United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

OMB No. 10024-0018 RECEIVED 2280 RE NATIFICATIONAL PARK OF

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 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property		
Historic name Other name/site number	Williamson, Roy, House 209-1510-0003	
2. Location		
Street & number18 City or townEc State KansasCode 3. State/Federal Agency Cer		not for publication vicinity Zip code 66111
☐ request for determination Historic Places and meets to the meets ☐ does not meets ☐ does	n of eligibility meets the documentation standards for me procedural and professional requirements set forth in the National Register criteria. I recommend that this is locally. (See continuation sheet for additional polymer polymer polymer.) Al/Title ciety	egistering properties in the National Register of in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property property be considered significant
In my opinion, the property [Comments.) Signature of commenting of State or Federal agency and		eria. (See continuation sheet for additional
4. National Park Service Cer I herby certify that the property is I herby certify that the property is I herby certify that the property is See continuation s determined eligible for the Register See continuation s determined not eligible for National Register removed from the National Register other, (explain:)	egister. heet. National heet. r the	Date of Action 4.(9.0)

Williamson, Roy, House		Wyandotte County, Kansas				
Name of Property		County ar	nd State			
5. Classification						
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) Category of Propert (Check only one box			of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)			
			Contributing 1 1 2 Number of contrib	Noncontributin 2 1 1 1 total	buildings sites structures objects	
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a	Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register					
N/A		-	0			
6. Function or Use						
Historic Functions (Enter Categories from instructions)			ent Functions categories from instru	ctions)		
Domestic: Single Dwelling		Do	mestic: Single Dw	elling		
Landscape: Garden		Lar	ndscape: Garden	············		
Agriculture/Subsistence: Agricultural Outbuilding		Not in Use				
7. Description						
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)		Materials (Enter categories from instructions)				
LATE 19 TH & EARLY 20 TH CENTURY AMERICAN		Foundation: STONE: Limestone				
MOVEMENT: Bungalow / Crafts	sman	Walls:	STONE: Limesto	one 		
	-		WOOD: Shakes			
		Roof: ASF	PHALT			
		Other:				

Williamson, Roy, House Name of Property	Wyandotte County, Kansas County and State			
, v				
8. Statement of Significance Applicable National Register Criteria	Areas of Significance			
(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register	(Enter categories from instructions) ARCHITECTURE			
A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE			
☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.	AGRICULTURE			
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.	Period of Significance			
_	1909-1957			
□ Property has yielded, or likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.		NP.		
Criteria Considerations (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)	Significant Dates			
Property is:	1909			
A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.				
☐ B removed from it original location.				
C a birthplace or grave.	Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)			
D a cemetery.	N/A			
☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	Cultural Affiliation			
☐ F a commemorative property.	N/A			
☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years	IVA			
Narrative Statement of Significance	Architect/Builder			
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)	WILLIAMSON, ROY			
continuation shocts.	JONES, WILLIAM (stonemason)			
9. Major Bibliographical References				
Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on	one or more continuation sheets.)			
Previous documentation on file (NPS): 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	Primary location of additional data: State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency Local government University Other Name of repository: Kansas State Historical Society			
recorded by Frictions Afficilitian Engineering	Nansas State Historical Goolety			

Williamson, Roy			Wyandotte County, Kansas
Name of Proper	ty		County and State
10. Geographica	ıl Data		
Acreage of Proper	7. 3.762 acres		
Zone Easting Verbal Boundary De (Describe the bounda Boundary Justificati	Northing Pscription Inies of the property on a continuation sheet.)	3 Zone 4 See co	Easting Northing Intinuation sheet
11. Form Prepared	i By		
Name/title Organization	Marjorie L. Stierly (owner); KSHS staff e	Date4	H/15/2006
Street & number	r 200 S. 122 nd St.	Telephone	913-422-5018
City or town	Bonner Springs	State KS	Zip code66012
Additional Docum	entation		
Submit the following item	ns with the completed form:		
Continuation Shee	ets		
Maps	A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indic	ating the property's I	ocation.
	A sketch map for historic districts and prope	erties having large ac	creage or numerous resources.
Photographs	Representative black and white photograp	hs of the property.	
Additional items			
(Check with SHPO or FP Property Owner	PO for any additional items)		
Name <u>F</u>	Ronald, L., Frank D. and Marjorie Stierly		
Street & numbe	er 1865 Edwardsville Drive	Telephone	816-769-1284 / 913-422-5018
City or town	Edwardsville	State	KS Zip code 66111

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16) U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

NPS Form 10-900-a (8-86) OMB No. 1024-0018

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 7 Page 1

Roy Williamson House Edwardsville, Wyandotte County, KS

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Just north of Edwardsville, Kansas, situated on a picturesque hill setting, the Roy C. Williamson House (c. 1909) reflects the hard work and inspiration of the builder. Located at 1865 Edwardsville Drive, the two-story stone house was built by a local farmer with the help of local stonemason William Jones. In addition to the stone house, the now three-acre property also includes a barn constructed of hand-hewn beams that is covered with corrugated metal, a non-historic three-car garage made of concrete block, and several important landscape features.

Site Description

Roy and Minnie (Kuhn) Williamson designed the house and its surrounding landscape. As a horticulturalist, Roy Williamson took great care in planning the design of all elements of his property. As a result, the site contributes to the historic significance of the property because it is a designed landscape. One enters the property at its south end off of Edwardsville Drive. A paved circle driveway is a primary feature that surrounds a stone fountain fishpond, detailed seasonally with yellow daffodils. In addition, several peony bushes first planted by the Williamsons still produce an abundant display of blooms during the month of May. The circle driveway leads to a non-historic three-car garage (non-contributing) made of concrete block. North of the garage is a wood frame barn (non-contributing) that is covered with metal and a concrete horse trough and windmill remnants.

The residence (contributing) is located east of the driveway. With the house built against a low bluff, the property features some attractive stonework including a mortared stone wall that frames the front walkway, two dry-laid stone walls built into the steep hillside on the east side of the house creating a terrace effect, and a picturesque stone stairway leading up to the backyard. The original cistern that was built in a bluff behind the house is extant. The cellar was built on ground level and is still in use.

House

The house reflects the vernacular architectural tastes of the owners who designed the house using local materials to fit their needs. The low roof pitches, wide-overhanging eaves, and wood shingled second story are elements of the early twentieth century Arts and Crafts movement. The wood windows throughout the residence are one-over-one double hung and feature smooth-cut stone sills and lintels. There is a new asphalt shingle roof and there are two interior brick chimneys.

South (front) Elevation

The main entrance to the house is centrally located on the south elevation. There is a large double hung window on either side of the entrance. A second-story hip roof section accentuates the central bay. The front elevation is dominated by the two-story circular turret structure located at the southeast corner of the house. The turret contains three large curved-glass windows on the first story and three smaller curved-glass windows on the second story. It is topped by a conical roof. A mortared stone wall encloses a front porch walkway and frames the entrance.

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Roy Williamson House Edwardsville, Wyandotte County, KS

East (side) Elevation

A concrete walkway runs the length of the east elevation leading from the front yard to a side entrance and to a stone stairway that lead to the backyard. The two-story circular turret structure also dominates the east elevation. A second-story hip roof section accentuates the central bay. A rear porch at the north end of the east elevation has been enclosed and is now a one-story wood frame addition. This alteration does not detract from the building's original design.

North (rear) Elevation

The first story of this elevation is built into the hillside and is concealed. The second story is comprised of the wood shingled gable end. The cistern is located on the north side of the house.

West (side) Elevation

The west side of the house sits adjacent to the circular driveway, and therefore the two side entrances on this elevation are most often used to enter the house. One door enters into the utility room/pantry and the other into the kitchen. Like the east and south elevations, a second-story hip roof section accentuates the central bay.

Interior

The interior of the house retains most of the original pine woodwork installed by the Williamsons. Most of the original hardwood pine floors are also intact. According to the original drawings, the floorplan is almost entirely unchanged – although the uses of some rooms have changed. Other original features include some light fixtures, pocket doors, operable transom windows above the second-floor bedroom doors, and door and window hardware. Some of the rooms, including the dining room, feature walls with original wood paneling.

One enters the residence through the main door on the south elevation, which leads into the living room. The original floor plans labeled the first floor of the turret as a sunroom – no surprise given the large south-facing windows. Pocket doors separate the living room from the dining room. At the center of the house – splitting the dining room on the east from the study and a bathroom on the west – is a staircase leading to the second level. At the foot of the stairs is the kitchen that extends north toward the utility room and cellar.

The second floor stairs terminate at a centrally located landing that provides access to three bedrooms. Each bedroom originally featured large walk-in closets. The only changes to the floorplan on the second level include a conversion of a large storage area into a bathroom. Interestingly, the original drawings suggest that the second level of the turret was intended to be used as storage.

In the 1960s, owners Blake and Ruth Williamson, son and daughter-in-law of the previous owners, remodeled the house to include paneling on the walls and carpeting. The current owners removed the non-historic paneling and carpeting to reveal the original wall and floor finishes.

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Roy Williamson House Edwardsville, Wyandotte County, KS

Buildings

- 1. Roy Williamson House (c. 1909) Contributing
- 2. Wood Frame Barn (Historic date unknown) Non-Contributing due to alterations
- 3. Three-Car Garage made of concrete blocks (Non-historic, date unknown) Non-Contributing

Site

- 4. Mortared stone wall enclosing front walkway and porch Contributing
- 5. Stone Fountain Fishpond (c. 1909) Contributing
- 6. Dry-Laid Stone Terraced Wall (adjacent to the east elevation) (c. 1909) Contributing
- 7. Stone Spiral Staircase and Concrete Walkway (c. 1909) Contributing

Structure

8. Windmill remnants (date unknown) – Non-Contributing

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Roy Williamson House Edwardsville, Wyandotte County, KS

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Roy Williamson House (c. 1909) is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its associations with local agriculture and horticulture history and Criterion C for its architectural significance as a two-story stone house built by a local farmer with the help of a local stonemason. With its historic ornamental and horticultural landscape features, the property is also significant as a designed landscape. The property retains its early twentieth century character-defining elements that reflect the creativity and talent of its longtime occupants.

Historic Context

The son of a pioneer family, Roy C. Williamson constructed his two-story stone house with limestone quarried from the land just north of the home site. While the property once encompassed 300 acres, only 3 ½ acres remain with the home. The 300 acres came into the Williamson family when Roy's father, Jacob T. Williamson, purchased the land in 1881. Jacob first came to the Kansas City area in 1858 and was one of the pioneer potato growers of the Kaw Valley. However, those were lean years and he soon returned to Ohio. In 1872, he again returned to Kansas, this time accompanied by his wife and family. He acquired a timber farm, which is now part of the Armourdale district of Kansas City, Kansas. As Wyandotte grew into Kansas City and Armourdale was platted, the Williamsons moved their farming operation further west – purchasing the above-mentioned 300 acres near Edwardsville. Edwardsville was conveniently located along the Union Pacific Railroad some fourteen miles west of Wyandotte. A post office was established there in 1867 and by the early 1880s, the town consisted of "thirty or forty dwellings, a number of business houses, a good depot and a fine school." By 1914, this area was served by the Kaw Valley line, a new Kansas City interurban trolley that stretched to nearby Bonner Springs.

Farmers throughout the Kaw Valley sold their produce for distribution at the Kansas City Market to cities as far away as Chicago and St. Louis. The dominance of the potato industry in the Kaw Valley is reflected in the following article that appeared in the *Lawrence World* in the summer of 1900:

Potato digging in the Kaw Valley, like the annual overflow of the Nile, is a remarkable occurrence. In the deep sandy loam of the river valley, the Kansas potato flourishes like the given bay tree. It is a vast amount of work to care for a potato crop, the culmination of which is digging. That work is in progress now and the valley is a scene of individual activity. The fields are covered with piles of these Kansas beauties, and in the farm yards they approach the pretensions of the pyramids.³

¹ William G. Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago: A.T Andreas, 1883). Available at <u>www.kancoll.org</u>

² Kansas City Star, 20 July 1914.

³ "Potato Harvest in the Kaw Valley," *Lawrence World*, 14 July 1900. See also: "Dutton-Soule-Thomas Farm," Register of Historic Kansas Places nomination form, August 2006. On file at the Kansas State Historical Society.

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Roy Williamson House Edwardsville, Wyandotte County, KS

The Williamson Family and Farmstead

William G. Cutler's *History of Kansas* published in 1883 includes a brief biography of Jacob Williamson, which referred to him as "farmer and potato specialist" who "markets about 4,000 bushels of sweet potatoes a year and raises from seventy-five to one hundred acres of Irish potatoes yearly." The entry also suggests that because of his access to rich soil and spring water he experimented with growing a variety of plants:

He has recently added a small fruit department, with his brother J. K. Williamson as superintendent, and is constructing a large pool (supplied with water from some of the most magnificent springs in the State), from which to draw water for irrigating his strawberry plantations. He proposes adding a general nursery, and also an experimental department, for the testing, production and introduction of new varieties of cereals, fruits and vegetables."

Shortly after purchasing the land near Edwardsville, Jacob and his wife Rebecca sold an acre of this land for one dollar to John Elmore, Henry Francis, Clayborn Cannon, Solomon Hodges, and Junius G. Groves⁵ to be used as a cemetery for African Americans. The deed is dated February 18, 1886, although "the earliest death recorded on a tombstone – for Mary Jane Cannon – is 1883, three years before the date of the land's official purchase." The acre of land was at the western edge of Williamson's property and was situated in a low-lying area next to a creek. The cemetery was long forgotten until the mid-1990s when Steve Shelton discovered the graves on the land he purchased for residential development. During construction, he kept the area marked and undisturbed. The minutes of a recent Edwardsville City Council meeting indicate that the City owns the cemetery and will maintain the land. The City is currently exploring alternatives for ingress and egress. 8

The link between Jacob and Rebecca Williamson and local African Americans was also long forgotten until recently. However, except for the deed representing the land transfer, no other tangible links between the Williamsons and African Americans have been found and will require more research. As prosperous potato and fruit farmers, the Williamsons clearly knew fellow Edwardsville farmer Junius Groves, who would become the "potato king" by the turn of the century. In 1900, the *Topeka State Journal* proclaimed Groves "the wealthiest Negro in Kansas, if not the entire West," and by 1907, Groves

⁴ Cutler, History of the State of Kansas.

⁵ African American Junius Groves was known nationwide as the "potato king." Born a Kentucky slave, he arrived in Kansas City in 1879 with other poor African American "exodusters" from the South. His story is well documented. See also: Anne P. W. Hawkins, "Hoeing Their Own Row: Black Agriculture and the Agrarian Ideal in Kansas, 1880-1920" in *Kansas History* (Autumn 1999), 200-213.

⁶ Caroline Boyer, "Woman Finds Long-Neglected Cemetery," Bonner Springs Chieftain, 19 February 2004.

^{&#}x27; lbid.

⁸ Minutes from the Edwardsville (KS) City Council Meeting, 9 October 2006. Available online at www.edwardsvilleks.org.

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Roy Williamson House Edwardsville, Wyandotte County, KS

was "reputedly the world's largest grower of Irish potatoes, and his palatial twenty-two-room brick home in Edwardsville...was the subject of newspaper articles nationwide."

Groves gained nationwide fame as Jacob's son Roy was developing plans for the construction of his two-story stone house. Roy worked the farm in partnership with his father and eventually took over the operation. "Roy Williamson well remembers he and his father selling berries and vegetables in Wyandotte when it was but a village," said a 1925 newspaper article about Jacob's son. This feature article also offers important insight into Roy's horticultural interests – which he learned from "his father, from Herman Theden¹⁰ and from books on the subject." He amassed quite a "horticultural library" that included the "complete works of Luther Burbank and many other books, even some volumes by Walt Whitman, which he says, are hardly horticultural matter, but one may get ideas of nature from reading them and a great deal of pleasure."11



Luther Burbank's 1893 publication.

This newspaper feature referred to Roy as an artist, who "for sixteen years has wrought patiently to spread a picture on a sloping hillside just north of Edwardsville." It continues, "The eleven room stone house is the result of Mr. Williamson's labor in his odd times between crop seasons, his helper being William Jones of Edwardsville, said to be one of the best stone masons in this country, especially efficient in facing work."

In 1925, the Williamson farm included 74 of its original 300 acres. At this time, Williamson tended an apple orchard that was part of the county agent's experimental orchards, using prescribed fertilizers and sprays. In addition, he was growing flower roots and bulbs that he planned to sell commercially – "one row is dahlias from hybridized seeds...and the first of them to bloom was a cactus dahlia of a lovely shade of lavender which he named 'Mrs. R. C. Williamson." ¹²

Roy and his wife Minnie had three sons – Blake, Wayne, and Clair – and one daughter Gail. Blake, who had handled the marketing of produce from the family farm, obtained his law degree from the University of Kansas in 1923 and was admitted to the state bar before age 21. He was named an assistant county attorney in 1929, became counselor in 1930, was elected to the Kansas House in 1934, defeated for the Kansas Senate in 1936, and reelected to the House in 1938 and 1940. Early in 1942, "he went into the Army, in the Judge Advocate General's department, assigned to the Engineers, having assignments principally in Central and South America, Africa, the Azores and Portugal, serving until December

⁹ Hawkins, "Hoeing Their Own Row," 203, 205.

¹⁰ Herman Theden was a well-known Wyandotte County agriculturalist that grew potatoes, vegetables, small fruits, and cereals. Perl W. Morgan, "Herman Theden" in History of Wyandotte County and Its People (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1911), pp. 825-826.

¹¹ Kansas City Star, August 1925.

¹² Kansas City Star, August 1925.

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Roy Williamson House Edwardsville, Wyandotte County, KS

1945."¹³ Blake was again elected to the Kansas Legislature in 1946. He chose not to run for reelection in 1970.¹⁴

He and his wife Ruth moved to the farm in 1961. Blake died in 1981 and Ruth continued living in the house another ten years until she sold it to the current owners. With that sale, the land transferred out of the Williamson family for the first time in 110 years. A portion of the land was sold for the development of a subdivision known as Williamson Farm, while roughly six acres remained with the homestead.

Architecture and Landscape

Built with locally quarried stone and other natural materials, the Roy Williamson House reflects the turn-of-the-century architectural tastes of its owners. Elements of the Arts and Crafts movement are visible in the house's low roof pitches, wide-overhanging eaves, and wood shingled second story. An appreciation of nature and the outdoors was central to the Arts and Crafts period. "Architecturally, the Craftsman and Prairie styles demonstrated simplicity of line and emphasis on craftsmanship using natural materials. Gardens followed suit. Plantings connected the house with the natural world." With the house built into a hillside, Williamson's designed landscape envelopes the house bringing nature indoors. His use of terraces to create a patio and walkway area for outdoor activity is a common element among Arts and Crafts period landscapes. These areas also provided new settings for planting, gardening, and potted plants, which allowed a gardener to rotate plantings to always keep things appealing. 16

Summary

The Roy Williamson House and property is significant under Criterion A for its associations with local agricultural history and Criterion C for its architectural and landscape significance as a turn-of-the-century owner-designed residence and site. With its many historic features still extant, the property reflects the talents of its longtime occupants.

16 Ibid.

¹³ Kansas City Kansan, 15 November 1959.

¹⁴ Bonner Springs Chieftain, 26 March 1970.

¹⁵ Denise Wiles Adams, Restoring American Gardens: An Encyclopedia of Heirloom Ornamental Plants, 1640-1940 (Portland, OR: Timber Press, Inc., 2004), 32.

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Roy Williamson House Edwardsville, Wyandotte County, KS

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 10 & Photos Page 9

Roy Williamson House Edwardsville, Wyandotte County, KS

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is situated on a hillside at the junction of 104th Street and Edwardsville Drive. The property is bounded on the south by Edwardsville Drive, on the east by 104th Street, a creek and a subdivision on the west, and private property to the north. Description: PT L2: BEG SW COR L1; E 484FT, S 42.42FT, W 10FT, S 129.42FT, SWLYCUR- 94.97FT, SWLY-156.7FT, SWLY CUR- 114.87FT, N 47, W 365.66FT, N 202.27FT TO POB. Containing 3.762 acres.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

There were 300 acres historically associated with the property. The nominated property, however, includes the remaining undeveloped three acres with the historic stone house, two non-contributing outbuildings, and contributing landscape elements.

PHOTOGRAPIC INFORMATION

Property Name: Roy Williamson House

Location: 1865 Edwardsville Drive, Edwardsville, Wyandotte County, KS

Photographer: Sarah J. Martin
Date: 28 December 2006

Digital Photos on File at the Kansas State Historical Society

Photo 1: South (front) elevation, facing N

Photo 2: South (front) elevation and east (side) elevation, facing NW

Photo 3: Terraced landscape and dry-laid rock walls along east elevation, facing N

Photo 4: Rear rock stairway, facing SW

Photo 5: East (side) elevation and north (rear) elevation, facing SW

Photo 6: Overview of house and landscape, facing SW

Photo 7: North (rear) elevation, facing S Photo 8: West (side) elevation, facing E

Photo 9: Stone fountain fishpond and circle driveway, facing S

Photo 10: West (side) elevation and south (front) elevation and mortared rock wall, facing NE

Photo 11: Barn and windmill remnant, facing N

Photo 12: Interior, living room, facing W

Photo 13: Interior, pocket doors between living room and dining room, facing N

Photo 14: Interior, stone cellar and kitchen, facing S

Photo 15: Interior, second story bedroom door, transom detail, facing E

