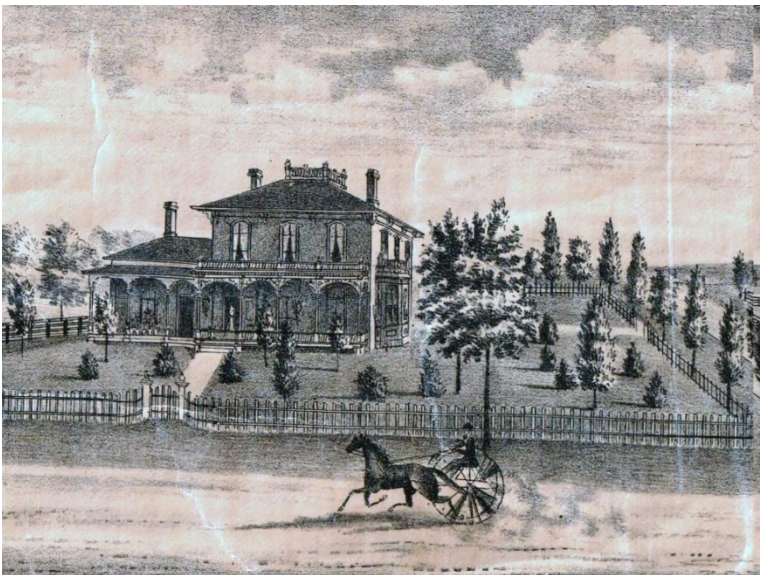




SandHill Marketing photo.

The Bock House, 150 Fulton Street, Gotham, Richland County – 1878.



Bock House, Richland City. Richland County History Room photo.

In 1878 Colonel Hugo W. Bock built his “mansion” in Richland City. The Richland County Observer of June 6, 1878, described the new home, built at a cost of \$3,500. “H.W. Bock of Richland City is building a fine residence on the bank of the river. The main building is 28 feet square with a kitchen 16x24 feet in size. A porch extends the entire length of the front. The ceilings downstairs are eleven feet high with upstairs ten feet four inches...The home is elegantly furnished throughout. When finished the house will be the finest residence in the county. From the veranda on top of the house there is a fine view. Fine workmanship is being exhibited by Joseph McVay of Highland and J.M. Marston of Muscoda. The handwork on the stairway is especially lovely.”

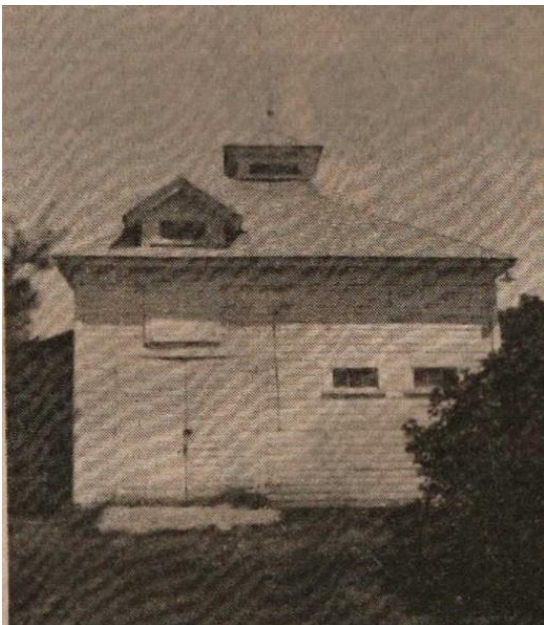
Characterized by overhanging eaves ornamented by paired brackets, the main block of this two story Italianate styled house features a wooden bay window with bracketed eaves and arched lintels. It has the low pitched hip roof, symmetrical shape, and tall, narrow windows, side bay windows, and wide overhanging

eaves with brackets that is typical of the Italianate style. From the late 1840s to 1890 it achieved huge popularity in the United States, where it was promoted by the architect Alexander Jackson Davis. Italianate remained the preferred house style in the United States until the 1870s, after the 1870s, architectural fashion turned more toward late Victorian styles such as Queen Anne.



Richland Observer photo.

The Bock House, along with its carriage house, was moved to its present location at Gotham from Richland City in 1908. By this time it was evident Richland City would be totally wiped out by the constant wearing away of the Wisconsin River. Many of Richland City's buildings were moved to Gotham and Lone Rock. The Bock



Bock carriage house - Richland Observer photo.

toward liquor traffic. Many of them having early fought in the movement against slavery joined the new Republican party under Abraham Lincoln and later became fighters in arms against the southern states. The Civil War was followed by radicalism which bore resemblance to bitter hatred.

Italianate was also a common style for modest structures like barns and for larger public buildings such as town halls, libraries, and train stations. The Bock House had a carriage house and barn that fit this style. You will commonly find Italianate buildings in nearly every part of the United States except for the Deep South. There are fewer Italianate buildings in the southern states because the style reached its peak during the Civil War, a time when the south was economically devastated.

carriage house, after being moved, was remodeled into a residence and was later destroyed in a fire.

The following narrative is from an article by Harry Bailey which appeared in the August 20, 1931, issue of the Republican Observer that recounts Bock's arrival in Richland County. "From among the interesting things concerning the development of Richland County and the influence of various men and women upon the character of its society, it would be hard to imagine a more curious mixture of paradox that what we will now relate.

The element of early settlers which shaped our social formation came largely from the east, bringing with them the Puritanical notions of New England, Quaker Pennsylvania and abolitionist Ohio.

They were Protestants in religion; first Whigs and then Republicans in politics; abolitionists in policy; prohibitionists in their attitude



SandHill Marketing photo.

In the closing days of the 60s there came into the county a man from Mobile, Alabama. He brought with him the reputation of having been a colonel in the Confederate army was a Southern Democrat, a Catholic and had come here to engage in the wholesale liquor trade.”

Colonel Hugo M. Bock was a man of six feet two inches height, weighed two hundred pounds and wore a full dark beard and looked like Stonewall Jackson. Colonel Bock was a man who would be noticed even in a large crowd.

Bailey continued, “Now, the paradox of this whole matter is

that Hugo M. Bock was but a few of the things he was thought to be, except a gentleman. He was not a southerner. He was not a Colonel in the Confederate army. He was not a Southern Democrat nor was he what was commonly termed a “whiskey man.”

Bock was a native of New York City. He was educated at Fordham College in New York. His father was a wholesale tobacco dealer with connections in Norfolk, Virginia. Young Bock was in the tobacco trade in Norfolk when the Civil War began and was conscripted into the Confederate army as a private. While in the army he became friends with a fellow soldier from Mobile, Alabama; when visiting his chum in Mobile, he got a job in a distillery.

Meanwhile his brother, Edward Bock, had become a nationally famed actor associated with Booth, Barrett and others of great fame. Edward had married a lady who was related to the Sextons, who lived in Richland County and after whom the village of Sextonville was named. He and his wife visited the Sextons and upon learning of the many business opportunities resulting from trade on the Wisconsin River, wrote his brother urging him to investigate the wholesale liquor trade from Sextonville. Soon afterward Hugo Bock came to Sexton’s home and formed a partnership in the wholesale liquor business.

His liquor business was hugely successful. He built his mansion, warehouses and offices in Richland City along with large barns, stables and a half-mile race track. Bock was a great lover of horses and raced them on the half-mile track near his rectifying plant. His title of “Colonel” came from his distinguished appearance and being a race horse man, not from his Civil War service. Bock gradually increased his land holdings until he had over 600 acres. At one time he bred horses in such numbers that he shipped them in railcar lots.

Colonel Bock was married twice and had one son, Joseph. His first wife Anna died in Mobile, Alabama; he subsequently married Mrs. Sarah McDonald of Mobile. He served twelve years as president of the Richland County Agricultural Society and was for some years president of the First National Bank. He died at the age of 81 years at his home in Gotham.