

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received NOV 25 1986

date entered MAY 7 1987

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic J.A. Symms Barn- Byre and Bluff Barns of Doniphan County (TR)

and or common Elilizabeth Winkler Barn

2. Location

KS 7

street & number SE½, NW½, SW½, NE½, S26, T4S, R20E not for publication

city, town Bendena X vicinity of

state Kansas code 20 county Doniphan code 43

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Elizabeth Winkler

street & number c/o Mrs. Reeves Shufflebarger

city, town Huron vicinity of state Kansas 66038

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds

street & number Doniphan County Courthouse

city, town Troy state Kansas 66087

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Doniphan County Cultural Resources Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes  no

date 1985 federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Kansas State Historical Society, 120 W. 10th

city, town Topeka state Kansas 66612

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

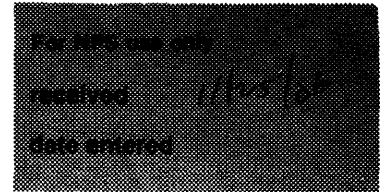
The J. A. Symms Barn (ca. 1880) is located on the Elizabeth Winkler Farm near Bendena, Kansas (pop. 150). The one-story, three-bay, center entrance, horizontally lap sided barn has a full byre with a limestone foundation and asphalt shingled gable roof. The barn has an east to west orientation, measuring sixty feet from north to south and eighty feet from east to west. The byre is built into a gradual east to west slope. The superstructure is supported by nailed, plank framing.

The western elevation is comprised of a center entry with a wide, diagonally planked door which is surmounted by a gable with two, 4/4 double hung windows. The north and south elevations indicate the barn's slope and have walls pierced by four rectangular openings each, these being vents or windows. A center gable with two, 4/4 double hung windows in its peak stands in the center of the eastern elevation. Various windows and vents flank the gable. Five lightning rods stand on the roof ridge. The barn is painted white. There are granaries in the western bay of the threshing floor and a staircase between the threshing and byre levels. There is no hay loft in this barn.

Originally constructed as a cattle barn, the building is now used for hay storage and dairy cows. It maintains a high degree of architectural and structural integrity. The significant alteration to the barn has been the replacement of the original roof with asphalt shingles.

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climate of Kansas it is preferable to any other, unless there should be an unusually moist ledge directly against or under it...The building should be located so that the basement will be partly in the ground on the north and west, and so that a low embankment, or filling, on these sides will give access to the second story.

While the byre or bluff barn presented a practical solution for Doniphan County's rolling topography, harsh winters, and high winds, it was not the most common solution. The byre and bluff barns built between 1860 and 1933 generally cost from \$2,000.00 to \$3,000.00 and while this may have been cost effective investment, it was an expensive investment. In addition, the higher degree of skilled craftsmanship required to construct a byre or bluff barn as opposed to most barns without foundations also hindered their construction. While the byre and bluff barns of Doniphan County are a sturdy survivor of a barn type built in Doniphan County between 1860 and 1933 they are not prolific, being far outnumbered by more inexpensive, rectangular wooden barns without foundations.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** ca. 1880      **Builder/Architect** Unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The J. A. Symms Barn (ca. 1880) is being nominated to the National Register as part of the Byre and Bluff Barns of Doniphan County (ca. 1860–1933) nomination under criterion C for its architectural significance. Constructed for J. A. Symms, a wealthy breeder of blooded cattle, who emigrated from Monroe County, West Virginia to Doniphan County in 1865, the barn is an example of a three-bay, center entrance, full byre, horizontally lap sided, gable roof structure with a limestone foundation, a threshing floor and a hay loft. The barn remained in the Symms family until 1924, when it was sold to the Winkler family, who retain ownership of the building but rent the farmland on which the barn stands to the great-great-nephew of J. A. Symms.

The eighteen nominated barns share a common feature in that at 1st one side of each barn's foundation is embedded in an earthen bank or bluff; the majority of the barns are built into shallow banks, two of the barns are built into bluffs. These vernacular wooden and cement structures span a seventy construction period and exhibit various masonry foundations, skeletal structures, and superstructures. The byre and bluff barns of Doniphan County are an excellent example of a vernacular form of architecture which was built to take advantage of the hilly topography of the county. These barns are representative of approximately thirty byre and bluff barns identified in a 1984–1985 cultural resource survey of Doniphan County. The remaining barns are too altered and/or deteriorated to be included in this nomination. Most of the nominated barns were constructed for stock and dairy cattle and remain in active use on working farms. The relative rarity of byre and bluff barns in Doniphan County and the high degree of architectural and structural integrity maintained by the nominated barns make this thematic grouping of vernacular agricultural structures extremely significant.

Doniphan County (est. 1855) experienced a substantial population increase in the twenty years following the Civil War, with many settlers moving from Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Germany. The barn building traditions brought by these settlers combined with the suitable topography contributed to the building of the byre and bluff barn type in Doniphan County. Most of the nominated barns are three-bay, center entrance, gable roof structures with limestone foundations, a full byre, a threshing floor, and a hay loft. There are groupings of period types, such as the board and batten barns with louvered vents from the 1870s and 1880s, the large, gambrel roof barns from 1910s, 1920s and 1930s, and the gradual transition from post and beam construction to plank framing. In 1891 J. D. Walters of the Kansas State Agricultural College called the byre (bank)/bluff barn an "all-purpose barn of the Kansas farmer" in an article entitled "The Barn," which was published in the Quarterly Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture. Walters described the bank barn as follows:

It gives a warm basement for the milk cows and cattle, and an accessible second story for the draught animals—for tools, machines, harness, and grain—and a roomy attic, or loft, for hay, straw, and fodder. In many states this form is objectionable for sanitary reasons, but in the dry

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than 1 acre.

Quadrangle name Bendena

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	5
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3	1	6	3	1	5
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4	3	9	3	8	2	0
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C 

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**Verbal boundary description and justification** The nominated property is located on the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$ , NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , S26, T4S, R20E in Doniphan County, Kansas on a tract measuring 100 x 80 feet, whose northeast corner is 14.1 feet directly northeast of the northeast corner of the barn's foundation. Beginning at the northeast corner of the parcel the boundary proceeds 80 feet south, 100 feet west, 80 feet north, and 100 feet east to the point of beginning.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martha Gray Hagedorn, Architectural Historian

organization Kansas State Historical Society date October 28, 1986

street & number 120 W. 10th telephone 913-296-5264

city or town Topeka state Kansas 66612

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

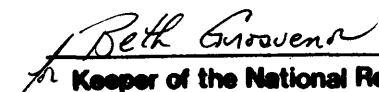
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society date October 28, 1986

### For NPS use only

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

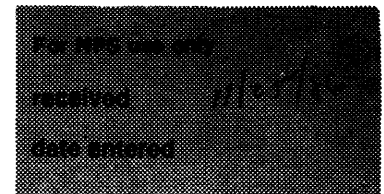
 Beth Grovener date 5/2/87  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
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BIBLIOGRAPHY—Byre and Bluff Barns of Doniphan County

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