

# 2011



# WILL COUNTY RURAL HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE FIELD GUIDE

Learn about the County's rich, rural heritage as told through its historic architecture. This field guide is intended to assist in your identification of the County's diverse buildings and structures in its explanation of the different materials, classes and types of farmhouses, barns, and other buildings and structures.

*Will County Historic Preservation Commission | Summer 2011*



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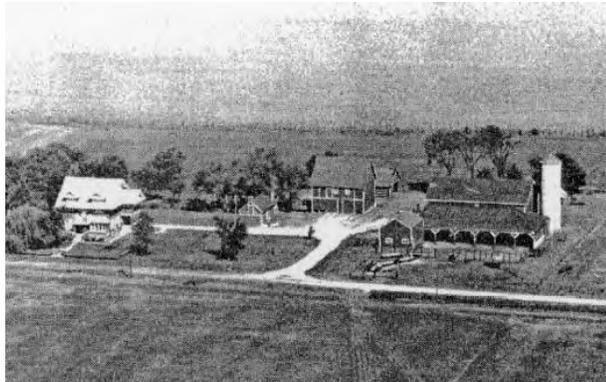
*Summer 2011*

# WILL COUNTY'S

## RURAL HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE FIELD GUIDE\*

### FARMSTEAD PLANNING

The relationship of the farmhouse to the barn and other farm buildings was generally determined by five factors: topography, weather conditions, convenience and labor efficiency, land survey organization, and, most importantly for some settlers, ethnic or regional tradition. A south facing orientation secured maximum light; an orientation toward the east allowed a barn to place its back against west prevailing winds. Local snow accumulation also influenced barn locations. In much of the Midwest, the geometric grid of roads and survey lines was basically aligned with compass directions, and farmers often lined up their barns and farm buildings in conformity. Where the terrain was more rugged, farmers followed the contours of the land in laying out buildings. In terms of labor efficiency, the barn did not need to be near the house except in areas where winters were cold and harsh. It was desirable to locate the barn closer to the field and other outbuildings than to the house.



*The Poor-Kronmeyer-Kirman farmstead (shown at left) in Lockport Township is located on a strip of land between Route 53 and the western bluff of the Des Plaines River Valley (its farmland was located west of Route 53). This influenced the buildings on the farmstead into a linear arrangement. The Hafenrichter-Noggle farmstead (shown at right) of Wheatland Township follows a courtyard arrangement, with the house and main barn forming the west and east sides with the other farm buildings located on the north side. (Illustration at the right from *This is Will County, Illinois, The American Aerial County History Series, No. 26, 1955.*)*

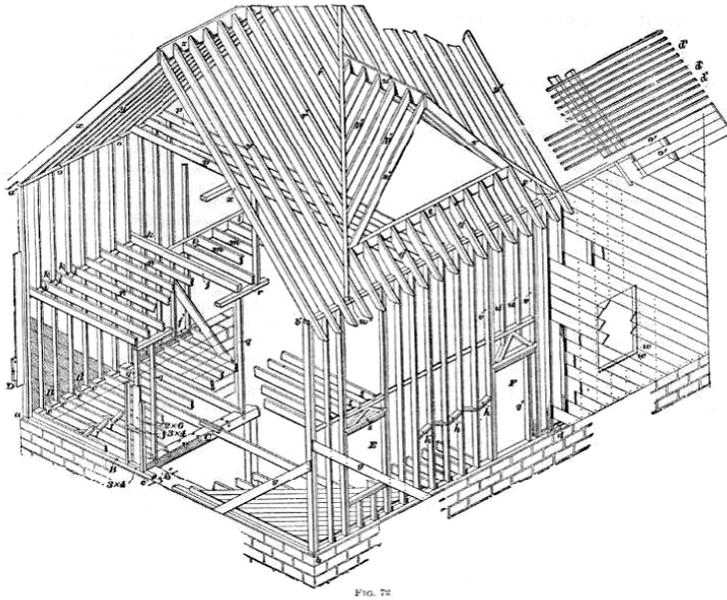
\*All information was taken from Will County Rural Structure Survey Reports, Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates Inc.

### **Balloon Framing**

The initial settlement of Will County coincided with one of the most revolutionary developments in American building construction: the introduction of the balloon frame. Referred to as “that most democratic of building technologies,” the balloon frame allowed the construction of a house with a minimum of labor and a moderate amount of carpentry skills. The key to the success of the balloon frame was the proper construction and erection sequence of its components. Prior to the development of the balloon frame, builders using timber for the construction of houses and other structures used structural systems such as the box frame or braced frame. It utilized heavy timbers to form posts, girts, girders, braces, and rafters, all fastened together with traditional carpentry joining such as mortise and tenons, splices, dovetails, and others. This type of structural system required builders to have a crew of five or six men to raise and set the heavy timbers. The materials used in the construction of a balloon frame structure consisted of milled lumber that was much lighter in weight than heavy timbers.

Credit for the development of the balloon frame is usually given to George Washington Snow of Chicago, although others give note that the originator of the system was a carpenter, Augustine Taylor, who with Snow built the first structure using balloon frame construction, St. Mary’s Church, in 1833. At that time Chicago lacked a sawmill to produce the cut lumber, but mills were present in Indiana and in Plainfield in northwestern Will County. However, these mills were relatively far away, and transportation of milled heavy timbers difficult and expensive. Therefore, it was necessary to develop a more economical construction system.

Since a carpenter with one or two helpers could frame and sheath a small one story house in one week, the balloon allowed a settler to have a dwelling on their land in a short amount of time. In addition, there was a 40 percent savings in the amount of material to enclose the same volume as compared to the braced frame. Additions were as easy to construct as the original house, and easier to frame into than if braced framing was used. Another benefit of the balloon frame’s light weight was that it allowed a structure to be moved more easily to a new site, if more room was needed on a property for other buildings or if additional land was obtained. As different architectural styles were introduced, the balloon frame was easily modified to create the forms and spaces required.



*The balloon frame derived its name from the lightweight framing that allowed a large volume of space to be enclosed economically. The drawing shown above is from was published nearly sixty years after the system was developed.*



*The Parr-Powers-Haywood farmhouse, shown above left, of Plainfield Township is a good example of the use of balloon frame construction, where a large volume of space has been enclosed relatively economically. Another example is the Dyer-Rathbun-Hageman-Scholz farmhouse of Du Page Township.*

**Masonry Construction**

***Brick***

Historically, brick masonry construction is relatively uncommon in Will County. Nineteenth century examples of brick construction are very rare; typically, the locally abundant limestone was used for masonry work. The further a way from limestone quarries the more brick construction there is. Brick farmhouses do exist in Will County though and are illustrated below.



*Two examples of brick masonry are, on the left, The Elius N. Clark House in Wilmington Township and on the right, the house at the Randall Farmstead of Channahon Township. These are rare example of nineteenth century brick masonry construction in Will County.*

### ***Joliet Limestone***

One building material dating from the earliest period of European settlement in Will County was limestone quarried from the Des Plaines and Du Page River Valleys. These same regions later provided gravel for use in concrete construction in Will County and the Chicago area. The Des Plaines River Valley just to the north of Channahon Township contains numerous quarries of limestone, referred to as Joliet Limestone. These quarries were utilized first for limestone for masonry construction but are primarily used today as sources of gravel.

A prosperous period for quarrying stone in the Joliet area began during the 1830s and lasted until nearly the end of the century. Martin H. Demmond was the first to quarry stone in the Joliet district, most likely on the bluffs west of the Des Plaines River overlooking the fledgling Joliet settlement. Commercial quarrying activities began about a decade later, when William Davidson and his brother opened the first of their quarries in 1845, one mile south of Joliet at a point where the canal turns west-southwest with the curve of the river.

However, the development of smoother business links with customers in metropolitan areas could not offset competition from alternative sources with superior building stone, especially limestone quarried near Bedford, Indiana. The availability of the more durable Indiana limestone and the discovery of the lack of long-term durability of the Joliet stone, in addition to the introduction of other building materials such as concrete, led to the gradual decline of the Joliet area stone industry.



*Illustrated here are some of the extant Joliet limestone buildings, all in Lockport and Du Page Townships. Top left and right are two views of the Ketchum-Heeg-Hullett farmhouse of Du Page Township. Bottom left is the Zipf-Waldvogel-Theobald farmhouse of Lockport Township; Bottom right is the Poor-Kronmeyer-Kirman farmhouse on Route 53 in Lockport Township.*

### **Concrete**

Although concrete was used by the Romans in antiquity, its use in recent times dates from the mid-nineteenth century. In 1860, S. T. Fowler patented a type of reinforced concrete wall construction, but it was not until the 1870s and 1880s that examples had actually been constructed. By 1900 numerous systems of reinforced concrete construction had been patented.

Concrete was seen as a material with great potential for use on the farm. Farmers were given guidance in using concrete on the farm, recommending its use in a variety of structures: Concrete can be used on the farm for residences, barns, poultry houses, garages, piggeries, stalls and mangers, milk houses, machine sheds, ice houses, silos, all kinds of tanks and troughs, vats and wallows, manure pits, septic tanks, piers and foundations, sidewalls, steps, driveways, hen nests, pump pits, fence posts, etc.

Will County contains relatively few examples of cast-in-place concrete structures, which were generally observed only for building foundations.

### **Concrete Block**

Beginning in the early 1900s, mass production of concrete block units succeeded after several earlier developments failed to lead to widespread production. Harmon S. Palmer patented a cast iron machine with a removable core and adjustable sides in 1900, allowing companies and cottage industries to spring up across the country. Palmer founded the Hollow Building Block Company in 1902, selling \$200 block machines. Other manufacturers who flooded the market with similar machines (without directly infringing on Palmer's patent) led to increased use of concrete block in building construction.



*Will County has a number of historic concrete block structures, including these mid-Twentieth century dairy barns. Left: The dairy barn at the Webber-Todd-Jenks Farmstead in Wilmington Township. Right: The dairy barn at the Readman Farmstead in Wilmington Township.*



*Green Garden Township Hall, located at the intersection of Manhattan-Monee and Center Roads has exterior walls constructed of rock-faced concrete block. Concrete block was often used in the early Twentieth Century as a less expensive alternative material with the appearance of stone.*

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## CLASSIFICATIONS OF FARMHOUSES

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Most built structures can be grouped into one of three categories of stylistic classification: “high style,” where the building clearly relates to a defined architectural style in form and detail; vernacular or “folk architecture,” where builders or owners without formal architectural training construct buildings based on regional or cultural customs, and where stylistic elements derived from style books are applied or mixed within the same structure; and utilitarian, where style is entirely secondary and efficient use of materials is the primary factor in the design. Most buildings fall into the categories of vernacular and utilitarian. Farmhouses were usually built by a builder or carpenter, and reflect general types of houses popular at the time. A discussion of the utilitarian types of farm buildings is covered later in this chapter. The discussion below first describes the architectural *styles* found to some degree in Will County. This is followed by an outline of the *types* of farmhouses, since most of these structures are better categorized by this means, with only the applied ornament being classified by style. Some houses in the Will County have undergone extensive renovations, making identification of a style or type difficult.

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## HOUSE TYPES

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Vernacular residential dwellings are not always suited to classification by architectural style because style is not the primary organizing principle in their design. Most vernacular houses relate to a *type* that describes or classifies their massing and floor plan. This section discusses the different types of housing found specifically in the survey area. Additional types and subtypes do exist but have been excluded because they are not pertinent to the discussion of Will County farmhouses.

During the survey, few structures could be readily identified that date from the earliest period of settlement (approximately the 1840s and 1850s). House types dating from the earliest settlement may have used configurations known as single pen or double pen, which basically are one or two room houses respectively. A double pen dogtrot consists of two rooms with the space in between covered by the roof. A saddlebag house is similar to the double pen except for the inclusion of a central chimney between the two rooms.

The house types classified below are those that are typically found in the survey area. As with any classification system, alternate systems could be utilized. Most of the definitions provided below were derived from *How to Complete the Ohio Historic Inventory* by Stephen C. Gordon. Building forms followed the movement of settlers from New England westward through the Ohio Valley to Illinois. However, a significant number of the settlers in the survey area were new immigrants to the United States. Their influence on the region’s buildings is visible in some of the extant house types, but more readily visible in the barns and other farm structures.

### ***I House***

The name “I House” was first recognized in 1930 as a housing type in Indiana that had originated in the Middle Atlantic States. The form was later identified in the other Midwestern “I” states of Illinois and Iowa. The form consists of a two story, one room deep plan that is at least two rooms wide. Chimneys were often placed at each end of the floor plan. I house types are present in some parts of the county and non-existent in others.



*There are still several examples of I Houses in existence throughout Will County. The Gougar farmhouse (New Lenox Township), shown above left, is at the historic location of Gougar’s Corners, where Will County’s first post office was located. Illustrated above right is the Russell–Hoyt–Wilbourn–White–Parker farmhouse of Homer Township.*

### ***Hall and Parlor***

The Hall and Parlor house is a simple rectangular plan dwelling one to one-and-a-half stories in height, with a side oriented gable roof. In plan, these types of houses have one larger room for the kitchen and daily living and a side room used as a more formal parlor or a bedroom. There is often an addition at the rear of the house extending from the parlor side. Chimneys are often placed at each end of the house. The type was used less often after the late 1800s. Very few, if any true Hall and Parlor houses were exist in Will County. Some houses may have started as Hall and Parlor types, but through renovations and additions have evolved into other forms.



*The Davis–Corwin–Jungels–Beaver–De Pra farmhouse of Homer Township, which has had several additions; however, the original portion of the house was likely a Hall and Parlor structure.*

***New England One and a Half***

This house type is a rectangular plan dwelling, one to one-and-a-half stories in height and at least two bays wide. Flanking a central entrance hall and stairs are two large rooms with two or more smaller rooms across the rear of the house. Some houses of this type are not symmetrical across the front, depending upon the interior layout. New England One and a Half houses were popular from the earliest days of settlement in Will County in the 1830s up to the Civil War. They often include Greek Revival ornament, such as pilasters, architraves, cornice returns, and entablature panels. Farming settlers emigrating from New England, where this house type originated, brought this house type with them to the Midwest. There are still examples of New England One and a Half style but are rare.



*The resemblance of these three farmhouses on Maple Road (Route 6 or Southwest Highway) in New Lenox Township is undeniable. At top left is the Ferguson–Van Duser– Handorf farmhouse. Above left is the Snoad–Kase–Handorf farmhouse. At top right and above right is the Van Duser– Handorf farmhouse.*

***Side Hallway***

Side Hallway houses are typically simple rectilinear volumes, two stories in height, and often with gable roofs oriented to the front or the side. In plan the entry is at the end bay of the front elevation, opening into the main stair hall. Adjacent to the hall is the main parlor with additional rooms at the rear of the house. The form was popular until the 1880s. Several examples of Side Hallway type houses have been identified in Will County, including several very typical Side Hallway style houses from Green Garden Township illustrated below.



### ***Upright and Wing***

The Upright and Wing was popular in the mid to late 1800s. The type consists of an upright portion with a gable end, usually one-and-a-half to two stories, and a one to one-and-a-half story wing. The gable end of the wing is usually at or below the eave of the upright. Upright and Wing type houses have T- or L-shaped floor plans. Inside, the wing contains a kitchen and one or two bedrooms and the upright a parlor and additional bedrooms. The Upright and Wing type is fairly common throughout Will County.



*Upright and Wing farmhouses are fairly common in Will County. Above left is the Hartwell–Rowley–Kolar farmhouse of Homer Township.*

*The Goodnow–Andrew farmstead of Green Garden Township is shown in the photograph at right; although the front porch has been replaced by an addition and the first floor window openings have been altered, the Upright and Wing form is still clear.*

### ***Gabled Ell***

The Gabled Ell house type usually dates from the two decades after the Civil War. It has an L-shaped plan, sometimes with additions to form a T-shaped plan, and usually is two stories in height with a gabled roof. Within the main “L” there is often a porch. In most arrangements, the gable end of the shorter of the two wings faces the street or main approach with the broad side of the other wing at the side. The Gabled Ell type is less common in Will County and can vary depending on township.



*Above is the Gabled Ell house at the Andrews-Piggush farmstead of Green Garden township, although simpler, also includes some Italianate elements.*



*Below is the Patrick Fitzpatrick House, a Will County Landmark, is located in Lockport Township and a great example of the Gabled Ell type.*

### ***Four-over-Four***

The Four-over-Four basically consists of a central hallway flanked by two rooms on each side in a house two to two-and-a-half stories in height. This house type usually has a gable roof, with the ridge line running parallel to the front face. Exploiting balloon frame construction, the form was popular in the middle 1800s, although it returned during the vogue of the Colonial and Georgian Revival styles. Several examples of the Four-over-Four type are located throughout Will County.



*The Four-over-Four example at left is the Sanders-Hedges-Kestel farmstead of Green Garden Township. This well-preserved house includes Greek Revival details. Shown to the right is the farmhouse on the Van Duser-Gooding-Peck-Weir-Cagwin farmstead of Homer Township.*

**Gable Front**

The Gable Front house describes a variety of house types dating from the mid-1800s through the 1920s. It is similar to the Four-over-Four, except that the main entrance at the gable end facing the street or main approach. It is also similar to the Side Hallway type, and usually has a rectangular floor plan. Several examples of the Gable Front type can be found in Will County.



*The simple structure shown above left, once likely a small Gable Front farmhouse, is on the Doig-Lauffer farmstead in Homer Township. The more elaborate Paddock-Jones-Anderson farmhouse in Homer Township, shown above right, is Queen Anne in architectural style. It has a Palladian second floor window and spindle work detailing on the front porch.*

### ***American Foursquare***

The American Foursquare was introduced around 1900 and continued to be popular until the 1920s. It consists of a two to two-and-a-half story block with a roughly square floor plan with four rooms on each floor. Roofs are hipped or pyramidal, with dormer windows (hipped and gable) on at least the front elevation and sometimes the side and rear elevations. Foursquares usually have front porches but may also have bay windows (some extending both stories) and one story rear additions. Many Foursquares were built from plans developed by local lumber companies or mail order sources that advertised in farm journals; others were purchased whole and delivered as pre-cut, ready-to-assemble houses from Sears, Roebuck and Company or home manufacturers. Compared to other townships previously surveyed, American Foursquare type farmhouses were uncommon in Wilmington Township, with only one example identified.



*The Foursquare farmhouse illustrated at upper left is at the Nieland–Bisping farmstead. The large Foursquare house illustrated on the right was constructed in 1906 on the Burmeister–Sangmeister farmstead. Both are located in Green Garden Township.*

### ***Bungalow***

The term bungalow derives from the word *bangla*, an Indian word adopted by the British in the nineteenth century for a one story house with porches. The American house form descended from the Craftsman movement, using natural materials and simple forms to create an informal domestic environment. Popular from approximately 1905 to 1935, there are two basic types of bungalows (and numerous subtypes), each deriving its name from the dominant roof forms. The Dormer Front Bungalow (also called the Shed Roof Bungalow) has a gable or shed roof turned parallel to the front elevation and a single large dormer. The Gable Front has a front facing gable, with the ridge of the roof running perpendicular to the main elevation. The relatively few examples of the Bungalow type in the survey area are somewhat simpler than those found in city and suburban neighborhoods and lack stylistic features such as exposed roof beams, ornamental wall trim, or shingle siding. Several examples of the bungalow type have been identified throughout Will County.



*Above: The Dormer Front Bungalow shown is located on the Stassen-Beckman farmstead is located in Green Garden Township; it features decorative wood brackets at the roof eaves and wood shingle siding.*



*Below: The hipped roof bungalow is located on Delaney Road in New Lenox Township.*

### ***Cape Cod***

The Cape Cod was a popular house type from the 1920s to the early 1950s. The type was inspired by eighteenth century cottages in Massachusetts and Virginia. The Cape Cod has a simple rectangular plan, one story in height with dormers and a gable roof. This type is rare in Will County. The few Cape Cod types that do still exist generally have had many modifications and additions added to them.



*The simple Cape Cod house illustrated at left is on Manhattan-Monee Road. The Cape Cod house illustrated at right is on Gorman Road. Both are located in Green Garden Township.*

### **Ranch**

Because the ranch type is a relatively recent domestic architecture development (it generally dates from the post-World War II era), ranch style houses were generally not recorded in the rural survey. The presence of a ranch style house was noted on the site plan of surveyed farmsteads to indicate that these houses likely replaced the original house on the site or provided an additional dwelling on the property. Ranch style houses are usually one or at most two stories and have rambling floor plans and relatively low-pitched hipped or gabled roofs. Although much of the newer housing in recently developed areas has features and elements reminiscent of older architectural styles (Colonial Revival, Dutch Colonial, or even Queen Anne), its true architectural lineage traces back to the ranch houses of the 1950s and 1960s.



*Illustrated at the left is a "typical" ranch style house on the Reed-Doctor-Burch farmstead of Homer Township.*

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## ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

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In the second half of the nineteenth century, architectural styles were disseminated through style books promoting not only aesthetic features of houses but also the orderly qualities for a proper domestic environment. Another source of building ideas was agricultural journals. Although carpenters and builders rarely followed such books and journals exactly, these publications did influence the types of houses being constructed (as discussed in the next section) as well as the stylistic elements applied to those houses. Although it is unlikely that many of the buildings in the Will County were built using designs or supervision of academically trained architects, many of the farmhouses were built by carpenters and builders competent at applying fashionable architectural styles in their work.

### ***Greek Revival***

The Greek Revival style was popular in the United States beginning in the 1820s and continued in some regions until the 1870s. Inspired by archaeological excavations and measured drawings of ancient Greek temples, the style was developed by America's first trained architects and spread by pattern books that influenced carpenters and builders across the relatively young United States. American culture found identification with the democracy in Ancient Greece. Greek Revival buildings have simple rectilinear forms, prominent classical ornament, molded cornices and window lintels, and other ornamental motifs inspired by Classical architecture. The style's simple massing and details went along with the sometimes limited materials and resources of rural areas. Several houses with Greek Revival details were identified within Will County.



*Above is the James Ducker House, a Will County Historic landmark located within the Village of Mokena, and is a prime example of the Greek Revival style.*

*Shown below left is the Greek Revival style Brooks–Paddock–Hallis farmhouse of Homer Township, whose gable end moldings are still present despite the installation of artificial siding. To the left is the Sanders–Hedges Kestel farmstead on U.S. Route 45 of Green Garden Township. This relatively simple house includes a number of details inspired by Greek Revival architecture, such as the entrance door surround and the strong horizontal band of trim below the roof eave. The basic rectangular, side-gabled form is also typical of simple Greek Revival buildings.*



***Gothic Revival***

Gothic Revival was roughly contemporary with Greek Revival, although with very different inspiration. It utilized late Medieval Gothic forms that have vertically oriented massing with steeply sloped roofs, and detail features such as pointed arches, narrow lancet windows, decorative bargeboards and finials, battlemented parapets, and clusters of chimney stacks. Like Greek Revival, pattern books guided architects and builders. Andrew Jackson Downing's *The Architecture of Country Houses* helped popularize this style. Gothic Revival architecture is very rare in Will County.



*The three farmhouses illustrated here are located in Homer Township. Above is the Rowley farmhouse which is a Gothic Revival cottage in architectural form and detailing. Illustrated below left is the Brooks-Reed-Bentley-Mortz-Bengston farmhouse with a circular quatrefoil window in the gable end. The farmhouse with steeply pitched roof in below right is on the Brinkerhoff-Watkins-Murphy-Meader farmstead.*



### ***Italianate***

Italianate, or Italianate Victorian, was one of the most popular and fashionable building styles in the mid 1800s, popular from about 1850 to 1880. Inspired by Italian Renaissance architecture, Italianate style houses feature rectilinear massing, low pitched roofs, overhanging eaves with bracketed cornice, and tall rectangular windows. Other features often present are moldings or hoods around window lintels (which are sometimes arched) and polygonal or rectangular bays or towers. Several large Italianate style houses were identified in Will County as well as some less obvious ones.



*Shown above left is the house at Bowen Farmstead of Wilmington Township, retains distinctive Italianate details including brackets at the eave. The house is a Will County Historic Landmark.*

*To the right is the Krohn-Kwiatkowski house, located in Will Township. This well-preserved house includes many Italianate features, such as the front porch millwork, decorative window surrounds, and brackets at the roof eaves . The house is a Will County Historic Landmark as well.*

### ***Second Empire***

Roughly contemporary with Italianate was the Second Empire style, which took its name from the public buildings with mansard roofs built under French emperor Napoleon III. (The first empire was the reign of his uncle, Napoleon). The style was transformed and applied in the United States to domestic as well as institutional buildings. In addition to the mansard roof and architectural features often present on Italianate buildings, Second Empire buildings often feature rich classical or baroque detailing and dormer windows with moldings or hoods. No examples of Second Empire are extant in the survey area.

### ***Queen Anne***

Popular in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, this building style in its purest form utilized irregular, asymmetrical massing and floor plans, several types of building materials, and extensive ornament to create an eclectic architectural tapestry that was often picturesque and entertaining. None of the farmhouses in the survey region reflect all of the primary elements of Queen Anne, although the massing and details of some of them show Queen Anne influence, likely

due to the influence of the style on builders and carpenters. The name “Queen Anne” for this style of design was popularized by nineteenth century English architects led by Richard Norman Shaw, although the architectural precedents from the reign of Queen Anne (1702–1714) have little connection to this heavily ornamented style. A few Queen Anne style houses have been documented in Will County but are rare.



*Top: Although obscured by later remodeling and additions, the original portion of the house has complex massing and a corner turret typical of the Queen Anne style. This house is located on Stuenkel Road in Green Garden Township.*



*Bottom: The Reynolds-Schwab farmhouse in New Lenox Township has gabled dormers that are the result of several additions. The house appears to have reached this overall form during the era that the Queen Anne style was fashionable.*

### ***Colonial and Georgian Revival***

After the comparative excesses of the Italianate, Second Empire, and Queen Anne styles, the Colonial and Georgian Revival styles are more restrained and utilize stricter use of ornament and proportion. Introduced on the east coast at the end of the nineteenth century, the Colonial Revival style spread to the Midwest over the next decade and became an influential style for larger homes and public buildings into the 1930s. The rectilinear forms of Colonial Revival structures are often symmetrical and have gabled roofs with dormers, classical columns and ornament, and ornamental window shutters. Georgian Revival buildings differ in that they adhere more closely to symmetrical floor plans; have strong cornice lines, Flemish bond brick coursing, watertables, and other elements

of traditional Colonial period architecture. does have a few farmhouses that have the same massing and proportions of Colonial and Georgian revival models, although without much of the detailing present in “high style” examples.



*The house shown above is on the Knickrehm farmstead of Green Garden Township. This relatively simple house has the overall form (side gabled) and some details (cornice returns, minimal roof overhangs) of the Colonial Revival style.*

### ***Craftsman or Arts and Crafts Style***

The Arts and Crafts movement originated in England in the mid-nineteenth century, although it did not become fashionable in the United States until the first two decades of the twentieth century. The style favored simple designs with natural materials, low-pitched roofs, battered wall treatments, exposed rafters, and casement and double hung windows. Although there are no true examples of Craftsman or Arts and Crafts farmhouses in Will County, there are a few with elements having its stylistic influence.



*The farmhouse on the Seggebrunch farmstead in Crete Township is an example of Craftsman Style detailing. The Farmstead is a Will County Landmark.*

### ***Prairie Style***

The Prairie Style was developed by several architects in the Midwest but originated chiefly from the Chicago area, where Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Burley Griffin, Marion Mahony Griffin, William Purcell, and George Elmslie (among others) formulated a set of principles uniquely suited to and inspired by the American suburban and rural landscape. In many ways this style developed from the Arts and Crafts movement, although it was a distinct style with its own characteristics. Prairie overhangs, asymmetrical floor plans, and geometric detailing based on nature motifs. Natural and earth-toned materials such as wood, stucco, and brick predominate, and windows often have leaded glass windows that repeat and develop nature motifs. The style was fashionable from around 1895 to 1920. Examples of Prairie Style homes are rare in Will County.



*Shown at left is a bungalow on Cherry Hill Road in New Lenox Township with strong horizontal line reminiscent of the Prairie Style.*

### ***Tudor Revival***

From about 1910 to 1940, Tudor Revival was one of several fashionable revival styles in practice. Based on English late medieval architecture, the style was adapted to unique American building forms created by the balloon frame. Although Tudor Revival buildings were also built in stone, the use of wood and stucco to imitate a half-timbered appearance was a predominant feature. Often times only the ground or first floor was clad with stone while the upper story was clad with wood and stucco “half-timbering.” The style also utilized asymmetrical floor plans and massing, narrow multi-paned windows, prominent masonry chimneys, and steeply sloped roofs. Will County has a very limited amount of Tudor Revival style houses located in it.



*Top: The charming Tudor Revival house shown at left is located on Cherry Hill Road in New Lenox Township.*



*Bottom: The Ogren House, a Will County Historic Landmark, is an excellent example of Tudor Revival Style. The house is in Plainfield Township.*

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## BARN TYPES

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As with house types, several systems have been used to classify barns, either by function; shape and structural system; ethnic traditions and their influence; or regional characteristics and commonalities. The classification types developed below are based on Allen G. Noble and Richard K. Cleek's *The Old Barn Book: A Field Guide to North American Barns & Other Farm Structures* and Allen G. Noble's *Wood, Brick & Stone*. Classification is generally made by the shape and function of the barn.

### ***Three-bay Threshing Barn***

The Three-bay Threshing barn (also called the English barn) was introduced into North America through English colonial settlement in southern New England. The English and continental European immigrants of the early 1800s introduced this barn type to the Midwest. It was originally designed as a single function barn to store or process grain and was most suitable for small-scale, subsistence farms. It is a single level, rectangular structure divided into three parts or sections, each termed a bay.

Large double doors are centered on both long sides of the structure. Hand threshing with a grain flail was done in the central bay, sometimes called the threshing bay. Following threshing, the large doors were opened to create a draft, which, during winnowing, would separate the chaff from the heavier grain, and carry it away. Flanking the central bay were the other two bays of generally equal dimensions. One was used during the fall or winter to store sheaves of harvested grain, awaiting threshing. The other bay was used for storing the threshed grain, commonly in bins, and straw, which was used as feed and bedding for horses and cattle. Early examples had steeply pitched (over 45 degrees) gable roofs and low stone foundations. They were sided in vertical boards with small ventilation openings high on the gable ends. Windows are largely absent, although later versions included them at animal stall locations. Gable-end sheds were a common addition.

Eventually, as dairying replaced wheat production in the agricultural economy, the threshing/storage function of this barn type became less important. At first animals were not housed in the structure, although interior remodeling was often made to introduce animal stalls in one of the two side bays. This effectively reduced the grain storage and processing function and only offered shelter for a modest number of animals. In some cases this barn type was lifted up and placed onto a raised basement, which then could house the animals, especially dairy cows.

Three-bay Threshing barns still exist and are scattered around Will County, yet many are disappearing.



*Tilsy Barn, located on the left, is a Three-bay Threshing type which was relocated from its original site to a farmstead in Homer Glen off of Cedar Road. The barn was relocated to preserve it. Tilsy Barn was designated a Will County historic landmark in 2011.*



*The Three-bay Threshing barn illustrated above left is located on the Green-Haake-Meier farmstead of Green Garden Township. This barn is typical of the many Three-bay Threshing barns in Will County. In contrast, bank barns are relatively uncommon in the county. One example, shown above, is on the Bettenhausen farmstead in Green Garden Township. The raised basement is constructed of concrete block, and an earthen grade on the opposite side of the barn allows direct access to the upper floor.*

***Raised, Bank, and Basement Barns***

The Raised or Bank barn originated in central New York as a shelter for dairy cattle. It was the first multipurpose barn to gain widespread popularity. These barns are usually larger than Three-bay Threshing barns and have a ground floor level for cattle and dairy cows with an upper level for hay and feed storage. This upper level is reached by an earthen ramp, bridge, or the natural slope of an embankment. Basement barns are similar to Raised barns, in that the foundation walls extend up to the bottom of the second floor. However, Basement barns do not have ramps nor are they sited to utilize the natural topography to access the second floor. Bank or Raised barns are rare and can only be found in a few townships.

### **German Barn**

German barns, also called German/Swiss barns or Pennsylvania barns, include a group of barns introduced into the Delaware valley by German-speaking settlers. It was one of the first American barn types to combine crop storage and animal shelter. It became a structure synonymous with Pennsylvania Dutch culture and its mixed grain-livestock agriculture. These barns had a lower story partially cut into the natural slope of the land and an upper level that was accessed from a slope or ramp. A forebay is formed by recessing the ground floor wall and enclosing it at each end with the masonry gable end walls. Another distinctive feature is the use of a combination of stone masonry and wood framed and sheathed walls: stone was typically reserved for gable end walls and/or north facing walls. This barn type is very rare in Will County, only a few are known to exist.



*The Nichols–Reniff–Chervan farmstead on Clinton Road in New Lenox Township has the Pennsylvania German barn shown at left. There are only a few German Barns left in Will County.*

### **Plank Frame Barn**

This relatively small barn type originated in the eastern Midwest around 1875. Plank frame barns can have gable or gambled roofs and are typically one story in height plus a large hay loft. They are multipurpose, with small ground floor windows for animal stalls and a large sliding door for equipment. Their floor plans are usually small, approximately 30 by 40 feet. Plank frame barns use small dimension milled lumber rather than the heavy timber framing of earlier barn types. Several examples of plank frame barns exist throughout Will County.



*Illustrated above left is the Plank Frame barn on the Fortmiller–Gorney farmstead of Green Garden Township.*

### ***Three-ended Barn***

This barn type is a modification to the Three-bay Threshing barn, adding a hay barn addition perpendicular to an existing barn. This addition, sometimes called a straw shed, could have less height than the main portion of the barn or be taller than the main barn. The additions could also have an open bay at ground level into which a cart could drive to unload hay into the loft space. Although relatively uncommon, there are a few examples located throughout Will County.



*The small gable roof Three-ended Barn illustrated at left is located on the Block–Paulson–Krapf farmstead in Green Garden Township. The larger gambrel roof Three-ended Barn illustrated at right is located on the Hanson–Schmidt farmstead in Green Garden Township.*

### ***Round Barn***

Non-orthogonal barns (round or polygonal in plan) were popular in the first two decades of the twentieth century. In Illinois, agriculture professor Wilber J. Fraser of the University of Illinois promoted the use of round barns. Round Barns are rare in Will County as well, but a few still exist.



The Baker-Koren Barn, located in Manhattan Township, is one of the few remaining Round Barns in Will County. The barn became a Will County historic landmark in 1999.

### **Round Roof Barn**

Round Roof Barns came into existence with structural advances in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Although called round, roof shapes for this type are often gothic arch in form. The name describes the roof shape, although the configuration of their floor plans were usually based on more typical barn types such as Plank frame, Dairy, or Raised barns.

### **Wisconsin Dairy Barn**

A barn associated with dairying is the Wisconsin Dairy barn, which originated at the Wisconsin's Agricultural Experiment Station at Madison around 1915. It was specially designed to provide a structure for efficient dairy farming. This large barn was typically 36 by 100 feet or larger. It had a gambrel roof or occasionally a round roof, although early versions were often gable-roofed with horizontal boarding. Rows of small windows and gable-end doors were typical. There was usually a large gable-end loft opening and a triangular hay hood. Frequently there are roof ventilators. There are several dairy barns located in all parts of Will County.

*In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, northern Will County lay at the southern end of the dairy farm region west of Chicago. Illustrated above is the dairy barn with an adjacent cast-in place concrete silo on the Rugg-Button-Warren farmstead on Haven Avenue, New Lenox Township.*

*The dairy barn illustrated on the bottom, is located on the Riegel farmstead in University Park. The farmstead is a Will County Landmark.*



### ***Feeder Barn***

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Illinois and Iowa developed into the regional center for beef production. Farmers with rougher land, more suited to cattle than crops, raised their cattle from birth to finished beef. They fattened their stock on surplus corn, alfalfa, and feed supplements, and sold them to the rail-connected beef-processing industry in Chicago. The industry was also aided by the introduction of the refrigerated box car. In order to build a barn to hold cattle and hay, the feeder barn (sometimes called the hay barn) was developed. Cattle are housed and fed on the ground floor with a loft above to hold hay. A few examples of the feeder barn type have been identified in different areas of Will County.



*The small feeder barn shown at right is located on Francis Road in New Lenox Township.*

### ***Pole Barn***

The latest major barn type, called the pole barn, evolved in the eastern Midwest. The walls of the building are hung on poles that are driven into individual footings buried in the ground below the frost line. The floor is typically concrete slab or dirt. There is no loft. Later versions usually have metal siding, especially those erected after World War II. The pole barn is an example of economical construction techniques applied to modern agriculture. Pole barns are pretty common throughout Will County with a few exceptions, such as Wilmington Township.



*Illustrated at left is a pole barn structure at the White-Krapf farmstead in Green Garden Township.*

### ***Quonset Shed***

Sometime referred to as Quonset “huts,” this metal building type is named for the U.S. Naval Air Station at Quonset Point in Davisville, Rhode Island, where sheds of this type were built in 1942, although woodframed examples were already common in the 1930s. Its universal use in the military during World War II made Quonset sheds seem to be an ideal economical building type in the postwar years, finding use as storage facilities, offices, homes, and commercial ventures such as movie theaters. Military Quonsets often had steel framing members to support the corrugated galvanized metal sheathing, but civilian examples used wood framing as well. Where observable, the examples present in Will County usually have wood framing. Their use includes implement sheds, animal shelters, and other types of storage.



*Left: This quonset shed is located at the Eich-Mattson-Doyle Farmstead of Jackson Township.*

*The structure shown to the right uses ribbed metal formed to a curve to create a structural form for the roof structure. This building was likely used as a machine shed. It is located on U.S. Route 45 in Green Garden Township.*

### ***Manufactured Building***

While pole barn structures use manufactured materials assembled by a local builder or the farmer himself, manufactured buildings were developed as a complete system in the 1940s. Such buildings offer quick construction time and potentially lower cost because of the use of standardized components. The buildings also allow for large floor areas, giving farmers flexibility of usage. This building type remains common for newly constructed agricultural buildings in Will County.

### ***Grain Elevators***

Grain elevators began to be constructed alongside developing rail systems during the second half of the nineteenth century. Early elevators were often associated with the flour mills they served. They were usually timber-framed structures, as were the mills themselves. Concrete grain elevators and silos, usually constructed in banks of two to ten or more, were constructed in the early decades of the twentieth century.



*Shown on the left is the grain elevator in the center of New Lenox along what is now the Rock Island Railroad tracks.*

### ***Corncribs***

Pioneer farmers frequently built log corncribs during their two centuries of migration into and settlement of the Midwest. Most crude frontier log cribs were little more than bins, loosely constructed of saplings or split rails and laid up with saddle notching to hold them together. Sometimes the logs were skinned to lessen the danger of infestation by worms and insect. The bin-like cribs were typically covered with thatch or cornstalks to help shed the rain; a board and shingle roof took more effort, required nails, and therefore was more expensive. Unfortunately, thatch roof corncribs were more readily infested by rodents. Log construction of corncribs remained popular through the 1800s in areas where timber resources proved readily accessible.

The invention of the circular saw in 1860 and its growing adaptation to steam power by mid-century made lumber cheap enough for general use on outbuildings such as corncribs, enabling later versions to be built of narrow lumber slats. The corncrib usually rested on log or stone piers.

In constructing a frame corncrib, two methods of attaching the slat siding or cribbing were used. The slats were attached either horizontally or vertically; cribbing attached diagonally for extra strength seems to have come into practice about 1900.

The size of the corncribs remained small, even as corn production rose during much of the nineteenth century, in part due to the practice of corn shocking. Corn could be gradually “shucked out” as needed and hauled to the crib or barn for milling and feeding to livestock. Large corncribs were unnecessary since farmers could leave much of their corn in the field until spring. Crib width was influenced by the climate of a region; drier conditions allowed for wider cribs with no increased loss of corn due to mold. As corn production outgrew the single crib in the developing Corn Belt, double cribs were formed by extending the roof over a pair of cribs to form a gable roof. If the gap between the cribs was then lofted over, extra space was gained beneath the roof for overflow storage of ear corn. Spreading the cribs apart not only increased the loft space but created a storage area below for wagons, tools, and implements. These structures, called crib barns, became common in the Midwest by 1900. The creation of larger corncribs and their overhead grain bins depended upon the invention of new methods to raise the grain and ear corn higher than a farmer could scoop it. High cribs were made possible by the commercial adaptation of continuous belt and cup elevators from grain mills and by the portable grain elevator grain.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, both concrete and steel were promoted as alternative construction materials for corncribs and grain elevators. The use of hollow clay tiles was also encouraged in those parts of the Midwest where they were manufactured, notably in Iowa, Illinois, and Indiana. The most common variety of concrete corncrib was made of interlocking stave blocks, which had been cast with ventilating slots. In some cases, steel wires or rods were incorporated in the vents to keep out rodents. The blocks were laid up in the form of a circular bin. These were encircled with steel rods, enabling the structure to withstand lateral pressures from the corn heaped within. Single and double bin corncribs of this type were most common, although four-bin corncribs were not unusual. Between 1900 and 1940, concrete was promoted as a do-it-yourself material, poured into rented forms, for building corncribs.



*Two rare examples of wood-frame corn cribs were surveyed in Jackson Township, including the octagonal structure at the Young–Palmer–Eaton Farmstead (left), and the round metal and wood structure at Ara Brown Farmstead (right).*

### ***Crib Barns***

Crib barns are simple structures formed of pens or cribs that have a space between the cribs for implement storage. There are two basic types: crib barns with the gable or roofline parallel to the cribs, and transverse crib barns with the roofline perpendicular to the pens. The configuration of crib barns developed from practical limitations and needs, such as the height to which a scoopful of corn could be pitched from a wagon (which dictated the bin height) and the size of farm equipment (which dictated the spacing between bins). Later crib barns, including many examples in Will County, have mechanical elevators housed in a small projecting cupola at the ridge of the crib barn roof. Crib barns constructed of concrete block are also present in the county.



*Crib barns are ubiquitous in Will County. Representative examples are illustrated on this page. Generally speaking, crib barns with elevators are somewhat newer than those without elevators; however, some disused buildings may have had their original elevators removed. The first row illustrates examples from New Lenox Township, while the second row is from Green Garden Township.*

### ***Metal Bins***

Metal construction for corn storage came into use early in the twentieth century and was promoted by the steel industry during World War I as a crop saver for the patriotic farmer. Rectangular or hexagonal corncribs were constructed from flat, galvanized-steel sheet metal with ventilating perforations. Corrugated, curved sheets created the more common cylindrical bin type, which was usually topped with a conical roof. The steel corncrib had wall ventilation slits and, most times, a roof ventilator at its peak. Steel was ideal for fabricating standard parts, as well as being vermin-proof. Proper design of metal bins included such factors as ventilation, consideration of structural loads from the feed to be contained, and use of a concrete or heavy timber foundation with the exterior walls anchored to the foundation. Roofs usually consisted of overlapping sheets to form a conical form.

Corn bins made of steel rods or heavy wire mesh also became available in the 1930s. The wire mesh type was particularly popular after World War II because of its low cost, ease of filling, and low maintenance. Wire mesh-type bins have fallen out of use since the 1980s, but the solid metal bins are still commonly used today. Will County has an abundant number of grain bins, although some areas more than others. Many of these bins have become abandon and unused.



### ***Silos***

Silos are structures used for preserving green fodder crops, principally field corn, in a succulent condition. Silos are a recent phenomenon, employed only after 1875 and not truly established until shortly before the turn of the twentieth century. The stored green fodder material is termed ensilage, which is shortened to silage. The acceptance of silos was gradual, but this type of structure eventually came to be enthusiastically embraced by farmers because it offered certain advantages. First, larger numbers of cattle could be kept on the farm because the food value of corn is greater than that of a combination of hay and grain. Second, less water was needed for stock in the winter, lessening labor requirements as frequent ice breaking and thawing was no longer required. Finally, because succulent green fodder could be fed throughout the year, cows produced milk during the entire winter season, increasing the income of the farm.

The first silos were pits excavated inside the barn. The earliest upright or tower silos date from the late 1880s and were rectangular or square in form and constructed with the same materials and techniques as those used in the barn itself, with framed lumber walls. Many were constructed within the barn building. Later examples of this silo type had rounded corners on the inside formed by a vertical tongue-in-groove lining. The rectangular silo appeared in some areas as late as 1910. The octagonal silo type that followed attempted to achieve the advantages of a circular silo while keeping the ease of angular construction. In the 1890s circular forms began to be seen. A shift from the rectangular to the circular stems from the efficiency of the circular form in storing corn ensilage by eliminating air space and thereby reducing spoilage.

The wooden-hoop silo was formed with wood, soaked and shaped into gigantic circular hoop forms and then fastened together horizontally in the tower shape. This style did not become popular because the hoops tended to spring apart. A more common type of wood silo was the panel or Minneapolis silo, also known by several other names. It was advertised in numerous farm journals in the early twentieth century. It consisted of ribs set about 20 inches to 24 inches apart and horizontal matched boards (known as staves) set in grooves in the ribs. Steel hoops were placed around silo to lock the boards in place. This type of silo was made with either single or double wall construction and was polygonal in plan.

Masonry silos, constructed of hollow clay tile, brick, or concrete block, appeared in the first decades of the twentieth century. In comparison with the other two types of silos, brick silos were more difficult to construct because of the time required to erect the relatively small masonry units. There were many patents on concrete blocks for silo purposes, with some blocks curved and other finished with rock-faced building blocks. Some patented blocks had reinforcing sold with the blocks or integral with the block units. Concrete block silos were finished on the interior with a layer of cement mortar to seal joints that might otherwise leak air or water.

The hollow clay tile silo, generally known as the "Iowa Silo," was developed by the Experiment Station of the Iowa State College and erected during the summer of 1908 on the college farm.<sup>156</sup> Brick and tile companies manufactured curved blocks for silos, advertising them in farm journals. The main complaint regarding the hollow block silo was that the masonry units were porous and leaked water. The mortar joints on both inside and outside of wall needed to be properly pointed as a precaution against leakage. Some silo builders washed the interior of the wall with cement mortar as a further precaution. Steel reinforcing consisted of heavy wire embedded in the mortar joints.

Concrete stave silos were constructed as early as 1904 in Cassopolis, Missouri, which used book-shaped staves. Several patents existed for cement stave silos, including that of the Mason & Lawrence of Elgin, Illinois, dating from 1914. Farmers also could make their own concrete staves or blocks to construct a silo or other farm structure. Concrete staves could vary in size, but were often approximately 30 inches long, 10 inches wide, and 2-1/2 inches thick. One end of the block was concave and the other convex to allow fitting the blocks in the assembled structure.

After 1949, a new type of silo appeared: the blue Harvestore silos. Constructed of fiberglass bonded to sheets of metal, they were first introduced in Wisconsin. The glass-coated interior surface prevented silage from freezing and rust from forming. Because the container was airtight, the silage would not spoil. Augers, derived from coal-mining equipment, were used to bore the silage out at the bottom of the silo, a great change from the earlier top-unloaded silos. A large plastic bag at the top of the structure allowed changes in gas pressure to be equalized, and took up the space vacated by removal of silage. In 1974 the company launched another line of products for the containment of manure called Slurrystore. By 1999, over 70,000 of Harvestore structures of various sizes (tall or short, narrow or stout) had been built.

Silos are not common in most areas of Will County.



*The Rink Farmstead, located in Wilmington Township, has both a concrete stave silo and a Harvestore silo (Two Pictures on the Left).*



*Illustrated above are silos constructed of clay tile block (left), precast concrete (center), and cast-in-place concrete (right). The silo at left is located on the Rahm farmstead. The one at center is located on the Heiland farmstead. The example at right is on the Alberts-Geuther-Olsen farmstead. These three silos are located in Green Garden Township. Most silos in Will County are no longer in use.*

For further information pertaining  
to Will County's history, historic  
sites and architectural information,  
explore the County's Rural Survey  
Reports at:

***[www.willcountylanduse.com/HPC](http://www.willcountylanduse.com/HPC)***