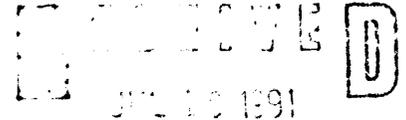


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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 Big Mill Homestead  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number Route 2 (Paradise Valley Rd) D-57  not for publication  
city, town Bellevue  vicinity  
state Iowa code IA county Jackson code 097 zip code 52031

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Limestone Architecture of Jackson County, Iowa  
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] 7/5/91  
Signature of certifying official Date  
State Historical Society of Iowa  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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  
[Signature] 8/30/91  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th century  
vernacular

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Limestone

walls Limestone

roof Composition shingles

other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

This two story (three story in rear) hip roof limestone house measures 36'2"x 32'5", with a five bay facade, and three bay side elevations. Double entrance doors are located on the five bay facade (north elevation). All windows and doors feature limestone sills and heavy stone lintels. There are three extant chimneys, located near the corners of the house. The stonework on this house is of cut coursed stone, with the stones varying greatly in size and shape. Only the sills and lintels have been dressed. This stone work appears similar to that found on some of the buildings on E.G. Potter's Paradise Farm, about a mile and a half east of this house. The major Potter buildings were constructed c. 1845-50. The low pitch of the hip roof is also similar to the Potter buildings, and is indicative of an early construction date. The house appears basically unaltered, although no historic photographs have been located to prove this. The main block of the house, roof, and stonework, retain a high degree of integrity. On the facade, it is possible to see where a broad porch was attached at an earlier date, but the shape and size of this indicate an early 20th century date, not c.1850. The most important change has been the deterioration that has occurred due to being empty. This is being reversed with the assistance of an HRDP grant (1990).

The survey of limestone architecture focused on the use of stone as a building material, with emphasis on the exterior. Little information was gathered on the interiors of the houses and buildings.

The location of this house is picturesque. It is located on a curve, on the south side of the Paradise Valley road (D57), nestled between the road and Big Mill Creek. A wooded hillside rises sharply north of the road, and Paradise Valley spreads out to the south, east, and west. The site of the house provides an especially fine view of the valley in all directions. Although the road is now graveled, it appears to have been changed little over the decades, remaining fairly narrow and definitely winding.

**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)  
Architecture

Period of Significance  
c.1850

Significant Dates  
c.1850

Cultural Affiliation  
N.A.

Significant Person  
N.A.

Architect/Builder  
Unknown

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

This limestone house is significant under Criterion C as an example of an uncommon house type (the hip roof cube) from c.1850 executed in limestone.

Big Mill Homestead is one of 217 limestone buildings and structures identified in Jackson County, and is one of the 101 residences recorded. Only twelve of the 101 houses have hip roofs, the others all being gabled. Of the hip roof houses, five are located along the Paradise Valley road: the E.G. Potter residence, Potter dormitory, Big Mill Homestead, Upper Paradise not far northeast of Big Mill on the north side of the road, and a house on the north side of the road, just west of the Bellevue city limits. All of these are square (the dormitory is rectangular), two and three stories high (built into hillsides), have a very low pitched hip roof, feature limestone sills and lintels, and at least two have belvederes. It has not been directly established that all of these were related to Potter's Paradise Farm, but research is continuing. The similarities are almost too much to be coincidence.

The stonework on Big Mill is of cut coursed stone, the blocks being varied in size and shape. There is no indication that the house was ever covered with stucco (as many in the area were). No builder has been identified for any of Potter's buildings, and no name has historically been associated with this residence. The U.S. Census shows five stonemasons in Jackson County in 1850, all living in Bellevue. However, there has not been any determination of specific buildings built by specific masons. Deterioration of the mortar makes comparison of mortar joints with others in the area impossible. It is difficult to compare the size and shape of the stones with other houses in the valley, because three are covered with stucco, and the fourth has been stuccoed and scored to look like ashlar.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Atlas & Plat Book of Jackson County, Iowa. 1893; 1913.  
History of Jackson County, Iowa. 1879; 1897.  
Paradise Farm, National Register of Historic Places Nomination by Grace  
Holihan, 1977.

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**

Acreage of property Less than one acre.

UTM References:

A 

1	5
---	---

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

B 

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--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone      Easting      Northing

C 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

D 

--	--

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--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

A parcel of land located on the south side of County Road D-57 in T86N R4E Sec 8 NW $\frac{1}{4}$  SE $\frac{1}{4}$ . Beginning at a point along the south right-of-way which intersects with a line ten feet east of the east wall of the building, then south to a point ten feet south of the south wall, then west 56'2", then north to the south right-of-way, then east to point of beginning. This rectangle allows ten feet beyond the east, south & west walls, and the area to the road  See continuation sheet on the north.  
It is centered around the building in question.

Boundary Justification

This nomination includes only the building noted above. It excludes all other buildings and structures on the site.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

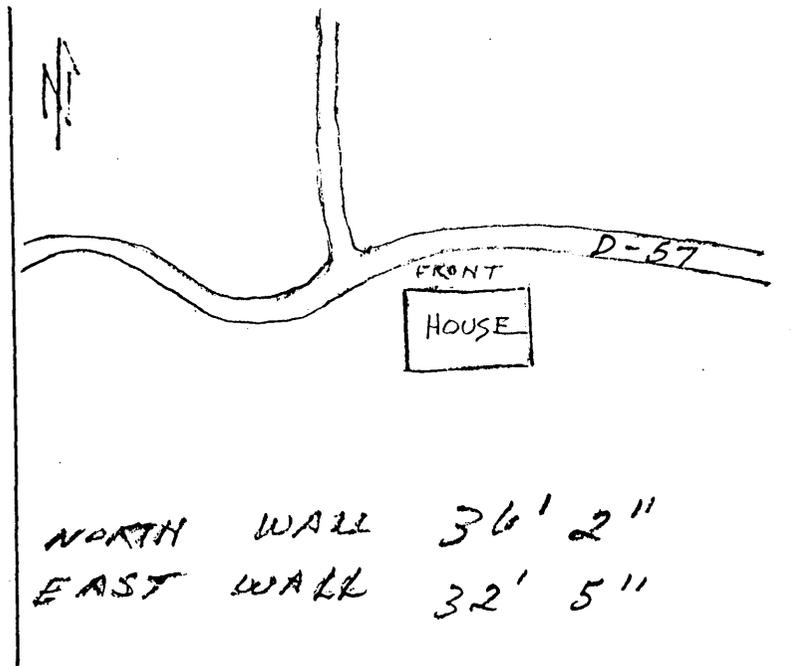
name/title Molly Myers Naumann, Consultant (515) 682-2743  
organization Jackson County H.P.C. date May 1991  
street & number J.C. Courthouse, 201 W. Platt telephone (319) 652-3181  
city or town Maquoketa state IA zip code 52060

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

CFN-259-1116



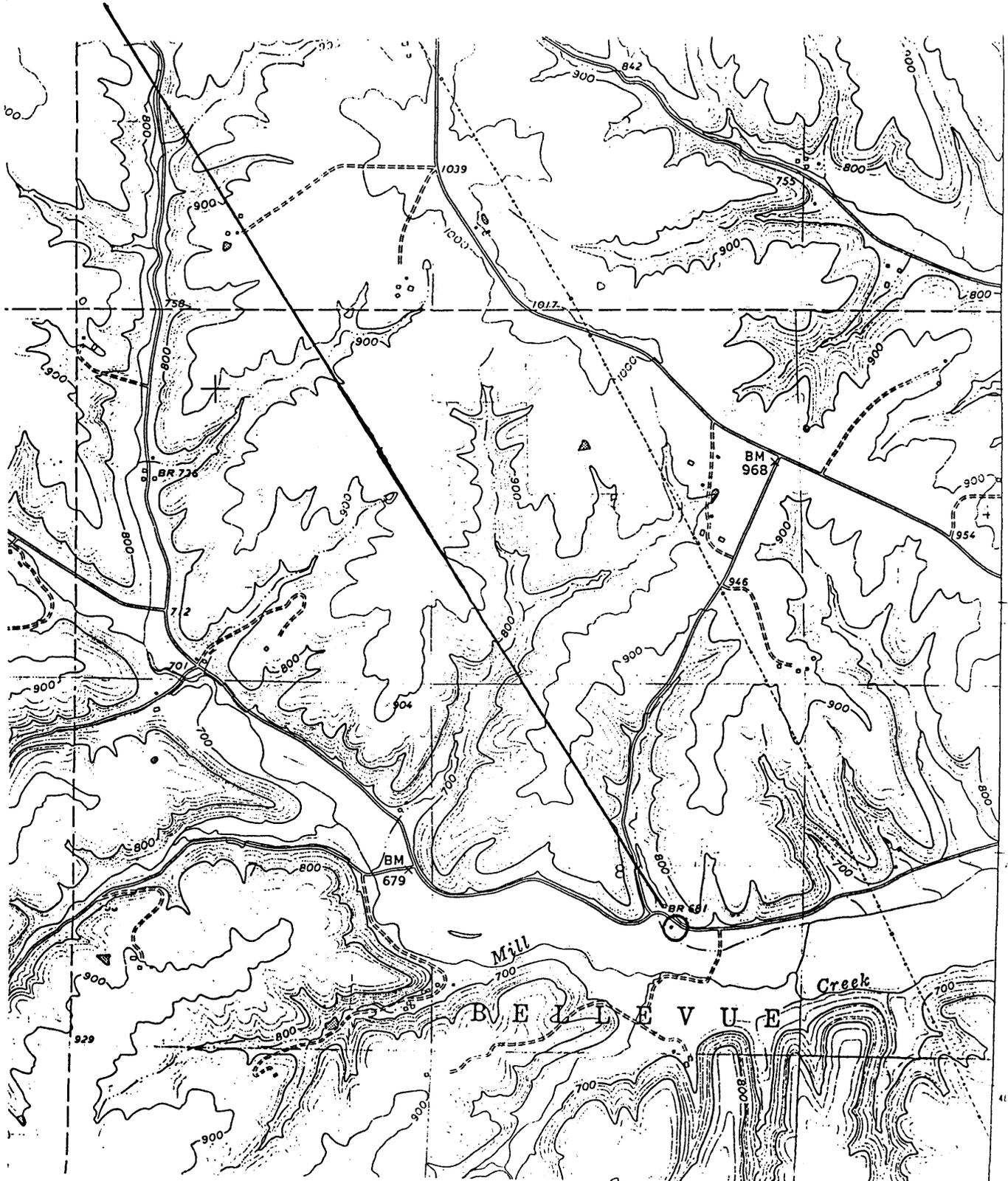
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

CFN-259-1116

## Big Mill Homestead

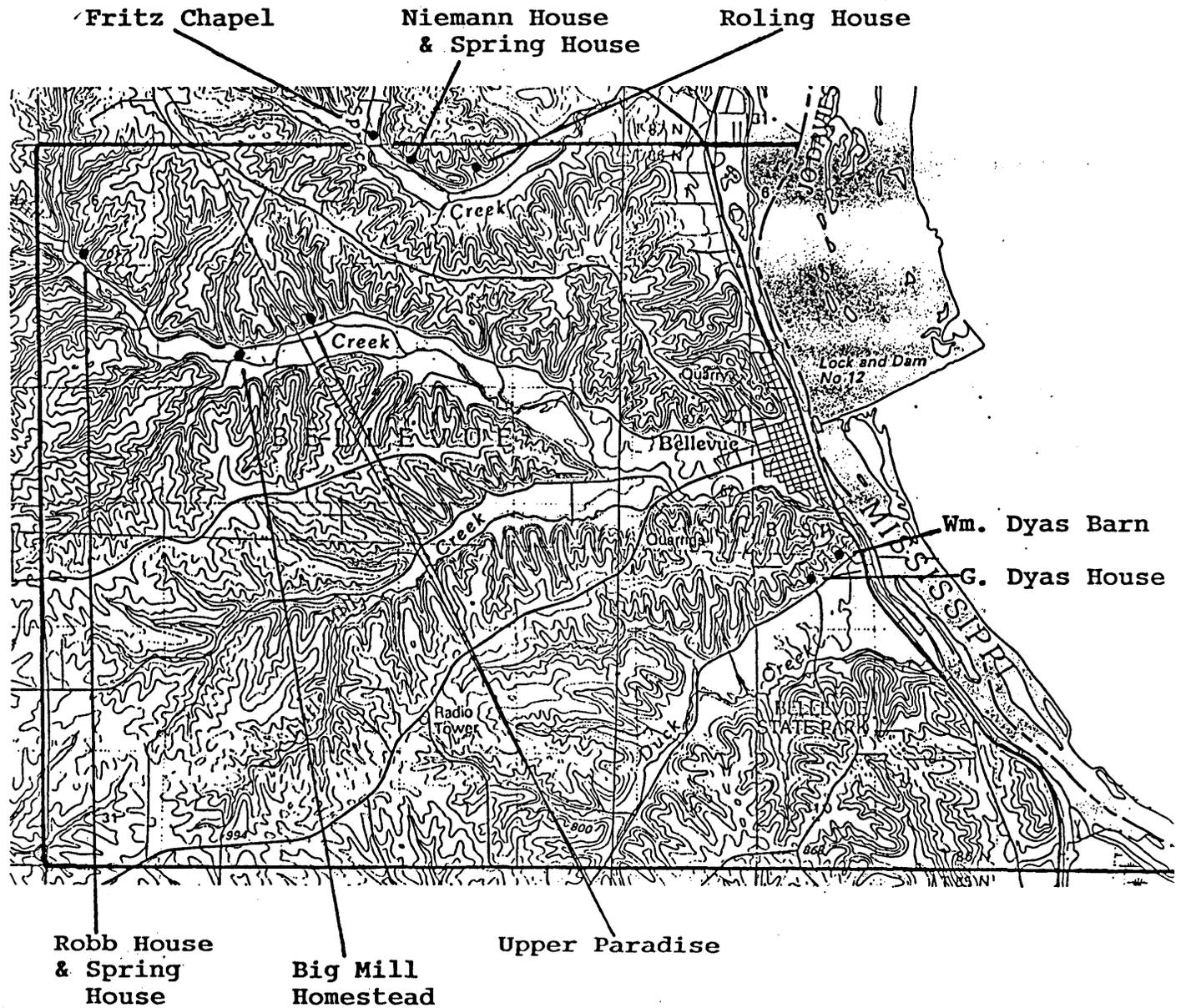


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

CFN-259-1116



Rural limestone resources being nominated  
with this submission.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

CFN-259-1116

Jackson County was one of the earliest Iowa counties established, first as part of the Wisconsin Territory, then the Iowa Territory, and finally under the State of Iowa. Paradise Valley was originally settled by Capt. Elbridge G. Potter, an eccentric atheist from New York. He came to own 1400 acres in the valley, plus the Jasper Flouring Mill in nearby Bellevue, and it is said that he owned 99 farms and other property in Iowa and across the country when he died in 1875. Both the mill and his home (Paradise Farm) are listed on the National Register. Most of the buildings on Paradise Farm are of limestone construction, a method frequently used by the early settlers due to the ready availability of the material. Potter's residence (two stories on the north, but a full three stories on the valley side), and the workers' dormitory are square/rectangular with very low pitched hip roofs. It is interesting to note that Potter's residence is not totally limestone, the third floor being of pise' (rammed earth) construction. Potter is said to have had several buildings constructed in Paradise Valley using this technique. A number of limestone houses and buildings are found along the Paradise Valley road, including the house in question.

Big Mill Homestead is a good example of any early limestone residence in an uncommon plan for this area, a hip roof cube. It retains a high level of integrity and should be preserved.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Photo \_\_\_\_\_ Page 1

CFN-259-1116

