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* W-Wausau

V.F.

WAUSAU, WIS.,

ILLUSTRATED.



ILLUSTRATED AND PUBLISHED

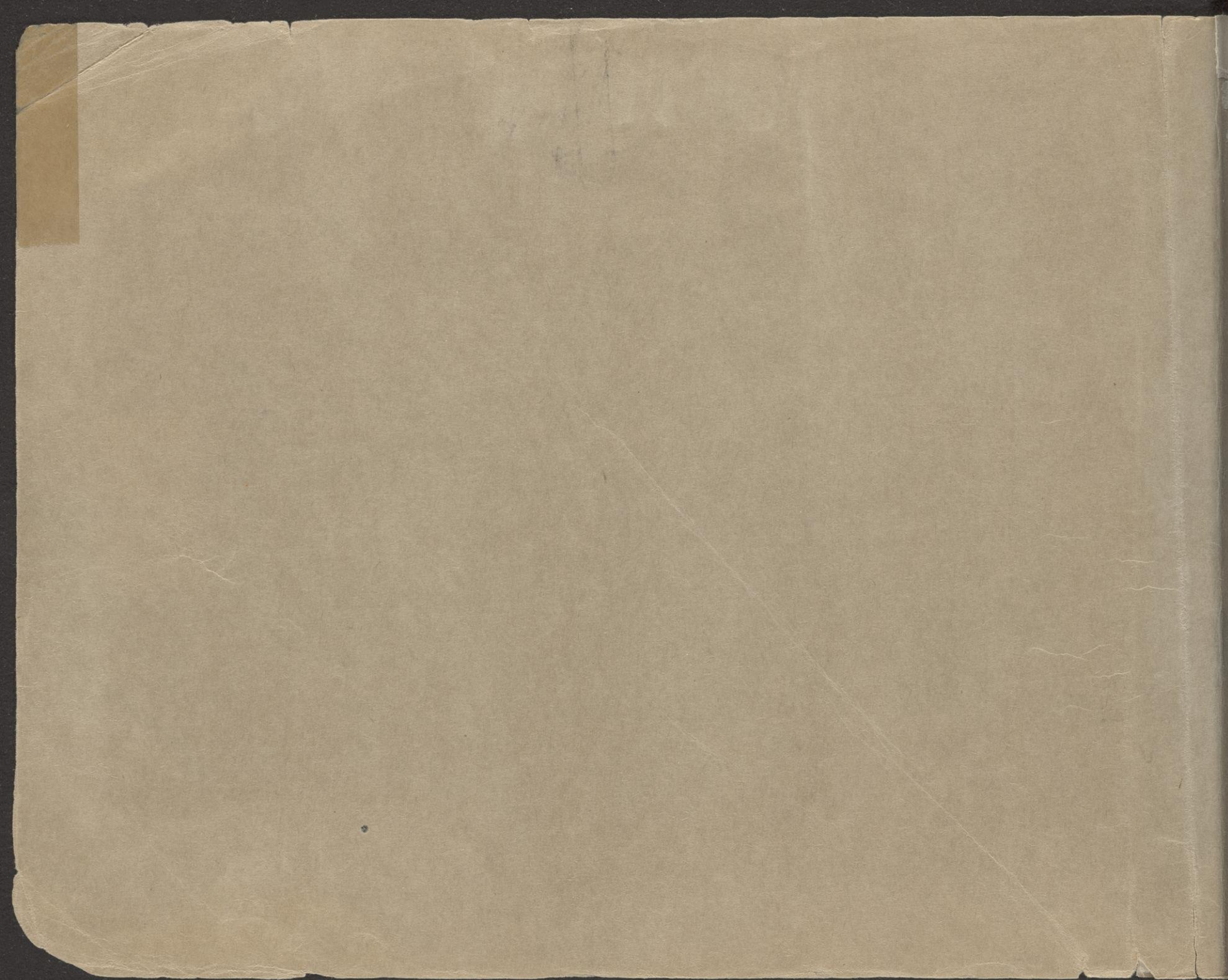
BY

THE ART GRAVURE & ETCHING CO.

MILWAUKEE, WIS.

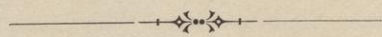
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WAUSAU, WIS.



WAUSAU, a flourishing city of 10,000 people, is located on both banks of the Wisconsin river, in the center of Marathon County, and near the geographical center of the State; 157 miles northwest of Milwaukee and 100 miles west of Lake Michigan, by way of Oconto and Sturgeon Bay. We propose in these pages to point out, with as explicit fullness as the brief compass of our space permits, the advantages Wausau offers to whomsoever is seeking a most desirable location for residence or investment. The city, though now so flourishing, is yet so young that an enumeration of these advantages may well be prefaced by a résumé of its early history, for the little space required will but emphasize more clearly the progress of which its citizens are so justly proud.

The name "Wausau," bestowed by the Hon. W. D. McIndoe, is an Indian word signifying "distance;" relative distances being implied by the manner of pronunciation. Thus, the word spoken with an abrupt, curt emphasis, would imply that the place referred to was comparatively near, while a drawling intonation meant that it was "f-a-r a-w-a-y." It is exceedingly probable that the word was first selected, in its primary significance, as implying the remoteness of Wausau, when first settled, from any other civilized community.

In the earlier histories, the whole of the surrounding country up to Lake Superior is described as belonging to the Sac (Saukis or Sauk) Indians. But the Menominees gradually drifted down from the neighborhood of Green Bay, and became, by degrees, so identified with it that when the first trading-post was established here the entire district was looked upon as their property. By them it was ceded to the United States Government, the first cession being a strip of land three miles wide, on each bank of the Wisconsin river.

This was in 1836, but the history of Wausau practically begins with the erection, in 1831, of the first saw-mill on the Wisconsin river, in what was then Indian Territory. It was built by Daniel Whitney, of Green Bay, who had obtained from the War Department, which then had control of such matters (the Interior Department not yet having been created), a permit to build a saw-mill and cut timber on the Wisconsin river. The mill was erected in 1831-2, at Whitney's Rapids, below Point Bass. Others followed in short order, but the establishment of these mills, foreboding the most extensive en-

croachments of civilization, excited the apprehension of the Indians and they began to make serious complaints to the Government agents. Accordingly, a treaty was made with the Menominees in 1836, at Cedar Point, on the Fox river, by Gov. Dodge, by which the Indian title was extinguished to a strip of land up the Wisconsin river six miles wide (three on each bank), from Point Bass, in what is now Wood County, forty miles northward up the river to Big Bull Falls, where now stands the City of Wausau.

The great demand and high price for lumber "down stream" had stimulated the business to a considerable extent. Exploring parties had made known the richness of the land, so that the fame of the Wisconsin pineries spread far and wide, and no sooner was the "six-mile strip" declared open than the lumbermen flocked to their harvest. The influx of settlers from Southern Wisconsin and Northern Illinois was rapid and continuous, and during the years 1837-38-39 every eligible place on the river as far as Big Bull Falls was occupied. The depressing panic of that year prevented new enterprises until 1839, when John L. Moore began operations at Little Bull Falls, now Mosinee, and Geo. Stevens at Big Bull Falls, now Wausau. The tract ceded in the Cedar Point treaty was ordered surveyed in 1839, and it was accomplished by Joshua Hathaway, of Milwaukee. By the years 1840-41-42 all the advantageous points on the river and its tributaries had received accessions, mills having been erected with surprising celerity.

The business of felling the gigantic pine, hauling it to the river, floating it to the mills, converting it into boards and shingles and running the rapids with it to market, is no child's play. It involves great outlay of capital and labor, with imminent risk of life, limb and money. But, regardless of all these hazardous chances, the business was embarked in by thousands, and the woods were soon full of choppers, loggers and teams, while the rivers were struggling with logs and its banks piled with lumber.

The question of supplies was always a serious one, for the nearest markets were far off, while the way was toilsome and beset by many dangers, so that it was only possible to get the merest necessities by a prodigious expenditure of means, muscle and superfluous profanity. The difficulties encountered were such as it is hard for us to realize in these days, when steam has furnished us with such varied and easy means of transport. The absolute necessity for some nearer means of supply led many who came "on lumbering thoughts intent" to change their objective views. They, metaphorically speaking, turned their axes into ploughshares, and, instead of felling timber, began tilling the soil. Those who did this were, in every case, phenomenally successful; but the lumber business, in spite of the many perils attending it, was always first and most important, so that even as early as 1857 more than 3,000 men were engaged along the Wisconsin river in the production of lumber, and the amount floated down that season represented \$4,128,000. Everything went by the river, and detachments were landed at every point from Portage City to St. Louis, and made the erection of all those cities possible. The delay in getting to market, and uncertainty as to the time when returns would

arrive, was sometimes exasperating, and added very materially to the amount of capital required to successfully carry on the business. Now the transportation is largely by railroad, and correct estimates can be made as to when the sales will realize for the operators. By 1852, in which year the city was first platted, Wausau was gaining prominence, for it was generally recognized, even at that early day, that it was an excellent strategic point for the capture of trade and transaction of business.

There was at this time little semblance of law, and apparently little need of it. The community was a peaceable one. Thieving was unknown, although there was an occasional saloon row, or street encounter; but quarrels were in some way patched up. Resort to Madison, the nearest Circuit Court, was very rare. As one of the old settlers quaintly remarked, "there was no stealing, and but few crimes until the lawyers and ministers arrived." It was incorporated as a village in 1862, and received a city charter March 18th, 1872.

During the war, the history of Wausau and Marathon County is not unlike that of all other counties in Northern Wisconsin, for the sounds of drum and fife were familiar enough in the pineries. The impassioned eloquence of the backwoods orators had its due effect, and the enlistments were equal to the demands. Of course, at that time Wausau was young; there were no railroads, and the river, with its numerous falls and rapids, was of little value as a thoroughfare. The men who enlisted went to Stevens Point, or to their former homes, to go to the front with their friends. The reputation of the soldiers from the pineries was excellent. Wausau has not forgotten the service of those who returned not, but has erected, on its beautiful Court House Square, at the business center of the city, an imposing monument, dedicated to the memory of those, when tried, were not found wanting. This monument is constructed of Marathon County granite and by Marathon County artists.

Up to 1874, the river and stages were the sole dependence of the city for the purposes of transportation, and a daily line to "Jenny" was one of the most important institutions until the completion of the road to that town (now known as Merrill). Now there are regular stage lines to various portions of the county, in addition to its railway service. No railway connection was made till the 31st of October, 1874, when Wausau was reached by the Wisconsin Valley Road, upon which trains began running on the 9th of November. The Wisconsin Central had already cut across a corner of the county, 28 miles south of Wausau, and skirted along the western border of Marathon County; but the Valley Road was the first line that reached the city, and its entry was greeted with a local "glorification" that fully proved how important Wausau deemed its newly-formed connection with the outer world.

In common with all other small roads, this road was soon absorbed by a larger corporation and became the property of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway Co., now known as the Valley Division. By them it was extended in 1881 to Merrill, and in 1889 to Minocqua; recently its southern connection with the main line was changed from Tomah

to New Lisbon. The Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western Railway Co. completed its line to Wausau in 1880, giving thirty-three miles shorter line between Wausau and Milwaukee or Chicago. In the following year a charter was granted for a railroad from Oconto to the St. Croix river, via Wausau, and a portion of the road was constructed from Oconto west; in 1884 this line was purchased by the Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western. A part of the original scheme the Lake Shore has now under construction and practically completed; namely, a line from Wausau west, to a junction with the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha, at Marshfield. Without its railroad connection, Wausau would be practically lost to the outer world, but with its southern outlet, over the St. Paul, and its eastern, western and Chicago connections by the Lake Shore, it is the possessor of railroad facilities not excelled by any interior town in Northern Wisconsin.

Though Wausau is essentially and before all others a lumber town, the greater portion of the surrounding country is admirably adapted for agricultural purposes. There are a few sandy tracts, but the larger part of the land consists of a rich, strong clay loam. The staple crops of the surrounding districts are wheat, oats, rye, barley, potatoes, timothy and clover, while green corn is grown very successfully. But the great wealth of the city lies in the enormous pine forests with which the greater portion of the county is filled. It has been estimated that there are, within the limits of Marathon County, one and a half billions of feet of choice pine timber, all of it, owing to the many streams that ramify in every direction, easily accessible to water. Even this, however, is a comparatively small item in the enormous lumbering interests that center here, for the whole of the pine forests in the country, drained by her numerous streams, is tributary to the mills of the city. It would appear at first glance, that however great the amount might be, the continual and extensive cutting would bid fair to exhaust the supply, but it apparently makes but slight impression, and the yearly growth is remarkably rapid. Moreover, a very essential feature, from the lumberman's point of view, is that the streams are swift and afford excellent power, the banks being generally firm and rocky, while rapids are frequent.

Big Bull Falls, at this point of the river, affords an easily utilized and unlimited water-power, as the fall is more than twenty feet, and the available horse-power, at its low stage, is between 20,000 and 30,000. Of this enormous power but a small portion is yet utilized, and there are most eligible sites for sale, at low figures, in immediate connection with the power yet unoccupied. Across the brink of the main fall stretches a beautiful and substantial steel bridge, with cut-stone piers and abutments, erected by the Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western Railway. The city is regularly laid out, very nearly co-incident with the cardinal points of the compass, and lies on an elevated plateau which rises from the river. The river is well sunk between its banks, and has at this point several islands with rocky foundations and well elevated above the highest water level. The city lies mainly on the right bank, but the larger islands are occupied and the left bank is building up rapidly.

Wausau is now the commercial center of Northern and Central Wisconsin. It is the outfitting point for lumber-

men, and the amount of trade is, for its size, equal to that of any city in the country. The natural resources of the country surrounding Wausau, in soil, timber, iron, water-power, and other advantages, as well as of climate and geographical position, make it second to none in the State. There is a gold, silver and galena mine on the northern border of the city, now being successfully developed. At least three-fourths of the land is timbered, the high lands being mostly covered by hard woods, such as maple, oak, ash, elm, bass-wood, butternut, etc., while that along the streams is mostly pine, cedar and hemlock. The chief shipments comprise lumber, shingles, lath, pickets, railroad ties, tan bark and various manufactured articles in lumber and granite. An immense business is done in lumber of all grades of pine and hardwood, last year's output being about 150,000,000 feet; and the almost endless pine forests filling the northern parts of the county will, to all appearance, furnish material for this important branch of industry for many generations to come. As a manufacturing city it is not excelled in the advantages it possesses. It contains thirteen large saw-mills (in addition to which there are over fifty immediately adjacent to the city), immense sash, door and blind factories, flouring mills, foundries, machine shops, tanneries, planing mills, box factories, breweries, etc., etc.

There is a good High school, eight ward schools, a business and commercial college, and five parochial schools. There are sixteen churches, and the leading religious denominations, such as the Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, etc., are well represented. A new court house, a splendid building, of which the lower story is constructed entirely of Marathon County granite, is now nearly ready for occupancy, and will be one of the finest structures in the State for judicial and county purposes. Up to 1881, hotel accommodation was somewhat scant, and it would not infrequently happen that new-comers would find all the rooms filled at the various boarding-houses, etc., and would have to do considerable "skirmishing" to secure even a "cot" or a "shake-down;" but now, the city has quite a number of hotels, some of them large and excellently appointed, besides numerous smaller and well conducted hostleries.

The city owns a fine system of water works, supplying as pure water as can be found at any of the health resorts. There is also a good system of sewerage, and gas and electric light plants. The business portion of the city is substantially built of brick and stone, and there are many fine residences, varying in value from \$5,000 to \$75,000; a \$50,000 opera house and numerous fine public halls, a city hall and two fine engine houses; an electric system of fire alarms, and an efficient fire department. There are five weekly newspapers published, any of which will compare favorably with any in the pineries of Wisconsin: "The Central Wisconsin," "The Pilot-Review," and "The Torch of Liberty," are printed in English; and "Der Deutsche Pionier," and "Das Wochenblatt," in German. "The Central Wisconsin" is the oldest, having been established in 1857; the first number appeared on April 22d, and was published by J. W. Chubbuck. The numbers for September 30th and October 7th were issued on one sheet of dark-green paper, no other being obtainable so far from market. The paper was discontinued for a while, but was finally resuscitated by R. H. Johnson. "The

Torch of Liberty," was established as a "National Greenback" paper, by Mark Barnum, August 9th, 1877. He also published, for a time, "Der Wächter," a German paper of like persuasion. There are three mails daily, and free delivery by United States carriers.

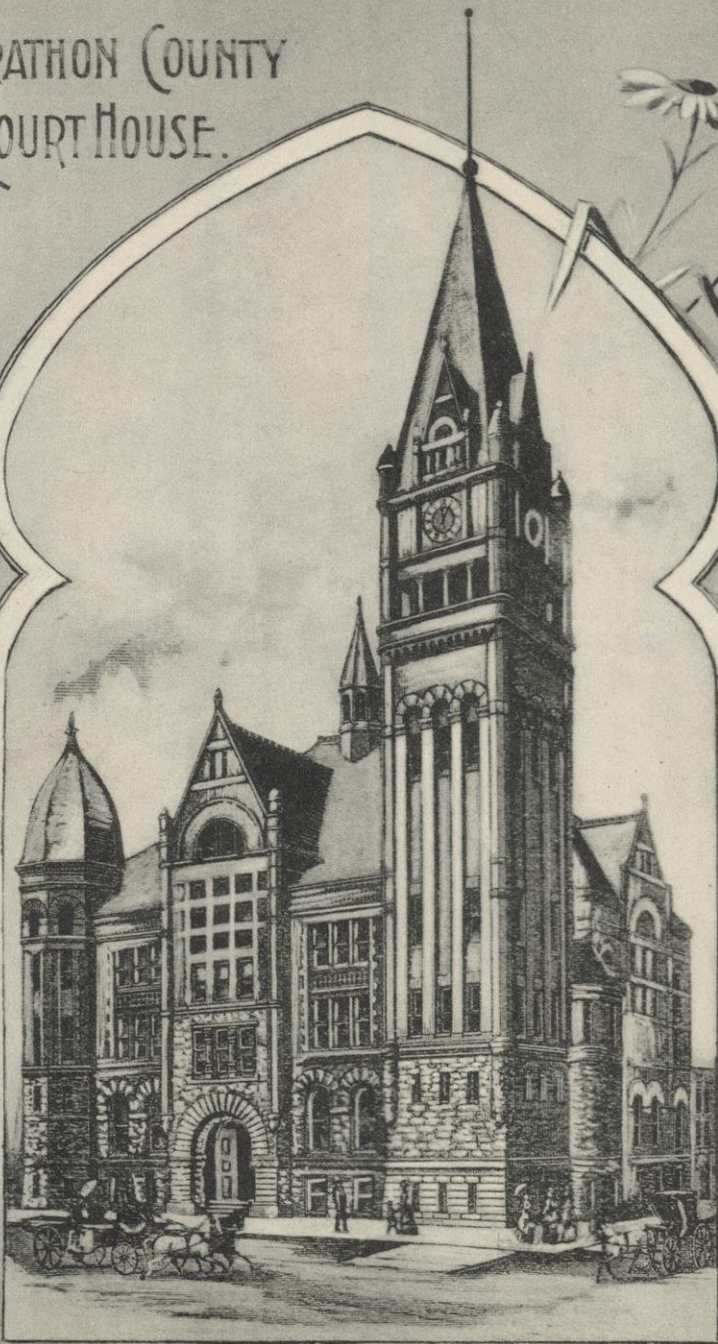
As an evidence of the substantial progress made during the last ten years, we quote the following figures from the "Extra Census Bulletin," No. 5, issued July, 1891, by the Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C. It deals with the lumbering industries of Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota. The returns are for the census years 1880 and 1890, by which it would appear that in 1880 there were six mills in Wausau, and thirteen in 1890; the capital invested in them was \$406,000 in 1880, and \$2,294,433 in 1890, and the value of their output was \$489,000 in 1880, and \$1,421,771 in 1890. The county has no bonded debt and the assessed valuation is \$5,072,093.

There is no nobler or more striking monument to the daring and indomitable energy displayed by the early pioneers than is offered by the existence of such a sturdy, thriving and prosperous town as Wausau, where, not long since, was solitary wilderness. The stirring and rhythmic song of the saw now thrills the ear, where formerly the stillness knew no break but the wild bird's note, or harsh cry of some prowling animal. Where the tall pines reared their stately heads, man's industry has raised church spires and towering temples, busy mills and factories that teem with the incessant stir of industry. Where, undismayed, the chipmunk frolicked and the beaver toiled, run well-paved roads and shady ways lined with pretty grass girdled homes, imposing mansions, well-furnished stores, or massive-fronted business blocks.

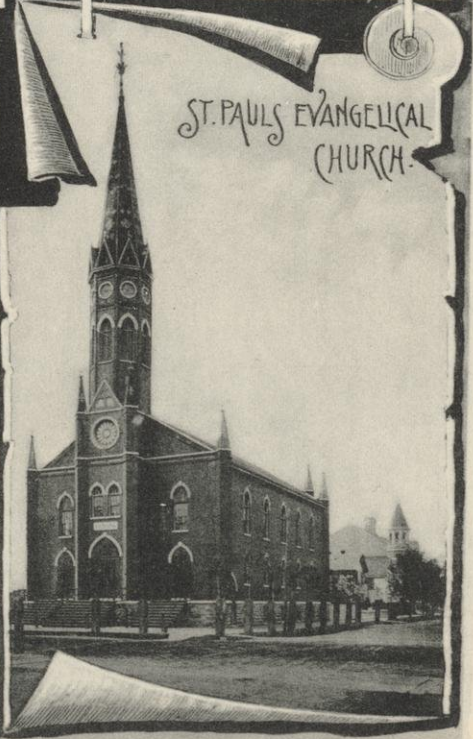
Well may Wausau exult in the progress she has made in the past, and the prospect of yet greater progress in the future. In every branch her industries have made a sure and stable growth, that, wonderful as it has been, owes nothing to the "booming" of interested speculators, but is solely due to the well-directed energy and enterprise of her own citizens, and the exceptional advantages with which Wausau is so liberally endowed, and which they have so well developed and turned to profitable account.

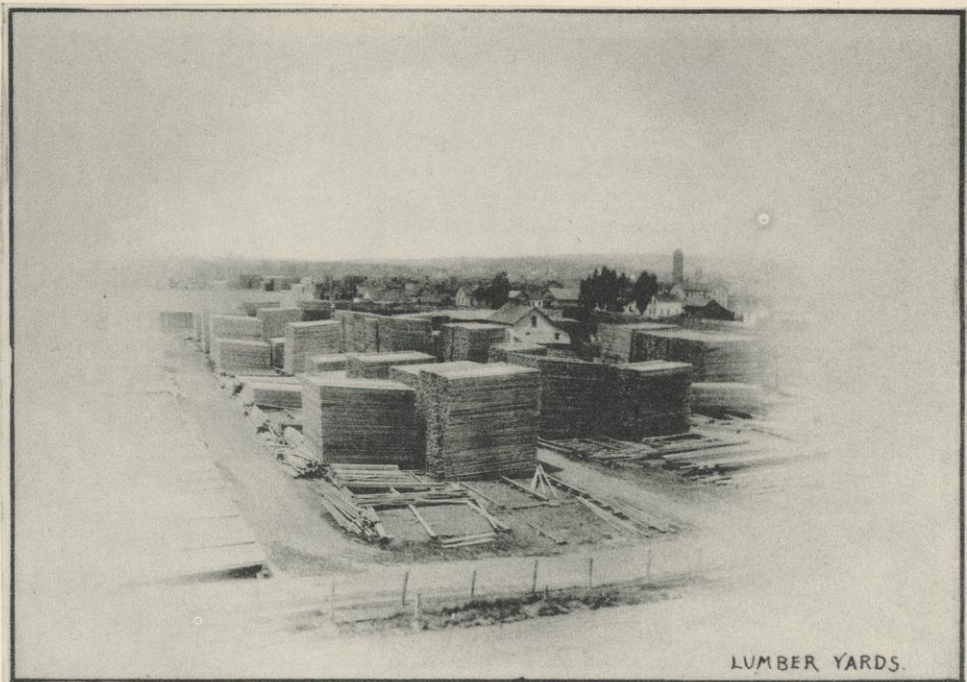
There is hardly any consideration which can appeal to one seeking a desirable location for business or residence, which Wausau cannot justly offer. The city for charm and comfort, as evidenced by its pretty homes, tree-lined ways, and the romantic beauty of its surroundings, is not surpassed by any in the State, and is equaled by very few. As regards its industries, though much has been done, much yet remains to be done. The openings for both labor and capital are still numerous and varied, and nowhere will they more certainly ensure a bountiful return. If what we have stated has interest for you, examine Wausau well before you settle. Take no man's word, not even ours, but come to the city and see for yourself. So shall you most surely be satisfied that Wausau deserves all we have claimed for it, and more. Better evidence you'll not desire, nor would we wish to offer it.

MARATHON COUNTY
COURT HOUSE.





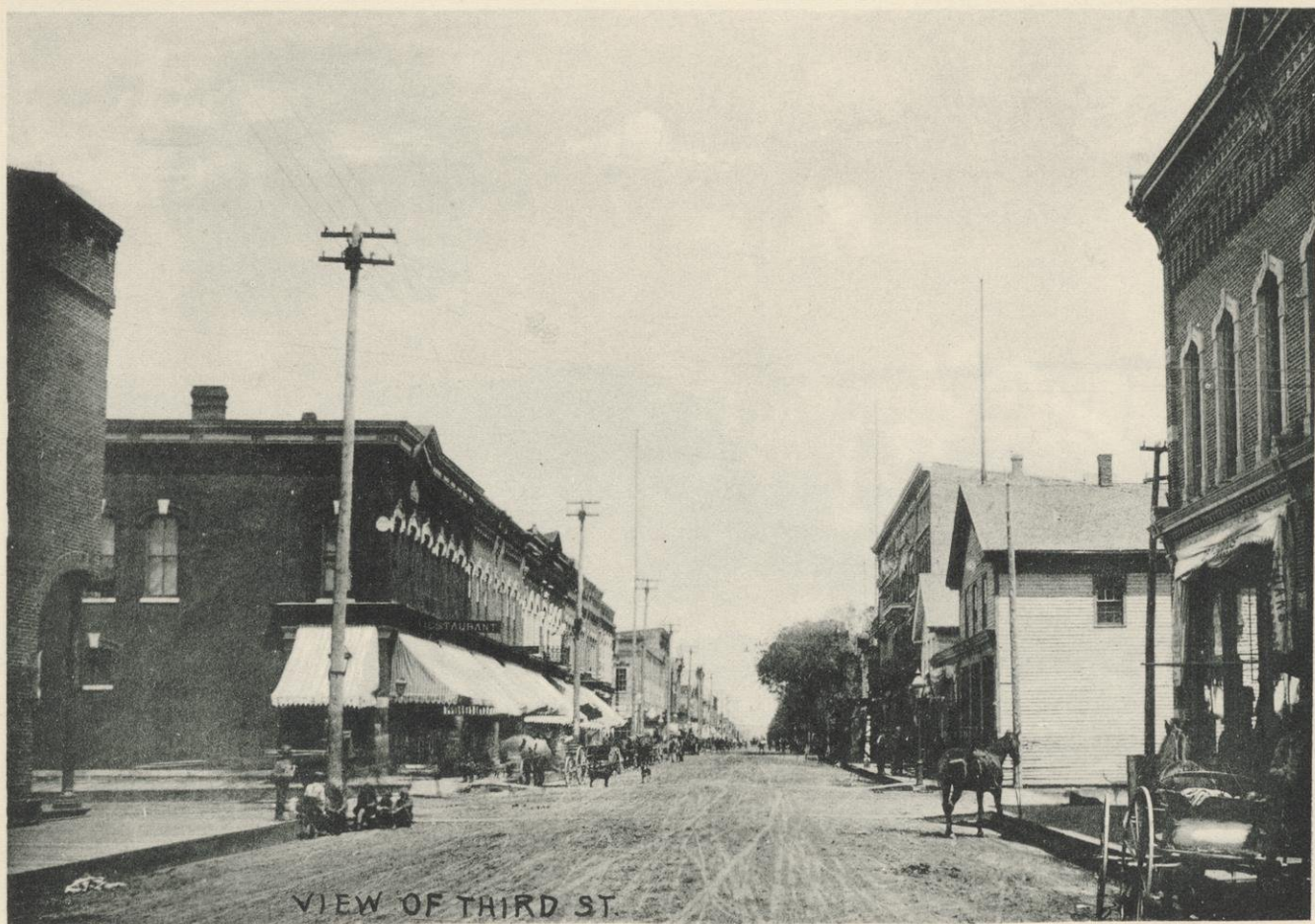


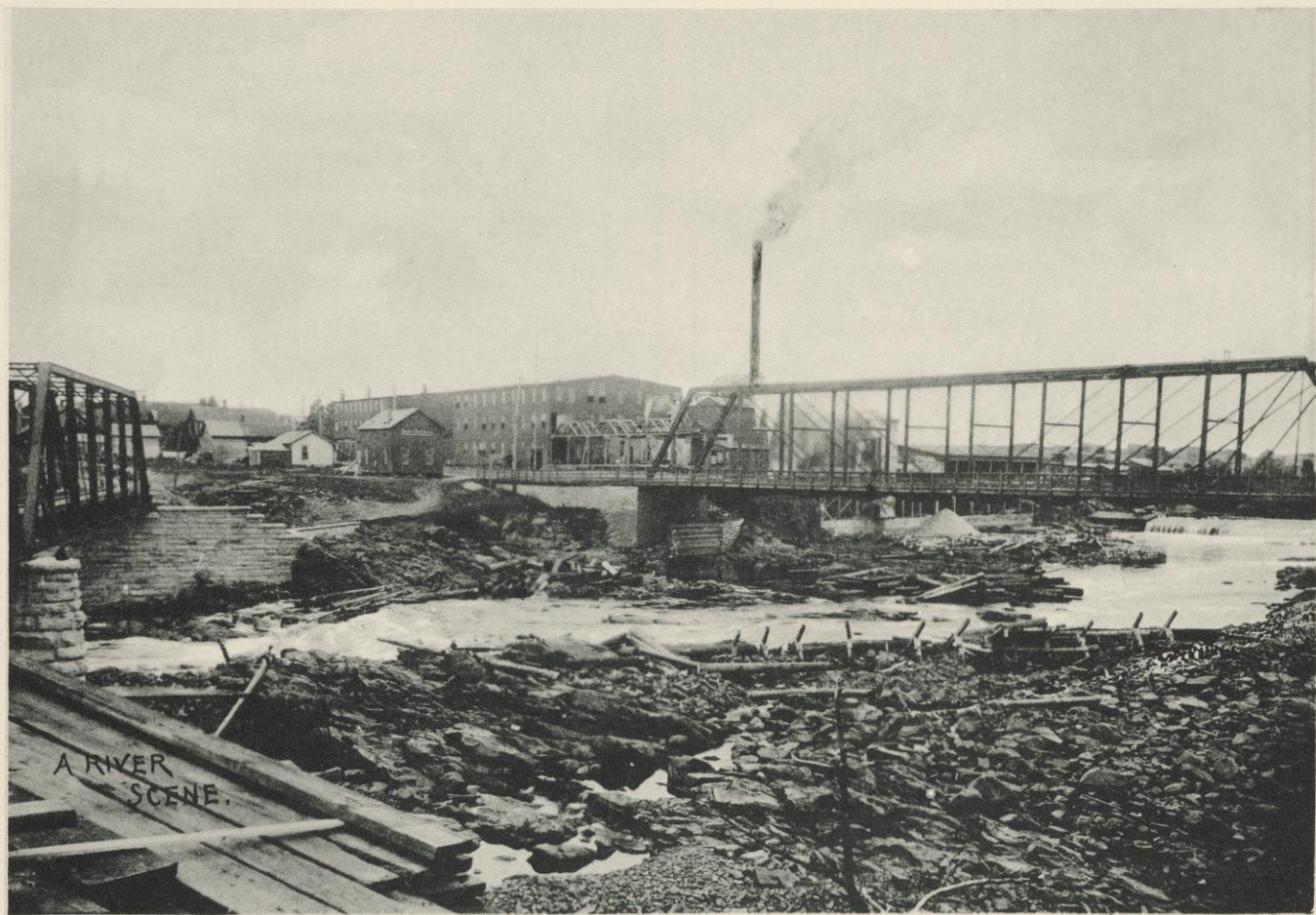


LUMBER YARDS.



RAPIDS of the
WISCONSIN





A RIVER
SCENE.



G. F. BELLIS & SONS.
Proprietors.



FIRST NATIONAL BANK



HOLBROOK, ARCHT. - MILWAUKEE



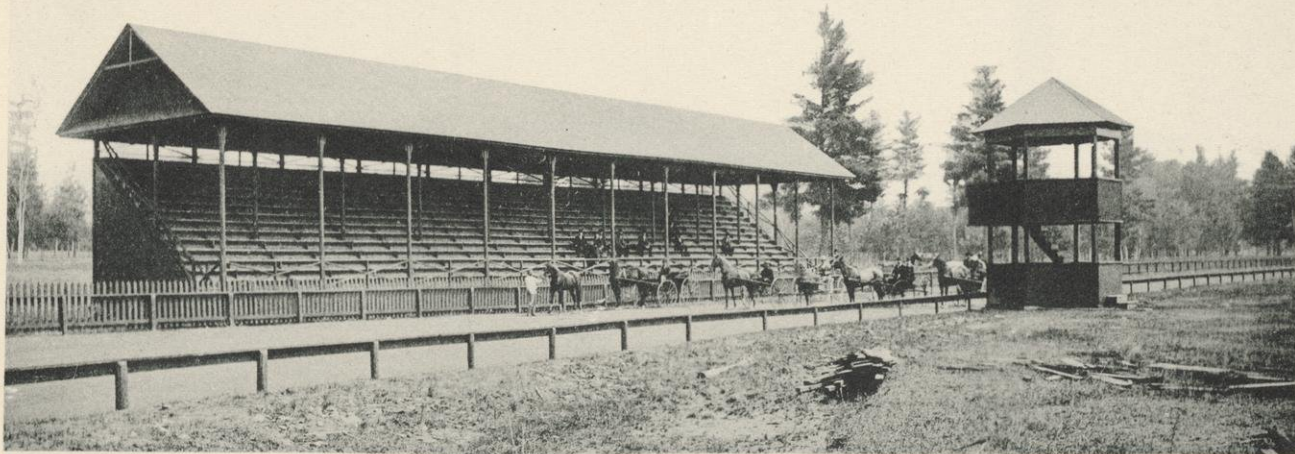
GERMAN - AMERICAN
SAVINGS BANK.
INTERIOR & EXTERIOR VIEWS

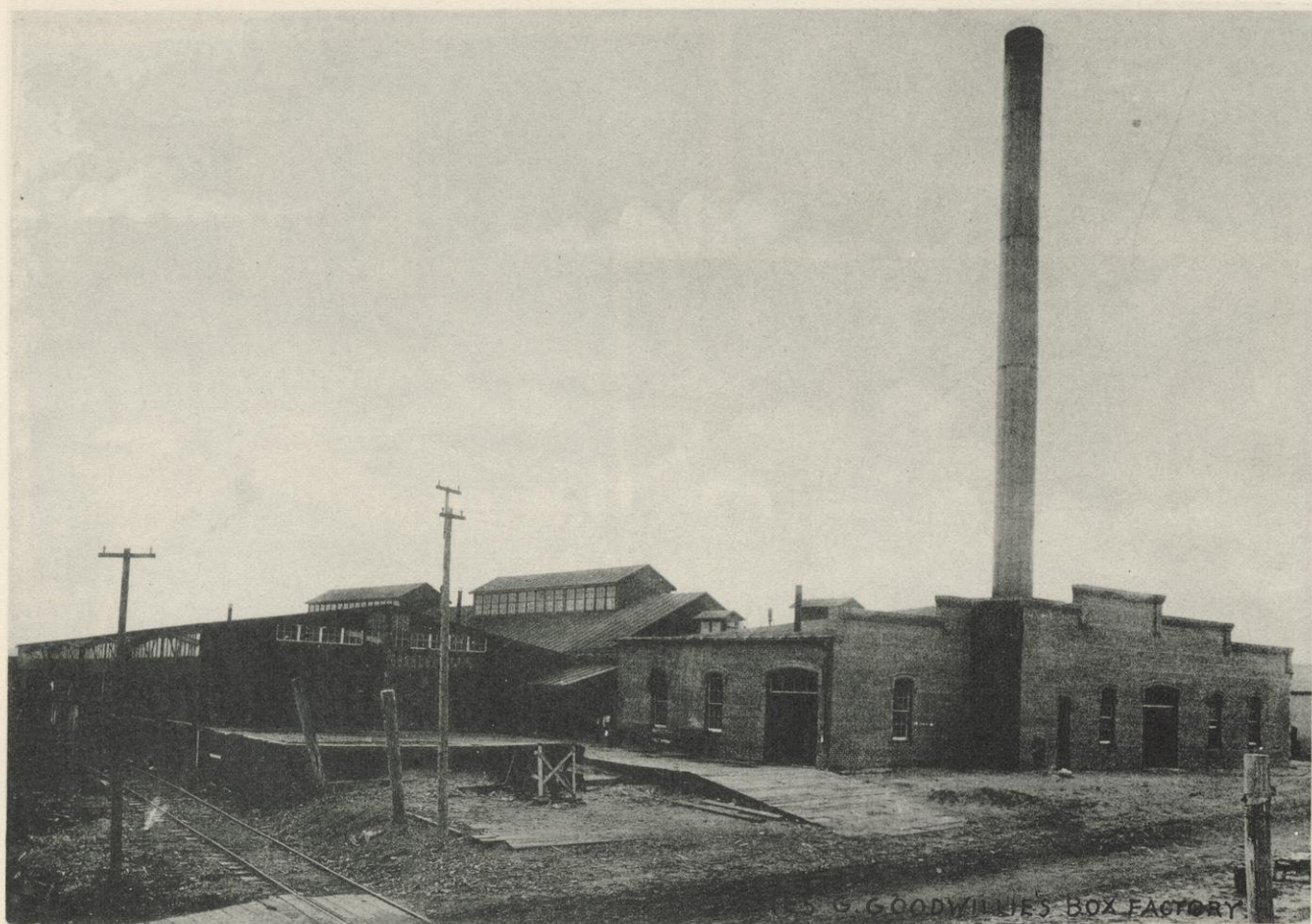




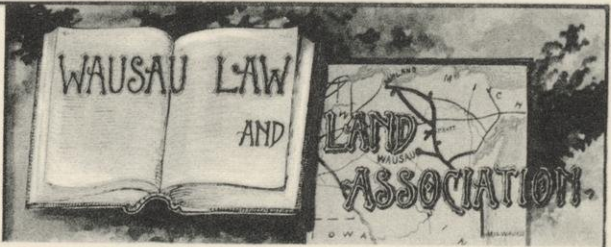
INTERIOR
MARATHON COUNTY
BANK.

The Wausau
Driving Park



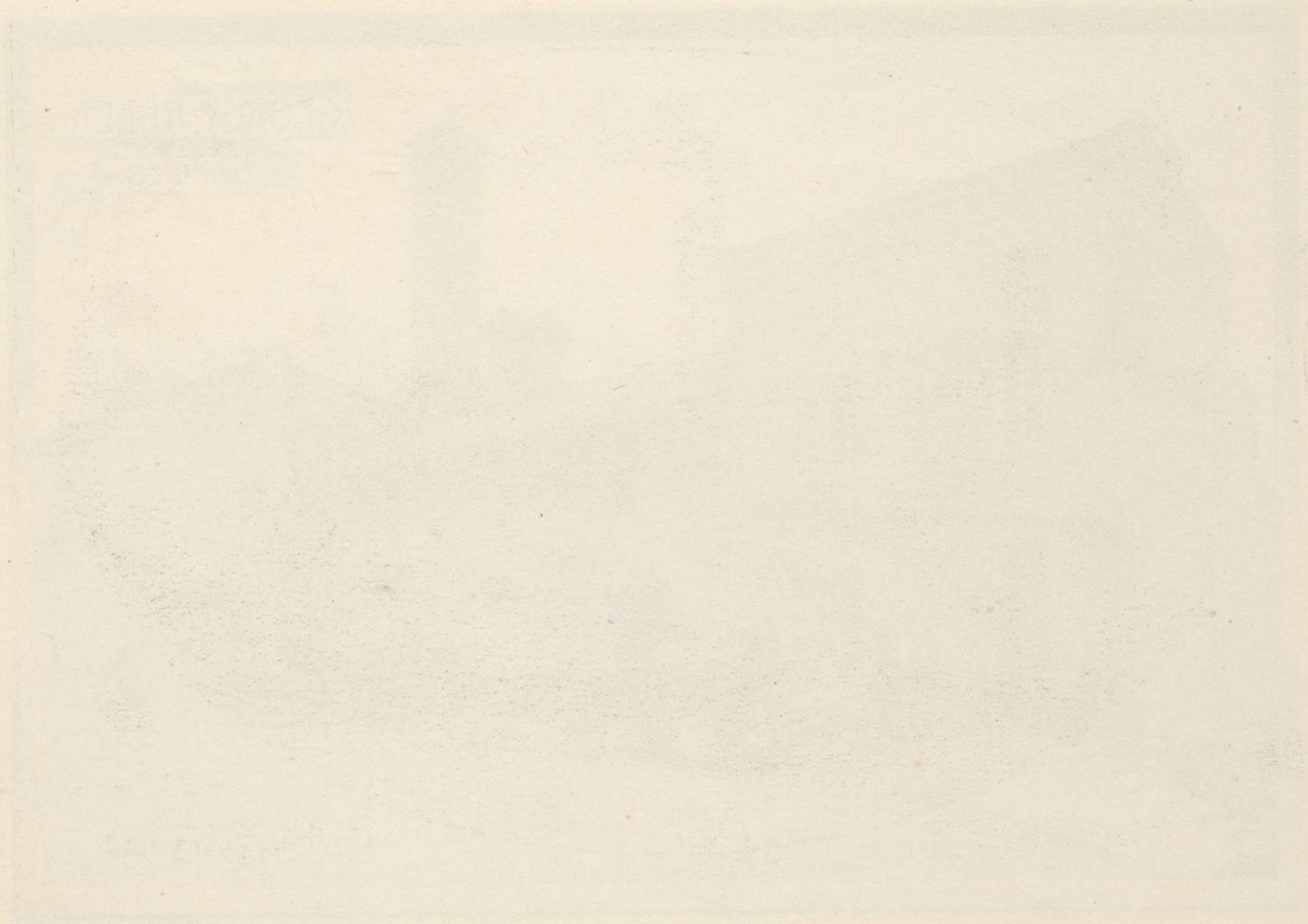


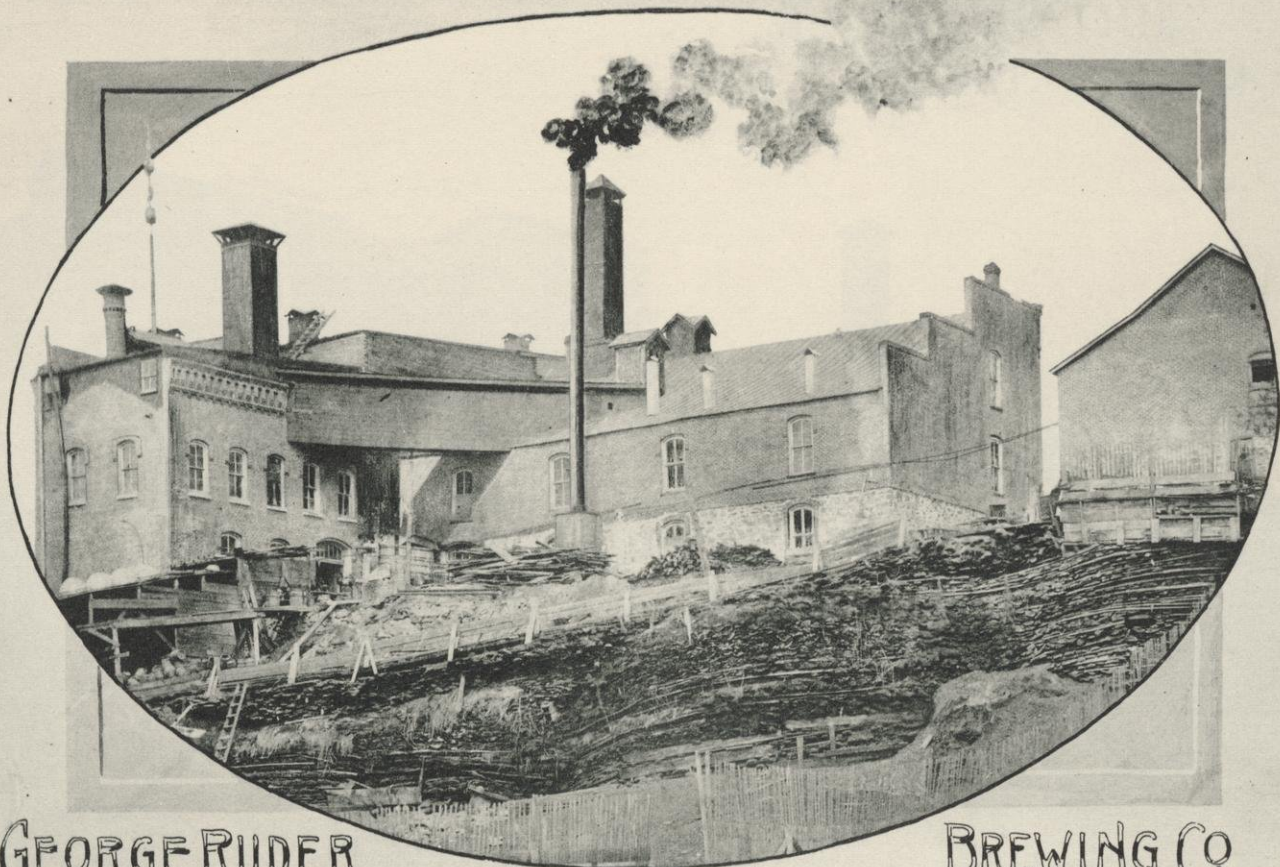
W. S. GOODWILL'S BOX FACTORY



GEORGE RUDER
BREWING CO.







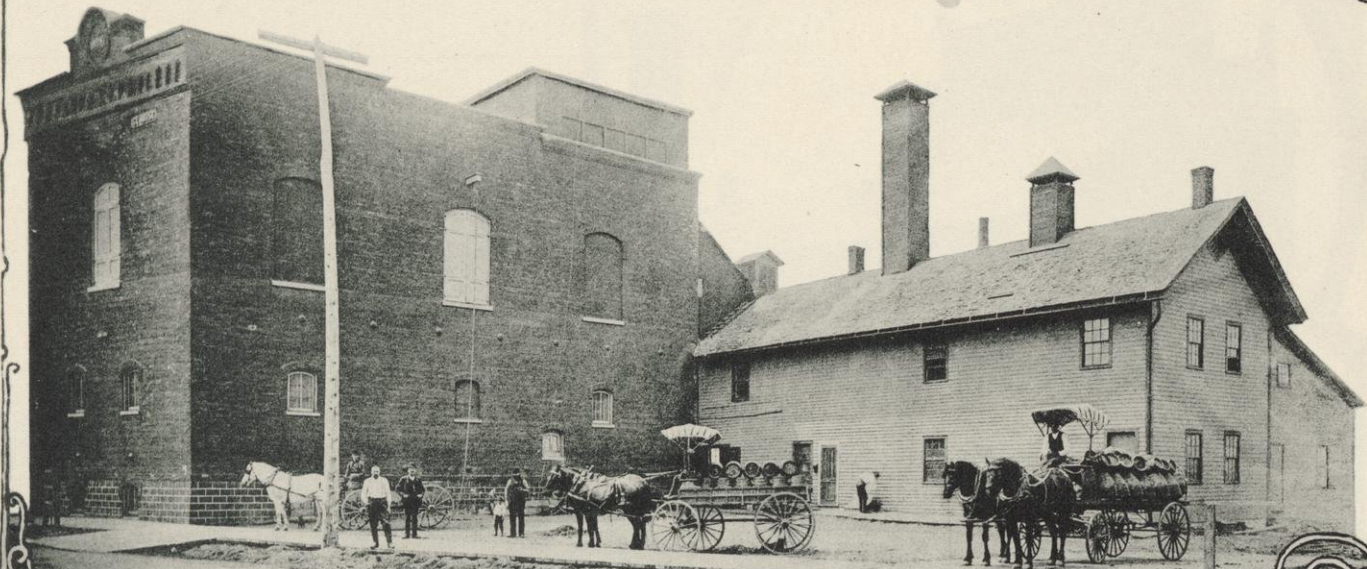
GEORGE RUDER

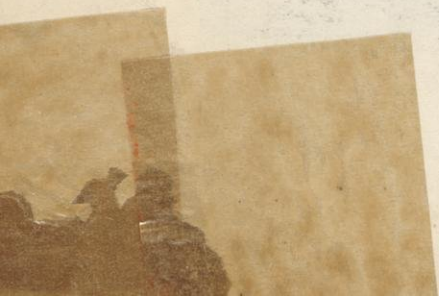
REAR VIEW OF BREWERY.

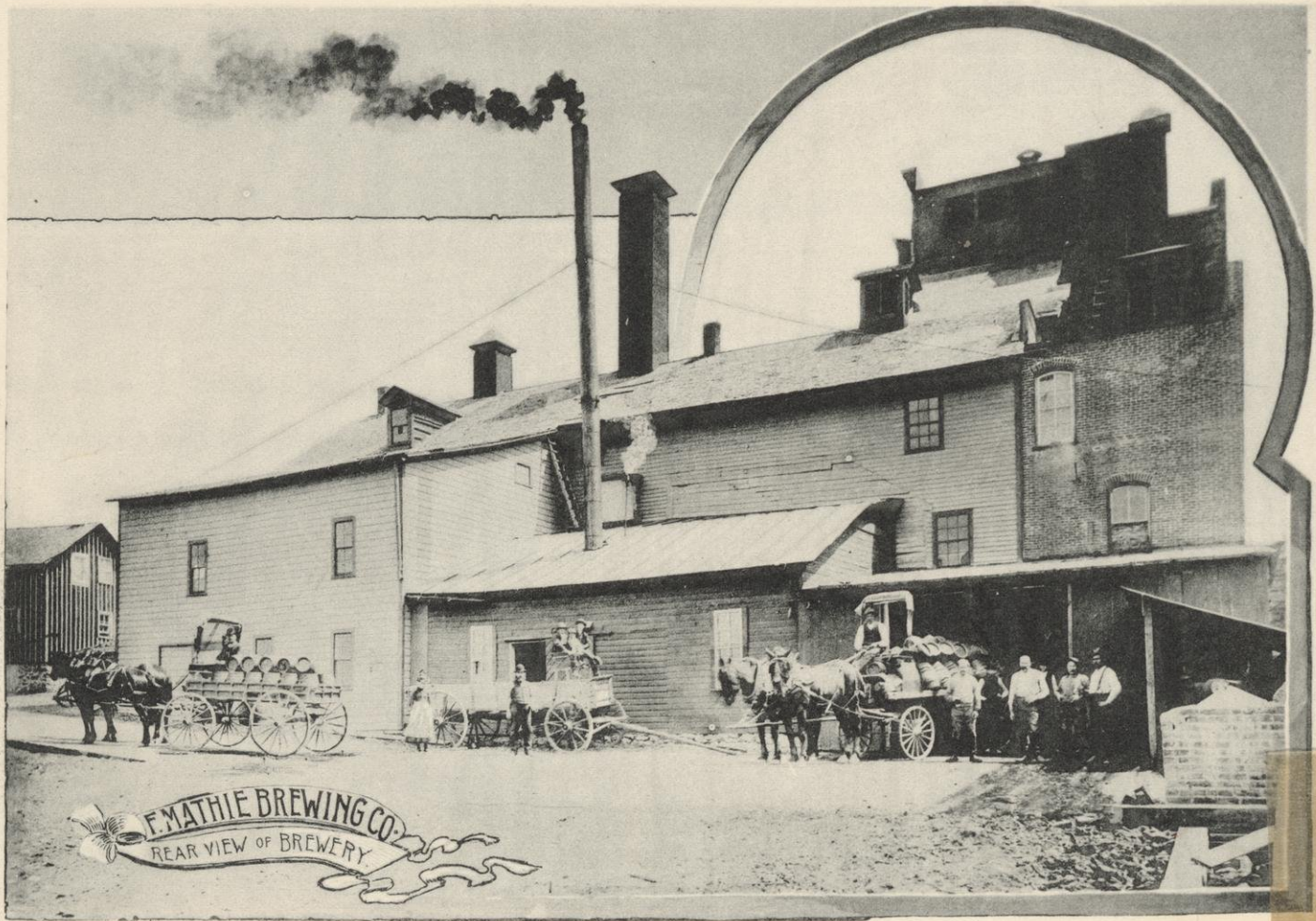
BREWING CO

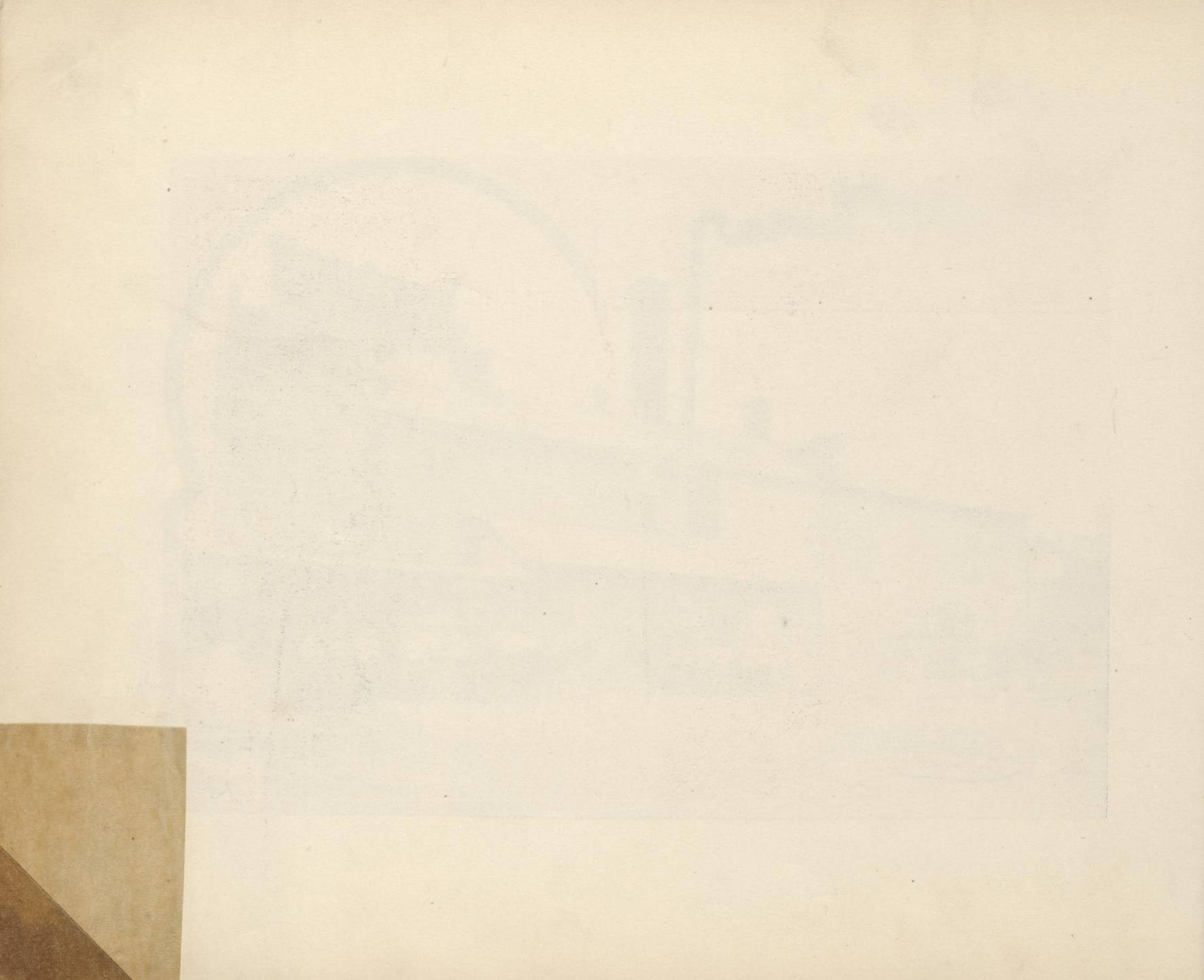


FRANK MATHIE
BREWING CO.









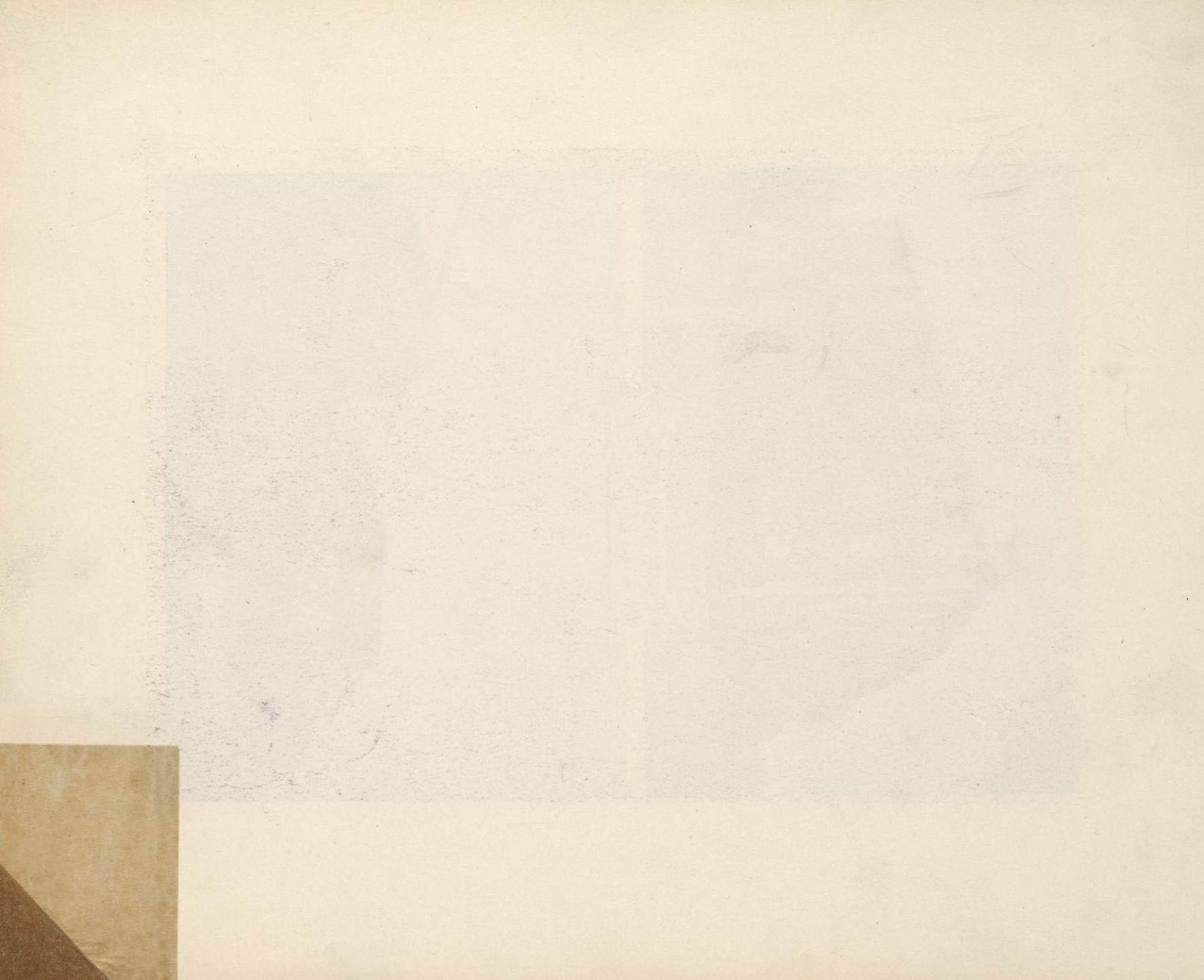


CURTIS BROS. & CO.
SASH, DOORS & BLINDS FACTORY.

WAREHOUSE.



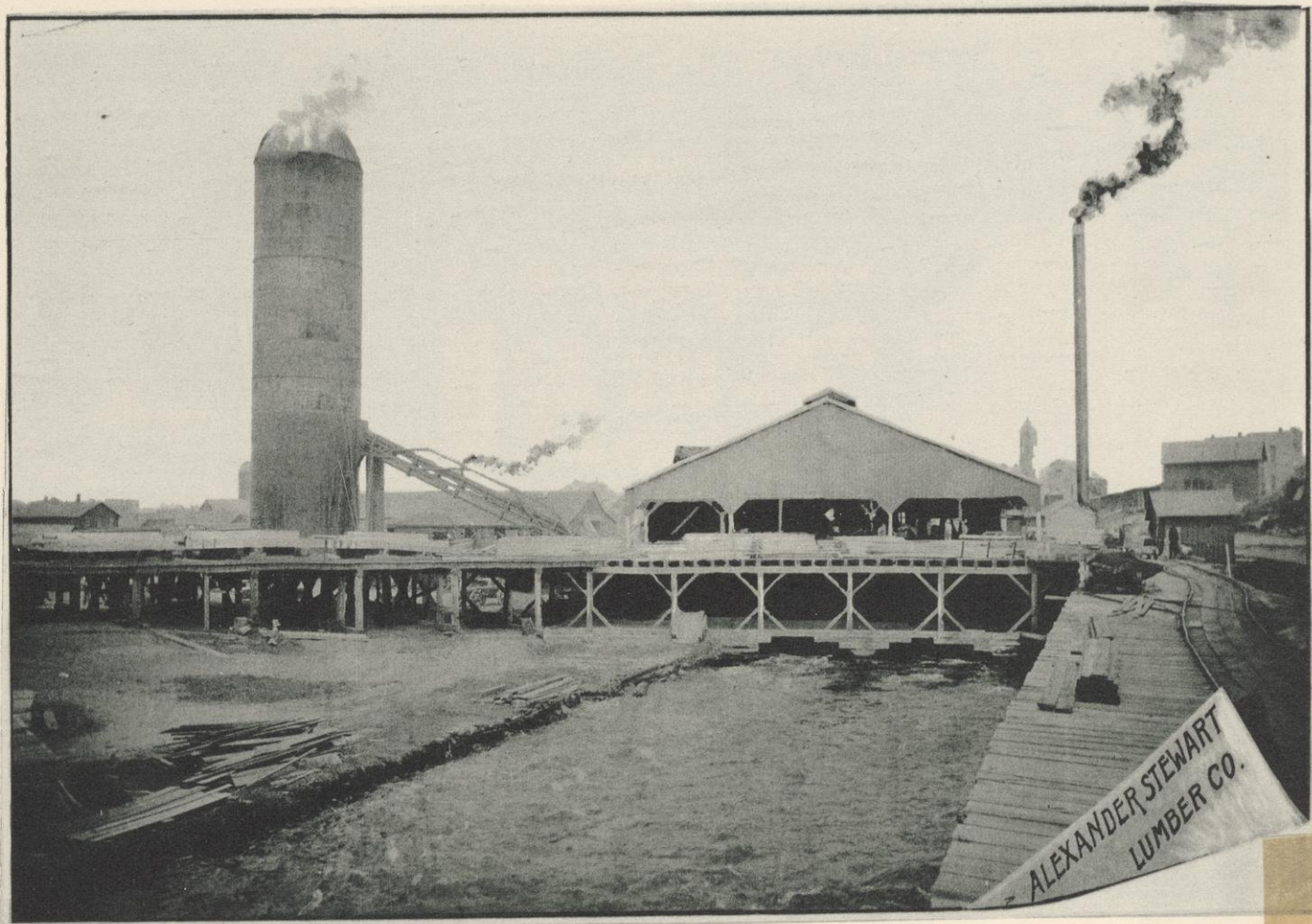
FACTORY.





D.L. PLUMER'S
SAW MILL.

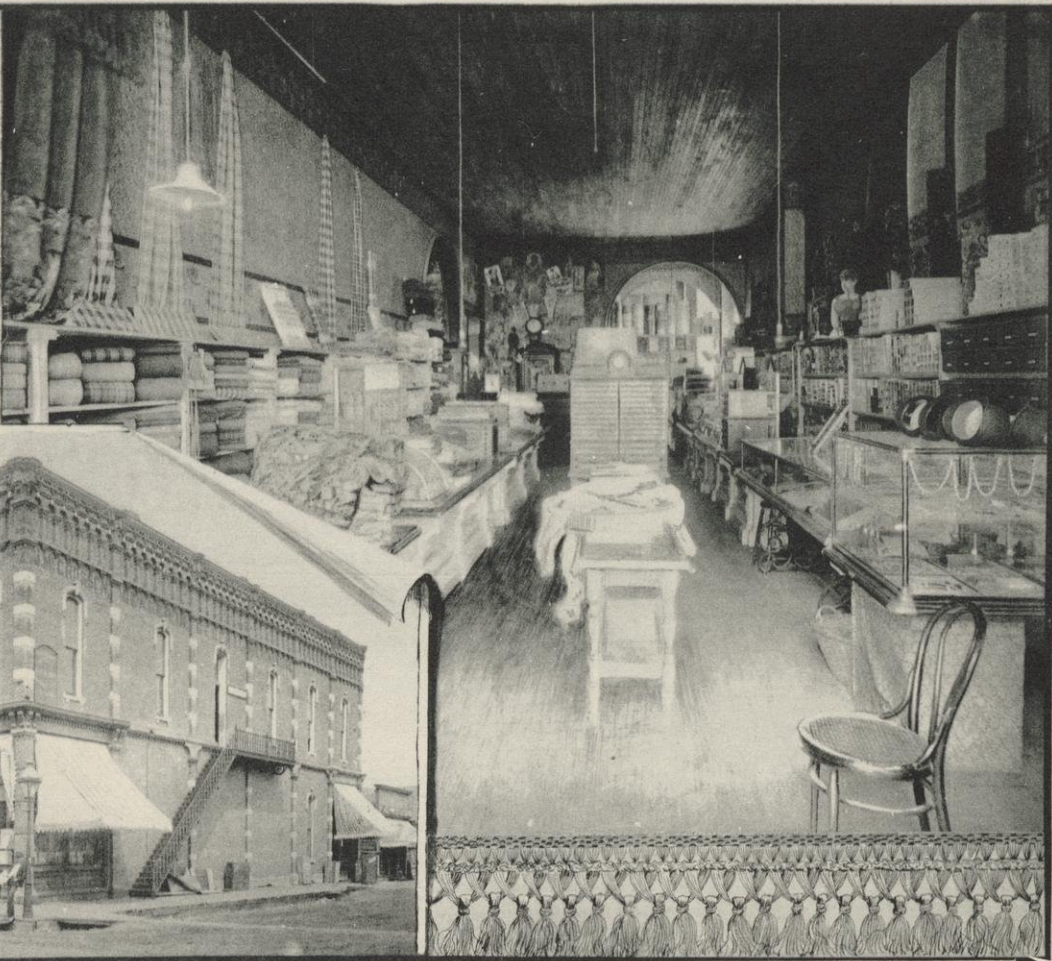






INTERIOR OF
DANA & KELLY'S JEWELRY STORE.

J.A. McCROSSEN
DRY GOODS.
GROCERIES
ETC.

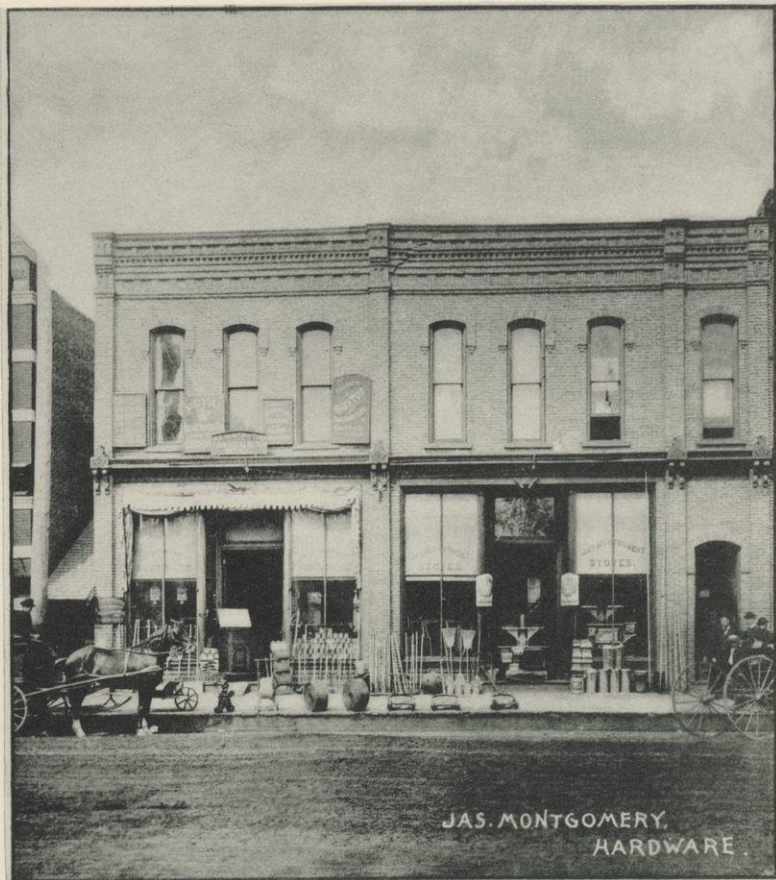


HEINEMANN BROS
THE BEE HIVE STORE





THE CENTRAL WISCONSIN,
R. H. JOANSON, Prop.



JAS. MONTGOMERY
HARDWARE



WM. F. COLLINS
HARDWARE



RESIDENCE OF DR. J.E. GARREY.

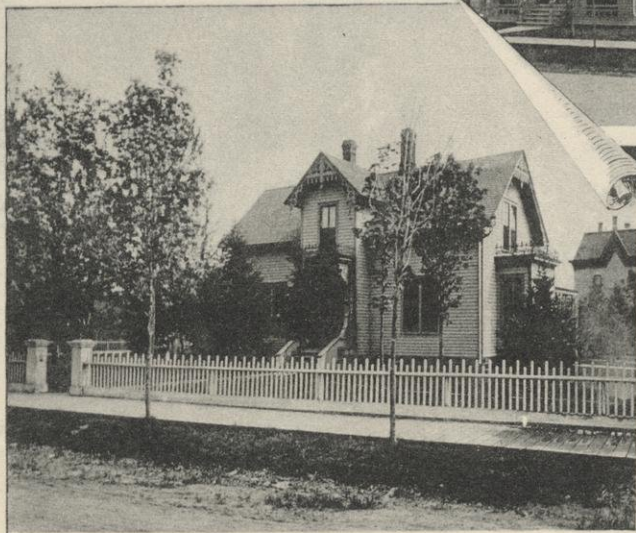


RESIDENCE OF J.M. SMITH.

RESIDENCE OF
C.S. CURTIS

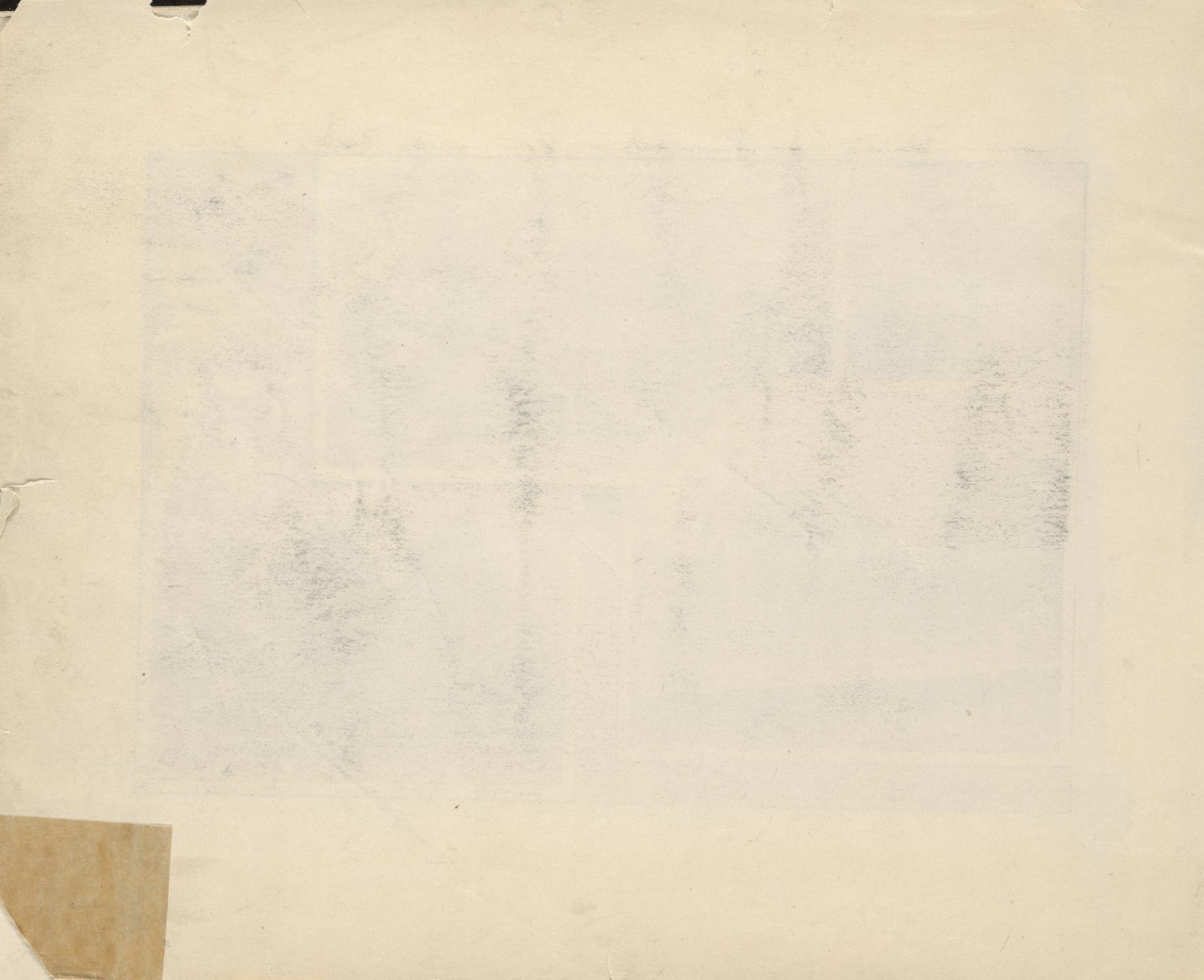


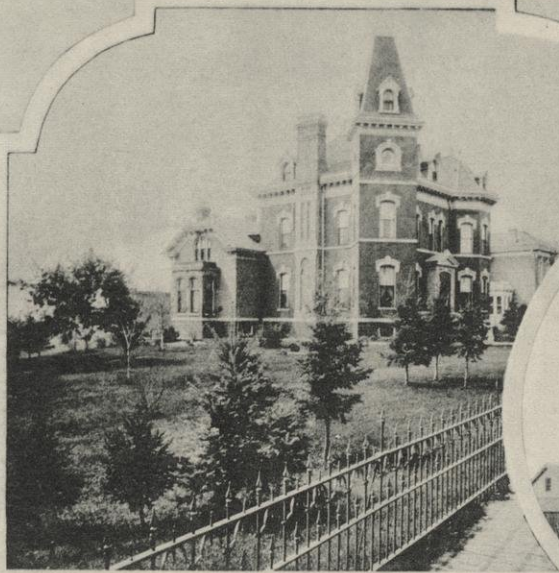
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RESIDENCE OF C.W. HARGER



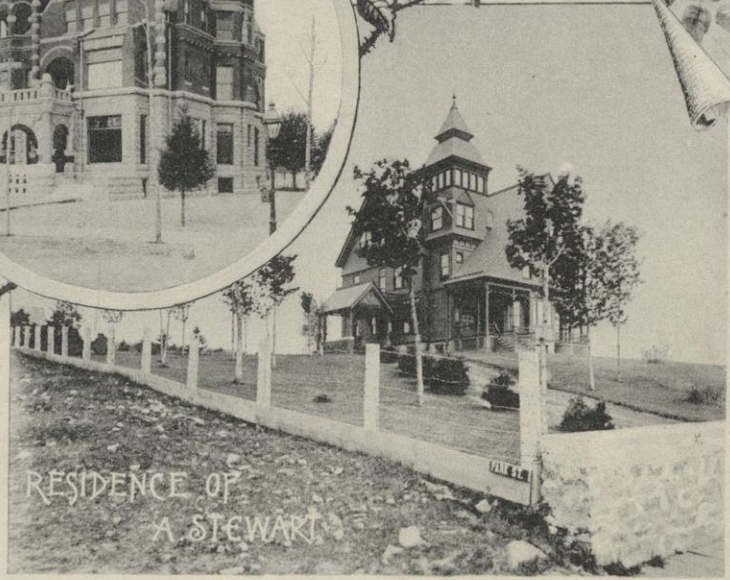




RESIDENCE OF
D. L. PLUMER



RESIDENCE OF G. SILVERTHORN



RESIDENCE OF
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