

INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEY ENTRY FORM
DISTRICT FORM
Olds-Read District

DISTRICT NAME: Olds-Read District
ADDRESS: 10084 Rushton Road, South Lyon, Michigan 48178
MUNICIPAL UNIT: Green Oak Township
COUNTY: Livingston

USGS MAP: South Lyon Quad
AREA MAP: South Lyon Area

PHOTOGRAPHY:
Site Negs: Roll 1, Negs. 13-15; Roll 2, Neg. 0
Streetscape Neg: Roll 1, Neg. 14
View: Facing northeast.
Credit: Jan Enns
Date: 4/8/99 and 5/20/99



SURVEY/DATE: Green Oak Township Intensive Level Survey 1999
SURVEYOR: Jan Enns

RESOURCES ON PROPERTY:

The 1849 Greek -style basilica form house was built during Alonzo W. Olds ownership of the property. In addition to the house there is a corncrib from a more recent period of time.

Resource	Historic Use	Current Use
Residence	Domestic/Single Family	Domestic/Single Family
Corn Crib	Agricultural/Storage	Domestic/Secondary Structure

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY:

The approximate one-acre lot is nearly rectangular in shape and the house is located toward the front. Branches of two large fir trees frame the façade as viewed from Rushton Road. The property is surrounded on three sides by open space with residential development on the fourth side. A drive-thru corncrib behind and off to the side of the house is the only outbuilding remaining. A drive runs from the road along the south side of the house to the garage at the rear of the house addition with an expanse of grass between the house and drive. On one side of the drive is a play area and on the other side where it turns into the garage is a patio. At the rear of the backyard is a vegetable garden.

HISTORY:

Original Owner: Alonzo W. Olds (1835-1851)

Subsequent Owners:¹⁴⁴ Warren Clark (1851-1860)
Enoch James (1860-1861)
Justus Nixon (1861-1863)
William Read (1863-1888)
Mary Read (1888-1900)
Albert Read (1900-1920's)
Addie Read (Dates unknown)
Albert, Jr. and Harriet Read, (?-1980)
Loren and Helen Read, Charles and Lois Smith, and Leslie and
Lois Read (1980-1989)
Russell and Marian LaLonde (1989-1995)
Russell, Jr. and Penny LaLonde (1995-present)

Ownership: Private

History of Property:

This parcel was part of a half section of land purchased by David Meech in 1833.¹⁴⁵ Briefly held by Henry Stansell and then Charles Place, the 80 acre parcel was purchased by Alonzo W. Olds in November of 1835.¹⁴⁶ On it he built a sawmill in 1836 powered by

¹⁴⁴ Assessors Tax Rolls, Green Oak Township, 1845-1900.

¹⁴⁵ Record of Deed, Liber 141 page 436. Livingston County Courthouse, Howell, Michigan.

¹⁴⁶ Record of Deed, Liber of Transcribed Records page 117, Livingston County Courthouse, Howell, Michigan.

water from the dam on the creek between Lime Kiln and Inchwagh (Nichwagh) Lakes¹⁴⁷. The sawmill was the second one constructed in Livingston County¹⁴⁸. A wooden tunnel carried water to the overshot wheel. By 1850 Alonzo Olds had built his Basilica form Greek Revival house where he lived with his wife, the former Janet Warden, sister of Robert Warden, and his three children.¹⁴⁹ Robert Warden and brother-in-law Kinsley Bingham were responsible for naming of Green Oak Township. By this time Alonzo Olds' farm had grown to 440 acres. In 1851 he sold it to Warren Clark, of Lenox, Madison County, New York¹⁵⁰. Olds moved to Section 11 where he lived in a large Gothic Revival house and again built up a large farm. He was on the Executive Committee to form the Livingston County Agricultural Society in 1853 and with Kinsley S. Bingham won a premium on their French Merino bucks (sheep) at the first fair that year in Brighton.¹⁵¹ Active in early local politics, Olds was Highway Commissioner and Assessor in 1835, Justice of the Peace in 1843 and 1847, and Township Supervisor in 1848.¹⁵²

Enoch James and Justus Nixon each held this property for one year, selling to William Read who had saved up enough money to purchase a farm while living near Ann Arbor. Originally from Kingswood, Buchinghamshire, England he lived on a tenant farm with his wife and eight children before moving to Green Oak Township.¹⁵³ William and Mary added three children to their large family¹⁵⁴ while enlarging their land holdings to over 200 acres¹⁵⁵. Mary lived on the farm after her husband's death in 1888 until upon her death in 1900 son Albert purchased it.¹⁵⁶ The farm grew to 280 acres by 1920 under Albert's ownership.¹⁵⁷ The 1888 Assessors Tax Rolls list the William Read Estate, with Albert Read as Executor paying the taxes through the time of his own purchase. A 1930's Plat Map indicates Addie Read owning the property, then the next Plat in 1954 shows Albert Read, Jr. and Harriet there.¹⁵⁸

¹⁴⁷ Donna Taylor, ed., Yesteryears of Green Oak, 1830-1930 (Brighton: Green Oak Township Historical Society, 1981), p. 20.

¹⁴⁸ Franklin Ellis, History of Livingston County (Philadelphia: Everts and Abbott, 1880), p. 324.

¹⁴⁹ Census Records, 1850.

¹⁵⁰ Charboneau, Milton, Land Owners and Early Settlers of Livingston County, Michigan, 1828-1870's, (compiled in 1996 or 1997, publisher unknown), p. 147.

¹⁵¹ Ellis, p. 126.

¹⁵² Taylor, pp. 209-214.

¹⁵³ Pauline Sterling, "Aristocrat is 123 Years Old and Charming," Detroit Free Press, August 28, 1966.

¹⁵⁴ Taylor, p. 51.

¹⁵⁵ Livingston County Historical Society, Combined Atlas of Livingston County, Michigan 1875, 1895, 1915. (Reprint of Atlas of Livingston County, Michigan, New York: F. W. Beers and Company, 1875; Standard Atlas of Livingston County, Michigan, Chicago: Geo. A. Ogle and Company, 1895; and Standard Atlas of Livingston County, Michigan, Chicago: Geo. A. Ogle and Company, 1915).

¹⁵⁶ Taylor, p. 51.

¹⁵⁷ W. W. Hixson & Co., Plat Book of Livingston County, Michigan, Rockford, Illinois: W. W. Hixson & Co., 1920.

¹⁵⁸ W. W. Hixson & Co., Plat Book of Livingston County, Michigan, Rockford, Illinois: W. W. Hixson & Co., 193- and Rockford Map Publications, Inc., Farm Plat Book and Business Guide, Rockford, Illinois: Rockford Map Publications, Inc., 1954.

Harriet Read, wife of the last Read to own the property reflected on the history of the farm in a book.¹⁵⁹ She writes about the animals once prevalent such as cattle, plow horses, sheep, chickens and pigs and describes aspects of the landscape including four silos, a stream, and a swamp with blueberries. Also a part of that landscape were fields of grain, potatoes and a roadside stand selling fruit from the orchard, berries, corn, vegetables, broilers, eggs, milk and cream. A newspaper article in 1966 provides information about the farm under Albert and Harriet's proprietorship.¹⁶⁰ Still a farm of 240 acres, but resources missing include the fence that once enclosed the front yard, a bucket well, dinner bell and three step horse block used for entering carriages. A narrow lane passing through stands of virgin timber and fields of grain led to four small lakes. Lime Kiln and Sandy Bottom Lakes were used by friends and neighbors for boating, serviced by a small boat livery Mrs. Read operated to earn extra money. Also mentioned in the article is a windmill and old barn, both no longer extant. William Read erected the windmill in 1884.¹⁶¹ Still working a dairy herd, Albert and Harriet Read no longer raised chickens, hogs or lambs. Lois Smith, daughter of Albert and Harriet, and raised on the farm, has fond memories playing with her brothers in the barns.¹⁶² She recalls three barns: a small horse barn to the left of the corn crib, a large bank barn with attached tool shed referred to as the "hay barn" with a stone basement where the sheep were kept, and a large dairy barn with a silo. Other outbuildings she remembers were the outhouse and a long chicken coop. The size of the farm remained about the same until about 1981 when it was reduced to about 46 acres.¹⁶³ When Russell and Marian LaLonde purchased the house in 1989, only about one acre was included and the Plat Map for 1991 indicates the rest of the land had been sold off. In 1995 they sold the house to their son and daughter-in-law, Russell, Jr. and Penny LaLonde.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Areas of Significant: Settlement and Architecture

Period of Significance: 1847 or 1849-1939; date of construction until a fire in 1939.

Significant Persons: Alonzo W. Olds

Statement of Significance:

Alonzo W. Olds was among the early settlers in Green Oak Township arriving in 1833. That year he built a sawmill, the second in the county, that made wood locally available as the area was developing.¹⁶⁴ Politically active in local politics he contributed to the early development of the township.

¹⁵⁹ Harriet Read, *From My Pen*, South Lyon, Michigan: Homestead Publishers, 1986.

¹⁶⁰ Sterling.

¹⁶¹ "Local Notes," *South Lyon Picket*, November 19, 1884, Vol. 2, p. 4, col. 4.

¹⁶² Interview with Lois Smith, great-granddaughter of William Read, 13610 Cantaberry, South Lyon, Michigan, by telephone, May 13, 1999.

¹⁶³ Rockford Map Publications, Inc., 1961, 1965, 1968, 1971, 1975, 1978, 1980, 1982, 1987, 1991, and 1996.

¹⁶⁴ Ellis, Franklin, p. 324.

The Greek Revival Olds-Read House was chosen as one of only two in Livingston County documented in the Historic American Building Survey in the 1930's. Its basilica form with Ionic columns is more formal than that of the typical farm house. In 1972 it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The proportions of the central block of the house and the wings are unusual. The narrowness of the two story central section and wings in relation to the height gives the house a very vertical look. Most basilica form or "Hen-and-chicks" houses have a more horizontal look, resembling a hen hovering over her chicks.

There is one building and one structure on this property, both are original; contributing, 1(50%), non-contributing, 1(50%). With the unusual design and architectural details on the house, its high level of integrity, early construction date and association with an earlier settler, this property meets ~~the-meets~~ the minimum evaluation standards for Architecture and Settlement.

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Part of the Northwest ¼ of Section 26, Town 1 North, Range 6 East. Beginning at a point on the North-South ¼ line of the Section; thence South 00 degrees 05 minutes 30 seconds West, 385.22 feet from the North ¼ corner of Section; thence South 0 degrees 05 minutes 30 seconds West, 167.20 feet; thence North 89 degrees 07 minutes West 275.54 feet; thence North 0 degrees 16 minutes 09 seconds East, 163.87 feet; thence South 89 degrees 48 minutes 30 seconds East, 275 feet to the point of beginning.

REFERENCES:

Assessors Rolls, Green Oak Township, 1845-1900, Archives, Michigan Historical Center, Lansing, Michigan.

Charboneau, Milton. Land Owners and Settlers of Livingston Co., Michigan, 1828-1870's. Compilation, 1996 or 1997.

Ellis, Catherine. "National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form", Alonzo W. Olds House. May 27, 1971.

Ellis, Franklin. History of Livingston County, Michigan. Philadelphia: Everts and Abbott, 1880.

Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Alonzo Olds House, 1936, Library of Congress.

Hixson, W.W. & Co. Plat Book of Livingston County, Michigan. Rockford, Illinois: W.W. Hixson & Co., 1920 and 193-.

Livingston County Historical Society. Combined Atlas of Livingston County, Michigan 1875, 1895, 1915. Reprint of Atlas of Livingston County, Michigan (New York: F. W. Beers and Company, 1875), Standard Atlas of Livingston County, Michigan (Chicago: Geo. A. Ogle and Company, 1895), and Standard Atlas of Livingston County, Michigan (Chicago: Geo. A. Ogle and Company, 1915).

LaLonde, Penny, 10084 Rushton Road, South Lyon, Michigan 48178. Interview by Jan Enns, September 19, 1998 and April 8, 1999.

“Local Notes.” South Lyon Picket, November 19, 1884, Vol. 2, p. 4, col. 4.

Lorch, Emil. “Notes for History of Michigan Architecture, Greek Revival”, Emil Lorch Collection, Box 12, Folder 1, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

Read, Harriet. From My Pen. South Lyon, Michigan: Homestead Publishers, 1986.

Record of Deed, Liber 141 page 436.

Record of Deed, Liber of Transcribed Records page 117.

Rockford Map Publications, Inc. Plat Maps, Livingston County, Michigan : Rockford, Illinois: Rockford Map Publications, Inc., 1954, 1961, 1965, 1968, 1971, 1975, 1978, 1980, 1982, 1987, 1991, and 1996.

Smith, Lois, Great-granddaughter of William Read, 13610 Cantaberry, South Lyon, Michigan, Interview by telephone, May 13, 1999.

Sterling, Pauline. “Aristocrat is 123 Years Old and Charming.” Detroit Free Press. August, 28, 1966, “Green Oak Township Homes and Buildings” Notebook, Green Oak Township Historical Society Museum, 6440 Kensington, Brighton, MI 48116.

Taylor, Donna, ed. Yesteryears of Green Oak, 1830-1930. Brighton, Michigan: Green Oak Township Historical Society, 1981.

United States Census Records for Livingston County, Michigan, 1850. Transcribed by Kernie L. King, Livingston County Genealogical Society, Howell, Michigan.

INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEY ENTRY FORM
INDIVIDUAL RESOURCE
Olds-Read District

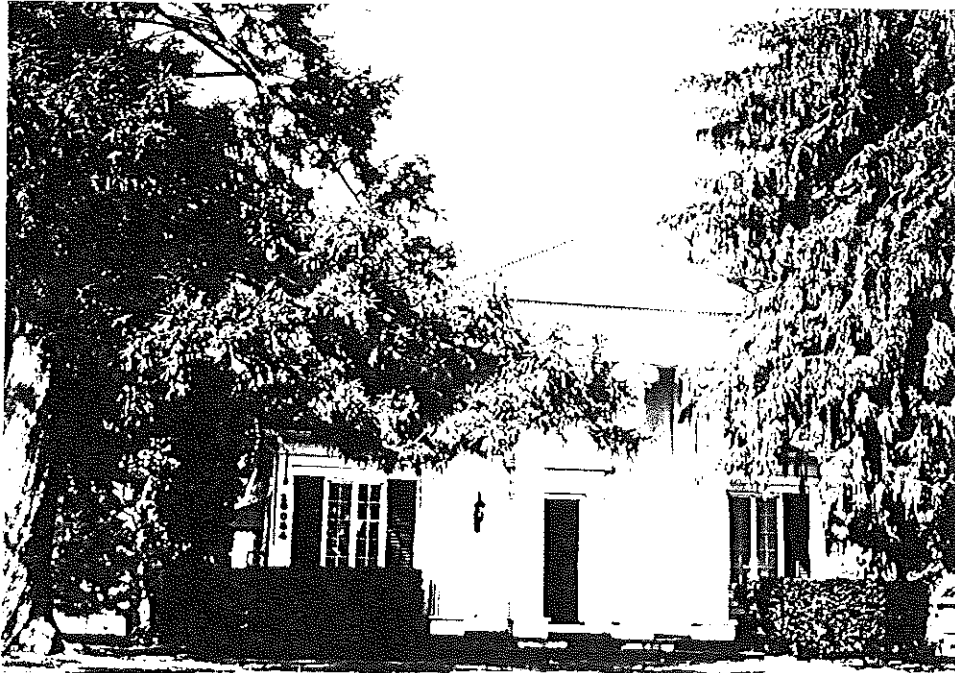
HISTORIC NAME: Alonzo W. Olds House
COMMON NAMES: Olds-Read House
ADDRESS: 10084 Rushton Road, South Lyon, Michigan 48178

PHOTO:

Roll: 1 and 2 **Neg:** 13 and 0, respectively

View: East elevation facing west: South and west elevations, facing northeast

Credit: Jan Enns, 4/8/99



Roll 1, Neg. 13-East elevation, facing west

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

Description: This two story Greek Revival-style basilica form house with two single story half-hip roof wings, referred to locally as a "Hen and Chicks" house, has a gable roof wing extending to the rear. The main block and side wings are deeper than their width, forming a rectangular footprint. Four fluted Ionic columns support the two-story tetra-style portico.

PHOTO: Alonzo W. Olds House



Roll 2, Neg. 0- South and west elevations, facing northeast

Materials: *Foundation*-stone *Walls*-wood (clapboard) *Roof*-asphalt
Other:

HISTORY:

Architect/Builder: Alonzo W. Olds, Builder.¹⁶⁵

Date of Construction: 1847 or 1849

History:

The Olds-Read House with oak timber frame and field stone foundation was built in either 1847 or 1849. Two sources record the date as 1847¹⁶⁶ and the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) states "between 1848 and 1849"¹⁶⁷. The property values in the Assessors Tax records from 1845 to 1850 do not reflect an increase to indicate when a house might have been added to the property. The wide flush board front elevation and clapboard on remaining elevations is of white pine.¹⁶⁸ The parapets on the one-story wings were removed in the 1920's.¹⁶⁹ Square plinths replace the original bases of the fluted portico columns.

The HABS drawings from 1936 and a detailed description of changes after 1982¹⁷⁰ trace changes made to the property during the 20th century. Elevation drawings show a front gable wing extending behind the house, approximately the width of the main two-story block of the house. All windows are six-over-six double hung sashes and the roof is covered with wood shingles. The rear wing with stone foundation had an off center chimney at the ridge and a large bell. Its first room was a kitchen, a room behind that called the back kitchen and then the wood shed or storage room with a small door half way up the wall to load the wood. Probably used to feed the men working on the farm, the back kitchen had a pump, galvanized sink and an old wood stove.¹⁷¹ In the ell formed on the south side of the house and rear wing was an entry into the basement. A shed roof in the north ell extends along the wing and also had a pump. The south wing of the house had three windows, a doorway and a false window. Off the north wing were added a sun porch to the front and bathroom to the rear with a window between. A large living room, dining room, two bedrooms and pantry made up the interior space of the house. No windows are indicated on the second floor on the side elevations of the house. Each wing has a window in its front and rear elevations and the addition has a small gable window.

¹⁶⁵ Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Alonzo Olds House, 1936, Library of Congress.

¹⁶⁶ "The Read Home", author unknown, Green Oak Township Homes and Buildings Notebook, Green Oak Township Historical Society Museum, 6440 Kensington Road, Brighton, Michigan and Donna Taylor, ed., Yesteryears of Green Oak, 1830-1930 (Brighton: Green Oak Township Historical Society, 1981), p. 69.

¹⁶⁷ HABS.

¹⁶⁸ HABS.

¹⁶⁹ Catherine Ellis, "National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form", Alonzo W. Olds House. May 27, 1971.

¹⁷⁰ "The Read Home".

¹⁷¹ "The Read Home".

A 1939 fire in the roof of the front of the second floor of the house brought the first documented changes.¹⁷² Two small windows were added to provide extra light into the hallway. A wall was removed making two large bedrooms, the rear one was paneled. Hardwood floors were laid in the upstairs rooms and white ash from trees on the farm was used to cover the old stairs. Extensive interior work on the first floor was undertaken in 1951. Casement windows replaced the original small double hung ones and the 10 foot ceilings were lowered to eight feet. Windows, also casement, were added to the second floor. Additional interior changes included opening the enclosed stairway and removing the wall between a bedroom and living room to make one large room. Between 1958 and 1960, changes were made to the dining room-kitchen area. Around this time the wood shed was removed and a garage was added to the rear wing.

The house looks much as it did in an early photo showing the front elevation. Although the windows have been changed, the size of the openings has not and with the shutters and other architectural details maintains its historic appearance. A Greek Revival entablature and pilasters surround the single panel front door with its original hardware. The walk once leading to it from the street has been removed. A brick chimney is tucked into the ell formed by the rear wing and house on the north side. At some point the sun porch off the north wing was removed and a cinder block foundation replaced the stone one on the rear wing. A shallow side addition has been made to the north side at the end of the rear wing. Penny and Russell LaLonde, current owners have made some additional changes to the interior.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Areas of Significant: Architecture and Settlement

Period of Significance: 1847 or 1849-1939, date of construction until a fire in 1939.

Statement of Significance:

One of two basilica form Greek Revival houses in Green Oak Township, the Olds-Read house is unusual due to its tall, narrow proportions. Architectural elements not often found in rural farmhouses include the use of flush board on the front elevation and round fluted columns. In his writings on the history of Greek Revival architecture in Michigan, Emil Lorch, a former Dean of the School of Architecture at the University of Michigan, finds that most columns are square since the fluted ones were too expensive.¹⁷³ These as well as

¹⁷² "The Read Home".

¹⁷³ Emil Lorch, "Notes for History of Michigan Architecture, Greek Revival", Emil Lorch Collection, Box 12, Folder 1, Emil Lorch Photo Collection

other details such as the dentils and Ionic capitals reflect the work of a skilled craftsman. Lorch specifically comments on the Alonzo Olds house and its architectural details such as the “formal composition of the central tetra style Ionic portico” and the “fluted Ionic columns that have anta responds at each end of the flush sided portico wall”.¹⁷⁴ He goes on to remark on the “fine Ionic Portico and good entrance design”.¹⁷⁵ This house, its character defining details intact, was built by one of the early settlers who became a successful farmer and opened the first sawmill. Through his involvement in local politics he contributed to the development of the community.

¹⁷⁴ Emil Lorch, “Livingston County, Rushton”, Emil Lorch Photo Collection, Box 3, Folder 76, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

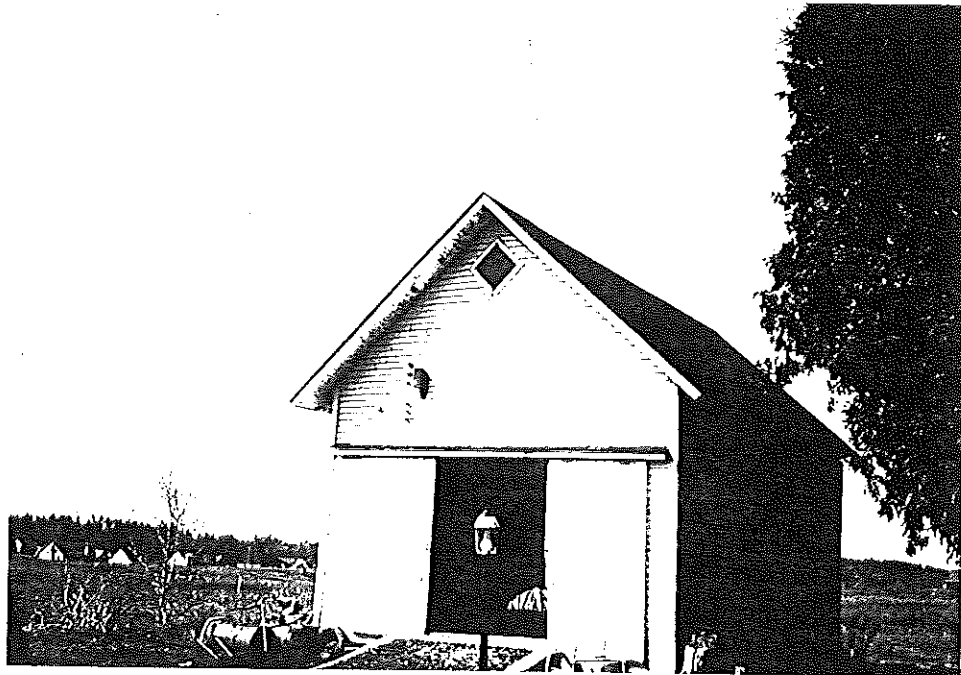
¹⁷⁵ Emil Lorch “Livingston County”, Emil Lorch Photo Collection, Box 18, Folder 26, Emil Lorch Photo Collection.

INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEY ENTRY FORM
INDIVIDUAL RESOURCE
Olds-Read District

HISTORIC NAME: Corncrib
COMMON NAMES: Corncrib
ADDRESS: 10084 Rushton Road, South Lyon, Michigan 48178

PHOTO:

Roll: 1 **Neg:** 15
View: East and north elevations, facing southwest.
Credit: Jan Enns, 4/9/99



ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

Description: Vernacular, front gable structure with a loft accessible by interior stairway. Open center portion with each side enclosed, with slats on the interior of the sides. There is a diamond shaped opening in the front gable, double sliding doors in the front and rear and two square hatches with doors on each side elevation.

Materials: *Foundation*-concrete *Walls*-wood (clapboard) *Roof*-asphalt

Other:

HISTORY:

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Date of Construction: Early 20th century.

History:

The drive-thru corncrib was first used in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and is common in the Midwest.¹⁷⁶ This one has a loft entered by a stairway on the interior of the south side. The sides of the crib for the corn have slats that can be removed for access. A concrete and grass ramp leads into the front of the out building.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Areas of Significance: None

Period of Significance: NA

Statement of Significance:

This corn crib is not significant. Due to the loss of other farm buildings it has lost its agricultural context.

¹⁷⁶ Allen G. Noble, Wood, Brick and Stone: The North American Settlement Landscape (Amherst, Massachusetts: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), 107.

