austin began a taxi service to Amherst and Iola as well as other towns.⁷⁶

The Village of Rosholt continued to thrive, undoubtedly linked to J.G.'s real estate and banking activities. In 1909 the *Stevens Point Journal* extolled the village: "There are 4 general stores, one housing the post office; an "up to date" drug store, the State Bank, two meat markets, a feed mill, a dealer in pumps and windmills who also drilled wells, the Maxwell Lumber Co, and "the best equipped" creamery in Portage county."⁷⁷

J.G.'s State Bank of Rosholt also thrived. A news article in 1909 reported that the "people of Portage county are growing rich rapidly," evidenced by the increase of bank deposits. The State Bank reported increases from \$98,826.54 to \$107,524.96.⁷⁸ Indeed, the bank's capitalization increased four-fold, from \$10,000 in 1904 to \$41,000 in 1921.⁷⁹ Until his death, J.G. remained active as president of the bank, and made certain that the community was aware of his presence. His grandson, Glen Lockery, recalls his daily routine. Every morning J.G. would take this automobile from the garage behind his home and drive it a few hundred feet and park it in front of his bank.⁸⁰

⁷⁰ *Gazette (Stevens Point, Wis.)*, 9 April 1913.

⁷¹ *Proceedings of the Village Board, 27 May 1908*, Portage County Historical Society Collection, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Area Research Center.

⁷² *Stevens Point Journal*, 10 February 1906.

⁷³ "Fire Chief's Corner," *Rosholt Record*, 27 September 2008: 9.

⁷⁴ *Gazette (Stevens Point, Wis.)*, 15 April 1908.

⁷⁵ *Gazette (Stevens Point, Wis.)*, 29 January 1908.

⁷⁶ *Town 25 North*: 259.

⁷⁷ *Stevens Point Journal*, 21 July 1909.

⁷⁸ *Stevens Point Journal*, 13 May 1909.

⁷⁹ *Our County, Our Story*: 380.

⁸⁰ Conversation between Rosholt House owner and nomination author, January 2009.

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J.G. also embarked on other banking activities in nearby communities. In 1909 he bought controlling interest in the Citizens' State Bank of Wittenberg, 20 miles north of Rosholt.⁸¹ This perhaps was related to his endeavors to sell his more than 2000 acres of land—to which he had sold only the logging rights—once it was cut over. In 1919, he sold his interest in the Wittenberg bank.⁸²

In 1911, together with his brother Kim Rosholt of Eau Claire and two other investors, he founded the Farmers' State Bank of Waupaca with a capitalization of \$30,000.⁸³ Interestingly, Kim Rosholt was, according to his obituary, known in Eau Claire as a successful banker and "colonizer," i.e. he bought up large tracts of "cut-over timber land" and "carried on a very extensive and successful colonization activities, bringing in settlers for the newly settled country" north of Eau Claire.⁸⁴

In the Rosholt area farmers and merchants continued to flourish—undoubtedly linked to J.G.'s banking and real estate dealings—and economic conditions improved with the accelerated demand for agricultural products during World War I.⁸⁵

His support of Concordia Lutheran Church did not wane. He personally guaranteed the dues the congregation was obligated to pay to the Norwegian Lutheran Synod.⁸⁶

Another contribution from J.G. to the village is the Hill Park, a pine covered hill at the north end of Main Street. In the summer of 1917, the Guernsey Breeders' picnic was held under the white pines on the hill north of the village. Out of this picnic developed the Rosholt Community Free Fair, which later was designated as the Portage County Fair.⁸⁷ In 1920, Hill Park was leased to the village by J.G., with the stipulation that the village invest no less than "\$200 on or before May 15th 1921 in improvements for to make a public park."⁸⁸ To this day Hill Park is the site of the Portage County Fair.

Long after J.G.'s death the village continued to benefit from his residual estate and the State Bank. In 1949 the Rosholt family donated this land to the village.⁸⁹ In 1948, Portage County paid to move a log cabin to Hill Park, which became the Pioneer Museum, exhibiting several hundred exhibits and photographs of central Wisconsin pioneer life and culture, organized by Malcolm Rosholt, who was

⁸¹ *Stevens Point Journal*, 23 September 1909.

⁸² *Stevens Point Journal*, 18 October 1919.

⁸³ *Stevens Point Journal*, 7 January 1911.

⁸⁴ *Eau Claire Leader*, 6 January 1920.

⁸⁵ "A Norwegian Family."

⁸⁶ "A Norwegian Family."

⁸⁷ *Our County, Our Story*: 383.

⁸⁸ Lease Agreement, 15 September 1920, Portage County Historical Society Collection, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Area Research Center.

⁸⁹ Warranty Deeds, Volume 198: 371, 22 July 1949, Portage County Register of Deeds.

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director of the museum. In 1955, the State Bank of Rosholt purchased a second log structure and moved it to the museum site.⁹⁰

J.G.'s last, posthumous gift to the village was given by the family from his residual estate.⁹¹ After the old brick school burnt in 1948, the estate donated a 5 acre site just west of J.G.'s original plat and adjacent to the plot he provided for the first schoolhouse. On this site was built a modern K-12 school that serves Rosholt and surrounding communities to this day. On the site of the old school house are the village's tennis courts.

On North Main Street the John Gilbert Rosholt house stands as a proud reminder of the village's namesake. Although many of the store fronts on Main Street are now vacant or serve non-commercial purposes, and all signs of the railroad have vanished, J.G. Rosholt's contributions to the community are evident: Hill Park—just north of his house and adjacent to the site of his saw mill, an historical marker at the old mill pond, the Concordia Lutheran Cemetery, the public tennis courts, and the K-12 school. The old bank building still stands next to J.G.'s house, but serves today as a motorcycle business, while the former State Bank of Rosholt, now Community First Bank, is located on the edge of town.

Much as the community character changed in the early years of the twentieth century from an outpost settlement to a village with railroad access, a school, a church, businesses, and a park, John Gilbert Rosholt reflected the community's growing prosperity with the construction of his new house. From the time of the completion of the house in 1906 until J.G.'s death in 1929, this was the home of Rosholt's most influential resident. It was during these years that J.G. oversaw the businesses that he had started and provided for the continued growth and development of the community. As noted in Rosholt's biography in the 1919 history of Portage County: "Naturally (Rosholt) is proud of the village which bears his name, and is constantly working for anything that will result in its advantage or promote the welfare of its citizens."⁹²

⁹⁰ *Our County, Our Story*: 283.

⁹¹ Warranty Deeds, Portage County Register of Deeds, vol. 198: 371.

⁹² Edward McGlachlin, ed. *A Standard History of Portage County*. Chicago: Lewis Pub. Co., 1919: 385.

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Wisconsin Valley Leader (Grand Rapids [i.e. Wisconsin Rapids], Wis.), 1903.

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Verbal Boundary Description:

Part of the South one-half of the North East Quarter of Section 20, Township 25 North, Range 10 East, in the Village of Rosholt, Wisconsin. Commencing on the west line of Main Street, 148.5 feet North of the North line of Randolph Street, as a point of beginning, thence Northerly along the west line of Main Street, 181.5 feet; thence Westerly at right angle, 252 feet; thence Southerly at right angle, 181.5 feet; and thence Easterly at right angle, 252 feet to place of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

This is the extent of the property associated with the house since its construction.

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Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
Rosholt, Portage County, Wisconsin

Name of Property: Rosholt, John Gilbert, House
City or Vicinity: Rosholt
County: Portage **State:** WI
Photographer: Douglas Moore, Thomas Charlesworth
Date Photographed: October 2008, October 2009

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of 12. Rosholt, John Gilbert, House, Portage County, WI; Photographer: Thomas Charlesworth; October 2009; Negative: Wisconsin Historical Society; Camera View looking Northwest at East (front) façade.

2 of 12. Rosholt, John Gilbert, House, Portage County, WI; Photographer: Thomas Charlesworth; October 2009; Negative: Wisconsin Historical Society; Camera View looking North at South façade.

3 of 12. Rosholt, John Gilbert, House, Portage County, WI; Photographer: Thomas Charlesworth; October 2009; Negative: Wisconsin Historical Society; Camera View looking Southeast at North façade.

4 of 12. Rosholt, John Gilbert, House, Portage County, WI; Photographer: Thomas Charlesworth; October 2009; Negative: Wisconsin Historical Society; Camera View looking East at West (back) façade.

5 of 12. Rosholt, John Gilbert, House, Portage County, WI; Photographer: Douglas Moore; October 2008; Negative: Wisconsin Historical Society; Camera View looking Northeast at vestibule and staircase.

6 of 12. Rosholt, John Gilbert, House, Portage County, WI; Photographer: Douglas Moore; October 2008; Negative: Wisconsin Historical Society; Camera View looking East at front parlor.

7 of 12. Rosholt, John Gilbert, House, Portage County, WI; Photographer: Douglas Moore; October 2008; Negative: Wisconsin Historical Society; Camera View looking West at living room.

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Rosholt, Portage County, Wisconsin

8 of 12. Rosholt, John Gilbert, House, Portage County, WI; Photographer: Douglas Moore; October 2008; Negative: Wisconsin Historical Society; Camera View looking Northwest at dining room.

9 of 12. Rosholt, John Gilbert, House, Portage County, WI; Photographer: Douglas Moore; October 2008; Negative: Wisconsin Historical Society; Camera View looking West at second floor hallway.

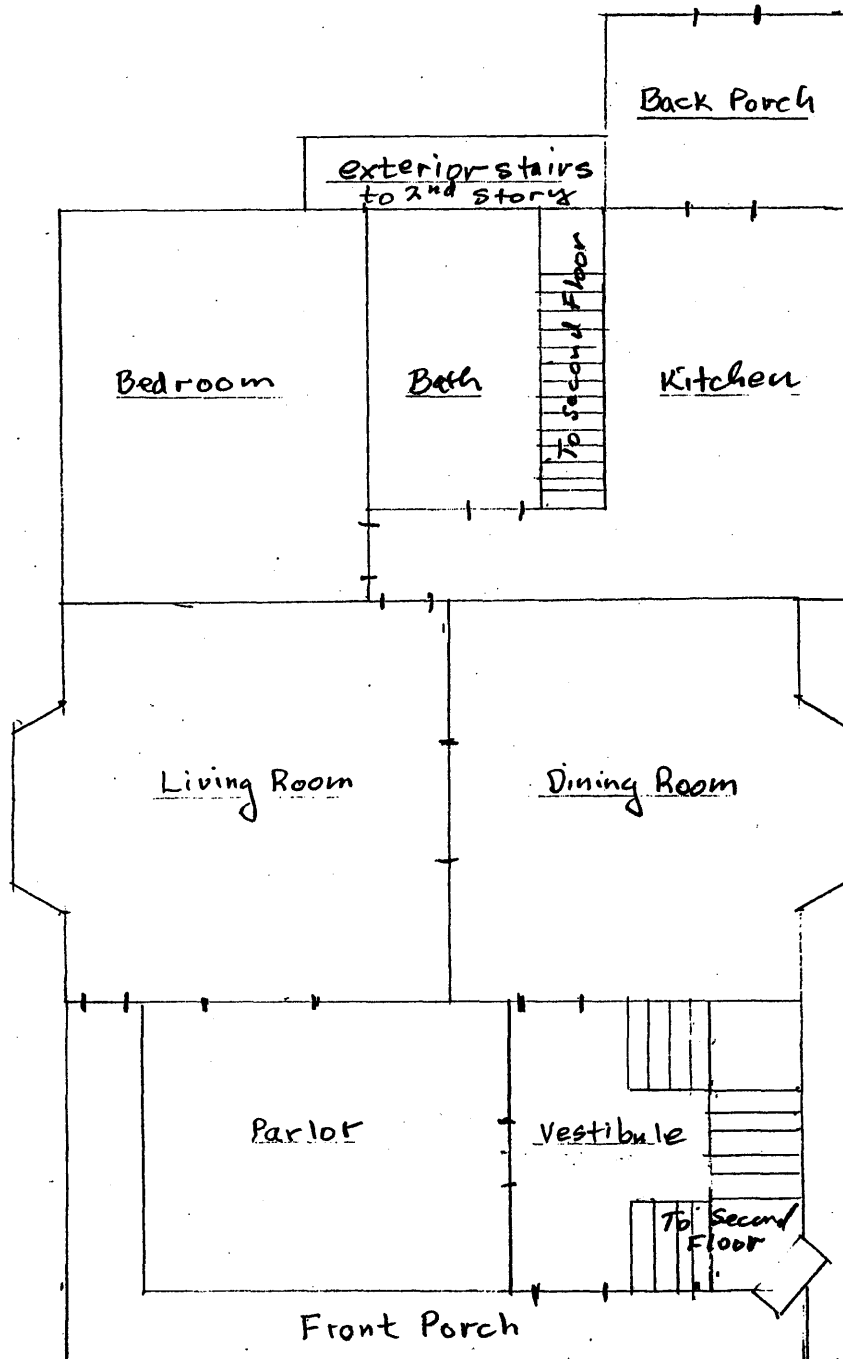
10 of 12. Rosholt, John Gilbert, House, Portage County, WI; Photographer: Douglas Moore; October 2008; Wisconsin Historical Society; Camera View looking East at attic room.

11 of 12. Rosholt, John Gilbert, House, Portage County, WI; Photographer: Douglas Moore; October 2008; Negative: Wisconsin Historical Society; Camera View looking East at basement walls.

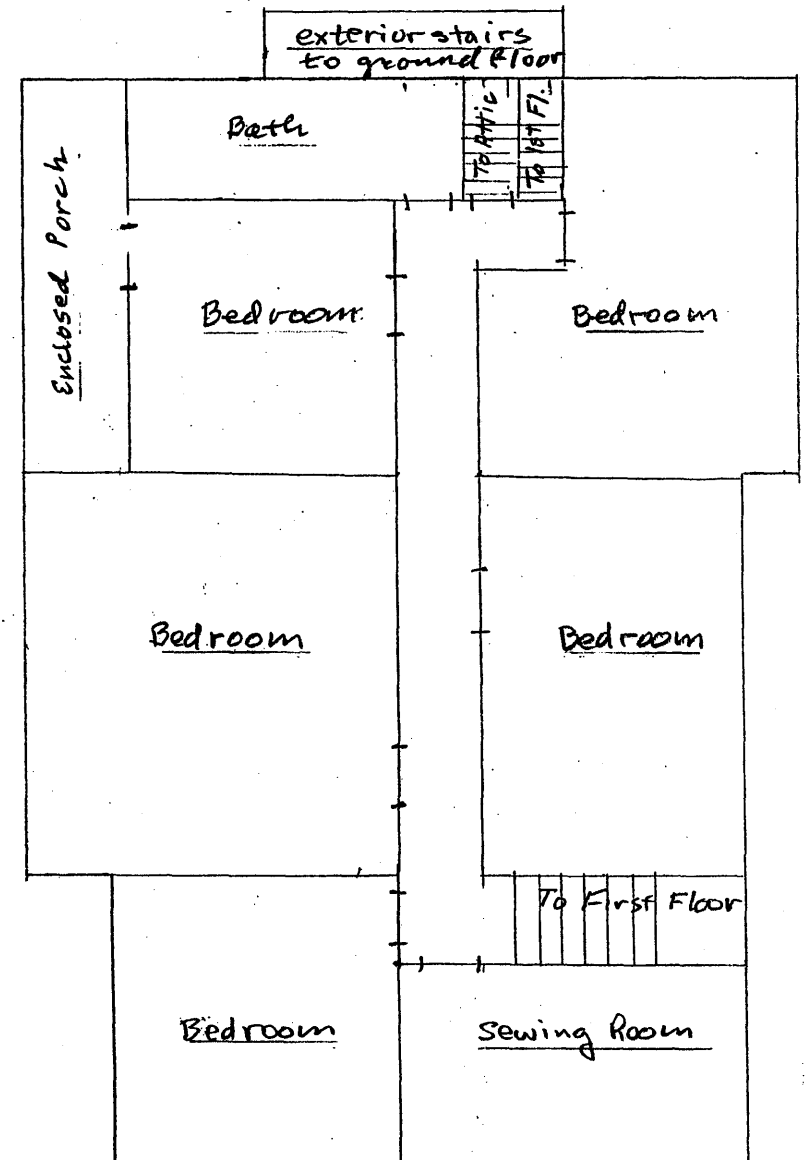
12 of 12. Rosholt, John Gilbert, House, Portage County, WI; Photographer: Douglas Moore; October 2008; Negative: Wisconsin Historical Society; Camera View looking Northwest at garage.

FIGURE 1: John Gilbert Rosholt House
237 North Main Street
Rosholt, Portage County
Wisconsin

First Floor



Second Floor



scale: $\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'$