

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED APR 1 1975
DATE ENTERED MAY 21 1975

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

House and
GINGRAS TRADING POST *use this post 7/20/75*

AND/OR COMMON

GINGRAS HISTORIC SITE (Preferred) *Walt Bailey*

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

NE of Walhalla off.
State Highway 32

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Walhalla

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1

STATE

North Dakota

CODE

038

COUNTY

Pembina

CODE

067

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERICAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER: *Historic Site*

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

State Historical Society of North Dakota

STREET & NUMBER

Liberty Memorial Building
State Capitol Grounds

CITY, TOWN

Bismarck

VICINITY OF

North Dakota

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds, Cavalier County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

306 Dakota Street, West

CITY, TOWN

Cavalier

STATE

North Dakota

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

North Dakota Historic Sites Survey

DATE

1972

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of North Dakota

CITY, TOWN

Bismarck,

STATE

North Dakota

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Gingras Historic Site covers slightly less than one-half acre of land atop a grass covered knoll about a mile north of the Pembina River in northeastern North Dakota. Originally part of the long grass prairie region of the Great Plains, where gently rolling, grass covered landscapes stretched to the horizons and where trees were most limited to stream banks, marshy swales or isolated units scattered haphazardly about the region, the site is now surrounded by cultivated fields separated by planted shelterbelts. Occasional pockets of wind borne silt, deposited during the "Dust Bowl" era of the 1930's, can still be found especially near long time abandoned buildings. A township road passes the site along its northern boundary overlying a former ox cart trail that serviced the area during the mid-nineteenth Century. Two buildings stand on the site, the trading store and the home of Antoine Blanc Gingras, resident trader, and an important figure in the early history of the North Dakota-Minnesota-Canada border region. Despite the alterations of vegetative patterns cited above, the site maintains the, essentially, the character of its original condition. The topography still permits expansive vistas stimulating the sense of loneliness, solitude and quiet experienced by early day travelers and settlers.

When the State Historical Society of North Dakota acquired the site in 1971, the two buildings were found to be badly deteriorated and much altered. Intensive archeological and historical investigation was started on the buildings in 1972 and resulted in a determination that not only was there sufficient integrity of fabric, design and materials to warrant restoration, but also that locally uncommon construction techniques, extant examples of innovative use of available materials, unexpected refinements of architectural detail and historical association with the history of the commerce, politics, settlement and growth of the region made preservation imperative.

Built during the 1840's, both the buildings are stylistically an amalgam of the classic American log cabin and the French/Canadian log cabin as adopted and adapted by the Metis culture in the international border region. Both are one and one-half stories high and are constructed of square hewn oak logs, dovetailed at the corners. Both were originally approximately 50' X 20' in size and both had a 26' X 20', three wall addition added to them, attached by means of mortis and tenon joints cut into vertical, hewn logs pinned to the main building with oak trenails. Trenail pinning is evident throughout the two structures. The buildings contained tongue and groove flooring on each level, laid on cedar joists on the first level and on oak joists on the second. Their roofs were supported without a ridgepole, but by rafters joined by tie beams. The lack of evidence of fireplaces suggests that the buildings were heated by stoves.

Sometime between the death of Gingras, in 1877, and 1914 when the buildings were occupied by the Allen Andrews family, the store, which had had two rooms on each level, was converted into a barn by closing off the former main entrance, which consisted of a large door flanked by a window on either side, and cutting new door and window openings and by adding barn appurtenances such as feed troughs and animal stalls. The building has since been archeologically recorded, dismantled and is presently being reconstructed on its original location using the original materials. Where replacement parts are necessary, every attempt has been made to substitute materials as close to the original as possible.

The house differs from the store by being much more elaborately finished. Five bays wide and two bays deep, the entire structure is sheathed with clapboard siding, finished with vertical corner boards and moldings around the doors and windows. The house has double hung windows with the exception of one slant, sash window at the western verge and two

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

slant, sash windows at the opposite verge overlooking the roof of the addition. The roof is high pitched and currently denuded of the original cedar shingles. The boxed cornices include a plain frieze and are enhanced by bargeboards on all sides, although some segments have fallen off or have been removed temporarily.

Interiorally, the house contained four rooms and a central hallway on the main level and had a closed stairway with a balustrade guardrail to the upper level. The walls were of plaster, applied to split willow laths, painted and finished with moldings at all joints. The ceilings, like the floors, were fitted tounge and groove boards. A half basement underlies the the house.

Preparatory to restoration, additional investigation will be undertaken, particularly in the upper levels of the house and its addition.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
___PREHISTORIC	___ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	___COMMUNITY PLANNING	___LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	___RELIGION
___1400-1499	___ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	___CONSERVATION	___LAW	___SCIENCE
___1500-1599	___AGRICULTURE	___ECONOMICS	___LITERATURE	___SCULPTURE
___1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	___EDUCATION	___MILITARY	___SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
___1700-1799	___ART	___ENGINEERING	___MUSIC	___THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	___EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	___PHILOSOPHY	___TRANSPORTATION
___1900-	___COMMUNICATIONS	___INDUSTRY	___POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	___OTHER (SPECIFY)
		___INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1843-1877

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Gingras Historic Site played a vitally important role, as did Antoine B. Gingras personally, in the commercial, political and settlement development of the North Dakota-Minnesota-Canada border region. Because of Gingras' activities, the former Hudson's Bay Company trade route was shifted from its northern route, through Fort Gary (Winnipeg) to a southern route through St. Paul, earning huge tariff revenues for the United States and firmly establishing U.S. economic and political control over the border region. Architecturally, the buildings on the Gingras site display locally uncommon construction techniques, extant examples of innovative use of available material, unexpected refinement of architectural details and maintain sufficient integrity of design, fabric and materials to warrant preservation.

The Gingras Historic Site consists of a trading store and house built, on this location and still standing, in the 1840's by a Metis fur trader, Antoine Blanc Gingras. The buildings on the site are among the few tangible remains of the fur trade era in the valley of the Red River of the North.

The 1840's were a period of intense competition between the American fur trading partnership of Norman Kittson and Henry Hastings Sibley and the British Hudson's Bay Company. The Metis, who had a sense of common cultural identity based on mixed Indian-European descent, a common language and a shared way of life, had traditionally fought the monopoly granted the Hudson's Bay Company by the British government. When Kittson and Sibley began competing with the British company, independent Metis fur traders such as Gingras and James Sinclair, joined with the Americans. The trade war that followed had repercussions far beyond the Red River Valley, influencing to some extent the foreign policies of both the United States and Great Britain.

One of the most important factors enabling Kittson, Sibley and the Metis to compete successfully with the Hudson's Bay Company was the reorientation of transportation routes they instituted. The American and Metis traders introduced the use of ox-cart brigades for transporting their furs to market at St. Paul, Minnesota Territory. The routing through St. Paul proved to be so much more efficient than the Hudson's Bay Company's route, by York boat to Hudson Bay and thence by sea to Europe, that, in the 1850's, the Hudson's Bay Company made arrangements with the United States Government to ship their goods through St. Paul also.

Antoine Gingras became both prominent and wealthy as a result of the part he played in these events. In 1852 and 1853, he served in the Minnesota Territorial Legislature, and by 1861, he was listed in the census as having goods and property valued at \$60,000. By 1869, he had increased his holdings to include a chain of trading posts extending across northern North Dakota and southern Manitoba. Gingras also became involved in the Riel Rebellion (1869) on the Metis side. As did the other Metis participants, Gingras suffered

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Franke, Nick G., "Antoine Gingras Historic Site," Plains Talk, Vol. 4, No. 1 (New Series), Winter 1973, State Historical Society of North Dakota, Bismarck.

Gluek, Alvin C., Minnesota and the Manifest Destiny of the Canadian Northwest: A Study in Canadian-American Relations, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1965.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.425 Acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>14</u>	<u>581245</u>	<u>54120810</u>	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Nick G. Franke - Research Archeologist

Walter L. Bailey - Historic Preservation Planner

ORGANIZATION

DATE

State Historical Society of North Dakota

3/26/75

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Liberty Memorial Building, State Capitol Grounds

(701)-224-2672

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Bismarck

North Dakota

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

DATE 3/26/75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE MAY 21 1975

ATTEST

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 5/20/75

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

severe financial losses because of his involvement, but he made the necessary adjustments and later, participated in the chartering of the City of Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Board of Trade in 1873. Antoine B. Gingras died in 1877 and was buried at St. Joseph (now Walhalla), Dakota Territory.

The buildings on the Gringras site are architecturally significant for the information they might provide about the construction of both utilitarian and domestic log buildings, especially those built within the Red River Valley during the mid-1800's. Although both buildings are built of hewn oak logs in a manner consistent with other log buildings of the period, the house shows more careful workmanship and attention to finish details than the store. Historic records indicate that the major influence in the design of the house came from St. Paul, Minnesota. However, a comparison of this house with comparable buildings in Winnipeg and St. Paul might provide more detailed information about relative architectural influences on the Great Plains.

ITEM NUMBER 9

Woolworth, Nancy L., The Antoine B. Gingras Site, Walhalla, North Dakota, Mss. on file at the State Historical Society of North Dakota, December, 1972.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : The File

FROM : Gary Hume, Preservation Projects

SUBJECT: Restoration of the Gingras Log House

DATE: July 29, 1976

Because of the advanced state of deterioration of the Gingras House and the potential safety hazard to performing the archeological and architectural investigations, a structural study has determined that the only feasible method of restoring the log structure is to disassemble the log walls, replace the rotten members and then, re-erect the logs. Although the building will be in a disassembled state during the archeological investigation and the preparation of restoration drawings and specifications, it is the opinion of the Branch of Preservation Projects that this should not affect the Gingras House's status as a National Register property.



approved
Chief, Branch of Registration

