

**United States Department of 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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Smith, J.B., House and Granary

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 5121 Gravel Pit Road

N/A not for publication

city or town Town of Green Bay

N/A vicinity

state Wisconsin code WI county Brown

code 009 zip code 54217

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

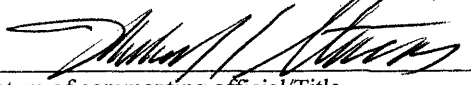
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional 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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

 SHPO

3/25/04

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Smith, J.B., House and Granary

Brown County

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 ___ See continuation sheet.
 ___ determined eligible for the National Register.
 ___ See continuation sheet.
 ___ determined not eligible for the National Register.
 ___ See continuation sheet.
 ___ removed from the National Register.
 ___ other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall

5/12/04

Jan

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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
 structure
 site
 object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

contributing	noncontributing
2	1 buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
2	1 total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources is previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/ storage

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/ animal facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation STONE

walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Smith, J.B., House and Granary
Name of Property

Brown County
County and State

Wisconsin

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage/ European

Social History

Period of Significance

c. 1885

Significant Dates

c. 1885

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Name of Property

County and State

9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- 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 #

Primary location of additional data:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property' 1.7 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 436190 4941960
 Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Erin Pogany, Matt Becker and Jeremy Happel	date	April 2003
organization	Mead & Hunt, Inc.	telephone	608-273-6380
street & number	6501 Watts Road	zip code	53719-2700
city or town	Madison	state	WI

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Smith, J.B., House and Granary
Town of Green Bay, Brown County, Wisconsin

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Description

The J.B. Smith House is located south of State Trunk Highway (STH) 57 at 5121 Gravel Pit Road in the NE ¼ of the NE ¼ of Section 22, Township 25 North, Range 22 East, town of Green Bay, Brown County, Wisconsin. The property includes two contributing resources – a house and a granary, and one non-contributing resource – a modern pole shed. The buildings are closely grouped on flat, open land adjacent to Gravel Pit Road.¹

J.B. Smith House *c. 1885* *Contributing*

The J.B. Smith House, c. 1885, exhibits Belgian influences in its gabled-ell form, brick construction, and decorative brickwork. The house rests on a stone foundation and displays an asphalt-shingled roof. An interior brick chimney is centered on the ridge of the front-gabled section. A modern addition is attached to the south facade of the ell. The interior space of the front-gabled section includes two bedrooms and a bathroom on the first floor and two bedrooms on the second floor. The ell section is divided into a kitchen and a bathroom with a crawl space overhead, and a living area occupies the modern addition.

The main (east) facade of the front-gabled section displays an entrance with a wood door and a metal storm door. The entrance displays an arched-brick lintel, a modern metal canopy above the door, and a concrete stoop with a metal railing. A modern, three-light replacement window unit is located to the north of the entrance on the first story. Replacement bricks are visible surrounding the modern window unit. The second story of the east facade displays two, one-over-one windows with arched-brick lintels and a bull's-eye window in the gable. The ell section of the east facade displays an entrance with a concrete porch and a shed-roof overhang. The north half of the porch has been enclosed to create a bathroom, and displays wide clapboard siding and a modern one-over-one window.

The north facade displays two, one-over-one windows with arched-brick lintels on the first story; and two, two-pane, vertical-muntin windows below the roof line of the second story.

The front-gabled section of the rear (west) facade displays two, one-over-one windows with arched-brick lintels on the first story; and two, fixed-pane windows with arched-brick lintels on the second story. Modern, paired casement windows are located on the ell section of the rear facade.

The south facade displays modern, paired casement windows on the east end of the first story; and a two-pane, vertical-muntin window with arched-brick lintels on the second story. Replacement bricks surround the first-story casement windows. A gabled-roof addition is attached to the west half of the south facade and partially overlaps the second-story window. The addition displays artificial siding, an interior brick chimney, paired

¹ Since 1995, a non-contributing c. 1910 chicken coop that was located on the property has been demolished. See Mead & Hunt, Inc. "State Trunk Highway 57 Reconstruction, Door County, Reconnaissance Survey of Potentially Significant Historic Properties," April 1995, Madison, WI.

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Smith, J.B., House and Granary

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casement windows on the east facade, and a fixed-pane window with a metal canopy on the south facade. A door opening has been enclosed on the south facade of the addition. A large, two-bay, gabled-roof garage is attached to the west facade of the addition. The garage partially overlaps the rear facade of the ell and displays wide clapboard siding; overhead garage doors and a small entrance on the south facade; and a small, one-over-one window on the north and west facades.

Although the house has had alterations, it maintains the character defining features associated with Belgian brick construction and contributes to the significance of the complex.

Granary *c. 1885* *Contributing*

A brick granary is located to the south of the house, less than 10 feet from Gravel Pit Road. The granary – the key feature of the farm – was constructed with similar building materials and details as the house. It is likely that the granary was constructed at the same time or shortly after the house (c. 1885). The granary is a large, one-and-one-half-story, gabled-roof building with a rectangular plan, limestone foundation, asphalt-shingled roof, and a raised gabled vent at the apex. The east facade of the granary features two small, inset three-pane windows on the south half. An entrance with a wide wood door containing a small window opening is located on the west end of the south facade. The second level of the south facade features a centrally located opening that has been boarded over. The north facade includes two small, inset three-pane windows on the first level; and a centrally located opening with a hinged wood door on the second level. The west facade of the granary features a small entrance with a wood door on the north end; a large sliding wood door; and a small, inset three-pane window on the south end. With the exception of the sliding door, the openings of the granary display typical Belgian, arched-brick lintels.

The granary is the primary historic resource of the J.B. Smith Farmstead. It has remained largely unaltered, and retains good historic integrity as a rare example of a brick agricultural outbuilding with distinctive Belgian-American architectural details.

Shed *c. 1970* *Non-Contributing*

A circa 1970 metal pole shed is located to the west of the house at the end of the driveway. The shed has a front-gabled roof and a garage-door bay on the east facade. This building is classified as a non-contributing resource due to its modern construction date.

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Statement of Significance

The J.B. Smith House and Granary are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under *Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage* and *Social History* as locally significant examples of the perpetuation of Belgian building traditions in this region of Door County. The house and granary represent the prevalent local Belgian building vocabulary and the adaptation to local norms in the house form and in the choice of building materials. The property contains a fine example of a late nineteenth-century brick agricultural outbuilding with a contributing Belgian farmhouse and a non-contributing shed. Built c. 1885, the farmhouse has undergone many alterations, but still displays typical Belgian architectural characteristics, including brick construction on a stone foundation, arched-brick lintels, and a bull's-eye window in the gable end. It is therefore a contributing resource of the farmstead. Built c. 1885, the granary is the primary historic resource of the farmstead and has very few alterations. Brick agricultural outbuildings are uncommon in Wisconsin, and the J.B. Smith granary displays many of the traditional elements of Belgian construction that are more typically found in houses, including brick construction on a stone foundation and arched-brick lintels. While J.B. Smith was of German descent, the architectural characteristics of the granary and farmhouse reflect local Belgian building practices. Whether a Belgian builder constructed them, or Smith adopted a distinctive local building form, these buildings represent a perpetuation of local Belgian building practices. The period of significance for the Smith Farmstead is c. 1885, the approximate construction date of the granary and farmhouse.

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Smith, J.B., House and Granary
Town of Green Bay, Brown County, Wisconsin

Historic Context

History of Brown County

The shores of Green Bay were inhabited by Menominee, Winnebago, and Fox Indian tribes when Jean Nicolet landed there in 1634. In the 1650s and 1660s, French traders began fur trading and missionary activities, and soon established Wisconsin's first community of European settlers. The development of Brown County began in 1683, when the French erected the post called La Baye, which included the present cities of Green Bay and De Pere. For almost two centuries, this was one of the most important fur trading posts in the Midwest. Yankee traders did not move into the area until the 1820s and 1830s, shortly after the U.S. government gained authority over the region. In 1830 Bay Settlement was established northeast of Green Bay by primarily French-Canadian families. The federal census in 1830 revealed 1,500 inhabitants in the area.²

Brown County originally covered a large portion of eastern Wisconsin. However, an Act of the Territorial Legislature on December 7, 1836, created Portage, Marquette, Calumet, Fond du Lac, Manitowoc, Sheboygan, and portions of Washington and Dodge Counties from land located in Brown County. The town of Green Bay was established in 1838 and consisted of 98 square miles until the towns of Preble, Humbolt, and Scott were created from its lands in 1858. In 1854 the city of Green Bay was incorporated and replaced De Pere as the county seat.³

Early settlement of townships typically involved the development of villages at major road intersections or near mills and general stores, as these areas were better able to support commercial activities. During the 1850s and 1860s, Bay Settlement became a center for commercial goods and services for residents of Green Bay Township. Aux Premiers Belges, later known as Robinsonville and then as Champion, is another community that developed in the early history of Green Bay Township. Robinsonville was established when the first group of Belgian settlers to the area, upon taking the advice of Father Daems, relinquished their land claims in Kaukauna and settled in the northeast area of Brown County. They made their homes from the huge cedars that covered the region. Robinsonville's first post office was established in 1880. In 1899 Robinsonville had a blacksmith shop, hotel, general store, post office, and School No. 3.⁴

² "Brown County History – 1634 to 1700," n.d., <<http://www.rootsweb.com/~wibrown/1700s.htm>> (7 September 2001).

³ "Brown County History – 1634 to 1700," n.d., <<http://www.rootsweb.com/~wibrown/1700s.htm>> (7 September 2001).

⁴ Tishler and Brynildson, 20-27.

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Turn-of-the-century northeastern Brown County was dotted with both large farms and smaller homesteads that relied on commercial centers, including Bay Settlement, for services. However, beginning in the early twentieth century, the expansion of surfaced highways and the increased use of automobiles signaled the demise of the small service community. With improved transportation, the nearby large city of Green Bay was able to provide for the needs of local farmers. Although Bay Settlement's service role declined, its institutional services founded by Father Daems, including the Holy Cross School, the Sisters of Saint Francis convent, and the Holy Cross Church, remained.

History of Belgian Settlement⁵

The difficult economic situation in Belgium that followed the country's independence in 1830, combined with promotional activities by immigrant recruiting agents, resulted in an exodus of rural Walloon peasants seeking a better life in America. Wisconsin was advocated as a place to settle by recruiters who worked for Antwerp shipowners and were equipped with promotional guidebooks. The Belgians who emigrated to Wisconsin's Door Peninsula between 1853 and 1857 came primarily from the south-central provinces of Brabant, Hanaut, and Namur. Belgians from these southern provinces were Catholics and spoke Walloon, a French-Patois dialect. In 1857, however, emigration slowed due to restrictions by the Belgian government and discouraging letters from previous emigrants.

Most of the Belgian settlements in the Door Peninsula were concentrated in the towns of Gardner, Union, and Brussels in Door County; the communities of Red River and Lincoln in northern Kewaunee County; and the towns of Humboldt, Scott, and Green Bay in Brown County. The majority of the settlers were farmers, but a few were skilled laborers or factory workers who left these professions in their native country to farm their own land in America. The number of Belgians in the peninsula by 1860 was estimated to be 4,647.

⁵ Belgian settlement in northeast Wisconsin has been well studied, most recently by Professors William Laatsch of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, and William H. Tishler of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. This section was compiled from a number of secondary sources, including William G. Laatsch and Charles F. Calkins, "Belgians in Wisconsin," in *To Build in a New Land: Ethnic Landscapes in North America*, ed. by Allen G. Noble (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); William H. Tishler, "Namur Belgian-American District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 6 November 1989; Allen G. Noble, *Wood, Brick, and Stone: The North American Settlement Landscape*, Vol. 2, *Barns and Farm Structures* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984); Barbara Wyatt, ed., *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*, 3 Vols. (Madison, Wisc.: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986); Deborah B. Martin, *History of Brown County, Wisconsin: Past and Present*, Vol. 1 (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1913); Xavier Martin, *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, Vol. 13, *The Belgians of Northeast Wisconsin*, ed. by Reuben Gold Thwaites (Madison, Wisc.: Democrat Printing Co., 1895); William H. Tishler and Erik Brynildson, "The Architecture and Landscape Characteristics of Rural Belgian Settlement in Northeastern Wisconsin" (Madison, Wisc., July 1986); and Virginia C. Dell, "Bay Settlement: A Hamlet in Northeastern Wisconsin," 1974, Belgian-American Research Collection, Special Collections, Cofrin Library, the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Green Bay, Wisc.

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The Walloon Belgian immigrants were largely of the Catholic faith and carried cultural affiliations of the Roman-Catholic Church with them from their homeland. Congregations and shrines were quickly established following settlement. Many Germans, Irish, Scandinavians, and Hollanders were also Roman Catholic and contributed to the development of the strong religious community in the Door Peninsula.

Agriculture

In the second half of the nineteenth century, agricultural activities on the Door Peninsula experienced a series of changes. During the early settlement period of the area, around the mid-nineteenth century, agricultural activity consisted mainly of grain production. Prior to the twentieth century, agriculture shifted to the production of vegetables and then to fruit. During this transitional period, the dairy business also became an important means of making a living. Throughout the twentieth century, a diversified agricultural system evolved which included dairying and cherry production, as well as growing abundant crops of rye, oats, barley, corn, peas, and potatoes.

Wheat became the first major cash crop in the area, as it was throughout much of the frontier. Wheat was an ideal crop for pioneers because soil that was not previously cultivated yielded the best results. In 1850 approximately 430 acres of wheat was grown on the peninsula. By 1890 that number had swelled to nearly 55,000 acres of wheat. The J.B. Smith Farmstead's granary represents this era of wheat production. However, the continuous wheat production drained essential nitrogen from the soil. As fields became useless, farmers cleared new land to grow their wheat. Eventually, these fields also became useless for wheat production.⁶ As pioneers moved on, wheat as a major cash crop followed the frontier westward.

Similar to other farms throughout Wisconsin, as wheat crops failed, peninsula farmers turned to dairy farming as a new means of making a living. *Cultural Resource Management (CRM) in Wisconsin* provides a summary of the three stages of development of the dairy industry in Wisconsin. Early dairy production began in the 1840s and 1850s as New Yorkers who had been raised on dairy farms brought their skills west. Following the decline of the wheat market, dairying competed with a variety of other cash crops and animal husbandry for the former wheat farmers' interest. The dairy industry experienced a revolution between 1860 and 1890 as farmers became more specialized. By the 1890s the foundation of the Wisconsin dairy industry was firmly in place.

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, the dairy industry was characterized by expansion, both in number of dairy farms and regions of the state where this activity was prominent, and by prosperity. By 1915 Wisconsin had become the leading dairy state in the nation with six southeastern counties comprising the heartland for milk production. Butter and cheese making became important industries in the southwestern part of the state. Historically, the northeastern counties surrounding Green Bay have also played a role in the dairy

⁶ Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporting Service, *A Century of Wisconsin Agriculture: 1848-1948* (Madison, Wisc.: Wisconsin State Department of Agriculture, 1948), 90.

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industry.⁷ In 1915 Door, Kewaunee, and Brown Counties produced nearly 21 million pounds of cheese combined.⁸

Coinciding with the transition to dairy farming in the late nineteenth century, farmers turned to the production of crops that supported livestock production and were better suited to the soil and climate than wheat. Potatoes became more important to the economy and grew well in the peninsula soil. In 1870, 2,197 acres of potatoes were planted on the Door Peninsula. A farmer could harvest as many as 700 bushels of potatoes from 1 acre. As wheat was declining, three times as many acres of potatoes were planted, with 6,394 acres in 1890.⁹ By the end of the nineteenth century, other crops, such as peas and sugar beets, also became popular on the peninsula.

Farmers also experimented with growing and manufacturing other crops and products. In the late 1890s, 25,000 pounds of wool was produced in Door County alone. For a short period, farmers also produced bundles of birch brush for the use in manufacturing brooms. Cranberries were also introduced, but lasted only a short time. Cranberry plants required a wet and marsh environment and therefore only flourished when there was a lot of water. The production suffered during droughts.¹⁰

The large-scale, commercial production of cherries on the peninsula that exists today started in the 1890s. Prior to this time, a limited number of fruit trees were found in the area with only a small number of true orchards. Farmers primarily grew fruit trees for their personal use. The first commercial orchards were planted in the northern part of the peninsula in the 1890s. In the following years, farmers throughout the Door Peninsula grew fruit trees for large-scale production and distribution. Cherries and apples became the most successful of the various fruit crops.¹¹

Throughout the twentieth century, the diversified agricultural system of the peninsula continued to evolve and modernize. Although farmers in the area depend on many industries such as raising various livestock, processing cherries, and producing wine, the major agricultural economic force in both Door and Brown Counties continues to be dairy production.

⁷ Wyatt, ed., "Agriculture," 2:9-11.

⁸ Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporting Service, 111.

⁹ Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporting Service, 90; and Marvin M. Lotz, *Discovering Door County's Past: A Comprehensive History of the Door Peninsula in two volumes*, Vol. 1, *From the Beginning to 1930* (Fish Creek, Wisc.: Holy House Press, 1994), 128.

¹⁰ Lotz, 1:130-131.

¹¹ Lotz, 1:132-133.

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Architecture

Building Materials

Belgian immigrants in the Door Peninsula built their first domestic structures, including homes and agricultural outbuildings, of log. Wood was the most logical construction material to these early settlers, in that it was both abundant and inexpensive. The most predominant wood source in the area was white cedar. In addition to being available, white cedar was soft, grew relatively straight, and was easy to work with.¹² Construction techniques included the use of rough-hewn cedar and pine logs, with square, half, or dovetail notching, and clay chinking.¹³ Although many immigrants to Wisconsin brought traditional timber construction with them from their homelands, log construction was not common in Belgium.¹⁴ As a result, initial log structures built by Belgian immigrants often lacked the refinement and craftsmanship found with those of other ethnic groups in Wisconsin, such as the Finns, Swedes, and Norwegians.¹⁵

Once the Belgian settlers became established on the land, initial log dwellings were often converted to a farm structure, and a second house was constructed. This house usually exhibited a higher degree of craftsmanship than that of the first house. These second dwellings were sometimes covered with a wood or brick veneer and enlarged with frame additions over time.¹⁶

Other early wooden buildings and structures not entirely built of logs utilized timber and balloon-frame construction. Timber-frame construction, which involves a system of heavy posts and timbers held in place by wooden pegs, was brought to Wisconsin by European settlers and was used well into the nineteenth century. Balloon-frame construction originated in Chicago in the 1830s. It substituted lighter boards and nails for the massive timbers and pegs used in timber framing. Balloon framing became very popular in Wisconsin in the late nineteenth century because it was inexpensive and expedient. However, as with all wood construction, buildings with balloon frames were vulnerable to catching fire.¹⁷

On October 8, 1871, the great Peshtigo fire took a number of lives and destroyed many of the buildings and structures made of log and wood in the Door Peninsula. In Brussels, for example, approximately 130 people

¹² Tishler and Brynildson, 68.

¹³ Noble, 2:139-141.

¹⁴ Wyatt, ed., "Architecture," 2:4.2.

¹⁵ Tishler and Brynildson, 68.

¹⁶ Tishler and Brynildson, 69.

¹⁷ Wyatt, ed., "Architecture," 2:4.4 - 4.5.

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were killed. The city of Green Bay was largely untouched by the fire and served as a relief center for other communities.¹⁸ Since historic and contemporary accounts of the Peshtigo fire are unclear as to the extent of the damage in the area, it is unknown if all buildings were destroyed. Yet, it is likely that some log and wood buildings did survive the fire and date before 1871.¹⁹

Shortly after the Peshtigo fire, Belgians and other settlers in the Door Peninsula began to expand their farms onto former timberland cleared by the fire and to rebuild their farmsteads with fireproof materials such as stone, brick, and metal.²⁰ Brick and stone were common building materials in Belgium and were readily accepted by Belgian immigrants in the Door Peninsula. Typical Belgian houses are one-and-one-half to two-and-one-half-story structures with stone foundations, shingle or metal roofs, and brick exteriors. A bull's-eye window in the gable end facing the road appears on many examples of brick Belgian houses. The floor plan for these houses is often four-and-two, which consists of two large rooms on one end and four small rooms on the opposite end of the first floor. Similar four-and-two floor plans can also be found in some log, stone, and bricked-over log houses in the area of Belgian settlement.²¹ Over time, these unique brick buildings have become icons of Belgian settlement in northeastern Wisconsin.

The entire region in which the Belgians settled lies within what is known as the "Red Clay District of Wisconsin." This proximity to soil types suitable for making bricks allowed for bricks to be easily and inexpensively manufactured.²² Small, local brickyards were established in the 1880s and supplied the deep red bricks used for construction in the area. These locally produced red bricks were used for the main building, and light tan or cream-colored bricks from the Milwaukee area were sometimes used to accent window and door openings. The use of different colors in brick construction is a distinctive feature of this rural landscape.²³ According to the *Milwaukee Journal*, Joseph Vandermissen had the largest brick-making kiln in the area, employing several people, and George Peters operated a kiln south of Brussels.²⁴ A 1986 survey conducted by

¹⁸ "Brown County History – 1700 to 1800," n.d., <<http://www.rootsweb.com/~wibrown/1700s.htm>>(7 September 2001).

¹⁹ Joe Knappen, "A Terrible Visitation," *Door County Advocate*, 23 June 1995.

²⁰ Noble, 2:139-140.

²¹ Tishler and Brynildson, 68, 70-71, 75, 77.

²² Tishler and Brynildson, 75.

²³ Noble, 2:140; Wyatt, ed., "Architecture," 2:4.11.

²⁴ "Red brick homes mark of Belgian Settlement," *Milwaukee Journal*, 9 May 1926 <http://www.shsw.wisc.edu/wlhba/article_View.asp?pageno=1&id=12467> (31 July 2002).

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William H. Tishler and Erik Brynildson, *The Architectural and Landscape Characteristics of Rural Belgian Settlement in Northeastern Wisconsin*, documented 18 brickyards in the area, including those owned by Vandermissen and Peters.²⁵ Local brick production diminished by the early twentieth century when larger brick-making operations and newer technologies took over. By 1913 there were only seven brick manufacturers in the area around Green Bay.²⁶

Higher-quality bricks were used on the exterior of the building, while lesser-quality bricks were used for the interior walls, which were often plastered over. The mortar was made from local lime and sand from the shores of Lake Michigan.²⁷ Brick architecture was used not only for domestic structures, but also for educational, commercial, and some agricultural facilities. Brick agricultural outbuildings are rare in the region, though a few barns, sheds, granaries, and pigsties have been identified in the area. Tishler and Brynildson noted two examples of brick barns, a smokehouse and pumphouse of brick, and a number of brick granaries in their survey of Belgian architecture.²⁸ Brick veneer over hewn cedar or pine logs can also be found in the Belgian architecture of the Door Peninsula. They also recorded that at least one barn in the area had a brick veneer; this example was reported in the *Door County Advocate* in 1884 but is apparently no longer extant.²⁹ This construction technique is unusual, however, and likely represents a transition from log to all-brick construction.³⁰

²⁵ Tishler and Brynildson, 41-49.

²⁶ Deborah B. Martin, 330.

²⁷ Lawrence LeRoy, interview by William H. Tishler and Erik Brynildson, in "The Architecture and Landscape Characteristics of Rural Belgian Settlement in Northeastern Wisconsin" (Madison, Wisc., July 1986), 76.

²⁸ Laatsch and Calkins, 200; and Tishler and Brynildson, 87-89. According to Allen G. Noble, "The Belgians did not use brick for either barns or outbuildings," see Noble, 2:141. He was apparently not aware of the few examples that have been identified.

²⁹ Laatsch and Calkins, 200; Noble, 2:140; and Tishler and Brynildson, 74. Tishler notes having located mention of such a barn in the newspaper.

³⁰ Tishler and Brynildson, 73.

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In "The Architecture and Landscape Characteristics of Rural Belgian Settlement in Northeastern Wisconsin," Tishler and Brynildson documented 233 pioneer brick farmsteads in the area of Belgian settlement – constituting 62 percent of all houses inventoried, and 16 brick schools – constituting 70 percent of all schools inventoried.³¹ In these buildings, Tishler and Brynildson found a transfer of architectural themes and building methods from the Old World. The greatest concentration of Belgian brick dwellings in northeastern Wisconsin is in the Namur Belgian-American National Historic Landmark District (NRHP, 1989) in Door County.

Agricultural Outbuildings

No systematic survey of Wisconsin agricultural outbuildings has been completed; however, *CRM in Wisconsin* outlines the types of agricultural structures found throughout the state. Early examples of agricultural outbuildings were log or timber framed and some later examples were built of brick. Agricultural outbuildings in the area of Belgian settlement include summer kitchens, granaries, chicken coops, pigsties, and sheds.

The granary was a common outbuilding when wheat agriculture flourished in Wisconsin. Typically, the structures were built of frame; examples of masonry, fachwerk, and log are also found within the state. Granaries are commonly small, have a rectangular plan, and feature a gabled or shed roof.³² On the Belgian farmstead, granaries of log were often found.

Brick agricultural buildings are rare in northeastern Wisconsin, though a few barns, sheds, granaries, and pigsties of brick have been identified in the area. The J.B. Smith granary (c. 1885) is unusual because of its size, brick construction, and characteristic Belgian details, including arched-brick lintels. The granary has had few alterations and retains good historic integrity as the primary resource of the farmstead.

Gabled-Ell Houses

According to *CRM in Wisconsin*, the gabled-ell house, also known as the upright with wing or temple with wing, is one of the most common and widespread vernacular forms found in Wisconsin. Gabled-ell houses were generally built in Wisconsin from 1860 to 1910. *CRM* identifies those built by Belgian immigrants in Door, Kewaunee, and Brown Counties as a well-known variant of this form. Gabled-ell houses consist of two wings, creating a cruciform, "L" or "T" shape plan. Shed or hipped-roof porches are commonly found at the intersection of the wings. While these houses appear with a variety of combinations of stories, the most common occurrence is a one-story wing attached to a one-and-one-half-story main section.³³ Decorative brickwork and bull's-eye windows are characteristics of gabled-ell houses built by Belgian immigrants. The J.B. Smith House, c. 1885, displays many of the distinctive stylistic elements of Belgian construction in

³¹ Tishler and Brynildson, 35, 69.

³² Wyatt, ed., "Architecture," 2:5-5.

³³ Wyatt, ed., "Architecture," 2:3-5.

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northeastern Wisconsin, including a one-and-one half story, gabled-ell form, brick construction on a stone foundation, arched-brick lintels, and a bull's-eye window in the gable end. The house has been considerably altered, but remains a contributing resource of the property.

*History of the Property*³⁴

This property, located in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 22, Township 25 North, Range 22 East, appears in local tax records as early as 1861. The first recorded owner of the property was Daniel Whitney, who transferred it to J. Bte. Smith in 1865. At this time the 40 acres were assessed at a value of \$50. An 1870 map of Brown County does not indicate any buildings in Section 22. J.B. Smith retained ownership of the property and, in 1883, expanded his ownership to the entire E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$. A gap in tax records for Brown County exists between 1884 and 1914; therefore, it cannot be verified exactly when property ownership was transferred. An 1889 plat map indicates a house near the east section line of the 80 acres owned by J.B. Smith. Based on this map and the house's architectural features, it has been assigned a circa date of 1885. When tax records resume in 1915, Peter Smith was the recorded owner. In 1916 Peter Smith's property was downsized to the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$, and in 1919 Smith sold the property to Martin Prevost, who was still recorded as the owner on a 1952 plat map. The property has remained in the Prevost family, and the current owner, Ken Rabas, is the grandson of Lester Prevost.

Although the architectural character of the Smith Farmstead is Belgian, the owner of the property was of German descent. Census records of 1895 indicate that J.B. Smith was born in Germany and his wife was born in Wisconsin. However, it was not unusual for immigrants of other ethnic groups to utilize the same construction methods and styles as the Belgians in the area.

³⁴ Information regarding property owners, assessment, and familial history was compiled from town of Green Bay, Brown County, Wisconsin, *Tax Rolls, 1860-1955*, Special Collections, Cofrin Library, the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Green Bay, Wisc.; *Official Map of Brown County, Wisconsin* (Milwaukee, Wisc.: Seifert & Cawton's, 1870); *Plat Book of Brown County, Wisconsin* (Minneapolis, Minn.: C.M. Foote & W.S. Brown, 1889); *Plat Book of Brown County, Wisconsin* (Rockford, Ill.: W.W. Hixson & Co., 1952); *Wisconsin State Census, 1895*, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Library Microforms Room, Madison, Wisc. (Salt Lake City: The Genealogical Society, 1979).

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Conclusion

The J.B. Smith Farmstead is locally significant under *Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage and Social History* as a fine example of a late nineteenth-century granary and farmhouse that perpetuate features characteristic of the local Belgian building tradition. Of special note is the large, masonry granary. Agricultural outbuildings in this region rarely display brick construction and Belgian characteristics. The granary is in good condition and has few alterations. While the farmhouse has been altered, it retains its Belgian characteristics and is a contributing resource. The Smith House and Granary demonstrate the strong influence of Belgian practices in this region of Door County, and reflect the perpetuation of local Belgian building practices and culture in the larger community.

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Town of Green Bay, Brown County, Wisconsin

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Smith, J.B., House and Granary
Town of Green Bay, Brown County, Wisconsin

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Smith, J.B., House and Granary
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Maps

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Smith, J.B., House and Granary
Town of Green Bay, Brown County, Wisconsin

Verbal Boundary Description

The historic boundary is described as follows: Beginning at a point on the west edge of Gravel Pit Road approximately 40 feet from the southeast corner of the house proceed west for 260 feet, turn north for 280 feet, turn east for 260 feet, and turn south for 280 feet to the beginning point. The east boundary line is concurrent with the western edge of Gravel Pit Road. The map is to scale.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the extant buildings that were historically associated with the J.B. Smith Farmstead and excludes acreage not associated with the significance of the resources.

Smth, J.B., House and Granary

County

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	Bruce Rabas	date	1/2004
organization		telephone	920 866-3049
street&number	5121 Gravel Pit Road	zip code	54229
city or town	New Franken	state	WI

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. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Smith, J.B., House and Granary
Town of Green Bay, Brown County, Wisconsin

The following information pertains to all photographs:

*Smith, J.B., Farmstead
Town of Brussels, Door County, Wisconsin
Date: November 2002
Photographer: Matt Becker, Mead & Hunt, Inc.
Negatives located at the Wisconsin Historical Society*

*Photograph 1 of 9
General view of farmstead
View looking southwest*

*Photograph 2 of 9
House, north and east facades
View looking southwest*

*Photograph 3 of 9
House, east facade
View looking west*

*Photograph 4 of 9
House, south and east facades
View looking northwest*

*Photograph 5 of 9
House, north and west facades
View looking southeast*

*Photograph 6 of 9
House, detail of bull's-eye window
View looking west*

*Photograph 7 of 9
General view of farmstead
View looking northwest*

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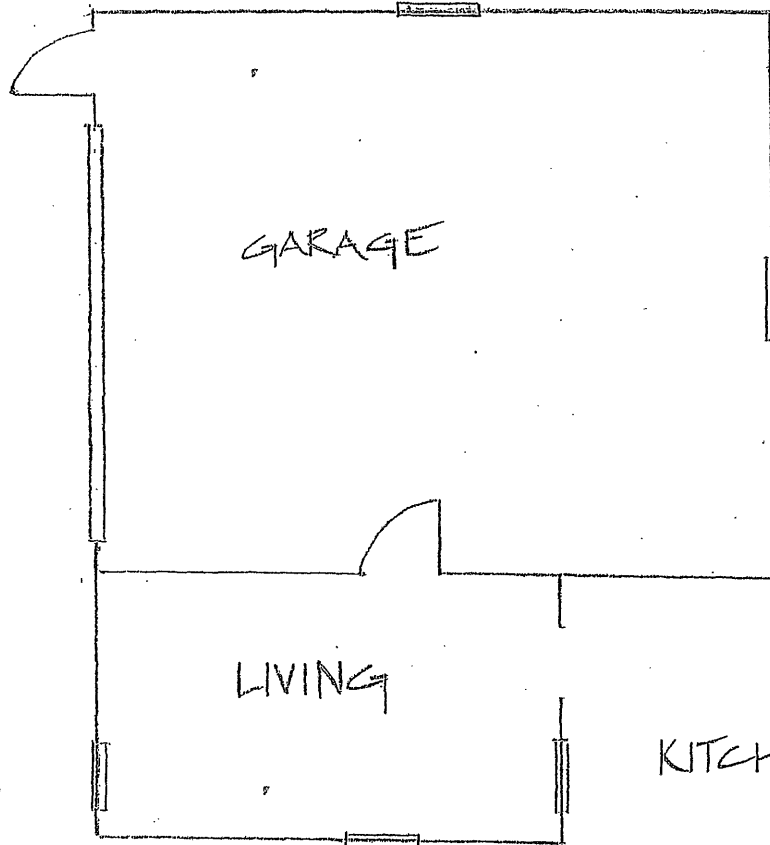
Smith, J.B., House and Granary
Town of Green Bay, Brown County, Wisconsin

Photograph 8 of 9
**Granary, north and east facades
View looking southwest**

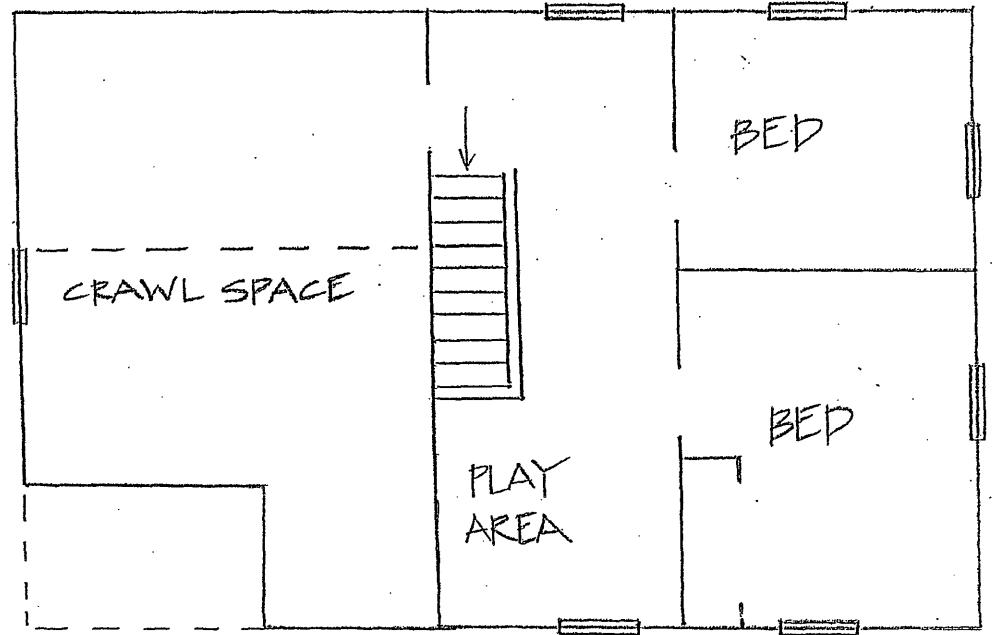
Photograph 9 of 9
**Granary, south and west facades
View looking northeast**

J.B. SMITH FARMSTEAD

FIRST LEVEL FLOOR PLAN

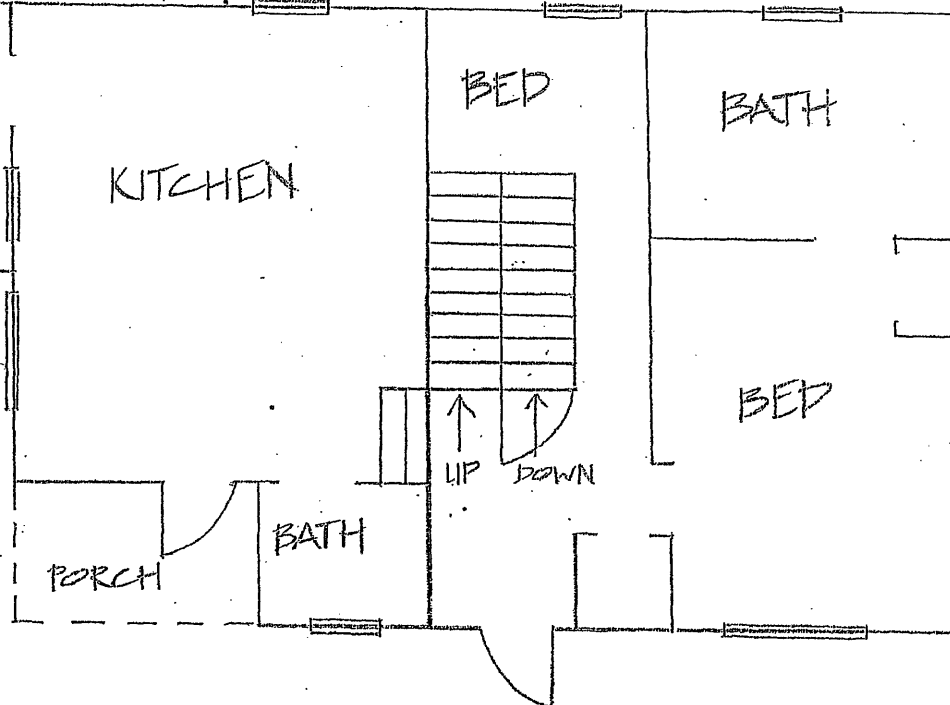


SECOND LEVEL FLOOR PLAN



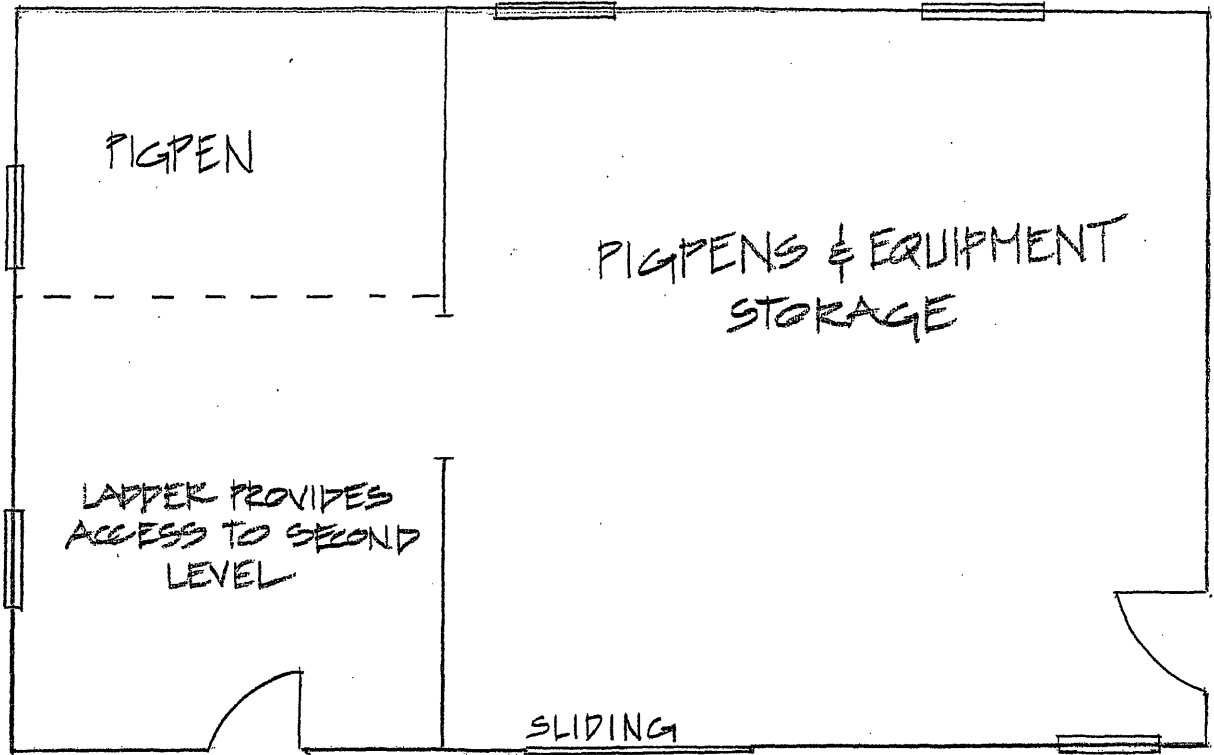
FLOOR PLAN

5121 GRAVEL PIT ROAD
GREEN BAY TOWNSHIP
BROWN COUNTY, WI

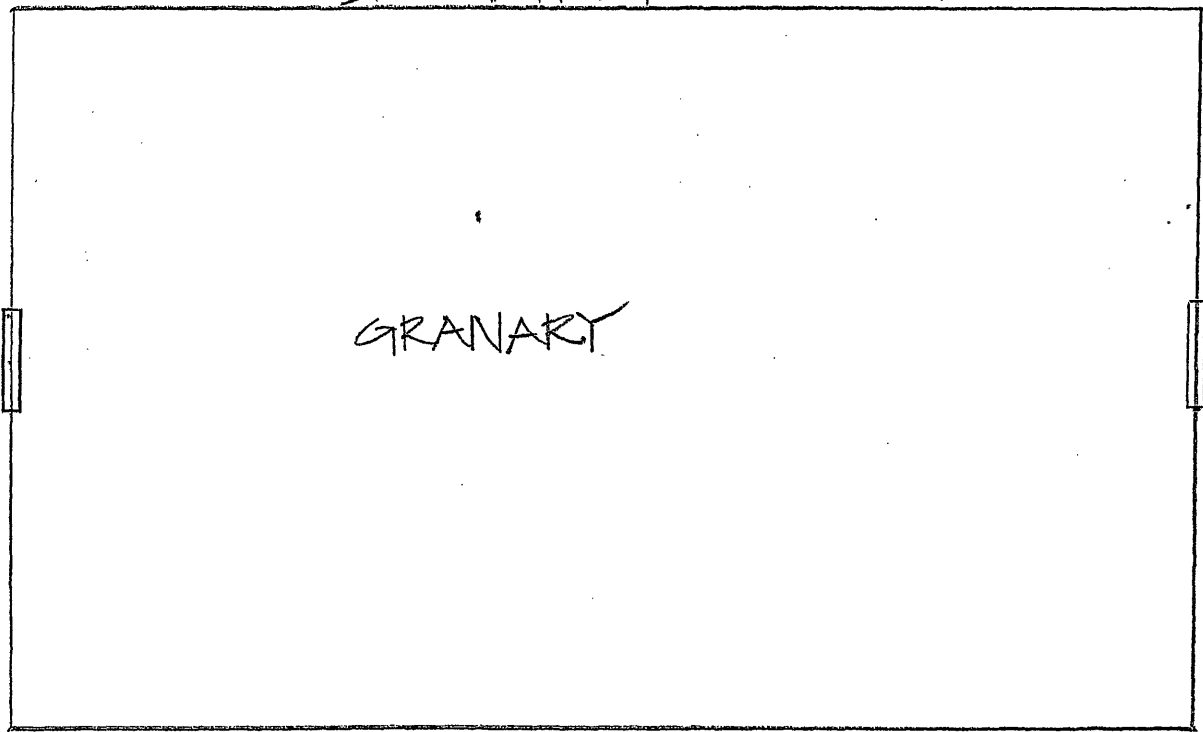


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NOT TO SCALE

FIRST LEVEL FLOORPLAN



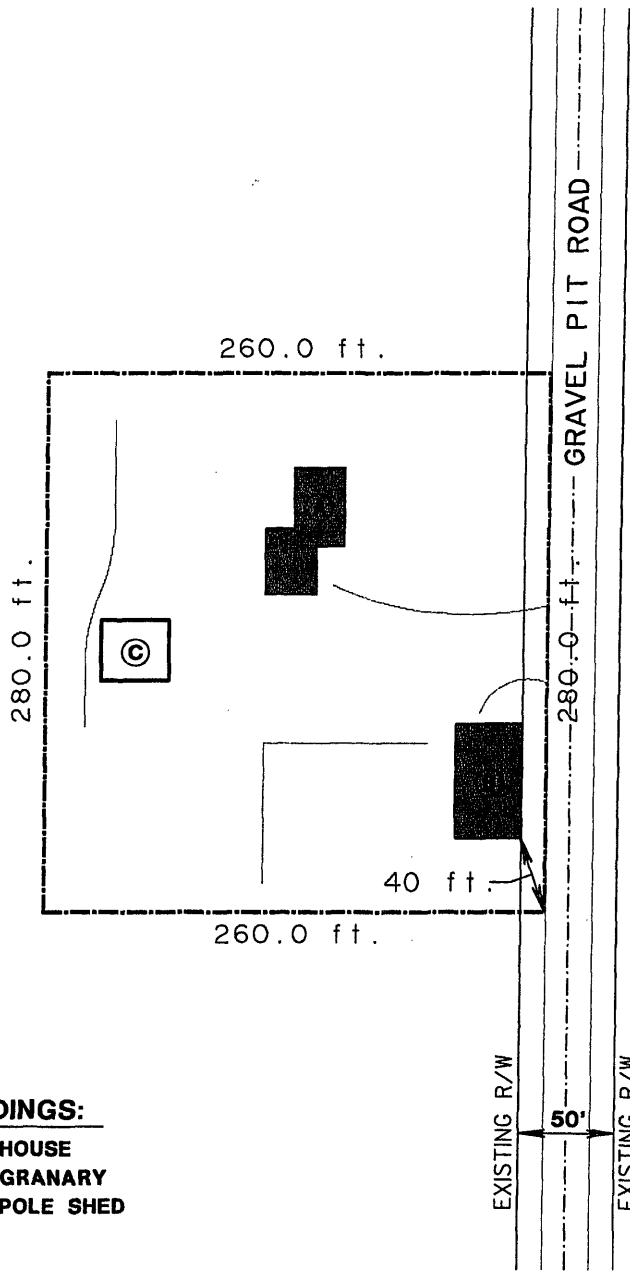
SECOND LEVEL FLOORPLAN



FLOOR PLAN

J.B. SMITH GRANARY
5121 GRAVEL PIT ROAD
TOWN OF GREEN BAY
BROWN COUNTY, WISCONSIN




← N ←
NOT TO SCALE



BUILDINGS:

- (A) HOUSE
- (B) GRANARY
- (C) POLE SHED

LEGEND:

-  NONCONTRIBUTING
-  CONTRIBUTING
-  HISTORIC BOUNDARY



J.B. SMITH HOUSE AND GRANARY

5121 GRAVEL PIT ROAD
TOWN OF GREEN BAY
BROWN COUNTY, WISCONSIN

