

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received JUL 23 1985
date entered SEP 25 1985

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

1. Name

historic August Tonn Farmstead

and/or common August and Augusta Tonn Farmstead

2. Location

street & number County Road 65 N/A not for publication

city, town Carlos Township X vicinity of Carlos

state Minnesota code 22 county Douglas code 041

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Harlan and Lillian Schuneman

street & number N/A

city, town Carlos N/A vicinity of state Minnesota 56219

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Douglas County Courthouse

street & number 320 7th Avenue W.

city, town Alexandria state Minnesota 56308

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Minnesota Statewide Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date 1983-84 ___ federal state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office, Fort Snelling History Center

city, town St. Paul state Minnesota 55111

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The August and Augusta Tonn Farm is located in Section 12, Carlos Township, Douglas County, near County Road 65 about 1½ miles north of the town of Carlos. The farmstead is situated in an isolated, thickly wooded area on the east bank of the Long Prairie River, and is accessible by a narrow gravel lane which enters the farmstead from the northeast. A corduroy road, one of the first roads built in the area, originally ran through the farmstead from the southeast and crossed the river on an earthen and log bridge west of the farmyard. Remnants of this bridge remain, but the road is no longer visible.

The Tonn farmstead is an amazingly intact collection of eight buildings, seven of which were constructed of logs by August Tonn and his family circa 1875-1890. The eighth structure is an unobtrusive circa 1925 woodframe garage. A mobile home was moved onto the site circa 1980. One additional log building, the Tonn's first house which was later used as a cow barn, was demolished circa 1980.

The seven log buildings which comprise the farmstead were constructed of hand-hewn oak and poplar logs cut on the site. Most of the buildings feature dovetail joinery, and all were originally roofed with thatch or hand-split oak shakes. Hand-planed wood was used for window and door frames, roof boards, doors, and siding. The buildings range in condition from deteriorated to good, and two of the log buildings have been reroofed with asphalt shingles. Some retain their original mud and clay chinking, while others have been rechinked with concrete. None of the buildings were ever serviced with electricity or running water. The site presently contains the following structures:

1. House. The Tonn House is an L-shaped, 1½ story, solid log building which may have been constructed in two phases. The east wing, which may predate the rest of the house, consists of a first story kitchen and a second story sleeping area. The west wing of the house has a parlor and bedroom on the first floor and a large sleeping area on the second floor. The house has rectangular 4/4 and 6/6 sash, clapboard and wide plank siding, a wood shingle roof, and a shed roof porch supported by simple square posts which runs along the west and south facades. The interior walls of the house were plastered, and the parlor contains some decorative woodwork framing windows and doors. The house is in poor condition.
2. Granary #1. The Tonn farmstead contains two granaries, the first located on the north side of the farmyard. This building has exposed log first story walls and an upper half story sheathed in vertical plank siding. A shed roof lean-to has been removed from one of the sidewalls and a shed eave supported by simple brackets has been rebuilt across the main facade. The building is in good condition and has been reroofed with asphalt shingles and rechinked with concrete.
3. Granary #2. This granary is located on the west side of the site. It is a simple 1½ story, gable roofed log building with vertical siding covering the upper half story. It is in good condition and has a new asphalt shingle roof.
4. Garage. Built circa 1925 to house the Tonn's first car, the garage is a simple one story, gable roofed, woodframe building in good condition. It has a double door entrance on the east facade. The garage is the only permanent farm building which was not built of logs. (Non-contributing)
5. Chicken house. The chicken house is a small, low, gable roofed log building with vertical siding on the upper portion of the walls and a wood shingle roof. It is in deteriorating condition.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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

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Continuation sheet Tonn Log Farm

Item number 7

Page 1

Item #7 (Description) continued:

6. Corn crib. The corn crib, which stands west of the chicken house, is a small gable roofed log building with a wood shingle roof. It was used to hold field corn grown to feed livestock. The building is in fair condition.
7. Pig barn. The pig barn is a small gable roofed log structure located on the west edge of the site. It is in deteriorating condition.
8. Horse barn. The Tonn horse barn is located south of the house, and is the second largest building on the site. The barn has a gable roof covered with wood shingles. Inside, it consists of two separate spaces for horses and other animals, and a second story haymow. The building is in good condition and has been partially reroofed with wood shingles.

The site also contains a mobile home, moved onto the property circa 1980. The mobile home is used occasionally by the present owners, and has electricity. Most other buildings on the site are vacant or used as storage sheds.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1875-ca. 1890 **Builder/Architect** August Tonn and family, builders

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The August and Augusta Tonn Farm, located in Carlos Township in Douglas County, is historically and architecturally significant as a rare and remarkably intact collection of log farm buildings which illustrate simple log construction techniques and represent an early form of subsistence farming common in Minnesota in the nineteenth century. The site is important for its overall integrity, and is the only intact log farmstead known to be standing in west central Minnesota.

The Tonn Farm was established in 1875 by August (1842-1890) and Augusta (1842-1927) Tonn, German born pioneers who moved to Douglas County from near Belle Plaine, Minnesota, in 1875. The Tonn family, which eventually included about twelve children, settled on this site on the wooded banks of the Long Prairie River and began a subsistence farming operation on 160 acres of land. The first building constructed on the property was a log house which originally stood southeast of the present farmstead. A second farm house and a collection of outbuildings consisting of a horse barn, pig barn, corn crib, chicken house, and two granaries were constructed during the years 1875-1890. These buildings, which range in size from the approximately 6' by 8' corn crib to the house (an unusually large example of pioneer log construction), were built by August Tonn and his family of hand-hewn oak and poplar logs cut from the site. Dove-tail joinery, hand-split oak shakes, straw thatching, hand-planed siding and framing, and mud and clay chinking were used in the construction of the buildings.

After August Tonn's death in 1890 the farm was operated by his widow until her death in 1927, and from 1927-1962 it was operated by daughters Louisa and Augusta and Louisa's son August, who stayed on the farm until 1938. The last family member to live on the farm was daughter Augusta Tonn, who lived in the house without electricity or running water until her death in 1962. The farmstead and buildings were sold in the late 1960's to a new owner who made a short-lived attempt to convert the site to a tourist attraction. The property was returned to the Tonn family about two years later, and today is owned by the descendants of August and Augusta Tonn who continue to farm surrounding land.

The Tonn Farm was included in a fifteen month historic sites survey of seven counties in west central Minnesota conducted in 1983-84 by the State Historic Preservation Office. The survey staff identified the Tonn Farm as being the only intact log farmstead known to be standing in west central Minnesota.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Douglas County Historical Society. Douglas County Album of the Ages. 1979.
 Tonn, August and Lillian Schuneman. Oral interview with Susan Granger, July 1983.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 10 acres

Quadrangle name Alexandria East Quad.

Quadrangle scale 7.5

UTM References

A

1	5	3	2	2	8	8	0	5	0	9	5	8	4	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

1	5	3	2	3	0	8	0	5	0	9	5	8	4	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

1	5	3	2	3	0	8	0	5	0	9	5	6	4	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

1	5	3	2	2	8	8	0	5	0	9	5	6	4	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

E

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property nominated is all that which is located in the northwest quarter of the south-east quarter of the southwest quarter, Section 12, Township 129, Range 37 West, Carlos Township, Minnesota

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 Susan Granger, Field Assistant

organization State Historic Preservation Office
Minnesota Historical Society

date July 1984

street & number Fort Snelling History Center

telephone (612) 726-1171

city or town St. Paul

state Minnesota 55111

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

Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 7/1/85

For NPS use only

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

**Entered in the
National Register**

date 9-25-85

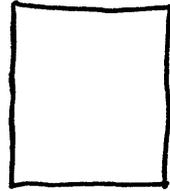
for Delores Byrum
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

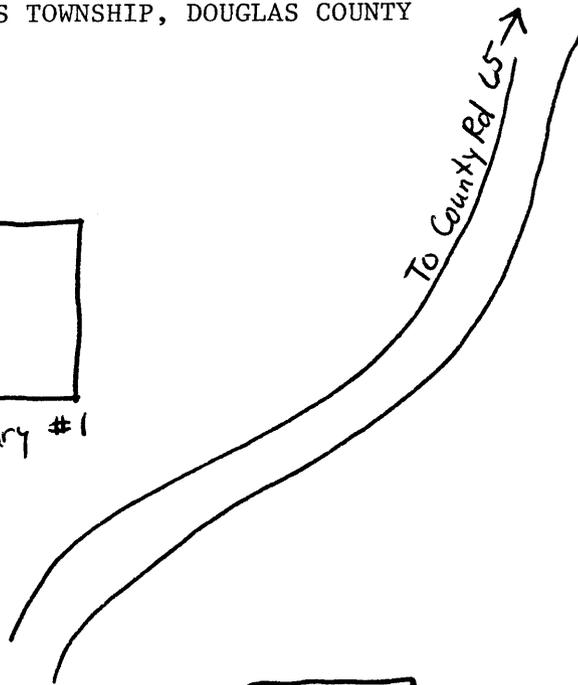
date

Chief of Registration

TONN FARM, CARLOS TOWNSHIP, DOUGLAS COUNTY



Granary #1



To County Rd 65 →

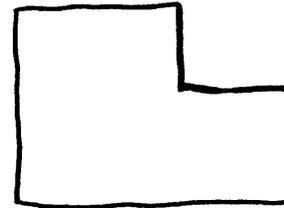
To river
←



Granary #2

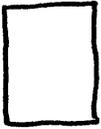


Garage



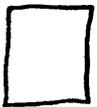
House

Corn
crib



Chicken house

Pig
barn



Mobile
home



Horse barn



Site of first house/cow barn