

Wisconsin Word Processing Format (Approved 1/92)

**United States Department of Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Gordon, Antoine and Sarah, House
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number	9717 County Road Y	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Town of Gordon	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Douglas	code 031
			zip code 54838

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)


Signature of certifying official/Title

4/25/2022
Date

State Historic Preservation Office - Wisconsin
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Gordon, Antoine and Sarah, House

Douglas County

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined eligible for the

National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined not eligible for the

National Register.

See continuation sheet

removed from the National

Register.

other, (explain:)

Lisa Deline

Signature of the Keeper

6/10/2022

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as
as apply)

private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

building(s)
 district
 structure
 site
 object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources
in the count)

contributing	noncontributing
1	0 buildings
0	0 sites
0	0 structures
0	0 objects
1	0 total

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources

previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

COMMERCE/department store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: vernacular

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation

walls Log

Wood Weatherboard

roof Metal

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Settlement

Ethnic Heritage: Native American

Period of Significance

1859-1888

Significant Dates

1859

1874

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Gordon, Antoine

Cultural Affiliation

Objiwe/Chippewa

Architect/Builder

Gordon, Antoine

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Gordon, Antoine and Sarah, House
Name of Property

Douglas County
County and State

Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

X State Historic Preservation Office

- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property Less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15N 592789 5121983
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Kelly Blaubach	date	8-11-20
organization	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Cultural Resource Management	telephone	414-229-3078
street & number	3413 N. Downer Avenue	zip code	53211
city or town	Milwaukee	state	WI

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Section 7 Page 1Gordon, Antoine and Sarah, House
Town of Gordon, Douglas County, WI

Narrative Description

Summary

The Antoine and Sarah Gordon House is located in the Town of Gordon, Douglas County, Wisconsin. Constructed in 1859, the original structure consisted of a front-gabled log cabin containing a single room and sleeping loft.¹ A side-gabled addition to the primary façade circa 1874 and garage addition to the rear in the 1950s give the house its current form. The house is split into three distinct sections, with the middle, 1.5-story front gabled part being the oldest portion of the whole, constructed in 1859 with squared logs and iron pegs. In circa 1874, a side-gabled building constructed of squared logs with wooden pegs was moved to the site from an unknown location and attached to the front façade of the 1859 building. A single-bay concrete block garage was added to the rear of the house in the 1950s. The house is clad in wood drop lap siding applied circa 1900. It features a metal roof, with a central gabled dormer and screened-in porch spanning the primary southern façade.

Site

The Town of Gordon is located in northwestern Wisconsin, in the southern part of Douglas County. This area of the state is largely rural, sparsely populated, and heavily wooded. Gordon is a rural township of 645 permanent residents as of the 2000 census, with the census-designated place of Gordon located within the township. It is the only concentrated community of any size in the township. The Gordon community is comprised of a post office, town hall, church, gas station, restaurant, local historical society, and several homes. Most of these buildings, including the nominated property, are clustered together along County Road Y between U.S. Highway 53 and the railroad tracks, a length of approximately 0.3 miles. This two-lane roadway serves as Gordon's main street. U.S. Highway 53, located just west of the community, connects the area with the cities of Superior to the north and Eau Claire to the south. A majority of the 645 residents live on rural properties outside of the Gordon proper.

The Antoine and Sarah Gordon House is located on the north side of on County Road Y. The Gordon Town Hall is located immediately west of the nominated property, and the Gordon Post Office is located immediately east. The St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church is located south of the property across County Road Y. A devout catholic, Antoine Gordon donated money and land for the construction of this church in 1890. The house sits slightly askew on a north-south axis, set back from

¹ Different twentieth century histories as well as family oral traditions identify a range of dates that Antoine Gordon settled in Gordon and built the nominated property. These dates range from 1853 to 1862. The year 1859 was chosen for this nomination because it is the earliest known contemporary record of Antoine Gordon's history, given in an interview with Antoine Gordon himself. Greater detail is provided in Section 8. *Stillwater Messenger*, August 10, 1889, p. 4, accessed February 6, 2020, https://newspapers.mnhs.org/jsp/viewer.jsp?collection_filter=All&doc_id=462c092d-c3f2-4d72-a116-d253ad0cdf05%2Fmnh0031%2F1HMB4Q58%2F89081001&vwrSrch=gordon&CurSearchNum=2&objRsltIdx=12&fitMode=1&scale=0.14&rotation=0&x=0&y=0&highlightColor=yellow&showThumbs=true.

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the northern edge of County Road Y by approximately 90 feet. The lot is long and narrow, and the front yard is enclosed by a white picket fence. A gravel driveway is located west of the yard and house. The fenced-in front yard is grassy, with several bushes and large trees along the eastern edge of the fence between the yard and the post office property. Shrubbery and low brush has grown close up to the east and west façades of the house. With the St. Croix River located one tenth of a mile east of the property, the water table below the house is extremely high. As a result, the house has no dug-out basement and was instead constructed atop tamarack logs, which serve as a water-and rot-resistant foundation.

Exterior

The Antoine and Sarah Gordon House consists of three sections: the front 1874 section, the middle 1859 section, and the rear c.1950 section. The oldest part of the house is the middle section constructed in 1859, originally of log construction, one-and-a-half stories, and front gabled. In 1874, the house was expanded; an existing house (original location unknown) was moved and added to the front of the subject house. This became the new primary façade and is what one sees today: side gabled, one-and-a-half stories, and with a full width screened porch and main entrance. At the back of the house, an attached one-story garage was built c.1950. This rear portion is of concrete block and the vehicle door opens to the side where the driveway is. Together, the three sections create a roughly "I" shape in plan view.

Primary (South) Façade (See photos #1-2)

The primary façade faces south and consists of the 1874 section of the house. It is side-gabled with a large screened-in porch and central gabled dormer. The porch is located beneath a shed roof, extending at a low slope from the steeper, side-gabled roofline. The lower walls of the enclosed porch are clad in wood clapboards, while the upper walls contain large, square screens between wooden posts. The screen-door entrance to the porch is located left-of-center in the façade, with two screened openings located left of the door and three openings to the right. Inside the porch enclosure, the front of the house is clad with drop lap siding. The front door is located left-of-center, parallel with the screen door to the porch. Two, 1-over-1 double-hung windows are asymmetrically placed on either side of the front door. A gabled dormer is centered in the roof above the porch and contains a six-over-one double-hung window. Vertical-slat shutters decorated with wood hearts and scalloped fascia boards were applied to the front portion of the house in the 1990s.

East (Side) Façade (See photos #3-4)

The east façade is composed of (moving front to rear) the side walls of the front 1874 section, the middle 1859 section and the rear c.1950 garage. The east side of the 1874 section has a four-over-four double-hung window in the gabled peak. Two one-over-one double-hung windows are evenly spaced on the first story, and all windows have plain wood surrounds. The gabled peak contains wood clapboards, while the first story is of drop lap siding. This side does not have the scalloped fascia

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boards present on the front of the house. The 1859 middle portion is recessed between the 1950 garage and 1874 section of the house. Once containing an enclosed porch and entryway, the porch has been removed, and the east-facing doorway has been sealed and the opening covered in plywood within the last 30 years. Drop lap siding covers the remainder of the center section. A two-over-two double-hung window in this section is possibly the only original 1859 window remaining on the house; the muntins between the panes of glass are flat and wide, suggesting they were milled on-site by hand at the time of construction, rather than factory-produced and shipped to the site. The plain wooden surround is similar to others throughout the rest of the house. The east wall of the concrete block garage has a single one-over-one double-hung window and a small cut-out filled with glass block near the southeast corner.

North (Rear) Façade (See photo #5)

The north façade consists of the gabled end of the 1950s concrete block garage. It contains a glazed and paneled entryway door left-of-center, with a 1-over-1 vinyl window between the doorway and the northeast corner of the building. A small two-paned window is located in the peak of the low-pitched gable.

West (Side) Façade (See photos #6-7)

The west façade of the house consists of the 1874 section to the front (south), the central 1859 section, and the rear 1950 garage. The west side of the 1874 section has a four-over-four double-hung window at the gabled peak, with two identical windows spaced symmetrically on the first floor below. All three windows feature plain wood surrounds, and the lower two windows are flanked by vertical-slat shutters decorated with hearts (matching those at the front of the house). The gabled peak and the eave of the shed-roofed porch contain wood clapboards, while the first story is clad in drop lap siding. A brick chimney is located at the northwestern corner of this 1874 section. The central portion is comprised of the front gabled 1859 section. This portion has a single, small six-pane wooden window with a simple surround similar to those on the front of the house. The rear portion consists of the 1950 garage, and contains a single-bay overhead garage door beneath the side gable of a low-slope, metal roof.

Interior

First Floor

The primary entrance on the south façade opens directly into the living room of the 1874 portion of the house. Floors are carpeted and have a slight rolling quality to them due to the unevenness of the tamarack log foundation below. Walls have been finished with plaster and covered in wallpaper with wooden beadboard cladding below. The eastern wall of the living room has two doors at the north and south ends, each leading to a small square bedroom beyond (one of these bedroom doors can be seen in photo #8). Once a single large bedroom, this half of the first floor was subdivided into two rooms in the 1920s. On the northern wall of the living room, a single doorway leads from the 1874 section into

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the 1859 original cabin. The wall between the two buildings is exceptionally thick, measuring approximately 15 inches wide (see photo #8-9). The first floor of the 1859 building consists of a combined kitchen and dining area, with narrow stairs leading to the second floor tucked into the southwest corner of the space (see photo #10). Walls are clad in painted vertical wooden boards, and a drop tile ceiling has been installed. An opening centered in the north (rear) wall leads to the 1950 garage section (see photo #11). Again, the walls between these two portions are thick, measuring approximately twelve inches. The doorway opens into a utility area containing laundry facilities, a bathroom, and a pantry. Another doorway beyond leads to the unfinished garage space.

Many of the finishes on the first floor interior date to the 1950s and 60s, including the installation of carpeting, wall paneling, trim, and hollow-core doors.

Second Floor (See photo #13)

The second floor contains two bedrooms, one in the 1874 section and one in the 1859 building. The stairs leading to the second floor are located in the southwestern corner of the kitchen and are exceedingly steep and narrow. The treads and risers have been carpeted, and the walls of the stairwell have been clad in natural pine tongue and groove paneling. The pine wall paneling has been continued throughout the entirety of the second floor. A small landing at the top of the stairs contains two doorways: one opening north and the other, south. The southern door leads to the bedroom in the 1874 section and the north door leads to the bedroom in the 1859 section. The ceiling is steeply pitched, with paneled knee walls under the eaves of both bedrooms.

The finishes of the second floor date to the 1990s, when the level was updated with new electrical wiring and insulation. This allowed for a viewing of the log style construction underneath, revealing evidence of fire damage. The walls were repaneled with natural pine and the floor was carpeted, and upstairs windows were replaced.

Integrity

The Antoine and Sarah Gordon House retains a moderate degree of integrity with respect to its location, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association. Material alterations have included the removal of a side entryway and porch on the western elevation and the replacement of almost all windows. However, most of the window openings on the 1859 and 1874 sections appear to be original. The house also retains an original two-over-two window on the western façade of the 1859 building that was likely milled on-site at the time of construction. The integrity of design has been diminished due to the addition of the central dormer and screened, shed-roof porch on the southern elevation during the 1920s. Of less consequence are the scalloped fascia boards and decorative shutters applied during the 1990s, as these additions can be easily removed. The drop lap siding applied to the house circa 1900 has been retained, as have the plain wooden window surrounds from the historic period. Even after they moved out of the nominated property, Antoine and Sarah Gordon lived next door until

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1907, well after the siding was installed in 1900. The house as it appears would be easily recognizable to them were they to see it today.

The integrity of feeling and association is particularly evident in the house's interior. Even though interior finishes have all been layered over or replaced, the building retains the low ceilings, rolling floors, narrow doorways, and simple wood trim which reflect its pioneer-era construction. In addition, the thick walls between the 1859 and 1874 sections represent how the two buildings were joined together to create a larger home. The steep and narrow staircase to the second floor is another important early construction detail and demonstrates the house's early construction date. Despite exterior alterations, interior details such as these make the association of the Antoine and Sarah Gordon House with Wisconsin's pioneer era abundantly clear. Moreover, the association of the property with métis culture in Wisconsin makes it an exceptionally rare resource, which compensates for some of the property's issues with integrity.

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Land Acknowledgement

This nomination recognizes the depth of human presence here, the ancestral homeland of American Indians for millennia, including the Menominee and Ho-Chunk tribes. From as early as the 17th century, inter-tribal conflict, Euro-American exploration and settlement, and ensuing military campaigns, all had the effect of repeated displacement of Indians of many tribal affiliations. This continuous tribal movement resulted in Wisconsin being home to many tribes who originated from other parts of the country, generating a pattern of immigration, relocation, and formation of a new homeland. Some of these tribes remain in Wisconsin; others may not, but numerous count Wisconsin as home: Brotherton, Dakota, Fox/Meskaki, Ho-Chunk, Kickapoo, Mascoutens, Menominee, Miami, Munsee, Odawa, Ojibwa, Oneida, Potawatomi, Stockbridge, Sauk, and Wyandot tribes. We acknowledge that the property that is the subject of this nomination is located on land long occupied by American Indians, and more recently by the Huron, Ottawa, and the Ojibwa tribes.

Statement of Significance Summary

The Antoine and Sarah Gordon House is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, having statewide significance under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage as an exceptionally rare home associated with Métis culture. The Gordon family was métis, a unique and identifiable cultural group that bridged relationships between American Indian tribes and early white explorers and settlers during Wisconsin's early settlement period. The Metis were critically important to the ability of European explorers to access the land at the interior of the state and in these explorers' ability to form and expand important fur trading enterprises and other trade networks. Metis families wielded powerful influence in social, political and economic development. The Gordons are furthermore associated with the transition of the Ojibwa/Chippewa and métis cultures following the end of the Fur Trade Era in northern Wisconsin. Due to the Gordon family's familial ties with the Chippewa tribes of northern Wisconsin and Minnesota, the area surrounding Gordon's home and trading post remained a largely native and métis settlement through the end of the nineteenth century. Following the arrival of the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Omaha Railroad in 1882, Antoine Gordon having an influential role in its arrival, and the official founding of the Town of Gordon in 1888, white settlers began to move into the area and establish homes and businesses. The period of significance for Criterion A is 1859, the year the Gordon's first permanently settled in the town, to 1888, the year their cabin was occupied for the first time by a non-métis family, the first permanent white settlers to arrive in Gordon.

The Antoine and Sarah Gordon House is also eligible for the National Register of Historic Places having local significance under Criterion B, in the area of Exploration and Settlement as the founders of Gordon. The Métis were an influential cultural group who affected settlement of Wisconsin, but buildings associated with the métis are rare today. This home has added significance as the home of the founders of the community. Originally founded as a métis settlement, Antoine Gordon was the founder of his community, developed businesses, influenced the arrival of the railroad, and was

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responsible for its growth and development. The early settlement and founding of the town of Gordon was inextricably linked to Antoine Gordon's activities and affiliations in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Not only is the subject property directly associated with the town's founder and his varied business and philanthropic interests that helped grow the community, but the continuing history of the plot of land where Antoine Gordon first established his home and trading post also represents the intersection of larger trends in northern Wisconsin's settlement. The evolution of his property in terms of its location, architecture, and ownership foreshadowed the close of the pioneer era in Gordon. The period of significance begins in 1859 when Antoine and Sarah Gordon settled permanently in the area and ends in 1888, when his son William Gordon moved to the reservation at Odanah and no one from the Gordon family lived in the subject house.

Background

Antoine Gordon

Antoine Gordon was born in Sandy Lake, Minnesota in 1812 to French voyageur Jean Baptiste Gaudin and Owanishan (Young Beaver), an Ojibwa woman and sister to a prominent chief of a band of Ojibwa in Minnesota, Bagone-giizhing (Hole in the Day). Spending his early life among the Ojibwe, Antoine eventually moved with the rest of his family to La Pointe on Lake Superior.² In 1843, he married Sarah Dingley, daughter of English fur trader Daniel Dingley and Musk-Ko-Dence, also known as Isabella La Prairie, a woman of St. Croix Ojibwe and French descent. Antoine and Sarah operated a general store at La Pointe from 1845-1855, during which time he also acquired an interest in the Lake Superior schooner, the *Algonquin*. He used the schooner to haul lumber he obtained from the mouth of the Bad River to market and achieved some financial success.³ During this period, Antoine anglicized his family name from Gaudin to Gordon. In 1855, the Gordons moved their growing family to St. Croix, near the mouth of the Snake River, and set up a trading post.⁴ They would remain here only a few years before moving to the present-day area of Gordon, then known by the Chippewa as Amik, or beaver. At Amik, the Gordons established a trading post and stagecoach stop along the line from Fort Snelling to Bayfield, supplying white travelers and local Chippewa, and later the local logging camps operating on the St. Croix and Eau Claire rivers. His activities in the community included funding the construction of an Indian mission and Catholic Church, as well as a school. When the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railroad came through Amik in 1882, the railway station was named for Antoine Gordon, as was the village when it was incorporated in 1888.⁵ Antoine Gordon was elected as the village's official postmaster as well as a town supervisor,

² Tadeusz Lewandowski, *Ojibwe, Activist, Priest: The Life of Father Philip Bergin Gordon, Tibishkogijik*, (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2019), pg. 13.

³ "The Algonquin," Lake Superior Tall Ships, accessed February 20, 2020, <https://www.lakesuperiortallships.org/algonquin>.

⁴ Lewandowski, *Ojibwe, Activist, Priest*, pgs. 16-17.

⁵ Seningen, *Mr. Gordon's Neighborhood*, pg. 73.

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while his son William Gordon was elected town constable.⁶ Gordon lived at the subject property until 1874, when he moved next door, his trading post. He lived there until his death in 1907.

Sarah Gordon

Sarah Dingley was born in 1827 in Burnett County to English fur trader Daniel Dingley and Musk-Ko-Dence, also known as Isabella La Prairie, a woman of St. Croix Ojibwe and French descent.⁷ In 1839, Isabella La Prairie identified herself and six of her children, including Sarah, as claimants in the "Half Breed Census" following the 1837 St. Peters Treaty with the Lake Superior Chippewa, in which \$100,000 was allocated for distribution to the "half breeds" of the bands participating in the treaty. Taken at La Pointe, Sarah Dingley was listed as 10 years old at the time of the census, and she and her five brothers and sisters were identified as having one-quarter native blood.⁸ Sarah Dingley married Antoine Gaudin in 1843 when she was about 16 and he was 31, and eventually moved with him to Amik to run the Bayfield Stagecoach hotel and trading post. Her mother Isabella La Prairie was documented by travelers on the Bayfield Stage in the 1860s as living in a wigwam in front of the Gordon house.⁹ In the 1900 Federal Census when she was roughly 70 years old, Sarah Gordon reported having had 10 children, four of whom were still living at the time.¹⁰ She is also mentioned in various histories as serving as midwife to family and neighbors in Gordon during her lifetime.¹¹ Further details of her life are sparse, though in a remote setting such as Amik, she would have been essential in the establishment and operation of the hotel and trading post. She died in 1911.

Like her husband, Sarah Gordon was métis, having an English father and a French and Chippewa mother. In her autobiography, Sarah Gordon's contemporary, Eliza Morrison, describes her life as a métis woman in neighboring Bayfield County during the late nineteenth century.¹² Like Gordon, Morrison strived alongside her métis husband to earn a living both farming and working for white settler families, raise her own family, and navigate the mix of Euro-American and Native connections that characterized métis life during this time period. While concrete details of Sarah Gordon's life are little known, her broad experiences may be inferred through rare accounts such as Morrison's.

⁶ Shirley Cathers, "History of the Town of Gordon," in *Wisconsin Centennial Histories of Douglas County*, unpublished, 2.

⁷ "Sarah Dingley Gordon," Find a Grave, accessed August 3, 2021, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/50547081/sarah-gordon>.

⁸ St. Peters 1839 Treaty – Halfbreed Census (Dingley Children), September 7, 1839, accessed through Ancestry.com, https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/12947583/person/12450407821/media/5aa9abab-7286-4895-bd4d-90e530c139a6?_phsrc=mcs28&_phstart=successSource.

⁹ "On the Stage," *Harper's Magazine*, Vol. 28, No. 165, February, 1864, 364.

¹⁰ United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1900. T623, 1854 rolls, accessed through Ancestry.com. *1900 United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004.

¹¹ "Back the road a bit," Vol. 1, Gordon-Wascott Historical Society, pg. 268.

¹² Eliza Morrison, *A Little History of My Forest Life*, ed. Victoria Brehm, Tustin, MI: Ladyslipper Press, 2002.

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Town of Gordon

Prior to the mid-nineteenth century, the area that would eventually become the unincorporated village of Gordon was located at the crossroads of an overland path known as the St. Croix Trail and the river transportation route of the Brule and St. Croix Rivers. The St. Croix Trail traveled directly through the future settlement, while the two-mile portage between the Brule and the St. Croix Rivers was located just northwest.¹³ By 1859, Antoine Gordon had built a cabin and trading post along the St. Croix Trail, which had been recently enlarged into a military road and stagecoach route between the newly established city of Bayfield and Fort Snelling, Minnesota. Gordon's post served travelers on the stagecoach and native inhabitants, as well as the logging camps of the Musser-Sauntry Logging Company, which owned much of the surrounding land. Although a railroad route had been surveyed through Gordon as early as 1856, the promised line did not materialize until 1882. Due to the remoteness of the area as well as the Gordon family's familial ties with the Chippewa tribes of northern Wisconsin and Minnesota, the area surrounding Gordon's home and trading post remained a largely native and métis settlement well into the 1880s. A census taken in 1878 identifies a population consisting of "mostly Indians," although boundaries for this census area are not given.¹⁴ White settlement in Gordon began to increase with the arrival of the railroad in 1882, and continued to accelerate after the Town of Gordon was officially founded in 1888. In addition to Antoine Gordon's trading post, by the turn of the century the settlement of Gordon contained two general merchandise stores, a school, town hall, a saloon, hotel, a Catholic Church, and several homes, all located along Gordon's main street. Antoine Gordon was himself responsible for the construction of the Catholic Church (extant), school (not extant), and hotel (not extant). Logging and milling were the primary economic drivers in the area. The Wisconsin State Census from 1905 identifies the majority of residents from the Town of Gordon as "White" and a minority as "Indian."¹⁵ However, until the 1910s and possibly later, an open area at the eastern end of the village near the Eau Claire River—known as "The Green"—sometimes contained the wigwams of the local Chippewa's seasonal camps.¹⁶ It is important to note that the census did not recognize the label or identity of métis or "half-blood" peoples; respondents were classified as "White" or "Indian," and therefore the census count may not capture the cultural nuances that likely characterized Gordon's population throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

¹³ Leigh P. Jerrard, *Brule-St. Croix portage*, 1943, 23 X 26 cm, ca. 1:14,500 scale, Wisconsin Historical Society, <http://cdm15932.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/maps/id/5509>.

¹⁴ Cathers, pg. 1.

¹⁵ State of Wisconsin, *Wisconsin, U.S., State Censuses, 1855-1905* [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2007), 1905.

¹⁶ Ron Seningen, *Mr. Gordon's Neighborhood: An Illustrated Timeline, Before During and After the Days of Antoine Gordon*, (printed privately, Ron Seningen, 2010), pgs. 78, 89.

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Although industrial lumbering was on the decline by the late nineteenth century as natural resources became exhausted, by the early twentieth century Gordon and the surrounding area could also boast of being a popular resort area for summer tourists.¹⁷ Seeking a respite from crowded urban areas, many wealthy sportsmen and their families from places like Chicago, Milwaukee, and Minnesota's Twin Cities began traveling to Wisconsin's North Woods for extended summer vacations amid natural settings and rustic accommodations. Prior to World War I, recreational travel and vacationing in Wisconsin's North Woods was costly, relying on rail links from cities and circuitous overland routes to reach remote recreational retreats.¹⁸ The construction of a second railroad through the Gordon area, the Wisconsin Central in 1906, later known as the Soo Line, made the town even more accessible to tourism by providing a direct line to southern areas of the state.¹⁹ The growing popularity of the automobile and the improvement of the roads eventually made travel for leisure more accessible and widespread, and areas like Gordon were, and still are, a popular location for summer cabins and resorts. A major fire in 1913 destroyed many of the town's buildings, although the Gordon House and Catholic Church across the street survived, albeit with some fire damage. The village of Gordon north of County Road Y was subdivided and mapped in 1917.²⁰

The 1930s saw additional efforts to promote the Gordon area as a tourist haven.²¹ In 1937, Lake Gordon was created through the construction of a dam on the St. Croix River. Built with funds and workers from the WPA, the 10-mile long lake was heavily stocked with fish, and its completion was heralded as a boon for future recreational business in the north woods area.²² Besides recreation-based business, Camp Gordon was established southeast of the village in 1932 as an adult male penitentiary intended to relieve overcrowding at the Wisconsin State Prison complex in Waupun. Camp Gordon began as a forestry camp, where inmates worked in the forest and on-site tree nursery, improving the natural surroundings for benefit of the growing tourist industry. In 1962 it became the Gordon Correctional Center, part of Wisconsin's Correctional Center System.²³ Currently, much of Gordon's local economy is driven by the promotion of tourism and the provision of recreational services. The

¹⁷ Seningen, pg. 94.

¹⁸ Aaron Shapiro, "Up North on Vacation: Tourism and Resorts in Wisconsin's North Woods, 1900-1945," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol. 89, no. 4 (Summer 2006), <http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/wmh/id/43445/show/43399/rec/43>.

¹⁹ Cathers, "History of the Town of Gordon," pg. 3.

²⁰ D.W. Van Vleck, *Townsite of Gordon Subdivision of SW1/4, SW1/4 of Section 31, T44N, R11W*, Certified Survey Map, 1917, City of Superior, WI.

²¹ John Bardon, "First Homecoming," *Gordon, WI* Sept. 3, 1934, pg. 4

²² "Lakes Dedicated," *Rhineland New North*, July 29, 1937

²³ "Gordon Correctional Center," State of Wisconsin Department of Corrections, accessed August 6, 2020, <https://doc.wi.gov/Pages/OffenderInformation/AdultInstitutions/GordonCorrectionalCenter.aspx>.

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village is surrounded by designated state and county forest lands in addition to Lake Gordon, and the area is promoted as a year-round vacationer's paradise.²⁴

Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage

The period of significance for Criterion A is 1859, the year the Gordon's first permanently settled in the town, to 1888, the year their cabin was occupied for the first time by a non-métis family, the first permanent white settlers to arrive in Gordon.

Meaning "mixed race," the label of métis indicated a unique culture in the Great Lakes region that developed during the Fur Trade Era, one that declined following American settlement and the introduction of the Reservation System.²⁵ The result of unions between French and English traders and native women, métis people belonged to both worlds, culturally and linguistically. They were able to serve as intermediaries between European traders and the trade networks available to them through their native relations. Settlements of métis families and the societies they created were often found at the confluences of major waterways and inland trade routes, such as La Baye (Green Bay), Prairie du Chien, and La Pointe. Following the end of roughly two centuries of fur trading in the upper Great Lakes region, American settlements displaced métis society and culture in Wisconsin during the mid-nineteenth century, and the métis either blended into white society or withdrew to reservations with their native families.

Wisconsin Natives, Métis, and the End of the Fur Trade

In the early 1600s, many native tribes in the new colonies were migrating westward as conflicts with the dominant Iroquois intensified in the east. These groups included the Sauk, Fox, Potawatomi, Mascouten, Kickapoo, Ottawa, Miami, Huron, Petun, and neutral Iroquois. As the powerful Sioux nations blocked their continued migration across the Mississippi River, Wisconsin became an end-point and new home for many of these groups. Competition for resources between new arrivals and the already-established Menominee, Ho-Chunk, and Ojibwe led to both war and disease, transforming the traditional lives of all of these tribes.²⁶ In northern Wisconsin, Huron and Ottawa tribes were dislodged from the St. Croix and Upper Mississippi River valleys by Eastern Sioux, eventually moving north to

²⁴ "Douglas County Communities: Gordon," Travel Superior, accessed August 3, 2020, <https://www.superiorchamber.org/douglas-county-communities>.

²⁵ Victoria Brehm, "Introduction," in *A Little History of My Forest Life*, by Eliza Morrison, ed. Victoria Brehm (Tustin, MI: Ladyslipper Press, 2002), 19. While anyone of mixed Native and European ancestry can now be considered métis, it is important to note that "Métis" refers to a distinct group of Canadian mixed-race people who founded their own colony at Red River in present-day Winnipeg and are legally considered a separate group of indigenous people by the Canadian government.

²⁶ "Iroquois Wars of the 17th Century," Turning Points in Wisconsin History, Wisconsin Historical Society, accessed 8-4-2021, https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/turningpoints/tp-005/?action=more_essay.

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Chequamegon Bay and Lake Huron. A loosely confederated group of Ojibwe moved west into the area in the 1660s, building a large village on Madeline Island.²⁷ Tribes like the Ojibwe served as key players in the trade of furs and other goods between the French traders and the tribes of the interior. The British Northwest Fur Company took control of much of the fur trade after the end of the French and Indian War in 1763, and Wisconsin's native tribes continued to adapt to the changing conditions around them while still largely maintaining their cultural lifeways and traditions.²⁸

Key to the success of native tribes in the fur trade of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Wisconsin was the establishment of a class of mixed-ancestry traders called "métis," who served as intermediaries between French and British agents and the tribes and clans that trapped the valuable furs.²⁹ European traders often intermarried with Native women in order to gain access to her tribe's trapping and trade networks. The offspring of these unions belonged to both cultures, and were often bi-lingual, well-connected socially, and able to navigate the worlds of the European traders as well as Native tribes. The métis population continued to grow through their intermarriage with other American Indians, incoming Europeans, and other métis. This group eventually constructed a distinct identity that was neither native nor European, whose place in society was wholly dependent upon their monopolization of the role of "middlemen" within the fur trade system.³⁰ Those who could claim métis heritage also served an important role in native and white American relations, often serving as translators during later treaty and annuity negotiations.³¹

In Wisconsin, enclaves of métis families and the societies they created were often found at the confluences of major waterways and inland trade routes. The Grignon and Lawe clans of Green Bay and Kaukauna, the Michel Cadotte family of LaPointe, and the Rolette and Brisbois families of Prairie du Chien were among the most well-known métis families in their respective communities.³² Though they were generally misunderstood and maligned by the Euro-American settlers that eventually supplanted them, these communities nonetheless created a unique culture that blended European and native customs. This culture was specially adapted to the era of fur trade and pre-settlement, and their

²⁷ "Who We Are: A History of the St. Croix People," St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin, <https://stcroixojibwe-nsn.gov/culture/who-we-are/>; "Historic Indians," Cultural Resource Management Plan, Vol. 1, 1-4—1-5.

²⁸ "Fur Trade," CMRP, 3—2.

²⁹ Victoria Brehm, "Introduction," in *A Little History of My Forest Life*, by Eliza Morrison, ed. Victoria Brehm (Tustin, MI: Ladyslipper Press, 2002), 19.

³⁰ Jacqueline Peterson, "Prelude to Red River: A Social Portrait of the Great Lakes Métis," in *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Winter 1978), 184.

³¹ Peterson, "Prelude to Red River," 259.

³² Lucy Eldersveld Murphy, *Gathering of Rivers: Indians, Metis and Mining in the Western Great Lakes, 1737-1832*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 52.

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success both financially and socially led to a “golden age” for these métis communities, which came to a close around the middle of the nineteenth century.³³

The fur trade system that had sustained métis communities in Wisconsin for two centuries ended in 1850 due to native land cessions, dwindling supplies of beaver, and the removal of the state’s native tribes to reservations and west of the Mississippi River.³⁴ After the Black Hawk War in 1832, white American settlement in the Wisconsin territory began in earnest, and the settlers were not interested in the existing trade networks that métis communities cultivated; rather, they wanted land, to which the métis class and their native cousins held no legal title, from the perspective of white settlers and the American government.³⁵ The economic role of the métis disappeared, and racial bigotry prevented white settlers from seeing them as anything other than “half-breeds.” Forced to choose between assimilating into either white or native society, the distinct culture of Wisconsin’s major métis settlements at Green Bay, La Pointe, and Prairie du Chien all but disappeared by the mid-nineteenth century. American Indians were encouraged to move to reservations, and métis traders were expected to move to reservations as well or else find work and assimilate within the urban Yankee economy that was developing around them. Leading métis families such as the Grignons in Kaukauna attempted to adapt to new ways, participating and investing in new enterprises and becoming involved in local politics.³⁶ The family names and descendants of these families exist today; however, the métis communities they helped to establish are no more.

Lake Superior Chippewa

“Chippewa” is the federally recognized label for the tribe in the United States, while members of the tribe currently use the word “Anishinabe,” meaning “original people,” or “Ojibwe” to describe themselves.³⁷ Within this nomination, “Ojibwe” will be used prior to 1836, and “Chippewa” will be used after 1836. This is the year that Wisconsin became a territory. In the years following, the government recognized and negotiated with Wisconsin’s bands of Native Americans, usually using anglicized tribal names to do so. “Chippewa” is therefore the most commonly found label in the federal documents and historic resources that were consulted, and may be the most widely understood term for the purposes of this nomination. However, it is important note that this is not necessarily the label that the modern Ojibwe would use to identify themselves.

³³ Kerry A. Trask, “Settlement in a Half-Savage Land: Life and Loss in the Metis Community of La Baye,” *Michigan Historical Review*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Spring 1989), 2.

³⁴ “Fur Trade: American Fur Control,” CRMP, 4—2.

³⁵ “Settlement,” CRMP, 1—1.

³⁶ Virginia Glenn Crane, “History and Family Values, a Good Wife’s Tale: Mary Elizabeth Meade Grignon of Kaukauna, 1837-1898,” *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol. 80, No. 3 (Spring, 1997), 192.

³⁷ “Who We Are: A History of the St. Croix People,” St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin, <https://stcroixojibwe-nsn.gov/culture/who-we-are>.

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In the 1660s, a loosely confederated group of Ojibwe moved west from the eastern Great Lakes into northern Wisconsin, building a large village on Madeline Island while the French, the Ojibwe's partners in the fur trade, built a fort and trading post on the island at La Pointe in 1693.³⁸ The Ojibwe served as key players in the fur trade between the French traders and the tribes of the interior, and La Pointe could potentially hold as many as 2000 Ojibwe in residence at least part of the year during the mid-1700s.³⁹ As the fur trade declined through the first decades of the nineteenth century and white settlement began to increase, the lives and lifeways of the Ojibwe became endangered. The years between 1837 and 1854 are described as a period of great sorrow for the Chippewa and métis people in northern Wisconsin. In both 1837 and 1842, the Chippewa entered into treaties with the United States government which would eventually cede all of their lands, opening them for white settlement.⁴⁰ In the White Pine Treaty of 1837, most Chippewa signatories believed they were only relinquishing partial and temporary timber and mineral rights to their lands in exchange for annuity payments, and would still be allowed to hunt, fish, and gather on ceded lands provided they caused no trouble.⁴¹ However, in 1850 the federal government issued a removal order for the Lake Superior Chippewa, which the Chippewa disputed, arguing that they had very good relations with their white neighbors and should not have to move. In an effort to force removal, the annuity distribution location was shifted from the traditional La Pointe to Sandy Lake, Minnesota, a distance of 300 miles from where the Lake Superior Chippewa resided. Distribution was deliberately timed in the fall to interfere with harvesting and preparations for winter. When the Chippewa arrived, the annuity payments were delayed, and no accommodations or food was provided. Hundreds died of disease and starvation in Sandy Lake during the winter, and many more died on the hard trip back to Wisconsin and La Pointe. This became known as the Sandy Lake Tragedy.⁴² Following a delegation of the Lake Superior Chippewa to Washington D.C. to air their grievances, the removal order was suspended by President Fillmore.

In 1854, the same year that Douglas County was formed, the bands of the Lake Superior Chippewa signed the Treaty of La Pointe. This created a series of Chippewa reservations in northern Wisconsin, including Red Cliff, Bad River, Lac du Flambeau, and Lac Court Orielles. Two bands of Lake Superior Chippewa were not represented in these treaty negotiations, including the St. Croix Chippewa and the Mole Lake Chippewa.⁴³ Various possible reasons are given for the omission, including the death of the St. Croix chief just before negotiations, or the inclusion of the St. Croix band with the Lac

³⁸ "Who We Are: A History of the St. Croix People," St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin, <https://stcroixojibwe-insn.gov/culture/who-we-are/>; "Historic Indians," Cultural Resource Management Plan, Vol. 1, 1-4—1-5.

³⁹ "Chippewa/Ojibwa," CMRP, 2—1.

⁴⁰ "Chippewa/Ojibwe," CRMP, 2—5

⁴¹ Seningen, *Mr. Gordon's Neighborhood*, 39.

⁴² Seningen, *Mr. Gordon's Neighborhood*, 45.

⁴³ "Chippewa/Ojibwe," CRMP, 2—6.

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Court Orielles band as a single signatory. Regardless of the reason, the St. Croix band of Chippewa ceased to exist as a separate entity in the eyes of the federal government following the 1854 treaty negotiations, and they would not receive recognition or reservation lands until 80 years later in 1934. They became known as the "lost tribe" of the St. Croix Chippewa, and survived by squatting on various scattered parcels of land throughout the St. Croix River valley.⁴⁴

During the mid-nineteenth century, the population of major métis trading cities like La Pointe began to dwindle due to the decline of the fur trade and the rise of the reservation system. Many Chippewa remained semi-nomadic, only residing at La Pointe for a portion of the year. Economic opportunities were also drawing natives and métis away permanently, to the logging camps and the copper and iron mines being established in northern Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. The founding of new cities following the beginning of white American settlement, including Superior (1853), Duluth (1854), Bayfield (1856), and Ashland (1887), continued to draw people and businesses from La Pointe. By the 1870s, the once bustling métis settlement was described as practically a ghost town, which would not see its population increase until Northwoods tourism took off around the turn of the nineteenth century.⁴⁵

Following white settlement, the future of Wisconsin's métis communities was filled with challenges. With the loss of their important role in the fur trade and increasing bigotry by whites toward native lifeways, many métis people were forced to choose between attempting acculturation into white society or life on a reservation. Eliza Morrison's autobiography of her life as a métis woman of European and Chippewa ancestry demonstrates the reality of belonging to two cultures at once. Her experiences during the mid-to-late nineteenth century living first in La Pointe, then on a farm in Bayfield County, and later the Bad River Indian Reservation at Odanah are an example of larger trends for regional métis. The Morrison family, though capable of earning a living through white methods of farming, working for wages for the government, tourists, or lumber companies, still chose to move to a reservation in the late nineteenth century. Morrison's autobiography describes the shrinking cultural space allowed for a métis existence. The blend of languages and lifeways that characterized métis culture all but disappeared, through assimilation or removal, as white settlement increased in northern Wisconsin.⁴⁶

The Gordons and Métis Culture

Antoine and Sarah Gordon both witnessed and participated in the evolution of Lake Superior Chippewa culture in Wisconsin during the mid-nineteenth century. Although the Gordons operated a

⁴⁴ "Who We Are: A History of the St. Croix People," St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin, <https://stcroixojibwe-nsn.gov/culture/who-we-are>.; Seningen, *Mr. Gordon's Neighborhood*, 54.

⁴⁵ Brehm, "Introduction," in *A Little History of My Forest Life*, 32.

⁴⁶ Brehm, "Introduction," in *A Little History of My Forest Life*, 41.

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store in La Pointe until 1855, Antoine's other business interests, such as partial ownership of the *Algonquin*, suggest that supporting a growing family from the proceeds of a single enterprise was a challenge in the environment of that fading settlement. They left La Pointe in 1855, establishing a trading post at the mouth of the Snake River, near to the inland enclaves of St. Croix Chippewa that remained in northern Wisconsin. They settled in Amik in the 1850s, establishing a trading post that served local natives as well as white travelers on the Bayfield-Fort Snelling stagecoach by 1859. A common anecdote about Antoine Gordon involves his journey 100 miles southwest in 1862 to Minnesota, to successfully counsel his first cousin Chief Hole-in-the-Day the Younger (a nephew of his Chippewa mother) against joining with the Sioux in the Mankato Uprising against the government. The failed Sioux uprising would end tragically with the largest mass execution in United States history.⁴⁷ The actual extent of Antoine Gordon's influence on his cousin in this matter is unknown, but the incident serves to illustrate the Gordon's continuing involvement in local and regional Chippewa matters during their time in Amik. He is also described by his grandson, noted Chippewa priest Father Philip B. Gordon, as giving shelter and counsel to area natives and acting as mediator for them.⁴⁸

Prior to the founding of the Town of Gordon in 1888 and the arrival of the first white family that same year, Amik was inhabited solely by métis families like the Gordons in addition to full-blooded Chippewa. A census taken in 1878 identifies a population consisting of "mostly Indians," although boundaries for this census area are not given.⁴⁹ While white settlement increased after the Town of Gordon was founded in 1888, until the 1910s and possibly later, an open area at the eastern end of the village near the Eau Claire River—known as "The Green"—sometimes contained the wigwams of the local Chippewa's seasonal camps.⁵⁰ These were very likely members of the "lost band" of St. Croix Chippewa, who had not been given a permanent reservation in northern Wisconsin during the 1854 treaty negotiations. Census records may provide some insight into the ethnic make-up of Gordon near the end of the nineteenth century, but it is important to note that the census did not recognize the label or identity of métis or "half-blood" peoples; respondents were classified as "White" or "Indian." An accurate picture of the white and native population therefore depended upon the judgement of the census taker and the desire of the respondent to be labeled as either white or native. Census counts may not capture the cultural nuances that likely characterized Gordon's population throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Antoine and Sarah Gordon belonged to the métis culture that their contemporary Eliza Morrison describes as shrinking, and their experiences represent the evolution of native and métis lifeways following the end of the fur trade in Wisconsin. Gordon's socio-economic success relative to other

⁴⁷ Paula Delfeld, *The Indian Priest: Father Philip B. Gordon, 1885-1948*, (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977), 21.

⁴⁸ Delfeld, *The Indian Priest*, 16.

⁴⁹ Cathers, "History of the Town of Gordon," 1; "Back the road a bit," Vol. 1, Gordon-Wascott Historical Society, p 268.

⁵⁰ Seningen, *Mr. Gordon's Neighborhood*, 78.

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métis was due to his ability to anticipate and take advantage of regional developments at both the beginning and during the course of white development of northern Wisconsin. The Gordons established a trading post at the crossroads of the Fort Snelling-Bayfield stagecoach line and the future Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Omaha Railroad, and were well-positioned during the late 19th century to serve as a supply post for the local Musser-Sauntry Logging Company when they began operations in the 1870s. Antoine Gordon further diversified his business interests by buying a hotel south of County Road Y (not extant) and establishing a farm and commercial trout fishery northeast of town. An Indian mission and Catholic Church was constructed in 1890 across the road from Gordon's house, with money he donated and on land that he provided. He also built a school just west of the church (not extant).⁵¹ His business and philanthropic activities in Gordon demonstrate his ability as a member of the métis community to straddle white and native lifeways, and highlight the strong influence he held in the very establishment and growth of the community.

In addition, Antoine and Sarah Gordon's son William married a full-blooded Chippewa named Ategekwe (Gambling Woman, also known as Sarah Mekins) and had a large family.⁵² The couple took over the Gordon house in 1874 when Antoine and Sarah moved into their trading post next door (not extant). William Gordon would later be elected as constable for the Town of Gordon when it was established in 1888 but would move to Odanah and the Bad River Indian Reservation shortly thereafter. The side-gabled southern portion of the current Gordon house was likely moved and attached to the original log cabin circa 1874, to accommodate William Gordon's growing family. One of William and Ategekwe's sons born in the house was Philip Gordon, who would become the famous "Indian Priest" later in life.⁵³

The first white family to permanently settle in Gordon, the James C. Smith family, arrived in 1888.⁵⁴ By this time, William and Ategekwe Gordon had relocated from the family house in Gordon to the reservation at Odanah. The Smith family spent their first winter in the Gordon house, while Antoine and Sarah Gordon remained at their trading post next door. The fact that the house was technically on land owned by the Musser Sauntry Logging Company makes it unclear whether Antoine and Sarah Gordon rented the house to the Smith family, unofficially "sold" the property to them, or simply allowed the newly arrived white family to stay in the currently empty building. It is reported, however, that Sarah Gordon assisted Aggie Smith, wife of James, when she gave birth to a son Grover in the

⁵¹ Delfield, *The Indian Priest*, 16; "St. Anthony of Padua: Parish History-Overview," Diocese of Superior, Wisconsin, accessed August 3, 2021, <https://catholicdos.org/st-anthony-of-padua-gordon-history>.

⁵² Lewandowski, *Ojibwe, Activist, Priest*, 20. Gordon family oral history puts the number of William and Ategekwe's children at a total of seven; census records from the late 19th century are unclear.

⁵³ Lewandowski, *Ojibwe, Activist, Priest*, 20.

⁵⁴ James C. Smith is identified as white in both the 1905 Wisconsin State census and the 1910 federal census.

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cabin during the winter of 1888.⁵⁵ Sarah Gordon is often credited with serving as midwife for her family and neighbors, both before and after white settlement began. Although the Gordons remained in town and Antoine Gordon continued to pursue his business and philanthropic interests as a member of the métis community even after white settlement of the village increased, there are no official records that indicate whether later inhabitants of the subject house, prior to its official sale to a white towns person in 1901, were of white or métis heritage. It is likely, however, that subsequent inhabitants during the late nineteenth century were indeed métis, given the Gordons' long-time association with the house and the fact that they continued to live next door until 1907, as well as the sizable presence of métis and native people in the town through the end of the century.

After 1901, the property changed hands several times, as indicated by legal property deeds. Owners were generally long-time residents of the town, but affiliations with the Gordon family have generally been difficult to verify. Subsequent occupants included the Kenneth W. McLaggan family from 1903 to 1919, although they may have rented the property after they completed construction of a large Queen Anne house that formerly stood east of the property. James and Anna Knox, whose daughter married Joseph Gordon, grandson of Antoine Gordon, owned the house from 1919 to 1924.⁵⁶ They sold the property to Roy Lawler in 1924 for a single dollar. Roy Lawler and his wife Ethel sold to Stanley and Lona Nelson in 1944.⁵⁷ In "First Homecoming," an essay written by historian John Bardon in 1934, both the Lawler and the Nelson families are described as among the "fine sturdy class of Iowa farmers" that arrived in Gordon "in later years." In 1989, Lona Nelson sold the property to Doug MacDonald, great-great-grandson of Antoine Gordon. In this way, the subject property came back into the ownership of the Gordon family.

Criterion B: Settlement

The period of significance begins in 1859 when Antoine and Sarah Gordon settled permanently in the area and ends in 1888, when his son William Gordon moved to the reservation at Odanah and no one from the Gordon family lived in the subject house.

Prior to Antoine Gordon's settlement and development of the area, Amik was a heavily wooded wilderness. Douglas County, formed in 1854, was still sparsely populated. The official census in 1860 lists the population as 802, with most of those counted likely living in the recently founded city of Superior.⁵⁸ The census probably did not include the local Chippewa tribes that continued to migrate seasonally through the area, including the "Lost Tribe" of the St. Croix Chippewa.

⁵⁵ "Back the road a bit," Vol. 1, Gordon-Wascott Historical Society, p 268.

⁵⁶ Doug MacDonald, interview with author, July 2, 2020.

⁵⁷ John Bardon, "First Homecoming," Gordon, WI Sept. 3, 1934, pg. 4

⁵⁸ "Douglas County, Wisconsin," Wikipedia, accessed April 1, 2020,

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The site on which Antoine Gordon built his log cabin in 1859 was strategically located to take advantage of existing and future transportation routes in northern Wisconsin. His cabin was located along the St. Croix Trail, an ancient overland trail long used by natives that ran from the Fort Snelling area in St. Paul to La Pointe. This “Grand Footpath” was an alternative to the Brule-St. Croix Rivers route, which required a two-mile portage between the two rivers just northwest of Amik.⁵⁹ During his mapping expedition of the area for the U.S. government in 1837, Joseph Nicollet noted that the overland trail was actually two days faster than the Brule-St. Croix route, because the rivers contained treacherous rapids in addition to the portage.⁶⁰ Indian trails provided some of the earliest overland travel routes during the first decades Wisconsin’s settlement era. Early settlers widened many of the trails and improved them in order to accommodate carts and wagons.⁶¹ The St. Croix Trail passed directly in front of the Gordon cabin, traveling in a northeast-southwest direction, and like other Indian trails in the state, it would be widened and improved during the first years of white settlement in the region to allow the Fort Snelling-Bayfield Stagecoach line to make its weekly journey through the wilderness. While the trail itself is no longer visible, the cabin is still oriented along the original trail path, slightly askew to the east-west CTH Y.

Antoine and Sarah Gordon’s permanent move to the area coincided with—and was likely influenced by—developments and speculative ventures elsewhere in the state.⁶² In 1856, Henry Mower Rice, a businessman and future senator from Minnesota, had helped to establish the city of Bayfield on Lake Superior. In an effort to connect his new city to the wider world, he funded the improvement of the St. Croix Trail into a military road for his stage line. The stagecoach was in operation by 1859, and Antoine Gordon’s cabin—though not owned directly by Rice—was one of the stops. It was one of the only places on the route where overnight shelter was offered, suggesting that Gordon’s cabin served as home, trading post, and hotel during the earliest years of the stage’s operation, or that he had already constructed multiple buildings to serve these uses.⁶³ In 1862, Henry Rice bought land south of the

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_County,_Wisconsin.

⁵⁹ Leigh P. Jerrard, *Brule-St. Croix portage*, 1943, 23 X 26 cm, ca. 1:14,500 scale, Wisconsin Historical Society, <http://cdm15932.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/maps/id/5509>.

⁶⁰ Seningen, *Mr. Gordon’s Neighborhood*, 41.

⁶¹ “Early Road Networks,” CRMP, 7—1.

⁶² Different twentieth century histories as well as family oral traditions identify a range of dates that Antoine Gordon settled in Gordon and built the subject property. These dates range from 1853 to 1862. The year 1859 was chosen for this nomination because it is the earliest known contemporary record of Antoine Gordon’s history, given in an interview with Antoine Gordon himself. *Stillwater Messenger*, August 10, 1889, p. 4, accessed February 6, 2020, https://newspapers.mnhs.org/jsp/viewer.jsp?collection_filter=All&doc_id=462c092d-c3f2-4d72-a116-d253ad0cdf05%2Fmnh0031%2F1HMB4Q58%2F89081001&vwrsrch=gordon&CurSearchNum=2&objRsltIdx=12&fitMode=1&scale=0.14&rotation=0&x=0&y=0&highlightColor=yellow&showThumbs=true.

⁶³ W.P. Bigboy, “Military, or St. Paul Road,” in “Early Trails and Water Routes,” and Joseph Bell, “Early Experience,” Chequamegon History database, ed. Amarin Mello, <https://chequamegonhistory.wordpress.com/2016/08/03/early-trails->

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subject property to construct a dedicated hotel in Amik for use by the stage line, and the Gordons operated this hotel for Rice in addition to their trading post to the north. The stage line between Bayfield and St. Paul ended in the early 1870s, when the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Omaha Railroad was constructed to Bayfield, passing through Washburn County just south of Douglas County and Amik.⁶⁴

Antoine Gordon also located his property along the proposed route of a potential railroad. Plans for building a railroad all the way through northern Wisconsin to the city of Superior began as soon as the city was founded in 1853 but were slow to be realized. However, a survey of the anticipated route, which cut straight through Amik, had been conducted by 1856, and the odd-numbered sections of land surrounding the trajectory of the anticipated railroad would be withheld from sale for the next 25 years.⁶⁵ This practice was not uncommon, as generous land grants from the federal and state government attempted to spur the construction of railroads in northern Wisconsin during the early years of settlement.⁶⁶ Many communities in the state owed their existence to the coming of a railroad, and Antoine Gordon, who presumably knew the general trajectory of the intended railroad (although he probably did not anticipate having to wait so long for its construction), constructed his house in Amik in order to take advantage of the crossroads of present and future transportation routes. Even though Section 31 of Township 44 was not available for sale, Section 6 of Township 43, located south just across County Road Y from the Gordon post, was available for sale.⁶⁷ Much of this area in Section 6 was purchased by Henry Rice, who likely also hoped to profit from the future railroad, and this is where Rice built his stage hotel in 1862. Antoine Gordon, meanwhile, established his first home and trading post on the unentered land immediately north. Whether Gordon was aware that the land he settled upon was being withheld from sale is unclear or perhaps he didn't recognize the restraints on the land placed by others, but according to these available records, he never legally owned the land where the nominated house was constructed and remains standing.

and-water-routes/; "On the Stage," *Harper's Magazine*, Vol. 28, No. 165, February, 1864, 364.

⁶⁴ This line was later extended north through Gordon in 1882.

⁶⁵ Wisconsin Railroad Commissioners' Department, "Statement of Land Grants in Aid of Wisconsin Railways," *Annual Report of the Railroad Commissioners of the State of Wisconsin, Part 1*, 1874, accessed February 20, 2020, <https://books.google.com/books?id=wN5GAAAAMAAJ&pg=RA1-PA227&lpg=RA1-PA227&dq=St.+Croix+to+Bayfield+Railroad+land+patents&source=bl&ots=7lpneZ0QMw&sig=ACfU3U1fs3hbm2OKfosPQL-gRRjpJYOVgg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwicmPG14qvnAhUWLS0KHW0WC1gQ6AEwCXoECAgQAQ#v=onepage&q=St.%20Croix%20to%20Bayfield%20Railroad%20land%20patents&f=false>.

⁶⁶ "Late Rail Lines," CRMP, 6—2.

⁶⁷ County Road Y serves as the boundary between Townships 43 and 44, although the current Village of Gordon straddles this line.

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Following the close of the stagecoach line in the 1870s, Henry Rice sold most of his property in the area. Antoine Gordon bought some of the property in Section 6 south of County Road Y from Rice and would eventually construct a Catholic Church and school in the village in addition to buying and improving Rice's stagecoach hotel. When the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Omaha Railroad was finally extended north through Gordon on its way to Superior in 1882, railroad agents negotiated with Gordon for the purchase of right-of-way through his land on Section 6.⁶⁸ Meanwhile, the railroad sold the land in Section 31, on which the subject property sits, to the Musser-Sauntry Logging Company in 1891 after railroad construction was completed and the railroad company divested itself of excess land.⁶⁹

The log cabin that Antoine Gordon built on the subject property is an example of the evolution of a form and construction method that was common to Wisconsin's settlement era. Construction with hewn timbers or rounded logs began as a folk building tradition in the Midland States during the early colonization period.⁷⁰ Like other types of folk housing, these pre-railroad structures were constructed with locally available resources and generally lacked any type of architectural embellishment. Built in the wilderness with little access to the materials available in cities, log cabins were often constructed by first-generation settlers to serve the immediate and urgent need for shelter. These buildings were sometimes intended to be impermanent, with unfinished interiors and fewer rooms. Early dwellings would be expanded or upgraded as resources allowed and were sometimes replaced altogether as a settler found success in his venture.⁷¹ In Wisconsin, log cabin construction began as soon as permanent settlement began and would continue in remote areas well into the late nineteenth century. Although immigrants from many different countries adapted log cabin construction for their own use, available regional resources and materials were more important in determining the appearance of log cabins during the pioneer era. Following the arrival of the railroad, construction methods changed to take advantage of readily available construction materials that could now be cheaply acquired and easily transported to formerly inaccessible areas. Antoine Gordon's 1859 log house and trading post represented the common trends of pioneer-era construction in Wisconsin's remote North Woods but was altered over time to provide more space for his son William Gordon's growing family. In 1901, the rough-hewn walls of the log cabin were covered with manufactured drop lap siding, signaling the prosperity of the new owner, John McCarthy.

⁶⁸ S.H. Clough to Col. J.C. Spooner, Genl. Solicitor, C, St. P, M and O Line, 2 November 1881, private collection of Doug MacDonald, Gordon, Wisconsin.

⁶⁹ Douglas County, Wisconsin, Deed Book 23: 270; Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railway Co. to Musser-Sauntry Land, Logging and Manufacturing Co., 28 January 1891; Office of the Register of Deeds, City of Superior, Douglas County.

⁷⁰ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 75-84.

⁷¹ Bruce D. Bomberger, "Preservation Brief 26: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Log Buildings," U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1991, accessed July 26, 2020, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/26-log-buildings.htm>.

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During the 1870s and 80s, the Musser-Sauntry Logging and Lumber Company established its base in Amik and the Antoine Gordon trading post became its main supplier. Gordon's hotel housed both the timber cruisers associated with the local industry as well as travelers passing through the settlement. Amik's economy during this period relied heavily on logging and milling operations, as did many small towns in northern Wisconsin. As northern Wisconsin's store of valuable timber began to dwindle at the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the logging and lumber milling industry began to decline, and companies began to divest themselves of cut-over lands. Many communities that relied on the industry went bust, while others attempted to develop new industries to boost the economy.⁷² In Gordon, as the Musser-Sauntry company began to downsize at the turn of the nineteenth century, recreational tourism arose as the industry that would eventually replace it. Musser Sauntry began divesting itself of excess lands, including the Antoine and Sarah Gordon house, which the company had acquired from the railroad in 1891. Although Antoine and Sarah Gordon had moved out of the subject property to their trading post next door in 1874, the property had continued to house William Gordon and his family until 1888. Afterward, the James Smith family, the first white settlers in the town, lived in the house for an unknown amount of time, though no official ownership records exist from this period. When Musser-Sauntry sold the land in 1901, local townspeople John H. McCarthy bought the Antoine and Sarah Gordon House. Even though Antoine Gordon never legally owned the subject property, the transfer of the house that he built from commercial to private ownership in 1901 signaled an end to the pioneer era that he began in 1859.

Comparative Analysis

The state of Wisconsin contains log cabins that date to the pioneer period, some of which have been well preserved and listed in the National Register of Historic Places.⁷³ However, the historic associations of these cabins, such as the Palo Homestead in Bayfield County and the Dinesen-Motzfeldt-Hettinger Log House in Forest County, are primarily concerned with European settlement history. Wisconsin also has properties that are listed in the National Register for their association with Native American history; however, these are generally categorized as sites with no above-ground structures extant. There are buildings in Wisconsin that were built or are associated with well-known métis families, including the Rolette House (b. 1842; NRIS #72000046) and the Michael Brisbois House (b. 1839; NRIS #66000801) in Prairie du Chien and the Charles A. Grignon House (b. 1836; NRIS #72000064) in Kaukauna. However, these buildings were constructed before the end of the fur trade, during an era when their owners still enjoyed some measure of prosperity and stability in their roles as métis traders. Therefore, the Antoine and Sarah Gordon House is a rare example of an extant pioneer-era building that represents the evolution of métis settlement following the end of the fur trade

⁷² "Logging and Lumber milling," CRMP, 5—15.

⁷³ The Wisconsin Historic Preservation Database identifies 163 extant buildings constructed of logs between 1840 and 1900 that were historically used as houses. Of these, 27 are listed on the National Register.

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era. Although the Town of Gordon still has the St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, constructed in 1890 with funds and land donated by Antoine Gordon, the house he originally built in 1859 as a trading post, hotel, and home remains the best example of his influence and activities in the settlement that he founded.

Conclusion

The Antoine and Sarah Gordon House is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under *Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage* having statewide significance for the Gordon family's association with the transition of the Ojibwa/Chippewa and métis cultures following the end of the Fur Trade Era in northern Wisconsin. The property is also being nominated to the National Register under *Criterion B* in the area of Settlement, locally significant as the home of the founder of Gordon. The early settlement and founding of the Town of Gordon was inextricably linked to Antoine Gordon's activities and affiliations in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. The subject property is the oldest building in Gordon, and the one closest associated with Antoine Gordon's cultural ties as a member of the métis community. Furthermore, his house demonstrates settlement trends common to many northern Wisconsin communities during the second half of the nineteenth century. Buildings associated with the métis community in Wisconsin are rare, particularly those dated after the end of the Fur Trade Era and the removal of most Native Americans and métis people to reservations. Antoine Gordon's founding of the Gordon community, and its continued existence as a predominantly métis settlement through most of the late nineteenth century, render the house he constructed in 1859 highly significant in the areas of métis culture and settlement in the state of Wisconsin, and the Antoine and Sarah Gordon House is therefore eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under *Criteria A and B*.

Archaeological Potential

The potential for historic period archaeological deposits associated with the Antoine and Sarah Gordon House exists and has been previously evaluated as the Gaudin Post (ASI #DG-0151) in the Wisconsin Historic Preservation Database – Archaeological Site Inventory. The property owner further states that many pre-and post-contact artifacts have been found on the grounds of the property throughout its history. However, further potential for pre-contact archaeological deposits within the property's historic boundary has not been evaluated as part of the nomination of this house to the National Register of Historic Places.

Preservation Activities

Following ownership outside of the Gordon family for much of the twentieth century, this property was purchased by Antoine and Sarah Gordon's great-great-grandson, Doug MacDonald, in 1989. An

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avid historian, Mr. MacDonald has collected a great many artifacts, photographs, and documents relating to his family's history and the history of Gordon. He is exploring options for removing some of the unsympathetic decorative elements on the house's exterior.

Acknowledgements

The Fuldner Heritage Fund paid for the preparation of this nomination. This endowed fund, created through a generous donation by the Jeffris Family Foundation and administered by the Wisconsin Historical Society, supports the nomination of historically and architecturally significant rural and small town properties.

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- "Chippewa/Ojibwa."
- "Fur Trade."
- "Early Road Networks"
- "Late Rail Lines"
- "Logging and Lumber Milling"

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Gordon, Antoine and Sarah, House
Town of Gordon, Douglas County, WI

Verbal Boundary Description

That part of the Southwest quarter of the Southwest quarter of Section 31, Township 44, Range 11 West, also described as the east 57 feet in width of the west 114 feet in width of that part of the SW-SW, described as follows: Commencing at a point on the south line of said section, 11.76 chains east of the SW corner of said section, thence north 5 chains, thence east 3.19 chains, thence south 5 chains to the south line of said section, thence west along said section line 3.19 chains to the place of beginning.

Boundary Justification

This is the current legal parcel description for the property, containing the residence associated with Antoine and Sarah Gordon, and is the extent of the property historically associated with this house.

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Gordon, Antoine and Sarah, House
Town of Gordon, Douglas County, WI

Section photos Page 1

Name of Property:	Antoine and Sarah Gordon House
City or Vicinity:	Town of Gordon
County:	Douglas County
State:	WI
Name of Photographer:	Kelly Blaubach
Date of Photographs:	July 2, 2020
Location of Original Digital Files:	State Historic Preservation Office, Wisconsin Historical Society

Photo 1 of 15
South façade, camera facing north

Photo 2 of 15
Southeast façade, camera facing northwest

Photo 3 of 15
East façade of 1874 section, camera facing northwest

Photo 4 of 15
East façade of 1859 section, camera facing southwest

Photo 5 of 15
Northeast façade of c. 1950 garage, camera facing southwest

Photo 6 of 15
Western façade, camera facing east

Photo 7 of 15
Southwestern façade, camera facing northeast

Photo 8 of 15
Living room, 1874 addition, camera facing northeast

Photo 9 of 15
Living room, 1874 addition to 1859 house doorway, camera facing northeast

Photo 10 of 15
Kitchen, 1859 house, camera facing southwest

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Photo 11 of 15
Kitchen, 1859 building, camera facing northeast

Photo 12 of 15
Original window, east wall of 1859 building, camera facing southeast

Photo 13 of 15
Second story, 1874 addition, camera facing east

Photo 14 of 15
Setting, property from south side of County Road Y, camera facing northeast

Photo 15 of 15
Setting, property from end of gravel driveway, camera facing north

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Figure 2: Certified Survey Map of SW1/4 of SW1/4, Section 31, T44, R11W, 1917

Figure 3: Antoine and Sarah Gordon photo, circa 1905

Figure 4: Sketch map of Antoine and Sarah Gordon House nominated area, August 2020

Figure 5: Antoine and Sarah Gordon House floor plan, August 2020

Figure 6: Antoine and Sarah Gordon House, USGS map with UWM coordinates, August 2020

Figure 1: Historic Photo of Antoine and Sarah Gordon House, circa 1900



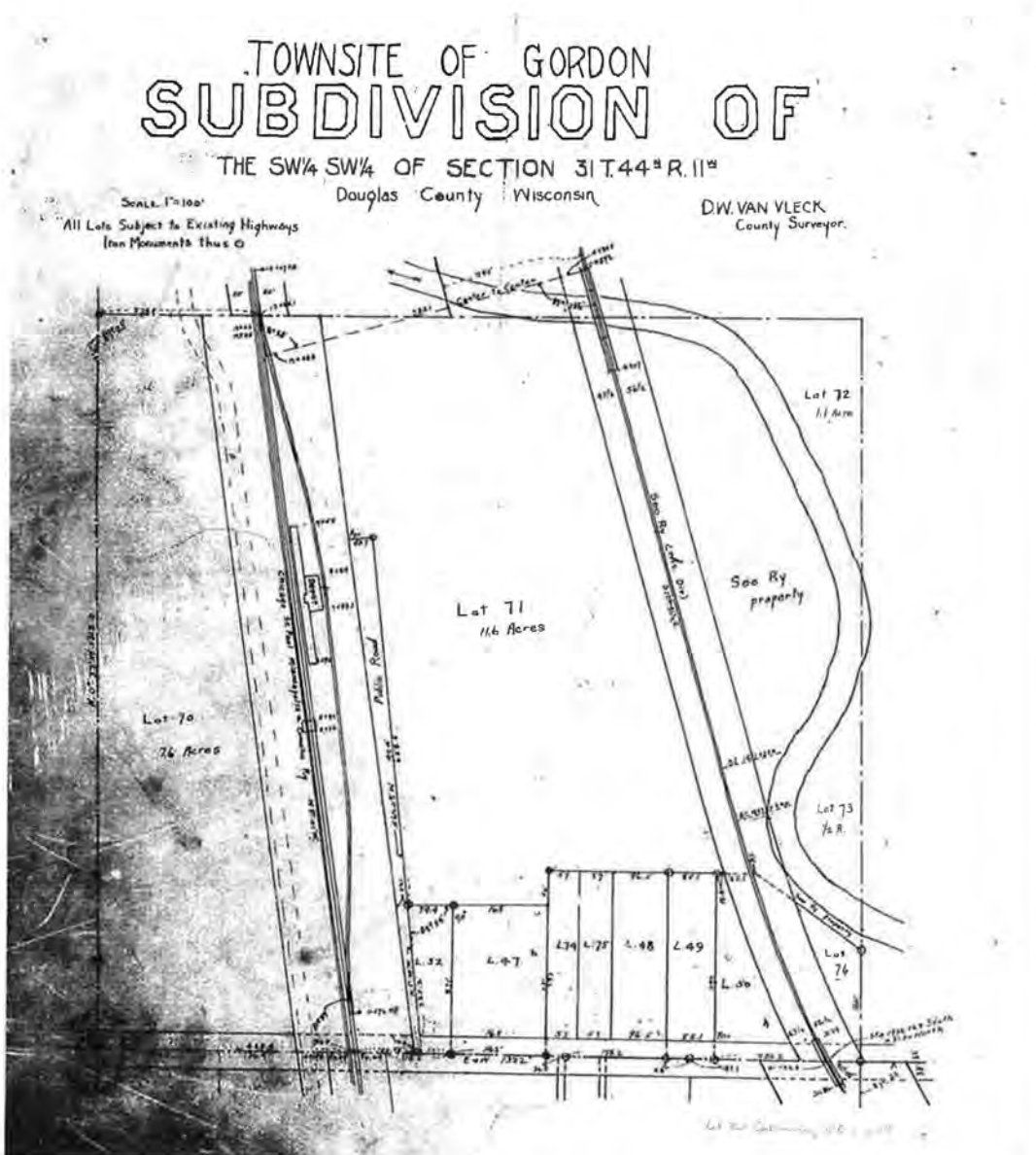
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Figure 2: Certified Survey Map of SW1/4 of SW1/4, Section 31, T44, R11W, 1917 (Subject property is Lot 75)



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Figure 3: Antoine and Sarah Gordon photo, circa 1905



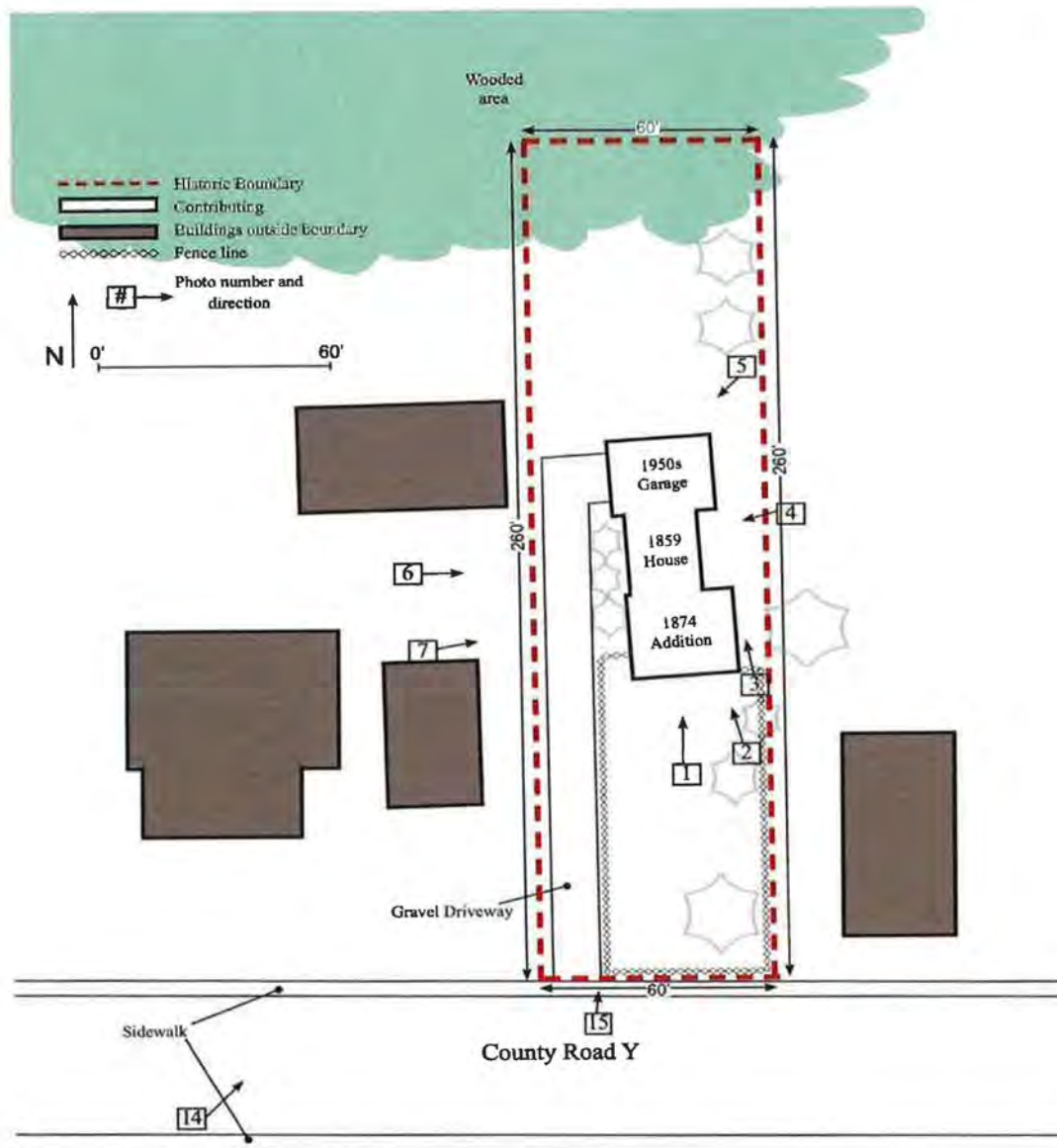
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Gordon, Antoine and Sarah, House
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Section figures Page 4

Figure 4: Sketch map of Antoine and Sarah Gordon House nominated area, August 2020



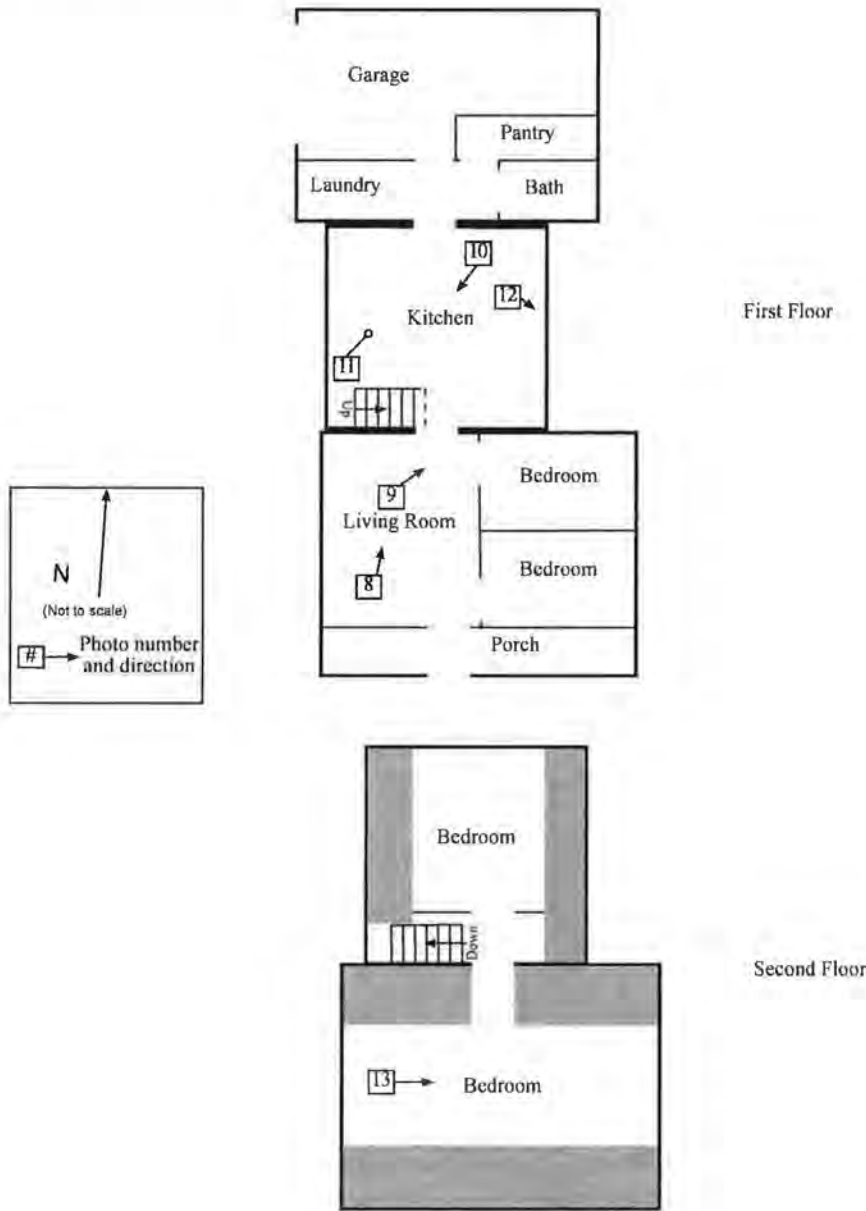
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Gordon, Antoine and Sarah, House
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Figure 5: Antoine and Sarah Gordon House floor plan, August 2020



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Gordon, Antoine and Sarah, House
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Figure 6: Antoine and Sarah Gordon House, USGS map with UWM coordinates, August 2020





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Antoine and Sarah Gordon House, Town of Gordon, Douglas County, 2 of 15







Antoine and Sarah Gordon House, Town of Gordon, Douglas County, 5 of 15



Antoine and Sarah Gordon House, Town of Gordon, Douglas County, 6 of 15



Antoine and Sarah Gordon House, Town of Gordon, Douglas County, 7 of 15



Antoine and Sarah Gordon House, Town of Gordon, Douglas County, 8 of 15













Antoine and Sarah Gordon House, Town of Gordon, Douglas County, 14 of 15



Antoine and Sarah Gordon House, Town of Gordon, Douglas County, 15 of 15

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination
Property Name: Gordon, Antoine and Sarah, House
Multiple Name:
State & County: WISCONSIN, Douglas

Date Received: 4/26/2022 Date of Pending List: 5/10/2022 Date of 16th Day: 5/25/2022 Date of 45th Day: 6/10/2022 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100007769

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 6/10/2022 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: AOS: Exploration/Settlement, Ethnic Heritage: Native American; POS: 1859-1888; LOS: local. The Antoine and Sarah Gordon House is an exceptionally rare home associated with the Metis culture. The Metis were critically important to the ability of European explorers to access the land at the interior of the state and in these explorers' ability to form and expand important fur trading enterprises and other trade networks. Metis families wielded powerful influence in social, political, and economic development. The Gordons are furthermore associated with the transition of the Ojibwa/Chippewa and metis cultures following the end of the Fur Trade Era in northern Wisconsin. Due to the Gordon family's familial ties with the Chippewa tribes of northern Wisconsin and Minnesota, the area surrounding Gordon's home and trading post remained a largely native and metis settlement through the end of the nineteenth century. Antoine Gordon was the founder of his community, developed businesses, influenced the arrival of the railroad, and was responsible for its growth and development.

Recommendation/ Criteria NR Criteria A and B.

Reviewer Lisa Deline Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2239 Date 6/10/2022

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



WISCONSIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

TO: Keeper
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Ian Gort
Historic Preservation Specialist

SUBJECT: National Register Nomination

The following materials are submitted on this Twenty-fifth day of April 2022, for the nomination of Antoine and Sara to the National Register of Historic Places:

_____	Original National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form
<u>1</u>	NRHP Nomination form PDF
_____	Multiple Property Nomination form
<u>10</u>	Photograph(s) submitted as PDF, made with selection of TIFFs
_____	CD with image files
_____	Map(s)
<u>6</u>	Sketch map(s)/figures(s)/exhibit(s) – all embedded in nomination form
<u>1</u>	Piece(s) of correspondence, scans attached to this submittal form
_____	Other:

COMMENTS:

_____	Please ensure that this nomination is reviewed
_____	This property is being nominated at the National level of significance
_____	This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
<u>x</u>	Please note that all physical materials will be submitted as directed by the NPS



STATE REPRESENTATIVE **Nick Milroy**
73rd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

August 12, 2021

Wisconsin Historic Preservation Review Board
Attn: Peggy Veregin
Wisconsin Historical Society
816 State Street
Madison, WI 53706

Dear Ms. Veregin,

It is my pleasure to support the nomination of the Antoine and Sarah Gordon House in the Town of Gordon to be added to the Wisconsin State Register of Historic Places and the National Register of Historic Places. This building has great significance due to its connection to the Town of Gordon's founders, Antoine and Sarah Gordon, and their family's métis culture.

Antoine Gordon was métis, half Ojibwe and half French, allowing the Gordon family to develop strong connections with people of those cultures in the area. Founded in 1888, the Town of Gordon was where American Indians, métis, and the incoming white settlers and explorers intersected. Antoine founded the community as a métis settlement, and because the Gordons had familial connections to Chippewa tribes in the region and Minnesota, it remained inhabited mostly by American Indians and the métis until the arrival of the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Omaha Railroad in 1882.

The contributions by the Gordons to the growth of the community cannot be overstated. They established a fur trading post, and Antoine established a mission which remains to this day as a church in town. He led the development of local businesses, was involved in the arrival of the railroad, and contributed to philanthropy which allowed the town to grow. Not only were the Gordons influential figures in the town they founded, but also for the entire region of northwestern Wisconsin.

Adding the Antoine and Sarah Gordon House to the State and National Register of Historic places would provide generations of area residents and visitors with the opportunity to learn about the rich history of the Town of Gordon, which is inextricably linked to this building. Its preservation is essential to people to learn about the métis culture and how this town and others like it became what they are today.

I hope the Wisconsin Historic Preservation Review Board will consider adding the Antoine and Sarah Gordon House to the Wisconsin State Register of Historic Places and the National Register of Historic Places. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Milroy".

Nick Milroy
State Representative
73rd Assembly District