"A TASTY, ROOMY, AND COMFORTABLE TENANT HOUSE": NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES ASSESSMENT OF THE SIBLEY TENANT FARMSTEAD SITE, FORD COUNTY, ILLINOIS

[ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY SHORT REPORT]

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Prepared for
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2011

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY SHORT REPORT
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
Old State Capitol, Springfield, Illinois

Reviewer:_____
Date:_____
_____Accepted
_____Rejected

Locational Information and Survey Conditions

County: Ford **Quadrangle**: Sibley, Illinois 1996

Nearest Community: Sibley, Ford County, Illinois

Project Type/Title: National Register of Historic Places assessment of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site (11FO64)

Responsible Federal/State Agencies: Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

Legal Location:

NE1/4, NE1/4, SE1/4,
Section 3
Township 24 North, Range 7 East,
Third Principle Meridian,
Ford County
Illinois

UTM: 4,491,167m North
382,650m East

Project Description: The project consisted of a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) assessment of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site (11FO64) which is located within the Sibley Habitat Area (Figures 1-2, 56-57). The Sibley Habitat Area is a 635-acre parcel of land located in Sullivant Township, rural Ford County, approximately 1½ miles south of present-day Sibley, Illinois. This parcel of ground is being developed as grassland habitat by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and was "purchased from revenue generated through he sale of the Illinois Pheasant Stamp Fund, Open Land Trust, and develop[ed] with the cooperation of the Ford County Pioneer Chapter of Pheasants Forever." The grassland habitat, which furnishes hunting opportunities for ring-neck pheasant, rabbit, and quail, was the first habitat initiative in Illinois known as the Habitat Wheel concept, which was launched in 2005. This habitat concept consisted of a large central landholding (or "hub") for habitat development with secondary smaller habitat areas (or "spokes") developed by regional conservation programs radiating out from this core area (http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/hunter_fact_sheet/r3hfs/sbl.htm). The Sibley area has been the focus of habitat studies for several decades (cf. Robertson 1958; Warner 1981).

Located on this 635-acre parcel of land is an existing, albeit abandoned, nineteenth century farmstead identified as the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site. Except for the occasional machine shed, the tenant farmstead buildings presently sit vacant, and the deteriorating buildings pose a long-term maintenance and safety problem for the IDNR. Existing plans call for the eventual demolition of these building, and in compliance with the Illinois State Agency Historic Resource Preservation Act, the IDNR is seeking a determination of NRHP eligibility of this site and its associated historic structures. In April 2011, the IDNR contracted with Fever River Research, Inc. (Springfield, Illinois) to complete this determination of eligibility. As such, IDNR requested that a NRHP assessment be conducted to help direct its future management of the property. The field investigation involved an architectural assessment of the residence and agricultural outbuildings at the farmstead, as well as the development of an historical context for the farmstead.

Topography: The Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site is located on the west side of Illinois Route 47 on a prominent upland ridge approximately 1½ miles south of Sibley, Illinois (Figures 1-2). The habitat project area is bordered on the north by Road 1200 North, and on the south by road 1100 North. The farmstead in located at the very head of the Mackinaw River, and the high ground associated with the project area represents the watershed divide separating streams flowing towards the Upper Illinois, Lower Illinois, Mississippi, and Wabash river valleys. The project area is located within the Grand Prairie Section (a) of the Grand Prairie Division (4) of the natural divisions of Illinois (Schwegman 1973). At the time of initial historic-era settlement, the vast majority of the project area was in wet prairie vegetation (Figure 5).

Soils: Varna—Elliot—Askum soil association

Drainage: Mackinaw River, Illinois River, Mississippi River.

Land Use/Ground Cover: Grass, gravel, concrete

Survey Limitations: The field investigations at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site primarily were concerned with the recordation of the standing structures, as well as the documentation of landscape and surface features (walks, wells, cisterns, etc.) associated with these buildings. No subsurface testing was conducted, nor were any artifacts collected from the ground surface.

Archaeological and Historical Information

Historical Context:

Early Development of Ford County and Sullivant Township

The Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site is located within Section 3, Sullivant Township, Ford County, Illinois. Ford County, located in northeastern Illinois, is the youngest county in the state. Established in February 1859 as the 102nd county in Illinois, it was partitioned from nearby Vermilion County, and named in honor of Thomas Ford (eighth Governor of Illinois). The county is an irregularly shaped area with a distinctive

narrow extension on the north end known as "the Panhandle." The county seat of Ford County is Paxton (Figures 3-4).

Historic-era settlement in Ford County was slow to develop due to the predominately prairie lands lying within the area, much of which was poorly drained. Nonetheless, intermittent settlement occurred around the occasional hardwood timber groves located adjacent to the various drainages. The earliest settlers within this county are documented to have been the Joshua and Robert Trickel families, which immigrated from Ohio in 1836 and settled at what was to become known as Trickel Grove. A primitive, overland "road" dating from early statehood days (and potentially earlier) ran through Ford County and connected the Upper Illinois River Valley at Ottawa, with Danville (and the adjacent Lower Wabash River Valley). This route, which was known as the Ottawa Travel Road traveled in a northwesterly direction from Danville following the divide between the various drainages, and often passing from grove to grove.[1]

Sullivant Township, located in the northwest corner of Ford County near the base of the Panhandle and abutting both McLean County to the west and Livingston County to the north, is an irregularly shaped political entity that is comprised of portions of four Congressional Townships (Township 24 North, Range 7 East; Township 24 North, Range 8 East; Township 25 North, Range 7 East; Township 25 North, Range 8 East). The township measures six miles (or sections) north/south by 9 miles (or sections) east/west—for a total of 54 sections (in contrast to Congressional Townships which measure six miles square and consist of 36 sections total). Sullivant Township, named in honor of Michael Sullivant, was organized in September 1867, having been split from nearby Dix Township to the south. As noted by Gardner (1908:194), the "land [of Sullivant Township] is the highest in the state between Lake Michigan and the Mississippi river…."

Gardner (1908) notes that "the history of this township can be nothing else but the history of a farm, for that is what it was. Most of the land in this township was entered or purchased by Michael L. Sullivant during 1854, who improved the land and operated it as an immense corn farm up to 1876, when he disposed of it to Mr. Hiram Sibley, of Rochester, New York. This was undoubtedly the largest corn farm in the world under one man's management. He was a leading man in the township, and lived in a beautiful grove called Burr Oaks, near the center of the township" (Figure 6).

Sullivant Township was greatly improved by construction of the Chicago and Paducah Railroad, which was constructed through the township in circa 1872-73. With the construction of the railroad, a siding was laid out by Sullivant within what is today the town of Sibley. The village of Sibley is the only village in Sullivant Township. Sibley had its beginnings during Sullivant's tenure of the Burr Oak Farm. Originally named Burr Oaks, this town was surveyed and laid out by John Lewis for Mr. Sullivant in

[1] Beers (1884:12) notes that this route traversed from Danville, to Sugar Grove, to Trickel Grove, to Ten Mile Grove, to Henderson Station, to Oliver's Grove, to Pontiac, and finally Ottawa. "This line of travel was the grate route for Westerly-bound emigrants, at least as far as Ten Mile Grove, where the lines diverged. A reliable citizen informs us that he has seen as many as forty emigrant wagons settled for the night in Sugar Grove. This was a favorite camping place, having an abundant supply of fuel and good water."

February 1877. One of the early buildings constructed during these early years of the community, by Mr. Sullivant, was "a large commodious grain elevator… erected by Mr. Sullivant" in the summer of 1874 (Gardner 1908:194). The community was expanded dramatically during Hiram Sibley's tenure at Burr Oaks Farm, at which time the community was renamed in his honor. Great improvements were made during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century years. Warner (1884) contains an excellent bird's eye view of the community that dates to 1884 and illustrates the recent expansion that the community underwent during the early year's of Hiram Sibley's ownership (Figures 24-27). Figures 7-40 accompany the following historical context.

The extensive Sullivant landholdings (as well as later Sibley Farm) also extended north across the Ford-Livingston County line into nearby Fayette Township (Livingston County). The earliest documented settlement in that township occurred in June 1863 (Le Baron 1878:562). The small railroad community of Strawn was established on the line of the Chicago and Paducah Railroad, immediately to the north of the Sibley landholdings, about ten miles south of Fairbury. Strawn was laid out in June 1873 for David Strawn—another substantial farmer and/or cattleman in the region. Le Baron (1878:569) noted that "In order to induce settlers to locate in the village, and in building it up, Mr. Strawn adopted the plan of giving every alternate lot to such as would erect houses, under certain specifications, by the 1st of September following the laying-out. The houses might be as large as the proprietors chose to build, but must not fall below certain dimensions. No shanties, either as business or dwelling houses, were to be erected." Le Baron (1878:807) further noted that David Strawn "was possessed of large means, and in an early day in this section of country, bought a large tract of land from speculators, in what is now Fayette and Germantown Tps.; at one time he owned in one tract 4,370 acres; through the influence and energy of his father, mainly, the C. & P. R. R. was built." David's son, Walther Strawn also was a farmer and stock dealer who came to Livingston County in 1873 to assist his father in superintending his father's work on the railroad (grading sixty miles of the right-of-way), and "engaged in opening up the farm". In 1878, after only two years of improvements, Strawn's farm was substantial. The county history notes that he David Strawn "owns 670 acres, valued at $50 per acre. During the season he handles from 200 to 300 head of cattle and a large amount of hogs; he superintends largely his father's vast estate, lying adjacent to his own home." The elder Strawn was a devote abolitionist who actually traveled to Kansas to fight for John Brown during the 1850s (Le Baron 1878).

History of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead

The Sibley Tenant Farmstead is located on the NE1/4, NE1/4, SE1/4, Section 3, Sullivant Township, Ford County, Illinois. The United States General Land Office (USGLO) maps illustrate this section of land—as well as all others in this Congressional Township, as being covered with prairie vegetation, and show no cultural features on it, or anywhere else in the township. Many small lakes or ponds dot the landscape indicating the presence of "wet" prairies. Similar landscape noted in T25N R8W—except presence of relatively large lake adjacent to small grove of trees along border between Sections 35 and 36. This eventually became known as Burr Oak Grove—and the location of the Sullivant farmstead.

This section of land, and much of the surrounding lands within this Congressional Township remained in the public domain until the early 1850s when Michael L. Sullivant purchased it from the United States government. Sullivant purchased Section 3 (Township 27 North, Range 7 East) from the U. S. Government on September 28, 1853 for the price of $1.25/acre. Sullivant's first purchases in Ford County occurred in early August 1853, and were followed by a flurry of purchases—totaling thousands of acres of land—in September 1853. Many of these early purchases were noted as "warrants"—suggesting that he was buying up military bounty lands that had originally been acquired by individuals as bounty land for service (probably in the relatively recent Mexican-American War). Sullivant purchased much of this land for what was then the standard purchase price of $1.25 per acre. Several subsequent purchases were made in 1854, followed by limited purchases in 1855 through 1858. It appears that the economic crash known as the Panic of 1857 had a dramatic impact on Sullivant's land purchases. Sullivant experiences a hiatus in land purchases after that date, and does not appear to have purchased any land locally throughout the 1860s. Sullivant appears to have resumed his land purchases in 1870 and 1871, but may again have been affected by the Panic of 1873. During these years, Sullivant also made major land purchases in Livingston, Champaign, and Vermilion Counties, with minor purchases in Kankakee and Macon Counties. A similar purchasing pattern was noted in nearby Champaign County, albeit starting slightly earlier in May and June of 1853 (Illinois State Archives). Champaign County was the location of Sullivant's first Illinois farmstead, which he referred to as his Broadlands farm.

According to one source, a Mr. Ludlow (of Ludlow township, Champaign County) may have been the "land agent" working with Sullivant to purchase his Illinois landholdings. In recounting his biography in 1871, this source noted that

> J. D. Ludlow, from whom the township and town derive their present name, was born in the year 1822, near Cincinnati, Ohio, on a farm, and came to Illinois as agent of Michael L. Sullivant, in 1853. He examined lands, surveyed, and purchased for Mr. Sullivant most of the great farm in the south-east corner of Champaign county, known as Broadlands. He also purchased at the Danville land office, for Mr. Sullivant, most of the tract of 40,000 acres, now being improved in Ford and Livingston counties by Mr. Sullivant (Lothrop 1871).

<u>The Sullivant Ownership</u>

Michael Lucas Sullivant was born August 6, 1807 in Franklinton, Ohio—the second son of Lucas and Sarah Starling Sullivant. From an affluent family, Michael was educated at Ohio University (Athens, Ohio) and Center College (Danville, Kentucky). An Ohio county history noted that

> Very early in life, Michael manifested a very decided predilection for rural affairs, and after leaving college, instead of studying a profession he determined to marry, and deliberately chose farming for his life-long

vocation.[2] The fine body of land which he inherited in the immediate vicinity of Columbus, afforded an opportunity for him to carry out his purpose on a then unusually large scale.

He engaged in farming at a time when there was but a limited price, as well as a limited demand and a circumscribed market for all kinds of farming products, and he at once saw that the only remunerative method was to consume the corn, hay, and grass, through the medium of stock. He consequently became a grazier [sic] and stock-feeder, "stall-feeding," as it was termed, many hundred fat cattle during the fall and winter months. This was, however, a laborious, and often uncertain, business; for cattle, when ready for market, must be driven over the mountains to Baltimore, Philadelphia, or New York, and the fluctuations in price from the time of the starting until the journey was ended was often of a most vexatious kind, making all the difference between a handsome profit and an *unhandsome* loss. These cattle had generally been grazed in the "Barrens," or Sandusky plains, in Ohio, or even on the praries [sic] of Indiana and Illinois, where they were picked up in lots by the enterprising feeders in Ohio, principally located in the Scioto valley (Williams Brothers 1880:580-581).[3]

Mr. Sullivant remained in his native State, occupying his ample inheritance, until about the year 1854, always showing himself independent and progressive, a man of large views, and taking the lead in many innovations upon fossilized ideas. He was one of the originators of the Ohio Stock Importing Company, and one of the organizers of the Ohio State Board of Agriculture, of which he was twice the president. He introduced new methods and machinery on his farm here, being the first to buy and put in operation a power threshing machine in Franklin county; also a reaper and a mower, and was always interested in everything that concerned agriculture (William Brothers 1880:580-81). .

Seeking a wider field of operations—if not marked out by destiny to inaugurate a stupendous experiment—he disposed of his large estate in Ohio, and, removing to Illinois, where he had secured a vast domain at government prices, he gave his attention to establishing the great farm of "Broadlands," which, in connection with that of "Bur [sic] Oaks," has given him fame wherever there is an English speaking people.

“One of the most striking traits in the character of Mr. Sullivant," says one who knew him well, "was the tenacity of purpose with which he pursued

[2] An 1877 article in *The Cultivator and Country Gentleman* states that “The design of his parents to establish him in a profession was frustrated by an unalterable wish of the son to render famous the avocation that is indispensable to the world, and the true producer of wealth. He was a farmer of some thousands of acres near Columbus, O., and, I think, on the famous Scioto bottoms, for some years previous to 1861, and has been an importer of blooded neat stock.”

[3] Much of this was copied verbatim and re-published in Beers (1884:34).

> his scheme, when once it was deliberately planned" (Williams Brothers 1880:580-581).[4]

As note above, by the early 1850s, Sullivant had begun considering the purchase of farmlands in central Illinois, and he began purchasing large sections of land in Illinois beginning in the spring of 1853, and continuing at a voracious pace through 1854.

> In October, 1852, Mr. Sullivant first visited Illinois, and at once appreciating the value of its rich prairie lands, purchased within a period of three or four years, about 80,000 acres, located principally in what are now the counties of Champaign, Ford, and Livingston. In 1855, he began his first improvement in Illinois at Broadlands, Champaign County, and to this place removed his family from Columbus, Ohio, in April 1861 (Beers 1884:34).

Although it is unclear as to when he sold his Ohio property, the county history notes that Mr. Sullivant met "with reverses," and soon sold his Ohio farm (in circa 1861) and moved to his farm in southeast Champaign County known as Broadlands. Sullivant continued to develop his Champaign County farm through the middle 1860s—but now as an owner-occupant. A small entry in the *Cultivator and Country Gentleman* for June 21, 1866 noted that "Mr. Sullivant, the farmer of 7,000 acres in Champaign Co., Ill., has planted 1,100 acres of corn this year and other crops in proportion."

Apparently, financial problems (and/or "reverses") continued to plaque Sullivant, as he was forced to sell his farm at Broadlands (containing 23,000 acres of land and improvements) in 1866,[5] A newspaper article published in the October 12th issue of the *New York Times* (reprinted from an earlier issue of the *Pittsburgh Commercial*) for that year (1866), and entitled "Sale of an Extensive Farm in Illinois.," documented Sullivant's sale of Broadlands. This article stated

> A Few days since MICHAEL L. SULLIVANT, Esq., sold his home farm of "Broadlands," in Champaign County, Ill., containing 22,000 acres, to R. A. ALEXANDER, of Kentucky, for $17 per acre—the sum total for the land amounting to $374,000. In addition to this, Mr. Alexander purchased all the stock, grain, hay and farming utensils belonging to the farm, thus making the whole purchase reach nearly or quite half a million of dollars, for all of which the cash was paid down. Mr. ALEXANDER intends to make "Broadlands" a stock farm, from which he proposes to ship to

[4] Jones (1983) contains multiple references to Michael Sullivant in his *History of Agriculture in Ohio to 1880.*

[5] The *Cultivator and Country Gentleman* (March 1, 1877) appears to incorrectly note that Sullivant sold his Broadlands farm in 1868. According to this source—which seems to be incorrect—Sullivant sold Broadlands to John Alexander (of Morgan County), "a famous stock-grower and dealer, for a quarter of a million dollars… and began transaction on his present farm at Burr Oaks, planting 1,000 acres in corn the first year." As Bogue (1959) discusses in detail, Sullivant was having major issues with paying his property taxes—as well as other taxes recently imposed during the Civil War years. During the mid-to-late 1860s, Sullivant lost several law suits initiated by the State of Illinois for payment of taxes—factors that clearly had an effect on Sullivant contributing to his sale of Broadlands.

> market some five hundred head of cattle per week. Mr. SULLIVANT proposes to move his household goods to his snug little farm of 45,000 acres in Iroquois County, Ill., where he will enlarge upon the extensive operations he has carried on in Champaign.

After his sale of Boradlands, Sullivant "retired to his larger estate of Burr Oaks in Ford County, containing 40,000 acres in the spring of 1867" (Beers 1884:34).

> After some preliminary improvements that year [1867], he began work in 1868 [at his Burr Oaks Farm], with 1,000 acres of corn. The year following 5,000 were planted, and the acreage was yearly increased until in 1871, he had under cultivation 18,000 acres of corn, besides extensive fields of oats and hay. At this time, much other work had been done—250 miles of Osage Orange hedge had been set out and cultivated, over 100 miles of ditching done, extensive farm buildings and shop erected, roads laid out and graded, a nursery of fruit and ornamental trees started, etc. Mr. Sullivant systematized a comprehensive plan for the management of his labor, and strict and elaborate accounts were kept of every expenditure, and showing each day's work, whether done by man or beast (Beers 1884:34).

Sullivant was no stranger to the press, and his large scale farming operations was the topic of many newspaper and magazine stories—on not only a local and state level, but even on a national and international level. We first see the press taking an interest in Sullivant's farming operations during the middle 1860s, while he is living at Broadlands (southeastern Champaign County). In August 1866, just prior to his move to Burr Oaks Farm in Ford County, a correspondent for the *Cincinnati Inquirer* wrote a story entitled "The Largest Farm in the World" which was carried by the *New York Times* (August 26, 1866). This correspondent wrote

> I observe a note in your last issue of an 8,000 acre farm in Bureau County, Ill., which will pass for a fair sized farm. But the farm which is, no doubt, the largest cultivated farm in the world, and, I believe, the best, is owned and cultivated by M. L. Sullevant [sic], Esq., formerly from the vicinity of Columbus, Ohio, now of Champaign County, Ill. He owns and presides over 70,000 acres of the best land on the hemisphere, 23,000 of which is under fence and in actual improvement and cultivation; the balance is used for herding.
>
> I will venture the opinion that there cannot be found five acres of unserviceable land on Mr. S.'s entire 70,000 acres. Their productiveness is unsurpassed. Almost all of Mr. S.'s farming is conducted by labor-saving machinery, so that it is estimated that throughout, one man will perform the average labor of four or five, as conducted on small farms. He drives his posts by horse power; breaks his ground by Comstock's "spades;" mows, rakes, loads, unloads and stacks his hay by horse power; cultivates his corn by improved machinery; ditches any low ground by machinery, so that all his laborers can ride and perform their tasks as easy

> as riding in a buggy. I had the pleasure of being present when he harvested a thousand acres of his wheat; this done with a ------'s "Headers"—about ten or twenty men and twenty horses cut and safely stacked away about 200 acres per day, and performed the work better than I ever saw it by the old modes. To give all the improved modes of farming employed by this king of agriculture, would require more space than you would like to spare. Notwithstanding all this labor-saving machinery, Mr. S. employs from one to two hundred laborers, some two hundred horses and mules, and a large herd of working oxen. Not having the exact date [data] before me, I will not venture to give the enormous returns, in bushels or tons, of the products of this great farm. Some estimate may be made from the magnitude of the farm, taken in connection with the fact that the quality of the soil is unequaled by the very best Sciota bottoms.

The *Cultivator and Country Gentleman* carried another article on April 9th, 1868, describing Sullivant's advertisements for contractors for breaking prairie soil at his Broadlands farm. This article stated

> **Prairie Breaking on a Large Scale**. Chicago, calls our attention to an advertisement which appears in the daily papers there, thinking it too good an illustration of Illinois farming to pass without notice. It reads thus: "*Wanted*—Contractors to break 4.000 acres prairie near Chatsworth, Ford county. Price $3 per acre. Houses, and lumber for stables furnished; no other extras. Address: M. L. Sullivant, Chatsworth, Livingston County, Ill.." At this rate, Mr Sullivant will get in quite a patch of corn from sod land alone, on his 40,000 acre farm!

A few years later (written on September 17, 1869; carried by the newspaper on October 2, 1869), a correspondent for the *New York Times* wrote a story under the heading "THE WEST" which was entitled "An Illinois Farm—How it is Worked, and the Profits." This correspondent was writing about Sullivant's Broadlands farm, which only recently—in 1866—had been purchased by John Alexander. The physical description of the farm is of interest (as it probably reflects Sullivant's improvements), as well as Alexander's organization and operation of the farm (which may or may not reflect Sullivant's management style). The correspondent wrote

> While at Jacksonville this week I made myself acquainted with some facts relating to one of our prairie farmers, who occupies a princely estate near that beautiful city, and also has a mammoth cattle farm of 26,500 acres in Champaign County. It costs him $4000,000, and is styled, with much appropriateness, "Broadlands." It is nearly seven miles from north to south, and six from east to west, and its cattle capacity for Summer pasturage, when fully grass-stocked, is estimated at 10,000 head. On the west side of the farm are two pastures one and a half miles by three miles, that contain nearly 3,000 acres each. To the east of these is a "patch" of corn half a mile wide and three miles long. ON the farm there are 5,000 acres in corn, which, it is calculated, with yield, at a low estimate, 250,000

> bushels. Of course such a farm as this is worked by the most approved machinery of all descriptions applicable to agricultural labor, much of which is made on the "place," as there is a blacksmith shop, as well as a harness and carpenter shop, in constant operation. The working stock consist of fifty yoke of oxen and fifty spans of horses and mules; and the working force of a superintendent, a general foreman, six assistant foremen, a book-keeper, a bake, a carpenter, a butcher, and about one hundred and fifty other operatives. The headquarters are in the centre of the farm, and there are six out-stations fully equipped. The average cost of boarding is thirty-five cents per day.
>
> The farm is divided by two roads, two miles a part, north and south, and one through the center east and west. These are lined with fifty-four miles of hedge, which was mostly set four years ago. Hedges have been, or are to be, set on every section line. Seventy-five miles were set in the Spring of 1868, and twenty-five last Spring. These hedges are to supersede the post and board fence, of which there are now eight miles. This has required about 50,000 posts, 640,000 feet of lumber, and eight kegs of nails.
>
> Mr. Alexander is the owner of this farm, and his operations are stated to be as nearly as practicable, every year as follows: He first purchases 4,000 head of Texas steers, which cost him $140,000; cost of handling, interest, &c., $47,000; making an aggregate of $187,000. His average sales are $70 per head, or $280,000, leaving him a profit of $93,000. The profits upon the grain and other crops of the farm bring the whole up to nearly $200,000, after paying all expenses, and including a rent or interest of $4 per acre on the land.
>
> It will thus be seen that large farming in Illinois pays. His neighbor, Mr. Sullivant, farms even more land, with profitable results.[6]

The magazine *Cultivator and Country Gentleman* carried an additional article entitled "Illinois Farming: Broadlands" on August 19, 1869 (page 133). Although John Alexander owned Broadlands at this date, this article does reflect the size and organization of the farm, which was laid out by Sullivant only a short time before.

> Rural, the able agricultural correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune*, contributes to that journal a full and interesting account of the well known Broadlands farm, of 26,500 acres in the southeast corner of Champaign County, originally the property of M. L. Sullivant, but purchased for about $400,000 in 1866 by JOHN T ALEXANDER, the present owner—a man who migrated from Ohio to Illinois in 1841, with little beside his own energy to back him, and whose present fortune has been made out of cattle and farming. Broadlands has been under the management of C. L. Eaton,

[6] This reference is to Mr. Alexander's neighbor Joseph Sullivant (Michael's son), who is managing an adjacent farm in Vermilion County, which is known as the Twin Grove Farm.

Mr. Alexander remaining on his former farm in Morgan County. We extract and condense as follows:

Mr. Eaton estimates the capacity of his farm when it is well stocked to the cultivated grasses, at ten thousand head for summer pasturage. It six miles from east to west, and nearly seven from north to south, occupying something over a township. On the west are two pastures, one and a half by three miles, of 2,880 acres each. One of these pastures is to be trench-plowed for corn in the spring of 1870, and the other in 1871. This will complete the breaking of the whole 20,500 acres. To the east of these pastures is a strip of corn half a mile wide. On the south side, Sections 33, 34, 35 and 36, are in corn, excepting 400 acres in winter wheat, 200 of oats, 100 of rye, and 120 to Hungarian grass. On the east side, Sections 13, 24 and 25, are also in corn. After deducting the small grains and wet spots, which could not be prevented this rainy season, there are not less than 5,000 acres in corn, which now gives promise of averaging not less than fifty bushels to the acre, or an aggregate of a quarter of a million of bushels from one farm, which, in addition, grazes four thousand fat cattle. In addition to this, several hundred acres were sown to corn and the sod turned over, while some was dropped into the furrow. This had made a very good stand and will be pastured in October. About one thousand bushels of seed corn have been used this spring.

The corn has been cultivated this season with the double-shovel plow up to the last time, which is to be done with a small turning plow. About half the corn is drilled with Brown's corn drill and the other half planted in hills, with the Union, Brown and Vandeveer planters, but none of it is check-rowed. The drill is preferred. Six hundred acres were replanted on account of the deep planting at the beginning. Shallow planting would have saved that expense and produced a better crop.

The breaking plows are mostly "sod plows," but the long mold board plow is preferred and will be used hereafter as the sod plow Is better adapted to "raw" than pastured prairie. The plows are mostly from the Peru factory of J. D. Brewster. The bill for plows of all descriptions, was in 1867, $1,500; 1868, $l,000; and 1869, $500. The rollers are made on the farm, of oak plank, and banded with iron. The harrows are also made on the farm, as a blacksmith and carpenter shop are in constant use. The harness is also made and repaired on the farm. Twenty-five wagons, six mowers, with dropper attachments for the grain, are made for grass seed, of which 1,000 bushels are to be saved this season. Hay-stackers, rakes, and one threshing machine make up the list of implements.

Fifty yoke of oxen and fifty span of horses and mules make up the teams.

The superintendent, a general foreman, six foremen, a book-keeper, a baker, blacksmith, carpenter, butcher, two tradesmen, seven cooks, and about one hundred and twenty men, make the operating department. The

> farm is divided into seven departments. The headquarters are in the centre, and the six stations are located at convenient points on the farm. From ten to twenty men are kept at each of these, together with the teams and tools required. One cook is stationed at each point, who draws dally supplies from headquarters, as is done in the army.
>
> The 1st of March 4,000 head of Texan steers were landed at Horner Station—by river to Cairo, and then by rail. Many of these steers are now good beef, and will all be sent to New York within the next three months, and their places supplied mainly by purchase of inferior fatted stock sent to the Chicago market. Mr. Alexander makes a regular purchase of five thousand head of fat stock weekly in Chicago, to ship to New York. The inferior stock will be sent to this farm for fall feeding on pasture and corn, and will all be closed out by the 1st of February, when a new supply of Texas cattle will take their place. Thus two sets of steers are fed annually on this farm—one exclusively on grass and one on grass and shock corn. About fifteen hundred tons of hay are fed to the teams and the few hundred head that cannot be sold and which go over to the next season. There are now on the farm about three hundred head of the culls of last season, the most of which are now good beef.
>
> There are now about five hundred head of hogs of all ages, besides one hundred shipped the day of my visit. A hundred acres of rye were grown for their summer feed. It is drawn in from the field, from the shocks, and thrown into the feed lots, of which there arc three. A small amount of corn and an occasional load of oats in the sheaf are added. The breed is a mixture of Berkshire and Chester White, the former predominating. The corn is mostly cut and put into shock and fed the fattening cattle in open field, and the hogs run among them, picking up all that is shelled or trampled into the soil. A wasteful way of feeding, and one that the management of this farm intends to dispense with as soon as possible.
>
> We may make room for a farther extract covering other points at a future time.

Clearly, the most flattering and, no doubt, rewarding and/or personally gratifying account describing Sullivant's Burr Oaks Farm was a well-illustrated story carried by *Harpers Weekly* on September 23rd, 1871 and entitled "Farming In The Great West" (Figures 8-18).[7]

> People who have never visited the great West, and in whose eyes a farm of two or three hundred acres is large, have very little conception of the magnificent scale on which farming operations are carried on in the regions of the prairie country. For their enlightenment we give in this number of the *Weekly* a series of sketches, some of which will be found on

[7] This article was carried by many other newspapers and/or magazines worldwide, including the *Sydney Morning Herald* (December 4, 1871) in Australia.

pages 900 and 901, of Burr Oak, the great farm of Illinois, and probably without a rival in the world. Located in Ford and Livingston counties, it lies, in a direct line to St. Louis, a distance of 100 miles from Chicago.

Twenty years since, its owner, M. L. Sullivant, entered this and other lands from government at an average price of $1.25 per acre. His determination seemed to be to keep himself "land poor," as the Western phrase is, until the disposal of surplus acres at a great and natural profit should give him the necessary funds to operate successfully a large farm.

In 1868, just previous to his location on Burr Oak, Mr. Sullivant visited his native place, in the vicinity of Columbus, Ohio. In response to inquiry after his welfare and prospects he said that he had run down from nearly 100,000 to 40,000, mentioning in a joking way, as one of his losses, the Broadlands farm of 20,000 acres, which he had sold to Mr. Alexander for a quarter of a million dollars. (Broadlands is today valued at more than $600,000.) In 1868 Mr. Sullivant commenced work on Burr Oak with 1,000 acres of corn. In the following year 5,000 were put in; in 1870, 9,000 acres. At the present writing he has upward of 11,000 acres of corn, which promise an average of fully forty-five bushels to the acre. Besides this there are quite 5,000 acres of other crops under cultivation.

These statements in figures give but a vague idea of the vast green oceans of growing grain under the bright prairie skies; but fancy a continuous crib of twelve feet in width, filled with ears of corn to the height of eight feet, nearly if not quite five miles in length, and you will then have the dimensions of Mr. Sullivant's corn crop for the present year.

But this is a comparatively small part of the work done at Burr Oak during the past four years. The estate embraces exactly sixty-five square miles—over 40,000 acres. The land, which is rolling, in some places quite broken, is in the form of a square, and has been crossed and recrossed by wide avenues hedged on either side with the Osage orange. Three hundred miles of hedge have been set out, six miles of board fence built for cattle and stock, and 150 miles of ditching (the ditches are seven feet wide, and average nearly two feet in depth) have been done to drain the wet places; numerous corn cribs, farm buildings, shops for various work; and a vast amount of work of all descriptions, in which a new place abounds.

Besides this, Mr. Sullivant has been an earnest worker for the advancement of Illinois, in which he takes considerable pride. Numerous railroad enterprises have been advanced by means of his sturdy support, and no actual settler has been refused counsel and advice in the selection of land, and oftentimes aid of a different description has been extended. In his great knowledge of land—both as to its lay, and the quality of the earth for the growth of different crops—Mr. Sullivant has it in his power to render a positive and needed aid to the farmer, who may be almost

ruined by the loss of a single crop. He believes persistent labor, directed by fair judgment, will enable any man to follow out Horace Greeley's advice—i.e., move West and prosper.

His farm-work is perfectly systematized. Burr Oak is a bee-hive, with no drones, and the accounts show where each day's work has been done, whether it is by man or beast. His purchases are invariably made in large quantities. For instance, fifty plows, fifty cultivators, etc. This enables him to make terms of the most favorable character. The hands, mostly Swedes and Germans, are engaged about the 1st of April, and are expected to stay until the 1st of January. Two hundred and fifty men are required at present to work the farm. These, with the exception of a few who bring their own teams and work by contract, are assigned to the different farms and gangs. Mr. Sullivant is the commander-in-chief, Mr. J. M. Miner his brigadier; next twelve captains, each with three lieutenants, each lieutenant having charge of a squad of men, and immediately responsible to the captain or head of the farm for their work.

Besides the organized farm gangs, there is a considerable force constantly employed in carpenter and mason work; a regular blacksmith's shop, with its four or five smiths; men constantly busy in the repair of machinery; the harness-shop, wagon-shop, painters. In the fall of the year Mr. Sullivant finds it necessary to detail a certain number of men as gunners to kill or drive away the innumerable flocks of wild geese and ducks which would otherwise destroy thousands of bushels of grain. In speaking of this, he says: "I tried at first to equalize the thing by planting a few hundred more acres, but my feathered boarders forced me to drain some of the lakes and ponds before I could get them to come in more reasonable force." To return to the work of the farm.

The captains report each evening to Mr. Sullivant, and deliver their pass-books to Mr. Taylor, the book-keeper and paymaster, who takes the record and returns the books. Meanwhile the captains are gathered about Mr. Sullivant, answering questions and receiving his order.

It may be well to state here that there is no field of Burr Oak with the condition of which Mr. Sullivant does not seem to be perfectly familiar, and generally from personal observation; and he has an able second in Mr. Miner, a bright-eyed, sun-bronzed Ohioan of not more than thirty-two years. He detects a defect in a piece of harness, in a bolt of a cultivator, or a half-done piece of work, the instant his eye falls upon it. With his light buggy and quick-stepping pair of mules he travels many miles each day, visiting such points as his chief directs—Mr. Sullivant, meanwhile, taking observations in an opposite quarter.

Thus it will be seen that the captains' reports at evening to Mr. Sullivant, in Miner's presence, are not made to parties uninformed. Mr. Sullivant has, however, selected his men with care, and the evening report seems to

a stranger more a friendly chat than any thing else. The work required from the men is ten hours per day; a noon-time of two hours gives a mid-day rest to the men and stock.

At the close of the day the hands from the different farms assemble at the dancing-floor in the fine grove of burr oaks from which the farm is named. The fiddlers and accordion players furnish the music, and a right merry time is enjoyed by men who, as Mr. Sullivant suggests, might find themselves in mischief with trifling exertion. The Swedish girls of Burr Oak are dancers of no mean rank, if endurance may be taken into consideration. Mr. Sullivant and his family are frequent and thoroughly welcome spectators of the dance. The social condition of Burr Oak is capital. Fighting, drunkenness, and other nuisances are of too seldom occurrence to mention.

There is not space to give a complete monthly report, but a synopsis, and a few of the leading items, will serve to explain the system.

	Men.	Horses.	Oxen.
May, 1871.....	4979¾	7060	1987
DAY'S WORK.			
	Men.	Horses.	
Overseeing generally.....	45	90	
Errands and chores.....	31	53	
Harness-shop	8	.....	
Water hauling	27¼	27¼	
Stables	191	160	
Blacksmith's shop.....	114	.....	
Kitchens.....	273	.....	
Implements and machinery ...	82	1	
Nursery	79½	18	
Hedges	383¾	214½	

This is but a fragment of the list, but it will be easily seen that with such a system Mr. Sullivant is able to keep himself thoroughly posted as to the condition of his farm and situation of his affairs.

Mr. Sullivant has a pet theory that what he is doing may be done by any company of earnest working-men who may combine capital and labor for mutual advantage. He is not a man of grasping disposition, but great-hearted and broad in his views, as his great work shows one very hand. On his return from a trip away from his farm the men gather about at evening to await his arrival, and welcome him in a genuine and earnest way that tells of more than usual feeling, and shows a pleasing relation of a man and his men.

The regular farm-work of Burr Oak, which is essentially a corn farm, is the breaking of raw prairie, planting, cultivating, and harvesting. Oxen are principally used in breaking, and with the breaking-plow a furrow twenty inches in width is cut. This appears to be merely a turning of the sod, for the furrow is but two and a half to three inches in depth. This work is done during spring, summer, and fall, and the land, if plowed sufficiently

early (any time before the 20th of June), may be at once planted with corn, which is not cultivated or worked in any way until it is harvested. The yield will average twenty bushels to the acre, which will pay an interest on the land at Illinois Central Railroad prices, the expense of work, and a profit besides. This estimate is made after a fair investigation, and rating the breaking at $2.75 per acre, which is full price, and the planting and seed at twenty-five cents per acre. A bushel of corn will fully plant eight acres of land. A man and team will plant twelve and a half acres, and run the furrows to a guiding stake. A heavier crop may be taken from land on which the breaking-plow is followed by a stirring-plow, and a furrow four inches deep is cut, the earth being thrown over the sod-plowing. This is summer or fall work. In the spring following this land is harrowed, planted, and cultivated in the same manner as old land. The crop abundantly repays the outlay. Old ground is plowed from the 1st of April until the 10th of June. With a steel plow and horses or mules, two and a quarter acres is a fair day's work. A man and four yoke of oxen will harrow, with gang-harrows, from twenty-five to thirty acres per diem. The cultivation is done entirely by machinery, and very completely, the number of times the crop is gone over depending on the condition of the ground—generally from three to four. Some idea of this cultivation of corn by machinery may be gathered from the mention that in one single field the writer saw no less than 124 cultivators, each worked by one man and two mules or horses. Scattered about at convenient points were boys with low trucks or wagons, on which were casks filled with water, to be used for drinking purposes by the workers. Burr Oak is a temperance farm—whisky being used only for snake bites; even then its owner is doubtful whether the whisky will not injure the man more than the snake bite. The work of cultivation finished, the crop is said to be laid up, and breaking, ditching, and other farm-work is in order until the harvest, at which time the men are told off in squads composed of two gangs of six to a gang. A boss, two wagons, and four horses are allotted to each squad. A gang takes five rows of corn, and an average of fifty bushels of corn is cribbed for every man's day's work. The cribs are long wooden sheds of sixty-four feet length, twelve feet width, and twelve feet height, with the roof sloping four feet. They are set in couples at favorable points, and crib three thousand bushels each. When a shipment of grain is to be made, power shellers are set to work between the cribs. Trains are contracted for through to New York thus avoiding two or three commissions, as well as elevator risks and charges—in all a saving of nearly the cost of producing the grain. The corn is bright yellow, and brings in the market a good price.

The machinery in use at Burr Oak would handsomely stock tow or three agricultural implement stores: 150 steel plow, of different styles; 75 breaking-plows; 142 cultivators, of several descriptions; 45 corn-planters; 25 gang-harrows, etc. The ditching-plow, a huge affair of eighteen feet in length, with a share of eleven feet by two feet ten inches, is worked by sixty-eight oxen and eight men. These finish from three to three and a half

> miles of excellent ditch each day of work. The oldest hedges (Osage orange) are but three years' growth, but now stand full seven feet high, and much of it is pig-tight. Even here machinery is called in, and the rows are clipped by a sort of an upright mower. The nursery for young trees and plants is well stocked, and many years will not elapse before Burr Oak has other groves than the one from which it derives its name. It is proposed to presently sink artesian wells, which will generally strike the water-vein at the depth of 140 or 150 feet.
>
> The stock of Burr Oak is at present 350 mules, fifty horses, and fifty yoke of cattle. There may be 1,000 or 1,200 hogs, and a magnificent herd of milch cows, mostly Durhams, and very valuable.
>
> An entire section of land is devoted to raising produce for feeding stock and hands. There are 2,500 acres of tame grass, which will cut an average of a ton and a half to the acre; besides this much wild grass is cut.
>
> Mr. Sullivant's present home, an exceedingly comfortable though rambling structure, was built piecemeal, and is considered as only temporary by the owner, who is purposing to build a comfortable rather than a pretentious house on rising ground in a bout the geographical center of the farm.

This extensive article on the Burr Oak Farm was also supplemented with twelve illustrations. The first illustration was "a striking portrait" of Michael Sullivant, followed by an engraving of The Homestead, Burr Oak," "Evening in the Burr Oak Grove," and "Map of 'Burr Oak' Farm." The centerpiece of this article was a large foldout double page with nine illustrations of farm scenes. These included 1) Planting Corn, 2) Ditching Plow, 3) Cultivating Corn, 4) Hedge Gang, 5) Breaking Raw Prairie, 6) Farm Gang, 7) Harvesting, 8) Mr. Sullivant and his Captains at Evening, and 9) Sunday in Burr Oak Grove (see attached figures).

Beers (1884:14) noted that "M. L. Sullivant finished husking his corn for 1871 on the 29th day of February, 1872. His crop aggregated 450,000 bushels. Mr. Sullivant was at that time proprietor of Burr Oaks farm, comprising some 42,000 acres." Beers (1884:34) also made reference to another unidentified published account of the Burr Oaks Farm from the autumn of 1873, and quotes from this source.

> Here, often under great discouragement, but with an indomitable will and untiring energy, Mr. Sullivant has been working out his great schemes on the prairies of Illinois, noted there, as in Ohio, for broad views and a genial hospitality. I took a ride of twenty miles through the corn-fields, and was surprised to see the great improvements made since my former visit in 1869, and stood almost in admiration alongside the huge ricks of hay containing 2,500 tons.
>
> With a herd of the finest blooded, Durham cattle, 500 mules and horses, wagons, farming implements and machinery in proportion, and employing

> on an average 300 men. Mr. Sullivant has established the claim of being the most extensive and enterprising farmer in the United States. His operations have attracted attention as well in Europe, as America.

Although the author of this previous work is unclear, it may have been written by Adam Bogardus'—a famous market hunter and trap shooter—who visited Burr Oaks farm, and published the accounts of the trip in his autobiography (Bogardus and Foster 1874). In his autobiography, Bogardus described his hunting exploits on the Sullivant farm.

> On Mr. Sullivant's great farm in Ford County there are many ponds and many extensive corn-fields, and I found last spring that the shooting of geese, ducks, and crane there was very good-so good that I mentally resolved to go there again next season. In two days' shooting, mornings and evenings, not over decoys, but as the wild fowl came to and went out of the corn-fields, I killed sixty-five mallards and pintails, mostly mallards, five brant geese, twenty. sand-hill crane, and three large white crane. Yet I was told that the ducks and brant had mostly all gone north before I was there, and that they had been much more abundant than they were in the two days I shot. Mr. Sullivant's foreman saw my ducks and cranes at the station, and made his remarks to this effect: "They said that as you were a pigeon-shooter, you would not be successful in the field. I have, however, seen no such lot as that at any time this season, and yet the ducks are now scarce to what they have been."
>
> This farm of Mr. Michael Sullivant's is the largest in Illinois, I think, and I am convinced that it is one of the best neighborhoods in the State for game. From what I saw, pinnated grouse abound, there are lots of quail, and in the migratory seasons great flocks of ducks, geese, brant, and cranes. The estate was purchased by Mr. Sullivant some years ago, when it was mostly unbroken prairie. It is eight miles square, contains about forty-four thousand acres, and twenty-six thousand acres of it have already been brought under cultivation. Twenty thousand acres of it were in corn last year, and I dare say more will be this year, while three thousand acres were in smaller grain, and three thousand in meadow-grass.
>
> Upon this Illinois farm there are three hundred miles of Osage orange hedges, which are yet young. Let the sportsmen remember what has been said of the hedges as affording nesting-places for game-birds, protection against hawks, and facilities for shooters, and they may conceive what these three hundred miles of hedges will do when they have grown tall and thick.
>
> On Mr. Sullivant's tract, in Ford County, before they are much shot at, the wild geese roost about the ponds in the prairie; but when they have been disturbed there a few times, they go further off to wild places in the extensive swamps (as cited from White 2002).

Just prior to the collapse of his farm, the journal *The Cultivator and Country Gentleman* (written February 7, 1877; published March 1, 1877) carried an article that was entitled "Agriculture at Wholesale" which also described Sullivant's Burr Oaks Farm.

> Here, the station of the Chicago & Paducah railroad, I believe, is the geographical centre of Mr. M. L. Sullivant's farm—"a farm as is a farm," whether considered regarding the extent of domain or its aggregate products… In 1868, he sold Broadlands… and began transactions on his present farm at Burr Oaks, planting 1,000 acres in corn the first year. The next year he planted 5,000. In 1870, he planted 11,000; in 1871, he planted over 11,000 acres in corn and over 5,000 acres in other crops. It is said that at one time his united corn cribs, 12 feet wide and 8 feet high, would extend nearly five miles. His largest corn field was about 25,000 acres. He has given employment at one time to about 185 men. His lowing her numbers 250 head, swine aggregate 500, and has had at once about 500 mules and 40 horses. About 40 of his finest mules were burned in a barn a few weeks ago.
>
> Burr Oaks farm is eight miles square, and of course comprises sixty-four sections, which is something over forty thousand acres. Its superficial area is beautifully undulating, and the soil is very deep, and marvelously rich and productive. It is the choice land in a wide extent of country. The grove of burr oaks, which gives the name to this great farm, and the railroad station about a quarter of a mile from the proprietor's residence, is near the centre of the farm. Here, under its lea, is the residence of Mr. Sullivant, which is rather a group of plain, unostentatious buildings, than a single one, and seems to have been built at various times, as the needs and conveniences of the family required. The whole is regarded as temporary, to be vacated when the pressure of business relating to the conduct of the farm shall be so relieved as to permit the proprietor to turn his attention to the erection of an edifice comporting with his wishes. Here too, are quite a number of other buildings: the "grand central," the general boarding house; the principle office, the store, post office, private office, blacksmith shop, wagon repairing shop, sundry small dwellings for employees, store houses, barns, cribs, &c. Then there are as many as nine sub-headquarters, situated in such localities on the farm as accommodate the laborers in tilling the soil, and designated by numbers from 1 up to 9. At each of these headquarters is quite a group of buildings, such as dwellings, barns, cribs, &c., and each one has a superintendent. Then there are dwellings at various points distinct from these headquarters, to accommodate renters. There is a large nursery on the farm, of shade, ornamental and fruit trees.
>
> The reader will have inferred that, under the direction of the proprietor, there are two or three book-keepers, a general superintendent, and a man employed more or less of the time to replenish (by purchase) the stock, or to dispose of the surplus of the same, when such a fact shall occur. There

> are in the stable at Burr Oaks four Short-Horn bulls, and in the pens several animals of the best breeds of swine. The reader may have also anticipated another fact, that agricultural implements have come to the Sullivant farm by the car-load.
>
> It appears that Mr. Sullivant's ambition is gratified. I think he has cultivated the largest number of acres of corn of any man on this continent. Mr. ----- (his name I cannot recall just now) of California, has grown 40,000 acres of wheat, but Mr. S. is the king in corn cultivation, I think. His fame has extended over to Europe, but not to the Appletons, it seems for the revise Cyclopaedia does not contain his name. Mr. Terentius Varro lives in history not only because he was the "most learned of the Romans," but because he was a farmer, and gave his best efforts in a literary way to his work on agriculture. We have fallen on other times, for the successful man on the farm—the hero of the indispensable, wealth-producing, peaceful pursuit of agriculture—now finds no place in our comprehensive repertories of knowledge; but yet I am confident that the name of the proprietor of the 40,000-acre farm, after his activities on the same have ended, will live in coming time.

Sullivant continued to have financial troubles, even after selling off his Broadlands farm in 1866. It was an era of "the perfect storm" for large landholders. After the Panic of 1857, the Civil War brought an invigorated economy—but one that was plagued by a variety of new taxes based on landownership. For the large landowner like Sullivant, times were difficult. And then came the Economic Panic of 1873—another world-wide depression that had a dramatic affect on agricultural prices. This was followed by several years of poor production on the farm, and by the mid-1870s, increased mechanization, overproduction, low produce prices, increased indebtedness, and "increased discriminatory treatment by railroads with regard to transportation of produce" greatly impacted Sullivant. According to Beers (1884:34)

> The financial crisis of 1873 ruined many, and was the beginning of a series of embarrassments that culminated five years later in the complete blotting out of Mr. Sullivant's great undertaking. In addition to $100,000 of his own capital, he had borrowed from time to time additional sums, expecting that the land brought under cultivation would, in three years, pay expenses and repay portions of those loans, but the crops failed, only one out of several realizing an average yield.
>
> Still sanguine of success in the end, Mr. Sullivant continued cultivating the land, and making improvements, and upon completion of the railroad through the farm, built large hay barns at the station for pressing and storing hay, and the summer of 1874, erected an elevator, at a cost of $20,000, furnishing it with a fifty horse-power engine, and shellers of large capacity, which is yet ranked one of the best between Chicago and St. Louis. The very promising crop of 1874 was a failure from a severe drought; 1875 was disastrous, while 10 per cent semi-annual interest had added largely to the original loans. In 1876, Mr. Sullivant offered the

> entire farm for sale, and laid out the town at the station [Figure 19]. A few farms were sold and a few lots, but real estate was at its lowest point in value, and the few sales made availed nothing to relieve the situation.
>
> In March, 1877, he made an assignment, no longer able to stem the tide against him, ill health adding its weight to financial troubles.
>
> In January, 1878, Mr. Sullivant became dangerously ill, and though better at times, never recovered; the summer of this year was one of hopeless anxiety for himself and family, and in October there was a public sale of all its property. Mr. Hiram Sibley, of Rochester, N.Y., was his largest creditor, and by this sale became the possessor of 17,641 acres of Burr Oaks Farm, the personal property, the town with its elevator and several other buildings, and the homestead, the Equitable Trust Company and others taking the balance of the estate, comprising 14,000 acres.

Thus ended the illustrious career of a man who was touted as being the largest farmer in the world. A couple of years later, the county history (Beers 1884:34) stated that

> With sorrow no words can express, Mr. Sullivant saw the utter wreck of his life-long labors and cherished plans, himself left without an acre of his once princely domain. He remained at Burr Oaks during November and December, but left to visit his daughters residing in Kentucky, in January, never to return.

On January 29, 1879, Michael L. Sullivant "died suddenly" while in Kentucky visiting his daughters. His body was taken to Columbus, Ohio where he was buried in Green Lawn Cemetery (Beers 1884:34). Sullivant's obituary, which was carried by newspapers far and wide, is presented below. This text was written apparently for the *New York Times* by a "Special Dispatch to the *Chicago Tribune*" from Gibson City) (February 3, 1879). Among other things, Sullivant's obituary details the financial troubles that plagued him during the last decade of his life, and lead to the collapse of the Sullivant farm.

> Dispatches received here to-day from Evansville, Ind., announce the death of Michael L. Sullivant, recently of Burr Oaks, Ford County, who has for years been known as the owner of the largest farm in the United States, and who has had a most remarkable history. The saddest feature in connection with his life and death is the fact that he died worse than penniless, because hopelessly in debt, and scarcely having enough ready money to provide for his immediate wants. He died on the steamer James Guthrie, on the Ohio River, near Owensboro, Ky. He was on his way to Louisville, having visited a daughter at Henderson, Ky. He was aged 73 years, was a native of Ohio, and had lived in Illinois more than half of his life. He first came into prominence as the owner of a farm in Vermilion County [sic], known as "Broadlands." This was 15 years ago, and at that time "Broadlands" was one of the largest farms in the United States. This he sold to Alexander in 1867. At this time he had obtained possession of

> 47,000 acres of fine prairie land in Ford County, comprising all of Sullivant Township, and much more. His farm was nearly eight miles square. Some of this land he had entered, some he had bought from the Central Railroad, and some he had obtained on warrants. When he moved on the tract he built a modest farm-house in the centre of it, to which he kept adding until now it is spread out into great dimensions. Here he lived and controlled the vast interests of his estate. He improved the land gradually, employing 400 hands at his most prosperous time. He devoted his energy to corn-raising. He had a theory that corn could be raised and sold at a profit for 15 cents. Five years ago he owed only $50,000 on the estate, at the same time holding $200,000 in good paper which could readily have been cashed.
>
> About this time the agents of Eastern money-lenders persuaded him to enter on a scheme of rapidly improving his land, in order to place it on the market, and he began to borrow money from Hiram Sibley, capitalist, of Rochester, N.Y., paying 10 per cent, and 5 per cent commission, securing the loans by mortgages on his estate. He kept borrowing, until finally he had placed $473,000 on his land. Most of this was borrowed through the late Corydon Weed, a banker of Bloomington. During this time, property values began to shrink, and several corn crops failed. This, together with the falling prices of produce, brought about his ruin. At one time Sullivant was paying $5,000 per month interest. As time grew stringent, he mortgaged his personal property to the amount of $200,000. Although it took 200 mules busy all Winter to haul his crops to the market, he could not meet the demands. He made a noble effort to extricate himself, but in vain. Finally disheartened, he assigned all his property to P. K. Wheaton, of Chicago. His total indebtedness was nearly $1,500,000 which is more than the property would now bring. His wife had $60,000 in her own right. This she lent him, taking a second mortgage, which was absorbed by the first, leaving her penniless too.

Sullivant's obituary concluded by stating that

> He professed no form of religion, although he was a consistent Christian. His wife is a member of the Christian Church. He was a fine book-keeper and practical business manager, and was a kind and accommodating neighbor.

Michael Sullivant was married twice. In 1827, presumably while at college in Danville, Kentucky, he married Sarah McDowell of that city (who passed away in December 1844). Together the couple had four children (one son and three daughters).[8]

[8] Sullivant's obituary noted that he was married "at Columbus, Ohio; when quite young. By this marriage he had two daughters, now married in Kentucky, and one son in Vermilion County."

In 1854, Sullivant again married, this time to Fanny Trilles of Bedford, Ohio.[9] Fanny and her children (one son and two daughters) remained in the Sibley area and continued to reside on part of the Sullivant estate after his death. Fanny's land was located to the north/northeast of Sibley, with her farmstead located immediately to the east of the community.[10] Beers (1884:34) noted that

> Mr. Sullivant's labors will perhaps be more fully appreciated years hence than now, when its inhabitants consider how, as a pioneer, he bravely met and conquered great difficulties.
>
> His old township still bears his name, though the name of the station has been changed, but the visitor who rides for miles along the highways of the old estate bordered by hedges, and sees long lines of trees planted by his direction around many forty-acre tracts, and others for shade and ornament along the streets of the station and prominent points of the place, will not fail to realize that he did much for his successors.
>
> His whole life was devoted to agriculture, first in Ohio, his native State, after in Illinois, the State of his adoption, in whose rapid growth and progress he took a just and enthusiastic pride, and lastly in Ford County, where he was known in the early days of its history, as well by his prosperity as later by his misfortunes.[11]

The Sibley Ownership

Beginning in October 1878, a new era dawned on the Burr Oaks estate. At that time, most of Sullivant's landholdings and personal property had been sold off to satisfy creditors. A large portion of the Sullivant estate (consisting of approximately 14,000 acres in Ford and Livingston Counties) had been purchased by the Equitable Trust Company (and others)—presumably through a sheriff's sale. By 1884, the vast majority of this land had been sold to individual, small-scale farmers. The accompanying plats of Ford and Livingston Counties (see Figures 21 and 22) indicate this post-sale, Sibley landscape. But the core of what was once the Burr Oak Farm—consisting of 17,641 acres of land, the improvements in the nearby community of Burr Oaks, and the Sullivant

[9] With regard to this marriage, Sullivant's obituary stated that he "married a second time 25 years ago, in Cleveland Ohio. By this union he had two daughters and one son, the later 19."

[10] A mortgage deed filed in January 1877 between Michael Sullivant and his wife indicates that Sullivant borrowed $54,000 from Fanny in April 1868 (at an interest rate of 6% per annum) (Ford County Mortgage Record Book 18: Page 410). This loan was apparently first recorded in an earlier note dated November 29, 1873. Sullivant put up 16 sections of land as collateral for this loan. This indenture may have saved Fanny from loosing all of her interest in the large Sullivant estate, and to obtain title to the lands indicated in the 1884 plat.

[11] Sullivant's Last Will and Testament, dated April 1878 was filed with the Clerk's Office, Ford County, Illinois (Probate File 29½) in February 1879. This will named Alonzo Burr, Bloomington, as the estate's executor. The will was witnessed by Marcus Norton (who apparently was residing in Des Moines township, Polk County, Iowa at the time of Sullivant's death), and William Bicket (later manager of the farm).

family home and personal belongings—remained intact and within the hands of a single individual, Hiram Sibley (Figure 20).

Hiram Sibley was an extremely successful eastern businessman born in Berkshire County, Massachusetts. Of national—if not international—importance, Sibley made his fortune developing the nation's telegraph and railroad networks. Sibley was the founder and first president of Western Union Telegraph Company, a position he held for sixteen years. After retiring from that position, he became interested in agriculture and the seed business, with headquarters in both Rochester (new York), and Chicago (Illinois).[12] Beers (1884:82) contains a biography of this non-local individual, and states that

> Since resigning the office of President of the Western Union, he has been largely engaged in the construction and management of railroads in the Western and Southern States. At present he is regarded as the largest farmer in the world, being the owner of the great "Burr Oaks" farm, formerly known as the "Sullivant farm," which contained 40,000 acres lying in Ford and Livingston Counties, Ill.; is also owner of much farm and city property in this State as well as in Michigan and New York. He has about $1,000,000 invested in his [seed] business in Chicago…

In 1886, just two years prior to his death (in 1888), a biography of Hon. Hiram Sibley was published in the *Scientific American*. This biography is cited below.

> Hon. Hiram Sibley, of the city of Rochester, a man of national reputation as the originator of great enterprises, and as the most extensive farmer and seedsman in this country, was born at North Adams, Berkshire County, Mass., February 6, 1807, and is the second son of Benjamin and Zilpha Davis Sibley. Benjamin was the son of Timothy Sibley, of Sutton, Mass., who was the father of fifteen children… From the most unpromising beginnings, without education, Hiram Sibley has risen to a position of usefulness and influence. His youth was passed among his native hills. He was a mechanical genius by nature.
>
> At the age of sixteen he migrated to the Genesee Valley, where he was employed in a machine shop, and subsequently in wool carding. Before he was of age he had mastered five different trades. Three of these years were passed in Livingston County. His first occupation on his own account was as a shoemaker at North Adams; then he did business successfully as a machinist and wool carder in Livingston County, N.Y.; after which he established himself at Mendon, fourteen miles south of Rochester, a manufacturing village, now known as Sibleyville, where he had a foundry and machine shop. When in the wool carding business at Sparta and Mount Morris, in Livingston County, he worked in the same shop, located near the line of the two towns, where Millard Filmore [sic]

[12] A view of the large Sibley and Company Warehouse at 315-331 North Clark Street, Chicago (built in ca 1885 and designed by George Edbrooke), can be viewed at the Art Institute of Chicago's digital photograph collection http://digitallibraries.saic.edu/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/halic&CISOPTR=676&CISOBOX=1&REC=1.

had been employed and learned his trade; beginning just after a farewell ball was given to Mr. Filmore [sic] by his fellow workmen.

Increase of reputation and influence brought Mr. Sibley opportunities for office. He was elected by the Democrats Sheriff of Monroe County in 1843 when he removed to Rochester; but his political career was short, for a more important matter was occupying his mind. From the moment of the first success of Professor Morse with his experiments in telegraphy, Mr. Sibley had been quick to discern the vast promise of the invention; and in 1840 he went to Washington to assist Professor Morse and Ezra Cornell in procuring an appropriation of $40,000 from Congress to build a line from Washington to Baltimore, the first put up in America. Strong prejudices had to be overcome. On Mr. Sibley's meeting the chairman of the committee having the matter in charge, and expressing the hope that the application would be granted, he received for answer: "We had made up our minds to allow the appropriation, when the Professor came in and upset everything. Why! he undertook to tell us that he could send ten words from Washington to Baltimore in two minutes. Good heavens! Twenty minutes is quick enough, but two minutes is nonsense. The Professor is too radical and visionary, and I doubt if the committee recommend the sum to be risked in such a manner." Mr. Sibley's sound arguments and persuasiveness prevailed, though he took care not to say what he believed, that the Professor was right as to the two minutes. Their joint efforts secured the subsidy of $40,000.

This example stimulated other inventors, and in a few years several patents were in use, and various lines had been constructed by different companies. The business was so divided as to be always unprofitable. Mr. Sibley conceived the plan of uniting all the patents and companies in one organization. After three years of almost unceasing toil, he succeeded in buying up the stock of the different corporations, some of it at a price as low as two cents on the dollar, and in consolidating the lines which then extended over portions of thirteen States. The Western Union Telegraph Company was then organized, with Mr. Sibley as the first president. Under his management for sixteen years, the number of telegraph offices was increased from 132 to over 4,000, and the value of the property from $220,000 to $48,000,000.

In the project of uniting the Atlantic and Pacific by a line to California, he stood nearly alone. At a meeting of the prominent telegraph men of New York, a committee was appointed to report upon his proposed plan, whose verdict was that it would be next to impossible to build the line; that, if built, the Indians would destroy it; and that it would not pay, even if built, and not destroyed. His reply was characteristic; that it should be built, if he had to build it alone. He went to Washington, procured the necessary legislation, and was the sole contractor with the Government. The Western Union Telegraph Company afterward assumed the contract, and

built the line, under Mr. Sibley's administration as president, ten years in advance of the railroad.

Not satisfied with this success at home, he sought to unite the two hemispheres by way of Alaska and Siberia, under P. McD. Collins' franchise. On visiting Russia with Mr. Collins in the winter of 1864-5, he was cordially received and entertained by the Czar, who approved the plan. A most favorable impression had preceded him. For when the Russian squadron visited New York in 1863—the year after Russia and Great Britain had declined the overture of the French government for joint mediation in the American conflict—Mr. Sibley and other prominent gentlemen were untiring in efforts to entertain the Russian admiral, Lusoffski, in a becoming mariner. Mr. Sibley was among the foremost in the arrangements of the committee of reception. So marked were his personal kindnesses that when the admiral returned he mentioned Mr. Sibley by name to the Emperor Alexander, and thus unexpectedly prepared the way for the friendship of that generous monarch. During Mr. Sibley's stay in St. Petersburg, he was honored in a manner only accorded to those who enjoy the special favor of royalty. Just before his arrival the Czar had returned from the burial of his son at Nice; and, in accordance with a long honored custom when the head of the empire goes abroad and returns, he held the ceremony of "counting the emperor's jewels;" which means an invitation to those whom his majesty desires to compliment as his friends, without regard to court etiquette or the formalities of official rank. At this grand reception in the palace at Tsarskozela, seventeen miles from St. Petersburg, Mr. Sibley was the second on the list, the French ambassador being the first, and Prince Gortchakoff, the Prime Minister, the third. This order was observed also in the procession of 250 court carriages with outriders, Mr. Sibley's carriage being the second in the line. On this occasion Prince Gortchakoff turning to Mr. Sibley, said: "Sir, if I remember rightly, in the course of a very pleasant conversation had with you a few days since, at the State department, you expressed your surprise at the pomp and circumstance attending upon all court ceremony. Now, sir, when you take precedence of the Prime Minister, I trust you are more reconciled to the usage attendant upon royalty, which was so repugnant to your democratic ideas." Such an honor was greatly appreciated by Mr. Sibley; for it meant the most sincere respect of the "Autocrat of all the Russias" for the people of the United States, and a recognition of the courtesies conferred upon his fleet when in American waters.

Mr. Sibley was duly complimented by the members of the royal family and others present, including the ambassadors of the great powers. Mr. Collins, his colleague in the telegraph enterprise, shared in these attentions. Mr. Sibley was recorded in the official blue book of the State department of St. Petersburg as "the distinguished American," by which title he was generally known. Of this book he has a copy as a souvenir of his Russian experience. His intercourse with the Russian authorities was also facilitated by a very complimentary letter from Secretary Seward to

Prince Gortchakoff. The Russian government agreed to build the line from Irkootsk to the mouth of the Amoor River. After 1,500 miles of wire had been put up, the final success of the Atlantic cable caused the abandonment of the line, at a loss of $3,000,000. This was a loss in the midst of success, for Mr. Sibley had demonstrated the feasibility of putting a telegraphic girdle round the earth. In railway enterprises the accomplishments of his energy and management have been no less signal than in the establishment of the telegraph. One of these was the important line of the Southern Michigan and Northern Indiana Railway. His principal efforts in this direction have been in the Southern States. After the war, prompted more by the desire of restoring amicable relations than by the prospect of gain, he made large and varied investments at the South, and did much to promote renewed business activity. At Saginaw. Mich., he became a large lumber and salt manufacturer. He bought much property in Michigan, and at one time owned vast tracts in the Lake Superior region, where the most valuable mines have since been worked. While he has been interested in bank and manufacturing stocks, his larger investments have been in land. Much of his pleasure has been in reclaiming waste territory and unproductive investments, which have been abandoned by others as hopeless. The satisfying aim of his ambition incites him to difficult undertakings, that add to the wealth and happiness of the community, from which others have shrunk, or in which others have made shipwreck. Besides his stupendous achievements in telegraph and railway extension, he is unrivaled as a farmer and seed grower, and he has placed the stamp of his genius on these occupations, in which many have been content to work in the well-worn ruts of their predecessors.

The seed business was commenced in Rochester thirty years ago. Later, Mr. Sibley undertook to supply seeds of his own importation and raising and others' growth, under a personal knowledge of their vitality and comparative value. He instituted many experiments for the improvements of plants, with reference to their seed-bearing qualities, and has built up a business as unique in its character as it is unprecedented in amount. He cultivates the largest farm in the State, occupying Howland Island, of 3,500 acres, in Cayuga County, near the Erie Canal and the New York Central Railroad, which is largely devoted to seed culture; a portion is used for cereals, and 500 head of cattle are kept. On the Fox Ridge farm, through which the New York Central Railroad passes, where many seeds and bulbs are grown, he has reclaimed a swamp of six hundred acres, making of great value what was worthless in other hands, a kind of operation which affords him much delight. His ownership embraces fourteen other farms in this State, and also large estates in Michigan and Illinois.

The seed business is conducted under the firm name of Hiram Sibley & Co., at Rochester and Chicago, where huge structures afford accommodations for the storage and handling of seeds on the most extensive scale. An efficient means for the improvement of the seeds is

their cultivation in different climates. In addition to widely separated seed farms in this country, the firm has growing under its directions several thousands of acres in Canada, England, France, Germany, Holland, and Italy. Experimental grounds and greenhouses are attached to the Rochester and Chicago establishments, where a sample of every parcel of seed is tested, and experiments conducted with new varieties. One department of the business is for the sale of horticultural and agricultural implements of all kinds. A new department supplies ornamental grasses, immortelles, and similar plants used by florists for decorating and for funeral emblems. Plants for these purposes are imported from Germany, France, the Cape of Good Hope, and other countries, and dyed and colored by the best artists here. As an illustration of their methods of business, it may be mentioned that the firm has distributed gratuitously, the past year, $5,000 in seeds and prizes for essays on gardening in the Southern States, designed to foster the interests of horticulture in that section.

The largest farm owned by Mr. Sibley, and the largest cultivated farm in the world, deserves a special description. This is the "Sullivant Farm," as formerly designated, but now known as the "Burr Oaks Farm," originally 40,000 acres, situated about 100 miles south of Chicago, on both sides of the Wabash, St. Louis, and Pacific Railroad. The property passed into the hands of an assignee, and, on Mr. Sullivant's death in 1879, came into the possession of Mr. Sibley. His first step was to change the whole plan of cultivation. Convinced that so large a territory could not be worked profitably by hired labor, he divided it into small tracts, until there are now many hundreds of such farms; 146 of these are occupied by tenants working on shares, consisting of about equal proportions of Americans, Germans, Swedes, and Frenchmen. A house and a barn have been erected on each tract, and implements and agricultural machines provided. At the center, on the railway, is a four-story warehouse, having a storage capacity of 20,000 bushels, used as a depot for the seeds grown on the farm, from which they are shipped as wanted to the establishments in Chicago and Rochester. The largest elevator on the line of the railway has been built, at a cost of over $20,000; its capacity is 50,000 bushels, and it has a mill capable of shelling and loading twenty-five cars of corn a day. Near by is a flax mill, also run by steam, for converting flax straw into stock for bagging and upholstery.[13] Another engine is used for grinding feed. Within four years there has sprung up on the property a village containing one hundred buildings, called Sibley by the people, which is supplied with schools, churches, a newspaper, telegraph office, and the largest hotel on the route between Chicago and St. Louis. A fine station house is to be erected by the railway company.

[13] Flax was a popular crop initially planted after the prairie sod was turned over for the first time. The flax plant apparently helped to rot the sod, making it easier to work the second year. Flax supplied both fiber (from the plant's stems) as well as oils (from the seeds). In the process of breaking the thousands of acres of prairie grass within the surrounding farms, much flax was produced during the early years of settlement.

> Mr. Sibley is the president and largest stockholder of the Bank of Monroe, at Rochester, and is connected with various institutions. He has not acquired wealth simply to hoard it. The Sibley College of Mechanic Arts of Cornell University, at Ithaca, which he founded, and endowed at a cost of $100,000, has afforded a practical education to many hundreds of students. Sibley Hall, costing more than $100,000, is his contribution for a public library, and for the use of the University of Rochester for its library and cabinets; it is a magnificent fire-proof structure of brownstone trimmed with white, and enriched with appropriate statuary. Mrs. Sibley has also made large donations to the hospitals and other charitable institutions in Rochester and elsewhere. She erected, at a cost of $25,000, St. John's Episcopal Church, in North Adams, Mass., her native village. Mr. Sibley has one son and one daughter living—Hiram W. Sibley, who married the only child of Fletcher Harper, Jr., and resides in New York, and Emily Sibley Averell, who resides in Rochester. He has lost two children—Louise Sibley Atkinson and Giles B. Sibley.
>
> A quotation from Mr. Sibley's address to the students of Sibley College, during a recent visit to Ithaca, is illustrative of his practical thought and expression, and a fitting close to this brief sketch of his practical life: "There are two most valuable possessions which no search warrant can get at, which no execution can take away, and which no reverse of fortune can destroy; they are what a man puts into his head—*knowledge*; and into his hands—*skill*."

In July, 1888—at 81 years of age—Hiram Sibley died. An extensive obituary, detailing the life of this “self-made man” was published in the *New York Times* on July 13, 1888 (see also Frank and McKelvey 1959).

The 1892 *Portrait and Biographical Record of Ford County, Illinois* (Lake City Publishing Company 1892:387-88) contains a description of the Sibley Estate. This source states

> THE HIRAM SIBLEY ESTATE, of which William A. Bicket is general manager, is an important part of the original Sullivant purchase in Ford and Livingston Counties and comprises twenty-one thousand two hundred and seventeen acres, valued at $1,326,735, and is divided into one hundred and thirty-six well-improved farms. Each farm has a tasty, roomy and comfortable tenant house and suitable farm and outbuildings. Well-improved roads run on section lines, and many hedges mark farm boundaries, dividing the land into farms of one hundred and sixty acres each. These farms are rented to a superior class of tenants on shares, or for cash rent, as the tenant may choose. When on shares, the tenant gives for the use of the land two-fifths of the corn crop and one-third of the small grain and hay. The rents for the year 1891 amounted in round numbers to $90,000. The crops of that year were represented by three hundred thousand bushels of corn, two hundred thousand bushels of oats, and seeds and other products not enumerated. Garden and field seeds are

grown extensively but not so much so as during the life of the proprietor, who was one of the greatest seed-growers and dealers in the Union.

The soil of these farms is a black prairie loam, very rich and fertile, and well adapted to general farming and stock-raising. A system of tile draining has been extensively adopted with marked success, and farms that were held at from $12 to $15 per acre in Mr. Sullivant's day are now worth from $60 to $80. Thirty sections of the property are situated in the township of Sullivant, Ford County, and five sections in Fayette Township, Livingston County. The town of Sibley, an incorporated village of five hundred inhabitants, is situated in the township of Sullivant and in the geographical center of the estate. It is a station on the Wabash Railroad and is situated on the main line between Chicago and St. Louis, being one hundred and three miles south of Chicago and one hundred and eighty-two miles north of St. Louis. The railroad, then the Chicago & Paducah, was built to this point in 1873, since which time Sibley has grown to be a thrifty and prosperous town. The village has three churches and four religious societies: the Methodist Episcopal, Swedish Evangelical Lutheran, German Lutheran and German Methodist. The town is noted for its excellent schools. Social and secret societies are represented by the following-named: Masonic, Knights of Pythias, Modern Woodmen of America, Good Templars and the Clover Club. The town has a good hotel, several mercantile houses and two important manufactories: the Illinois Canning Works, which have a canning capacity of the product of one thousand acres of sugar corn, and the drain tile works that supply the farmers of the surrounding country with a very necessary article for improving their land. The Sibley property includes the grain elevator, having a storage capacity of fifty thousand bushels and facilities for loading thirty cars a day, being the largest on the Wabash Railroad between Chicago and St. Louis, with one exception.

The tenants of the Sibley estate are of various nationalities, Americans, Germans, Swedes, English, Irish and French being represented, and the total number included in the tenant population is about an even thousand. The educational wants of the farmers' families are provided for by ten good country schools which are conducted under the State laws as district schools and are governed by officers elected by the people. A beautiful and interesting feature of the Sibley landscape is the little lake adjoining the village, which is well stocked with fish and adds much to the attractiveness of the place.[14]

Under the careful and judicious management of Mr. Bicket, the estate has attained a degree of thrift that has not only brought profit and large increase in value to the owners but competence, comfort and contentment to the industrious and enterprising tenants. It is safe to assert that there is not another property of like extent on the face of the globe that is occupied

[14] This is currently known as Bicket Lake.

> under leases where the tenants are as prosperous, independent and contented as those on the Sibley estate. The causes for this happy result are easily discovered. First may be mentioned the wonderful richness and fertility of the soil, a plentiful supply of good water, cheapness of fuel and salubrity [sic] and healthfulness of the climate; secondly, the convenience to market; and last, but not least, the wise, liberal and judicious policy of the management, which affords every man a fair return for his labor and the advantages of schools and churches for his family. So popular have the leases of this property become that they are sought for as most desirable by the most respectable and worthy renters. For twenty years the manager has been weeding out the objectionable tenants and supplying their places with the worthy and desirable lease-holder, until at this date the land is peopled by a model tenantry. The town contains a good library of well-selected books and many elegant works of art, and the High School can boast the most complete set of scientific apparatus for educational purposes to be found in the county, all furnished through the liberality of Mr. Sibley and the efforts of the pupils, and should be credited to the broad-minded system of management, which has been so faithfully and successfully carried out by the Board of Education.

After the death of Hiram, the Sibley estate was managed by his son, Hiram Watson Sibley (1845-1932)—followed by Hiram's grandson, Fletcher Harper Sibley (1885-1959). Both Hiram and Harper's obituaries are present in the Gibson City Library (July 7, 1932, and April 30, 1959, respectively). Figures 30-31 and 35-40 contain historic images depicting farming operations and tenant farmsteads on the Sibley Estate Farms.

Being a non-local landowner, the daily operation of the Sibley family's Illinois landholdings were under the supervision of a farm manager. Published histories give some insights into who these men were. First to be noted, as manager of the "north half" of Sullivant's farm, was a man named J. C. Richcreek. By 1878, Richcreek was a grain merchant in nearby Strawn. Born in Ohio, and apparently raised in Edgar County, Illinois, it was in 1867 that Richcreek

> Left home, traveling South and West, through a number of the States, going West with a view of buying land; in the Winter of 1870, he located with Mr. L. Sullivant, as foreman on the north half of his farm, lying in Ford and Livingston Cos., Ill.; this farm, known as Burr Oaks farm, consisted of sixty-four adjoining sections, having direct personal supervision of everything necessary to the successful farming of the same; the acreage of corn on his part was from eight to nine thousand; in Sullivant's employ he remained six years; in 1875, he removed to Strawn, and engaged in his present business… (Le Baron 1878:807).

Another individual identified as an early manager of the Sullivant farms was a man named Eli Harvey. Harvey apparently was put into that position by Sullivant, and maintained by Sibley through at least 1884.

> ELI HARVEY, Sibley, was born on his father's farm in Clinton County, Ohio, in 1839. He received his education in a log school house. In 1857, he emigrated to Malden, Ill., where he resided on a farm until 1860, when he removed to Loda, Ill. Here he commenced a career as overseer of a large landed estate, a position he has held for twenty-two consecutive years. His position at Loda was overseer, general manager and paymaster of Adam Smith's 2,000-acre farm, a position he held until 1875, with the exception of the year 1867, when he came to Burr Oaks farm to oversee the planting of hedge fences of nearly 100 miles in extent, and as a fact worth mentioning here, Mr. Harvey put in the first hedge plant in Sullivant Township with his own hand. In 1875, he became overseer of the Burr Oaks farm, and has held that position to the present time. Mr. Harvey may be said to be in reality a self-made man. His education is a broad and generous one. His merits have been repeatedly recognized by his employers, and the people have held a continual claim upon him, as we find him holding the several positions of School Director for twelve consecutive years, Township Constable for six years, Overseer of Highways for six years. He was the first Town Clerk of Sullivant Township, which obtained its first organization through his efforts. He is one of our best citizens, and takes a pride in the advancement of all public interests (Beers 1884:80).

In the accompanying Sibley city directory, Beers (1884:83) lists Eli Harvey as the "*Assistant* Manager of the Sibley interests." Besides Harvey, the Sibley directory for that year also indicates the presence of W. A. Bicket, a "Real Estate Agent" at that time. In 1892, Lake City Publishing Company (1892:211-212) indicates that William A. Bicket was the "general manager of the Hiram Sibley estate in Ford and Livingston Counties" by that date, and states the following about Bicket (Figure 32).

> WILLIAM A. BlCKET, general manager of the Hiram Sibley estate in Ford and Livingston Counties, was born in Toronto, Canada, September 9, 1842, and is a son of James and Jane (Leckie) Bicket, both of whom are now deceased. Our subject's connection with the immense property of which he is now the manager began in August, 1872, when Michael L. Sullivant was proprietor, and since 1878, when Hiram Sibley succeeded to its ownership, he has been general manager… The father of our subject was a native of Scotland and emigrated to Canada in his youth. The mother was born in Canada, and was of Scotch and English descent.
>
> William A. Bicket was reared and educated in Canada, attended the public schools and served a five-years' apprenticeship to the mercantile business in Perth, Ontario. In 1860, he went to Chicago, and was employed as a clerk in a commission house for two years, when he removed to Wabasha County, Minn., where he purchased a farm and was engaged in agricultural pursuits until February, 1864. On the 25th of that month, he enlisted in Company A, Seventh Minnesota Infantry, was detailed on special duty immediately after entering the service and was stationed at Ft. Snelling, where he was in charge of receiving and forwarding recruits to

the front, and continued in that line of duty until mustered out May 11, 1865.

On his return from the war, Mr. Bicket engaged in the grain commission business in Chicago until 1866, when he went to Loda, Ill., and took charge of a distillery,[15] then one of the largest in the United States, continuing there until August, 1872, when he entered the service of Mr. Sullivant in Ford County as commissary for his mammoth farm. On the failure and assignment of his employer early in 1877, he was placed in charge of the property as manager under the assignee, in which capacity he served until October, 1878, when Mr. Sibley came into legal possession of the property. He was retained by the new proprietor in the same capacity and since the death of Mr. Sibley, on the 11th of July, 1888, he has been general manager of the estate in Ford and Livingston Counties.

In politics, Mr. Bicket is a Republican, and has been active and influential in the local campaign work of his party. He is a member of the Ford County Republican Committee, having often served as delegate to district, couuty and State conventions, and has held various official positions. For fourteen years he has been Supervisor of Sullivant Township, was Coroner of Ford County for four years and has held every office at times in the village of Sibley from President of the Board of Education to President of the village. He is a Knight Templar Mason, belonging to Sibley Lodge No. 761, A. F. & A. M.; Gibson Chapter No. 183, U. A. M.; Gibson Council No. 72; and Mt. Olivet Commandery No. 38, K. T. He is also a member of Lott Post No. 70, G. A. R., of Gibson.

It is now twenty years since our subject became identified with the property known as the Hiram Sibley estate and fifteen years since he had full control of the management of the entire estate in Ford and Livingston Counties. The history of the growth and development of the property is covered in a description of the estate published elsewhere in this work, which speaks volumes in praise of the sagacity, fidelity and executive ability of the manager. His just, liberal and impartial treatment of the tenants has won their regard and confidence, while his honest and judicious discharge of duty has been eminently satisfactory to those interested in the estate.

William Bickett was manager of the Sibley Farms through his death in 1896. As the Sibley Area Centennial History Committee (1977) noted, "William Addison Bicket probably had more to do with the history, growth and development of the Sibley Farms and the town of Sibley than any other man."

[15] According to the Vermilion County history, "The nearest trading point was at Loda twelve miles north which was a famous point for trade for all this country until the distillery burned and the building of the railroads drew merchants away from there until now there is nothing left of its former business importance" (Jones 1911:430). An 1869 *Bird's Eye View of Loda* illustrates the distillery on the southwest side of the town.

Currently, it is not known who managed the Sibley Farms from circa 1896 to 1904. It was in 1905 that the next long-term farm manager came into the picture. That individual, named Charles Garfield Rohrer (who was known as "C.G."), managed the farms for 45 years, retiring in 1950 (Figure 33-34).

> Charles G. was born in Canton, Il. In 1880.[16] He was a graduate of Canton High School and attended the U. of I. In Dec. of 1904 he married Mary Ella Brisby, better known as Ella, and in Dec., 1905 they moved to Sibley.[17] … C. G. was one of the first farm managers in Illinois. Harper Sibley gave him credit for guiding the way to better soil management and the raising of more and more livestock on the farms. According to tax records from 1918, Mr. Rohrer earned $4,250 a year as farm manager. At his retirement, his 1949 tax records showed an income of $6,000 a year, plus a house to live in.
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> In 1910 Mr. Rohrer designed and engineered the famous Sibley corn crib which was built to speed up unloading and storage of more ear corn. The crib could hold 125,000 bu. Of ear corn and was the largest in the world. It was originally designed for horse and wagon delivery but was later converted for trucks and tractors. C.G. was greatly relieved when he finally solved an unloading problem by simply twisting the conveyor belts.
>
> In the early 20's Louis Rust, a U. of I. Graduate, was employed to help the Estate grow and furnish its own seed corn. Hybrid seed corn was successfully developed and offered to other concerns. Seed was selected in the fields, brought to the seed house and tested for germination, identified, racked, and moisture-controlled for the next year's seed corn.
>
> Each fall C.G. rode the corn fields counting of the corn rows, ½ for the Estate and ½ for the farmers. The Estate owned the horse he rode. In the summer time he would also ride through he fields checking on weed problems.
>
> Before Mr. Rohrer became manager the mains crops were corn and some oats, with a few head of livestock, but no clover—a crop that a former manager had considered a weed. The crop rotation plan was soon introduced with ¼ of the land seeded in clover to be plowed under. Limestone was applied in great quantities to improve the clover. Improved crop results were immediately noticed. In 1937 the Sibley Farms averaged 70 bu. Of corn per acre against a Ford County average of 50 bu. And a state average of 47 bu.

[16] The Rohrer family had emigrated from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania prior to that date.

[17] Rohrer was married to Ella Brisby, of Canton, at Peoria in 1904. They relocated to Sibley in 1905, "when Mr. Rohrer became manager of the Sibley Estate Farms, a post he held until 1950" (*Gibson Courier*, Thursday, 8-1-1957; http://genealogytrails.com/ill/ford/obits_R.html).

> Before the days of chemical fertilizers, farmers used the crop rotation method; 2 yr. Corn, 1 yr. Oats and 1 yr. Alfalfa or sweet clover (which was plowed under for nitrogen). Beef and dairy cattle were introduced to the farmers so that the by product of manure could be spread over the fields. To secure heifers or steers C.G. made annual trips to Texas in the fall for feeder cattle, which were shipped by rail and distributed among the farms. They were allowed to glean the corn fields and were marketed in the spring.
>
> During C.G.'s tenure, with guidance of U. of I. men, a program of terracing the fields and grass waterways was instigated. Mr. Rohrer was always interested in newer and better farming equipment, including the first combine harvesters.
>
> In 1946 the Rohrers purchased a tract of land from the Sibley Estate, which is still in the family's name. In 1950 C.G. retired as farm manager… After his retirement, Mr. Rohrer worked for Funk's seed Corn Co. presenting promotional programs (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).

During the 1950s, a man named L. L. Norton apparently took over the management of the Sibley Estate Farms for an indeterminate number of years.

The majority of the Sibley Estate Farms remained in the Sibley family hands through the early 1960s. With death of Harper Sibley in April 1959, things began to change (see his obituary, dated April 30, 1959). In the late 1960s and 1970s, the family began selling off some of the lands, and as Harper Sibley's son (Hiram Watson Sibley) reminisced in the 1970s, "the centralized form of farm management established and maintained for so long has been fragmented and brought to an end by decisions made by descendants of the first Hiram Sibley either to donate or sell some of their farms. In 1977, only three sets of descendants of Hiram Sibley continue to own and manage farms in the Sibley area…" (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).[18]

Previously Reported Sites: None reported in the immediate vicinity.

Previous Surveys: None within the immediate vicinity.

Regional Archaeologist Contacted: No regional archaeologist was contacted.

Investigation Techniques: The investigation involved three main components: 1) the recordation of the house and barn at the site; 2) documentary research on the history of

[18] Hiram Watson Sibley worked in the health care industry at the University of Illinois Medical Center in Chicago for much of his life. He retired in 1981, where he was the director of the Center for the Study of Patient Care and Community Health. For a short while after his retirement, he lived in a restored farmhouse immediately to the east of Sibley. He passed away in circa 1985. His son, Tom Sibley, was the only family member to actually pursue farming in the Sibley area. His 1970s herd of buffalo grazing on Illinois lands brought much attention to his local farm. He, too, has passed away.

the property and its owner/occupants; and 3) the preparation of a historical and architectural context by which the significance of the site could be evaluated.

The recordation of the house and barn included the preparation of scaled line drawings and the taking of digital photographs of the buildings. Both plan and sectional views were prepared for both structures. Particular attention was paid to identifying change-through-time in the buildings. Secondary buildings such as the machine sheds, dairy, workshop, and the corncrib were photographed and basic structural data recorded.

The documentary research component of the project focused on establishing the ownership history of the site, background of its owners, and a general historical context for the county. Although a chain-of-title search was not conducted, researchers visited the county courthouse to inspect archival material (probate records, tax records, and deeds) within the Circuit Clerk's Office, Ford County Courthouse, Paxton, Illinois. Additional research in this facility is warranted.

Additional documentary research was done at the public libraries in Gibson City, and Paxton, as well as at the Illinois State Library (Springfield). On-line resources of the Illinois State Archives were consulted for early Sullivant land purchases. A web-based search of pertinent census records was conducted through www.Ancestry.com. Agricultural census data—although of interest, has not yet been researched.

An initial assessment of the Sibley family archival holdings located within the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections at the University of Rochester library, Rochester, New York was undertaken. Initial email contacts with the University archives have resulted in a better understanding of the holdings.

Initial contacts with individuals with knowledge and interest in local history was undertaken. This initial inquiry identified multiple individuals of potential interest for oral history interviews (names on file, Fever River Research). Of particular assistance, and to whom we give thanks, was Merle and Krista McCallister (Sibley).

Additionally, efforts were made to contact the Ford County Historical Society. Unfortunately, these efforts have proved unsuccessful. The extent of their potential holdings relative to the Sullivant and/or Sibley Estate is of interest. One source suggests that some documents may be available through this source (cf. Ford County Historical Society 1984:142).

Time Expended: 138 man-hours (in field)

Sites/Features Found: The Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site is represented by a nineteenth century house, an early twentieth century barn, corncrib, garage, milk house, granary, and windmill (Figures 41-43). Later middle-to-late twentieth century buildings include two machine sheds, multiple metal grain bins, and a storage shed. The house—or at least the core of the existing dwelling—is the oldest building at the site. As will be discussed below, it was constructed in multiple episodes. The foundation remains of several other out buildings are present and discussed below. Appendix I contains a series of

photographic views of the setting, house, barn, and other outbuildings. Appendix II contains the archaeological site form.

Site Specific Research: As with most tenant-operated farmsteads, it is difficult to ascertain who occupied the house, and farmed the accompanying acreage of this farmstead over the years. Assuming that this is Farm Number 96 (as potentially depicted on the painted-over sign located on the barn), the farmstead may have been occupied and worked by John Stephani during the later years of the nineteenth century. According to the "1892 Corn Rents For Sibley Estate Farms" (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977), Sephani's 54 acres of corn produced only 27.75 bushels per acre that year. Another family named associated with this particular farmstead is the Charles Henry Rohrer (also known as "Chub") family. Chub was the son of Charles. G. (or "C.G.") Roherer—the long time, early twentieth century manager of the Sibley Estate farms. Chub was born in July 1911 and

> Graduated from Sibley High School and attended the U. of I. For 2 yrs. where he was a Big Ten athlete. He returned to Sibley to raise commercial Long Island ducklings and chickens in the barn on Rte. 165 [located at the corner of Routes 165 and 47; the Sibley Area Centennial History Committee (1977) has a picture of this barn.] The barn was a very modern, complete building with living quarters, bath facilities, running water, heat, and electricity. Charles, also known as Chub, owned a feed mill which ground grain for area farmers as well as his own needs. He farmed 240 aces north of the barn and after his marriage to Leah Ward, a Sibley school teacher, he bought the house and land next to the present Texaco station. Later he was to also farm the section of land now farmed by John Ames [the location of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site.] He raised purebred Angus cattle. He was one of the first Sibley farmers to raise hogs, and this venture led to more Sibley farmers raising hogs. Charles H. Rohrer died of a sudden heart attack in Aug. of 1956 at 45 years of age[19] (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).

This account suggests that Chub lived on his own farm, and only farmed the lands in Section 3, and may not have occupied the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site. The Ford County Historical Society (1984) contains a similar, re-written and/or updated entry. This, and other accounts suggest that the existing farm was occupied and farmed by a John Ames after the death of Chub Rohrer in 1956.

Land assessor's plats published by the Rockford Map Publishers Company indicate that all of Section 3 was in Anne Sibley's name in 1966, in Hiram Sibley's name from 1977 through 1990, and in Hiram and Anne Sibley's name in 1992 and 1996. The next available plat, dated 2004, indicates the IDNR ownership of Section 3 (and the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site) at that time.

[19] Charles and Leah Rohrer had one child—Robert Charles (1941-xxx). Robert attended Spartan Aeronautical School in Oklahoma for one year, and then returned to Sibley at which time he began a carpentry contracting business.

House: The residence at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead is located on the northeastern corner of the site, facing east and being set some distance back from Route 47. The house we see today was built in multiple episodes and has evolved considerably from its original configuration as a small two-story, board-and-battened sided dwelling with one room on each floor. Floor plans illustrating the evolution of the house through time have been attached as Figures 44 through 53, and should be referenced in conjuncture with the house's textual description. The description addresses existing conditions first. A summary of suspected construction episodes follows. Accompanying photographs of the house are attached in Appendix I (Figures 61-80).

The main block of the existing dwelling consists of a two-story, frame, side-gabled I-House with a three-bay façade and a simple "two-over-two-room" floor plan with no central hallway. A partial-width, hip-roofed porch is centered on the front (east) elevation. A single-story service extends off the rear (west) side of the main block. Additions have been made along both the north and south sides of the service wing, the most recent being a large bedroom addition on the north, which possibly was built in the 1970s. The exterior walls of the house presently are covered with fiberboard siding, which overlays an earlier generation of beveled weatherboard siding (wood) on the earlier sections of the dwelling. The existing roofing is composition shingles. Most sections of the house have brick foundations, one exception being the 1970s-era addition, which rests on concrete block.

The front porch on the house measures approximately 8'x16', has brick foundations, and a frame superstructure with a half-hip roof. The porch has solid knee walls as opposed to a balustrade. The area above the knee walls originally was left open but later was enclosed with ribbons of storm windows. The porch can be entered through a doorway on its south side. The ceiling is covered with narrow beadboard, while the deck has wood flooring. Based on its general character and the materials used its construction, the porch dates to the first half of the twentieth century. It is not known whether an earlier generation of porch or stoop may have occupied this same location. However, the fact that the existing porch covers an original basement window suggests that any previous porch/stoop would have been shorter than that now present. Pictures of early Sibley houses indicate the presence of a small, unenclosed front porch.

An exterior doorway off the front porch serves as the formal entrance to the house and opens into the southern of the two rooms on the first floor of the main block. This door is a six-panel door, with the upper four panels being glass. This door opens into Room 100 (see attached floor plans) which measures 19'-1"x15'-2 and is illuminated by two windows—one located on the east and the other on the south. A wide doorway in the south wall of the room leads into the rear wing, while a much narrower doorway on the north accesses the northern room on this floor of the main block. An enclosed stairway leading to the upper floor of the houses rises along the north wall of Room 100. This stairway is not accessible from Room 101, though a storage closet located beneath it is. Room 101 served as the parlor/living room in the home throughout its occupancy. The northern two-thirds of this room represents the first-floor chamber of the original house, which later was expanded to the south (a topic discussed in more detail below).

The northern room on the first floor of the main block (Room 101) measures 9'-6"x15'-2" and presently has a window on its east side. A second window formerly was present on the north side of the room but later was enclosed on the interior (though the window sashes were left in place and are still visible on the exterior of the house). An older walk-in closet is located along the east side of the room. A second closet—added when the 1970s-era addition was made—can be accessed through a doorway in the west wall. This doorway is suspected to occupy the same location as an original (third) window opening. Room 101 was last used as a bedroom and may always have served this function. The ceiling height in Rooms 100 and 101 is only 7'-0", which is exceptionally low.

The rear service wing proper (excluding the additions flanking it) presently consists of a single large room (Room 105) most recently used as a combination kitchen/dining room. The space formerly was divided amongst two rooms, which were built in separate episodes. The western of these two rooms (Room 102) actually is believed to have begun its history as a detached summer kitchen and was ultimately joined to the main house through the addition of a connector—the second of two rooms mentioned (Room 103). This evolution will be discussed in more detail below. The existing combination kitchen/dining room (Room 105) measures 11'-2"x25'-3" and has a single window opening, which is located on the west wall. There is evidence of two earlier, and now abandoned, window openings on the north wall of the room. Doorways on the east side of the kitchen/dining room access the living room (100A) and the stairway leading to the upper floor, while another door on the north opens into the 1970s-era addition. Three doorways on the east side of Room 105 access three smaller chambers added when the wing was expanded to the south in the middle twentieth century: a laundry room on the west (Room 104); a side entrance porch/"mud room" in the center (Room 106); and a bathroom on the east (Room 107). The floor level on the side entrance porch/mud room is lower than in the rooms adjoining it. The porch has an exterior doorway on its south side, a closet on the north, and a stairway on the east leading down to the basement.

The 1970s-era addition consists of a single large bedroom and multiple closets. The bedroom itself measures 19'-11'-½"x 14'-3-½" at its widest points and is illuminated by four windows (two on the north and two on the west). A large walk-in closet occupies the southwest corner of the room. Three small closets are present on the eastern side of the bedroom.

The second floor of the house is accessed by means of a narrow stairway that ascends from the kitchen/dining room (Room 105). The existing stairway has a straight run of steps. It is a second-generation stairway, having replaced an earlier stairway that occupied the same location but had a set of winder steps, which originally was accessible from Room 100 (as opposed to Room 105). Paint lines on a section of wall planking preserved when the new stairway was installed provide evidence for the original stairway's configuration (with a very small under-the-stairs closet). The existing stairway rises to a short hallway, which separates two bedrooms. The southern bedroom (Room 200) is the larger of the two and measures 16'-3"x15'-3" at its widest points. A walk-in closet is located in the northeast corner of the bedroom. The room currently has three windows present (one each on the east, west, and south walls). However, there is

evidence for two additional original window openings that have been enclosed. One of these enclosed openings is located on the east wall and appears to have been abandoned during the initial expansion of the house early in the twentieth century. The second opening is located on the west wall was closed off when the connector joining the main house and summer kitchen was built. It is unclear as to whether these windows were closed off at the same time, or whether the west window may have persisted a bit longer than the one in the east wall.

The southern bedroom on the upper floor (Room 201) measures 9'-11"x15'-3". It has one window on its east side and another on the north. A third window opening was once present on the west side of the room, but this was converted to a door opening after the 1970s-era addition was constructed in order to allow access to an attic space. A doorway in the southeast corner of Room 201 opens into a small walk-in closet, which has a window on its east side. The ceiling height on the second floor of the house is same as that on the floor below—7'-0".

The house has a partial basement beneath it, which can be accessed via a stairway descending from the side entrance porch (Room 106). This stairway opens into a basement room (Room 001) that measures 8'-5" wide and extends the length of service wing (being located below Room 105). Room 001 represents a basement expansion and was excavated after the wing itself was in place. This is evident from the concrete walls ringing the north, south, and west sides of the room, which step in 13" to 16" from the brick foundations supporting the wing.[20] The room originally had two window openings on its west end and a third window on the north. None of these windows remain in service however. One of those on the west has been bricked up, while the other has been narrowed and converted to a coal chute. The northern window opening has not been modified per se but is now blocked by the 1970s-era addition. Room 001 provided space for various mechanical systems (water heater, water pump, furnace, etc.) and also was used for laundry purposes prior to the provision for a washer and drier in Room 104.

A doorway on the east side of Room 001 opens into a second basement room (Room 000), which lies beneath Room 100 and represents the original cellar in the house. Room 000 measures 12'-10"x14'-10". The east and south walls of the room are brick, while those on the west and north are clay tile. The north and west walls presumably were of brick originally; it is not understood why they were replaced with clay tile. The ceiling in Room 000 is covered with plaster and wood lath (unlike Room 001, where the ceiling is unfinished). The fact that the wood lath is applied with wire-drawn nails suggests that the ceiling was enclosed post-1890. Room 000 has two original window openings present—one of the east and one of the south—but both of these have become encapsulated within the body of the house due to later additions. The southern window continues to emit light into Room 000, however, due to the presence of another window, added when the house was expanded, centered upon it. The ceiling height in Room 000 is 5'-8", as measured from the concrete floor to the bottom of the joists. It is not clear how Room 000 was accessed prior to the addition of 001. One possibility is that it was

[20] The concrete walls were necessary since the brick foundations did not go deep enough to allow a basement room. The excavation for Room 001 was inset sufficiently from the brick foundations to prevent undermining the latter, and the concrete walls were then poured.

entered by means of an exterior bulkhead stairway located along the west foundation wall of the original house. Unfortunately, any evidence of this bulkhead would have been removed when the foundation wall in question was rebuilt with clay tile and Room 001 was excavated.

In respect to construction materials, the original part of the house was framed with circular-sawn, non-surfaced, white pine lumber attached with machine-cut nails. The floor joists on the lower floor are 2"x6"s and set 1'-11" on-center (on average). The flooring is 1"x5-¾" tongue-and-groove pine. Identical joists and flooring was used for the upper story. The ends of the floor joists on the second floor rest on a 1"x4" ribbon notched into the outer face of the wall studs. The studs, which are 2"x4"s, are widely spaced and have 2"x4" rails running between them. These rails provided a nailing surface for securing the board-and-batten siding that covered the exterior of the original house. The original flooring is 1"x5-¾", tongue-and-groove white pine. This has been overlaid with narrower (3-¼") yellow pine flooring, which presumably was installed when the main block was expanded.

The ceiling joists on the second floor of the main block are nominal-sized 2"x4" (1-¾x3-¾ actual), surfaced-four-sides, yellow pine placed on 16" centers. These are attached with wire-drawn nails and date to the expansion of the house. The existing roof over the main block dates to the expansion (if not later) and is framed with nominal-sized, 2"x4", yellow pine rafters, which are surfaced on all four sides. The lower ends of the rafters are notched around a 2"x4" plate. Their upper ends are butted together, with no ridge board being present. Collar beams run between the rafters. A mixture of materials was used for the roof sheathing. Some of the sheathing is 1"x5", tongue-and-groove, white pine planking which previously had been used as wall planking—as evidenced by its being painted on one side and also bearing the impressions (or "ghosts") of wood lath (indicting a plastering episode post-dating the initial painting). The planking in question matches that encapsulated on the north wall of Room 100 when the existing stairway to the second floor was installed, and it is presumed to be wall planking salvaged from other parts of the original house. The remaining roof sheathing is 1"x12", vertical-sawn, non-surfaced, soft pine (white pine?). Additionally, several pieces of what appear to be remnant wide plank siding (from the original board-and-batten siding) are also present. All of the sheathing is set with a 2" gap between the boards, which indicates that the roof originally was covered with wood shingles.

The materials used in the construction of the rear wing vary, depending on the room in question. The west end of the wing—which is older—was built with full-dimensional, non-surfaced white pine lumber, which was edged with a circular saw and planked with a vertical saw. The walls studs are 2"x4"s, the ceiling joists 2"x6"s placed on 16" centers, and the rafters 2"x4"s placed on 24"-25" centers. The roof sheathing is 1"x5", vertical-sawn, white pine planking laid with a 1-½" to 2" gap between the boards. No ridge board is present. All of the original lumber in this section of the wing was attached with machine-cut nails, including the wood lath used for the plastered walls and ceiling on the interior. The east half of the wing is constructed with nominal-sized, surfaced-two-sides, yellow pine lumber, which is attached with wire-drawn, nails. The ceiling joists here measure 1-5/8"x3-5/8" and are laid 16" on center. The rafters measure 1-5/8"x3-1/2" and have 25" centers.

Structural evidence indicates that the house at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead experienced at least five major construction episodes, which are outlined below:

Episode I: The initial date of construction for the residence is not known with certainty. The materials used in its construction broadly are indicative of the period 1860-1890, though documentary research suggests that the house likely was erected during the middle part of this timeframe—in the 1870s. It is our belief that this early house was constructed during the later years of the Sullivant ownership of this property (circa 1870-77).

The original house was a small, 1½-story dwelling which measured 14'-2" (north/south) by 16'-2" (east/west) and whose exterior walls were covered with vertical board-and-batten siding. The exterior of the building was painted (in what appeared to be a dark brown or barn red color). The house had one room on each floor (Rooms 100 and 200). Access between these rooms was provided by means of a corner stairway with winder steps located in the southwest corner of Room 100. This early dwelling is similar in form to that structure identified as the "High House" at the Manske-Niemann farmstead in rural Montgomery County (Stratton 2002). This 1-1/2-story, three-bay, side-gabled frame dwelling house form is common among working class Mid-Atlantic and Piedmont settlers.

The interior walls and ceilings of this early house were covered with 1"x5" tongue-and-groove pine planking. A tar paper was applied to the interior wall surface prior to the planking being installed. This tar paper would have provided a degree of insulation (wind barrier) and also served as a vapor barrier. The interior walls on the first floor initially were papered, except for those within the stairway. The original stairway wall finish consisted of "wall paper" which consisted of old newsprint (which was later covered with commercially manufactured wall paper) applied over a non-painted plank surface. The ceiling, which was also covered with planks, was also painted (as suggested by the planking reused as sheathing on the existing roof). The walls on the second floor potentially were papered as in the stair hall. Later on, the walls on the first floor were plastered. In order to do this plastering, wood lath was applied over the original wall/ceiling planking (being laid diagonally across the walls and attached with machine-cut nails). The second story room had a garret ceiling, with low walls along the east and west sides of the dwelling. Access to the single-room cellar was probably made via an exterior set of steps located along the west wall. One of the unanswered questions regarding this original dwelling is the location of the original chimney.

At a slightly later date, it appears that this house was "modernized" by the removal of the battens and the application of a narrow weatherboard siding over the exterior vertical boards. The weatherboard encapsulated the vertical board siding on the original house, which still remains *in situ* on the east, west, and partial north walls of Room 100. The ghosts of this siding (and the regular interval of machine cut nail holes that once held it in place) is evident along the upper portion of the west wall encapsulated by the current roof system.

Potentially at this same time, the interior plank wall finishes were covered with lath (applied with machine cut nails at a 45-degree angle to the floor) and plaster. Presumably, the ceilings were painted and the walls received wallpaper. This modification may have occurred during the early years of the Sibley family ownership (circa 1878 to 1890).

A detached outbuilding was located directly to the rear (west) of the house. This outbuilding—suspected to have served as a summer kitchen—may have been contemporary with the house or was built soon after the latter. The interior walls and ceiling of the summer kitchen were covered with plaster and lath, the lath being applied with machine-cut nails. An interior brick chimney was located along the west wall of the summer kitchen.

Episode II: Very early in the twentieth century (circa 1895-1910), the original house was expanded to the north and south, creating an I-House form. This resulted in the enlargement of Rooms 100 and 200 and the addition of Rooms 101 and 201. As part of this remodeling, the garret ceiling on the second story was removed and replaced with a full-height ceiling (changing the house from a 1½-story to 2-story structure). At this time it appears that the earlier weatherboard siding was removed and/or replaced with newer siding over the entire enlarged dwelling. As part of this work, the majority of the wall and ceiling planking (and underlying tar paper)—and earlier episode of lath and plaster wall finish—in the original house was torn out and replaced by plaster and lath. Some of the original wall planking survived *in situ* behind the stairway to the upper floor, however, since the stairway was not modified at this time.

Episode III: The next construction episode involved the connection of the main house with the summer kitchen, creating an attached service wing. This involved the construction of a new room in between the two buildings—and may have occurred in conjunction with Episode II. The new room probably functioned as an enlarged kitchen and/or a dining room (103). Once integrated into the house, the summer kitchen is suspected to have continued as a kitchen (Room 102). One change made to the space, however, was the removal of the original brick chimney on the west wall and the erection of a new chimney along the common wall between it and Room 103. This chimney likely vented a cooking stove in Room 102 and possibly a heating stove in Room 103. The original stairway to the upper floor also was removed, being replaced by the existing set of steps leading up from Room 103. A porch was added along the south side of the wing at (or around) this same time. The west end of the porch was enclosed to create a small chamber (Room 104), which may have served either as a pantry, "wash room,", or woodshed accessible from Room 102. [This may be similar to small enclosed sections of large rear porches common among houses in upstate New York, and northern Illinois—which is often referred to as *New England Extended*.] The existing front porch on the house may also have been added during this construction episode, which is believed to have been completed by circa 1930 (possibly having being undertaken over the course of the preceding decade).

Episode IV: In the decade or so following World War II, the porch on the south side of the rear wing was removed and replaced by a wider, enclosed extension that was even with the south wall of the main block. This extension allowed Room 104 to be expanded and also provided space for a side entrance porch/mud room (Room 106) and bathroom (Room 107). A third generation chimney is believed to have been added to the rear wing around this time as well. This chimney was located on the east side of the common wall between Rooms 102 and 103 and extended into the basement room (001) below. It is suspected to have vented a central heating system. The coal chute on the west end of Room 001 likely was added in association with the installation of the furnace. Oral tradition suggests that the Sibley family modernized their tenant houses with the addition of bathrooms by circa 1950.

Episode V: The final major construction episode occurred when the large bedroom addition was constructed on the north side of the house. As noted above, this addition is speculated to have been built in the 1970s. Perhaps in conjuncture with this addition—or maybe later—the wall separating Rooms 102 and 103 was removed creating the existing combined kitchen/dining room (105). The plaster-and-lath walls and ceilings throughout the older sections of the house also eventually were covered with ½" drywall in recent decades.

There remain a number of unanswered questions about this house. One of these involves the locations of all of the door and window openings in the original dwelling. Although we were able to determine the location of some of these during the field investigation, the location of others remains unknown due to the extensive remodeling that has occurred (such as the wholesale removal of the south wall of the original house and the extensive removal of the original wall/ceiling planking). Another issue involves the presence or absence of chimneys in the main block. No evidence of chimneys were found during the investigation, yet it is reasonable to assume that one or more chimneys would have been present, unless the heating stoves in this section of the house simply were vented with exposed piping—an arrangement not unheard of. The method of accessing the original cellar room also remains in question, as touched on above.

Barn: A large frame multi-purpose (or general purpose) barn is located near the center of the farmstead. Floor plans and sectional view of the barn have been attached as Figures 54 through 55, and should be referenced in conjuncture with the barn's textual description. Accompanying photographs of the barn are attached in Appendix I (Figures 76-115).

The barn measures 56'-2" (north/south) by 52'-3" (east/west) and is oriented north/south. The central core of the barn is taller than the remainder and is covered by a front-gable roof. Lower side "wings" wrap around this central core on the east, west, and south; those on the east and west have dropped shed roofs, while that on the south has a half-hip roof. Despite the differential rooflines, these wings do not represent later additions but rather are integral to the original structure. The exterior walls of the barn are covered with vertical board-and-batten siding, while wood shingles (attached with

round-headed machine cut nails) cover the roof.[21] The foundations are of poured concrete. Due to the slope of the terrain on which the barn sits, the foundations are more exposed at the rear (south) end of the building than on the north. The interior face of the foundations is battered (sloped). Several concrete buttresses are present on the west side of the barn to help stabilize the foundation wall at those locations.

The north elevation of the barn represents the "front" of the structure. This elevation features three personnel and/or livestock doorways on the main level, all of which are equipped with Dutch doors. A large mow door, which is hinged at the bottom, is centered in the gable end wall. A hay bonnet (or hood) projects out from the peak of the roof, sheltering a hayfork track and the mow door below. The bonnet is a simple hanging gable, lacking the side walls found on some barns. Two small grain doors are located above and to either side of the central entrance door on the north elevation. Two loft-level doors also are present on this elevation; these are located at opposing ends of the elevation, being centered within the lower shed-roofed "wings." Another personnel/livestock doorway is present on the west elevation, and yet another is found on the opposite side of the barn. The latter doorways—as well as the western of those on the north elevation—all have concrete ramps leading up to them. The top surfaces of these ramps formerly were covered with heavy planking that was nailed down to 2"x4"s set in channels within the concrete. The purpose of the planking presumably was to provide traction (and perhaps a more forgiving surface) for the cows and horses moving in and of the barn. Two 12' wide doorways are present on the south elevation of the barn. These allow access to the large feeding/loafing area in the southern half of the barn. Both doorways have large sliding doors. The window openings in the barn are all equipped with a single 4-light single sash. Most of the windows slide open sideways, though some have been altered to function as hopper windows.

A small, gable-roofed, frame addition is present on the east side of barn. This addition served as a connector between the barn and a now-removed silo. The eastern wall of the connector is set at an angle to meet or align with the silo. The silo rested on 16"-wide concrete foundations with an outer diameter of approximately 13'. An examination of the rubble scattered around the foundations indicated that the silo was constructed with 4"-thick tile manufactured by the National Fire Proofing Company (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) and impressed NATCO.

One of the more interesting features found on the exterior of the barn is a sign or placard with a number painted on it, located on the upper part of the east elevation, near the northeast corner. Although this number has been over-painted, the paint on the sign is somewhat deteriorated, and the number "96" appears to be present. This is believed to be the number assigned to the farmstead during the era it was managed by the Sibley family. As noted in the historical section of the report, Sibley Estate Farms consisted of over 100 tenant farms at its peak.

The interior plan of the barn is well designed and is the very definition of multi-purpose. Space was provided for a milk parlor, horse stables, hay storage, granaries (for

[21] These nails appear to have been zinc coated, and may be similar to those advertised in the February 1906 issue of the American Carpenter and Builder.

small grain storage), and a large loafing/feed area. The northern half of the barn is roughly divided into three main sections, each of which can be accessed through the Dutch doors on the north elevation. The western third (or wing) was used for the stabling of horses originally. Four large box stalls are present. Averaging nearly 7' wide, the stalls run north-to-south and are separated by plank partitions. The stalls face onto a line of feed bunks running along their east side. The northernmost feed bunk still retains its original configuration and has a deep box for hay and smaller, shallow box meant to hold small grains (i.e. oats)—an arrangement tailored to the feeding of horses. The original feed bunks in the other three stalls have been replaced by ones having a shallow box divided into thirds (for grains) over which an angled, slatted hay manger rises. The low height of these replacement bunks suggests that they were not intended for horses but rather smaller livestock, potentially young steers (?). Tie-downs for three separate animals were present in each of these retro-fitted stalls. They likely were installed after draft horses stopped being used on the farm. The bunks could be filled by means of a narrow feed aisle running along their east side. A ladder and trap door leading to hay loft is located at the southern end of this aisle. The floors of the stalls are covered with 2"x12" planking, which was nailed to 2"x4" nailers set in the underlying concrete floor. A shallow gutter, measuring 10" wide and 2-½" deep, runs along on the west side of the stalls. This gutter presumably was intended to draw off urine from the stalls and yet, oddly, it does not appear to have an outlet from the barn (None was found in investigation). A wide service or litter aisle runs along the west side of the stalls, and it was along this that horses were moved in and out of the barn, via the exterior doorways at each end. Gated partitions extend across the aisle, being aligned to stall divisions. These partitions essentially extended the depth of the stalls and perhaps were intended to keep the horses separated from one another when they were being harnessed. A line of tack hooks runs along the west wall. There are three different types of hooks present: cast iron ones, which are first generation; tubular steel ones, which are longer than the cast iron ones and can pivot; and one hook made of bar steel. The lower part of the north, south, and east walls is covered with heavy vertical planking to serve as rub guard against livestock. A trap door is present in the ceiling above the service aisle; this would have allowed hay to be tossed down from side loft above.

A connecting aisle extends off the northeast corner of the stall area and runs to the eastern side of the barn. Two granaries face onto this aisle. The granaries were intended to hold small grains and were filled by means of overhead chutes connected to exterior grain doors mentioned earlier. At a relatively recent date, a saddle rack has been installed in front of the eastern granary, blocking the doorway accessing it. Another feature of note in the aisle is an exceptionally sturdy gate at its western end. The gate is framed with full-dimensional, non-surfaced, oak lumber and has steel pipes that can pivot open like a stanchion. It probably was used to secure livestock for medical care and/or inspection (such as dehorning, castration or other medical procedures), though the narrowness of the aisle would seem to militate against its use for large animals. The location and materials used in its construction suggests that this feature was not original to the barn.

The eastern third of the north half of the barn served as a milking parlor. It measures 15'-7" wide and 31' long (as measured from the interior face of the wall framing) and has a concrete floor. The east side of the parlor serves as a wide service or

litter aisle for both livestock and personnel and extends the length of the parlor. Cows could be brought into the parlor through exterior doorways on the north and east. A line of stanchions facing a feed bunk runs the length of the parlor, being positioned along its west side. A total of nine stanchions are present. Manufactured by the Louden Manufacturing Company, the stanchions are of steel construction principally, though they do have strips of wood lining their interior surfaces (to prevent the metal from cutting into the cow). They stanchions are hung with chains from a wood frame built with 2"x4"s.

The stanchions located within the milking parlor are marked "LOUDEN" with a potential model number ("1191") and partially legible patent date (potentially "8-1-1?" or "9-1-1?). Unfortunately, the patent date is not completely legible. During our initial field inspection we thought the last number might depict the number "14" for reference to the year 1914. Louden first started producing similar metal stanchions in late 1905 or early 1906, and by circa 1910 he had sold over 50,000 of these stanchions. Louden filed several patents for stanchions beginning at that time. Although he filed for a patent for a quick release model (similar to those in this barn) in 1907, the patent was not issued until April 1911 (U.S. Patent Office). In 1916, Louden was issued a patent for stanchions with wood linings, similar to those in the barn (U.S. Patent Office). The 1916 Louden catalog illustrates the "Wood-Lined Steel Stanchions" presumably used in the Sibley barn (with a patent date of August 1, 1916) (Louden 1916). The patent date on the stanchions in the Sibley barn may, indeed, reference this 1916 patent date. It is interesting to note that the stanchions in the Sibley barn were set in a wooden frame (like those illustrated in the earlier patent), and not within a tubular steel frame (illustrated with the later patent). This may suggest that the stanchions were constructed (and the barn) in circa 1910-15.

The feed bunk in the milk parlor is of poured concrete construction and has a concave profile. Such monolithic concrete mangers for dairy cattle were being marketed heavily by such companies as Louden during the later half of the first decade of the twentieth century. A narrow feed aisle runs along the west side of the bunk. A ladder for accessing the loft is present at the south end of this aisle. Hay for the cattle could be brought into the parlor via a sliding door in the west wall, which opened directly into the main hay storage area in the center of the barn, or through a large trapdoor in the ceiling above the east side of the parlor. The cattle also were fed silage, as evidenced by the presence of the silo foundation (and connector building) off the southeast corner of the barn. The silage appears to have been brought into the milking parlor's feed aisle by way of a raised walkway (no longer extant) that ran along the outside of the milking parlor's south wall. A non-original doorway to access this walkway is located along the south end of the feed aisle.

The wide litter aisle was serviced by an overhead iron track system that once operated a litter carrier. This track ran the entire length of the milking parlor (north to south) and extended through a doorway located on the south wall of the litter aisle, terminating approximately 5-6' within the adjacent loafing area to the south. This litter carrier was designed to either dump directly onto the lowered concrete floor within the loafing shed, or within a wagon (or manure spreader) parked at this location. It is unclear as to how this litter carrier interacted with the raised walkway associated with the adjacent silo. Urine from the cattle was drawn off by means of a gutter (4" deep and 10"

wide) that runs nearly the entire length of the parlor and drains into the feeding/loafing area on the south end of the barn. The wall and ceiling surfaces in the parlor are painted with heavy coat of whitewash. Such whitewashing was required under Federal legislation passed in circa 1926 regulating Grade "A" standards for dairy products. It is perhaps not coincidental that the words "PAINTED 8-27" is neatly written on a beam on the north end of the parlor. The window sashes on the east side of the milking parlor have been modified. The original windows in the milking parlor were sliding sash similar to those in the wing to the west. Sometime during the later 1930s or 1940s, these windows were retrofitted with replacement "ventilating windows" manufactured by the Starline Company. The metal replacements, which were designed to pivot inward, were impressed "STARLINE / HARVARD, ILLINOIS / PAT. NO. 2112280 OTHERS PENDING." The patent for these "Ventilating Windows" was issued to Starline in March 1938. Similar, metal-sided ventilating windows were available from Louden as early as 1916 (Louden 1916:146).

As previously noted, the southern half of the barn served as an open feeding/loafing area for cattle. Due to the slope in the terrain, the concrete floor in this part of the barn is more than 3' lower than that in north half of the barn. The floor slopes to the south to facilitate drainage. The principal feature in this space is a large, three-sided feed bunk/manger that wraps around a frame platform projecting off the main hay storage area in the center of the barn. The feed bunk/manger is partially demolished but much of still remains intact. As built, it ran for approximately 40' linear feet and consisted of a lower feed box (3-½" deep and 1'-8" wide) and angled, slatted manger above. A frame platform formerly ran between the east side of the feed bunk and the doorway accessing the connector to the silo. This platform would have eased the movement of silage into the milk parlor. Although little physical evidence of this raised walkway was present, a local informant verified its existence. [22]

The central part of the north half of the barn serves as a hay storage area. It is not a loft in a traditional sense, considering that hay was stacked from the ground level upwards. Side lofts are present, however, above the stalls, milk parlor, and granaries. It would appear that these side lofts probably were more work areas (for access to the east and west wings for dropping down hay) than for the actual storage of hay. The bulk of the hay storage was in the multi-story central storage area under the gable roof. Considered together, these spaces accommodated a massive amount of hay, a large volume of which still remains in the barn. The central area has a concrete floor like the stall area and milk parlor adjoining it. Hay was brought into the barn by means of an overhead hay carrier, the carriage for which ran along a metal track following the ridge of the principal gable roof. The rope for pulling the carriage passes down a frame chase located on the south gable end. This chase also doubles as the ladder that access the overhead work platform located in the south gable (for operation of the hay carrier). This chase continues down to the floor level in the feed/loafing area (extending beneath the floor of the loft). The fact that this chase opens into the loafing shed area (where there is little room for the use of a horse powered lift) suggests that the hayfork was operated by mechanical means (i.e. engine or tractor), rather than horse power (as was the case in

[22] The southern and eastern sides of the feed bunk/manger—and the raised walkway to the silo—were demolished in 2002 in order to allow the removal of hay from the barn (Daryl Coates, personal communication).

many other barns). The rope chase was built in such manner to also function as a ladder for accessing a service platform at the south end of the hayfork track. The carriage for the hayfork was marked "The F. E. MYERS & BRO. CO. / O.K. / UNLOADER / ASHLAND, O. / STEEL BEARING." It also had the numbers H 427 embossed on a pulley wheel, and another partially illegible number ("?92") embossed on the main mechanism. The F. E. Myers and Brother's *Ashland Pump and Hay-Tool Work*s of Ashland, Ohio was an early innovator in hay carriers. Their "O.K." carrier was first patented in November 1884 (with use of a wooden track). By the early years of the twentieth century, the OK hay carrier was in common use with a metal track (Myers and Brother n.d.).

The barn is of plank-frame construction and was built with nominal-sized, surfaced-four-sides, yellow pine lumber. In contrast to earlier timber-frame construction, which involved large (often hand-hewn) structural members joined with mortise and tenon joinery, plank framing utilized lighter, sawn lumber that was nailed or bolted together. Larger posts and beams, where required, were of composite construction, as were roof trusses. This philosophy is amply illustrated by the design of the barn in question. The wall posts on the side wings, for instance consist of doubled-up 2"x4"s (1-½"x3-½" actual), while those for the taller central core are tripled-up 2"x6"s (1-½"x5–½" actual). 2"x10" beams run between the upper part of the posts in the central core, and the ends of these are sandwiched in between the 2"x6"s comprising the posts. Extending off each 2"x10" beam are two 2"x6"s, one of which is nailed to a rafter and the other to the post. Combined, these structural members serve as a truss to prevent the outward movement of the walls and also secure the roof. Diagonal braces consisting of 2"x6"s toe-nailed in place run between the posts and beams. The floor joists for the loft are 2"x6"s and are supported by 2"x4" and 2"x6" ribbons (depending on location). The rafters in the barn are 2"x6"s set 2' on center. The roof span over the side wings is supported by a light-frame purlin system, consisting a 2"x6" purlin and 2"x6" queen post. The purlin posts are aligned with the posts in the central core of the barn. The roof sheathing is ¾"x12" boards laid with a 2" gap in between. For more details on the character of the framing system employed in the barn, reference the sectional view attached as Figure 55.

As noted above, the barn at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site was constructed using modern, non-traditional construction techniques that employed an "additive" process using dimensional lumber. Referred to as Plank Construction, this technique created large timbers built-up by laminated 2" planks fastened together with nails. As a 1917 Jamesway Catalog notes, "but of late years the plank frame barn, in one form or another, has become the most popular" (Jamesway 1917:25). The catalog notes that "its construction is not as well known as some of the other types, [and] the principal reasons for the building of the plank frame barn are: 1) the fact that it saves in cost of lumber. 2) It provides far more storage room in the hayloft. 3) It is much more easily built than any other type, if the correct method of erection is followed." By 1917, Jamesway was popularizing a unique form of roof truss that opened up the loft. This loft truss was not present in the Sibley Barn. The plank frame construction method used in the Sibley Barn was easier to construct, and required less skilled labor than contemporary heavy timber framing methods.

The barn at this site is not a traditional structure typical of the earlier generation of farming (nineteenth century). Several aspects of its construction, such as the overall uniformity of its design and framing methods, as well as the standardized placement of framing members and the location of window and door openings, distinguish this structure from its timber-frame predecessors. As discussed earlier, it seems likely that the General Purpose barn located at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site may very well have been architect and/or engineer designed. Unlike earlier traditionally constructed agricultural outbuildings, the barn's design very much has a "scientific" and/or architect-designed feel to it. Several aspects of this structure hint at its professional design, and include 1) well integrated layout, 2) distinctive framing techniques, 3) plan well integrated into the surrounding landscape utilizing natural drainage, and 4) numerous "modern" conveniences, such as electrical lighting rod system. Additionally, the Sibley barn exhibits evidence of a technical knowledge of design that took serious note to lateral stresses (wind shear). Similarly, other Sibley-owned structures appear to have been architect and/or engineer designed, such as the large corncrib constructed in nearby Sibley (at about the same time period). This extremely large, industrial, early twentieth century corncrib was designed by the University of Illinois-trained, Sibley farm manager (Rohrer), who may have been responsible for other early twentieth century structures. If Rohrer was not responsible for the barn design, another potential source to consider is the University of Illinois (which had one of its first experimental agricultural stations located at Sibley).

The actual date of construction for the barn is not known. However, it is suspected to date to circa 1910-1915. This assessment is based on the design of the barn, materials used in its construction, and the patent dates of certain equipment present. Of particular interest in relating to the potential date of construction is the Louden stanchions, and their use on a wooden frame. Steel frame stanchions would have been more likely in use during the later 1910s and 1920s. Similarly, the barn appears to have been constructed without the use of a silo—which would have been extremely common during the later 1910s and 1920s. Taking everything into consideration, it would appear that this barn was constructed sometime during the pre-World War I era of agricultural prosperity (potentially as early as circa 1910).

Other Extant Outbuildings: Besides the house and barn, several additional outbuildings are present at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site (Figures 122-147). Immediately adjacent to the rear of the house is a small frame outbuilding, which measures approximately 10'x14' in size. This structure is of late twentieth century construction, and appears to represent a storage shed. Located to the south of the house, immediately across the driveway, is located a frame garage and milk house. Associated with these two structures is a concrete capped well with overhead steel-framed windmill. The garage measures 20'2" wide (north/south) by 24'2" long (east/west). The structure has a gable roof, with two large sliding vehicular doors located within the east gable end wall. The building, which has a concrete foundation, was constructed using dimensional lumber, probably during the early years of the twentieth century.

The adjacent milk house is a small frame structure with board-and-batten siding that measures 6'2" (north/south) by 8'2" (east/west). It sits approximately 2'4" to the north of the garage, with the west end of both structures aligned. The structure has a

concrete foundation, concrete floor, and interior concrete water tank or trough along its west wall. The walls of the tank rise 2'0" off the floor of the building, and the interior has a metal tank that functioned as a lining. Two iron pipes (1" and 2" in diameter) pass through the south wall of the tank. A door is located within the east gable wall of the structure. Two windows also are present, one being located in the north wall and the other in the west wall. The windows have a single sash with four lights. The sashes originally functioned as "sliders" but later were converted to hopper-style windows. The milk house is constructed with nominal-sized, fully surfaced lumber. The corner posts are 4"x4"s, while intervening studs are 2"x4"s—as the sills, rails, plates, and rafters. The roof has 1"x6" sheathing and wood shingles. The shingles are attached with machine-cut nails with round heads.(similar to those present on both the corncrib, granary, and barn) All other nails used in the construction of the milk house are wire-drawn nails. The interior walls and ceiling are covered with fiberboard panels and are painted white. Interestingly, the concrete water tank was poured *after* the fiberboard was installed (as evidenced by the concrete being poured *to* the wall panels). The windows may have been converted at the same time the fiberboard was installed. These modifications possibly were related to new sanitary guidelines for milk production. This milk housed was probably constructed during the early years of the twentieth century, perhaps during the 1920s.

Located approximately 3' in front (to the east) of the milk house is a concrete capped, brick-lined well. Perched over the top of the well is a steel windmill tower, with a base that measures 8'0"x8'0" in size. The windmill would have supplied power for pumping water, which passed via iron pipes into the well house, being deposited within the interior water tank of that structure. The overflow from this interior water tank (which was designed to keep large cans of milk cool) would flow via iron pipes to the large exterior water trough located slightly downhill and to the south/southwest of the milk house. This large, exterior water trough (which was located along the north edge of a large feed lot) measured 6'0" wide by 16'0" long, with sides walls that were 2'8" high. The north wall of the water trough aligned with the south wall of the nearby garage. A raised concrete "pad" with four iron anchor bolts was located near the center of the water trough floor. A wood or coal burning water heater was probably anchored to this pad. Although difficult to determine with any degree of accuracy, all four of these structures appear to be present on the 1940 and 1956 aerial photographs.

Located towards the far southeastern edge of the farmstead was a frame machine shed, which measured 40'4" by 40'4" in size. This structure was of pole construction, with large sliding vehicular doors along the south and west sides of the building. This structure was probably constructed during the middle twentieth century (circa 1940 to 1955; as it does not appear on the 1940 aerial photograph, but is present on the 1956 photograph). Another large machine shed, also of pole construction, was located near the far western edge of the farmstead immediately west of the barn. This large structure measured approximately 40' wide by 60' long with an open 19'wide storage bay along the length of the structure's south side. Large vehicular doors were located in each of the gable ends. This structure was probably constructed during the later twentieth century (post 1960s).

Located immediately adjacent to the northeast corner of the barn is a small frame structure that was originally constructed as a granary. This structure measured approximately 12'3" square. It was constructed on three parallel linear concrete foundations, and was raised off the ground creating airflow under the structure. The building was constructed of traditional frame techniques (not plank construction). The corner posts were 4" by 6" sawn white pine. Rafters and other stock consisted of full dimension, circular sawn, 2"x6" white pine. The floor joists were 2"x10" full dimension lumber. The exterior of the building was covered with vertical board and batten siding, with narrow slats applied over the cracks to make the exterior skin more weather and/or "grain" tight. A personnel door and window was located in the north gable elevation. A raised grain service door was located in the south gable end wall. Wire-drawn nails were used throughout the construction of this structure. This structure is illustrated on the 1940 aerial photograph, and was probably constructed sometime during the first decade of the twentieth century—potentially in conjunction with the construction of the barn. Having said this, the differential construction methods (traditional frame construction versus plank construction) suggests that the granary may pre-date the barn by a few years. At a later date, during the mid-twentieth century, the granary was converted into a workshop, complete with built-in workbench and storage cabinet (which utilized a primitive kitchen cupboard for storage).

The corncrib is a relatively large, front-gabled, frame structure that measures 26'3" wide (east/west) by 48'0" long (north/south) (see Figures 58-60 and 131-146)[23] This structure consists of two 8'1"-wide cribs for corn storage each side of a central 10'2"-wide central aisle/drive. Whereas the aisle has a grade-level concrete floor, each of the storage bin frames was constructed on three linear concrete foundations similar to those used on the granary, creating a raised platform (approximately 1'6" off the ground) well suited for airflow beneath the bins. The corncrib was constructed using nominal-sized lumber (mainly 2"x6's and 2"X8"s) nailed together with wire-drawn nails typical of the early twentieth century years. As will be discussed below, this corncrib was probably constructed in the latter 1910s or 1920s and modified over the years as agricultural strategies (and crop demands) changed.

One of the defining characteristics of this corncrib is the presence of a mechanical "cup" elevator within the central core of the structure. This elevator was used to raise both ear corn and grain to the headhouse overhead where it was funneled (using gravity) into the appropriate crib or bin below for storage. This elevator system was nestled in a 3'0"x6'3" niche that was located along the east side of the central aisle, approximately mid-way through the building. This "cup" elevator system was manufactured by the Meyers Manufacturing Company of Morton, Illinois.[24] Associated with this elevator, and also manufactured by the Meyer's Manufacturing Company is a wagon lift system

[23] Although discussed here as a "corncrib," the structure also served as a granary. Most traditional "corn cribs" from the early to middle twentieth century were designed to store both ear corn and smaller grains (such as oats, wheat, or rye) in smaller grain-tight bins.

[24] A potential model name and number ("HARDESTY 40471") is stenciled on the galvanized sheeting that encloses the backside of the elevator. The Meyer Manufacturing Company of Morris, Illinois was established in 1908, and remained in business throughout much of the twentieth century.

designed to raise wagons and/or trucks so that they could dump their load of corn or grain into the elevator.[25] Both appear to be original to the building, though the character of their use changed through time.[26] As originally constructed, the corncrib and/or elevator handled ear corn as well small grains (probably oats, rye, wheat—later supplemented and/or replaced by soybeans). These crops were dumped into the base of the elevator using the wagon lift system and then raised up to a headhouse where they were diverted into the appropriate side crib or central bin using a metal tubular chute. The chute pivoted and could be extended as needed by adding 8' sections of pipe. Similarly, the chute could be shortened by removing sections of pipe. The elevator was powered by an electric motor located in the headhouse. More than likely this was the original motor for operating this elevator—as the manufacturer of the motor (the Century Electric Company) was in business by 1910 and patenting repulsion start induction motors about that same time period.[27]

It is unclear as to whether this electric motor was the original power source driving this cup elevator. In circa 1920, electrical power was not commonly available in a rural setting. It was not until the late 1930s that rural electrification became commonplace. At this time, power to drive machinery such as this elevator could have been supplied by internal combustion engines (either stationary or wheel mounted). Nonetheless, more progressive and/or better financially situated farmers might have wired their farmsteads for the use of electricity (as a source of power as well as electrical lighting) by this date. Such modern conveniences would have required the installation of a small gas-powered electrical generator for use by the farm family. Although the electrical wiring present in the corncrib (as well as the barn) was initially thought to date to the circa 1940s, it could potentially date to this 1920s period.

As noted above, the outer two cribs were originally designed for the storage of corn. As originally constructed, these cribs were designed and used for the storage of ear corn. Originally the exterior surface of the cribs were covered with narrow horizontal planks spaced at approximately 3" intervals. These horizontal slats were designed to keep the ear corn in the crib, but supply plenty of ventilation to air dry the ear corn. The interior wall of the cribs, which faced onto the central aisle, also had these same slatted walls. Unlike the outer walls, incorporated into the base of these interior walls facing the aisle were a series of long and narrow openings with hinged doors constructed in the same slatted configuration as the surrounding crib walls. These doors, which had their long axis parallel to the ground and opened into the aisle, allowed for the easy removal of

[25] A similar "cup" elevator system for small grains was documented by Fever River Research in the barn at the Moore-Knobelock farmstead in rural St. Clair County (Stratton and Mansberger 2007). Unlike the mass-produced, engineer-designed product used at the Sibley Farmstead Site, the cup elevator at the Moore-Knobeloch Farmstead was farmer-designed and constructed.

[26] One of the stronger arguments for the elevator being original to the crib is the fact that the concrete foundations associated with the elevator system are integral to the foundations of the remaining corncrib.

[27] The motor currently present is a 2 HP repulsion start-induction single-phase motor manufactured by the Century Electric Company of St. Louis, Missouri. The motor plate provides the following technical data: Type: RS / Frame: A225 / Model: WA3-5 / Cycle: 60 / HP: 2 / Volts: 115 or 230 / Amps:24 / QR: 12 / Service Factor: 1.15 AT rated volts and cycle / M: 1750 / Serial No. 10V29820 E. The Century Electric Company of St. Louis was making single phase electric motors by 1910 (http://vintagemachinery.org/mfgindex/detail.aspx?id=2461).

the ear corn that was stored in the cribs. Exterior walls that did not originally have these horizontal slats were covered with a board and batten surface that used distinctive metallic battens similar to those advertised in the 1906 *American Carpenter and Builder.*

At present, the crib (and elevator) has been extensively remodeled and retrofitted for storage of shelled corn and/or soybeans This re-modeling consisted of the raising of the floors in the cribs and the introduction of a spiral auger beneath the new, sloped floor for the removal of the shelled corn. Additionally, the exterior wood slats and interior slatted doors were removed, and the exterior was sheathed in vented metal panels adapted for shelled corn. Similarly, the interior walls of the cribs were lined with hardware cloth (tacked to the original wood slats) to prevent the loss of grain. The overhead structure with the corn cribs also was substantially beefed up to support the additional load of the shelled corn; this involved the addition of new cross bracing through the cribs (2"x8"s being used). Shelled corn was moved into the structure using a third spiral auger, which extended through the east crib and allowed shelled corn to be dumped into an auger mouth located outside and along the east wall of the corncrib. This auger transferred this shelled corn through the crib and into the base of the elevator, which carried it to the top of the structure to be deposited in one of the two cribs. These changes to the structure probably occurred in the circa 1950s or 1960s, and were associated with the increased use of "combines" which harvested and shelled corn in the field during the same operation. At a later date (post 1956), two large metal grain bins for storage of additional shelled corn were constructed along the east side of the corncrib. These bins were probably added in the post 1960s era, and emphasize the increased productivity and/or yield of the corn crop on this farm.

Additionally, three large bins for small grain storage (oats, wheat, etc.) are located above the central driveway, being sandwiched between the adjoining cribs. The grain bins are 10' wide and 12'-3" deep. Moving north to south, they measure 11'-6", 18'-1-1/2", and 17'-6" long (north/south distance). Their interiors of these grain bins are lined with nominal-sized 1"x8" horizontal planking. Combined, the three bins have an approximate capacity of 4,600 bushels. All three have chutes in their bottoms through which grain can be dumped. Two types of chutes are present. The center and southern bins each have two short, straight chutes through which grain can be dumped into a wagon or truck, while the north bin has one chute of this type. The northern and center bins also have narrower, longer chutes that angle down to and then align to the interior walls of the corncrib; these would have been used to fill buckets or sacks for feed.

Unfortunately, the date of construction of the original corncrib is unknown. This corncrib, which was documented on the 1940 aerial photograph, was probably constructed sometime during the first third of the twentieth century. It would seem likely that this crib—first designed for ear corn and small grains—was constructed during the later 1910s or earlier 1920s. By the 1960s, these corncribs were being modified to handle an increased capacity of shelled corn and soybeans.

Non-Extant Outbuildings: The foundations of several non-extant structures were identified during the field investigations. One such structure was located to the north of the larger machine shed. This concrete foundation and floor (with drain) measured approximately 24'2" wide (north/south) by 48'2" long (east/west). A concrete

pavement or apron, of variable width surrounded the structure. The 1956 aerial photograph illustrates a distinctive structure with monitor-style roof at this location. This structure probably represents a large structure for feeding hogs. Although difficult to interpret, the 1940 aerial photograph also seems to depict this structure.

Foundation remains of a large cattle feed barn, silo, and connector was located immediately to the west of the extant barn. This structure measured approximately 26-30' in width by 82' in length. An approximately 8'wide feed bunk, presumably constructed on raised brick walls, ran the length of the structure. Located adjacent to the north end of the structure was a silo, approximately 22' in diameter. Foundation remains suggest that a small metal grain bin was located immediately adjacent to the east side of the silo. This structure, constructed for feeding cattle, was not present on the 1956 aerial photograph—suggesting that this structure was constructed after this date, potentially in the later 1950s, 1960s or even 1970s.

As noted earlier, in the discussion of the barn, foundation remains of a second silo, and connector, were located along the east side of the extant barn. This silo measured approximately 12-14' in diameter, and was constructed of tile manufactured by the National Fireproofing Company, and marked NATCO. This structure appears on both the 1940 and 1956 aerial photographs. Structural evidence suggests that this structure was not an original feature of the barn, and post-dates the construction of the barn by a few years. It would appear that this silo may have been constructed in the later 1910s or 1920s.

Both the 1940 and 1956 aerial photographs illustrate several additional small structures scattered around the farmstead. One of the more substantial buildings is a gable-roof structure located immediately to the north of the existing barn, slightly off the northeast corner of that structure. This building appears on the 1940 aerial, but does not appear to be present on the 1956 aerial photograph. The function of this structure is unknown. Four additional structures (one potentially representing the above-referenced hog house) lie immediately to the west of this structure. Many of the smaller structures, some of which appear to be located in feed lots, probably represent small frame sheds, many of which may represent feedlot shelter for animals.

Water-Supply Related Features: A cistern with cast-iron hand pump is located near the northwest corner of the kitchen wing of the house. The cistern is capped with a large concrete pad. What appears to be a cistern filter is located at the northeast corner of the structure. Except for a modern drilled well located to the west of the house, no exterior wells are immediately discernable in the yard.

Landscape-Related Features: Concrete sidewalks are located along the south and west side of the house. Another landscape feature at this site that is immediately obvious is the extensive use of concrete pavement in the adjacent barn yard and/or feed lots. That area south of the barn, extending to the corn crib is almost entirely paved in concrete.

Cultural Material: The field investigation did not involve any surface collection or subsurface testing. However, a surface scatter was observed in the tilled field located west of the

house and machine shed. The material observed included building stone, brick, window and container glass, stoneware, and metal.

Collection Technique: No cultural material was collected.

Curated at: Notes and drawings are curated at Fever River Research, Springfield.

Area Surveyed (acres and square meters): An area approximately 500' by 500' in size, comprising 5.8 acres (23,471 square meters)

RESULTS OF INVESTIGATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

☐ Phase I archaeological reconnaissance has located no archaeological material [in this portion of the site]; project clearance is recommended.

☐ Phase I archaeological reconnaissance has located archaeological materials; site(s) does(do) not meet requirements for National Register eligibility; project clearance is recommended.

☐ Phase I archaeological reconnaissance has located archaeological materials; site(s) may meet requirements for National Register eligibility; further testing is recommended.

☐ Phase II archaeological investigation has indicated that site(s) does(do) not meet requirements for National Register eligibility; project clearance is recommended.

☒ Phase II archaeological investigation has indicated that site(s) meet requirements for National Register eligibility.

Comments:

Large Scale Corporate Farms in Central Illinois: An Research Perspective

Much has been written about the large farms of east central Illinois that were created during the mid-nineteenth century, and the Sullivant family's impact on Illinois plays a significant role in these writings. Sullivant, and his contemporaries, were often making headlines in such national venues as *The New York Times* and *Harper's Weekly*. At the time, their farming practices were clearly newsworthy for a variety of reasons. More recently, and for similar reasons, twentieth century historians also have taken note of their exploits (cf. Gates 1931, 1932, 1941, 1945, 1948; Bogue 1959; Whitten and Whitten 2006).

Upon reviewing this material, several research themes become immediately evident, and are discussed briefly below. One of these is the shift in land use practices over time, and the reorganization of labor to accommodate these changes. Large tracts of cheap, available grasslands in central Illinois during the 1840s-50s promoted the growth of large-scale farms that specialized in cattle production. During the 1850s, when Sullivant purchased the majority of his Illinois property, land prices were cheap. Not unexpectedly, this prairie lands he purchased were undeveloped, and considered fairly undesirable lands for the time. Contemporary agricultural practices, as well as technologies, were not adapted to wet prairie environments such as those

purchased by Sullivant. Many of Sullivant's contemporaries who purchased large scale farms similar to his devoted their efforts to cattle *ranching*. These large tracts of grasslands were ideally suited for grazing cattle, and central Illinois was "the cattleman's domain." As Bogue (1959) discusses, these large cattle barons developed an *extensive* land use practice that was characterized by low-investment in land, or property improvements, and limited row-crop production. Livestock were generally of local stock, and not the more expensive "blooded" stock or imported breeds. Cattle were grazed on grasslands during the spring, summer and fall months, occasionally allowed to forage in cultivated fields, wintered on cut hay and fodder, and systematically rounded up, and driven in cattle drives (typical of those generally associated by today's school children with the Far West) to market. The initial markets were located farther east (such as in Ohio, where cattle were fattened on corn prior to slaughter), as well as to the nascent slaughterhouses of Chicago. Well-known ranchers from this era included William Scully (Logan County), John Alexander (Morgan and Champaign Counties), Isaac Funk (McLean County), John Dean Gillett (Logan County—dubbed the "Cattle King of the World" by the *London Gazette*), and William Duncan (of Towanda; cf. *Cultivator and Country Gentleman* 1868:260)—to name only a few.

As noted above, the large tracts of grasslands in central Illinois were well suited for extensive land use practices such as cattle grazing and/or ranching. By 1870, over 300 farms in Illinois were larger than 1,000 acres in size (compared to 76 in Indiana, and 38 in Iowa) (Whitten and Whitten 2006:69). Whitten and Whitten 2006:70) comment that "farms of 1,000 acres and more were exception in the 1850-70 corn belt, and farms of 20,000 acres and more were exception among the giants. Most of the large farms held around a thousand acres, a small portion of which was actively cultivated."

Contemporary 1850s agricultural "science" was just beginning to understand the fertility and potential productivity of prairie soils. An earlier generation of farmers perceived timber soils to be better adapted to traditional agricultural practices, and initial settlement often was located along a timber/prairie border—to utilize the grazing potential of the prairies. Unfortunately, the lack of timber in central Illinois was perceived by these early agriculturalists as a sign of poor agricultural lands. The few timber groves located in this region (such as Burr Oak Grove and Trickel Grove) became the location of some of the earliest farms in the region. Unfortunately, few such groves were present in Ford County.

Although large expansive prairie lands which were cheap to purchase, they were very expensive to improve. Bogue (1959) discusses the transition from extensive to intensive land use practices. She notes that

> At the middle of the century, conditions favorable to livestock enterprises of the character just described began to disappear in east central Illinois… The influx of settlers in the 1850's, the spread of the railroads, and the gradual rise in real estate values and tax levies were destined to sooner or later to force changes upon the area's cattle industry. The era of the drover and of reliance on local strains of livestock, of free unfenced pasture, cheap feed, and careless and wasteful feeding programs was drawing to a close (Bogue 1959"49).

By the 1870s, intensive land use practices were quickly becoming the norm. These practices revolved around improving the farmland and/or making it more productive through row-crop

production, livestock "up-grading" to better blooded stock, and diversification. Although Bogue (1959) appears to place Sullivant in the mix with these cattle barons, his agricultural practices were considerably different than most cattlemen's practices. Discussing Sullivant's Ohio background, nineteenth century histories note Sullivant's experience prior to moving to Illinos as a cattle *feeder*—a practice more typical of intensive land use practices in the more developed eastern states. By 1860, Sullivant had developed his Broadlands farm in southeastern Champaign County. At this location, Sullivant developed a farmstead model that was reminiscent of his practices in Ohio, and which focused on the *feeding* of cattle, and *the production of corn.* Sullivant, from his earliest days at Broadlands, was intent on *improving* his lands by breaking the prairie and planting corn, constructing hedgerows, and creating improved drainage systems. This strategy, which required large capital investments in machinery and labor, was established by Sullivant in rural Champaign County in the late 1850s, and was the model that was transferred over to his operation of the Burr Oaks farm in Ford and Livingston Counties during the later 1860s.

Sullivant, from the beginning of his farming experience in Illinois, was convinced of the importance of row-crop production—particularly corn. Although Sullivant relied heavily on cattle with his economic model, he recognized the importance of corn and its economic potential. The Ford County Centennial Commission (1959:30) notes that "corn has always been the chief crop raised in Ford county, and its importance throughout the history of the area is tremendous. Not only is corn the largest crop; its growing, marketing, processing, use in feeding, and treatment of by-products all have formed a large part of the trade, marketing, and manufacturing in the towns." An early Ford County pioneer (a Mrs. Patton) reminisced about farming during the early years of settlement. She wrote that

> Before corn, there was prairie grass, and not much else. Many early settlers commented on the long view for miles in any direction, a sea of grass with no trees or trails. The first step of breaking the sod was some places done by oxen, but most Ford county land was first turned over by horse or mule-drawn plows. (Ford County Centennial Committee 1959:34).

Further relating her experiences during her first year of settlement (in 1855), Mrs. Patton commented

> Well, that spring it was break prairie with our own four-horse team and an ox team. The man broke by the acre, $2.50 per acre, broke and planted, sowed corn, about one hundred and forty acres, and raised the best vegetables of all kinds, melons, pumpkins by the wagon-load, and the best corn. We sold one hundred acres of it to cattle feeders the next fall for five hundred dollars, and were pleased with our year's work
>
> In the spring we built two rooms to our house and dug a cistern, fenced in a garden and put an addition to the stable.
>
> Money was very plentiful that summer or spring. John Adamson, at Covington, brought two hundred and over of four-year-old steers to be herded on the prairie and they were large and got fat on the grass without any expense, except to pay the herder and for salt, the prairie grass was so fine.

> Another year of improvement was 1856. We set out the fence to take in more land, hauled more rails, and built two houses on the farm that winter for two tenants to move on the farm in the spring.
>
> That summer everything was corn. We could not see the country so far away and the people had come to the country so fast that there were new houses on all sides of us. There was lots of corn and no sale for it unless cattlemen came in with cattle to feed the corn to. Corn would grow then if you planted it without any trouble. The weeds had not got a start then, only the tumbleweeds, and they would roll over the field and lodge against the fences as high as the fence.
>
> [The summer of] 1857…was the same; plow, raise corn, cut and have prairie grass, and cut up corn, and have lots of men to work, as we always had (Ford County Centennial Committee 1959:34). (1959:34).

Unfortunately for Sullivant, he was slightly ahead of his time, and the technological advances necessary to convert the wet prairie lands into productive row-crop production was not yet sufficiently developed for production on such a large scale. Whitten and Whitten (2006:69) use Sullivant's Broadlands and Burr Oaks farms as examples to emphasis the historical development of large-scale farm enterprises in the United States at mid-century, and state that "Sullivant and Alexander anticipated the giant agribusinesses of the next century. Although they employed machinery extensively to operate the farms, their dependence on animals for a power source limited the extent of their mechanization… The rapid transit (railroads) and high-speed communications (telegraph) of the 1860s and 1870s lacked the flexibility for coordinating a giant centrally operated farm. Most of the giants in the corn belt in the post-Civil War era were divided into many small units to simplify coordination" (Whitten and Whitten 2006:69). Although Whitten and Whitten (2006:69) note that "technological advances in farm machinery in the 1850s and 1860s expanded the acres that could be worked per man-hour, permitting many of the farms to produce corn despite their large size." Clearly, major advances in reapers, corn planters, prairie plows, corn cutters, power shellers, disc harrows, cultivators, and mechanical ditchers were all made during the 1850s and 1860s. During this time, as Whitten and Whitten (2006:70) discuss, "…even these giants were dismantled after 1870. Increasing land values encouraged ranchers to push west and south for cheaper rangelands. The economies of large scale that would later accrue to corn planters were not evident in the 1850-70 period; so large farms for growing corn were not profitable enough to guarantee their continued existence. As late as 1899 the most productive corn planters maintained, on average, between 175 and 260 acres (31.4 bushels per acre). Ranchers moved on and farmers reverted to smaller, more productive farm sizes. The giant farms of the corn belt first appeared in the years between the Civil War and World War I, then disappeared until a later time."

As noted above, the availability of farm labor was a critical element in the management of a farm of such large size—especially one that was emphasizing row-crop production of corn. Row crop production was labor intensive, and required substantial improvements for grain storage (corn cribs). Acquiring this labor force was a problem in-and-of itself. Methods of organizing this labor force, and or farm management styles, were also being experimented with during these years. As one nineteenth century county history noted,

> People who have never visited the great West, and in whose eyes a farm of two or three hundred acres is large, have very little conception of the magnificent scale on which farming operations are carried on in the regions of the prairie country. (Le Baron 1878:566).

Sullivant appears to have initiated a central form of management that took on a military structure, all under his direct supervision, and directed from his personal residence at Burr Oaks farm. In further discussing Sullivant's landholdings in Livingston County, this same source wrote that

> Notwithstanding the vast area of this gigantic plantation, its management is reduced to so perfect a system that everything moves on with as much harmony as though but a few hundred acres were embraced in it.
>
> The system observed on this place is equal to military discipline. Sullivant was Commander in Chief, then an Adjutant under him, who assisted him in the management and saw that all orders were obeyed; next, there were twelve Captains, each of who had three Lieutenants under him, and each Lieutenant had charge of a gang of six to ten hands. The farm was laid of into stations, and each station was in charge of a Captain, whose duty it was to report every day's business to the Commander in Chief at night. A bookkeeper was employed and an account opened with every station, and in this account was entered everything done on that station each day, viz., how many men were employed, how many horses, mules and oxen, together with what kind of labor each had performed… (Le Baron 1878:566).

Operating a farm of this size—let alone improving landholdings so large—required large numbers of skilled and unskilled laborers. The 1870 Federal census of population gives considerable insights into the demographics of, as well as the logistics of housing, this early extremely large laborer force. A quick look at the 1870 Federal Census of Population indicates that there are only 5 dwellings listed in the entire township, one of which was the Sullivant household, and another a large boarding house occupied by 114 people. Besides the Sullivant family (consisting of Michael, his wife Fanny, and their two children), the Sullivant-family house was apparently occupied by a bookkeeper, two civil engineers, and three domestic servants. At that time, Sullivant's real estate was noted as being worth $1,000,000, whereas his personal property was valued at $700,000. The extreme value of the personal property probably reflects the value of the extensive farm machinery and livestock owned by Sullivant. The next entry in the census below the Sullivant home was a presumed dwelling occupied by Mark Anthony and his family (two children). Anthony was listed as being a domestic servant from Mississippi. It is suspected that this house was located in very close proximity to the Sullivant residence, and he probably worked for the Sullivant family. Two entries down from Anthony's residence was the extensive entry for a "Boarding House." It is suspected that this boarding house was probably located adjacent to the Sullivant farmstead at Burr Oak Grove. Apparently, this boarding house was under the care of John Miner (whose occupation was listed as "Overseer of Farm") and his wife. Although the majority of the individuals in the Boarding House were noted with occupations of "farm hand" or "farm laborer", cooks, boarding house waiters carpenters, blacksmiths, cabinet makers, house keepers, dairymen, were also enumerated in this large "residence." The vast majority of these workers were immigrants, with the preponderance

being Scandinavian, with some Germans and Irish. All of the inhabitants of this township were listed as "white" except for one mulatto domestic servant living within the Sullivant home. It is interesting to note the presence of two small households occupying structures between the Sullivant house and the large boarding house of families with head-of-households being from Mississippi. The 1860 Federal Census of Population indicates a similar strategy of housing a large number of farm laborers in boarding houses at the Sullivant farm in Champaign County known as Broadlands.]

How successful Sullivant's form of farm management was is unclear, and one potential problem associated with this management style was the acquisition of labor. Acquiring a labor force of sufficient size, on a regular basis, was difficult. As an analysis of the 1870 census indicates, this labor force relied heavily on immigrant labor, and consisted predominately of young males (without families). One source (Le Baron 1878) also suggests that Sullivant may have imported southern blacks to work his farms, potentially during the 1870s.

> There are living in and around Fairbury about 100 negroes. They came mostly from Mr. Sullivant's, in Ford County, who imported them to work on his large farm; but as times grew hard and dull, he would get rid of his colored help, and they would wander toward Fairbury, where they found homes. They have always conducted themselves in an orderly manner, with a disposition to work and get along in the world. The Supervisor says he has given less charity to Negroes, in proportion, than to whites; and, taken all together, nothing can truthfully be said to their disadvantage.
>
> One of the most interesting and exciting little incidents that has ever occurred in this village, perhaps, was the first exercising of the rights of franchise by a member of the 'Fifteenth Amendment.' Richard Quarles, known nearly all over McLean and Livingston Counties as 'Side Hill Dick," on account of one leg being several inches shorter than the other, was the first colored man to cast a ballot at an election in Fairbury. The occasion was the election of township officers, in the Spring of 1870, and called out nearly as many people, to witness the performance, as would a circus. But no one challenged or contested his right to vote, and it passed off in good humor (Le Baron 1878:346, 349)

By the later 1870s, it appears that Sullivant had been moving away from this centralized form of labor management. The farm plat published in the 1871 *Harper's Weekly* article documented approximately ten ancillary "farm houses" scatter around the large landholdings. The structure and/or function of these "farm houses" on this estate is unclear. It may be that Sullivant had initiated a move away from the centralized "boarding house" form of labor and the establishment of a more traditional tenant farm system. Clearly, upon the purchase of the core of the farm by Hiram Silbley, this traditional form of labor organization was established. One of the first things undertaken by Sibley was the construction of tenant farm houses—one on each 160-acre parcel of ground (four per section). As Sibley's biography in the magazine *Scientific American* noted

> The property passed into the hands of an assignee, and, on Mr. Sullivant's death in 1879, came into the possession of Mr. Sibley. *His first step was to change the whole plan of cultivation*. Convinced that so large a territory could not be worked

> profitably by hired labor, he divided it into small tracts, until there are now many hundreds of such farms; 146 of these are occupied by tenants working on shares, consisting of about equal proportions of Americans, Germans, Swedes, and Frenchmen. A house and a barn have been erected on each tract, and implements and agricultural machines provided (*Scientific American* 1886).

As his biography noted, Hiram Sibley employed a different labor force to work his Sibley landholdings. Instead of using a large, hired work force organized around a command structure similar to a military organization, Sibley employed a more traditional tenant farm system, with each section of land being developed into four discrete farm units operated by a single farm family. The Sibley family provided a farm house, barn, and farming equipment for use by the tenant. As one of the Sibley descendents noted, "on each quarter section my great grandfather built a farm house and a barn to contain four horses and three milk cows. This was a model for the tenant farm system developed around Sibley. The barns were painted red and the houses Western Union yellow. The yellow farmhouses, a part of history, continues to arouse curiosity and comment" (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).

The 1880 Federal Census of population documents a large expansion of the township population over the previous decade (from approximately 141 to 723 individuals). The increase in population for this township as documented by the 1880 census returns is also mirrored by the major increase in homes present in the township, with the number of houses jumping from 5 in 1870 to 112 in 1880. This decade appears to have witnessed a major transformation in the rural landscape—from a landscape exhibiting a low-density of farmsteads with labor concentrated at a single location (and housed in a large boarding house to a landscape dominated by high density, 160-acre farmsteads each with its own house, barn, and operating family. Although it is easy to give credit to Hiram Sibley for this transformation, it seems likely that the shift was well underway by 1878 (when the lands were acquired by Sibley), and was initiated by Sullivant during the mid-1870s. The 1880 census enumerates Sullivant's widow (Fanny Sullivant) in a residence in close proximity to the community of Sibley. Her occupation was indicated as "real estate owner." Besides her three children, the household includes three servants (one of which is a black man from Tennessee). Further analysis of the various census returns have great potential for characterizing the Sibley tenant farm population.

Nonetheless, Sibley's management style was a system based on a non-local landowner in possession of large acreage managed by local, non-owner, tenant farmers. Although such tenant based systems of farming often can lead to poor relations between tenants and owner, the Ford County histories suggest a very pleasant relationship between the Sibley family and their tenants. This relationship of "good-will" seems to have been initiated early by the Sibley family, with Hiram Sibley investing substantially in the development of both the individual tenant farmsteads, as well as with the community. The duration of the many long-term tenants attests to the relationship between Sibley and his tenants. Similarly, the community's new school, funded by Sibley, was one of the more impressive small town schools in this part of the state, and attests to the family's interest in the social development and well being of the community.

This form of landownership—with large acreage owned and controlled by a limited number of men—had its disadvantages, and was looked upon early with disdain. An article published in the October 12th, 1866 issue of the *New York Times* chastised Sullivant's system of management.

> His [Sullivant's] success has demonstrated the fact that large bodies of land can be successfully managed under the general hand, but it has not made apparent that other idea, that community is profited thereby. In addition to wheat fields and corn fields, and herds of stock, people and school-houses and churches are useful in that way—indeed, may be said to be absolutely necessary to the welfare and progress of a country. Large farms—vast estates, like those over which they brag in Illinois, stand in the way of progress. A thousand acres, divided into ten farms of one hundred acres each, supporting ten families, a school-house, a church, yield more to the State, more to community, than when under one princely owner; yield more wealth, more brains, pay more taxes, and is more in accordance with the genius of a free government.

One writer noted in 1871 in regards to the large Broadlands farm in Champaign County—developed by Sullivant, but at this time owned by John Alexander, that "however we may boast in having this mammoth farm within our borders, its presence, as one farm, is a calamity." This author continues by noting that

> The tract of land here controlled by one man would make 331 farms of 80 acres each, and it is idle to say that it will produce as much wealth together as thus separated and owned by the many. In the one case, we have the rich lands, without roads, but few dwellings, cultivated by hirelings, who have no interest in the work, no schools and no enterprise, save what is carried in the person of one individual. In the other, we have 331 residences, 331 men, all owners, all interested, no hirelings, no necessary waste, schools, roads, enterprise, thrift and prosperity (Lothrop 1871).

Such distain for control of large acreage by single individuals was not limited to Sullivant and his management style. In 1900, a story on "Syndicate Farming" was written by the *Chicago Chronicle* (and re-printed in the journal *Public Opinion*). This article discussed both Sibley, as well as William Scully's tenant farms in Illinois. Regarding Sibley, the article began with relative praise

> In Illinois one large landed estate is that of Hiram Sibley. The headquarters are at Sibley, the station name taken from that of the owner. The heirs do not live in the state and rarely visit the farms. The agent looks after all the details of leasing, etc., and administers the property from Chicago. He lives in Evanston and makes frequent visits to the estate to see that all is satisfactory. Tenants may remain as long as they wish, and it is said they rarely give up their farms, excepting to take hold of land they have bought (*Chicago Chronicle* 1900).

But, no matter how well the Sibley family treated their tenants, the system was still one that was often looked down upon. Nonetheless, as Bogue (1959:160) states, Hiram Sibley developed his lands "into one of the largest and most successfully managed group of tenant farms in east central Illinois" (see also Gates 1945: 20-22).

Finally, another aspect of the Sibley Estate Farms—and the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site—is the potential to document the changing nature of agriculture and the rural landscape

during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. During the era of the Sibley Estate Farms, farmers were witness to great changes in agriculture—changes that were common among farmers throughout central Illinois, as well as the state as a whole. This period witnessed the development of Illinois agriculture from a pioneer industry organized around family and hand labor and animal power to a commercialized, highly mechanized industry often associated with large corporations dominated by "scientific" farming methods.

From the beginning, Sullivant was ahead of the times with regard to his approach to land management, and attempted—albeit on a very large scale—to approach agriculture from a scientific viewpoint. His farming practices incorporated a wide range of techniques that originated from academic and/or popular culture sources (such as the agricultural press). Of particular emphasis was Sullivant's early efforts on drainage (ditching and presumably tile drainage for the wet prairie lands of central Illinois), and fencing (use of Osage orange). Extensive "avenues" of hedgerows were planted in the 1860s. [For all practical purposes, none of these hedgerows have persisted to the present time within lands once owned by the Sibley family. In contrast, an occasional Osage orange fence line has survived in the surrounding countryside.] Additionally, Sullivant invested a considerable amount of time and money to improving the drainage of his lands. The early efforts undertaken by Sullivant consisted predominately of creating ditches, with large specialized ditching plows pulled by very large ox teams. Sullivant also worked towards improving the bloodline of his cattle, and included the purchase of pure-bred diary herds. Sullivant also invested heavily in farm machinery.

The Sibley years are noted for their extensive application of tile drainage systems. The 1940 aerial photographs of the IDNR lands indicate that large portions of this section of land had been tiled. Sibley soon established his own tile factory utilizing clay from a pit located to the west of town [see photograph of Sibley Tile Factory in Sibley Area Centennial History Committee (1977).] Additionally, the Sibley farms also had their own gravel pit, which "permitted all the roads and farm yards to be surfaced [see picture of workers at gravel pit in Sibley Area Centennial History Committee (1977)]" (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).

This process of modernization was carried forward by Hiram Sibley and multiple generations of the Sibley family. Continued capitol investments in modern technology, and; improvements in tenant housing was emphasized by the Sibley family. Initially, it appears that modifications were made to the original house. The initial changes may have occurred during the late nineteenth or very early twentieth century (see discussion of Episodes II and III in House description). Little is known about the extent of the improvements made to the agricultural outbuildings during the early Sibley years (circa 1880-1905). The existing workshop/granary is one of the only outbuildings that may date from this period. Beginning in circa 1910, a new era of construction seems to have been initiated at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site. Aside from changes that may have occurred to the house during these years (see discussion of Episodes III and IV), at least two major agricultural outbuildings were probably constructed during the circa 1910s. Both structures—the barn and the corncrib—represent top-of-the-line, technologically cutting edge structures that were either architect or engineer designed. More than likely, these buildings were built under the influence and guidance of Charles Rohrer, who had become the new farm manager in 1905. Rohrer was a University of Illinois graduate (Department of Engineering; Class of 1901-02) and, more-than-likely, either designed these structures himself, or sought the guidance of other University of Illinois professionals. In 1910, Rohrer was

credited for designing the large corncrib constructed along the rail siding in Sibley—which was touted as the largest corncrib in the world.

Speaking of the early years of the twentieth century, one Sibley descendent noted that "It was a time when farming was done with horses, corn was picked by hand and each farmer milked his own cows. It was a time of small farms when little change was taking place. It was a good time to be growing up" (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977). But, as Hiram Watson Sibley reminisced in the mid-1970s, "I remember my father's excitement as new ideas emerged. He preached the use of clover in the crop rotation. This required regular applications of lime. Clover, lime and hybrid seed corn thus became the three cornerstones of sound farming practice in the 1920's. The clover also provided a haven for pheasants and Sibley became noted among hunters as the place to go when the hunting season opened." Mr. Sibley further noted that "another innovation of the 1920's, designed so that farmers might use their time more productively, was the addition of livestock projects to crop farming. This practice increased the annual income of the farmers. My father established dairies (largely Brown Swiss), cattle feeding operations (largely Herefords), and swine operations (Durocs and Hampshires to start, but eventually Minnesota hybrids)… My father put into practice the principles learned in his conservation classes at Cornell and the University of Illinois… When small dams, used to control the occasional rush of water, failed to retain top soil carried away by heavy rains, melting snows and gale-like winds, contour plowing was tried. This had an ameliorative effect and led to terracing on the steeper slopes. Finally, grass waterways… were developed. As a result farmers around Sibley became noted not only for the clover, but also for their contour plowing, their terracing, and their grass waterways" (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977). Similarly, efforts at modernization during these years were not solely devoted to agricultural interests, but to domestic interests also. Female members of the Sibley family "stressed the importance of comfortable living conditions for farm families and the unequivocal necessity of indoor bathrooms. The rural electrification program of the 1930s brought electricity to Sibley farms and made the installation of bathrooms possible. By 1950 all the farm houses had the accommodations" (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).

Similarly, "the 1950s brought a technical revolution to farming. Tractors had more power, plows had more plow shares, the picker-sheller made its appearance and commercial fertilizer began to be used in place of clover… A number of difficult decisions had to be made. A new kind of corn storage was required. Farms had to be larger to support farm machinery, and a grist-mill and mixing equipment were needed to supply proper rations for swine operations. As a result, equipment sheds replaced barns, bulk bins replaced corn cribs, and a feed mill was built alongside the 125,000 bushel corn crib. In time, even this well-known landmark had to give way to huge bulk bins" (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).

During the early years of the first decade of the twentieth century, the University of Illinois established an agricultural experiment station at Sibley. The Sibley Agricultural Experiment Station, and ag-scientists from the University of Illinois, played a major role in developing a successful strain of hybrid seed corn during the early years of the twentieth century (see Hume and Center 1907; Hume, Center, and Hegnauer 1908). This experiment station was established during the first decade of the twentieth century (circa 1902-04?) and was located just east of the town. The Sibley Farms, and the Sibley seed business (with its large seed warehouse), no doubt, was instrumental in the placement of this agricultural experiment station at Sibley. At this time, the only other experimental plots in Illinois were those at the main

University of Illinois campus at Champaign-Urbana. As one source noted, "Prior to World War II, Sibley seed corn regularly led the seed corn tests conducted by the University and the special cross developed in Sibley was used continuously until replaced in the 1950s's by new single-cross hybrids" (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977). It is no small matter that the Sibley Estate Farms are discussed in the 1908 treatise simply entitled *Corn* (Bowman and Crossley 1908). At least two distinct varieties of corn (Silver Mine, and Iowa Silver Mine) were developed at Sibley—one by F. A. Warner ("Manager of the Sibley Estate") (Bowman and Crossley 1908). Similarly, the Sibley Farms were well noted by regional universities. Corn production at Sibley became of interest to many nearby universities, and several studies related to corn were undertaken at that location (cf. Kansas Board of Agriculture 1902; Hume and Center 1907; USDA 1911). Clearly, the University of Illinois, as well as the agricultural extension service and/or agricultural experiment station at Sibley, had a significant impact on the modernization and scientific development of the Sibley farms during the early to middle twentieth century.

Another interesting early twentieth century aspect of the Sibley family is their suspected use of architects, and/or agricultural engineers to design agricultural buildings such as barns and corn cribs used on the estate beginning at least by circa 1900. One of the earlier architect-designed structures may be the Sibley House, a family owned hotel located in Sibley and constructed shortly after acquisition of the town by Hiram Sibley. The 1884 *Bird's Eye View* illustrates a vernacular small-town railroad hotel (see Figures 24-25, 27) that appears to have been rebuilt by the time the 1908 history was published (see Figure 31). As such, it would appear that this structure had been rebuilt in early years of the twentieth century. Architectural plans and specifications prepared by the Rochester, New York architect Claude Bragdon and identified as "House at Sibley, Ford County, Illinois" and dated June 1901 potentially represent plans for the re-built Sibley House. Bragdon apparently designed several buildings for the Sibley family. Except for this single structure in Illinois, the architectural commissions for the Sibley family were all located in Rochester, New York. Among these projects was a single stable design, which was not designed by Bragdon, but by James G. Cutler—perchance due to its specialized non-domestic and/or agricultural function. Cutler was another Rochester architect and one-time mayor of that city.[28] Similarly, a large corncrib located at the rail siding in Sibley was apparently designed by Charles G. Rohrer (Steinbacher-Kemp 2006). This structure, which consisted of two parallel cribs with a central driveway measured 35 feet in height and 325 feet in length, and held an estimated 125,000 bushels of ear corn. At the time it was constructed in circa 1910, it was reported to be the largest corncrib in the world (and actually listed as such by Ripley's Believe-it-or Not). Rohrer was a longtime manager of the Sibley Estate Farms trained at the University of Illinois as an engineer (Class of 1901-02) (Phelps 1916:563)[29] As discussed earlier, it seems likely that the General Purpose barn located at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site may very well have been architect and/or engineer designed, and Rohrer may have been responsible for its design. At this point in time, the degree of influence of architects/engineers on the design of other Sibley tenant farmstead agricultural buildings is unclear. Nonetheless, it is suspected that the Sibley family utilized professional architects and/or engineers in the development of their agricultural complex.

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[28] See the following: http://rocwiki.org/James_G._Cutler, http://www.facebook.com/pages/James-G-Cutler/106304786075635, and http://www.lib.rochester.edu/index.cfm?page=803.

[29] This building was demolished in 1965.

Summary and National Register Eligibility

As with all historical properties assessed within the context of cultural resources management, the value of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site ultimately is determined by its eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Eligibility to the National Register is based on four broad criteria that are defined by the National Park Service and used to guide the evaluation process. These criteria state that

> The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and
>
> A) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
>
> B) that are associated with the lives of persons significant to our past; or
>
> C) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose component may lack individual distinction; or
>
> D) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history (36CFR60.4 Criteria for Evaluation).

The Sibley Tenant Farmstead (11FO64) is believed to have been established in the 1870s and remained in continuous occupation and/or use until 2002. The original character of the residence at the site suggests that the dwelling may very well have been constructed by Michael Sullivant in conjuncture with the development of a satellite farmstead associated with his enormous Burr Oak Farm. In the late 1870s, the property passed into the hands of Hiram Sibley, who had acquired a large portion of Sullivant's former landholdings in Ford and Livingston counties. Although Hiram Sibley and his heirs were non-resident landowners, the family played a major role in the subsequent development of Sullivant Township and its one village, which was aptly named Sibley. Hiram Sibley retained Michael Sullivant's essential model of a large estate but opted for less centralized control and established numerous tenant farmsteads to augment the handful established by Sullivant. These various properties ultimately were organized as Sibley Estate Farms, which at one time consisted of over 125 individual farms whose day-to-day operations were overseen by tenant-occupants but whose control and development ultimately rested in the hands of Sibley-appointed managers. The Sibley Tenant Farmstead was one these properties, apparently being designated as Farm No. 96. Sibley Estate Farms attracted state and even national attention in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries due to its organization structure and high level of production. The innovative practices carried out there contributed to the University of Illinois Agricultural Extension Service's decision to establish a field station in Sibley, which was a rather prestigious distinction for a village of quite modest size. One

indicator of the overall success of Sibley Estate Farms is the fact that it persisted for nearly one hundred years, through three generations of Sibley-family ownership, before being dissolved in the 1970s. Since that time, many of the farmsteads that comprised Sibley Estate Farms have disappeared from the landscape. A partial windshield survey conducted of Sullivant Township suggests that a relatively small number of the Sibley farms have survived. Of those known to still be extant, the Sibley Tenant Farmstead represents one of the most complete in respect to historic site plan and compliment of outbuildings.

The Sibley Tenant Farmstead (11FO64) is considered to be eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, C, and D. The farmstead's eligibility under Criterion A relates to agriculture. The Grand Prairie region of Illinois, in which Ford County lies, is one of the leading agricultural areas of the Midwest and has been since the late nineteenth century. For nearly a century—spanning from late 1870s to the 1970s—Sibley Estate Farms was on the leading edge of the agricultural economy in the region. The agricultural economy changed over time, as did the farming systems related to it. These changes are well illustrated by the Sibley Tenant Farmstead both in regard to site structure and character of the buildings and structures there.

The majority of the buildings and structures at the site are more than fifty years old (thus meeting the benchmark age for National Register eligibility), the few exceptions being the large machine shed on the western edge of the site, the two steel grain bins, and a small shed behind the house. The remaining buildings and structures are considered contributing elements to the site; these include the house, barn, corncrib, older machine shed, workshop, milk house, garage, windmill, and concrete trough. These resources range in date from circa 1875-1955, though the majority of them were constructed during the first half of the twentieth century. The buildings and structures in question have good-to-excellent integrity overall, and, taken as a group, meet the requirements for Criterion C. Among the outbuildings, the barn especially stands out due to its well-planned design and the excellent integrity. The barn has experienced very few changes since its construction, and even much of its mechanical equipment remains in place. By itself, the barn richly illuminates the agricultural economy and strategies employed on the farmstead in early twentieth century Ford County. Complimenting this picture is the massive corncrib, which was designed to originally hold ear corn, and later modified for shelled corn. It is notable for its massive size and sophisticated design. The other outbuildings and structures, while not as individually distinctive as the barn and corn crib, nonetheless contribute significantly to our understanding of the farmstead and its change through time. Of all the buildings at the site, the house has seen the greatest change, with one addition being made as recently as the 1970s. Even so, the dwelling provides valuable data on the domestic component at the site and illustrates the changing needs and expectations of its occupants (and perhaps its owners/managers) through time. The house's very evolution provides some indication of what was expected of a tenant farmhouse in Sullivant Township—or at least on a Sibley farm—at different points in time. The house we see today stands in marked contrast to the simple, board-and-batten dwelling erected in the 1870s.

We also consider the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site to be potentially eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D (archaeology). Although no subsurface archaeological investigations were conducted, there is good indication that subsurface resources—beyond the standing structures and surface foundations already documented—are present and would yield significant data addressing site-specific questions, as well as broader

research questions regarding settlement, material culture, and lifeways in central Illinois. One of the greater unanswered questions is whether archaeological resources are present in the front yard of the existing house, where the ground surface is very irregular and suggestive of buried features. Addressing this issue would have great value in properly interpreting the existing residence. Was the existing residence initially built as a substantial outbuilding for a larger house once present in the front yard? Or could it be the lone survivor of a row of dwellings erected by Michael Sullivant to house workers employed on one of his satellite farms? We know virtually nothing about the physical structure of the satellite farms established by Michael Sullivant (in contrast to his Burr Oak Homestead), and the possibility of there being archaeological remains associated with one these at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead is intriguing indeed.

As such, both the above-ground and below-ground historic resources at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site are contributing elements to the significance of the site. This project was initiated by the IDNR in response to their intent to remove (and/or demolish) some of the structures at this site. The contributing above-ground structural resources have been documented through photographs, field notes, and scaled line drawings. It is our opinion that the existing documentation of the above-ground remains has been sufficient to mitigate the proposed demolition of these structures—assuming that no ground disturbance takes place during the demolition process. As such, assuming no ground disturbing activities at the site, no further work is recommended with regard to the proposed structural demolitions, and we recommend clearance of the proposed undertaking.

Additionally, we recommend that the site be protected from ground disturbance in the future. The yard immediately surrounding the house is considered the most sensitive area, as it likely contains subsurface archaeological features (i.e. privies, middens, pits). With this in mind, the on-site burial of any demolition materials resulting from any clean-up activity that may be undertaken should be avoided. The natural topography of the site restricts the space available for burial, and that which is available is the most sensitive archaeologically. If on-site burial is proceeded with anyway, the area selected for burial should be tested for archaeological resources beforehand.

Potential For Further Research

Current research has raised many questions, and identified several avenues of further research that could be undertaken. Recommendations for follow-up research are presented below. The order that these recommendations are discussed is not an indication of the recommendation's priority or ranking of importance.

Archaeological testing of existing farmstead. Of particular interest is the large front yard to the east of the current house. At present, it is unclear as to the function of the early structure documented by the existing project. Although we suspect that it was a domestic dwelling, there is some possibility that this structure may have been a component of a larger "sub-station" created by Sullivant. Such a sub-station would have had offices, as well as a suite of structures potentially housing workers and farm managers. As such, the existing structure may have been one of a small cluster of similar dwellings and/or offices. Minimally, the area around the existing dwelling and front yard needs to be protected. This becomes a practical concern should the time come for the demolition of the extant structures. Any demolition activity should be

designed to prevent any ground disturbance until the potential of archaeological integrity of surrounding yard is determined.

Archaeological survey of existing IDNR lands. Several historical sites are documented on the 640-acre parcel of land currently owned by the IDNR. Of particular interest is Farm House No. 5 which was documented on this section of land on the 1871 *Harper's Weekly* map (see Figure 9). The location of this potential site is on lands to the south and west of the existing farm complex. Additionally, two other tenant farmsteads are identified within this parcel of land on the 1884 atlas (Beers 1884). Both of these farmsteads were extant in 1947—one located in the far southwestern corner of the section, and the other in the far northeastern corner of the section (USGS 1947). The archaeological integrity, and potential significance, of these sites should be assessed at some future date.

Architectural survey of surrounding countryside with emphasis primarily on assessing the number and/or integrity of the Sibley tenant farms. The general impression is that a very low number of the Sibley tenant farms are still extant. An 1892 "Corn Rents for Sibley Estate Farms" published in Sibley Area Centennial History Committee [SACHC] (1977) indicates that the greater "Sibley Farms" was comprised of apparently 112 tenant farms. By circa 1955, the number of tenant farmsteads had decreased by 50%, with only approximately 56 farmsteads still intact (Drury 1956). The passing of the last 50+ years has resulted in the continued disappearance of many of the remaining farmsteads. At present, it is unclear as to whether the property under study (the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site) is one of 40, or more likely, one of 5 tenant farmsteads still intact. As part of this task, archival sources (particularly plat maps and early U.S.G.S. topographic maps) should be utilized to plot the location of known farmsteads. Historic aerial photographs such as Drury (1956), as well as those from the Illinois State Geological Survey taken in 1940 (ISGS 1940) would add substantial depth to this survey. Secondarily, a general assessment of the potential archaeological integrity of the ten farmsteads identified on the 1871 plat of the Sullivant farmstead, as depicted in *Harper's Weekly* could be undertaken as part of this survey work.

Archaeological survey of the Burr Oak farmstead. This is the location of the circa 1850s to late 1870s Sullivant family farm. Associated with this site would be the family home (which was depicted in the 1871 *Harper's Weekly* article), as well as the farm laborers barracks and/or settlement associated with Sullivant's early years of operation. This archaeological site, which is currently an extant farmstead, represents a fairly unique historical archaeological site in Illinois and would contribute significantly to our understanding of regional history (should it have any archaeological integrity).

Archival research potential for the Sullivant Farms: Much additional information is, no doubt, available and awaiting compilation. Of particular note are deed and mortgage records located within the Ford County courthouse in Paxton. A quick inspection of those records indicates that several mortgage records survive with details of the transactions between Sullivant and his creditors. Several entries asking for judgements against Sullivant are noted in the records for the mid 1870s—such as that of the Superior Machine Works dated October 13 1875, or the First National Bank of Fairbury dated July 19, 1876. One particular mortgage deed of note that was located (Mortgage Record Book 18: Page 395) was drawn up between Michael Sullivant and Hiram Sibley outlining Sullivant's collateral to satisfy two promissory notes between the two men. This mortgage deed outlines the extensive livestock, farm tools, and machinery put up for

collateral by Sullivant. The first note for $50,000 was payable to Sibley by August 1st, 1876, with a second note for $50,000 due two years after that date. Additional context information regarding the development of the Sullivant township is available in the township tax books (Collection Books), which are also present for the Sullivant years. Similar records in adjacent Livingston County have not yet been assessed.

Additional information relating to the type and location of buildings on the Sullivant lands is also available from these deed records. Multiple deeds were noted between Sullivant and his tenant relating to the disposition of the corn raised on the tenant farms. One such deed dated February 19, 1877 between Sullivant and William Wilson for the storare og 4,333 1/3 bushels of ear corn for $1,300 in the "second crib from the south in a row of six cribs situated on the NW 1/4, of Section 35, Town 25, Range 7 and near the depot at Burr Oaks on the Chicago and Paducah Railroad" (Deed Book 30: Page 51). Another deed dated February 17, 1877 indicates Sullivant selling 11,998 bushels of ear corn to William Lunt for the sum of $3,419.43. This deed notes the location of the eight corn cribs scattered around Sullivants landholdings. This deed also noted that the purchaser "can use cribs for storing and shelling corn, if desired, free of charge till October 1, 1877" (Deed Book 30: Page 52). A similar deed dated February 26, 1877 indicates Sullivant selling an additional 10,947 bushels of ear corn to Lunt for the sum of $3,119.90, and notes the location of the corn in four separate corn cribs variously located on his land. Such deeds contain a wealth of information as to farming practices, as well as to help reconstruct the cultural landscape of the Sullivant farm.

Federal and state census records have not been thoroughly assessed. Although the 1870 and 1880 Federal population censuses have been briefly looked at they—as well as the other later returns—could use a more thorough analysis. These population census returns—combined with the late nineteenth century agricultural census returns—have the potential to provide new insights into the character of the Sibley tenant farmers during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Archival research potential for the Sibley Farms. A considerable amount of primary material is present relating to the Sibley Farm. One of the primary sources of material not yet assessed relating to the Sibley family management of the local farms is located in the archives of University of Rochester, Rochester, New York. The Sibley Family Papers are located in the Department of Rare Books, Special Collections and Preservation Section, University of Rochester library. Box 10 of this collection contains 9 folders entitled "Illinois Lands, 1852-1934," one folder entitled "Illinois Lands, Right of Ways, 1928, 1940," and one folder entitled "Illinois Lands, Account for 1888" (http://www.lib.rochester.edu/index.cfm?PAGE=1138#add). Additionally, a July 11, 1888 letter written by W. A. Bicket to Hobart F. Atkinson is in the collection (Letter Number 152), and may be of interest. The presence of additional completed forms, such as the 1892 Corn Report, would be of great interest.

The Sibley family holdings within the University of Rochester all appear to pre-date circa 1932. More recent family papers would also be of great interest to the study of the Sibley Estate farms. Additional family holdings from the 1970s-90s should be sought. Of great interest is the picture book of estate farms and family tenants presented to the elder Sibley at his retirement.

Early twentieth century Gibson City newspapers (*the Gibson Courier*) in the Gibson City public library are present (from November 1911 through October 1912 and contain a local news

column for Sibley. This news column contains considerable information regarding Sibley residents and the Sibley Farms. A review of this source would be of interest.

Several local individuals have been identified that could prove useful to interview. Several elderly carpenters who worked for the Sibley Estate Farms are still living, as well as a descendant of John Ames (occupant of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site).

Role of the University of Illinois and the Sibley Experiment Station. The experiment station at Sibley was established in the early years of the twentieth century. The relationship of this experiment station, agricultural engineers, and biologists from the University of Illinois, and the Sibley family is of great interest. The role of the Sibley Estate (and staff) in the development of the Sibley Agricultural Experiment Station, and the impact of that experiment station (and the university) on the development of farm and management strategies during the early years of the twentieth century is of great interest. C. G. Rohrer, a long-term manager of the Sibley Estate Farms arrived in Sibley about the same time that the experiment station was established. It is not coincidental that Rohrer was a graduate from the University of Illinois (in 1902-03) with a degree in engineering. Of particular interest in Rohrer's involvement with the station's research.

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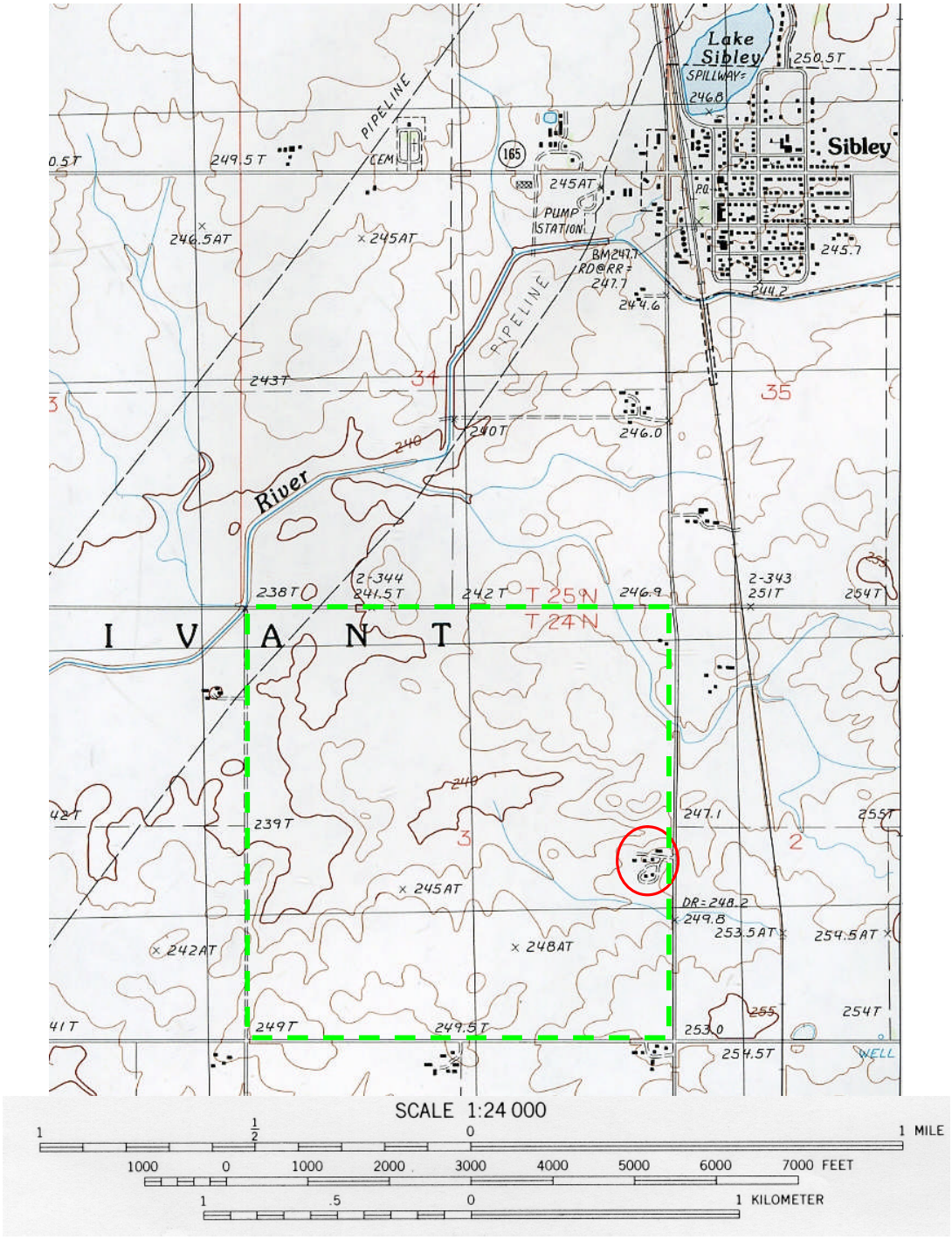


Figure 1. United State Geological Survey (USGS) map showing the location of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site (circled in red). The property is part of the Sibley Habitat Area, managed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (USGS Sibley, IL 7.5-minute Quadrangle 1986 Provisional Edition) (indicated in green dashed line).

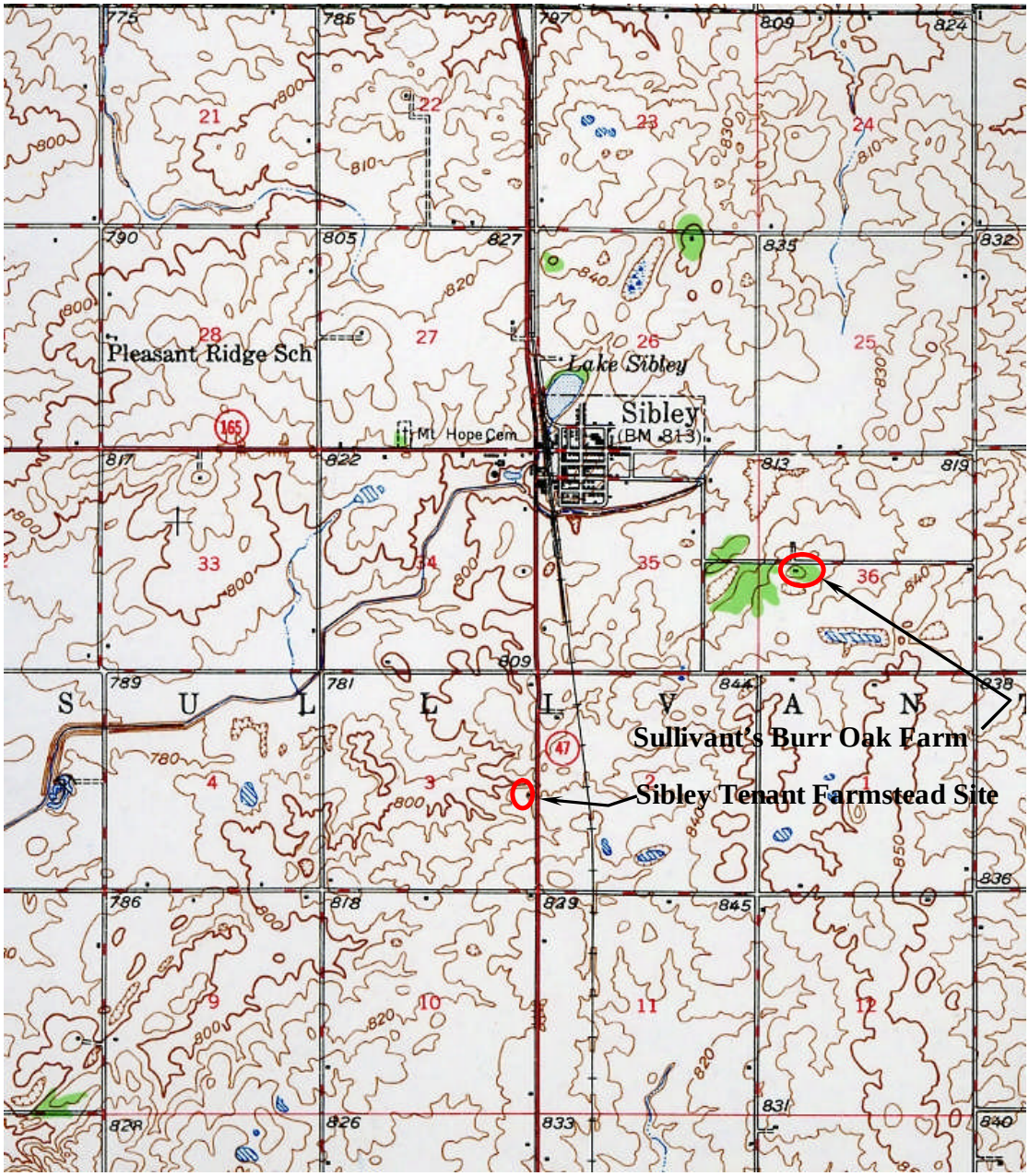


Figure 2. United State Geological Survey (USGS) map showing the location of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site (circled in red) (USGS Sibley, IL 15-minute Quadrangle 1947; Data taken from 1940 aerial photography.

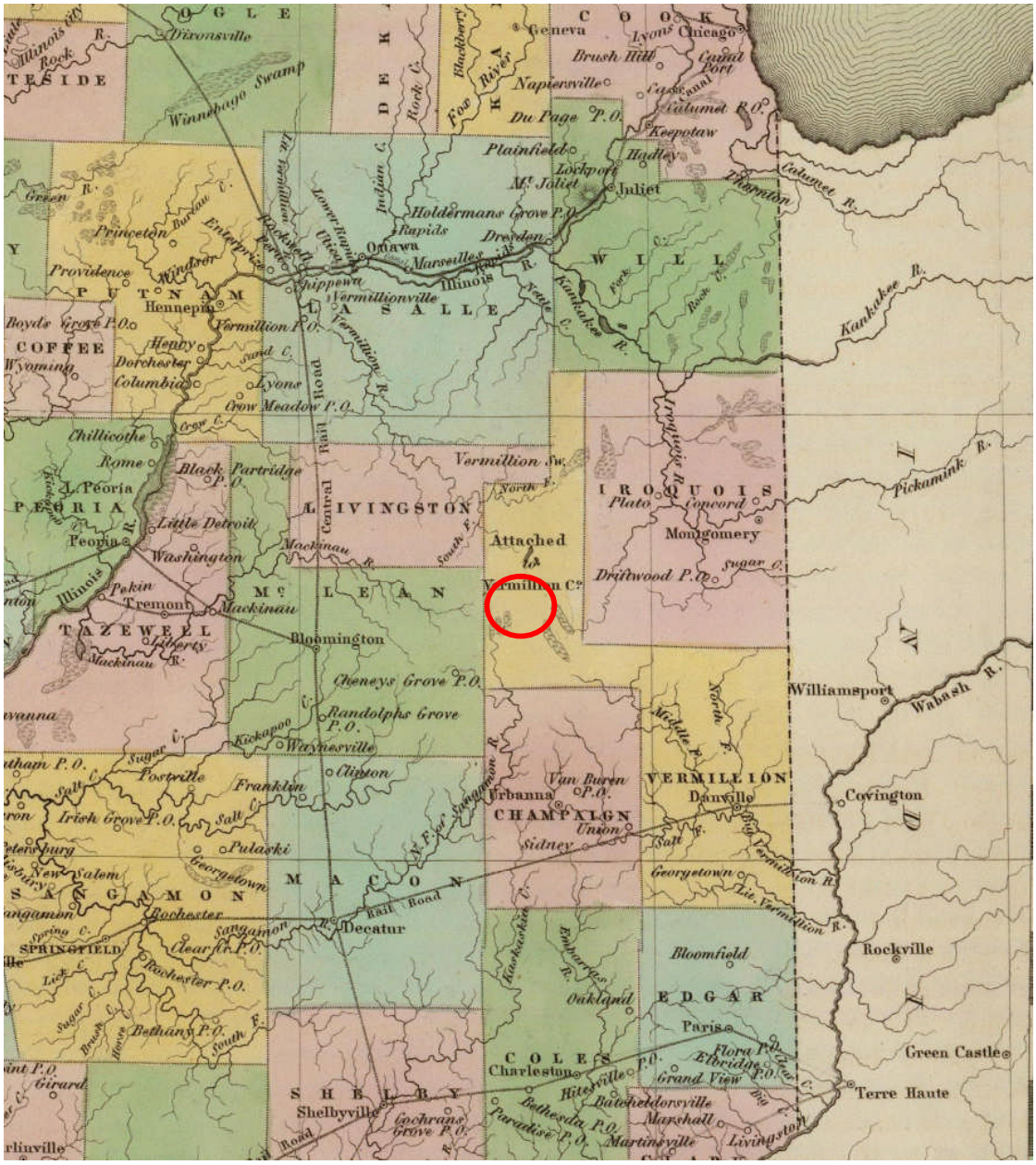


Figure 3. View of northeastern Illinois in 1838 (Bradford 1838). Ford County has not, as yet, been formed. At this time the area was awkwardly attached to Vermillion County. The approximate project area is circled in red. One of early transportation routes through the area was the Danville to Ottawa Travel Road, which connected the upper Illinois River Valley at Ottawa with Danville (and the greater Wabash River Valley. Note the location of the project area at the divide separating the Illinois and Wabash valleys.

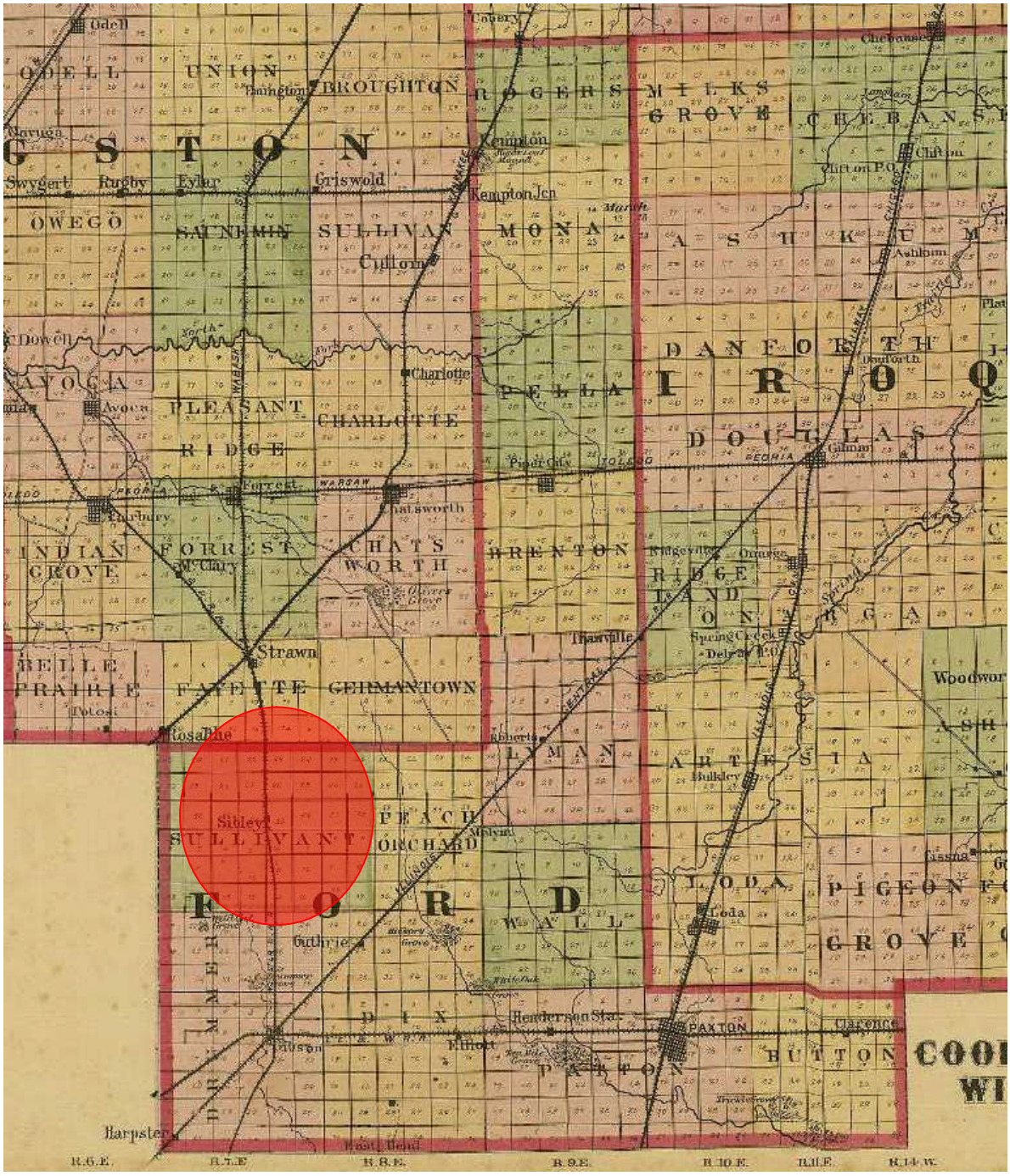


Figure 4. Map of northeastern Illinois illustration the location of Ford County on the map entitled *Railroad Map of Illinois* (Beers 1884:85). Sibley is located in Sullivant Township, midway between Strawn and Gibson City, on the line of the Chicago and Paducah Railroad. The bulk of Sullivant's Burr Oaks Farm was located in Sullivant Township (Ford County) and Fayette Township (Livingston County), Illinois. Sullivant also had extensive landholdings in Sullivan Township to the northeast of Strawn (near Cullom, Livingston County). Sullivan Township was named in reference to Sullivant.

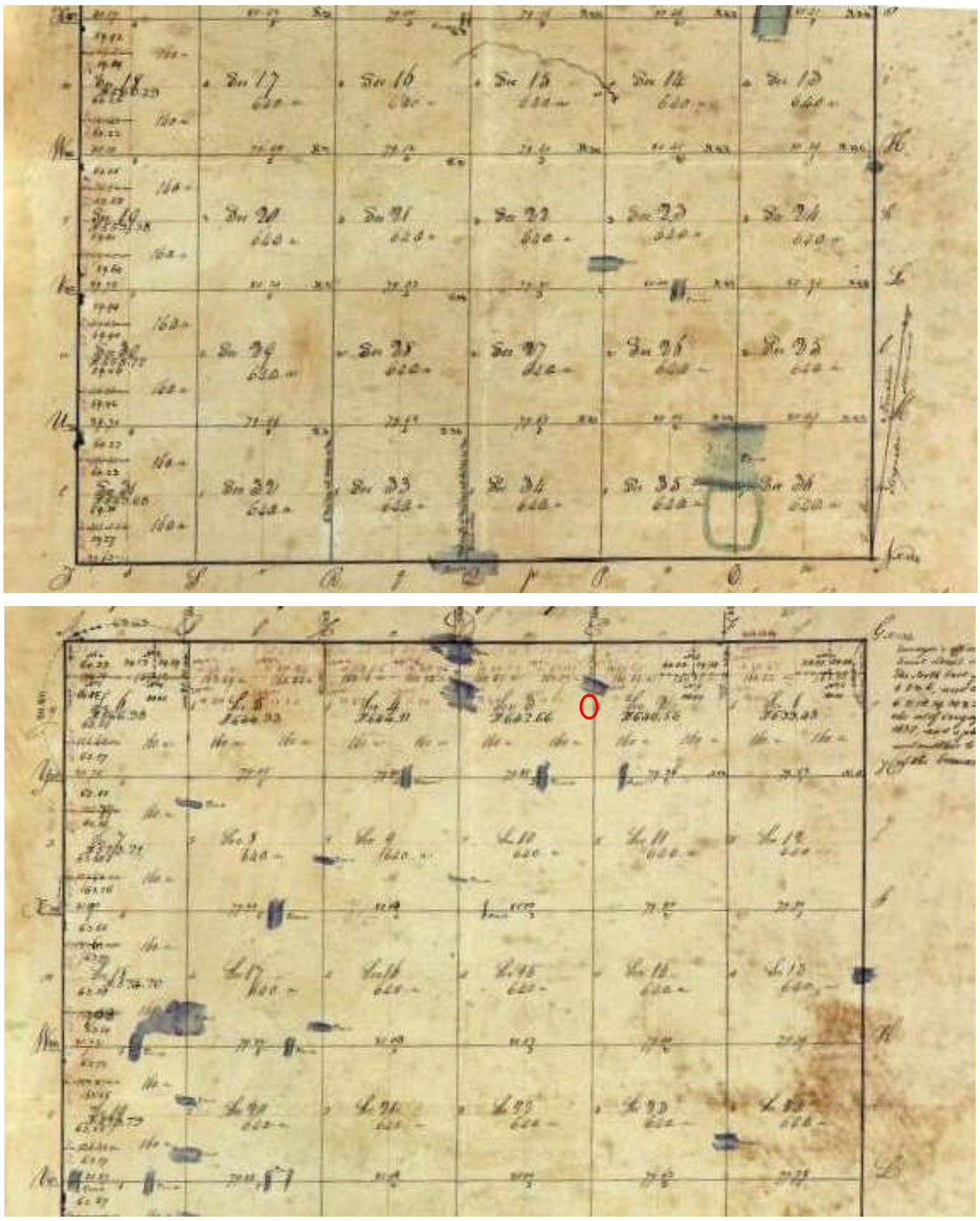


Figure 5. Portions of the United States General Land Office (USGLO) plats of Township 25 North, Range 7 East (top) and Township 24 North, Range 7 East (bottom) [comprising the bulk of present-day Sullivant Township] illustrating the future location of Sullivant's Burr Oaks Farm. No cultural features are illustrated on or in the vicinity of the farm (USGLO 1824; see also USGLO 1857). The location of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site is circled in red.

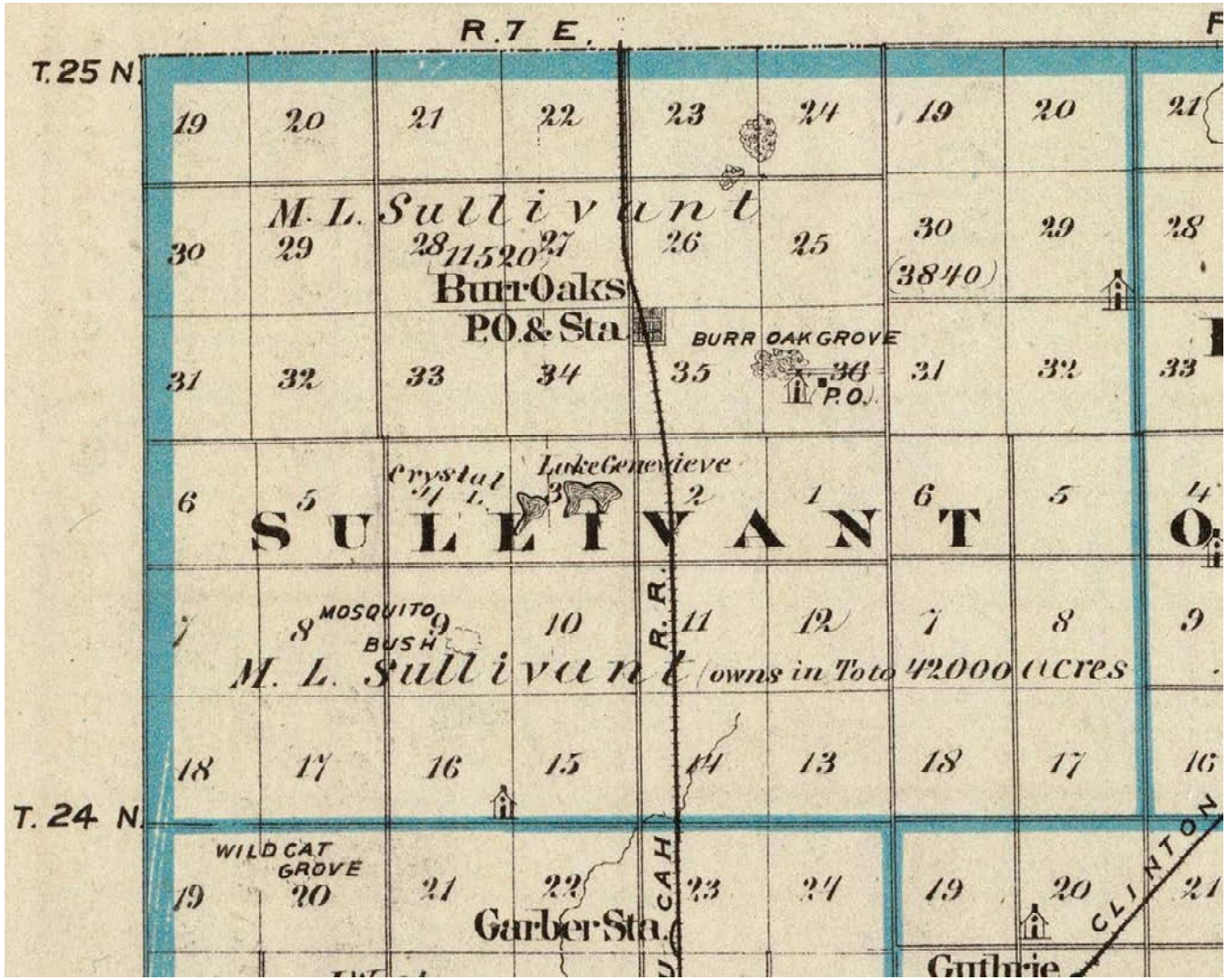


Figure 6. Detail of Sullivant Township, as illustrated on the 1876 *Map of Illinois* (Warner and Beers 1876). This map indicates that M. L. Sullivant was the owner of 42,000 acres of land.

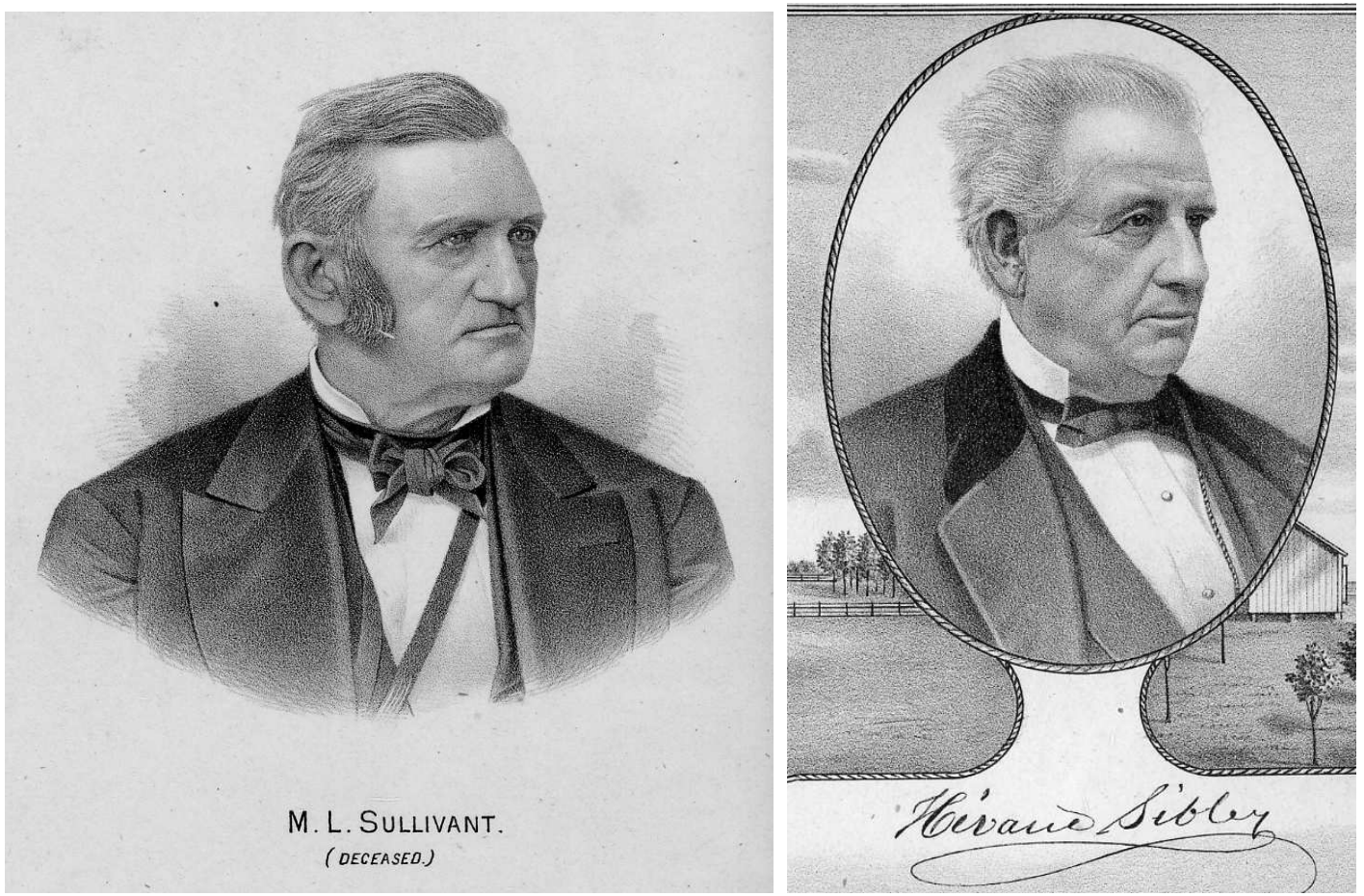
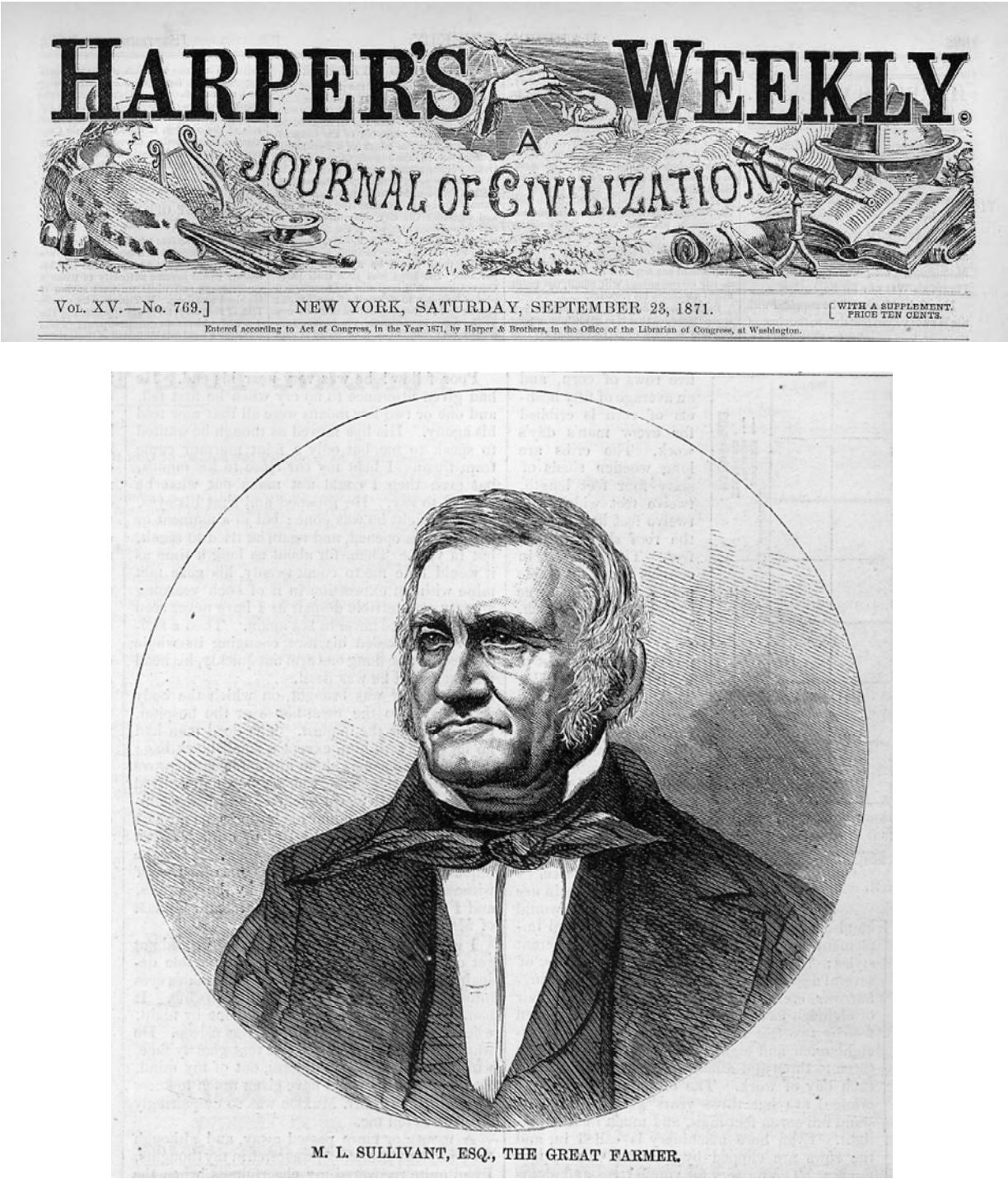


Figure 7. Michael Sullivant and Hiram Sibley—two significant men in the early development of Ford County, Illinois (Beers 1884).


HARPER'S WEEKLY.
A JOURNAL OF CIVILIZATION.
VOL. XV.—No. 769.] NEW YORK, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1871. [WITH A SUPPLEMENT. PRICE TEN CENTS.
Entered according to Act of Congress, in the Year 1871, by Harper & Brothers, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

M. L. SULLIVANT, ESQ., THE GREAT FARMER.

Figure 8. One of the largest landowners in the United States—if not the world—during the middle nineteenth century was Michael L. Sullivant, owner of the Burr Oaks Farm located in rural Ford County, Illinois. In 1871, the illustrated magazine entitled *Harper's Weekly* published a well illustrated article on Sullivant and his agricultural pursuits (*Harper's Weekly* 1871)..

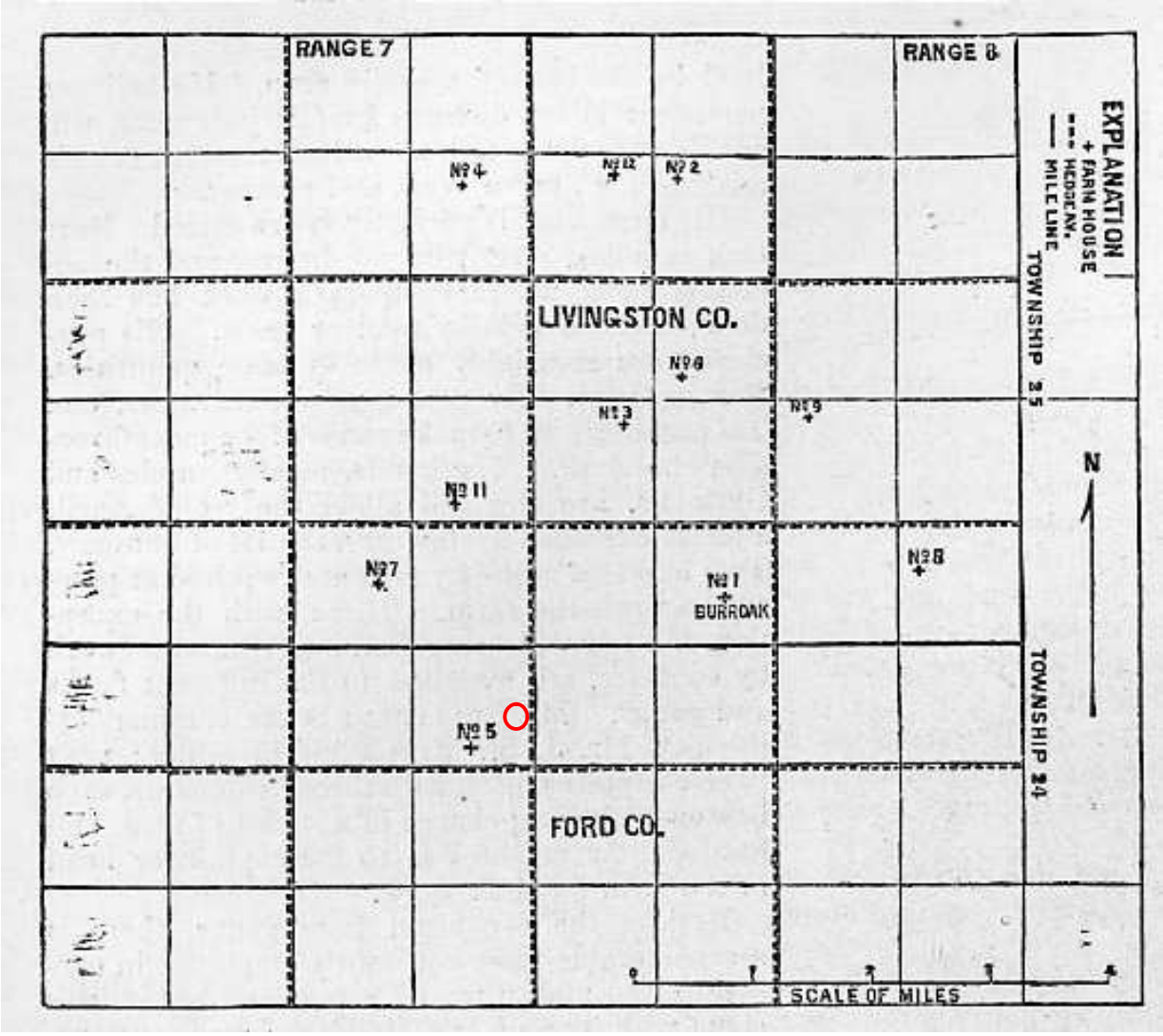


Figure 9. Map of Burr Oak Farm in 1871, as illustrated in *Harper's Weekly* (1871). This map illustrates the location of Sullivant's home farm ("No. 1 / Burr Oak"), as well as ten other farm houses (numbered 2 through 12; lacking a number 10). This map also illustrates miles of Osage orange hedgerows, here referred to as "Hedge Avenues." The Sibley Tenant Farmstead is located in close proximity to the farm house identified here as "No. 5." It is unclear as to whether or not the current farmstead may represent Farmstead No. 5. The approximate location of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site is circled in red.

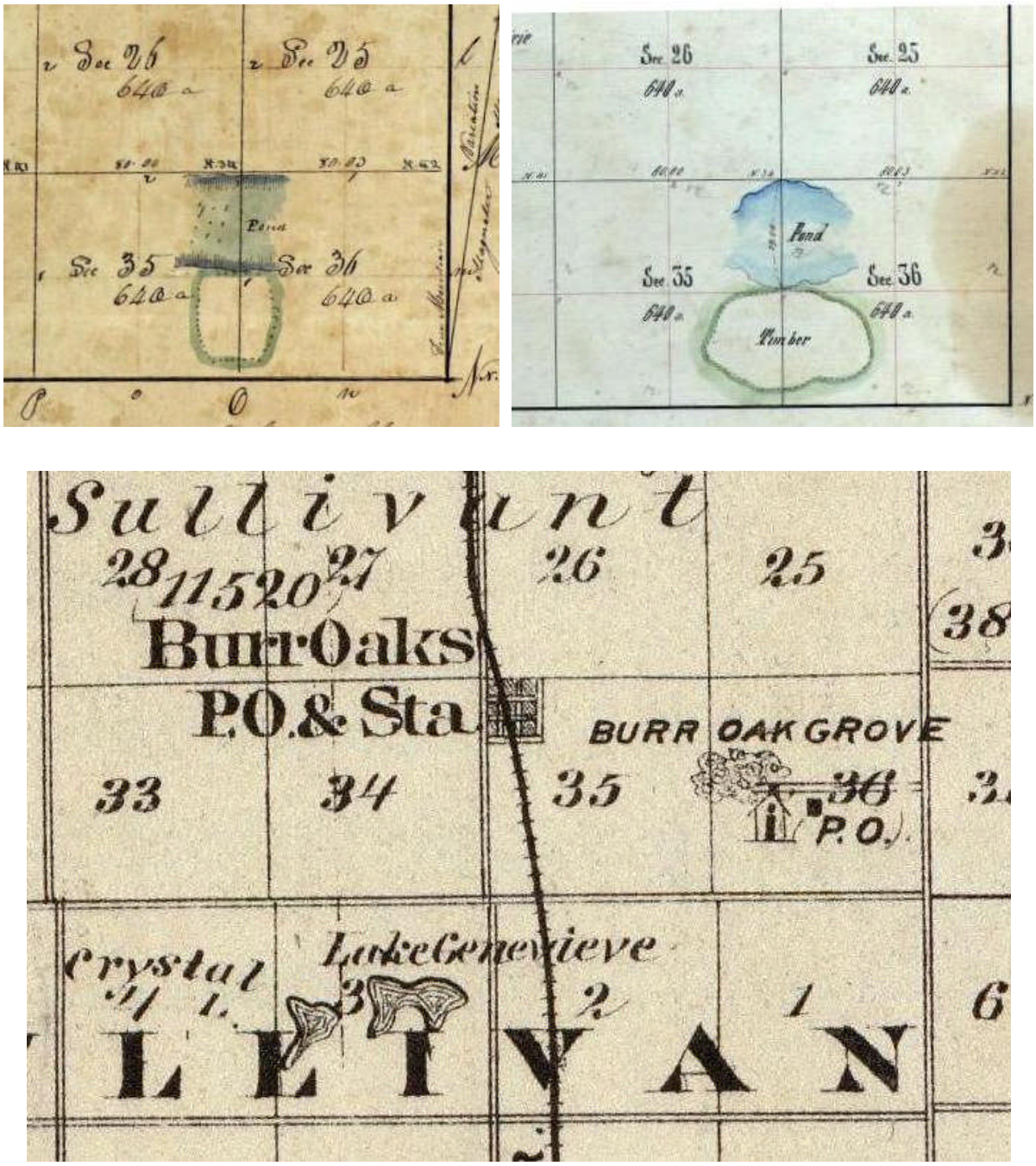
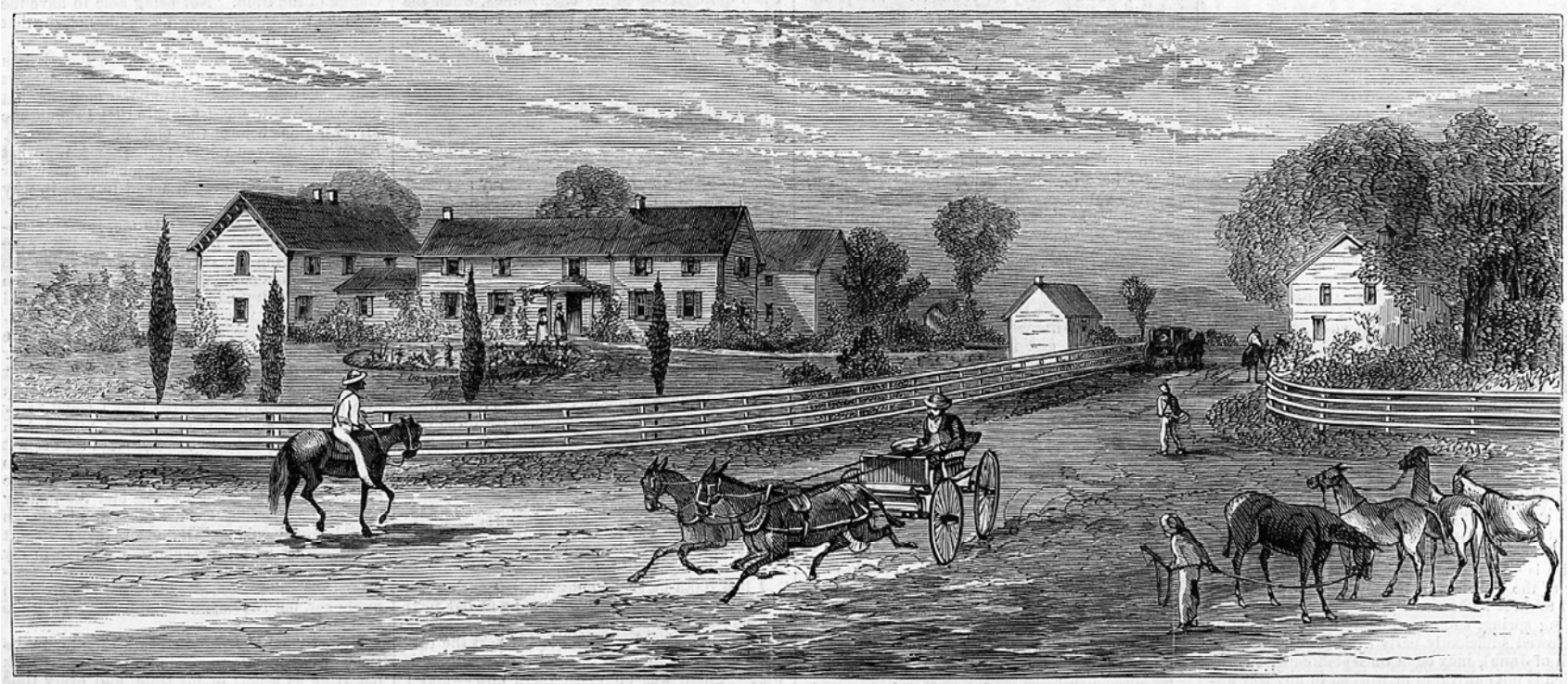


Figure 10. Three cartographic views illustrating Burr Oak Grove. Top: Burr Oak Grove, as illustrated on the 1824 (left) and 1857 (right) USGLO maps. Bottom: Detail of Burr Oaks Station and vicinity illustrating the Burr Oak Grove post office and school (Warner and Beers 1876). The Sibley Tenant Farmstead site is located in Section 3 near "Lake Genevieve."



THE HOMESTEAD—"BURR OAK."

Figure 11. View of Sullivant's "Homestead—Burr Oak" as illustrated in *Harper's Weekly* (1871). Sullivant's home complex consisted of a cluster of traditional, unpretentious, frame buildings that had been constructed over a multi-year period. Missing from this illustration are agricultural outbuildings such as barns.

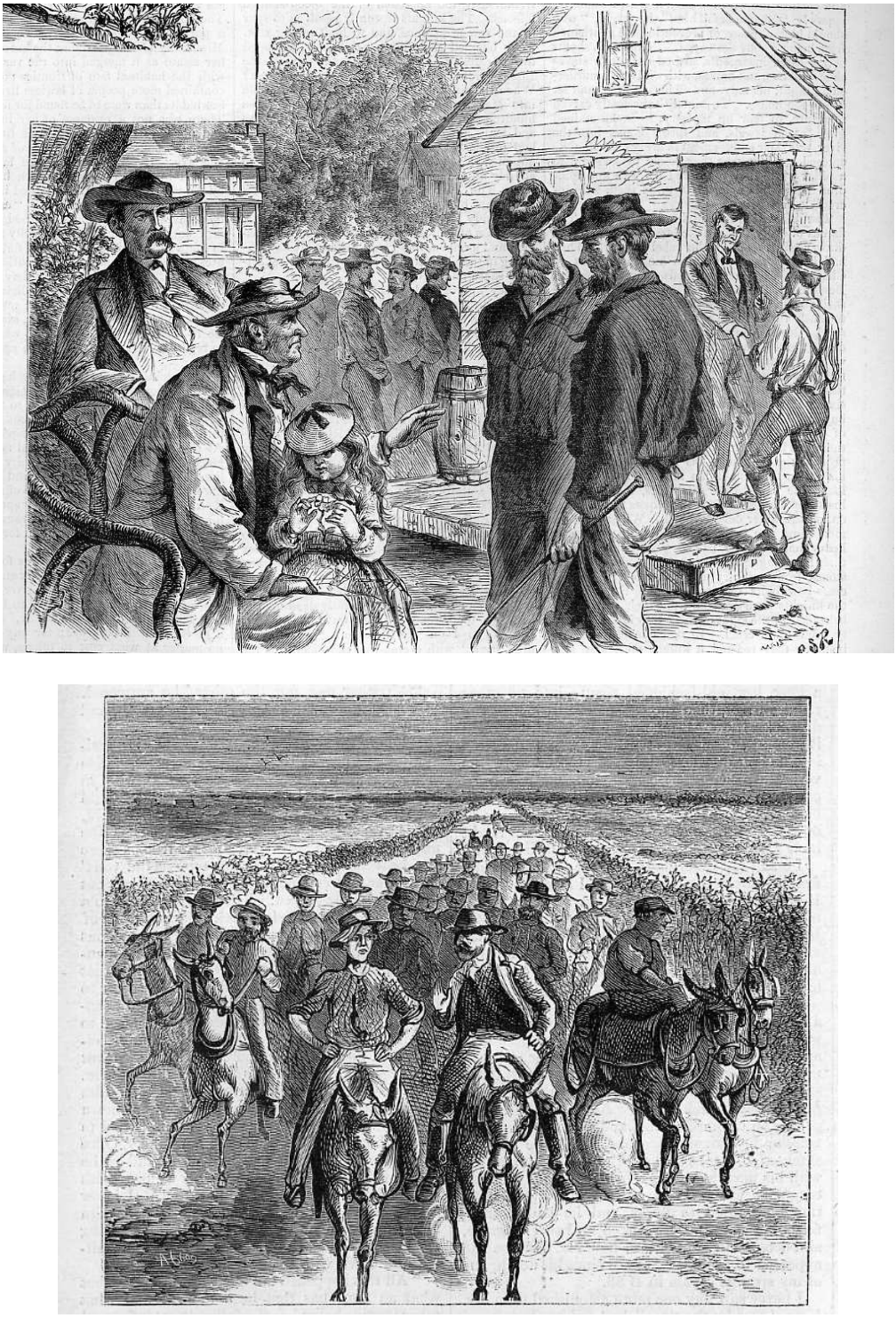
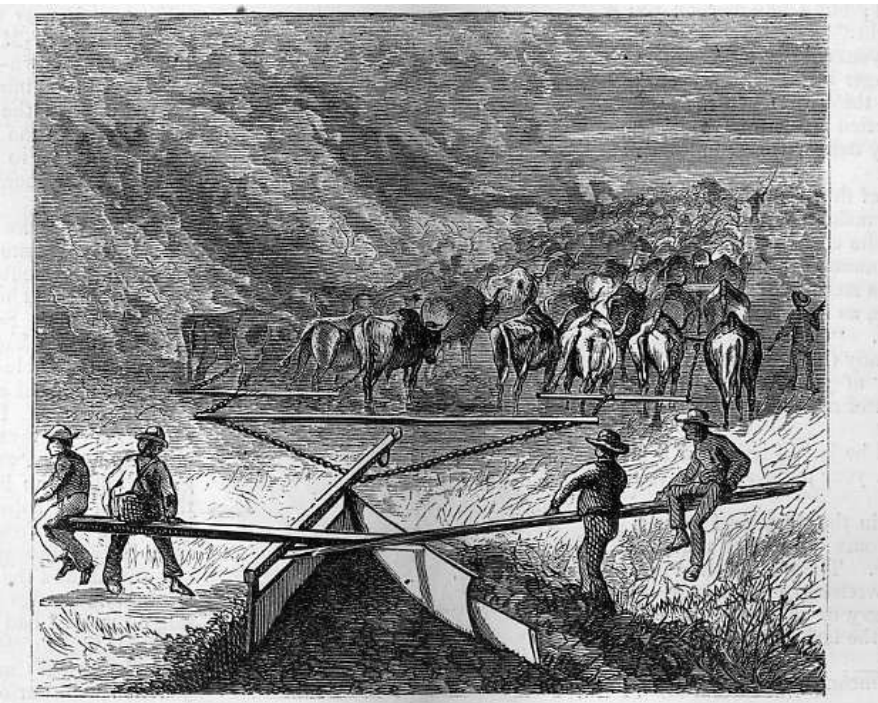
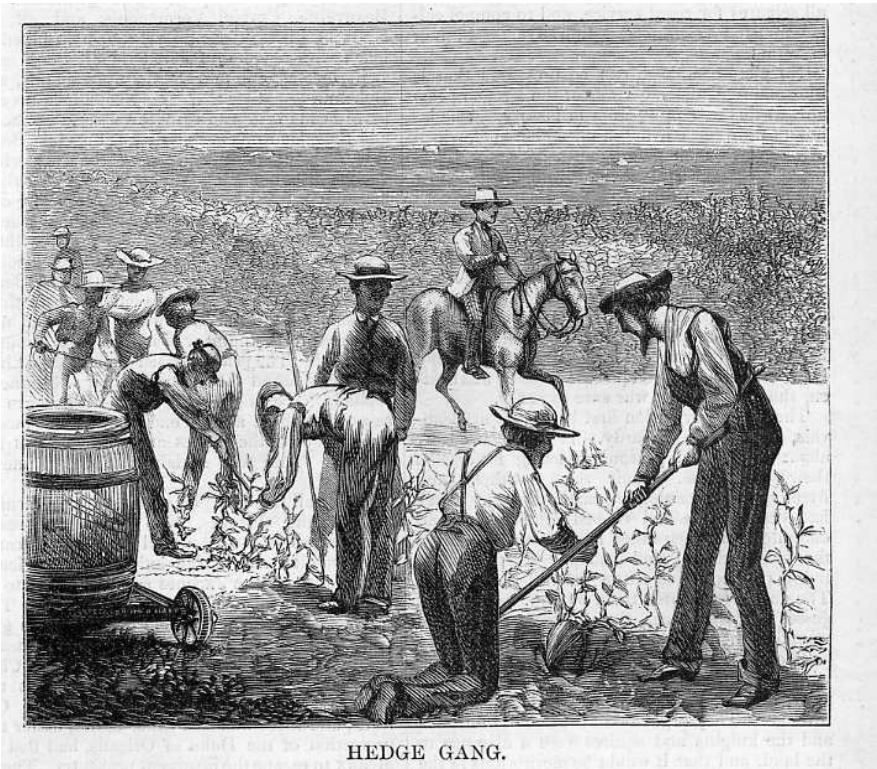


Figure 12. Two additional views of the Sullivant farms, as illustrated in *Harper's Weekly* (1871). Top: "M. L. Sullivant and his Captains at Evening." Bottom: "Farm Gang."



A DITCHING PLOW.



HEDGE GANG.

Figure 13. Two additional views of the Sullivant farms, as illustrated in *Harper's Weekly* (1871).

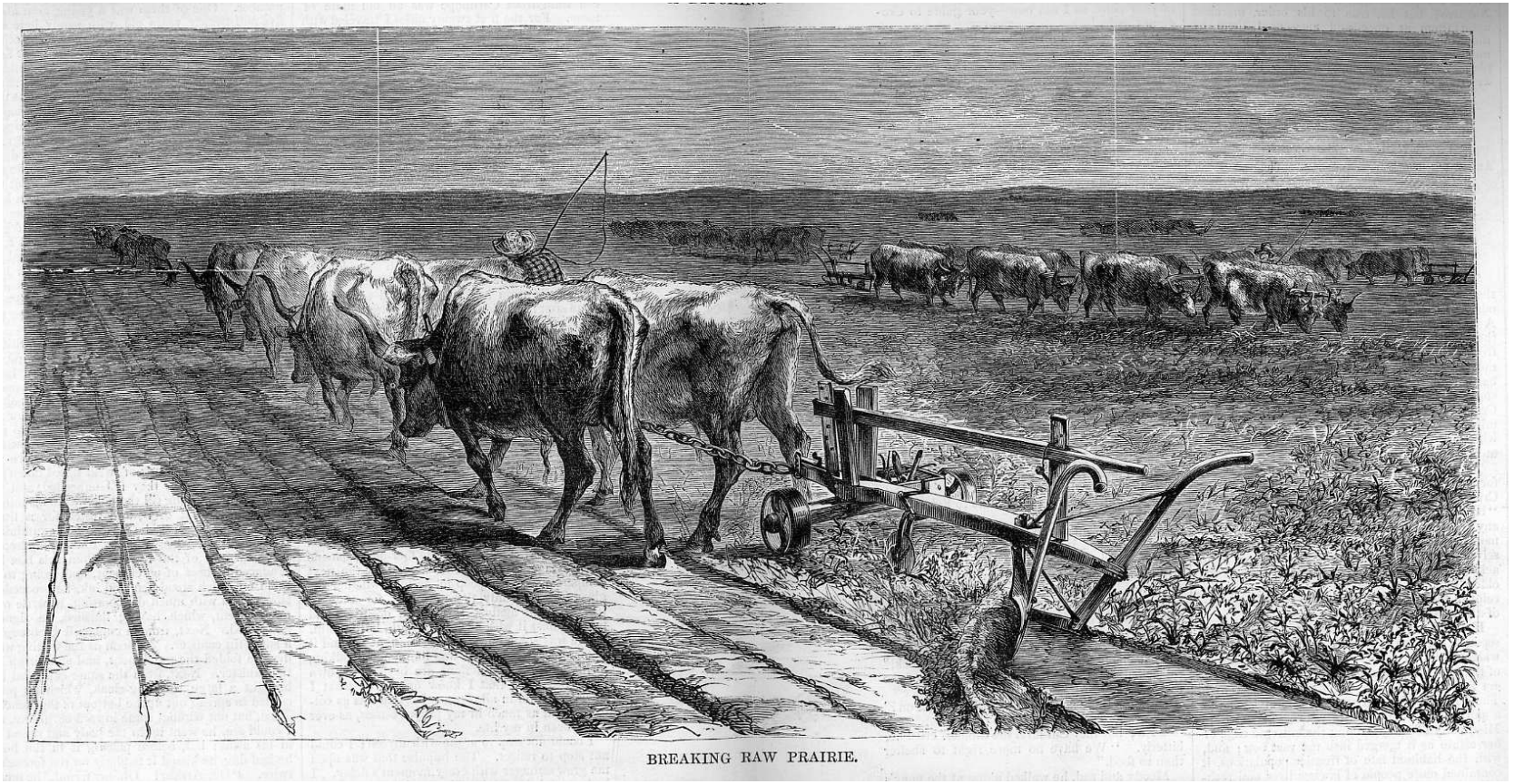


Figure 14. View entitled "Breaking Raw Prairie" as illustrated in *Harper's Weekly* (1871). This image depicts at least four "breaking" plows—each with teams of eight oxen—working a single field within the Sullivant farm.

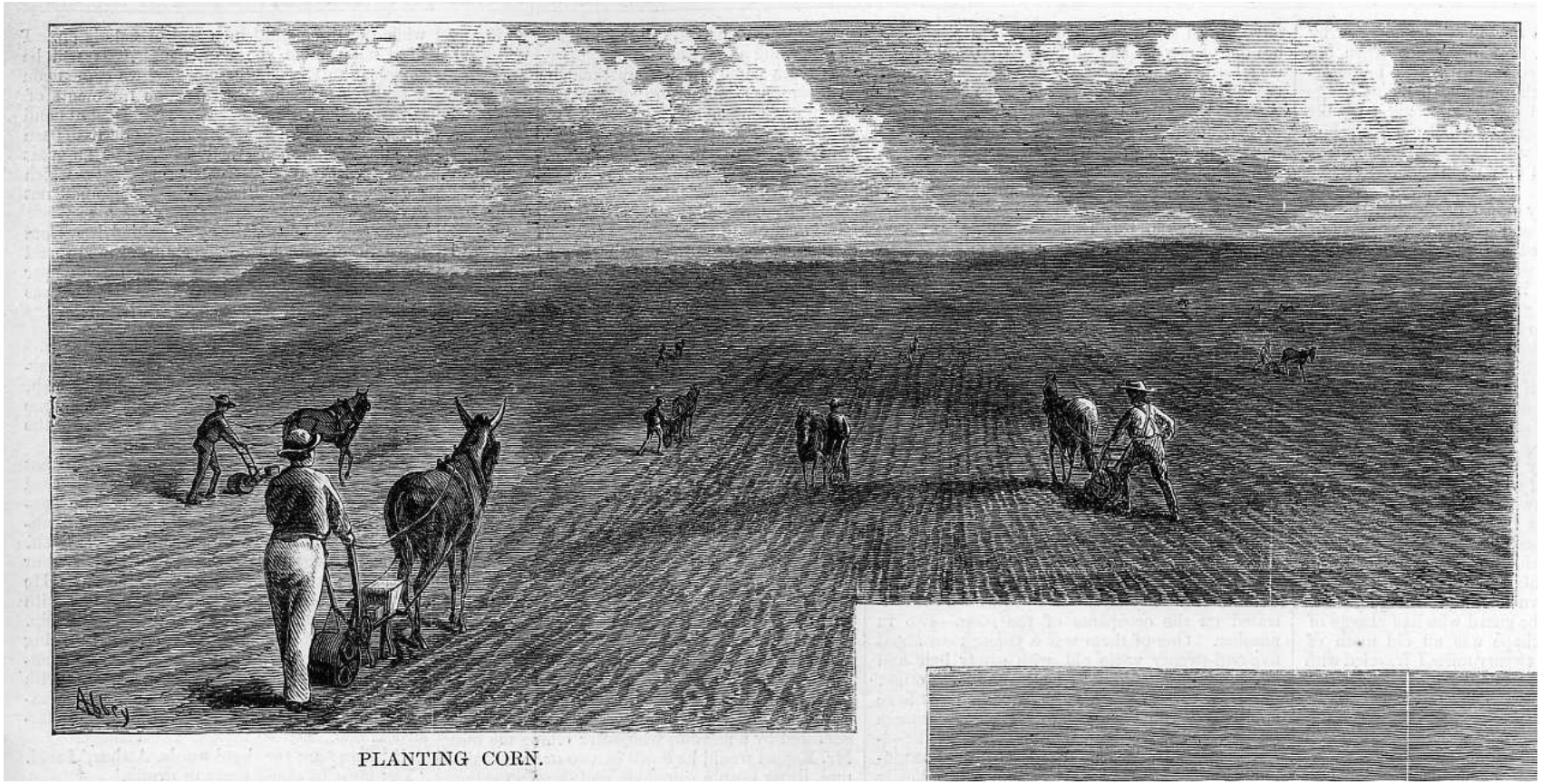


Figure 15. View entitled "Planting Corn" as illustrated in *Harper's Weekly* (1871). This image depicts at least six farm hands, each using a one-mule (or potentially horse) planter working a single field within the Sullivant farm.

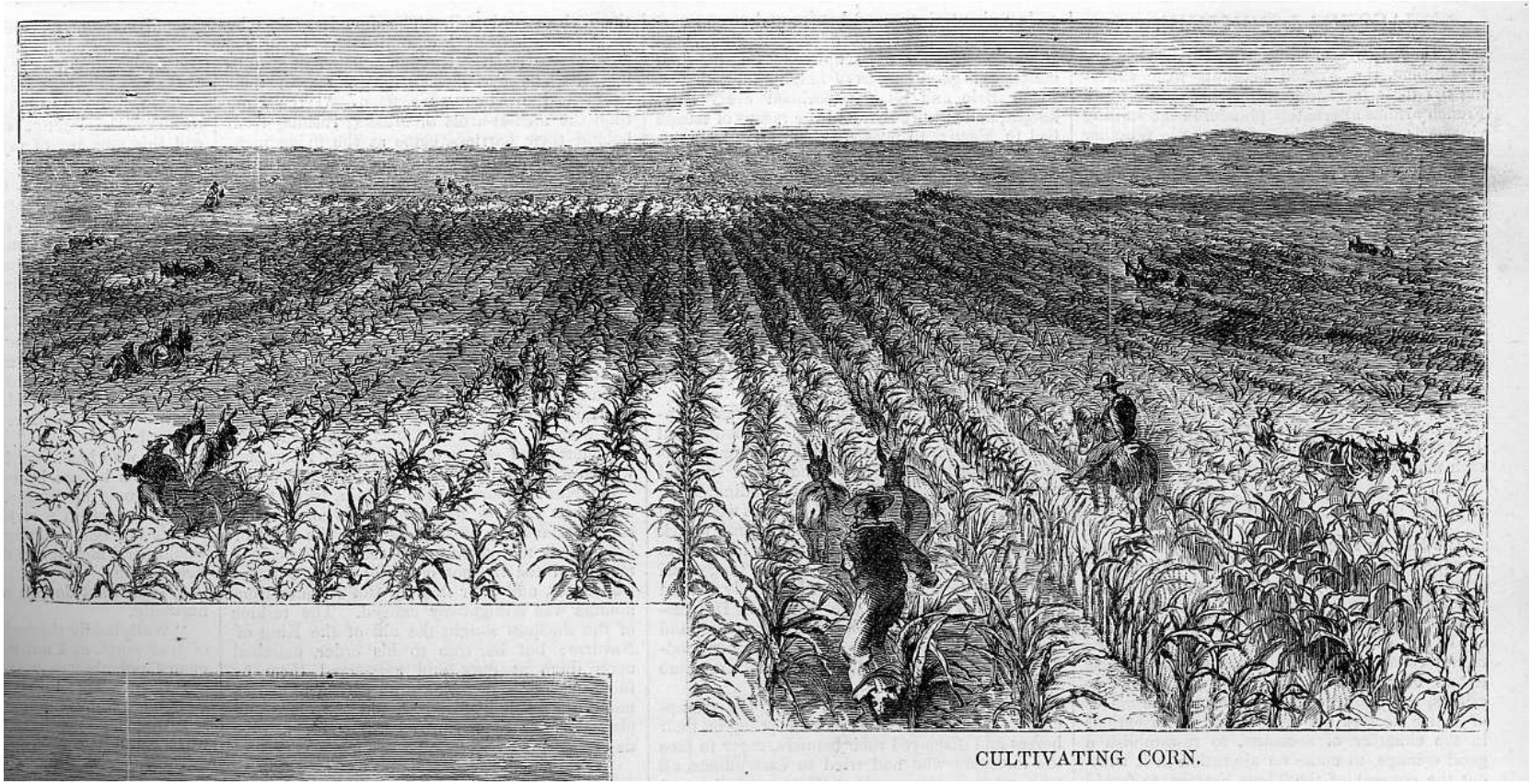


Figure 16. View entitled "Cultivating Corn" as illustrated in *Harper's Weekly* (1871). This image depicts eight to ten farm hands, each using a two-mule (or horse) cultivator working a single field within the Sullivant farm. The image also depicts the horse-mounted overseer or "captain."

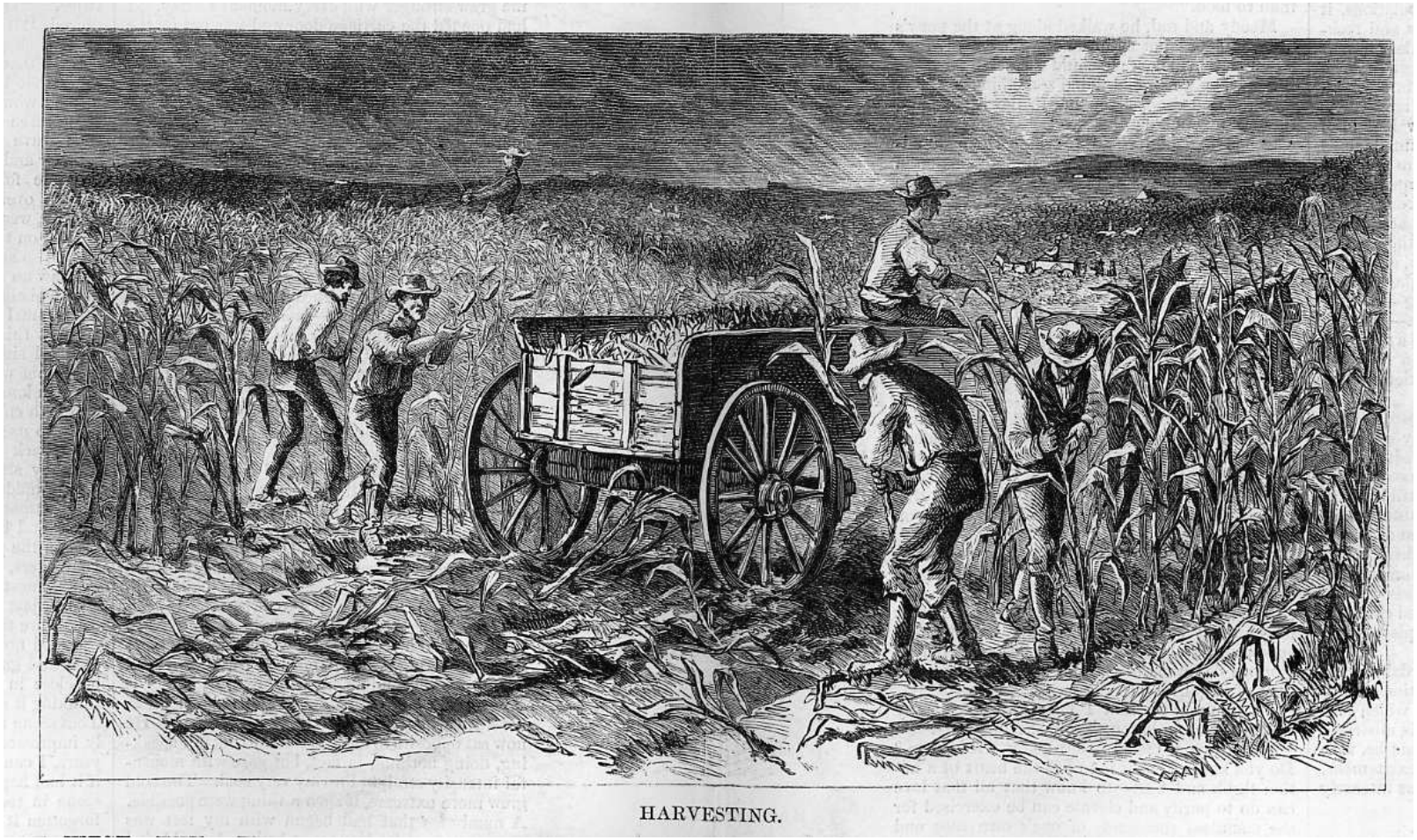
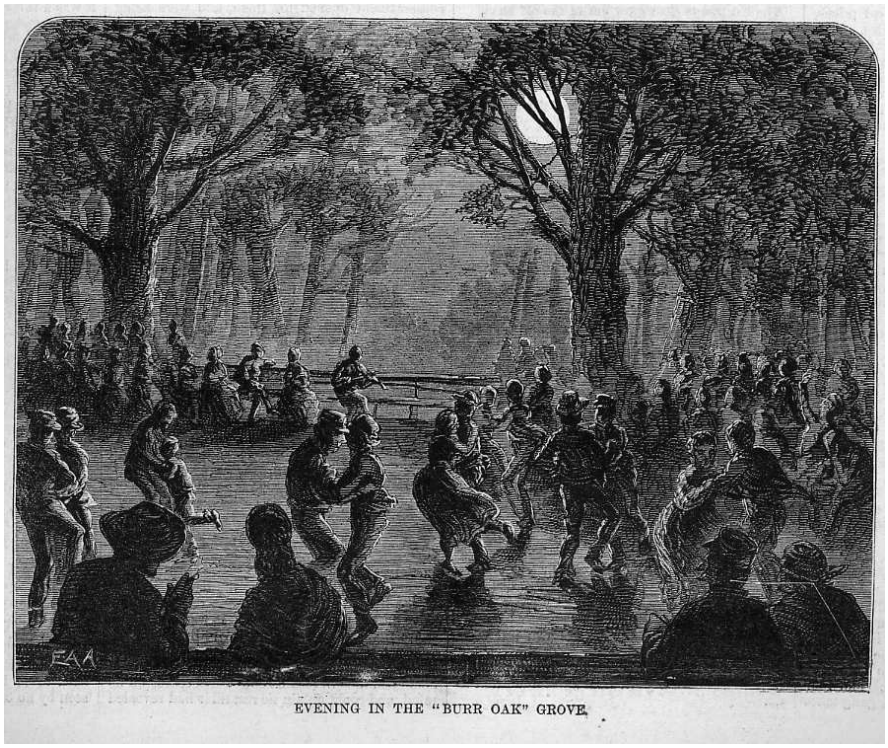
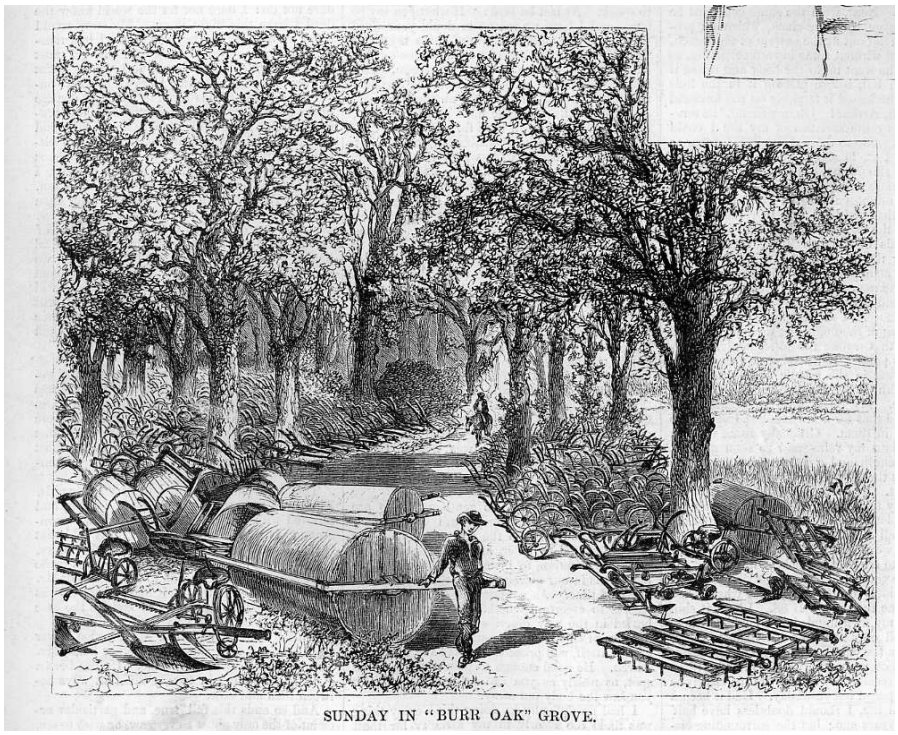


Figure 17. View entitled "Harvesting" as illustrated in *Harper's Weekly* (1871). This image depicts at least three corn picking teams working a common field at the Sullivant farm. Each "team" consists of a wagon pulled by two mules (or possibly horses), a driver, and four farmhands—two walking each side of the wagon picking corn from the stalk and pitching the ears corn into the wagons. Picking corn was a very laborious task in the 1870s.



EVENING IN THE "BURR OAK" GROVE.



SUNDAY IN "BURR OAK" GROVE.

Figure 18. Views entitled "Evening in the 'Burr Oak' Grove," and "Sunday in 'Burr Oak' Grove" (*Harper's Weekly* 1871).

SULLIVANT FARM FOR SALE

IN PARCELS.

HAVING come to the conclusion, that I am monopolizing more territory, 140,000 acres, 8 miles square, than any one man ought ... especially at my time of life, I have determined to diminish my cares and give every one who wants a Farm of moderate size a chance ... twenty or thirty thousand acres ... rolling prairie ... land in Illinois ... and at prices, and on terms that will defy competition.

Information regarding my lands, may also be obtained from the following parties: —

M. L. Sullivant,

BURR OAKS,

Ford County, Ill.

Figure 19. Sale bill offering Sullivant's lands for sale. This sale bill was probably printed in 1877 in an final effort to stave off foreclosure, just prior to the final sale of the lands. This sale bill was printed at a small scale, and is partially illegible (Ford County Historical Society 1984). Future research needs to identify what may be in the holdings of the Ford County Historical Society.

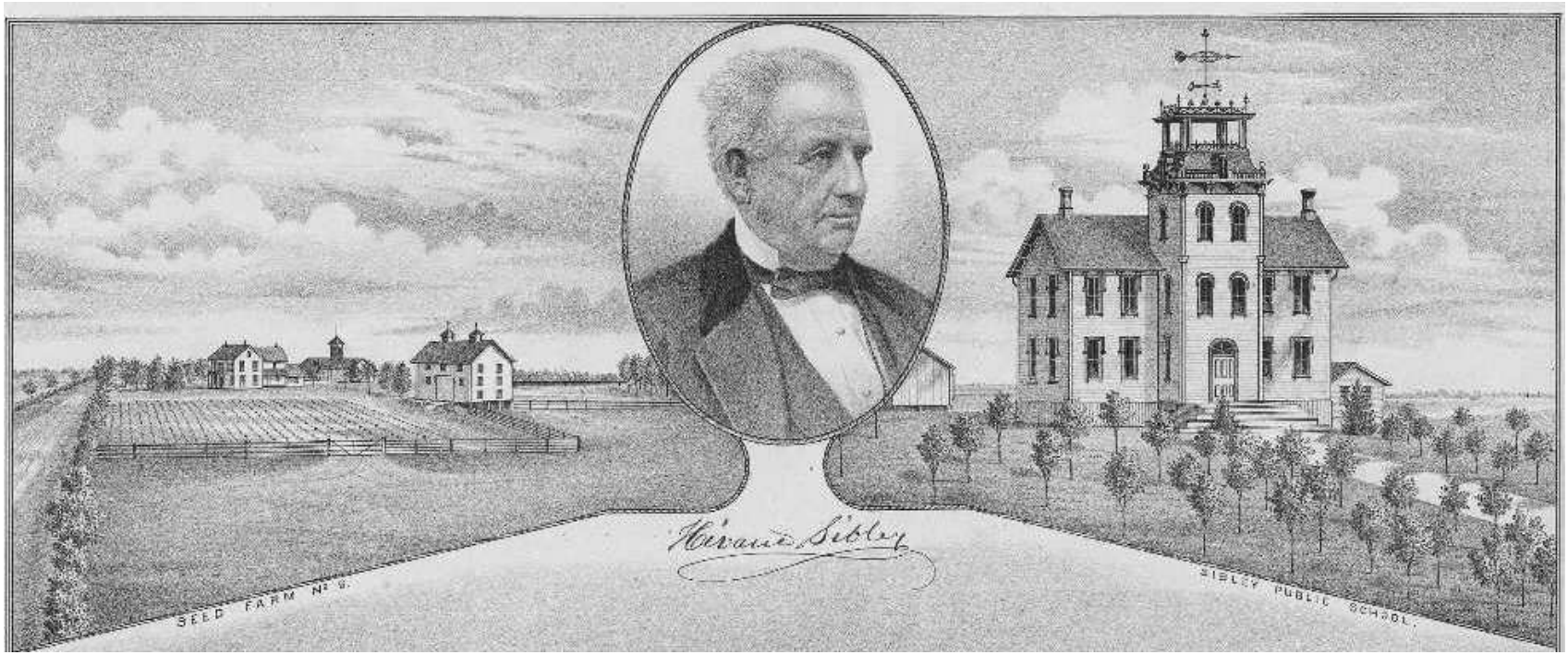


Figure 20. Hiram Sibley, an extremely successful businessman from Rochester, New York, acquired a major portion of the Burr Oaks Farm after Sullivant's economic collapse and loss of the property. Sibley was a strong promoter of public education, and in 1884 constructed a substantial new school in Sibley. This building was demolished in 1918 (Beers 1884).

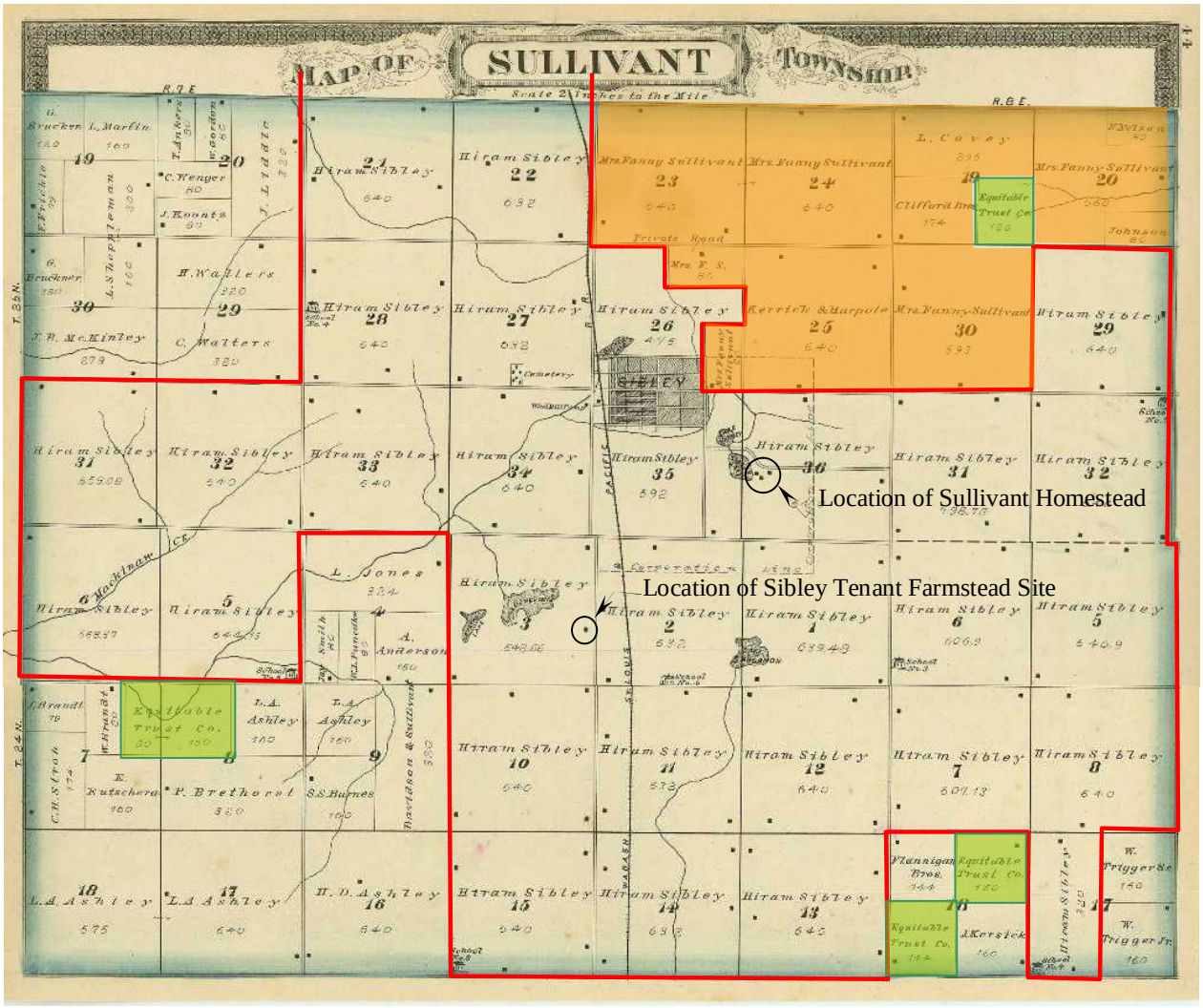


Figure 21. Sullivant Township (Ford County) in 1884, illustrating location of the Hiram Sibley landholdings (outlined in red)—as well as the Equitable Trust Company (in green), and Sullivant family lands (in orange) (Beers 1884:44).

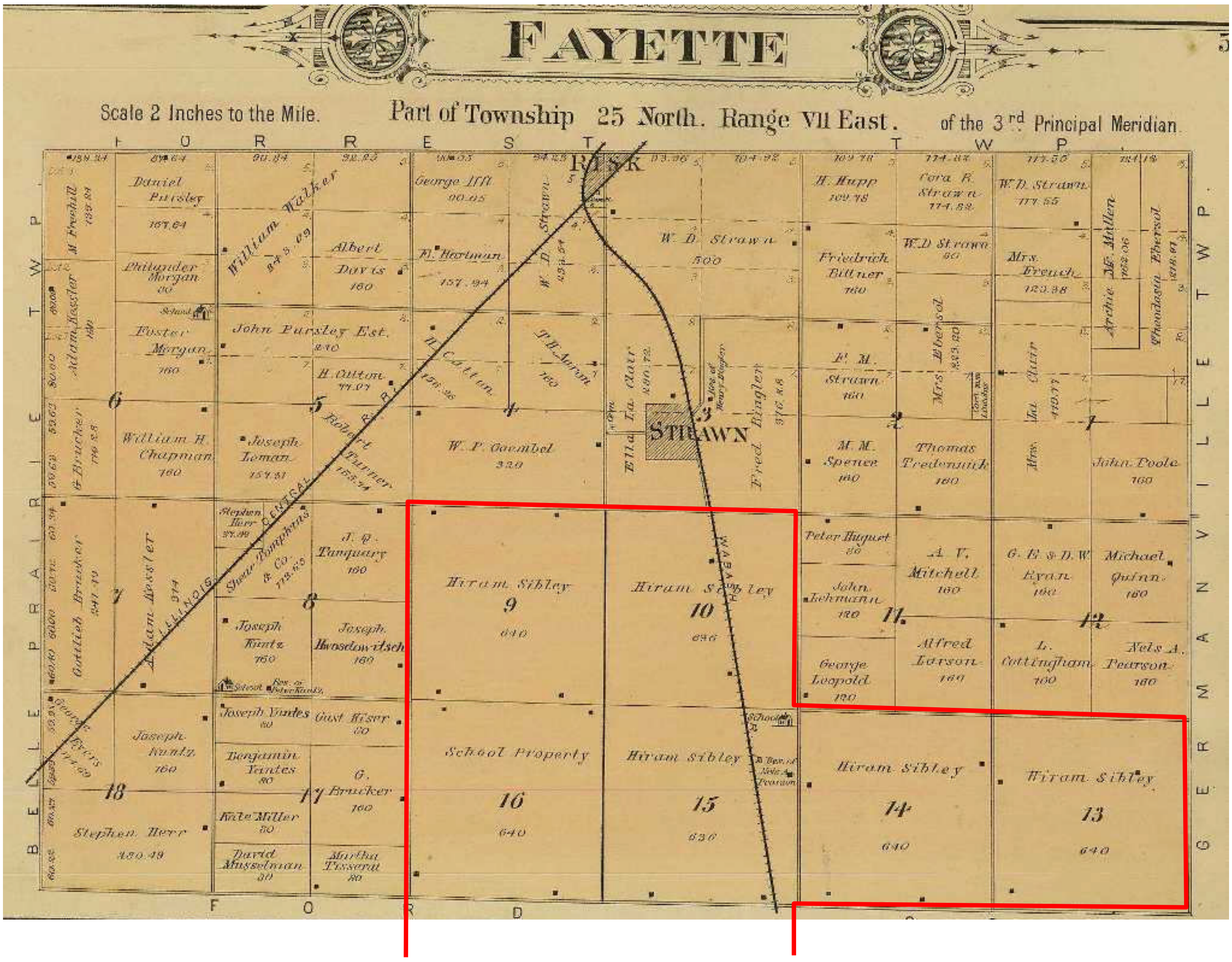


Figure 22. Fayette Township (Livingston County, Illinois) in 1893, illustrating location of the Hiram Sibley landholdings (outlined in red) (Ogle 1893:53).

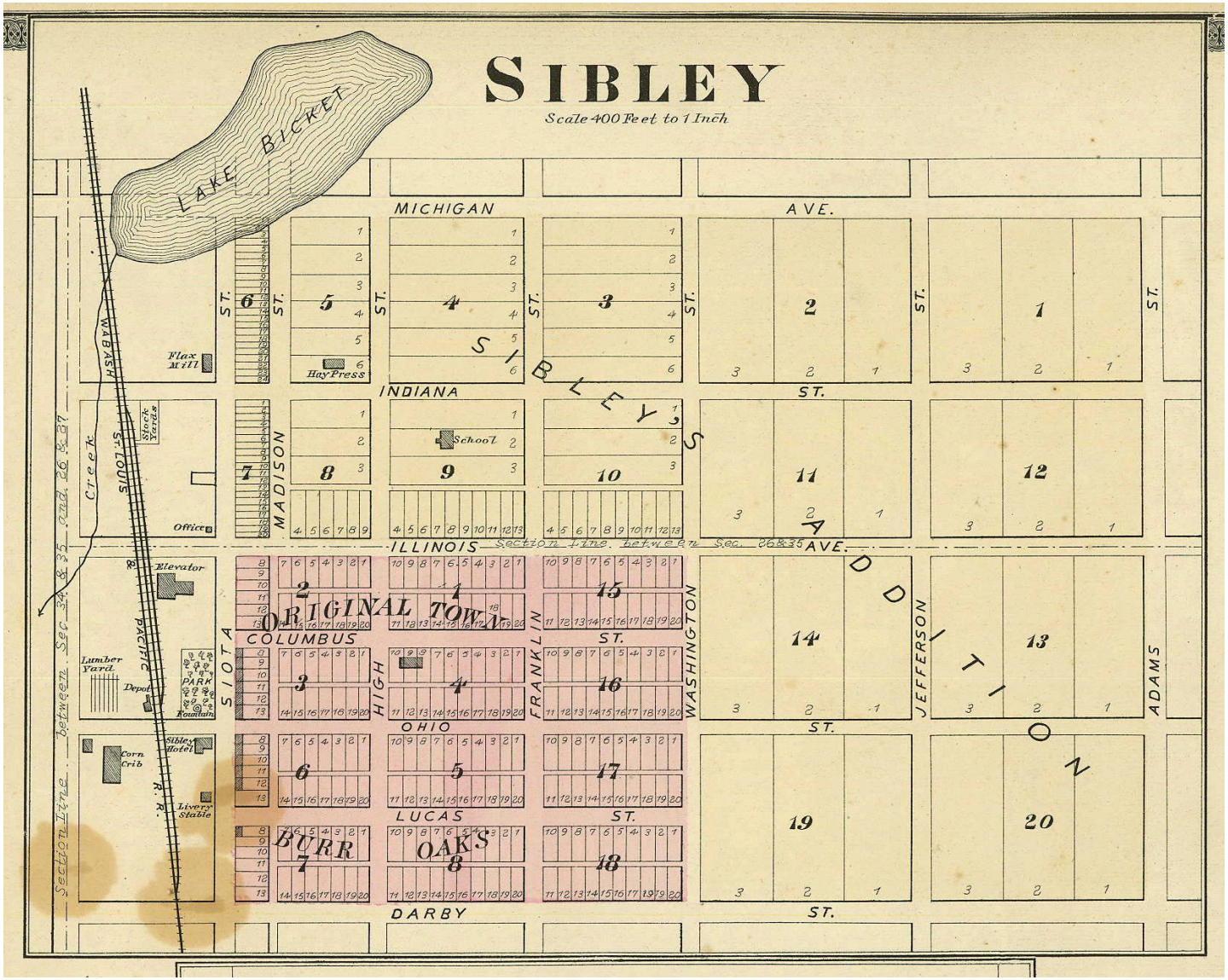


Figure 23. The village of Sibley in 1884 (Beers 1884:38).

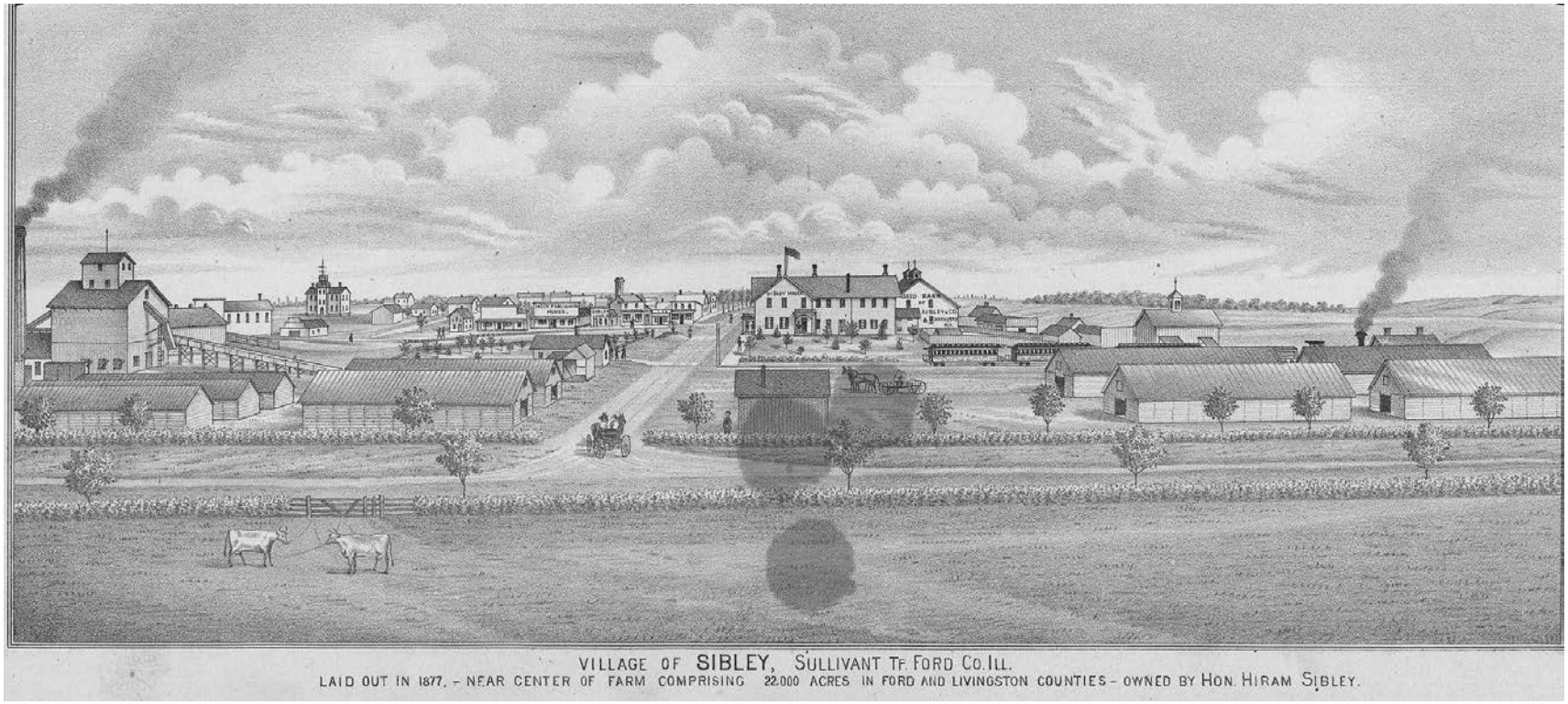


Figure 24. View of Village of Sibley, Sullivant Township, Ford, County, Illinois (Beers 1884:39).

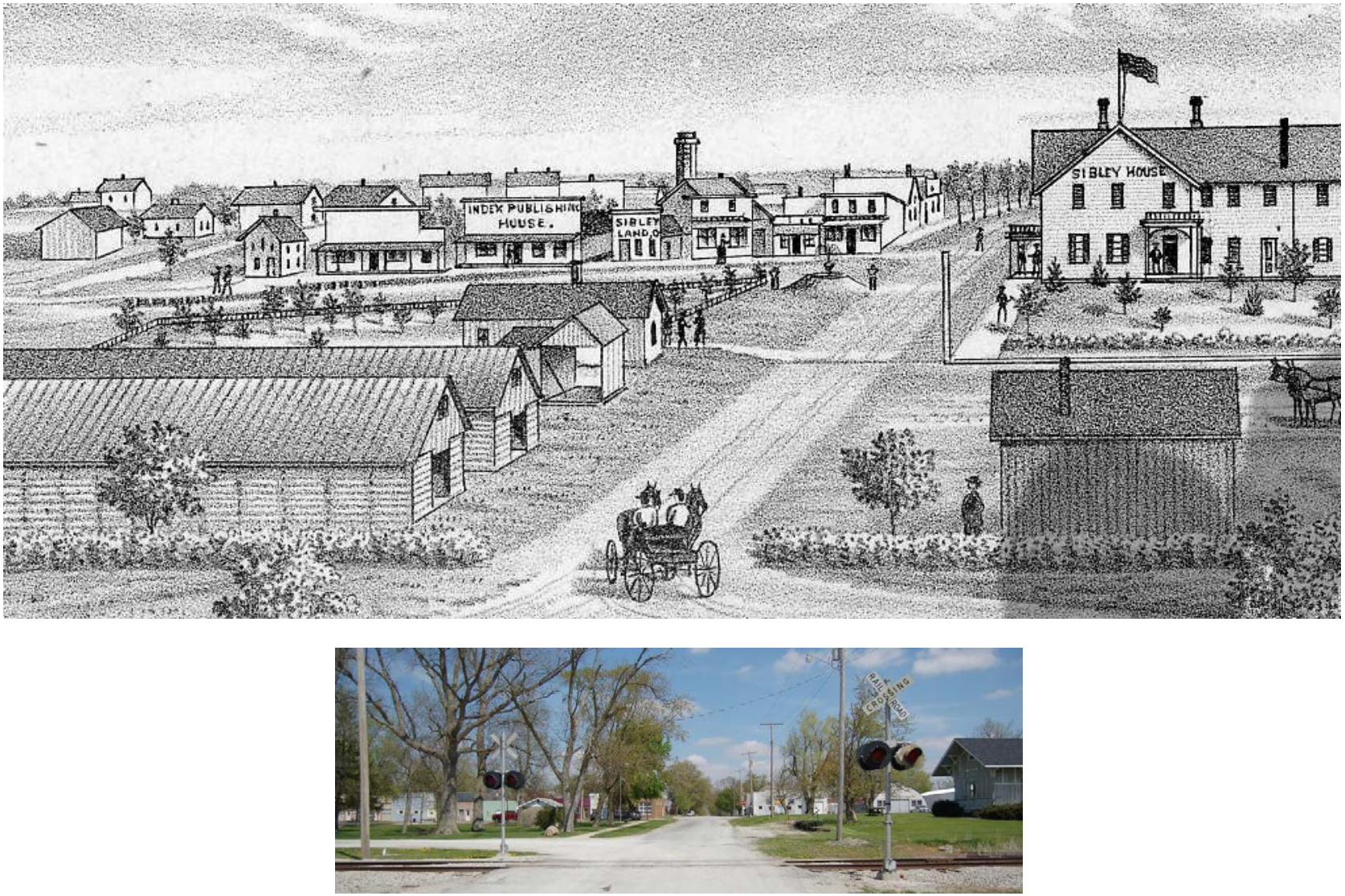
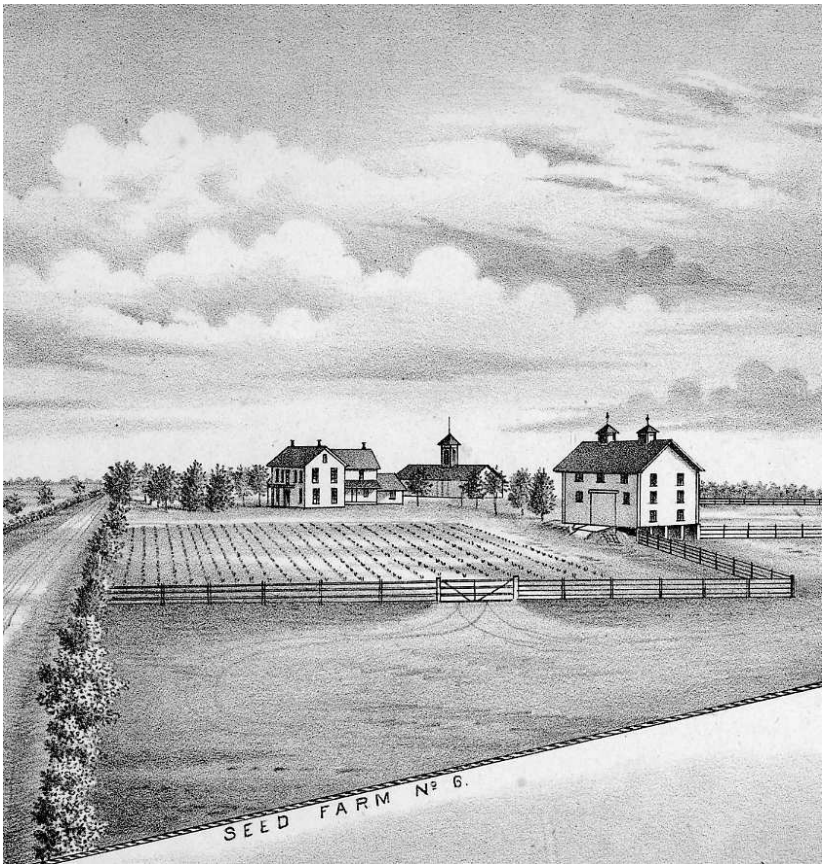


Figure 25. Detail of commercial district of Sibley in 1884 (Beers 1884:39). Note the presence of the fountain across the street from the Sibley House. Bottom: Current view from similar perspective.



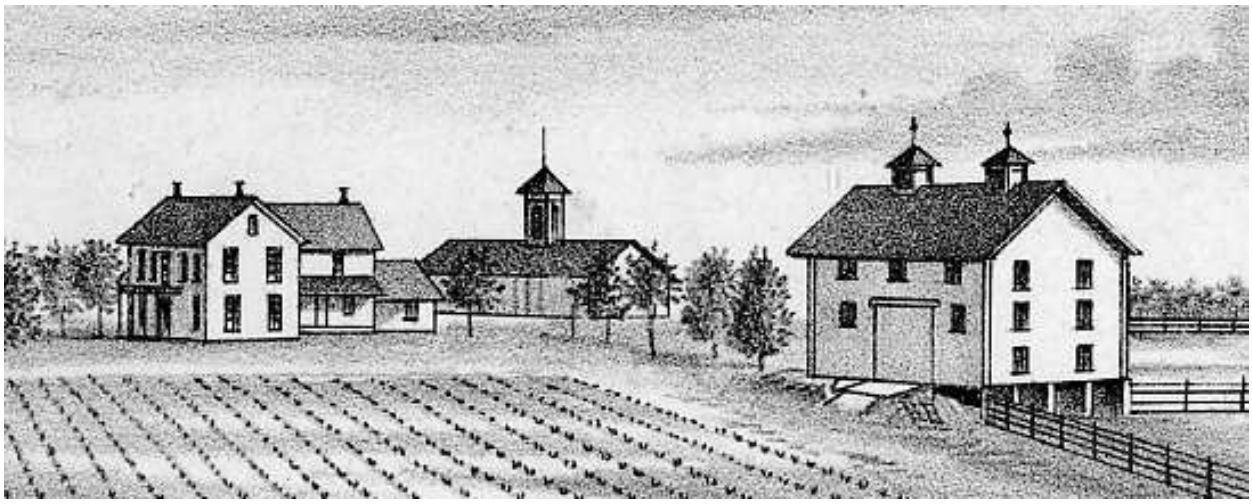


Figure 26. Details of Sibley and Company's Seed Farm No. 6 (Beers 1884:39). Unfortunately, the location of this farm is currently unknown. The farmstead has a large frame I-house and two very large and rather unique barns.

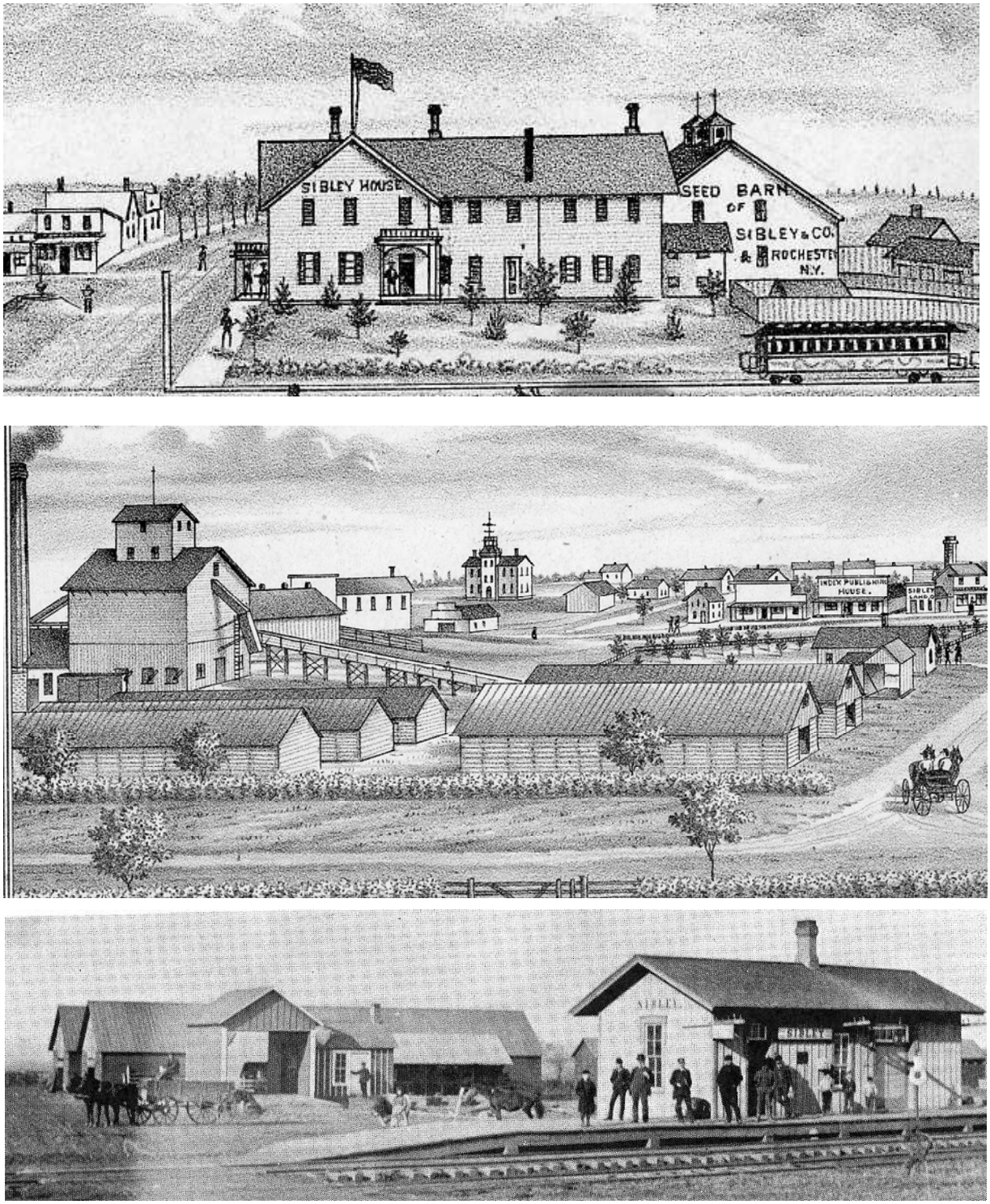


Figure 27. Detail of Sibley House, Sibley and Company's Seed Barn (top), and elevator with adjacent corn cribs (middle) (Beers 1884). Bottom: Late nineteenth century photographic view of depot, scale house, and corn cribs in background (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).

Figure 28. The Sibley Seed House. It was from within this building that corn was selected, dried, and processed for seed corn production. The Sibley Farms were very involved with the development of hybrid seed corn strains in use during the early years of the twentieth century. Pictured in this photograph are (left to right) L. I. Norton, C.G. Rohrer, and Dr. Jim Holbert (of Funk Brothers Seed Company). This structure persisted through the 1970s (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).

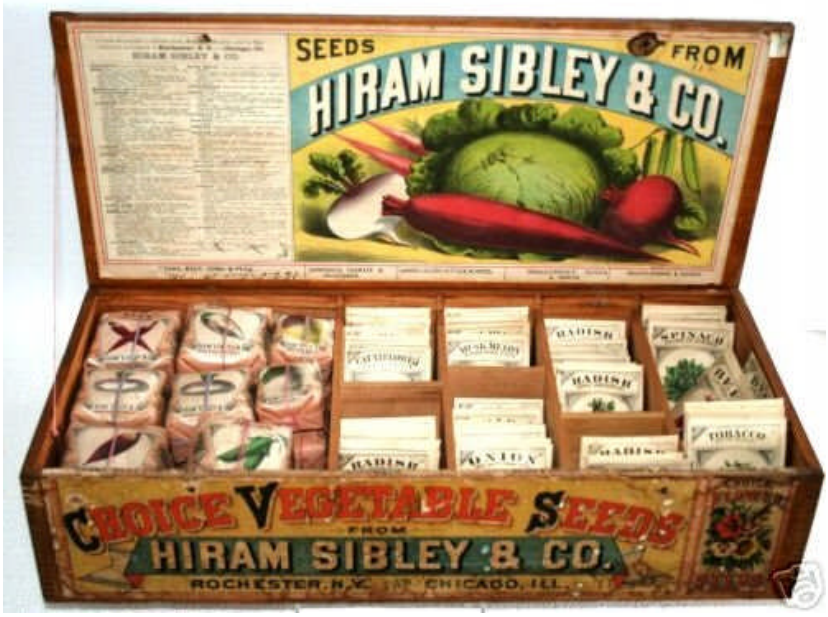


Figure 29. Nineteenth century seed box from Hiram Sibley and Company [online EBAY item.]

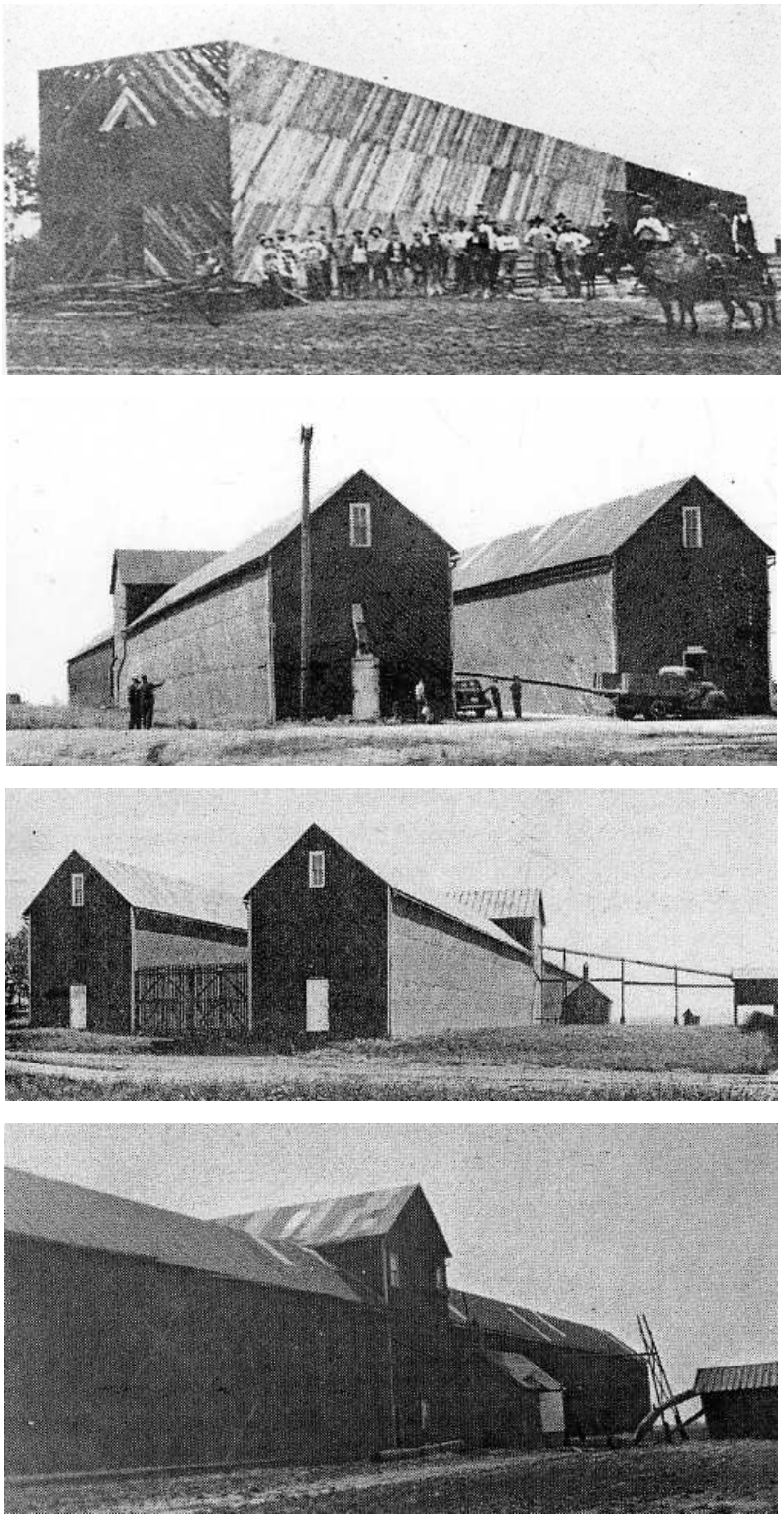
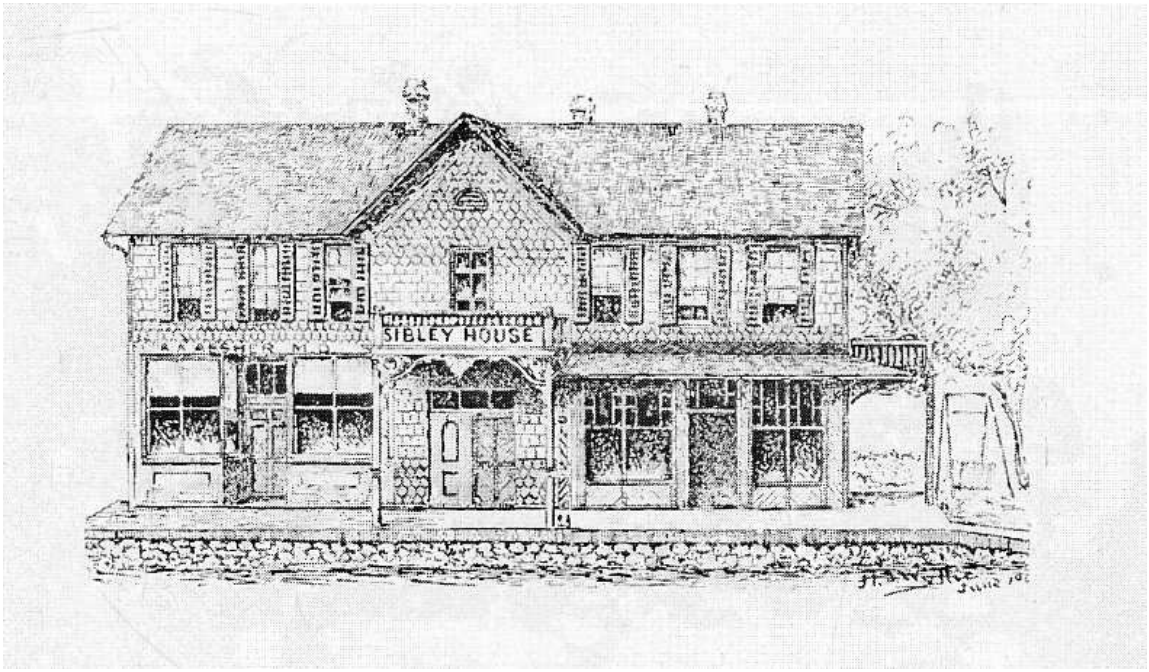
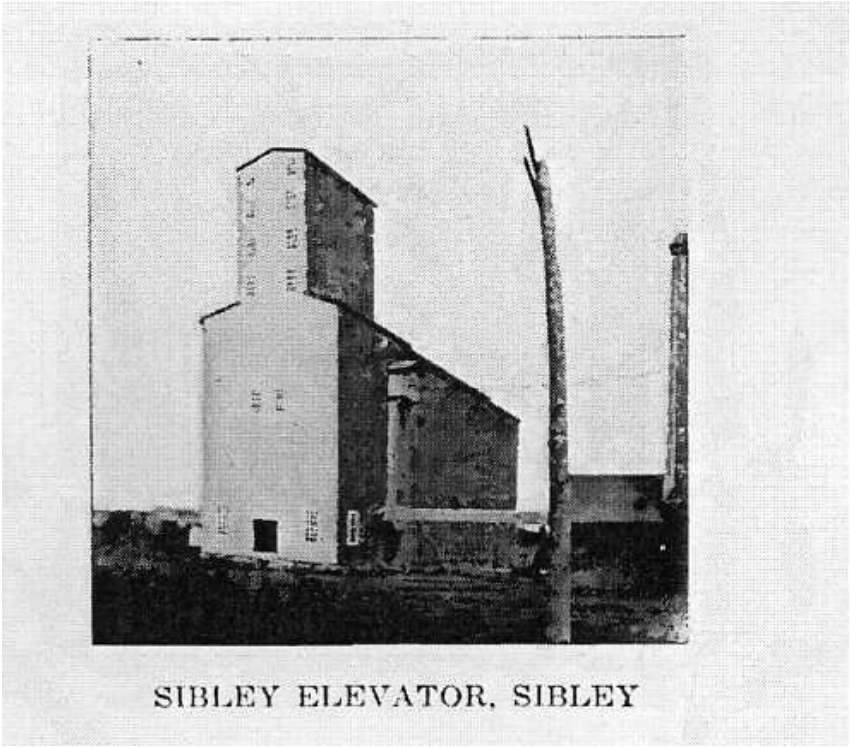


Figure 30. Views of the massive corn crib designed by C.G. Rohrer and constructed for the Sibley Farms in 1910. This 125,000 bushel corn crib was demolished in 1965 (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).

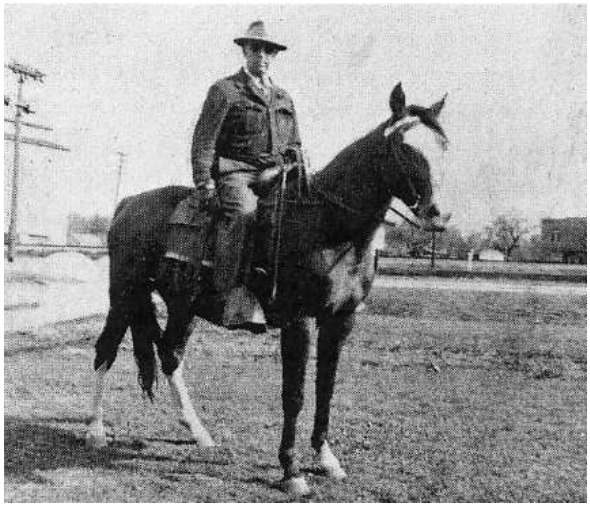




SIBLEY ELEVATOR, SIBLEY

Figure 31. The "Sibley House" and Sibley elevator, as illustrated in the *History of Ford County, Illinois* (Gardner 1908). It is unclear as to whether this is the same structure as illustrated in the 1884 atlas, or a new version of the Sibley House (which may have been designed by the Rochester architect Claude Bragdon in circa 1901-02).

Figure 32. William A. Bicket, general manager of the Sibley Estate from 1877 until his death in 1896. In August 1872, Bicket was hired by Sullivant to organize and/or run the company's commissary. Upon Sullivant going into receivership in 1877, Bicket was appointed manager of Sullivant's estate, a position he maintained after Sibley became owner (Lake City Publishing Company 1892:210; Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).



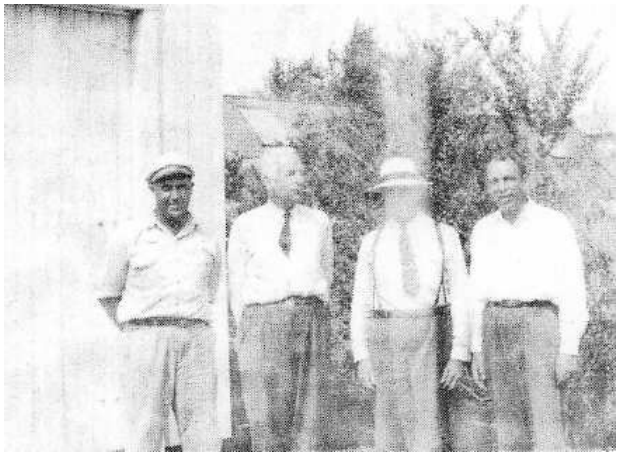


Figure 33. Left: Charles Garfield Rohrer on his horse. C.G. was manager of the Sibley Farms from 1905 through 1950. As a graduate of the University of Illinois (agricultural engineering), Rohrer brought a wide range of skills and university contacts to the management of the large estate. In celebration of his 70th birthday, a party was held in his honor in Sibley. At that time (June 1955), "books containing pictures of each farm and each farm family [comprising the Sibley Farms] were presented as mementos of a lifelong relationship." [Finding a copy of those books would be extremely informative]. Right (left to right): Chub Rohrer, Harper Sibley, C.G. Rohrer, and Hiram Sibley in 1949—just prior to C.G. Rohrer's retirement Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).

Figure 34. Left (left to right): Harper Sibley, Mr. And Mrs. C. G. Rohrer, and Mrs. Harper Sibley in 1950—at Mr. Rohrer's retirement. Right: Mr. And Mrs. "Chub" Rohrer with their son in 1954 (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).

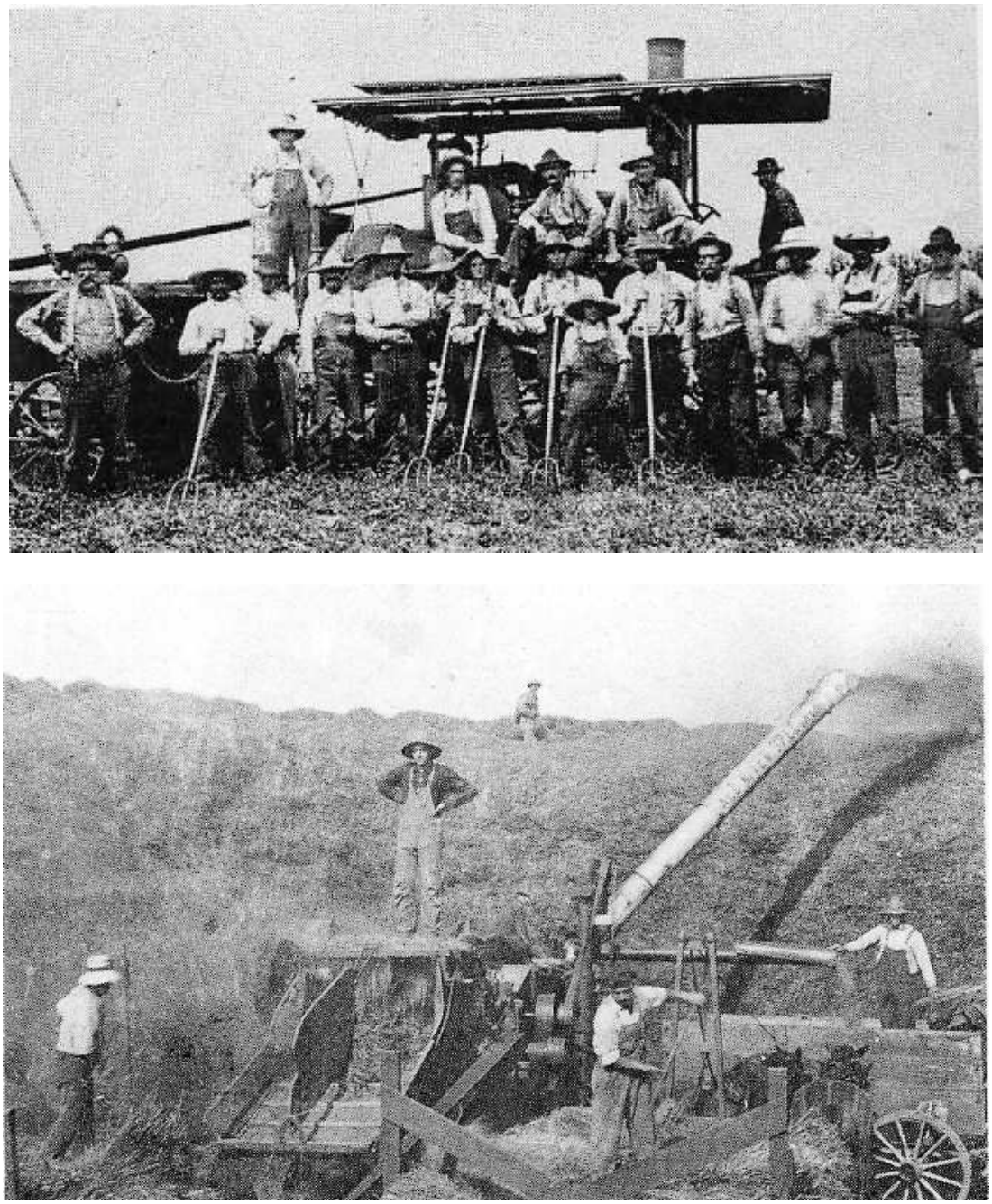


Figure 35. Several pictures document farm life on the Sibley Farms (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977). Top: Threshing crew on Sibley Farms in the late 1920s. Bottom: Threshing oats on the Sibley Farms in the 1920s. Sibley Area Centennial History Committee (1977) contain many additional farm related photographs depicting farm life in the Sibley vicinity—many of which were probably on Sibley Farms. The rural photographic record for this area is better than average.

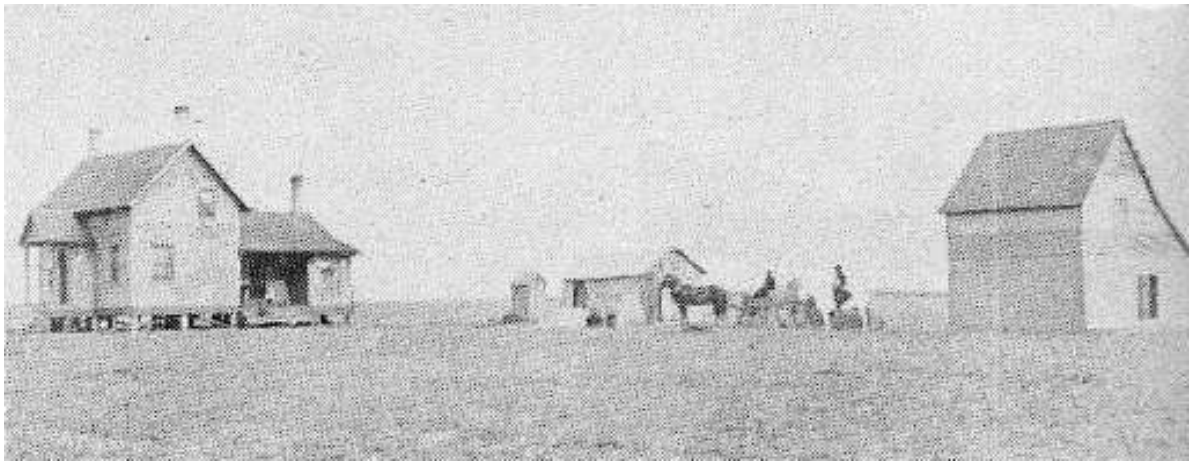


Figure 36. Two early Sibley Estate farm houses. Unfortunately, few photographs of farmsteads from this era are known to exist. Top: Circa 1885 view of Sibley Estate Farm No. 31. This farm was located in the SW1/4, Section 26, Township 25 North, Range 7 West) (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977). This photograph illustrates the sparse nature of the early tenant farmsteads. Bottom: The farmhouse located at the Sibley Estate Farm No. 57. This house, which was apparently constructed in 1887 (note date on porch gable end) was occupied by the Sehmann family from 1903 until 1919, and was located west of Burr Oak Grove, ¾-mile southeast of Sibley (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977). Both houses are of similar form.

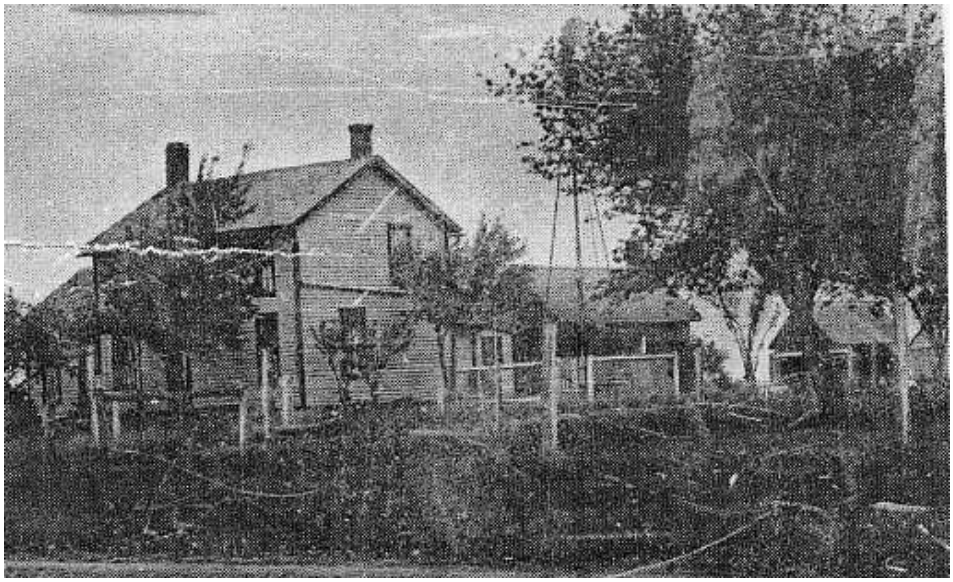


Figure 37. View of the William Hafer farmstead, later known as the Francis Pretslaff home . The Hafer family moved into a house on this Sibley Estate farmstead south of Sibley in 1881, and remained at this location through 1914 (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977). This early Sibley farm house is similar in design to those illustrated in the previous figure. These houses all are two rooms wide by 1 ½-stories in height. Rear service wings are minimal in size. All houses appear to have been painted a light color (yellow?) and trimmed with a darker color.

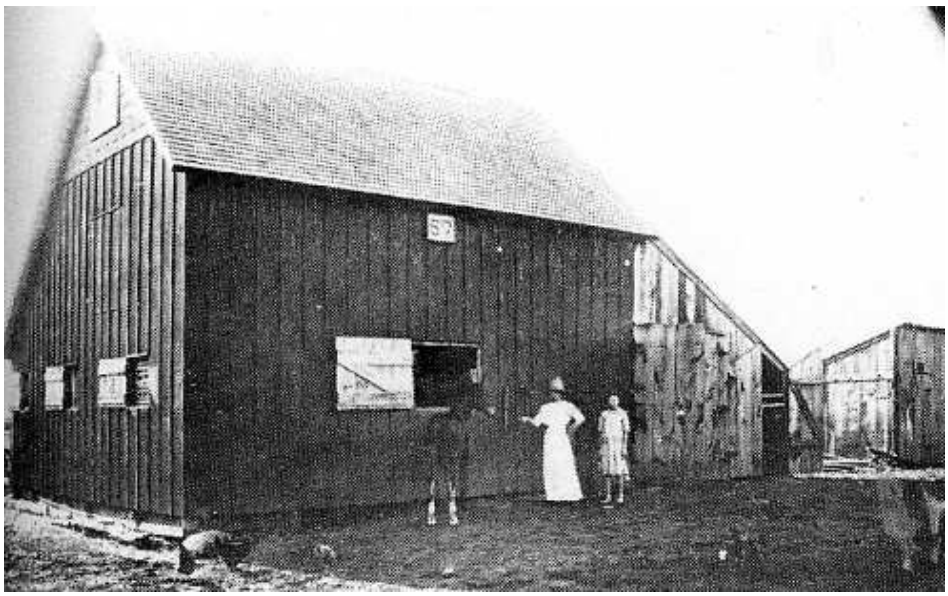


Figure 38. The Sehmann barn was located at the Sibley Estate Farm No. 57. This barn represents a very small horse barn (almost equivalent to a stable). A shed-roof extension was located on one end, and may have housed a small milking parlor. The house associated with this barn was apparently constructed in 1887 (see above picture of the Sehmann house). This barn (and house) was located west of Burr Oak Grove, ¾-mile southeast of Sibley (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).

Figure 39. Barns on the Sibley Estate. Top: Detail of early Sibley barn in 1915. Pictured are William "Doc" Phillips and Henry Curtis. The farm sign appears to indicate Sibley Estate Farm No. 66. Although only a small portion of this barn is depicted, it appears to represent a traditional Three-bay or English Barn. Bottom: View of the barns on the Frank Elliott farm east of Sibley. Although Elliott originally worked a Sibley Estate Farm, he purchased this farm in 1914. These two barns were not part of the Sibley Estate. The barn on the right is similar in form to the barn located at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site and probably represents a general purpose barn for horses and dairy cattle. The fuction of the large barn in the background (with the cupola) is unknown (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).

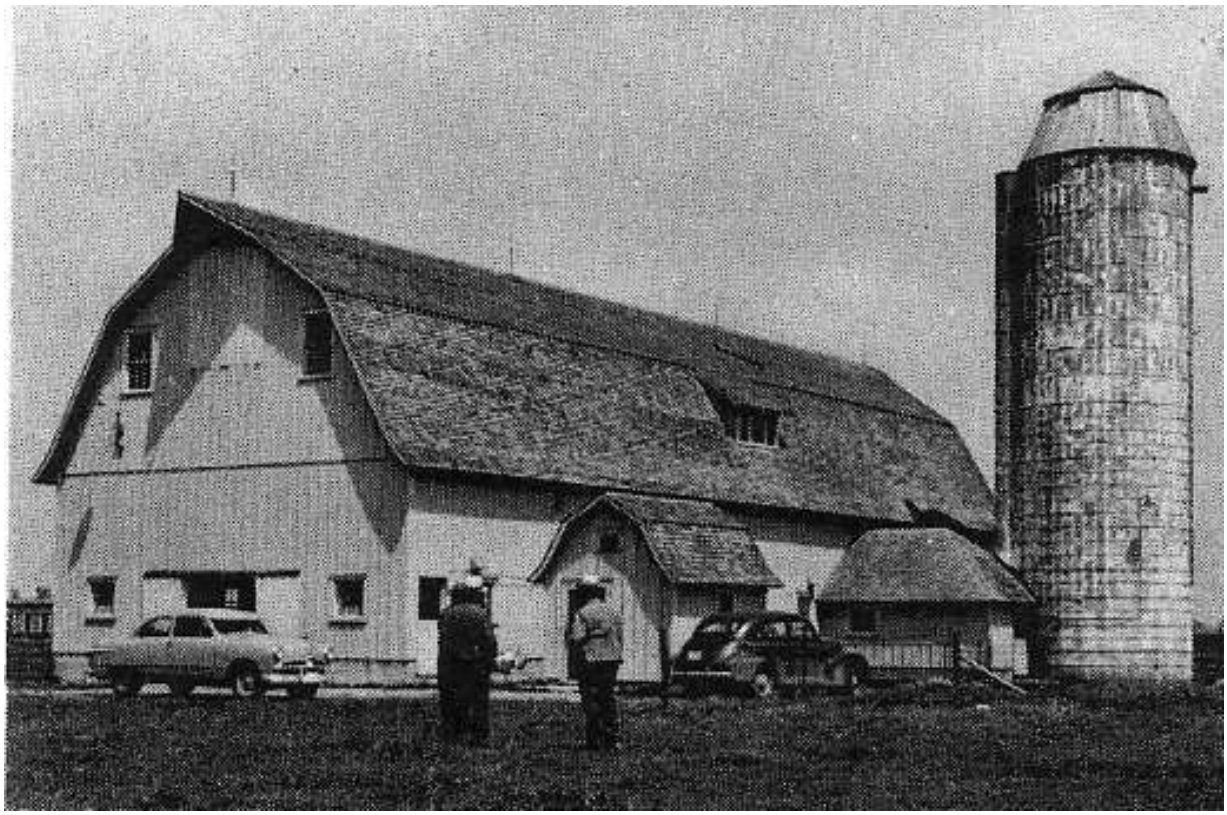


Figure 40. The Sibley Estate began to emphasis more livestock production during the early years of the twentieth century. By the 1950s, the Sibley family had introduced dairy production and several modern dairy barns were constructed at that time. This is the Francis Gentes barn in 1950 (Sibley Area Centennial History Committee 1977).

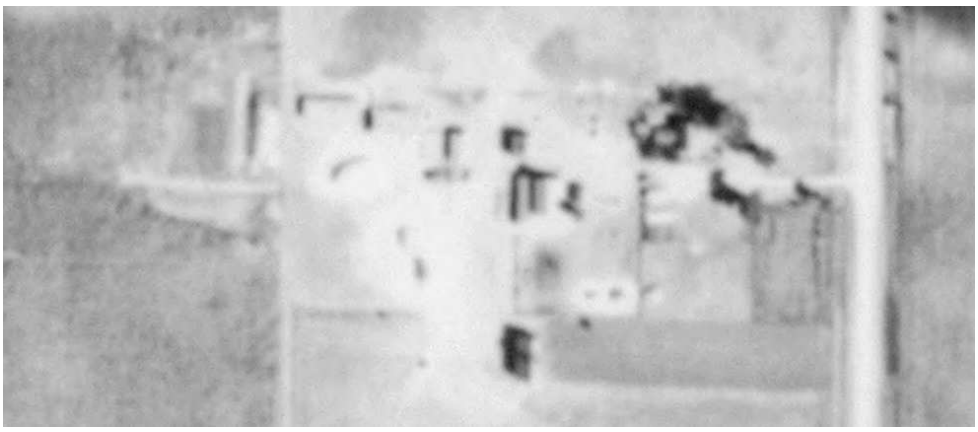


Figure 41. Circa 1940 aerial view of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site (ISGS 1940).

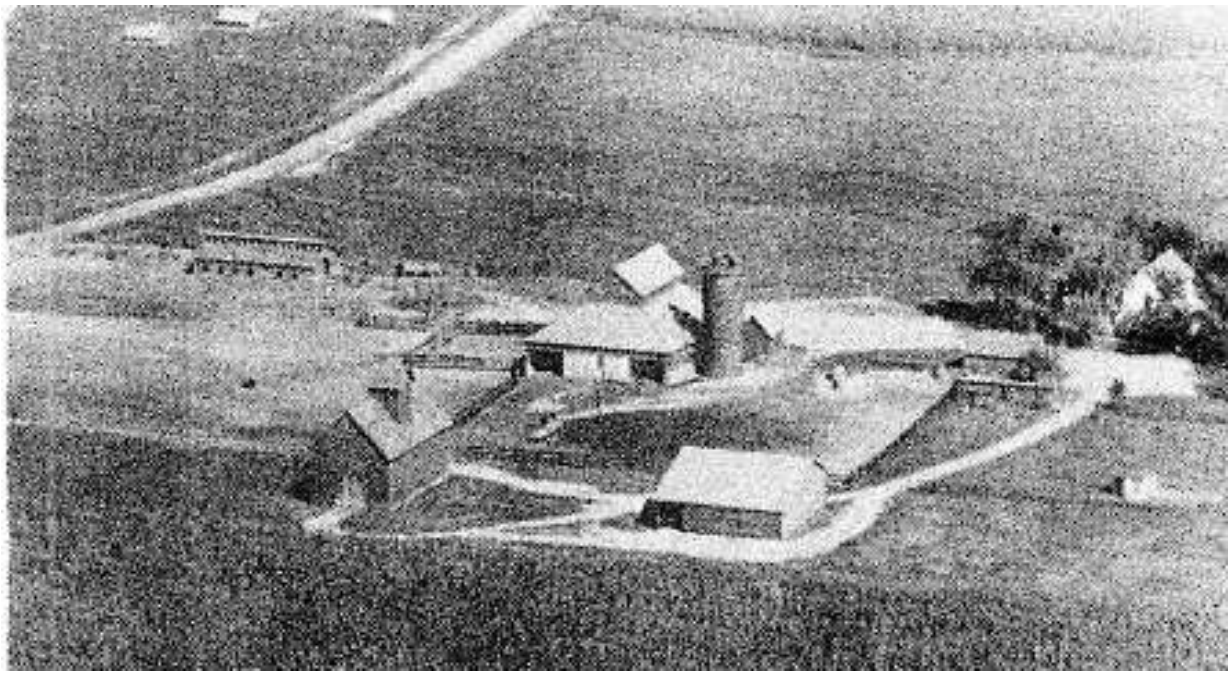


Figure 42. View of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site in circa 1955 (Drury 1956). Drury (1956:297) indicates that the this 640-acre farmstead was part of the larger "Sibley Farms," and that it was operated by the tenant farmer "C. H. Rohrer." Drury (1956) illustrates pictures of approximately 56 rural properties that comprise the Sibley Farms at that date. At least three additional farm illustrations were indicated as being operated by "C. H. Rohrer" at that time. From this picture, it would appear that the corn crib had not been converted to shelled corn, and the large grain bins had not yet been constructed. Additionally, the cattle feed barn, with its large silo, and the larger of the two machine sheds had not as yet been constructed. What appears to be a hog house, with monitor roof, is present. Much of the feed lot between the barn and corn crib had not, as yet, been paved with concrete. Small frame sheds located in adjacent fields probably represent hog shelters. Unfortunately, little detail regarding the house can be seen.

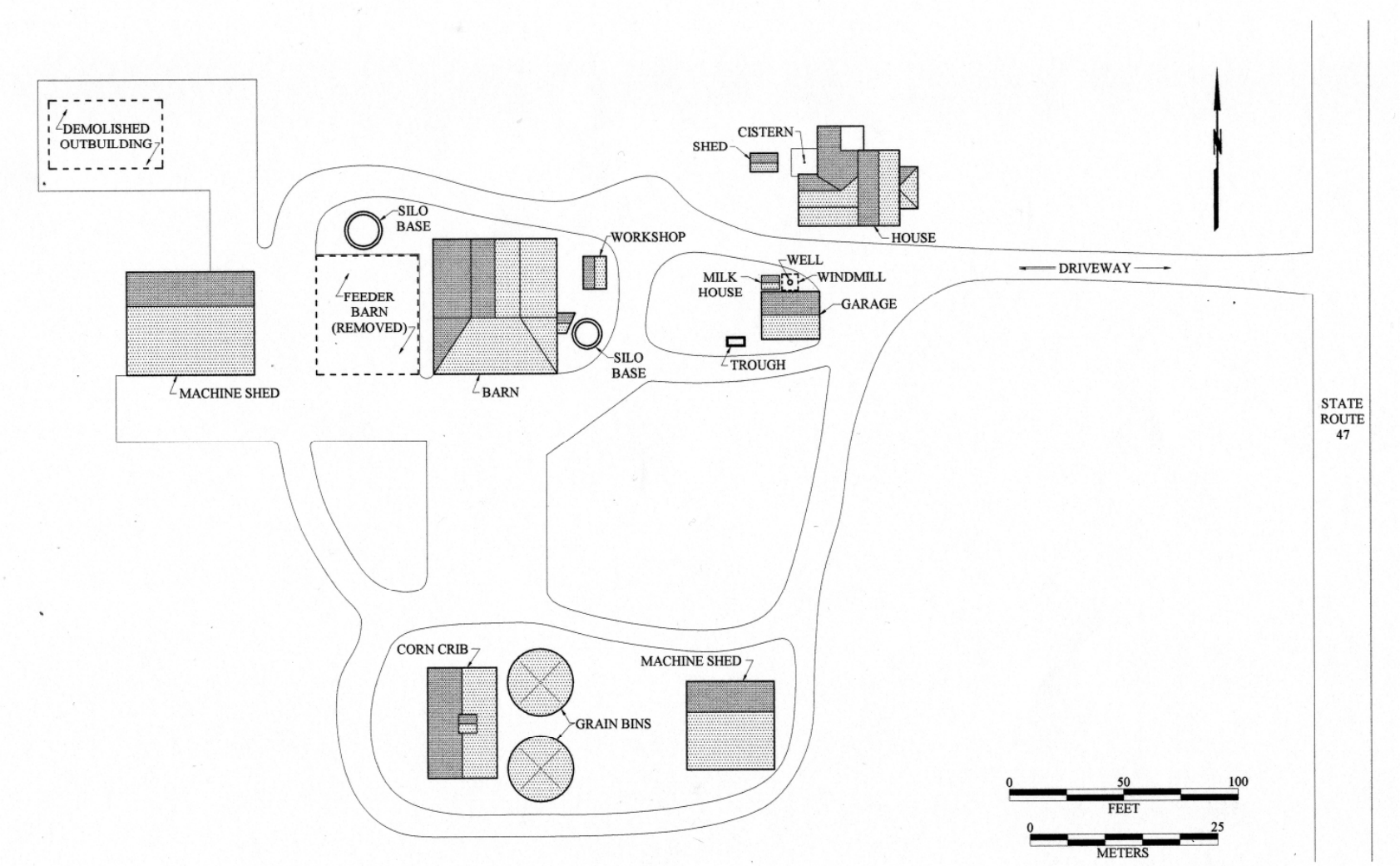


Figure 43. Plan of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site (11FO64) showing conditions in 2011.

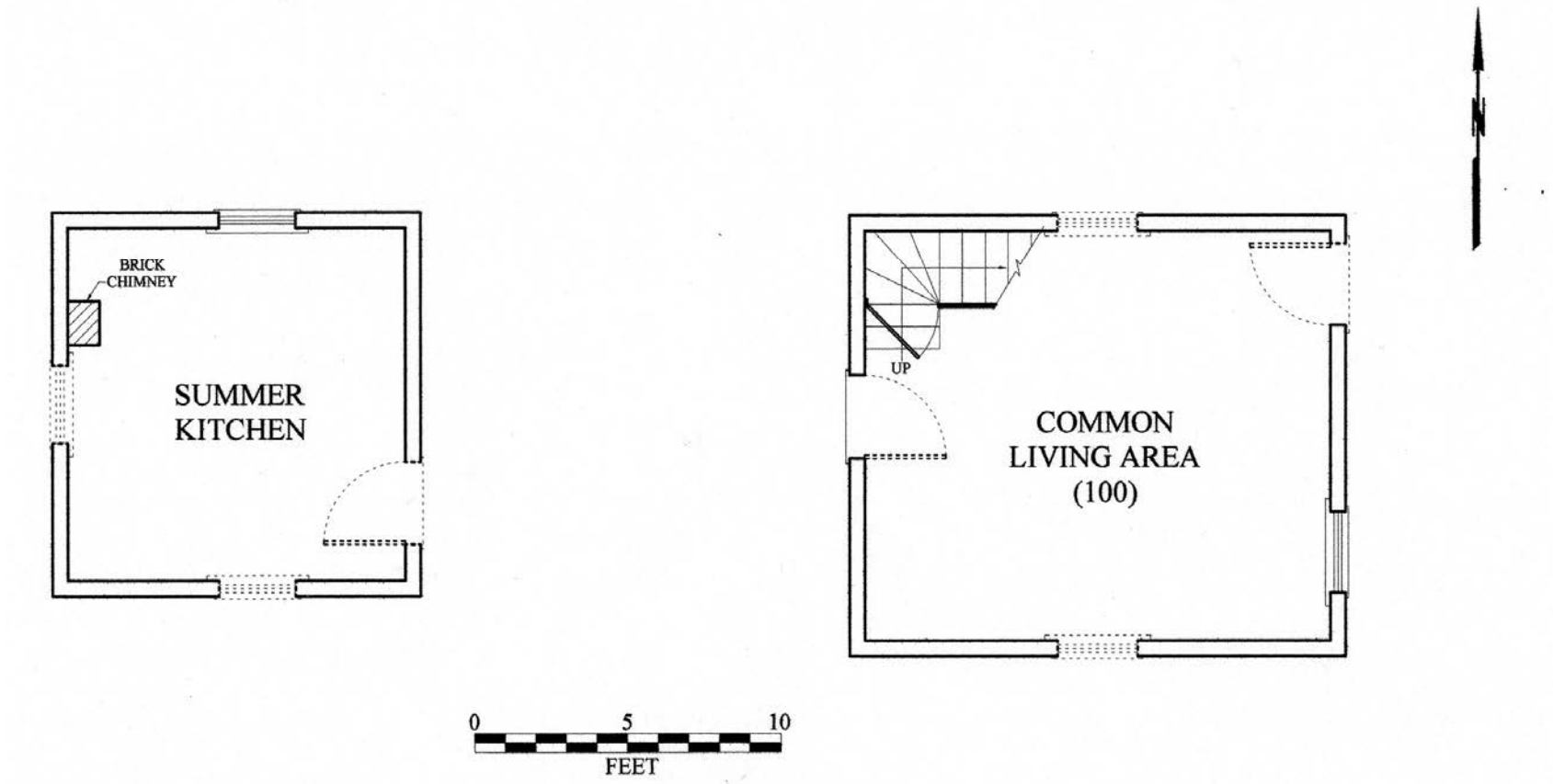


Figure 44. First floor plan of the residence at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead showing as-built conditions (circa 1880). The house originally had one chamber per floor. A detached outbuilding—suspected to be a summer kitchen—was located to the rear of the dwelling. We have a limited understanding of the window and door openings in the original house due to the extensive alterations later made to the structure. Conjectural openings are indicated by dashed lines. It is presumed that the house had a chimney present but its location is not known.

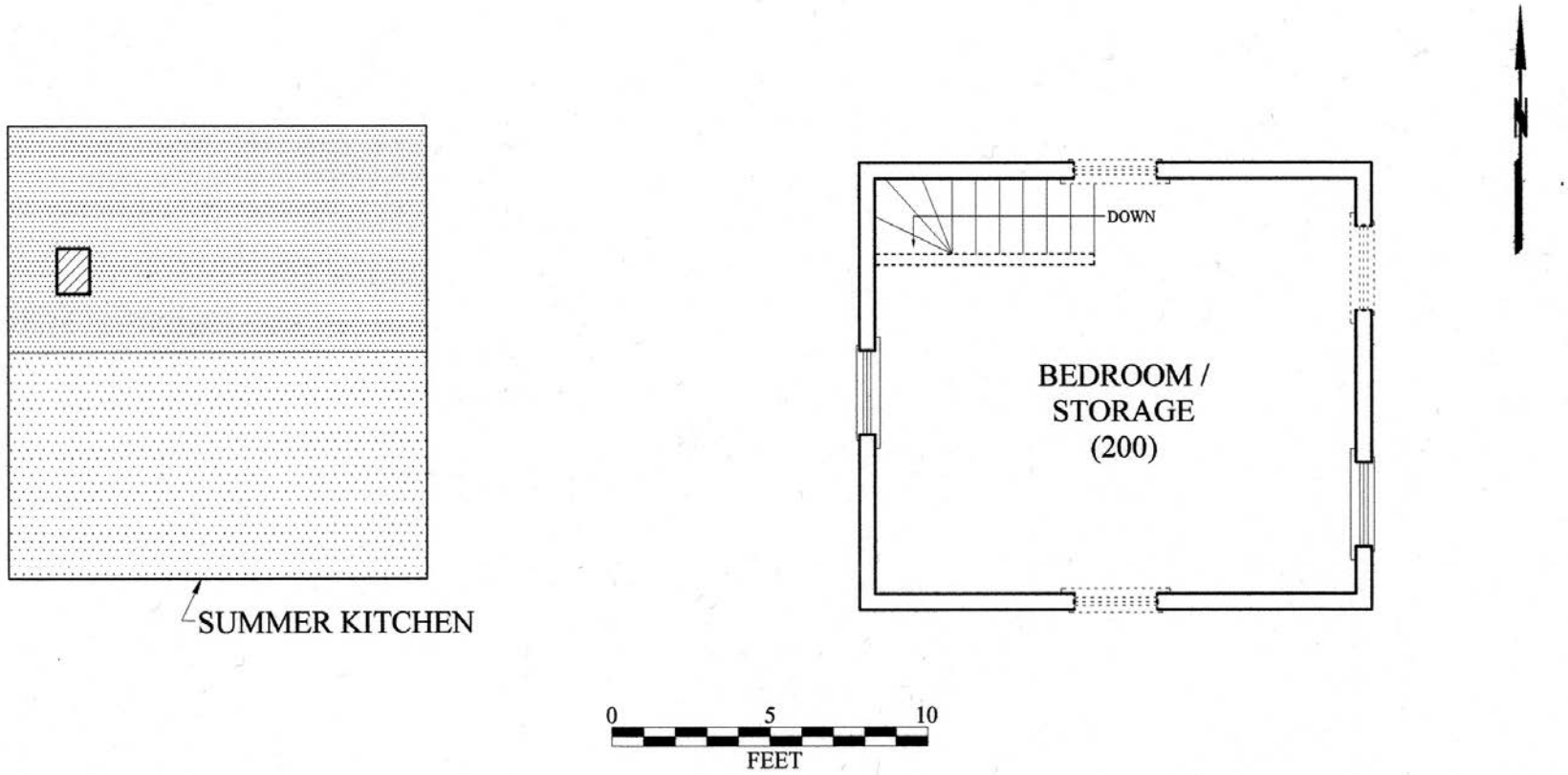


Figure 45. Second floor plan of the residence at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead, circa 1880.

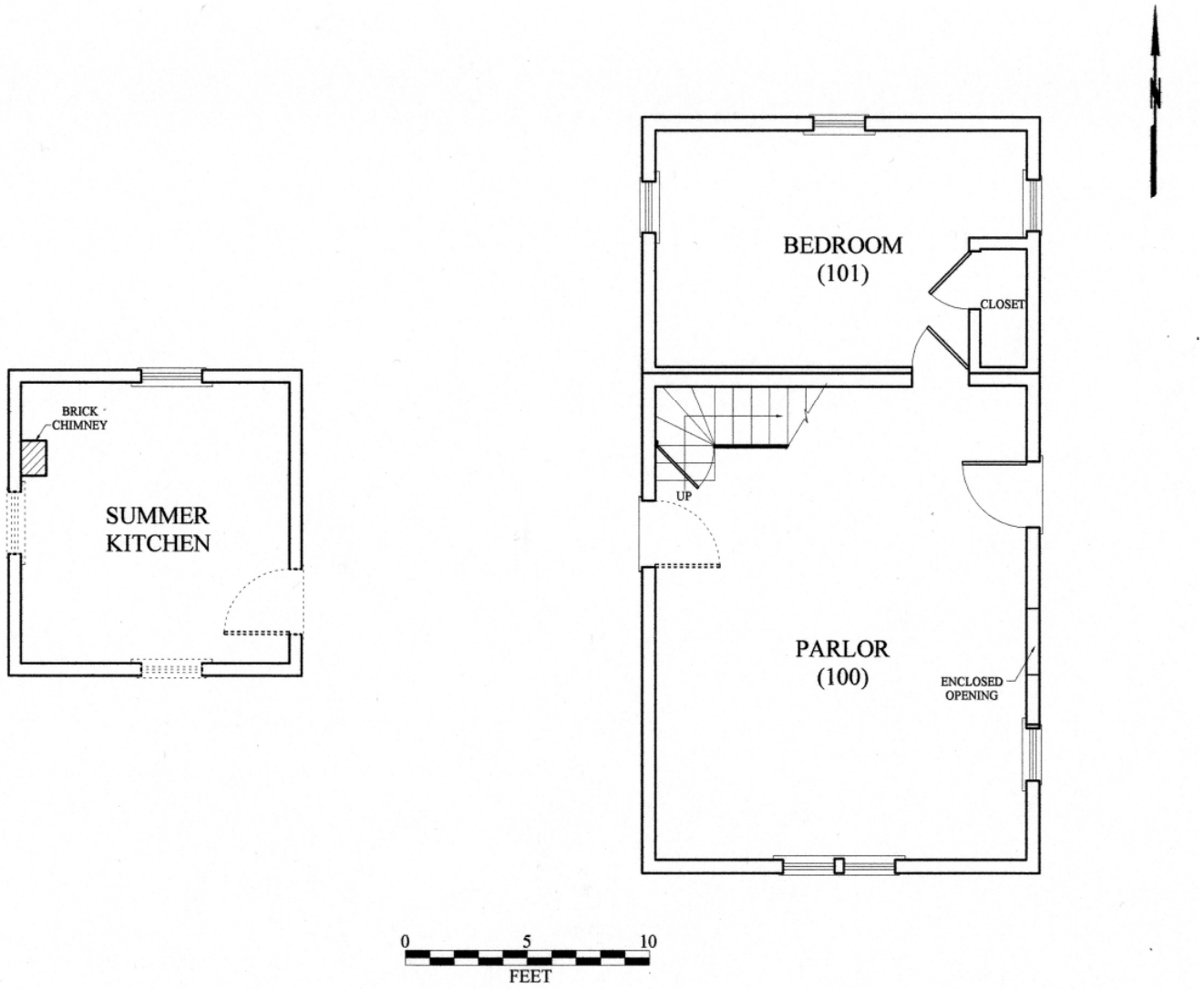


Figure 46. First floor plan of the residence showing conditions circa 1910, following the initial expansion of the original house. The summer kitchen remained detached from the house at this date.

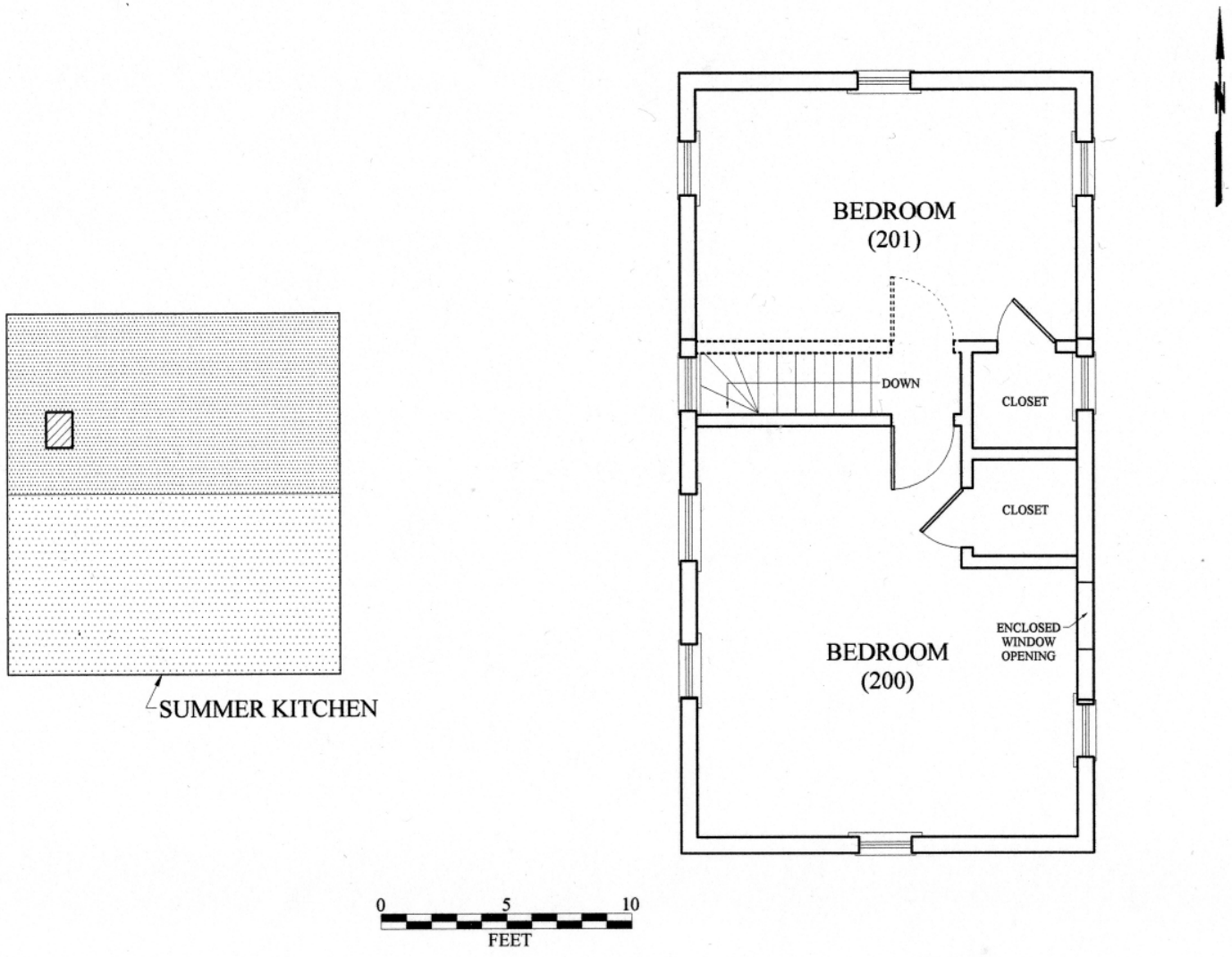


Figure 47. Second floor plan of the residence circa 1910.

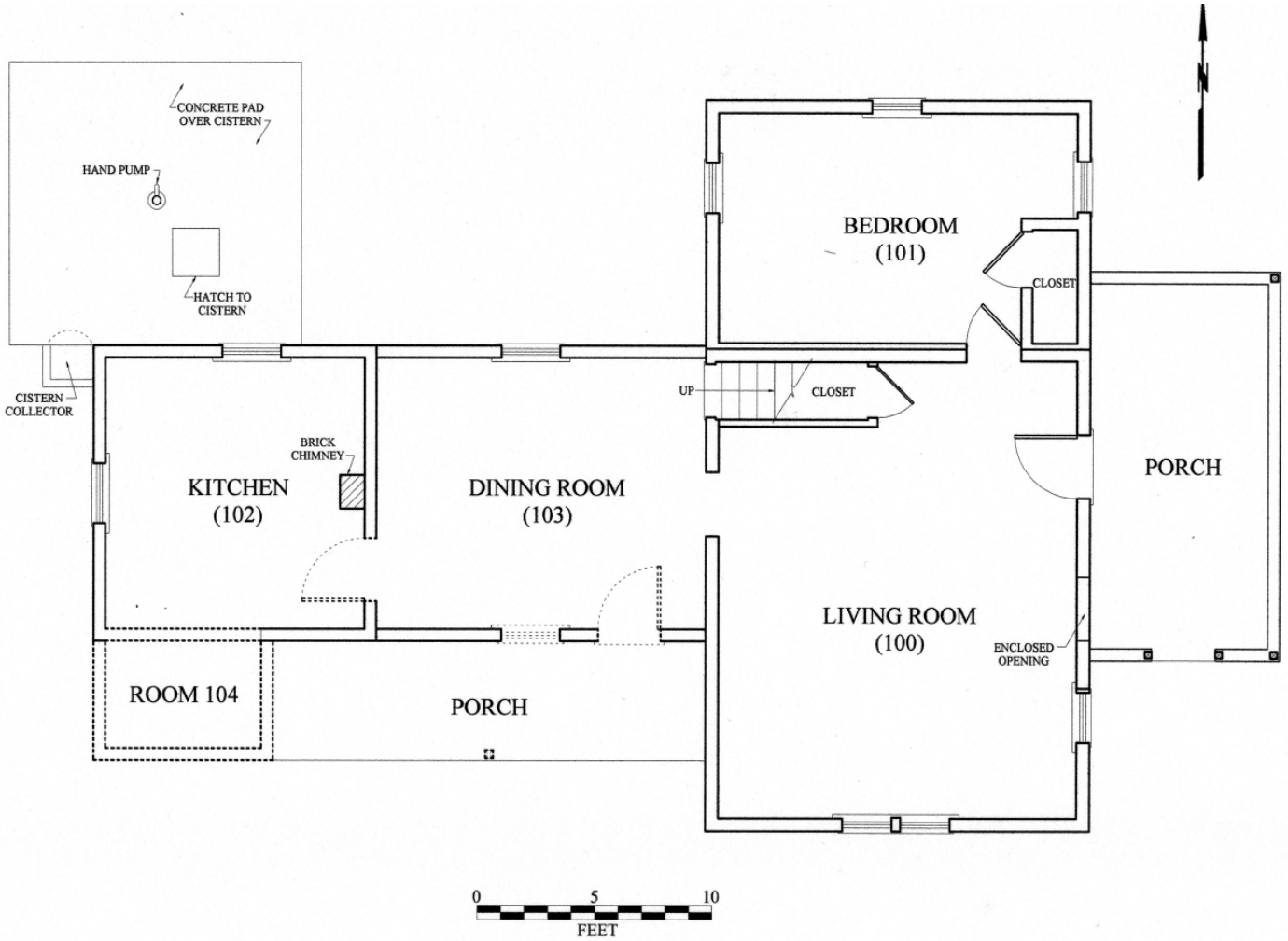


Figure 48. First floor plan of the residence circa 1930. By this date, a room (103) had been added between the summer kitchen and main house in order to join the two and create a service wing. A porch also had been added along the south side of the wing. The function of the small room on the west end of the porch (Room 104) is not known, but it may have served as a pantry or perhaps as a storage room for firewood. It is not known whether Room 104 was accessible from the kitchen or porch (or both).

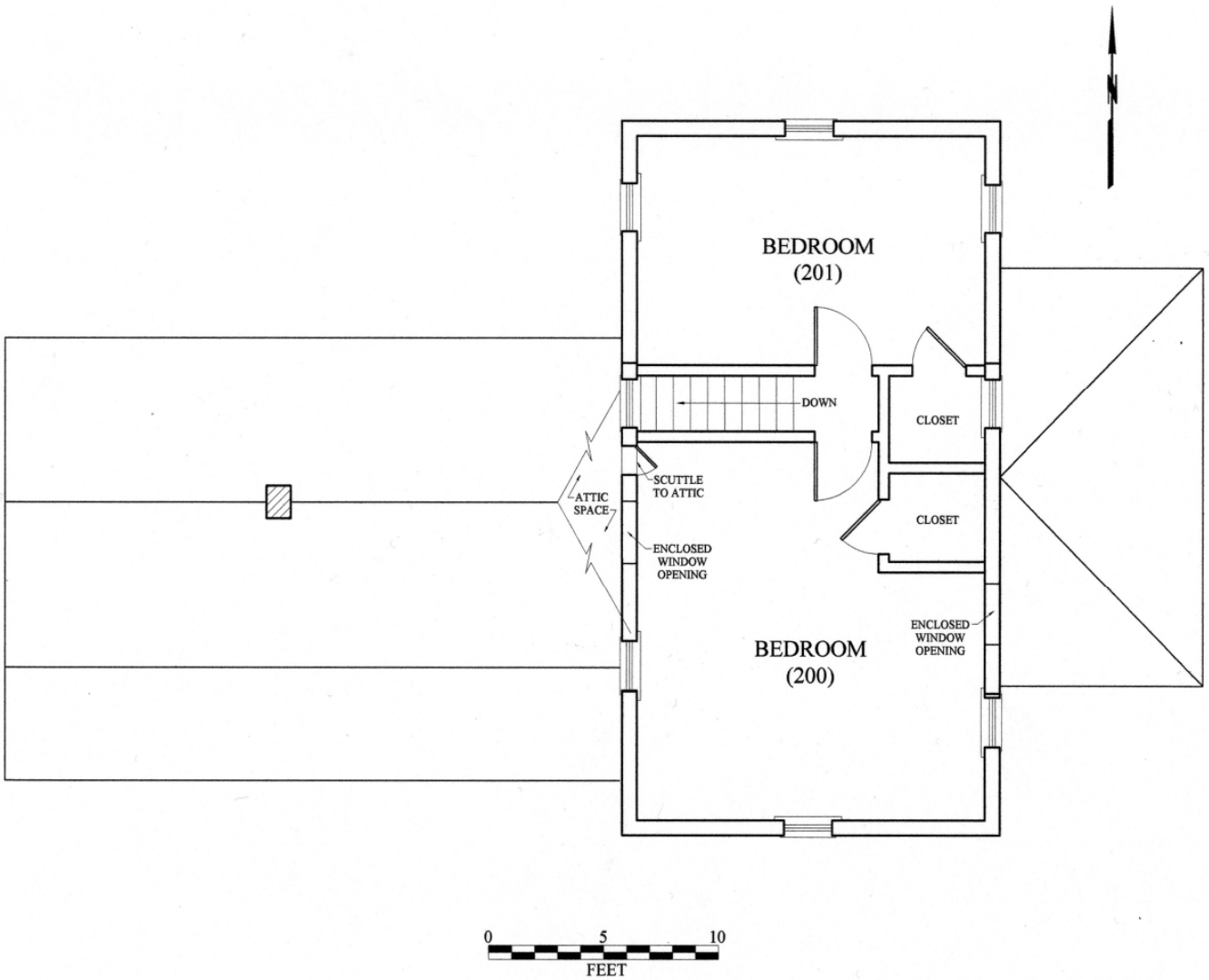


Figure 49. Second floor plan of the residence circa 1930.

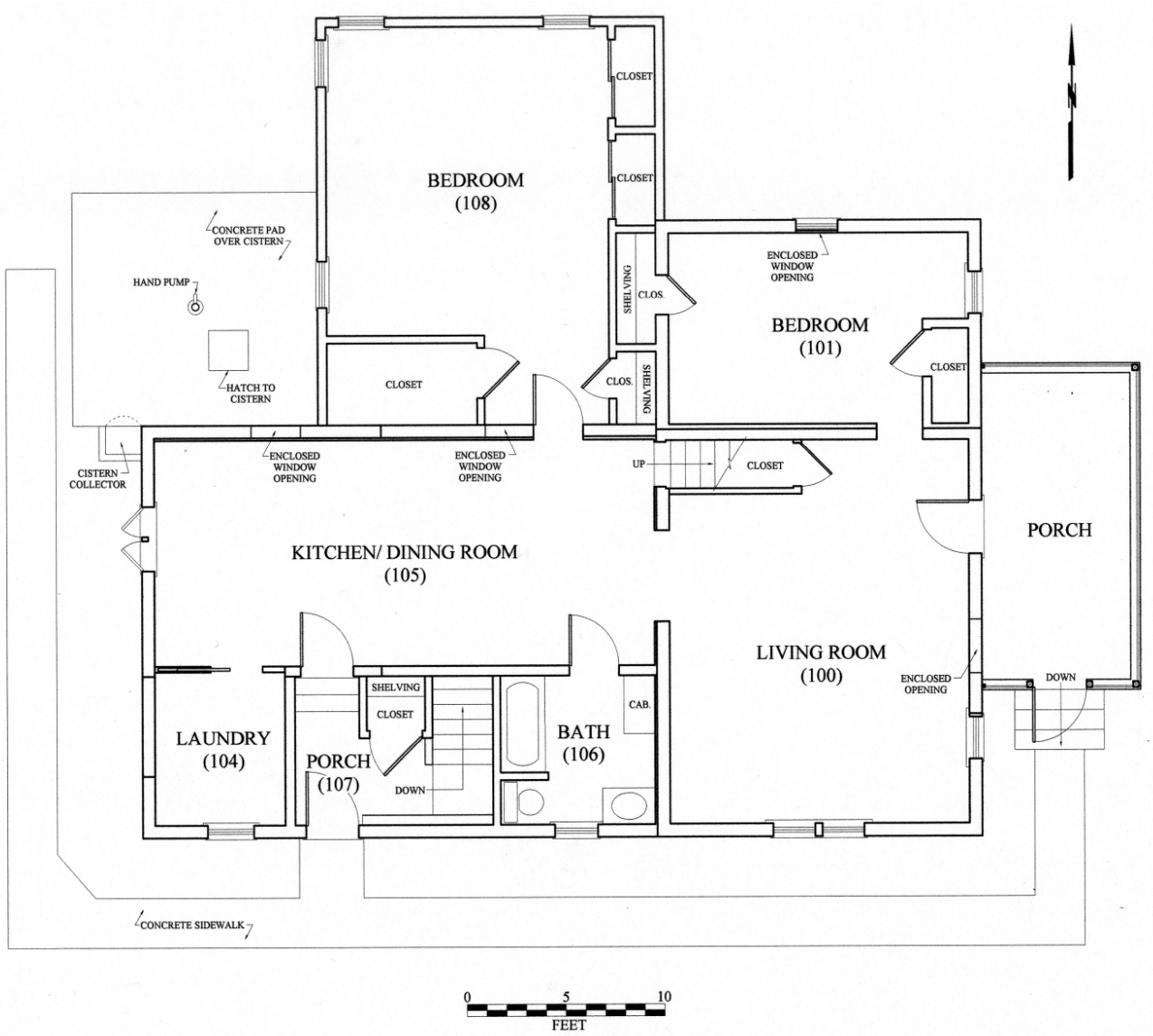


Figure 50. First floor plan of the residence showing existing conditions.

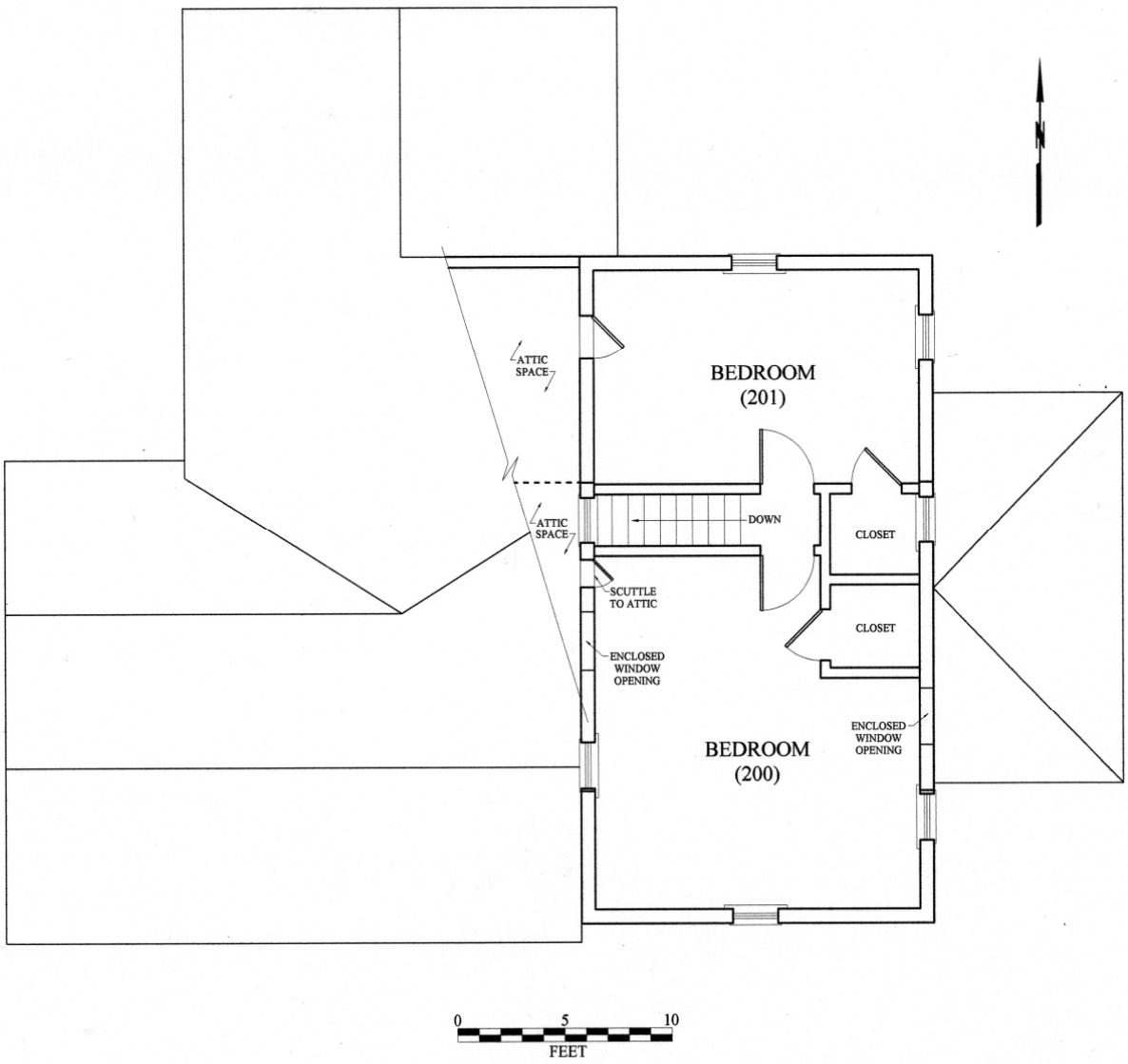


Figure 51. Second floor plan of the residence showing existing conditions.

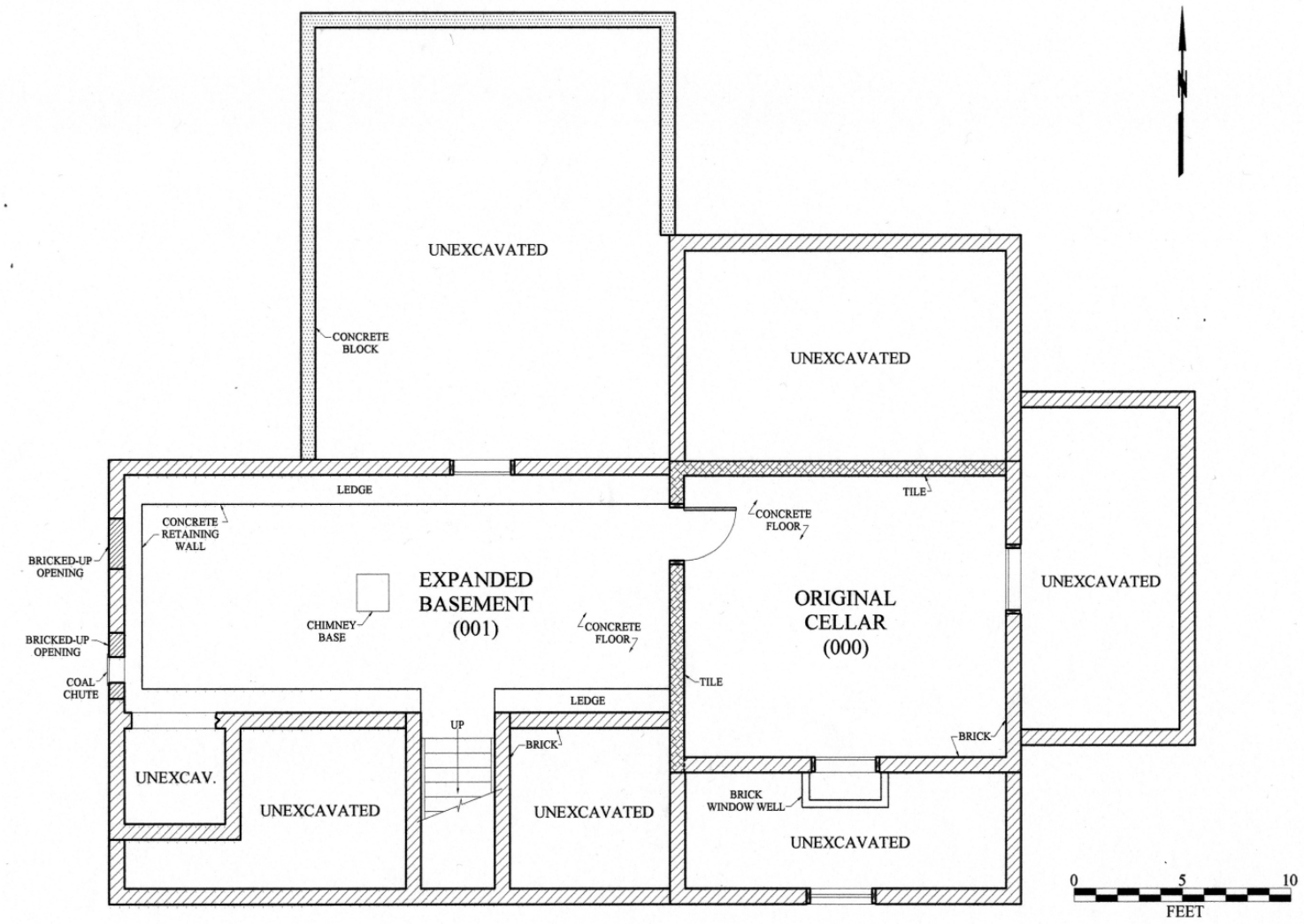


Figure 52. Basement plan of the residence showing existing conditions.

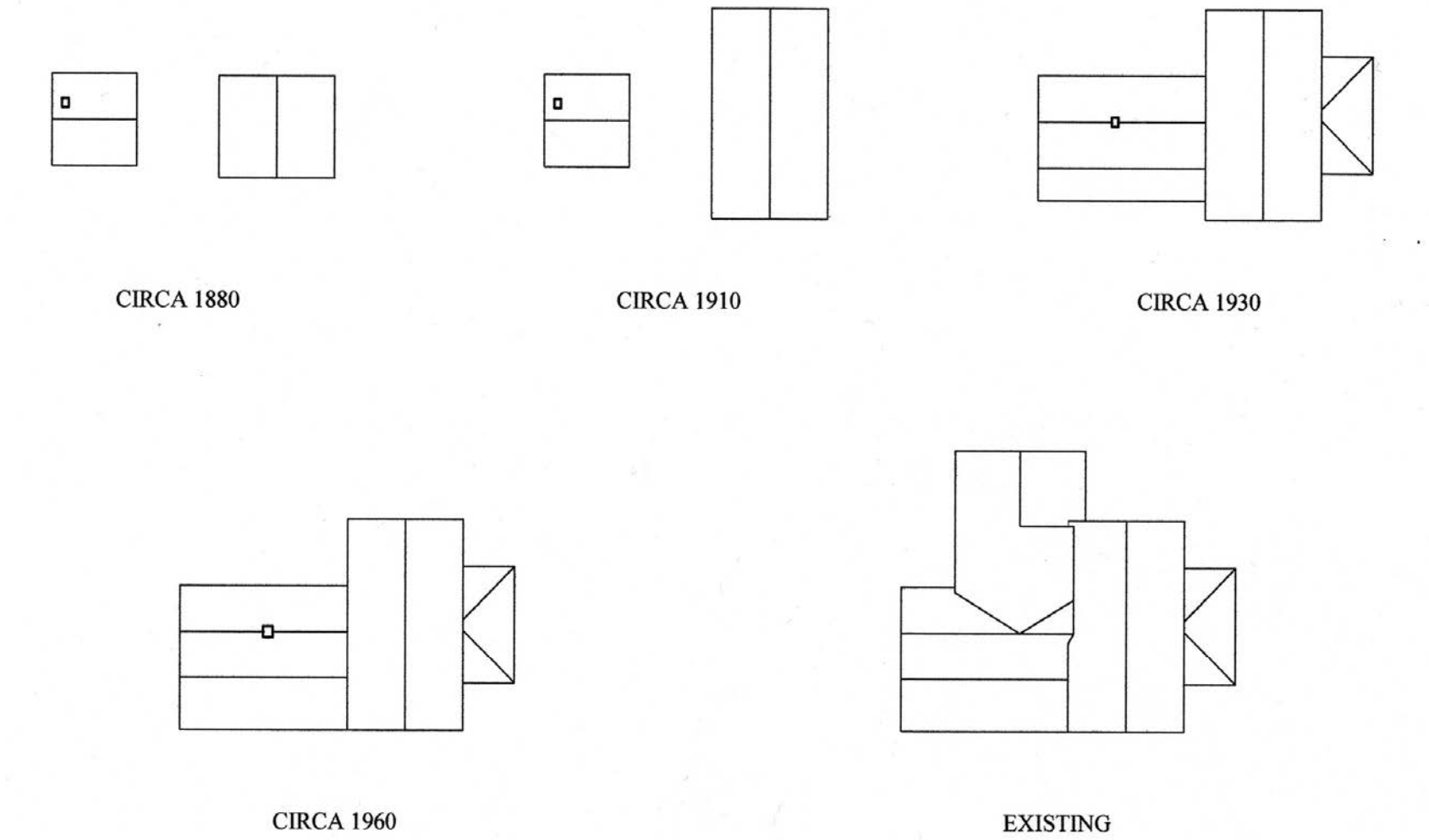


Figure 53. Evolution of the residence at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead through time.

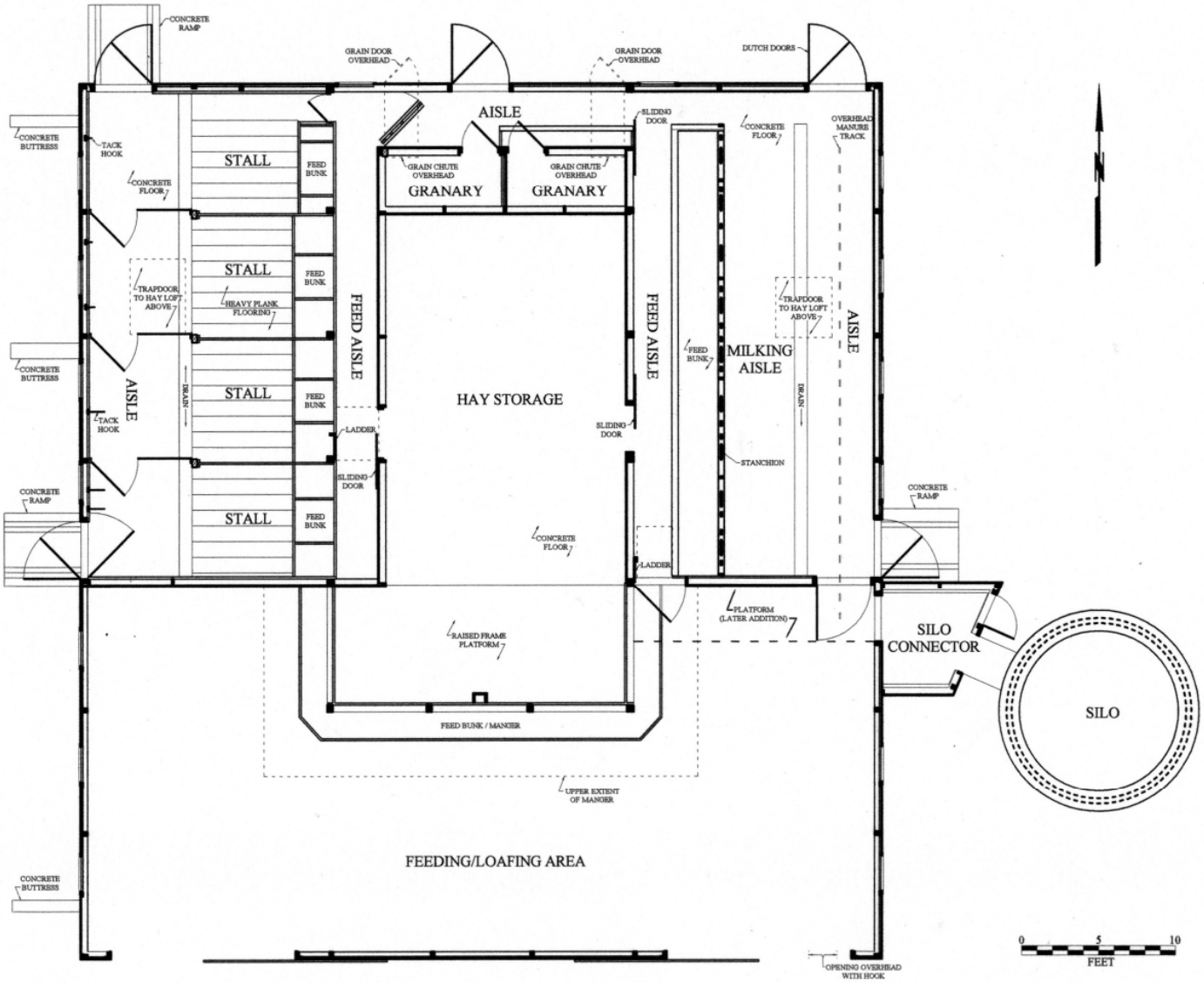


Figure 54. Ground floor plan of the barn at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead.

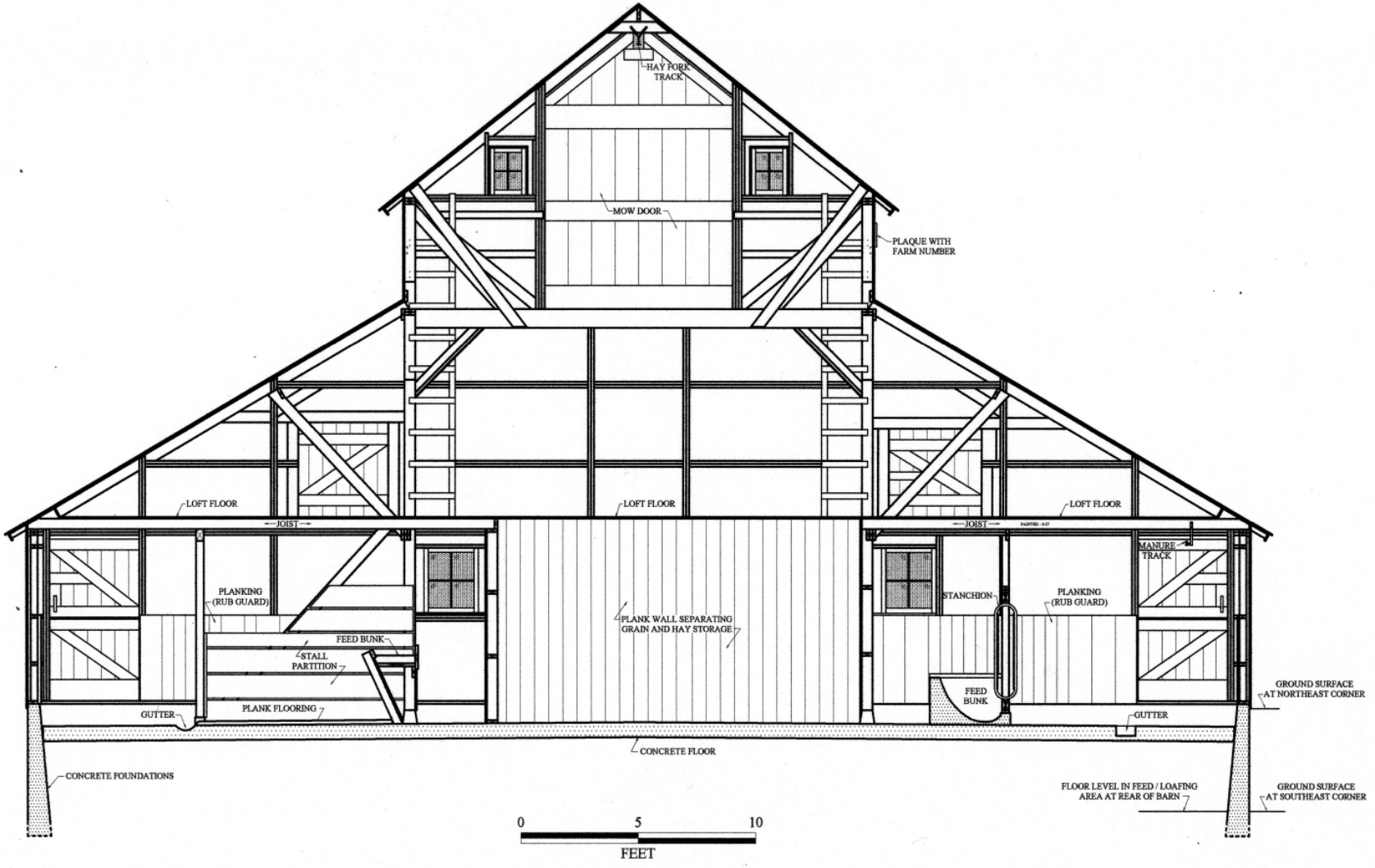


Figure 55. Section view through the barn, looking north.

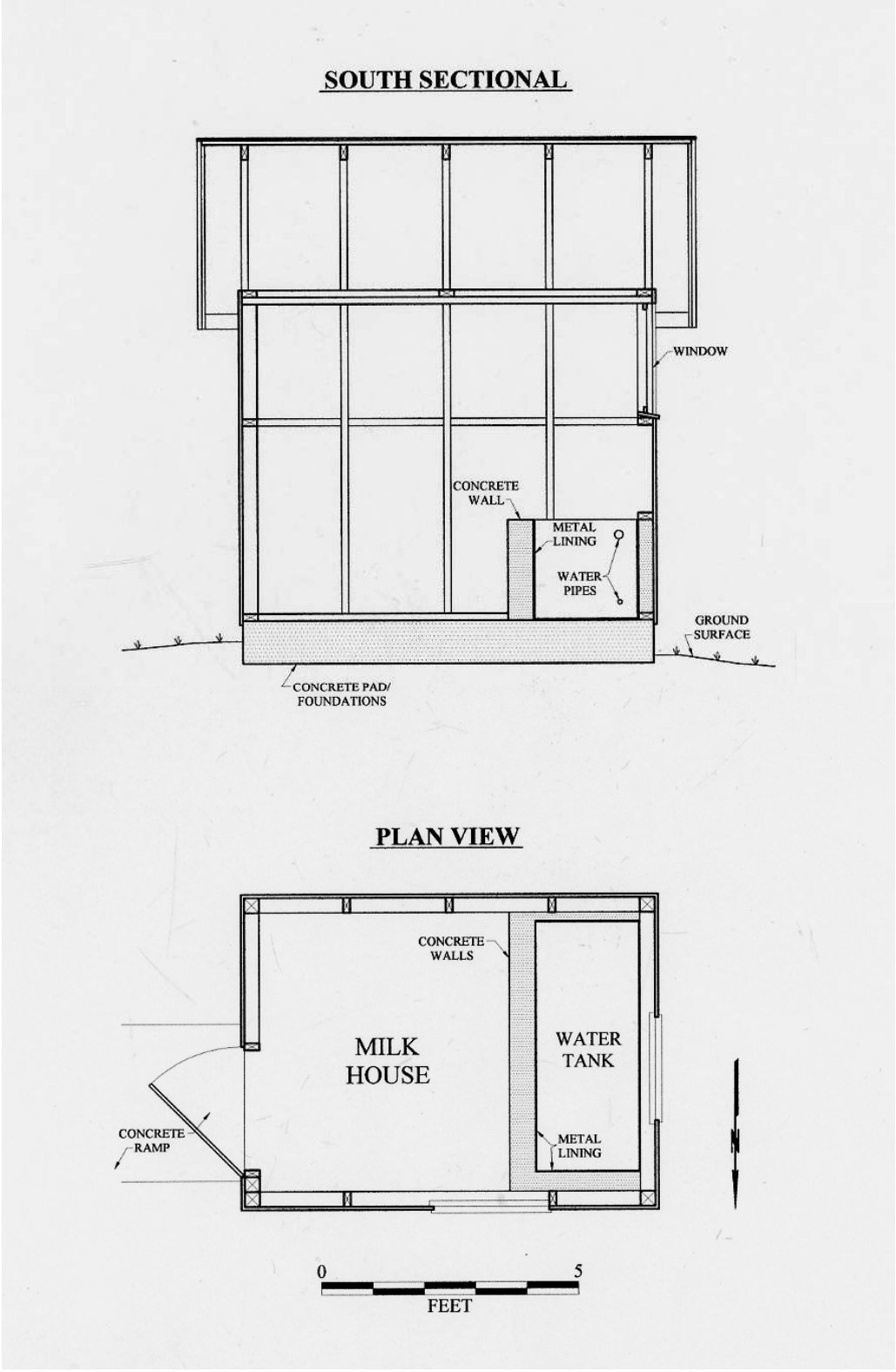


Figure 56. Plan and longitudinal section of the milk house.

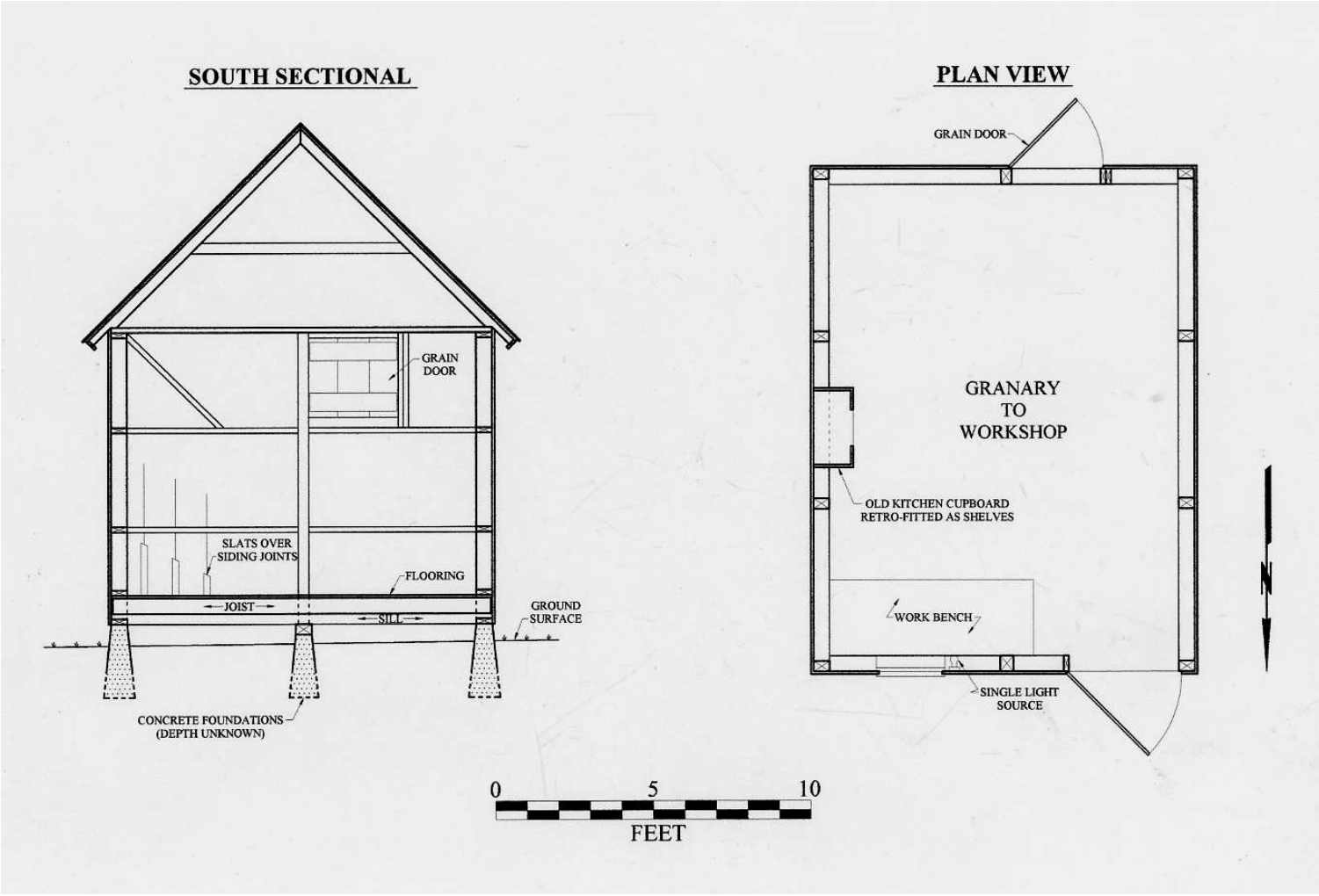


Figure 57. Plan and section of the granary/workshop.

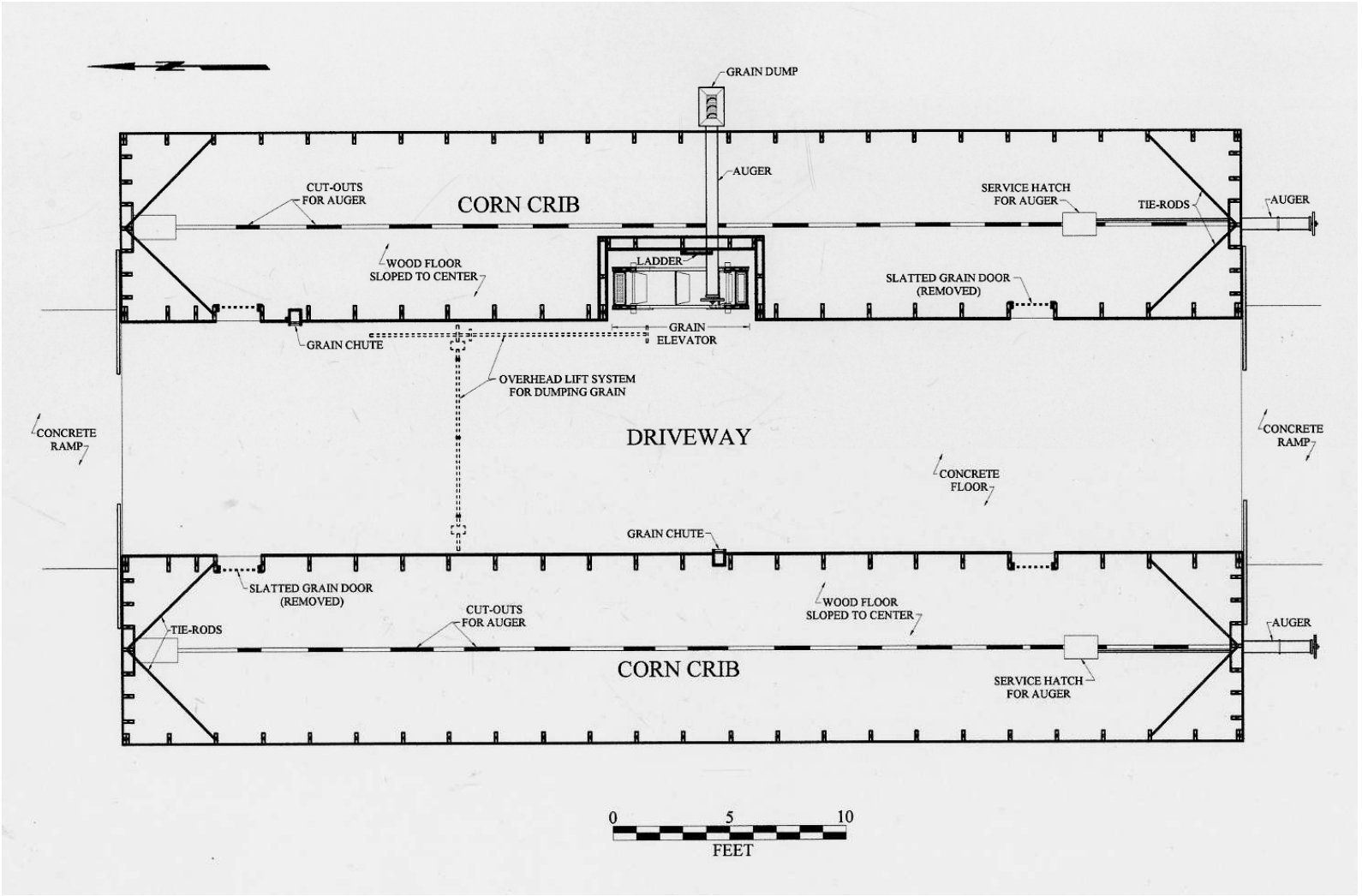


Figure 58. Floor plan of the Sibley corncrib at ground level.

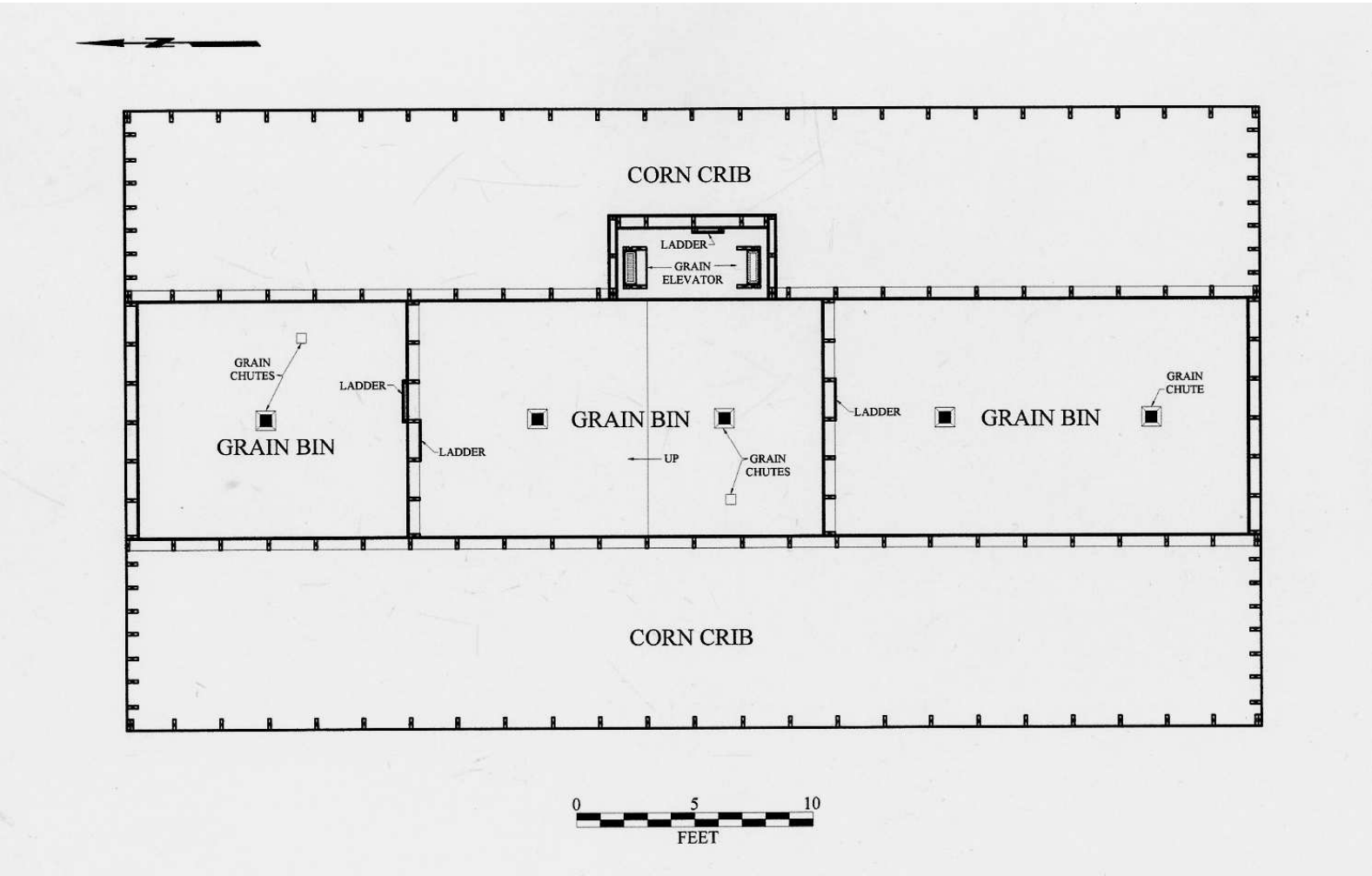


Figure 59. Floor plan of the Sibley corncrib at upper level.

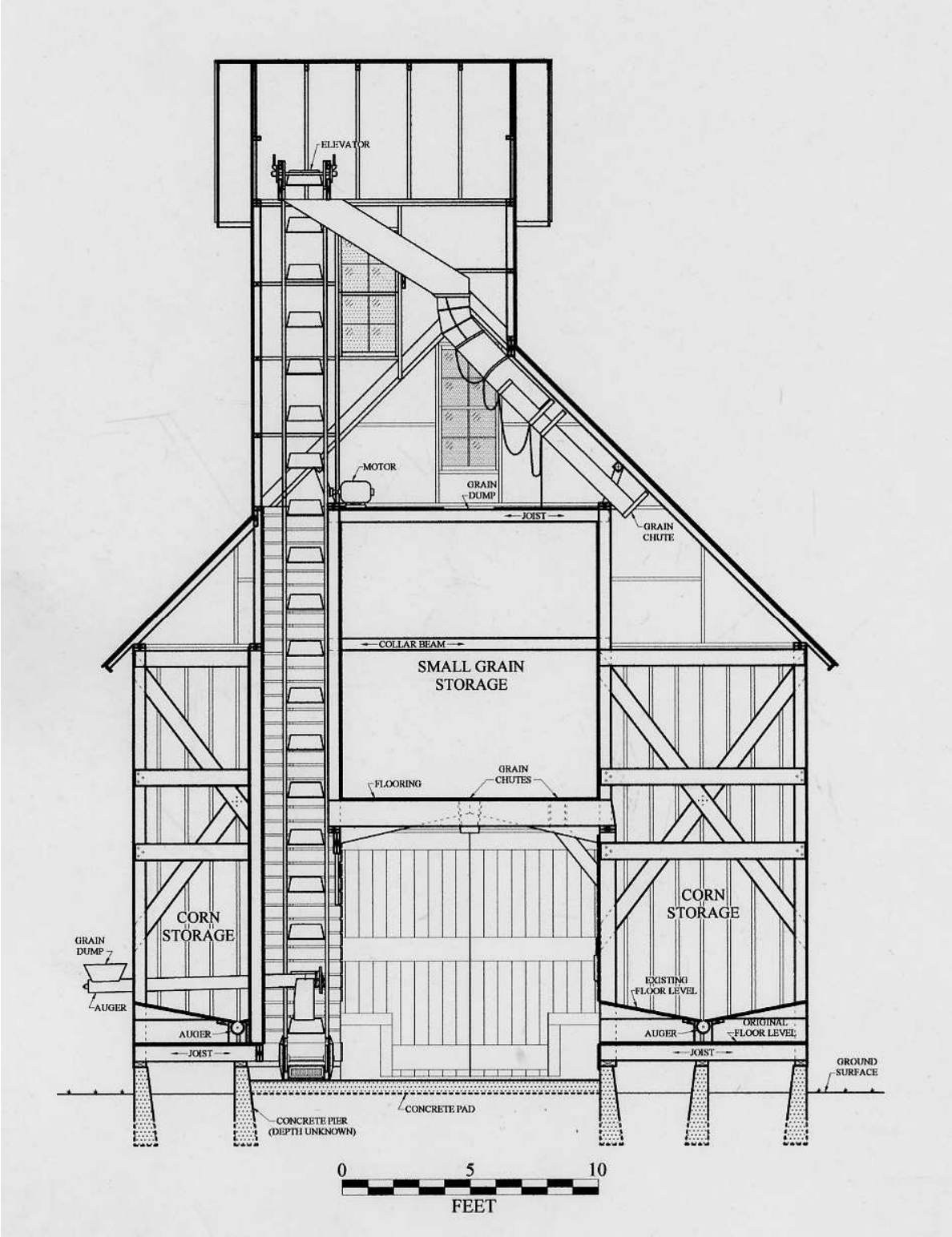


Figure 60. Sectional view of the Sibley corncrib.

APPENDIX I
PHOTOGRAPHS

Figure 61. Panoramic view of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site, looking west/northwest.

Figure 62. Panoramic view of the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site, looking west/southwest.

Figure 63. Miscellaneous views of the house located at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site.

Figure 64. Miscellaneous exterior views of the house at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site.

Figure 65. Exterior and interior details of the front entrance door.

Figure 66. Lower floor interior details of the main body of the house, which exhibits little historic detail.

Figure 67. Two views of the "under-the-stairs" closet located in the main room of the house.

Figure 68. Two views of the stairs leading to the second story of the house. Left: Looking from the second floor down. Right: Looking at the stairs from the back kitchen.

Figure 69. Miscellaneous second floor interior details of the house.

Figure 70. Detail of original brick foundations under original one-room dwelling illustrating the encapsulated window and window well associated with this early structure.

Figure 71. Second story framing detail illustrating the original rafter plate of the one-room , 1 ½-story dwelling. During the early years of the twentieth century, this small structure was expanded greatly, in both floor plan space and height. This photograph illustrates the expansion of the original short knee walls to full-height walls at this time.

Figure 72. Detail of the original exterior surface of the one-room, 1 ½-story dwelling illustrating the character of the board and batten siding, as well as the location of an original window opening (left). The image at right also indicates that a relatively wide molding or trim board was located at the eave. This picture also indicates horizontal paint/dirt lines and nail holes (associated with machine cut nails) once associated with horizontal siding that had been applied over the original board-and-batten siding. This siding appears to have been applied prior to the expansion of the house—and the raising of it to a full two stories in height. The original board-and-batten siding appears to have been painted with a red paint.

Figure 73. Details of existing house roof framing. The existing roof over the front portion of the house was constructed in a single episode using re-used materials (sheathing), as well as apparently newly purchased materials typical of an early twentieth century construction episode (southern pines, surfaced on four sides). The re-used sheathing included what appears to have been pieces of vertical board siding (not illustrated), as well as tongue-and-groove planking (exhibiting evidence of a lath and plaster finish having been applied over the original painted surface) (bottom photograph). This tongue-and-groove planking appears to represent the original interior wall and/or ceiling finishes of the circa 1870s house.

Figure 74. The current closet beneath the existing stairs is considerably larger than the original closet once present. As such, remnants of the outer room and interior closet finishes from the original circa 1870s dwelling were preserved in place. This picture depicts the transition from the inside of the closet (left) to inside of the main room (right).

Figure 75. Two views of the interior wall finishes intact within the existing stair hall closet. This interior wall surface helped determine the sequence of events associated with the interior of this dwelling. Based on this remnant wall section, the original dwelling walls (and probably ceiling) within the main room of the house were covered with horizontal tongue and groove planks and applied over a black oiled paper. The plank wall surfaces were then covered with wallpaper, whereas the ceilings may have been painted. Over this surface, sometime during the later nineteenth century, lath were applied on a diagonal (using machine cut nails), and subsequently surfaced with plaster (and presumably wallpaper). Later, during the early twentieth century, this original lath was removed, and a second episode of lath was applied on the horizontal (using wire drawn nails). Remnants of the plaster and wallpaper of this latest episode are intact within the closet.

Figure 76. Detail of the original wallpaper utilized on the walls of the lower floor of the circa 1870s dwelling (removed from within the enclosed closet) (reproduced at 75% original size).

Figure 77. In contrast, the area within the original "under-the-stairs" closet had been covered with newsprint in lieu of wallpaper. At a later date, this newsprint was covered with a late nineteenth century wallpaper. Subsequently, with the re-configuring of the stairs, and the enlarging of the closet, the wall surface was covered with horizontal lath (attached with wire-drawn nails). The area within this early closet—unlike the room outside the closed—was never covered with the earlier episode of diagonal lath (and plaster). Both the newsprint and wallpaper surface had deteriorated substantially by the time the lath had been applied.

Figure 78. Detail of the newsprint applied directly over the unpainted plank wall surface. In turn, the wallpaper was applied over the newsprint, and finally the plaster (with horizontal lath; represented by the horizontal white line) was applied over the wallpaper.

Figure 79. The "ghost" of the original stairs leading to the second story was preserved beneath the lath and plaster within the existing stairway. This evidence indicated that the original stairs were of the "winder" variety, with the doorway located along the south wall of the stair hall—opening into the small downstairs room of the original dwelling. As this photograph illustrates, the exposed plank walls leading to the upstairs were washed or lightly painted.

Figure 80. Two views of the walls located in the existing stairway documenting the location of the original stairs, and the character of the wall finishes above and below the original steps.

Figure 81. Three views of the barn located at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site.

Figure 82. Three additional views of the exterior of the barn at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site.

Figure 83. Door openings in the barn were predominately of the two-part "Dutch" variety. Doorways associated with livestock—whether cattle or horses—had well designed concrete ramps that originally had wood plank surfaces (attached to wooden nailers set into trough-like depressions in the ramps (as seen in the middle photograph). Additionally, two large sliding doors were present along the south elevation and associated with the enclosed loafing shed.

Figure 84. Each side of the large mow door (located on the north elevation of the barn) was located two windows and two small hinged doors. One window was located each side of the mow near the gable and furnished light and ventilation to those working in the mow. A second window was located low on this elevation and allowed light to enter the service aisle for each side of the barn and serviced the milking parlor on the east and the horse stalls on the west. The two small doors located above each of the lower windows had very different functions. The outer-most door on each side allowed access to the hay in the loft located above both the milking parlor and the horse stalls. The smaller and/or inner door accessed a frame chute that lead to the interior granary located immediately off the service aisle in the center of the barn.

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Figure 85. Located off the southeastern corner of the milking parlor was a small frame wing that connected the barn with a silo (which is no longer present). The silo was constructed of ceramic tile manufactured by the NATCO Company (*Country Gentleman*, December 9, 1916; page 2132). This small frame wing (and presumably silo) was not original to the barn, but represents a later improvement to this structure.

Figure 86. Although painted over, a small sign was located on the exterior surface of the northeast corner of the barn's hay loft. This small sign appears to have had the number "96" (or potentially "98") painted on its surface, presumably in reference to the Sibley Farm Number.

Figure 87. Of the three stalls present within the west section of the barn, one had a deep box manger without a hay rack (top; designed to accommodate a single animal) and three had shallow box mangers with overhead hay racks (bottom; with each stall designed to accommodate three smaller animals). The deep box manger represents the original style manger, with the other three representing replacements mangers. Although the original deep mangers were designed for use with draft horses, it is unclear as to the function of the later replacement managers.

Figure 88. Four box stalls were located within the west section of the barn, which was originally designed for the care of draft horses. These stalls had plank side walls, with the upper two planks cut off in line with the diagonal brace forming the sidewall support for each stall. The stalls had thick plank floors set over a concrete surface. A floor drain drained the end of each stall. A wide litter aisle was located at the west end of each stall, separated by swinging gates that corresponded to each box stall. A single, sliding sash window was associated with each of the stalls along the exterior (west) wall.

Figure 89. Two different types of horse harness or "tack" hooks were present in the litter aisle of associated with the horse stalls. The earliest variety was of cast iron (Top left) and was very similar to those advertised in the *Louden General Catalog No. 46* (1916) (bottom) . As the Louden catalog notes, these "Heavy Harness Hooks are far superior to ordinary spikes or wood pegs to hold harness" that was in common use during the late nineteenth century. As cast iron is brittle, these cast iron hooks had a tendency to break and the majority of the original hooks in this barn have been replaced by a bent steel rod hook that swivels (top right).

Figure 90. A narrow service or feed aisle was located along the east side of the box stalls (top left). Additionally, a slightly wider service aisle located along the north side of the central hay storage area was present and connected the horse stalls (to the west) with the milking parlor (to the east). An exterior door, centrally located in the north barn façade, accessed this service aisle. Similarly two large, walk-in grin bins were accessed from this aisle (top right). Boxed-in, overhead chutes connected the grain bins with an exterior door for loading loose grains into the bins (bottom; see also Figure xx for picture of exterior doors).

Figure 91. Two views of the milking parlor, taken from within the litter alley. Top: Looking north. Bottom: Looking south. Note the presence of the tubular steel stanchions within a wooden framework, an overhead track for removal of litter, and the overall white character of the room (as it had been painted white).

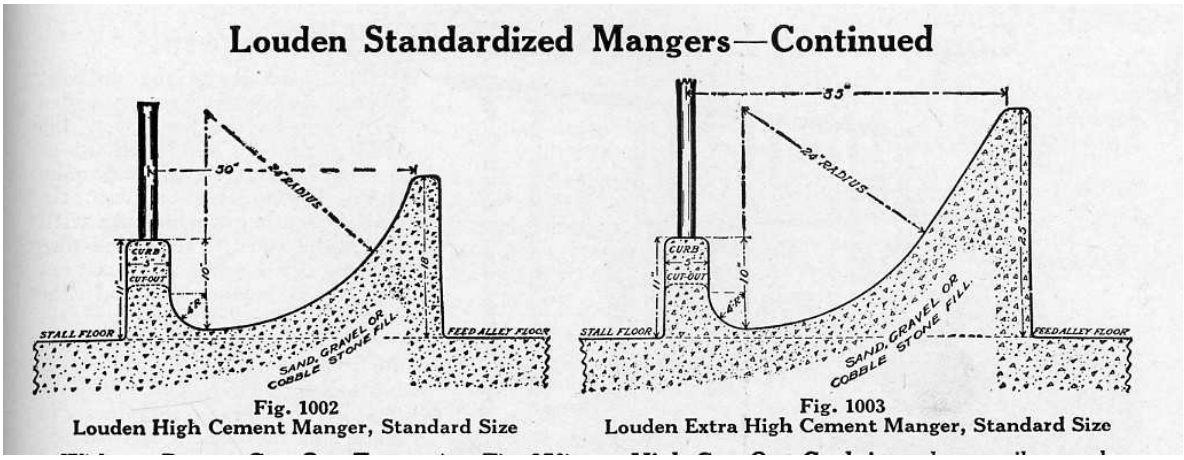


Fig. 1002
Louden High Cement Manger, Standard Size

Fig. 1003
Louden Extra High Cement Manger, Standard Size

Figure 92. Another distinctive feature of the milking parlor was the presence of a concrete manger. Tools and forms to manufacture these standardized mangers were being marketed by Louden (and others) by the middle 1910s (Louden 1916).

Figure 93. Painted along the upper girt along the north wall of the milking parlor was the words "PAINTED – 8—27." This probably is in reference to the painting (white) of the interior of the milking parlor, and not in reference to the painting of the exterior of the barn. This 1927 date is in keeping with the federal legislation beginning in 1924 that specified milk parlors should be painted white, and noted that "To assist States and Municipalities in initiating and maintaining effective programs for the prevention of milk borne disease, the USPHS, in 1924, developed a model regulation known as the *Standard Milk Ordinance* for voluntary adoption by State and Local Milk Control Agencies. To provide for the uniform interpretation of this *Ordinance,* an accompanying *Code* was published in 1927, which provided administrative and technical details as to satisfactory compliance. This model milk regulation [is] now titled the *Grade "A" Pasteurized Milk Ordinance*" (USPHS 2009). It is interesting to note that the wiring appears to have already been installed in the barn prior to the painting—suggesting that the barn may have been wired at a fairly early date.

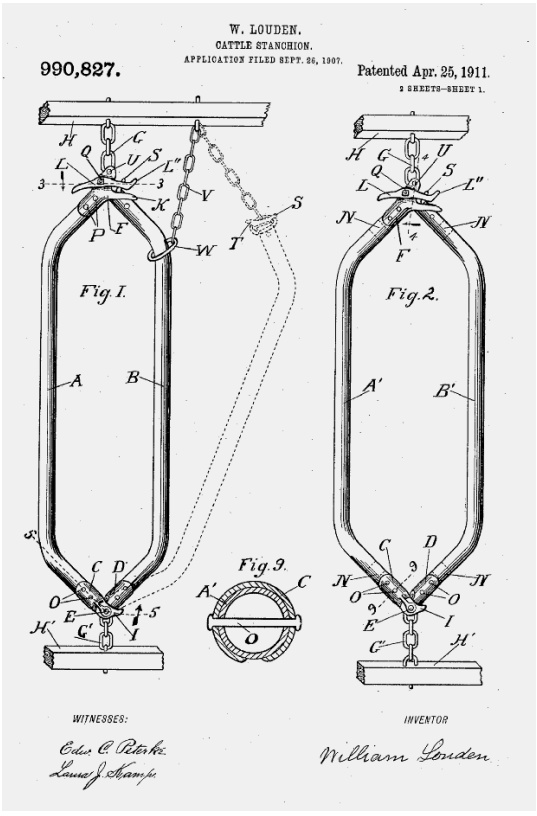
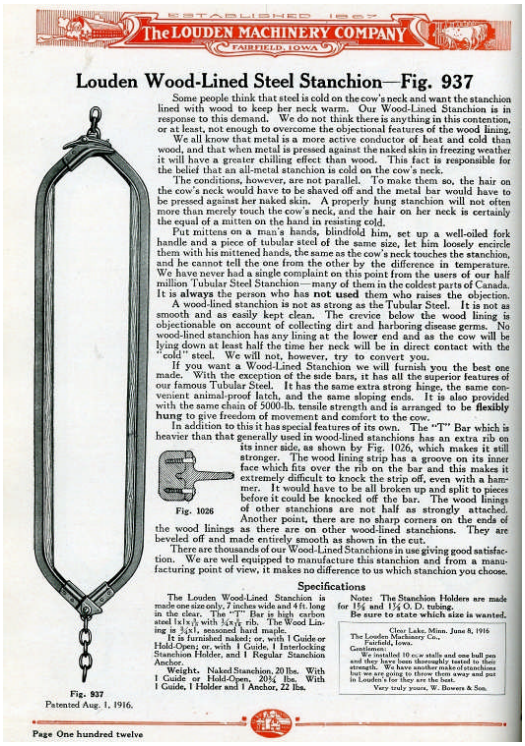


Figure 94. The stanchions located within the milking parlor are marked "LOUDEN" with a potential model number ("1191") and partially legible patent date (potentially "8-1-1?" or "9-1-1?). Unfortunately, the patent date is partially illegible. During our initial field inspection we thought the last number might depict the number "14" for reference to the year 1914. Louden first started producing similar metal stanchions in late 1905 or early 1906, and by circa 1910 he had sold over 50,000 of these stanchions. Louden filed several patents for stanchions beginning at that time. Although he filed for a patent for this quick release model (bottom right) in 1907, it was not issued until April 1911 (U.S. Patent Office).



ESTABLISHED 1867

The LOUDEN MACHINERY COMPANY

FAIRFIELD, IOWA

Louden Wood-Lined Steel Stanchion—Fig. 937

Some people think that steel is cold on the cow's neck and want the stanchion lined with wood to keep her neck warm. Our Wood-Lined Stanchion is in response to this demand. We do not think there is anything in this contention, or at least, not enough to overcome the objectional features of the wood lining.

We all know that metal is a more active conductor of heat and cold than wood, and that when metal is pressed against the naked skin in freezing weather it will have a greater chilling effect than wood. This fact is responsible for the belief that an all-metal stanchion is cold on the cow's neck.

The conditions, however, are not parallel. To make them so, the hair on the cow's neck would have to be shaved off and the metal bar would have to be pressed against her naked skin. A properly hung stanchion will not often more than merely touch the cow's neck, and the hair on her neck is certainly the equal of a mitten on the hand in resisting cold.

Put mittens on a man's hands, blindfold him, set up a well-oiled fork handle and a piece of tubular steel of the same size, let him loosely encircle them with his mittened hands, the same as the cow's neck touches the stanchion, and he cannot tell the one from the other by the difference in temperature. We have never had a single complaint on this point from the users of our half million Tubular Steel Stanchion—many of them in the coldest parts of Canada. It is **always** the person who has **not used** them who raises the objection.

A wood-lined stanchion is not as strong as the Tubular Steel. It is not as smooth and as easily kept clean. The crevice below the wood lining is objectionable on account of collecting dirt and harboring disease germs. No wood-lined stanchion has any lining at the lower end and as the cow will be lying down at least half the time her neck will be in direct contact with the "cold" steel. We will not, however, try to convert you.

If you want a Wood-Lined Stanchion we will furnish you the best one made. With the exception of the side bars, it has all the superior features of our famous Tubular Steel. It has the same extra strong hinge, the same convenient animal-proof latch, and the same sloping ends. It is also provided with the same chain of 5000-lb. tensile strength and is arranged to be **flexibly hung** to give freedom of movement and comfort to the cow.

In addition to this it has special features of its own. The "T" Bar which is heavier than that generally used in wood-lined stanchions has an extra rib on its inner side, as shown by Fig. 1026, which makes it still stronger. The wood lining strip has a groove on its inner face which fits over the rib on the bar and this makes it extremely difficult to knock the strip off, even with a hammer. It would have to be all broken up and split to pieces before it could be knocked off the bar. The wood linings of other stanchions are not half as strongly attached. Another point, there are no sharp corners on the ends of the wood linings as there are on other wood-lined stanchions. They are beveled off and made entirely smooth as shown in the cut.

Fig. 1026

There are thousands of our Wood-Lined Stanchions in use giving good satisfaction. We are well equipped to manufacture this stanchion and from a manufacturing point of view, it makes no difference to us which stanchion you choose.

Specifications

The Louden Wood-Lined Stanchion is made one size only, 7 inches wide and 4 ft. long in the clear. The "T" Bar is high carbon steel 1x1⅛ with ¾x⅝ rib. The Wood Lining is ¾x1, seasoned hard maple.

It is furnished naked; or, with 1 Guide or Hold-Open; or, with 1 Guide, 1 Interlocking Stanchion Holder, and 1 Regular Stanchion Anchor.

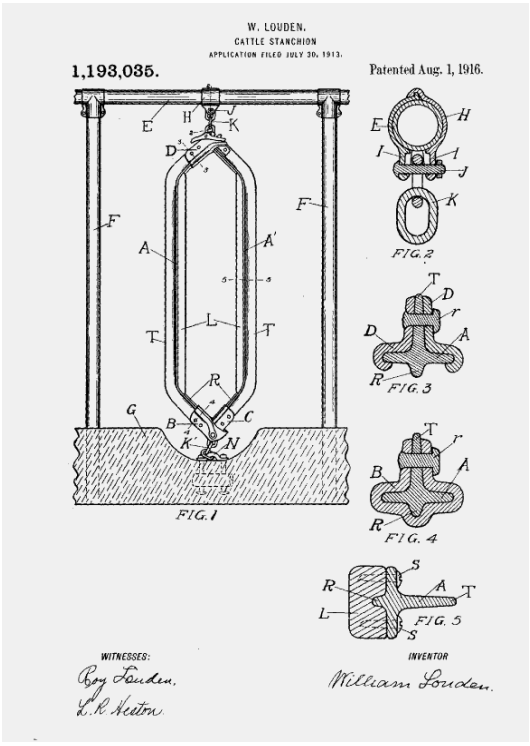
Weight. Naked Stanchion, 20 lbs. With 1 Guide or Hold-Open, 20¾ lbs. With 1 Guide, 1 Holder and 1 Anchor, 22 lbs.

Note: The Stanchion Holders are made for 1¼ and 1⅝ O. D. tubing. Be sure to state which size is wanted.

Clear Lake, Minn. June 8, 1916

The Louden Machinery Co.,
Fairfield, Iowa.
Gentlemen:
We installed 10 o.w stalls and one ball pen and they have been thoroughly tested to their strength. We have another make of stanchions but we are going to throw them away and put in Louden's for they are the best.
Very truly yours, W. Bowers & Son.

Fig. 937
Patented Aug. 1, 1916.



W. LOUDEN.
CATTLE STANCHION
APPLICATION FILED JULY 30, 1913.

1,193,035.

Patented Aug. 1, 1916.

FIG. 1

FIG. 2

FIG. 3

FIG. 4

FIG. 5

WITNESSES:
Roy Louden.
L. R. Keeton.

INVENTOR
William Louden.

Figure 95. In 1916, Louden was issued a patent for stanchions with wood linings, similar to those in the barn at the Sibley Tenant Farmstead Site (right) (U.S. Patent Office). The 1916 Louden catalog illustrates the "Wood-Lined Steel Stanchions" (left) presumably used in the Sibley barn (with a patent date of August 1, 1916) (Louden 1916). The patent date on the stanchions in the Sibley barn may, indeed, reference this 1916 patent date. It is interesting to note that the stanchions in the Sibley barn were set in a wooden frame (like those illustrated in the previous figure), and not within a tubular steel frame shown here.

Figure 96. Centrally located within the ceiling over both the east wing (dairy parlor) and the west wing (horse stalls) was a large door accessing the hay loft overhead. This door allowed for hay and/or straw to be dropped down into the stall areas. Note also the metal track for use with a litter carrier.

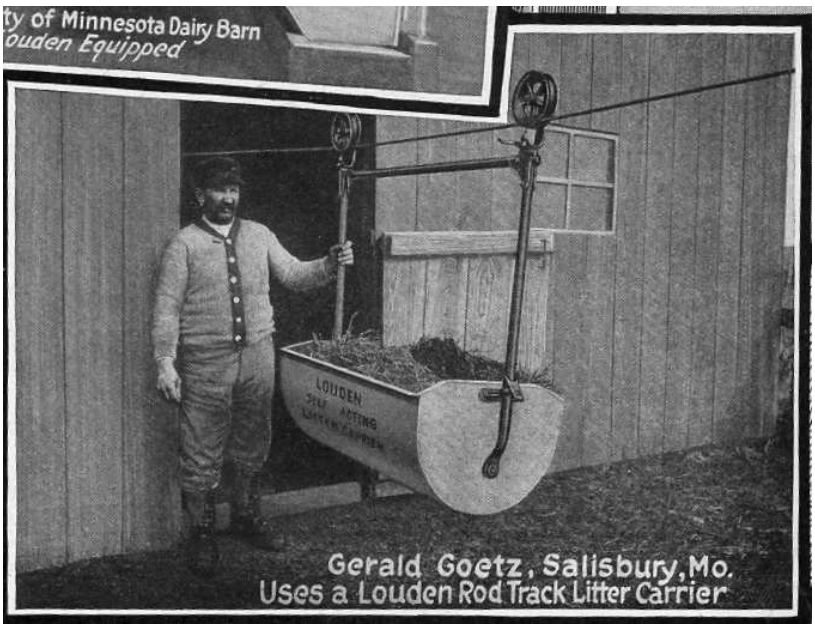


Figure 97. Louden's Litter Carrier, as depicted in the 1916 catalog (Louden 1916). A similar litter carrier was in use in the Sibley barn. Overhead track systems were also used as feed carriers, too. The location of the track over the litter alley in the Sibley barn suggests that this track system was used for the removal of litter, and not for feed.

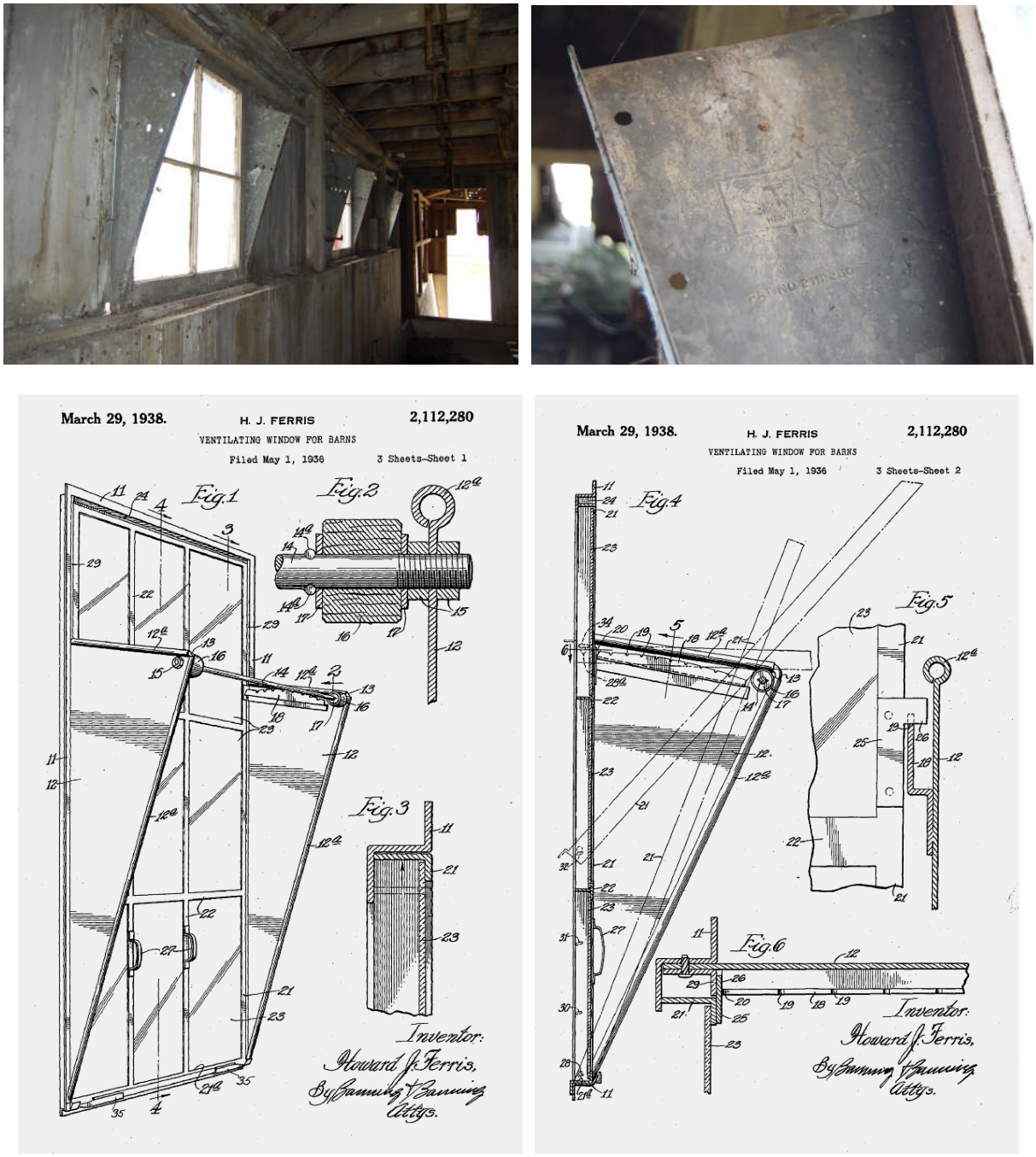
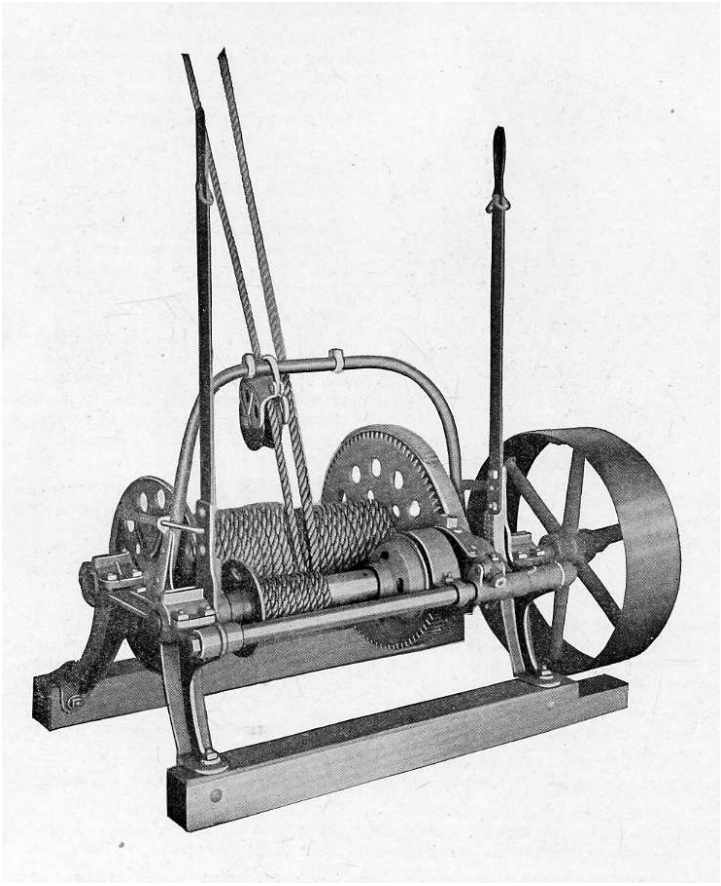


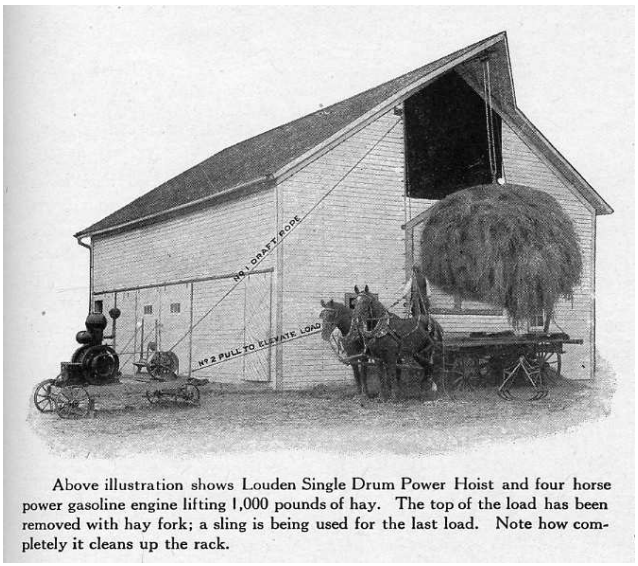
Figure 98. The original windows in the Sibley barn were sliding sash set in a simple wood track. The existing replacement window in the milking parlor had metal sides and were designed to pivot inward. These metal sides were impressed "STARLINE / HARVARD, ILLINOIS / PAT. NO. 2112280 OTHERS PENDING." The patent for these "Ventilating Windows" was issued to Starline in March 1938. Similar, metal sided ventilating windows were available from Louden as early as 1916 (Louden 1916:146).

Figure 99. The south wing of the barn functioned as a loafing shed or cattle feeding area. It consisted of a large, open, U-shaped area with feed bunks and hay racks located around the south end of the open hay loft which projected into this activity area.

Figure 100. The majority of the original feed bunks and hay racks within the loafing shed area had been removed within the recent past. Nonetheless, the west end of the combination feed bunks and hay racks remained intact (left). The view at right is taken from within the hay loft area that extends into the loafing shed.

Figure 101. Located beneath the raised floor of the south end of the hay loft—and accessed from within the loafing shed area—was a lack bolt anchored to a heavy beam counterbalanced against the concrete foundations of the barn. This lack bolt probably held a pulley which was part of the operating system for the overhead hay carrier. The rope from the hay carrier traveled down a chute (seen here) and would have been accessible to workers within the center of the loafing shed area. As there is no room for operating a horse at this location, it would appear that a stationary engine and mechanical hoist system was probably used to operate this hay carrier. The chute was integrated into the personnel ladder that accessed the overhead carrier and raised platform located at the south end of the loft.





Above illustration shows Louden Single Drum Power Hoist and four horse power gasoline engine lifting 1,000 pounds of hay. The top of the load has been removed with hay fork; a sling is being used for the last load. Note how completely it cleans up the rack.

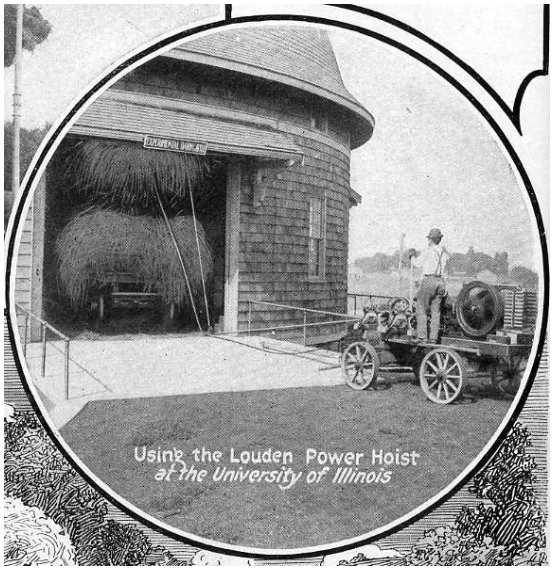


Figure 102. A Single Drum Power Hoist, as illustruated in Louden's 1916 catalog (top), and being demonstrated in use at two different locations (bottom). The illustration at bottom right depicts the use of a power hoist at the round dairy barn at the University of Illinois (Louden 1916). A similar portable power hoist would probably have been placed in use in the loafing shed when hay was being loaded into the loft.

Figure 103. View of the northeast corner of the loafing shed area, illustrating doors leading into the milking parlor (left), and into the adjacent silo connector (right). Based on the character of the concrete threshold (which appears to have been broken through the original concrete foundations), it appears that the doorway that leads into the small room that accessed the silo was not original to this structure. As such, the original barn may not have been designed to feed silage to the dairy cattle. Also note the presence of the floor drain, and overhead litter carrier track—both of which dumped the cattle waste into this loafing shed area. Not illustrated in this photograph is a "catwalk" (with railing) that connected the silo door and the doorway located on the south end of the milking parlor's feed aisle. This walkway and door were not original to the barn—probably constructed when the silo was added. This modification to the barn—consisting of the construction of the silo and the introduction of ensilage as feed—marks one of the most significant changes that affected the functional use of this barn.

Figure 104. Two views of the ladder and raised platform located along the south end of the hay loft. This raised platform was used by workers operating the hay carrier. A rope "chute" for operation of the hay carrier (or "unloader") was built into the back side of the ladder.

Figure 105. View of ladder located mid-section in the hay loft (left) and along the north elevation of the hay loft (right).

Figure 106. Three views of the barn's framing system, as depicted within the hay loft.

Figure 107. View of the upper framing system of the hay loft (looking southwest). The one large girt has been removed, probably to facilitate the loading of hay into the lower section of the loft.

Figure 108. View of the hay loft, looking to the southwest .

Figure 109. Three views of the barn's framing system, taken from within the loft. This barn was constructed using "plank" construction methods. The materials used in the barn were predominately southern pine/fir that had been surfaced-four-sides (S4S). Wire-drawn framing nails were used extensively throughout the building. Note the use of wind bracing tied into the overhead rafters (center and right photograph). This may be an effort to give the barn's roof some protection from severe wind damage—as tornados were feared by many a farmer. [A tornado may have just missed this farm in late summer 1927, as one struck the southwest side of Sibley doing extensive damage to that community at that time.]

Figure 110. Detail of the queen post truss supporting the rafters within each of the side wings of the barn.

Figure 111. View of framing details within the side wings. Note the boxed-in character of the eave (right) which would have prevented hay from accumulating within the inaccessible location overhead.

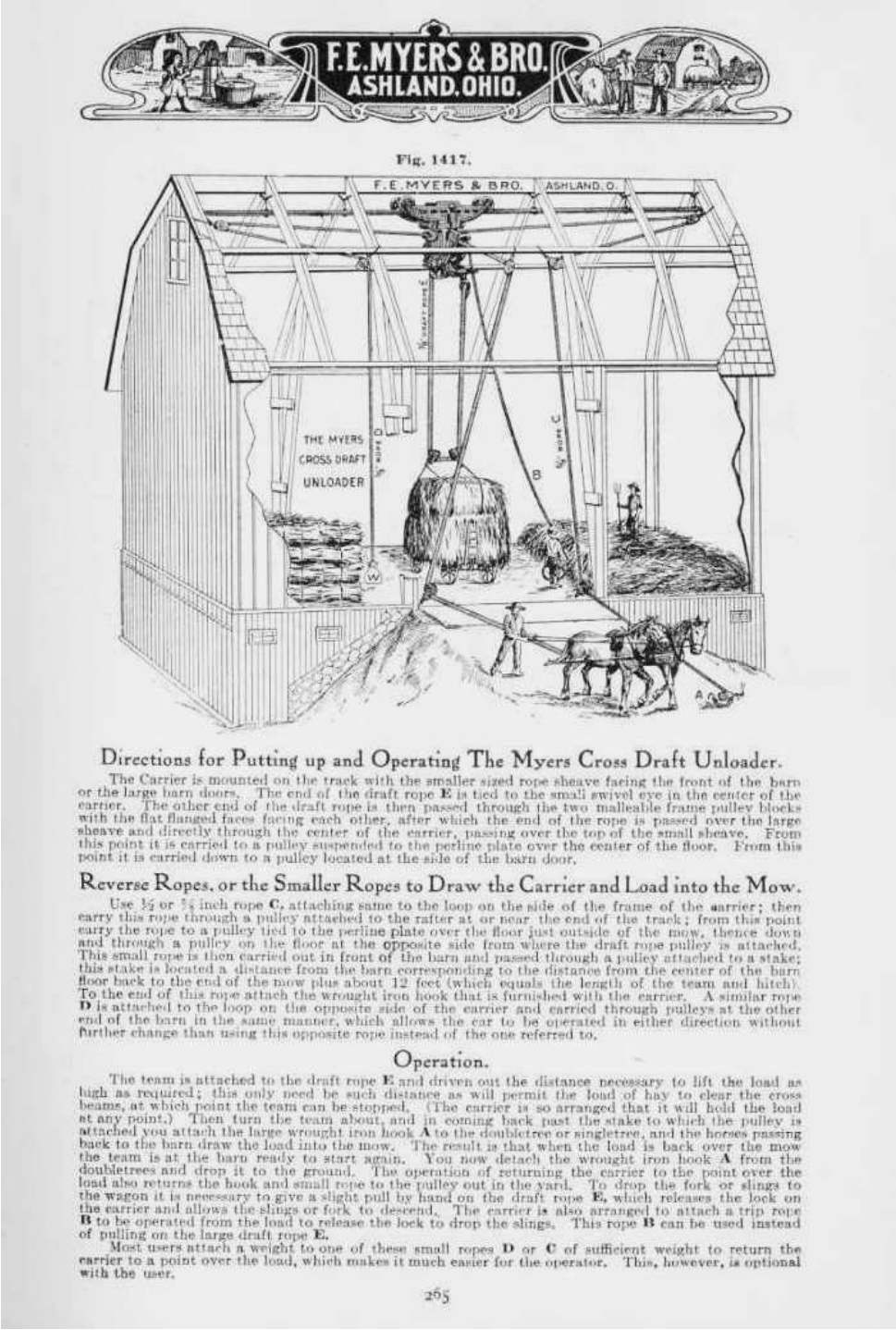
Figure 112. View of barn's poured concrete perimeter foundations (left) and piers (right).

Figure 113. Lumber used within the construction of the barn was a hard yellow (or Southern) pine. The lumber had been cut from the tree with a circular saw. Much of the lumber used in the construction of the barn was in the form of planks which had been surfaced four sides (S4S). The above timber, representing one of the larger non-plank timbers used in the construction of this structure, was surfaced only on two sides (S2S).

Figure 114. The extremely large, two-story hayloft was made practical with the aid of a mechanical hay carrier (and/or unloader). This metal-track hay carrier was marked "The F. E. MYERS & BRO. CO. / O.K. / UNLOADER / ASHLAND, O. / STEEL BEARING." It also had the numbers H 427 embossed on a pulley wheel, and another partially illegible number ("?92") embossed on the main mechanism.

Figure 115. The F. E. Meyers and Brother's *Ashland Pump and Hay-Tool Works* of Ashland, Ohio was an early innovator in hay carriers (Top, circa 1905-08 Myers catalog front cover and detail from back cover). Their "O.K." carrier (bottom, from their circa 1905-08 catalog) was first patented in November 1884 (Myers and Brother n.d.).

Figure 116. Detail of F. E. Myers and Brother advertisement illustrating their hay unloading tools in the 1906 (top) and 1914 (middle) issues of the *Farm Implement News*, as well as in the company's circa 1920 Catalog No. 52 (bottom). Note the reference to the "steel bearings" in the latter catalog, which increased the price of the unloader by approximately 15%.



Directions for Putting up and Operating The Myers Cross Draft Unloader.

The Carrier is mounted on the track with the smaller sized rope sheave facing the front of the barn or the large barn doors. The end of the draft rope **E** is tied to the small swivel eye in the center of the carrier. The other end of the draft rope is then passed through the two malleable frame pulley blocks with the flat flanged faces facing each other, after which the end of the rope is passed over the large sheave and directly through the center of the carrier, passing over the top of the small sheave. From this point it is carried to a pulley suspended to the perline plate over the center of the floor. From this point it is carried down to a pulley located at the side of the barn door.

Reverse Ropes, or the Smaller Ropes to Draw the Carrier and Load into the Mow.

Use ½ or ⅝ inch rope **C**, attaching same to the loop on the side of the frame of the carrier; then carry this rope through a pulley attached to the rafter at or near the end of the track; from this point carry the rope to a pulley tied to the perline plate over the floor just outside of the mow, thence down and through a pulley on the floor at the opposite side from where the draft rope pulley is attached. This small rope is then carried out in front of the barn and passed through a pulley attached to a stake; this stake is located a distance from the barn corresponding to the distance from the center of the barn floor back to the end of the mow plus about 12 feet (which equals the length of the team and hitch). To the end of this rope attach the wrought iron hook that is furnished with the carrier. A similar rope **D** is attached to the loop on the opposite side of the carrier and carried through pulleys at the other end of the barn in the same manner, which allows the car to be operated in either direction without further change than using this opposite rope instead of the one referred to.

Operation.

The team is attached to the draft rope **E** and driven out the distance necessary to lift the load as high as required; this only need be such distance as will permit the load of hay to clear the cross beams, at which point the team can be stopped. (The carrier is so arranged that it will hold the load at any point.) Then turn the team about, and in coming back past the stake to which the pulley is attached you attach the large wrought iron hook **A** to the doubletree or singletree, and the horses passing back to the barn draw the load into the mow. The result is that when the load is back over the mow the team is at the barn ready to start again. You now detach the wrought iron hook **A** from the doubletrees and drop it to the ground. The operation of returning the carrier to the point over the load also returns the hook and small rope to the pulley out in the yard. To drop the fork or slings to the wagon it is necessary to give a slight pull by hand on the draft rope **E**, which releases the lock on the carrier and allows the slings or fork to descend. The carrier is also arranged to attach a trip rope **B** to be operated from the load to release the lock to drop the slings. This rope **B** can be used instead of pulling on the large draft rope **E**.

Most users attach a weight to one of these small ropes **D** or **C** of sufficient weight to return the carrier to a point over the load, which makes it much easier for the operator. This, however, is optional with the user.

265

Figure 117. Detail from F. E. Myers and Brother's circa 1920 *Catalog No. 52* illustrating the use of their hay carriers or "unloaders." It is interesting to note the use of horses at this date—as the Sibley barn appears to have been rigged to operate with a mechanical hoist at this early date. It is also interesting to note that this catalog illustrates an open loft that utilized plank-constructed trusses.

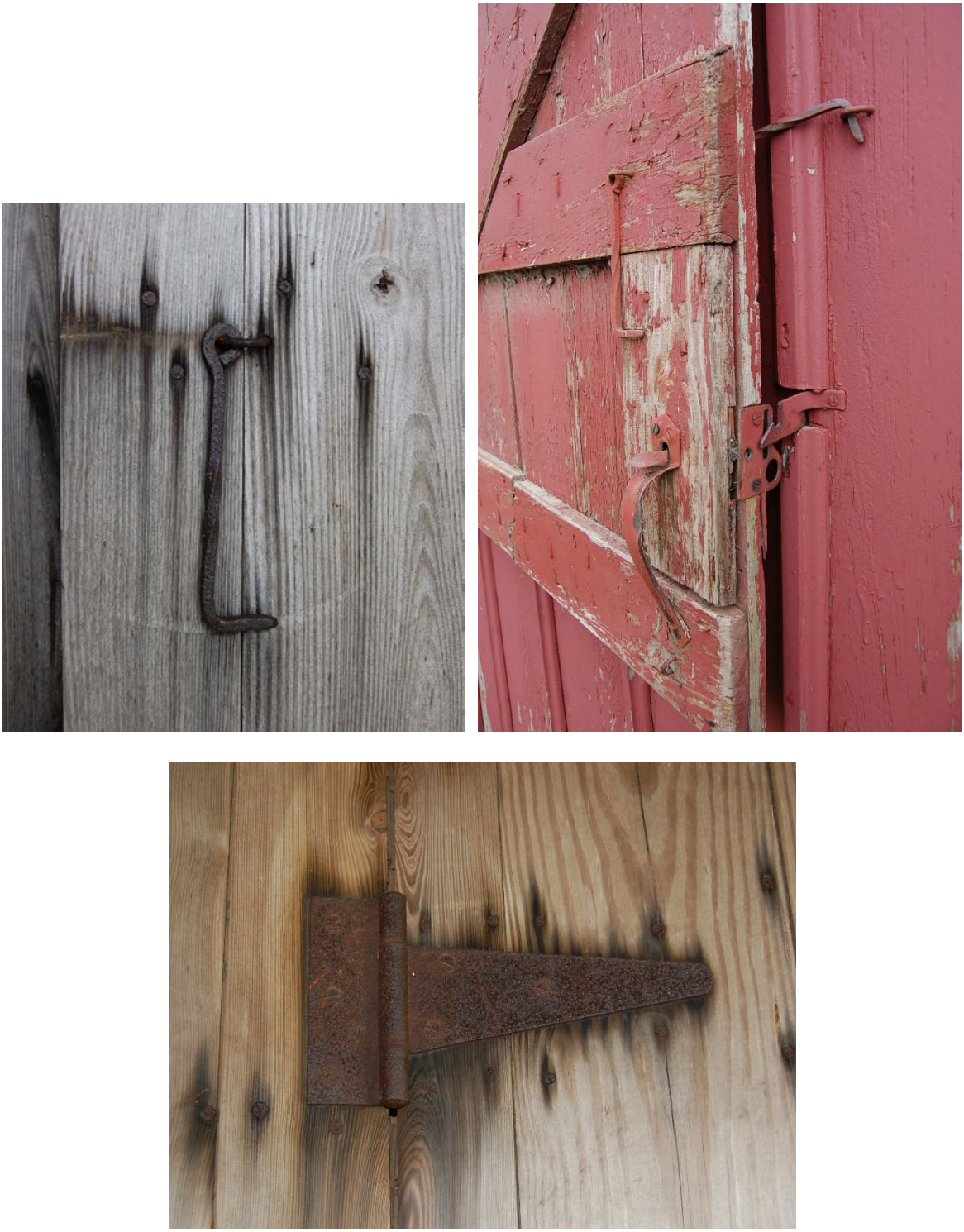
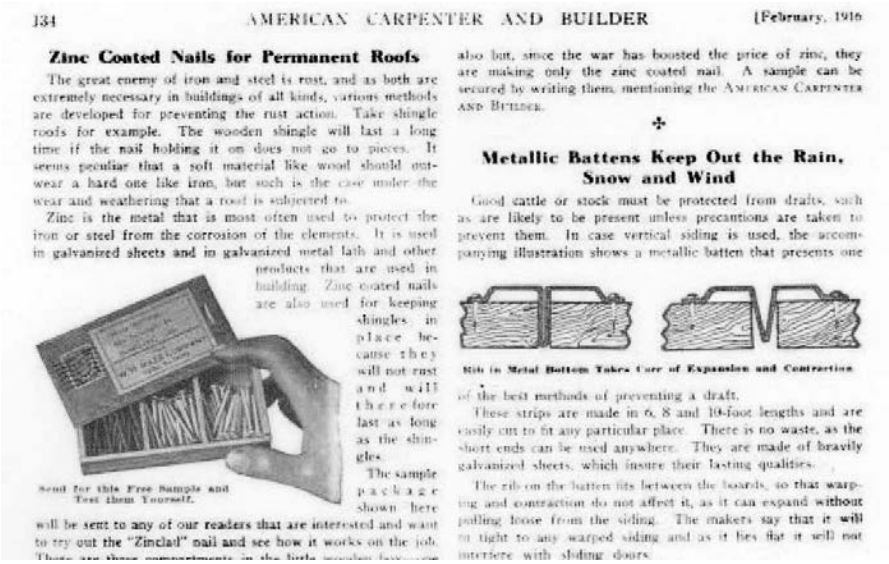


Figure 118. Miscellaneous door hardware used in the barn.



134 AMERICAN CARPENTER AND BUILDER [February, 1916

Zinc Coated Nails for Permanent Roofs

The great enemy of iron and steel is rust, and as both are extremely necessary in buildings of all kinds, various methods are developed for preventing the rust action. Take shingle roofs for example. The wooden shingle will last a long time if the nail holding it on does not go to pieces. It seems peculiar that a soft material like wood should outwear a hard one like iron, but such is the case under the wear and weathering that a roof is subjected to.

Zinc is the metal that is most often used to protect the iron or steel from the corrosion of the elements. It is used in galvanized sheets and in galvanized metal lath and other products that are used in building. Zinc coated nails are also used for keeping shingles in place because they will not rust and will therefore last as long as the shingles.

Send for this Free Sample and Test them Yourself.

The sample package shown here will be sent to any of our readers that are interested and want to try out the "Zinclad" nail and see how it works on the job.

also but, since the war has boosted the price of zinc, they are making only the zinc coated nail. A sample can be secured by writing them, mentioning the AMERICAN CARPENTER AND BUILDER.

✣

Metallic Battens Keep Out the Rain, Snow and Wind

Good cattle or stock must be protected from drafts, such as are likely to be present unless precautions are taken to prevent them. In case vertical siding is used, the accompanying illustration shows a metallic batten that presents one

Rib in Metal Batten Takes Care of Expansion and Contraction

of the best methods of preventing a draft.

These strips are made in 6, 8 and 10-foot lengths and are easily cut to fit any particular place. There is no waste, as the short ends can be used anywhere. They are made of heavily galvanized sheets, which insure their lasting qualities.

The rib on the batten fits between the boards, so that warping and contraction do not affect it, as it can expand without pulling loose from the siding. The makers say that it will fit tight to any warped siding and as it lies flat it will not interfere with sliding doors.

Figure 119. New products advertised in the *American Carpenter and Builder* from February 1906 include zinc coated roofing nails, and metallic battens. The zinc coated nails were used throughout the farmstead, including on the barn and corncrib. Similar metallic battens were used on the corncrib.

Figure 120. Running water delivered by underground pipe to the barn was a later modification to this structure. The original source of water for the animals in the barn was a nearby well and associated water trough east of the barn. A shut off valve was located immediately outside the barn opposite this standpipe. The date of this modification is not known. Additionally, there is no evidence of a cistern or well dedicated solely to barn use.

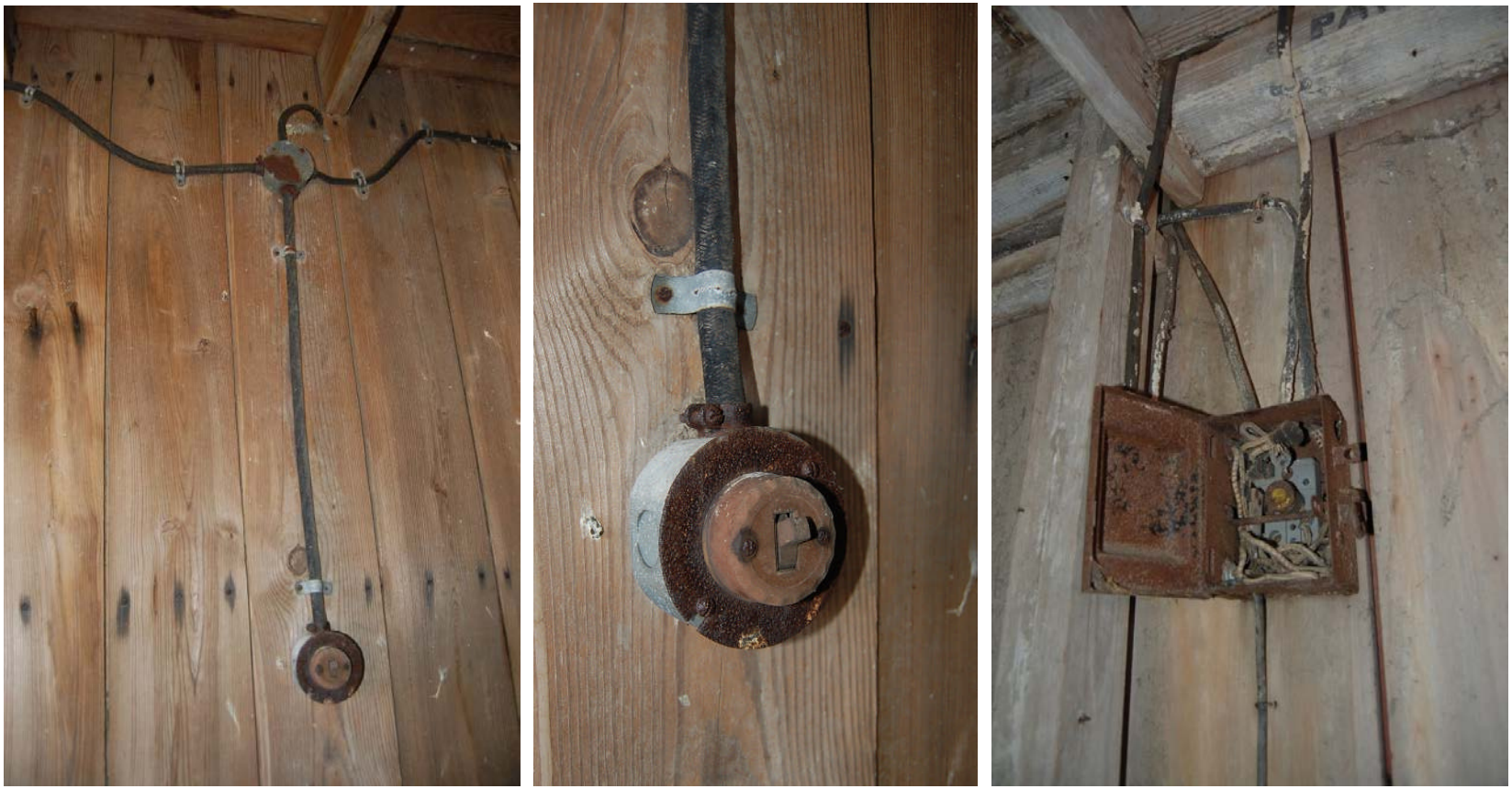
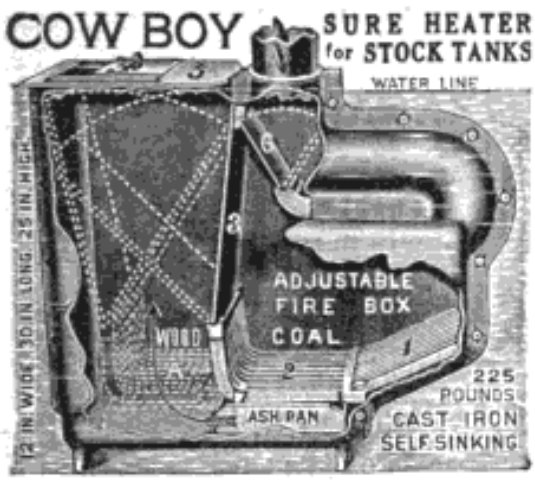


Figure 121. Details of the electrical system within the barn. This electrical system probably represents a middle twentieth century (circa post-World War II) modification to the structure (post-dating the late 1930s rural electrification program). The presence of whitewash paint over the electrical wiring in the milking parlor is of interest, suggesting that the wiring may pre-date this middle twentieth century date (as the interior may have been whitewashed in 1927).

Figure 122. Four views of the garage, milk house, well, water tank, and windmill complex.

Figure 123. Three views of the frame milk house, with it's interior concrete water trough, or tank (for temporary storage of milk stored in large metal milk cans). This tank would have been filled with water pumped from the adjacent well by the overhead windmill. Overflow water from this tank would have passed via iron pipe to the nearby animal water trough (which was located slightly downhill from the milk house).

Figure 124. Details of the concrete water trough, or tank located west of the garage and milk house. Overflow water from the milk house passed via an iron pipe to this trough. Similarly, overflow water from this trough flowed out the east end of the trough and utilized a natural drainage way that headed off to the southwest. The raised "platform" in the center of the tank, with its iron anchor bolts, probably held a water tank heater that prevented the water tank from freezing over during the winter.



MR. DEALER—Be a Live One and Get the

Cow Boy Tank Heater

SELLS itself; gives perfect satisfaction and neighbors buy it. Greatest submerged radiation. Sure Heater for large and small tanks. SELF-SINKING. Cleanest to handle. Ashes removed without disturbing the fire. Adjustable firebox for coal or wood. Burns any kind of fuel.

OUR DISC JOINTERS for Plows bury all cornstalks, manure, etc., deep in the furrow where it will make fertilizer and not interfere with preparing best seed bed or best cultivation of crop.

THE WILLS MANUFACTURING CO.
65 Seventh Street, MENDOTA, ILLINOIS

No. 242 Star Tank Heater

Cast Iron—One Size Only

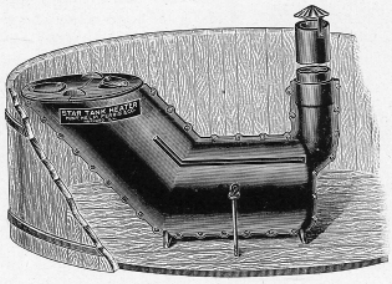


Fig. 242

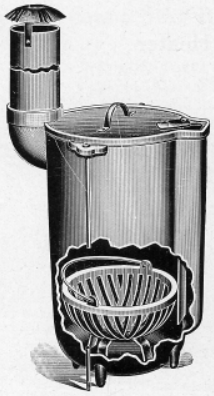
THE STAR Tank Heater, shown in the above illustration, has been on the market for years and has given such an excellent account of itself that it needs no introduction in those localities where Tank Heaters are used and appreciated.

Its reputation is such that there is a continued demand for it, some preferring a heater of this shape to the square type of heater shown in the illustration of the No. 844 heater on the preceding page.

This heater is being made today, as it has been for several years past, of the very best quality of gray iron. It is a heavy heater that sinks of its own weight, thus making it unnecessary to provide for fastenings in either iron, cement or wooden tank.

This heater is built on the principle of a base burner, the heat passing around the outer shell of the heater. By this system of radiation, the heat is so thrown into the water that a maximum amount of heat is given off with a minimum amount of fuel.

Height 24 inches. Shipping weight, 240 lbs.



No. 1 Black Jack Tank Heater

Basket Grate

THE body casting on this heater is the same as on the heater shown above. This heater is furnished with basket grate. Height of either size, 24 inches. We furnish both heaters shown on this page with heat deflector where desired. Too much cannot be said in favor of the deflector. It is so constructed that the heat is conducted entirely around the outer surface of the heater before it enters the smoke pipe. It is a great fuel saver.

No. 1. Diameter, 14 inches.

Shipping weight, 110 lbs.

Figure 125. Water tank heaters similar to those potentially used in the Sibley water tank. Top: Example of a "self sinking" cast-iron tank heater (*Farm Implement News Buyer's Guide* 1914:317). Bottom: Two examples of similar "self sinking" heaters from the *Starline Catalog No. 88* (Starline 1926). Lighter, sheet metal versions that were anchored to the base of a tank were also marketed, and would have been more resistant to the constant nudging of a cow or horse's head.

Figure 126. View of the east end of the water trough. Note the iron pipe overflow near the base of the tank. The function of the two concrete pads is unknown.

Figure 127. View of middle to late twentieth century storage shed located immediately to the west of the house.

Figure 128. Two exterior and one interior view of the garage.

Figure 129. Multiple views of the granary. This small frame structure was probably constructed for use as a storage building for loose grain (such as oats) for cattle and horse feed. At a later date—probably during the middle twentieth century—the building was converted into a workshop (complete with workbench.

Figure 130. Three views of the middle twentieth century machine shed.

looking northwest

looking southeast

looking northeast

Figure 131. Three views of the corn crib and grain bin complex, with the machine shed in the background.

Figure 132. View looking south, down the central aisle of the corn crib. Note the elevator "niche" on the left center of the aisle, and the overhead truck or wagon lift for dumping corn (and other grains) into the elevator.

Figure 133. View looking south, down the center of the west bin of the corn crib. As originally constructed, this structure was designed to store ear corn and had a wood slat exterior skin. The current slotted metal siding and the sloped floor with recessed conveyor system is a later modification adapting the structure to storage of shelled corn.

Figure 134. Two views of the corn cribs located each side of the central aisle. As originally constructed, the bins were designed with a flat floor, wood slatted "skin", and long narrow hinged doors along the aisle for unloading the ear corn. Sometime during the middle twentieth century, the crib was retrofitted for handling shelled corn. At that time, a raised and sloped floor (with under-floor conveyor system) was installed, the structural system was strengthened, the exterior wood slats were replaced with slotted metal panels, and the interior surface of the wood slats was covered with wire mesh. Top left: note removal of original doors and presence of new grain shoot. Top right: note raised, sloped floor. Bottom: note "ghost" of original hinge for removed door.

Figure 135. Miscellaneous details illustrating changes associated with the conversion of the corn crib to shelled corn (from ear corn). Top: detail of overhead grain shoot, and re-enforced floor joists to handle the movement of the grain and the increased overhead weight, respectively. Bottom: detail of exterior slotted metal sheathing and central conveyor for removal of shelled corn.

Figure 136. Two views of the elevator mechanism. This elevator system was not original to the corn crib, and although it may have been originally installed to handle ear corn, it probably was added to the structure at the same time that it was converted to shelled corn.

Figure 137. Two views of the elevator (left), and its shaft (right).

"Meyer's" Upright Cup Elevator and Wagon Dump

The FIRST SUCCESSFUL UPRIGHT EAR CORN ELEVATOR MADE

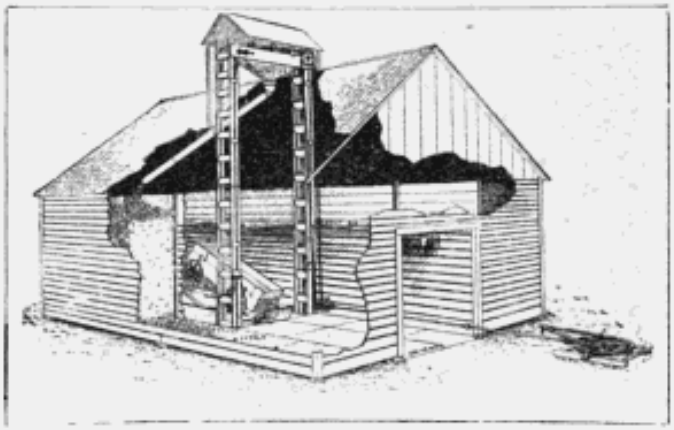
Placed inside the crib.

Always ready for use.

Works easily.

No dragging or sliding.

No unhitching of the horses; no lifting jacks, worm screws.



Drive on the dump, pull the lever and the weight of the wagon tips the load.

Simplest, Handiest and Easiest Running Elevator Made.

Elevates Wheat, Oats, Ear and Shelled Corn any Height—50 Bushels in Three Minutes.

Get the agency at once for the kind that stays with you, the kind which pleases your customers most.

Free Catalog showing eight styles of Upright and Portable Elevators with model crib plans.

A. F. MEYER MFG. CO., - Box 98, - MORTON, ILLINOIS

Figure 138. Top: Detail of elevator nameplate that reads "MEYER MFG. CO. / MORTON, ILL." Bottom: Advertisement for "Meyer's" Upright Cup Elevator and Wagon Dump, as depicted in the *Farm Implement News Buyer's Guide* (1914). This advertisement indicates that these were "the first successful upright ear corn elevator made."

Figure 139. Left: Cover of circa 1940 catalog from the Meyer Manufacturing Company, Morton, Illinois. This catalog cover notes that the company has been in operation since 1908 producing bucket and portable elevators, and illustrates a farm wagon dumping ear corn into a bucket elevator. Right: Illustration of "The New Meyer No. 3" with a steel ceiling jack and fold-away conveyor similar to that in use at the Sibley farm (Meyer n.d.). These conveyors could be installed in the central aisle way, or tucked away into the framework of the crib—as in the Sibley corncrib.

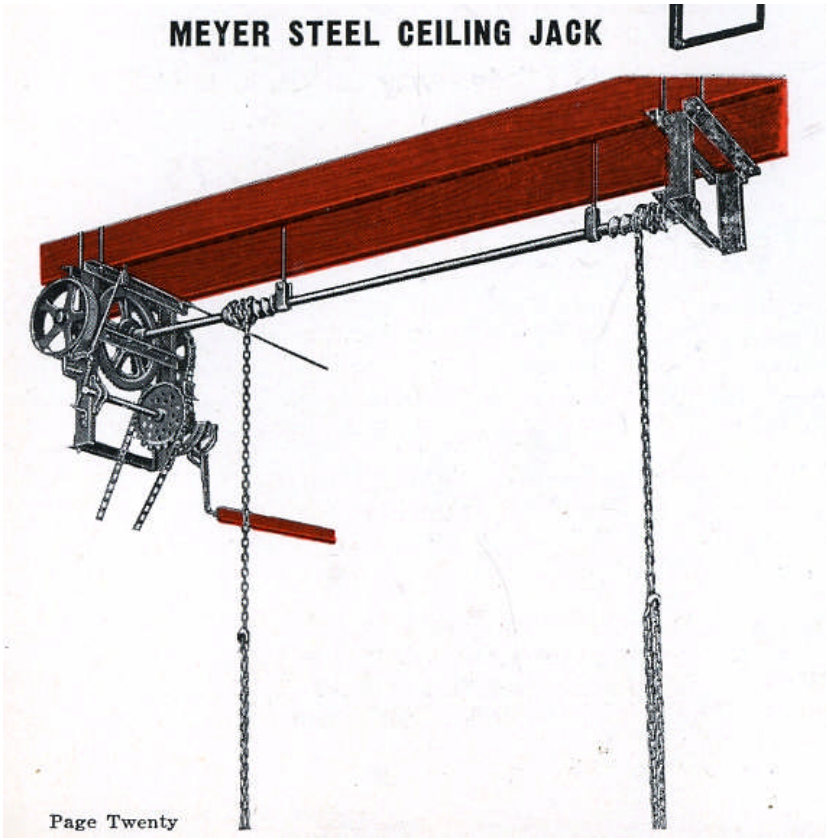


Figure 140. Top: Two views of the "ceiling jack" or wagon lift in the Sibley corn crib. Bottom: Detail of the "New 'Meyer' Steel Ceiling Jack" from the Meyer Manufacturing Company's *Catalog No. 24* (Meyer n.d.). The accompanying description in this catalog notes that "everything is up and out of the way, affords complete safety from moving parts. Always ready for use."

Figure 141. Overhead detail from within center aisle of corn crib illustrating the manner in which the original ceiling joists had been strengthened. This was done at the time the overhead storage area was converted from ear corn to shelled corn and/or grain—which would have increased dramatically the overhead load.

Figure 142. View from within the loft of the corncrib. The bins to each side, originally designed for ear corn, are accessed by the openings below the rafter plate. The grain bins over the central aisle are accessed by the openings running the length of the building in the center of the plank floor.

Figure 143. Three views of the headhouse and the cup elevator.

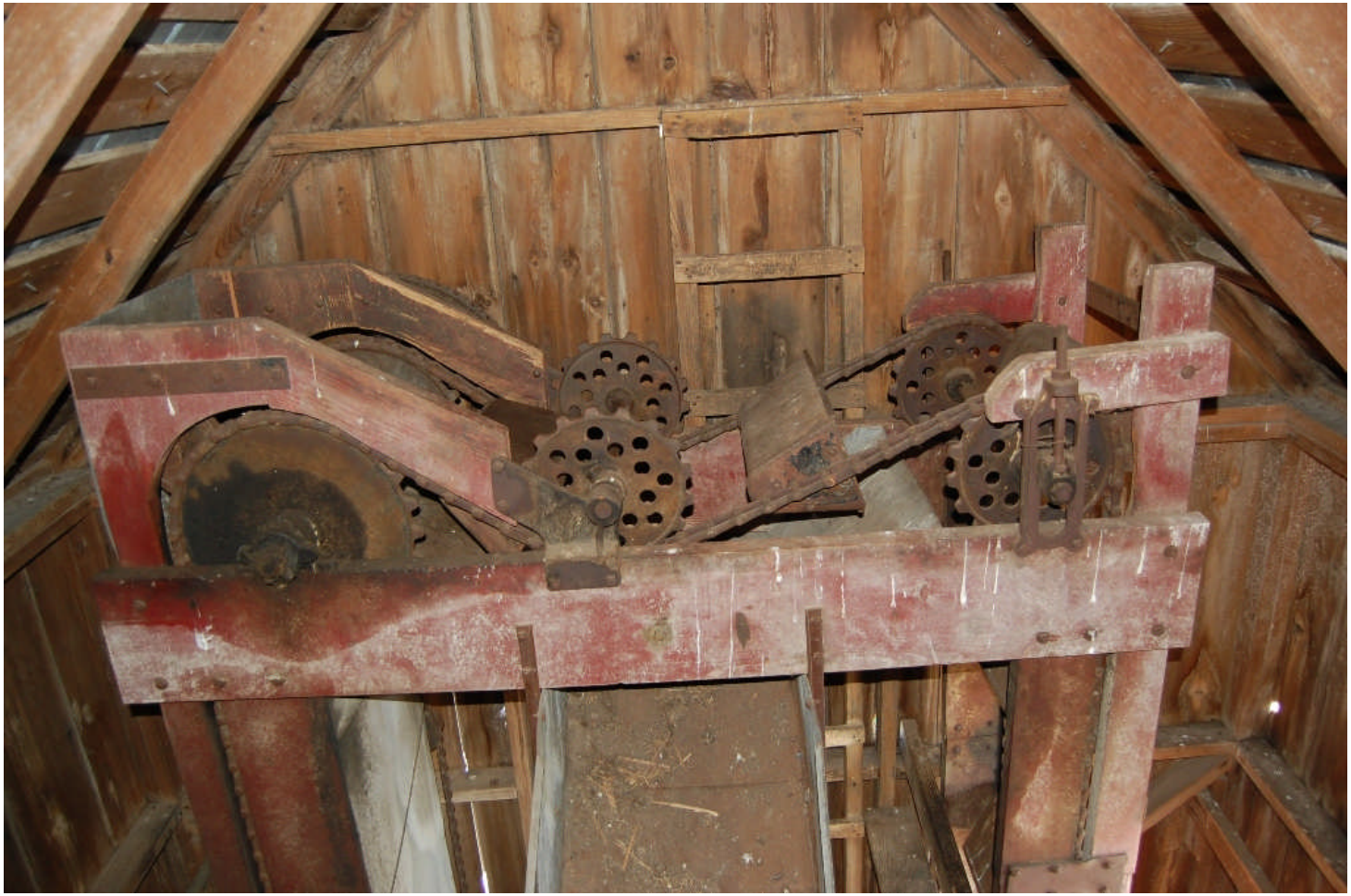


Figure 144. View of the head frame and mechanical works associated with the cup elevator.

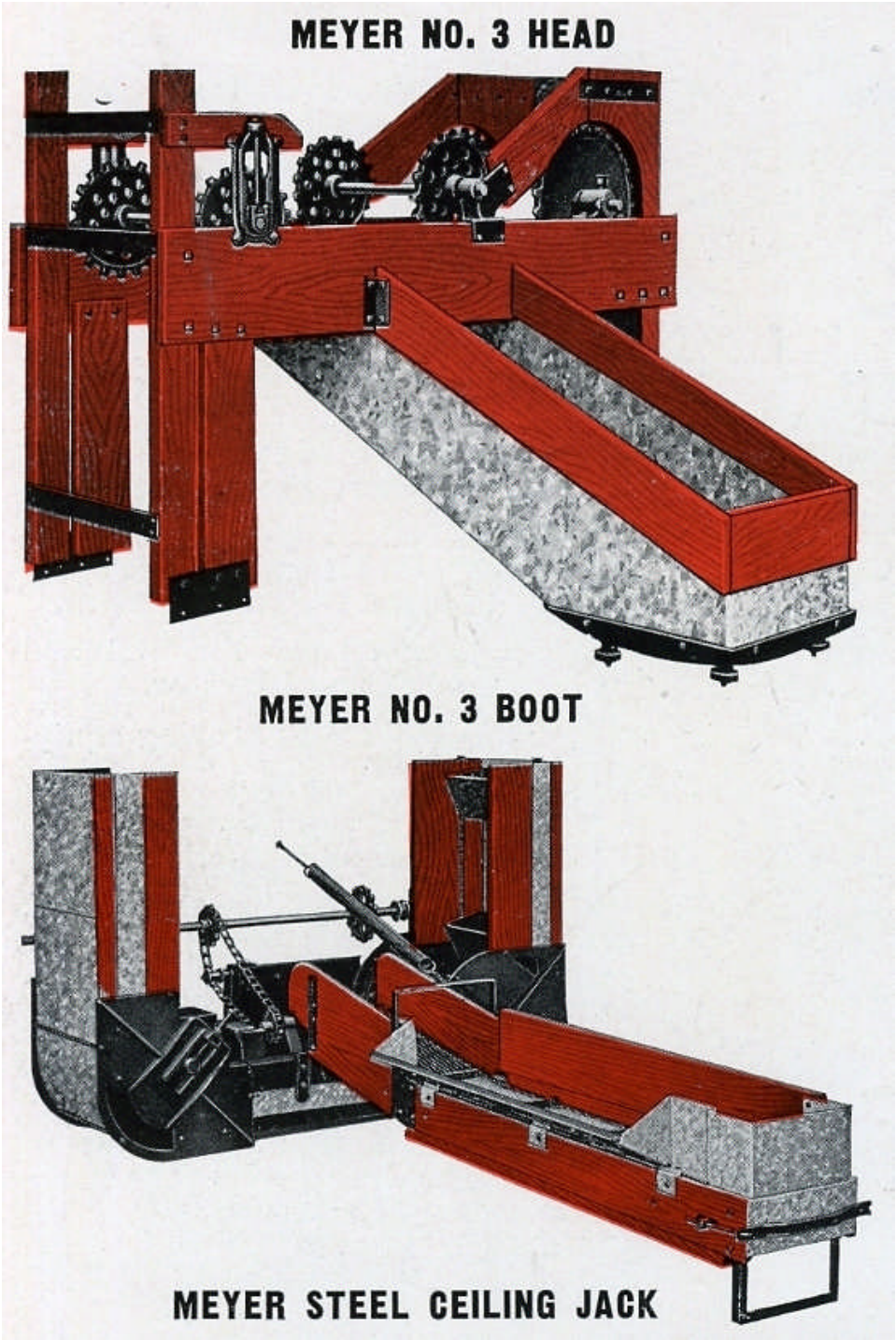


Figure 145. Detail of the "Head" and "Boot" of the Meyer No. 3 Elevator, which is very similar to that installed in the Sibley corncrib.

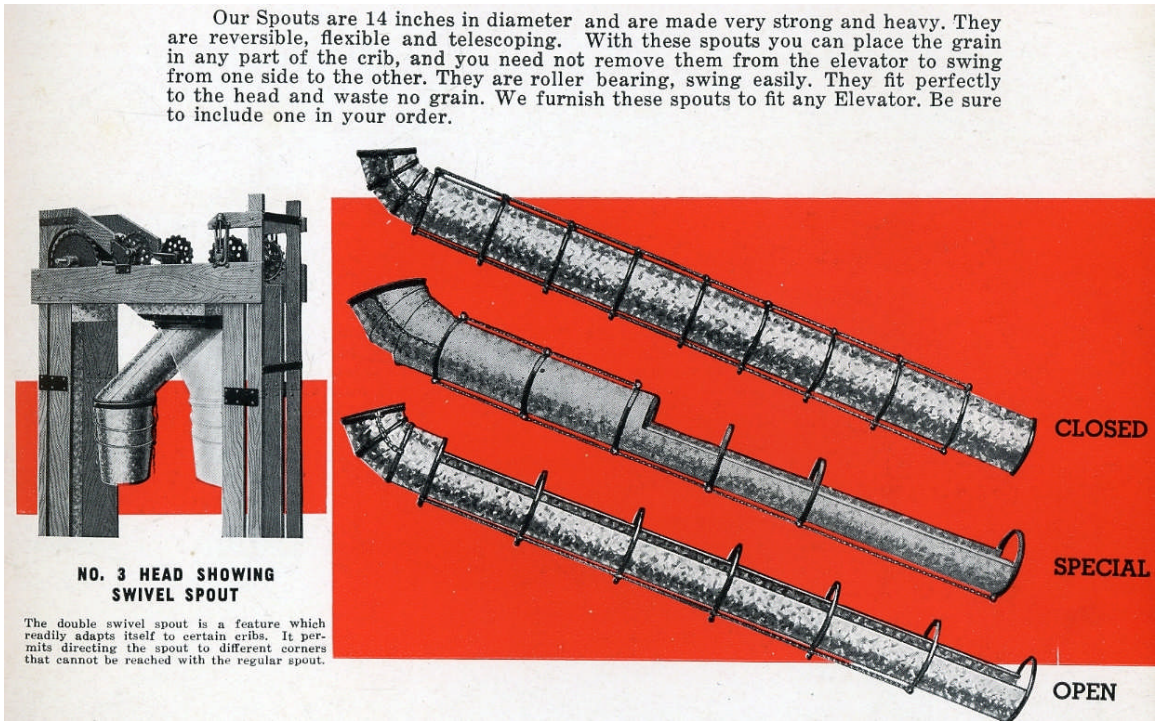


Figure 146. Detail of the Meyer galvanized steel swivel spouts. That used on the Sibley corncrib was the "Special" variety illustrated here.

Figure 147. View of the late twentieth century machine shed.

APPENDIX II
ARCHAEOLOGY SITE FORM

ILLINOIS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE RECORDING FORM

County: Ford **Site Name:** Sibley Tenant Farmstead **Revisit:** N
Field Number: **State Site No.:** 11FO64
Quadrangle (7.5'): Edwardsville **Date Recorded:** 2011.05.25

LEGAL DESCRIPTION (to quarter quarter quarter)

Align: SE	**1/4s:** NE NE SE	**Section:** 3	**Township:** 24 N	**Range:** 7 E
Align:	**1/4s:**	**Section:**	**Township:**	**Range:**
Align:	**1/4s:**	**Section:**	**Township:**	**Range:**
Align:	**1/4s:**	**Section:**	**Township:**	**Range:**

UTM Coordinates (by ISM): **UTM Zone:** 16 **UTM North:** 4,491,167 **UTM East:** 382,650
Ownership: Public

ENVIRONMENT

Topography: Upland Ridge **Elevation (in meters):** 248
Nearest Water Supply: Intermittent **Drainage:** Mackinaw
Soil Association: Varna—Elliot—Askum

Description: Located within the Grand Prairie region, the site lies on the spur of an upland ridge overlooking the headwaters of the Mackinaw River. The area surrounding the site formerly was tilled agricultural ground, but largely has reverted to native prairie.

SURVEY

Project Name: Sibley Farmstead Survey **Site Area (square meters):** 15,959
Ground Cover (List up to 3): Grass Paved Weeds **Visibility (%):** 10
Survey Methods (List up to 2): Pedestrian **Standing Structures:** Y
Site Type (List up to 2): Habitation

SITE CONDITION

Extent of Damage: Moderate
Main Cause of Damage: Vandalism

MATERIAL OBSERVED

Number of Prehistoric Artifacts (count or estimate): 0 **Number of Historic Artifacts (count or estimate):** 0
Prehistoric Diagnostic Artifacts: 0 **Historic Diagnostic Artifacts:** Y
Prehistoric Surface Features: N **Historic Surface Features:** Y

Description: There are multiple standing buildings/structures at the site including a residence, garage, barn, workshop, corn crib, machine sheds, and grain bins. The remains of several other outbuildings and landscape features also are visible above grade.

TEMPORAL AFFILIATION (check all that apply)

Prehistoric Unknown:	**Late Archaic:**	**Mississippian:**	**Colonial (1673-1780):**
Paleoindian:	**Woodland:**	**Upper Mississippian:**	**Pioneer (1781-1840):**
Archaic:	**Early Woodland:**	**Protohistoric:**	**Frontier (1841-1870):**
Early Archaic:	**Middle Woodland:**	**Historic Native American:**	**Early Industrial (1871-1900):** Y
Middle Archaic:	**Late Woodland:**	**Historic (generic):**	**Urban Industrial (1901-1945):** Y
			Post-War (1946-present): Y

Description: The farmstead is suspected to have been established in the 1870s and remained in continuous occupation until the property's acquisition by IDNR in 2002. For most of its history, the farmstead was part of the extensive Sibley Farms Estate.

Surveyor: F. Mansberger **Institution:** FRR **Survey Date:** 04/06/2011 **Curation Facility:** FRR
Site Report by: C. Stratton **Institution:** FRR **Date:** 05/23/2011
IHPA Log No.: **IHPA First Sur. Doc. No.:**
Compliance Status: **NRHP Listing:** N