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Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

NPS Form 10-900
United States Department of the 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Hofmann Apiaries
Other names/site number: _____
Name of related multiple property listing: **N/A**
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 4661 420th Avenue
City or town: Janesville State: MN County: Waseca
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___**national** X **statewide** ___**local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X **A** ___**B** ___**C** ___**D**

Barbara Howard November 24, 2015

Signature of certifying official/Title: Barbara Mitchell Howard, Deputy SHPO, MNHS **Date**

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

Hofmann Apiaries
Name of Property

Waseca, MN
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Joe Edson N. Beall 1.19.16

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: [X]

Public – Local [ ]

Public – State [ ]

Public – Federal [ ]

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) [X]

District [ ]

Site [ ]

Structure [ ]

Object [ ]

Hofmann Apiaries
Name of Property

Waseca, MN
County and State

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	1	buildings
2		sites
4	1	structures
		objects
10	2	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
AGRICULTURE/Animal facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
_____OTHER_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: _WOOD; METAL; CONCRETE; ASPHALT; STUCCO

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Hofmann Apiaries is located approximately five miles northeast of Janesville, Minnesota. (*Figures 1-2*) The 4-acre parcel is L-shaped with a 536-foot (east-west) frontage on 420th Avenue, and is approximately 528 feet deep (north-south). The site is primarily covered in grass with a variety of tree types planted around the periphery of the farm and apiary hive yards. There is a circular asphalt drive that loops off of 420th Avenue and provides access to the garage and paths to the outbuildings. The nominated property encompasses all extant contributing buildings, structures and sites related to the historic apiary. (*Figures 3-4*) Non-extant resources are discussed in the Lost Resources section below.

The most prominent structure on the site is the 1923 Honey House, a large barn-like, cross-shaped building with gambrel roofs. The structure, located on the eastern edge of the nominated site, housed the honey extraction, processing, canning and storage functions of the apiary business. The Honey House retains good exterior integrity, displays excellent interior integrity and remains today an outstanding example of Emil Hofmann's creative design and entrepreneurial spirit.

Other apiary-related resources, all located to the west or northwest of the Honey House, include an intact Winter Bee Cellar, Reservoir, Pump House, Smoking Equipment Shed, Wax Shed, Machine Shed, the hive Main Yard, and the North Yard.

A simple vernacular Farmhouse dating to 1884 faces 420th Avenue to the south. The Farmhouse, which also served as the apiary business office, over time experienced footprint modifications, changes in fenestration, front porch alterations, and the addition of artificial siding over its original clapboard. However, most of the major modifications happened before 1933, the end of the period of significance.

Narrative Description

Contributing Buildings (4) – The contributing buildings related to the apiary functions and used within the period of significance (1907-1933) are the Honey House, Wax Shed, Machine Shed and Farmhouse.

Honey House – *(Figures 3-4, 6-7, 10-11, 14-18, Photos 3, 11-24, 28)*
Original barn built circa 1901; converted to Honey House 1908; major alterations 1923. Approximately 80 feet east/west and 44 feet north/south.
This distinctive building is the true heart of the property and contains most of the original features, including the warming room, the extraction room, the honey tanks (three of six remain), the weighing and canning room and an early, central utility elevator.

The building has three major massings that include a one-and-a-half story gambrel-roofed west wing, a raised basement and one-and-a-half story central block with gambrel roof, and a one-and-a-half story gambrel-roofed east wing/garage. The building's entire roof displays aged asphalt shingles. The west wing elevations are sheathed in lap siding, and the elevations of the center mass and east wing display fiber-cement siding shingles. The date of this siding application is unknown.

The west wing (formerly pig barn) retains its original clapboard siding. The central and garage components of the Honey House are clad in fiber-cement shingles. The windows on the three-component structure are a mix of original and replacement sash.

Honey House west wing
The west wing originally housed the warehouse, the workshop, and an upper-level storage area for the business. The interiors have retained their original integrity, with most of their original furniture and built-ins.

The west-facing elevation of the west massing displays an end gambrel and lap siding. At grade level, the fenestration includes a wood entry door with two lights and a two-over-two wood-frame window to the south. On the upper level under the gambrel is a centered loft door flanked by four-over-four wood-frame windows.
The south-facing elevation displays a series of paired one-by-one wood windows, and two

wood access doors. At the upper level the roof displays a shed dormer with a pair of two-over-two wood windows. The dormer has a ribbed metal roof. The easterly end of the elevation supports a metal shed roof over an exposed fieldstone foundation. This once was the location for an open stair for direct access from outside into the honey extracting room. *(Figure 18)*

The north-facing elevation displays a series of paired four-light wood windows and an access door with a six-light window. On the north side the wing sits on a partially exposed fieldstone foundation.

A brick chimney projects directly north of the roof ridge near the central mass.

Honey House central block

The central portion of the structure housed the honey tank and boiler room, the hive warming room, the honey extracting room, the elevator platform, and upper-level storage areas. The rooms retain their original finishes and relationships. The extracting room retains the built-in honey tanks, extracting equipment and a corner sink.

The axis of the main mass is north/south with gambrels at both ends. The exterior walls are sheathed in fiber-cement shingles and sit on a stucco-covered foundation. Originally the major window openings displayed six-over-six wood-frame, double-hung windows. Today some of the openings have lost their original sash, replaced with one-over-one windows.

On the upper story, under the gambrel, the south-facing elevation shows two window openings. The westerly opening displays what remains of an upper, deteriorating six-over-six wood sash. The opening has been boarded over from the interior. To the east is a one-over-one aluminum-framed window.

The south-facing first floor displays three window openings covered with one-over-one aluminum-framed storm windows. Below the raised basement, sheathed in stucco, are two openings with their original six-over-six wood-frame, double-hung windows and aluminum-framed storm windows over both.

Both the east and west facing elevations on the first floor display two window openings with one-over-one aluminum-framed windows. At the basement level on the west-facing elevation there are three original six-over-six wood-frame, double-hung windows, two of which are covered with aluminum storm windows.

The fenestration on the north-facing elevation of the central block consists of two six-over-six wood-frame, double-hung windows with aluminum-framed windows on the upper level, and two window openings with aluminum-framed windows on the lower level. At the basement level there is a projecting entry vestibule sheathed in lap siding, displaying an original six-over-six double-hung, wood window adjacent to an access door.

There is a large brick chimneystack that projects from the roof adjacent to the southerly roof ridge.

Honey House east wing
This wing houses the at-grade garage and an upper level storage area. The interior rooms have retained their original integrity.

The east wing is sheathed in cement fibrous shingles. The south-facing elevation displays hinged, windowless, vertical-board barn doors approached by an earthen ramp. The east-facing elevation displays a single six-over-six original wood, double-hung window in the gambrel, and two six-over-six original wood, double-hung windows on the first floor above a stucco-sheathed raised basement.

On the north elevation there are two six-over-six original wood, double-hung windows above a stucco-sheathed raised basement.

Wax Shed – *(Figures 3-4, Photos 25-27)*
Built 1926. Approximately 20 feet east/west by 40 feet north/south.
The construction of the Wax Shed in 1926 allowed Hofmann Apiaries to separate the processing and storage of the wax from the honey extraction operation. Beeswax sales played a secondary role to the honey operation, but the shed was instrumental for the clean and controlled storage of the hive wax and helped prevent bacterial bee diseases.

The Wax Shed is located to the north of the Farmhouse. The one-story rectangular structure has a low-pitched, asphalt-shingled, gabled roof, and shiplap wood siding. A large brick chimneystack stands adjacent to the southerly end of the roof ridge. A shorter gabled wing projects off the northeast corner of the building. The structure displays original four-over-four wood-frame, double-hung windows. The south-facing facade is composed of a small loft door under the gable, with an entry door flanked by windows below. The interior remains open with a concrete floor and the walls have been insulated with a modern rigid material.

Machine Shed – *(Figures 3-4, Photos 27)*
Built early 1900s. Approximately 30 feet east/west by 46 feet north/south.
This structure housed the steam engine, clover huller and heavy equipment used in harvesting the clover seed. Clover was a major food source for the Hofmann bee colonies.

The machine shed with a gabled corrugated metal roof is one of the older structures on the site. The structure is clad in vertical wood siding and sits on a fieldstone foundation. The shed displays an irregular window pattern on its south-facing facade and large swinging barn doors on its west elevation.

Farmhouse – *(Figures 3-4, 8, Photos 1-3)*
Built 1884; major additions/alterations 1921, 1948. Approximately 30 feet east/west by 40 feet north/south.

Still a private residence, the original Folk Victorian Farmhouse faces south to 420th Avenue. Though the interior has been altered, the exterior maintains the same footprint as it did after 1921 alterations. The vernacular Farmhouse has an asphalt-shingled roof, and is sheathed in aluminum siding (1948) over clapboard siding. The foundation is covered in concrete.

The house displays a variety of original and later window openings. While the original fenestration was two-over-two sash in a balanced, symmetrical placement, by the mid-century the first floor openings had been modified to accept shorter and wider modern windows. New one-over-one windows with metal storm windows have replaced the original, 19th-century sash.

The Farmhouse originally displayed a shallow one-story open front porch tucked into the el-shaped footprint. When the house was expanded in 1921 the porch was also expanded to the south and became an enclosed three-season porch. In 1948 the enclosed porch was removed and a vestibule was attached to the front door opening. The remainder of the porch was left open as a deck with a modern limestone foundation.

Contributing Structures (4) – The contributing structures related to the apiary functions and within the period of significance (1907-1933) are the Winter Bee Cellar, Smoking Equipment Shed, Reservoir, and Pump House.

Winter Bee Cellar – *(Figures 3-4, Photos 6-10)*
Built circa 1921. Approximately 29 feet east/west by 19 feet north/south.
The one remaining bee cellar demonstrates the bee wintering system. In 1924 there were four cellars, but today only the Home Yard cellar remains. The interior of this building remains completely intact.

The Winter Bee Cellar is located to the west of the Honey House and adjacent to the Reservoir and Pump House, all of which are northwest of the hive Home Yard. The Bee Cellar is a wood-frame structure clad in corrugated metal sheathing. The shed has a gabled roof and sits on a raised fieldstone foundation that is surrounded by an earth berm. A wood and corrugated metal door on the east elevation provides access to the upper level of the structure. A wooden bulkhead door in the east berm provides access to the cellar's lower level.

The upper level interior is open with a wood-framed screened floor supporting a layer of straw. The lower level, where the bees were overwintered, displays the screened hay ceiling, and sidewalls of fieldstone. The hay-covered screening provided air circulation between the two levels.

Smoking Equipment Shed – *(Figures 3-4, Photos 10-11)*
Date unknown, likely early 1900s. Circular, approximately 5 feet in diameter.
This freestanding container sits between the Winter Bee Cellar and the Honey House. The small, circular metal cabinet was used to store the hive smoking equipment. The storage unit is supported on a concrete foundation and displays a single hinged door on the easterly side.

Reservoir – *(Figures 4, Photos 3-5, 10)*
Built 1921. Bermed, approximately 30 feet east/west by 20 feet north/south.
The water reservoir consists of a concrete tank that is surrounded by an earth mound contained at its base by a 3.5-foot fieldstone octagonal wall partially covered in concrete. The rectangular exposed concrete top shows approximately 12 inches above the mound; there is a round, steel manhole cover at the west end of the top.

Pump House – *(Figures 4, Photos 5)*
Built circa 1921. Approximately 10 feet east/west by 8 feet north/south.
The Pump House is a small, wood-frame gabled shed that sits adjacent to the Reservoir. The structure contains the electrical circuitry for the operation of the farm's water pumping system. The structure is sheathed in stucco with lap siding on the end gables. The window openings support original four-over-four and two-over-two wood-frame, double-hung windows. Access is provided via a vertical wood plank door on the west-facing elevation.

Contributing Sites (2) – The contributing sites related to the apiary functions and within the period of significance (1907-1933) are the hive Home Yard and North Yard. Crucial to the site's integrity are the two remaining hive yards, which are flat, open sites where the beehives were placed.

Home Yard – *(Figures 3-4, 8-10, 14, 18, Photo 28)*
Used by 1907. Approximately 100 feet east/west by 60 feet north/south.
The Home Yard, which is located along and just north of 420th Avenue, held 20-30 hives. No structures have since been built on the original open yard.

North Yard – *(Figures 3-4, Photo 29)*
Used by 1925. Approximately 70 feet east/west by 110 feet north/south.
The North Yard was primarily used for preparing the off-site yards' hive boxes and their colonies for overwintering in the large adjacent bee cellar. The North Yard is located north of the Wax Shed, and remains open and well defined by the surrounding vegetation. Adjacent and west of the North Yard under volunteer brush is a slightly raised ridge that marks the site of the lost out-yard bee cellar. No structures have since been built on the original open yard.

Non-contributing structure and building – The non-contributing structure and building are an early corncrib, and a modern garage.

Corncrib – *(Figure 4, Photo 6)*
Built in the late 1800s.
This early structure is a remnant of the original farm functions and had no direct association with the apiary functions. The wood-frame, rectangular farm structure is approximately 6' wide, 26' long and 11' tall. The walls, which are covered in lath, support a metal shed roof. The gables are at the east and west elevations and the west elevation displays a simple wood plank door with a loft door above. The corncrib sits north of the Home Yard.

Residential Garage – *(Figure 4, Photo 7 partial)*
Built in the 1960s.
This rectangular metal-clad, two-car garage is approximately 20' wide, 24' deep and 12' high. The sides are covered in vertically ridged metal siding and support a shallow gabled metal roof. The garage door faces to the southeast and supports an overhead double garage door. The building also displays a pedestrian utility door at the southerly end of the southwest-facing wall. There are two, small louvered glass windows, one in each of the other 2 walls. The garage is located directly across the asphalt drive and northwest of the Farmhouse.

Lost Resources – There is one apiary-related building within the National Register boundary that has been lost through time. The North Yard once displayed a large winter bee cellar that dated to the mid-1920s. (*Figure 4*) It was a later and larger version of the extant Winter Bee Cellar (circa 1921) that is adjacent to the Home Yard. It was constructed of cement block with an earth berm and sheltered under a tin shed roof. The structure was used to house the out-yard bee colonies over the winter. The cellar was partially destroyed in a 1960s storm, suffered from neglect after its use was discontinued, and was eventually demolished.

In the early years the grounds around the apiary displayed a series of graveled roads that provided truck access to all sides of the Honey House, to the Machine Shed, and looped around the North Yard. Today the paths are grown over with grass, however, some of the patterns of vehicular travel within the site are still evident.

Other Considerations – The Hofmann family maintained a 100-acre working farm (*Figure 2*) long before the Hofmann Apiaries was founded, and continued to farm the land during and after the period of significance. The farm maintained a variety of other livestock — including chickens, pigs, and cows — as well as fields and vegetable gardens. Several buildings related to these farming functions, including the windmill, chicken coop, and a cow barn, have been lost over time. The extant farm-related structures outside of the nomination boundary are located to the north and northwest of the Honey House. They include a large modern metal-clad pole barn and two early 20th century corncribs.

From west to east the land gently slopes down past the Honey House to the wetlands around Mud Lake *(Figure 2).* While the Hofmann family still retains ownership of the nearly 40-acre Parcel C, a large share of it has been placed in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

No apiary-related resources remain outside of the National Register boundary of the property.

Historic Integrity

For a property to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places it must retain most aspects of its historic integrity. The Hofmann Apiaries resources present an exceptionally strong sense of place due to the site's strength in all of these areas.

Location: The apiary site is still at its original location. No property resources have been moved or relocated.

Setting and Design: Not only does Hofmann Apiaries remain at its original location, it also retains its original setting and sense of place. Except for the lost north yard bee cellar, the apiary buildings remain in situ, and maintain their relationship to each other. They are surrounded by intact landscape resources including mature trees, surrounding crop fields, and to the east a conservancy of the lower wetlands that remain in Hofmann family ownership.

Materials: Many of the apiary buildings, including the Reservoir, Wax Shed, Pump House, and Machine Shed retain their original construction and materials. The Honey House retains most of its original construction with the most significant change being an early partial re-sheathing in fiber-cement wall shingles. The Farmhouse retains the original clapboards underneath the 1948 siding, as well as its 1921 footprint and foundation. Landscape materials generally remain intact.

Workmanship: Emil Hofmann's original distinctive workmanship, including his much-admired design for the Honey House, remains clearly evident.

Feeling and Association: Hofmann Apiaries maintains its exceptional integrity in this category. The site gives an exceedingly strong sense of place, and encourages the interpretation of the process and the importance of American beekeeping. It is easily understood and highly evocative.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [X] 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.)

- [ ] 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
AGRICULTURE

Period of Significance
1907-1933

Significant Dates
1908
1923

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Hofmann, Emil

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Hofmann Apiaries, located at 4661 420th Avenue, near Janesville, Minnesota, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, with the Area of Significance being Agriculture. Its level of significance is statewide, due to its prominence in the beekeeping industry and high honey production levels. The apiary relates to the state context of "Railroads and Agricultural Development: 1870-1950."

The period of significance begins in 1907, when historic photos show that Emil Hofmann had begun designating extensive resources to keeping bees, and also when planning began for the 1908 conversion of the hog barn to a dedicated Honey House. The period of significance ends in 1933, when the local Janesville bank foreclosed on the farm.

The importance of the Hofmann Apiaries is in its role as a preeminent and innovative business that achieved significant state and national recognition for its beekeeping practices. The apiary function is clearly demonstrated in the remaining resources, which retain exceptional integrity and which effectively demonstrate the history of beekeeping practices in Minnesota.[1]

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Introduction

Hofmann Apiaries is significant for its important role in Minnesota beekeeping industry, and for the innovative production and processing practices developed there. Initially the Hofmanns operated a late nineteenth century farm typical of its time and region, with small, hand-tilled corn and grain fields and a modest livestock base consisting mostly of cows, with a few pigs and chickens. Emil Hofmann founded his beekeeping endeavors on a chance encounter with a natural swarm of bees around the turn of the twentieth century, and from that modest beginning built a multi-generational business that was one of the honey-producing leaders in Minnesota and the Upper Midwest.

Emil Hofmann was especially known for his innovative techniques, which included early adoption of the alternative Dadant hive,[2] and for unusual feeding and overwintering techniques,

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[1] The Hofmann Apiaries is also one of the few documented historic apiaries in the nation, with the only other bee-related listing on the National Register of Historic Places being Langstroth Cottage (Oxford, Ohio), the home of noted American beekeeper L. L. Langstroth, listed to the Register in 1976. The Apiary Building at the University of Massachusetts – Amherst is listed as a contributing building to that university's historic resources, but the full campus has not been added to the Register. Ash Hill Apiary is a modern apiary located on the grounds of the Register-listed Ash Hill property in Hyattsville, Maryland, but it is not a historic resource for the site.

[2] The Dadant family, which emigrated from France to America in 1863, became the intellectual heirs to L. L. Langstroth's work, eventually gaining the rights to the seminal beekeeping guide *The Hive and the Honeybee* in 1885 and translating it into Italian, Russian, Spanish and Polish. The Dadant hive was very similar to Langstroth's innovation, but somewhat larger. According to Amos and Ernest Root in the 1917 book *The ABC and XYZ of Bee Culture,* Dadant enthusiasts claimed that the structures had higher production, were more efficient, swarmed less, and wintered better. Please see a narrative discussion of

all of which led to highly efficient production. His apiaries were also known for the cleanliness of the facility, especially the expansive Honey House. When Emil's son, Charles, took over the business upon his father's death in 1934, he in turn became noteworthy for his public administrative and educational contributions to the beekeeping field.

All but one of the original bee-related buildings, as well as a few of the production resources and some of the original hive yards remain today.[3] This gives Hofmann Apiaries a highly evocative sense of place.

Beekeeping in America

Beekeeping is one of the world's earliest agricultural industries, with hives found in Israel dating back to the 9th century BCE.[4] The first honeybees in America were shipped from England to Virginia in 1622, and to other Colonies soon after.[5] The first hives cultivated in America were based on the European straw skep,[6] soon to be followed by wooden box hives.

In 1851, American minister, educator, and amateur scientist Lorenzo Lorraine (L.L.) Langstroth revolutionized American honey production by inventing the movable frame hive (also known as the box hive).[7] Langstroth, who had begun working with bees as a hobby in the 1840s, had become a self-taught expert on honey production. He noted that the hives held a "bee space" — an area of about 5/16ths of an inch that the bees naturally kept open. He applied this to the whole hive, creating a box filled with panels, each 5/16ths of an inch apart, all easily removed from the hive and replaced after harvest. Langstroth published his classic book *The Hive and the Honeybee* in 1853, and became known as the "Father of American Beekeeping."[8] Langstroth Cottage, the Oxford Ohio home in which he lived from 1858-1887, is the only resource currently on the National Register because of its significant association with American beekeeping.

New methods of beekeeping followed very quickly after Langstroth's discoveries, including the introduction of man-made wax comb foundations within the boxes, and the development of alternative structures (such as the Quinby and Dadant hives).[9] Additional innovations included new extracting methods such as the centrifugal honey extractor, more consistent smoking techniques, and even an evolved beekeeper's veil.

Another major innovation in American beekeeping was the introduction of Italian bee stock, beginning in 1860.[10] The Italian bees were considered superior to the American bee stock for a number of reasons,

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wooden box hives.

[3] Hive yards were open, flat grounds upon which the hives were placed either for honey production or in transition and preparation for winter storage in bee cellars.

[4] American Beekeeping Federation, "Beelogics", accessed August 2015, http://www.abfnet.org.

[5] E. Oertel, *History of Beekeeping in the United States,* US Department of Agriculture, 1980, 2.

[6] A *skep* is a man-made domed hive constructed of twisted straw that houses a swarm of bees.

[7] James Sheire, *National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Langstroth Cottage.* National Park Service, 1981.

[8] ibid.

[9] The Quinby hive was developed by Moses Quinby, author of *Mysteries of Beekeeping Explained* (1853). It was another kind of movable-frame hive, but with different dimensions (18.5 x 11.25 inches) and 12 frames. The Langstroth hive was 18.25 x 14.625 inches and 10 frames, and the Dadant hive was 18.5 x 11.25 inches with 10 frames.

[10] Oertel, 4.

including better temperament and a resistance to disease, especially one known as "foulbrood."[11] An American-Italian hybrid strain soon became the dominant American domesticated honeybee.[12]

Most American apiaries started on a small scale, often as elements of other agricultural endeavors. Due to transportation and storage issues, as well as the challenges inherent in managing larger enterprises with multiple colonies, most apiaries were exclusively local and served small areas.[13]

Commercial beekeeping in America hit its peak just after World War I, due to a confluence of refined techniques, higher demand, and better distribution. As various sugar and manufactured syrups became more popular in the late 1920s[14] into the early 1940s,[15] demand and thus production then diminished.

The Evolution from Hofmann Farm to Hofmann Apiaries

The Historic Hofmann Apiaries began as a small Minnesota farm. Twenty-five-year-old Valentine Hofmann immigrated to the United States in 1871, following friends who had settled in the Janesville area of southern Minnesota.[16] Soon after, he sent for his fiancée, Rosalia (aka Rosalea) Frodl, and the couple became the first to be married at St. Jarleth Catholic Church on June 9, 1872.[17] In 1873, they purchased forty acres of land in Janesville Township, a little over three miles west/northwest of the church site. The farmland was originally owned by Joseph Crown who had been granted the site in November 1859 through a Bounty Land Patent for his previous service in the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), though when the Hofmanns bought it the land had changed hands at least once. Most of the land was still forested, with five cleared acres and a one-room log cabin rumored to be so small that, when Valentine traded a load of wood for a rocking chair, he had to tie it to the cabin rafters because there was otherwise no room for it.

In 1875, the family purchased sixty more acres, which included twenty acres of wetlands.[18] By 1884, the land had been mostly cleared and planted, and the Hofmanns were able to construct a wood-frame house for themselves and their four sons — the oldest being Emil (born 1874), then Henry (born 1878), Adolph (born 1880), and Julius (born 1882).[19] That Farmhouse, with additions, still stands on the property today. *(Photos 1-3)*

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[11] American foulbrood is the most widespread, and considered the most destructive, of bacterial bee brood diseases. It spreads through spores, which infest the larvae, which darken and die in the cells. It spreads quickly, easily wiping out multiple hives, and the spores can live for up to forty years. A destructive disease of honeybee larvae caused by bacteria, American foulbrood is a major threat to the American beekeeping industry.

[12] In the early 20th century, Hofmann Apiaries placed numerous advertisements in the American Bee Journal referencing their Italian stock.

[13] The number of Minnesota apiaries in the early 1900s is difficult to track. Beekeeping at that time often consisted of just a few hives at a farm providing honey to family, friends, and neighbors. By 1910, Minnesota agricultural records counted the number of hives, but oddly enough not the number of apiaries. The fact that beekeeping at the Hofmann farm was considered an apiary at all, when so many other beekeepers were relegated to hobby status, is significant.

[14] Frank C. Pellett, "Factory Methods Applied to Honey Production," *American Bee Journal*, (November 1928): 554-556.

[15] David Schaaf, oral interview, August 29, 2015.

[16] Charles S. Hofmann, *My Life and a History of the Hofmann Farm*. Minneapolis: Hofmann Studios, 2004, 85.

[17] Charles S. Hofmann, 87.

[18] Larry Hofmann, unpublished family history, 2012, 3.

[19] US Federal Census, Janesville, MN, 1900.

In the 1880-90s, the land was cleared for farming, and the purchase debt paid down as income grew from their labors. Family history states that the boys had all left the home by the end of the century,[20] but the 1900 federal census indicates that they all resided at the farm with their mother as the Head of Household.[21] The *Janesville Argus* from the time period includes several tidbits about Emil's travel adventures in particular, as he traveled to the East Coast, then out to Seattle, and finally to southern California, where he apparently played on the San Diego baseball team, was a stagehand at the Fisher Opera House, and worked as a painter at the Hotel del Coronado.[22] When Valentine died on April 23, 1900, at the age of 54, only Emil had an interest in the farm, taking over the family business and supporting his widowed mother.[23] Initially, he ran the farm much as his father had, growing corn and grain, and maintaining a small dairy herd. He soon (circa 1901) decided to add purebred Chester White hogs to the farm, and borrowed money to construct a dedicated hog barn.[24] This was the building that would eventually be converted into the Honey House.

The exact date when the Hofmann farm began its transformation from a small farm into a successful beekeeping facility is somewhat uncertain.[25] Emil's son, Charles Hofmann, notes in his autobiography a story about Emil noticing a swarm of wild honeybees making a temporary landing on a small bush close to the house.[26] Hofmann family records place that event circa 1903. Fascinated by the swarm, Emil crafted a makeshift hive, and when the bees occupied it, the Hofmann Apiaries was born. With few role models, Emil began to educate himself on beekeeping.

The earliest known photographs of the farm as a beekeeping operation were taken in 1907. A picture of the farmstead shows the barn/Honey House still in operation as a hog barn *(Figure 7)*, but other photos from that same year show Emil tending bees in the Home Yard with nine hives evident *(Figure 8)*. A photograph with a broader view from the same time period features Emil, his wife Clara (whom he married in 1906) and infant daughter Gretchen (born 1906) in the Home Yard with almost twenty hives *(Figure 9)*. Son Charles Hofmann was born in 1908.

Hofmann Apiaries Grows

Though a niche crop such as honey might have seemed a risky investment, it was relatively inexpensive to establish and soon paid off. Between 1906 and 1908 the markets for grains and especially for livestock began to decline, and Emil made the decision to discontinue hog farming and focus on beekeeping, while still maintaining a small farmstead. In 1908 he converted the hog barn into a basic Honey House, purchased larger-scale field equipment, and established the Home Yard and four offsite "out-yards" in which to place the various hives.[27] The Honey House, as it was originally conceived from the converted barn, had an open space in front for extraction, storage in the back, and a small separate workshop area

[20] Larry Hofmann, oral interview, May 25, 2013.
[21] Census, 1900.
[22] *Janesville Argus*, January 31, 1896; May 3, 1899; June 28, 1899; January 10, 1900.
[23] Charles S. Hofmann, 2004, 95-96.
[24] Charles S. Hofmann, 2004, 96; *Janesville Argus,* April 20, 1904.
[25] The distinctive circa 1930 Hofmann Apiaries letterhead proudly proclaims "Established 1899," but that would seem extremely unlikely, since at that time Emil was still in California, and the farm was being run conventionally by Valentine.
[26] Charles S. Hofmann, 2004, 97.
[27] Larry Hofmann, unpublished family history, 2012, 6.

(presumably to keep hardware and tools separate from the sticky honey products).[28]

Emil Hofmann's beekeeping during that period also led to a major agricultural change for both his farm and the surrounding area. American tastes of the time tended to favor lighter-colored, sweeter honey. The honey produced in the southern states was stronger in flavor, but lighter in color, than in the North. A dark, strong-tasting honey came from buckwheat, while goldenrod led to a bright gold color. The lightest honey came from alfalfa and light clover.[29]

While researching nectar Emil learned that alsike clover was not only a preferred flower for the bees, but also that in the Eastern U.S. farmers were growing the perennial clover crop for hay and pasture. Alsike was not then commonly grown in Minnesota, but Emil tried a pilot crop in 1907 [30] to great success. The next year he planted his own fields with alsike clover and began offering seed to surrounding farms.[31] Then he purchased a relatively expensive clover huller and steam engine,[32] and began to offer his services as a contract huller to neighboring farms.[33] Larry Hofmann, Charles' son, believes that the farm's Machinery Shed may have been built around this time, in order to store the huller and engine.[34] Although the bees were the main focus for the Hofmann Apiary, by 1912 the clover provided a valuable secondary income stream, with the *Janesville Argus* reporting "He had seventeen acres…[netting] $51.10 an acre." The clover was especially valuable since it both fed the bees and could then itself be sold, with the same paper commenting, "The fact that his bees imbibed the nectar did not depreciate the value of the crop."[35]

Within a few years, Janesville became one of the leading alsike clover centers in the United States.[36] Charles Hofmann's autobiography proudly states that "for quite a period of time in the fall, more freight cars left Janesville than from the city of Mankato because of the many carloads of alsike clover seed being shipped." [37] As the American Bee Journal also asserted, "The improvement of a locality really goes hand in hand with large scale honey production management."[38]

While the clover was an important focus, for the Hofmanns the honey production remained the main business. By 1911, Emil was said to have 450 "swarms of bees," [39] and by the 1920s this had grown to nearly 1,000 colonies. He was active in state beekeeping politics, including lobbying the legislature for beekeeping regulation,[40] and was appointed Deputy State Bee Inspector later that year.[41]

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[28] Larry Hofmann, oral interview, 2014.
[29] *Facts About Honey*, Hofmann Apiaries, Published by Hofmann Farms, 1916, 1.
[30] *Janesville Argus,* January 29, 1908.
[31] *Janesville Argus,* November 25, 1908.
[32] *Janesville Argus,* August 25, 1909.
[33] Charles S. Hofmann, 2004, 99.
[34] Larry Hofmann, oral interview, 2014.
[35] *Janesville Argus,* November 27, 1912
[36] E.W. Atkins, "Sound Methods Make Beekeeping a Real Business," *American Bee Journal*, (March 1925): 116-118.
[37] Charles S. Hofmann, 2004, 100.
[38] E.W. Atkins, "Sound Methods Make Beekeeping a Real Business," *American Bee Journal*, (March 1925): 116-118.
[39] *Janesville Argus*, February 1, 1911.
[40] ibid; *Janesville Argus,* May 10, 1911.
[41] *Janesville Argus*, July 5, 1911.

Since honey production was both dependent upon the bees and fairly standardized, it was up to innovative beekeepers to devise means to improve their yields. Emil was especially known for a clean and neat facility and for inventing mechanisms that improved his efficiency and resulted in a greater harvest. From the American Bee Journal: "Hofmann belongs to that rare class combining neatness with good practice and extensive production. His hives are nicely painted, stands are level, grass is cut, all equipment is in place, and everything is slick as the parlor of a Dutch housewife".[42] Indeed, he reportedly paid attention to even the smallest detail, such as placing each hive on a concrete base, and for fully gravelling his roads long before anything else in the county was much more than dirt.[43] As he became more profitable, Emil re-invested in the apiary site, including several alterations to it in the early 1920s, which in turn dramatically increased capacity and allowed him to double the number of colonies.

He built a Reservoir in 1921 *(Photo 4)*, which allowed water to run downhill to the Honey House and across the yard to the basement of the main house, from which it was pumped up to a holding tank on the roof, providing excellent water pressure for the residence. The running water made the Honey House far more efficient and greatly assisted with cleanup, always an issue with sticky honey products. It also allowed for a highly innovative bee feeding technique.

The 2nd floor area above the garage was used for sugar storage and delivery. When the hives were determined to need feeding the Hofmann truck fitted with a 5,000 pound capacity tank partially filled with water would enter the garage and a trap door in the ceiling would be opened to feed sugar into the tank below. The tank was then steam infused to agitate the water and mix the content into syrup that was then delivered to the feeding trays in the hive yards. This feeding system allowed the bees to be efficiently fed in just a few hours by 1-2 men.[44] This allowed for honey production to begin even before early spring blossoms appeared — a distinct advantage in a difficult northern climate.

That same year, 1921, the Farmhouse was expanded significantly, allowing for a larger kitchen, a bathroom, an enclosed porch facing 240th Avenue, a larger basement with a wood and coal-burning furnace, and a small office. Perhaps most significantly, room was added to board 2-3 hired hands as seasonal apiary help.[45]

The third major change to happen at that time was the expansion of the apiary's Winter Bee Cellar *(Photos 6-9),* which turned out to have significant and long-standing effects.[46] Unlike birds, bees do not migrate south over the winter. Generally, they overwintered in situ in the field hives, somewhat protected by telescopic hive covers that kept out the elements and provided some insulation. Often, especially in the North, these covers did not provide enough protection from the cold, and many bees died over the winter. In some cases, beekeepers were known to transport their bees south for the winter, but this was an expensive undertaking that also weakened the stock as the bees mingled with other colonies.

In order to better protect the bees, Emil began to extensively employ overwintering cellars. On the site

[42] *American Bee Journal*, August 1916, 261-262, No author listed.
[43] E.W. Atkins, "Sound Methods Make Beekeeping a Real Business," *American Bee Journal*, (March 1925): 116-118
[44] E.W. Atkins, "Producing and Handling Honey with Efficiency," *American Bee Journal*, (April 1925): 162-164.
[45] Larry Hofmann, oral interview, 2013.
[46] Ibid.

there were two cellars: a larger cellar in the North Yard, and a smaller one in the south or Home Yard. There was at least one other cellar similar in size to the smaller cellar located approximately five miles northwest of the farmstead. The Bee Cellars were quite elaborate, with a foundation that was dug into an embankment. The enclosure above was constructed of fieldstone and cement tile with air space between the walls. The space above the ceiling rafters was packed with clover chaff and/or hay, depending on availability. A ventilation shaft led from the cellar to an outdoor shaft several yards away. Sheets of canvas and/or burlap controlled air access. This led to a constant temperature of 50-55 degrees, which allowed the bees to "winter cluster", and dramatically reduced bee loss, protecting Emil's mature, purebred colonies.[47] The wintering system, plus the above-mentioned feeding techniques, dramatically increased the length of the production year and allowed Hofmann Apiaries to compete with beekeepers in more temperate climes.

Following this work, Emil designed and built a sizable addition to the Honey House in 1923. *(Photos 11-24)* The 1908 conversion from a hog barn to a honey house had been minimal, keeping the same footprint and general appearance while converting the interior to a workshop, extracting space, and maintenance area. As the apiary expanded, greater capacity was needed. Emil added second-floor storage in the former hog barn as well as a large, three-story addition that included a steam-heated warming room (in which he could warm the honey prior to its extraction, which led to a faster and more efficient process), and a newly outfitted extracting room with six honey tanks allowing for total storage of 2,100 gallons (25,200 pounds). A central open freight elevator provided access to the Warming Room and the Extracting Room on the first floor, and the basement's Weighing Room and storage room. (*Photos 22-24*) This utility lift provided for the mobility of heavy loads from all the production rooms to the ample storage space in the basement and the 2nd floor. The high, gambrel roof added height and storage space, and gave the Honey House a distinctive appearance that was noted in the American Bee Journal, that bore almost no resemblance to its original livestock function. The American Bee Journal article of 1925 focused on the creative design of the Honey House, and on young Charles Hofmann's hand-drafted plans.[48]

A few years later, in 1926, a Wax Shed (*Photos 25-27*) was added for rendering wax, separating that undertaking from the honey operation to allow for greater efficiency in each. The addition of this separate structure may have been necessary due to an unfortunate turn of events. In 1925, Emil Hofmann purchased a few pieces of equipment and the colonies of a smaller nearby apiary. The colonies turned out to be rank with foulbrood, which quickly infected Hofmann's previously healthy apiary and almost put him out of business.[49] The honeycombs were wheeled over to the Wax Shed where the wax was rendered and the frames sterilized. The Wax Shed still stands northwest of the Farmhouse.

Emil Hofmann's investments in the apiary appeared to pay off, both in production and in national attention. An author for the November 1928 American Bee Journal was especially effusive in its praise, claiming the Hofmann enterprise was "one of the most extensive and perfectly arranged that I have ever

[47] E.W. Atkins, "Sound Methods Make Beekeeping a Real Business," *American Bee Journal*, (March 1925): 116-118
[48] E.W. Atkins, "Producing and Handling Honey with Efficiency," *American Bee Journal*, (April 1925): 162-164.
[49] Larry Hofmann, oral interview, 2014.

seen among the hundreds of such plants visited." [50] A local newspaper claimed, "E.L. Hofmann is one of the best, most successful and extensive beekeepers in the United States." [51] Hofmann Apiaries was cited in local newspapers for holding numerous beekeeping events — one in June, 1928 included the editor of the American Bee Journal, a former U.S. Department of Agriculture beekeeping specialist, University of Minnesota department heads, and the State of Minnesota apiary inspector. The article remarked, "Honey sundaes will be served on the grounds." [52]

Honeymaking at Hofmann Apiaries

Productive honeymaking at Hofmann Apiaries was dependent on a strong relationship between the production of the bees and the apiary's innovation.

Bee colonies themselves remain fundamentally unchanged from the wild swarm Emil Hofmann observed in the early 1900s. While these swarms exist naturally, they tend to be relatively isolated; they do not co-exist in the wild in multiple colonies like the bee yards of domestic apiaries. In order for Emil to be a productive beekeeper, he needed to increase scale. Emil had purchased the swarms of J.F. Clark, Ed Willis, and Glyde Swain in 1910.[53] By that time Hofmann Apiaries had several bee yards. The apiary itself had a large Home Yard, plus the North Yard, which was used mainly as a staging area for out-yard hives, both before and after overwintering them in the large bee cellar.

Emil also maintained hives on nearby out-yards, up to twenty miles distant, for a total of up to five bee yards in any given year.[54] These multiple yards allowed for large numbers of bees. This space was rented, often in exchange for honey, with each yard holding 150 to 200 colonies. It was crucial to locate these yards far apart, as otherwise the bees would compete with each other for food and would also produce less honey.

The harvesting of honey at the Hofmann Apiaries began each year in early August. Before removing honey from a hive the top cover was then taken off and the open hive was smoked which would have a calming effect on the bees. A butyric acid-soaked cloth was placed over the frames and the top cover was replaced. The vapors of the cloth would drive the bees down out of the upper supers into the deep hive body below.[55] About 2/3 of the combs were removed at any one time, leaving enough honey in the hive to nourish the bees. Emil eventually (circa 1921) constructed a permanent Smoking Equipment Shed, a freestanding container that was used to store the hive smoking equipment, including the bellows, the smokers (which are still extant inside), and ground corncob smoking fuel.

Once the supers were vacated they could be removed from the hive, and when all the supers were off the top cover was replaced. When the Hofmann flatbed truck was loaded it was driven into the Honey House garage. The garage floor was graded to a level allowing the truck bed to be at the same level as the warming room floor. Using a removable bridging platform between the truck and the warming room

[50] Frank C. Pellett, "Factory Methods Applied to Honey Production," *American Bee Journal*, (November 1928): 554-556.
[51] *Janesville Argus*, June 28, 1928.
[52] *Janesville Argus*, June 28, 1928.
[53] *Janesville Argus*, March 30, 1910.
[54] *Janesville Argus*, March 23, 1910.
[55] A "super" is an upper level component of a hive that contains the combs that are harvested for honey.

floor the supers could be moved laterally from the flatbed directly into the Honey House Warming Room where they were stacked one upon another. When the Warming Room was filled with enough supers to warrant a day of extracting it was heated to approximately 100 degrees Fahrenheit to increase the fluidity of the honey in the combs. After being heated, the combs were taken to the Extracting Room where a special, steam-heated, long-bladed knife was used to uncap each side, one at a time, exposing the honey.

There were three belt and lever driven extractors along a north-south axis in the center of the room. The frames and the combs were then placed in the honey extractors to be spun. The centrifugal force caused the honey to be thrown from the combs and collected below. The honey was then heated to 150° Fahrenheit by pumping it through coils in a hot water tank that hung along the east wall of the Extracting Room. Piping from the tank delivered the hot honey to one of six holding tanks also along the east wall. The tanks could be accessed from the top and with the heavy lids removed, any wax remaining on the honey would be skimmed off the top of the crop. (*Figure 17, Photos 20-21*) Emil, with family member support, was able to extract 12,000 pounds of honey in a 10-hour day. Emil Hofmann is quoted as claiming "Honey extracted early in August was still perfectly liquid … in the latter part of December." [56]

The six tanks extended down through the Extracting Room floor and rested on a platform in the basement "Honey Tank and Boiler Room" which was also known as the Weighing Room. It was here, from the tank spigots, that the honey flowed into 5 or 10 pound pails and 30 or 60 pound cans. The product was weighed for accuracy, and after cooling, labeled with the Hofmann Apiaries brand, and then stored in the adjacent basement storage room. When it was time to make product shipments to a distributor, the 60 lb. tins of honey could be loaded onto a truck through the back door of the basement storage room and driven to Janesville where it was loaded onto a rail car. Emil also sold honey directly to local customers.[57]

Decline and Transition

The Depression and succeeding Dust Bowl years would cost the Hofmann Apiaries dearly. Hofmann Apiaries continued strong production, but the market became weak, and by 1930 Emil had over 50,000 pounds of honey stored in a Minneapolis warehouse. Lacking income, and with the farmland itself mortgaged to an insurance agency, Emil Hofmann mortgaged his chattel to the Janesville State Bank on December 31, 1930. This included "50,000 pounds of honey in storage…900 colonies Bees and Hives, and all the material pertaining to the business, [and] 2 honey extractors" (as well as 15 cows, a coach, and a truck).[58]

On July 17, 1933 the Janesville bank foreclosed on the property, holding a corresponding sale on July 25 and taking over ownership when no bidders attended the sale. Worn down by the strain, Emil died of "nervous exhaustion" on Friday July 13, 1934.[59] At age 59, he was only a few years older than his father had been when he died.

[56] E.W. Atkins, "Producing and Handling Honey with Efficiency," *American Bee Journal*, (April 1925): 162-164.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Hofmann family records (unpublished).
[59] Frank C. Pellett, "Death of E. L. Hofmann," *American Bee Journal*, (August 1934): 352.

Although 1933 marks the end of the period of significance related to the apiary's physical construction and production levels, it is by no means the end of the story.

Following the foreclosure, the Hofmann Apiaries passed on to Emil's 26 year-old son Charles — whose story was similar to his father's in that he took over responsibility for both the farm and his mother. He regained ownership of the farm from the bank after securing a federal land bank loan and other financing. The total indebtedness was over $15,000 — a significant amount at that time.[60] Charles was able to begin paying down that debt within a few years. He married Ellen Hendricks of Fulda, Minnesota, in 1941. He and Ellen would go on to have four children: Laurence (Larry) (born 1943), Ann (born 1947), Gregory (born 1950), and Mary Lynn (born 1954).[61]

Though Charles Hofmann dedicated much of the first years of farm management to debt reduction, he later became known for his contributions to the beekeeping field, including serving as State Apiary Inspector and serving several terms as president of the Minnesota Beekeeper's Association. He belonged to many beekeeping organizations, including the Minnesota Beekeeper's Association (for which he served several terms as president) and the American Beekeeping Federation, which he helped found in 1942. He served as vice president of the American Beekeeping Federation in 1951 and was instrumental in leading that organization's effort to lift WWII price restrictions on honey. He served three terms as chairman of the Haydak Research Fund, a University of Minnesota scholarship research fund established by the Minnesota Honey Producers Association. He was the State Apiary Inspector, and judged the Bee and Honey Exhibit at the Minnesota State Fair for many years.

In the early 1950s Charles began developing a slide lecture about honeybees. He worked on it for twelve years and called it *The World of Bees*; its purpose being to serve as an aid in educating people about bees. After favorable response to early presentations, he contacted the head of the University of Minnesota's Division of Concerts and Lectures, was granted an audition, and hired as part of that program. For two winters (1966-67 and 1969-70) he presented *The World of Bees* in schools throughout most of Minnesota and eastern South Dakota.[62] *The World of Bees* still exists in DVD and Blu-ray formats, having won a national Telly Award in 1998 and again in 2014.

The apiary maintained production with a reputation for consistently excellent honey through 1985, though Charles operated with roughly half of the colonies that Emil had kept. Finally in that year Charles sold the business and most equipment to nearby beekeepers, ensuring that colonies would remain nearby. Charles continued his important influence into his later years.

Importance of Hofmann Apiaries in the Industry

As noted above, beekeeping was (and remains) a niche business, as compared to livestock or crops such as corn — or even alsike clover. The American Bee Journal from 1916 through 1934 regularly refers to the Hofmann Apiaries as a Minnesota, Upper Midwest, and nationwide leader. In 1916, the American

[60] Larry Hofmann, oral interview, 2013.
[61] Hofmann family records (unpublished).
[62] Charles S. Hofmann 2004, 173-189.

Bee Journal cited the Hofmann Apiaries as likely the largest honey producer in Minnesota. [63]

Area newspapers also reference Hofmann Apiaries' prominence. In 1909, a headline in the *Janesville Argus* read "E.L. Hofmann Enjoys the Distinction of having Finest Stand of Bees in the State of Minnesota," further commenting "No other Apiary can even begin to approach it either in intelligent handling by the owner or in Productiveness." [64] A 1915 Duluth *News-Tribune* article reported, "Fifteen tons of honey from the bee farm of Emil Hofmann, of Janesville, Minn., the largest apiary of its kind in the northwest, will be used in a novel extracting demonstration at the Minnesota State Fair…"[65] The Waseca *Journal* later referred to him as "one of the best, most successful, and extensive beekeepers in the United States."[66]

Emil was also recognized locally and nationally for his work. In 1910, he was asked to represent the State of Minnesota at the national beekeepers convention in Albany, NY.[67] He led a group of beekeepers that lobbied the state legislature to establish regulatory measures and a state inspector, and was appointed as the first Deputy Bee Inspector for the state in 1911.[68] In 1928, as noted above, Hofmanns hosted a nationwide beekeepers' meeting, with an extensive program.[69] He was also known to have others in the industry study with him, such as Matt Miklovich, an Austrian beekeeper who spent the summer of 1916 learning Emil's methods.[70]

Much of this success was credited to Emil's innovation, which had allowed him to "care for twice as many colonies as most men, without extra labor."[71] Chief among these factors were elements such as the well-designed Honey House, machinery like the elevator, equipment (outdoor feeders), and even small details such as the concrete hive stands. Hofmann Apiaries was primarily a family-owned business, employing relatively few outside workers. In general, Emil only employed 2-3 hired hands annually to care for all the bees as well as the 100-acre farm, while still maintaining a small herd of cows, chickens, and the clover crop. In this way, although Hofmann Apiaries had more colonies and produced more honey than most Minnesota beekeepers, Emil was able to follow the traditional, small family farm model prevalent in the state.

In a 1932 American Bee Journal article entitled "The Bees Pay Best," E.L. Hofmann stated that the bees had been the most profitable branch of his operations for "all but three years of the past twenty." [72] The scale of this profitability is indicated by the number of bee colonies held (940 as of 1916 and nearly 1,000 by 1930), the capacity of the Honey House for any single batch (2,100 gallons, or just over 25,000 pounds), and the apiary's annual production — ranging from 90,000 pounds in one of his poorest years

[63] *American Bee Journal*, (August 1916): 261-262, No author listed.
[64] *Janesville Argus*, August 11, 1909.
[65] *Duluth News-Tribune*, August 1, 1915.
[66] *Waseca Journal*, June 6, 1928.
[67] *Janesville Argus*, September 28, 1910; December 14, 1910.
[68] *Janesville Argus*, February 1, 1911; May 10 1911; July 5, 1911.
[69] *Waseca Journal,* June 6, 1928; *Janesville Argus*, June 14, 1928.
[70] Ibid.
[71] *American Bee Journal*, (August 1916): 261-262, No author listed.
[72] Frank C. Pellett, "The Bees Pay Best," *American Bee Journal,* (April 1932): 143.

(1924) to 150,000-200,000 pounds annually by the early 1930s.

Minnesota hives produced 976,262 pounds of honey in 1909 increasing to 1,251,102 pounds by 1919.[73] With Minnesota's annual honey crop weighing in at about 1.55 million pounds by 1930, the Hofmann Apiaries provided approximately 10-13% of the state's commercial honey production.[74]

Conclusion

Hofmann Apiaries is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places due to its important and notable role in Minnesota beekeeping, for the strong integrity of its buildings and resources.

The Honey House, Wax Shed, Machine Shed, Winter Bee Cellar, Farmhouse, Reservoir, and related outbuildings — all tell a clear story about the evolution of the farm from a traditional immigrant farmstead to one of Minnesota's most successful early apiaries. The resources retain strong integrity in all categories, but they are exceptional as a cohesive collection of apiary resources representing the first third of the 20th Century. The Honey House particularly demonstrates this story, from its original configuration as a hog barn to a large, well-designed honey processing plant.

Associated resources, such as the Bee Cellar, also provide an evocative sense of place, and the relationship of the apiary buildings to each other and to the beekeeping function is clearly evident. The fact that the property has been in the same family since 1873, as well as its continuous use as an apiary from the early 1900s through 1985, also adds to the site's cohesion. Hofmann Apiaries is a strong, resource that provides a clear sense of purpose and cogently tells the story of early beekeeping in Minnesota.

[73] Philip Hale, ed., *Agricultural Statistics*, (St. Louis: Hale Publishing Company, 1920).
[74] *American Bee Journal,* April 1932.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ 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 # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
__X_ Other
Name of repository: __Waseca County Historical Society_____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _WE-JSC-036_____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: Longitude:
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or
UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 15 Easting: 446 141 Northing: 4890 739
2. Zone: Easting: Northing:
3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

That part of the South Half of the Southeast Quarter of Section 11, Township 108 North Range 24 West, Waseca County, Minnesota, described as:

Commencing at an iron pipe monument designating the South Quarter corner of said Section 11; thence North 89 degrees 29 minutes 04 seconds East, (assumed bearing), along the south line of the Southeast Quarter of said Section 11, a distance of 815.00 feet to the point of beginning; then 367.00 feet north; then 124.00 feet east; then 161.00 feet north; then 170.00 feet east; then 343.00 feet south; then 242.00 feet east; then 185.00 feet south; then 536.00 feet west to the point of beginning.

The parcel contains 4 acres, subject to an easement for Township Road purposes over and across the southerly boundary. Also subject to any other easements of record.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes all remaining contributing resources used in the apiary functioning of the farm as professionally surveyed in 2010.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Thomas R. Zahn, Principal; Bethany Gladhill; Peg Reilly
organization: Thomas R. Zahn & Associates LLC
street & number: 807 Holly Avenue
city or town: Saint Paul state: MN zip code: 55104
e-mail tzahn@comcast.net
telephone: 651-221-9765
date: June 2, 2015

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs
Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Hofmann Apiaries

City or Vicinity: Janesville

County: Waseca State: Minnesota

Photographer: Thomas R. Zahn

Date Photographed: April 26, 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 29. Farmhouse, south elevation, looking north
2 of 29. Farmhouse, south and east elevations, looking northwest
3 of 29. View from Farmhouse looking east toward Honey House
4 of 29. Reservoir, looking northeast
5 of 29. Pump House, west and south elevations, looking northeast
6 of 29. Winter Bee Cellar to the right, west elevation, looking east
7 of 29. Winter Bee Cellar, east elevation, looking west
8 of 29. Winter Bee Cellar interior upper level, looking west
9 of 29. Winter Bee Cellar interior lower level, looking southwest
10 of 29. Smoking Equipment Storage Shed and Winter Bee Cellar, looking west
11 of 29. Honey House west wing, west elevation, looking east
12 of 29. Honey House west wing, south and west elevations, looking northeast
13 of 29. Honey House center and garage wing south elevation, looking north
14 of 29. Honey House center and garage wing east elevation, looking west
15 of 29. Honey House, north elevation, looking south
16 of 29. Honey House west wing warehouse, looking east
17 of 29. Honey House west wing workshop, looking east
18 of 29. Honey House west wing workshop, looking west
19 of 29. Honey House west wing attic storage room, looking east
20 0f 29. Honey House central extracting room, looking east
21 of 29. Honey House, central extracting room extraction tub, looking east

22 of 29. Honey House central lift and storage attic, looking south
23 of 29. Honey House, Hand made motorized pulley system for lift, looking northwest
24 of 29. Honey House, View from garage wing attic through center and west wing attic storage areas, looking west
25 of 29. Wax Shed east and south elevations, looking northwest
26 of 29. Wax Shed interior, looking north
27 of 29. Machine Shed left and Wax Shed right, south and west elevations, looking north
28 of 29. Home Hive Yard, looking east
29 of 29. North Hive Yard, looking north

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.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

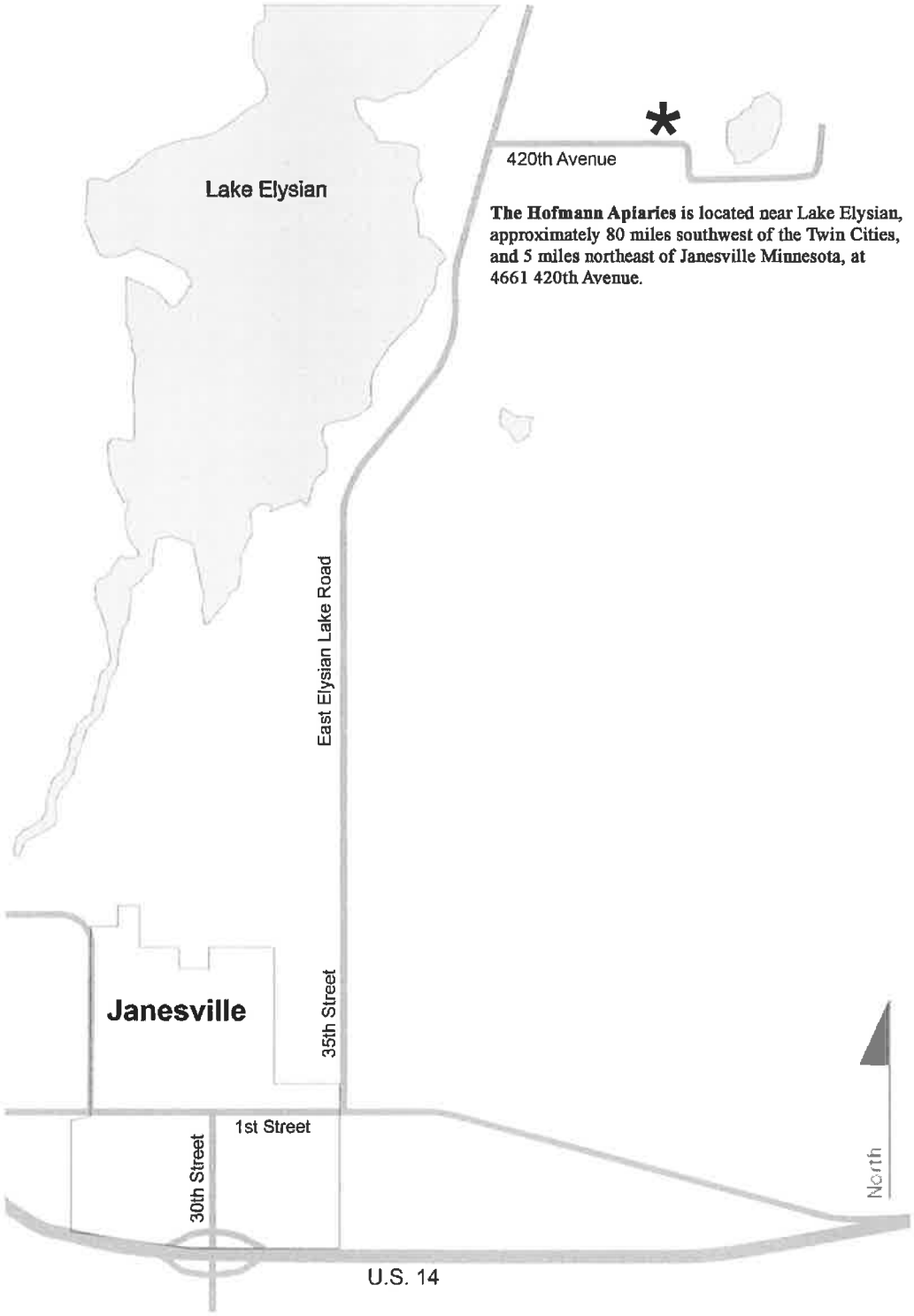


Figure 1: Location map of the Hofmann Apiaries northeast of Janesville, Minnesota.

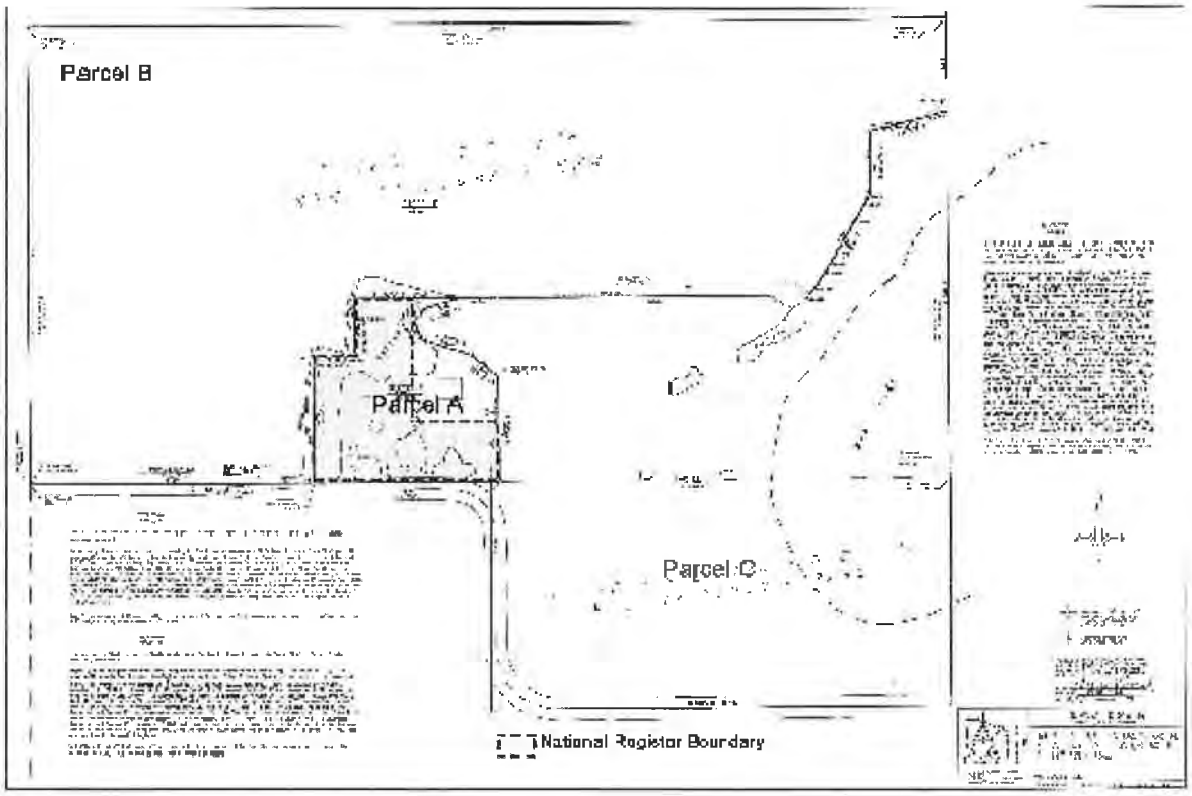


Figure 2: The original Hofmann Farm consisted of 100 acres. In September of 2010 the 55.1-acre Parcel B was sold and is now being cultivated by the new owner. Parcel A and Parcel C remain in the ownership of the Hofmann family. The National Register boundary is within Parcel A and contains all the remaining apiary-related resources. Parcel C is made up of some pastureland, low wetlands and a portion of Mud Lake. The majority of Parcel C is in a conservancy.

Figure 3: Contemporary aerial view of the Hofmann Apiaries.

Figure 4: Hofmann Apiaries site plan with National Register boundary.

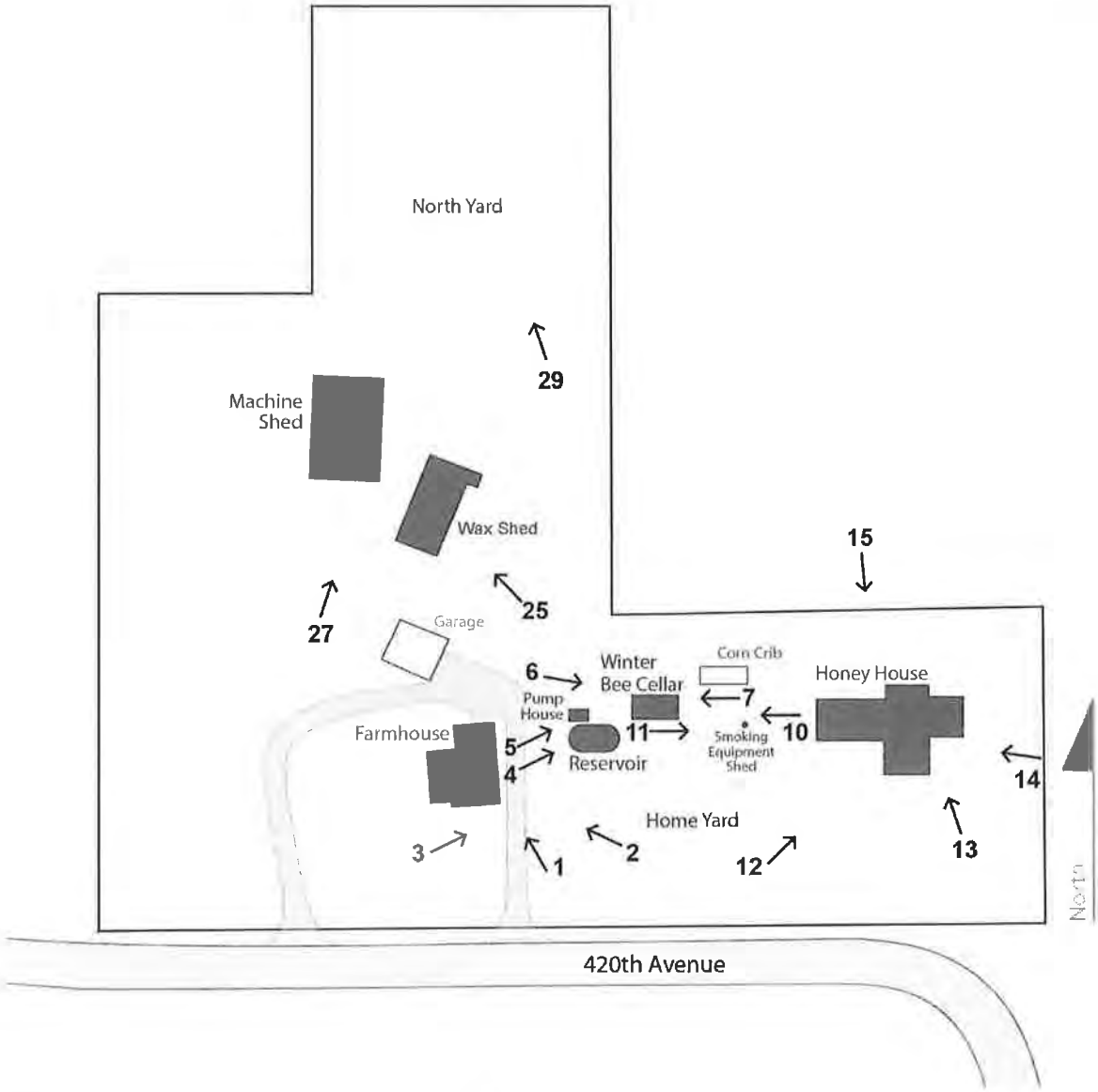
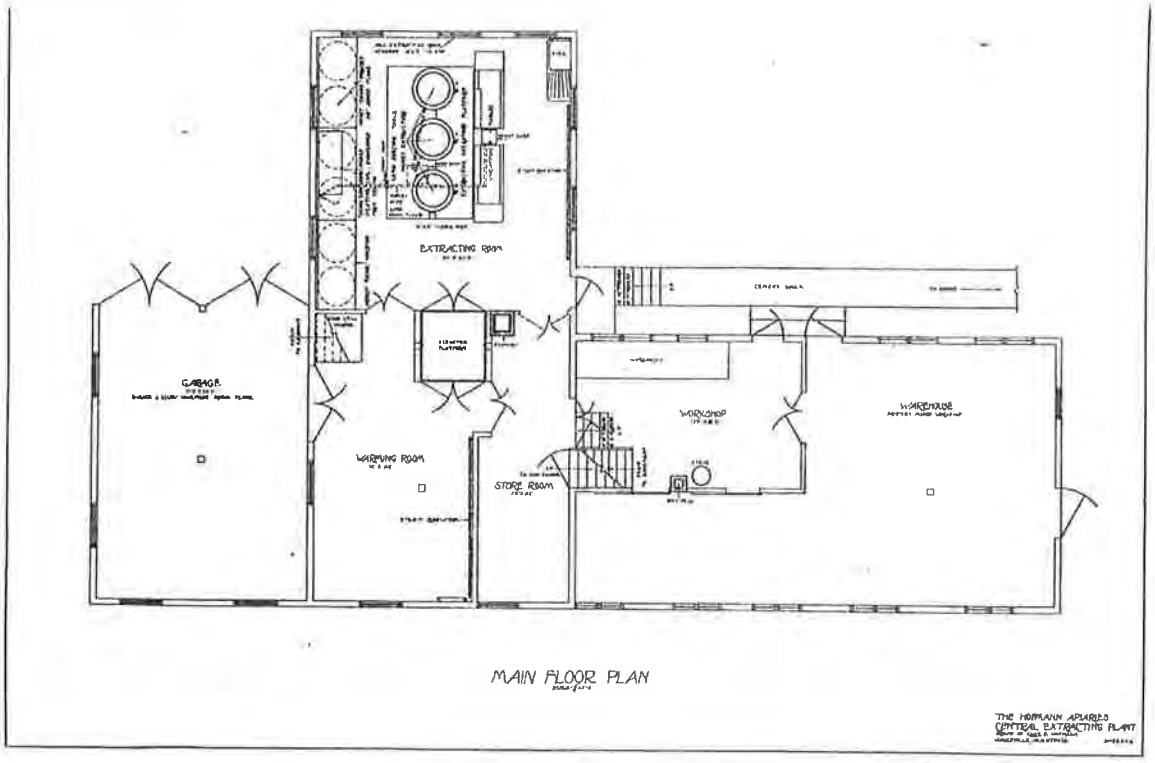
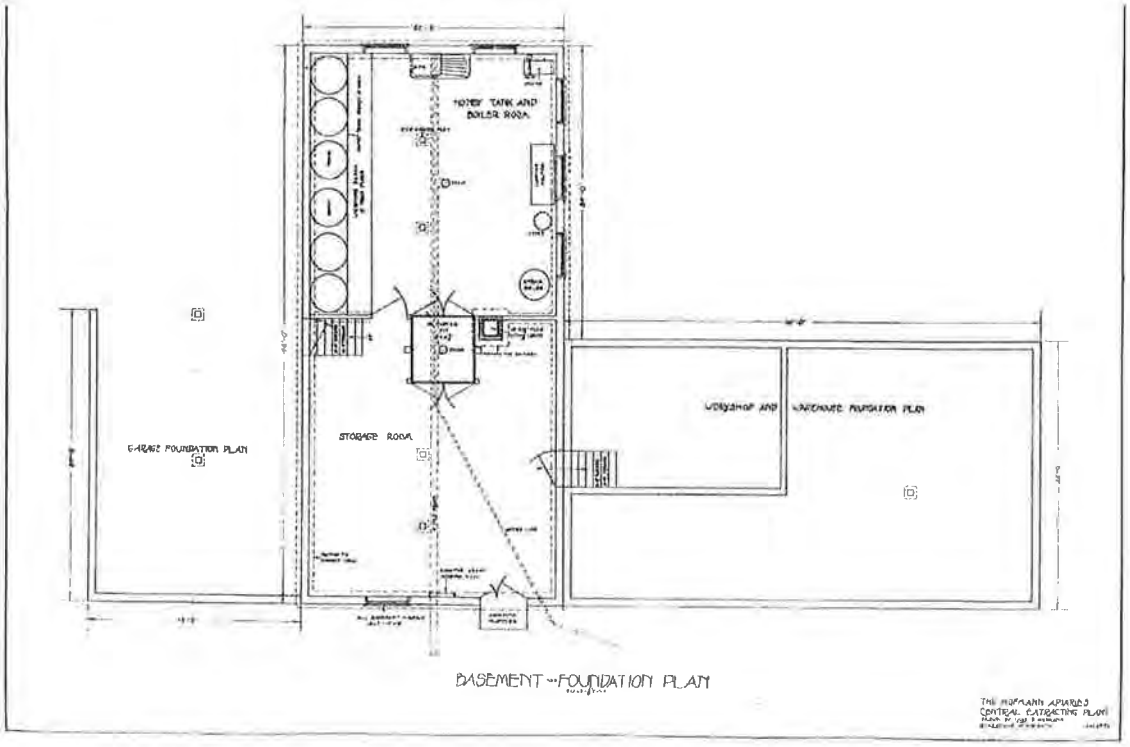


Figure 5: Hofmann Apiaries photo key.



Main floor plan of the honey house. Everything arranged for speed.



Basement plan of honey house, equipped to serve the floor above.

Figure 6: Honey House first floor and basement plans from April 1925 American Bee Journal.

Figure 7: August 24, 1907 looking west. This is the earliest known photograph of the Hofmann apiary. The original hog barn is in the foreground with hives visible in the distance on the left. The hog barn was converted into a Honey House with a workshop, honey extraction, and storage space approximately one year after this photograph was taken.

Figure 8: 1907 looking west. This photograph shows Emil working in the "Home Yard" with Rosalia harvesting berries in the background. The family Farmhouse is seen beyond the yard.

Figure 9: 1907 looking northwest. The Home Yard.

Figure 10: Circa 1914 looking west. This photograph was used for promoting the bee business showing the Home Yard with many hives. The family's first car is parked next to the early Honey House.

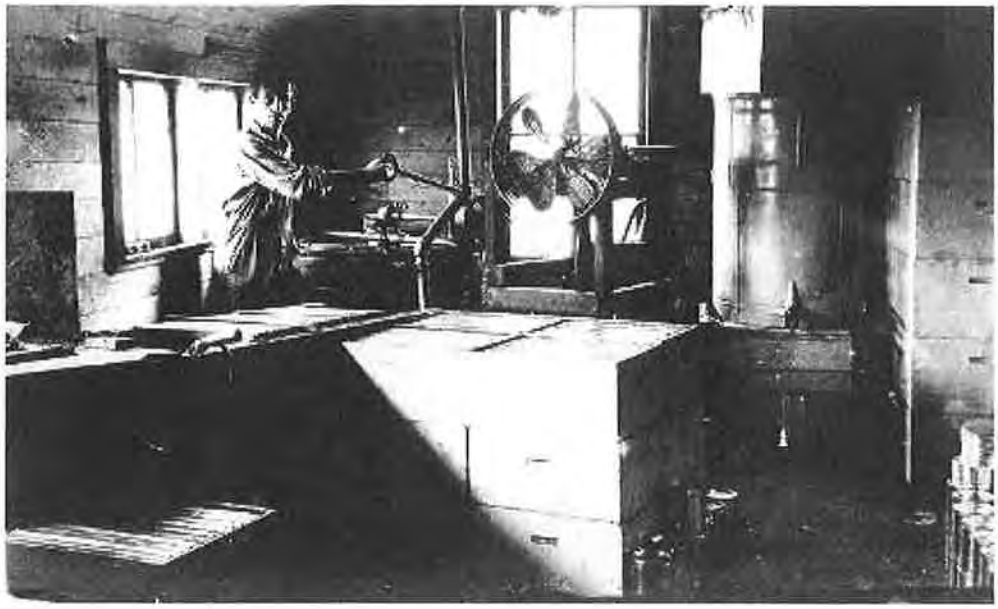


Figure 11: The honey extracting room in the southeast corner of the old hog barn.

Figure 12: This promotional photograph shows the "No 2" truck loaded with extracting equipment. Before the use of the motorized truck, equipment was carted on a hay wagon pulled by a team of horses.

Figure 13: Clover hulling equipment at the Hofmann farm.

Figure 14: Between 1915 and 1920 looking northwest. This image shows the south Home Yard to the left of the newly constructed gabled Winter Bee Cellar that was used to overwinter the bees. The business at that time had four bee cellars with two near the home and two in out-yards.

Figure 15: 1924 looking southeast. The new Honey House that incorporated and expanded the old hog barn structure (foreground).

Figure 16: Circa 1924 looking northwest. This photograph of the Honey House appeared in the 1925 March and April issues of the American Bee Journal. The two-part article featured the apiary's modern facilities and efficient business practices. Emil appears at the open garage door.

Figure 17: 1925 looking south and east. This photograph of the Extracting Room on the main floor of the new Honey House also appeared in the American Bee Journal 1925 article. Emil Hofmann is seen in the foreground right.

Figure 18: 1925 looking to the northeast across the Home Yard to the Honey House.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

STATE OF MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

ELYSIAN QUADRANGLE
MINNESOTA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

HOFMANN APIARIES,
JANESVILLE
WASECA COUNTY
ZONE 15
EASTING
446141
NORTHING
4890 739

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1964. Field checked 1966

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Minnesota coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks zone 15, shown in blue

Depth curves and soundings compiled from charts furnished by Minnesota Department of Conservation

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

Map photoinspected 1977
No major culture or drainage changes observed

UTM GRID AND 1966 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET
(GN, MN; 0°29' / 9 MILS; 6½° / 116 MILS)

SCALE 1:24 000
1 ½ 0 1 MILE
1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET
1 .5 0 1 KILOMETER

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

MINN.
QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty — Light-duty
Medium-duty — Unimproved dirt
State Route

ELYSIAN, MINN.
N4407.5—W9337.5/7.5

1966
PHOTOINSPECTED 1977
AMS 7272 II NW—SERIES V872

INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1991

54B

HONEY
Hofmann's
½ MILE