

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF RIPON

Ripon was built on the northern edge of one of the largest stretches of open prairie in Wisconsin.

The first white settlement within the present city limits was a small utopian community known as Ceresco, founded in 1844.

One-half mile east of Ceresco, other settlers formed Ripon, naming it after the English cathedral city located in Yorkshire. It drew most of its settlers from New England, New York and Pennsylvania. Ceresco disbanded in 1851 and in the two villages combined two years later and incorporated as the City of Ripon in 1858.

Like many cities in Wisconsin, Ripon grew quickly attracting a large German and Polish population in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## OTHER THINGS TO DO while in Ripon

Visit the Little White Schoolhouse,  
*Birthplace of the Republican Party*

Shop our many distinctive establishments on the east & west sides and in Ripon's Historic Downtown district. Don't miss the bargains at the Rippin' Good Cookies Outlet

Tour the Ripon College campus

Hike or Bike one of Ripon's many trails

Enjoy Downtown Ripon at Friday Night Concerts June through August & the Farmers Market on Tuesday evenings & Saturday mornings June through October, both on the Village Green

Have fun at Cedar Ridge Stable & Lodge, Larson's Famous Clydesdales Show, Prellwitz Produce, and the historic Campus Cinema

Please contact the Ripon Area Chamber of Commerce for more information about these and other attractions in Ripon!

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## Self-Guided Historic Walking Tour

### Part A

Approximate Walking Time  
60 Minutes



Prepared by the  
Ripon Area Chamber of Commerce

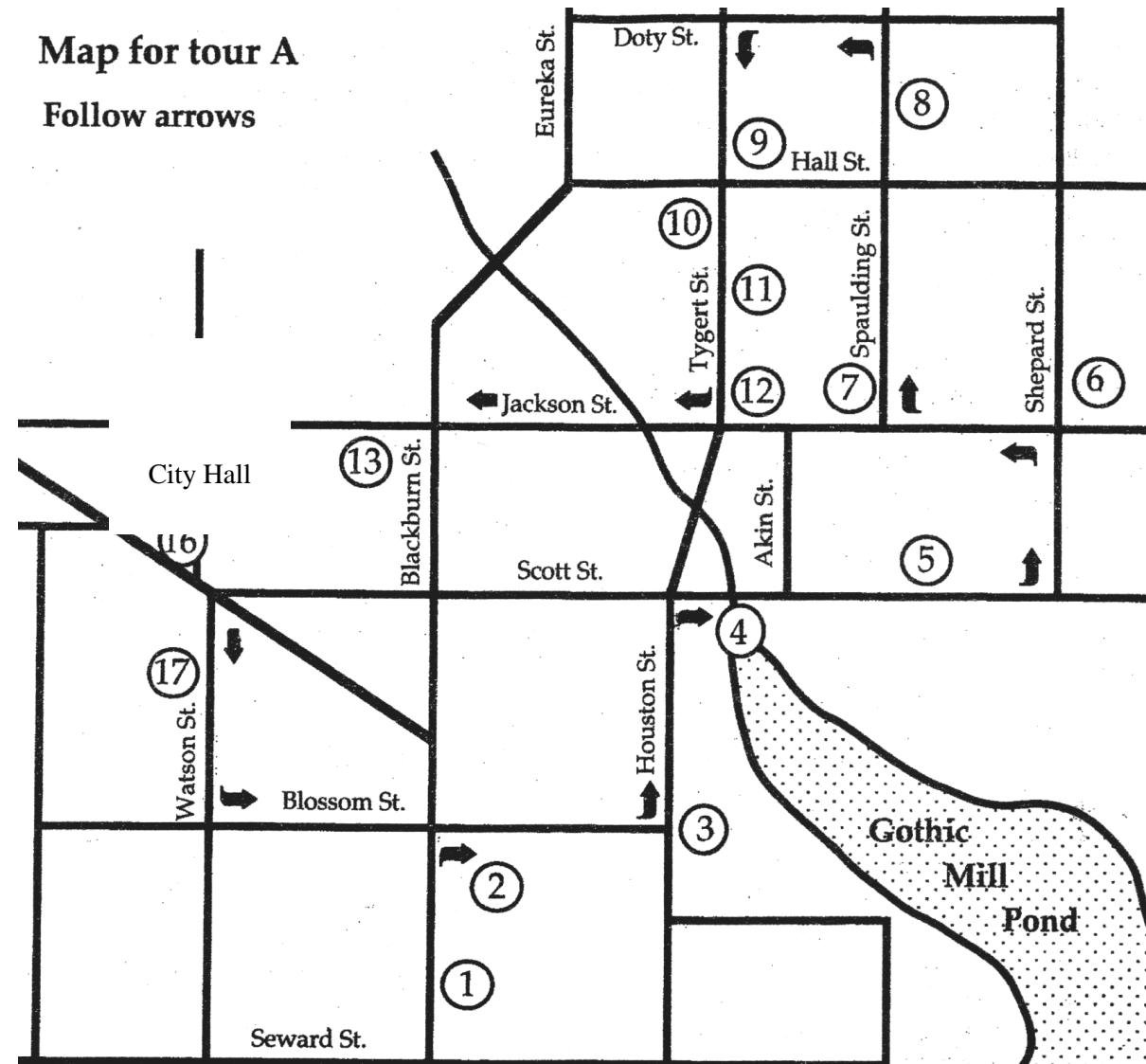
## WELCOME TO HISTORIC RIPON!

This self-guided walking tour will show you many of Ripon's historic sites. Unfortunately we were unable to include everything so feel free to deviate from the path we describe. If you want to wander some of the side streets to look at something of interest, by all means do so! Take your time and enjoy the history of this beautiful city.

To enjoy Ripon's architecture to its fullest, don't forget to look up! Some of the most beautiful and well-preserved details on many homes and businesses are along the roofs or tops of porches. Note the care and cost that went into producing buildings. Have an enjoyable tour and thank you for visiting historic Ripon.

### Map for tour A

Follow arrows



### 1. The Little White Schoolhouse

303 Blackburn Street

**The birthplace of the Republican Party.** On March 20, 1854, a group of Ripon citizens met in the small schoolhouse to form a new anti-slavery party and give it the name *Republican*. In recognition of the building's importance to the nation's heritage, it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973. A year later it was granted the additional status as a National Landmark. The markers in front of the building provide more information.

### 2. Republican House

303 Blackburn; Built 1857

This fine old red brick Italianate mansion was built in 1857 by George N. Lyman, a successful merchant. The Haseltine family occupied it until the 1940's when it became a toy factory. It was a restaurant from the 1950s – 2009 and is now the site of the future Republican Presidents Museum.

### 3. St. Peter's Church

217 Houston Street; Built 1860

This Episcopal church is an excellent example of Carpenter Gothic church architecture and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It bears the same name as the Anglican Cathedral in Ripon, England.

### 4. Gothic Mill Pond

Scott Street; near Houston

One of Ripon's attractions to pioneers was the potential for deriving power from the flow of Silver Creek. By 1870, the creek had been dammed at four locations within the city limits. Eventually, nine mills made use of waterpower from the creek. The only remaining dam at the Scott Street Bridge was built in 1853 by David Mapes, one of the city's founders, to power his Gothic Mill. The dam no longer provides power, but the pond and adjoining areas have become a recreation site for area residents & visitors.

### 5. John Scott Horner House

336 Scott Street; Built about 1850

This cut stone house was built by John Scott Horner, another of Ripon's founders. Horner was appointed acting governor of Michigan Territory by President Andrew Jackson in 1836. When Wisconsin Territory was split from Michigan, Horner became its first secretary, and head of the government land office in Green Bay. In 1838, Horner purchased the quarter section of land that became the site for the village of Ripon. In 1849 he made an agreement with David Mapes to help found the village. He named the city Ripon because it was the name of his family's ancestral home in England. The home remained in the Horner family until 1988. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

### 6. Speed Queen (Alliance Laundry Systems)

Shepard Street

Running along the east side of Shepard Street as far as they eye can see is Ripon's largest industry, Speed Queen, manufacturer of washers and dryers. The company began as a hardware store at the turn of the century operated by Barlow and Seelig. You will see the store later in this tour. Many of Ripon's finest homes were built on the nearby streets from 1850-1880.

### 7. Cowan House

320 Jackson Street; Built 1854

This home's second story and pitched roof were added some time after the original construction. The home is rumored to have been a stop on the Underground Railroad.

### 8. Alice Callan School

221 Spaulding

Originally named Longfellow, this school with its unique architecture was renamed in honor of a beloved teacher who perished in the 1949 Grandview Hotel fire. The building is now a private residence.

### 9. T.D. Stone House

206 Hall Street; Built in 1870s

T.D. Stone, entrepreneur and combative editor of the Ripon Free Press, built this Queen Anne style home. It has also served as a fraternity house for Ripon College students.

### 10. Seymour Eggleston House

113 Tygert Street; Built in 1850s

Built in the Greek Revival style, this home has been owned by many of Ripon's leading citizens. Between 1872 and 1925 it was the home of Lydia Brown, Ripon's first woman public official. An advocate of women's rights, she was elected school commissioner in 1887.

### 11. Henry T. Henton House

119 Tygert Street; Built in early 1850s

This elegant Italianate house is built of grout blocks, an early form of concrete block construction developed in Wisconsin. Before railroads enabled the importation of inexpensive lumber to Ripon in the late 1850s, houses were often built of some form of masonry. Mr. Henton was owner of two area mills and served as mayor of Ripon during the Civil War. The bricks which make up the driveway were originally used to pave Watson Street.

### 12. Edward Jussen House

306 East Jackson Street; Built 1879

This is an example of transitional Victorian architecture.

### 13. Jackson Street

100 Block of East Jackson

Note the buildings on both sides of the street. These buildings are typical of late Victorian-era commercial architecture which exhibits the tendency toward extravagant use of complex shapes and elaborate detailing. Located near the old rail depot, this area housed a harness maker, monument shop, livery stable, wagon maker, as well as the city's first jail.

### 14. The Square

Watson between Jackson and Fond du Lac Ripon's "Main Street" began here. Virtually all of the buildings on the Square burned to the ground at least once. A particularly devastating fire in 1869 destroyed almost the entire west side block accounting for the fairly uniform Italianate building designs. Ripon's first hotel was built at the northern end of the square in 1849. The original crude wooden hotel was replaced a few years later by a much larger masonry building. Known by many names, including the Grandview, it dominated the square until its destruction by fire in 1949.

### 15. Campus Cinema

103 Watson Street

Once a leading department store, the building became the very first movie house operated by Ben Marcus and is still part of the large Marcus Theatre chain operating throughout Wisconsin.

### 16. Art Deco Bank

112 Watson Street

This is the only art deco commercial building in Ripon. It was built following the fire that destroyed the middle of the block.

### 17. Birthplace of Speed Queen

210 Watson Street

This three-story and the adjoining buildings were originally occupied as Barlow and Seelig's Hardware Store, predecessor company of Speech Queen. The first Speed Queen washer was built on the second floor of this building.

***Conclusion of part "A." You may return to the Little White Schoolhouse by going east on Blossom Street or continue with part "B" of the tour.***