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NPS Form 10-900

United States Department of the 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Audubon County Home Historic District

Other names/site number:

Audubon County Poor Farm; Nathaniel Hamlin Park and Museums; County Home Museum

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1891 215th Street. (West of US 71)

City or town: Audubon State: Iowa County: Audubon Code: 009

Not For Publication:

NA

Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A B C D

Steve King

16 JAN 2015

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Audubon County Home Historic District
Name of Property

Audubon Iowa
County and State

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: _____ **Date** _____

Title : _____ **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government** _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain:) _____

Jon Edson H. Beall 3.17.15
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
Public – Local
Public – State
Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
District

Audubon County Home Historic District
Name of Property

Audubon Iowa
County and State

- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	_____	sites
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>10</u>	<u>6</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- DOMESTIC / institutional housing
- AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE / agriculture outbuilding
- FUNERARY / cemetery
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- RECREATION AND CULTURE / museum
- SOCIAL / meeting hall
- COMMERCE/TRADE / specialty store
- RECREATION AND CULTURE / outdoor recreation
- AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE / animal facility
- FUNERARY / cemetery

Audubon County Home Historic District
Name of Property

Audubon Iowa
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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

 LATE VICTORIAN

 OTHER

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: FOUNDATION: brick/stucco;

WALLS: brick/wood/steel/weatherboard/limestone ROOFS: steel/asphalt shingles

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Approximately 1.5 miles south of the town of Audubon on U.S.71 and a quarter mile west on 215th Street is the hilly 10 acre property once known as part of the original Audubon County Home or "Poor Farm". (Figure 2) It ceased that use in c.1972. The Audubon County Historical Society acquired the property in 1976 as a centennial project to develop as a museum. Today the home is part of a complex known as the Nathaniel Hamlin Park, ((Figure 1) named after the first settler in the county. The most striking features of the complex are the home and the caretaker's cottage (Photos 0001 and 0002) with a high over-look facing east, over green lawns and farm buildings. (Photo 0003) Buildings that were part of the original farm, and are also contributing, include: west barn (WB); east barn (EB); meeting hall (MH); washhouse (WH); and tenants garage (TG). Other buildings, which are non-contributing, include: an elk barn (ElkB) and gazebo (ElkG); country school (CS); blacksmith shop (BSS); and machine shed (MS). A contributing site is the cemetery, which lies west of the home, and has 3 graves (G). Contributing structures include a man-made cave (C) and a reservoir (R). Fifteen windmills (x) are non-contributing. A grove of trees called Bluegrass Grove lies to the west of the houses. A bicycle trail and Bluegrass Creek lie to the east across the highway. Two miles farther east is the East Nishnabotna River. The county uses an area adjacent to the east side of the complex for storage of road materials and machinery. Adjacent to the southwest lies the county recycling and landfill facility. The Audubon County Home has considerable integrity, since the exterior remains as originally built and its interior has its original floor plan. It appears to have no structural problems. There is need for basic maintenance, plus re-pointing of mortar and replacement of some brick on the south wall. The other original farm buildings, site, and structures are in good condition and have historic integrity for site and style to satisfy the National Register requirements.

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National Park Service**

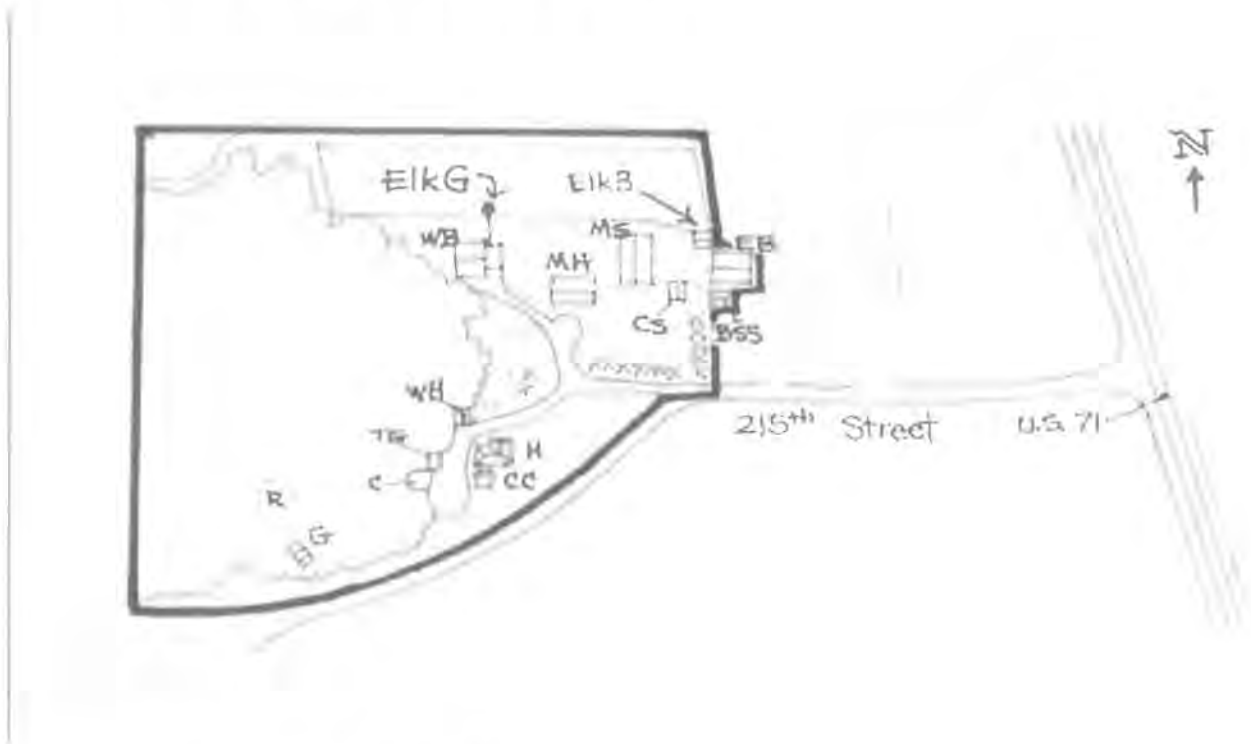
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Name of Property Audubon County Home Historic District
County and State Audubon County, Iowa

(Figure 1) SKETCH MAP

The solid dark line defines the approximate area of the property.
Scale: U.S. 71 to fork in the road is about a quarter mile.



Nathaniel Hamlin Park

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------|------|---------------------|
| H | County Home Museum* | CS | Country Schoolhouse |
| CC | Caretakers Cottage* | BSS | Blacksmith Shop |
| MH | Meeting Hall* | ElkB | Elk Barn |
| TG | Tenants Garage* | ElkG | Elk Gazebo |
| WH | Wash House* | C | Cave* |
| WB | West Barn* | G | Cemetery Graves* |
| EB | East Barn* | R | Reservoir* |
| MS | Machine Shed | X | Windmills |

Key: Contributing resources are marked with an *asterisk. Also, see PHOTO MAP on page 43, or Resource Chart, page 12.

Source: Drawn by N.A. Thomas from Google Maps, 2013

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Name of Property Audubon County Home Historic District
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Narrative Description

The **Audubon County Home** (H) (Contributing) was built as a county home for indigent people of the county in 1890. It is a 2-story brick, late Victorian building. It has an asymmetrical style with a low-pitched, cross-gable hip roof. The exterior has not been changed and is in good condition, considering its 124-year history. It measures about 38'x46'. (Photos 0001, 0004, 0005) (Figure 4)

Exterior details: The façade of the building features exposed brick with some surfaces of the foundation covered in stucco. The purpose of this treatment is unknown; perhaps a softer brick was used and the stucco applied to provide a more durable finish. The chimney (Photo 0004) is made of brick, and the roof is steel, with asphalt shingles on the east and south sides of the main building. There is a belt course of limestone girding the house at the base of the first floor level. Windows have brick segmental arches at the top. (Photo 0006) Windowsills and part of the lintel trim are made of limestone. The window casing is double-hung and made of wood with a slight arch at the top, while the glazing has a 2/2 pattern. At the top of the walls near the eaves is a linear pattern of brick trim that encircles the house. Three windows at the second floor level at the back of the house (west) have a simpler lintel shape. (Photo 0005) There is an expansive porch (7'3"x23'4") on the east side of the house. The historic photo shows wooden lattice was used around the base of the porch, (Figure 3) but that was replaced with brick, possibly c.1941. There is a wooden entry area (6'3"x12'4") on the west side that is enclosed with two newer storm doors and five original windows. Both east and west porches have slightly-arched detail. There is an iron fire escape on the north wall leading from the northeast room on the second floor to the ground, assumed to be part of the original building. Exterior walls are 15" thick.

Former details: There used to be a small dormer with windows on the east side roof, but that was removed when the house was roofed in c.1985. (Figure 3) There were two chimney stacks; both have been removed. A freestanding chimney remains on the north side of the house. (Photo 0004) It was originally built to exhaust a boiler system from the basement level, but that heating system is not operable.

Interior details: The floor plans for all three levels have not changed. (Figures 5,6,7) Plinth blocks were used at the base of door trim. Bull's-eye blocks adorn upper corners of doors and windows. Interior details are not elaborate, as can be expected for institutional construction. Door and window casing is wide (5 1/4") with some linear texture. Skirting boards are 9" deep. There are transom windows above all doorways. (Photo 0007) Some woodwork has been painted. All hardware is of a simple design. Wainscoting was used in one room (1st floor NE) and was made from pine. Wooden floors were made of pine or fir. Exterior walls were plastered directly over brick. Interior walls are 10" thick. Some plaster and lathe was used, and we think brick was used to strengthen load-bearing walls. Since the house is mainly extant, the walls haven't been broken into except for small repairs.

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Narrative Description, *continued*

The **Caretakers' Cottage** (CC) (Contributing) is believed to be the home of Royal Petty shown on the 1900 plat map of the county farm. The Audubon County Historical Society believes it was the original farmhouse on the land that was purchased from Michael O'Donnell in 1887, and that it was built in c.1880's. (Figure 2) It was moved to its present location in c.1910 and was meant to provide living quarters for a steward and his family. This house is attached to the larger brick building on the southwest side of the larger building. The cottage is a one-and-a-half-story, wood-framed house with a one-story wing that attaches to the main house. The foundation is brick with a crawl space from the larger home. It has a gabled roof and a covered entry area on the west side, with a deck on the east side. The cottage measures about 30'x26'. (Photo 0002) (Figure 4)

The **Meeting Hall** (MH) (Contributing) measures 32'x64' and is constructed of wood and brick. It was built by members of WPA in c.1941 from brick salvaged from the original Audubon County Courthouse. It served as the "Poor Farm Garage" and stored farm implements. It was remodeled in 1984 and the south side was closed in with wood framing and windows, which had also been recycled from the old courthouse. It serves as a meeting hall for the Audubon County Historical Society in warm months and can also be rented by the public for meetings, reunions, etc. (Photos 0008, 0009) (Figure 4)

The **Tenants Garage** (TG) (Contributing) is a wood-framed building c.12'x20' that lies just west of the home. It has wood siding, sits on a poured concrete base, and currently has a steel roof. It appears to have had a wood shingle roof at one time. We have no date for this building, but it appears in the c.1960 aerial photo and may have been built early on for the stewards' use. (Photo 0010) (Figure 4)

The **Wash House** (WH) (Contributing) is a 12'x20' wood-framed building just northwest of the home. It is also shown in the c. 1960 aerial photo. It has its original wood siding. The foundation is sculpted concrete block or stone, the roof is currently corrugated metal, but formerly had shake shingles, and it is in good condition. After a TAN (Technical Advisory Network) examination by preservation architects, it was more closely-dated to "early decades of the 20th century, based on the use of the concrete rock-faced block" of the foundation. (Honebrink, 2014, p.11) (Photo 0011) (Figure 4)

The **West Barn** (WB) (Contributing) is a wood-framed building measuring 40'x50' with a 14'x16' concrete block add-on (milk house). It has been mostly sided and roofed with steel, but old board and batten is evidenced on the east exterior wall under the awning. It is simply marked "old" on the county assessors paperwork and designated as the dairy barn. We (ACHS) are not sure if this barn was one of the original farm buildings already in place at the time the farm was purchased in 1887. There was a \$1163.65 expense in the supervisors accounts for "new building"

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Narrative Description, *continued*

in 1910, and this may have been for improvements to the old barn. "John Weighton – Lumber for barn at County Home: \$624.55; R.C. Waterson – Carpenter work on barn at County Home: \$149.25." (Audubon Co. Journal, 1910) Wooden-pegged joinery of true 6" beams is evident in the lower part. The loft shows joinery with large metal spikes, so it is possible the barn is a combination of more than one era. It is in good condition and is used in the summer as a "Bargain Barn", for sale of used clothing & small items. (Photo 0012) (Figure 4)

The **East Barn (EB)** (Contributing) is about 50'x60' and was built in fall of 1956 by Eagen Construction Company of Exira, Iowa at a cost of \$6,890.00. The Audubon County Court House has some plans drawn on tracing paper that show wall and rafter structure, as well as details for the roof vent and an inverted "Y" footing. The barn has a wood frame and steel cladding on a poured concrete base. It is in good condition and is used for storage. (Photo 0013) (Figure 4)

The **Machine Shed (MS)** (Non-contributing) was built 1988 for \$27,000. It is a steel building, 50'x75', on a poured concrete base and is in good condition. It houses antique tools and equipment. (Photo 0014)

The **Country Schoolhouse (CS)** (Non-contributing) is a wooden building 18'x22' that was donated by Charles and Joni Hansen and moved to the site in 1984. It was built in c.1866 and was used as the Douglas Township #3 country school. Audubon County stopped using country schools in about 1956, after which time students were bussed to schools in Audubon and Exira. It has been restored with new windows, siding, roof, walls and floor, and sits on a concrete block foundation. It has an asphalt shingle roof and is in good condition. It has a plaque reading "CSAA Landmark Schoolhouse by the Country School Association of America." (Photo 0015)

The **Blacksmith Shop (BSS)** (Non-contributing) is a wood-framed building with wood siding 18'x22' that was moved to the site in 2002. It has a poured concrete base and a steel roof. It was formerly an old office building on US 71 in Audubon and has a pressed-tin ceiling and wood siding. It currently houses blacksmith tools as well as harnesses, and is in good condition. (Photo 0015)

The ACHS considers the Blacksmith Shop and the Country Schoolhouse integral features of their historical park, since they are both part of the county's past history. Although neither building was part of the original County Farm, they are both popular with the public, and fit the Society's Mission Statement.

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Name of Property Audubon County Home Historic District
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Narrative Description, *continued*

The **Elk Barn (ElkB)** (Non-contributing) was built in 1997. It has a wood frame and is finished with steel siding and roofing. (Photo 0016) This newer structure houses a family of elk. This relatively small building belies its sturdy construction; the framing structure is made up of 4"x4" posts and beams, and walls are horizontally-placed 2"x16" planks. It is in good condition.

The **Elk Gazebo (ElkG)** is also newer (1999) and affords visitors a birds-eye view of the elk. It is a 12' octagonal shape, constructed with a wood frame, roofed with asphalt shingles, and the lower area is covered with metal panels. A wooden deck walkway connects to the West Barn. All features described here are in good condition. (Photo 0012, background)

Site and Structures

The **cemetery site** (Contributing) is located on a wooded hillside west of the home. There are three **graves (G)**. Only one has a marker, but all three are defined by concrete trim, two of which are intact and one is broken. One grave was for Moses Hart who died in May 1891, aged 74 years. Another grave was for his wife Martha "Grandma" Hart who died in December 1898 aged 75 years old. The Harts were two of the earliest residents of the home. The third grave is "unknown". This site is classified a "Pioneer Cemetery", based on Iowa criteria: a cemetery where there have been fewer than 12 burials in the past fifty years. Newspapers from 1898 recount details of the Harts' lives, and the ACHS continues research to enhance their story. (Photo 0018)

The **cave (C)** (Contributing) is built into the side of the hill west of the house, and is man-made. It was used for root storage. It is constructed of poured concrete, clay tiles, and brick. It has a wooden door and concrete retaining walls. It has an interior space of 18'x8' with a barrel-vaulted ceiling that is 8' high in the center. Sidewalls are about 5' tall. (Photo 0019)

The **reservoir (R)** (Contributing) is also located on the hill west of the house, and is constructed of poured concrete, clay tiles, and brick. It is approximately 12' in diameter. Part of a sidewall has collapsed. It is unknown if there were pipes in the ground to carry water to the house or a cistern; that possibility has not yet been explored. (Photo 0020)

Fifteen **windmills (X)** (Non-contributing) also called "wind-pumps" have been donated to the Historical Society over several years, starting in 1979. They are collectively counted as one resource. Some may date to the early 1900s. Windmills were marked on the 1900 county plat maps and were considered fairly new technology for that time. Harvey Somson, an early member of ACHS, promoted the collection and he'd also "had a hand in promoting and carrying out the Danish windmill project in Elk Horn, Iowa." (Sievers, 1984) It is not known at this time if any of the windmills date to the 1887 farm; more research is needed. Some windmills need repair. All need servicing. (Photo 0015)

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Statements

Topographical Statement: The reservoir (R) and cemetery graves (G) are on the highest ground; the county home (H), caretakers cottage (CC), tenants garage (TG), wash house (WH), and cave (C) are on a lower plateau; the meeting hall sits on a middle ground from which you go down to the west barn (WB) & elk gazebo (ElkG), and down to the machine shed (MS), east barn (EB), elk barn (ElkB), blacksmith shop (BSS), and country schoolhouse (CS). This hilly site is a strong part of the setting and integrity of the property and has not changed.

Archeological Statement: An archeological investigation was not a part of this nomination. Additional research may identify archeological sites, including unmarked graves that could contribute to the overall historical significance of the property.

Integrity Statement: The Audubon County Home Historic District retains its integrity from the period of significance identified for this property, 1888 – 1964. Aspects of integrity and how the buildings meet the integrity required for National Register listing are discussed below:

Location: The Audubon County Home Historic District occupies a portion of the original 200-acre county farm that was purchased in 1887. This extends the period of significance for this property to include c.1888 through 1964 for the continuous use as a county farm. The main contributing buildings, site, and structures included in this nomination have not been physically moved, though each of the buildings have been repurposed.

Design: The Audubon County Home Historic District buildings retain integrity of design. The County Home retains its original form and floor plan, even though two rooms (original kitchen and pantry area) were given over to use by the tenant in the caretaker's cottage. The floor plan has not changed, but access to those rooms is blocked using closed doors. Those doors will be reopened when it's no longer financially necessary to rent out the caretaker's cottage.

Setting: The Audubon County Home Historic District retains most of its original integrity of setting. The view from U.S. 71 of the home's rural setting has been somewhat compromised by the county maintenance buildings to the east. However, as you approach the home and farm buildings, and pass the county buildings, the rural feeling is re-established.

Materials: The materials originally used for construction of the Audubon County Home Historic District remain intact with some exceptions. Most contributing and non-contributing buildings have been reroofed with steel, with the exceptions of the home and the schoolhouse which have been roofed, partially or wholly, in asphalt shingles. The west barn has been partially clad with

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Integrity Statement, *continued*

steel siding; the east barn fully clad. Audubon is a farming community and the use of steel roofing or cladding is the norm for protection of farm structures. Early members of the ACHS were more concerned about protecting contents than about the aesthetics of using original materials; budget was the main factor. The original interior materials used in the county home are intact, except for flooring and wainscoting in the second floor bathroom. The old flooring was quite rotten and had a lot of large holes in it; donated hardwood was used to replace it. Also, the lower part of the bath walls were covered in 70s paneling. When that was removed, there were numerous large holes with missing plaster all the way around, so wainscoting was used. Some additions of carpet and vinyl linoleum that were added between 1964 and c.1985 are being taken out, returning floors to their original state. Some replacement windows (8) have been installed upstairs in the county home, but a 2/2 configuration has been used. Unfortunately, the window project was begun before the National Register nomination process was started. The plan is to repair remaining windows following guidelines suggested by the State Preservation Officers. There are 30 windows in the house, plus 9 in the basement.

Workmanship: Integrity of workmanship is evident throughout the Audubon County Home Historic District. Work of the original masons remains visible in the county home, specifically the arched window detail, use of limestone trim, and brick sculpting at the top of exterior walls. Excellence of work by the original carpenters is evident in the remaining detail of the east and west porches on the exterior, and of the transoms, door and window trim in the interior.

Feeling: The Audubon County home was built to resemble a large "farmhouse" (W. C. Page, 1990, p. 1-9), and it continues to convey that feeling. The size of nineteenth century families often resulted in the need for large family homes.

Association: Integrity of association refers to the degree to which a property has a direct link to the event, person or development for which the property is significant. The Audubon County Home and other buildings are well known as part of the original "poor farm", but after 42 years since its closing, less is known of individuals who lived and worked there. Members of the Audubon County Historical Society continue to investigate those aspects with research of records and first person accounts. National Register designation will no doubt help with the re-establishment of this understanding.

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Name of Property
Audubon County Home Historic District

County and State
Audubon County, Iowa

RESOURCES

Photo Number & Name of Resource	Category	Date of Construction	Moved?	Contributing or Non-
0001 County Home (H)	Building	c. 1890	No	Contributing
0002 Caretaker's Cottage (CC)	Building	c. 1880	Yes – c.1910	Contributing
0009 Meeting Hall (MH)	Building	1941	No	Contributing
0010 Tenant's Garage (TG)	Building	c. 1890 - 1960	No	Contributing
0011 Wash House (WH)	Building	c. 1890 – 1960	No	Contributing
0012 West Barn (WB)	Building	c. 1888 - 1960	No	Contributing
0013 East Barn (EB)	Building	1956	No	Contributing
0014 Machine Shed (MS)	Building	1988	No	Non
0015 Country Schoolhouse (CS)	Building	1866	Yes - 1984	Non
0015 Blacksmith Shop (BSS)	Building	c. 1900	Yes - 2002	Non
0016 Elk Barn (ElkB)	Building	c. 1999	No	Non
0012 Elk Gazebo (ElkG)	Building	c. 1999	No	Non
0019 Cave (C)	Structure	c. 1890	No	Contributing
0020 Reservoir (R)	Structure	c. 1890	No	Contributing
0015 Windmills (X)	Structures	c. 1900 – 1979	Yes	Non
0018 Cemetery Graves (G)	Site	1891 & 1898	No	Contributing

Audubon County Home Historic District
Name of Property

Audubon Iowa
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL HISTORY
AGRICULTURE

Period of Significance
c. 1888 – 1964

Significant Dates
c.1890
c.1910

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
Reeves, Grant

Audubon County Home Historic District
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Statement of Significance Summary

The Audubon County Home Historic District is locally significant under Criteria A because of its social history. It was used as a county "poor farm" and home from c.1888 through c.1972, a period of about eighty-four years. It housed indigent people of the county, which included the poor who couldn't support themselves, as well as inebriates and the insane. The home was built c.1890 with brick that was manufactured in the area. Although poor houses as an architectural type have not been studied in Iowa, the state had an extensive system of these facilities. The poor house in Audubon County gains added significance because it is a relatively unaltered example of its type, remains in good condition, and early drawings of the building's floor plan document this claim. A caretaker's cottage was added c.1910 for a man and his family who were expected to care for the farm operation as well as the residents of the home. "In about 1970 a commission decided the house should no longer be used to house the poor of the county. They also decided that it should be torn down, but the Supervisors held off on that decision." (Milliman, 1977, p. 4) The Audubon County Historical Society (ACHS) acquired the buildings and eight acres in 1976. Agricultural significance: The farmland comprising the original county farm was used to support the home, and able-bodied residents were expected to help make the operation self-sustaining. The county still rents some of the original farmland. Seven contributing buildings are: the home (H), caretaker's cottage (CC), meeting hall (MH), west barn (WB), east barn (EB), washhouse (WH), and the tenant's garage (TG). The two contributing structures are: the manmade cave (C) and reservoir (R). These buildings and structures are extant. It is unknown if the cemetery site contains more than three graves; further work will be required to establish the potential of this site. Criteria consideration D is satisfied since the cemetery is an integral part of the Historic District.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Social History: The Audubon County Home Historic District is a good example of a small county poor farm designed to resemble a farm home. The integrity of its location and association with some of the original poor farm outbuildings further strengthens its significance as a well-preserved example of a county home, a property type becoming increasingly rare in the state of Iowa. It was in continuous use as a poor farm until 1972. Members of the Audubon County Historical Society (ACHS), established in 1960, continue to collect information connected to the home: income & expenses, number of inmates, names of stewards, etc., to give us a clearer picture of what life was like in this institution.

Agricultural History: Records from 56 years of recorded data show a total income of \$460,707. Members of the ACHS are studying the supervisors' annual reports to establish whether the farm was truly "self-sustaining." The integrity and number of outbuildings strengthens the farm's significance as an agricultural entity. The society also is concerned with the care and display of farm machinery and tools from an earlier era. They preserve and show how farm homes were equipped at the time the county was being settled.

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Name of Property Audubon County Home Historic District
County and State Audubon County, Iowa

HISTORIC CONTEXTS

Early Government of Audubon County

Audubon County was organized as a separate county in 1855. The first government of the county was under the judge system -- one man with power to locate roads, levy taxes, and build bridges, court houses, jails, etc. The board of county supervisors system was established January 1, 1861. Since there was only one civil township at that time, there was one supervisor, J.M. Hubbard, and the first clerk of the board, Richard Eault. "The first bill they were called upon to audit and order paid from the county funds was \$20.84 to W.B. Felch, for boarding a pauper named W.L. Carter, for sixteen weeks, at \$1.25 per week." In 1863 another mention: W. S. Carter (pauper) was "let to William Carpenter at \$1.40 per week, with \$3 appropriation with which to purchase said Carter a hickory shirt and a pair of blue drilling pants." (Biographical History of Shelby and Audubon Counties, Iowa, 1889, p. 645 - 647) It is unknown if W.L. Carter and W.S. Carter were two men, or one and the same; perhaps the difference was due to a typographic error.

The business of the county for the next few years seems to revolve around disputes over which city would be the county seat. The original county seat was at Dayton (non-extant), then moved to Exira (1874), and finally to Audubon in 1879. The city of Audubon had just been platted at the end of the Atlantic & Audubon branch of the Rock Island Railway. "The railway company had large landed interests around Audubon, so they built a large brick structure designed so that it could be converted into business houses or into a court house, if desired. They finally donated a free lease of this building to the county for five years." At the end of five years the county purchased the building for \$7000. It was "a two-story brick building, 44 x 100 feet. The lower story is subdivided into rooms for the various county offices, while the upper floor serves as a court-room, and has for years been used as a public hall, opera house, etc." (Biographical History of Shelby and Audubon Counties, Iowa, 1889, p. 649) This building was used as the courthouse for Audubon County until 1940, at which time it was torn down and a new courthouse built. The materials from that old building were used in the construction of the County Home buildings in 1941 and 1984.

The rivalry between the cities of Exira and Audubon can be traced back to the county seat conflict: "At the election which finally settled the county-seat contest in favor of Audubon, much 'bad blood' was manifest, the south part of the county charging the north portion with illegal voting. So hot was this contest that men from Exira were present at the polls all day, for the purpose of challenging votes. These men, many of them, carried well-loaded revolvers, but the event passed off without the use of them. However, many hot words were shot pro and con throughout the day." (Biographical History of Shelby and Audubon Counties, Iowa, 1889, p. 649.)

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Early Government of Audubon County, *continued*

In 1887 there were three supervisors: "It was during this year that the question of purchasing land for poor-farm purposes came up, and was finally settled by a vote; a majority of 363 decided land should be bought at once. The tax for such purchase was two mills per dollar. Accordingly a 200-acre tract was bought from Michael O'Donnell, on sections 33 and 34 of Leroy Township, and within one mile and a half of Audubon, in a southwesterly direction. The board of supervisors could not have selected a finer location or obtained better land. A natural grove containing thirty acres gives a beautiful site for the poorhouse buildings which are to be built the present season. The farm-house already on the place, together with barns, etc., which the county has built, is sufficient to accommodate all the unfortunate poor, and the farm was more than self-sustaining the first year. It cost the county \$35 per acre, or \$7000, the same being a wise investment, for the two simple reasons that paupers can be kept cheaper in this manner, and also there are many persons who have hitherto drawn some support from the county fund who dislike to be sent to the poor farm -- hence the number is greatly lessened who apply for aid. For the first superintendent over this place, the services of V.A. Walkup were secured; he is now in his second term. His report shows, and is corroborated by the appearance of the farm, that he is the right man in the right place." (Biographical History of Shelby and Audubon Counties, Iowa, 1889, p. 650)

A further research of Walkup finds that he was born in Kentucky in 1844, joined the Union Army (Kentucky Cavalry) at the age of nineteen and took part in many skirmishes in the Civil War. He was taken prisoner on Nov. 17, 1863 and was paroled several days later. He returned to Iowa after the war, settling in Audubon County in 1881. He built the first steam flourmill in Audubon, took charge of the water works, and served as city marshal for three years. He was then appointed superintendent of the poor farm in 1888.

The 1911 contract between the county supervisors and the fourth steward, Joseph Baumgartner, seems to place more importance on the farm operation than on the people at the Poor Farm, whom were referred to as "inmates":

"THIS CONTRACT, made and entered into this 7th day of January, 1911, by and between Audubon County, Iowa, party of the first part, and Joseph Baumgartner, party of the second part, WITNESSETH: That party of the second part will assume the management of the County Home and Farm on the 1st day of March 1911 and continue said management of the County Home and Farm until March 1st, 1912, unless this contract is sooner terminated; and to do all things connected therewith some of which are hereinafter specifically mentioned, and in consideration the party of the first part agrees to pay the party of the second part \$60.00 per month at the end of each month, by warrants drawn on the County Fund of said County. Said

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Early Government of Audubon County, *continued*

party of the second part also agrees to do all the necessary work in connection with the running of the said County Home and Farm, heretofore and hereinafter mentioned: That he will cultivate, guard and protect the premises in a good and husband-like manner; That he will protect all the trees and shrubbery and especially all the grain he may raise on said premises from all danger by fire or depredations of stock; That he will haul out and scatter all the manure that may accumulate on said premises during the term of this contract; That he will destroy all Canada thistles on said premises and to prevent them from going to seed; That he will keep in good repair all fences and buildings on said place and that he will generally take such care of said premises as an ordinary man would of his own affairs. The said party of the first part agrees to keep a farm on said premises for the use of said party of the second part and further agrees to furnish all material for repairs and improvements on said place.

The said party of the second part further agrees that he will not remove any of the straw from said premises, or any of the crops raised thereon, except by an order of the Board of Supervisors, or a member thereof and that all small grain on said place is harvested and threshed as soon as possible, or advisable, after harvesting; That he will husk and crib all corn raised on said place on or before the 31st day of January of each year.

Said party of the second part further agrees that he will take proper care of all stock which is on said premises, or may be hereafter acquired during the life of this contract and that he will feed for market all stock that may be directed to by the Board of Supervisors, provided however, that he will not be required to feed more than two car load at any one time; That he will haul to the nearest market all grain, or whatever stock that may be salable, whenever the Board of Supervisors, or a member thereof, may direct. That whenever the Board of Supervisors may purchase any material, to be used on said place, he will haul same to said premises, from anyplace in Audubon County; That he will do all matter and things set forth in this contract for the compensation hereinbefore mentioned with the exception that the party of the first part will pay for the cost of machine for cutting and threshing grain, but the party of the second part agrees to do all the work in connection of harvesting grain, threshing of said grain, including shocking and stacking.

The said party of the second part in consideration of this contract further agrees to properly care for all inmates of the County Home, including washing and board, except that party of the first part will furnish the provisions necessary for the boarding of said inmates and the family of the party of the second part. And it is specifically understood that the Board of Supervisors may terminate this contract at any time.

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Early Government of Audubon County, *continued*

It is further agreed that should the party of the second part fail to turn over any money, or property, coming into his hands by reason of this contract, or when directed by the Board of Supervisors, or a member thereof, the Auditor of said county shall not pay any further sum to said party of the second part and shall refuse to draw and warrant in his favor until the sum has been paid or turned over as required. Said party of the second part agrees to furnish a good and sufficient bond, payable to Audubon County, Iowa, to be approved by the Board of Supervisors, for the faithful performance of the duties hereinbefore set forth. Said bond to be in the sum of \$2000.00.

Signed: G. M. Ross, Samuel McGaffin, E. F. Johnson
Board of supervisors of Audubon County, Iowa.

Party of the first part.

Joe Baumgardner, Party of the second part." (Train, 1911, pp. 78-79)

Another document "Instructions to Township Trustees", found in the 1909 Financial Report of Audubon County, makes it clear that there were to be no "frills" at the Poor Farm:

"Whereas, the support of the poor has become a great expense to the tax-payers of Audubon County, by the injudicious furnishing of supplies, in many instances of a kind that many tax payers cannot furnish their own families. Therefore, Be It Resolved, That the Board of Supervisors will allow only for plain, substantial supplies; they will positively refuse to allow payment for plush, lace, silk, ribbons, or peaches, lemons, oranges, canned goods, high grade flour, or any other article of luxury, unless, it be in the case of sickness, and then only upon the order of the attending physician; that supplies shall only be furnished upon the order of the township trustees who shall also see that the party is a county charge and is a resident of the county. The attention of township trustees is called to their duty as provided in section of 2226 and 2227, of the Code to warn all persons that may become county charges to depart from the county before they gain a residence.

That any person filing claims for other than goods ordered by the trustees, or selling certain prohibited goods and charging them as something else, or selling the above goods and trading them for others, or selling them above trade prices, will cause the whole bill to be rejected; that all persons receiving complete support from the county either by the order of the trustees or otherwise as declared fit subjects for the poor farm and should be sent there by the trustees of the respective townships in which there may be such cases.

A separate bill should be made of all board of health meetings and board of health physicians, as these items are all taxed back to the town or township where they originate.

Under the new law the township clerks are allowed two per cent for handling the township road funds." (Train, 1909, p. 7)

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First Person Accounts

"About 1944 or 1945, and in between working for other farmers, I also worked a day now and then for the manager of the Audubon County Farm. I think his last name was Richardson but I do not remember his first name. In the winter I would help him haul manure - I helped clean the hen house a couple times and the hog house once. I also helped with grinding feed for the hens. In the summer I would help him in putting up the hay. The hay field was north of the buildings and we crossed over that small creek on a bridge in what is now the elk enclosure. They put up loose hay, with a team of horses, a hay loader and a hayrack. This hay was put in the haymow of the cattle barn. If I remember right one of the men, who was living there drove the team on the hayrack and also drove them on the rope pulling the hay up into the haymow. Another man helped with leveling out the hay in the barn.

One time when the stewards were gone on a vacation, I stayed over there and took charge of the chores. Some of the men had certain chores that they could do, but some of the chores I had to do or watch that they did them right. I do not remember how many men were there at that time but [think] about six. I had to do most of the milking and I had to run the cream separator. One of the men did help with the milking but he could only milk one or two of the cows. They used quite a bit of milk and cream for the people that were living there. They had a bunch of hogs to be taken care of and hens in a hen house for the eggs. One of the men took care of feeding and grooming the horses.

One of the men had a lot of cats in one of the buildings and he fed them the skim milk and he would walk to Audubon and buy some cat food. He must have had some money of his own. He also picked up and brought back any stray cats that he could find. I looked into the building one time and they were wild. They were climbing the walls and running all over the building. From what others told me, he was the only person the cats knew.

That one time I ate and roomed in the manager's part of the house, and did not go into the part of the home where the other people stayed." (Larsen, 2014)

"In 1954 when I was ten years old, my mother was asked by the steward to come and "sit" at the County Poor House so that they could have an evening out. I don't think my mother knew what she was getting into, because she took me along. As we were ushered into the caretakers' cottage, we passed by a barred doorway, behind which the residents were crowded... their arms reaching through the bars. They must've known that we were new, because they wailed and shouted: 'LET ME OUT! LET ME OOOUUUTT!!!' It was a nightmare. Our hearts felt compassion for these poor souls - but our heads reasoned: Remember what the caretaker told us: Do not let them out! I wish I could remember the rest of the evening, but I can't -- my brain has probably blocked that terrible night." Flash forward to 2013 when I joined the Audubon County Historical Society: We are hoping that we can pull together some first-person accounts of the Poor House. My niece Marjorie (Alt) Rudolph is four years younger than me and she recalls a friendlier visit to the Poor House which took place a few years after my experience... (Thomas, 2014)

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First Person Accounts, *continued*

"I remember caroling at the home with our church choir. (St. John's Lutheran Church) We were brought into the first room at the back of the house, which was the dining room for the residents. They were all seated at the big table and we made a line halfway around the room. The residents looked clean and neat, with clean clothes and combed hair. They were quiet and attentive as we sang. We sang a few carols and left." (Rudolph, 2014)

Public Care for Dependent Persons in Audubon County, Iowa

After the county system of government was established in Audubon County, this is how social issues for poor and insane were handled: Each Township Trustee was responsible for his respective citizens; it was his duty to know how they were functioning. If a person could not care for themselves, all efforts were made to locate their immediate relatives to come to their aid so as to not be a burden on the county. This included grandparents, parents, children, and grandchildren. Residence at the County Poor Farm was a last resort. The county also did not want to take on the responsibility of transients; those persons were encouraged to vacate the county. A poor tax was levied to pay for the upkeep of persons living at the County Poor Farm, but it was understood that most people who were able, were to work at the farm to "earn their keep".

It was the responsibility of the caretaker and/or a doctor to recommend that an inmate of the poor farm be moved on to a State Hospital. Sometimes a person was committed to the Poor Farm by a family member. Clarinda handled an assortment of problems, so if they were released back to the care of the county home, we can only assume that their condition had improved and they were no longer a danger to themselves or others.

It is possible that in the 1940's through '50's that these institutions were functioning as old folks' homes, in addition to being a repository for the social poor or insane. Audubon County's Friendship Home (care for aged) was established in 1959, coincidentally about the same time the County Poor Farm was closed.

The following is a summary of the recently-discovered Audubon County Home records for 1942-'43, and 1949-'51: It is hard to trace the number of inmates in residence during these years because of movements in and out, but the population average was from 12 to 16. The ages of the known inmates varied from 24 up to 89, with most in the 60s, 70s and 80s. Four inmates died while in residence during 1942, '43, and '49.

Medical: About \$60 was paid for medical expenses in 1942; in 1943 \$48 for doctors, \$130.50 for dental, and \$124 for drugs. Since the county was responsible for medical expenses for the

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Public Care for Dependent Persons in Audubon County, Iowa, *continued*

caretaker and his family as well as inmates, it may be difficult to sort out just who received the benefit of medicines or medical attention. In 1949, \$231.00 was spent for medical and \$6.00 for dental expense. There is only one medical expense listed for 1951, which was a hospitalization in Carroll at St. Anthony Hospital for \$3,033.35. The Audubon County Hospital was built in 1952. Medical expense for 1951 included about \$132 for doctors, \$21 for dental, and \$107 for drugs. Veterinarian expense is also listed in the Home's reports. It is hoped that drugs for animals and people were kept separate, but that is unknown, since entries were listed simply as "drugs". Other expenses: Frozen pipes were a problem in 1949-'50 because they paid someone to come and defrost pipes. A total of \$30 was sent to Earl May Seed Co. during 1950-'51. The garden was located on a level area of the property, in the area defined by the Elk Barn south to the road and from the East Barn west to west edge of the Machine Shed. In 1950 there was a \$20 expense for "piano". Other "luxuries" included \$35.50 for an "electric fan and to repair radio", but again, it is not known if this was for the inmates' use or the steward's. It is hoped that ACHS will find more of this type of record. If so, it would be beneficial to approach the University of Iowa and/or Iowa State University's sociology and/or history departments with our material.

Care of the Insane in Audubon County and other Iowa Counties

Methods for care of mentally ill persons have changed dramatically over the past century. At the time of the platting of Audubon (1878), there were three facilities in the state to take care of the incurable insane: Clarinda, Independence, and Mount Pleasant. The older hospitals at Independence and Mount Pleasant became over-crowded, so "The Clarinda Treatment Complex was built in 1884 as the Clarinda State Hospital in Clarinda, Iowa in southwest Iowa. It was the third asylum in the state of Iowa and remains in operation today. The hospital's many name variations include: The Clarinda Lunatic Asylum, The Clarinda State Asylum, The Clarinda Asylum for the Insane, and The Clarinda Mental Health Institute." The original plan for patients was to hold alcoholics, geriatrics, drug addicts, mentally ill, and the criminally insane." (Wikipedia, 2014) Clarinda started accepting patients in 1888.

Audubon County

Unlike larger counties that actually made allowances for specific facilities for the insane, Audubon County's residents were all housed together: paupers, insane, demented, inebriates and others, including children of the indigent. In the 1895 Iowa State Census, nine people were listed in the Royal Petty (steward of the Poor Farm) household, including a 40-year-old woman and her 8-year-old son. (FamilySearch.org, 2013)

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Care of the Insane in Audubon County and other Iowa Counties, *continued*

Recent discovery (Oct. 2014) of partial County Home records for the years 1942-'43, and 1949-'51 reveal that inmates were, indeed, sent on to Clarinda for psychiatric care (1 in 1943, and 2 in 1949). Conversely, inmates were also received from Clarinda; apparently helped by their stay at Clarinda (3 patients in 1949, and 1 in 1950). ACHS hopes to uncover more of this type of record to further tell the history of the Audubon County Home.

To say that treatment for any person in the Audubon County Poor Farm was "harsh" may be an understatement. We (ACHS) may never know the degree of suffering at this facility – we can only look at the physical evidence left at the house. So far that has only shown: (1) that all rooms had padlocks on the outsides of doors, and (2) that window casements were screwed into window frames from both the outside and inside. The padlocks and window screws may have been used to prevent inmate escape or for their own safety. Unless we find written records, we may never know.

From recently-discovered records, there is a glimmer of hope that the Audubon inmates were treated fairly well. We know that inmates received medical and dental care, and medicines and medical supplies were regularly-purchased for their use; we also see payments made to area hospitals. In 1942, "\$51.00 to pay for funeral for AA." (1942 County Home Records) There were payments to "Iowa State Penitentiary for blankets and sheeting" (1949 County Home Records) and "to Men's Reformatory \$12.84 for soap". (1942 County Home Records) Apparently, they were supporting prison industries, and being budget-conscious at the same time. We do not know how patients were treated from 1900 to 1941, and will endeavor to find more records, including the years 1952 until the end of the County Home's use as a care facility.

Page County (Clarinda)

This institution was also established as a farm consisting of 500 acres, and increased to 860 acres. It had a capacity and population of 811 patients, and most of the male patients worked on the farm, gardens, greenhouse, or stables. Other industries at Clarinda included: manufacture of clothing, shoes, wood products including furniture, mattresses, and brooms. (Asylum Projects, 2014)

"Patients are committed to the hospital without previous consultation of hospital authorities. Upon entrance all patients, irrespective of conditions, are confined to bed for a few days at least until physicians and nurses can be more familiar with the patient. They are also, within the first few days of their admission, carefully examined as to their physical and mental or nervous disorders or anything abnormal which presents itself. Where the history accompanying the patient is defective it is endeavored to obtain further information from friends and correspondents and others who

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Care of the Insane in Audubon County and other Iowa Counties, *continued*

may have knowledge pertaining to the patient's previous life. The history of each individual patient is kept up and memoranda made at stated intervals and as much oftener as changes in the patient's condition may render it desirable." (Asylum Projects, 2014)

"Patients were classified according to condition. The acute are cared for in specially equipped wards by nurses who are selected for the requirements of the ward for *disturbed and acute* cases. The *sick* are maintained in a regular hospital ward for the sick employees. The *infirm* are kept on special wards and those on the men's side are in charge of women nurses. The *tubercular* patients are cared for in special rooms on certain wards. An appropriation has been asked for the erection of a regular tuberculosis pavilion and also for a special building with a capacity of 200 for new and disturbed patients of both sexes. There are maintained for each sex special wards for the care of epileptic patients." (Asylum Projects, 2014)

Other Counties

Documents for Washington Co. show a large facility with a wing for the insane and a wing for others. (W.C. Page, 1990, Fig. 4-a, p. 4-2) Johnson Co. (Iowa City) tells of a wooden structure that was used between 1886-1930 for mentally ill patients which had small, barred cubicles.

"Treatment was non-existent, heat provided only by a small stove in the hallway, and the amount of physical care administered here was probably little more than that given the hogs who occupied the structure in later years." (Miltner, 1974, p. 3) Jackson Co. reports of an asylum: "In 1870 and 1872, there was a stone building, 26 x 30 feet, two and one-half stories, erected by the county, in which might be accommodated the incurably insane returned from the State Asylum. Each floor is divided into rooms or cells, with doors of iron grating, opening into the halls, by which means the cells are heated in winter from stoves located in the halls. In this department are nineteen insane persons, eleven of whom have been pronounced incurable." (Naumann, 1992, p. 3)

Historic Public Care of the Poor

The following, well-written by historian W.C. Page in 1990, chronicles general care for poor persons from 1485 Tudor England up to Iowa's early years of the 20th century:

"The care of dependent persons in the legal locality of residence is an old concept in English law dating from the Tudor period. This concept was transplanted to America during this country's colonization. In the Midwestern United States, the typical governmental unit to administer the so-called Law of Settlement generally has been the county and here the poor farm evolved as the institution to provide care for dependents.

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Historic Public Care of the Poor, *continued*

An important question, at all times and places, has been the definition of what constitutes dependency and, hence, eligibility for public care. Dependency has historically been defined to embrace a wide spectrum of the human condition -- paupers, infirm, vagrants, insane, orphans, et cetera. Care for dependents, historically, has revolved around two different types of care: indoor relief and outdoor relief -- indoor relief provided by poor houses and poor farms, for example, and outdoor relief (or out-relief) being the financial support of dependents in their own or other private homes. The fact that dependency has traditionally been defined broadly has often meant that people with widely varying problems have been inappropriately housed together. As western society evolved, dependency has been more closely defined. By the end of the Victorian period, for example, separate institutions were often in service to care for different types of dependency.

From the time of territorial status through the present day, legislation in Iowa for poor relief has formed the framework for public programs to address this problem. The care for poor has been seen as a basic responsibility of county government from the earliest period of Iowa's statehood.

The poorhouse was an ancient, if not honorable institution, which was believed every county ought to have, along with the jail and the courthouse, as soon as the people could afford it (Gillin, 1914, p. 89).

Prior to the Civil War, county judges were authorized to administer programs for the care of dependents. They oversaw the care of the poor, establishment of poor houses, purchase of land, building's erection, and institutional operation. Judges had to submit the cost of these expense to public vote if they were beyond the county's ordinary tax revenues. During this early period, the contractor system was widespread in the Midwest and in Iowa. If a county had no poor house, independent private contractors often times provided services to dependents at county expense.

A mechanism to fund poor houses was provided by state legislation in Iowa. Counties could use monies from regular taxation, or, if this was insufficient, levy a poor tax if approved by public vote. The General Assembly also, from time to time, approved the sale of government land to fund poor house construction (Jones County) and sometimes swamp land money was also given over to poor house construction. In 1846 the General Assembly passed special legislation to provide poor relief for a poor house in Lee County and similar legislation was also passed in 1851 for an institution in Des Moines County.

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Historic Public Care of the Poor, *continued*

In 1860 the General Assembly authorized county boards of supervisors to oversee matters related to the poor and other dependents. The county judge system of administration ended. (Boards of supervisors continue up to the present day to be responsible for many social services for dependents in their counties).

The Civil War dramatically changed public programs for dependents. Society felt strong obligation to support the families of soldiers on duty and for war widows and orphans. While these programs were seen as socially acceptable, other forms of out-relief for the poor continued to have a stigma (Gillin, 1914, p. 97).

Changes in Iowa state law in 1873 required the administrator of a poor house (sometimes called a superintendent, sometimes a steward) to use proceeds from the poor farm cash profit to help fund expenses of the poor house. According to one social historian, this new legal language changed the direction of the administrator's energies from concern for the inmates to making the farm profitable (Gillin, 1914, pp. 168-169).

In 1909 the General Assembly changed state law so that county supervisors might levy 2 mills instead of 1 mill on the dollar for the care of the poor. In this same year, the State of Iowa changed terminology for poor houses, officially renaming them "county homes." The basic functioning of institutions for dependents remained, however, mostly as in the past. The years between 1897 and 1907 were mixed in terms of social reform: 'this period is marked by the growth of other social legislation, but decreasing attention was paid to the care of the poor' (Gillin, 1914, p. 110).

The poor house/poor farm/county home system was very widespread in Iowa. In 1911, for example, all but four of Iowa's 99 counties maintained county homes or poor houses/poor farms (Gillin, 1911, p. 41). The sane inmate population at these facilities totaled 1,137 individuals. Many facilities housed both the sane and insane. One county in Iowa at this time maintained a contractor system to provide dependent care. State monitoring of these institutions was incomplete. Only those facilities which provided care for the insane were inspected and evaluated by state officials. The other facilities were under local control where county officials had many duties and little expertise in the sociology and science of dependent care. The likelihood for mistreatment and ill care was greater at facilities without state control. Many instances of resident mistreatment apparently were overlooked.

During the first two decades of the Twentieth Century, there was considerable professional discussion concerning poor houses on the national, regional, and state levels. At annual conferences on charities and corrections in Iowa, for example, public officials, social workers,

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Historic Public Care of the Poor, *continued*

and experts in the field exchanged information and attempted to understand problems related to poor relief. New buildings replaced earlier farm houses which had been simply converted from single-family residences into poor houses. World War I broke into this picture of reform. In the post-war world, new problems like hard-surfaced roads engaged county boards of supervisors and issues relating to poor houses moved into the background (McClure, 1968, p. 10).

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, poor houses continued operation and felt the pinch of constraints as many private families. As the population of the elderly grew in Iowa and people lost their homes and savings, so the need for more beds in county homes grew. The buildings which seemed like palaces in the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries became overcrowded. By the same token, other government programs, like federal old age insurance ('social security') and the old age assistance program, were enacted. In Minnesota, public assistance programs had immediate effects of county poor farms and the number of these institutions declined (McClure, 1968, p. 165). This could possibly be said for Iowa as well." (W.C. Page, 1990, pp. 1-5 and 1-6)

History of Iowa's Poor Relief

The following, written by Leah D. Rogers in 2014, chronicles Iowa's poor relief and social reform that took place from the early 1900s up to 1979:

"The four counties in Iowa in the early 1900s that did not maintain county homes or poorhouses were Crawford, Emmet, Ida, and Osceola (Gillin 1914, p. 319). However, some of these, such as Crawford County had built a county home by the 1920's, probably in response to the increasing numbers of impoverished during the Great Depression, which in Iowa began in the 1920s with the farm depression." (Rogers, Johnson County, p.28)

"By the early 1900s, there were some separate facilities for the care of certain classes of dependents. The State Institution for Feeble-Minded Children at Glenwood was an institution where a person below the age of 46 years could be committed if they had been pronounced so by the proper authorities; however, an insane person of the same age could also have been sent into the county poorhouse system if they had not been adjudged insane by the county commissioners of insanity (Gillin 1914, pp. 322-323). Other state hospitals for the insane included one established at Mt. Pleasant in 1861, one in Independence in 1873, one in Clarinda in 1888, and one in Cherokee in 1902 (WPA 1986). If there was no separate asylum facility at the county poor farm, then the insane person could be kept in the poorhouse with the other dependents, sometimes in a separate ward. Blind persons could be admitted to the College for the Blind in Vinton, while deaf persons could be sent to the Iowa School for the Deaf at Council Bluffs at the expense of the state. Orphans might be cared for at the Soldiers' Orphans' Home at Davenport but could be kept at a county

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Name of Property Audubon County Home Historic District
County and State Audubon County, Iowa

History of Iowa's Poor Relief, *continued*

poorhouse as well. Disabled veterans could be housed at the Soldiers' Home at Marshalltown. There was also a state hospital for epileptics and a school for the feebleminded in Woodward, Iowa. However, many county homes continued to co-mingle the different types of dependents, often with less-than-desirable results." (ibid)

"While there was much discussion about reforming the county poor farm/county home system in the early twentieth century, World War I pushed issues related to the poor into the background. As a result, the onset of the Great Depression and the resulting rise in the number of poor needing assistance, taxed the county home system to its limits. County home buildings that had once seemed so large quickly became overcrowded. However there was a relief from the federal public assistance programs that had the immediate impact of lessening the need for county poor farms (Page 1990, p 1-6). As the twentieth century progressed in Iowa, as elsewhere in the Midwest and the nation as a whole, the county poor farm system evolved into nursing homes for the elderly and specialized hospitals and institutions for the mentally ill and the disabled. As a result, the poor farm system was becoming obsolete by the late twentieth century." (ibid)

"Just prior to the passage of the nation Social Security Act in 1935, Iowa had already enacted an Old Age Pension law for which a census was conducted between January and April 1935 to identify beneficiaries. Iowa was among only a handful of states that enacted old age pension legislation prior to Social Security. The other states included California, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Washington, and Wisconsin, states that all enacted early old-age assistance programs, with Colorado, Florida, Iowa and Mississippi all enacting legislation in the 1930s just prior to the national legislation (Lansdale 2003). One writer concluded that old age assistance had been earlier in the western states primarily out of concern for the pioneer." (Rogers, Johnson County, p.29)

"In the East, down to the Great Depression, economic success was generally attributed to individual acumen, and failure to personal inadequacies. In the Far West, it appeared to me that there was greater tolerance for the old person who had not "struck it rich," attributable perhaps to the fact that those who had, knew that good luck rather than superior virtue accounted for their success (Lansdale 2003)." (ibid)

"However, residents of county homes were not eligible for Social Security payments according to the new national law and, as a result there was "a massive exit of residents and wholesale shutdown of the homes" across the country (Engel 1979). By the time that the eligibility rules were reversed in 1950, "most of the nation's county home were closed" (ibid)." (ibid)

"But in Iowa, support for the county home system never wavered — partly out of respect for county authority, but primarily because it was chapter for counties to care for their poor and disabled at home than to send them to state institutions. (Unlike most other states, Iowa counties are required to pay most of the costs related to their residents' use of state institutions).

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Name of Property Audubon County Home Historic District
County and State Audubon County, Iowa

History of Iowa's Poor Relief, *continued*

Not until 1958, when several residents were killed in a Council Bluffs nursing home fire, was the county's autonomy over its care facilities cracked.

The Legislature, in session at the time of the fire, gave the state Health Department and fire marshal board powers to regulate all homes caring for the aged.

But neither that legislation, nor a law passed in 1965 requiring licensing of county homes, had much effect. It was not until 1971 that state regulation of care facilities began to mean something." (ibid.).

"Another reason for the continued support for the county home system in Iowa was the fact that farmers were not eligible for Social Security until the mid-1950s. It is likely that many of the continuing population of Iowa's county homes between the 1930s and the 1950s were farmers ineligible for Social Security and in need of assistance.

In 1979, the *Des Moines Register* ran an investigative article that exposed a number of county homes that had become little more than a dumping ground for the mentally ill, mentally disabled, and senile elders but also for alcoholics and drug addicts (Engel 1979). Conditions in some homes were found to be substandard despite the enforcement of state health laws at county homes starting in 1971. Some county homes were still in operation in the 1970s, though few could be operated at a profit." (ibid.)

"It was noted ironically in the 1979 article that many of the same defects in the state's county home system in the late 1970s were the same as those cited in a 1904 study, which noted that "the county homes are notoriously ill-adapted; there are no facilities for the segregation of the various classes of dependents and defectives; the treatment of inmates, to say the least, is unscientific; it is rare, indeed, that much attention is paid to comfort and happiness; stewards as a rule, are untrained; poor management and inefficiency seem to prevail everywhere" (quoted from "State Legislation in Iowa, 1904, Iowa State Historical Society" in Engel 1979). (Rogers, Johnson County, p.30)

"Since 1979, the county home system has changed radically and is much more regulated today than in 1979. Facilities for the different types of dependents have also been better segregated. A number of county homes, such as the Johnson County Home, were privatized. None of the county poor farm operations have survived, although some county farm buildings remain standing as vacant buildings, historical exhibits, or adapted to other uses." (Rogers, Johnson County, p.30)

Audubon County Home Historic District

Audubon Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Name of Property Audubon County Home Historic District
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Name of Property Audubon County Home Historic District
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Audubon County Home Historic District
Name of Property

Audubon Iowa
County and State

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 Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property c. 10 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates Datum if other than
WGS84: _____ (enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Audubon County Home Historic District
Name of Property

Audubon Iowa
County and State

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: 15	Easting: 339844	Northing: 4617855
2. Zone: 15	Easting: 340101	Northing: 4617860
3. Zone: 15	Easting: 340097	Northing: 4617768
4. Zone: 15	Easting: 339899	Northing: 4617661

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Audubon County Historical Society is the owner on record of three parcels:

Lot A SW NE Sec. 33-80-35 = 3.6 acres

Lot A NW SE Sec. 33-80-35 = 4.22 acres

PT SE NE ¼ Sec. 33-80-35 = 2.30 acres

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes the parcels historically associated with the County Home, including the farmyard and buildings, and excepting the farm land.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Neoma Alt Thomas

organization: Audubon County Historical Society

street & number: 2203 Clark Avenue

city or town: Ames state: IA zip 50010 e-mail nthomasart@msn.com

telephone: 515-509-1157

Others with vested interest:

Carma Hutchins, Pres. ACHS, 210 E. Division St., Audubon, IA 50025

Audubon Co. Supervisors, Attn: Duane Diest, 1758 150th St., Audubon, IA

50025 Debra Umland, Audubon Co. Assessor, 318 Leroy St. #2, Audubon, IA

50025 Diana Munch, Audubon Co. Auditor, 318 Leroy #4, Audubon, IA 50025

Audubon County Home Historic District
Name of Property

Audubon Iowa
County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Figures

- (Figure 1) Sketch Map
- (Figure 2) 1900 Plat Map, detail
- (Figure 3) Historic 1890 photo showing construction of County Home
- (Figure 4) Circa 1960 photo showing aerial view of County Farm
- (Figure 5) Basement of County Home
- (Figure 6) First floor of County Home
- (Figure 7) Second floor of County Home
- (Figure 8) Photo Map

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Audubon County Home Historic District
City or Vicinity: Audubon
County: Audubon State: Iowa
Photographer: Phillip Thomas, Sr.
Dates Photographed: July 2013; Oct. 2013; Nov. 2013; Dec. 2013
Digital images stored with photographer at 2203 Clark, Ames, Iowa 50010

Audubon County Home Historic District
Name of Property

Audubon Iowa
County and State

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- (Photo 0001) Audubon County Home, east elevation, camera facing W
- (Photo 0002) Caretakers Cottage & County Home, east elevation of cottage and partial south view of home, camera facing W
- (Photo 0003) Nathaniel Hamlin Park, looking NE from the east porch of County Home. Left to right: meeting hall, machine shed, elk barn, country school, east barn, and blacksmith shop (partially obscured by trees)
- (Photo 0004) County Home Museum, north elevation, camera facing S
- (Photo 0005) County Home Museum, west elevation, camera facing E
- (Photo 0006) Window detail, west exterior, Audubon County Home, camera facing E
- (Photo 0007) Interior showing doorway with transom window, looking north into hallway
- (Photo 0008) Meeting Hall, west and north elevations, camera facing ESE
- (Photo 0009) Meeting Hall, south elevation, camera facing N
- (Photo 0010) Tenant's Garage, south and east elevations, camera facing NW
- (Photo 0011) Wash House, south and east elevations, camera facing NW
- (Photo 0012) West barn with elk gazebo to the right in background, camera facing NW.
In foreground: Arch Andersen, a retired Audubon businessman, is a 30 year+ member of the historical society. He worked with Dr. John Sutcliffe to bring elk to Audubon County and he continues to care for and feed the elk family.
- (Photo 0013) East Barn, west and south elevation, camera facing NE
- (Photo 0014) Machine Shed, south and east elevations, camera facing NW
- (Photo 0015) Country School & Blacksmith shop, west and south elevations, camera facing ENE (photos 15-20 in black and white)
- (Photo 0016) Elk barn, south and west elevations, camera facing NE
- (Photo 0017) Start of the walking trail that leads you to the graves and reservoir, camera facing NE (note elevation)
- (Photo 0018) Cemetery showing graves of Mr. & Mrs. Hart plus an "unknown", west of the County Home, camera facing WSW
- (Photo 0019) Cave, east elevation, camera facing W
- (Photo 0020) Reservoir west of County Home, camera facing WNW

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. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Name of Property Audubon County Home Historic District
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(Figure 2) Detail, 1900 PLAT MAP, Audubon County, IA
Detail showing location of Poor Farm in relation to the town of Audubon



Source: Ogle, Geo. A. *Standard Atlas of Audubon County, Iowa* Chicago: Geo. A. Ogle & Co., 1900

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Continuation Sheet

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Name of Property Audubon County Home Historic District
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(Figure 3) 1890 Historic Photo



Historic photo, 1890 by Harper Photography, Audubon
Showing construction of County Home
Audubon County, Iowa
(Camera facing NW)

Source: *Collection of the Audubon County Historical Society*

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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Name of Property
Audubon County Home Historic District

County and State
Audubon County, Iowa

(Figure 4) Circa 1960 Historic Photo



Historic photo: c. 1960,
Aerial view of County Farm,
Audubon County, Iowa
(Camera facing WSW)

Source: *Collection of the Audubon County Historical Society*

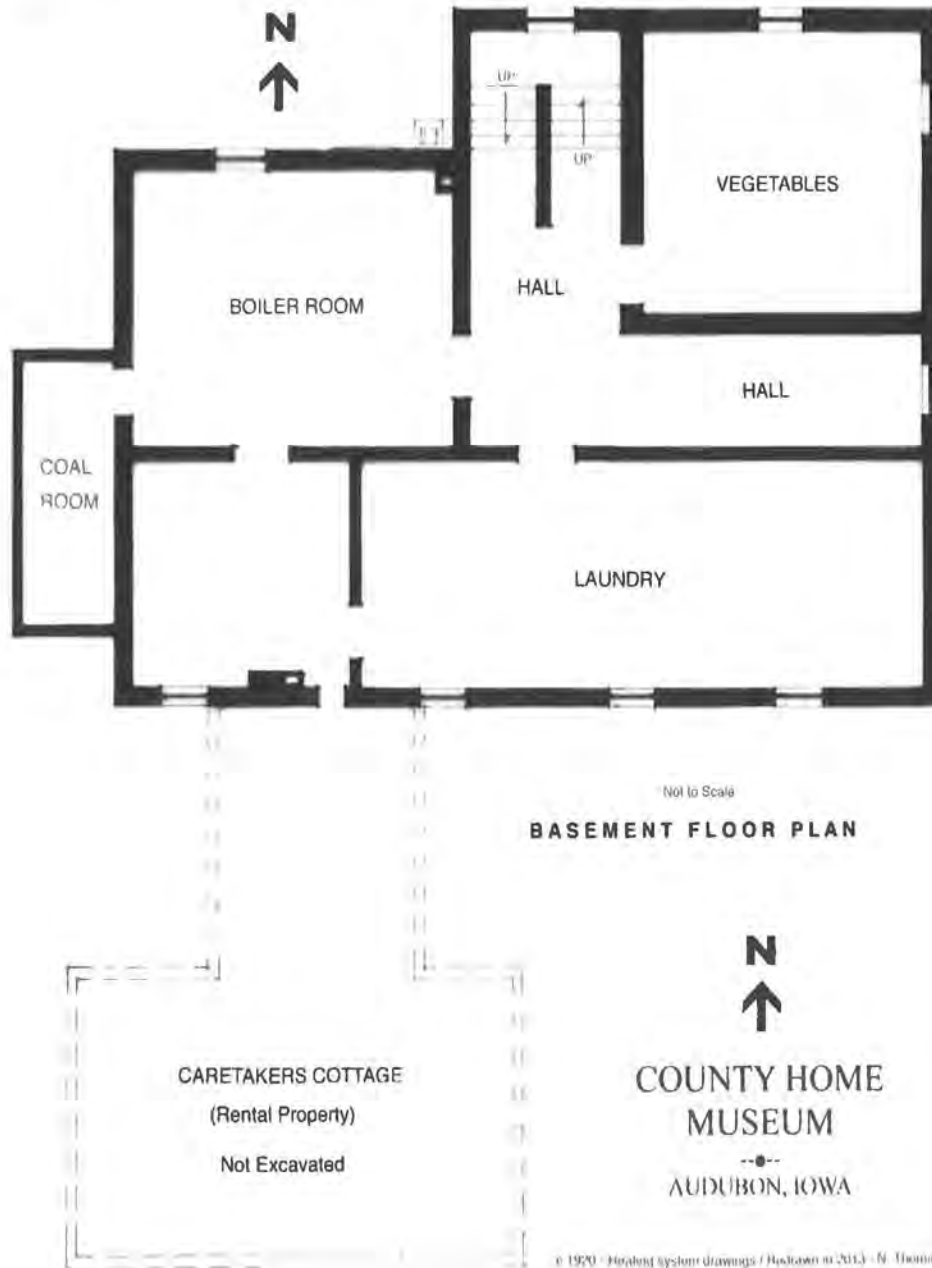
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National Park Service**

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Name of Property Audubon County Home Historic District
County and State Audubon County, Iowa

(Figure 5) Basement Floor Plan



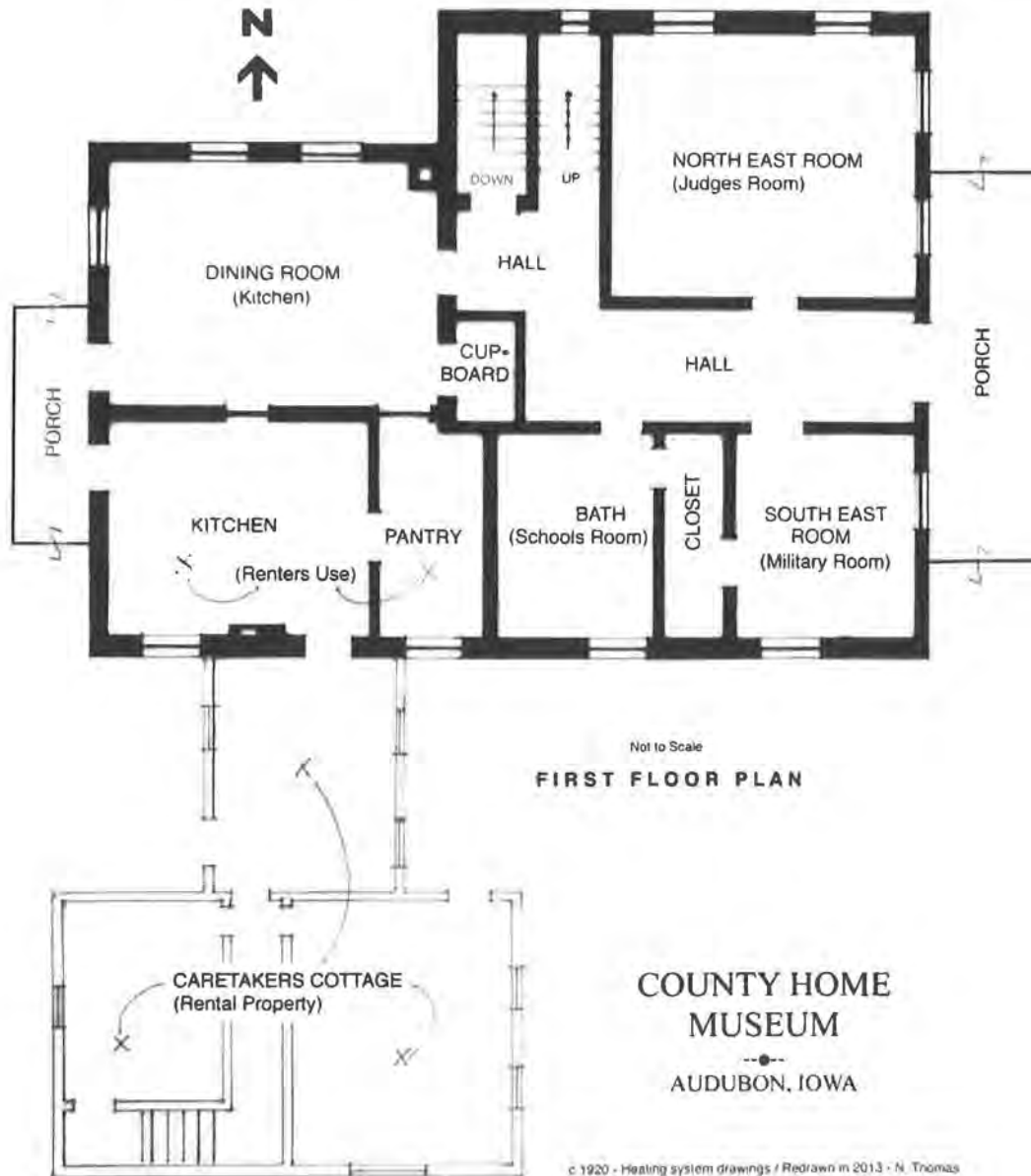
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Name of Property Audubon County Home Historic District
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(Figure 6) First Floor Plan



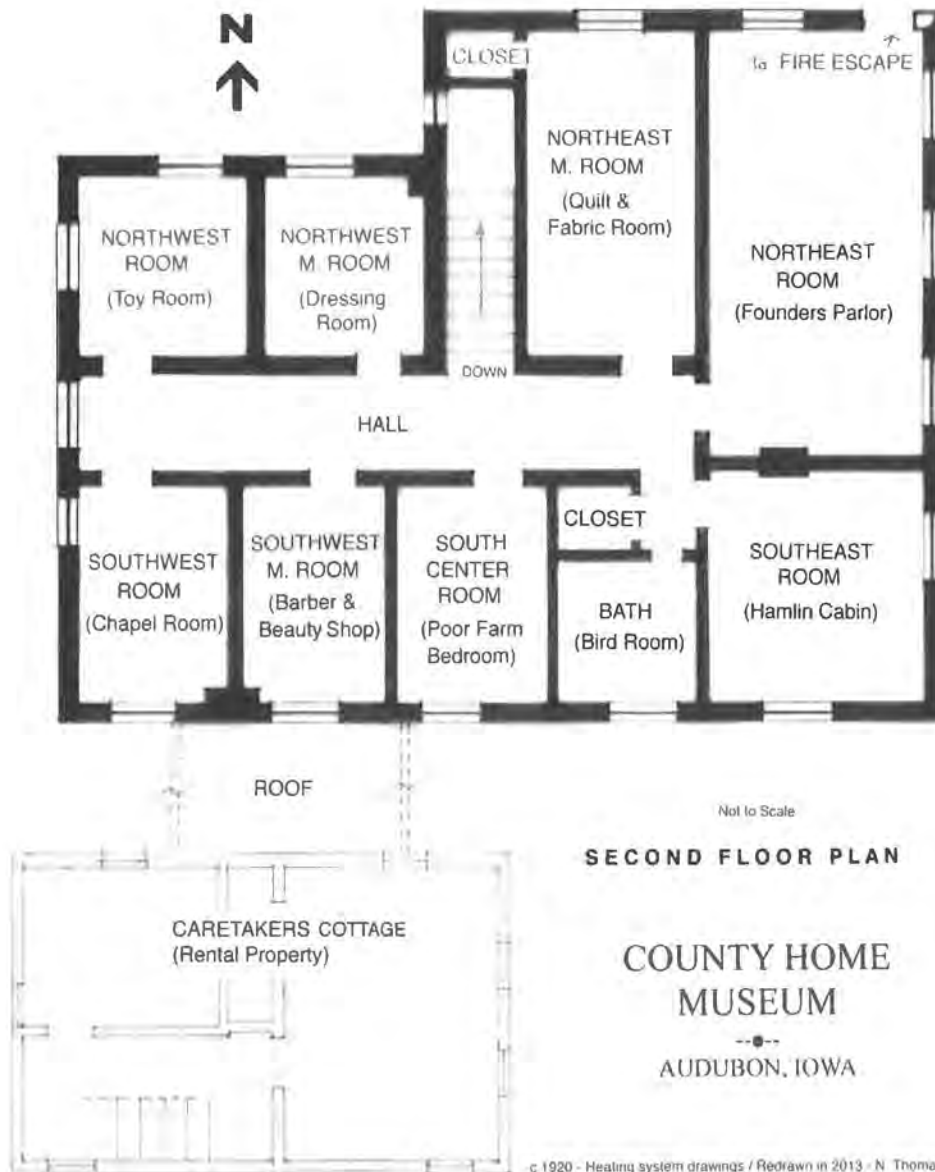
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Name of Property Audubon County Home Historic District
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(Figure 7) Second Floor Plan



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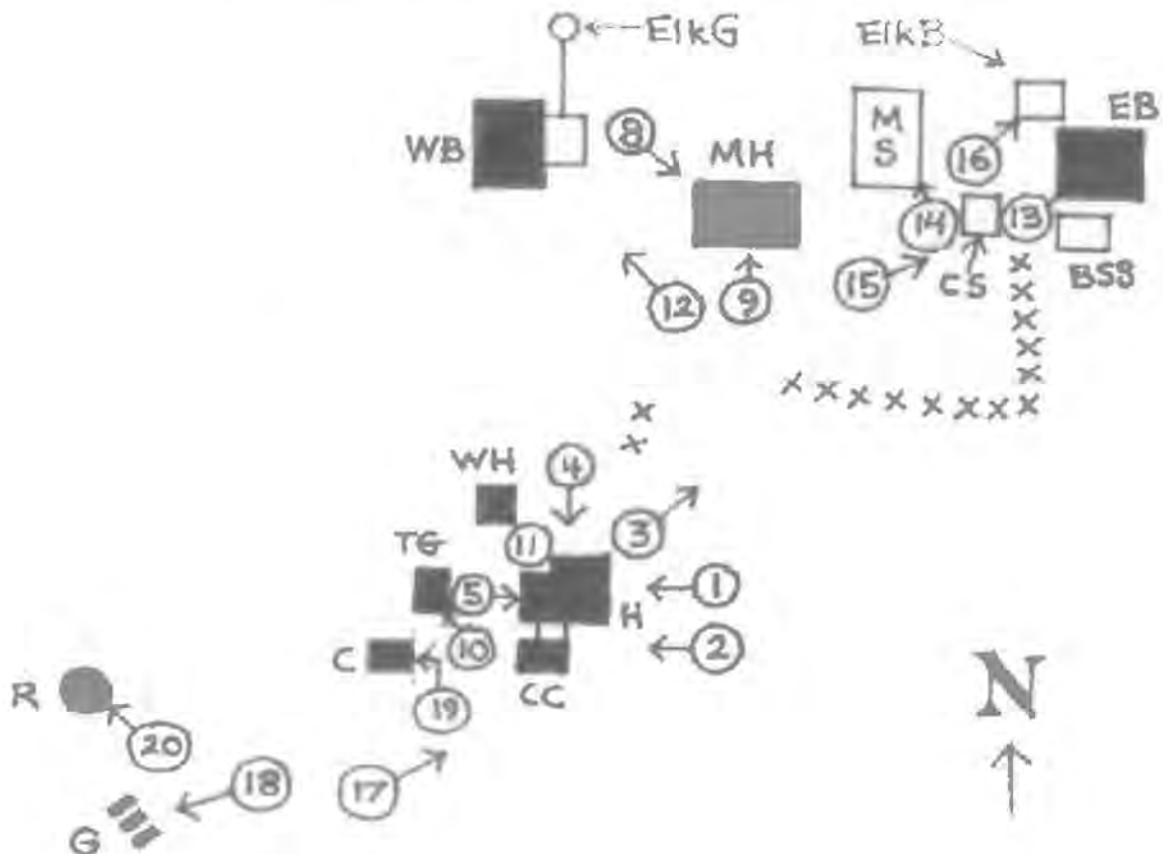
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Name of Property Audubon County Home Historic District
County and State Audubon County, Iowa

(Figure 8) PHOTO MAP

KEY: Solid black shapes = Contributing buildings, site or structures / Outlined shapes = Non-contributing /
Circled numbers are photo numbers



- | | | | |
|----|--------------------|------|---------------------|
| H | County Home Museum | CS | Country Schoolhouse |
| CC | Caretakers Cottage | BSS | Blacksmith Shop |
| MH | Meeting Hall | ElkB | Elk Barn |
| TG | Tenants Garage | ElkG | Elk Gazebo |
| WH | Wash House | C | Cave |
| WB | West Barn | G | Cemetery Graves |
| EB | East Barn | R | Reservoir |
| MS | Machine Shed | X | Windmills |

Source: *N.A. Thomas, from a Google Map, 2014*









ELK BARN

BLACK

















BARGAIN BARN

Rural & Antiques

Cattle Industry Murals







Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #1 County Home



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #2 Caretaker's Cottage & County Home



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #3 Nathaniel Hamlin Park



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #4 County Home



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #5 County Home



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #6 Window Detail



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #7 Transom, County Home



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #8 Meeting Hall



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #9 Meeting Hall



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #10 Tenant's Garage



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #11 Wash House



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #12 West Barn (w/elk gazebo)



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #13 East Barn



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #14 Machine Shed



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA
Photo #15 Country School & Blacksmith Shop



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #16 Elk Barn



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #17 Start of Walking Trail



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #18 Cemetery



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #19 Cave



Audubon Co. Home HD, Audubon Co., IA Photo #20 Reservoir

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Audubon County Home Historic District

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: IOWA, Audubon

DATE RECEIVED: 1/30/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/05/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/20/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/17/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000080

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 3-17-15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:



RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

MARY COWNIE, DIRECTOR
CHRIS KRAMER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR
KIM REYNOLDS, LT. GOVERNOR



IOWA
ARTS
COUNCIL

PRODUCE
IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL
MUSEUM OF IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL
LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

STATE
HISTORIC
SITES

STATE HISTORIC
PRESERVATION
OFFICE OF IOWA

IOWA
HISTORICAL
FOUNDATION

January 27, 2015

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief
National Register and National Historic Landmarks
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Fl.
Washington D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

The following National Register nomination(s) are enclosed for your review and listing if acceptable.

- Audubon County Home Historic District, 1891 215th Street, Audubon vicinity, Audubon county, Iowa

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Foster Hill
National Register