

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Nebraska</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Polk</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	<b>JUN 4 1973</b>

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Morrill (Charles H.) Homestead**

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**One-half mile southeast of Stromsburg on U.S. Highway 81.**

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE: **Nebraska**      CODE: **31**      COUNTY: **Polk**      CODE: **143**

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>abandoned</u>
			<input type="checkbox"/> Comments Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Julia Morrill Walcot**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**185 Lake Mahoney**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**North Platte**

STATE: **Nebraska**      CODE: **31**

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**County Clerk, Polk County Courthouse**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Osceola**

STATE: **Nebraska**      CODE: **31**

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**Historic Preservation in Nebraska**

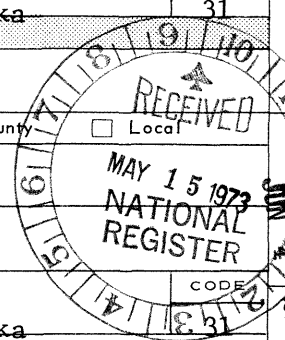
DATE OF SURVEY: **1971**       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**Nebraska State Historical Society**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**1500 "R" Street**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Lincoln**

STATE: **Nebraska**



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: <b>Nebraska</b>
COUNTY: <b>Polk</b>
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE <b>JUN 4 1973</b>

NOTE: This nomination is located in the third Nebraska Congressional District

7. DESCRIPTION

MAY 15 1973  
CONDITION

(Check One)  
 Excellent     Good     Fair     Deteriorated     Ruins     Unexposed

(Check One)  
 Altered     Unaltered

(Check One)  
 Moved     Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Polk County is comprised of a gently rolling plain of prime agricultural land. The north fork of the Big Blue River takes a curved course across the county, entering in the southwest corner, proceeding to a point just south of Osceola, and then flowing back to the southeast corner of the county.

The Charles H. Morrill Homestead is situated on a picturesque site near the Big Blue River, one-half mile southeast of Stromsburg on U.S. Highway 81. Two homestead structures remain extant.

The original house, a frame dwelling, was erected in 1872. It was initially 16'x16' and one and one-half stories, but through the years wings have been added. The structure is nearly void of architectural style except for the subtle Italianate detailing of the bay window and the Victorian post brackets throughout the porch additions. The stability projected by this early rural residence is atypical of many of the first makeshift homesteads.

While living in Lincoln in 1899, the Morrills decided to build a summer house. Initially they had planned to build on a choice site on the shore of a Minnesota lake, however, they had always considered Stromsburg their real home and their final choice was their original homestead site.

In the early spring of 1900, Mr. Morrill made a trip to the Black Hills near Spearfish, South Dakota, where a large lumber camp was located. There he personally selected pine logs of high quality, uniform in diameter (8-10 inches) and perfectly straight. Two flatcars were loaded with logs and shipped to Stromsburg.

House plans were furnished by the Morrills and the contract was let to Ludwig Rudeen, who had built log houses in his native country Sweden. The logs were hewn flat on three sides, and the bark was left on the fourth to be exposed to the weather. The cover joints were dovetailed and fastened together with wood pins. The cracks between the logs were chinked with tarred oakum, and the interior was lathed and plastered. The summer house was finished in 1901, and its thick walls provided good insulation through the summer and winter months.

Architecturally the log house typifies the bungaloid mode. It is Swiss Chalet in type and unique in Nebraska. The bungalow style reached the height of its popularity through 1900-1920. Stock plans were readily available and could be purchased for as little as five dollars. The Morrills probably used a stock plan in the design of this summer house, however, the genuine construction techniques of the Swedish builder make this log bungalow truly unique.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian
- 15th Century
- 16th Century
- 17th Century
- 18th Century
- 19th Century
- 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

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 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 checked="" 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**

As one of the early settlers, Charles H. Morrill is prominently identified with the growth of Polk County and Nebraska. Originally from New Hampshire, he settled in Iowa after the Civil War. In 1871 he came to Nebraska and homesteaded 160 acres in Polk County near the Big Blue River in the township of Stromsburg.

For more than twenty years he farmed the homestead and developed an extensive cattle business. In 1873 Morrill and an associate, J.P. Smith, opened one of the first businesses in Stromsburg, an agricultural implement store. He sold his interests in 1875 and became a partner in a general merchandise store, the only store in Stromsburg at that time.

By 1881 Morrill had accumulated enough business experience and capital to organize the Stromsburg Bank, and in 1883 he purchased interest in the Osceola Bank. In 1899 he became president of the Lancaster Land Co. This corporation owned Havelock, the town in which the Nebraska shops of the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad were located. His increasing business interests in Lincoln prompted him to make his permanent home there in 1894.

Morrill was also active in politics and the development of Nebraska's system of higher education. In 1879 he became Governor Albinus Nance's private secretary and in 1904 he was elected as Republican National Committeeman. He was elected regent of the State University in 1889, serving as president of the Board of Regents from 1892 to 1902. He took a deep interest in Nebraska's natural history. In the 1890's he and Dr. E. H. Barbour, professor of geology, initiated yearly geological and paleontological expeditions into all parts of the state. These expeditions resulted in the initial collections of the University Museum. Throughout the latter years of his life Morrill liberally financed expeditions and maintenance of the University's collections. In 1927 when the University museum building was erected, it was befittingly named Morrill Hall. A western county organized in 1908 and a community northwest of Scottsbluff also bear Morrill's name.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Files, Nebraska State Historical Society.

Morrill, Charles Henry. The Morrills and Reminiscences (Chicago and Lincoln: University Publishing Co., 1918).

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

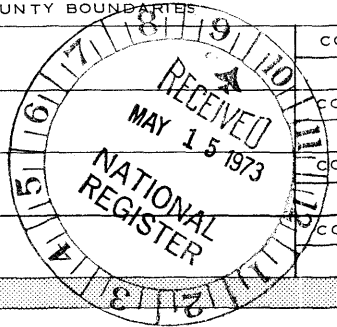
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		97 °	35 ' 35 "	41 ° 06 ' 23 "
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

14/618/40  
4551310

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/2 acre

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



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**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Persijs Kolberg, Curator of Historic Sites

ORGANIZATION: Nebraska State Historical Society DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1500 "R" Street

CITY OR TOWN: Lincoln STATE: Nebraska CODE: 31

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

<p>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:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name <u>Morvin E. Knecht</u></p> <p>Title <u>Director, Nebraska State Historical Society</u></p> <p>Date <u>5/3/73</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION</b></p> <p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Robert W. Utley</u> Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date <u>6/4/73</u></p> <p>ATTEST: <u>[Signature]</u> Keeper of the National Register</p> <p>Date <u>5 24 73</u></p>
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