

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED **MAY 20 1980**
JUL 31 1980
DATE ENTERED

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Trimborn Farm

AND/OR COMMON

Same

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

8801 West Grange Avenue

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Greendale

__ VICINITY OF

4th

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Wisconsin

CODE

55

COUNTY

Milwaukee

CODE

079

CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY** DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT**OWNERSHIP** PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION** IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS** OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE** YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO**PRESENT USE** AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER:**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Greendale Land Company

STREET & NUMBER

735 North Water Street

CITY, TOWN

Milwaukee

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin 53202

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Milwaukee County Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

901 North 9th Street

CITY, TOWN

Milwaukee,

STATE

Wisconsin 53233

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

Determined Eligible, 5/12/78

DATE

1977

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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 Trimborn Farm currently consists of eight buildings, of which three were most important to the manufacture of limestone. In addition, one limestone kiln structures still exists: on the central property, are 75 foot long remains of the main kilns, facing northeast. These kilns, built of fieldstone, are beginning to deteriorate due to age. However, they are still believed to be capable of functioning.

The Trimborn House is a two-story building of cream brick, rectangular in plan, with a one-story addition covered by a half-hipped roof, facing to the southeast and running the full length of the building. The main portion of the structure is topped by a gable roof with returns and wood eaves. The main (northwest) facade is fronted by a trabeated door covered by a two-posted porch with a gable roof. The second story of the main facade contains three segmented arch 6/6 windows. The southern half of the main portion is a commercial type with a recessed porch, facing southwest. The back of the main portion has a centrally located exterior brick chimney. The interior arrangement is symmetrical.

The stone barn is rectangular, about 100 feet in length and fifty feet in width. It is constructed of limestone and is covered with a gable roof, which like the house has corner returns and wood eaves. The roof is wood shingled. In the interior, the barn is supported by oak timbers and pegged joints. Two, modern, poured concrete silos now adjoin the barn.

The bunkhouse is likewise two-storied, with a gabled roof, wood eaves and returns. The bunkhouse is rectangular, constructed of clapboard, and is 22 feet by 32 feet in dimension. The front (southwest) facade has a single entrance with wooden door, and a small loft door directly above. The four front windows are symmetrically arranged; glass has been removed from each window. The rear of the building has a second story exit with a small wooden balcony. The bunkhouse is generally in poor condition.

The remainder of the buildings on the site are interesting, but not important to the nomination. These include a frame, timbered barn, two wooden sheds, a small masonry shed which appears to have been for dairy use, and the remains of what may have been a smoke house.

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

SPECIFIC DATES

1846, 1876¹

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

/unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

For over fifty years the Trimborn Farm was a center for the manufacture of lime. This lime, which was produced in very large quantities between 1860 and 1890, was used extensively in Milwaukee for building construction. So far as is known, the buildings and kilns of the Trimborn Farm constitute the only lime farm in Wisconsin to have survived in relatively intact condition.

Industry. About 1846, a man named O'Donnell (or possibly O'Donald) erected lime kilns south of Milwaukee, where the Trimborn Farm stands today. O'Donnell manufactured lime here for only a few years. Lime was produced by heating limestone in the vertical kilns until the heat causes the mineral to chemically decompose. At that point, the limestone breaks into its components, carbon dioxide gas and calcium oxide. The calcium oxide is a powder which is the residue left after decomposition, and is popularly known as lime. Lime can be mixed with water and sand to create mortar for brick construction.² Since O'Donnell's kilns were situated near a sizeable limestone deposit, the manufacture of quality lime at this site was virtually a guaranteed success, particularly with nearby Milwaukee as a marketing outlet.³

In 1850, however, O'Donnell sold 10 acres of land and some of his kilns to two men, named Jacob Kier and Werner Trimborn. Little is known of Kier, who left the lime business in 1854. Trimborn had been born in Germany in 1801-1802, and had come to the United States and settled in Milwaukee in 1847. He had had apparently no prior experience in lime manufacturing, and had in fact been a teamster before forming his partnership with Kier.⁴

Despite lack of experience, Trimborn became adept in manufacturing and marketing lime. He established an office on Water Street in Milwaukee to market the lime and used his profits to expand his property south of the city.⁵ By 1876, the Trimborn Farm encompassed over 500 acres of land, including the all-important limestone quarry and pasture and crop land. In addition to the Trimborn House, the farm included six kilns, bunkhouses for the workers employed at the farm, and a large stone barn. Trimborn employed from thirty to forty men each year and also required at least 6000 cords of wood yearly to operate his kilns. The farm workers typically turned out 200 barrels of lime each day.⁶ The effort was sufficient to make the Trimborn Lime Co. one of the major suppliers of lime to Milwaukee and nearby towns. It also made Trimborn rich: in 1870 his property exceeded 60,000 dollars in value.⁷

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Trimborn Farm, Greendale, Wisconsin

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

After Trimborn's death in 1879, his sons August and Leonard Trimborn took over management of the lime business. August lived at the farm and ran the kilns, while Leonard lived in Milwaukee and sold the finished product. In 1882 the brothers leased part of their quarry and kilns to the Schultz and Bond Co.⁸ Lime was in great demand during the 1880s, particularly in rapidly growing Milwaukee. In 1887, for example, the value of Milwaukee buildings increased by some 4 million dollars, with over half of this due to new construction.⁹ The Trimborn brothers were able to keep pace with progress and began offering a larger range of building materials.¹⁰

In 1935, most of the property that had been the Trimborn Farm was sold to the government as part of the "greenbelt" city of Greendale. The parcel of land containing several of the farm buildings, four of the kilns and the remains of the quarry were not developed. Today, these lands are still owned by the Greendale Land Co. In recent years, the extension of suburban housing has threatened to engulf the remains of the farm. This has led the Milwaukee County Park Commission to explore the possibility of purchasing the property for preservation. At this time, the future of the property is uncertain.¹¹

Architecture

The Werner Trimborn Farmhouse is an unusual Greek Revival residential-commercial combination of uncertain date. A lithograph in a Milwaukee County atlas of 1876¹ pictures the structure in its present form; design characteristics suggest that the building was constructed sometime around 1854 when Trimborn assumed ownership of the property.

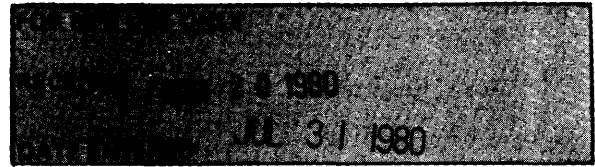
The two-story three-unit front facade with central, trabeated doorway, and two-unit side elevations with returned eaves identify the farmhouse as a Greek Revival design. Although the west facade includes a two-story extension with recessed posted porch often found on attached side wings of such houses, the southern wall of the extension is dropped down from the roof-line cornice creating a raised parapet on the west, and transforming the southern half of the farmhouse into a commercial-type structure. Placement of openings along the southern side wall also suggest commercial usage, as does the tall brick exterior chimney built against the facade. No evidence could be found to document any non-residential use of part of the structure.

¹Milwaukee Journal, October 29, 1972.

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TRIMBORN FARM, GREENDALE, WISCONSIN



CONTINUATION SHEET

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

Outstanding among the ten other structures on the site is the large stone barn constructed in 1851-52 and enlarged in 1876. The 104'x52' two-story structure is constructed of coursed cut limestone (probably quarried on the site) from ground line to roof. Unusual in its full-stone construction, the barn is trimmed with wood eaves and corner returns in Greek Revival fashion. Finely-detailed outside, interior elements are large-scaled, consisting of hewn oak timbers and purlins with pegged joints. The barn is a well-preserved, handsome example of early hand construction executed with an eye for refined appearance.

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Trimborn Farm, Greendale, Wis.

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Notes

- 1) Earliest construction of kilns at the site was in 1846, according to the estimate of the Milwaukee County Landmarks Commission. An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Milwaukee County, Milwaukee, 1876, shows the Trimborn Farm to consist of 11 buildings, including the Trimborn House, the bunkhouse, and the stone barn that still stand at the site. See p. 42.
- 2) Hales Corners Hub, May 10, 1979; Milwaukee Journal, October 29, 1972. For information concerning the manufacture and uses of lime in the late 19th century, see A. A. Gilmore, Practical Treatise on Limes, Hydraulic Cements and Mortars, D. Van Nostrand, New York, 1864.
- 3) Hales Corners Hub, May 10, 1979.
- 4) Frank A. Flower, History of Milwaukee, Western Historical Association, Chicago, 1881, p. 1515; The Milwaukee City Directory for 185-1852, Parsons & Van Slyck, Milwaukee, 1851, p. 155.
- 5) Col. Van Slyck's Milwaukee City Directory and Business Advertiser, 1854-1855, Starrs' Book and Job Office, Milwaukee, 1854, p. 268.
- 6) Milwaukee Journal, October 29, 1972; Flower, p. 1515-1516, 1653.
- 7) H. Russell Zimmermann, The Heritage Guidebook: Landmarks and Historical Sites in Southeastern Wisconsin, Heritage Banks Inland Heritage Corp., 1976, p. 182; Census Schedules for 1870, Milwaukee County, on deposit at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, p. 175.
- 8) Flower, p. 1515-1516; Milwaukee Journal, October 29, 1972.
- 9) Andrew Morrison, ed., The Cream City, n.p., 1888, p. 98.
- 10) Wright's Directory of Milwaukee for 1895, Alfred G. Wright, Milwaukee, 1895, p. 1081.
- 11) Milwaukee Journal, October 29, 1972; Greendale Village Life, April 12, May 3, 1979.

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10. VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the Northwest corner of said 1/4 Section; thence South 87° 23' 00" East along the north line of said 1/4 Section, 889.00 feet to the point of beginning of the land to be described; continuing thence South 87° 23' 00" East along the North line of said 1/4 Section, 614.50 feet to a point; thence South 2° 37' 00" West, 175.00 feet to a point; thence South 87° 23' 00" and parallel with the North line of said 1/4 Section, 265.00 feet to a point; thence South 3° 18' 30" West, 131.99 feet to a point; thence South 78° 46' 26" West, 222.23 feet to a point; thence South 54° 37' 47" West, 198.67 feet to a point; thence North 82° 18' 14" West, 149.34 feet to a point; thence South 85° 45' 49" West, 135.37 feet to a point; thence South 66° 25' 17" West, 238.03 feet to a point on a curve whose center is to the Northeast and whose radius is 640.00 feet, said point also being in the East line of Grandview Drive; thence Northerly along said East line of Grandview Drive and along the arc of said curve, whose chord is 154.62 feet and bears North 3° 21' 47" West, 155.00 feet to a point; thence North 3° 34' 30" East along the East line of Grandview Drive, 436.71 feet to the place of beginning, subject to the North 24.75 feet of the West 614.50 feet used for West Grange Ave., containing 7.661 acres of land.

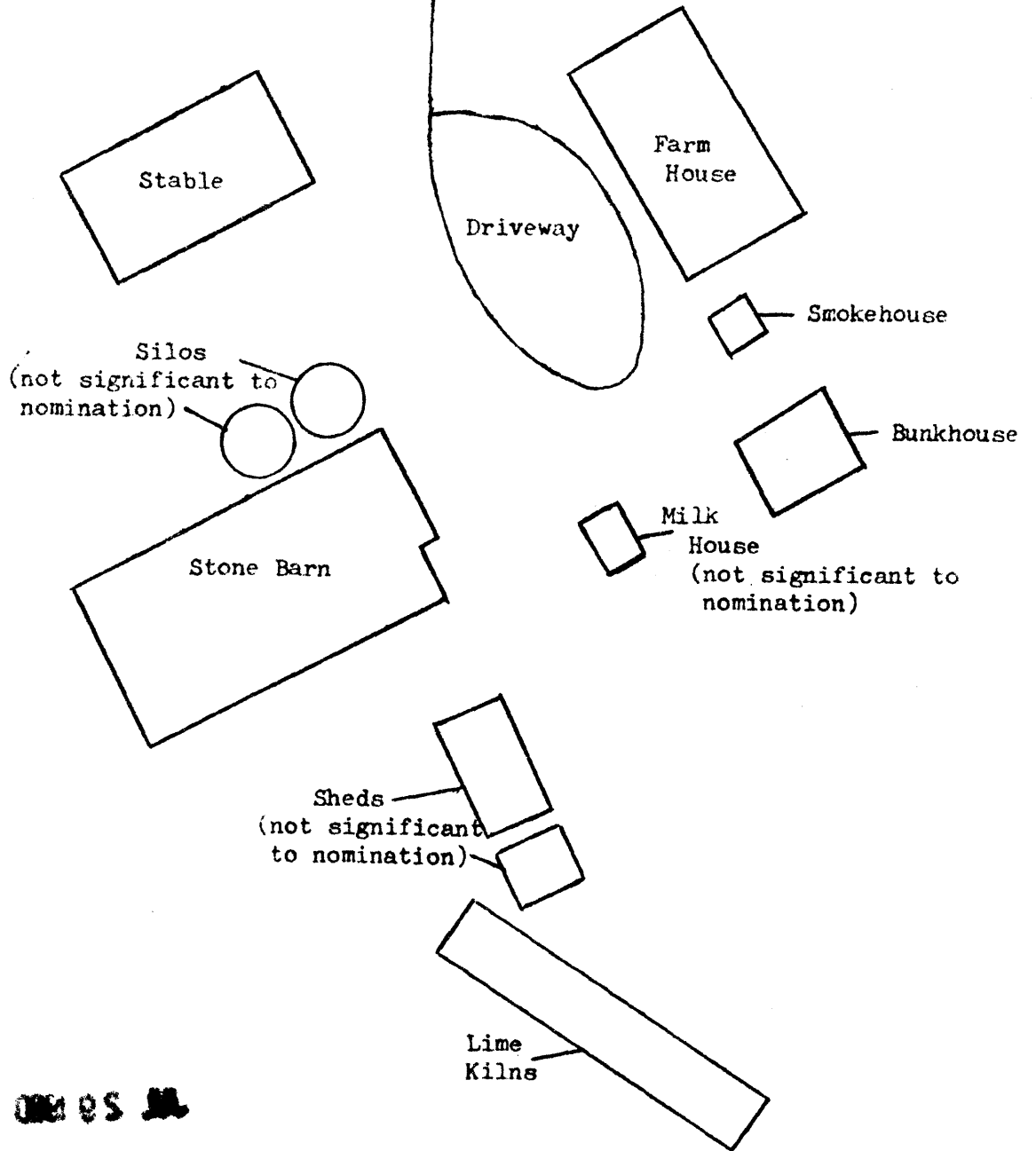
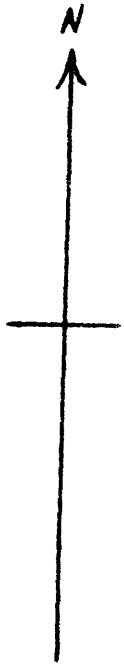
11. FORM PREPARED BY

Harry H. Anderson, Director
Milwaukee County Historical Society
910 North 3rd Street
Milwaukee

November 1979
414/273-8423
Wisconsin 53203

TRIMBORN FARM
8801 West Grange Avenue
Greendale, Milwaukee County, Wis.

Grange Ave.



JUL 31 1960

Not to scale