

MAY 20 1960

HISTORIC NAME: Jones-Roberts Farmstead

COUNTY: Blue Earth

CURRENT NAME: Williams Farmstead

CITY/TWP.: Judson Township

LEGAL DESC.: That part of T108N, R28W, Section 5 as described as follows: beginning at the NE corner of the NW quarter of Section 5, thence southerly 1100 feet, thence westerly 500 feet, thence northerly 1100 feet to Section line, thence easterly 500 feet to point of beginning.

ADDRESS: State Highway 68

CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Buildings <u>X</u>	Excellent _____	Local _____	Primary <u>Settlement</u>
Structure _____	Good <u>X</u>	State <u>X</u>	Secondary <u>Agriculture</u>
Object _____	Fair _____	National _____	Others <u>Architecture</u>
District _____	Deteriorated _____		

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Yes _____ No X Restricted _____
 VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD: Yes X No _____
 OCCUPIED: Yes X No _____

PRESENT USE: Farmstead

DATE CONSTRUCTED: 1860+

ORIGINAL USE: Farmstead

ORIGINAL OWNER: Humphrey Jones

ARCHITECT/BUILDER:

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Irwin Williams
 RFD
 Lake Crystal, MN 56055

ACREAGE: Less than one acre
 approx. 12.5

LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.: Blue Earth County Historical Society
 606 South Broad, Mankato, MN 56001

UTM REFERENCE:
 Judson Quad. 7.5
 A. 15/402610/4894170
 B. 15/402610/4893830
 C. 15/402460/4893830
 D. 15/402460/4894170

FORM PREPARED BY: Dennis Gimmestad
 DATE: January 1980

DESCRIPTION:

The Jones-Roberts Farmstead is located in Section 5 of Judson Township, less than a mile south of the Minnesota River. The buildings are situated in relatively close proximity (see attached map) and are partially hidden from the highway by an extensive grove.

Although it has not proven possible to date the individual buildings with precision, local sources indicate that at least the three principal structures (farmhouse, barn, and granary) were likely constructed by Jones during his ownership (1850s-1887). With the exception of the chicken house and garage, the entire farmstead appears to have been in place by or shortly after the turn of the century. Descriptions of each of the buildings follow:

Farmhouse (c. 1860, with possible later east addition, some remodeling on east section 1970s). Humphrey Jones constructed a log claim shanty, the first in Judson Township, on the farm in 1855. A History of the Welsh in Minnesota indicates that he later "built his residence on the identical spot where his first cabin stood." Although the specific date is not given, the context for this construction is c. 1860, and the style conforms with this period. The house is an L-shaped frame residence with a 1 3/4 story section and a one story wing. The larger section is built on a stone foundation, exposed on the south side. It features an open front porch with sawn wood ornamentation at the main level, 6/6 windows on the main level and the gable ends, and rectangular "belly windows" on the west upper level. The eastern section originally featured 2/2 windows, and is thought to have been constructed at a later date. This portion has been recently remodeled. The original portion of the house has intact walnut woodwork, and, in the exposed basement, a large central fireplace. It appears that the design of the original house may have followed the practice of locating the kitchen in the basement. An outside "oven", a squat, gable-roofed structure just to the south of the house, appears in a ca. 1894 photo but is not visible today.

Barn (pre-1887, west addition c. 1914). Mortise-and-tenon/pegged hand-hewn frame, vertical siding, stone foundation, cedar shingles, bank plan with drive-in hayloft, simple gable roof with haytrack shelter and gate at west end.

Granary (pre-1887). Mortise-and-tenon/pegged hand-hewn frame, board and batten siding, three-sided stone foundation with storage access on east side, stone stairway to entrance on west side, simple gable roof with cedar shingles. Some wooden bins on interior intact.

Buggy Shed (n.d.). Mortise-and-tenon/pegged frame, board and batten siding with open east end, simple gable roof with cedar shingles. Base remodeled with concrete foundation at later date. Remains of icehouse at rear (east end).

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Blue Earth County, MN
Judson TownshipDescription - continued

Hog House (n.d.). Mortise-and-tenon/pegged frame, board and batten siding, simple gable roof with cedar shingles.

Garage (c. 1929). Frame construction, board and batten siding, pedimented window frames, gable roof with cedar shingles.

Chicken House (c. 1925). Frame construction, horizontal clapboard siding, elongated rectangular dimensions, concrete foundation, irregular gable roof, door and extensive window fenestration on south side.

Grove. An extensive wooded area of oak and elm trees to the north and east of the farmstead. The area was used extensively for the summer outdoor meetings of the Calvinistic Methodist Churches. A pavillion once located here has been removed, but a primitive "prairie pulpit" once in use is on exhibit at the Blue Earth County Museum in Mankato.

About 300 feet southwest of the farmstead is the site of the original Owen Roberts log cabin.

All the outbuildings of the farmstead are painted red; the farmhouse is painted green. The cohesiveness of the buildings is augmented by the surrounding wooded area.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Jones-Roberts Farmstead is significant as a rare surviving complex of buildings associated with the most concentrated settlement of Welsh in Minnesota, and as a well-preserved example of an early Blue Earth County farmstead. In 1853, two Welshmen from LaCrosse, Wisconsin, D.C. Evans and Richard Davies, became interested in the newly opened lands near the Blue Earth River, and village of South Bend was platted a short distance west of Mankato where the Minnesota River bends from a southeasterly to a northeasterly course. South Bend acted as a gateway for subsequent Welsh settlement to the west and northwest in nearby Judson and Cambria Townships. Humphrey Jones was one of several Illinois and Ohio settlers to respond to Davies' promotional efforts in 1855, took a claim in section 5 of Judson Township, and, over the next few decades, assembled a farmstead which he owned until his death in 1887. The subsequent owner, Humphrey Roberts, was a nephew of Jones and the son of Owen Roberts, who settled in the area in the 1850s and first lived in a log cabin near the Jones cabin. The primary focal points for the area, which surpassed earlier Welsh settlements at St. Paul and LeSeuer to become the most concentrated area of Welsh in the state, were the 15 Welsh churches organized between 1855 and 1889. One of these churches, the Jerusalem Church, was organized at the Owen Roberts cabin in 1858. Although the congregation constructed its own building nearby in 1870, it returned to the grove on the Jones farmstead during the summer months for outdoor presbyteries and synods. Held during June, a "cwrdd mawr" ("big meeting") involved three days of meetings, services, and singing. These meetings were especially successful during the pastorage of Rev. David Edwards (1892-1916), and a church history concludes that "there never was a period of greater prosperity in this vicinity than during the years of the 'big meetings'". The only early Welsh church building to remain in the area is outside of the core of the rural settlement in the city of Mankato; the grove and buildings at the Jones-Roberts Farm survive as an important early focus of the Welsh community. The near total lack of modern intrusions and the complete set of buildings make the farmstead additionally significant as an outstanding example of a late 19th century farming operation.

MINNESOTA HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY FORM

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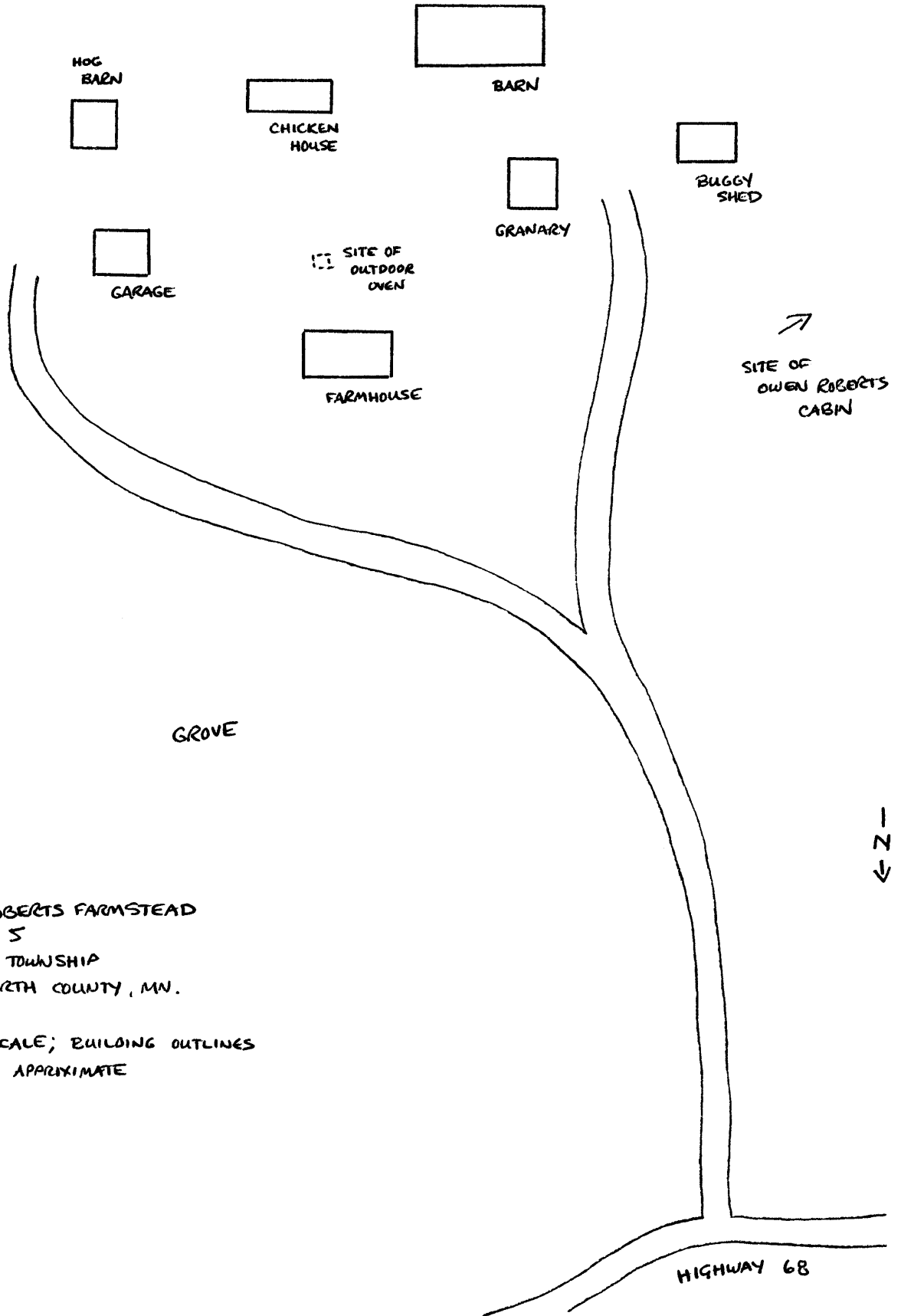
Blue Earth County, MN
Judson Twp.

Bibliography

Centenary History of the Jerusalem Presbyterian Church. Lake Crystal, Minnesota:
Privately published, 1958.

Hughes, Thomas E. and others, eds. A History of the Welsh in Minnesota, Foreston
and Lime Springs, Ia. (Mankato?): Privately published, 1895.

MAY 20 1980



JONES-ROBERTS FARMSTEAD
SECTION 5
JUDSON TOWNSHIP
BLUE EARTH COUNTY, MN.

NOT TO SCALE; BUILDING OUTLINES
ARE APPROXIMATE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

for Keeper Melvin Lynn
1/19/89

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

**Note: These changes apply to
Jones-Roberts Farmstead in Blue
Earth County, Minnesota.**

REFERENCE NUMBER: 80001949

STATE: MINNESOTA

COUNTY: Blue Earth

RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC):

CITY:

VICINITY OF: Lake Crystal

ADDRESS: Mn. Hwy. 68

CERTIFICATION DATE:

REMOVED DATE:

COMMENTS:

Nina M. Archabal

Nina M. Archabal
State Historic Preservation Officer

JUN 17 1988

Date