

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received JUN 23 1983
date entered

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

1. Name

historic NA
and/or common St. Boniface Catholic Church Complex (CD10-1)

2. Location *Main St.*

street & number NA NA not for publication
city, town Menominee NA vicinity of
state Nebraska code 031 county Cedar code 027

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>NA</u> in process	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Archdiocese of Omaha, c/o The Most Rev. Daniel Sheehan, Archbishop
street & number 100 North 62nd Street
city, town Omaha NA vicinity of state Nebraska

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cedar County Courthouse, Register of Deeds
street & number 101 South Broadway
city, town Hartington state Nebraska

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date On-going federal state county local
depository for survey records Nebraska State Historical Society
city, town Lincoln state Nebraska

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The St. Boniface Catholic Church complex is located in Menominee, Nebraska, approximately 16 miles northwest of Hartington, the county seat of Cedar county. Comprised of four major and five minor structures, and the church cemetery, the complex includes a Gothic Revival chalk rock church built in 1886, 1900-1902; a two-story brick Rectory built in 1911; a two-and-one-half story chalk rock school constructed in 1923 in the Second Renaissance Revival style and the parish hall, a metal Quonset building (1977-78), which adjoins the school along the north facade. Other buildings in the church complex include the parishioners house, a "beer shack", a garage building, a Behlen building and a trailer house. The German Catholic congregation owns 16 acres of land.

Structural and historical integrity of the site and grounds has been preserved except for certain modern intrusions made to the church and school. Asphalt shingles now cover the original wooden shingles on both structures, new glass doors have replaced the originals in the church, portions of the north facade of the school have been altered due to the addition of the parish hall, and alterations have occurred in the church interior due to past remodellings.

The St. Boniface Catholic Church Complex is located in Menominee, Nebraska (1982 population, approximately 17). The town of Menominee is situated one-and-one-half miles east of Highway 81 between Fordyce and South Yankton, Nebraska. The church complex, nestled in the Antelope Creek Valley, is a prominent feature of the rolling countryside in Cedar county. It consists of four major structures; St. Boniface Church, School, Rectory and Parish Hall (new construction), and the church cemetery. The nomination includes a total of 16 acres, which comprises all land presently owned by the St. Boniface congregation. The church complex, for the most part, makes up the town of Menominee. The remaining buildings consists of several residences and a public school.

The present St. Boniface Church was erected in 1886 and rebuilt in 1900-1902, in the Gothic Revival style of architecture. Readily identifiable design features are present including pointed arched window and door openings, a steepled tower, buttresses, copings and stringcourses.

The building is constructed of native chalk rock, layed out in a modified Latin Cross plan and has an engaged tower and a gable roof covered with asphalt shingles (original shingles were wood). Much of the detailing is in brick, including hoodmold details above doors and windows, corner and nave buttresses, quoining, drip moldings, corbeling and decorative trimwork.

The cathedral is entered through double doors crowned with a prominent brick arched hood mold with drip moldings and a zig-zag decorative motif. A transom of colored glass with "St. Boniface Church" inscribed is found above the doors. The pointed arch theme is repeated in decorative brickwork above the entry, again incorporating the zig-zag motif. The engaged tower is corner buttressed and features Gothic windows with brick pointed arched window hoods, brick quoining, stringcourses, and various types of brick corbelling such as that used in the pointed arch theme at the cornice and in the simplified horizontal

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 type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	humanitarian
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
				ethnic
1886, 1900-1902, 1911,				
Specific dates	1923, 1977-78	Builder/Architect	NA	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

St. Boniface Church is significant to northeast Nebraska for providing the spiritual, social and cultural base of a group of German immigrants settling in Cedar County in the late 19th century. The church complex is significant to Cedar County as an assemblage of buildings closely related to instructional needs of German-Catholic families, and stands as a landmark in the Menominee community. Architecturally, the complex represents an intact grouping of vernacular structures with interpretations of the Gothic Revival, and Second Renaissance Revival styles of architecture. Constructed of native chalk rock found in the Antelope Creek Valley, the church and school stand as unique buildings in the state of Nebraska.

With the passing of the homestead law in 1862, many German immigrants came to America to settle the new land. Early settlers coming to the Antelope Creek Valley in Nebraska included Mike Goeden, who came to Menominee in 1865; Peter Kleinschmitt, arriving in 1869; the Lammers family in 1874; the Anton Haberman family in 1867; and the Joseph Kollars and Franz Zavadil families settling in 1867. The Menominee Post Office was established in 1867. The town was named for either Menominee, Michigan, or Menominee, Wisconsin, derived from the Menominee Indian tribe (Perky, 1982, p. 32). In the fall of 1869, Father F. Lechleitner came to the Antelope Creek area to encourage the people to have a meeting and initiate the plans for construction of a church building. Twenty-four families were in attendance at the meeting and during the summer of 1870, work commenced on the building of a frame church. This structure was destroyed by a storm before completion. In 1871, the people were encouraged by Bishop O. Gorman to start building again. Herman Witte, an early settler of Cedar County, traveled to Dubuque, Iowa, to collect money for a new church, and raised the sum of \$245. Mr. Witte served as one of the carpenters in the building of the frame church.

In 1872, Menominee became a mission of St. Helena, with Father Daxacher performing religious functions such as baptisms, weddings and funerals. Father Irle came to Menominee in the spring of 1882 to serve as pastor of St. Boniface. In the following years, the parish was without a resident pastor, so Father Daxacher attended the necessary functions until January, 1885, when Father Baumgartner became pastor.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 16 acres

Quadrangle name Menominee, Nebr./Gavins Point Dam

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

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6	3	3	2	7	0
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4	7	3	8	0	4	0
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4	7	3	8	0	4	0
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D

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6	3	2	7	8	0
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4	7	3	8	1	8	5
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E

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The property is located on the north 29½ rods of the NW¼ of the NE¼ of Section 1, T32N, R1W of 6th P.M. of Cedar County, Nebraska, including all historically associated real estate.

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

state	NA	code	county	code
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state	NA	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joni Gilkerson, Preservation Associate

organization Nebraska State Historical Society

date April, 1983

street & number 1500 "R" Street, P.O. Box 82554

telephone 402/471-3270

city or town Lincoln

state Nebraska

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

Mamm D. Linnett

6/9/83

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

date

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

J. Nelson Ryan
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

7/21/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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bands. The church belfry is entirely of brick and displays stringcourses, corbelling, and pointed arched openings with pointed arched hoodmolds. The tower is capped with a pyramidal-shaped steeple with distinctively flared eaves, pedimented gablets and a bracketed cornice. The steeple is covered with wooden shingles. Latin crosses are situated at the gablet peaks and at the apex of the steeple.

The north and south facades show brick buttresses framing the stained glass windows forming four bays along the nave. The windows are capped with brick pointed arched hood molds with drip moldings and surrounded with brick quoins and stone lugsills. Brick corbelling, drip moldings and the zig-zag motif adorn the nave facades. The transept wings display corner brick buttresses, brick corbelling, a grouping of three pointed arched window openings with brick pointed arched window hoods, brick quoining and stone lugsills. Additional entries are found in the transept wings along the east facade. At the rear of the church (west facade) is the pentagon-shaped apse, and additional entries (one entry is now bricked up).

The interior plan consists of a nave, transept, chancel, ambulatory and two sacristy areas. The vestibule, balcony and reconciliation room are located at the west end of the church. Within the chancel is the high or main altar and contemporary altar table and side pulpit, which is situated directly south of the altar table. To either side of the chancel area are located the tabernacle and altar of repose and the baptismal font and holy family statues. Two large mural paintings representing biblical themes, and paintings depicting the four gospel writers, are found in the chancel area. The ceiling murals representing the seven sacraments are incorporated into the "River of Life" theme, a large linear band that follows the contour of the church ceiling along the nave and transept wings. A decorative band of stenciled motifs follows the interior walls of the church at the base of the window openings. The interior space of the church is delineated by the use of flat barrel vaults along the nave and barrel vaulting in the apse area.

The original church was built in 1886, but a fire in October 1900 destroyed all but the stone walls. Shortly thereafter, the church was rebuilt, using the existing walls as the nucleus of the new building. The transept wings, brick steeple, additional entries and windows were added at this time. The present St. Boniface church was blessed in June, 1902.

The church interior has undergone several redecorations. The original interior was destroyed by fire in 1900. After the church was rebuilt, the interior was devoid of ornamentation. The side altars were purchased in 1902. The first decorating job (c. 1914-1919) incorporated linear bands of geometric

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and floral shapes, symbols, and murals, creating an elaborate atmosphere rich in color and profuse in ornamentation. The church interior was remodeled again in 1945 and 1981, the latter date creating the present appearance of the church today. The side altars and communion rail were removed from the chancel area. A statue of the Virgin Mary and Jesus, originally part of one side altar were moved to the back of the church near the stairway leading to the balcony. New doors were installed during the 1981 remodelling of St. Boniface.

The present St. Boniface rectory was built in 1911. The two-and-one-half story brick square house has a stone foundation (covered with concrete) and hipped roof with a modillioned cornice. The roofline is penetrated with a hipped roof dormer above the front facade with modillioned cornice. The full frontal porch displays six Tuscan columns and balustrade. Fenestration consists of segmentally arched window openings with brick segmentally arched window hoods and stone lugsills. The double hung windows feature one-over-one pane arrangement. The south facade displays a two-story bay window. The west (rear) facade shows a one-story extension which provides entry to the house.

The St. Boniface Catholic School was constructed in 1923 in the Renaissance Revival style of architecture. The two-and-one-half story "tee" shaped chalk rock structure has a raised basement and a truncated hip roof penetrated by gabled dormer windows. The entire building is trimmed with brick incorporated into the quoining, stringcourses and window and door surrounds. Articulation of the front facade through the use of the dark brick produces horizontal divisions, giving the appearance of the piano nobile (second level) and the attic story (top floor), found in the design of Renaissance palaces (Alexander, 1976, p. 224). The prominent entry pavilion features brick quoining, brick stringcourses, and a pedimented front with pilasters. The front entry shows transom windows and sidelights. Fenestration in the pavilion consists of a central window with flanking "half windows" and transoms (second level) and a round arched window opening with sidelights and transom (third level). A latin cross is situated at the apex. Fenestration in the remaining facades is comprised of a series of windows, tied together with brick stringcoursing and decorated with brick surrounds. Brick quoining appears at the corners of the building.

The St. Boniface parish center, located directly north of the school, is a modern metal quonset-type building constructed in 1977-1978. The structure adjoins the school on the north facade, thus making the kitchen facilities located in the school basement accessible for activities and social events in either building. Although nondescript in character and lacking historic value, the building plays a significant role in the present activities of the St. Boniface congregation.

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The nomination also includes five minor structures located on the church property (see site plan #'s 3, 4, 5, 6, 7). The small frame house located immediately northwest of the church, is one story in height and has a cement block foundation and a hipped roof with central chimney. The north facade shows a one story extension with shed roof. The house has provided living facilities for caretakers, pastors and local parishioners. A trailer house also serves as a private residence. The "beer shack" is a small frame building with a gable roof and a hinged opening on the present west facade, similar to those found in food stands. The structure was originally located on the ball field in Menominee and was later moved to its present site. The Behlen building, which serves as storage, and the double stall garage, are both located directly northwest of the rectory. Three structures in the complex (#'s 4, 6, 9, shown on site plan), are currently considered non-contributing buildings in this nomination due to the nature of the different materials used and the newer construction.

The cemetery lays directly south of St. Boniface Church and is bordered on the north and east by coniferous trees and on the south and west by a path leading from the church.

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In 1886 work commenced on the erection of a stone and frame church. The church was named for an English Benedictine monk, Saint Boniface, known as the apostle of the Germans. The chalk rock used in the construction of the church was dug and hauled from the Peter Goeden Sr. farm, which was located approximately one mile south of Menominee. Michael and Catherine Goeden, early pioneers of the area, donated the 16 acres of land for the church property. The structure was blessed by Bishop Marty from Yankton, South Dakota. A fire in October, 1900 left only the stone walls of the church standing. The present St. Boniface church was rebuilt using the existing walls as the nucleus of the new building. Bishop Scannell blessed the completed structure on June 3, 1902, with Father Louis Becker serving as pastor of St. Boniface at the time. By September, 1906, the membership of St. Boniface comprised of 102 families registered at Menominee and eighteen families in Beaver Creek.

In the following years, a committee was formed to begin plans for the construction of a rectory. They included William Lockman Sr., Peter Schaefer, Herman Potts, and J. W. Lammers. The two story brick structure was completed circa 1911, and is the present rectory standing today.

In 1923 the congregation, under the direction of Ather John P. Hilt, pastor, raised the necessary funds for the erection of a school. Again, chalk rock was used as the construction material, being hauled from nearby land. The cornerstone was laid in 1923 with classes beginning in the fall of 1924. The Benedictine sisters were given charge of the new educational facility. Building committee members of the school included Henry Schroeder Sr., William Goeden, Paul Albrecht, John Lammers, Albert Mauch, Albert Tramp, Sigismund Loecker, John Mueller, Anton Hoebeltheinrich, Rev. Archbishop Jeremiah Harty, and Father Hilt. The contract was let to Geddes Construction Company with plans and specifications provided by Joe P. Guth. The original two and one-half story frame school building was located directly north of the church. The school was later moved to a new location and served as the Menominee store until 1982 when fire destroyed the structure.

Because of the large parish debt during the 1930's, Father Zillig, pastor at that time, introduced "God's Acres", a program where farmers could donate one acre of corn to the church to be sold for income. This practice still exists today using cash donations put into special funds. (Centennial, 1982, p. 11). Father Zillig served the Menominee parish for 37 years, from 1936-1973, the longest period of leadership held by a pastor of the St. Boniface Catholic Church.

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During the 1930's and 1940's major improvements and repairs were made to the church, school and rectory, with most work under the supervision of Lawrence Tramp. In 1945 the church interior was redecorated by Mr. Reeves, an architect from Iowa. Additional improvements and construction work were made in the 1970's including the erection of a steel building to be used as a parish hall. "St. Boniface Social Center" was dedicated on June 11, 1978. Plans called for the hall to be joined to the school building to allow use of the kitchen facilities in both structures.

In 1980, a committee was formed to coordinate the centennial celebration of St. Boniface parish, with plans involving yet another redecorating of the church interior to begin in 1981. The contract for painting and decorating the church interior was given to Jerome Rupiper of Yankton, South Dakota. In September of that year the repair and repainting work of the church steeple and cross was also started. Lawrence Tramp assisted and supervised in the church remodeling in preparation of the centennial. In 1982, the people of St. Boniface parish celebrated their 100th anniversary of faith.

Father Tom Sellentin, present pastor of St. Boniface, stated: "The native chalk-rock exterior remains as a reminder of past generations who worked to establish a living faith community, the bright new interior is symbolic of the new life which has come to the church since Vatican II." (St. Boniface Centennial Committee, 1982, p. 42).

Architecturally significant, the St. Boniface Church exemplifies a unique manifestation of the Gothic Revival style of architecture. Most buildings of the Gothic style are large, entailing heavy construction materials and techniques. Designs for church plans are typically of the nave and aisle type, most incorporating transepts. Symmetry in massing is the rule, with verticality being emphasized by steep gabled roofs, and towers. The towers, either singly or in pairs, dominate the front facades and may or may not have steeples. Buttresses serve as the main articulating features on large masonry buildings. Other structural and decorative elements include stringcourses, copings, pinnacles, decorative brickwork and tracery (Panek, 1976, p. 34-1, 14-1, 2). One of the most distinguishing characteristics of the Gothic style is the pointed arch, used in window and door openings. Leaded stained glass is used in church buildings. Gothic architecture was popular in western Europe during the High Middle Ages emerging from the Romanesque and Byzantine forms in France during the late 12th century (Harris, 1977, p. 254). The style reached its peak during the 13th century in France and England, when religious inspiration produced magnificent cathedrals (Whiton, 1974, p. 63). A revitalization of Gothic architecture appeared in the United States during the 19th century when terms such as Neo-Gothic and Gothic Revival were used throughout most of the century.

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The St. Boniface school is a vernacular product of the Renaissance Revival style of architecture. The Renaissance style developed in Italy during the early part of the 15th century. It was a "rebirth" of Classical philosophy and art, and became the dominant architectural style in Europe during the 16th century (Harris, 1977, p. 449). The Renaissance Revival gained prominence in the United States during the 1840's-1890's. The style was popular in Nebraska during the early years of the 20th century. Characteristics of the style include formalism in plan, heavy construction materials, belt or stringcourses, heavy cornices and raised entries, usually centered on the main facade (Panek, 1976, p. 16-1, 33-1).

The key architectural elements of the complex, the church and the school, stand as unique examples of the Gothic and Second Renaissance Revival styles in Nebraska. Central to this status is the artful combination of native chalkrock walls with brick articulation which has produced a highly decorative affect.

Formally both buildings conform to the "rules" of their style, but the execution of the decorative scheme generally distinguishes them from other buildings of their styles in Nebraska.

The church in particular is exuberant in its detail, reflecting a more medieval approach to decoration which extends even to its hand-crafted execution. Hand-cut brick provides the basis for much of the more important detail work, and the result, primarily in the drip-molds and the zig-zag motifs, provides the church with a most striking effect. This attention to detail extends even to the upper portion of the tower where the carefully sawn louvers in the belfry are featured. Here too the buttresses gently curving toward the cornice, combined with the flare to the eaves of the steeple produce a most unusual effect in profile.

The tower in other respects is important to the overall design. In proportion it assumes at least fifty percent of the front wall of the church, and rises to considerable height without any significant diminution to the cornice. In proportion then, it more clearly resembles the Gothic of the east Central European lands (particularly Czech churches) than it does the Western European and English versions which became more or less codified in the American Gothic Revival. With this observation in mind, and recalling the zig-zag motif mentioned earlier, a motif which thus far has only been observed with Slavic affirmities, the church seems to portray the hand of the only mason we have identified in the congregation and one who is known to have participated in its construction, Frantisek Zavadil. Zavadil was a Bohemian, perhaps the only one in this German Catholic congregation, whose masonry skills will soon be described in a forthcoming nomination (Zavadil farmstead, Cedar County, Nebraska).

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The building of the school continued the decorative tradition established earlier in the church, but did so in a secular style. The school reflects the love of decoration which the Central and Eastern Europeans preferred, especially during the latter stages of the Renaissance. Significant too is the broken parapet designs of both the dormers and the entrance pavilion, representing an enlivening of roof profile which thus far seems more associated with European settlement in Nebraska than with other groups (see Rad Sladkovsky vis 8 Z.C.B.J., Pischelville, Knox County, Nebraska NRHP, p. 8-5).

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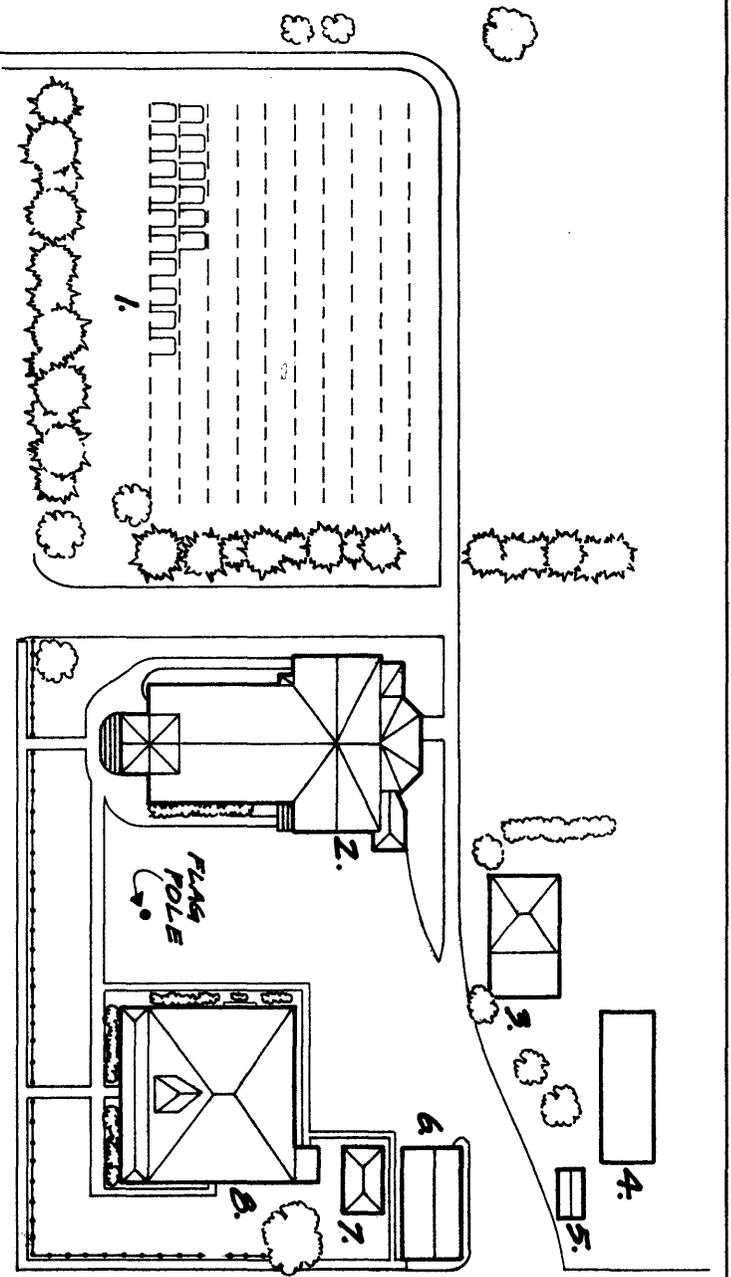
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MAIN STREET - MENOMINEE

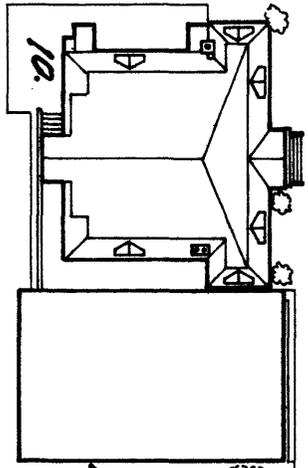
**ST. BONIFACE CATHOLIC
CHURCH COMPLEX (P10-1)
MENOMINEE, CEDAR
COUNTY, NEBRASKA**

NO SCALE

MAP DRAWN BY STEVE RYAN FROM
FIELD NOTES BY VONI GILKERSON,
NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY, FEB. 1985.

KEY:

- 1. CEMETERY
- 2. CHURCH
- 3. HOUSE
- 4. TRAILER HOUSE
- 5. DEER SHACK
- 6. METAL STORAGE BLDG.
- 7. GARAGE
- 8. RESTORY
- 9. PARISH HALL
- 10. SCHOOL



COUNTY ROAD