

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PHO 674524

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RECEIVED

MAY 10 1979

DATE ENTERED

JUN 18 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Cook Farm

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

S of Charles City Ia

STREET & NUMBER

U.S. 218

CITY, TOWN

Charles City

X VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Third

STATE

Iowa

CODE

COUNTY

Floyd

CODE

CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE | PUBLIC ACQUISITION | ACCESSIBLE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> NO | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> PARK |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: |

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Yester Farm, Inc., David L. and Judith M. Hutchins

STREET & NUMBER

R.R. 3

CITY, TOWN

Charles City

X VICINITY OF

STATE

Iowa 50616

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Floyd County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Charles City

STATE

Iowa

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS | <input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Cook Farm is a 4-acre complex of residential and agricultural buildings, situated on a heavily travelled highway. The immediate surroundings are rural, with a mixture of pasture, cropland, and stands of timber. The structures (two houses, and a block of connected barns) are all built of locally-quarried limestone and date from the 1850-60 period. A small house, and two sections of the barn, are believed to have been built in the mid-1850's. The main house, and third section of the barn, date from c. 1860.

The main house has a two-story front-gable main block, with a one story dining/kitchen wing off the south side. The dressed limestone blocks are laid in a random ashlar pattern, and the corners of the house are quoined. Windows have broad, dressed stone lintels. The plain cornice is wood.

The main facade is three bays wide, with a lunette window in the attic story and entrance to right of center. The doorway is framed by diamond-shaped sidelights and a transom with lozenge-shaped lights. It is sheltered by a small falt roof on paired brackets (possibly a later feature). The rear and north side have three windows on each floor.

A porch, with chamfered wooden posts, is recessed in the west side (front) of the kitchen wing. Another extends across the rear of this section.

Directly behind the main house is a considerably smaller stone house, its walls laid up in rubble ashlar. This little (18' x 22') side gable structure has a 12' x 12' kitchen section on the east end. Window and door openings have flat arches with roughly cut radiating voussoirs. The main entrance is centered in the south wall. The east wall has a doorway into the kitchen area, and another opening directly outside. The house was once partitioned into two rooms; it is now one, with a concrete floor.

The barn, oriented east-west, and located south of the two houses, has four sections. The westernmost is a three-story cube, 40' x 40', with louvred wooden cupola centered in the low hipped roof. The walls are of random ashlar, the corners quoined, and the windows (two each on north, south and west facades) have flat arches with radiating voussoirs similar to those on the small house. The main entrance of this block is on the second level, north side: a wide, timber-framed doorway above which is a round-arched hay door. On the south side are two doors at ground level, opening into pasture. The ground floor contains horse stalls; the second, machine storage and hay bins; the third is an open loft.

The second section appears to be contemporaneous with the first. Joined to it on the east is a third section of the same size and shape, the two forming one long gable-roofed rectangle. The third section appears to be later (as evidenced by the masonry), probably of the same age as the main house. The second section has milking stanchions on the ground floor. The ground floor of the third section also housed cattle. The upper floors of both sections are open lofts. On the north side is an abandoned silo.

At the extreme east end of the barn is a frame addition, rebuilt on original foundations in 1978.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> ART | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES

c. 1855-65

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The buildings of Cook Farm achieve significance in several respects:

1. All are constructed of locally-quarried limestone cut and dressed by hand. This method of building is relatively unusual in Iowa, and its examples are limited to specific areas (north central and northeast Iowa, in particular) defined by geologic history. Most structures of this type are also limited temporally to the decades 1850-1870 (an early period in Iowa history), perhaps due to the then limited availability of manufactured brick and processed lumber.
2. The barn is particularly outstanding. Very few agricultural structures built wholly of stone are known to exist in the state. Most common are houses, churches and schools. The cube shape of the westernmost portion of the barn may be unique: no other comparable structures have been identified to date.
3. The farm presents one of the few known instances in which one property contains a variety of stone structures. Among Iowa's current National Register properties are stone schools (Madison, Scott, Winneshiek Counties), stone churches (Clayton, Louisa Counties), stone houses (Dallas, Johnson, Black Hawk Counties), a factory (Van Buren County) and barns (Madison County); but Cook Farm presents not one, but two houses, and an unusual series of connected barns.*
4. Cook Farm also offers the opportunity to observe variety in the manipulation of stone. The earlier house, with its basic form, rubble walls and roughly-shaped voussoirs, is true folk architecture, demonstrating extreme economy of effort in the use of local materials. The big house, on the other hand, is clearly more sophisticated in form, handling of materials and detail, and suggests the hand of a master mason.

The site of Cook Farm was acquired by the O'Hair family in the early 1850's. About 1860, Elizabeth Strawn came to the Charles City area. She was a native of Ohio (b. 1810); her family moved to Indiana about 1825, and Elizabeth spent most of her life there. Two husbands (James Oxford and Enoch Strawn) died, leaving her with a large family and, apparently, a substantial estate. She brought her family to Floyd County and "purchased a large tract of land in St. Charles Township" (History (1882), p. 777), which included the O'Hair farm. The craft of stonemasonry was well-established by this time in the Charles City area (a number of extant commercial blocks are of this material), and Elizabeth Strawn is credited with commissioning the erection of the substantial, dressed-stone farmhouse, and adding the third section to the barn.

See continuation sheet

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- History of Floyd County, Iowa. Chicago: Inter-State Publishing Co., 1882, pp. 265, 521, 535, 777, 1013.
- The Iowan. Winter, 1964-65, p. 14.
- Interviews: Mark Ferguson, Charles City (deceased); Allen Andres, Charles City (1978).
- Mason City Globe-Gazette, Jan. 7, 1977, p. 7.
- Waterloo Courier, ____, 1925, p. 1 (clipping)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 4 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Charles City, Iowa

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A

| | | | | |
|-----|-------|-------|---------|-------|
| 1,5 | 5,2,8 | 9,6,0 | 4,7,6,4 | 1,5,0 |
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| 1,5 | 5,2,9 | 0,3,5 | 4,7,6,4 | 0,6,0 |
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|-----|-------|-------|---------|-------|
| 1,5 | 5,2,8 | 9,2,0 | 4,7,6,4 | 0,0,0 |
|-----|-------|-------|---------|-------|

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| 1,5 | 5,2,8 | 8,6,0 | 4,7,6,4 | 0,8,0 |
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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

An area of land about 4 acres square, bounded on the southwest by U.S. Highway 218, and located near the center of Section 20, T95N R15W, Floyd County, Iowa. (see continuation sheet)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

M.H. Bowers, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Division of Historic Preservation

DATE

April 1979

STREET & NUMBER

26 East Market Street

TELEPHONE

319/353-6949

CITY OR TOWN

Iowa City

STATE

Iowa 52240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Admin A. Anderson

DATE

5/1/79

TITLE Director, Division of Historic Preservation

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Charles W. Peterson

DATE

6.18.79

ATTEST: William H. Abraham

DATE

6.18.79

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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| | |
|------------------|-------------|
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Cook Farm, Charles City vicinity, Floyd County, Iowa

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

About 1865, Mrs. Strawn moved into Charles City, selling her "farms" in the process. The stone complex was sold to A.W. Cook, who lived here until his death in 1887. Cook was born in Boston in 1810, and after a peripatetic career through Vermont, New York, New Orleans, and Alabama, he stopped in Kentucky, married, and began raising fine livestock. He moved again, to Illinois, and then in 1868 or 1869 came to Floyd County to "a beautiful stock farm on Cedar Creek" (History 1882, p. 1013). Cook became well-known in subsequent years for his fine horses. He imported Percherons from France (and is credited with being the first in the state to do so), and raised Shorthorn cattle.

*Two other examples are the Green Estate in Jones County, with eight buildings of limestone, and a farmstead in Dubuque County containing a stone house, small barn and food cellar.

Addendum to No. 10, Verbal Boundary Description:

The approximately 4 acres included in this nomination have been selected simply to take in the buildings and to allow a limited "buffer" zone around them. Cook Farm at one time encompassed some 600 acres in Section 20, an area which over the years has been reduced to about 100 acres, these now in the hands of the Hutchins. Because the buildings of Cook Farm are significant principally for their architectural qualities, a four-acre block of land was chosen for inclusion in the Register, rather than the 100 acres which now comprise Yester Farm, Inc.