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**Nat. Register of Historic Places**  
**National Park Service**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Ellis, William and Amanda J., Farmstead Historic District  
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 1134 I Ave not for publication N/A  
city or town Elliott vicinity X  
state Iowa code IA county Montgomery code 137 zip code 51532

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 nationally statewide X locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official *Steve King*

Date **9 SEPT 2015**

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

*Edson H. Beall 10-23-15*

- 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):

*Edson H. Beall*

Signature of Keeper 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

Number of Resources within Property

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register   0  

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling  
Agriculture/Subsistence Animal Facility

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling  
Agriculture/Subsistence Vacant/Not In Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne  
OTHER/Heavy Timber Frame Barn

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete  
roof asphalt  
walls wood/weatherboard  
other \_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance Circa 1900  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates Circa 1900  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

=====

10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreage of Property 1.103

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	15	314215	4556743	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====  
11. Form Prepared By  
=====

name/title Sherri Meeker e-mail address brilent@windstream.net  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date July 31, 2014  
street & number 12260 S 1325 Rd telephone 417-276-4543  
city or town Stockton state MO zip code 65785  
=====

=====  
Additional Documentation  
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====  
Property Owner  
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Sherri A Meeker Revocable Trust  
street & number 12260 S 1325 Rd telephone 417-276-4543  
city or town Stockton state MO zip code 65785  
=====

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Ellis, William and Amanda J., Farmstead Historic District  
Montgomery County, Iowa

## DESCRIPTION

The William and Amanda J. Ellis Farmstead Historic District is located on the east side of I Avenue in the NW 1/4, S10, T73N, R38, Sherman Township, Montgomery County, Iowa. This farmstead is situated in the north central part of Montgomery County approximately 3 miles west of the town of Elliott and approximately 8 miles north of the town of Red Oak. It is sited on a large knoll at the west central part of the farm; rolling down to the south to the drainage, out to the east to the fields, and up to the terraced fields to the north. The buildings primarily face the south and the roadway to the west. Contributing buildings include the house and the barn. Non-contributing buildings include the two garages.

### Contributing Buildings

#### *House*

The house was built circa 1900 by William Ellis. It is a two-story front facing T-plan cross gable house that shows influences of Queen Anne and Victorian styles of architecture. Four gables are centered on each side of the house, with a fifth one centered over the southern third of the west elevation, featuring pent roof enclosures and wide eaves. At the intersections of the T there is a porch to either side. The original foundation was stone set on the ground with concrete block, cast to resemble quarried stone, laid on top. The exterior walls of the house are clad with narrow clapboard siding. All windows and doors have wide, flat casings and traditional crown moldings. The original roof was likely wood shingles; however, it is now fiberglass shingles.<sup>1</sup> Neither chimney remains.

This house has five large gables, four spanning each cross gable and the fifth centered on the south section of the front elevation. Each gable is different, but share common elements. All but the south elevation has at least one window. All but the back (east) elevation have some configuration of shingled diamond features, as well as the same pattern of alternating rows of octagonal, cove and square shingle treatments; the east elevation is clapboard in the gable. All have large trim boards leading to the soffit, with quarter round at the intersection of the wall and soffit. All have crown molding trimming out the front edge of the gables. Gable ornamentation is knob-like beads and rosettes.<sup>2</sup> The four gables employing this detail are all different, but complimentary. Large trim boards transition from the clapboard to the eyebrow soffit on all elevations. There is unusual detailing on each outside corner. Starting at the top of the corner, crown molding tops the vertical trim boards that are about eight inches in width. The trim boards curve to a width of about four inches with another level of crown molding. The vertical trim boards continue to the foundation. As the vertical trims meet at the corner, quarter round was used as a detail in the butt joint to add visual interest.

#### *Front (West) Elevation*

The front facade, looking out onto I Avenue, provides the appearance of Queen Anne and Victorian influences; tall windows, larger square windows with shallow rectangular windows above, cut away bay window, gingerbread gable ornamentation, turned posts, spindle work friezes suspended from porch ceilings, lacy carved brackets, patterned shingle work (imbrication<sup>3</sup>), and decorative teardrop pendants. The steep 8.5/12 pitch is also characteristic of the Queen Anne and Victorian styles and accentuated with roof crestings<sup>4</sup> and finials. The detailing of the gable ornamentation is primarily knob-like beads and rosettes.

The center of the west elevation is a large bay of sixteen feet. Centered in the bay is a large square window with a smaller rectangular window over it. To each side of this window, in the cut away, are smaller one-over-one single hung windows. This series of windows provides light to the living room. Above each side bay window is a polychromatic sunburst, spandrel friezes and a teardrop pendant.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Existing fiberglass roof was severely damaged in the May 2014 storm, and is expected to be replaced with fiberglass shingles in weathered wood summer 2014.

<sup>2</sup>The gable ornamentations have been temporarily removed for repairs. They are expected to be installed in 2015.

<sup>3</sup>Old House Journal, May, 2014, p88.

<sup>4</sup>Missing crestings will be reproduced by Gotham Metalworks. They are expected to be installed in 2015.

<sup>5</sup>The spandrel friezes and teardrop pendants have been temporarily removed for repairs. They are expected to be installed in 2015.

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On the first story, the south portion of the T, which recesses nine feet, has a centered entry to the kitchen, with a modern steel door featuring a single pane set into the upper portion and raised panels in the lower. To the left is a casement window, installed in the 1980's by a tenant in the place of the original tall window, providing light over the kitchen sink.<sup>6</sup> This section runs eighteen feet north to south. To the right the north wall of the central bay, is an original entry door to the living room, with a single pane in the upper portion and raised panels in the lower. The north portion of the T recesses seven feet with an offset entry to the right which enters the parlor. The door is also a single pane with raised panels, and has carved appliques. To the left is another large window with a smaller rectangular window over it lighting the parlor. This section spans fourteen feet north to south. The north porch is situated in the section to the left (north) of the central bay and is six feet in depth. There are two turned posts with lacy carved brackets on each side of the posts and the returns of the spindle work friezes suspended from the porch ceiling enclosing the porch. The south porch is situated in the section to the right (south) of the central bay and is also six feet in depth. There are three turned posts evenly spaced on this porch running eighteen feet north to south then turning to the east for seven feet. There is a radius between the second and third posts. Spindle work friezes are suspended from the porch ceiling the entire expanse of the porch, with lacy carved brackets<sup>7</sup> on each side of the posts and the frieze returns. Centered above the kitchen entry on the south porch is a small, simple gable with octagonal shingles. There is a wide band board separating the first and second story in the center section.

The second story has one tall one-over-one single hung window centered on the south portion and a smaller window to its left providing light to a bedroom and closet respectively. On the south wall of the center bay is another tall one-over-one single hung window. The front facing center west wall is cantilevered over the bay below, and also has a large square window with a smaller rectangular window centered in the space directly above the one on the first story. There is a tall one-over-one single hung window on the north wall of the bay; these three providing light to the west bedroom. Another tall one-over-one single hung window is centered in the northern portion of the west facade lighting the north bedroom.

There are two gables on this front facade. The secondary gable is centered over the southern portion of this facade. This gable has a centered pointed-arch gothic window flanked by diamond shingled diamonds with alternating rows of octagonal, cove, and square shingles. There is a wide trim board under the eaves with quarter round bridging the trim board and the soffit, and traditional crown molding on the face of the gable. The primary gable is the center section of this facade. It has a series of three narrow rectangular windows featuring a taller center window. There are two shingled diamonds above the shorter windows, and a small shingled diamond to each side of the window series. There is also a wide trim board, quarter round and crown molding on this gable.

There is a T-shaped stone paver path (2006) connecting the two porches to the road, with the south arm of the T continuing south to the driveway which replaced the 1970's concrete path.

### *Side (South) Elevation*

The south elevation faces the machine shed and drainage. On the first story, the porch continues around from the west facade to one's left. Historically, there was a tall single hung one-over-one window on the south wall under the porch. It was boarded up by a tenant during an unapproved kitchen remodel in the 1980's.<sup>8</sup> There are two tall one-over-one single hung windows unevenly spaced along this nine foot span. The left one provides light to the bathroom, the right to the butler's pantry. The first story extends six feet beyond the second on the south and east sides. The second story has one tall one-over-one single hung window in the left third of the wall and provides light to the south bedroom. There is no alignment of windows on the south side.

The south gable of sixteen feet spans the entire second story. There is one large shingled diamond flanked by a smaller diamond on each side, with alternating courses of octagonal, cove and square shingles. This gable is the only one that does not have a window. As with all the gables, this one has a wide trim board, quarter round and crown molding.

<sup>6</sup>This window may be replaced in the future, per Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

<sup>7</sup>Missing brackets have been duplicated and will be installed in 2015

<sup>8</sup>This window may be replaced in the future, per Secretary of the Interior's Standards. I am hopeful that it still exists underneath the plywood covering.

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## *Back (East) Elevation*

When compared to the front and sides of the house, the back (east) elevation is quite simple and utilitarian. Facing the non-extant out buildings, an old garage, the barn, and the non-extant orchard, this elevation was not a primary focus and is out of public view. The centered gable is without decorative shingle work and gable ornamentation. There is a square window centered in this clapboarded gable, as well as the same wide trim board, quarter round and crown molding found on all the gables.

On the second story of this cross gable a single tall one-over-one window is centered in the sixteen foot span. The south wall of the gable recedes six feet to the west and has a single tall one-over-one window centered on that wall. The north wall of that gable recedes three feet to the west with a single tall one-over-one window held tight to the west. This series of windows provide light to the east bedroom. The south portion of the second story recedes from the centered gable six feet and runs eighteen feet north to south. There is a tall one-over-one single hung window centered on that wall providing light to the south bedroom. The north portion of the second story continues north from the first recession another seven feet before receding to the west again five feet, then continuing north again seven feet. There is a tall one-over-one single hung window tight to the left (west) on that wall.

The first story of this cross gable has a pair of tall one-over-one single hung windows centered on the wall directly beneath the upper stories. These windows are united by a common crown and light a bedroom now commonly used as a den. Unlike the second story, the first story remains flush to the center section for eight feet to the left (south) of the center section. There is a tall single hung window providing light to the laundry room. The wall then recedes one foot to the west then spans ten feet, where a storm door is held tight to that intersection. This door leads to a mud room, then to the exterior steel door (1980's) that matches the one that enters the kitchen directly opposite. There is a tall single hung window centered in the left half of that wall providing light to the butler's pantry.

The original cellar entrance was on this elevation in the south one-third of the gabled section. Historically, there was a steep set of steps leading to the cellar. At the bottom was an incised wood door. It had a single pane of glass in the upper portion topped with crown molding. Below the window were three carved snowflakes. Once a full height door, it had been cut down between the second and third horizontal raised panels to fit the low threshold. When the foundation was replaced (2006), the cellar entrance was centered on that wall, surrounded by the original rock faced cement block. The door was copied and made into a set of French doors for the walk-out entrance of stone pavers. This makes the cellar more accessible, especially from the farmyard.<sup>9</sup>

## *Side (North) Elevation*

The north elevation looks out on terraced fields. The north gabled side spans sixteen feet. This gable has a centered square window, with a narrow shingled diamond above it. The window is flanked by shingled diamonds of the same height as the window. There are alternating courses of octagonal, cove and square shingles.

The second story has a pair of tall one-over-one single hung windows centered on the wall bridged by a common crown which light the north bedroom. The first story has the large square window with the narrow rectangular window above it centered on that wall directly beneath the gable and second story windows. The large window provides light to the parlor.

## *Noted Interior Features*

The William Ellis Farmstead Historic District house is being nominated, under Criterion C (Architecture) primarily for its exterior significance. However, there are some interior features that are noteworthy.

<sup>9</sup>There was a basement under just the east-west section, and only crawl spaces under the north and south. Because the sedimentary rock used on the north and south sections was set on the ground, it deteriorated more rapidly than that of the center section causing the house to start to pull apart. The house was raised, a new foundation laid, and the house lowered. (Oct.-Dec. 2006)

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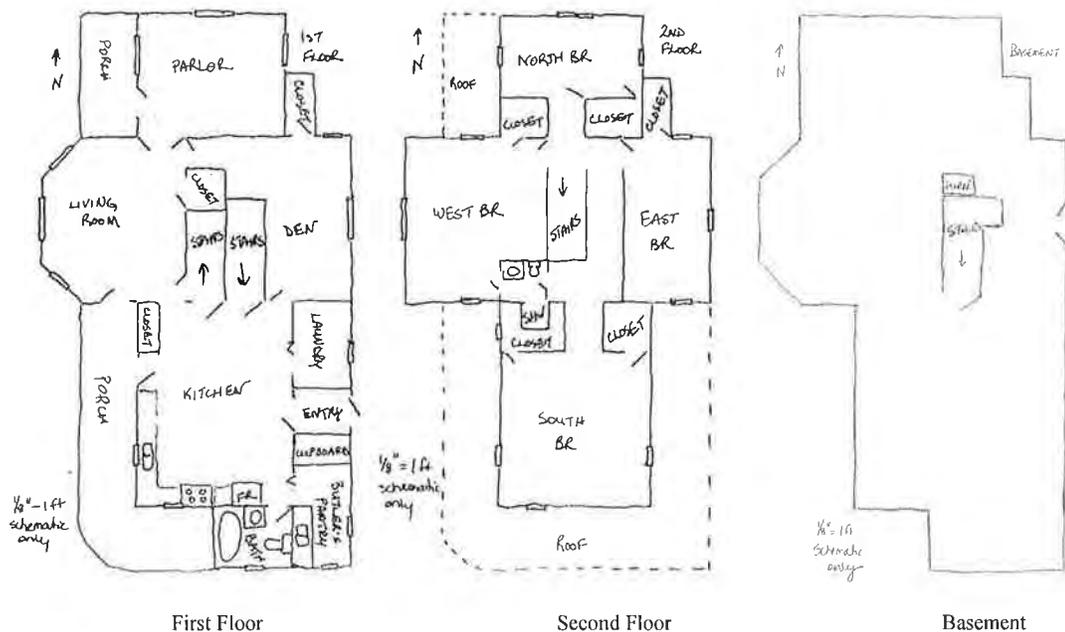
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Entering the more frequently used kitchen door on the west elevation, one is aware of the large number of doors in the large, 20' x 20' kitchen. The door one just entered is the only one on that wall. The wall to the north has four doors - to the living room, to the upstairs, to the basement, and to the bedroom/den. The east wall has three doors - to the laundry, to the mudroom, and to the butler's pantry. The south wall has only one door which leads to the bathroom. The living room has six doors - to the porch, to the kitchen, to the upstairs, to a closet, to the bedroom/den, and a set of French doors to the parlor. In the summer, the glass French doors were used; solid raised 5-panel doors were used in the winter. This floor plan allowed for a circular traffic flow around the core of the house. All the doors on the first floor were raised 5-panel. There is a transom above the door leading to the second floor, embellished with a turkey.



First Floor

Second Floor

Basement

Sherri Meeker, ca. 2014

Second story features are a bit more restrained. Upstairs features an open central hall and open stairwell. There is a bedroom to the north, east, south and west. All bedrooms in the house have closets, which is a bit unusual as closets were commonly taxed as rooms at that time. The door to the south bedroom was one containing a glass panel in the upper portion and raised panel lower. The glass was etched with a wildlife scene.<sup>10</sup>

All the floors are wide plank, inch thick fir. Baseboards are approximately eight inches in height with a milled profile at the top. Inside and outside corners featured turned blocks approximately twelve inches in height, eliminating mitered joints. All outside corners have four foot tall turned corner protectors. All the windows and doors are cased in gracefully undulating millwork and wide flat headers topped with egg-and-dart crown molding; the doors have eased plinth blocks. The narrow rectangular windows contain decorative window glass; two matching stained glass windows, another stained and beveled glass window, and an etched glass nautical scene. The exterior doors to the living room and parlor contain etched glass floral baskets.<sup>11</sup> The ceilings throughout the house are approximately nine feet in height.

<sup>10</sup>The scene was a caribou. Clem Ellis, in his youth, reportedly threw a baseball in his room (south bedroom) and it cracked the window. The window remained until the 1980's when it became unsafe and was removed. A plain piece of frosted glass was installed.

<sup>11</sup>In the late 1960's the then tenant commented that those stained and etched windows could be purchased at any local dime store. The next weekend my dad and I were on ladders carefully removing them. Mom had the lead repaired, the windows cleaned, and then framed. They are hanging in my living room. I may reinstall them sometime in the future.

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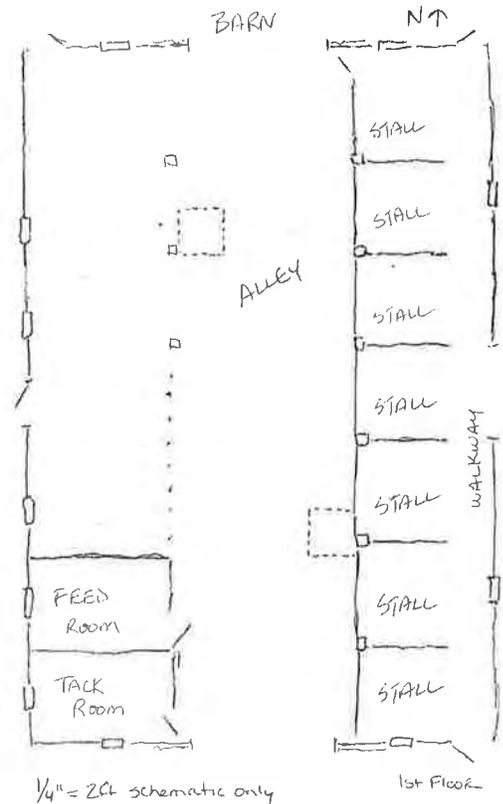
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## Barn

The barn was built circa 1900 in the double monitor style with gable ends, brows and side sheds. This 3-bay style barn with broken gable type roof (shed-gable) with a central section taller than its surrounding sheds was popular from 1900 to the 1920's.<sup>12</sup> The construction is rough-sawn heavy timber frame with notch and mortise joinery and typical stick framing common at that time. Rough-sawn lumber with rough-sawn notches was an expensive construction technique. The barn is 40 feet east to west by 60 feet north to south with a 16 foot by 60 foot concrete feeding floor, added in the 1950's, on the east side of the barn. There are large sliding doors which slide on a single pulley and rail, unusual, at each end of the central aisle. On the north elevation, the central door is flanked by a divided-light square window and a dutch-door framed at each corner. The west elevation has four divided-light square windows unevenly spaced in the south two-thirds of the wall. There is a stable (dutch) door at approximately two-thirds of the way from the north, and a rectangular one-over-one single hung window approximately four feet from the south corner. The south elevation has a rectangular one-over-one single hung window approximately six feet from the west corner, the sliding door at the center aisle, and a stable (dutch) door at the east corner. The east elevation is given way to a series of stalls used for livestock, accessed from the outside by a central opening with a sliding door and common walkway which opens to the concrete feeding floor. The ceiling is approximately ten feet high. The floor is bridge plank style of true 2"x12", which has rotted in the stall area. There is a tack room at the southwest corner of the first floor. The feed room, which is likely not original, is next to the tack room. A stud wall continues north from the feed room. That area was possibly originally used for veterinary and farrier services, or equipment storage.



Sherri Meeker, ca. 2014

The loft floor consists of true 1"x6" planks over floor joists that rest on single cross beams that are supported by a series of six posts on east side of the center aisle, and by three posts and standard wall framing on the west. There is a series of four square divided light windows evenly spaced on the east and west sides of the upper shed. These windows are drop-in frame construction which allows the windows to be set in the openings for winter, removed for ventilation in summer and stored in pockets built next to the windows. There are two hay drop doors evenly spaced on the east and west sides of the lower shed. The hay loft doors at the north and south ends of the barn are cable driven by a crank assembly located at each end of the center alley on the west side, and slide up and down in tracks. The farmer and/or hired hands would use a trolley to load hay into the barn loft through these doors. There are two access points to the loft. At the north half, access is at the mid-point and located on the west edge of the center alley. At the south half, access is at the mid-point and located on the east edge of the center alley. These hay drop chutes are four feet square and framed to the roof.

The east side of the barn used stall dividers to support the loft. Each stall had a graining trough on each side of the hay trough. The lower head wall suggests stalls for horses. There are holes on the troughs for rings to which they tethered the horses. There are seven stalls with six center supports and six posts. Access to the stall area is gained from a dutch-door on the north end of the center alley, from a dutch-door on the southeast corner, and the center opening on the east.

<sup>12</sup>Lowell Soike. "Viewing Iowa Farmsteads." Robert Sayer. *Take This Exit - Rediscovering Iowa's Landscape*. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University. 1989 p 167.

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The main uprights are rough-sawn true 6"x6". The cross braces, which are butt jointed, are bolted to the beams. The end walls are balloon framing. The side walls are modified balloon framing. Where the studs meet above the first floor top plate, a four foot piece is scabbed to each stud. The loft is constructed of true 6"x6" risers notched down to 4"x6" to set on double floor joists that are true 2"x8" rough-sawn. At every double floor joist there is a support upstairs in the loft and is located four feet off the loft floor. In the loft, a butt trough joins 2"x8" vertical framing with the 2"x6" horizontal framing at the four foot knee wall between the roofs. This provides two times the storage, and was a very expensive type of construction. Expensive round head square nails were use throughout.

The barn base is 6"x6" rough-sawn beams resting on the original limestone foundation. Floor supports are true 6"x6" in the center section and 4"x4" in the side sections, all set on limestone piers and walls. The roof is constructed of 2"x6" rafters with slat style sheeting that allows air circulation, and was originally wood shingles; asphalt shingles were added in the 1940's or 1950's/ The shed roofs had yankee gutters, of which pieces remain, and the lightning rods are still on the center ridge. The barn is covered in wide plank siding.

### *Integrity*

The William and Amanda J. Ellis Farmstead Historic District house exhibits an extremely high degree of internal and external integrity with no major additions or alterations. Unlike many farmhouses in the county whose architectural detailing has been stripped or covered in favor of "no maintenance" materials, this home displays nearly all the elements that were original to the time. The kitchen and first floor bath were "updated" in the 1980's. A second floor bath was added to the west bedroom by annexing a corner of that room and a secondary closet from the south bedroom which shared a wall, also in the 1980's. Plumbing was run outside the wall cavity necessitating the use of a drop ceiling in the kitchen and living room. The house is currently being restored following the Secretary of the Interior's standards. So far the house has been repainted in original colors with some additional accents, and new combination screen/storms milled in the old style have been installed. Current plans include repairing the porches, repairing and reinstalling the gable ornamentation, replacing the roof, and replacing the missing crestings and finials. Future plans include a more sensitive kitchen and bath remodel, relocating exposed plumbing and ductwork following SI standards, and removing the drop ceilings. Although in poor condition and not in use, the barn is original in design, structure, materials and details. The barn, while still reasonably sound, is in much need of repairs. Other than the cupola being removed in the 1940's, there have been no other major modifications, alterations or additions thereby maintaining a high degree of architectural integrity. The fabric of the barn displays a fair degree of integrity as there is much deterioration and loss of materials as a result of continued agricultural use and deferred maintenance. The remaining materials are original to the resource. Future plans include repair and restoration of the barn.

Location: The house and barn remain in their original locations with their original footprints in the agricultural setting of a working farm.

Design: The house retains its original footprint and floor plan, with minor changes of a second floor bath added to the west bedroom by annexing a corner of that room and a secondary closet; drop ceilings in the living room and kitchen to hide plumbing and duct work. Windows and doors remain in their original locations, with the exception of the two in the kitchen as discussed earlier. The house has a large kitchen to prepare meals for the farm hands typically employed in the early 1900's. The barn is configured with a series of stalls for the horses on the east, tack room, feed room, and implement storage on the west, and hay loft above. The cupola had deteriorated and was removed in the 1940's for safety.

Setting: The Ellis Farmstead Historic District is agricultural in nature and remains in an area of working farms. As is becoming increasingly common, some nearby farms have separated the homestead and farming operations. The Ellis Farmstead Historic District remains intact as a working farm. Farming methods have changed greatly over the last century. When William was farming, horses pulled the farm equipment. As farming moved into the industrial age, tractors replaced horses. As the size of farm implements increased they no longer fit in the barn. As a result, the barn is no longer used and has fallen into disrepair. William also raised cattle and hogs. All livestock operations ceased in the late 1960's, after which all livestock buildings were demolished.

Materials: The materials commonly used in the construction of the house and barn remain largely intact. The original concrete block

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Ellis, William and Amanda J., Farmstead Historic District  
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foundation was replaced in 2006. The top course of block visible above grade is the original rock face block; modern concrete block is below grade. Over the years the roof has changed from wood shingles to fiberglass shingles. The house and barn are wood frame construction. The house's original wood framed window sashes, some even with the original glass, are intact in their original locations. The interior wood floors, although covered by carpet, are intact. The original plaster is in decent condition. Metal crestings run along the ridge line. The barn is wood frame construction with wood siding, wood frame window sashes, and wood plank floors set on a limestone foundation and piers. The glass is missing in nearly all the windows. The cupola was removed in the 1940's as it had deteriorated. There is a loss of materials as a result of deferred maintenance and neglect. Some pieces are stored in the barn.

**Workmanship:** Integrity of workmanship is evident throughout the Ellis Farmstead Historic District. For both the house and barn, the buildings' structural elements remain intact. Location of doors and windows remain as originally installed, except for the two kitchen windows previously noted. The house exemplified the quality of workmanship prevalent during that time period and available to a man of means, as one marvels at the intricate detail of the turned posts and spindles, lacy carved brackets, and delicate gable ornamentations achieved without modern power tools. Original architectural details were, or will be, repaired or replaced in kind according to SI standards, where deteriorated or missing. The barn has an unusual rail and pulley system that operates the loft doors. Although true dimensional lumber was standard at the time, round head square nails, bolts, notches and mortises in the double monitor style were expensive construction details.

**Feeling:** The Ellis Farmstead Historic District continues to evoke an historic sense of the property's use. While farming methods have changed, and the farm no longer has a livestock operation, this is still a working farm and will continue to be planted in corn and soybeans.

**Association:** The property is still commonly known today as the "Ellis farm". William was a well-known and respected farmer and stockraiser. William was a man of means and influence. He and his wife, Amanda, were highly regarded in the community, evidenced by the lavish comments in Minnie's and Clara's nuptials printed top center on the front page of the *Elliott Graphic*.

The house maintains a high degree of all seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Because of the high degree of integrity, detail and craftsmanship remaining in the house, the moderately high degree of architectural completeness of the barn and the fact that the remaining materials are original to the resource, this resource qualifies for nomination under Criterion C.

## Non-Contributing Buildings and Structures

The non-contributing buildings and structures include two garages.

The 12 foot by 20 foot garage to the east of the house (circa 1950's) has a concrete floor, and three courses of rock face block topped with wood framed wall covered in horizontal siding. The south elevation has carriage doors. The east and west elevations have a single square divided light window centered on those walls. A gabled roof which runs north to south is covered with asphalt shingles over wood shingles. The ceiling is covered in tongue and groove bead board. It is in poor condition.

The other 12 foot by 20 foot garage/shed is a shell on a skid set on a dirt floor. This structure was brought in by a former tenant in the 1980's. The garage is constructed of wood framing, vertical wood siding, and asphalt shingles. The gable roof runs east west, with carriage doors on the west elevation. It is in fair condition.

## Archeological Potential

It is believed that the Ellis Farmstead Historic District has potential for archeological remains associated with the farm district. However, as this nomination is based on Criterion C, this potential remains unknown and is not considered a contributing factor at this time.

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## Architectural Significance

The William and Amanda J. Ellis Farmstead Historic District is locally significant under Criterion C for its architectural significance as a reasonably well preserved early 20<sup>th</sup> century farmstead, and a rare example in the township. The house is a very fine example of a Queen Anne and Victorian style farmhouse with Stick influences. The main floor of the house has a circular flow to the floor plan and the second floor functions off a central hall. Built eight miles south of the Mormon Trail (Highway 92), the period and date of significance is circa 1900 when the house and barn were built during the years William and Amanda Jane owned the property (1882-1919).

There is some discussion as to the actual date of construction. Family lore has said 1898. Newspaper articles would have one to lean toward prior to 1903. William's oldest daughter, Minnie, was married in the parlor December 23, 1903 in a ceremony attended by "seventy-five of the immediate relatives and friends of the families."<sup>13</sup> Their youngest daughter, Clara, who was not to be outdone by her sister, was also married in the parlor in 1908 in a ceremony attended by "about one-hundred guests."<sup>14</sup> Assessor's office records state 1907. Stacey Von Dielingen, the assessor, indicated in a conversation July 15, 2014 that her office was not created until about 1950. Before then, records were maintained by the Township Trustees. The current trustee, Mrs. Jo Good, has no information.

William Ellis was born near Warsaw, Gallatin County, Kentucky July 21, 1852. In a Christmas Day ceremony in 1880, at the age of 28, William married Amanda Jane Murrah (b July 24, 1857) of Adams County, Illinois. It is possible they headed north from Adams County and picked up the Mormon Trail at Nauvoo, Illinois, following the trail to Montgomery County. Montgomery County was established in 1853, Sherman Township in 1868. Elliott was founded in 1879 and incorporated in 1882. April 3, 1882 William purchased 160 acres of rolling hill farmland 3 miles west of Elliott in Section 10 of Sherman Township from P.P. Johnson for \$30 an acre. William continued to increase his land holdings with another 80 purchased in section 10 in 1899, another 80 acres in section 10 in 1901, another 80 acres in section 9, and another 40 acres in section 16 in the early 1900's, giving William total land holdings of 440 acres. William divided this equally between his two living sons; Fred received the 220 acres located in section 10, and Henry received the 220 acres that are in sections 9, 10 and 16. William named his farm "Sunny Side Stock Farm", and was listed as a farmer and stockraiser in the 1907 Atlas.<sup>15</sup> William planted corn and soybeans, and raised cattle and hogs.

In September 1882, William sold one acre at the very northwest corner of the farm to the Sherman Township School Board. Fred bought that piece back from the Consolidated Sherman Township Schools in April 1927. "A schoolhouse is located upon every corner of every four sections (or four square miles), making nine of them in each of the twelve townships in the county."<sup>16</sup>

William and Amanda, circa 1900, built their large two-story frame house on the knoll near the road. Lore has it that this spot was picked because he could see the cemetery from the back porch and watch the sun rise over the headstones, and when he was buried he could see the house and watch the sun set over the house. Around the same time, he and his sons built the barn. It is likely his lumber came by rail. "The growth of the railroad system made heavy woodworking machinery widely accessible at local trade centers, where they produced inexpensive Victorian detailing. The railroad also provided local lumber yards with abundant supplies of pre-cut detailing from distant mills. Many builders simply grafted pieces of this newly available trim onto the traditional folk house forms familiar to local carpenters."<sup>17</sup> The house shows much of this Victorian detailing in the gable ornamentations, gable shingle work, gable crown molding, corner details and crown moldings, spindle work friezes around the porches, turned posts, lacy cut brackets, cut away bay window, and roof crestings.

<sup>13</sup>*Elliott Graphic*. Elliott, Iowa. January 1, 1904. p1.

<sup>14</sup>*Elliott Graphic*. Elliott, Iowa. March 12, 1908. p1.

<sup>15</sup>*Standard Atlas of Montgomery County, Iowa*. Chicago: George A. Ogle & Co. 1907, p13, 57, 63

<sup>16</sup>W.W. Merritt, Sr. *A History of the County of Montgomery From the Earliest Days to 1906*. Red Oak, Iowa: The Express Publishing Co. 1906. p148.

<sup>17</sup>Viginia and Lee McAlister. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 2005. p310.

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Ellis, William and Amanda J., Farmstead Historic District  
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William and Amanda would have five children; Henry 1881, Minnie 1882, Willie 1884 who died at the age of 2, Clara 1887, and Fred 1889. Amanda died April 12, 1917 at the age of 59. William continued to live on the farmstead until his death June 2, 1919 at the age of 66. Both are buried at Hillside Cemetery, Elliott, Iowa. During William's time at the farmstead, the house and the barn were built; other buildings, both extant as well as non-extant, were built circa 1920's and later.<sup>18</sup>

Subsequent owners of the Ellis Historic Farmstead District included son Fred T. and wife Ruth C. Ellis, who owned the property from 1919 to 1983; grandchildren Edward J. Ellis, Barbara K. Stuart, and Sherri A. Sauerman, who owned the property together from 1983 to 1995; and Sherri A. (Sauerman) Meeker Revocable Trust, who has owned the property since 1995. The property is a century farm, receiving the certification in 1996.

The William and Amanda J. Ellis Historic Farmstead District represents a relatively rare remaining example of grand rural Queen Anne and Victorian architecture. It is the most elegant and ornate of the houses on any of the Ellis family properties. There are two houses in Pilot Grove Township (1910 and 1912) which could have a similar floor plan and potentially the same builder. There is a house in Red Oak (1895) that has an almost identical footprint, and one in Red Oak Township (1899) with a very similar footprint. All have been stripped of their architectural embellishments, as have most existing farm houses of that era in Montgomery County, regardless of architectural style. The property is of local significance in Sherman Township, and Montgomery County, as it is the only remaining rural resource of Queen Anne and Victorian architecture that is architecturally intact. Most agricultural properties have lost their barns; this is the largest double monitor style barn I have found in Sherman Township. Henry had a much smaller double monitor style barn, and there is a small one at the corner of H12 and M47.

<sup>18</sup>The same tenant as <sup>11</sup> had permission to bulldoze the old cattle sheds, but took it upon himself to bulldoze almost every building and structure on the farm and the orchard, as evidenced by the 1980's aerial photo. His employment was promptly terminated.

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### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is as follows: From the northwest corner of the northwest quarter to a point 1,655 feet south; beginning there then two hundred seventy-five feet east, then one hundred seventy-five feet south, then two hundred seventy-five feet west, then one hundred seventy-five feet north to the point of origin.



2014

Courtesy: Beacon Schneider Corp.



1960's

Courtesy: Montgomery County Assessor

### Boundary Justification

This boundary includes all the extant buildings historically associated with the William and Amanda J. Ellis Farmstead Historic District listed in this nomination.

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Montgomery County, Iowa

Additional Documentation

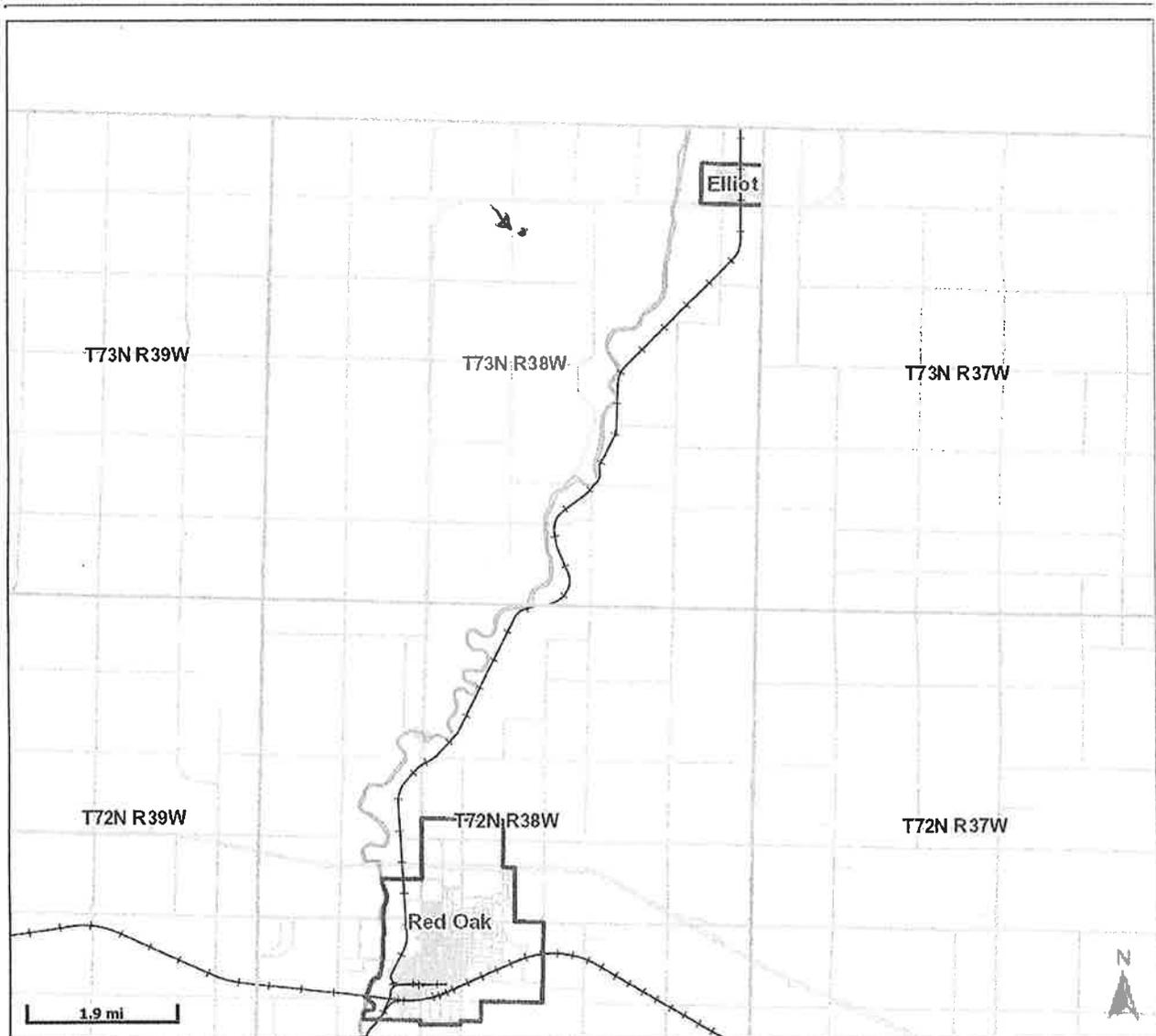
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General Location of the Ellis Farmstead Historic District

## Montgomery County, IA



Date Created: 7/19/2014



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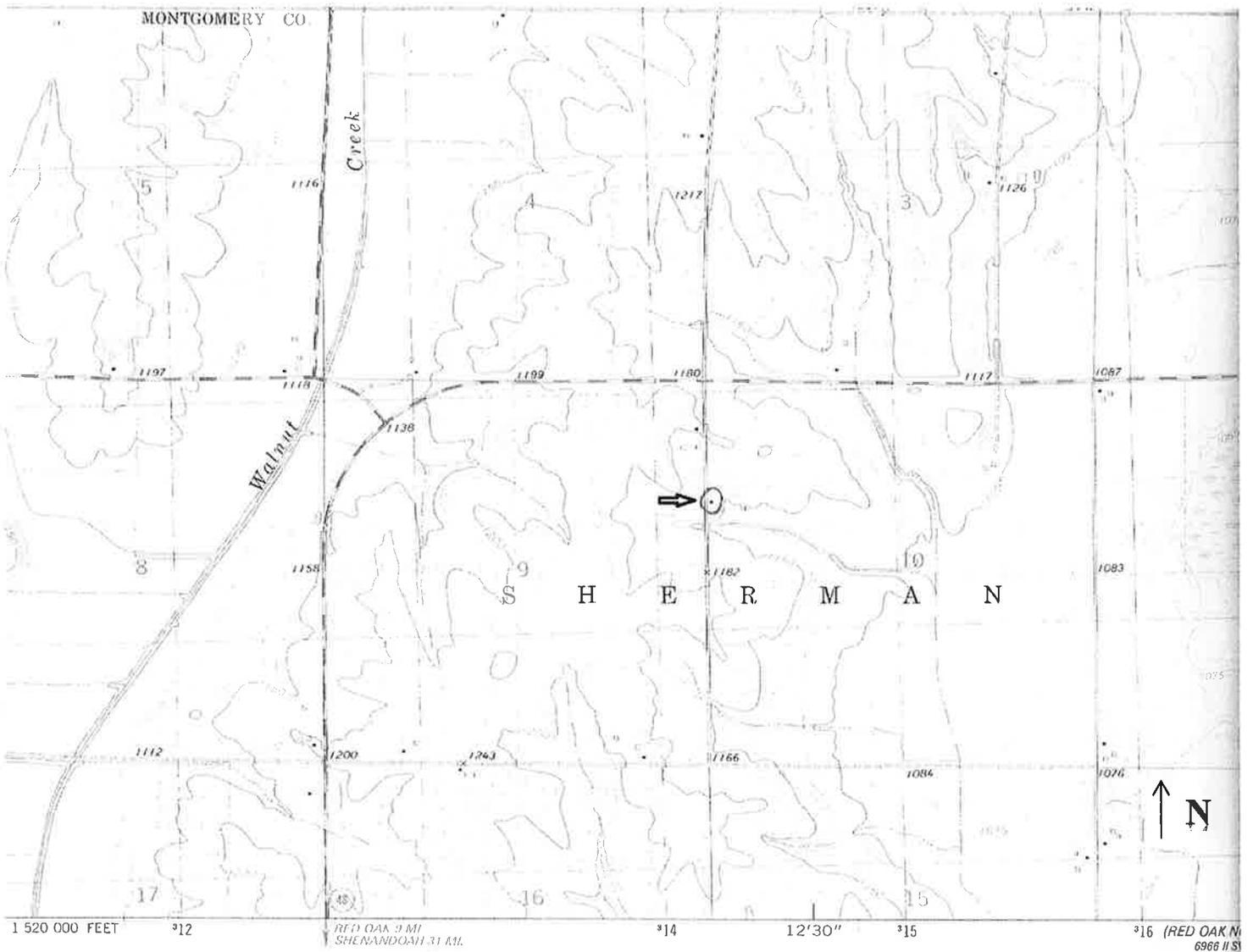
Ellis, William and Amanda J., Farmstead Historic District  
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USGS

ca. 1978



Zone 15 Easting 314215 Northing 4556743

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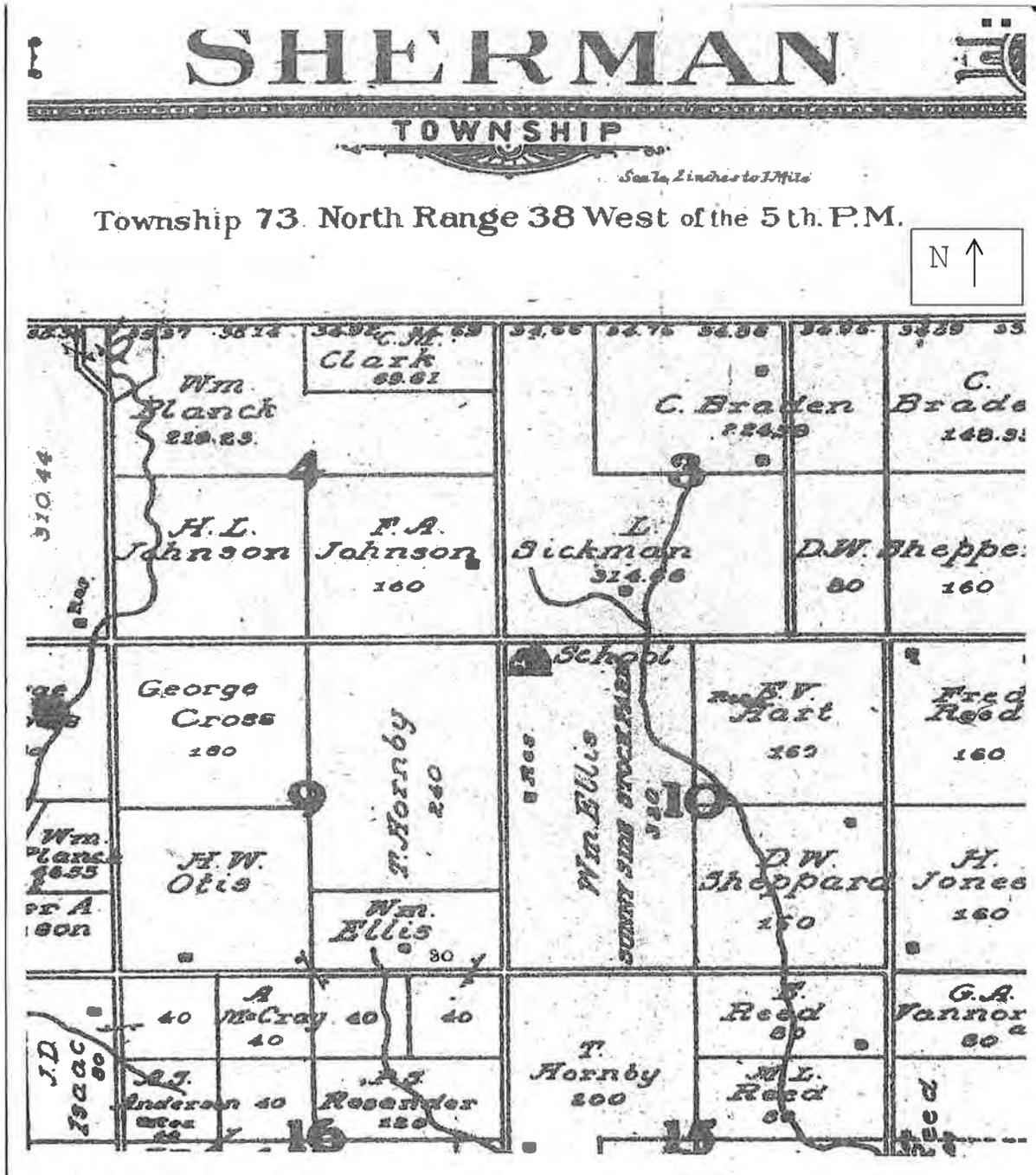
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1907 Sherman Township

Standard Atlas of Montgomery County, Iowa





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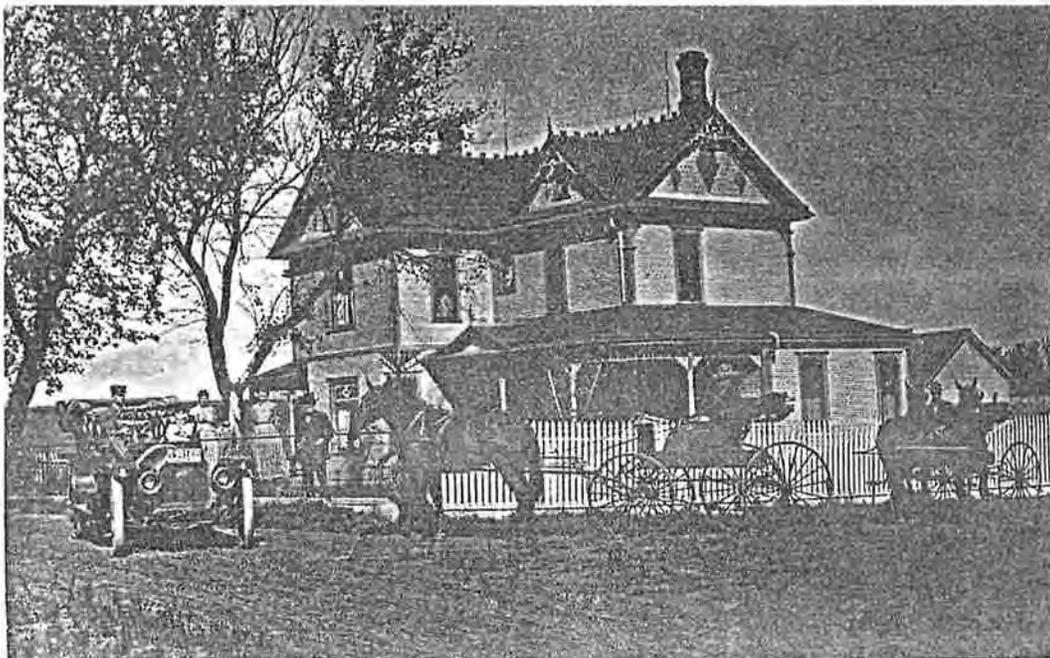
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Historic Photographs Circa 1900's



Sherri Meeker Collection  
Gordon Photography, Griswold, Iowa  
Date Unknown

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Circa 1960's Aerial Photograph



Circa 1980's Aerial Photo



Sherri Meeker Collection  
Photographers Unknown

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William Ellis Family  
1907 Atlas of Montgomery County, Iowa



WM. ELLIS.

Seated, left to right: Amanda Jane, William, Clara Caroline  
Standing, left to right: Minnie Elizabeth, Fred Thomas, Henry Howard

Date Unknown

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East side of house looking south (circa 1910)

From left to right: Fred Ellis, William Ellis, Ruth Ellis

Sherri Meeker Collection

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Wedding Bells Ring Mer-  
riely With Yule Tide  
Chimes

One of the most pleasant affairs of the season was the wedding which occurred at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Ellis of Sherman township Wednesday evening when their eldest daughter, Minnie E., was united in the bonds of holy matrimony to Mr. Ira R. Lantis in the presence of about seventy-five of the immediate relatives and friends of the families. Promptly at the appointed time Miss Velma Collins took her place at the instrument and as the beautiful strains of the wedding march pealed forth, the bridal pair took their places under the arch of holly and carnations from which was suspended a beautifully arranged wedding bell, awaiting an opportunity to proclaim to the world the new found joy in the consummation of the marriage vow. The solemn words that made them one were pronounced by Elder Samuel Gregg of the Christian church. The bride carried a very prettily arranged bouquet of lillies of the valley. Both young people are held in the highest esteem in the communities in which they live. They were the recipients of many useful presents. They will be at home to their many friends on the Lantis homestead after March first. The Graphic joins with their many friends in extending congratulations, and wishing them long life, prosperity and happiness.

*Elliott Graphic*, January 1, 1904

Ellis—Reed.

On Wednesday evening March 11th occurred the marriage of Miss Clara, second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Ellis, to Charles Reed, oldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Reed.

The Bride's home was brilliantly lighted the color scheme being green and white.

The Bride was gowned in a beautiful white embroidery swiss dress and carried a shower bouquet of white carnations.

The groom was attired in the conventional black.

At the strain of the wedding march played by Mrs. Ed. Wilson, the bride and groom, preceded by the Rev. Merritt of Red Oak entered the parlor and took their place under a beautiful canopy of lace and smilax with still further decorations of ferns. After a prayer by the Reverend Mr. Merritt the young couple joined their right hands and took the solemn vows that made them husband and wife. After congratulations, a lovely two course luncheon was served. About one hundred guests were present and the many valuable and useful presents which the happy couple received show the esteem in which they were held by all who have known them since childhood.

Mr and Mrs Reed will be at home to their many friends on a farm north east of Elliott after April first. The Graphic joins with the entire community in wishing them God speed on their journey through life.

*Elliott Graphic*, March 12, 1908

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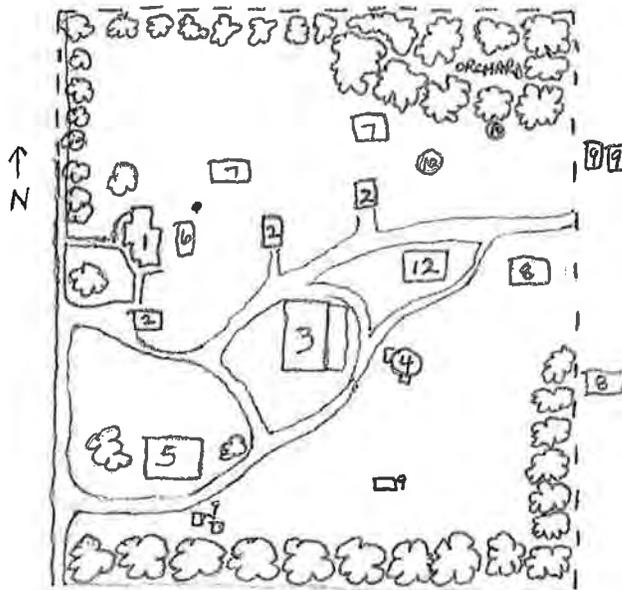
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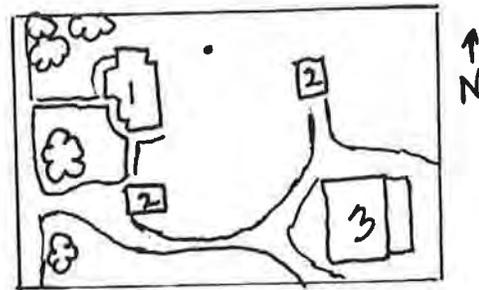
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Site Maps



1940's



2014

Key:

- 1. House
- 2. Garage
- 3. Barn
- 4. Grain Bin
- 5. Machine Shed
- 6. Wash House
- 7. Poultry House
- 8. Cattle Shed
- 9. Hog House
- 10. Wire Crib
- 11. Concrete Slab
- 12. Crib
- . Propane Tank

- 1. House
- 2. Garage
- 3. Barn
- . Propane Tank

Source: Sherri Meeker

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The following information is common to all the photographs:

Property Name:	Ellis, William and Amanda J., Farmstead Historic District
County and State:	Montgomery County, Iowa
Name of Photographer:	Sherri Meeker
Date of Photographs:	July 26, 2014 (1-13, 15-17, 21-25), December 11, 2007 (26-31), September 1, 2011 (25-26), September 2, 2014 (27-28) March 23, 2015 (14, 18-23)
Location of Negatives:	Sherri Meeker

## Photographs:

- #0001 - West facade, camera facing southeast
- #0002 - West facade, (left) and south facade (right), camera facing northeast
- #0003 - South gable, camera facing north
- #0004 - Southwest gables, camera facing east
- #0005 - Northwest gable, camera facing east
- #0006 - West facade, north end, camera facing southeast
- #0007 - North facade, camera facing south southwest
- #0008 - North gable, camera facing south southwest
- #0009 - East facade, camera facing west
- #0010 - East gable, camera facing west
- #0011 - Barn, west facade, (left) and south facade (right); grain bin; camera facing northeast
- #0012 - Barn, east facade, (left) and north facade (right), camera facing southwest
- #0013 - Barn, central alley, camera facing south
- #0014 - Barn light, center alley, camera facing north
- #0015 - Barn, loft, camera facing north
- #0016 - Barn, loft, camera facing northeast
- #0017 - Barn, loft, camera facing northwest
- #0018 - Barn, crank and rope, north end, camera facing north
- #0019 - Barn, crank and rope, south end, camera facing southeast

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- 
- #0020 - Barn, crank handle, south end, camera facing south
  - #0021 - Barn, stalls, east side, camera facing southwest
  - #0022 - Barn, stall feeder, camera facing east
  - #0023 - Barn door, south center aisle, camera facing north
  - #0024 - Garage, South facade (left) and east facade (right), camera facing northwest
  - #0025 - General view of the Farmstead from the southwest, camera facing northeast
  - #0026 - Kitchen, camera facing northwest
  - #0027 - Kitchen, camera facing southeast
  - #0028 - Living room, camera facing north
  - #0029 - Parlor, camera facing north
  - #0030 - Second floor central hall, camera facing north
  - #0031 - Second floor central hall, camera facing south
  - #0032 - Gable ornamentation
  - #0033 - Spindle work friezes
  - #0034 - Stained glass windows
  - #0035 - Acid Etched windows

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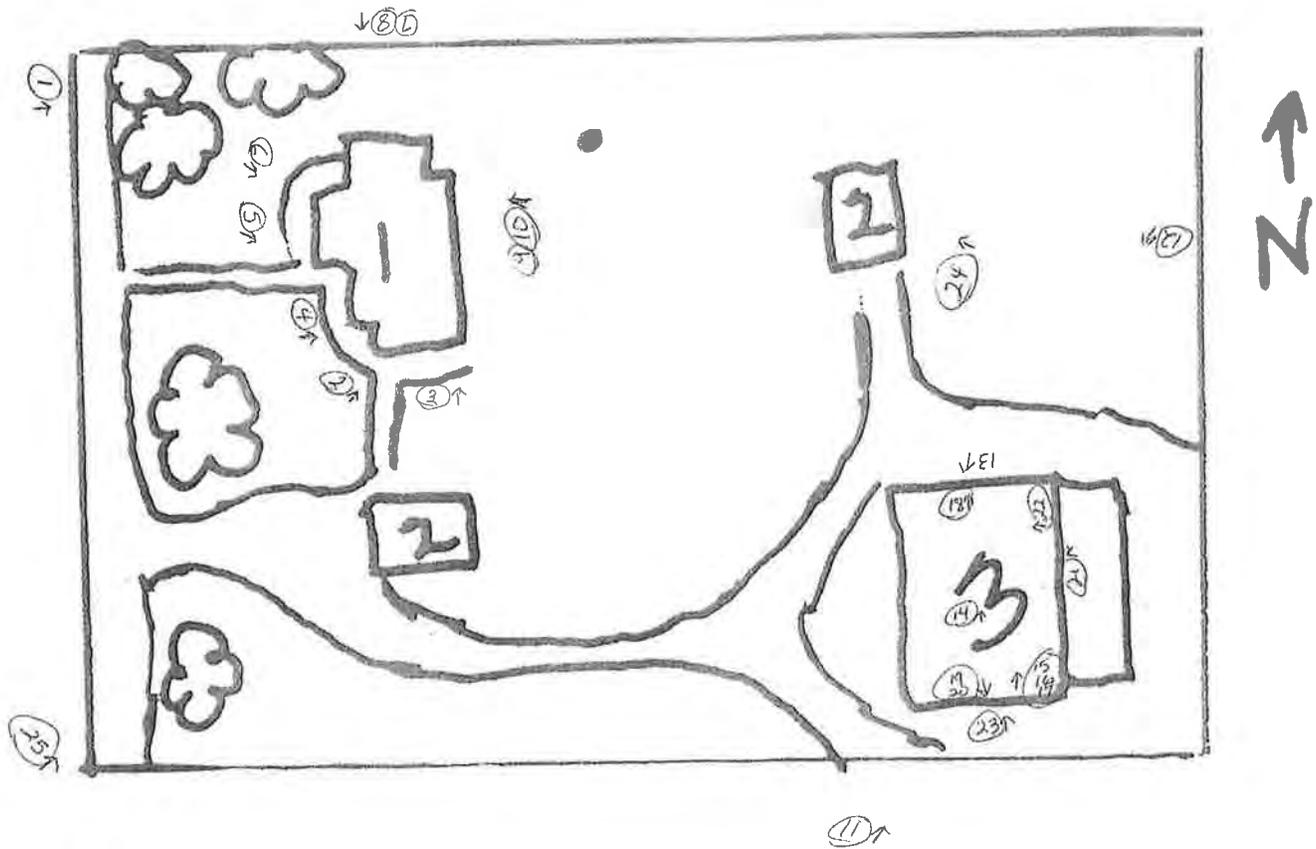
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Site Plan Photo Key



Sherri Meeker  
Ca. 2014

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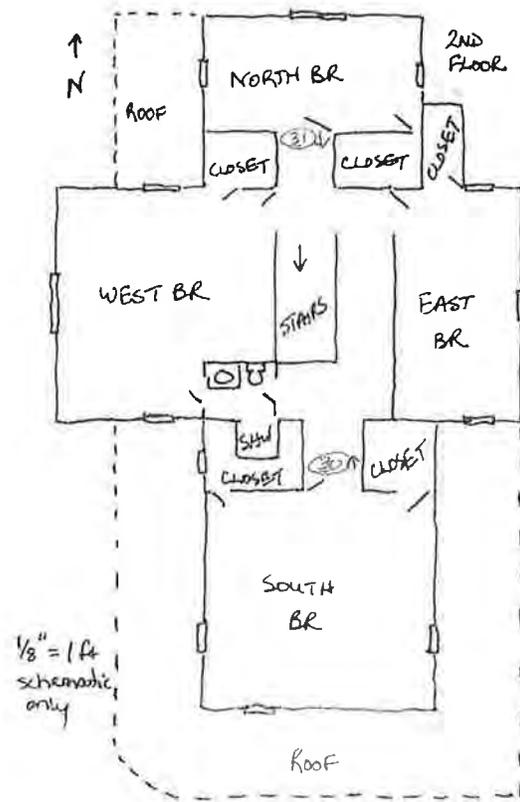
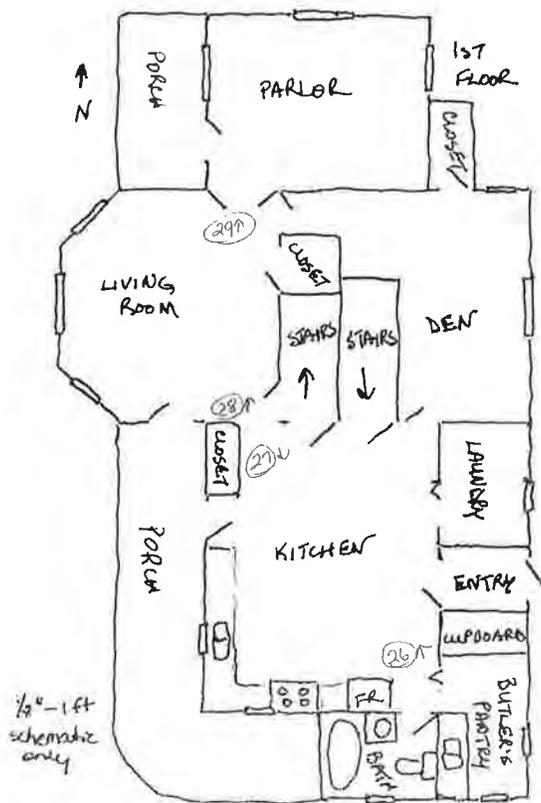
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### Interior Photo Key



Sherri Meeker  
Ca. 2014

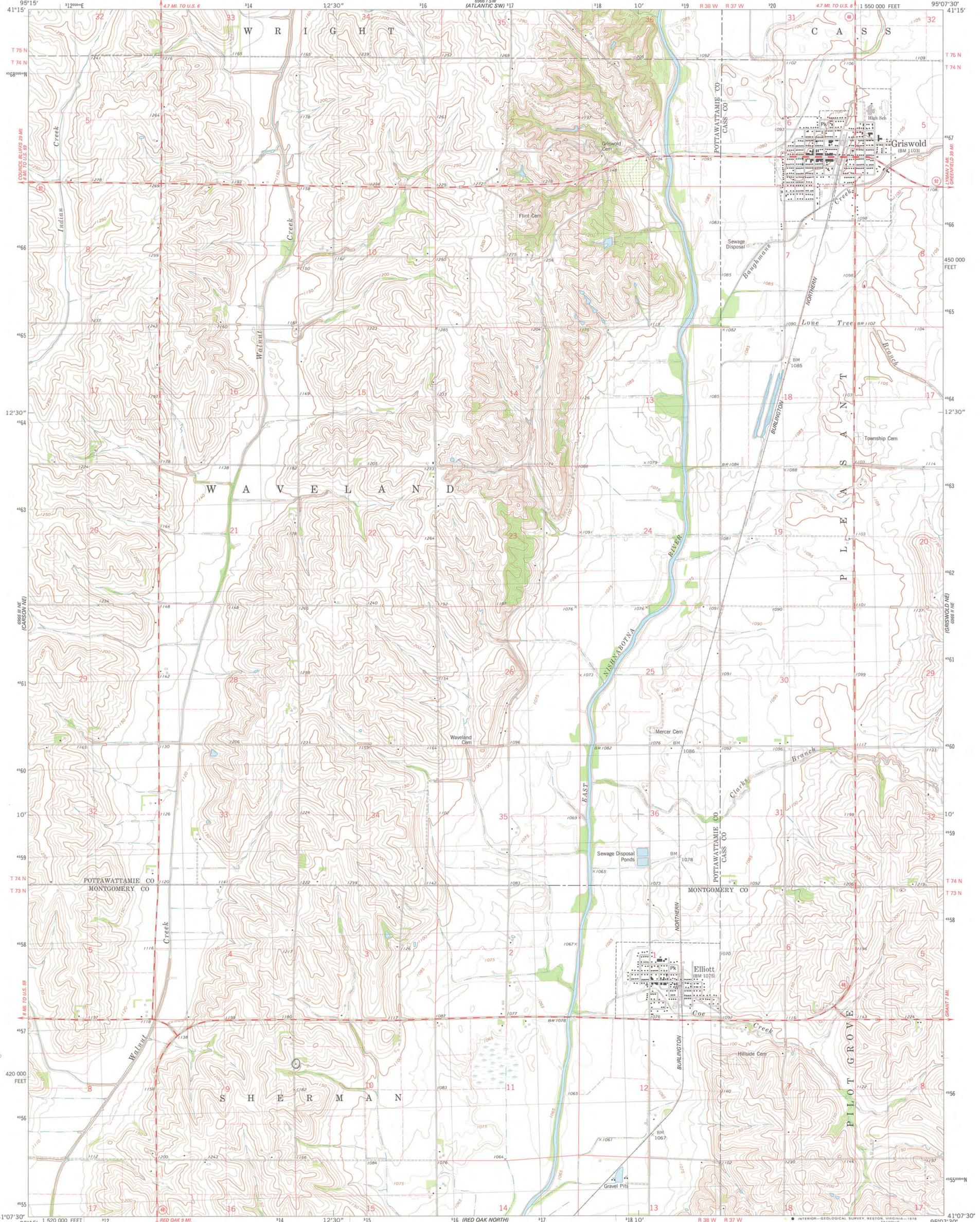
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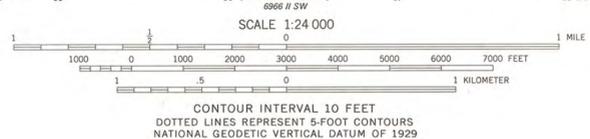
GRISWOLD QUADRANGLE  
IOWA  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

6966 II NW  
(SERIES 57)



Zone 15  
Easting 314215  
Northing 4556743

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
in cooperation with the Iowa Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
taken 1976. Field checked 1976. Map edited 1978  
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Iowa coordinate  
system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic)  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 15  
1927 North American datum  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where  
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route



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