

# Iowa Site Inventory

Office of Historic Preservation  
Iowa State Historical Department  
East 12th & Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Site Number 75N 27W - 22  
District Name Legacy In Stone TR  
Map Reference # 13

## Identification

1. Site Name John S. & Elizabeth Beem Holmes Barn
2. Village/Town/City Vic. St. Charles Township Scott County Madison
3. Street Address 8 Miles on G50; 1 Mile South; follow lane
4. Legal Location 77N 27W 22 W1/2 NW1/4 \*
- |        |             |       |         |                        |
|--------|-------------|-------|---------|------------------------|
| Urban: | subdivision | block | parcel  | subparcel              |
| Rural: | township    | range | section | ¼ section of ¼ section |
- Map 2)
5. UTM Location: zone 15 easting 420,120 northing 4,570,430 Acreage less than one acre
6. Owner(s) Name Irvin Edwards
7. Owner(s) Address Rt. 1 Box 131 Winterset IA 50273
- (Street address) (City) (State) (Zip)
8. Use: Present Barn Original Barn

## Description

9. Date of Construction 1875 Architect/Builder unknown
10. Building Type:
- |   |                                      |  |  |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> single-family dwelling   | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial  | <input type="checkbox"/> other institutional | <input type="checkbox"/> religious               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> multiple-family dwelling | <input type="checkbox"/> educational | <input type="checkbox"/> public              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agricultural |
| <input type="checkbox"/> commercial               |                                      |  |  |
11. Exterior Walls:  clapboard  stone  brick  board and batten  shingles  stucco  
 other Native limestone
12. Structural System:  wood frame with interlocking joints  wood frame with light members (balloon frame)  
 masonry load-bearing walls  iron frame  steel frame with curtain walls  reinforced concrete  
 other \_\_\_\_\_
13. Condition:  excellent  good  fair  deteriorated
14. Integrity:  original site  moved—if so, when? \_\_\_\_\_  
Notes on alterations, additions (with dates and architect, if known) and any other notable features of building and site:
15. Related Outbuildings and Property:  barn  other farm structures  carriage house  garage  privy  
 other \_\_\_\_\_
16. Is the building endangered?  no  yes—if so, why? \_\_\_\_\_
17. Surroundings of the building:  open land  woodland  scattered outbuildings  densely built-up  commercial  
 industrial  residential  other farmstead

18. Map



19. Photo 13B & 13C  
Roll \_\_\_\_\_ Frame \_\_\_\_\_ View \_\_\_\_\_

\*Nomination boundary:

A circle, 150' diameter, with center point located at center point of barn. Includes only subject building.

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

### **20. Architectural Significance**

- a. Key structure/individually may qualify for the National Register
- b. Contributing structure  
Theme(s): Vernacular Architecture  
Subtheme(s): Function: Agricultural

The John S. Holmes Barn is an early example of a vernacular agricultural building constructed of limestone. It is one of few extant stone agricultural buildings and is, by far, the largest. It is a symmetrical massed rectangle with centered gable entrances and centered under eave entrances with flanking windows. The most notable features are the large size and the large arched doors in the gable ends. The date October 25, 1875, is cut into the stone on the east side of the building.

The 39' x 52.5' gabled barn is constructed of locally quarried finished cut limestone and is as tall as a three story building. The north and south gabled facades have massive high arched doorways providing a drive through for large farm equipment. The north facade has a centered window above the doorway. The east and west facades each have a centered under eave entrance with flanking windows. There are elevated ramps to all the entrances.

All facades are constructed of massive blocks of finished cut quarry faced limestone. Some massive pieces of rubble are also used. Stonework is coursed with random bond and joints are grapevine tooled. Quoins and jambs are finished cut stone with exaggerated quarry face. Lintels and sills are dimension stone with exaggerated quarry face; sills protrude. The arched gable entrance has stone laid on end in a sunburst design to form the arch. These stones are rusticated with an exaggerated quarry faced texturing. Windows are not splayed, and half the width of the reveal is paneled with plain wood. Doors are not recessed but are on the exterior, opening out. The overhanging eaves and verges are open.

Many years ago an attempt was made to stucco the building to preserve the stone. However, there was a storm a few hours after the stucco was applied that washed most of it off.

### **21. Historical Significance**

- a. Key structure/individually may qualify for the National Register
- b. Contributing Structure  
Theme(s): Early Settlement

John S. and Elizabeth Beem Holmes were early settlers in Madison County who came from Indiana in 1854. They purchased a 40 acre farm which they expanded to 350 acres. Holmes was a farmer, stock raiser and community leader who held several local offices.

Atlas of Madison Co., Iowa Philadelphia: Harrison & Warner, 1875.

Courthouse Records. Winterset, Iowa: Madison County Recorders' Office.

History of Madison County, Iowa. Des Moines: Union Historical Co., 1879.

Houlette, William D. "Madison County's Wonderful Stone Houses," The Iowan Vol.2, No.6 (August - September, 1954) pp.30 - 35.

Mueller, Herman. History of Madison County, Iowa, 2 vols. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1915.

22. **Sources**

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