

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED FEB 4 1977  
DATE ENTERED NOV 7 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  
Wyman-Rye Farmstead  
AND/OR COMMON  
Rye Farm

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER *N of Clinton on*  
Wyman-Rye Drive  
CITY, TOWN  
Clinton  
STATE  
Wisconsin 53525  
VICINITY OF  
 VICINITY OF  
CODE  
55  
COUNTY  
Rock  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
First  
PRESENT USE  
 NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CODE  
105

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 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	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME  
Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Rye  
STREET & NUMBER  
R. 2, Wyman-Rye Drive  
CITY, TOWN  
Clinton  
VICINITY OF  
STATE  
Wisconsin 53525

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Rock County Court House  
STREET & NUMBER  
51 South Main Street  
CITY, TOWN  
Janesville  
STATE  
Wisconsin 53545

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
Rock County Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings  
DATE  
1975  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
Rock County Historical Society  
CITY, TOWN  
Janesville  
STATE  
Wisconsin 53545  
\_FEDERAL \_STATE  COUNTY \_LOCAL

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" 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 two significant historic buildings of the Wyman-Rye farmstead are the imposing limestone barn constructed in 1857 and the fine cream brick Italianate villa of 1872, which provide the core of a still active farm. The barn was constructed of random limestone quarried from the local woods. With dimensions of 50' x 100' for the main block, and 36' x 16' for the southeast wing, it remains one of the most imposing barns in the county, if not the state. The 30' high walls are 2' thick at the base and 20" thick at the rafters; the ridge pole is 40' up. Hand hewn pegged and fitted oak beams and tamarack rafters are clearly visible, and the mow floor for storing hay is still intact. Pigeons could fly into the triangular openings at the apex of the south gable; an 8' x 12' pigeon cote on the roof was removed ca. 1955.

Repairs include new asphalt roofing, a few new rafters, and replacement of louvered shutters in the arched windows. Doors are original. In the basement, metal posts have replaced the 2-3' thick oak posts which supported the main floor. The barn, however, is still true, in contrast to two silos added in 1960-62, which tilt slightly. They and other minor additions to the barn are due to its 20th century conversion from the housing of sheep (Mr. Wyman's flock numbered over 1,000) to dairy cattle. It is presently used for beef cattle. The first milkhouse nestles on the southwest side of the barn; in 1955 Rye built a concrete and glass block milkhouse on the northwest, which leads to the barn basement, where Rye added steel stanchions and calf pens in the 1950's. He also glass-blocked the true arched openings on the lower east wall, which had admitted the sheep. These additions however, enhance the usefulness of the barn and do not detract from its architectural value.

The house, which also faces north, is a true High Victorian Italian villa. Its intersecting wings are dominated by a 4-story mansardic tower, which is placed at the right-angled intersection of the two front wings. These wings are two-storied and ornately treated, with a rich double-bracketed and dentiled frieze at the gabled eaves. The south (back or kitchen) wing, also original to the house, is 1 1/2 story with simpler brackets and window treatments. The finely detailed porch, which fronts the tower, and the one-story bay windows at the narrow ends of the north and east wings are intact. The eastern portion of the front veranda is gone, however. The simple veranda on the kitchen wing is a replacement. Cream brick for the walls and stilted arched lintels was reputedly and logically brought from Milwaukee; the limestone used in foundations, sills and keystones presumably came from the local quarry. Overall dimensions are approximately 50' across, 48' deep, and 45' to the top of the tower.

The interior contains nine large rooms replastered and papered by the present owners. First floor ceilings are 11' high; glass is largely original, and the three original iron grates remain. The curved walnut staircase is noteworthy. The only alterations were to the kitchen wing, where a summer kitchen to the west was removed and a "picture" window was installed. Also gone is a covered walk which led from the kitchen to the privy.

Large portions of the original iron and stone fence to the north of the villa are still intact. To the northeast across the road are the limestone ruins of a smokehouse and the foundation walls of another barn. The original frame house, to the north of the

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 4 1977
DATE ENTERED	NOV 7 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

stone barn, served as a tenant house after it was replaced as a residence in 1872 but was razed about 1960. A later horse barn and granary were torn down, and a gambrel roofed frame tool shed replaced them in 1955. A portion of the original farm, containing the former quarry, has been subdivided as the Wyman-Rye Estates, but the rural character of the farmstead is preserved by distance, topography and the bulk of the barn.

# 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 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 1857 (barn); 1872 (house) BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Wyman-Rye farmstead is probably the best preserved of the large 19th century farmsteads erected on the rich land of Rock County. The true Italianate villa with its mansarded tower still commands a fine view over surrounding outbuildings, fields, and the valley of Turtle Creek. It and the great limestone barn, which reputedly cost \$10,000 and took two years to build, are still intact and actively used. The combination of the stone barn of mammoth size, the large and elegant house, the commanding location, and the continuous operation as a family farm is distinctive and unique in Rock County.

The farmstead was built by William Wyman (1806-94), one of Rock County's most prominent and colorful pioneer farmers. Born in Beverly, Mass., he learned the carpenter's trade and also engaged in the construction of the Erie Canal. In 1839 he emigrated to the future Bradford Township, Rock County and built up a farm of 560 acres "under a high state of cultivation."<sup>1</sup> He engaged extensively in sheep raising, driving a flock of 1,100 sheep to a second farm in Iowa, and upon the sale of that farm, drove the flock back to Bradford. He oversaw construction of his barn, supposedly paying the workmen \$1.00 a day and all the whiskey they could drink. They were fired if they became drunk.<sup>2</sup> He erected other buildings, drawing on knowledge of his trade, including the Wyman Hotel and Opera House in Clinton,<sup>3</sup> now razed, and so could be presumed to have had a strong hand in the construction of his house and barn.

The first Mrs. Wyman, Martha Boardman, (married in 1833) lived in the house only eight years until her death in 1880. In 1881, the 75-year-old gentleman married their 23-year-old housekeeper, Corrie Wells, who bore him two girls in 1882 and 1884. He was a respected and productive citizen of Rock County.

Subsequent to Wyman's death, the farm passed through two short-term owners (Mr. and Mrs. Christen Jensen, 1911, and Mr. and Mrs. James Coleman, 1915), in the eight years prior to its purchase by Jay I. Greene in 1919. Greene was a well-known dairy farmer and cattle dealer and became chairman of the Rock County Board. He sold the land to the present owners in 1951.

1. Portrait and Biographical Album of Rock County, 1889, p. 383.
2. Interviews with Theodore Rye, owner, 1975-76.
3. Album, p. 383.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Douglas, Nancy B. and Hartung, Richard P., Rock County Historic Sites and Buildings, (Janesville, 1976), 49 (Plate 17d), 57, 88-89 (Plate 31f), 158-159 (map).  
 Everts, Baskin and Stewart, Combination Atlas Map of Rock County, (Chicago, 1873), 14 (illus.).  
History of Rock County, (Chicago, 1879), 889.  
 Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Rye, Oct. 4, 1976.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3.75

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 | 346430 | 4716990  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

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

Nancy Belle Douglas, Preservation Coordinator

ORGANIZATION

Rock County Historical Society

DATE

10-15-76

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 896

TELEPHONE

608/756-4509

CITY OR TOWN

Janesville

STATE

Wisconsin 53545

# 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

*Rebecca M. Mearns*

TITLE Acting Director  
 State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE 1/25/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
 ATTEST: *Charles A. [Signature]*  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
 DATE 2/2/77  
 DATE 11.2.77

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 4 1977
DATE ENTERED	NOV 7 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

See  
ITEM NUMBER below PAGE 2

6. Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Sites & Buildings  
1975 State  
State Historical Society of Wisconsin  
Madison Wisconsin 53706
  
9. Perrin, Richard W. E., Historic Wisconsin Buildings, (Milwaukee, 1962), 87, 89  
Portrait and Biographical Album of Rock County, Wisconsin (Chicago, 1889),  
383-384
  
11. Donald N. Anderson, Historian & Registrar, Historic Preservation Division  
State Historical Society of Wisconsin 9 December 1976  
816 State Street 608/262-0746  
Madison Wisconsin 53706