



The First Settlement
Neighborhood:
A Walking Tour

A Madison Heritage Publication



The staff pose for a photo, ca. 1870, at the American House, 323 E. Main Street at S. Hancock. The proprietor, Andrew Flom, welcomes a guest. The building was replaced by the Flom Apartments in 1925. WHi(X3)25336

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Cover Photo: Looking east from the Capitol at the commercial buildings on S. Pinckney St. and the First Settlement neighborhood beyond, ca. 1885. WHi(X3)18578

Introduction

The east side of Madison's capitol hill boasts a number of historic buildings associated with Madison's industrious pioneer immigrants. At the head of King Street a group of two- and three-story brick and stone buildings represents the core of Madison's early business district. Nearby, a row of commercial buildings, hotels and a depot that served the vital railroad trade are found along East Wilson Street. And just to the east lies a five block neighborhood of 19th and early 20th century residences and flats—home for generations of German, Norwegian and Irish immigrants and their descendants.

These buildings have survived the onslaught of time and change and portray an important part of Madison's early historical development.



American Express wagons await the arrival of a train at the Chicago & Northwestern Depot in 1913. WHi(M491)189

Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, Wilson Street

The southeastern bluff of Capitol Hill overlooking Lake Monona was once a prestigious address for many of Madison's most prominent residents. Monona Avenue (now Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard) and West Wilson Street above the lake were the sites of gracious brick, stone and frame mansions. The neighborhood retained its basic character until the construction of the State Office Building in 1929 and the City-County Building in 1956. Today only remnants of this once elegant neighborhood remind us of its residential past.

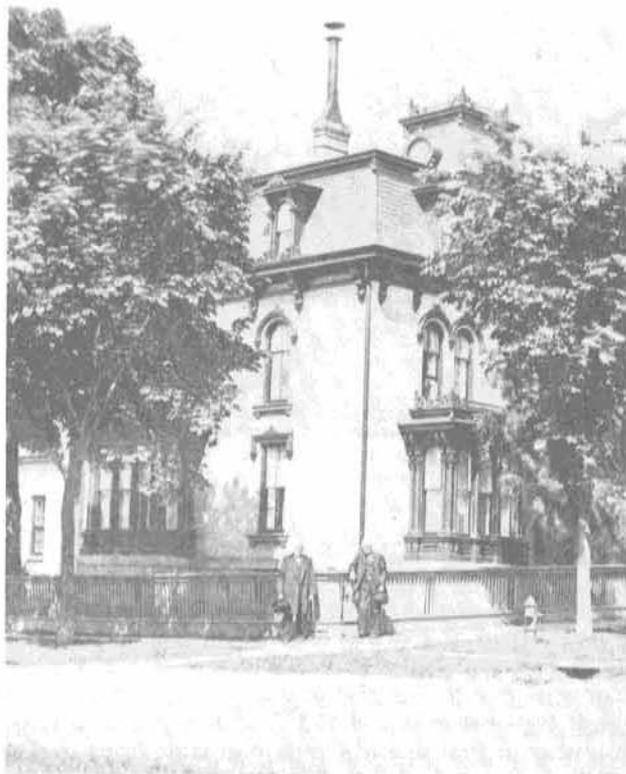
Olin Terrace

Wilson Street at Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard ca. 1935

Olin Terrace was developed in the 1930s featuring a bronze fountain, limestone balustrade-lined walk, a breathtaking view of Lake Monona and an axial view of the Capitol. The terrace and the memorial fountain were built by the estate of John M. Olin, who was a founder and leader of the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association. The association, by private subscription, purchased and developed the



The Fairchild residence ca. 1870. Sarah and Jairus Fairchild, a general store owner who served as Madison's first mayor, built this red brick mansion on the lakeside corner of W. Wilson St. and Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. The house was later occupied by the Fairchilds' son, three-term Wisconsin Governor Lucius Fairchild. Lucius lost an arm in the Battle of Gettysburg. He and his wife Francis were early leaders in the women's suffrage movement in Madison. In 1925 their home was leveled for construction of the State Office Building. WHi(X3)17064



Mills residence in 1887. This photo commemorated a fifty-year friendship between pioneers Darwin Clark and Simeon Mills, who arrived to settle in Madison on the same day. Mills' mansion was the first residence in Madison built in the French Second Empire style. Mills allegedly built the city house after firing of the long buggy trips from his country house east of Madison (now 2709 Sommers Avenue). This house, demolished in the 1930s for a gas station, stood on the site of the present City-County Building. WHi(X3)29581

forerunners of Madison's present parks system including Brittingham, Tenney, Hoyt, and Vilas Parks. Viewed from the terrace are the neo-classical Madison Municipal Building (the old U.S. Post Office and Courthouse), designed by James Wetmore and built in 1928-1929; the Art Deco State Office Building, constructed at 1 W. Wilson in three stages (1929-1931, 1937 and 1959); the City-County Building (1956-1957); and the Georgian Revival style Madison Club, 5 E. Wilson, built in 1916-1918 and designed by noted local architect Frank Riley.



Bellevue Apartments

29 E. Wilson Street

1913-1914

The premier apartment building of its day, the elegant Bellevue featured a high level of service and convenience for its discriminating residents. It was built by Charles E. Marks, a developer of a good number of Prairie and Craftsman style houses. The Bellevue was designated a Madison Landmark in 1986 and listed on the National Register in 1987.

Early Madison's Commercial District

The 19th and early 20th century commercial buildings in the vicinity of Main, King and Pinckney Streets are historical and architectural remnants of the heart of Madison's early business district. The two- and three-story sandstone and brick buildings served as the commercial hub for Dane County prior to the development of intercity rail trade and the subsequent growth of surrounding agriculturally-oriented communities.

In 1836 Michigan territorial judge James Duane Doty purchased and platted the land that was to become Madison. In November of that year Doty was successful in lobbying the territorial legislature to select the site as its new seat of government, overcoming fierce competition from over 20 other real and paper towns.



Upper King Street in 1851. This drawing depicts the fledgling commercial district on the stage coach approach to the Capitol. The first session of the territorial Supreme Court was held in the sitting room of the veranda-fronted Madison Hotel, one of the first hotels in Madison when it opened in 1838. WHi(X3)30106

The first building in Madison, a three-room log house erected in April, 1837 on the present site of the State Education Building, was built for Eben and Rosaline Peck to house, feed and entertain construction crews arriving to build the new territorial capitol building. Though it barely kept out the wind and rain, the Pecks' "Madison House" was temporary home for dozens of men who arrived on foot or horseback from Milwaukee, Chicago and points east. In spite of its six-foot headroom, the hotel was often the scene of music making and square dancing under the supervision of Mrs. Peck. The building eventually surrendered to the elements and was torn down in 1858.



Lower King Street ca. 1887. A July 4th parade streams toward the Capitol Square from the Schlinggen Marble Works at Butler Street. WHi(X3)36383



William Oppel's Fancy Grocery, 116 E. Main, in 1896. Oppel, a German immigrant, offered such items as quail (5 cents apiece), partridge and prairie chickens (10 to 15 cents). The stone building was razed in 1970 for a parking lot. WHi(X3)29431

A cluster of buildings arose in the spring of 1837 on the east side of capitol hill. Among them was Simeon Mills' log store, saloon, and post office at the corner of Main and Webster. The success of Mills' fledgling enterprises gave him the financial capability in later years to build several downtown structures, some of which still stand on King Street. By the time the legislature convened here in the fall of 1838, there were about 24 log and frame buildings on the "stump-strewn hillside centered along King Street," then the gateway for arrivals from Milwaukee and Chicago. (David Mollenhoff, *Madison: A History of the Formative Years*, 1982, p. 33).

In 1846, Madison acquired village status for its 625 residents, many of whose homes and businesses were built near King Street, still the only defined street. The period from 1846 to 1856, when Madison achieved city status, was one of considerable growth. The population burgeoned from the influx of thousands of Yankees, Germans and Irish. Commercial buildings were erected on Main and Pinkney Streets and residences in the immediate surrounding areas. Larger two- and three-story brick and stone stores, halls, hotels, factories, offices and residences sprang up, often replacing earlier rustic pioneer structures. One observer wrote of the area in 1857 that the downtown streets were "so thronged with teams from the country that it was difficult to pass through them" (*Wisconsin State Journal*, April 17, 1857).

During the following decades and continuing through the 1920s commercial growth and rebuilding spread to the entire Capitol Square and surrounding blocks as well as along most of State Street to the university. The monumental Tenney Building is an example of the booming growth experienced in the 1920s. In the economic slow down of the Depression and World War II, however, maintenance of many older downtown buildings began to be deferred. In the post-war recovery years, new retail centers in suburban areas garnered an increasing share of the market and downtown Madison began to lose a significant portion of its retail clientele. At the same time, auto usage increased and with it the demand for parking convenient to the expanding government, banking and law businesses around the Capitol. The results dramatically altered the face of the downtown—hundreds of houses and small commercial buildings, even entire blocks, were demolished for parking lots and large, new office structures. But the old buildings on the Main-King corner of the square survived. In recent years, the growing number of permanent residents in the vicinity, small businesses, new shops and restaurants have created a renewed vitality for this historic remnant of earlier days. The block bounded by Main, King and Webster Streets was listed on the National Register as the Simeon Mills historic district in 1987.



200 block E. Main Street ca. 1900. A Fourth of July parade files past the stores on the south side of Main Street between Butler (in the distance) and Webster. These buildings were demolished in the late 1960s and early 1970s in advance of the construction of the State Natural Resources Building. WHi(X3)44142



Burrow's Block in 1964. Mack Coll.

Burrows Block

120-128 S. Pinckney Street

1856

The classically proportioned building was erected in 1856 by Peter Van Bergen, who had served as the Village of Madison president. The building housed the post office, offices and stores. In 1858, a fourth floor was added and the two top floors were developed as an auditorium. In 1871, the hall was remodeled by a Brooklyn theater man, R. M. Hooley, and until 1885 the opera house was Madison's major theater. This is the only 19th century building remaining in Madison connected with a pre-Civil War Black family—George and Carrie Williams, a barber and a hairdresser who operated their tonsorial parlor and "Bazaar of Fashion" here for many years. The top two floors, including the opera house, were removed in 1885.

Albee's Block

118 S. Pinckney Street

1852

Originally a red brick structure, the building first housed G. C. Albee's harness, saddle and trunk store. An important early tenant was the *Wisconsin Patriot*, a Democratic newspaper which had the largest circulation in Madison. Because it was pro-slavery, the paper faced hard times during the Civil War and folded. The building was remodeled ca. 1920 with an elegant neo-classical front.



Tenney Building

110 E. Main Street

1929

Designed by the Madison firm of Law, Law and Potter, the Indiana limestone Art Deco building features ornamental stone carving, terra cotta panels and an ornate marble and brass lobby. The first building on this site was a cheap wooden structure housing the "Worser," a notorious gambling club frequented by state legislators. The second was the United States Hotel and the third was a three-story office block also known as the Tenney Building.

Suhr's German-American Bank

102 King Street

1887

John Suhr founded the bank and erected the sandstone building to serve primarily German immi-



Suhr's German-American Bank and the Mills Block ca. 1890-1900. WHi(X3)44073

grants. The architect for the building, Col. John Nader, was also the city surveyor. To make the design compatible with its surroundings, Nader copied the proportion and detailing of the much older Mills block next door on King Street. During the previous year, Suhr had employed Nader in the design of his Second Empire style mansion at 121 Langdon Street (extant).



100 block E. Main, ca. 1895. WHi(X3)44074

Schoen Block

117 E. Main Street

1875

This handsome sandstone building was designed by local architect, David R. Jones, and built for Philip Schoen's Capitol Bakery. During the 1880s, the city's longest lived German newspaper, the *Staats-Zeitung*, maintained its offices here. Jones designed over 61 buildings in Madison and vicinity between 1872 and 1885. Among the few remaining are Music Hall on Bascom Hill, the Gothic polychrome brick Smith and Lamb building, 105 W. Main (1876), and Washburn Observatory (1878) on Observatory Hill.

Thompson Block

119 E. Main Street

1868

Norwegian immigrant Ole Thompson operated the successful Thompson Hotel (later the Simon House) nearby on South Butler Street for several years before erecting his cream brick grocery store in 1868. The store was operated by Louis Nelson and his family from about 1874 until the 1930s, one of the finest grocery stores in the city. The uniquely detailed corbelled brickwork and pilasters of the upper floors were complemented in 1984 by the restoration of the store front.

Argus-Heilmann Building

121-123 E. Main Street

ca. 1847

A portion of this building is very likely the oldest commercial building remaining in Madison. It was built by E. G. Dean ca. 1847 for the *Argus*, a pioneer weekly newspaper founded by Simeon Mills and others in 1844. The paper merged with a competitor, the *Wisconsin Democrat*, in 1852 becoming Madison's first daily. The building was also home to two fraternal lodges — the Odd Fellows and the Masons. In 1873, George Heilmann opened the Madison Steam Bakery here, along with a saloon, a restaurant and a candy store. The operation remained in this location for over 50 years. The Heilmanns remodeled the red brick building in 1891-1892 in the Romanesque Revival style.

Mills Block

106-116 King Street

1852 and 1855

The first of the stone business blocks erected on King Street was built at 106-108 King Street by Simeon Mills and John Catlin in 1852. The adjoining buildings on King were erected by Mills in 1855. Originally three-story buildings, they housed a number of important Madison businesses including the fledgling *Capital Times* in the basement of 108 from 1917 to 1927. The Madison Saddlery Company, a wholesale manufacturer of harnesses and saddlery hardware, was located at 116 King from 1885 to 1907, at which time it moved to the building built for the company at 313-317 East Wilson Street (extant). In 1867, Michael Cantwell, an Irish immigrant, started a job



The Cantwell Printing Company, 114 King Street.
WHi(X3)31117

printing business on the upper floors of 114 King. For many years Cantwell Printing was the publisher of the internationally famous farmers' periodical, the *American Thresherman*. In 1906, the firm moved to a new building erected for it nearby at 121 S. Pinckney (extant).

King Street Arcade

107-113 King Street 1927

Perhaps Madison's first interior arcade, two levels of shops and offices open onto a central sky-lit atrium which runs between Pinckney and King Streets. The building next door at 101-105 King Street was the Art Deco style Capital City Bank, complete with a gold dome. It unfortunately was remodeled ca. 1970.

Majestic Theater

115-117 King Street 1906

The classically detailed theater, designed by leading Madison architects Claude and Starck, was built by Otto and Edward Biederstaedt as a vaudeville house. In 1912, the theater was converted to a movie house, and a third story later added. An original neo-classical balustrade was removed and the Deco marquee and facade were added later. The Majestic is the oldest remaining theater building in Madison.



Upper King Street ca. 1935. The old flat-iron Christian Dick Block dominates the corner at Doty while the Art Deco Capital City Bank rises above Pinckney at the other end. WHI(X3)36028

Dick Block

121-125 King Street

1889

The turreted Romanesque Revival building was erected by Christian Dick for his wholesale liquor business, a Schlitz saloon, and Kehl's Dance Academy. The design is attributed to the Madison architectural firm of Conover and Porter, who also designed the Old Red Gym.

Fess Hotel

119-123 E. Doty Street ca. 1883 and 1901

In the late 1850s George and Anna Fess opened a hotel and livery on Doty Street catering to legislators, salesmen and weekly boarders. The business was operated by their descendants as late as 1974. The cream brick Italianate half of the existing building was constructed in the 1880s to match the origi-



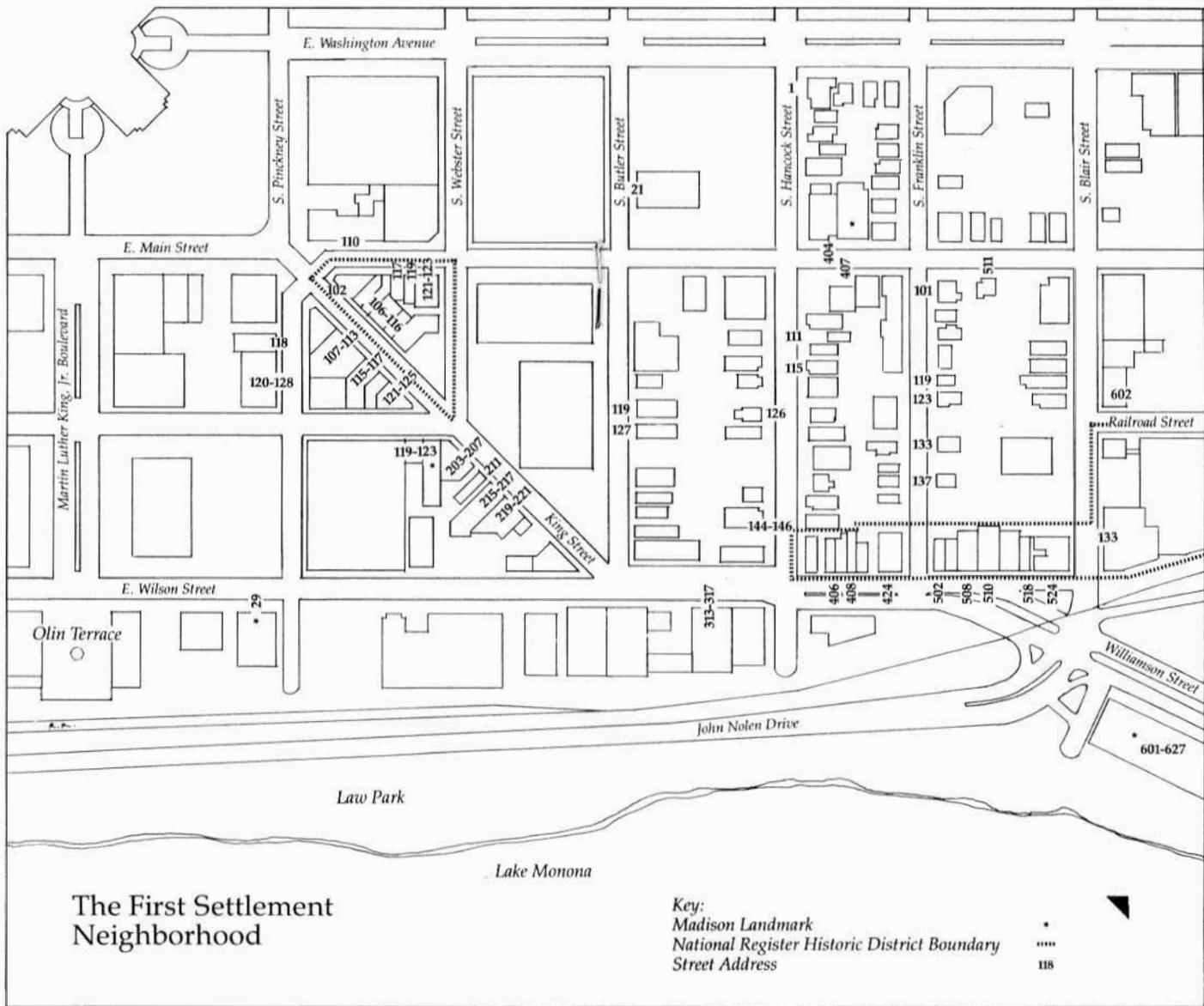
nal buildings adjoining it toward Pinckney (demolished). The pink St. Louis pressed brick half, originally a separate store front built in the 1850s, was remodeled to its present appearance by architects Gordon and Paunack in 1901.

Findlay Building

203-207 King Street

1882

The Findlay Grocery was founded in 1856 by Scottish immigrant R. K. Findlay. It was first located in the Mills Block at 108 King Street. Following the Panic of 1873, the business went under but was revived by Findlay's brother Alexander in 1878 at 121 E. Doty. In 1882 the enterprise was moved into this building, erected for it at 203 King Street. The firm



**The First Settlement
Neighborhood**

Key:
 Madison Landmark *
 National Register Historic District Boundary
 Street Address 118



also owned a warehouse and bakery that produced over 4,000 loaves of bread a day, which were shipped by wagon and train throughout the county.

Moessner Building

211 King Street

1869

Frederick and Catherine Moessner's confectionery and bakery was operated in the small red brick Italianate building from 1869 until 1893. Catherine Moessner advocated establishing Madison's first kindergarten, an idea imported from her native Germany. It opened in Turner Hall in 1879 and she was its first teacher. Later, the Moessner building housed a Chinese laundry for over 50 years.

Frautschi Buildings

215-217 King Street

1856

219-221 King Street

1913

Originally built in 1856 for the Billings and Carman plow factory, the Breckheimer Brewery occupied the building at 215-217 King Street between 1865 and Prohibition. Mathias Breckheimer added a power house, ice houses and bottling plant to the property. Of these, the main building, which also housed the Breckheimers' residence, saloon and malthouse, remain.

Christian Frautschi came to Madison from Switzerland in 1869 and started a cabinetmaking and undertaking business on South Webster Street which later occupied a large store front at 204 King Street. In 1913, after Christian's death, the company, then managed by his son Arthur, bought part of the old Breckheimer brewery and built the new furniture store (extant), and a funeral parlor and apartments at 134 E. Wilson Street (demolished 1982). The 1913 furniture store and funeral parlor were designed by Ferdinand Kronenberg. The old Breckheimer Brewery building, malt house and saloon were remodeled in 1928-1929 for the store addition, and a new funeral parlor and apartment building was constructed in 1929 at 126 East Wilson (extant). The store operated here until 1982.

Madison Saddlery Company

313-317 E. Wilson Street

1907

The Madison Saddlery Company was founded in 1875 by Charles Hoebel, an immigrant from the province of Hanover, Germany. He developed an extensive regional wholesale harness and leather



business with his sons in a location at 116 King Street. They occupied that building from 1885 until they built the impressive East Wilson Street building, which afforded direct loading to both wagons and trains.

East Wilson Street Railroad Commercial District

The development of rail service and subsequent development of commercial activity in "East Madison" spanned a fifty year period. The first of the



Milwaukee Road East Madison Depot ca. 1895. Passengers waiting for the Milwaukee bound train. The older Wilson Street buildings pale in comparison to the high-style Victorian depot. The building was demolished by the railroad in 1953. WHI(X3)44141

east side lines was that of the Chicago and North Western Railway Company (C&NW). Its crossing of Lake Monona, terminating at Blair Street, was completed in 1864. A call then came forth from the business community to construct a union station at Blair Street to serve both the C&NW and the Milwaukee Road because the site was more accessible to the Capitol Square than the Milwaukee Road's West Madison depot on West Washington Avenue. However in 1869, the Milwaukee Road built its own line and depot south of Wilson between Franklin and Blair. The C&NW had to abandon the union station idea and in 1871 built a passenger and freight depot east of Blair Street. Between 1869 and 1871 three new lines were built with connections to the east depots: two lines of the Milwaukee Road to Sun Prairie and Portage and a C&NW line to Baraboo and beyond to the Mississippi. In 1873, Madison was designated a stop on the C&NW's main line between Chicago and Minneapolis.

In 1885, the C&NW replaced its small passenger depot with a larger depot complete with a hotel and dining room. In response, the following year the Milwaukee Road built a Victorian Gothic passenger depot.

During these years, several buildings were erected on the 500 block of East Wilson, some of which remain: Herman Kleuter's red brick Italianate grocery, feed store and residence at 508 (built in 1871), William Schumacher's Germania House hotel, at 510 (1872, altered), August Ramthun's East Madison House hotel and saloon, at 524 (1873) and George Schlotthauer's Lake City House hotel and saloon at 502 (1875). In 1886 J. B. Drives, the new owner of the East Madison House, built the store building at 518 E. Wilson. The first tenant, August Conradi, a druggist, soon erected his own building at 408 E. Wilson in 1889. The drugstore remained there for almost 100 years.

The 1890s saw the tremendous expansion and reconstruction of the East Madison House (in 1891 and 1897) at 524 E. Wilson by Charles Elver, and construction of Charles Smith's double store at 406 E. Wilson (1897) which housed the Sauthoff Bros. tailor shop and a restaurant. In 1910 the C&NW built the \$200,000 neo-classical limestone-faced passenger depot at 133 S. Blair, designed by the firm of Frost and Granger. The railroad's original multi-million dollar building proposal had to be scaled down to avoid the controversial closing of Blount Street. During the drawn-out planning of the depot, C&NW



Wilson Hotel, formerly the East Madison House and the Elver House

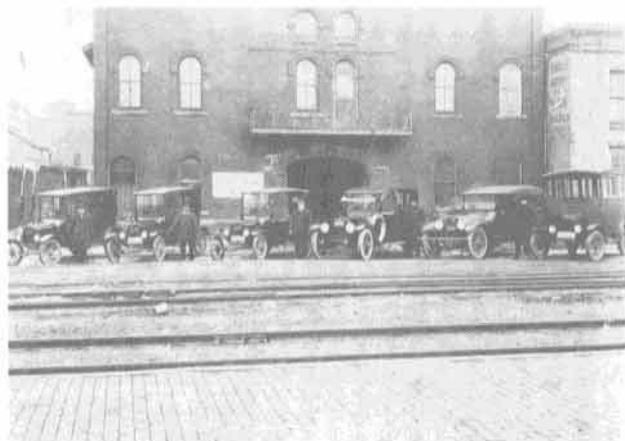
employee Ernest Eckstedt built the Cardinal Hotel at 424 E. Wilson in 1908, adding the fourth and fifth floors in the following year. The Cardinal was the largest and last of the railroad hotels. It was designed by local German-born architect, Ferdinand Kronenberg.

By 1915, when the railroads were nearing their peak of activity, the C&NW sold as many as 1,000 tickets and routed 50 trains through its station each day. Growth continued through the 1940s. After WW II, however, growing competition from airlines, bus lines and improved auto travel caused the railroads to decline. The Milwaukee Road's east side depot closed in the late 1940s and was demolished in 1953. In 1965, the C&NW ceased passenger service and subsequently sold its building to Madison Gas &



Cardinal Hotel

Electric, which in 1984 centered its new office development around the historic depots. Commercial buildings on the 300 and 600 blocks of East Wilson Street were demolished for a street widening project in 1952 and in constructing the post office annex (now a retail building). The demolished structures included two saloons, a barbershop, stables, an agricultural implements warehouse, two hotels, a confectionery, costume shop offices, and residences. The 400 and 500 blocks of East Wilson Street and the C&NW Railroad depots were listed on the National Register in 1987.



Taxi drivers pose with their cabs in front of the old Hunt livery on Wilson Street across the tracks from the Chicago & Northwestern Depot, ca. 1920. In the background on the left is the old Fauerbach Brewery on Williamson Street. WHi(X3)43111

Machinery Row

601-627 Williamson Street

1898-1912

The buildings at 601-627 Williamson Street and frame buildings adjacent to them which stood at 513-525 have long been known as "Machinery Row," a significant part of "Implement Row," the name for the warehouse and manufacturing area around the C&NW depots. The locally prominent firm of Conover and Porter designed Machinery Row, which was built in segments over a period of several years beginning in 1898. Older buildings were replaced as they became available, providing space for farm implement agencies and a host of other businesses.

Wisconsin Wagon Company

602 Railroad Street

1883

The Wisconsin Wagon Company was incorporated

in 1883, and in that year completed a large frame building and a stone blacksmithing shop at this site. The existing brick building replaced the frame structure in 1903-1904. The company's production and sales were much greater than the typical small town wagon business of the other local wagonmakers and may have been instrumental in setting the tone for development of the Implement Row area. The Wisconsin Wagon Company made carriages, ice wagons, drays, delivery wagons and six- and nine-passenger pleasurettes. With the advent of the auto, the company converted its production to auto bodies.

The First Settlement Neighborhood

The neighborhood above East Wilson Street retains an interesting array of buildings constructed by emigrants from several countries. The list includes St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Our Savior Norwegian Lutheran Church and houses of German, Norwegian and Irish railroad employees, clerks, and store owners. Here they began their assimilation into 19th and early 20th century American life. The multi-generational tenancy of these families lent a stable presence to the neighborhood still evident to this day.

In the original plat of 1836 the land that now lies between Hancock and Franklin Streets was designated for the development of a canal. It may have been a drawing board mistake mislocating the canal on a hill instead of in the flat marsh which was actually a block to the east. However, the problem was easily rectified by subdividing the land in 1839 into



Kessler House, 133 S. Franklin, in 1954. Among the few early brick residences of the boom period of the 1850s remaining in the city, the Kessler house is an important vernacular rendition of the classically-proportioned Italianate style of architecture. Mack Coll.

saleable lots. The original names of the adjoining streets—East and West Canal Streets—stuck until as late as the 1890s.

The First Settlement area developed early as a neighborhood of unpretentious wood and brick houses at the periphery of capitol hill, then as a densely settled middle-class neighborhood hemmed in by the bustling commercial districts at its south and west borders and the industries at its eastern border.

While mid-century homes of German families were often maintained into a second generation on South Franklin Street, larger homes, apartment buildings and other buildings were built on South Hancock Street in the 1890s through the 1920s, replacing many of the brick and frame cottages constructed in the boom period of the 1850s.

In the recent past, a resurgence of interest in the neighborhood has created a flurry of renovation, new construction and public improvements.

Barker House

137 S. Franklin Street 1852

This house is perhaps the oldest remaining in the neighborhood, having been built by Albert and Alida Barker. Its simple lines are typical of the early frame houses once found throughout downtown neighborhoods that were largely replaced by the close of the century with large homes and flats.

Kessler House

133 S. Franklin Street 1854

German immigrant Daniel Kessler, a tailor, and his wife Henrietta built this simple house of Madison red brick in 1854. Larger and more pretentious houses built in a similar four-square plan include the Stoner house at 321 S. Hamilton, the Slaughter-Shuttleworth house at 946 Spaight and the Kendall House at 104 E. Gilman. Kessler's brothers lived here and in a home the family built next door at 135 S. Franklin (demolished).

Sauthoff House

123 S. Franklin Street 1904

August and Anna Sauthoff bought the south half of the Nienabers' lot and built this frame Queen Anne house in 1904. They resided here from 1904 to 1907. Sauthoff was a merchant tailor and was active in the Madison Turners.



Nienaber house (left) and Sauthoff house (right) in 1954. Mack Coll.

Nienaber House

119 S. Franklin Street 1866

This house was built of Madison's red brick by Bernhard and Katherine Nienaber, who resided here from 1866 to 1915. Nienaber was a cigar-maker on East Main in the King Street commercial district and later opened a shop in his home. He served on the county board in 1900.



Thompson House

101 S. Franklin Street 1872

This cream brick house was built by Emily Thompson, widow of Norwegian immigrant Ole Thompson, who built Thompson's Hotel at 123 S. Butler (later the Simon House) and the Thompson Block at 119 E. Main Street. The Thompson family occupied the house until the 1930s. In 1979 photographer Zane Williams bought and restored the house, sparking a wave of renewed interest in the surrounding area.



Boley House, 511 E. Main, in 1899. The photograph documented the transfer of the "white" brick house from its builder, Joel Boley (center) and his wife Mary (right center), to Henry Nelson, a retired Norwegian farmer from Norway Corners near DeForest, and his wife Betsy (seated at right). Realtor Léonard Gay (left) closed the sale. Author's Coll.

Boley House

511 E. Main Street

1884

Emily Thompson sold the east half of her lot in 1884 to Bernard Neilson. On the parcel, his business partner Norwegian-born Joel Boley and his wife Mary built a cream brick-veneered residence. It was among the most expensive houses constructed that year and featured built-in plumbing. Boley was vice-president of a dry goods and sewing machine store on E. Main Street on the square.



Our Savior's Norwegian Lutheran Church ca. 1895. WHi(X3)31545

Our Savior Norwegian Lutheran Church

1 S. Hancock Street

1897

The Norwegian Lutheran Church congregation was formed in 1886 when it split from Bethel Lutheran Church. Members of the new congregation disagreed with Bethel's policy of sending their children to public schools where they would be taught in English rather than the native tongue. Sermons at Our Savior were offered in English only on alternate Sundays through the 1920s. The church building was built on a lot vacated by the removal of dry goods merchant Christian and Fredericke Heinrichs' house (built 1865) to the adjoining lot at 405 East Washington. The church steeple was enclosed in later years.



St. Patrick's Church

404 E. Main Street

1889

In 1888, St. Raphael's parish had so outgrown its facilities on West Main St. that the parish was split to create the largely Irish St. Patrick's Roman Catholic congregation. The following year, local architect Col. John Nader designed and built this cream brick Romanesque Revival style building. It was widened by the addition of aisles to each side of the nave in 1902. Later modifications removed decorative cresting from the steeple and parapet.



Wood-Curtis House
407 E. Main Street

1853

The Wood-Curtis house was built originally in 1853 as a small, two-story red brick cottage by Sarah and Algernon S. Wood, a marble cutter. Emelie and James K. Proudfit, a newspaper, insurance and real estate entrepreneur, assumed ownership in 1858. In that year the rubble addition was built, with a dressed stone facade and decorative corner quoins. During his tenancy, Proudfit served as City Treasurer and State Assistant Adjutant General.

The third wing, designed by D. R. Jones in the Italianate style, was erected of cream brick in 1874, the time at which pioneer lumberman, merchant and inventor Dexter Curtis and his wife, Hannah, bought the house. The windows and doors on the original house were probably enlarged at this time employing new cast-iron lintels. The neo-classical porch was added in 1898.

Curtis was noted for his invention of the zinc horse collar pad which he manufactured in a factory adjoining his house on Franklin Street (demolished) as well as in a factory in Birmingham, England. The distinction of his horse collar pad was that it prevented sores on horses. Curtis served in the state assembly in 1882 and on the Madison Common Council. Following his death in 1898 his son William Dexter Curtis continued to operate the business, which was eventually relocated to 826 E. Washington.



Curtis House
111 S. Hancock Street

1888

Frank Curtis, a son of Dexter Curtis, was a foreman at his father's horse collar pad factory. Frank and Athelia's two-story frame house is an older building, likely moved to the site in 1888 and the turret and decorative front porch added. The house has recently undergone extensive restoration at the hand of cabinetmaker Kevin Earley.



Boley Flats
115 S. Hancock Street

1895

The Joel and Mary Boley home is the second Boley house in the neighborhood. The Boleys retired here having moved from 511-513 E. Main. This gracious cream brick house has lovely Queen Anne details.

Festner House

126 S. Hancock Street

1862

The simple Madison red brick house was built by Sophia and Frederick C. Festner, a printer and book binder on King Street. Festner had been third ward alderman in 1860 and served as city treasurer in 1861. He sold the house to Amanda and Samuel C. Bean, a one-term state senator, in 1867. Note the fanlight over the door, the bull's-eye window and the doubled eave brackets.



Kleuter Apartments

144-146 S. Hancock Street

1896

This is an unusual building type for its period since most of the other apartment buildings built prior to the 1910s in Madison resembled single family homes. This one was built by Prussian immigrant Herman Kleuter in 1896. The Kleuter family also built the buildings at 506-508 East Wilson where they lived and operated their meat market business until the 1920s.

Turner Hall

21 S. Butler Street

1941

Sixteen pioneer German businessmen chartered themselves as the Madison Turnverein (Turner Association) in 1855, one year before the village of 5,000 people became a city. The Turner philosophy, widespread among Germans who immigrated here after the 1848 revolution, involved a program of physical exercise coupled with mental and social stimulation. Many people of the German business community throughout the King Street area and along E. Wilson Street were active in the Turners.



Turner Hall ca. 1895. Although the German Romanesque sandstone facade survived the fire of November 15, 1940, it was demolished to make way for a new building erected on the foundation of the old. WHi(X3)33387

Turner Hall was used for instruction in gymnastic and physical culture, concerts, lectures, operas and traveling performances. The Turners sponsored the first kindergarten and first lending library in Madison. In 1909, the Madison school system arranged to send all its children to Turner Hall for classes in the only gymnasium in town.

The Turners acquired this site and erected a building in 1858; it was destroyed by fire in 1863. German-born architect August Kutzbock built a new facility in 1863 which served until it too was destroyed by fire in 1940. Architects Law, Law and Potter built the current edifice on the 1863 foundation.

Simon House

119 S. Butler Street

1896

Helen and John Simon, proprietor of the Simon House hotel and restaurant (also known as the Neue Deutsches Haus), built this expansive Queen Anne cream brick house two doors south of the hotel (demolished). Note the Palladian window in the gable end and the spindled porch posts—favorite Queen Anne motifs.

Heilmann House

127 S. Butler Street

1889

Julia and George Heilmann, owner of the Heilmann bakery, restaurant and confectionery at 123 E. Main Street, built this cream brick Queen Anne residence. Discoloration of the brick shows where the original veranda once wrapped around the front and south side.