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7 DESCRIPTION

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Ravine House, constructed by Daniel Dayton in 1857 as a hotel on the original Dubuque/Saint Paul territorial road, is situated on a steeply sloping site in the northeast corner of the southeast quarter of section six in Harmony Township, approximately five miles south of Preston, Minnesota. Originally the building consisted of two parts: a log house with lean-to of single storey height constructed in 1855, and the two and one half storey stone hotel. (The log house and lean-to were removed early in the century and a lean-to erected on the north wall of the stone building in the 1920s. This lean-to is in an extreme state of deterioration and is presently being removed.) The remaining building is of local limestone with twenty two inch thick walls. It is within two feet of being square, and two and one half stories high.

The interior of the first floor is divided into three rooms. A large "common" room extends the full length of the front (east). A smaller room occupies the southwest corner; this room is assumed to have served as an office. To the north of this, in the middle section of the building is the staircase to the second floor and a coat closet. In the northwest corner is a paneled pantry with full length cupboards totally covering the north wall. A door on the north wall of the common room formerly led to the log house (later lean-to) which had served as a kitchen.

The first floor interior has deeply recessed paneled window frames handsomely executed with a bold roll molding over each and a scroll device below. This is carried out over each of four interior doors on the west wall of the common room and over each first floor window except in the pantry.

The second floor is also divided into two rooms. A large sleeping room occupies the area immediately above the "common" room and a smaller, private room is directly above the "office". Window recesses are also panelled on this floor, however the scroll-molding is absent.

The third, or attic, level is divided into two rooms, the northernmost of which has a full staircase to the second floor. Each room has one window in the gable which decends to the floorline to form an equilateral triangle.

The Ravine House stood unoccupied for many years and was extensively deteriorated when a restoration project was launched by the county for the Bicentennial Celebration. Although the property is privately owned, restoration is proceeding to return the Ravine House to the appearance of Dayton's proprietorship. To date, roof and windows have been replaced, masonry stabilized, and interior structural system and floors repaired.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ravine House is significant for its historic associations with the pioneer development of Harmony Township and as one of the few remaining stage coach period hotels in Minnesota. The house is an example of stone architecture common to southeastern Minnesota, and is significant for the excellence of its stone craftsmanship.

The house was built in 1857 by Daniel Dayton, a pioneer from Vermont. Dayton was a member of the state legislature in 1859 and 1860, Harmony Township chairman and clerk for many years, and one of the first justices of the township. In addition, he held many county and town offices.

At various times throughout its history the Ravine House was a stage coach hotel, post office, livery stable, store and farm residence. Historic ledger accounts, an inventory of household goods, internal revenue hotel licenses, and Daniel Dayton's personal papers are intact and have been an invaluable resource to the non-profit organization that is currently restoring the Ravine House to its 1850s appearance.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Archival records (ledger accounts, Dayton family personal papers, etc.), Ravine House, Inc., Harmony, Minnesota.

Curtiss-Wedge, Franklyn, History of Fillmore County, Volumes I and II, Chicago, 1912.

Newspaper accounts and advertisements, Rochester City Post, 1859-66.

10GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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Lynne VanBrocklin Spaeth/	Charles W. Nelson/L	uther Thompson		
ORGANIZATION <u>Minnesota Historical Soci</u>	atu /Minnagata Iliata	rianl Saniatu/Pa	DATE	8 April 1977
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12 STATE HISTORIC F	PRESERVATION	OFFICER CER	TIFICATIO	N
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ATTEST:

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DATE

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page ____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Velou Jun . 19/89 Keeper

6-24-88

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Note: These changes apply to Ravine House in Fillmore County, Minnesota.

REFERENCE NUMBER: 77000732

STATE: MINNESOTA

COUNTY: Fillmore

RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC): Dayton, Daniel, House (Ravine)

CITY:

VICINITY OF:

ADDRESS: off Co. Hwy. 17

CERTIFICATION DATE:

REMOVED DATE:

COMMENTS:

nua m. archabal

JUN 1 7 1988

Nina M. Archabal State Historic Preservation Officer Date

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Registration Fo	orm		in K	ILUS A
This form is for use in nominating	or requesting determinations o	f eligibility for individu	al properties or distric	te See institutions in Guideli
for Completing National Register Fo	orms (National Register Bulletin	16). Complete each it	em by marking "x" in	the appropriate box or by en
the requested information. If an item and areas of significance, enter or (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.	does not apply to the property bools and subcategories and subcate	eing documented, enter pories listed in the instr	"N/A" for "not applica ructions. For additiona	ble." For functions, styles, main a space use continuation she
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	niel L., House			
other names/site number R	avine House		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
2. Location				
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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions) Domestic/Hotel	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions Domestic/Secondary
7. Description	
Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)
	foundation Limestone
Greek Revival	walls Limestone
	roof
	other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

..

JUL 16 1991

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Dayton, Daniel L., House, Harmony Twp., Fillmore Co. Section number _____ Page ____

DESCRIPTION: DAYTON HOUSE

The Dayton House is the best-preserved stage stop in Minnesota. It belongs to the general property type of "stage stop," as defined in "Section F" of the multiple property listing,"Overland Staging Industry in Minnesota, 1849 - 1880." Because of its function as an overnight stop, the house falls into the subcategory of "home station." Stations that did not board travelers overnight were known as "swing stations." The house is located at the base of a slope in the southeast quarter of section 6 of T101N, R10W.

Daniel Dayton, a native of Vermont, came to Minnesota and constructed a small log hotel along the Saint Paul and Dubuque Stage Road in the spring of 1855. He built the limestone Dayton House in 1857 as an addition. Owners removed the original log hotel in the early twentieth century, and a small shed-roofed addition appeared in its place during the 1920s. That addition has since been torn down.

The two-and-one-half-story Dayton House is a modest example of the Greek Revival style, as reflected in its general massing and symmetrical arrangement of window and door openings. Walls are irregularly cut limestone blocks laid in courses. Windows are six-over-six, double-hung sash with limestone sills and massive, dressed limestone lintels. The composition-shingled roof features a moderately-pitched gable and two brick chimneys.

Three noncontributing outbuildings also occupy the immediate area. A rectangular, gableroofed, two-story, wooden shed on a limestone foundation stands just north of the Dayton House. It has a single-leaf doorway near the southeast corner and the remnants of a wider gate on the north end. A small barn or granary lies at the top of the slope about 30 yards to the west, behind the house. It is wood, with a low-pitched gabled roof, and rests on a limestone foundation. A shed-roofed addition adjoins the west end. The small size of both of these buildings probably precludes their involvement in stage-related activities. Stagecoaches on the Saint Paul and Dubuque Stage Road used four horses, which neither of these buildings could accommodate.

A larger barn overlooks the Dayton House from the southwest. It is wood, with a mediumpitched gabled roof, and rests on a concrete-block foundation. A shed-roofed addition lies to the eastside, on a slightly lower, but similar foundation. The barn's foundation and general construction indicate a twentieth-century origin, placing the structure outside the period of significance (1849 -1880) established for the state's staging industry.

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8. Statement of Significance	
Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:	
Applicable National Register Criteria 🖾 A 🗌 B 🔤 C 🔲 D	
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	
Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions) Period of Significance Transportation 1857 - 1867	Significant Dates
Cultural Affiliation N/A	
Significant Person Architect/Builder N/A Builder: Daniel Dayte	on

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

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SIGNIFICANCE

The Dayton House is historically significant under criterion A for "stage stop," as defined in the multiple property listing "Overland Staging Industry in Minnesota, 1849 - 1880." Its "area of significance" is transportation, for its association with the Saint Paul and Dubuque Stage Road, a major artery of travel in Minnesota during the late 1850s and 1860s. The building is located in the southeast quarter of section 6 in Harmony Township (T101N, R10W) of Fillmore County. Its windows and roof have been replaced, and the masonry stabilized, but the house retains its integrity. The immediate area also contains three noncontributing outbuildings.

Although Minnesota residents had been agitating for an all-Minnesota route between Saint Paul and the Iowa line since the late 1840s, the road did not become a reality until the summer of 1854, when agents of Martin O. Walker, a Chicago-based stage company owner, cleared a trail through the newly settled regions of Minnesota's southeast. Previously, those bound for Iowa had to travel via Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. The new route provided a quicker and more direct trip, as well as access to fertile, but previously isolated lands. By July of 1854, Walker stagecoaches carried passengers and mail between Saint Paul and Dubuque, completing the trip in four days.¹

Walker built the Saint Paul and Dubuque Stage Road during a period of great roadbuilding activity in southeastern Minnesota. The settlers who came to the area following the ratification of the Second Treaty of Traverse des Sioux in 1853 needed a road system to accommodate commerce and travel. The roads built during this period played an important role in regional urban development. Historian Arthur J. Larsen has pointed out that "it was the laying out of such a [road] system that made possible the growth of Rochester in Olmsted County, which was platted on July 25, 1854, and made a stagecoach station the same day." A contemporary account of Rochester stated that "the great Dubuque and St. Paul road passes through here, where it is intersected by the principal thoroughfare from Winona westward [and] . . . in summer, Rochester is a sort of grand encampment for the meeting streams of emigration upon both these roads." Another historian has mentioned the vital role the Saint Paul and Dubuque Stage Road played in the development of the town of Zumbrota, in Goodhue County, where it intersected another important stage road between Mantorville and Red Wing.²

Daniel Dayton, a native of Vermont, came to Minnesota and opened a log hotel along the Saint Paul and Dubuque Stage Road in the spring of 1855. In 1857, he added an adjoining two-and-ahalf story limestone building to the south. Because it operated as a "home station," that is, it boarded stage travelers overnight, the Dayton House, like other overnight stations, is considered more important than "swing stations," which only served as places to change a stagecoach's horses. The Dayton House also operated as a local post office. It is the finest known surviving example of a stage stop in Minnesota. Its significance derives from its location along the Saint Paul and Dubuque Stage Road.³

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The Dayton House continued to operate as a home station until the mid 1860s, when a rail line opened between Saint Paul and the Iowa border, diverting traffic from the stage road. The modern road system now follows parts of the original stage road, including segments of U.S. Highway 52 between Olmsted and Dakota Counties. The road section alongside the house is gravel and no longer retains its integrity.⁴

NOTES

1. "Frink and Walker," <u>Daily Minnesotian</u> 18 July 1854; Arthur J. Larsen, <u>The Development of the Minnesota Road System</u> (Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society): 141 - 142; "The Stagecoach Business in Pioneer Minnesota," <u>Gopher Historian</u> 22 (Spring 1968): 3.

2. The quotes are from Arthur J. Larsen, "Roads and Trails in the Minnesota Triangle, 1849 - 60," <u>Minnesota History</u> 11 (December 1930): 397 - 399. See also Multiple Property Documentation Form for Overland Staging Industry in Minnesota, 1849 - 1880; Roy W. Meyers, "The Story of Forest Mills; A Midwest Milling Community," <u>Minnesota History</u> 35 (March 1956): 21.

3. History of Fillmore County, Preston, Minnesota: Fillmore County Historical Society, 1982.

4. Vienna Drake, "Century-Old 'Ravine House,' Once Stage Stop, Still Stands," <u>Rochester Post-Bulletin</u> 2 September 1955; Arthur J. Larsen, "Roads and the Settlement of Minnesota," <u>Minnesota</u> <u>History</u> 21 (September 1940): 239. See also Dayton, Daniel, L., House. Previous National Register Nomination Form.



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"Frink and Walker." <u>Daily Minnesotian</u>, 18 July 1854.

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- Larsen, Arthur J. <u>The Development of the Minnesota Road System</u>. Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1966.
 - _____. "Roads and the Settlement of Minnesota." <u>Minnesota History</u> 21 (September 1940): 225 244.

_____. "Roads and Trails in the Minnesota Triangle, 1849 - 1860." <u>Minnesota History</u> 11 (December 1930): 387 - 411.

Meyers, Roy W. "The Story of Forest Mills; A Midwest Milling Community." <u>Minnesota History</u> 35 (March 1956): 21.

"Stagecoach Business in Pioneer Minnesota." Gopher Historian 22 (Spring 1968): 1 - 5.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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city or town Minneapolis				
street & number 710 Grain Exchange Building	telephone 612-338-1987			
organization Hess, Roise and Company	date July 1990			
name/title Robert Hybben and Jeffrey A. Hess				
11. Form Prepared By				
	X See continuation sheet			
Boundary Justification				
Poundon / Instituation				
	See continuation sheet			
Verbal Boundary Description	See continuation sheet			
UTM References A 115 575050 41825380 Zone Easting Northing C 15 750 50	B			
10. Geographical Data Acreage of property _Less than 2 acres				
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	Specify repository:			
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #	University Other			
designated a National Historic Landmark	Local government			
x previously listed in the National Register	Other State agency Federal agency			
has been requested	State historic preservation office			
preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)	Primary location of additional data:			
Previous documentation on file (NPS):	x See continuation sheet			
	x See continuation sheet			

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property is bounded by a rectangle commencing at a point formed by the northeast corner of the southeast quarter of section 6, Township 101 North, Range 10 West, thence progressing due westward for a distance of 500 feet along the half-section line, which forms the northern boundary of said quarter section, thence progressing at a right angle due southward in a straight line for a distance of 400 feet, thence progressing at a right angle due eastward in a straight line for a distance of 500 feet, thence progressing at a right angle due northward in a straight line for a distance of 500 feet, thence progressing at a right angle due northward in a straight line for a distance of 500 feet, thence progressing at a right angle 10 West, Fillmore County, State of Minnesota, a distance of 400 feet to the point of origin.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries contain the contributing building which comprises the property known as the Daniel L. Dayton House. Because the noncontributing buildings are located on land historically associated with the Dayton House and in close proximity to the house, they are also contained within the boundaries.