



The Krouskop Mansion 323 South Central Avenue 1913-16. Richland County History Room photos unless noted otherwise.

Abiel H. 'Doc' Krouskop - July 13, 1840 - April 2, 1930.



Abiel Hovey Krouskop Richland Center's first millionaire.

Abiel H. Krouskop was born in Bellefontaine, Logan County, Ohio, July 13, 1840, and was a son of Jacob and Elizabeth (McCloud) Krouskop, one of the early Richland County pioneer couples who settled in the village of Sextonville in 1851. His siblings included Elizabeth Miller Krouskop, William Krouskop, George Krouskop, Mary Akey, Letitia Lord McCorkle and Cynthia Krouskop. Krouskop was educated in the public schools of his native town in Ohio, and also in the schools of Richland and Dane counties. At the age of nineteen he began his independent career by engaging in the general mercantile business in a small building owned by his father, near the Krouskop's Sextonville mills. He carried on a general merchandise business until 1863, when he moved to Richland Center and purchased the stock of goods belonging to J. W. Lybrand, in a building located on the corner of Court Street and Central Avenue where the Gund building (Goplin Insurance)

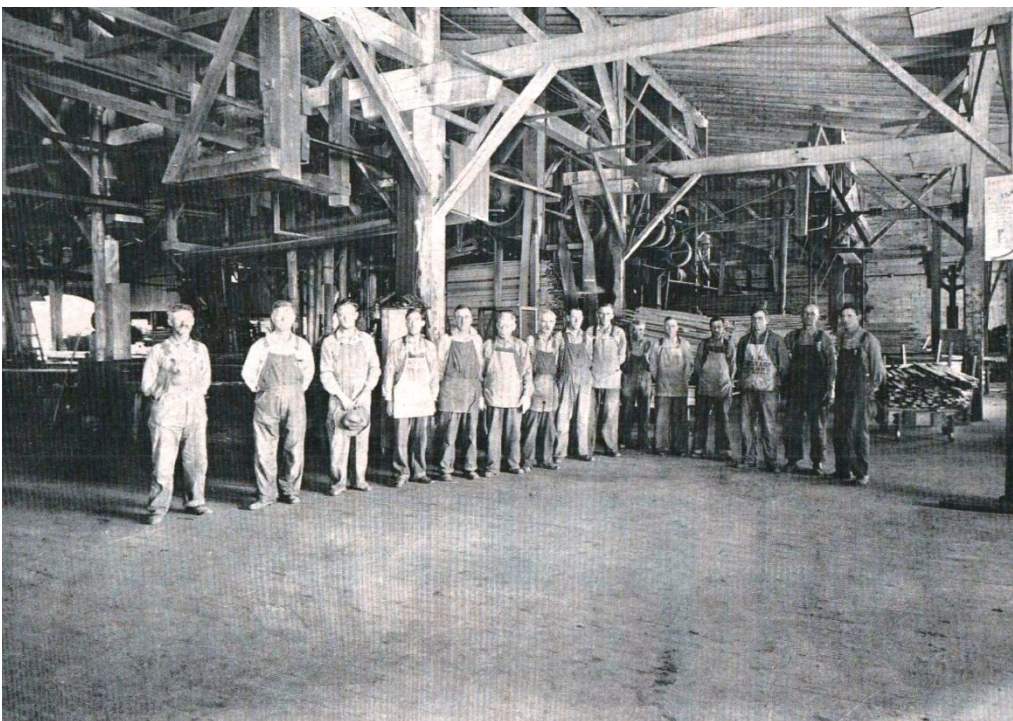
now stands. Krouskop continued in business at that point until 1878, when he erected a building, known as the "Grand Emporium" near the site where Center Cinema Theater is located. It was a two-story structure of pressed brick, 125x44 feet in size and was known as one of the finest such establishments in the state. With its cut stone cornices it was a showplace and the pride of Richland Center. It also had an opera house on the second floor.

On January 28, 1883, Krouskop's opulent store burned along with two adjoining buildings he owned. In 1884, he erected a three-story building on the same block of the fire. Although this second store was a substantial building, it was not as ornate as the structure that burned. At this time his mercantile business was managed by Charles Craig and Krouskop devoted much of his time and attention to other business interests. (The rebuilt store was destroyed by fire in 1948).



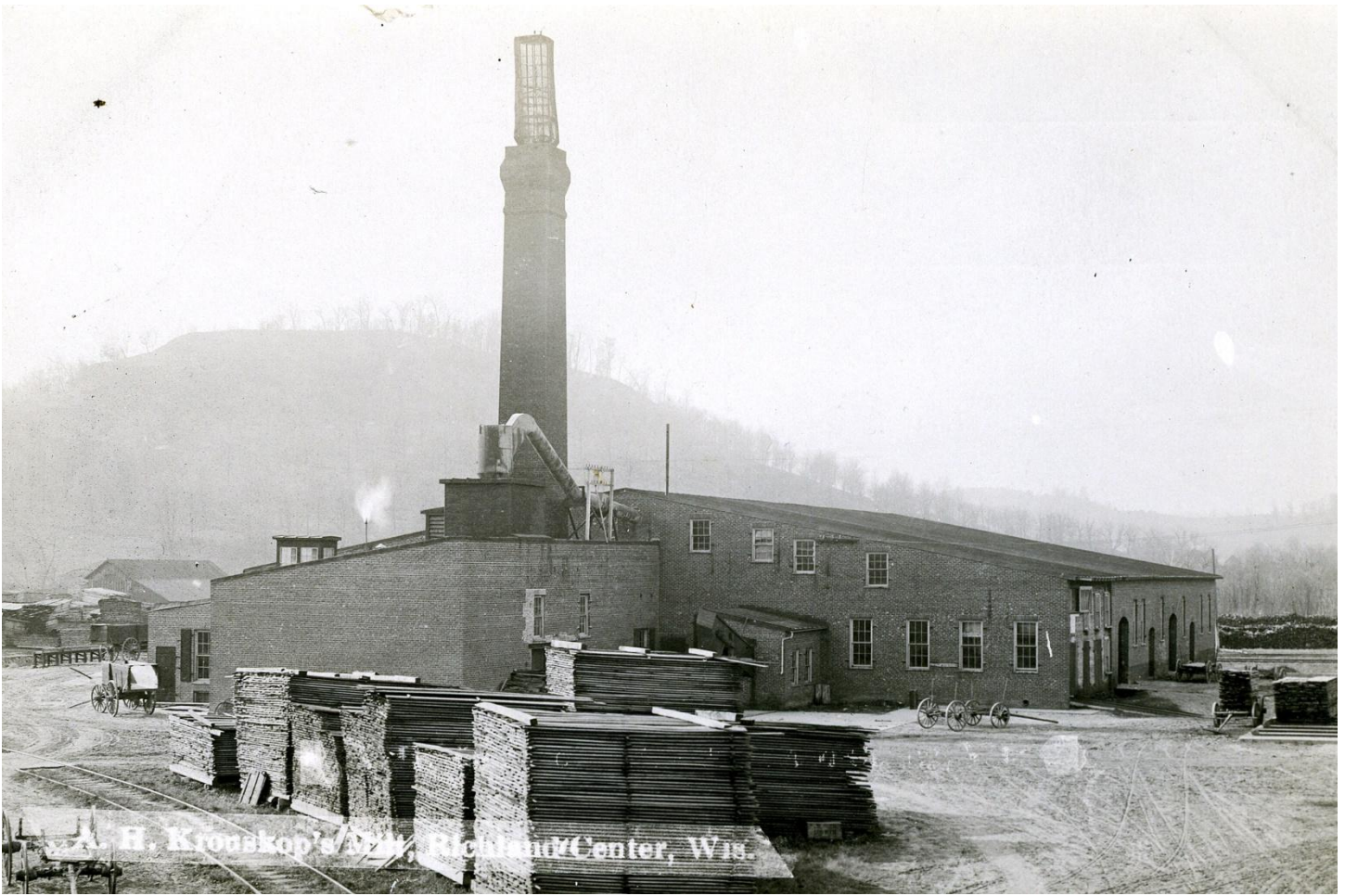
Left: The "Grand Emporium." Right: Remnants of the "Grand Emporium" after fire in 1883. Below: Interior view of the sawmill.

In 1878, with his retail store under the management of his partner, Charles Craig, he built a sawmill in the city, which developed into a large wholesale and retail lumber business. He also built a number of warehouses and established a market for coal, grain, feed and livestock. With the expansion of his varied business interests, Krouskop became one of the largest employers in southwest Wisconsin.

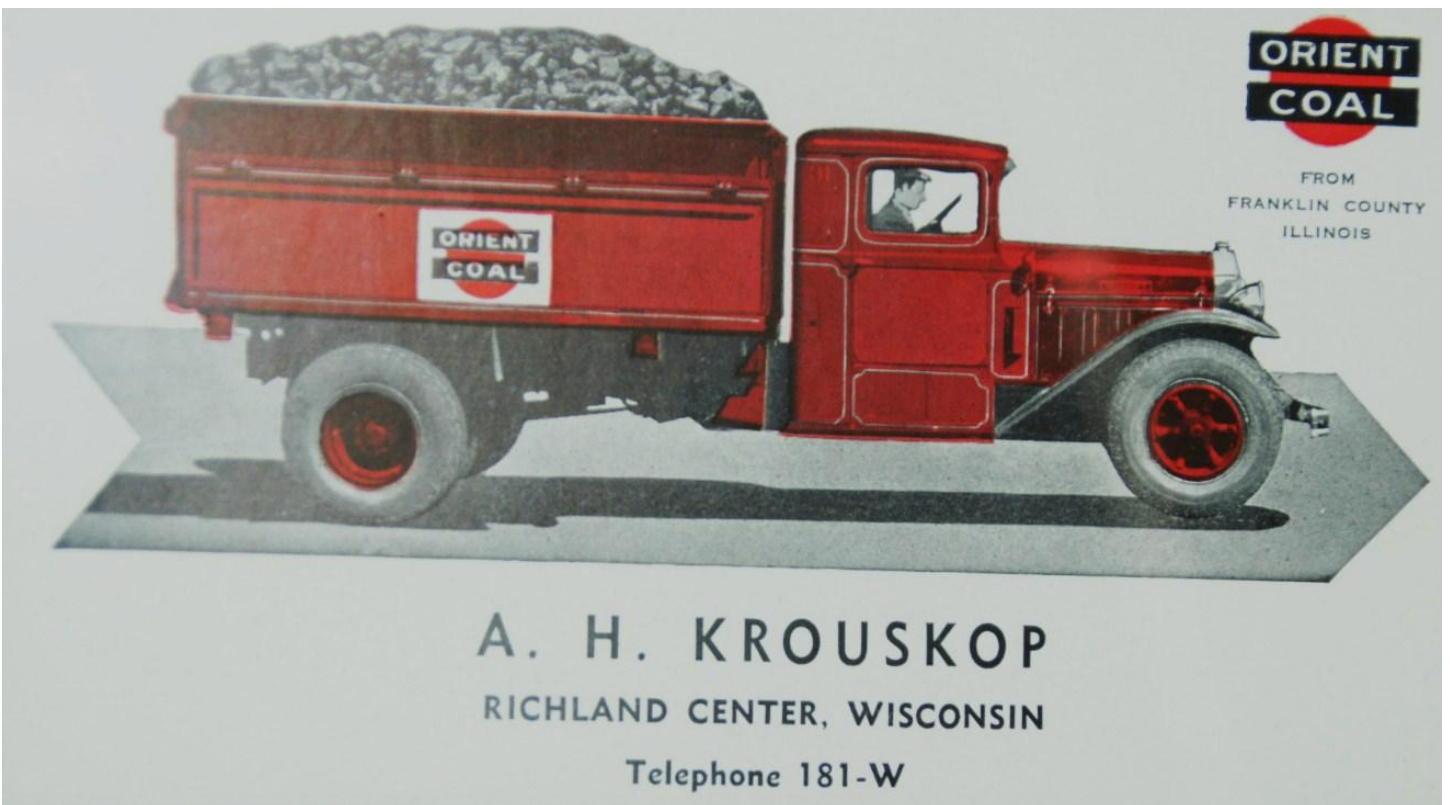


In 1892-3 he built a large lumber mill; it was 120x133 feet in size, and was devoted to the manufacture of hardwood lumber. The engine room was 50x13 feet, and the boiler room 50x25 feet, and the shavings room 13x35 feet, all constructed of brick. A 250-horse power engine propelled the vast machinery, and there was a planing-mill, dry-kilns, and all other equipment to get out finished lumber. Most of the logs were bought from timber owners in Richland County. All kinds of hard and softwood lumber were produced, including maple and

red oak flooring, basswood ceilings, hardwood finishing lumber and dimensional material for furniture manufacturers. Carload after carload was shipped from Richland Center, some as far as the Pacific coast. The yard reached full built capacity by 1911. In addition to the warehouse, major buildings at that date included a saw and planing mill with a power house, lumber sheds, kiln, yard office, granary, horse barn, grain warehouse, and livestock yards. The yard sat adjacent to the railroad, a facility indispensable to the transportation of its bulk products. Krouskop shipped many of his goods to Chicago for a broad distribution across the Midwest and Plains as well as engaging in local retail. In addition to the manufacturing business, Krouskop bought large lots of railroad ties and was an active dealer in buggies, carriages, wagons and agricultural implements. He also owned a brickyard a sand-pit and a number of farms.



The Krouskop sawmill on South Main Street was demolished to make way for the Orange Street by-pass project in the 1980s.



The various Krouskop businesses were consistent advertisers in the local newspapers throughout their history.

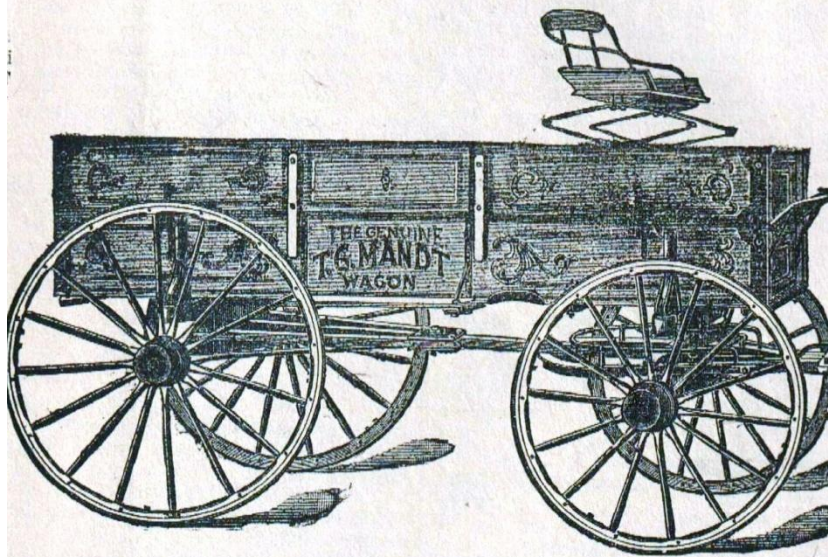
SAW LOGS

MAPLE AND OAK SAW LOGS, . . . \$22.00 per M.
 BASSWOOD SAW LOGS, . . . \$20.00 per M.

I will pay the above prices for No. 1 large sized Basswood, Oak and Maple logs at my mill in Richland Center. I will pay good prices for No. 1 White and Black Ash, Soft Maple, Soft and Red Elm. Nothing will pay loggers better than to haul their logs direct to my mill, get the money to take back home and the work is ended.

A. H. KROUSKOP

"Hitch Your Wagon to a Star"



But Be Sure It Is a T. G. Mandt Stoughton Wagon!

For then you will not fail because of your wagon. The Mandt Wagon is the best and we give below a few reasons why it is the best:

1. It is manufactured from the very best and seasoned material.
2. It is the easiest running wagon in the world.
3. The skeins have a dust and sand proof collar.
4. The wheels have black birch hubs, second growth spokes, bent white oak felloes with bolted and clipped joints, heavy tires.
5. Has a patent steel stake—the handiest and best made.
6. Has the Mandt hinged end-gate and shoveling board combined that is worth \$10.00 in time and convenience to any man.
7. Has the best box ever put upon a wagon.
8. Has new features and is better ironed from tip of tongue to the tail board than any other wagon.

Come and see it for yourself as we cannot enumerate all the special advantages possessed by it in this short ad. The price is right.

A. H. KROUSKOP

Krouskop was a candidate for Congress on the Democratic ticket in 1892, his opponent being Joseph W. Babcock, and although the normal Republican majority in the district (the third) had been 6,000, Krouskop was defeated by 3,000. Richland County, with a usual adverse majority of over 700, only cast a majority of 274 in opposition to his aspirations, and he carried the home county of Babcock, where the Republican majority was usually a reliable one. In early life Krouskop was a Lincoln Republican, casting his first vote for the Great Emancipator, but he later became affiliated with the Democratic Party.

His many business ventures made him one of the most successful business men in southwestern Wisconsin. He employed about fifty men on an average during every month in the year. At the time of the construction of the railroad from Lone Rock to Richland Center he was one of the leaders in the enterprise and he was connected with its management until the railroad was sold to the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Company. Local legend has it that A.H. Krouskop, after decades of living frugally in a room in his store, built a large home at the intersection of Central Avenue and Haseltine Street to block a business competitor, A.D. German, access to the railroad for his Frank Lloyd Wright designed warehouse. Krouskop has been described as a tall willowy built man. He was said to be very somber and stern always dressed in black and having "the appearance of a Kentucky Colonel with his neatly

This is Styleplus Week from Maine to California!

Merchants who are keen to sense the demands of men and how to serve them are this week making a special Spring and Summer Display, in store and window, of Styleplus Clothes \$17.

Changing conditions in the markets of the world cannot alter the Styleplus Ideal—always to clothe men exceptionally well—always to offer them exceptional value at the easy-to-pay price of \$17.

Styleplus Clothes represent a new phase in American clothing manufacturing. The efficiency and economy in the big scale and specialized plan of their manufacture put dollars into the pockets of American men and put better clothes on their backs!

**Styleplus \$17
Clothes**

TRADE MARK REGISTERED
"The same price the nation over."

The man who buys Styleplus knows the price before he goes into the store. And he knows that his next suit of Styleplus will cost just the same; no more, no less!

Style plus through-and-through quality—all wool fabrics
Style plus perfect fit—for every man of every age and physique

Style plus economy—the easy price for everybody

Style plus guaranteed wear—a written guarantee with every Styleplus

Keith Konqueror Shoes

\$3.50 to \$5.00

A. H. KROUSKOP & CO.

Trade Mark



Registered



kept beard and mustache. He walked with a straight posture and even step. He was all business at all times.” Krouskop was known to rule sternly and silently over his domain, few ever saw him smile. Although he had poor eyesight, he was well-groomed from his black suit to his dark beard. He was conceded to be the leader in the industrial affairs of Richland County throughout his lifetime. A.H. Krouskop died on April 2, 1930, at the advanced age of 89 years, 8 months and 20 days. Having remained a life-long bachelor, for the last forty years of his life his home had been kept by Miss Annie Golden, who survived him. He had outlived his generation with his brothers and sisters all passing long before his death. He had been a resident of Richland County since he was eleven years of age when his family settled in Sextonville in 1851.

The site of the Krosukop sepulcher and memorial was located on a south facing slope of ground forty feet square at the north side of the Richland Center cemetery. The Stotzer Granite Company of Portage and Milwaukee was the contractor.



The Krouskop business empire continued for a number of decades after his passing. William S. McCorkle and Carl Barnes continued to manage the multitude of Krouskop interest. The end of Krouskop’s Department Store came on January 31, 1986, when the store closed its doors and a stock liquidation sale was held. The liquidation sale did not affect the Krouskop Lumber Yard, the Bulk Fuel Yard or the Service Station, all of which continued in business. The remaining businesses all eventually closed. The Krouskop Mansion and the last remnant of the Krouskop Department Store are the only buildings left from the Krouskop businesses.



The Krouskop Agricultural Implement Warehouse was located on Haseltine Street and was a part of the Krouskop Lumberyard whose main mill was erected in 1883. Krouskop may have established the operation as early as 1878. However, he did not acquire most of the land which the milling operation had occupied until 1879-80. The mill complex of buildings and lumber yard eventually covered the area between the Pine River to the west, Haseltine Street to the north, Main Street on the east extending to Central Avenue, and Gage Street to the south.



The warehouse was constructed in two parts. Krouskop erected the west half between 1899 and 1905 as an implement warehouse. He built the east half between 1905 and 1912 as a grain warehouse. This building changed functions rather frequently. By 1912, the west half contained primarily cement while the east half held hardware and roofing materials. In 1927, they had both become a feed warehouse. After Krouskop's death in 1930, a "modern feed mill" was established in the west end. It produced mixed and sweet feeds for dairymen and farmers. Machinery in the basement included a corn crusher, grinding mill, molasses mixer, molasses pump, bins, clover and timothy seed cleaner, and conveyors. The Consumer Cooperative located in Richland Center in 1935, and they purchased the building in 1948.

This window was made in memorium to Annie Golden, the longtime housekeeper of A. H. Krouskop and hung in his house at 323 South Central Avenue, southeast corner of Central Avenue and Haseltine Street. She was born on Oct. 2, 1847, in Ireland and passed away on Oct. 12, 1931; outliving Krouskop by one and-one-half years.

Advertisements from *The Richland Observer* archive.