

4-11-74

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Nebraska	
COUNTY: Dawson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 69-10-26-0007	DATE 10/15/69

1. NAME

COMMON:
Midway Stage Station

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
(south of Gothenburg)

STATE Nebraska	CODE 26	COUNTY: Dawson	CODE 047
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public <input type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>
Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/>	Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	In Process <input type="checkbox"/>	Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/>	Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>	Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/>	Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/>
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	Comments <input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/>	Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Educational <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Religious <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:
96 Ranches (Robert M. Williams, Managing Partner)

STREET AND NUMBER:
P.O. Box 243

CITY OR TOWN: Gothenburg	STATE: Nebraska	CODE 26
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
County Clerk, Dawson County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:
Washington & Seventh Streets

CITY OR TOWN: Lexington	STATE: Nebraska	CODE 26
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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: one acre

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: The Pony Express: Across Nebraska from St. Joseph to Fort Laramie

DATE OF SURVEY: 1959-60 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Nebraska State Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:
1500 "R" Street

CITY OR TOWN: Lincoln	STATE: Nebraska	CODE 26
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Nebraska

COUNTY: Dawson

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input type="checkbox"/>	Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The building is situated in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 35, Township 11 North, Range 25 West. It is located on its original site just south of the Platte River, along the old Central Overland (or Oregon) Trail. Facing SSW, it parallels both the Platte River and the Overland Trail. It is a long, low, one story cabin, constructed of heavy, squared, hand-hewn cedar logs. To the original, ca. 1859 section of the cabin, two extant log sections were later added to the east, probably in 1860-61 when the building served as a Pony Express station. Originally the log walls sat directly on bare earth, which also served as the cabin's floor. The entire structure now rests on a concrete platform. Now sealed with grout, the wall spaces were originally packed with mud. The roof as it evidently appeared in the 1860's remains intact. This low pitched, split cedar roof is supported by cedar log ridge beams and surmounted by a heavy layer of sod. Above this roof and its sod cover is the present shingled roof, having a steeper pitch than the early roof it conceals.

Many Pony Express stations in Nebraska were destroyed during Indian raids in 1864-65. Many more fell into ruins following the completion of the Union Pacific Railroad across Nebraska in 1869. However, Midway survived, serving for many years as a ranch dwelling. About 1879 the building and its surrounding property were acquired by Henry Laurens Williams. About 1897 a large frame house was built immediately north of the log structure, which became a rear annex to the newer structure. Although the frame house was destroyed by fire about 1959, the log cabin survived with only minor damage. The Williams family continues to own the cabin, which is located on their "Lower 96 Ranch," now managed by Henry's grandson Robert M. Williams. Aware of its historical importance, the family has carefully preserved the structure. They have recently installed exhibits and old furnishings inside the cabin, which is occasionally opened to the public.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. Continued
 was headquartered at Midway late in 1864, during a period of severe Indian depredations in the vicinity.

B. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1859-61**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Political	<input type="checkbox"/>	Urban Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Phi-	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Historic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	losophy	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	
Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Invention	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	
Art	<input type="checkbox"/>	Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sculpture	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	
Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/>	Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Human-	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	
Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Literature	<input type="checkbox"/>	itarian	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	
Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Theater	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	
		Music	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	_____	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

This structure is Nebraska's most important extant building known to have served traffic along the old Central Overland (or Oregon) Trail. It served this traffic in several capacities. Most importantly, the structure is one of some thirty-six Nebraska buildings which served as Pony Express stations during the brief existence of the Pony Express in 1860-61. Three of these stations are claimed to be extant: one structure at Cozad, another at Gothenburg, and Midway Station south of Gothenburg. While the authenticity of at least one of these three buildings is uncertain, research thus far indicates that Midway is almost certainly an authentic Pony Express station. It is the most historically important and least altered of the three buildings, and only Midway remains on its original site.

It has been reported that Midway was built as a fur trading post about 1850. However, it appears reasonably certain that the building was one of a series of some fifteen stage and mail stations constructed across Nebraska in 1859 by the Leavenworth & Pikes Peak Express Company to link the Missouri River with Denver and Salt Lake City. The firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell soon acquired these stations and early in 1860 built about twenty-one additional Nebraska stations. All thirty-six buildings, located at intervals of about fifteen miles, were soon used as Pony Express stations. In 1859 Midway was known only as U.S. Mail Station #17. However, travellers in 1860, including England's Sir Richard Burton, began to refer specifically to "Midway" in their writings. The station purportedly derives its name from its position midway on the stage line between Atchison and Denver.

Midway's importance was enhanced in 1860 when it became a Pony Express "home station," which housed riders in addition to caring for their horses. (Most stations were "relay stations" caring for horses only.) Meanwhile, Midway continued to serve as a stage and immigrant supply station until the late 1860's. During this period the building was located on the most heavily trafficked segment of the Central Overland Trail, which had served as the principal North American highway to the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean since the 1830's. At Fort Kearny, some 66 miles east of Midway, traffic converged from various Missouri River towns. At Julesburg, some 136 miles west of Midway, traffic branched off to Colorado, California, Oregon, and Montana. Captain John R. Porter's company of some fifty Union soldiers

← (CONTINUED)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

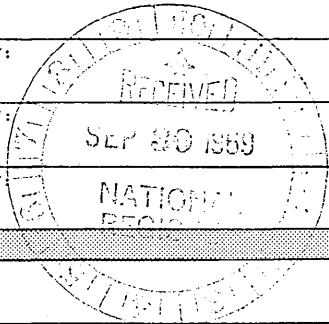
Archives, St. Joseph Museum, St. Joseph, Mo.
 Files, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska.
 Richard Burton, *The City of the Saints*, London, 1862.
 M.D. Freitas and K. Wichman, "Pony Express Stations of Gothenburg,"
 unpublished, Architecture Dept., University of Kansas, Lawrence, 1967.
 Merrill Mattes and Paul Henderson, "The Pony Express," *Nebraska History*,
 vol. 41, no. 2, 1960.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		40°	53'	15"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		100°	08'	48"
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



NO
ATTN
SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 John Q. Magie, Curator of History

ORGANIZATION: Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE: August 27, 1969

STREET AND NUMBER:
 1500 "R" Street

CITY OR TOWN: Lincoln

STATE: Nebraska 68508

CODE: 26

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Martin O. Kwett, Director

Title Nebr. State Hist. Society

Date Sept. 22, 1969

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest Allen Connally
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

OCT 15 1969

Date _____

ATTEST:

William J. Stoutagh
 Keeper of The National Register

OCT 06 1969

Date _____

NEBRASKA
GOTHENBURG QUADRANGLE

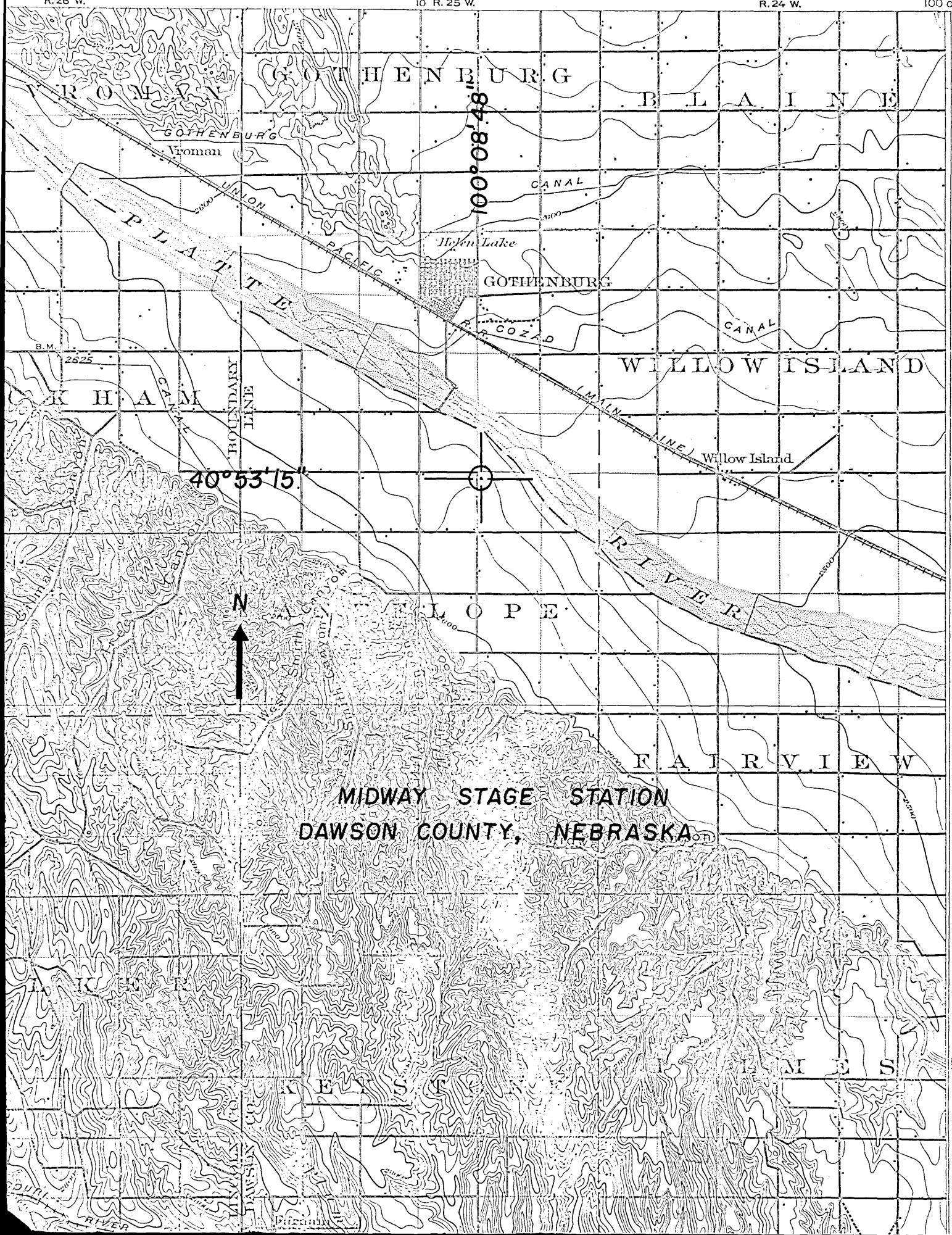
R. 26 W.

10' R. 25 W.

R. 24 W.

100' 00' 41' 00"

T. 12 N.



T. 11 N.

50' T. 10 N.

T. 9 N.

(Livingston)

Form 10-301
(Dec. 1968)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Nebraska	
COUNTY Dawson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 69-10-26-0207	DATE 10/5/69

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON: Midway Stage Station		AND/OR HISTORIC:	
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN: (south of Gothenburg)			
STATE: Nebraska	CODE 26	COUNTY: Dawson	CODE 047
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE: U.S.G.S. 30', quadrangle Gothenburg			
SCALE: 1: 125,000			
DATE: 1902			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			

