

LOCUST ST. – EAST SIDE, NORTH OF WATER ST. TO ALLEY

BEFORE THE 1888 SANBORN FIRE MAPS

The exact location and years of operation of some of the businesses that were known to have been on Locust Street, east side, north from the NE corner of Locust & Water Streets is difficult to pinpoint for a number of reasons. First, there are no maps similar to the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps before 1888. Second, the Ottawa County Exponent files from 1871 to 1897 have been destroyed. Third, other files from newspapers in existence in Oak Harbor at that time have also disappeared. Fourth, ownership of the property may not have been who actually ran a business there. Fifth, addresses were not assigned in Oak Harbor until 1925. With all of this in mind, the following is what is known to have been on the east side of Locust Street, north from Water Street to the alley area prior to 1888. There are sure to have been others.

Adolphus Kraemer owned most of the property on the east side of Locust Street, north of the Otto Schimansky blacksmith shop (NE corner of Locust & Water Streets). This area was called Kraemer's Block. Somewhere in this area in 1874 was Short's Bakery & Dining Room. In October, 1878, C. Maeulen, Notary Public, had an office in Kraemer's Block. Also in October, 1878, P.E. Sweet had his New Harness Shop in Kraemer's new building next to the bakery. May of 1875, the Oak Harbor Weekly Press (newspaper) had an office in the Kraemer Block.

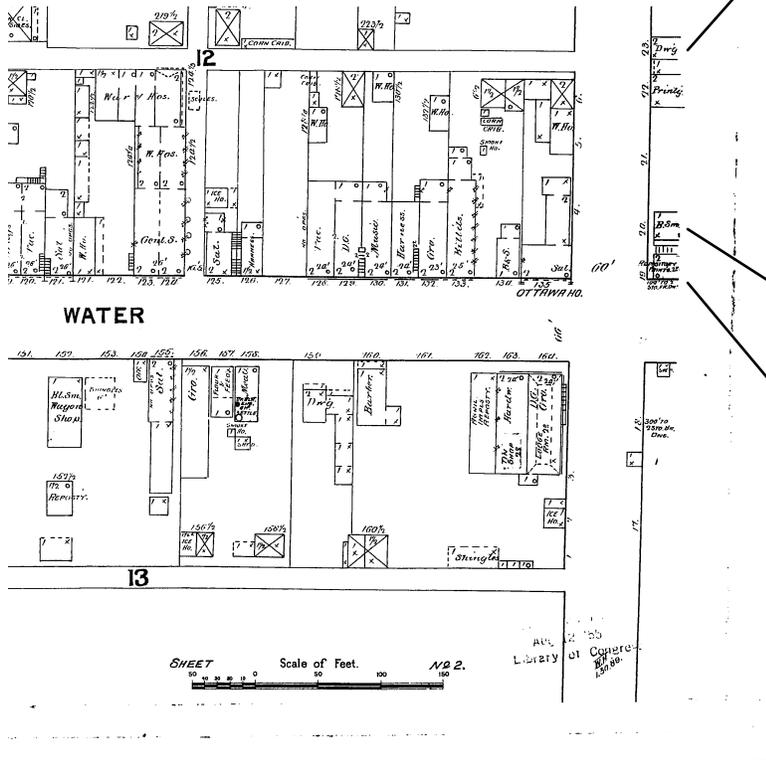
Michael Thierwechter moved his general store from Elmore to Oak Harbor in 1877. He rented a store front in a frame building from Adolphus Kraemer on the east side of Locust Street. The store was on the ground floor. Clerks from the store lived on the second floor and Adolphus Kraemer had his law office on the second floor. This building burned in 1883 and was replaced by another 2 story frame building that, by 1900, housed the Ottawa County Exponent.

Some where in the Kraemer Block, possibly the 2 story frame building at 116 Locust Street that was later (around 1900) the Oak Harbor Exponent building, was the John Burhold Bakery (from at least 1878 to at least 1887) and also the Wilt Sisters Millinery (prior to 1900). It could be that they were in the same building at the same time. Back in the late 1800's and early 1900's there were many businesses on second floors of the commercial buildings in the downtown.

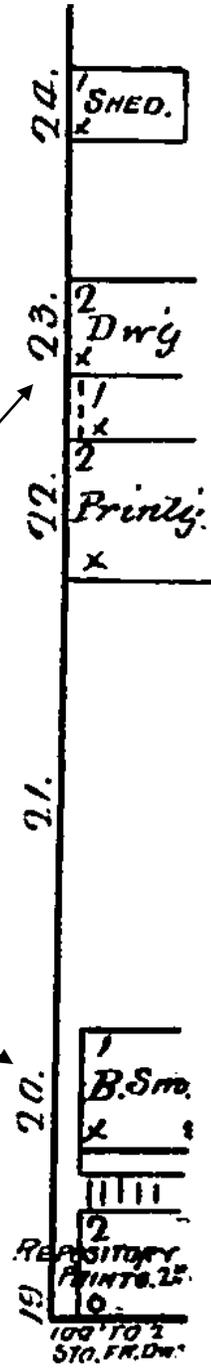
At the 120 Locust Street location, just north of the 1900 Oak Harbor Exponent building, was the Nagle Drug Store. As no date is presently known for this store, this may or may not have been in the building later known as the Oak Harbor Cleaners.

LOCUST STREET – EAST SIDE, NORTH FROM WATER STREET TO ALLEY

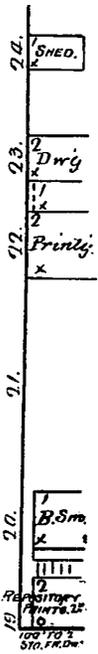
Sanborn Maps of Nov 1888 & May 1893 are the same. Below is from the 1888 map showing location of buildings. The enlargement to the right tells what each building was. The print shop (by #22) was the 2 story frame Ottawa County Exponent building. (Enlargement is not cut off, Sanborn Maps did not go further east for these 2 dates.)



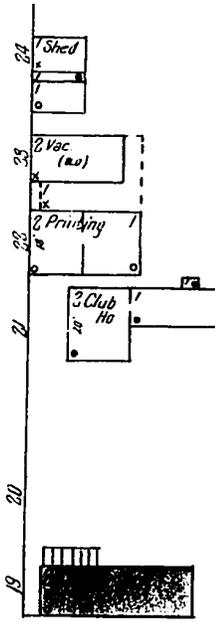
Sanborn Map 1888 (Detail)



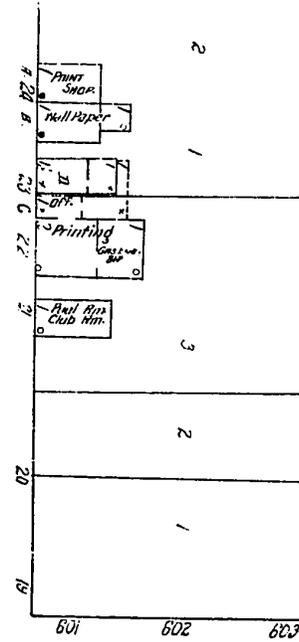
Enlargement - 1888



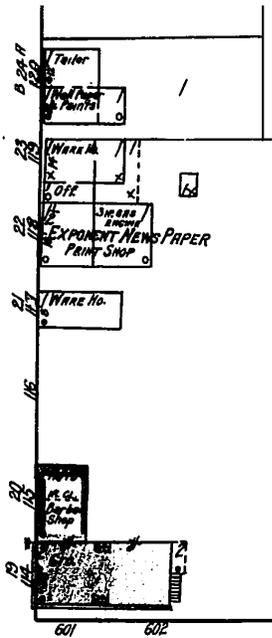
1888/1893



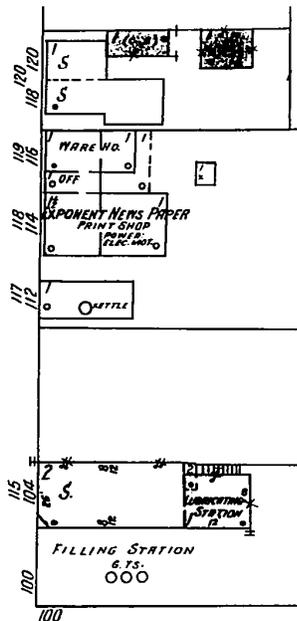
1898/1904



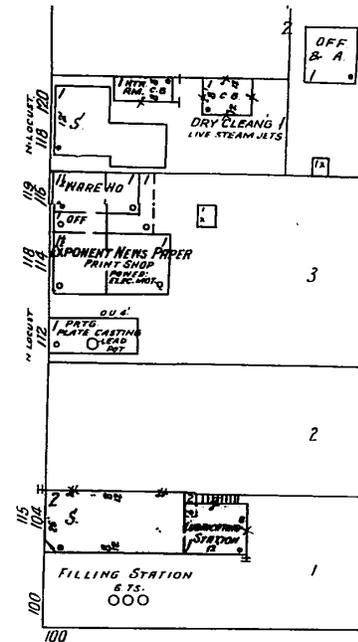
1910



1920



1931



1945

SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE MAPS – 1888, 1893, 1898, 1904, 1910, 1920, 1931, 1945

1888/1893 Maps – Show the Otto Schimansky blacksmith shop on the NE corner of Water and Locust. Schimansky returned to Oak Harbor from Michigan and erected a frame blacksmith shop here in 1875. It was destroyed by fire September, 1883. Rebuilt to what is seen on these maps. He owned the shop to around 1896.

Most of the property to the north (and east) of the Schimansky shop was owned by the Kraemer family. The building labeled “Printy” was the Ottawa County Exponent. The building shown on these map was built to replace one destroyed in the September, 1883 fire. (This fire destroyed the Exponent’s back file of copies from 1871 to 1883. Flood in 1969 destroyed 1883 to 1897.) Above this building in 1894 was the dressmaking shop of Mrs. Jennie Davenport.

1898 Map – (Map not shown) Map is very similar to the 1888/1893 maps except that it only shows the south half of the blacksmith shop. This south half is what is shown on the 1904 map. The blacksmith shop in 1898 is now owned by Mylander & Wilhemsen

1904 Map – Building on the NE corner of Locust & Water is still a blacksmith and possibly still Maylander & Wilhemsen. Notice the additional building labeled “Club House” – This was the Hartford Club. Formed in 1902 as a social club for the pleasure of its members. Limited to 40 keyholders. Two days a week were for wife and ladies of the members. Billards & bowling alley were available. (Both suffered damage in the 1904 flood.) Louis Heller & George Bredehoft set pins here. Building set on piers over the bayou. – Jean Williams said that George Bredehoft told her that DeWilton Kraemer met here with friends for coffee and politics. The Hartford Club was in the same building that in 1900 had housed the Oak Harbor Bowling Alleys and in 1901 Kraemer’s Bowling Alley.

1910 Map – Notice that the blacksmith building on the NE corner is now gone and lot is empty. Do not know when it was removed. Only know that the brick building (later moved back) was built about 1911.

The next building that was labeled “Club House” is now labeled “Pool Hall & Club Room” with loss of rear portion of building. Can not explain this except there were other bowling alleys in town and this, being one of the first, may have been outdated or just plain closed and removed. Perhaps because it was built over the bayou on piers it needed to be torn down.

North of the Printing building (Exponent) the “D” means dwelling. North of that is “Wallpaper” and “Paint Shop” Both shops were run by George Paulsen.

1920 Map – Building on NE corner is now a brick 2 story building with a grocery on ground floor. Building built by John Ficken about 1911 as a grocery store. By 1920 the grocery has changed hands numerous times. Ficknen & Huntress, William Klipp, William Bredehoft,

A. Hoedt, Charles Corson, J.H. Ficken, Carl Noble to name the ones that are known. (Carl) Noble & (Hodie) Krieger were here prior to 1926.

Just behind the grocery store is barbar shop. Around 1918 to 1924 it was the shop of Charles “Honsey” Fought who was a barber in town since at least 1894.

The building furtherest to the north labeled “Tailor” was before 1917 Eugene V. Brown. He was both a tailor and a dry cleaner. Wm. T. Earle bought out Brown in 1917. Not sure how long Earle stayed here before moving out.

1931 Map – The brick 2 story building (aka the Noble Block) on the corner was moved back some 30 feet in late 1929. Gas tanks were installed in old basement and new brick addition, a lubricating station, built to the east. On this map, it is now Griest Super Service Station.

The furtherest north building’s two fronts are labeled “S” which means stores. Not entirely sure of of these store fronts. Sometime after 1920 and prior the 1930’s there was a Ketus Kemp Barber Shop in the north store front and Carl Kinsel Electric & Plumbing shop in the south store front. In the later 1930’s both store fronts were a cleaners run by Chestnutwood and by 1939/1940 both store fronts were the Oak Harbor Cleaners & Dryers run by Mr/Mrs Nate Goldstein. They were here starting in 1932.

1945 Map - On both the 1931 and 1945 maps there is a building that has a kettle and plate casting area in it. This was where the Exponent had a lead furnace for melting the lead type print forms. (This would become the site for the 1946 Exponent building.)

AFTER THE 1945 SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE MAP

106-110 Locust Street – Ottawa County Exponent built a single story block building in 1946 where they had the building that was used for melting the lead type print forms. The Exponent moved out in Sept., 1990. Things Unique (crafts & art items) was in same building as Exponent, in a room to the south side, for 1-2 years just prior to 1990. Building was empty 1990 to 1992. License Plate Bureau was here June, 1992 to June, 2009. Building has been empty since then.

116 Locust Street – The 2 story frame buiding that was the Exponet office was replaced by O.L. Teagarden sometime after 1946 (needs to be researched). Bob Thayer Minn. Moline Tractor Sales, Griest Motor Sales (1952 to 1967), Van-Atta Co-op Laundry (1968-1980), Blakely Co-op Laundry (1980-1997), Blakely Dry Cleaning started in 1984 in conjunction with the laundry, Sew-n-Sew shop in same room as laundry (1992-1993), Bob & Sue Morse bought laundermat from Blakley in 1997, Freddy’s Laundermat & Dry Cleaning in 2004, Slick Willy’s in 2013.

120 Locust Street – Single story frame building that housed the numerous cleaners still had in it, after 1945, the Oak Harbor Cleaners, The Male Room (men’s clothing in with cleaners at least from 1967 to 1969), The Treasure Chest (Christain [?] book store) 1976, Side Line Sound Shop (music store) 1977, Building was torn down for a parking lot.