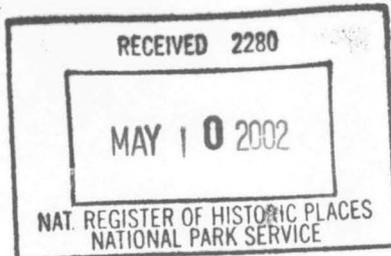


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bryant, James and Anne Atmore, Farmstead

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 12557 L Drive N not for publication N/A  
city or town Convis Township vicinity N/A  
state Michigan code MI county Calhoun code 025  
zip code 49014-8410

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination      request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets      does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant      nationally      statewide X locally. (      See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Brian D. [Signature]  
Signature of certifying official

4/21/02  
Date

Michigan State Historic Preservation Officer  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

=====  
4. National Park Service Certification  
=====

I, hereby certify that this property is:

*Walter H. Beall*

entered in the National Register  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the  
National Register

\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the  
National Register

\_\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

*for*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

*6/20/02*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

=====  
5. Classification  
=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- \_\_\_\_\_ public-local
- \_\_\_\_\_ public-State
- \_\_\_\_\_ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- \_\_\_\_\_ building(s)
- district
- \_\_\_\_\_ site
- \_\_\_\_\_ structure
- \_\_\_\_\_ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>6</u>	_____ buildings
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u> sites
<u>5</u>	_____ structures
	_____ objects
<u>14</u>	<u>1</u> Total



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## Description

The Bryant Farmstead located at 12557 L Drive North in Convis Township, Calhoun County, Michigan, comprises a rectangular thirteen-acre farmstead portion of a 160-acre farm parcel located on the north side of L Drive. The historic farmstead lot is flanked on three sides by cropland and fronts southward on L Drive North. The farmstead is comprised of the house and, directly north of it, agricultural outbuildings, including two barns, two silos, two corn cribs, a pump house with windmill remnants, and washhouse. According to oral tradition, two depressions in the front yard mark the site of the original log house and well. Just northwest of the house, a brick cistern was recently re-discovered. A small orchard is located to the northwest of the house. The orchard consists of a small collection of apple, cherry, and pear trees planted by James Bryant approximately thirty years ago. The entire farmstead lot is bounded by a combination of woven wire fencing, and wood post-and-rail fencing facing L Drive; the remaining parcel boundary fronting along L Drive is delineated by a combination of wood post-and-rail fencing and the remains of dry-laid stone fencing east of the farmstead lot. Mature maples are interspersed throughout the front yard and mature lilac bushes grow near the house and orchard. An ornamental plum tree and younger tulip poplar define the yard between the house and drive.

The farm's current irregular form results from numerous discrete land acquisitions in the nineteenth century, beginning with the purchase of the west ½ of the southeast ¼ of section 31 in the mid-1840s. The majority of the farm's acreage consists of agricultural fields that do not appear to retain historic characteristics, a modern gravel operation, and a pine woodlot on the northeast part of the property. The southern portion of the 160-acre parcel, including the agricultural land and farmstead lot, is predominantly level, while the northern portion of the parcel is defined by rolling land containing groves of mature red pine interspersed among small ponds.

## Farmstead

### House

The Bryant house is a two-story, post-and-beam Greek Revival/Italianate upright-and-wing building dating to circa 1855. The three-bay upright features a coursed, rounded cobblestone foundation and wood clapboard. The original wood clapboard was uncovered during 1970s exterior restoration work, which included the removal of asbestos wall shingles. A hipped-roof porch protects the front entry and French doors of the side-hall plan upright. The second-story one-over-one wood windows feature working shutters and the cornice is finished with a wide frieze-band molding and paired Italianate-era cornice brackets. The original wing at the house's east end also features a similar coursed cobblestone foundation and wood clapboard. Additionally, two recessed porches—one at the façade and one at the north elevation, a Queen Anne-era window and similar paired brackets all provide defining characteristics to the east wing. A shorter one-story west wing, constructed c. 1900, was built upon an uncoursed fieldstone foundation and also sheathed with wood clapboard. Two six-over-six wood sash windows with working shutters dominate the wing façade. The original brick interior chimney has been replaced with an exterior, brick ridgeline chimney on the rear elevation. The roof is clad in asphalt shingle.

A three-bay upright with flanking wings dominates the house façade. The foundation of the upright and east wing consists of carefully chosen coursed fieldstone, while the west wing is built upon uncoursed, split fieldstone. The

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differing material treatments reinforce the research that dates the west wing to circa 1900, nearly fifty years younger than the rest of the house. The main feature of the upright is the projecting hipped-roof porch. The porch apron consists of squared vertical wood slats, and simple wood posts enframe oval cutouts supporting the roof. A flat board runs just below the porch soffit, defining the porch frieze. The façade displays a six-panel wood entry door with sidelights, and two six-light French doors, the three accessible to the porch and the building's interior. The three entries are finished with shouldered wood trim, a common design component of Greek Revival-era buildings in Michigan. In the second-story three one-over-one wood sash windows have working wood shutters. Cornerboards frame the upper portion of the upright and the raking cornice consists of a wide entablature divided with a simple fillet molding, the cornice further defined by paired brackets with pendant moldings. The paired brackets and decorative cornice continue along the eaves of the upright. The rear of the upright is characterized by a modest gable-roofed vestibule providing access to the cellar. One first-story and two second-story openings have been covered. An exterior brick chimney replaces an earlier interior brick chimney.

Where visible, the foundation of the east wing is finished in coursed, rounded cobblestone, with the corners defined by simple sandstone quoins. A slightly projecting wood dripcourse divides the foundation and wood clapboard wall. Although the east wing likely dates to the original construction of the building, a Queen Anne-era window demonstrates later nineteenth-century updating to the exterior. The window consists of a fixed lower sash and an upper transom sash. The south (façade) and north elevation of the east wing both feature a recessed porch, one accessing the street elevation, the other opening into the farm courtyard (the recessed porch still provides access to the courtyard from the house, although the porch's original centered entry has been moved). The presence of the recessed porch was also a common construction technique in Greek Revival buildings. The spans are supported with similar paired wood uprights enframing oval cutouts. The apron of the north elevation recessed porch features vertical slats with diamond-shaped cutouts. A corner board frames the corner of the wing and similar cornice molding and paired brackets continue along the eave and raking cornice. The east elevation of the east wing is characterized by cornerboards enframing two first-story six-over-six wood sash windows, and one slightly smaller six-over-six wood garret window. A modern steel cellar door provides basement entry.

The west wing foundation is built of uncoursed, split fieldstone. The façade elevation is characterized by two six-over-six wood sash windows with working wood shutters. Subsequent alteration to both the west and north elevations is evidenced by the covered opening at the west elevation and recent shed-roofed addition. The addition has three newer one-over-one windows and a modern door that opens onto a small deck leading out to the backyard.

The first-floor interior of the upright is divided into two dominant spaces: the side hallway and parlor. The flooring of both rooms consists of original wide wood planking, laid directly on the floor joists. The junctures of the wood floor and plaster walls are finished with a tall, simple baseboards and wood quarter-round base molding. The openings in the parlor and hallway are finished with shouldered wood trim, similar to the exterior trim. The open-stringer stairway has painted risers and treads while the turned newell post, delicate balusters, and handrail are finished in stain.

The east wing, containing a dining room and kitchen, is accessed directly from the exterior and from the interior by the side hallway within the upright. The dining room is floored with oak strip flooring with a central pine section.

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Wainscoting encircles the room and the walls and ceiling are finished with wallpaper. A clock alcove set into the west wall of the dining room is trimmed with the similar shouldered wood moldings found throughout the house. The kitchen is floored with wider lengths of oak and features a tall baseboard with beveled edge and quarter-round base molding. Beaded wainscoting encircles a portion of the kitchen and the walls are finished with wallpaper. A two-panel wood door opens into an ascending stairway providing access to the attic of the wing.

The west wing reflects the highest degree of alteration and updating within the building. The flooring within the wing consists of newer knotty pine. Unpainted wainscoting in some portions of the wing also appears to be a recent alteration to the interior space. The openings are finished with wood molding that does not display the same design characteristics of the molding throughout the rest of the house, but likely dates to the circa 1900 construction of the wing. A bathroom has recently been installed in the west wing and further alterations include the construction of a new room (seen from the exterior as the shed-roofed addition on the north elevation of the building) and the repositioning of the hallway leading to the backyard.

Access to the second story is provided by the stairway from the hall in the upright portion of the house. The second story of the upright contains wide plank flooring and simple baseboard profile similar to the first story's. The walls and ceilings are finished with plaster and wallpaper. The "Mary Mayo" room, the largest room of the second-story—in addition to two other small rooms—is currently undergoing repairs, which have exposed a portion of the house framing. The framing exhibits post-and-beam construction with pegged mortise-and-tenon joints and diagonal wind braces, while the intermediary spaces are supported at regular intervals by wood studs. Interestingly, some non-bearing stud walls were constructed with the studs rotated ninety degrees from the normal position, the wide plane of the stud facing out into the room. No clear answers have been uncovered yet to help explain this somewhat less common construction method.

The garret room above the east wing once housed the farm laborers, according to family tradition. Due to the low ceiling, the floor of the room is approximately one foot lower than the floor level of the second-story upright. The flooring consists of wood planks of varied widths (from six to twelve inches) and is finished with a simple baseboard with beveled edge. The walls are finished with wallpaper and the aforementioned stairway provides access to the kitchen.

### **Washhouse/woodshed**

The washhouse/woodshed borders on the gravel drive and is located directly north of the house. Based on construction techniques, oral tradition, and information contained in the Rural Property Inventory, the combination washhouse/woodshed likely dates to pre-1880. The washhouse is constructed with post-and-beam framing and the washhouse portion is sheathed in wood board-and-batten. Access is through a vestibule entry, flanked by two one-over-one wood sash windows. Extending north from the washhouse is the shed-roofed woodshed addition. The woodshed has a poured concrete foundation and is clad with horizontal v-groove wood siding with access through large doors on metal track rollers. The roofing consists of a combination of asphalt shingle and standing-seam metal. James Bryant renovated the washhouse for use as his residence upon returning to Convis Township from northern Michigan.

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**Pump house/windmill remnants**

Also bordering on the gravel drive is a pump house with remnants of the windmill. The pump house has a poured concrete foundation. The wood walls above the foundation are battered and the exterior sheathing is a combination of drop siding and board-and-batten. The roof is finished with asphalt shingles. Original openings have been covered. The current windmill itself reportedly replaced the original when it was blown down by a windstorm in 1920. The windmill legs and bracing remain, but the blade and rudder mechanism was removed in 1944, according to James Bryant, because his father was concerned they would fall and injure someone.

**Horse barn**

Directly east of the pump house and bordering on the gravel drive stands a gable-roof horse barn that James Bryant stated was known as the horse barn. It housed the six horses the farm generally used plus two or three buggies, as well as a tool bench. Based on construction techniques, oral tradition, and information contained in the Rural Property Inventory, the barn may date to as early as 1860. A combination of original fieldstone foundation and later concrete parging can be seen at grade. The exterior walls are clad in board-and-batten siding, and finished with white cornerboards and a simple fascia board. One interesting interior feature consists of chamfered wood posts, an unusual treatment for a primarily utilitarian structure. Some original openings have been covered; others now contain multi-light hopper windows. A concrete ramp spans nearly the entire width of the south elevation and facilitates access through the central bay. The barn is finished with a steel roof.

**Shed-roofed corncrib**

The shed-roofed corncrib is located directly north of the washhouse. Built upon a concrete pad, the corncrib features horizontal wood slats with hinged openings near the eaves for loading. The roof is sheathed with corrugated metal.

**Drive-through corncrib/hog house**

The drive-through corncrib/hog house is located directly north of the corncrib. Constructed on a foundation of poured concrete, the walls are sheathed with board-and-batten siding. The current siding covers earlier v-groove horizontal siding similar to the style used on the woodshed. The roof is clad in asphalt shingle. A long shed addition sloping to the west appears likely to have been constructed to house hogs. Both parts of the structure have post-and-beam structural systems.

**Livestock barn**

Located directly north of the English barn is the large gambrel-roof livestock barn thought to have been constructed in the early 1880s. Two concrete stave silos stand to its immediate south. Constructed on a fieldstone foundation, the barn has a post-and-beam framing system and is finished with vertical wood siding and with recently installed roofing of aluminum sheets molded to resemble old metal shingles. A low shed-roofed addition extends out from the north elevation of the barn. Built on a poured concrete foundation, the addition is sheathed with v-groove horizontal wood siding and roofed with corrugated steel. According to the current owner, a large wing extending out from the barn to the north was removed due to advanced deterioration.

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**Silos**

The east silo is built upon a poured concrete pad while the west silo appears to be built upon a fieldstone foundation. The vertical chutes providing access to the loading/unloading hatches (and protection from the environment) have been removed. The silo roofs have also been removed.

**Site of log house**

A depression on the front lawn is readily discernible and according to oral tradition marks the site of a log house, the Bryants' first home on this farm, occupied from the time of their settlement in 1844 until the current house was completed around 1855. The site appears to have remained relatively undisturbed.

**Site of well**

A depression in the front lawn near the road marks the site of the original well, which provided water to the first residents of the property as well as passersby. The well may have continued in service until the later well (marked by the windmill remains and extant pump house) went into service, presumably in the late nineteenth century. As with the log house site, the well site appears to have remained relatively undisturbed since its abandonment.

**Brick cistern**

To the northwest of the house is a brick cistern. "Rediscovered" within the last year, the cistern has since been filled in.

**Orchard (Non-contributing)**

Located directly east of the corncribs and washhouse, a modest orchard of approximately twenty apple, cherry, and pear trees dot the side yard. The orchard trees were planted about thirty years ago by then occupant James Bryant.

**Stone Wall Remnants**

Remains of a dry-laid fieldstone wall run for several hundred feet along L Drive North just east of the farmstead. To allow for efficient plowing operations, larger stone cobbles and boulders brought up by the freeze and thaw cycle had to be removed on an annual basis from the farm's glacial till. These stones provided an abundant source of building material to construct building foundations, with plenty left over to be used in building walls around the edges of the fields. Fieldstone walls were reportedly common in the area, but most have disappeared as farming practices have evolved. The wall has not been maintained and survives today as an elongated low heap of stones.

Bryant Farmstead, Convis Twp., Calhoun Co., MI

- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
AGRICULTURE  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance 1855-1900

Significant Dates N/A

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

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

=====  
9. Major Bibliographical References  
=====

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

- Previous documentation on file (NPS) None
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

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

=====  
10. Geographical Data  
=====

Acreage of Property    About 13.5 acres

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>16</u>	<u>660537</u>	<u>4688459</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	<u>  </u> See continuation sheet.					

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

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

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### Statement of Significance

The Bryant Farmstead, located in Convis Township in Calhoun County, Michigan, is significant under **National Register Criteria A and C**. Established in 1844 by James and Anne Atmore Bryant and still owned today by descendants, the farmstead is important among southern Michigan examples for the number and variety of its buildings and structures dating primarily from the nineteenth century. The nineteenth-century agricultural buildings include a livestock barn, English barn, corncrib/hog house, and washhouse/woodshed. In addition, the c. 1855 Bryant farmhouse is notable on its own as a particularly well preserved example of the upright and wing house form characteristic of southern Michigan's housing stock in the nineteenth century and for its architectural styling, which is a mix of two architectural "styles," a vernacular form of the Greek Revival and bracketed Italianate, typically used in Michigan houses of the 1850s and 60s.

The Bryant Farm began with the September 4, 1844 purchase by James Bryant of the west half of the southeast quarter of Section 31 in Convis Township, Calhoun County. Patrick Clark of Washtenaw County made the initial purchase of the southeast quarter of section 31 from the federal government on October 21, 1835 (the federal patent was issued on September 10, 1838), and the property passed through ten additional owners before the Bryants purchased it, testimony to the speculation in southern Michigan lands during Michigan's early statehood period.

James Bryant (1818-93) was born in England and came with his parents to the Hickory Corners vicinity of Barry County northwest of Battle Creek. By early 1842, when he was married to Dorcas Ann Joy (born 1819), he was living in Pennfield Township, Calhoun County, a few miles northeast of Battle Creek. Dorcas Bryant passed away only nine and one-half months after the marriage, on November 7, 1842. Two years later, in 1844, James Bryant and Anne Atmore were married. Anne Atmore Bryant (1821-1905) was born in Norfolk, England, and came to Pennfield Township with her parents. James Bryant's purchase of the property in Convis Township, just to the east of Pennfield, presumably anticipated the needs of a growing family.

A 1913 biographical sketch of James Bryant's son, Myron J. Bryant, states that James Bryant "cleared and plowed, after which he erected the needed buildings" (Gardner, vol. 2, pp. 1279-80). The family first occupied a log house whose site is still marked by a readily visible depression in the front lawn. They may have moved to the Convis farm in mid-June 1845: daughter Mary, brought into this world on May 25, 1845, was reportedly "born in Pen[n]field, but was reared upon ... [the Convis Township farm], having been brought there when but two years old" Hobart & Mather, p. 426).

By the mid-1870s James and Anne Bryant's additional land purchases increased the property to about 160 acres and gave it the irregular boundary it retains today. The Bryants developed a diversified farm operation that included 80 acres of land available for cropping, a woodlot to provide a fuel source, and a variety of draft animals and livestock including cattle, milk cows, horses, oxen, sheep, and swine. Crop output included wheat, corn, oats, potatoes, buckwheat, and hay (1850 Federal Agricultural Census). Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, farm production steadily grew (in improved acreage and output of farm products) and the output continued to diversify (two

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acres of fruit trees are noted in the 1880 Federal Agricultural Census producing over 200 bushels). The mid- to latter-nineteenth century marked the period of the farm's shift from a subsistence operation to a surplus operation, the majority of the surplus coming in the form of wool with nearly 900 pounds produced the previous year, and crop output of 1,000 bushels of corn and 750 bushels of wheat produced (1880 Federal Agricultural Census).

The later nineteenth to early twentieth century period marked a shift in the animal practices at the Bryant farm from an intensive wool operation to a dairying operation. The production, harvesting, and storage of silage underwent a period of innovative development in the later 1800s as the emergence of the silo on the farm landscape marked the arrival of large-scale dairying operations. Farms with larger acreage were able to grow the quantity of silage needed for larger dairying operations. Additional innovations in milking methods decreased the dependence on manual labor while allowing for larger herds of dairying cattle. The two concrete stave silos built on the Bryant farm represent the second generation of innovation in silo construction techniques. The concrete stave silo exhibited superiority over the wood stave silo for its durability and airtight construction, qualities necessary for the long-term storage for feed.

Gardner's 1913 *History of Calhoun County, Michigan* says of James Bryant's farm: "The beautiful farm which he constructed and the accessory buildings erected with such thoughtful care still stand and are counted among the best in that locality" (vol. 2, p. 1280). With only the exception of the two silos, all extant outbuildings were likely constructed between 1845 and 1900. Rural Property Inventory cards and information from Bryant descendants, in addition to the use of post-and-beam framing on almost all outbuildings and of board and batten siding on some, corroborate the assertion that the outbuildings are of pre-1900 vintage. James Bryant's great-grandson of the same name stated that the farm's original main barn was destroyed a long time ago, but that the present large gambrel-roof barn dates from around 1880-1883 (he noted that "on the inside of the main doors can be seen (faintly) 'M. J. Bryant Painter 1885'").

Surviving tax records and other sources provide no firm dates for the house or other farm buildings. Various estimates of the date of construction of the house made by family members contained in materials in the farm's Centennial Farm file range from the late 1840s to around 1860. The Early Victorian front porch and paired brackets, which seem to be parts of the original structure rather than additions, suggest a date toward the end of that range. The relative elaborateness of finish and the fine state of preservation distinguishes this house in architectural terms from the more typical upright-and-wing farmhouses that dot the southern Michigan with their vestigial Greek Revival trim and, more often than not, obtrusive alterations.

James Bryant likely continued farming the acreage to some degree until shortly before his death in 1893. Myron J. Bryant (1858-1925), the second oldest son of James and Anne, and his wife, Georgiana Chisholm Bryant, purchased the farm from his siblings and continued farming until his death in 1925. Joseph (born 1885), the second oldest son of Myron and Georgiana, lived on the farm his entire life, and he and wife Winifred Ashley Bryant purchased it from the other heirs following the death of Georgiana in 1941. He continued its operation until James, Joseph and Winifred Bryant's only son, returned to the Convis Township farm in the 1960s to continue the Bryant family tradition. It is important to note that census records show between eight and eleven family members and laborers occupying the farmhouse at any given time. Quite often, a younger Bryant son with wife and children would occupy the house

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alongside the son's parents, creating the traditional extended family so often seen during the first decades of settlement in Michigan.

After spending some time in Traverse City, James Bryant returned to the farm in Convis Township, renovating the washhouse/woodshed into a residence for his mother, Winifred Bryant. Shortly after her death in 1974, James Bryant began restoring the house as a monument to the life of Mary Mayo, his great-aunt. Exterior restoration work included the removal of asbestos shingles installed in the 1930s and the repair and repainting of the yellow poplar clapboards underneath. James Bryant continued to farm and raise cattle and also planted raspberries, creating a locally popular "U pick" source for fresh raspberries. Beginning about 1980, James Bryant began leasing the land to other farmers, a practice that is continued today. The farm acreage is currently in a three-crop rotation of corn, wheat, and soybeans. James Bryant died in 1997 and his nephews, Kenneth and Richard Wirtz, now own the property.

The Bryant Farm served as the childhood home of a figure of statewide importance in the Grange movement in the late nineteenth century, Mary Bryant Mayo. Mary, the child of James and Anne Bryant, was born May 25, 1845. Soon after graduating from Battle Creek High School, she began a career as a teacher in one of the district schools. Mary Bryant married local resident Perry Mayo on April 14, 1865 and they settled on a farm located across the road from her childhood home.

Perry Mayo, in his own right, was a highly respected resident of the county. The son of a Convis Township farm family, he enlisted in the Michigan Volunteer Infantry, Second Regiment, of the Union Army in April 1861. During his three-year tour, Perry saw action in the first and second battles of Bull Run, the capture of Jackson, Mississippi, the siege of Knoxville, and the campaign against Richmond. Wounded twice in action, Perry was honorably discharged in July 1864 (*Biographical Review of Calhoun County*, pp. 425-426).

Mary subsequently settled into her role as the wife of a farmer in rural Calhoun County. However, a chance encounter with a former classmate brought the disadvantages of rural life into sharp focus. Allowing for plenty of physical activity, farm life provided few opportunities for mental stimulation and social interaction for women. Farm wives were bound to domestic tasks within the limited sphere of the farm, often enduring long periods of social isolation. Jennie Buell related one woman's story in *One Woman's Work for Farm Women*:

Only last December (1907) there appeared at one of our state Granges a woman who, with her husband, had come five hundred miles to represent the new Grange of which six of her family were members. In conversation with her newly found Grange sisters, this interesting woman said she was the mother of fourteen children, and that, at one time, for five years she saw no one outside her immediate family (p. 20).

Mary keenly understood the labor necessary to operate a successful farm, but wondered whether a life replete with physical activity but lacking in mental stimulation and spiritual nourishment would be "the measure of my life, and that of every farmer's wife" (Buell, p. 9).

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Bound by the domestic chores of farm life that meant rural isolation and a lack of opportunity, Mayo desired opportunities for simple social interaction and for educational enrichment that could greatly improve the quality of his life and that of countless rural residents. With a growing desire to improve the quality of life for rural residents, Perry and Mary joined an organization that provided not only a stimulating and welcome environment, but also one they found to be the perfect vehicle for furthering their mission to provide enlightenment and social opportunities to their rural brethren, the Battle Creek Grange.

Oliver Kelley had founded the national Grange, or "Patrons of Husbandry," in 1867 after witnessing first-hand the devastation wrought on southern farmers by the Civil War, and their inability to readily adapt to the radical changes brought about by it. The Grange based its principles upon the importance of education. The knowledge gained through this education would translate into a more efficient and profitable farm operation. As a social organization, the Grange also provided its members the opportunity to socialize with their fellow community members, an important opportunity for residents in many of the isolated rural communities of the state. A flourish of organizing activities and external market forces soon transformed the Grange into a strong social movement. With 750,000 members by the end of 1874, the Grange was ready to attempt to influence the economic realities of the day.

The effects of the Panic of 1873 created problems for farmers on many levels, serving to galvanize the resolve of the Grange members. Farms in forfeiture because of default on mortgages served to inflate interest rates, and an arable land glut led to declining land values. Furthermore, inflated freight rates being charged by railroad companies to ship products, in addition to the specter of industrial consolidation on the horizon, were sure to result in higher prices for most necessary farm services. Keeping in mind that the first attempts to rectify the problem of industrial monopoly, the *Sherman Antitrust Act* of 1890, was more than fifteen years in the future, the farming public was forced to take action.

The Grange also existed to represent the rights of the farming public, specifically in the matter of patent litigation. The owners of patents for agricultural implements, some of marginal utility or efficiency, were, nevertheless, able to charge royalty fees on farmers using similar implements, with the threat of litigation doing much to silence farmers' protests regarding the fee charges. Judging by court records discussed in Sanders (1999), most "new" patents, when brought under legal examination, were found to be without merit, and their owners charging royalty fees unjustified.

As important—perhaps more important—the Grange portrayed itself as a champion of gender and rural equality, reflecting the progressive ideas beginning to blossom during the late nineteenth century. From its inception, the Grange allowed male and female members an equal voice on all issues, regardless of sex. Grange members lobbied their governmental representatives for equal educational opportunities and facilities for rural youth regardless of sex. The yearly Grange platform included a request for equal suffrage for men and women.

Though not outwardly partisan, the Grange would lobby for federal legislation of benefit to its members and their children. The second Morrill Act of 1890 revised the 1862 landmark legislation providing federal lands for states to found Agricultural & Mechanical (A & M) colleges. Additional federal acts in 1887 and 1906 provided funding to further agricultural education while encouraging continuing innovation in agricultural technology (Sanders, pp. 315-317). These acts reflected the Grange's beliefs that the agricultural curriculum should be, above all, a practical

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endeavor; with lessons students could easily transfer from the classroom to the farm field.

Established in early 1872, the Michigan Grange preached the concept of happiness for its rural members built upon a foundation of prosperity, gained through knowledge. The Grange members associated with these "rural" progressive reforms and recognized them as key components of the Grange's work. Perry and Mary recognized the effectiveness of the Grange as a leadership voice among the rural residents. They enthusiastically immersed themselves in the progressive environment of the Grange and soon established a reading club for neighborhood youth. Mary also taught Sunday school.

The Bryants were recognized early for their ability to speak honestly, simply, and persuasively on issues of the day and both were soon elevated to leadership positions on the local and state Grange levels. Mary was in demand as a public speaker and was elected to the office of deputy lecturer for the state grange, serving as the deputy lecturer from 1883 to 1903. As deputy lecturer she was responsible for traveling throughout the state and being the unifying voice for the state's women. Furthermore, she understood the importance of her task to be the reshaping of women's previously held perceptions about the opportunities a farm woman should expect or even demand to have. She used her simple, persuasive speaking style to convey the idea that rural life could and should be more fulfilling for the women of Michigan. During her tenure as lecturer, Mary delivered lectures throughout Michigan and in other states, hoping to bring the rural population to a "social and mental awakening" (Buell, p. 23). In 1885 and 1886 alone, Mary presented over one hundred lectures throughout the state (Buell, p. 25).

Her speaking ability and the importance of her influence to bring about change were perhaps unconsciously revealed during the 1887 annual meeting when the current lecturer criticized the Grange's relationship with the local press, complaining, "only Mary Mayo and Governor Luce could command a large audience without the cooperation of local newspapers" (Trump, p. 38).

In 1886, Perry was elected as state senator, serving a district comprised of Calhoun and Branch counties. Also in 1886, Cyrus Luce, a native of Branch County and Master of the Michigan State Grange from 1880 to 1887, was elected governor. Governor Luce appointed Mary to the Board of Control for the State Industrial Home for Girls in Adrian. Serving as an active board member during Governor Luce's tenure (1887-1890), Mary stressed the importance of separating the mentally ill and those unable to be rehabilitated from the girls who, with the proper educational facilities, might still be rehabilitated to live a fulfilling life. The board requested a new educational building be constructed, reporting the current educational environment to be inadequate. Although their initial request was rejected, a new school building on the grounds was soon constructed and prominently featured in the 1891-1892 report.

In 1888 Mary was elected chaplain of the state grange and served until her death in 1903, the exception being the years 1890-1892. In 1889 Mary was elected to chair the Michigan Grange's first Committee on Woman's Work, a committee on which she would serve until 1903. The committee providing basic services and social interaction to disadvantaged rural residents, but Mary understood that poverty did not discriminate between the urban and rural residents of the state. She requested that the committee also provide assistance to the urban poor, and her local committee performed charitable acts for the residents of Battle Creek.

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Continuing to focus on activities that would directly impact the life of young people, Mary began a program in 1892 that she hoped would soon expand under additional Grange chapters:

In the summer of 1892, she entertained a hard working typesetter, a girl from Chicago, who was completely exhausted. This girl was with Mrs. Mayo two weeks and went back home a new girl. Every year since, the Mayo home has had from one to four such guests, each for a two week stay (Winter & Frankland, eds., p. 61).

Mary saw the value of exposing overworked urban residents to the restorative qualities of the rural environment. Mary's lobbying within the state Grange resulted in the 1893 statewide adoption of the Grange Fresh Air Program, whereby the Grange, on a statewide basis, would provide homes for the urban residents toiling within the industrial centers such as Chicago and Detroit. The Twenty-Second Annual Session of the Grange (1894) summarized the success of the program and its impact on the lives of others:

It was a new departure, little understood by either Patrons or people in the city. Without a single dollar as a basis of operations, it has been much more successful than our fondest hopes.

City people couldn't believe that others could be that nice to them. Railroads provided free passes. 'Mother Mayo' took in two girls, one with an advanced case of tuberculosis—who died at the Mayo home—and the other a girl weary of factory work. Their appreciation of the outing was touchingly reported by Mary Mayo (Trump, p. 54).

The Fresh Air Program was described as "the single most successful woman's work effort anywhere in the Grange" (Marti, p. 95). Mary Mayo's legacy to the Grange and to her fellow humans was beginning to take shape.

With cooperation from railroads and urban business, the program provided a much needed respite from an urban environment. 1896 was a peak year: 274 urban residents were brought into the rural hinterlands to replenish their spirits, 231 of them residents of Detroit. Interestingly, a number of farm families opening their homes for ostensibly temporary visits subsequently adopted twenty-four of their young urban guests. The formation in Detroit in 1902 of the Michigan Fresh Air Society was the direct result of Mary Mayo's work to involve and educate people to the simple yet important benefits of clean air.

Mayo's actions were synonymous with the Progressive Era and the improvements in society it targeted, although without a strictly rural focus. Her Fresh Air Program presaged an emerging movement in the early twentieth century schools and homes emphasizing the importance of fresh-air exposure and ventilation for maintaining health.

Also during this time, the Michigan Grange initiated another new program in which Mary took a leadership role. Begun in 1895, the Women's Section comprised a forum at county meetings that provided women the opportunity to communicate and interact with other female grange members. From 1895 to 1900 Mary participated in 123 Women's Section meetings throughout the state.

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Although women had been admitted to the Michigan Agricultural College (MAC) since 1870, provision for the education of women had been secondary to men. In 1900 the MAC's Women's Building, the first building on campus constructed for the express purpose of educating women, was dedicated and Mary was formally recognized for her contributions for the advancement of rural women. With the construction and dedication of the Women's Building, Mary would realize the accomplishment of something she had fought many years for—better educational opportunities for women in Michigan. While the women's curriculum of the day may seem antiquated by current standards, the report given at the 1897 annual meeting outlined what appears to be a surprisingly innovative and truly equal curriculum that included "...mechanical studies which fit a woman to drive a nail (not a finger nail) as well as her brother" (Trump, p. 61). Although formally honored at the dedication for her role in opening the door to equal learning for women at the MAC, she was unable to attend: a seriously ill lamb on the farmstead required her attention that day.

Although Mary died on April 21, 1903, posthumous honors recognizing the importance of her accomplishments continued throughout the twentieth century. Almost immediately following Mary's death, the thirty-first annual session (1903) of the state Grange formally requested that the women's building on the MAC campus be named Mary Mayo Hall (Trump, p. 73). Although this building was eventually named Morrill Hall, the college would eventually honor Mary's role as one of Michigan's early leaders for equal opportunity. Mary Mayo Hall, a dormitory specifically constructed for women on the MAC campus, was formally dedicated on October 16, 1931. The fact that "there was no question that the college woman was more prepared to enjoy living, to extract the most from life" (*Lansing State Journal*, Oct. 17, 1931), could be attributed to Mary's ceaseless work to assure opportunities for women. The "measure" of a woman's life would not be taken solely in terms of physical exertion: there would be opportunities for access to the mental and social and spiritual components she had recognized as necessary for a meaningful life. Her work was recognized as "the strongest personal influence from outside the college brought to bear on making provisions for women students" (*Lansing State Journal*, Oct. 17, 1931). Mary Mayo Hall continues today to serve as a women's dormitory on the campus of Michigan State University.

Mary Mayo was named to the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame on October 21, 1989. Joining only 161 other women (through 2000) whose actions have made a significant contribution to the quality of life for all residents of Michigan and beyond, she was honored for her simple yet extraordinary actions.

"Mother Mayo" harnessed her speaking abilities to bring heretofore isolated and marginalized women into a new socially rewarding Grange setting. She worked tirelessly to provide women with equal educational opportunities. She led the effort to provide to as many poor children and young adults as possible exposure to the restorative climate of the farm to counteract the debilitating work environment of the era. She sought to provide better understanding between the rural and urban classes in Michigan and to provide help where needed, whether the recipient lived in a farmhouse or urban tenement. In these actions, Mary Mayo created an enduring legacy.

**The Bryant Farmstead is *not* being nominated under Criterion B in relation to Mary Bryant Mayo. The reason for this is that Mary Mayo's significant activities took place during the period from the 1870s until her death in 1903. During this period, as the husband of Perry Mayo, she actually resided in a property across the road**

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**from her childhood home. The home of Perry and Mary Mayo still stands and, although modernized more than the Bryant Farmhouse, appears to retain sufficient integrity as a nineteenth-century farmhouse and possesses more direct historical associations with Mayo's important years.**

Archaeological Significance:

The sites of the original log house, well, and the early cistern have reportedly not been disturbed since they passed out of use. Thus there is some reason to believe that they may contain significant archaeological resources related to the early years of the farm and of white settlement in the area. Other parts of the farmstead and farm may also contain significant archaeological resources. No archaeological investigation of the log house site, well, cistern, or other parts of the Bryant Farmstead or farm has been done.

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National Park Service

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**Geographical Data**

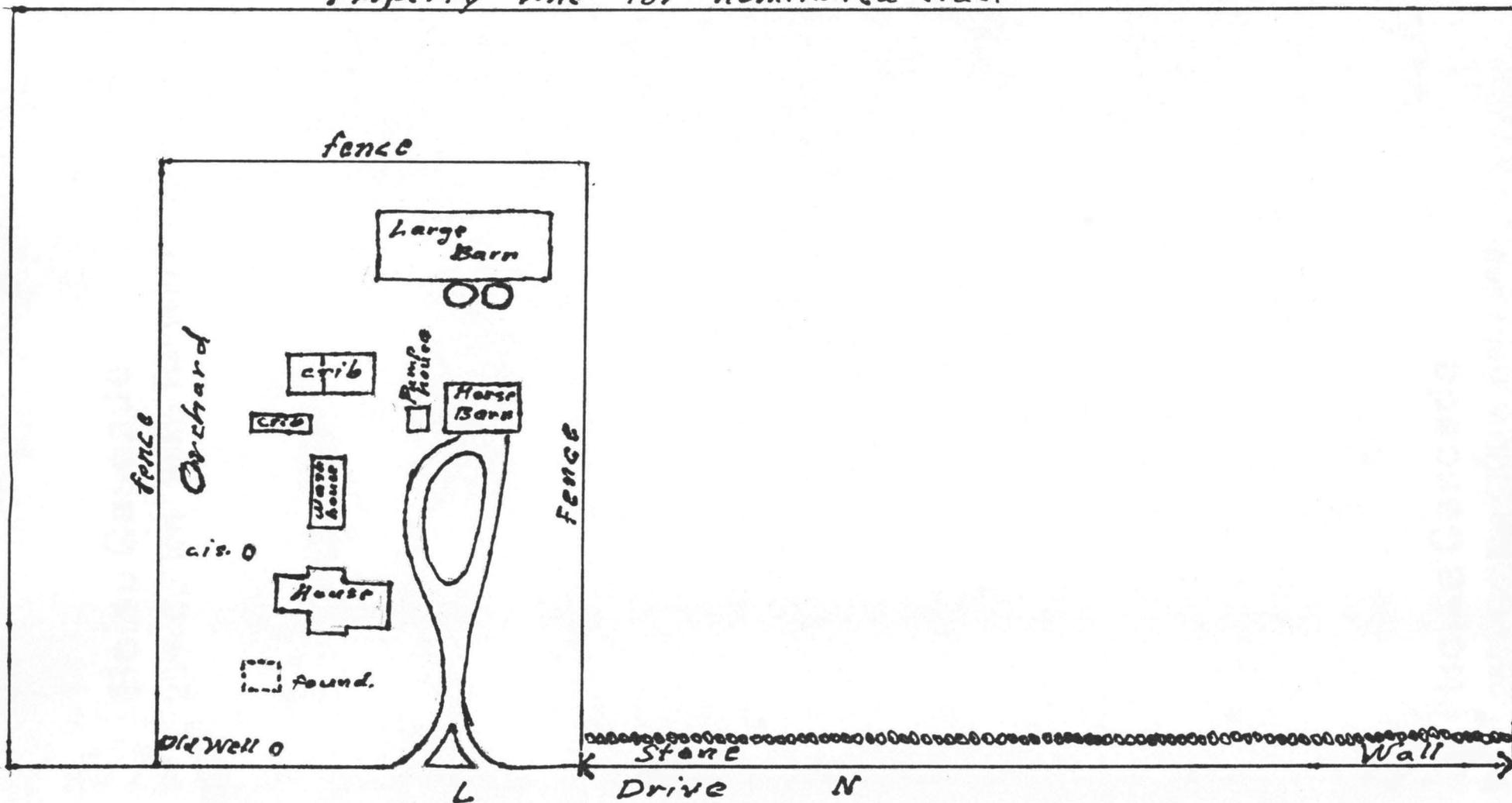
**Verbal Boundary Description**

Part of the SE ¼ Sec. 31 T. Beg at SW cr of SE ¼ Sec. 31 T 1 S, R 6 W, Convis Twp., Calhoun Co., MI; th E 300 ft for a POB; th N 500 ft; th E 1200 ft, more or less, to E line of Wirth property; th S 500 ft; th W 1200 ft, more or less, to POB.

**Boundary Justification**

Selected boundary encompasses the parcel containing the farmstead and a portion of the farm of the same width (N-S) to its east that is fronted by the stone wall remnant.

Property line for nominated Tract



BRYANT, JAMES AND ANNE ATMORE, FARMSTEAD

Convis Township, Calhoun County, Michigan

Scale: 1 inch equals 100 feet



North



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

name/title Frank Quinn

organization Michigan State Historic Preservation Office date Nov. 2001

street & number 717 West Allegan telephone 517/373-1630

city or town Lansing state MI zip code 48918

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

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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

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

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

name Kenneth and Richard Wirtz

street & number 16137 Old Route 27 North telephone 616/789-0389

city or town Marshall state MI zip code 49068

=====  
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for  
applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties  
for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to  
amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a  
benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended  
(16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated  
to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing  
instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the  
form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form  
to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box  
37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget,  
Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Bryant, James and Anne Atmore, Farmstead

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MICHIGAN, Calhoun

DATE RECEIVED: 5/10/02                      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/03/02  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/19/02                      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/24/02  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 02000667

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N    NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    6/20/02 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the  
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



10 19 01

Bryant Farmstead  
Calhoun Co, MI

Frank Quinn 10-2001

Neg: SHPO

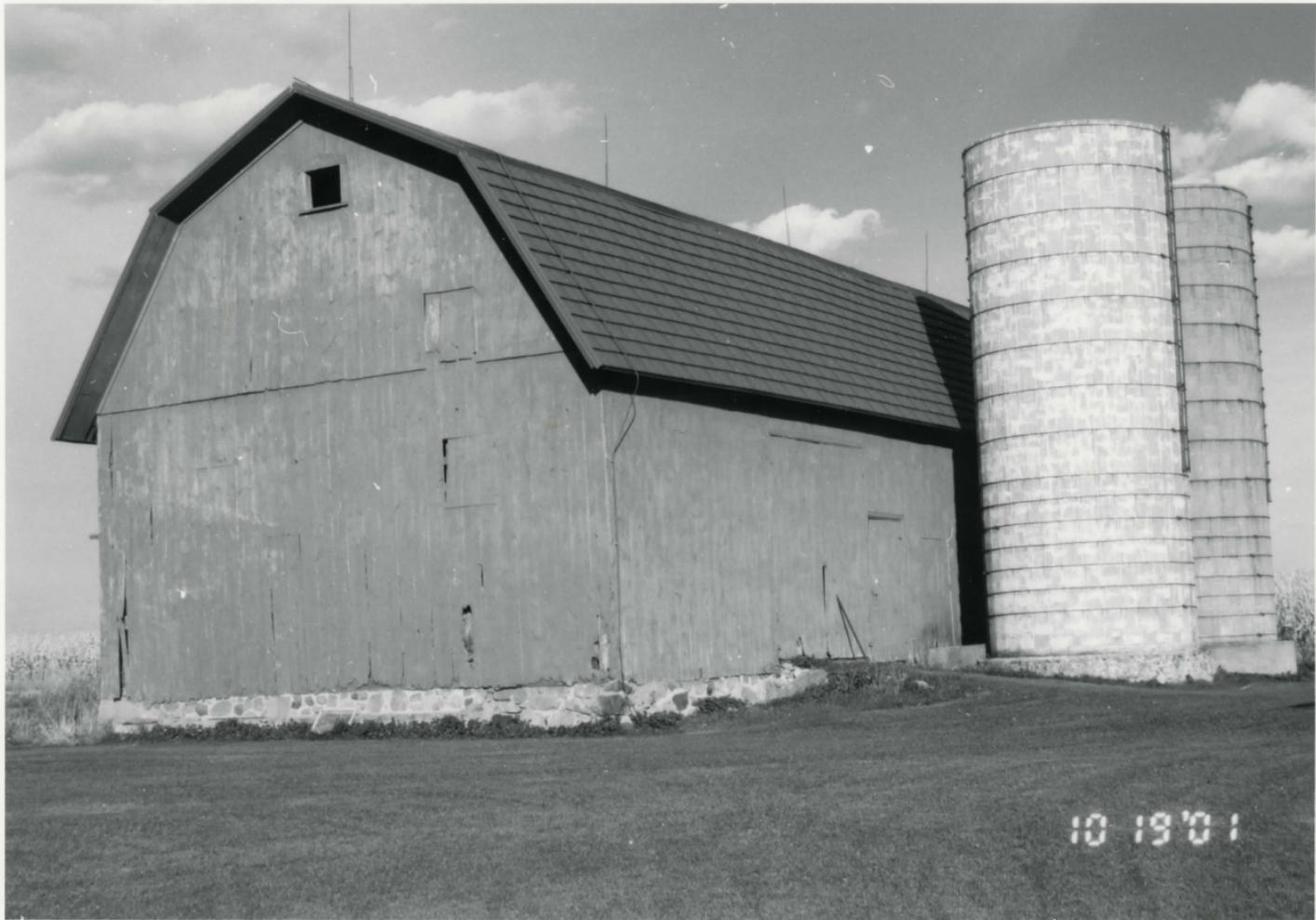
House, S + E facades



17567

10 19 07

Bryant Farmstead  
Calhoun Co., MI  
Frank Quinn 10-2001  
Neg: SHPO  
St NE Facades



10 19'01

Bryant Farmstead

Calhoun Co. MI

Frank Quinn 10-2001

Neg: SHPO

Livestock Barn, W+S Facades



Bryant Farmstead

Calhoun Co. MI

Frank Quinn 10-2001

Neg: SHPO

Stone wall remnants, Facing N



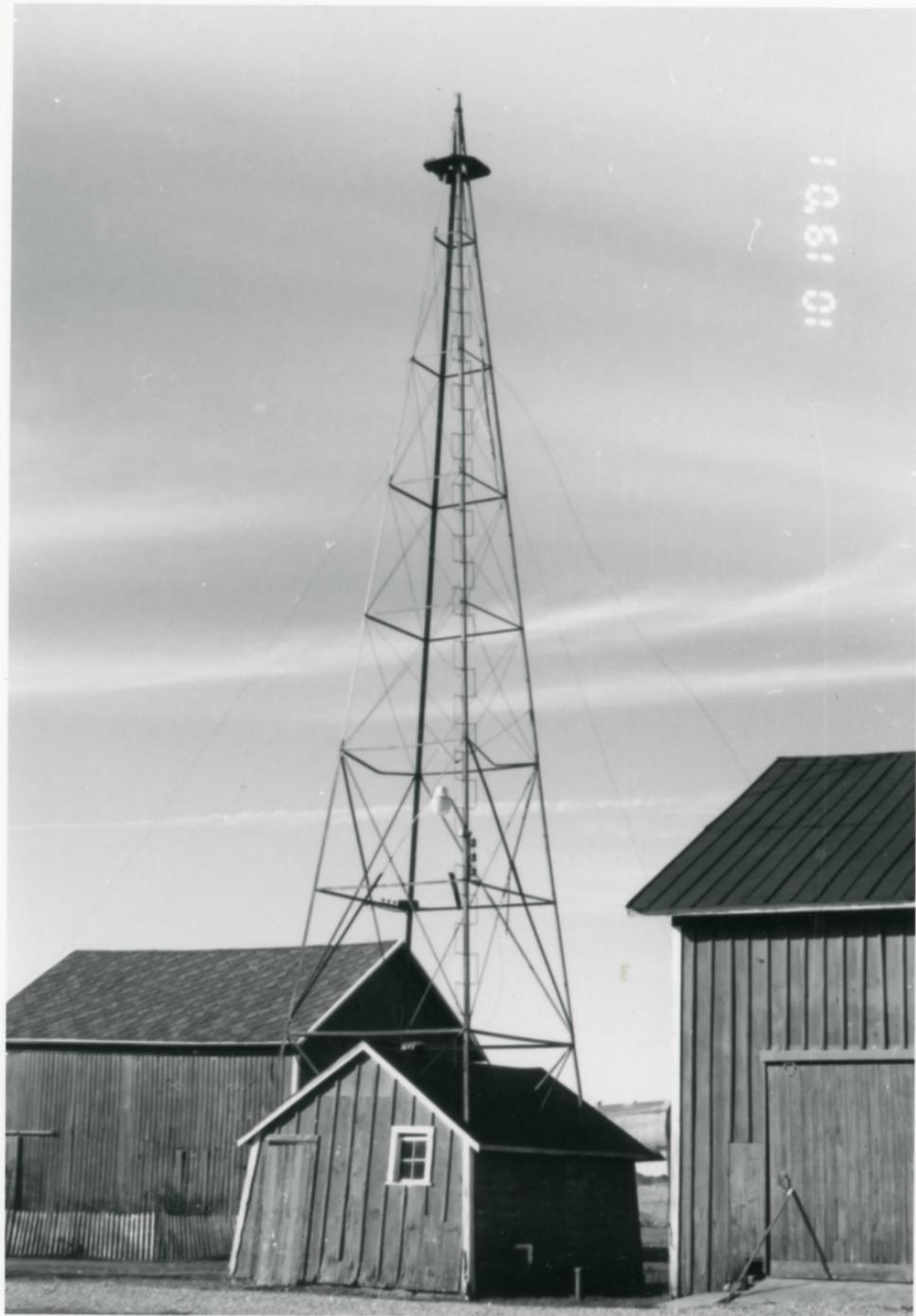
18 19'01

Bryant Farmstead  
Calhoun Co. MI

Frank Quinn 10-2001

Neg: SHPO

W + S facades



10 19 01

Bryant Farmstead

Calhoun Co. MI

Frank Quinn 10-2001

Neg: SHPO

Corncrib-hoghouse/windmill/horse barn,  
S + E Facades



Bryant Farmstead  
Calhoun Co. MI

Frank Quinn 10-2001

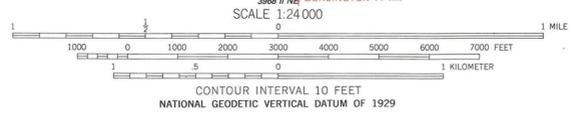
Neg: SAPO

Horse Barn, W+S Facades



Bryant Farmstead  
Calhoun Co., MI  
16 660537  
4688457

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1946. Topography by planimetric surveys 1947. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1961. Field checked 1961  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Michigan coordinate system, south zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 16, shown in blue  
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983, move the projection lines 1 meter north and 1 meter west as shown by dashed corner ticks  
Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1980 and other sources. This information not field checked. Map edited 1985



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

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



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
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A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

CERESCO, MICH.  
SE/4 BATTLE CREEK 15' QUADRANGLE  
42085-C1-TF-024  
1961  
PHOTOREVISED 1985  
DMA 3968 I SE-SERIES V682

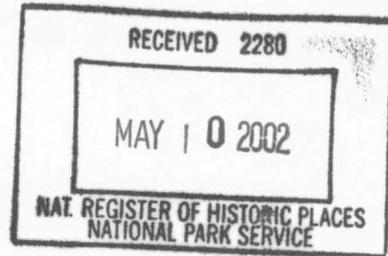


State of Michigan  
John Engler, Governor

Department of History, Arts and Libraries  
Dr. William M. Anderson, Director

State Historic Preservation Office

Michigan Historical Center  
717 W. Allegan Street  
P.O. Box 30740  
Lansing, MI 48909-8240  
517/373-1630



April 19, 2002

Ms Carol D. Shull, Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
800 Capitol Street, NW, Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Ms Shull:

Enclosed are national register nomination materials for the James and Anna Atmore Bryant Farmstead in Calhoun County, Michigan. This property is being submitted for listing in the national register. No written comments concerning this nomination were submitted to us prior to the submission of this nomination to you.

Questions concerning this nomination may be addressed to Robert O. Christensen, National Register Coordinator, by phone at 517/335-2719 or by e-mail at [ChristensenRO@michigan.gov](mailto:ChristensenRO@michigan.gov).

Sincerely yours,

Brian D. Conway  
State Historic Preservation Officer

BDC:roc