

PH0367192

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
MAY 17 1976
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED APR 11 1977

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
Elijah Filley Stone Barn *nh*
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER *507 Filley off US 136* NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CITY, TOWN CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Filley First
STATE CODE VICINITY OF COUNTY CODE
Nebraska 31 Gage 067

3 CLASSIFICATION

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Edwin Pedersen
STREET & NUMBER
RFD 1
CITY, TOWN VICINITY OF STATE
Filley Nebraska

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Gage County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN STATE
Beatrice Nebraska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Historic Preservation in Nebraska
DATE
1971 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Nebraska State Historical Society
CITY, TOWN STATE
Lincoln Nebraska

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Elijah Filley stone barn is located on the uplands near Mud Creek, which flows in a south-westerly direction to the Big Blue River, two miles south of Holmesville. Formerly a part of Elijah Filley's Cottage Hill Farm, this landmark structure stands isolated from its historic environment. And though still a part of a rural environment, little remains outside of the barn which was a part of the Cottage Hill Farm. Presently, a two-story frame house (abandoned), which replaced the Filley stone house after the family removed to the town of Filley, exists on the property along with a small shed (probably not a part of Cottage Hill Farm). Remnants of the board fence which once enclosed the corral and surrounded the stone house are still visible.

The barn, a truly remarkable structure, was built in 1874. Rectangular in plan, this three-story limestone structure measures 54 by 44 feet. Protected by a simple gable roof, the long axis runs east-west. The building is classified as a bank barn, carefully integrated into the existing easterly slope of the land, and provides entrance to the lower level from the east end, while access to the second level is from the higher west side.

The design of the barn adequately reflects the diverse farming and ranching activities of Mr. Filley as well as the size of his operations. The lower level provided space for cattle and oxen while the second level provided for wagons and horses as well as grain bins. Stalls for horses were along each side. Storage for hay was provided above the main floor in two levels--a lower level above the horse stalls and an upper level above the main aisle. An opening was provided in the west gable large enough for hay wagons to enter the barn. Hay was lifted to the mow from the rack with a horse fork.

Structurally the building is divided into three bays north and south, and four bays east and west. The lower level walls are 24 inches thick with six 24-inch square piers providing support for the floor above. Twelve inch square beams run the full length (54 feet) of the barn, resting in the end walls and on the piers. Three-inch planks form the floor above. The seams between the planks were calked with oakum and the whole floor covered with melted pitch, providing a water-tight floor.

Above the second level heavy timbers (8", 6", and 4"), arranged in six bays, support the internal structure and share the load of the roof with the exterior bearing walls. This internal structure supports two levels of hay storage area in addition to articulating the horse stalls along each side.

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The barn's magnificence is derived primarily from the use of the limestone material. Laid up of rough quarried coursed rubble, the base of the lower level is articulated from the remainder of the structure by the water table at the second floor line. The water table and the quoins at the corners above it are more elaborately cut, being rock-faced with incised diagonal patterns surrounded by a smooth-cut border. This decorative motif is repeated in the keystones of the arched openings.

Fenestration is by arched opening throughout. The arrangement of these openings displays the masterful skill of the builder and lends an air of distinction to the whole. The side (main bearing) walls display two tiers of four windows which light the livestock areas on the lower and second levels. The east gable facade features two tiers of large arched openings, variously reflecting the functional needs within the three structural bays of the interior, while the large semi-elliptical arch of the west gable provides access to the central aisle of the second level. Small arched openings, one in each gable, provide ventilation to the hay storage spaces of the upper level of the barn. The ventilation system is presently incomplete--the central, rectangular and gabled cupola has been removed.

Some structural problems are evident, perhaps related to inadequate ground drainage from roof water. Both side walls appear to be in good condition; however, the gable walls both show signs of what appears to be settlement of the side walls. One major area of concern is the structural failure at the northeast corner of the building. Tie rods and tension bands do not appear to have remedied the problem.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1874

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Elijah Filley and others

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Cottage Hill Farm was established in 1867 when Elijah and Emily Filley came to Gage County. The first year they lived in a tent which they preferred rather than living in a sod house or a dugout. Having made a commitment to stay there, they decided to build with permanent materials--limestone which outcropped on the Filley property. Ammi Filley, Elijah's father, quarried the stone, Emily hauled it to the building site and Elijah burned lime and laid the wall. By 1868 they had a seven room 1½-story stone dwelling which served as their home until 1883. This house, together with the barn, miscellaneous outbuildings, the board fence corral, and miles of osage orange pasture fence, constitutes what we know of the historic Cottage Hill Farm environment.

Prior to 1867, settlers had chosen to locate near the wooded streams. These favorable sites were all taken when the Filleys arrived. They were quick to recognize, however, the tremendous potential of the higher ground and became the first homesteaders on the uplands in this section of the country. They immediately commenced improving their homestead, and in later years continued to make improvements beneficial to the entire community. *They*

Mr. Filley became the leading farmer and stock raiser in the area. He put all of his land under cultivation and put in many miles of osage orange fence to contain his cattle. Most of his farming activities were related to his stock-raising pursuits. He had gained considerable experience in this field prior to coming to Nebraska while under the employ of William Straun, one of the largest stock-raisers in Illinois at the time. Mr. Filley's cattle business quickly expanded into feeding and breeding operations. One year he fed as many as 1800 head of cattle at his various feed lots in Gage County. Although his breeding operations were not as significant as his cattle feeding, his concern with pure-bred stock did much to enhance the quality of livestock in this part of the country.

Elijah Filley was also active in the field of commerce. When he first came to Gage County he purchased several yoke of oxen and began breaking ground for agricultural use. During the next three years he broke several hundred acres of land for himself and his neighbors. In

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet, Item #9

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,4	7 0,9 1,6,0	4,4 5,9 6,8,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

D. Murphy, Architect

ORGANIZATION

Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

April 1976

STREET & NUMBER

1500 R. Street

TELEPHONE

(402) 432-2793

CITY OR TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

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

Marvin D. Knott

5/5/76

TITLE

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

CHIEF

Jay A. [Signature]

DATE

4/11/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

W. Murphy

DATE

3/25/77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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the fall of 1868 he purchased the first threshing machine to be used in this part of the country and threshed all the grain raised for many miles in all directions from his home. In addition to these activities, he established a substantial freighting operation in these early years, hauling goods from Nebraska City and Brownville to Beatrice. This freighting expanded into an extensive cattle shipping operation by 1872. He is said to have shipped the first carload of cattle out of Gage County with the completion of the railroad in 1871. In subsequent years, associated with his feeding operation, the shipping played a major role in the agricultural development of the region. Filley's importance to agriculture was further enhanced in 1883 when, associated with the founding of the town of Filley along the Beatrice to Nebraska City branch of the railroad, he established a large grain storage facility at that place. His contributions to the overall story of agriculture were recognized on a state-wide level when, in 1924, he was inducted into the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement.

Filley's role in the social and political development of the area is of no small importance. He was active in the organization of School District #9 and a charter member of its board. He also assumed the greatest financial burden in the erection of the stone schoolhouse in 1870. Politically he served six terms as a Gage County Commissioner, as State Representative (1880-1881) and as State Senator (1882-1883). He was also elected to six terms on the State Board of Agriculture and served as first vice-president for three terms--1905-1907. One of his major contributions to the local community is associated with the erection of the barn in 1874. This was the year of the devastating grasshopper invasion, which completely destroyed the crops in the area. Many people were faced not only with the loss of their crops but with the loss of their livestock as well. Recognizing a need in the community, Filley purchased hogs by the thousands and shipped them, along with his cattle, to Iowa where they were sold. He also shipped substantial quantities of corn back from Iowa to feed work stock. It was at this time, as a relief measure, that he decided to build a barn. He had been in need of a substantial barn for some time and decided to take advantage of lower wages to put as many people to work as possible. It has been said that he employed people from all over Gage and surrounding counties that fall of 1874 to build the barn.

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Architecturally, the barn is one of the most magnificent in the state. Important for its size (the largest limestone structure identified to date) and structural qualities, the barn is also an excellent, if not uncommon, example of the bank barn, a type of structure whose use was compatible with the topography of southeastern Nebraska. Many bank barns still exist in the region, but no others have been identified whose walls were built entirely of stone (one other--much smaller--is known to have been built in 1872 near Roca in Lancaster County; it burned down several years ago). This multi-functional barn is also a significant architectural entity in its competent use of limestone (which outcrops significantly in only scattered areas of southeast Nebraska), both structurally (in the exclusive use of arched openings to penetrate the wall), and esthetically (in the sensitive disposition of the openings in relation to structure, function, and the visual whole).

The Filley stone barn stands today as an expression--both functional and esthetic--of the agricultural activities of one whose importance to the area is without question. He had confidence in Nebraska and her agricultural possibilities and built for permanence as a symbol of that confidence.

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