

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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DIVISION OF
NATIONAL REGISTER PROGRAMS
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Hill, Matt and Emma, Historic Farmstead
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Off Township Road 303 not for publication N/A
city, town Tower (Pike Township) vicinity
state Minnesota code MN county St. Louis code 137 zip code 55732

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	6	1 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	1	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	1	structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		objects
		8	1 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Rural Finnish Log Buildings of St. Louis Co., MN

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official Ian R. Stewart Date 1/25/90
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau Minnesota Historical Society

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Entered in the
National Register

Alvina Byer

4/9/90

for Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwellingAGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCEanimal facilityagricultural outbuilding

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Log

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concretewalls LogWeatherboardroof Shingleother _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Located in the southeast corner of Pike Township down a long, narrow dead end lane, the Matt and Emma Hill Farm is a complex of eight turn-of-the-century buildings and structures. Situated on the south slope of a hill surrounded by rolling terrain composed of flood plain and open hay fields, the farm has a magnificent viewshed to the south overlooking the Pike River, which flows through the property down a steep slope about 150' away from the house. Secluded and undisturbed by modern intrusions, the farm consists of cleared land that is buffered on the north, west, and east sides by a mature, second-growth forest that contains a variety of deciduous hardwoods and softer coniferous trees. The property is entered by a rather long, straight driveway from the north that curves around a hill as it reaches the farmstead. The buildings, which date from between ca.1897 and ca.1903, are loosely arranged but form a subtle courtyard pattern. The following summary description of the Hill Farm corresponds to a map included with the registration form.

1) House (tupa), ca.1897, contributing.

The house is an extremely well-preserved, two-bay, one-and-one-half-story log building constructed on a stone foundation covered with a veneer of concrete. Measuring 19'2" x 29', the dwelling has plank-shaped hewn logs joined at the corners by finely-crafted, double notch joints that are sheathed with drop siding and corner boards. Rectangular-shaped, 1/1 double hung windows (some with missing frames) are located in each principal wall except the northeast side, where a small shed roofed frame porch encloses the entrance. The north-facing facade features a gable wall projecting from the right bay. Inside the left (kitchen) bay is a 3'-square door in the floor giving access to a cellar, and a brick chimney along the log partition in the center of the building. The right bay also has a trap door located in the center of the floor. Both rooms have floor boards measuring between 3/4"-2 1/4" and 7"-high baseboards. The loft is accessible by a door in the upper east gable end that was reached on a removable ladder. The gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

2) Hay Barn (lato), ca.1897-1903, contributing.

This building is located about 26' southeast of the house, and is built into a steep hillside with its south gable raised on a high wooden post and concrete foundation facing toward the Pike River. Measuring 18'8" x 22'9", the one-story barn has unhewn log walls featuring vertical dowels, wooden spacers, and wide spaces to allow air circulation; the corners are joined by saddle

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

Architecture

Ethnic Heritage: European

Period of Significance

ca.1897-1939

Significant Dates

ca.1897

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Hill, Matt, architect and builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Matt and Emma Hill Farm is historically significant under National Register Criterion A because it is associated with the turn-of-the-century movement of Finnish immigrants from the mining and timber industries where they originally found employment, to the rural areas of St. Louis County where they developed an agricultural life style amid the cutover landscape. It is also architecturally significant under Criterion C as an excellent example of a large and undisturbed complex of log buildings that embody the distinctive, traditional methods of construction used by Finns in the area. The house, domestic and agricultural buildings, and cultivated land represent the first associated property type (Finnish Log Farms) and exemplify the kind of subsistence level farming that these immigrants experienced. The Hill Farm is representative of the agrarian way of life that so many Finns strove for in rural St. Louis County during and after their employment in the iron mining and lumber industries (see associated historic contexts, The Iron Range, 1880s-1930s and Northern Minnesota Lumbering, 1870s-1930s). The Hill Farm illustrates the common practice by Finnish farmers of constructing numerous log buildings each for a specialized function. Furthermore, these buildings collectively form a rather loose closed farmstead arrangement, with both saunas situated a considerable distance from the house. The placement of each building in relation to one another and the location of the saunas on the edge of the farmstead are likely to be derived from Finland. The success of raising crops and animals by the Hill family is indicated by the small hay fields on the farm, and the cluster of domestic and agricultural buildings comprising the farmstead. Finally, the use of traditional materials, a two-room, one-and-one-half-story house plan, and familiar construction techniques such as double notched, chinkless log walls, reflect the continued use of Finnish folk building methods. The Hill Farm has retained all aspects of integrity because none of the buildings have been altered and the property never benefitted from rural electrification. The unspoiled location of the property overlooking the Pike River contributes to the overall integrity and significance of the farm.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See the Historic Contexts Bibliography

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acres of property 160 acres

UTM References

A

1	5	5	4	9	8	5	0	5	2	7	8	4	2	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

1	5	5	5	0	6	6	0	5	2	7	8	4	1	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

1	5	5	5	0	6	7	0	5	2	7	7	5	1	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

1	5	5	4	9	8	5	0	5	2	7	7	5	1	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies the south half of the northeast quarter and the north half of the southeast quarter of Section 26 of Pike Township, T60N, 16W, St. Louis County.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the farmhouse, outbuildings, and cultivated fields that have historically been part of the Hill Farm and that maintain historic integrity.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael Koop/Preservation Consultant

organization N/A date January 1989

street & number 615 Jackson St. NE telephone 612-623-8356

city or town Minneapolis state MN zip code 55413

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notches. The logs rise only to the eaves; vertical planks cover the upper gable ends. The gable roof has collapsed.

3) Outbuilding, ca.1897-1903, contributing.

The original function of this building is not known. It is one-story high and made of unhewn logs locked at the corners by saddle notch joints. It measures 14'9" wide and 17'6" long, and is divided longitudinally into two pens by a solid log wall. Each pen has an opening along the northwest wall. The building has no rafters or roof.

4) Cattle Barn (navetta), ca.1897-1903, contributing.

This nearly square building measures about 24' on the south gable, 25' on the north gable, and 24'4" along the sidewall. It is one story high with a loft, and made of plank-shaped, hewn timbers joined by double notch joints. A rare and unusual feature is that the log walls are constructed on a vertical pier foundation that is visible below the east and south walls. Logs rise up to the eaves at which point vertical boards cover the upper gable ends. Six joists embedded through the axial walls support the hay loft, while six rafters and two purlins stabilize the gable roof, which is covered with wood shingles. Wide, paired wagon doors pierce both gable ends, and two square, fixed sash windows light the south end of the building. There are at least eight animal stalls inside.

5) Original Sauna (savusauna), ca.1897-1903, contributing.

Constructed on a rubble stone and vertical pier foundation, this one-story building is 11'11" square. It is built of plank-shaped, hewn timbers with double notch joints that rise for the full height of the gable walls. There is a door in the south gable end and a small window on the east wall. The gable roof (which formerly was covered with wood shingles) is supported by six pole rafters, two purlins, and a ridgepole. Four hewn joists hold up the loft floor. The interior has two animal stalls, but the blackened logs, construction techniques, and overall size suggest that this was probably the original sauna referred to in the Homestead records.

6) Sauna, ca.1920, contributing.

Standing some 130' northwest of the house, this sauna is a log and frame, one-story building measuring 10'4" x 18'4". The nearly-square bathing room is made of hewn logs locked at the corners by dovetail notches. The right bay, or changing room, is made of 2" x 4" studs, and the entire building is

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sheathed with drop siding. The steam room features a 11 1/2"-wide window between the door and chimney, and three wooden benches along the west wall. There is a rectangular-shaped, double hung window in the east gable end, and a small, square, fixed sash in the south wall of the sauna room. Sawn rafters support a gable roof covered with asphalt shingles.

7) Chicken Coop (kanahakki), date unknown, noncontributing.

This wood frame building is about 10'6" square, has a shed roof, and is covered with drop siding. It has a door and window to the east and another small window facing south.

8) Well (kaivo), ca.1897-1903, contributing.

The well is located about 23' east of the house. It has no pump and is covered with plywood. It is considered a contributing structure.

9) Agricultural Fields, contributing.

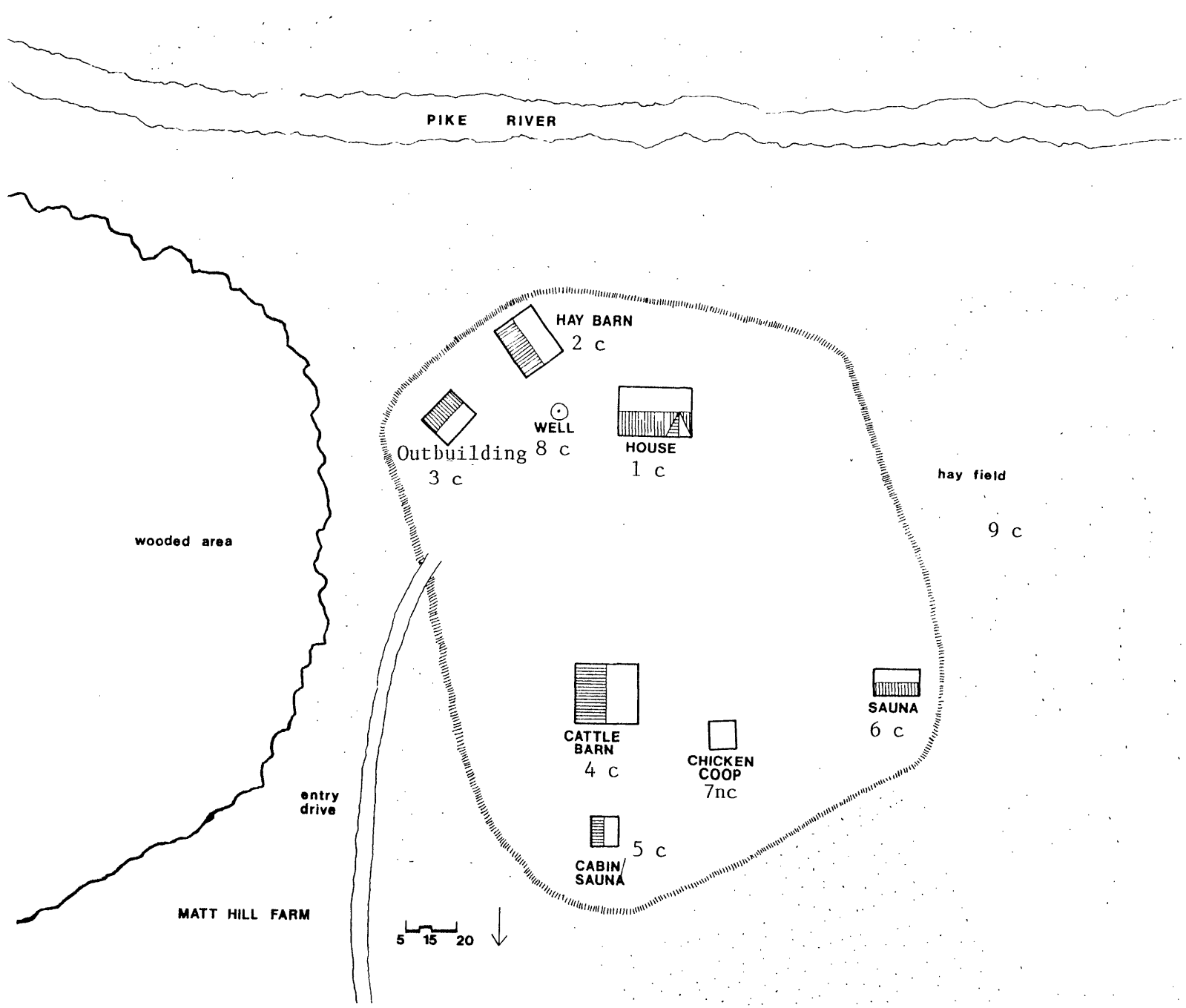
These buffer the property primarily north of the log and frame sauna. Although the farmstead is presently abandoned, the fields are still used by another farmer for hay. They are considered a contributing site.

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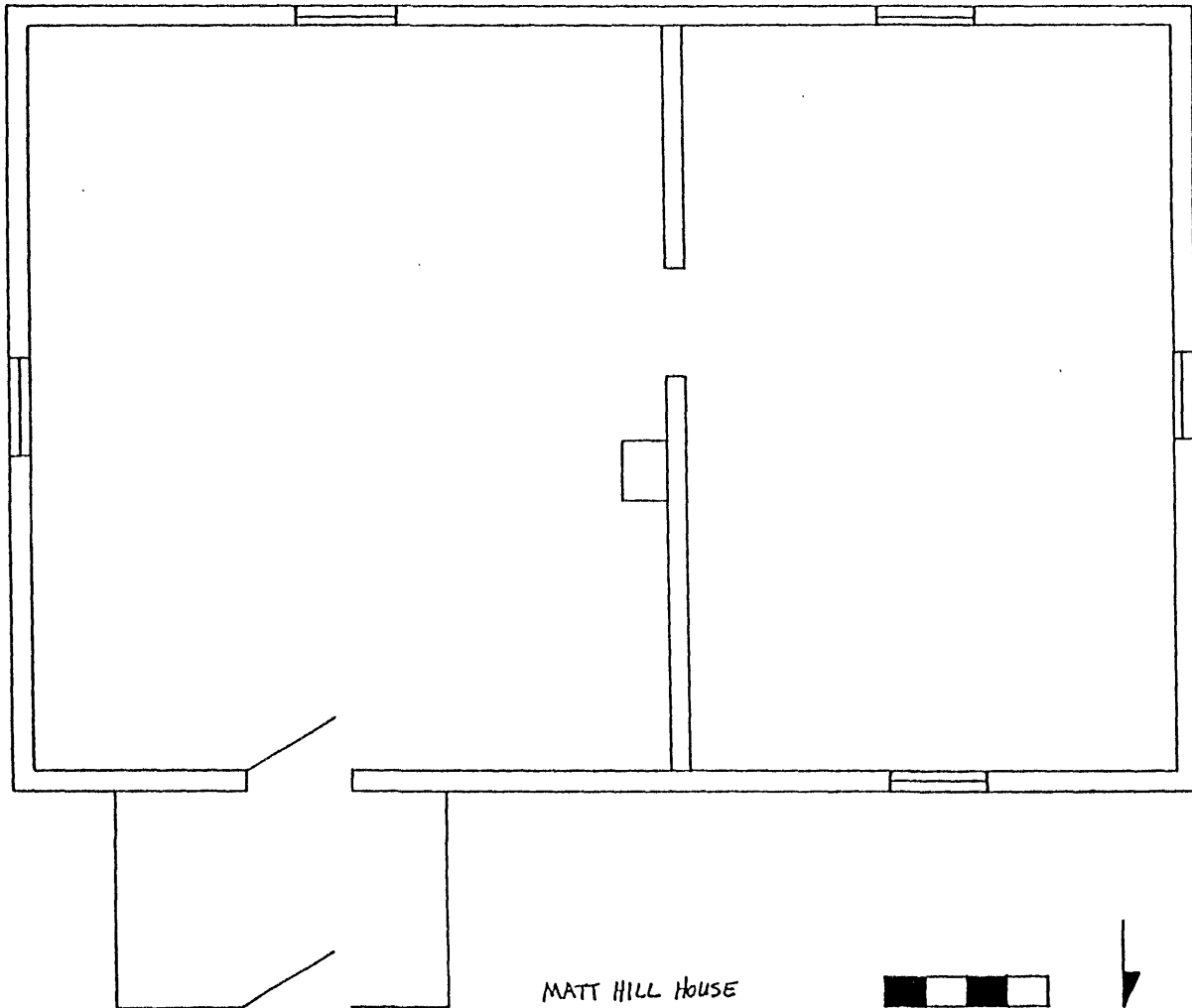
THIS IS NOT A BOUNDARY MAP

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Homestead records indicate that Matt Hill moved from Biwabik, Minnesota (where he may have worked at the Biwabik Mine) in the late 1890s and applied for a 160-acre homestead in Section 26 of Pike Township on 4 August 1897. Hill settled on his land one month later and by 22 March 1898 his wife, three children, and mother-in-law had joined him on the farm. He reportedly constructed the two-room log house in September, 1902, but it is unclear where the six family members lived prior to that time. Hill secured his final proof on 29 January 1903 when he was 39 years old. His two witnesses, Gust Ettla and Antti Pekkala, certified that Hill had never been away from his homestead for more than two months at a time. Although it is not known where Hill went when he left the farm, it is probable that he sought temporary employment in the mines or forests in order to boost his income. By 1903 the farm consisted of a house, bath house (sauna), three barns, a well, and arable land. Hill and his family had cleared sixteen acres of "timbered agricultural land" with five acres cultivated and producing crops. The total assessed value of the land and improvements was \$650, slightly under the average amount compared to other Finnish farms in the area.

The rectangular-shaped, two-room house is modeled after the same form found in Finland. Its excellent condition contributes to the overall significance of the site. Both the cattle barn and original sauna display pier foundations, an uncommon feature in St. Louis County but not without an Old World antecedent. All of the log buildings except the hay barns (which have unhewn timbers and saddle notches) utilize the north European form of construction, resulting in extremely tight walls.