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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received JUL 12 1984
date entered AUG 9 1984

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

1. Name

historic Henry Ames House

and/or common Brickyard Farm

2. Location

street & number County Highway 24 MN N/A not for publication

city, town Darwin Township XX vicinity of Litchfield vic.
~~congressional district~~

state Minnesota code 22 county Meeker code 093

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Alvin Christensen

street & number Route 3, Box 255A

city, town Litchfield N/A vicinity of state Minnesota

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Meeker County Court House

street & number Sibley Avenue and Fourth Street

city, town Litchfield state Minnesota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Survey of Historic Resources has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records Minnesota Historical Society—Ft. Snelling History Center

city, town St. Paul state Minnesota

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____ N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Henry Ames House, constructed in 1888-89 was designed as the centerpiece for Ames' "Walnut Grove Stock and Dairy Farm", which encompassed 420 acres. The two-story dwelling was built by Henry Ames, a Meeker County brickmaker/contractor using cream-colored "Litchfield" brick manufactured on site by Ames. Somewhat vernacular in style, the structure is rectangular in shape and is highlighted by segmented arched window openings; which are hooded with red brick as an accent color.

The house has a high gabled roof and is two bays wide. The left (west) bay is a three-sided two-story bay window which projects from the front facade. Fenestration is single pane double-hung sash in this bay and throughout the entire house. Topping the bay at the roof line is a large wooden pedimented gable, supported on either side by carved brackets. The gable holds a pair of single-pane venting windows bordered by fish-scale shingling, set below a tympanum decorated with lattice. The design of the front gable is identical to the east and west side gables except that they each have a pair of double hung windows. The right (east) bay holds the double-door entry flanked on the right by two plain double-hung windows. Centered above the first floor entry and windows is a double window, hooded by twin semi-circular arches of red brick. On the roof, positioned above the double window, is a decorative gablet, with a tympanum of lattice work. A similar gablet is above the entry steps on the porch roof. An open frame porch stretches across the first story front facade. Its shed-type roof is supported by turned posts, and small spindles decorate the frieze. The original porch deck, balustrade, and steps have been replaced within the past decade due to deterioration. Plywood now replaces lattice work which originally covered the space between the porch deck and the ground. The house is supported by a high brick foundation, which is now hidden by a layer of insulating material and plywood.

Although much of the interior mill-work and original floor plan is retained, large wood-frame additions have been added to the rear of the house on either side. Built within the last decade, the additions, although uncomplimentary are not irreversible changes. The two brick chimneys have lost their decorative corbeling.

The rural setting of the house has been unchanged except for the reduction in size of the property; which now consists of 8.4 acres. Facing the county road and set-back approximately 100 yards, the house is accessed by a horseshoe drive which wraps around the structure. East of the house are several out-buildings, the largest being a frame barn set on a high brick foundation. Probably constructed about the same time as the house, the barn has been obviously rebuilt and altered several times, and is now in a dilapidated condition. All other out-buildings date from the present century, and are insignificant and unobtrusive. A frame dwelling, built about ten years ago, stands about 100 yards north of the Ames House and does not interfere with the integrity of the site. Several small piles of brick, dispersed over the property, are all there is to indicate the existence of a once prosperous brickyard.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates Built: 1888-1889 **Builder/Architect** Henry Ames, builder

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The Henry Ames House built in 1888-1889 is the only existing original structure which marks the site of Ames' "Litchfield Brickyard" which he operated there from 1883 to 1900. Built by Ames at the height of his career, the house is constructed of Litchfield brick; manufactured on site, and is the last surviving Meeker county residence of this area pioneer.

Born in New York in 1846, Ames came west in 1867, and learned the mason's trade in Iowa. A few years later he moved to Meeker County, Minnesota where he practiced his profession for more than a decade. In 1882 he purchased an established brickyard, and within a year moved it to his farm in Darwin Township, Meeker County. During his first year of operation at the new site he produced more than 8,000,000 brick; which covered an acre and a half. Within a few years Ames had more business than he could handle. The county newspapers of that period are filled with stories of his prosperity; most praising him for the quality of his product or describing the high demand for his "Litchfield brick".

Available records do not define how wide a market Ames controlled, but we do know that builders chose his cream-colored brick to build business blocks, schools, churches, and residences throughout Meeker County, and in at least three surrounding counties. Of course Litchfield itself was his best customer. The Meeker County Courthouse (1886), the G.A.R. Memorial Hall (1885), the Litchfield Woolen Mill (1885), the Masonic Temple (1889), the Litchfield Opera House (1900), are a few of the more prominent buildings which were constructed of Ames' brick. In the neighboring city of Willmar, the Merchants Hotel and the Kandiyohi County Bank used "Litchfield" brick, as did many home builders.

It was said by some of Ames' contemporaries that if his brickyard didn't start the Litchfield building-boom of the 1890's, it sure did contribute to it. By that time Ames was providing employment for twenty-five men, and "six teams" the entire year, and was considered one of Meeker county's leading industries.

In 1900 Ames' son William took over the operation of the brickyard, but by 1905 the yard was closed and William had moved to northern Minnesota and started his own brickyard. In 1907 Henry Ames traded his Meeker County farm for a business block in Willmar, Minnesota, and moved there the same year. After the death of his wife in 1911, Ames moved to Seattle and lived the remainder of his life with a daughter there.

From 1907 to the present Ames' farm and "Litchfield Brickyard" have been used solely for agricultural purposes. His original 420 acres has now dwindled to a mere 8.4 acres. Ames' residence is all that remains to remind us of the important industry which he started here more than a century ago.

The Henry Ames House is historically significant as the last surviving Meeker County residence of one of the area's pioneers who operated a leading industry at this site for nearly twenty years. It is also the last surviving original building marking the site of the Ames Brickyard.

9. Major Bibliographical References

U.S. Federal Census 1900, Minnesota State Census 1905, U.S. Federal Census 1910, Casey, Patrick J., The First 100 Years, 1968, Litchfield Saturday Review (newspaper) 1892, 1911, Alden Ogle & Co., Album of History and Biography of Meeker County Minnesota, 1888, Ripley Cemetery Records, County Recorder's Office; Meeker Co.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 8.4 acres

Quadrangle name Forest City

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UMT References

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5	0	0	0	3	2	0
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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification Part of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sect. 6, T.119, R.30 - Described as commencing at an iron monument in place at NW corner of Sect. 6 thence on an assumed bearing of south 0 degrees, 00 minutes west along west line of said Sect. 6 for a distance of 1,713.48 feet - thence on a bearing of north 89 degrees, 33 minutes east for a distance (continued)

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

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James A. Sazevich

organization The House Detective date November 15, 1983

street & number 454 N. Smith Avenue telephone (612) 222-8160

city or town St. Paul state Minnesota 55102

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 7/5/84

For NPS use only

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

~~entered in the~~
National Register

date 8-9-84

for Shelores Byers
Keeper of the National Register

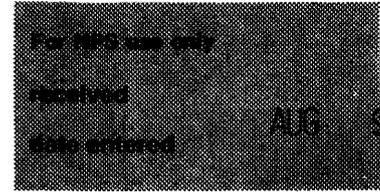
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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Darwin Twp., Meeker County, MN

Continuation sheet Henry Ames House Item number 10.

Page 01

Geographical Data-Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

Legal Description (continued): of 478.65 feet to the actual point of beginning of the following described tract of land. Thence continuing on a bearing of north 89 degrees-33 minutes east for a distance of 577.50 feet. Thence on a bearing north 0 degrees - 00 minutes east parallel with the said west line of said Sect. 6 for a distance of 619.88 feet. Thence on a bearing north 87 degrees, 58 minutes, 08 seconds west for a distance of 578.04 feet. Thence on a bearing south 0 degrees, 00 minutes west parallel with said west line of Sect. 6 for a distance of 644.88 feet to the actual point of beginning. This tract contains 8.4 acres of land.