

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Wisconsin</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Grant</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	<b>FEB 23 1972</b>

**1. NAME**

COMMON: <b>Mitchell-Rountree House</b>	Congressmen to be notified: Sen. William Proxmire Sen. Gaylord A. Nelson Rep. Vernon W. Thomson
AND/OR HISTORIC: <b>Stone Cottage</b>	

**2. LOCATION**

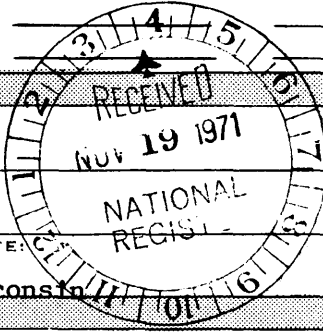
STREET AND NUMBER: <b>Jewett Street at Lancaster Street (State Highway 81)</b>			
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Platteville</b>			
STATE <b>Wisconsin</b>	CODE <b>53818</b>	COUNTY: <b>Grant</b>	CODE <b>043</b>

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)		<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment			
<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum			
<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific			
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____			
<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____			

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: <b>Grant County Historical Society</b>		STATE: <b>Wisconsin</b> COUNTY: <b>Grant</b>
STREET AND NUMBER: <b>Mr. John Kujawa, President 244 West Pine Street</b>		
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Lancaster</b>	STATE: <b>Wisconsin</b> CODE: <b>55</b>	



**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: <b>Grant County Courthouse</b>		STATE: <b>Wisconsin</b> COUNTY: <b>Grant</b>
STREET AND NUMBER:		
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Lancaster</b>	STATE: <b>Wisconsin</b> CODE: <b>55</b>	

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: <b>Historic American Buildings Survey</b>		STATE: <b>District of Columbia</b> COUNTY: _____
DATE OF SURVEY: <b>1934</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: <b>Library of Congress</b>		
STREET AND NUMBER:		
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Washington</b>	STATE: <b>District of Columbia</b> CODE: <b>11</b>	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Built in 1837, the Mitchell-Rountree House is a small rectangular 1 1/2-story stone cottage with a single story ell at the left rear side. The ell is the kitchen-dining room, which leads off the living room and is two steps lower than the first floor level of the main house, making this an early version indeed of the split-level house of today. There are five rooms and a central hall, with openings to the living room at the left and parlor at the right. At the left rear side of the hall is a stairway to the second floor hallway from which a bedroom leads off on either side. Each of the five rooms has its own fireplace. Both floors are of the original sawed ash planking with boards varying in width from four to twelve inches.

Exterior walls are of native buff dolomite laid random ashlar and vary from 12" to 18" in thickness. "The stone was fitted very closely, and in some places mud joints were used instead of mortar."<sup>1</sup> At the corners and at the door openings are quoins of larger stones oriented so that their placement is alternately horizontal and vertical. At the gable ends of both the house and the ell, massive "chimneys are built into the body of the wall,"<sup>2</sup> as frequently seen in the Federal style of Colonial architecture.

There are three small roof dormers in the front half-story, each with a full pedimented head. Dormers are sided with clapboards. All windows are six-pane double-hung sash, and those on the front and rear sides have stone lintels and sills, plain frames, and louvered shutters. There are no gable end windows. The front entry is a plain frame opening with paneled double doors. There are no sidelights, but there is a five pane transom above. The doors have a single square panel below the knob level and four tiers of single, narrow, horizontal panels above.

In 1861 the house was covered with "a brown stucco which was raked to look like regularly coursed ashlar,"<sup>3</sup> and this remained on the house for more than a hundred years. Within the past decade, however, the stucco has been removed and the exterior walls restored to their original state, giving the stone no protection against the weather but greatly enhancing the charm of the small cottage.

Tradition has it that there was originally a separate kitchen in back of the house, from which the prepared food was carried into the dining ell. Except for a continuation of the flagstone walk extending from the rear of the house into the back yard, there are no visible remains to substantiate this, but it is accepted as probably true.

1. Perrin, Historic Wisconsin Buildings, 85
2. Kienitz, 397
3. Ibid., 403



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

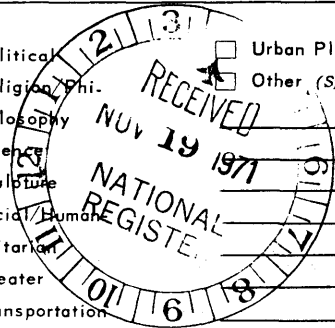
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1837**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political            | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion, Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |   |   |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

After stating that, "Unquestionably some of the most perfect stonework to be found anywhere in the United States is that of southwestern Wisconsin," Perrin says, "At Platteville, the Mitchell-Rountree house has been a landmark since 1837 when it was built..."<sup>1</sup> This house, in addition to being one of the outstanding landmarks in Wisconsin's architectural heritage, is a quite unique structure in a particular line of architectural evolution.

The Mitchell-Rountree house was built for the Reverend Samuel Mitchell, who was born in Virginia, served in the Revolutionary War, and came to Platteville, Wisconsin in 1836, having earlier lived in Maryland and Kentucky. The Mitchells lived briefly in a frame house before building their now much-acclaimed stone cottage, "Family tradition claims that they built it on a scale smaller than that to which they had been accustomed to in Virginia and Maryland since their sons and daughters had married and there was no need for a large dwelling. However that may be, the house as built can take its place with popular small Virginia houses. In earlier history one finds that story-and-a-half houses were not uncommon in rural England proper."<sup>2</sup>

Apparently Wisconsin's sole example of its kind, the Mitchell-Rountree house is of Tidewater, Virginia Colonial design, architecturally of the small lineage as the Adam Thoroughgood house in Tidewater, the Tabb house in York County, and the Warburton house in James City County, Virginia, the latter three all dating to the late 17th century with the Tabb house the latest, having been built in 1700. These houses, in turn, appear to be American Colonial adaptations of a design common in English cottages which can be traced back to the general plan of thatched cottages of c. 1300.<sup>3</sup> Virginia seems to have been the area in which this type of house was most common, following the basic pattern of having 1 1/2 stories, dormers on the front half of the roof, a central hall from front to rear with one or two rooms on either side, and at least a partial basement. Gable end chimneys were built into the walls and each room in the house had a fireplace. When more space was needed, the solution was to add a wing or an ell. All such houses had a certain attractiveness, and while they were built of either wood or brick in Virginia, the availability of stone in southwestern Wisconsin led to its use in building the Mitchell-Rountree house and the stone only enhanced the beauty of the already eye-catching simple, charming design which has attracted the interest of both architects and historians of architecture.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Kienitz, John F., "A Virginia House in Wisconsin," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 30:292-407, 1947.  
 Newcomb, Rexford, Architecture of the Old Northwest Territory, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1950, 128.  
 Perrin, Richard W. E., Historic Wisconsin Architecture, Wisconsin Chapter, American Institute of Architects, Milwaukee, 1960, 26.  
 Perrin, Richard, W.E., Historic Wisconsin Buildings, Milwaukee Public Museum, Milwaukee, 1962, 84-85.

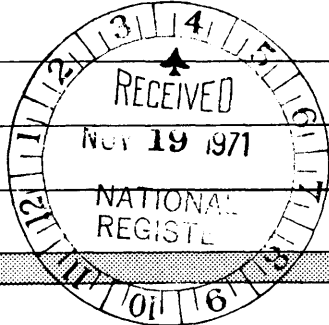
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		N 42 44 29	W 90 28 57	
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **0.25**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Donald N. Anderson, Asst. Director, Historic Sites & Markers Division**  
 ORGANIZATION: **State Historical Society of Wisconsin** DATE: **August 17, 1971**  
 STREET AND NUMBER:  
**816 State Street**  
 CITY OR TOWN: **Madison** STATE: **Wisconsin 53706** CODE: **55**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:  
 National  State  Local   
 Name James Morton Smith  
 Title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin  
 Date NOV 12 1971

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.  
Wm A. Connolly  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
 Date FEB 23 1972  
 ATTEST:  
W Bradford  
 Keeper of The National Register  
 Date February 2, 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

MITCHELL-ROUNTREE HOUSE

8.

A daughter of the Mitchells married Major John H. Rountree, who is credited with being the actual builder of the house and who later acquired it for himself. Until recently the house was occupied by the late Miss Laura Rountree, a direct descendant of the builder. It is now the property of the Grant County Historical Society, which has restored it, furnished it with authentic period pieces and makes it accessible to the public during the summer months.

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1. Perrin, Historic Wisconsin Buildings, 84-85
  2. Kienitz, 397
  3. Ibid., 397-399

