

**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: Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing: \_\_\_\_\_

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & number: 624-642 Cedar Street

City or town: Rockford State: Illinois County: Winnebago

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

I hereby certify that this    nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

   national    statewide    local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

   A    B    C    D

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
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

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#### 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:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☒

District

☐

Site

☐

Structure

☐

Object

☐

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register           

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY: Processing Site

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Vacant

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENT:

Commercial Style

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Limestone, concrete, asphalt, built up, brick  
stone, terra cotta

### 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.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building on Cedar Street in Rockford, Illinois is a commercial structure, which for over sixty years, housed the company offices, processed seed orders, and contained a retail store. Generally an "L" shape, it was built in five phases, in 1912, in 1918, two in 1928, and in 1946. The building is dark red and brown brick with stone trim. Sections 1 and 2 stand three stories; Section 3 stands two stories and Section 4 stands one story. Only the basement of Section 5 remains. Windows are of steel. The interior is generally open and the five connected structures contain exposed structural systems. It contains partitioned interior offices and freight elevators. While the complex was added to and modified over time, with the removal of the 1946 section, few changes were made to the existing sections after the period of significance, 1912-1965. The building has good integrity, with both its exterior and interior reflecting its original use. Overall the building has sufficient integrity to be listed on the National Register.



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**Narrative Description**

**PHYSICAL CONTEXT**

The Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building is located on the south side of Cedar Street between Winnebago and Short Horsman Streets, where S. Rockton Avenue intersects Cedar Street in southwest Rockford.

The City of Rockford, which is the county seat of Winnebago County, consists of 61 square miles. In 2013, the population was 150,000. It is located in north central Illinois, just south of Wisconsin, 90 miles northwest of Chicago. Unincorporated land and smaller towns surround Rockford. Cherry Valley is located to the southwest; New Milford to the south; Winnebago to the west; Shirland to the northwest; and Rockton, South Beloit and Roscoe to the north. U. S. Highway 90 leads west, from Chicago to Rockford, and then veers north forming the east boundary of Rockford as the road extends north to Wisconsin. To the southeast is U. S. Highway 39, which then becomes U. S. 20, bordering Rockford on the south before it continues north and west to Galena. The Chicago/Rockford International Airport (KRFD) is located in the southwest corner of the city.

The city is centered on the Rock River, which separates the east and west sides of Rockford. Kent Creek veers off of the river, forming north and south forks. Main Street (Illinois Route 2), which runs north-south, and State Street (US Route 20), which runs east-west, are the city's most important business thoroughfares.

The Condon Bros. Seedsmen & R. H. Shumway & Sons Building is located just north of the North Fork of Kent Creek on the south side of Cedar Street, three blocks west of S. Main Street, between S. Winnebago Street on the east, Rockton Avenue on the west and Green Street on the north. To the south, between the North Fork of Kent Creek and Cedar Street, is open space, once the location of railroad tracks.

**SITE**

*Numbered sections, as illustrated in a sketch map, Figure 1, are referenced throughout the text.*

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The Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building forms an "L-shape" footprint above grade and a rectangular footprint at the basement level. The building is located on a rectangular lot, 234 x 132 feet. The lot is situated in a pie-shaped industrial block bound by S. Winnebago Street, Cedar Street, and the North Fork of Kent Creek. The building is bound by Cedar Street to the north, a 20-foot wide alley to the west, a light-framed industrial building to the south (quonset hut at 760 Cedar Street), and empty lots to the east.<sup>1</sup> The Chicago & North Western Railway tracks run east-west at the south end of the industrial block. A railroad spur was located directly behind and to the south of the building but was removed in 1946.

The site has minimal landscape features. A concrete sidewalk is located on the north side of the building and slopes down at the west side of the site. Concrete stairs are located on the sidewalk in front of Sections 3 and 4, and accommodate grade changes. The buildings were constructed in April and July 1928, respectively. There are three, twenty-foot high deciduous trees planted in front of the buildings on Cedar Street. An approximately sized 20'x25' concrete parking pad exists in the west alley between the Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building and the building located at 712 Cedar Street. The concrete floor of the partially demolished 1946 addition is exposed, and creates an exterior deck.

**ARCHITECTURE**

**Exterior**

**Massing/Structure:**

The Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building is made up of five distinct commercial style sections, each having its own structural system. From east to west the sections are: Section 1 (66' x 70', 3-story, 1918-1919), Section 2 (69' x 70', 3-story, 1912, encompassing circa 1892 1-story brick building with slant roof – only roof was removed), Section 3 (48' x 127.67, 2-story, 1928), and Section 4 (50' x 127', 1-story, 1928). Section 5 (136.2 x 56', basement only, 1946) is located to the south of Sections 1 and 2 (See Figure 1).

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<sup>1</sup> These were historically Lots 1-8 of the Cemetery Association Addition Subdivision.

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Section 1 is built of reinforced concrete with a brick curtain wall. Section 2 has a limestone, load-bearing foundation with interior wood supporting columns and beams and a brick curtain wall; Section 3 is a wood frame structure with a brick curtain wall. Section 4 is constructed with a light steel structural system and brick. Section 5 has a concrete reinforced structural system (originally a one-story structure with a basement; now only the basement remains). The sections all have simple, rectangular, massing.

**North Facade**

The north façade is the primary facade and is asymmetrical. It is made up of Sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 that were constructed between 1912 and 1928. The façade has dark red and brown brick facing material and is the only façade with any ornament, which includes: Indiana limestone sills, coping units, pediments, tiles, and door surrounds; terra cotta coping units; and patterned brickwork.

**Section 1**

The Section 1 façade is a three-story, reinforced concrete structure faced in dark brown brick in an American bond pattern with six rows of stretchers for every header row. It is symmetrical and divided into two halves that are almost mirror images of each other, for a total of four bays. Ceiling heights between floors are approximately, 11' at the first floor and 10' at the second and third floors. The first floor of Bay 1 has two, simple, rectangular, 3'x6-1/2' window openings with Indiana limestone sills and brick headers with a one-inch profile. The windows have been modified and are now non-contributing, four-lite aluminum windows. They are currently covered in plywood. Bay 2 has a 5-1/2'x9-1/2' opening with simple brick header and wood, five-panel double doors with a four-lite transom above them. A single, surface mounted light fixture is centered in the opening. To the right, is another rectangular, 3'x6-1/2' window opening with Indiana limestone sill. To the right of the window is a 3'x8' primary entrance opening with decorative features. The opening has a flat, Indiana limestone surround. A projecting canopy supported by a single curved limestone bracket on each side separates the door opening from a two-light operable transom. The entrance consists of a single, 3'x6-1/2' wood panel door with 4-over-1 panels: the upper panels are glazed. Bays 3 and 4 at the first level are a mirror image of Bays 1 and 2.

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The second level of Section 1 contains 3'x6' window openings. Bay 1 has two openings, Bay 2 has a group of three openings. Bays 3 and 4 at the second level are a mirror image of Bays 1 and 2. The third level of Section 1 is identical to that described at level 2, with the exception that Bay 1 has a group of three openings instead of two openings. All of the window openings are boarded up. The flat roofline of Section 1 has glazed terra cotta units capping the front edge of the roofline.

*Section 2*

Section 2 is a three-story brick building with wood framing and a limestone foundation. The building was constructed in 1912. It is seven bays wide. The 69'-wide, red brick façade is almost symmetrical and has a primary entrance door in the center of the first floor. Lot 11 is 33-feet wide and Lot 12 is 36-feet wide, so when Bay 7 was built, its design had to accommodate an extra three feet; the result is that the spacing between Bay 6 Bay 7 is wider than between Bays 1 and 2. The brickwork is a modified Flemish Stretcher bond pattern having seven raking stretcher rows between the header rows that have two stretchers between a single header. Floor to ceiling heights are approximately, 12' at the first floor and 10' at the second floor and sloping 13'9" to 11' at the third floor, due to the roof slope. At the first level, there is no opening in Bay 1. Bays 2 and Bay 6 consist of a pair of six-over-one, 3'x7', wood paneled double doors that have glazing in the upper lites and are topped by a five-lite transom. Bays 3 and 5 each contain a 5' x 6-1/2' window opening with a limestone sill and a brick header course. The steel windows have a configuration of 16-lites with an operable eight-lite awning sash in the middle. They have been covered with plywood. The main entrance is in the center of the building, Bay 4. The opening is 4' x 7'. It has brick surrounds and articulated brick pilasters supporting a pediment consisting of a limestone panel with a shallow segmental arch. The doorway is rectangular, 4' x 7', with a wood-paneled door with 6 glazed lites in the upper section of the door and a mail slot at the bottom. A transom over the door has been covered over. Bay 7 consists of a 3-1/2'x4-1/2' window. It has a limestone sill and brick header and is raised above the levels of the other openings. The second floors of bays 1-3 and 5-7 consist of identical 5' x 6' window openings with sixteen-lite steel windows that have an operable four-lite awning sash in the center. The third floor of bays 1-3 and 5-7 consist of identical 5' x 6' window openings with sixteen-lite steel windows that

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have an operable eight-lite awning sash in the center. Decorative brickwork at the roofline consists of a five-course corbel that runs along the top edge of the flat roof. A single, 2'x2' brick chimneystack rises approximately 12' above the roofline on the west side of the building. There is metal conduit attached below sill lines at floor two. Electrical poles and alarm systems are attached to the building, vertically at Bays 5 and 6. Significant signage, measuring 2-1/2' x 12' exists between the second and third floor at Bays 6 and 7. It at one time read, "R. H. Shumway Seedsman and Condon Bros. Seedsmen." It now is a partial sign that spells out "ros. Seedsmen."

*Section 3*

The north façade of Section 3 was built in 1928 with a retail storefront on the first floor and offices on the second. There are four irregularly spaced bays on the north façade. The red brick façade has a flat roof and gable-end parapet. The roofline has continuous limestone coping with two notches cut at the springline of the gable parapet. The brickwork is in the modified Flemish Stretcher bond pattern and on the first floor, matches the brick pattern used on Section 2. On the second floor, it is modified to have ten stretcher courses between header rows, instead of seven. On the first floor, Bays 1 and 3 consist of 12'x10' storefront openings that have been infilled with vinyl siding over wood framing. Bay 4 has a 14'x10' storefront opening that has been infilled with vinyl siding over wood framing. There are two, 2'x3' metal-clad casement windows located in each panel. Each panel has a parged concrete base that was at one time painted. The base at Bay 4 has been repaired with concrete and is unpainted. The entrance to this section is located in Bay 2. It consists of a 3'x7' opening topped by an arched limestone pediment with recessed corner blocks and an articulated brick surround in a stack bond pattern. The wood door is partially boarded. It has a transom above with diamond-shaped security glass. The second floor windows are centered above each opening in Bays 1, 2, and 3. The window in Bay 4 is just west of center. A brick stringcourse, located just under the window sills, separates the first and second floors of the building. The four Bays on the second floor have 5' x 6' openings. Each has a limestone sill, lintels consisting of a row of brick headers and 16-lite windows with operable sash. Eight of the windows have been boarded over.

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*Section 4*

Section 4 is a one-story brick warehouse with a steel bowstring truss structural system. It is symmetrical and has a gable-end parapet with limestone cap and two notches at each side, where the gable end meets the parapet. It was constructed in 1928, after Section 3, and has similar features found on that façade. The brickwork is a modified Flemish Stretcher bond pattern, but uses additional decorative patterns that are not used on any other section of the facade of the building. It consists of five bays. Bay 1 has a 3'x8' opening with a stack bond header course brick surround. It contains a five-panel wood door with a transom above. Bay 2 contains a 5'x6' window opening with a 1" profile brick sill. A vertical, brick stretcher course and a header sill course are carried horizontally across the façade beyond the windows, creating a decorative feature. Two, 12"x12" limestone square tiles are set diagonally in the brick façade and centered over the door and three window openings. Centered under the gable is an 8'x11' opening with an arched surround of stretchers. The surround continues above the opening in an arch that is infilled with brick in a basketweave pattern. A metal roll up door is located in the opening. Bays 4 and 5 consist of two window openings: bay 4 is a 5'x6' opening with 16-lite steel fixed window; Bay 5 is a 3'x6' opening. Both have brick surrounds and a 1" profile sill. The brick courseline extends to the edges of the wall plane. Three 6"x6" anchor plates are secured to the wall at Bays 3 and 4; one anchor is attached to the left of the 8'x11' opening; two anchors secure a wood board to the right of the opening. A single, 18"x24" brick chimneystack rises above the parapet at Bay 1.

South Façade

The south façade of the building includes all five sections (see Figure 1). From west to east, the buildings are connected to each other as follows: Section 4, Section 3, Section 2, and Section 1 with Section 5 (basement) located in front of Section 2 and Section 1. When train cars arrived at the building, via spur tracks positioned directly south of the building, loading docks and platforms accommodated the loading and unloading of products. None remain. The rear facades have no decorative elements or trim, befitting their utilitarian function.

Section 5, the 1946 addition, was constructed to the south of Section 2 and Section 1. The basement of Section 5 protrudes

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four feet above grade. The first floor of Section 5 is at the same floor level as the floors at Section 2 and 1, and is now an exterior concrete deck. The south façade of Section 5 is a reinforced, poured-in-place concrete wall, extending four feet above ground. Eight window openings are approximately 2-1/2'x2' and have fixed, 4-lite, metal sash. Some have been infilled. A stairway, with a metal pipe railing connects from grade, to the basement level and to the first level deck of Section 5, approximately 40' from the edge of Section 3.

The south façade of Section 4 is constructed with pink brick, is one-story high and has been painted. The curved truss shape of the structural system is reflected in the roofline of the building. The façade is symmetrical and there is one, centrally located door and two windows flanking it on either side.

The south facade of Section 3 has a mottled and irregular, painted pink brick façade with three openings that have been infilled: one is a 3'x7' centrally located door that has been infilled with brick, and two are 2'x6' window openings with limestone sills that have been infilled with concrete block. Under the failing paint the exposed pink brick is visible. A metal gutter is located at the roofline and curves down to meet two downspouts at each edge of the facade. The second floor façade, located near Cedar Street, has one 2-1/2'x6-1/2' opening with a double hung, wood window and one, 3-1/2' x 5-1/2' opening with a double hung, wood window. A 2'x2', brick chimney extends above the Section 3 roofline and is approximately 60' in height.

The south façade of Section 2 has an unsymmetrical appearance. The first floor consists of six Bays. Bays 1 and 2 have two, typical, 5'x6' brick window openings with limestone sills and brick surrounds. These have 16-lite, steel windows with operable 8-lite sash in the center. The third bay contains a 5'x8' rectangular door opening 2-1/2'x7' wood, double doors that have five-panels and a four-lite transom above. Bay 4 has a concrete block, infilled, 3-1/2'x6'' window opening and Bay 5, a 5'x8' arched door opening. The opening has a pair of 2-1/2'x7' six-over-one wood double doors, topped by a 5-lite transom. Bay 6 is a solid brick wall with no openings. The second floor of Section 2 has four bays with three, irregularly spaced, typical windows, which do not align with windows at the first floor. Bays 1, 2 and 4 contain 5'x6' window openings with limestone sills and 16-lite metal operable sashes. At Bay 3, along the elevator shaft, there is a smaller, 3-1/2'x6' opening with a 12-lite, rolled metal sash that does align with windows on the first and third floors. The third floor has six bays with only

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Bay 1 and 2 windows centered over the windows at the first level. The five large windows, in Bays 1,2,3,5,and 6, are the same size as the large windows on the second floor, 5'x6'. The window in Bay 4 is the same size as that below it, in line with the elevator penthouse, 3-1/2'x6'. An elevator penthouse extends eight feet above the roofline. There is a window in the penthouse section, that is the same size and configuration as the two windows beneath it, 3-1/2'x6'.

Section 1 of the south façade is generally symmetrical. It extends four bays. On the second and third floors, Bay 3 and 4 are mirror images of Bay 1 and 2, except for three small, 3-1/2'x3-1/2', windows in Bay 2 that are along the elevator shaft. The reinforced concrete structural frame of the building is visible beneath white paint, and the brick walls and windows are located within the frames. All of the windows on the second and third floors are non-contributing and were installed in 1970 to replace the original sash. Original window openings have been retained, but have been infilled and shortened to accommodate new, smaller-sized, 3-1/2'x4' sash. All of the brick sills at Section 1 were constructed with one-inch profiles and all have been retained, except for two on the first floor at Bay 2 and 3, where the profile was knocked off. The second floor windows are 1-over-1, aluminum, double hung sash, and the third floor windows are 2-over-2, aluminum, double hung sash, with interior-applied horizontal muntins.

On the first floor, six openings, 3-1/2'x6', have been infilled with concrete block: Bay 1 has two. Bay 2 has one: Bay 3 has one, Bay 4 has two. One, 3-1/2'x3-1/2' square opening, under the elevator penthouse at Bay 2 has been infilled with concrete block. First floor door openings are located at Bay 2 and 3 and are mirror images of each other. The openings are 5'x8' and have heavy, sliding, wooden railroad depot doors with battens. Each door has sloped, metal tracks, surface-mounted to the exterior brick wall. Centered over Bay 2 and 3 on the roof is the elevator penthouse, which has a flat roof. The walls are brick and have been coated with an elastomeric coating. It has a 3-1/2' x 4' opening that has been infilled with concrete block and retains its brick, profiled sill.

**West Façade**

The west façade of the building includes exterior walls from Section 4, which only stands one floor; Section 3 façade is exposed on the second floor; and Section 2, has a façade exposed



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on the second and third floor. The facades are made of brick in Flemish Stretcher bond. The Section 4 facade has light pink brick and is mottled with failed, white paint. The parapet at the north end is in poor condition. The facade contains seven, 5'x6' rectangular window openings with 16-lite steel windows with operable 8-lite sash in the center. There is one 3'x8' door with a concrete step at the south end.

The west facade of Section 2 at the third level has five, 5'x6' window openings with 16-lite metal sash and central, operable, awning 8-lite sash. There is one single, 3'x6-1/2' wood, 4-over-3, wood panel door with the upper four lites glazed. A metal fire escape extends from the door opening to the second floor roof below. The second floor facade has two, 4'x5', six-over-three, metal windows with the upper sash operating as an inward awning. These are located just south of the second floor office extension. There is one, 5'x6' window to the north of the fire escape. The opening is offset and modified and a remnant arched opening exists and is centered below the third floor window above. The modified opening is offset to the left, from the window above. The opening has an air conditioning unit inserted into the upper sash. To the right of that window and directly below the third floor door, is a 3'x6-1/2', five-panel wood door.

**East Façade**

The Section 1 east facade was a party wall with the factory building on Lot 8, that no longer exists.<sup>2</sup> The facade is a 70'-wide, brick wall with no openings, constructed of light pink brick that has been parged or painted. The parapet wall is capped with limestone units. There are no other character-defining features of this facade. The Section 3 east facade is visible above the Section 5 basement. It has a pink brick facade with two openings. There is one 5'x6' window opening at the south end and a centrally located door opening that is 4'x7-1/2'. The roof framing rafters are visible at the roof line and the 2'x2'x60' chimneystack is centered above the two openings.

**Interior**

**First Floor**

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<sup>2</sup> The party wall is referenced in the 27 July 1946 title deed between Coan family and R. H. Shumway Company. Winnebago County Recorder Office, Doc. # 543099.

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The first floor has distinct rectilinear spaces that are connected by door openings to adjacent areas. Each addition added to the 1912 warehouse was a stand-alone structure with its own structural system. Circulation in the building was through doorways created between each structure and vertically, by stairs and freight elevators. There are two elevators at the south end (one in Section 2 and one in Section 1).

The first floor of Section 1 contains one large, open space that is 69'x70' with 10' ceilings. The exposed structural system consists of reinforced concrete framing with modular concrete vault panels. The reinforced concrete vault panels have a corrugated appearance and eight cylindrical shells that carry the loads above. The vaults, columns, and some walls have been painted silver. The columns are regularly spaced in a grid system, located approximately every 16-17'.

Section 2 at the first floor is an open space, punctuated by 12" x 12" heavy timber posts. The exposed post and beam system has a 7' high, wood shipping platform secured to columns on bays 3 and 4 at the east and west sides of the space. The walls and floors of the east half of Section 2 date from circa 1892 and were incorporated into the Condon Bros. Seedsmen building that was constructed for them in 1912. The room has windows only at the north and south ends of the space. The floor to ceiling height is 12'. Walls are brick. The flooring on the east half consists of 3" x 12" floor joists with subfloor and wood flooring, and the west half has solid 2" x 6" dimensional lumber on edge with wood, tongue and groove floorboards, running east-west. Ceilings are also wood, 2" x 6" dimensional lumber, but the boards run north-south. The posts and ceiling have been stained brown, and the brick has been painted white. Surface-mounted electrical conduit is attached to the walls and ceilings. There are 4' long fluorescent lights and single-bulb fixtures that hang from the ceiling throughout the space.

Section 3 has one central, large open space, a 28'x50' retail space located to the north end, and a small bathroom located to the south. The steel, post-and-beam structural system is exposed, as are steel purlins that hold plywood sheets for the roof. Walls between the posts are constructed with 4"x12"x12" Natco Hollow Tile, manufactured by the National Fire Proofing Company. These are left exposed and painted white. The south, north, and east walls are brick. There are paired 3'x3' windows at the west wall. These have six-lite steel sash that are fixed. The retail room is located at the north end and is entered by

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walking down a concrete ramp. Spaces are separated by a mixture of hollow clay tile partition walls, brick walls, and wood-framed walls. Three, full-height window openings on the north side of the space, where the retail operation was located, have been infilled. These infilled walls, 8'x8' and 8'x10', cover the former openings and have two windows per panel. This retail space was finished with gypsum board that is in disrepair. The ceiling has been covered in gypsum board and painted white. Eight, 4'-wide, fluorescent hanging fixtures are located in the showroom and are scattered throughout the main space. A stairway, at the northeast, leads up to the second floor, where offices were located. The stairwell walls are hollow clay tile and there is a simple, wood railing on the south wall. At several locations along the east wall just south of the restroom, there are 4'x8' arched openings with brick surrounds that connect to Section 2. These openings have sliding, corrugated metal doors on exposed metal tracks. Electrical wiring and alarm systems as well as fire suppressant systems are attached to walls and ceilings throughout the space.

Section 4 is a one-story, open space, 48'x133'. It has an exposed structural system of metal bowstring trusses and a curving, wood-framed roof. The walls are brick where columns are located, with hollow clay tile walls between the columns. The height of the ceiling at the centerpoint is approximately 15', and the height of the sidewalls is approximately 10', where they meet the ceiling. Walls and ceilings are all painted white. The space is broken up by a 20'x30' concrete block area at the southeast corner that has two rooms. The middle room was formally a boiler room. An electrical panel is attached to the north wall of the boiler room. At the midpoint of the east wall there is an 18'x5-1/2' ramp that slopes up to the first floor of Section 3. The wall opening between sections is 4'x7'. The concrete ramp has a curb and a 2-1/2" diameter metal pipe railing. A sliding, corrugated metal door on tracks hangs at the opening. To the north of the sliding door is a boarded-up opening that appears to be part of a larger opening. At the north wall on the east side there is a ramp, 20'x4', that runs east-west and connects to the main door of this section.

**Second Floor**

The second floor of Section 1 consists of one large, open space, 66'x70', with a ceiling height of approximately 10'. The exposed structural system matches that at the first floor and has been painted silver. Columns and some walls have also been painted

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silver. The posts are located approximately every 16-17', like on the first floor. Openings to two bathrooms are located at the center of the north wall, and a hollow clay tile partition wall extends 32' to the south. A sink is located on the west side of the partition wall. 4'-wide fluorescent lights and single bulb fixtures hang from the ceiling. The brick elevator housing is located in the center of the south wall and has vertically sliding gates, constructed of wood slats, one on each side of the elevator cab. A horizontally sliding, metal-clad, wooden door on metal tracks is attached to the elevator wall on each side.

The second floor of Section 2 is broken into two spaces that are separated by a dividing wall (Lot 11 and Lot 12); the east half is open space 33'x70' and west half is offices, 36'x70. The east half has an exposed wood, post and beam structural system. The 10"x12" posts occur approximately 11-14' apart in a grid system. The ceiling has 10"x10" beams that support floor joists and flooring. The walls are exposed brick. The floors are 3"-wide wood, tongue and groove floorboards, running east-west. The posts, walls, and floors have all been painted white. The ceiling height is 10'. The 8'x8' elevator housing is located on the south wall, about 8' off-center, towards the east. It is constructed of brick and has two openings at the east and west with vertically sliding, wood-slat, barrier gates. A 3' x 11' box conveyor machine is located in the middle of the room and delivers merchandise to the first floor. There is a stair to the south of the conveyor machine that leads to the third floor. There are 4'-wide, two bulb, fluorescent lights and single-bulb fixtures hanging at regular intervals to light the space. Plumbing pipes are located in the center of the north wall and no fixtures, walls or partitions remain.

The space located west of the open, storage space, is an office area that includes 30% partitioned walls with the rest open, or partitioned by half walls. This office area connects to the offices in Section 3 on the second floor.

Section 3 contains 28' x 50' of office space, at the north end of the second floor. It contains small rooms that are separated by wood and gypsum board partitions and have wood window partitions to provide light. A staircase at the north end of the space connects to the first floor. The wall of the stairwell has a hollow clay tile exterior wall (south wall) and a brick wall (north wall).

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Third Floor

The third floor of Section 1 consists of one large, open space that measures 66'x70' with a ceiling height of 10'. The exposed structural system is the same as that on the first and second floors and also has been painted silver, along with some of the walls. The grid system has the same dimensions, with posts located approximately every 16-17'. The space has been divided by partitions into smaller rooms at the north and east perimeter. The main, open space is approximately 3100 square feet and the secondary, partitioned space located along the east wall, is 1500 square feet. A 3'x7' door opening separates the two spaces and has a 3-lite fixed transom above. An openings to one, 20'x6', bathroom is located in the center of the north wall. A hollow clay tile partition wall extends 32' to the south. The north, east, and south exterior walls are painted brick, and interior walls contain a variety of materials. Some are hollow clay tile units; others are wood partition walls with 9-lite steel glazed fixed windows. A metal hand wash station is located outside of the restrooms. 4'-wide fluorescent light and individual single-bulb fixtures hang from the ceiling.

The third floor of Section 2 consists of a single, light-filled, open space with an exposed wood post and beam structural system. The posts are small-sized, 8"x8" and are offset approximately 11-14' in a grid system. The ceiling has 2'x12" paired joists supporting purlins and exposed roof decking. The walls are exposed brick and the floors consist of wood, tongue and groove floorboards that run in an east-west direction. The posts and walls have been painted white. Dozens of paper signage cards are glued to the floor and are hand-written with product items and numbers, such as "493 Rabbit Repellant" or "849 fruit stakes." The ceiling height is 13-9" and slope south to 11'. There are three, 6'x12', double-side, sloped skylights that have been covered over on the exterior. Large steel 16-lite operable windows line the north, west, and south walls. Two wood-framed restroom spaces, with 10' ceilings, have been built at the north end of the larger space. Radiator piping exists at some windows, but radiators have been removed. Two Modine brand heating units hang from the ceiling near the southwest corner, to the west of the elevator. Contributing, 4'-wide fluorescent lights hang at regular intervals to light the space. They are hung in both north-south and east-west directions. Electrical wiring, boxes, and switches as well as hanging single bulb fixtures are located throughout the room. The elevator shaft is constructed with brick walls, and a sliding, corrugated metal door provides access.

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Basement

The 66'x70' basement in Section 1 is divided into two open rooms with a north-south partition wall separating them. Each space has exposed concrete frames and 2'x2' concrete columns spaced 16'-17' apart in a grid. Concrete girders support modular concrete vault panels. The vault panels have a corrugated appearance consisting of eight cylindrical shells positioned north-south. These span between each set of columns. The floor is poured concrete. An elevator shaft is located adjacent to the south wall and is an 8'x8' enclosure with brick walls. The unfinished, hollow clay tile partition wall between the two spaces extends north from the elevator enclosure and are constructed using 4"x6"x12" dark brown units and Natco 2"x12"x12" pink units. The south wall is a poured concrete retaining wall that is left exposed. It has eight, 2'-8" x 2'-8" window openings. All openings have been infilled.

The basement at Section 2 has a regular pattern of load-bearing, limestone walls supporting heavy wood girders. The foundation and walls of the east and west half of Section 2 date from circa 1892 and were incorporated into the Condon Bros. Seedsmen building that was constructed for them in 1912. Some spaces are larger by having had some length of walls shortened and replaced with wood timbers. A central circulation corridor runs north-south and intersects the limestone walls. At these locations there are smaller posts and headers that create an opening in the structural walls. The posts provide support for two of the girders above. The brick walls have been coated with a plaster waterproofing material. A row of simple, light fixtures hang above the corridor.

Sections 3 and 4 do not have basements.

All that remains of Section 5 is the basement. This space consists of one large open room, 56'x136'. The floors, walls, and ceiling are reinforced concrete. The basement is unfinished and visible formwork marks exist on the columns, walls, ceiling and floor slabs. Circular, 24" diameter columns in two rows are spaced approximately 17' or 18' apart and the same distance from the exterior walls. The columns are fluted at the ceiling and hold a 3" thick 4'x4' concrete plate that carries the load, a reinforced concrete roof. There are engaged columns at the perimeter walls that have angled, 2'-wide, brackets that support the ceiling. Two central fire suppressant plumbing pipes hang

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from the ceiling, and connect to 2"-diameter fire suppressant pipes that branch at 90 degrees to either side between the columns. Ceiling-mounted electrical conduits connect to single bulb fixtures. Some light fixtures do not have exposed conduit. There are nine window openings: three on the east façade and six on the south façade. The openings are 2-1/2'x2' and are located four feet above the floor, centered between support columns on the exterior walls. These openings hold 4-lite, fixed, steel windows that are boarded up. There are door openings at the north wall that connect to the basements of Section 1 and 2. They have concrete ramps connecting the levels. There are no openings in the south wall.

**Integrity and Alterations**

The interior and exterior of the Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building has good integrity. All five building phases of the complex were completed by 1946. The five building phases occurred in 1912 (encompassing the earlier, circa 1892, 1-story brick building); 1918; April 1928, July 1928, and 1946. All phases of the building are intact, except for the 1946 section, Section 5, which was demolished down to the basement.

Overall changes include window replacements, modifications of interior spaces in office areas, the addition of toilet rooms and partitions, and changes to interior and exterior openings. The building retains its architecturally and structural significance. Specific changes that occurred to the building site and structure are described chronologically by section, below.

**Site**

The site expanded from one building to five from 1912-1946. Spur tracks were always adjacent to the building. One set of tracks were eliminated in 1946 when Section 5 was built and the company used a different set of spur tracks located just south of the Section 5 building. The spur tracks are now not part of the site and have been removed.

**Section 2 – 1912**

Section 2 was built in 1912 and was constructed over parts of two existing buildings that were located on Lot 11 and Lot 12 of the site. The existing buildings had limestone foundations that were incorporated into the construction of Section 2. The one-story building on the west half of Section 2 (Lot 12) had the first floor removed down to the foundation and the one-story

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building on the east half of Section 2 (Lot 11) had only the roof removed and its foundation and first floor were incorporated into the new building. While some of the pre-1900 foundation walls and first floor walls were added onto, all interior posts and beams on the east and west halves are consistent throughout Section 2 and date from 1912.<sup>3</sup>

Other changes to Section 2 include new openings between each half of Section 2 at all levels, most likely occurring after Section 1 was built in 1918 and as a result of the Condon Bros. Seedsmen taking occupancy of all of Section 2. From 1912-1918 the west half of Section 2 was used by Condon Bros. Seedsmen, and the east half of Section 2 was occupied by J. F. Coan Paper Company.<sup>4</sup>

In 1925, a permit describes work to the present building. It includes information on new brick veneering on Cedar Street and an addition.<sup>5</sup>

In 1928, when Section 3 was built, modifications to the exterior west wall of Section 2 included opening up the brick wall near the north end of the first and second floors, and removal of

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<sup>3</sup> "Shumway Updates," a Section 2 investigative report dated March 20, 2015, by Kyle Bevers and by architect, Gary Anderson. The report states the basement foundation and walls were from two, pre-1900 buildings and that an angled scar line on the brick walls in the east half of Section 2 on the first floor indicate the removal of a slopped single story roof. The report notes interior supporting columns and beams on the first, second and third floors of both halves of Section 2 to be identical in style and materials, dating from 1912. The 1892 *Atlas of City of Rockford*, plate 8, by Frederick B. Roe delineates a building owned by Helen A. Bartlett on Lot 11.

<sup>4</sup> J. F. Coan built Section 2 in 1912 for use by the Condon Bros. and his own business, Coan Paper Company, which had been at that location since 1901. "Condon Bros. to erect Warehouse," *Rockford Morning Star*, 2 Jun 1912, p. 10. J. F. Coan is noted as owner from a lien notice on the property per Marge Bevers research. City directories confirm that the Coan Paper Company was based at 632 Cedar Street in 1901, 1905, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1912, 1915, and then, in 1920, the company moved to 628 Cedar (the newly constructed Section 1). Condon Bros. is listed as moving to 632 Cedar Street (the east half of Section 2) in 1920, after the Coan Paper Company moves to their new building (Section 1). The 1928 Sanborn map confirms the address locations as well as Condon Bros. occupying the entire third floor of Section 2 (both Lots 11 and 12) and only the second floor of Section 1. It is unknown when the pre-1900 buildings of Section 2, located on Lots 11 and 12, were originally built but a building is shown on Lot 11 in the 1897 Sanborn map; it is referenced as the Bartlett Flour Company.

<sup>5</sup> City of Rockford, Building Department Permit No. 2599B, 21 Sep 1925 "1 story add to pres. Bldg. 66/6x75/0 - brick veneering front." Joe. Scandrolì Contractor. The permit card is not conclusive, but it is believed that a third floor was added and the north façade brickwork was modified.



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window openings. Doors were also added to the west wall on the third and second floor of Section 2, near the south end, and a fire escape was added that terminated at the Section 3 roof.

Signage, measuring 2-1/2' x 55', was put in-place after 1933, on the north elevation of Section 2, between the second and third floor. 1933 is the date when Condon Bros bought out R. H. Shumway and operated that business at Cedar Street. The signage is now partially existing, measuring 2-1/2' x 12' at Bays 6 and 7. It at one time read, "R. H. Shumway Seedsman and Condon Bros. Seedsmen." It now is a partial sign that spells out "ros. Seedsmen."

In 1933, the interior was remodeled and partitions added.<sup>6</sup>

In 1943, floors were reinforced.<sup>7</sup>

In 1946, when the Condon Bros. purchased Section 1 from the Coan family, (or possibly before if they leased the building from Coan), openings were created between Section 1 and Section 2 at the first, third, and basement levels.<sup>8</sup> When Section 5 was built that same year, it attached to the south wall of Section 1 and 2, so the first level of the façade was enclosed by the new building. Wall and door openings were modified. Offices remodels occurred in Section 2, most likely in 1918, 1933, and again in 1950, when a permit was approved for office renovations for the Company.<sup>9</sup>

Three skylights were covered over at some point when the roof was redone.

**Section 1 – 1918-1919**

In 1918, J. F. Coan owned Lots 9, 10, 11, and 12 and constructed the building known as Section 1. By 1928, the Condon Bros. Company was leasing half of the second floor of Section 1 for their seed business.<sup>10</sup> In 1943, a permit was approved for toilet and washroom partitions to be added.<sup>11</sup> When Section 5 was built

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<sup>6</sup> City of Rockford, Building Department Permit No. 5127B, 24 Aug 1933.

"Remodel interior – partitions," \$150, Jos. Scandroli & Son, Contractor.

<sup>7</sup> City of Rockford, Building Department Permit No. 9776B, 9 Aug. 1943,

"Reinforce Floors" \$300, C. M. Pearson Contractor.

<sup>8</sup> Winnebago County Recorder Office, Doc. # 543099.

<sup>9</sup> City of Rockford Permit No. 14182B. "Remodel offices," \$2,000, Sjostrom & Sons, 22 Nov. 1950.

<sup>10</sup> Sanborn Map, 1928.

<sup>11</sup> City of Rockford Permit No. 9822B, 14 Sep 1943. "Ptns for add'l toilets and washrooms," \$300, Aska & Moen Contractor.

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in 1946, it connected to the south wall of Section 1, and wall and door openings were modified. Stair changes over time include blocking off of the northeast and northwest stairs from the second to third floors and construction of new wood stairs at the southeast corner from the second to the third floor.

Remodeling of offices occurred in the areas that included offices in 1950.<sup>12</sup> In 1970 a permit was issued for window replacement. It is unclear where this replacement of windows occurred, but Section 1 has had the largest number of windows replaced. The other sections retain industrial-type metal sash windows.<sup>13</sup>

**Section 3 -1928**

Section 3 was constructed sometime between 1925 and 1928.<sup>14</sup> In 1928, when Section 4 was built, existing exterior doors and window openings were modified. On the second floor, it is believed that alterations occurred to the offices in 1950 when a permit was issued.<sup>15</sup> In 1947, a 10'x20' coal bin and 60' smokestack were built at the south end of Section 3. Also, a loading platform was constructed, location unknown.<sup>16</sup> Sometime, after the period of significance, the storefront windows of Section 3 were infilled. Small windows were incorporated into the infill.

**Section 4 - 1928**

Section 4 was built in 1928 and connected to Section 3.<sup>17</sup> There are no known changes to this structure.

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<sup>12</sup> City of Rockford, Building Department, Permit #14182B.

<sup>13</sup> City of Rockford, Building Department Permit No. 36692B, July 13, 1970.

"Installing new windows," \$1,000, Harris Bldg. & Rem. Contractors.

<sup>14</sup> Section 3 was constructed prior to Section 4 as there are window openings that are now covered over. One permit was issued in 1925 for a one-story addition and brick veneering and two permits were issued in April and July of 1928 for additions. The permit notations are inconclusive and do not give exact location of the work. Scandroli Contractors are still in business, but were unable to provide records of the work completed during 1925 through 1928. City of Rockford, Building Department, Permit No. 25995, 21 Sep. 1925. "1 story add to pres. Bldg. 66/6x75/0 - brick veneering front," Joe Scandroli Contractor.

<sup>15</sup> City of Rockford Permit No. 14182B, 22 Nov. 1950. "Remodel offices," \$2,000, Sjostrom & Sons.

<sup>16</sup> City of Rockford, Building Department, Permit No (unreadable), 14 Jun 1947. "10 x 20 masonry coal bin & Construct ramp for loading platform" \$1,000, Ole Bakken contractor. City of Rockford Building Department Permit No. 11638B, 17 Mar 1947. "60' smokestack, \$300," Ole Bakken Contractor.

<sup>17</sup> City of Rockford, Building Department, Permit No. 3787 B, 26 July 1928. "Add to office & store room," Chas. Scandroli Contractor.

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Section 5 - 1946

A permit was issued for the construction of Section 5 in 1946.<sup>18</sup> In 2009, the upper floor, the first floor, was demolished after walls collapsed. The basement was retained and the windows in the east were infilled and some south wall windows were infilled.

Practically all of the modifications to the building and the site were conducted during the period of significance and during the occupation of the Condon Bros. Seedsmen Company and their operation of the R. H. Shumway Seedsman Company. Changes known to have been made after 1965 include the demolition of the upper level of Section 5, the modification of openings and replacement of windows at Section 1, and infilling three storefront plate glass openings with solid wood framing and windows at Section 3.

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<sup>18</sup> City of Rockford Building Department, Permit No. 15230, July 1946. . "1 & B. Br. & Concrete to be used as warehouse," \$25,000, C. E. Wolfley architect, Home Const. Co. Contractor.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ 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

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE

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**Period of Significance**

1912-1965

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**Significant Dates**

N/A

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**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

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**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

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**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

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**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 Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building is locally significant and eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A for its leadership in the seed industry. R. H. Shumway & Sons was founded in 1870 by Roland H. Shumway and acquired in 1933 by Condon Bros. Just after the merger, the *Rockford Morning Star*, stated, "Rockford as the home of some of the world's greatest seed houses is the home of Condon Brothers, one of the leading firms in the entire seed business."<sup>19</sup> The seed firm controlled two large seed houses, which both continued in business together, publishing separate catalogs, until the firm ceased operation in the 1980s. Over the years, millions of their catalogs were shipped all over the world. The period of significance dates from 1912, when the first section of the building was constructed and ends fifty years ago.

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

**BACKGROUND HISTORY**

History of the section of Rockford where the Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building was located dates back to the founding of Rockford. When city founder, Germanicus Kent<sup>20</sup>, reached the area in 1834, the first title to the property was known as an "Indian float" allocated to "James, son of Mau-nah-tee-see", who was the son of a Winnebago princess and French fur trapper.<sup>21</sup> One of many mixed race children of Indians and white settlers, "James" was awarded all of Section 22 under the 1929 Winnebago Nation of Indians Treaty Reservations Act. The land changed hands several times before 1840, with owners including Kent. Section 22 incorporated both the site of where Kent built his original cabin and the area that became the 600 block of Cedar Street.

<sup>19</sup> "Condon Concern One of Largest Seed Companies". *Rockford Morning Star*, May 20, 1934.

<sup>20</sup> The Kent family, Lewis Lemon (a slave) and Thatcher Blake are generally credited with founding the settlement that was later to be called Rockford. <http://www.gorockford.com/about-rockford/history/>

<sup>21</sup> In 1829 the Federal Government granted what were known as "Indian floats" to the mixed race children of Native American and white settlers. A "float" in lieu of a deed that could be redeemed for land or money."

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The 600- and 700-blocks of Cedar were acquired by the nascent Rockford Cemetery Association in the early 1840s. Between 1844 and 1852, this was the only cemetery on the west side of Rockford. When the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad came through, the railroad forced the relocation of the cemetery, acquiring the 600-block except for 70' frontage on Cedar Street in April, 1852. This is where the Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Company Building was later constructed.

Location of freight tracks, south of Cedar Street, was to prove important to the growth and development of the seed company as well as numerous other industries in Rockford. The railroad, chartered January 16, 1836, to connect Chicago with the lead mines at Galena, began service in 1848 and was completed as far as Elgin in 1850--reaching Rockford in 1852. Train service arrived on the west banks of the Rock River after construction of the first trestle bridge across the river in 1853.

The Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building was located strategically to take advantage of both rail and water transportation. Because of its location, halfway between Galena and Chicago, the city of Rockford was briefly called "Midway." It quickly became known as Rockford, however, because of the excellent ford across the Rock River. In September, 1851, the first permanent dam on the Rock River was built. That same year the Rockford Water Power Company was organized. The confluence of rail service and water power that was generated south, along Main Street (which intersects with Cedar Street), combined to make Rockford an early and formidable Midwestern industrial center.

Early settlers of Rockford, which was incorporated as a city in 1852, included poor Irish emigrants attracted by railroad construction jobs and driven from their homeland by the Potato Famine that took place between 1845 and 1852. In 1850, the Irish represented 2% of the total population of Rockford, which was then 2100. In 1860, they represented 10% of Rockford's 6800 residents. The Irish lived in "patches" with shanty slums--low income housing--along the river and on Cedar Street. One, called "Tipperary Patch" was located on the site of the Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building. In 1958, Leonard Condon, when interviewed for the *Rockford Morning Star*, reminisced that their building was the location of the patch where many Irish settlers originally made their home.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>" Irish Families Figure in Seedsman's Memories" *Rockford Morning Star*, March 9, 1958.

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**R. H. SHUMWAY**

The history of R. H. Shumway Company dates from 1870, when Roland Hallett Shumway founded the R. H. Shumway Seed Co. Roland was the son of David S. Shumway, who was one of the earliest settlers in Winnebago County, arriving from Vermont in 1836.<sup>23</sup> Like so many with an entrepreneurial spirit, David and his family headed west to make their fortune. The Shumways settled at the confluence of the Rock and Kishwaukee Rivers. Working as a carpenter, David built two sawmills.<sup>24</sup> He was reported in the *History of Rockford & Winnebago County, IL* as having settled on a farm in New Milford.<sup>25</sup> The 1860 Census Records have David Shumway listed as a farmer.<sup>26</sup>

R. H. Shumway, who was born in Kishwaukee, Winnebago, Illinois, July 26, 1842, founded the R. H. Shumway Seed Company at the family farm. Educated in the public school, his boyhood days were spent upon the farm. The 1903 issue of the *Rockford Morning Star* reported that "there is where he acquired the knowledge requisite to the success of his present business."<sup>27</sup> At age 19, he enlisted in the Civil War, re-enlisting two years later. Between the two enlistments, in 1864, he married Emma A. Davis, a native of New York.

As early as 1871, Shumway realized that producing and selling quality seed would be the key to his success. The *Star* reported, "In 1871 he began to realize the importance of the production of thoroughly good seed as the best means of success to the farmer and gardener, and gave special attention to their development."

<sup>28</sup>

Shumway immediately began growing his company into the business that was to merge with Condon Bros. Seedsmen in 1933. In 1872, he moved from the farm into Rockford, where he established his business at the northeast corner of 3rd and E. State Street.

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<sup>23</sup> Shumway's parents settled at the mouth of the Kishwaukee River, soon after the Black Hawk War. Mrs. Shumway (Sallie Greeley) was a first cousin to Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*, Congressman from New York and candidate for U. S. President, running against Ulysses S. Grant. He is credited with the phrase, "Go West young man, go west." "Rockford Today". Rockford: Clark Co. Press, 1903. pp. 106-107.

<sup>24</sup> Marge Bevers. "Genealogy of the David Smith Shumway Family." Unpublished. Much of the information in this nomination is taken from primary research assembled by Marge Bevers.

<sup>25</sup> Charles A. Church. *History of Rockford & Winnebago County, IL, from the First Settlement in 1834 to the Civil War*. Rockford, IL: New England Society of Rockford, IL, W. P. Lamb Book and Job Pinter, 1900. Ancestry.com. Pg 43. Bevers, Appendix A #18.

<sup>26</sup> Genealogy. U. S. Census, 1860, Illinois. Ancestry.com Marge Bevers. Unpublished Appendix A, #24.

<sup>27</sup> "Rockford Today", pp. 106-107.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*



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Eight years later he moved again, to larger quarters, in the 300 block on E. State Street. In 1880, Shumway established a retail outlet for his seeds at 323 East State Street, near where he lived, at 113 N. 3rd Street. By 1885, the firm moved to the 100 block of S. 1st Street, where it remained for 40 years. He expanded the business in 1888 and 1898.<sup>29</sup>

The production of quality seed was to prove successful for his company. The 1900 *History of Rockford and Winnebago County* states that "Roland H. Shumway has acquired a national reputation as a seedsman and has amassed a large fortune."<sup>30</sup> The 1903 *Rockford Star* noted that because of close attention to investment in his business, he had acquired considerable competence and ran a business "valued at about a million of dollars."<sup>31</sup>

After Emma's death in 1899, Roland lived with his children. Still, evidence shows that the property he owned was enormously valuable. In 1905, Shumway was recorded as paying the highest personal property tax of any Rockford resident.<sup>32</sup> That same year, he donated land on East State Street for the express purpose of establishing a farmers' market.<sup>33</sup>

Roland Shumway died, at age 88, December 31, 1925, in an automobile accident, in Rockford.<sup>34</sup> After Roland's death, his son Myron Raymond ("Ray") Shumway assumed responsibilities for running his father's large mail-order seed business.<sup>35</sup> He was the last Shumway to manage the family business of R. H. Shumway Seedsman. Upon Ray's death, March 16, 1933, his widow Vera, sold the company to the Condon family, which ran Condon Bros. Seedsmen. The Condons moved the Shumway Company to Cedar Street, where their wholesale business was located<sup>36</sup> and operated the company.

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<sup>29</sup> Roland L. Shumway obituary. *Rockford Star*, January 2, 1926. Bevers. Appendix A, #130.

<sup>30</sup> Church. Bevers. Appendix A, #18.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> "Shumway" Bevers.

<sup>33</sup> Bevers. In her section on the Shumway family, Marge Bevers notes that the Shumway Market currently houses the Arts Council and hosts farmers' markets during the summer.

<sup>34</sup> Roland H. Shumway's obituary in the *Rockford Star*, January 1, 1926, stated that Mr. Shumway suffered from deafness as a result of a bronchial illness while serving in the Civil war, and this prevented him from hearing the car approach. The accident took place as he was walking home from his seed company on S. 1st Street. Bevers, Appendix A, # 130. Shumway is buried in Cedar Bluff Cemetery, Rockford.

<sup>35</sup> "M.R. Shumway, Prominent as Seedsman, Dies." *Rockford Register Republic*, March 16, 1933. From "R.H. Shumway", April 12, 2014. Web. Wikipedia. March 9, 2015.

<sup>36</sup> One of Vera's brother in law's R. H., started a retail sales showroom in the 1940s on Charles Street, but the catalog business was now run by the Condon family. Bevers. Family Group Record 13.

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**CONDON BROS. SEEDSMEN**

Condon Bros Seedsmen was founded in 1910 by Leonard R. and John R. Condon and their father Thomas Condon. Thomas Condon was born in Newcastle, Tipperary, Ireland on June 16, 1853. He was in his mid to late teens when his family arrived in Rockford.<sup>37</sup> On May 16, 1876, he married Bridget Prendergast, who was born in New Jersey just after her parents arrived in the United States from Ireland. Thomas worked as a mechanic for the Utter Manufacturing Co. and for 25 years as for the Rockford Post Office.<sup>38</sup> The Condons had at least seven children.<sup>39</sup> Thomas was 57 in 1910, when Condon Bros. Seedsmen was established, with his sons Leonard R. and John R. The firm's first location was at 513 W. State Street, west of the Rock River, where they operated a small retail store. By 1912, only two years after the their firm was founded, they relocated to the building that is today 624-642 Cedar Street<sup>40</sup>, where they built a seed cleaning and refining plant and mail order and wholesale store. It was erected for them by J. F. Coan, who owned the J. F. Coan Paper Company. Condon Bros. incorporated in October, 1914, and by 1915 had acquired its own seed farm called the Rock River Valley Seed Farm. At the time the company was founded, the sons lived with their parents at 1519 Rock Street.

When Condon Bros. Seedsmen, moved to Cedar Street, it was little more than a mud path in rainy weather and rough in dry weather. The only buildings in the immediate area were the Chicago & North Western Railway freight station, Keig Baking Company, and a paper shop. By 1933, when it merged with R. H. Shumway, the plant fronted approximately 175' on Cedar Street; was flanked on either side by flourishing businesses and aggregated "an annual business of several million dollars."<sup>41</sup>

Thomas Condon died shortly after the firm was established. He succumbed to pneumonia January 12, 1919. Described as a "well known and highly respected citizen of this community" in his obituary, Condon was a member of Rockford Council, Knights of Columbus and Camp 49, Modern Woodmen of America. To quote, "He

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<sup>37</sup> There is dispute over his age upon arrival. Family members report he was 14 and the family arrived in 1867. The U.S Census reports that he arrived in New York City on April 11, 1870 with his father Michael and his mother Mary. Bevers, CONDON, P. 5.

<sup>38</sup> "Thomas Condon, Old Resident Here, Dies" *Rockford Republic*, June 13, 1919.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> At that time the address of the building was 632-634-636 Cedar Street. It was referred to as 628-642 Cedar Street in an advertisement that the company took out in the *Rockford Morning Star*, May 28, 1961, "Condon Bros. Seedsmen Celebrate 50th Anniversary." *Rockford Morning Star*, May 28, 1961.

<sup>41</sup> "Condon Concern One of Largest Seed Companies". *Rockford Morning Star*, May 20, 1934

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took an active interest in politics and in all civic movements, and was held in high regard by a host of friends and acquaintance, with whom he endeared himself by his genial nature and estimable qualities of character. His passing will be widely mourned."<sup>42</sup>

John R. and Leonard R. ran the company. They were both experienced in the seed business, bringing administrative talent as well as familiarity with seeds to the partnership. Both had worked for the flourishing firm of H. W. Buckbee Seeds prior to establishing Condon Bros. with their father. John worked as a foreman at Buckbee for 20 years. Leonard started work at Buckbees at age 13 and left when he was 27 years old.<sup>43</sup>

Leonard R. Condon was president of Condon Brothers and secretary/treasurer of R. H. Shumway after 1933. In 1927, he was elected president of the American Seed Trade Association and a life member of the Board of Directors. He was also active in civic affairs and the Democratic Party, serving as Winnebago County Democratic Central Committee Chairman for several years. He was Rockford Township Assistant Supervisor for nine years and a member of the Winnebago County Board. In 1950, Leonard R. was awarded a plaque by the Rockford Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors for "continuous service of more than a decade." In 1958, he was named "Man of the Year" by the Notre Dame Alumni Club of Rockford." He was also a director of Illinois National Bank, Forest City National Bank, Central Illinois Electric & Gas Co. and president of Contour Hosiery Mills, a South Rockford factory, for 28 years. The sons of Leonard and his wife Catherine King Condon, Timothy (who was an attorney) and Leonard, Jr. (Leonard W.) were also involved in the business.<sup>44</sup>

Leonard R.'s brother John was an original founder of the Contour Hosiery Mills that his brother presided over. He was a charter member and first president of Mauh-Nah-Tee-See Country Club, a member of Rockford Elks, Notre Dame Club of Rockford and Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> "Thomas Condon, Old Resident Here, Dies" *Rockford Republic*, June 13, 1919

<sup>43</sup> The Rockford City Directory of 1900 lists John R. Condon (1877-1966) as a foreman at the Buckbee company and the 1902 Directory lists Leonard R. Condon (1883-1962) as a clerk. Bevers, "CONDON BROTHERS SEEDSMEN, 642 Cedar Street (1910-1958)" The summary of information was provided to Marge Bevers by Judith and Leonard W. Condon, III, the grandson of Leonard R. Leonard W. took over the business when the elder Condon's retired.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* The Advertisement for the firm's 50th Anniversary notes that Leonard W., in 1961, had operated the company for the previous 25 years. "Condon Bros. Seedsmen Celebrate 50th Anniversary." *Rockford Morning Star*, May 28, 1961.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

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When the Condon's purchased Shumway, they kept the Shumway name, and R. H. Shumway Seedsman continued to operate. During the course of their years in business, the Condons purchased several other seed companies including Alneers and, ironically, the H. W. Buckbee Seed Company,<sup>46</sup> where Leonard R. and John had started out in the seed business. The Buckbee Seed property and the business were purchased by Condon for \$42,000 in 1937; their purchase included a four-story building on Buckbee Street. When the *Rockford Register-Republic* wrote about the buyout, it stated, "For years it was the most flourishing in the middle west, mailing catalogs and supplying seed and shrubs to farmers and city gardeners throughout a wide section of the United States and several foreign countries."<sup>47</sup>

Judith Condon (Mrs. Leonard W. Condon, III) describes the nature of Condon Bros. Seedsman & R. H. Shumway Seedsman. In the summary of information she assembled on the company, she wrote that the business was three fold: 1) a mail order company; 2) a wholesale business and 3) a seed packet business in retail stores on consignment. Early mailings went to customers in Florida, Texas, Louisiana and Georgia. The largest numbers of customers were in Pennsylvania, then Ohio, and Illinois was third. She added that Condon was one of Rockford's largest employers of its time although many of the workers were seasonal--order fillers, checkers, catalogue addressers. The office force was full time. After the catalogues were mailed, orders would come back in February and be filled until the middle of May. In late fall, seeds would be put in bins and packets filled from the bins. Packets would then be sent off to racks in grocery stores and hardware stores on consignment. Ernie Smith, a salesman for Condon for 25 years would be on the road from June 1 until September every year picking up cases and selling seeds in 50-pound lots. Many seeds sold by Condon's were grown on contract in Idaho and California for land under irrigation. Shrubs grown under contract came mostly from California and Texas. Novelty seeds came from Belgium, France, Japan and Holland.<sup>48</sup>

Huge numbers of catalogs were sent all over the world. An article in the *Rockford Morning Star*, published in January of 1948, noted that 2,000,000 copies of seed catalogues were to be

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> "Court Approves Buckbee Seed Property Sale," *Rockford Register-Republic*, October 26, 1937, pg. 1.

<sup>48</sup> Judith and Leonard W. Condon, III. Bevers, "CONDON BROTHERS SEEDSMEN. 642 Cedar Street, (1910-1958)

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sent from Rockford all over the country and the world, half from Condon, half from Shumway. The catalogs, "liberally colored", contained the pre-planting-season lists of "what to buy" from Condon Brothers Seedsmen and R. H. Shumway Seedsman--companies jointly owned by Condon Bros. These 80 page (Shumway) and 90 page (Condon) catalogs were to be mailed to the people who had ordered seeds the previous year. In addition, requests were received daily for between 6,000 and 7,000 orders. The seeds ranged from asparagus to zinnias and field seeds. Included were two new roses, one named for Mrs. Dwight Eisenhower, one for Ernie Pyle.<sup>49</sup>

**OTHER CEDAR STREET BUSINESSES**

The site on Cedar Street where Condon Bros. Seedsmen located was an ideal site for an industry that depended on shipping, with rail transportation and hydroelectric power nearby. The Chicago & North Western Railway tracks were located to the south of Cedar Street, with two spurs running parallel to the south edge of the lots where Condon built their facility. The railroad's freight depot was located about a quarter mile east of the site, on Cedar Street. The north Branch of Kent Creek was located just south of the rail yards, with the Rock River a few blocks to the east.

Location near the rail yards attracted other industries, including several companies in the supply chain between farmers and retailers. The companies that built facilities on Cedar Street included:

- J. B. Agard, subsequently Agard & Ross, Grain dealer (600 Block, Cedar Street, 1859-1881)
- Bartlett & Co. subsequently D. L. Bartlett, A.L. Bartlett, Flour mill and grain and feed store, cereal production (500, 600, 700 Block, Cedar Street, 1856-1955)
- Blakeman & Dobson, subsequently Dobson Manufacturing Co., Lumber purveyor, door and window manufacturer, lumber and builder supplies, revolving churn manufacturers (Cedar Street, 1880s-1925)
- J. F. Coan, Paper Company (400 block Cedar Street, 1897-1920)
- E. C. Coppins, subsequently Coppins & Lange, Rockford Flour & Feed, Flour and Seed (600 Block, C.1900-1930s)

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<sup>49</sup> "Gardeners All over World To Get Rockford Catalogs". *Rockford Morning Star*, January 11, 1948.

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- NW Oatmeal Mills, subsequently A. M. Johnson & Co. 600 Block, (600 Block, Oatmeal production, 1874-1892). This company eventually evolved into Quaker Oats, and the staff participated in the founding of this world-famous company.
- D. Clark Bakery, subsequently Clark & Keig, Forest City Baker, Keig Stephens Baking Company, (Baking company, 600 Block, 1900-1945ff)
- Rockford Specialty Metal, subsequently Modern Metals (600, 700 Block, 1920-1940s)
- Henry H. Palmer, Spring bed manufacturer, churn maker (Vicinity of Cedar Street, 1866-C. 1915)
- Bertrand & Sames, Manufacturer of riding corn, wagons (300, 400 Block Cedar, 1860-C. 1900)
- Walsh & Joyce, subsequently ginger ale and lager bottler; agent for Miller's Milwaukee Brewery, (500 Block Cedar, 1897-1925)
- H. H. Palmer, subsequently Palmer & King, manufacturer of churns (500 Block Cedar, 1890s)<sup>50</sup>

**ROCKFORD'S ROLE IN THE NATIONAL SEED INDUSTRY**

Seed distribution was a huge national business; Rockford played an important role, and Condon Bros. Seedsmen & R. H. Shumway Seedsmen Company were significant in the industry. The Victory Horticultural Library, an organization devoted to fostering the sharing of information pertaining to historical horticulture, created "The Seedsman Hall of Fame", honoring individuals who had an impact on the history of horticulture. Their web site lists 51 firms from around the United States (and one in Paris, France), including such familiar names as W. Atlee Burpee. Only three were located in Illinois, and all three were in Rockford: H. W. Buckbee, Condon Bros., and R. H. Shumway.<sup>51</sup>

In 2008, Matthew Dillon, Director of Advocacy for the Organic Seed Alliance, wrote "SeedStory. A Brief History of the Seed Industry."<sup>52</sup> He sums up the story of commercial seed development in the United States. Much of the following information is taken from his study. He notes that until the 1850s, the States didn't

<sup>50</sup> Bevers, Notebook, Pp 11-15. All of the companies cited were researched by Marge Bevers and information on them was included in her genealogy on the David Smith Shumway family, "Early families & Businesses on Cedar Street, Rockford, Illinois, May, 2009," Pp. 1-15

<sup>51</sup> "Seed Company Histories and Timelines" Victory Horticultural Library. 1914 Web. March 5, 2015.

[http://www.saveseedsof.org/seedsmen/company\\_history.html](http://www.saveseedsof.org/seedsmen/company_history.html)

<sup>52</sup> "Seedstory. A Brief History of the Seed Industry". C. January, 2005. Web. March 6, 2015

<https://seedstory.wordpress.com/a-brief-history-of-the-seed-industry/>

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have a commercial seed industry and at the time of his writing, it is today "the world's largest".<sup>53</sup>

In the middle of the 19th Century, seeds were gotten via a small number of horticultural seed catalogs, farmer exchanges or the U. S. Government. At that time, the U. S. Patent and Trade Office (PTO) and congressional representatives saw to the collection, propagation and distribution of varieties to their constituents. The program grew so quickly that, by 1861, the PTO had an annual distribution of more than 2.4 million packages of seed (containing five packets of different varieties) and by 1897, under the management of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, more than 1.1 billion packets. Seed exchanges existed as early as the 18th Century, when Thomas Jefferson engaged in seed-exchange societies. By 1819, the U. S. Treasury Department issued a directive to its overseas consultants and Navy officers to systematically collect plant materials.<sup>54</sup>

Dillon noted that the first commercial seed crop was not produced until 1866, when cabbage seed was produced on Long Island for the U. S. wholesale market. The early industry did quite well, but early seed professionals felt that their growth was stymied by U. S. Government programs as well as the self-replicating nature of their product.<sup>55</sup> This led to the founding, in 1883, of the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA). As the business of growing and marketing seeds expanded, seedsmen decided to hold a large convention. After the first meeting, which 35 men from 33 seed trade firms attended, the organization was formed--with an early goal of reducing postage on seeds. The organization, as it moved into the first decades of the Twentieth Century, addressed the issues of seed legislation, tariff issues, postal laws and the free distribution of seeds by the government. It took steps to increase food production in support of the U. S. War effort in World War I. Ironically, the Depression saw a big increase in the seed business because more and more people had to plant gardens in order to eat. The Victory Gardens of World War II also markedly increased business. ASTA expanded, so that by 1958, when its 75th anniversary was celebrated, membership included 731 companies. These numbers were gathered at approximately the same time as the Condon Bros. Seedsmen & R. H. Shumway celebrated its 75th

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* In 1924, after many years of lobbying, ASTA convinced Congress to cut the USDA seed distribution programs. . Subsequently its role consisted of training plant breeders, performing fundamental research, and creating raw materials and technologies for private industry to capitalize on.

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anniversary. In 2005 ASTA's membership consisted of over 700 companies involved in seed production and distribution, plant breeding, and related industries. It serves as a voice of action in matters concerning the development, marketing and free movement of seed and associated products throughout the world.<sup>56</sup>

Seeds were a big business, and the industry continued to grow. In the 1960s, a few larger firms began to purchase smaller firms, largely to acquire strong hybrid holdings. The Condon Bros. Seedsmen & R. H. Shumway Company participated in this trend of consolidation when they purchased other Rockford seed companies. The trend continued into the 1980s, when the firm ceased operation.

With the retirement of Leonard R. and John Condon in 1958, Leonard W. (Leonard, Jr.) took over Shumway Seeds, running the mail order business; Ernie Smith and his wife Gertrude Gallagher Smith, took over Condon Seeds and ran the retail store. Ernie died in 1962, and Gertrude and their daughters Sue and Ann ran the business. At that point it serviced local gardeners. A 1978 article in the *Sunday Register-Star*, showed Gertrude Smith standing in front of 800 drawers of seeds at the Condon Lawn and Garden Center. She said that the drawers were augmented with eleven large barrels used for storage. She said "and then we don't have enough".<sup>57</sup> The company only stayed in business a few more years, however, closing in 1980.<sup>58</sup> Interestingly, there is an R. H. Shumway Company, seed distributors. A member of the National Garden Bureau, they continue to produce seed catalogues. The firm is located in Randolph, Wisconsin.<sup>59</sup>

**ROCKFORD SEED FIRMS**

Over the years, Rockford served as home to several seed firms, which grew the seeds or purchased them wholesale, packaged the seeds for distribution--both wholesale and retail.<sup>60</sup> The largest

<sup>56</sup>"ASTA, American Seed Trade Association." 2015, Web. March 9, 2015. <http://www.amseed.org/>

<sup>57</sup> "Seed firm has deep roots in Rockford." *Sunday Register-Star*, June 4, 1978.

<sup>58</sup> "Condon," *Bevens*

<sup>59</sup> R. H. Shumway's. 2015. Web. March 10, 2015 <https://www.rhshumway.com/>

<sup>60</sup> Other companies included J. B. Root & Company, Charlotte M. Haines (who wrote several books including *Seeds Grown By A Woman*), Charles J. Cherry & Company and Great Northern Seed Company. Charlotte Haines became president of Buckbee Seed Company. Charles J. Cherry & Company and Great Northern Seed Company were bought out by Buckbee Seed Company. "Other Seed Companies, Rockford Reminisce.com: Vintage Rockford Postcards-Pictures-Advertising-History." 2012. Web. March 9, 2015. [http://www.rockfordreminisce.com/Other\\_Seed\\_Companies.html](http://www.rockfordreminisce.com/Other_Seed_Companies.html)



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and most important, in addition to Condon Bros. Seedsmen & R. H. Shumway, were the Buckbee Seed Company, George S. Haskell & Co., and Alneer Bros.<sup>61</sup>

The Buckbee Seed Company, which dates from 1871, was started by Hiram W. Buckbee. H. W. started on his family homestead--located at 1405 Kishwaukee Street at the corner of what is now Buckbee Street. He began by selling cabbage plants as a young boy. Gradually the company expanded into the corporation of Rockford Seed Farms and Forest City Greenhouses. His brother, who joined the company, beginning in 1927, served four terms in Congress. Hiram died in 1921, John in 1936. The firm, which farmed on 15,000 acres and had buildings with over 350,000 square feet of work space that included a greenhouse complex and trial area, was one taken over by the Condon Bros. Seedsmen & R. H. Shumway Seedsman Company as part of their expansion.<sup>62</sup>

The second seed business was George S. Haskell, Jr. & Company, located on North Main Street. He organized a seed business with his brother-in-law in 1864, but it closed in about 1891, when Haskell passed away. His obituary noted that he grew a great variety of seeds for his warehouse, was on the state board of agriculture and president of the Winnebago Agricultural Society.<sup>63</sup>

The third company was Alneer Bros, founded in 1887 by Swedish immigrants Charles G. and Alfred A. Alneer. The firm started at 710 S. 4th Street, where George Twiss had previously operated a seed dealership. In 1897, the firm moved to 116 Kishwaukee and remained there until 1947, when Alfred's son, Raymond J. Alneer managed it.<sup>64</sup> In 1947, Alneer Bros. was bought by Condon Bros. With this acquisition, the youngest of Rockford's seed companies became the only remaining seed operation.

The Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building is the only building still standing on the west side of the Rock River that is associated with the seed industry. On the east side of the river, part of the Buckbee complex remains--at what is today 620

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<sup>61</sup> Marge Bevers has extensively researched seed companies and written about them in her unpublished Genealogy of David Shumway. It is her judgment that these, along with R. H. Shumway, Seedsman and Condon Bros. Seedsmen, were Rockford's most important seed companies. Bevers, "Rockford Seed Firms", Pp. 16-18.

<sup>62</sup> Bevers, Genealogy of David Shumway, P. 17; "Rockford Seed Companies: Buckbee Seed Company." Rockford Reminisce.com. <http://www.pro-up.org/buckbee/buckbeehistory>.  
[http://www.rockfordreminisce.com/Buckbee\\_Seed\\_Company.html](http://www.rockfordreminisce.com/Buckbee_Seed_Company.html)

<sup>63</sup> "Haskell Family History, George Samuel Haskell, "George S. Haskell Dead" Rockford Daily Register, Aug 12, 1891. n. d. Web, March 10, 2015.<http://www.haskellfamilyhistory.com/database/2/35137.html>

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* Pp. 16.

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Buckbee Street, on the west side of Kishwaukee. It consists of a four-story brick building accentuated by arched openings and some smaller brick garage buildings. Although it is not known exactly when these buildings were constructed, stylistically the four-story building appears to date from the early 1890s. The large building is now empty, having previously housed the Testor Corp., manufacturers of children's models, glue, etc. There is also a small one-story shotgun building, covered in vinyl siding, with a large boarded up storefront window at the front and a limestone foundation. It is located in the 1000 block of Kishwaukee at what would have been the north end of the Buckbee complex. This small structure may have served as a retail store for the company. All of the other buildings belonging to this huge company have been demolished.

The Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building, with good integrity--sufficient to reflect its historic use--remains as a reminder of the significance of this once internationally-known seed company. Located at the confluence of railroad yards and waterways, it is the only seed company building remaining in an area that once served as a major center of industry in Rockford.

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<https://seedstory.wordpress.com/a-brief-history-of-the-seed-industry/>

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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
- ☐ Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** .70

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: 42.269411 degrees | Longitude: -89.102603 degrees |
| 2. Latitude:                   | Longitude:                    |
| 3. Latitude:                   | Longitude:                    |
| 4. Latitude:                   | Longitude:                    |

**Or**

### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927    or    ☐ NAD 1983

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

See Continuation Sheet for parcel maps of the two parcels, Pin #11-22-453-005 and Pin #11-22-453-006.

**Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building**

Name of Property

**Winnebago County, IL**

County and State

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the buildings and additions on Cedar Street that have historically been part of the Condon Bros. Seedsman & R. H. Shumway Seedsman companies from 1912-1965 and that retain historic integrity.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Susan Benjamin, Laura Knapp

organization: Benjamin Historic Certifications, LLC

street & number: 711 Marion Avenue

city or town: Highland Park state: IL zip code: 60035

e-mail ssbenjamin@sbcglobal.net

telephone: 312-203-1808

date: 3/20/2015

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**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.)

**Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building**

Name of Property

**Winnebago County, IL**

County and State

**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: Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building

City or Vicinity: Rockford

County: Winnebago

State: IL

Photographer: Don Bissell (0001-0009, 0013, 0014, 0016-0021)  
Susan S. Benjamin (0010, 0011, 0015),  
Laura C. Knapp (0012)

Date Photographed: Varies, see description

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

Location of Original Digital Files: Bevers and Bissell Properties, LLC,  
112 N. Wyman Street, Apt. 3, Rockford, IL 61101-1145

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0001  
North façade of Section 1, Section 2, and partial Section 3, camera  
facing southeast  
May 2009

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0002  
North façade of part of Section 2, Section 3, and Section 4, camera  
facing southeast  
June 2010

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0003  
North façade of Section 1, camera facing south  
June 2010

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0004  
North façade of Section 2, camera facing south  
June 2010

**Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building**

**Winnebago County, IL**

Name of Property

County and State

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0005

North façade of Section 3, camera facing south

May 2009

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0006

North façade of Section 4, camera facing south

May 2009

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0007

South façade of Section 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, camera facing northwest

March 2015

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0008

East façade of Section 1, camera facing west

March 2015

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0009

West façade of Section 4, camera facing southeast

March 2015

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0010

Interior of Section 2, first floor, camera facing south

March 2015

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0011

Interior of Section 3, first floor, camera facing southwest

March 2015

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0012

Interior of Section 3, retail store and stairs, camera facing northeast

March 2015

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0013

Interior of Section 4, first floor, camera facing south

March 2009

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0014

Interior of Section 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor offices, camera facing north

May 2012

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0015

Interior of Section 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, camera facing west

March 2015

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0016

Interior of Section 1, 3rd floor, camera facing east

July 2009

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0017



**Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building**

**Winnebago County, IL**

Name of Property

County and State

Interior of Section 2, 3rd floor, camera facing east  
March 2015

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0018  
Interior of Section 1, basement, camera facing south  
March 2015

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0019  
Interior of Section 2, basement, camera facing north  
May 2012

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0020  
Interior of Section 5, basement, camera facing south  
January 2000

IL\_Winnebago County\_Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building\_0021  
View of box conveyor machine at Section 2, 2nd floor, camera facing  
southwest  
May 2012

**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.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

**Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building**

Name of Property

**Winnebago County, Illinois**

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 10 Page 1

10. Geographical Data



Parcel Pin # 11-22-453-005

↑ North

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

**Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building**

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Name of Property

**Winnebago County, Illinois**

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 10 Page 2



Parcel Pin # 11-22-453-006

↑ North



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

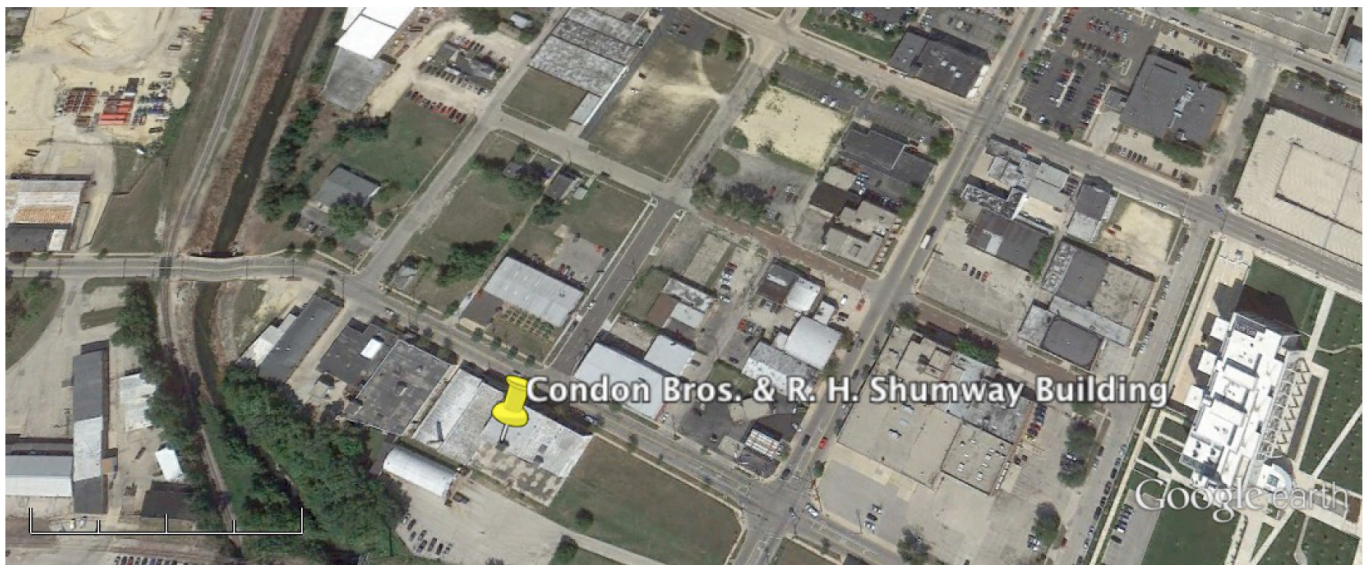
Section number Additional Documentation Page 3

**Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building,  
Winnebago County, IL**

**Geographical Map**



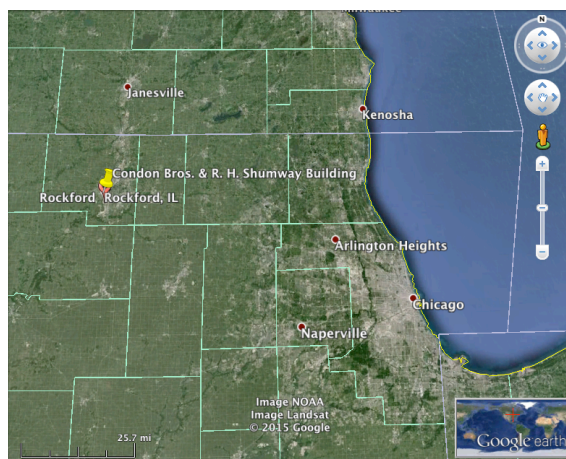
Page 1



Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building

Rockford, Winnebago County, IL  
Latitude: 42.269411 degrees  
Longitude: -89.102603 degrees

Area Map :



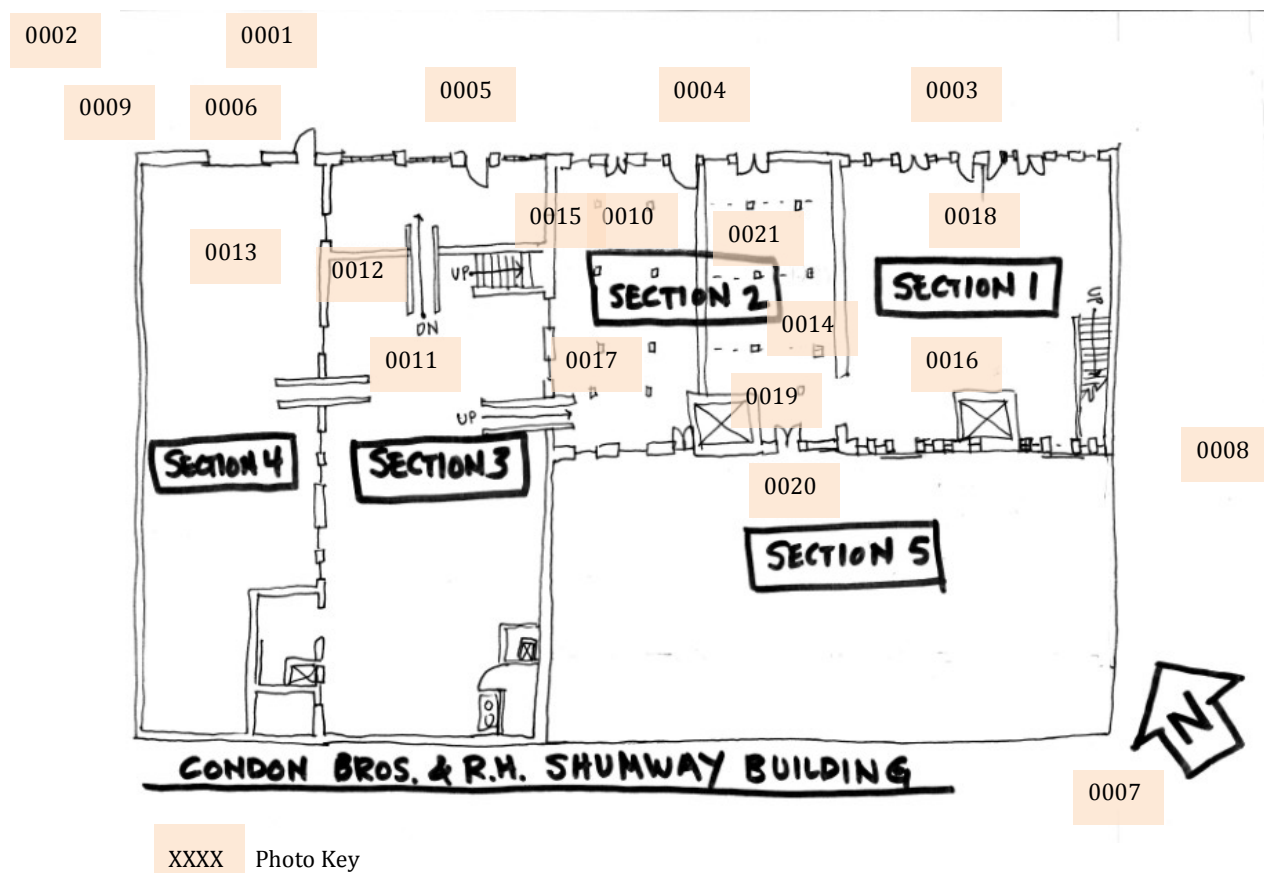
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Additional Documentation Page 4

Condon Bros. & R. H. Shumway Building,  
Winnebago County, IL

Sketch Map Figure 1



















SEEDSMAN & CONDON BROS SEEDSMEN













