

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

OCT 25 2004  
1320

OMB No. 1024-0018  
**OCT 28 2004**

NATIONAL REGISTER, HISTORY  
& EDUCATION  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Page 1

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 any 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: **Wilson District #7 School**

Historic name:

Other names/site number **O'Meara Schoolhouse**

2. Location

Street & number: **1507 270<sup>th</sup> Avenue** not for publication **N/A**  
City or town: **Delmar** vicinity **N/A**  
State: **Iowa** code: **IA** county: **Clinton** code: **045** zip code: **52037**

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  X  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  X  meets   does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant   nationally   statewide  X  locally. (   See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Howell Slike  
Signature of certifying official

October 26, 2004  
Date

**STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA**

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.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau



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6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Education Sub: School

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Vacant/not in use Sub: N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other, One-Room Schoolhouse

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: Stone/Limestone

Roof: Wood

Walls: Wood

other: Glass

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

=====  
8. Statement of Significance  
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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for 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.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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)

**Education**  
**Architecture**

Period of Significance: 1880's - 1954

Significant Dates: Circa 1880's

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

Architect/Builder: Unknown

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

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- 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

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Geographical Data  
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Acreage of Property: **less than 1 acre**

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

Zone Easting Northing  
1: 15, 701541 4647873

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: Sara O'Meara e-mail address: sara\_omeara@yahoo.com

Organization: N/A date: July 27, 2004

Street & number: 345 63<sup>rd</sup> Street telephone: 415-677-5980 (day)

City or town: Oakland state: CA. zip code: 94618

=====  
Additional Documentation  
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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 Owners  
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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Patrick J. O'Meara \_\_\_\_\_

street & number PO Box 94 \_\_\_\_\_ telephone 563-659-5691 \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Welton \_\_\_\_\_ state IA zip code 52774 \_\_\_\_\_

=====  
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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page 1

Wilson District #7 School  
Clinton County, Iowa

## Summary Paragraph

The Wilson District #7 School is located in the 35th section of Bloomfield Township in the east central county of Clinton Iowa. The school is situated on the west side of county road 270th Avenue, between county roads 145<sup>th</sup> Street to the north and 155<sup>th</sup> Street to the south. It is one half mile south of Deep Creek and bordered on the north, south and west by pasture and corn fields.

## Narrative Description

The school is a single story wood frame building. In style it is a vernacular clapboard frame, rectangular in design, simple and unadorned. A single chimney of red brick is centered toward the west end of the building. On the east end is a small vestibule where the only door once exited onto a wooden porch. The porch is now missing. The school sits on a limestone foundation and has wooden shingles on a gable roof.

The building is symmetrical on the north and south facades with a series of three windows on each side. The windows are wood sash units double hung four over four. There are no openings on the west facade. On the eastern most end of the school (the east end of the vestibule) there is a single window with wood sash, double hung four over four.

Two outhouses, built at the same time as the main school, sit approximately 20 feet from the west end of the school, one to the north and one to the south. These are also wooden clapboard structures with three walls, a fourth wall consisting of a single door, and wooden shingles on the roof. The outhouse to the north of the school is a three-hole privy, with one of the holes accommodating an adult, and the outhouse to the south is a two-hole privy. The outhouses were built one for boys and one for girls, if the teacher at the time happened to be male the north three-hole privy (accommodating an adult) would be used for boys and the south for girls, and if the teacher were female the north outhouse would be used for girls and the south outhouse for boys.

The interior of the Wilson District #7 School is separated into two spaces; a small vestibule which opens onto a single larger rectangular room. The small vestibule has hardwood floors and plaster walls, along the north wall are a series of hooks with a shelf above them. The east wall is dominated by a single window. And the only outside door on the building is on the south wall. A single wooden interior door on the west wall of the vestibule opens onto the main school room.

The main rectangular room has wooden floors and plaster walls. On the east wall of the main room, to either side of the interior vestibule door, there are 16 wooden cupboards with metal latches (8 on each side). One quarter of the entire west end floor (approximately 9 feet) is raised 10 inches from the rest of the room. There is an oil burning stove with a pipe leading to the chimney in the center of the eastern most end of the risen portion of the floor. There are electrical lights hanging from the ceiling. The electricity and oil stove were installed in the school sometime in the 1930's.

## **Integrity**

The Wilson District #7 School is currently in a condition of disrepair. Many of the windows are broken and/or missing. Some of the clapboard is missing on virtually all four of the exterior walls of the school. The front door and porch are missing. The roof has large holes all the way through to the interior of the main schoolroom on both the north and south gables. Some of the limestone foundation is missing. The interior floorboards in the main schoolroom and in the vestibule are rotting and some are missing. Both outhouses are in similar shape with roof, wall, floor and foundation repair needed. Both the original doors and seat boards of the outhouses are in tact. Many of the original books, school desks, chalk board and the original teachers' desk and chair still exist and have been placed in storage until such time that the school can be restored. Despite the severe condition, the property retains sufficient integrity to convey its historical and architectural significance.

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Wilson District #7 School  
Clinton County, Iowa

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The plan for restoration is to apply for the Iowa Country Schools Grant and/or raise private funds to historically restore the school to its 1880's era; \$1,500.00 in match money has already been raised. Working with the Clinton County Historic Preservation Commission and following the guidelines set by the Secretary of the Interior for historic building restoration, we would begin (possibly spring of 2005) with as much volunteer resources as possible. The longer term plan is to donate the school to the local preservation society to be operated as an interpretive museum and activity center. Members of the Clinton County Historic Preservation Commission had an Architectural Specialist visit the school in April of 2004. We have taken preventative measures recommended by him to impede further damage to the property until restoration can take place.



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Wilson District #7 School  
Clinton County, IowaSummary statement of significance:

The Wilson District #7 School, built circa 1880's, is significant under National Register Criterion A in the area of education. The property is also significant under Criterion C as it is a classic example of the simple vernacular architecture type of schoolhouses built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Set in its original location of a country farm pasture the feeling of the property retains a strong connection and conveys the historic significance of the American era when one room country schools were commonly found in developing rural communities. The basic school structure and setting have not changed in approximately 125 years.

Historical significance:

The first recorded school in Clinton County dates to around 1847 and was built in the town of Lyons, now a part of the town of Clinton. By 1860 the population of the County had reached 18,938 and Clinton being the largest town in the county had established a new school located in the center of town. By 1875 two more schools would be built in the north and south ends of Clinton. Bloomfield Township was created in 1855 and the first recorded school was an 1859 log structure built in what was then the town of Bloomfield. Bloomfield became Delmar in 1871 after the completion of the Davenport, St Paul & Midland railway which came through the town. The Delmar school district was established in 1874 and erected its first school by 1875. Bloomfield Township at that time had 9 country schools in what was known as the Wilson District, each one erected to accommodate four sections of the township. The Wilson #7 school is the only one of the original nine remaining. In other townships the schools have been turned into farm sheds, moved into towns or have been converted to become family homes. In a survey of the original schoolhouses in Bloomfield Township it has been revealed that every one of the schools has been destroyed entirely except for the Wilson #7 school. Its significance is further enhanced by the presence of the original outhouses, 8 of the original school desks, the original teachers' desk and chair and many school books from the late 1800's.<sup>i</sup>

In 1908 President Theodore Roosevelt formed the National Commission on Country Life to find solutions for rural problems, not the least of which was "the rural country school problem". Advocates of the commission believed that as many as six country schools could be consolidated into one larger school with separate grades in separate classrooms and that this would favor a more "progressive" learning experience for the students. School consolidation took place from the early 1900's until the early 1960's. In use as a school for almost 75 years the Wilson #7 school closed in 1956. The entire Wilson District was later consolidated when the Wilson, Elwood and Delmar Districts merged in 1962.<sup>ii</sup>

Architectural Significance

The architecture of the Wilson District #7 school is significant as a representative of the American vernacular style typical of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The schools dimensions meet the specifications of the classic 19<sup>th</sup> century floor plan of 18 feet wide X 28 feet long. Its window structure meets the typical style of a bank of three double-hung sash windows on the 28foot sides of the school building. Built in the later part of the century its significance is further enhanced by the presence of the vestibule/cloakroom which became part of the standard design for schools at that time.

The schools physical location is also historically significant as the country school was typically located at the crossroads of a four section area of the Township unless other factors such as local politics or large families dictated otherwise. The Wilson District #7 school is located directly at the crossroads of the four sections of 25, 26, 35 and 36 in the Township as well as having been built directly across the county road and on the property of James & Ellen O'Meara who by 1888 had 10 children.

<sup>i</sup> The History of Clinton county, Iowa by Lucius P. Allen published in 1879 (Brookfield and Bloomfield Townships pages 626-631, Public Schools pages 597-601, Education 505-508). 1865, 1874, 1894 Plat Maps of Bloomfield Township.

<sup>ii</sup> Delmar, Wilson, Elwood School Districts 1962 Consolidation Report. Provided by Mary Hainstock, Superintendent of Delwood Community School Delmar Iowa – January 2004.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Wilson District #7 School  
Clinton County, Iowa

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## Major Bibliographical References

Gulliford, Andrew. America's Country Schools. The Preservation Press, 1984

Reflections of O'Meara, Patrick Reilly, deceased. Former student (1922-1929) and teacher (1930's and 1940's). Not dated. Hand written notes stored with Sara O'Meara

U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1880 Bloomfield Twp., Clinton County, Iowa. Source: FHL Film 1254334 National Archives Film T9-0334. <http://www.rootsweb.com/~usgenweb/>

Clinton County IAGENWEB site, <http://www.rootsweb.com/~iaclinto/index.htm> 1879 Histories of Clinton County by L.P. Allen

Iowa Historic Preservation Alliance web site, <http://www.iowapreservation.org/schools/index.html>

*The History of Clinton County, Iowa* by Lucius P. Allen published in 1879 (Brookfield and Bloomfield Townships pages 626-631, Public Schools pages 597-601, Education 505-508). 1865, 1874, 1894 Platt Maps of Bloomfield Township.

Delmar, Wilson, Elwood School Districts 1962 Consolidation Report. Provided by Mary Hainstock, Superintendent of Delwood Community School Delmar Iowa- January 2004

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Wilson District #7 School  
Clinton County, Iowa

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Verbal Boundary Description:

The Wilson District #7 School is a rectangular parcel measuring approximately 65 feet X 100 feet whose northwest corner is 25 feet directly northwest of the northwest corner of the foundation of the schoolhouse and whose southeast corner is 30 feet directly southeast of the southeast corner of the foundation of the schoolhouse vestibule.

Boundary Justifications:

The boundary is justified by an immediate rectangular area encompassing the school and the outhouses not exceeding 1 acre of land. East of the schoolhouse there is a small area of yard that runs 25 feet to the fence line near the road (270<sup>th</sup> Avenue). The north and south borders are parallel lines encompassing the outhouses. The western border is dictated by running just west of the outhouses. This is the original 1880's area that comprised the schoolhouse and outhouses.

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# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

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Wilson District #7 School  
Clinton County, Iowa

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View of Wilson District #7 School from the east looking west. North and south outhouses are visible on the right and left of the school, respectively (south outhouse partially hidden by trees). Photo circa 1952. Photographer unknown.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number: Historic Photo 2      Page 7

Wilson District #7 School  
Clinton County, Iowa

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View of south side of Wilson District #7 School from the south looking north. Front door, porch and vestibule are on the right of photo. Photo circa 1952. Photographer unknown.

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Wilson District #7 School  
Clinton County, Iowa

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Photo #1

Photographer is David O'Meara

March, 2004

Negative located in San Francisco California with Sara O'Meara (nominator of Property)

View of Wilson District #7 School from the northeast looking southwest taken from county road 270<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Photo #2

Photographer is David O'Meara

March, 2004

Negative located in San Francisco California with Sara O'Meara (nominator of Property)

View of Wilson District #7 School from southeast looking northwest. South and east side of school is visible.

Photo #3

Photographer is David O'Meara

March, 2004

Negative located in San Francisco California with Sara O'Meara (nominator of Property)

View of Wilson District #7 School north outhouse from the south looking north.

Photo #4

Photographer is David O'Meara

June, 2004

Negative located in San Francisco California with Sara O'Meara (nominator of Property)

View of Wilson District #7 School from the northwest looking southeast, west and north side of school visible.

Photo #5

Photographer is David O'Meara

June, 2004

Negative located in San Francisco California with Sara O'Meara (nominator of Property)

View of Wilson District #7 School from the northeast looking southwest, vestibule and north side of school visible.

Photo #6

Photographer is David O'Meara

June, 2004

Negative located in San Francisco California with Sara O'Meara (nominator of Property)

View of Wilson District #7 School south outhouse from the south looking north.

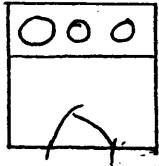
United States Department of the Interior  
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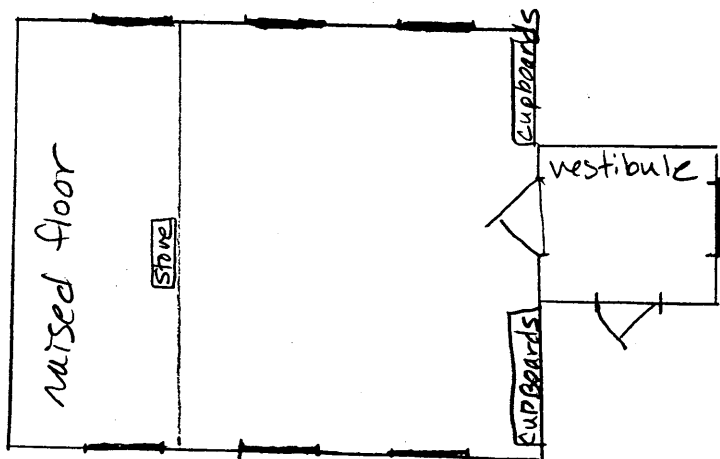
Section number: Floor Plan

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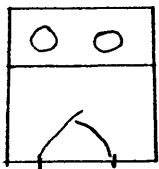
Wilson District #7 School  
Clinton County, Iowa



North outhouse



Main schoolhouse



South outhouse

1 inch = Approx. 10 feet



Dated - May 2004

Source - hand drawn by Sara O'Meara

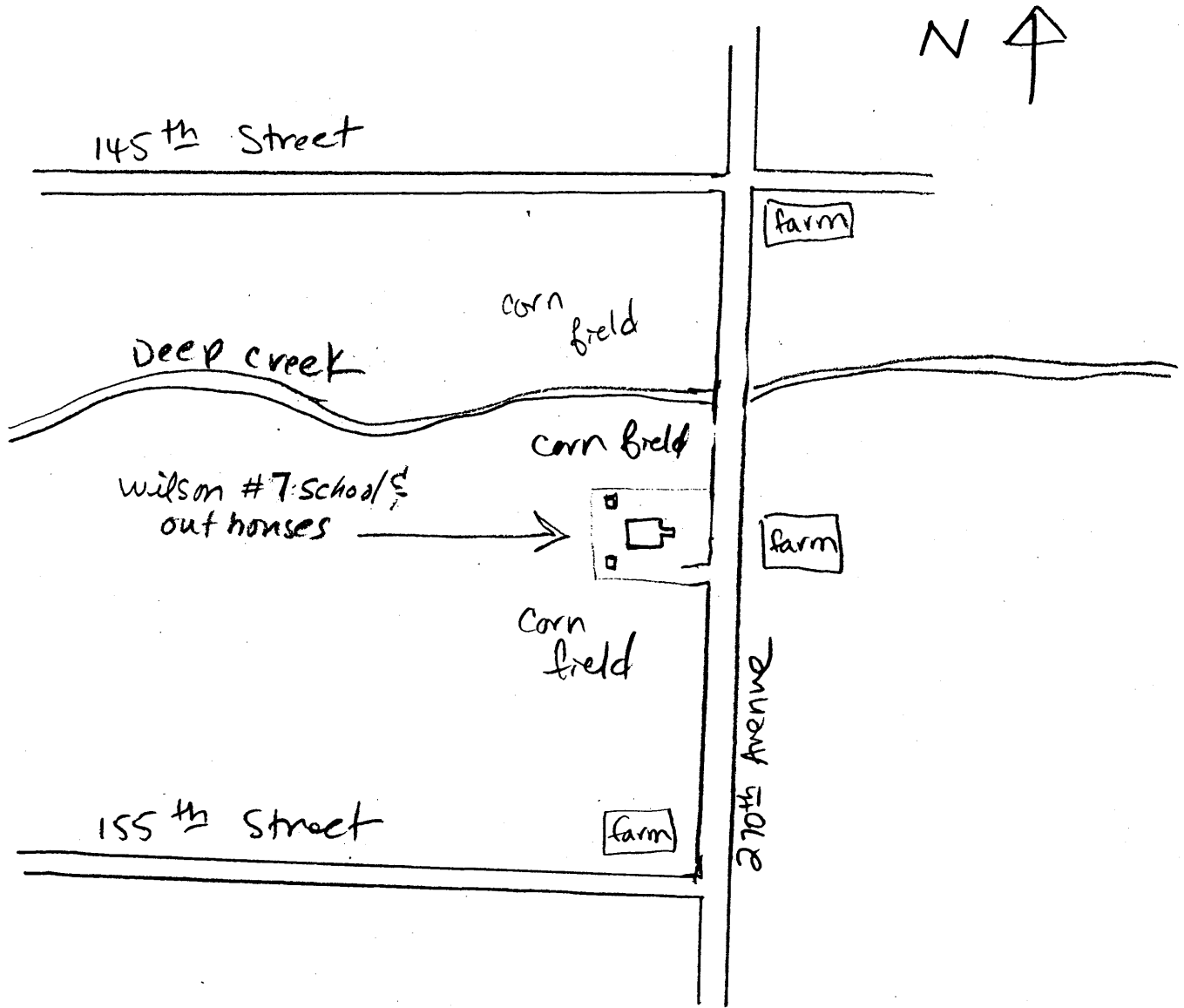
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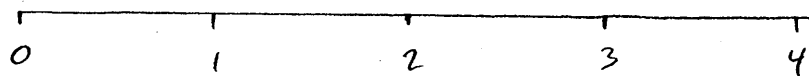
Wilson District #7 School  
Clinton County, Iowa



Date - May 2004

source - Hand drawn Sara O'Meara

4 inches = 1 mile







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**National Register of Historic Places  
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Wilson District #7 School  
Clinton County, Iowa

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Additional Property Owners:

Ben & Karen O'Meara  
709 1<sup>st</sup> Street NW  
Elkader, IA. 52043  
563-245-1748

Tom & Pat O'Meara  
5700 JDK Road  
Erie, IL. 61250  
309-659-2044

Sally Laughlin  
709 Middle River Drive  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL. 33304  
954-561-5261

Don & Betty Henningsen  
929 County Club Drive  
Maquoketa, IA. 33435  
563-652-5426