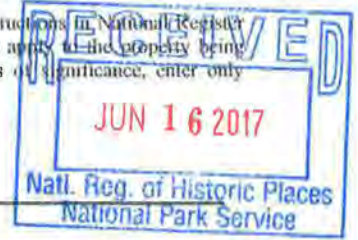


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

56-1391

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Vinkle, Henry and Aurora (Walker), House

Other names/site number: Coe House Museum

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 371 West Michigan Avenue

City or town: Grass Lake State: MI County: Jackson

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

Brian D. Amick

Signature of certifying official/Title: _____ Date 5/22/17

Michigan State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: _____ Date _____

Title : _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain:)

for Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

7.31.17
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
Public – Local
Public – State
Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
District
Site
Structure
Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u>1</u>	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
 /secondary structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum
EDUCATION/research facility
SOCIAL/Meeting Hall

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Italianate

Materials:

Foundation: Fieldstone

Roof: Asphalt

Walls: Brick

Other: Wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Henry and Aurora (Walker) Vinkle House is a yellowish brick, hip-roof Italianate house with a two-story T-plan main front section, with the top of the T forming the right side of the front and projecting to the front and rear and the shaft with its recessed front forming the left side of the front. There is also a one-story rear extension nearly as broad as the front. The house's round arch-head windows have caps formed of double courses of header bricks painted in a whitish hue that contrasts with the yellow-buff brickwork of the walls. The front is spanned by a one-story open porch that, built in 1974, retains the decorative character of a previously removed porch that shows in older photographs. The rear ell also has a shed-roof wooden porch along its east side. The half-acre lot also contains a hip-roof brick three-hole privy at the rear of the house and a small gable-roof frame barn or shed at the rear of the property.

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Narrative Description

Setting

The Vinkle House is located on a small rise on the south side of the main street at the far west end of the Village of Grass Lake. Set on a half-acre lot, the house is located at the southeast corner of West Michigan Avenue, which runs in a north-northeast to west-southwest direction through the village and past the house toward Jackson, and Wolf Lake Road, a locally important road running south toward Napoleon, about seven miles away. Nearby, on the north side of West Michigan Avenue, is the former Michigan Central Railroad line, the lifeblood of early Grass Lake and still part of a main line between Detroit and Chicago now owned by the Norfolk Southern. The line carries Amtrak passenger service, though Grass Lake is no longer a stop along the route.

The house's yard slopes gently upward towards the south, or rear, of the property. A gravel drive on the east side of the house continues around to the rear, widening out to form a parking area, and exits on Wolf Lake Road to the west. The yard contains several large, old deciduous trees, including a large catalpa standing directly in front of the house. To the east of the property, other historic houses form the western edge of the Village of Grass Lake. Further to the east along Michigan Avenue stands the village's two block long commercial district with its buildings dating mostly from the later nineteenth into the early twentieth century.

House – Exterior

The T-footprint two-story hip-roof main part of the house has a width across the front of thirty-two feet, half of that in the right/west side, which projects forward of the left/east section seven feet, and half the total width in the recessed east section. The west half of the house (the head of the T) also projects to the rear of the east section five feet. The west part of the two-story main section has a depth of twenty-eight feet, the east section sixteen feet. The reconstructed front porch projects outward from the house's front five feet in front of the west section and twelve feet in front of the recessed east part.

The one-story rear ell has a maximum depth of twenty-eight feet and width of twenty-nine feet. It is formed of two parts – a hip-roof original east-side section that extends back mainly behind the recessed-front east part of the house's main front section and, along its west side, behind the head-of-the-T west section of the front, a narrower brick part with low-slope shed roof. A four-foot deep shed-roof porch extends along the rear ell's entire east side.

The house's front contains a door near the center of the recessed east section's front, and there is a second door into the projecting west section's east face. The first floor of the front features tall, nearly floor-to-ceiling round-arch windows, two in the projecting west section and one to the left of the entry in the recessed right-hand part. The second floor of the front façade contains two round-arch windows in each section. The two-story part's east side displays two round-arch windows in each story, the broad west side elevation two more widely spaced windows in each

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story. The second-floor, south end of the west, head-of-the-T section now contains a door (perhaps replacing a window) that opens onto a nearly flat shed roof on the rear ell's west side. All the windows and doors in the house's main front section have brick arch caps formed of double rows of header bricks laid flush with the wall surface. The caps' brickwork is painted white, a treatment that on this house dates back many years. The west side elevation also contains a later projecting square-plan red brick chimney stack that rises through the eave well above the roof.

The Vinkle house is constructed with walls of a locally fired yellowish brick. The name D. Shelly appears cut into a brick on the façade near the front entrance. Shelly owned a local contracting and brick-making company (United States Federal Census, 1880), and the inscription suggests the possibility he may have made the brick or been involved in the construction of the house. The bricks are placed in a running bond pattern. The exterior structural system of the house is solid brick, possibly as deep as four bricks for the main portion of the house. The foundation/basement walls are built of large, rough fieldstones set in mortar. The windows and doors are the original wood ones. The interior walls are finished with plaster and wallpapered. The roofs are clad in asphalt shingles except for the ell's side porch, whose shed roof is clad in rubberized sheeting.

The house has two porches, one on the front façade and one on the ell's east elevation. The front porch was rebuilt in 1974, replacing the former, which had been removed because of severe deterioration. The present wooden porch, except for the mansard roof, follows closely what shows in historic photographs of the house (Grass Lake Area Historic Society Interview, 2012). The trim between the posts and below the lintels has a delicate vine and leaf motif, and the porch's solid wood aprons below the deck display cut-outs in a trefoil pattern. The front porch appears originally to have had a hip roof, as shown by ghost evidence of it in a picture of the house's front before the reconstructed porch was built. The present roof, with its short and steep mansard front, is finished in both asphalt shingles and rubberized sheeting. The side porch is much simpler in design, having a shed roof with thin columns supporting it.

From the exterior, the doors of the Vinkle House take on the same form as the windows, with round-arch heads. Like the front windows, in the interior the round-arch-head doors are outlined by square-head door trim. Each of the exterior doors on the original portion of the house has large glass lites.

The one chimney no longer functions and was probably used for an earlier heating system. This red brick chimney is located on the west elevation and is very thin and tall. The existing chimney is clearly not original, and it appears that the house was primarily heated using some liquid fuel, as evidenced by the large metal storage tanks in the basement.

The ground floor of the T-footprint two-story part of the house contains three rooms, a hall or living room in the east part (shaft of the T), parlor occupying the front of the west side, and a third, narrow room at the west back end, now used as exhibit and storage space. A narrow, walled-in staircase, with door at its lower end, runs west from the hall's west side up to a small landing inside the house's west side wall. From the upper landing, an open hallway runs along

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the stairwell's south side leading to a door into a bedroom above the hall. A door to the upper stair landing's right or north opens into another bedroom above the parlor.

From the downstairs hall/living room, a doorway in the center of the room's south wall opens into the dining room in the northeast part of the one-story rear ell. Behind/south of it is the kitchen, in the ell's southeast corner. This hip-roof east part of the rear ell appears to be part of the original house and displays a round-arch-head door each in the dining room and kitchen and round-arch window in the dining room beneath the east porch and a round-arch and lower segmental-arch-head window in the kitchen's rear/south façade. The narrower shed-roof west side of the ell contains a bathroom at its north end and an uninsulated summer kitchen/storage room behind in the southwest corner.

The shed-roof west portion of the rear ell is thought to date from later than the rest of the house, and its present form may have resulted from more than one construction episode. Its west side façade is built of a slightly more red-hued brick than the rest of the house and has a header course every seventh or eighth course compared to the rest of the walls, which are faced in stretcher bond. There is some thought that what is now the location of the bathroom against the rear façade of the two-story main house was once an open porch – perhaps the entire shed-roof west-side part. The bathroom has a round-arch window like those in the rest of the house. The lower west side wall directly adjacent to the main part of the house's south façade contains a metal coal chute door topped by a segmental-arch cap formed of a double course of header bricks. The south part of the shed-roof west side has a square-head window different from the rest but otherwise seems to have brickwork uniform with the rest of the west side extension – except for a part of the upper wall structure on the south/rear façade, which was rebuilt with much more reddish brick at some point. This summer kitchen area has a poured concrete floor that contains the date 1941 inscribed in it, presumably indicating the year when the floor was built.

House – Interior

The interior retains its molded wood doorway and window trim, tall baseboards, and original doors – round-arch-head exterior ones and square-head paneled interior ones. Along with the front and two east side doors a fourth door – in the south wall of the small first-floor room south of the stairway and connecting to the bathroom in the ell's west side – also has a round-arch head, suggesting that this may also have been an exterior door at one time. The round-arch front windows in the first floor run from floor to ceiling height. On the first-floor interior the windows' and doors' round arch heads are outlined by square-head wooden trim. The front door's upper portion contains two tall frosted glass lights displaying etched lozenge forms outlining eight-pointed leaf or floral forms radiating out from a central circular or petal form. The arch-head dining room and kitchen exterior doors have large clear glass lites in the upper portions, while the front parlor door off the front porch is a paneled wood structure without any lites. Paneled square-head double doors separate the hall and parlor. Interior walls and ceilings are plastered, except in the summer kitchen, where the brick walls and wood ceiling structure are exposed. Efforts have been made to retain the interior integrity with repairs to plaster work and existing finishes. The walls retain the historic plaster on the first floor but the second floor walls

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have been rebuilt with drywall. The dining room ceiling retains an original central ceiling pendant. The house is furnished mainly with historic artifacts appropriate to a historic house museum presenting local life in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Privy

A privy with a broadly projecting asphalt-shingled hip roof stands directly behind the kitchen, in the house's rear ell. Its walls are constructed of the same brick as the rest of the house, with no interior wood framing, and the walls are at least three wythes deep. The privy has three holes and has a tank system that allowed for its continued use. The privy displays details similar to the main house including painted segmental-arch-brick caps over the east-facing door and a short west-facing louvered window, the arches formed of single rows of headers. The privy's brickwork was repaired in 1981, but the building retains its original character.

Barn

The second outbuilding is a small gable-roof wood-frame vertical board-and-batten-clad barn. Its date of construction is unknown. The barn has its long front side, with sliding double doors spanning nearly the entire façade, facing west. Each gable end contains a single small square window. The barn may have been used for storage or as a workshop; it appears too small to have served as a carriage house with room for a horse and grain storage. The rear of the barn is constructed using a portion of a stone foundation, possibly from an earlier structure built into a hill. The rest of the barn rests on simple wooden posts into the ground. The barn has a concrete floor and brick paving up to the door.

Interurban Exhibit

The far back end of the yard behind the graveled parking area now features a small gable-roof wooden building, built in 2014 to house exhibits related to Grass Lake's significant interurban railway history (see *Statement of Significance* below). The building is built in the style of a railroad depot, with a roofed-over platform out front facing north, and is labeled with the name "Coe Waiting Station, Grass Lake." The museum has acquired an interurban car used by the Michigan United Railway, one of the two lines that served Grass Lake and passed by the house. The museum hopes to have it moved to the site in the near future (a very deteriorated interurban car that is currently placed on the grounds near the 2014 depot, and shows in the nomination photos, is not the planned permanent exhibit but only on loan for the present). The interurban exhibit area, non-contributing for the purposes of this nomination, is located at the far back end of the property somewhat removed from the house and other buildings.

Retaining Wall

The entire property is divided from the adjoining properties by a large block retention wall that was added around the same time as the 2014 depot and is considered non-contributing for the purposes of this nomination.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

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Period of Significance

1869

Significant Dates

1869

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Vinkle House was the home for about eighteen years of Henry and Aurora (Walker) Vinkle from its construction circa 1869, until the Vinkles moved to the Dakotas in 1887. Henry Vinkle was a prominent businessman in the village, initially after his 1868 arrival in town the owner of a furniture and undertaking business and later of a hardware and agricultural implements business while also still serving as the village's only undertaker. Mrs. Aurora (Walker) Vinkle seems to have been the actual owner of the property - having received it as a gift from her father, William H. Walker, a prominent land owner and the son of an early settler. The house meets National Register Criterion C in the area of Architecture as one of most intact among the small number of brick Italianate houses present in this small, rural community.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Grass Lake

Grass Lake was one of four townships into which Jackson County was divided in 1832. The county as a geographical unit was established by the governor and legislative council of the Michigan Territory in 1829, but was attached to Washtenaw County, to the east, for administrative purposes. Jackson County was formally organized in 1832, and the single Jacksonopolis Township (soon renamed Jacksonburgh) that already existed divided into the four townships that included Grass Lake. Grass Lake Township initially comprised eight Congressional townships, but was reduced to the present area, only slightly larger than a single one, in 1836 – such was the progress of the county’s settlement in the early 1830s. Grass Lake is named for “the beautiful sheet of water forming its northern boundary, and this lake was called Grass Lake on account of its being almost covered with luxuriant wild grass” (Inter-State Publishing Co., *History of Jackson County*, I, 273-77; II, 843-844; quote from 844).

Grass Lake Township’s first settler arrived in the spring of 1829, with a few more in 1830-31 and then many more by 1835. A village at “Grass Lake Center,” a short distance east of the present village, began to coalesce during the 1830s. A post office was established in 1831, the first hotel built in 1834, and three churches established in the 1832-36 period (Inter-State Publishing Co., II, 843-44).

In 1842 the state-owned railroad line running west from Detroit to Jackson was built through Grass Lake (the railroad, a few years later reorganized as the privately owned Michigan Central Railroad, was completed to Chicago by the early 1850s). The railroad built its depot west of Grass Lake Center. This quickly resulted in the demise of the village at the Center and the development of the present Grass Lake Village a short distance to the west of the former center. The 1881 county history reports a then-population of about one thousand, and lists as present there at the time: two hotels, four dry-goods stores, two hardware stores, two drugstores, two millineries, a grocery, and four saloons (Inter-State Publishing Co., II, 844, 846-47).

The Vinkles

By the early 1880s Henry and Aurora (Walker) Vinkle were prominent members of local society. They owned a large business in Grass Lake selling hardware and farming implements. Henry Vinkle was born in Dexter, Michigan, in 1845 to Henry and Rebecca Vinkle. When “14 years of age [he] commenced to learn the trade of cabinet-maker from his father, which business his father had followed many years.” But he soon turned to clerking in a general store/furniture business owned by his brother, John Vinkle, in Dexter, and eventually formed a partnership with him that continued two and a-half years until Henry sold his interest back to John – this was presumably in the early-mid 1860s. Vinkle spent the next few years “traveling, visiting various cities and places of interest in the Eastern States. In March, 1868, he located in Grass Lake and commenced the furniture and undertaking business” (Inter-State Publishing Co., II, 872-73).

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Vinkle soon met, and in 1869 was married to, Aurora Walker, the daughter of William H. Walker of Grass Lake. The Walkers were early settlers of Grass Lake, having arrived in 1830 or 1831 (Inter-State Publishing Co., II, 843, 873). In 1830 William Walker's father, Daniel Walker, purchased property that became the future site of the west part of the village from the government. The land the house sits on was part of this larger property, and remained in son William Walker's possession until after Vinkle and his daughter Aurora were married (Land Patent, Jan. 3, 1831, Cert. No. 3599). The Walker family helped to establish Grass Lake as a village and William's father Daniel Walker served as the first postmaster in 1831 and first township clerk and tax collector, positions he held until his death in 1839 (Inter-State Publishing Co., II, 873).

William H. Walker "engaged extensively in the manufacture of brick until 1866, when he established his drug business; up to the present time [1881] he has continued his branch of trade, adding to it from time to time a book and stationary department, a grocery store and wall-paper department" (*ibid.*, 873). W. H. Walker also served as a Village President and on the Board of Trustees of Grass Lake Village.

Walker deeded the lot on which the nominated house stands to Aurora (Walker) Vinkle in 1871, two years after her marriage to Vinkle. The 1868 tax records, the first that list Henry Vinkle, show him only assessed for personal property. In 1869 for the first time he is listed with real estate in Sec. 32 (where the house is located) valued at \$600. In the 1870 assessment roll his real estate is valued at \$800, in the 1871-73 rolls at \$700, and in 1874 and 1877 at \$600 (Jackson County Tax Records, Archives of Michigan). It seems likely the house was built in 1869 or perhaps even in time for the Vinkles' marriage in late February 1869.

The Vinkles had three children: Mahlon H. Vinkle, born 1870; Minerva L. Vinkle, born 1872; and Maude Vinkle, who was born about 1877 and died of diphtheria in 1881 (O'Leary, *Ancestors of Mahlon H. Vinkle*).

Henry Vinkle was apparently a successful businessman in Grass Lake. The 1881 county history noted that "After some years [in the furniture and undertaking business] Mr. Vinkle added to his former business that of dealing in agricultural implements, which he still continues," and that he had then recently sold the furniture business while keeping on as an undertaker – described in the history as the only one in the town (Inter-State Publishing Co., II, 873). Other sources make clear that he ran the agricultural implements business in association with a hardware business. A brief note in the July 20, 1877, *Jackson Citizen Patriot* reported that Vinkle "has just received as handsome a looking hearse as one would wish to take their last ride in, which he purchased in Newark, NJ."

Another issue of the *Jackson Citizen*, for June 9, 1885, contained a letter from "A Spectator" about "Henry Vinkle's great display of farm implements" on the previous Saturday. The writer commented that the display "was no indication of hard time."

It was the largest delivery ever made in a country town in one day. The farmers who purchased all came and had a free dinner at the Lake house [hotel], incidentals thrown in,

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and after dinner they hitched to the various implements and were escorted out of town, headed by Vinkle's best blacks, followed by Davenport & Curtis' \$2,500 team, loaded with Champion men; next came the Grass Lake band and then separators, twelve binders, nine mowers, eight cultivators, four drills and other smaller implements, and among the many purchasers were, Martin, Muspaugh, Castle, Wood, Taylor, Heydlauff, Clark, Soper, Walter Hines, Martell, Hoffman, Cook, Hoffnagle, Adams, Parks, Crell, Seagrist, McVay, Garton, Schnichenbocher and others, twenty-four teams, all carrying the stars and stripes, and the band, in their new uniform, with 800 spectators, was truly a new thing for Grass Lake, and shows that Grass Lake nor Henry Vinkle are not yet dead. Sales, about \$5,000.

Despite their apparent success in Grass Lake, the Vinkles moved to the Dakotas only two years after Henry's triumphant "great display" of farm equipment he sold. The April 4, 1887, *Citizen Patriot* reported "H. Vinkle, wife and daughter Minnie, started, Wednesday, for Dakota." The background to the move may be explained by a brief report in the "Changes" section of the monthly Chicago-based *The Farm Implement News* for February 1887 under the "Michigan" heading: "Grass Lake – Henry Vinkle, hdw., undkrs., coal and agrl. impls., burned out." This apparent disaster may have left the Vinkles thinking about starting fresh somewhere else.

Where exactly they moved to is not made clear, but a *Citizen Patriot* brief of February 22, 1898, states that Henry Vinkle, "who has been visiting Grass Lake and Jackson friends, has returned home" – his home listed as Harwarden, South Dakota. This may be an error for Hawarden. Hawarden is located in Iowa, but just across the Big Sioux River from Union County, the southeasternmost county in South Dakota. The move would have taken place during the Dakota land boom when settlement of the eastern Dakotas proceeded rapidly, fueled by railroad development and rising agricultural expectations. The 1900 federal census lists Henry, "hotel landlord," and Aurora, along with son Mahlon and his wife Myrtle, residing at Bear Creek Township, Dickey County, North Dakota, along with daughter Minnie, who had married Ansel P. Slocum in Oakes, North Dakota, in 1889 – the village of Oakes is surrounded by Bear Creek Township (O'Leary, *Ancestors of Mahlon H. Vinkle*). Dickey County is located in southeastern North Dakota near the South Dakota line.

The Vinkles continued to own the Grass Lake house until 1901, presumably renting it out. In February 1901 they sold the house and half-acre lot to the Detroit, Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor & Jackson Railway (DYAA&J), an interurban line between Ann Arbor and Jackson that went into operation that year. The DYAA&J, whose line ran directly behind the Vinkles' property, was one of two interurban lines that served Grass Lake in the early twentieth century. The second, whose line ran along Grass Lake's main street in front of the Vinkle House and then south along Wolf Lake Road past the house's west side, was the Jackson & Suburban Traction Co. line that connected Jackson to the west with Grass Lake and also included a branch running to the Wolf Lake amusement park and resort area a few miles south-southwest of Grass Lake. Built in 1901 as part of what was originally conceived as an interurban line connecting Detroit and Chicago, it never built farther east from Jackson than Grass Lake, where it ended at a junction with the DYAA&J on the village's east side. The line was absorbed by the Michigan United Railways, a consortium of trolley and interurban lines serving southern Michigan cities west of Ann Arbor

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and the Detroit area, in 1907 and operated to Grass Lake until 1924 (Schramm, et al., *When Michigan Rode the Rails, Book III*, 33-34, 36, 39-44, 111).

The Vinkle House's purchaser in 1901, the DYAA&J, was part of a Detroit-Jackson line opened between 1896 and 1901 whose eastern sections were initially owned by different companies. From 1907 on to its end in 1929 the entire Detroit-Jackson line was operated as part of the Detroit United Railway system under the Detroit, Jackson & Chicago name. The Detroit United Railway was established in 1901 as an amalgamation of previously separate Detroit area trolley/interurban lines as one of many interurban and local trolley system investments by Cleveland-based entrepreneurs Henry A. Everitt and Edward W. Moore, who controlled nearly all the lines in northern Ohio along with lines in New York state, Canada, and elsewhere (Hilton and Due, *The Electric Interurban Railways in America*, 287-88). (For a small town with a population of 800-1000, Grass Lake had rail service of an almost metropolitan character. The two interurban lines provided no fewer than twenty-seven daily trips in each direction from Grass Lake. This was in addition to the Michigan Central Railroad, which also provided passenger service to the village from its own depot (Schramm, et al., 44).)

The DYAA&J line ran directly behind/south of the property. The Grass Lake map in the 1911 Geo. A. Ogle & Co. county atlas shows the railway having its depot where Lake Street crossed it well east of the house, near the center of town. How the interurban system used the house is unclear – perhaps as temporary housing for employees. The property was part of that acquired by the reorganized Detroit, Jackson and Chicago Railway in 1907.

In 1909, Herman H. and Fredericka Mellencamp purchased the house from the railway. In the 1910 census, Herman, 73 years of age, and Fredericka, 71 years of age, lived with their twenty-one-year-old son, Jesse, who was a traveling salesman for a telephone company (United States Federal Census, Jackson County, 1910). The Mellencamps had multiple children, many of whom lived around the area. Their son Henry and his family lived in Grass Lake, and took over his parents' estate after their deaths. Herman died in 1919, and Fredericka died in 1920. While local word-of-mouth reports that Henry Mellencamp may have rented the house to Catherine M. Walz in October 1925, the house was deeded to William H. and Lu Ella Miller in 1926 by the Mellencamp family heirs.

Walz purchased the property from William Miller in 1931 after Lu Ella's death the previous year (Michigan Death Certificates, 1921-1952). Walz, a widow when she purchased the Vinkle House, had previously lived with her husband, Lewis Herman Walz, in Sharon Hollow a few miles to the southeast of Grass Lake. Louis Walz died from injuries sustained during a barn raising in 1918. Catherine raised her four children at this house and in 1930 three of those children still lived with her.

Following Catherine Walz the Coe family resided in the house. Local informants and census data suggest that the Coes lived there as early as 1938, possibly under an unrecorded land contract. Grass Lake Area Historical Society members remember spending time with the Coe daughters at the Vinkle House while in high school during the 1940's. Catherine Walz deeded the property to Archie H. and Myrta M. Coe on October 16, 1953.

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Archie and Myrta Coe lived in the house for many years. Myrta Coe sold the property to the then newly incorporated Grass Lake Area Historical Society in 1972 with the condition that she could live there until her death. The purchase price was \$12,500 with a \$2,000 down payment and small monthly payments until complete. From 1972 to 1975 the historical society made improvements to the property, including rebuilding the front porch using historic photographs and updating mechanical systems.

In 1975, following Myrta Coe's death, the Grass Lake Area Historical Society took possession of the house. The historical society has made a number of repairs to the property but has done so in a manner to preserve the architectural integrity of the building. In 1975 they hired a mason to clean and tuck point the brick and in 1976 a new roof was installed. At this time repairs were made to the interior plaster work and the house was re-wired to bring it up to code. Repairs including structural work and repointing were done to the privy's brickwork in 1981 and in 1989 the kitchen was restored to a more typical nineteenth-century appearance by removing some of the modern appliances and alterations the Coes had made to the property.

The historical society has been an excellent steward of the Vinkle House and is currently making plans and fundraising for repair of the original wooden windows. They have furnished the house as a typical Victorian house, with seasonal decorations. They regularly hold programs at the museum including children's events, holiday celebrations, and community history days. The museum is an important place for the community.

Architecture

The Vinkle House is significant under Architecture in the local, Grass Lake area context. Grass Lake is a small village with a population over the years generally of about 800-1000 (the 2010 census recorded a population of 1173). The business district of Grass Lake is two blocks long, and contains a number of primarily brick commercial buildings dating from the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. There are two Victorian churches and a scattering of substantial historic houses ranging from Greek Revival to early twentieth-century Queen Anne/Free Classic and bungalows. The village contains five other brick Italianate houses, at 400 and 435 East Michigan Avenue, 640 Church Street, and 217 and 233 North Lake Street – all of them solid middle class buildings. Four of them are two-story hip-roof buildings with round or segmental-arch-head windows and eaves displaying paired brackets, while the fifth has a gabled-ell form with hip-roof "upright" and gabled side ell. The brick walls in three of the houses have been painted, and in all various alterations have taken place such as enclosed front porches and an added modern belvedere on the roof in one case. Among them the Vinkle House is typical in its presentation of Italianate features such as the projecting hip roof and round-arch windows and doorways, but stands out among them for its high degree of overall architectural integrity.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Vinkle, Henry and Aurora (Walker), House
Name of Property

Jackson County, MI
County and State

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

“Closing Out Sale.” *Grass Lake News* (Grass Lake, MI), January 2, 1887.

The Farm Implement News, Vol. VIII, No. 2, Feb. 1887, page 40.

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“History.” Grass Lake Chamber of Commerce. Accessed November 13, 2012.

Inter-State Publishing Co. *History of Jackson County, Michigan*. Chicago, IL: 1881.

Jackson Citizen, Jackson, MI

- Henry Vinkle’s great display of farm implements. 6/9/1885.

Jackson Citizen Patriot, Jackson, MI

- H. Vinkle’s new hearse. 7/20/1877.
- Vinkles started for Dakota. 4/14/1887.
- Vinkle, who has been visiting friends, has returned home. 2/22/1898.

Jackson County Tax Rolls, Village of Grass Lake, Archives of Michigan, 1864-1877.

Jackson County Register of Deeds, Jackson, Michigan. Property deeds for Vinkle House. Copies in working file.

“Michigan, Death Certificates, 1921-1952,” index. FamilySearch (<http://familysearch.org/pal:MM9.1.1/KF3W-5Y3> : accessed 24 October 2013), Luella Miller, 1930.

Ogle, Geo. A., & Co. *Standard Atlas of Jackson County, Michigan*. Chicago: Geo. A. Ogle & Co., 1911.

O’Leary, Marilyn. *Ancestors of Mahlon H. Vinkle*. Grass Lake Area Historical Society, 2012.

Schramm, Jack E.; William H. Henning; Richard R. Andrews. *When Michigan Rode the Rails, Book III: Transit Across Michigan by Interurban, Train, Bus*. Interurbans Special Series, no. 109. Glendale, CA: Interurban Press, 1988.

United States Federal Census, 1850 MI, Washtenaw, Dexter, Dexter Village: pg 521; 19 Sept, 1850.

United States Federal Census, 1860 MI, Washtenaw, Scio: pg. 46; 15 Aug, 1860.

Vinkle, Henry and Aurora (Walker), House
Name of Property

Jackson County, MI
County and State

United States Federal Census. 1880 Michigan. Jackson County, Village of Grass Lake, pp. 38.

United States Federal Census, 1900, Oakes City, Dickey, North Dakota: Enumeration District 252, sheet 4. 11 June, 1900.

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Grass Lake Area Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.55

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 42.248985 Longitude: -84.218661

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

Vinkle, Henry and Aurora (Walker), House
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1. Zone: 38 Easting: 469073.565015 Northing: 646771.143387
2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property is bounded by East Michigan Avenue to the north and Wolf Lake Road to the west. The property line to the east is the edge of the driveway which is lined by bushes and a large tree. The southern property line is a line of trees and ditch that delineate the property from those of the other side.

BEG AT PT OF INTERSECTION OF CEN LN OF TERRITORIAL RD WITH CEN LN OF GRASS LAKE RD TH S 0012'E ALG CEN OF GRASS LAKE RD 184.5 FT TH N 880 22'E 135.1 FT TH N 100W 213.47 FT TO CEN OF TERRITORIAL RD TH S 730 19'W ALG CEN OF TERRITORIAL RD 102.96 FT TO BEG. BEING PART OF ORCHARD LOT IN BLOCK 2 WALKER'S ADDITION SITUATE IN THE VILLAGE OF GRASS LAKE D.D.A.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These are the legal boundaries of the current property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Katie Kolokithas, Survey and Information Coordinator
revised by R.O. Christensen, National Register Coordinator, MI SHPO
organization: State Historic Preservation Office
street & number: 735 East Michigan Avenue
city or town: Lansing state: MI zip code: 48912
e-mail kolokithask1@michigan.gov
telephone: 517-241-6062
date: May, 2017

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Vinkle, Henry and Aurora (Walker), House
Name of Property

Jackson County, MI
County and State

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photo Log

Name of Property: Vinkle, Henry House

City or Vicinity: Grass Lake

County: Jackson State: Michigan

Photographer: Katie Kolokithas

Date Photographed: October 25, 2012

1. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Principal façade exterior, facing south
2. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: East elevation exterior, facing southwest
3. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Rear elevation exterior, facing northeast
4. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Rear elevation exterior, facing northwest
5. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: West elevation exterior, facing southeast
6. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Barn at rear of property, facing east
7. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Front façade and landscape, facing southeast
8. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Interior detail of front façade door, facing north
9. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Interior detail of first floor window, facing north
10. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Heating oil tanks in basement, facing north
11. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Interior of the brick privy to the south of the house, facing east

Vinkle, Henry and Aurora (Walker), House
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12. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Historic Photograph showing trefoil porch detail, date and source unknown (photo located within Vinkle house)
13. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Historic Photograph showing porch detail, date and source unknown (photo located within Vinkle house)
14. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Principal façade exterior, facing southwest
15. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Interior, dining room facing east into bathroom
16. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Interior door showing rounded details, between bathroom and room off of hall, facing south
17. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Front façade detail in brick, name D. Shelly inscribed on brick about 18 bricks from porch floor, facing south
18. Vinkle, Henry, House, Grass Lake, MI: Front porch exterior facing west showing porch details

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Jackson County, MI
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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



Vinkle, Henry and Aurora (Walker), House
371 West Michigan Avenue, Grass Lake, Jackson County, Michigan

Lat./Long.: 42-248985 / -84.218661

.75 inch = 500 feet







← DOWNTOWN
← JACKSON
← SPORTS & TRAILS PARK



COE WAITING STATION

GRASS LAKE

POE HOUSE
museum

Enter Only



COE WAITING STATION

GRASS LAKE

COE WAITING STATION
GRASS LAKE
This station was built in 1911 and is one of the few remaining stations in the Coe Railroad system. It was built by the Coe Railroad Company and is a fine example of early 20th-century architecture. The station is made of wood and has a gabled roof. It is located on the Coe Railroad line between Grass Lake and Coe.









































D. Shelly.



















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 6/16/2017 Date of Pending List: 7/18/2017 Date of 16th Day: 8/2/2017 Date of 45th Day: 7/31/2017 Date of Weekly List: 8/3/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 7/31/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Edson Beall Discipline Historian

Telephone _____ Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

Grass Lake Area Historical Connections

371 W. Michigan
P.O. Box 53
Grass Lake, Michigan 49240

State Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 30044
Lansing, Michigan 48909

11 May 2017

Good Morning,

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Grass Lake Area Historical Connections, proud owners of the Coe House Museum in Grass Lake. We are very excited that our house, the Henry and Aurora (Walker) Vinkle home, has been evaluated and is now being considered for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. This step by the Michigan Historic Preservation Board is action we have been looking forward to.

Our small community has a proud history. We are watching a growth spurt in recent years and are excited to note a true interest in this history by our 'newcomers'. It is as though an awakening is happening which will assist in the many preservation efforts of our small historical group. The acknowledgement of our Coe House Museum will certainly fuel this new excitement. We are hopeful that we will shortly be able to announce National Historic Registry acceptance to our supporters.

Thank you to all who have worked on our behalf to get to this point. I invite you to visit Grass Lake and both of our museums – Coe House Museum and Michigan Military Heritage Museum. You will be glad you came.

Sincerely,
Marilyn O'Leary
Board President
Grass Lake Area Historical Connections



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

EARL J. POLESKI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 22, 2017

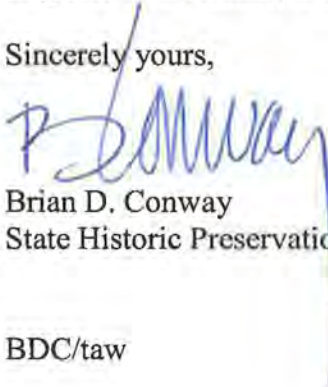
Mr. J. Paul Loether, Chief
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the **Henry and Aurora (Walker) Vinkle House, Grass Lake, Jackson County, Michigan**, to the National Register of Historic Places. This property is being submitted for listing in the National Register. No written comments concerning this nomination were submitted to us prior to our forwarding this nomination to you.

Questions concerning this nomination should be addressed to Todd A. Walsh, Interim National Register Coordinator, at (517) 373-1979 or WalshT@michigan.gov.

Sincerely yours,



Brian D. Conway
State Historic Preservation Officer

BDC/taw

