

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received 6/1/83

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Polled Hereford breed site of origins barn and windmill.

and/or common

2. Location

street & number SW of Indianola S.E. Quarter of Section 36, Jackson Township not for publication

city, town Indianola, vicinity of

state Iowa code 19 county Warren code 181

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> 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 John and Fred Knoxby

street & number 722 Fifth

city, town West Des Moines vicinity of state Iowa 50265

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Warren County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Indianola state Iowa 50125

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title n/a has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

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

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The elements of significance are the site of origin, the barn for housing polled hereford breeding stock, and the windmill which marks the location of mating. The area surrounding the site comprises rural rolling farmland. The five acre tract itself is that part of a once operating farmstead on which the Gammon's Polled Hereford breeding program occurred. Here still stands the original barn and windmill structure. Only the fence lines and pen locations have undergone probable change, and, in this respect, some future archaeological investigations might help fill out the historical record.

A machine storage shed, located about 100 feet northeast of the barn, is the only other farm building situated on this same side of the road. It dates before 1938. A farmhouse once stood about 175 feet north of the barn, but reportedly this burned down in the late 1950s. Across the road to the west are a corn crib and shed (built after 1938), neither of which bore any relationship to Warren Gammon's cattle breeding enterprise.

The barn is a relatively small two-story building, with loft, erected on a concrete block foundation. The lower story is divided into stable space. The roof is of a two-pitch gambrel type covered with wood shingles over which asphalt shingles (now themselves deteriorated) have at one time been laid. A hay door is built into the barn's west side, the exterior walls of which are of vertical board siding. As for the windmill, the supporting frame of the structure survives as does a part of the operating mechanism that includes the vane.

## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input 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** 1901-1903 **Builder/Architect** n/a

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Polled Herefords--the hornless cattle that are so popular among cattle raisers--form the largest branch of the Hereford family today.<sup>1</sup> The Polled Hereford is the only beef breed native to the United States and Warren Gammon originated it in Warren County, Iowa.<sup>2</sup> Gammon and his son conducted the breeding experiments on a five acre portion of their leased holdings that encompassed the barn and windmill. The barn housed the polled breeding stock he had purchased along with the first Polled Hereford offspring. On February 21, 1902, beside the windmill where, for siring purposes, Gammon kept his Polled Hereford bull, "Giant;" the first planned mating with a Polled Hereford cow took place. From these pioneering beginnings, the Polled Hereford gradually assumed popularity among cattle raisers such that it has become a major breed throughout the world.

Nineteenth century owners of Hereford cattle in the United States had known that horned Herefords occasionally produced a calf that did not develop horns and such cattle came to be known as "polled", meaning "naturally hornless." Haphazard attempts to produce hornless whitefaces had begun as early as 1893 both in Kansas and in Ontario, Canada. But it was with the first serious breeding program created by Warren Gammon and his son Bert that the right combination was hit upon that led to the Polled Hereford breed.

Warren Gammon, a Des Moines lawyer, conceived his idea, according to Orville K. Sweet in Birth of a Breed (1975), "after he saw some polled cattle on exhibition at the Trans-Mississippi International Exposition in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1898." The new approach he seized upon, Sweet explains, was to find:

a few purebred Herefords that had failed to develop horns and from that start to develop a naturally hornless strain of whiteface cattle that would be purebred and eligible for registration. In 1900 he sent inquiries to the 2,500 members of the American Hereford Association, attempting to find some naturally hornless purebred Herefords. From the some 1,500 replies he received, Gammon found and bought four bulls and ten cows. Two cows were barren, and one bull was eliminated and so it was from the remaining eleven animals that Gammon established the Polled Hereford breed registry.

Beginning with the original eleven Polled Herefords in 1901, the breed began to grow. Growth was necessarily slow at first, but increased rapidly over the years to a total in January, 1973, of more than three million head.

By 1976, the Polled Hereford breed had risen from the status of "freaks" among the Hereford species to numerically overtake the horned whiteface in the nation, and today in Iowa, the Polled Hereford comprises about three-fourths of the state's Hereford stock.

At the time that Gammon started the Polled Hereford breed, the farm was owned by the Angus Coal Mining Company and consisted of approximately 1,300 acres. The Gammons rented a portion of this holding and held a lease for a considerable length of time. To commemorate Gammon's accomplishment the Iowa Polled Hereford Association has since erected an historical marker just south of the barn and windmill on a hill overlooking the site.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

- Sweet, Orville K. Birth of a Breed: The History of Polled Herefords—America's First Beef Breed.  
Kansas City, Mo.: Lowell Press, 1975, pp. 34-37, 47-54.
- Sanders, Alvin H. The Story of the Herefords. Chicago: The Breeder's Gazette, 1914,  
pp. 1039-1040.
- Ornduff, Donald R. The Hereford in America, Kansas City, Mo.: Privately published 1957,

## 10. Geographical Data

pp. 314-369

Acreage of nominated property five acres

Quadrangle name Des Moines, NK series

Quadrangle scale 1:250,000

### UTM References

A	<u>11</u> <u>5</u>	<u>4</u> <u>42</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>6</u> <u>7</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

NW1/4 of SW 1/4 of NE 1/4 (2 1/2 acres) and the SW 1/4 of the SW 1/4 of the NE 1/4 (2 1/2 acres) all in Section 36, Twp. 75N, R25W

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state Iowa code 19 county Warren code 181

state \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title James E. Jacobsen, National Register Coordinator

organization Iowa State Historic Preservation Office date December 10, 1982

street & number Historical Building  
East 12th and Grand Avenue telephone 515-281-4137

city or town Des Moines state Iowa 50319

## 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 Alvin H. Jacobsen

title Executive Director, Iowa State Historical Department

date 5/10/83

For NPS use only

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

Beth Grosvenor  
Keeper of the National Register

date 6/24/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration