

Landmark Nomination Form, City of Stoughton, WI

1. Name of Building or Site

Historic: Moline Plow Company: Mandt Wagon Company Branch

Common: Highway Trailer Building

2. Location

Address: 501 E. South Street, Stoughton, WI 53589

Aldermanic District:

County: Dane

3. Classification

Type of Property	Ownership	Historic Use	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private Status <input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied	(if different from present use) Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum <input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: Vacant

4. Current Owner of Property

Name: City of Stoughton – Redevelopment Authority

Street Address: 381 E. Main St., Stoughton, WI 53589

5. Legal Description (in County Courthouse / City Assessor's Office)

Parcel Number: 051108165227

Legal Description: ORIGINAL PLAT BLOCK 35 PRT LOTS 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 BEG NW COR LOT 1 SD BLOCK TH S 297 FT ALG W LN SD LOT TH W 330 FT TO E LN LOT 7 SD BLOCK TH ALG SD E LN N 297 FT TO S LN EAST SOUTH ST TH E 330 FT TO POB

6. Description

Condition:

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site
<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved, Date:

Original Owner: T.G. Mandt Vehicle Company (later, Moline Plow Company)

Original Use: Wagon and implement factory

Architect or Builder: Unknown

Architectural Style: Astylistic utilitarian (industrial loft)

Date of Construction: 1905, 1906, 1910

Indigenous Materials Used: N/A

6a. Describe the present and original physical appearance (attach on separate sheets)

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6a. Describe the present and original physical appearance

Setting

The building is located on the south side of E. South Street, between Sixth and Seventh Streets. E. South Street is a paved city street with concrete curb/gutter and sidewalks on each side. The Moline Plow Company's current setting is an industrial/residential mix with industrial buildings located to the south and single family residences to the east. Historic industrial buildings to the west and across E. South Street to the north have been converted to multi-family residences. A paved and graveled lot is located on the building's south side with an entry drive (now gated) located off of E. South Street along the building's west side. A secondary drive is located off of Eighth Street.

This red brick factory building was constructed in stages between 1905 and 1910. It is an astylistic industrial loft building that is comprised of six distinct masses including a large, 3-story woodworking shop at the northwestern corner of the building; a small, 1-story wood drying addition just east of this; the partial remains of a 1-story power plant east of the drying room; a large, 3-story building mass housing the machine shop, stock room, and paint shop (located south of the woodworking wing); a large blacksmith shop projecting from the east end of the machine shop; and a large 2-story storage warehouse that spans the southern elevation of the blacksmith shop. All building masses are of red brick construction and contain a variety of window and door openings, the majority of which have been infilled with concrete block or covered by plywood and metal panels.

North (front) Elevation

The front façade of the factory faces north and is asymmetrical in plan. The façade (and the building as a whole) is anchored by the two 3-story building masses (woodworking and machine shops) that cover approximately half of the total building footprint. The westernmost end of the front (north) elevation contains four bays at each floor; each bay contains a wide window opening and is separated from the next bay by shallow brick pilasters. A wide, segmentally-arched doorway is located at the first floor. East of this, four more bays each contain three separate window openings at each floor; again, each bay is separated from the next by shallow brick pilasters. East of this, the façade of the 1-story drying room contains a wide, rectangular doorway that has been infilled with concrete block. East of the drying room, the façade of the remaining power plant wing contains two, large round-arched windows and a rectangular garage bay containing a modern, metal garage door (concrete block infill above the garage door suggests that this was historically a round-arched window or door opening). A concrete slab foundation projects from the east elevation of the power plant; the eastern end of this is enclosed by a raised concrete foundation wall.

East Elevation

The blacksmith shop portion of the building projects from the east side of the machine shop. The blacksmithing wing embodies a production shed design with a 2-story, gable-roofed center bay and 1-story, shed-roofed bays projecting from each side. The primary, and most visible, façade of the blacksmith shop faces east and is symmetrical in plan. The central, 2-story portion of the building contains a rectangular garage door opening at its base and four segmentally-arched window openings at its second story. A portion of the wall above the garage door has been replaced with concrete block, suggesting that the original door opening was segmentally-arched prior to the installation of the existing overhead garage door. Both shed-roofed side wings contain two bays, each of which contain three tall, segmentally-arched window openings. Bays are slightly recessed with brick pilasters between each and corbelling above.

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South (rear) Elevation

The south elevation of the building consists of the rear walls of the machine shop and storage wing. The south side of the machine shop contains nearly no fenestration in its western half (historically, another building abutted this portion of the machine shop). The remaining rear wall of the shop contains rows of regularly spaced 2-over-2 windows at the first and second stories and a row of regularly-spaced 2-pane sliding windows at the third story. The south side of the storage wing contains five bays, each of which is separated by shallow brick pilasters and each of which is capped by bands of brick corbelling. Individual window openings in these bays have been boarded over or infilled with concrete block; vehicular delivery doors are located in the western bays; these contain overhead metal doors.

West Elevation

The west elevation consists of the west side of the 3-story woodworking and machine shop building masses. The machine shop, located south of the woodworking shop, has a slightly higher roofline than the woodworking shop. The west side of the woodworking shop consists of five bays, each of which is separated by shallow brick pilasters; bands of corbelling are located at the top of each bay, just below the roofline. The woodworking shop contains identical fenestration patterns at each floor. From north to south, this consists of a single window opening, a wide doorway, two wide window openings, and two single window openings. The west elevation of the machine shop consists of three bays, each of which is separated by shallow brick pilasters; as in the woodworking shop, bands of brick corbelling cap each bay, just below the roofline. All three floors of the machine shop contain identical fenestration patterns; this consists of three individual window openings at each bay and on each level, with the exception of a pedestrian door with overhead transom in the northernmost bay. All window openings have been boarded over with the exception of two windows at the third story where the remains of the original factory windows are visible (metal frames and muntins with a few glass panes remaining).

Interior

The interior of the factory building was not available for viewing at the time of the October 2016 site visit due to safety concerns relating to the building's structural stability. However, a brief view from an open doorway in the south elevation shows original (but deteriorated) wood flooring and heavy timber structural supports. The building appears to retain a relatively open floor plan.

7a. Significance of Nominated Property & Conformance to Designation Criteria

The Moline Plow Company's 1905-1910 factory building at 501 E. South St. retains sufficient integrity to meet requirements for local landmark designation. The building is locally significant for its association with the industrial history of the City of Stoughton in the early twentieth century. Individually, this building retains a fair degree of integrity and represents one of Stoughton's key industries and major employers in the first decades of the twentieth century.

Historic Context

Wagon Manufacturing in Wisconsin

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Beginning around the middle of the nineteenth century, the manufacture of carriages and wagons in Wisconsin played a key role in the state's early industrial development. In addition to flour milling, wagon manufacturing was one of Wisconsin's first small-scale industries to develop within the state's growing agricultural regions. The success of the industry was ensured by the state's ample supply of hardwood as well as the growth of agricultural development in the Midwest. Typical wagon factories grew to include a staff of wheelwrights, carpenters, painters, blacksmiths, and leatherworkers. The years immediately following the Civil War marked a boom in the industry as increased development of agricultural land in the upper Midwest resulted in an increased demand for wagons, carts, and coaches. By 1870, 485 wagon works companies were in operation throughout Wisconsin, employing over two thousand men and producing \$2,596,534 worth of goods. Only the flour milling and lumber industries produced a greater value of products. Nationwide, Wisconsin was one of the top eight states for wagon production. Kenosha and Racine Counties were the most productive areas in the state, producing 33% of the state's total wagon manufacturing output. In the south-central part of the state, Dane County was a substantial producer with 21 shops totaling over \$50,000 annual production value by 1870.¹

By 1880, as a result of the financial depression that began in 1873, the boom period of wagon manufacture had ended. Many smaller wagon works operations closed or were consolidated into larger firms during the later 1870s and 1880s. During this time, and through the last years of the nineteenth century, plants expanded to include machine shops, assembly plants, pattern shops, parts storage areas, paint shops, and any number of other departments located in complexes of mostly brick buildings. Most wagon factory buildings were between one and three stories tall with direct access to rail lines for incoming materials shipments and outgoing product shipment. When wagon distributors began to market products, companies also began offering showrooms with distribution warehouses. By 1920, Stoughton's wagon works factories had grown to become some of the state's more sizable wagon works operations, although these were dwarfed by the Bain Wagon Works in Kenosha.

The demise of the wagon and carriage industry began in the early 1900s with the introduction of the automobile. Initially, many wagon works companies attempted to develop separate automobile departments within their factories, while continuing to specialize in wagons and carriages. However, by the 1910s, as the automobile (as well as the gasoline tractor) began to gain nationwide acceptance, the demand for carriages and farm wagons decreased rapidly with many plants closing their doors in the years following World War I.²

Targe Mandt and the Stoughton Wagon Company

Targe G. Mandt immigrated to the United States from Norway in 1848 as a small child. After traveling from New York to Milwaukee, the Mandt family arrived in the Town of Pleasant Springs, about six miles northeast of the newly platted village of Stoughton. Targe Mandt learned carpentry and metal work from his father and applied these skills to building his first wagon, utilizing the family forge and workshop. As a teenager during the Civil War, Mandt gained employment at a Missouri wagon factory. His skill and knowledge of the trade (and doubtless the wartime shortage of able men), soon led him to be promoted to shop foreman. After the war, Mandt returned to Stoughton with the goal of establishing his own wagon factory there.³

¹ Barbara Wyatt, ed., "Carriage and Wagon Works" in *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*, Vol. 2 (Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), 3-17.

² Wyatt, "Carriage and Wagon Works" in CRMP, 3-1 – 3-17.

³ Ferd Homme, *Oak Opening: The Story of Stoughton* (Stoughton, WI: Stoughton Centennial History Committee, 1947), 35-41.

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To this end, he purchased a plot of land along the Yahara River between Water Street and Fourth Street (located west of the subject site) and relocated an old warehouse to the site to house the wagon works. The Mandt Wagon Company produced its first wagons in 1865. By the 1870s, the quality and affordability of the Mandt wagon had given the company an excellent reputation throughout the Midwest with trade extending into Iowa, Minnesota, and the Dakotas. By 1883, the company employed 225 men and produced \$350,000 worth of wagons annually. However, in January of 1883, a fire spread through the factory which, at that time, consisted of a complex of primarily wood-frame buildings. Despite the best efforts of local bucket brigades, the Mandt Wagon Company buildings were destroyed. After the fire, the company was reorganized and incorporated as the T.G. Mandt Manufacturing Company, Ltd. and the factory buildings were rebuilt in brick. In 1889, for unknown reasons, Mandt severed his relations with the new corporation and the firm's name was changed to the Stoughton Wagon Company. After a brief period during which Mandt contracted to have his patented wagons made by out-of-state factories, he turned his attention to the establishment of a new wagon works in Stoughton.⁴

Property History

In 1896, Mandt returned to the wagon making trade, establishing a new factory immediately east of his previous site. With the two factory complexes in town, Stoughton residents commonly referred to Mandt's latest company as "the new shops" to differentiate them from the Stoughton Wagon Company, or "the old shops."⁵ Despite their competing interests, both factories prospered. The new factory was located on South Street and would grow to encompass all but a small portion of the area between 5th and 7th Streets with property on both sides of the Yahara River. The first buildings constructed on the site included a single structure housing a woodworking shop, blacksmith shop, coal shed, and machine shop, a front office with a rear woodworking and painting shop, and separate structures for lumber drying and storage (none of these nineteenth-century buildings are extant today).⁶

Following Mandt's death on February 28, 1902, the directors of the T. G. Mandt Vehicle Company sold their holdings, as well as Mandt's original patents, to the Moline Plow Company. As a nationwide player in the wagon and farm implement industry at the time it purchased the Mandt Company, Moline Plow had 13 branch offices in 12 states with another in Canada. Beginning in 1902, the company's newly acquired factory in Stoughton continued its production under the name Moline Plow Company: Mandt Wagon Company Branch with an annual output of between 4,000 and 5,000 wagons. By 1904, the company had greatly expanded its operations with the construction of a number of new buildings on the site. In 1905 and 1906, a new main factory building was constructed along South Street to replace the 1896 factory building; this included spaces for woodworking, dry kilns, a machine shop, and a power plant.⁷ In 1910, the company expanded the factory building to include a new blacksmith shop in back of, and parallel to, the power house.⁸ Within two years after the completion of the blacksmith shop, a large storage wing was constructed along the shop's southern elevation. At about the same time, the neighboring G.W. Currier Tobacco Warehouse was acquired by the company to house its dry kilns and

⁴ Homme, Oak Opening, 35-41.

⁵ Ibid, 40.

⁶ Sanborn Map Company, City of Stoughton: 1884-1949. Digital collection, Golda Meir Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (Milwaukee, WI).

⁷ Sanborn Map Company, City of Stoughton: 1884-1949. Digital collection, Golda Meir Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (Milwaukee, WI).

⁸ "Fine New Shop at Mandt Wagon Plant," *Stoughton Courier*, May 6, 1910.

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excess lumber.⁹ By this time, the plant covered 32 acres (with sprawling lumber yards on the south side of the river) and boasted an output that had multiplied seven-fold since the turn of the century with the manufacture of bobsleds, manure spreaders, and hay tools, in addition to the patented T.G. Mandt Wagon.¹⁰ Between 1912 and 1926, the northwest corner of the main factory building was rebuilt to a ninety degree angle (replacing the previous “cutaway” corner that had been built to accommodate a rail line that was subsequently rerouted).

Reports during World War I indicated that the Moline Plow Company’s lumber yards (covering the present-day area of Mandt Park) held over one million dollars of lumber.¹¹ To meet increasing demands, additional buildings and storage sheds were constructed through about 1920 so that the site contained almost no sizable open spaces other than the narrow corridors between buildings through which passed a number of railroad spur lines to facilitate the movement of raw materials and finished products throughout the complex (see Figure 2). During this time, there were about 1,000 men employed in the wagon industry in Stoughton, both at the Stoughton Wagon Works and the Moline Plow Company. The vast majority of these were Norwegian immigrants, many of whom had been attracted to Stoughton because of the promise of employment in its wagon factories.¹²

By the early 1920s, the shrinking market for farm wagons led the Moline Plow Company to stop production and close its Stoughton branch in 1921. In March of 1925, after the company indicated that it might raze the factory buildings, the City of Stoughton purchased the plant and machinery for a total of \$100,000 in order to keep the company’s former laborers employed.¹³

Although the main factory building was briefly occupied by the Mid-West School Furniture Company, this operation was short-lived, and in February of 1931, the city leased a large part of the property to the Highway Trailer Company which, at that time, employed about 200 men during peak production (Highway Trailer would later purchase its portion of the site in 1946).¹⁴ The remaining buildings on the site were leased to the Garden City Foundry, the Stoughton Cab and Body Company, and the Stoughton Manufacturing Company.¹⁵ Beginning in the 1930s, ancillary buildings and structures on the site were taken down, likely to sell or otherwise make use of the building materials; this was almost certainly accelerated during World War II when unused metal elements would have been collected as part of war-time scrap drives.¹⁶

Architectural Context

Eight other industrial buildings have been recorded in the Wisconsin Historic Preservation Database (WHPD) in the City of Stoughton. Of these, the Moline Plow Company is the only clear representative of an industrial loft

⁹ Sanborn Map Company, City of Stoughton: 1884-1949. Digital collection, Golda Meir Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (Milwaukee, WI).

¹⁰ “Mandt Wagon Works” file at Kvamme Local History Collection, Stoughton Public Library, Stoughton, WI (accessed October 8, 2016).

¹¹ Homme, Oak Opening, 35-41.

¹² “Mandt Wagon Works” file at Kvamme Local History Collection, Stoughton Public Library, Stoughton, WI (accessed October 8, 2016).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ “History Extends – From Making Mandt Wagons to Building Highway Trailers,” *Stoughton Courier*, November 24, 1971.

¹⁵ Federal Writers’ Project, *WPA Guide to Wisconsin* (St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2006), np.

¹⁶ Wisconsin Historic Aerial Image Finder, Dane County 1937, <http://maps.sco.wisc.edu/WHAIFinder/> (accessed October 16, 2016).

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property type. Outside of the Moline Plow Company, only one other property associated with Stoughton's historic wagon-making industry remains in the city today. This astylistic brick building is located at 501 S. Water Street and is currently occupied by Uniroyal Global Engineered Products, LLC. In comparison with the Moline Plow Company factory building at 501 E. South Street, this building is a single-story production shed that has been heavily altered through a series of large additions that have more than tripled the size of the original building. For this reason, the building retains a fairly low degree of historic integrity and does not compare favorably with the Moline Plow Company factory building.

Summary

At its peak in the early 1910s, the Moline Plow Company was a densely-built site containing over fifteen individual buildings in addition to a number of small outbuildings and storage yards. As of 2017, the site retains only three buildings historically associated with the wagon-making industry. Two of the three remaining historic buildings (a foundry building at 433 E. South Street and a warehouse at 425 E. South Street), retain low degrees of historic integrity due to major alterations including insensitive new siding, the loss of original window openings, the addition of new windows, and the construction of modern additions. Consequently, the Moline Plow Company's main factory building at 501 E. South Street is the best remaining representative of the company's Stoughton wagon-works plant.

This building retains its original site, wall material, and distinct spatial organization. In addition, the building's original fenestration is clear despite the loss of much of the original window glazing, and it is clearly recognizable as an element of Stoughton's early twentieth-century industrial landscape and is a good local representative of an industrial loft property type. Because the Moline Plow Company was a key element of one of the city's biggest industries in the early twentieth century (a business rivaled only by Stoughton's thriving tobacco industry), and because it was one of Stoughton's major employers during the first decades of the twentieth century, playing an important role in the city's growth and development, the building meets the eligibility requirements for local landmark designation.

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7. Significance

Area(s) of Significance – check all that apply and justify in section 7a below

☒ Architecture

☐ Cultural or Social History

☒ Associative Significance

7a. Significance of Nominated Property & Conformance to Designation Criteria (attach on separate sheets)

8. Major Bibliographical References

City and State Archives:

“Mandt Wagon Works” file at Kvamme Local History Collection, Stoughton Public Library, Stoughton, WI.
Accessed October 8, 2016.

Periodicals, pamphlets, and websites:

Fine New Shop at Mandt Wagon Plant,” *Stoughton Courier*, May 6, 1910.

History Extends – From Making Mandt Wagons to Building Highway Trailers,” *Stoughton Courier*, November 24, 1971.

Books:

Homme, Ferd. *Oak Opening: The Story of Stoughton*. Stoughton, WI: Stoughton Centennial History Committee, 1947.

Ruff, Allen. *Forward! A History of Dane: The Capital County*. Cambridge, WI: Woodhenge Press, 2000.

Other:

Sanborn Map Company. City of Stoughton: 1884-1949. Digital collection, Golda Meir Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (Milwaukee, WI).

Wisconsin Historic Aerial Image Finder, Dane County 1937, <http://maps.sco.wisc.edu/WHAIFinder/>. Accessed October 16, 2016.

Wyatt, Barbara, ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986.

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9. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Gail Klein

Organization:

Date: July 28, 2017

Street & Number: 937 Brookside Cir

Phone: 541-285-0352

City, State, Zip: Stoughton, WI 53589

Email: gail.rae.klein@gmail.com

10. Commission Actions

Hearing Approved:

Hearing Date Set:

Designated a Landmark (Date):

Landmark Number:

Certified By:

Commission Chairman Name

Date

Signature:

Moline Plow Company:
Mandt Wagon Company Branch

Site Plan

South Street

5th Street

6th Street

7th Street

Fourth Street

Dry kilns/storage
c.1880
(425 E. South St.)

Paved drive

Factory
(501 E. South St.)

Concrete
foundation for
nonextant
smokestacks

Grass

Paved drive

Grass

Pavement

Pole barn
c.1997

Pole barn
c.1980

Storage shed
c.1980

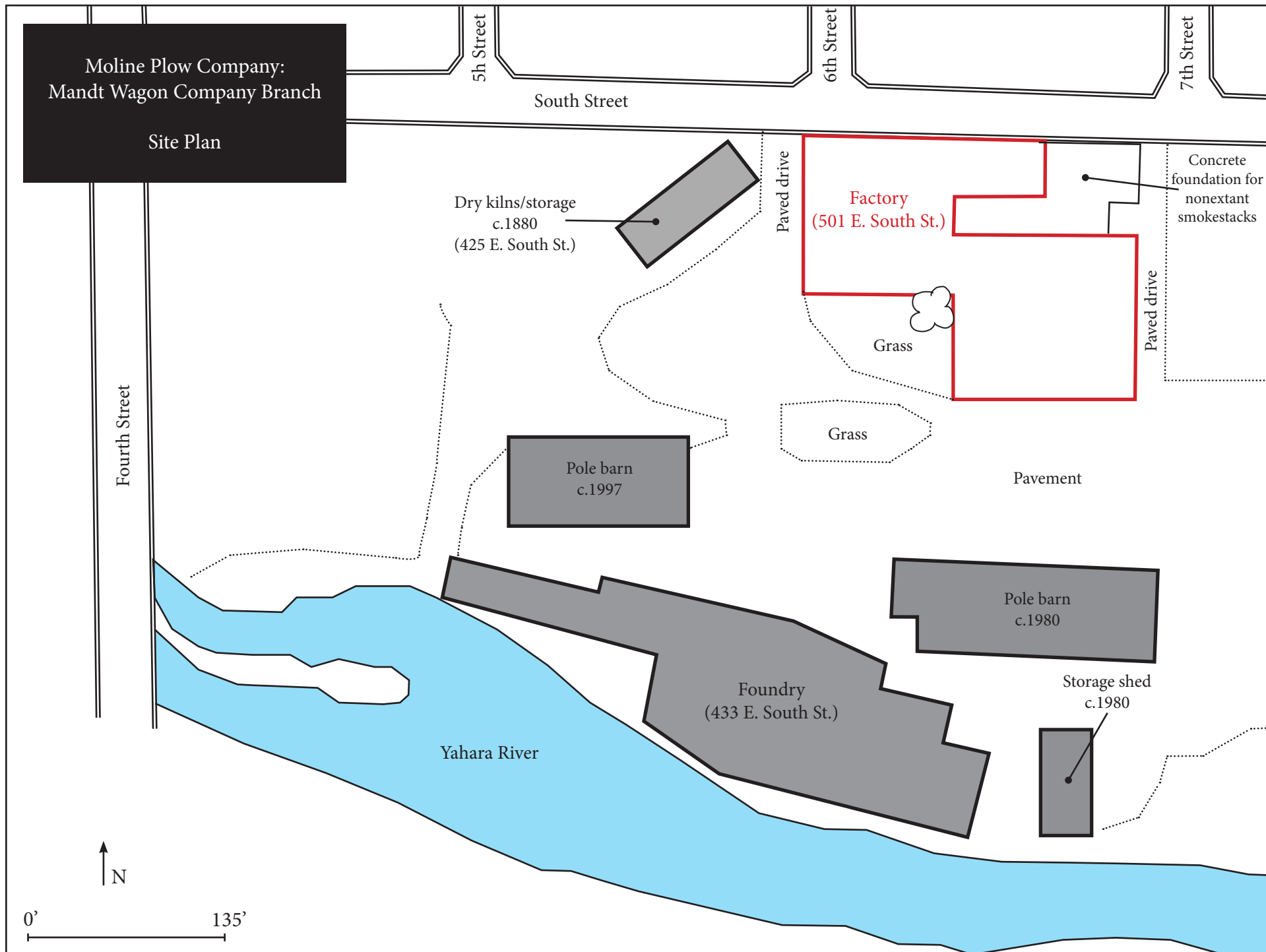
Foundry
(433 E. South St.)

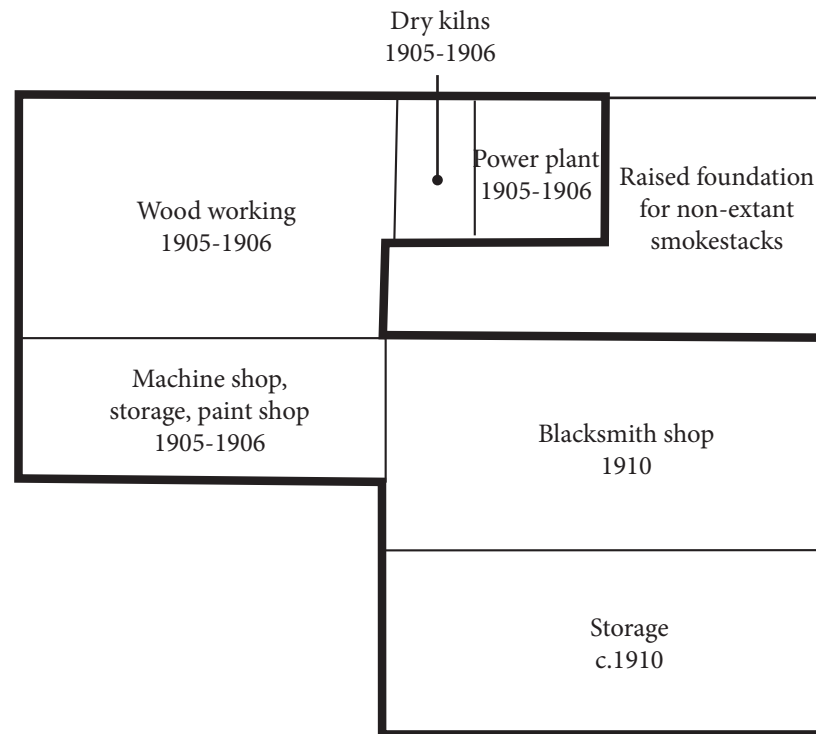
Yahara River

N

0'

135'





Moline Plow Company:
Mandt Wagon Company Branch

Factory Building Plan

Moline Plow Company: Mandt Wagon Company Branch
501 E. South St.
City of Stoughton
Dane County, WI

Photographed by Gail Klein
October 18 and November 6, 2016

Photo 1 of 10
Factory, north and west elevations, looking southeast

Photo 2 of 10
Factory, north elevavtion, looking southeast

Photo 3 of 10
Factory, north and east elevations, looking southwest

Photo 4 of 10
Factory, north and east elevations, looking southwest

Photo 5 of 10
Factory, east and north elevations of power plant foundation, looking southwest

Photo 6 of 10
Factory, east elevation of power plant foundation and blacksmith shop, looking southwest

Photo 7 of 10
Factory, east elevation of blacksmith shop, looking southwest

Photo 8 of 10
Factory, south and east elevations of blacksmith shop and storage room, looking northwest

Photo 9 of 10
Factory, west and south elevations, looking northeast

Photo 10 of 10
Factory interior, first floor of woodshop space



Photo 1 of 10



Photo 2 of 10



Photo 3 of 10



Photo 4 of 10



Photo 5 of 10



Photo 6 of 10



Photo 7 of 10



Photo 8 of 10



Photo 9 of 10



Photo 10 of 10