

**ETHNIC ARCHITECTURE  
IN STARK COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA**

A HISTORIC CONTEXT

Prepared for:

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**STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NORTH DAKOTA**  
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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In response to a 1991 Request for Proposals issued by the State Historical Society of North Dakota, Renewable Technologies, Inc. (RTI) of Butte, Montana was awarded a contract under the Historic Preservation Fund Grants-In-Aid Program to prepare a historic context for ethnic architecture in Stark County, North Dakota. The goal of the project, as defined in the request for proposals, was

to examine the building morphology of ethnic property types in both the rural and urban setting in Stark County, by collecting data from a sample of representative properties. The survey is directed at a sample of sites/structures to be recorded at the reconnaissance level. The project is a first effort to survey ethnic architecture in Western North Dakota and is intended to be the initial phase of a larger objective to survey other counties in Western North Dakota that have vernacular resources of similar ethnic derivation.

The survey was to be one of the first in North Dakota to examine ethnic buildings in both urban and rural settings on a county-wide, comparative basis. Previous investigations have focused largely on isolated buildings in rural settings.

The contract required an intensive level survey of approximately 50 buildings, drawn from both rural Stark County and the smaller communities outside of Dickinson. Emphasis in recording the properties was to be placed on such architectural features as form, massing, materials, and orientation.

This report presents the results of the survey of 49 ethnic architectural sites (39 rural farmsteads and ten urban houses) in Stark County. It is divided into seven parts following the required format of the Archeology and Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of North Dakota for a context document: 1) introduction; 2) context narrative; 3) property types; 4) data gaps; 5) preservation strategies and goals; 6) endnotes, and 7) bibliography. The context for "Ethnic Architecture in Stark County" is supplemented by North Dakota Cultural Resources Survey site forms containing detailed historical and architectural information on the properties surveyed.

## 2.0 HISTORIC CONTEXT NARRATIVE

### 2.1 GEOLOGY, GEOGRAPHY, AND METEOROLOGICAL DATA

Stark County is located in the southwestern part of North Dakota (Fig.1). Dickinson, near the center of the county, is the county seat. Dickinson and the communities of Belfield, Taylor, and Richardton are all located on Interstate 94 which crosses the county east and west. The small villages of Lefor and Scheffield near the southern county line are the only other towns in the county. Three paved state highways cross the county running north and south.

Most of the county's terrain is gently sloping. Steep upland prairie occurs in the western portion which borders the Badlands of the Little Missouri River. Several prominent buttes dot the landscape. The Heart and Green rivers and Antelope Creek are the main watercourses although several intermittent streams also pass through the county. The landscape is treeless except for planted windbreaks and the bottomlands along the rivers.

Stark County's climate is generally characterized by long, cold winters with frequent blizzards and short, warm summers. Precipitation averages between 15 and 16 inches a year. The strongest winds come from the northwest from September to May with occasional westerly winds; the winds are generally from the southeast from May through July.

The county is underlain with sedimentary deposits which were deposited in seas that once covered the county and much of North Dakota. Three geologic formations of sedimentary deposits occur in Stark County: 1) the Fort Union formation is the largest and consists of gray silty clay shale, pale-olive siltstone, and grayish-brown sandstone with intermittent, thick beds of lignite coal; 2) the Golden Valley formation lies southwest of Dickinson and consists of clay loam shale, loamstone, and sandstone with occasional, narrow bands of lignite coal; and 3) over much of the Golden Valley formation is the White River formation. It consists of tan and gray layers of clay.<sup>1</sup>

# NORTH DAKOTA



# STARK COUNTY

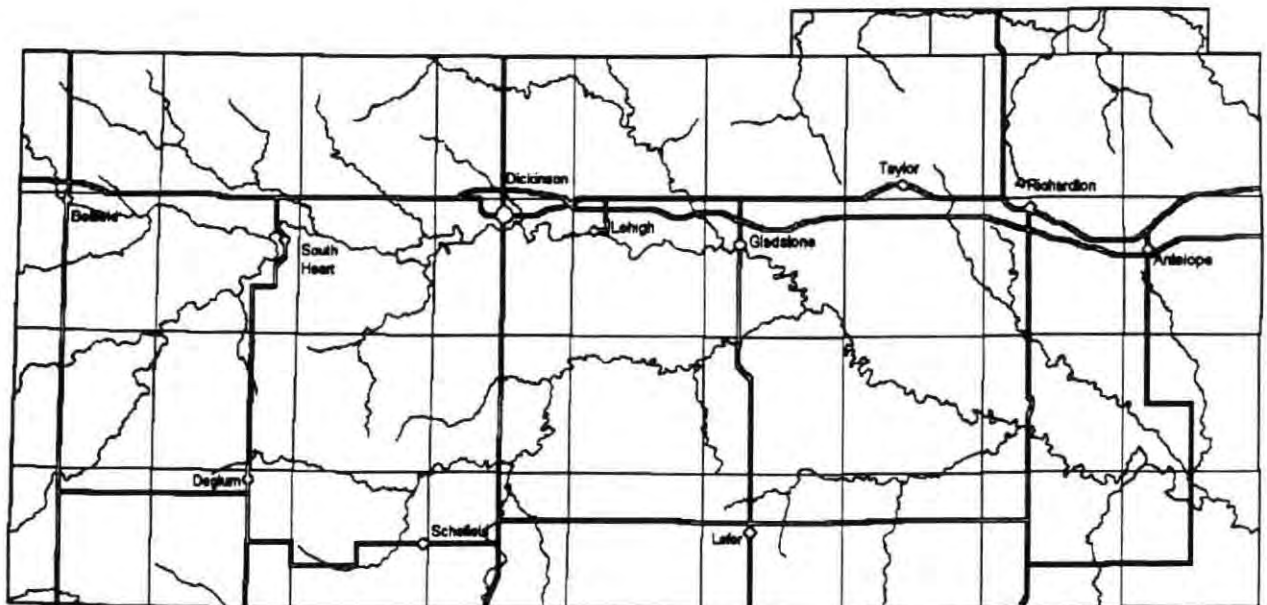


Figure 1. Map of North Dakota and Stark County.



## **2.2 OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL IMMIGRATION HISTORY**

### **2.2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The history of ethnic immigration to Stark County must be considered within a framework that reflects the historical factors that influenced immigration on a regional, as well as local (in this case, county) level. This discussion, therefore, includes: 1) an examination of the regional history of immigration to Dakota Territory and to North Dakota following statehood, and 2) a local history of ethnic immigration to Stark County, focusing on individual ethnic groups represented in the survey of ethnic properties in the county.

### **2.2.2 THE FORCES BEHIND IMMIGRATION**

Ethnic immigration to Dakota Territory and, after 1889, to North Dakota, was sparked by events both in the United States and Europe. The forces in Europe contributing to emigration are complex since they varied from country to country. For example, the German-Hungarian practice of primogeniture -- land being passed to the oldest son -- resulted in large numbers of landless persons. The removal of political rights formerly enjoyed by the Finns and German-Russians, particularly the decision of the Russian Czar to induct young men into the army, influenced some members of these two groups to emigrate. Overpopulation and land shortages across Europe kept millions in poverty.

The appeal in the United States was free land. Most importantly influencing immigration to North Dakota, was the construction of railroads. They provided easy access to the free or relatively cheap federal lands.

Immigration to Dakota Territory began in earnest after 1878 and resulted in a 1000 percent increase in the state's population by 1890. Following a slow down in immigration during the national economic depression of the 1890s, a second boom of immigrants began arriving in 1898; this boom lasted until the late 1910s when drought and economic depression resulted in outward migration.<sup>2</sup>

Immigrants to North Dakota, and the western United States, could take advantage of three laws to obtain federal lands. The Preemption Law of 1841 allowed the outright purchase of 160 acres after a settler had lived on the property for six months and made certain improvements. The Homestead Act of 1862 provided settlers with 160 acres of free land subject to residency and improvement stipulations over a five-year period. The Timber Culture Act of 1873 contained no residency requirement, but stipulated that ten acres of a 160-acre claim had to be planted to trees over an eight-year period. Applicants could not file for a preemption and a homestead simultaneously since both required residency, but could combine either with a timber culture claim, thus increasing

their holdings. After meeting the requirements for a preemption or homestead, the settler could then file for the other. This process allowed settlers to acquire as much as 480 acres of land.<sup>3</sup>

Land in North Dakota could also be purchased outright from railroad companies such as the Northern Pacific Railroad. The Northern Pacific acquired extensive holdings as a result of the federal bill authorizing the building of the railroad. For each mile of main line constructed within the territories, the United States government granted the Northern Pacific 40 odd-numbered sections of public land. These lands were in a band up to 100 miles wide and centered on the railroad right-of-way.<sup>4</sup>

The Northern Pacific entered Dakota Territory in 1872 and reached Bismarck in 1873, when the company's bankruptcy halted construction. Construction finally resumed in 1879, and the Northern Pacific completed its transcontinental line in 1883. During the early 1890s, the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault St. Marie built a line diagonally across the state. The Great Northern Railway finished its transcontinental line, crossing the northern portion of North Dakota, in 1893. The latter two companies built in North Dakota without the benefit of government land grants, but were to play an important part in the promotion and settlement of the state.<sup>5</sup>

The Panic of 1873 which forced the financial reorganization of the Northern Pacific also had a tremendous influence on future settlement patterns in North Dakota. Because of the bankruptcy, the company exchanged bonds for its granted lands, and large parcels of land in Dakota Territory were acquired by speculators and investors. Between 1875 and 1878, half the 1.2 million acres sold by the railroad was acquired by forty individuals.<sup>6</sup>

Despite these large-scale sales, the Northern Pacific continued to recognize the necessity of having a dispersed public which would use its services. The Northern Pacific encouraged the development of "bonanza farms," large-scale enterprises that required considerable investments, to prove the productivity of the territorial land, and by that attract settlers. To promote settlement during the early 1880s, the Northern Pacific allowed real estate agents to sell smaller land parcels at a commission. By 1905 it had adopted a policy emphasizing sales no larger than one-half section in size.<sup>7</sup>

A significant stimulus to emigration was the agents employed by various railroad companies. With large parcels of land available along both sides of the new tracks, railroad company agents actively sought settlers who could successfully farm the land. Agents also spent time in eastern ports and rail centers to meet immigrants and offer reduced fares and inexpensive land. Railroad companies distributed pamphlets in Europe advertising land and portraying, in a biased and exaggerated manner, the Great Plains region.<sup>8</sup>

Immigration to Dakota Territory was also boosted by the Territorial Legislature, which proposed in 1866 that an "Immigrant Agent of Dakota Territory" be appointed. The two primary responsibilities of this office were to: 1) initiate correspondence with a national immigration bureau regarding available Territory resources, and 2) travel to Europe to seek potential settlers. In 1869 Territorial Governor John Burbank appointed James Foster (a prominent land speculator), Frank Bem (a native Bohemian who worked as an agent for his compatriots), and John Hodnett (an Irish writer for Chicago newspapers), as immigration officials to locate and assist settlers coming into the Territory. Because the Legislature made no provisions to defray expenses, all three men served without salaries or formal expense accounts.<sup>9</sup>

By 1871, after public support and newspaper editorials had stressed the importance of an active immigration agency, the Territorial Legislature created the Bureau of Immigration. Foster was appointed commissioner for a two year term and given a \$500 appropriation for "preparing and circulating information concerning . . . Dakota and inducing immigration thereto."<sup>10</sup> Foster's many responsibilities included publishing and circulating promotional pamphlets advertising the Territory to prospective settlers. The publication, "Resources of Dakota," suggested that "there's room enough in Dakota for a few million more good, honest, hardworking tillers of the soil, and a cordial hand of welcome is outstretched to greet the newcomer who accepts the invitation to share in our prosperity."<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, Foster was expected to secure transportation for immigrants in the least expensive and most practical manner possible. This task proved to be difficult with limited funds, but other forms of financial and moral support were available. For example, to help Russian residents in making the journey to America, steamship tickets costing \$43-\$51 for passage from Hamburg, Germany were sold in Yankton between 1874-1875.<sup>12</sup>

In 1875, the Bureau of Immigration appointed Jacob Brauch as one of three special agents responsible for searching eastern states for European immigrants. Brauch had worked previously as a private immigration agent bringing German-Russian Mennonites into the Territory. With assistance from railroad agents who kept him informed about immigrant arrivals in New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago, he was highly successful at luring other German-Russians into Dakota Territory.<sup>13</sup> Despite such activities, the work of the immigration bureau was considered unsatisfactory and it was abolished in 1877, only to be reinstated again in 1885.<sup>14</sup>

The Legislature's funding of the office was erratic over the next decades, but the office did undertake significant promotional campaigns at times. Immigration promotion was reduced during World War I and did not resume appreciably until 1919. By the late 1910s and early 1920s, economic downtrends associated with depressed agricultural prices and widespread drought were important factors in the halt of the influx of newcomers to the state. At the state level, the office of the Commissioner of Immigration was abolished in the early 1930s. Although settlement in North Dakota continued to be promoted even after World War II, the more recent emphasis has been on tourism.<sup>15</sup>

### 2.2.3 NORTH DAKOTA'S MAJORITY ETHNIC GROUPS

North Dakota has a rich diversity of ethnic groups. In 1910, 71 percent of the state's population was foreign born or the children of one or both foreign born parents. The largest ethnic populations were Norwegians, Germans, Anglos, Swedes, and Danes.<sup>16</sup>

The initial immigrants to Dakota Territory were predominantly people of Anglo-Scots-Irish-Old American descent who settled in dispersed areas across the region. Relatively few of these early settlers stayed on the land, in part due to their ability to take advantage of other opportunities because of their English-language background.<sup>17</sup> Other Europeans soon repaleded the Anglo-Americans -- predominantly from northern and eastern Europe. The two largest of these immigrant groups -- the Norwegians and German-Russians -- made up 40 percent of North Dakota's foreign-born population in 1910.<sup>18</sup>

Statewide, the Norwegians were the earliest and largest group of foreign immigrants. Norwegians first arrived in the Red River Valley around 1870<sup>19</sup> and by 1910 made up 21 percent of North Dakota's foreign-born residents. Norwegians settled across the entire state, with major concentrations in the eastern and northern counties.<sup>20</sup> Most of the original settlers in North Dakota of Norwegian descent came via other states, some first stopping in eastern North Dakota before moving westward.<sup>21</sup> Many of them were offspring that had come of age after land became scarce in the areas to which their parents emigrated.<sup>22</sup>

The German-Russians were the second largest ethnic group to settle in North Dakota. The term "German-Russian" refers to a group of German-speaking people who migrated primarily from western Europe to southern Russia between the mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries. These emigrants located along the Volga River with later settlement concentrating in the Odessa region and southern Ukraine. Here they established tightly-knit settlements (referred to as "colonies"), which preserved their Germanic culture and religious beliefs, and distinguished them from the native Russian peasant villages.

For over a century the colonists lived productive and peaceful lives along the Volga River and Black Sea. In the mid-nineteenth century, however, the Russian government responded to growing concerns against the German-Russians and began retracting many of the privileges they had been granted to entice them to settle in Russia. By 1871 the program of self-government known as the Codex of the Colonists was abolished making the residents subject to the Russian Ministry of the Interior. Furthermore, the German-Russians were forced to relinquish control of their education system, adopting Russian as the official medium of instruction. Perhaps the most drastic change occurred when military law was instituted, requiring mandatory service for all young men.<sup>23</sup>

This oppression led to two significant developments for the colonists: 1) a migration to Siberia; and 2) a mass exodus, beginning in 1872, of thousands of German-Russians to the United States, Canada, and South America. The colonists were lured to the Great Plains of the United States and Canada by offers of large tracts of inexpensive, undeveloped land. In America they settled primarily in the Dakotas, Kansas and Nebraska, while others eventually made their way to Montana, Washington, and eastern Colorado.<sup>24</sup>

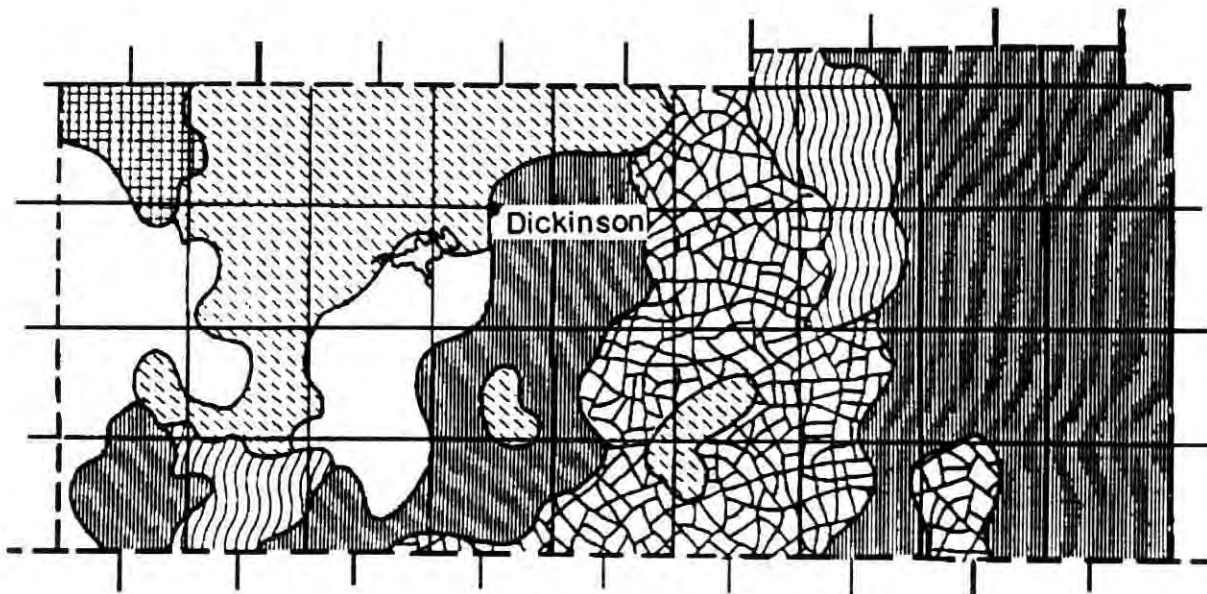
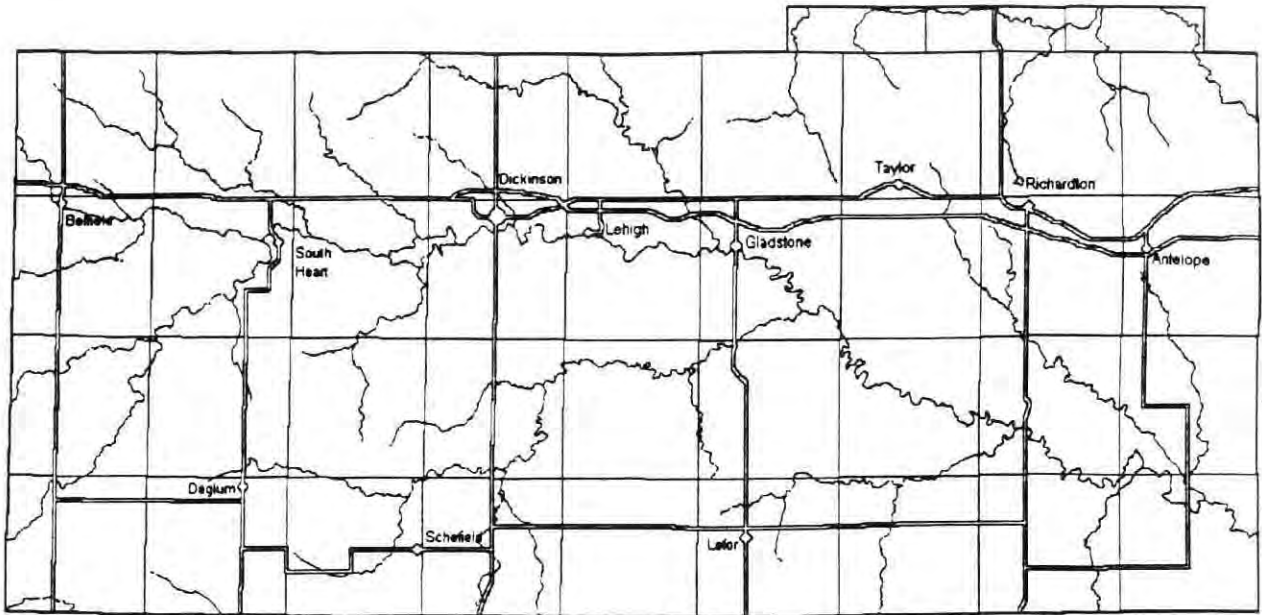
The first German-Russians in Dakota Territory settled near Yankton in 1872. A steady stream of immigrants from Russia followed, settling farther and farther north. In 1884, they crossed the line of what was to be the southern border of North Dakota. This settlement near Zealand in McIntosh County coincided with a group of German-Rumanians arriving near Cathay in Wells County via Canada. The wave of immigrants continued in both states until World War I. The 1920 census reported that the 23,850 German-Russians residing in North Dakota made up 20 percent of North Dakota's foreign-born population and represented 20 percent of the entire German-Russian population in the United States.<sup>25</sup> The German-Russians predominantly settled in the central and south-central portions of the state.<sup>26</sup>

## **2.3 OVERVIEW OF STARK COUNTY IMMIGRATION HISTORY**

### **2.3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Figure 2 is an extraction from Sociologist William Sherman's map of ethnic distributions in southwestern North Dakota in 1965. It shows the recent patterns of ethnic residence for Stark County. Except for unshaded areas which include a mixture of ethnic groups, residents in the shaded areas represent at least 95 percent of the indicated national group. Stark County is dominated by five groups: German-Russians, German-Hungarians, Bohemians or Crimean-Bohemians, Norwegians, and Ukrainians. The areas with mixed settlement include individuals of Anglo-American, Norwegian, German, German-Russian, German-Hungarian, Bohemian, French, or other descent. Field research also suggests that Estonians who resided in Crimean Russia before emigration to the United States would have been included as county residents if the map had been made 50 years earlier.

Before discussing the history of these ethnic populations, it may be useful to consider the relative proportion that each ethnic group constitutes of the county's and state's foreign-born populations. Figure 3 is derived from 1910 and 1920 census data provided by Sherman and Thorson in *Plains Folk*. It should be noted that no distinction was made between the different ethnic Russians; German-Russians are considered together with Crimean Bohemians and Finns in the 1910 census. These three Russian groups constitute the largest ethnic population in Stark County, representing 40.6 and 46.6 percent, respectively, of the county's foreign-born residents in 1910 and 1920. The Stark County group constitutes 6.1 percent of North Dakota's Russian population.



- |   |                  |   |           |
|---|------------------|---|-----------|
|  | German-Russian   |  | Norwegian |
|  | German-Hungarian |  | Ukrainian |
|  | Bohemian         |  | Mixed     |

Figure 2. Ethnic distribution in Stark County (1965).

Taken from: Prairie Mosaic.

Figure 3. Foreign-born Residents of Stark County, 1910 and 1920

1910 U.S. Census				1920 U.S. Census			
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	# IN STARK COUNTY	% OF FOREIGN-BORN IN COUNTY	% OF FOREIGN-BORN IN STATE	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	# IN STARK COUNTY	% OF FOREIGN-BORN IN COUNTY	% OF FOREIGN-BORN IN STATE
Austria (Ukrainians, Bohemians, Poles)	308	6.5	6.0	Austria (Ukrainians)	174	4.5	8.5
Canada (French)	39	0.8	1.6	Canada (French)	23	0.6	1.5
Canada (Others)	132	2.8	0.7	Canada (Others)	93	2.4	0.7
Denmark, Iceland	28	0.6	0.5	Denmark, Iceland	24	0.6	0.5
England	60	1.3	2.0	England	39	1.0	1.7
Germany	342	7.2	2.1	Germany	278	7.2	2.3
Greece (Railroad Crews)	86	1.8	7.9	Greece	0	0	0
Holland	54	1.1	7.6	Netherlands	37	1.0	4.1
Hungary (Banat, Burgenland Germans)	1310	27.5	45.9	Hungary (Banat, Burgenland Germans)	897	23.3	35.6
Ireland	75	1.6	3.0	Ireland	51	1.3	3.1
Italy (Railroad Crews)	34	0.7	2.7	Italy	-	-	-
Norway	200	4.2	0.4	Norway	146	3.8	0.4
Rumania (Bessarabian German)	18	0.4	1.7	Rumania (Bessarabian Germans)	41	1.1	2.3
Russia (German-Russian, Crimean Bohemians, Finns, Etc.)	1932	40.6	6.1	Russia (German-Russians)	1793	46.6	6.1
Scotland	23	0.5	1.4	Scotland	18	0.5	1.5
Sweden	80	1.7	0.7	Sweden	43	1.1	0.4
Switzerland	38	0.8	6.8	Switzerland	28	0.7	5.5
Turkey (Lebanese, Dobrudja Germans, Greeks, Etc)	1	0.02	0.2	Syria (Lebanon)	4	0.1	1.4
				Belgium	2	0.1	0.4
				Czechoslovakia	107	2.8	5.2
				Finland	8	0.2	0.7
				France	3	0.1	0.9
				Luxemburg	9	0.2	3.9
				Poland	32	0.8	1.4
TOTAL	4760			TOTAL	3850		

Information taken from: Plains Folks, Appendix C.

The German-Hungarians were the second largest ethnic group in Stark County, representing 27.5 and 23.3 percent of the county's foreign-born population in the 1910 and 1920 censuses, respectively. Although they were a smaller component of the county's population than the combined Russians, it is important to note that the Stark County population represented 45.9 and 35.6 percent of the state's total German-Hungarian population during those census years. Clearly, Stark County was a focal point for this group's settlement in North Dakota.

No other ethnic groups are as significant numerically as the Russians and German-Hungarians. Although the Norwegians had moderate holdings in Stark County in 1965, their 1910 and 1920 population figures show that they represented only 4.2 and 3.8 percent of the county's foreign-born population. The Stark County Norwegians represented just 0.4 percent of the state's total Norwegian population.

### 2.3.2. ETHNIC GROUPS IN STARK COUNTY

#### 2.3.2.1. Introduction

The first settlement in Stark County occurred at Adobe Walls Station which was established as an overland mail relay station in 1878.<sup>27</sup> Anglo-American ranchers in southwestern North Dakota were present by 1881 and some Norwegians worked with these groups.<sup>28</sup> By this time the Northern Pacific was completing its line west of Mandan, and the company initiated a vigorous emigration program through its European Bureau of Colonization to attract settlers west of the Missouri River.<sup>29</sup> <sup>30</sup> Many first immigrants to Stark County, however, moved from other locations in the United States. An 1892 Northern Pacific Railroad guide identified the residents of Taylor as mainly from New York and New Jersey who had arrived in 1882. Gladstone's population included a colony of about 150 settlers from Ripon, Wisconsin who had also arrived about 1882.<sup>31</sup>

#### 2.3.2.2 Norwegians

In 1883-1884, Norwegian immigrants settled in Stark County at Taylor, and occupied an area extending 20 miles north and six miles south of that town. They were followed in 1900, by Norwegians arriving from Beresford, South Dakota who settled in the southwest corner of the county in an area known as Daglum.<sup>32</sup> The tendency of Norwegians to settle in proximity to other Norwegian families from the same province was reported by Thorson in Plains Folk.<sup>33</sup> It is not known, however, whether the separation of the two Norwegian settlement areas in Stark County is a reflection of this practice.

The "Ethnic Architecture in Stark County" survey includes three examples of Norwegian ethnic architecture, all concentrated in the southwestern corner of the county near Daglum [see Appendix A]. These include farms of the Petterson brothers, (Hans, Ole, and Halvor), Jacob Johnson, and Anton Burwick. The County History says that the three Petterson brothers came to the United States in 1899 and spent a few years in



Beresford, South Dakota working on farms. The brothers homesteaded in Stark County in 1906. Two sisters also came to Stark County and before marrying, lived at the original Petterson homestead. One of these sisters married Albert Burwick, possibly the son of Anton Burwick.

Anton Burwick was born in Norway in 1843. He originally settled in Iowa, then in Beresford, South Dakota, before coming to Stark County in 1907. He and his son Richard arrived in the state by train, typical of many Norwegians immigrants. Until their house was completed, the Burwicks stayed with another son, Ole, who had arrived a year earlier.

Jacob Johnson lived in the same area of Stark County as the Pettersons and Burwicks. Little is known about this man other than the information in the 1914 county atlas. According to this source he was born in Norway in 1879 and arrived in Stark County in 1908. He married Bertha Hendrickson. It is not known whether he came to the county directly from Norway, but it is doubtful.

### 2.3.2.3 German-Russians

In 1887, the first German-Russians arrived in Stark County near Antelope. More German-Russians soon followed, first settling near Dickinson and Richardton, and eventually spreading south from Dickinson into Slope and Hettinger counties.<sup>34</sup> The focus of the German-Russian population after 1910 became the small community of Scheffield which grew up around St. Pius' Catholic Church, about 15 miles south of Dickinson.<sup>35</sup> The Stark County German-Russians were largely from the Beresan area of Russia, as were most of those who settled in southwestern North Dakota, west of the Missouri River.<sup>36</sup>

Twenty-one German-Russian farmsteads are represented in the "Ethnic Architecture in Stark County" survey [see Appendix A]. Of those German-Russians with known arrival dates in the county, the earliest came in 1891; arrival dates after that are fairly evenly dispersed between 1891 and 1906, except the year 1898 when five families settled in the county. It appears from the biographies in the county history that most German-Russian emigrants arrived directly from South Russia and immediately took up a homestead. There are a few exceptions such as Philip Loran who first lived in Yankton, South Dakota where he worked in a brickyard before homesteading near Richardton, and Raymond Frank who worked in a brickyard in Dickinson prior to homesteading in 1906.<sup>37</sup>

Unfortunately, no biographical information other than that provided in the county atlas was located for the two earliest Stark County German-Russian immigrants represented in the survey. Frank and Frances Ehrnantraut Krank are the earliest arrivals represented in the survey on which biographical information is available. The Kranks farmed in Speier, Russia before emigrating to Richardton in 1892. They originally

homesteaded south of Richardton, but due to a lack of drinking water, purchased therights to a homestead south of Dickinson about 1896. They eventually acquired a full section of land.

Joseph Froehlich, another early German-Russian settler in Stark County, first emigrated with his parents from South Russia to Aberdeen, South Dakota in 1891. Froehlich's parents homesteaded northwest of Dickinson in 1895, and one year later Joseph homesteaded southwest of Dickinson. He married Franciska Steiner, another German-Russian immigrant, in 1901.

#### 2.3.2.4. German-Hungarians

German-Hungarians populated the area around Gladstone beginning in the mid-to late 1880s. The first settlers in the German-Hungarian region around Lefor arrived in 1890 and by 1898 included 42 families.<sup>38</sup> Lefor itself was not officially established as a town until 1911, although a sod church was built in 1897 and replaced with a stone building in 1903.<sup>39</sup> The German-Hungarian population of Stark County is descendant of Germans who arrived from the Banat region of Austria-Hungary.<sup>40</sup>

Fourteen German-Hungarian farmsteads are represented in the "Ethnic Architecture in Stark County" survey [see Appendix A]. The earliest German-Hungarians in this group arrived in Stark County in 1891 and others took up homesteads until 1904.<sup>41</sup>

Michael and Anna Sharick and their three children are the earliest German-Hungarians in Stark County represented in the survey, having traveled from Bencheck, Hungary to the Richardton area in July 1891. Michael Sharick was a blacksmith, like many German-Hungarians who had a trade besides farming. By at least 1898, the Sharicks had homesteaded south of Richardton. Michael died in 1898 and Anna obtained the patent to the homestead in 1907. She continued to live on the homestead until at least 1920 when it was sold at sheriff's sale.

Perhaps the most prominent of the German-Hungarian families in Stark County are the Lefors who arrived in 1893. Adam Lefor, Sr. and his wife, Marian Kungel Lefor, emigrated from the Banat region of Hungary along with eight children. A son had preceded them, arriving in 1892, and worked for the railroad. The Lefors first settled on railroad land near St. Stephens, but eventually were forced to leave. The elder Lefor then homesteaded in the Lefor area in 1897; at least three of his sons, including Thomas and Adam, Jr., whose farmsteads are documented in this survey, soon homesteaded nearby.

The Lefor family interests gradually expanded, both around Lefor and throughout Stark County. Adam, Sr. and his sons operated a store in Gladstone from 1905 until 1909 when they sold it at a substantial profit. Thomas eventually increased his holdings to "12 quarters" which he farmed with horses.<sup>42</sup> Although "Lefor" had been the site of a Catholic church beginning in 1897, it was not until Adam Lefor, Jr. constructed a store

there in 1910 and a post office was established a year later that it became an official town. Adam, Jr. eventually owned banks in Belfield, Dickinson and Gladstone and was named state bank examiner from 1933 to 1939.

#### 2.3.2.5. Bohemians

Bohemians in Stark County include two groups: Czechs that came to America directly from Bohemia and those who traveled a more circuitous route through the Crimea. Originating from Bohemia, in what is now western Czechoslovakia, the ancestors of the latter group first settled in the Russian Crimea and Czechohrad in 1859-1861. After one generation, these Bohemians from the Crimea began immigrating to South Dakota, gradually moving north to obtain available land. In 1887, a group of Bohemians from Czechohrad and several other villages in the Russian Crimea established New Hradec in Dunn County.<sup>43</sup> This population extended 20 miles southwest of that community into Stark County. An earlier attempt in 1886 by Czechs from Minnesota to settle along the Green River failed, as most returned east by 1888.<sup>44</sup>

The only Stark County house of Bohemian ethnic affiliation documented during the survey belonged to Joseph Hondl [see Appendix A]. According to the 1914 County Atlas Hondl was born in Bohemia, arrived in Stark County in 1898, and married Mary Ridl. Presumably, he came to this country directly from Bohemia. Several Ridls were among the earliest Bohemian settlers in the county, but their relationship to Mary Ridl is unknown.

#### 2.3.2.6. Estonians

Around 1900, Estonian farmers from six colonies in the Russian Crimean Peninsula settled between the Norwegian community of Daglum and the German-Russian community of Scheffield in the southwest corner of the county.<sup>45</sup> Very little information is available concerning Estonians in North Dakota and Stark County. Sherman reports in Prairie Mosaic that these Lutheran immigrants moved to the state after having lived for one or two generations in the Russian Crimea.<sup>46</sup>

The "Ethnic Architecture in Stark County" survey recorded the farms of two Estonian brothers, Joseph and Jacob Kasberg [see Appendix A]. The 1914 County Atlas says that Joseph was born in 1876 and Jacob in 1873. Jacob's birthplace was reported as "near the Crimean Peninsula." The atlas shows different years of arrival in Stark County, but the county history indicates that the brothers came together, settling there in 1903. Jacob purchased the homestead rights of Paul Braun, who built the house that still exists on that farmstead.<sup>47</sup>

### 2.3.2.7. Ukrainians

Ukrainians immigrated to Stark County beginning in 1896, concentrating in the northwest corner of the county, west of the Bohemian occupied region.<sup>48</sup> No properties associated with the Ukrainians were identified in the "Ethnic Architecture in Stark County" survey.

### 2.3.2.8. Dutch

A group of Dutch immigrants briefly settled near Belfield in the northwest part of the county between 1910 and 1920. They located on a large tract of land purchased by the Holland-Dakota Land Company in 1908. Instead of selling its property to prospective settlers, the company leased land to the Dutch immigrants and also set up an experimental farm and warehouse, although the venture was not successful. After a promising start, it reportedly failed due to low agricultural prices and bad weather. By 1920, most of the Dutch settlers had left. A small number of descendants of these settlers remain east of Belfield in the South Heart area.<sup>49</sup> No properties associated with the Dutch were identified in the "Ethnic Architecture in Stark County" survey.

### 2.3.2.9. Conclusion

Immigration to Stark County, and the state as a whole, peaked before 1920. Figure 3 illustrates this fact through the pervasive decline in numbers of foreign-born or first generation individuals. Although some of this may reflect failure to report one's ethnic affiliation due to the nationalistic fervor and anti-German sentiment associated with World War I, the consistency of the pattern across groups suggests that other factors -- such as drought and low agricultural prices -- were more likely responsible.

## 2.4 EUROPEAN ANTECEDENTS OF STARK COUNTY ETHNIC ARCHITECTURE

### 2.4.1 INTRODUCTION

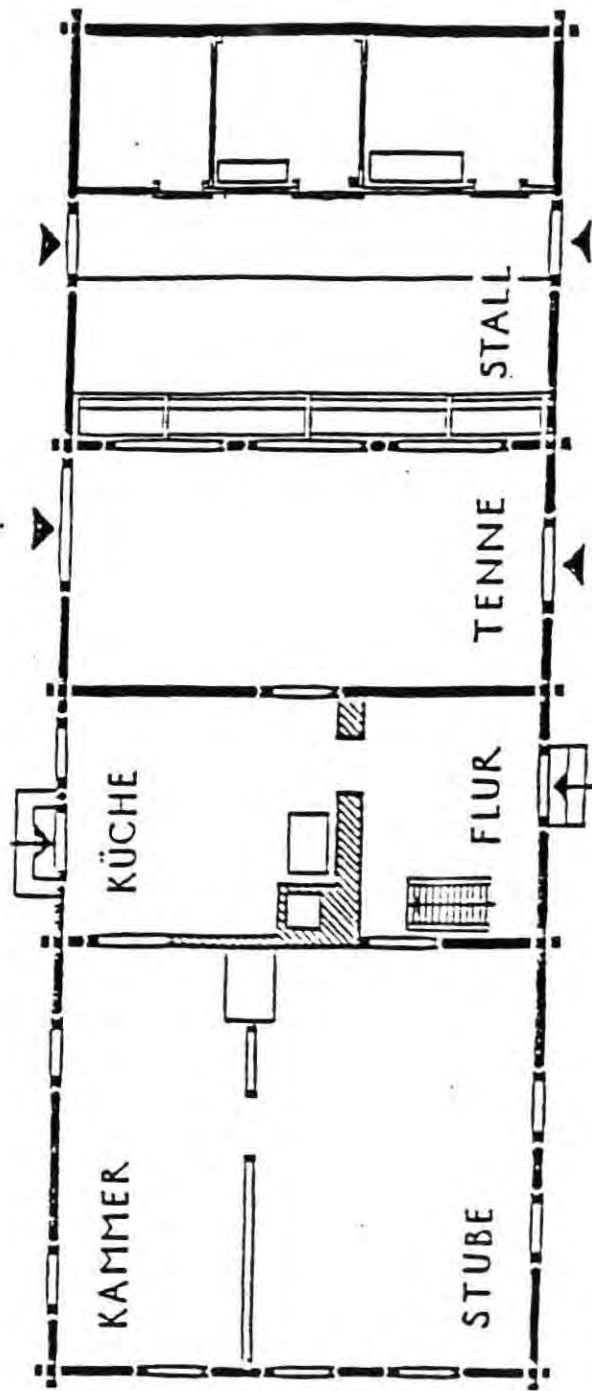
In order to analyze and understand the ethnic architecture found in Stark County, we will first examine how its antecedents evolved in France and Germany, southwestern Russia, and Norway. This section ends with a summary of the results of an architectural survey of German-Russian architecture in South Dakota.

#### 2.4.1.2. French and German Architecture

In the French and German regions where the German colonists who later moved to Russia and Hungary had lived, farmhouses evolved over several centuries into relatively standard designs. These houses typically were larger than those constructed later in eastern Europe and had several basic features that were adaptations to the area. Generally speaking, the dwellings were two stories high and nearly rectangular in shape, with at least two rooms arranged around a central chimney.<sup>50</sup> Known as the Middle German Hearth House or Mitteldeutsches Ernhaus, this form was widespread in southern and central Germany, and used a central hearth room (Ern) within the building. In northeastern Germany similar dwellings were called Wohnstallhaeuser<sup>51</sup> (Fig. 4). One scholar notes that in Germany Ernhaus essentially had three interior spaces under a common roof in the form of a housebarn: the living area, the kitchen, and the stable.<sup>52</sup> Similar spatial arrangements occurred in houses constructed in America, although domestic and agricultural buildings were usually separated.

The entrance of the Ernhaus was on the axial wall near the center of the facade, often flanked on each side by at least one window (Fig. 5). One entered a rectangular kitchen (kuche) featuring a large central fireplace and chimney; opposite the kitchen was a living room used for entertaining called a stube. Often a smaller chamber for sleeping called a kammer was located to the rear of the stube. A characteristic feature of the Ernhaus was a heating device (ofen) in the stube that was stoked from the adjoining kitchen through a small firebox.<sup>53</sup> The basic two-room plan, which Weaver refers to as the Oberdeutsches Haus, is similar in form to the hall-parlor house common in Great Britain. The kuche functioned in much the same way as the English hall, while the stube and parlor each served as the space for more formal gatherings.<sup>54</sup> Larger houses often had a small storage or sleeping chamber to the right of the kitchen in a third bay.

Form in architecture is persistent even when crossing political boundaries.<sup>55</sup> On the other side of the Rhine River in Alsace, houses can be found with floor plans quite similar to those discussed above. A regional study of French folk houses in north-central and northeastern France illustrates a basic house type that bears a striking resemblance to German-Russian dwellings in Russia. Floor plans of multi-storied houses with their gable ends facing the street indicate these similarities.



VIERZONIGES WOHNSTALLHAUS (MITTELTEILNENBAU) LEHDE 32

Figure 4. Floor plan of a German Wohnstallhaus.  
 Taken from: Fiedler, (1967).

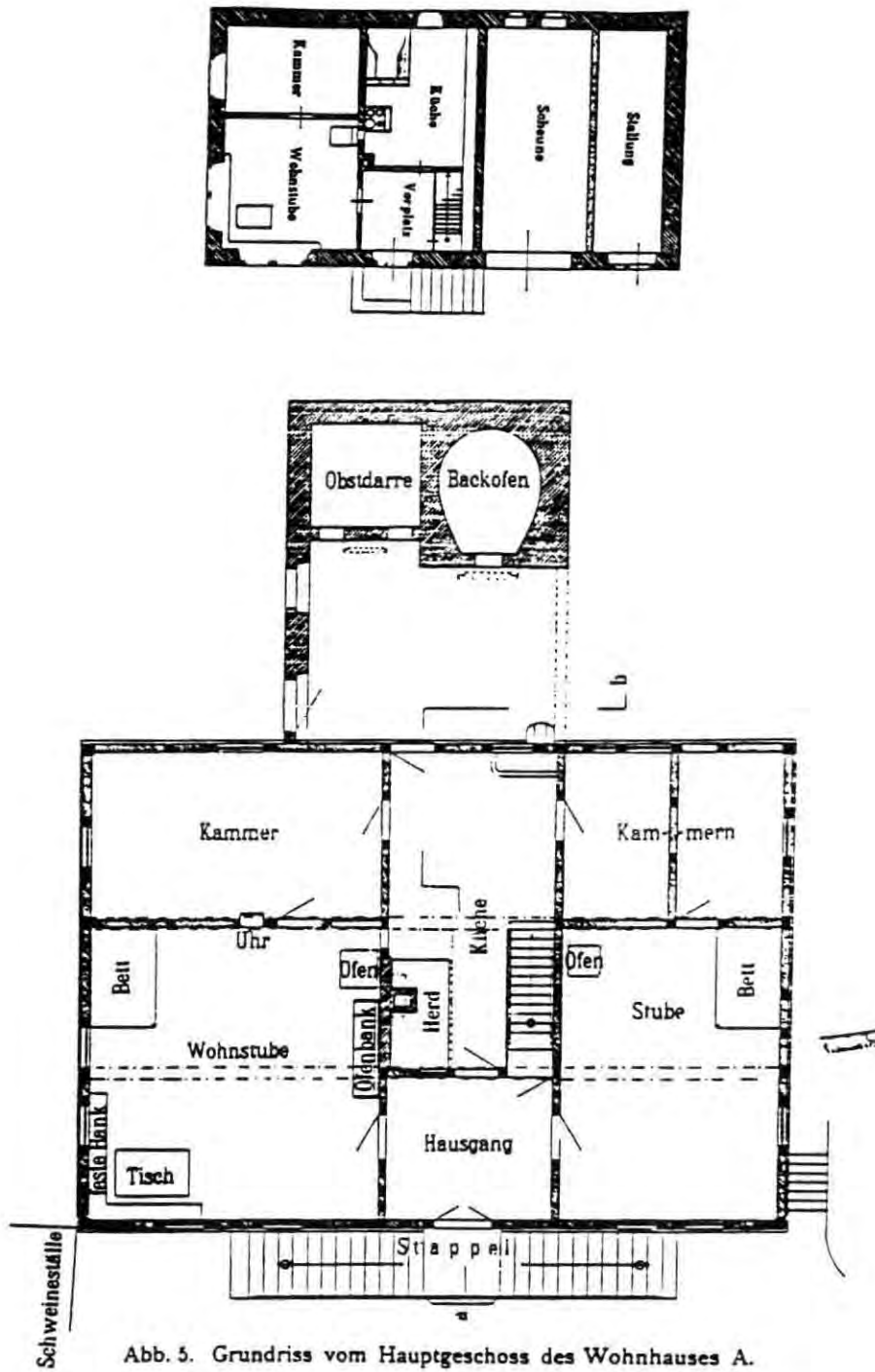


Abb. 5. Grundriss vom Hauptgeschoss des Wohnhauses A.

Figure 5. Two examples of an Ernhaus from central Germany.  
 Taken from: Schafer, (1906).

In the most common example (Fig. 6, top) a southeast-facing entrance leads into the "vestibule" (2.2 in the plan) with a living room (2.3) to the immediate left. The alcove, or small bedroom, (2.1) is to the right of the entrance, while the kitchen (2.4) is located on the north side of the house between a small bedroom (2.3.1) and store room (2.5). Another floor plan (Fig. 7) is essentially the same and includes a bake oven (2.4.1) attached to the back wall of the kitchen and a heating stove (2.2.1) in the living room.<sup>56</sup>

Some Franco-Germanic dwellings had three distinct interior spaces; these tripartite buildings featured a slightly narrower central hall which served as the kitchen. Doors on each side of the kitchen led to multi-purpose sleeping and dining chambers. In wider and two-room deep houses the central kitchen was placed behind an entry room called by Germans a hausflur and by German-Russians a vorhaus.<sup>57</sup> The additional rooms flanking the kitchen often functioned as storage or sleeping space.

The majority of houses moved from the Alsace region to the outdoor museum Ecomusee in Ungersheim, France (near Colmar) display similar form. These dwellings have a central hall which functions as the kitchen, flanked to the left by a stube containing an oven, and to the right by a stable for animals. In some cases the stube is divided laterally to create a smaller rear chamber.<sup>58</sup>

The tripartite plan with a central kitchen was widely used throughout eastern and northern Europe. These dwellings have axial wall entrances and three-room central passage plans with single and double pile room arrangements.<sup>59</sup> While two- and three-room plans were used with frequency in England, where they were called hall and parlor houses, they differed from western European examples in one significant aspect. British hall and parlor dwellings had at least one and usually two gable end interior or exterior chimneys.<sup>60</sup> By contrast, the Ernhaus common to France and Germany relied on a central hearth around which the rooms were situated. With the widespread popularity of the two-room and tripartite central chimney house in Europe, it is not surprising that similar floor plans emerged after settlement in southwestern Russia.

#### 2.4.1.3. German-Russian Architecture in Southwestern Russia

After moving to Russia, German-Russian settlers attempted to develop an environment similar to that of their former homeland. The German-American scholar Joseph Height has suggested that their Russian settlements were laid out in a format "distinctively Franconian-Alsatian in origin and character." Dwellings were arranged in linear villages, known in Germany as "strassendorfer," (Fig. 7) which were characterized by a long street with two rows of gable fronted farmhouses facing each other.<sup>61</sup> Their accompanying "hof" or farmyard also resembled German prototypes. In western Europe and Russia yards were frequently enclosed on three sides by a large masonry wall, with an entrance gate facing the street.<sup>62</sup> Duplication of the western European house form and strict adherence to a strassendorf village configuration in Russia prompted Baron von Haxthausen, who in 1843 visited several colonies near the Black Sea, to remark that the



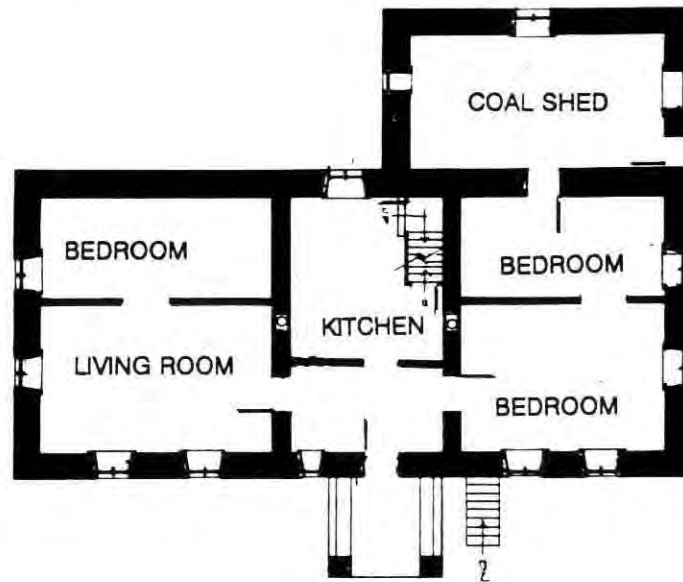
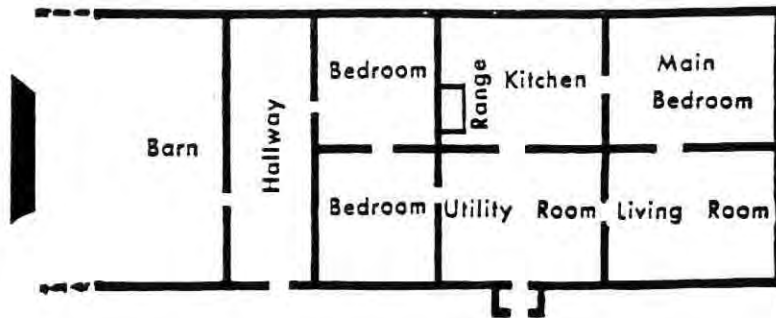
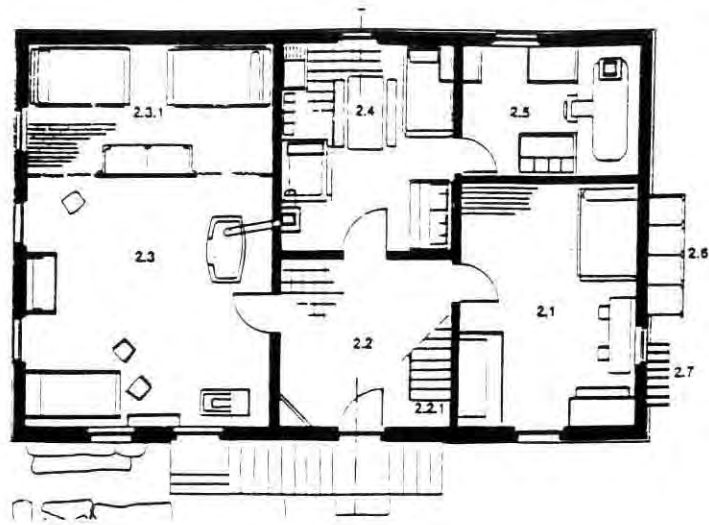


Figure 6. House floor plans from (top to bottom) the Alsace region of France, South Russia, and Stark County, North Dakota. Taken from: Denis and Groshens (1978) and Height (1975).

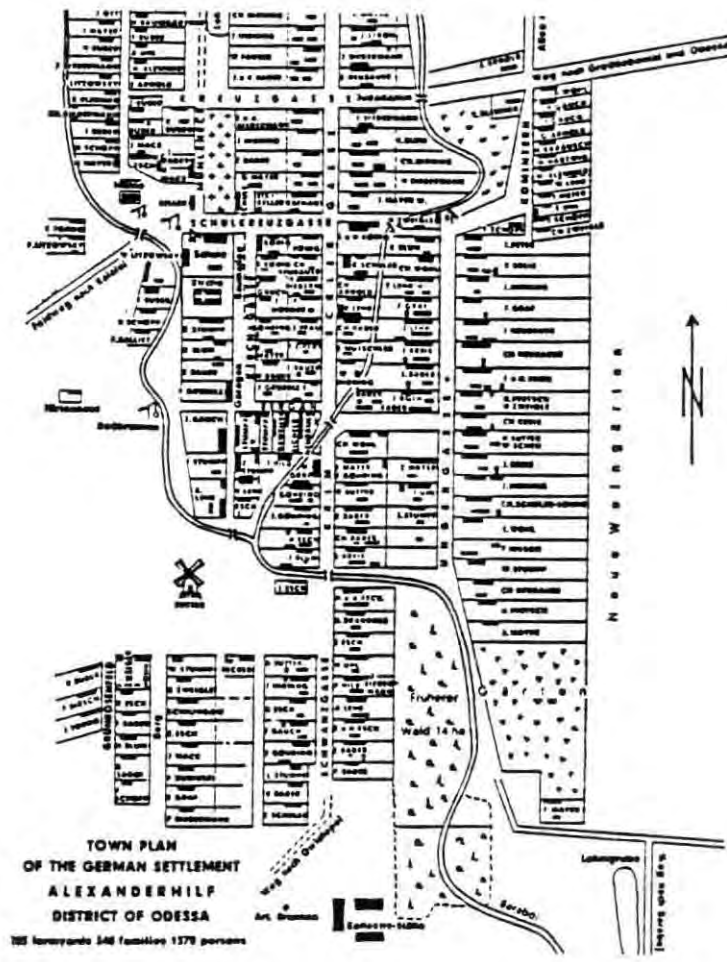


Figure 7. A German-Russian strassendorf village in Russia.  
 Taken from: Hieght (1978).

dwellings (and other cultural features) looked so familiar that he thought he was back in his native Germany.<sup>63</sup> Similar conclusions were drawn by another German scholar, Karl Stumpp, who noted that:

in the Black Sea region the . . . 'street-village' predominated. The gable end of the houses faced the straight village street, which was from 30 to 100 yards wide, and the barns, granaries, and house were all under one roof.<sup>64</sup>

An account of the Kleinliebenthal Colony near Odessa described the village as having two long parallel roads, "the eastern street . . . runs from the north to the south and has 115 houses in two rows . . . the houses in the colony all follow one plan, usually with the gable facing the street."<sup>65</sup> Houses were laid out on uniformly-sized lots measuring about 120' by 725',<sup>66</sup> and in Mennonite villages each yard was approximately 265' wide with a distance of about 100' between each house.<sup>67</sup>

The most common Russian (as compared to German-Russian) farmer's and villager's house was a simple one- or two-room building known as an izba (also spelled isba or istba).<sup>68</sup> Found extensively throughout the northern forest belt as far south as Kiev, the square-shaped izba was made of unhewn logs. It had an entrance in the gable end, only one or two windows, and was built low to the ground with a gently pitched roof. The interior typically consisted of one large room (and occasionally an adjoining lobby) with a massive stove which often occupied one quarter of the floor space.<sup>69</sup>

Because of a dearth of wood in southwestern Russia the izba was not found outside of timbered northern Russia.<sup>70</sup> Elsewhere, the khata or manzanka, which closely resembled the izba in shape and plan, was built. While sometimes made of branches and clay, other khatas were made by cutting:

parallel lines in the turf that covers the steppe. Then these strips were cut with a spade to form square slabs about 12 or 15 inches to the side and 2 1/2 to 3 inches thick. First, they were dried, then they were placed together, with the grassy surface downwards, to form walls about 28 inches thick . . . and 8 feet high. The clay plaster on the walls, external as well as internal, was carefully whitewashed every week, or at least every fortnight.<sup>71</sup>

Thus, while the materials used for the izba and khata differed, each was essentially similar in form. Neither the izba nor the khata, however, was replicated by the German colonists who used other materials to construct their dwellings.

Due to a lack of wood on the Russian steppe, German-Russians were forced to abandon their centuries-old Fachwerk timber framing techniques and rely on indigenous building materials such as clay and stone. Eventually the colonists learned to build entire

farmsteads with clay because the material was so prevalent in the region. Stumpp and others indicate the use of clay was so widespread that every village had its own clay pit, allowing each villager to haul as much clay as necessary.<sup>72</sup> Other residents had their own pit within the farmstead.

Close to the building site, in a circle about three and one-half meters in diameter, the soil was turned over the depth of a spade and made into a dough into which chaff and short straw was mixed. Since the kneading would have been too difficult for men, it was done with horses . . . The deeper one dug, the better the bricks became, because there was yellow clay below. Often thousands of bricks were removed from such a hole and it became quite deep. We had in our yard for years and years the hole from which our bricks had been taken.<sup>73</sup>

In 1843, of 1,779 houses in the Mennonite-settled Molotschna villages, 1,240 (69.7%) were made of clay brick, 209 (11.75%) of Fachwerk, 157 (8.8%) of fired brick, and 52 (2.9%) of stone.<sup>74</sup> Although these figures represent only one community in South Russia, it is interesting to contrast the small percentage of houses constructed of stone with the large number (20 of 21) of German-Russian houses in Stark County built of stone.

In southwestern Russia, three house types -- each differing slightly in materials and form -- provided shelter for colonists from the time they settled until their departure for the New World. Most of the earliest German-Russians arrived only to find deficient housing conditions despite claims by government officials that permanent dwellings would be available for immediate occupancy.<sup>75</sup>

The first type of house occupied by settlers was a hastily-erected building made of sod, clay, or wicker and clay. In 1805 the Lustdorf Colony near Odessa contained primitive "dwellings of clay-plastered wickerwork with thatched roof[s] consist[ing] of a single room, 24, by 28 feet . . . "<sup>76</sup> These frontier houses were intended to provide quick, temporary shelter until more suitable living quarters could be built. Depending on when they arrived and the length of time necessary for living in these hovels, the colonists likely abandoned their ephemeral dwellings as soon as more permanent housing could be constructed.

Historical accounts suggest that the next type of dwelling built by German-Russians was known as a semelanka (also spelled zemlyanka, semelyanka, or semeljanka).<sup>77</sup> Referring to a subterranean structure, a German traveling in Russia in 1838 reported that local inhabitants of the steppe were already living in earthen huts known as semelacki, "conceal[ing] themselves and their dwellings halfway in the earth. They excavate a cellar three to four feet deep . . . [building] a wall of earth about four feet high . . . "<sup>78</sup> Another account described a Russian peasant assisting inexperienced German settlers in the construction of "zemlyanka, or earth houses, which were simply big holes in the ground covered with the lumber from the wagons."<sup>79</sup>

The semelanka, however, was also described as a more permanent dwelling that replaced the flimsy wicker and clay houses. Height suggests it "was actually an adobe hut, constructed of sun-dried clay blocks . . ."<sup>80</sup> Other references to the semelanka in colonies surrounding Odessa clearly show it was built most frequently with either sun-dried clay bricks or rammed earth, and occasionally of stone.<sup>81</sup> What is not clear, however, is the degree of permanency intended for these residences. The term semelanka assumes different meanings depending on its context, as William Sherman notes:

...semelanka in Russian and Ukrainian refers to the half underground house with its varied type of earth, wood or reed roof. The Germans in Russia, however, seemed to use the word in a wider sense. The simple one or two room early house of clay, adobe or rammed clay, whether above or below ground, was also called a semelanka.<sup>82</sup>

In the Black Sea colonies semelanka was commonly referred to as indigenous to the Russian territory, associated either with local inhabitants, members of the military, or government officials dispatched to build these dwellings for the colonists. In referring to semelankas, the size of one German-Russian colony is designated in an 1809 report from the Neudorf settlement which notes that "Councilor von Rosenkampf supervised the construction of the 100 huts of stamped earth . . ."<sup>83</sup> In another instance, sixty-five families from the Neuberg Colony who had lived in wicker and clay huts since the early summer of 1805 received assistance from a detachment of Russian soldiers who helped them build nine rammed earth semelankas.<sup>84</sup>

Despite occasional descriptions to the contrary, the semelanka seems to have been a substantial improvement over the ephemeral wicker and clay dwelling, and was suitable for permanent residency when regularly maintained. The one-story, central chimney building had a two- or three-room plan according to an official design issued by the Colonists Welfare Office.<sup>85</sup> As in Germany, these houses were usually built with the gable end toward the street; entry was gained from the eave side off the farm courtyard. The two-room semelanka provided space for a combination kitchen-living area and an additional room, while the three-room plan allowed for a central kitchen flanked by chambers. Inside a two-room pioneer dwelling "the large cook-and-bake stove was made of wicker work which was covered with a thick layer of clay. Sometimes it was mounted into the interior wall, in order to provide heat for both rooms."<sup>86</sup> An example of this house type was built by the Hahn family, who emigrated to the Lichtental Colony from Wurttemberg in 1833. During the summer of 1834 the Hahn brothers, with their mother, built a house measuring about 18' by 28' with a hip roof made of reeds. Their dwelling had a vestibule, a small parlor and bedroom to the left, a kitchen straight ahead, and the barn on the right.<sup>87</sup> Mention of the barn as part of the house is significant because it shows that attached housebarns existed on the steppe.

Regardless of how the semelanka was constructed and for what period of time it was occupied, two points emerge from this discussion: 1) semelankas superseded the initial temporary wicker and clay structure, and 2) their design and construction techniques were influenced either by native occupants of the steppe or by representatives who were officially responsible for the colonists' settlement.

The form of the semelanka is common throughout Europe but resembles in particular houses in the Palatinate and Alsace, Wurttemberg, Hesse, the Rhineland, and parts of Baden.<sup>88</sup> While two-room and tripartite houses are significant Anglo-American traditions, central European examples differ from British types in their orientation (gable toward the street) and single, central chimney.<sup>89</sup>

Many references portray houses from the Black Sea region with similar two-room or central hall tripartite plans (Fig. 8). Baron von Haxthausen described a house in which the residents ". . . enter directly from the street into the hall, to the right and left of which are the various rooms, the kitchen being generally separated from the others . . ." <sup>90</sup> Many Stark County houses built by German-Russian and German-Hungarian immigrants display the same two-bay and tripartite plans (see 32 SK 171, 32 SK 173, 32 SK 177, and 32 SK 188). An essential component of German-Russian and German-Hungarian houses in Europe and in Stark County is the central kitchen. Written sources indicate that the Old World houses consistently incorporated a hearth and chimney at or near the center of the building. In a tripartite house, for example, the middle bay was always the kitchen; if undivided it also served as a hall which provided access to the first and third bays (or the front and back rooms). The central corridor may have eventually developed into a separate room and took the hearth or ern. Nearly all of the Stark County houses had a central kitchen with the living room, or stube, in the customary location, the front left bay.

The Heimatbuch der Deutschen aus Russland, a German publication which focuses on German-Russian history, suggests that the tripartite plan was a base type from which at least two other variations developed.<sup>91</sup> This "Phase 1" dwelling (Fig. 9) consisted of two large rooms divided by a hall/kitchen from which one or more heating stoves could be fired. One German-Russian colonist described this house in the following manner:

A thin wall separated the kitchen, with the brick fireplace, from the hallway. The stoves in the two rooms were heated from there. One of the stoves, the one in the back room, was a baking oven. The back room was entered from the right of the hall and the front room from the left.<sup>92</sup>

In the second phase a division was introduced near the front of the central hall creating a small entryway (vorhausl). The recessed kitchen, in a sense, thus became a schwarze Küche or black kitchen. In the third phase longitudinal partitions were added to the first and third rooms, resulting in a two-room deep plan.

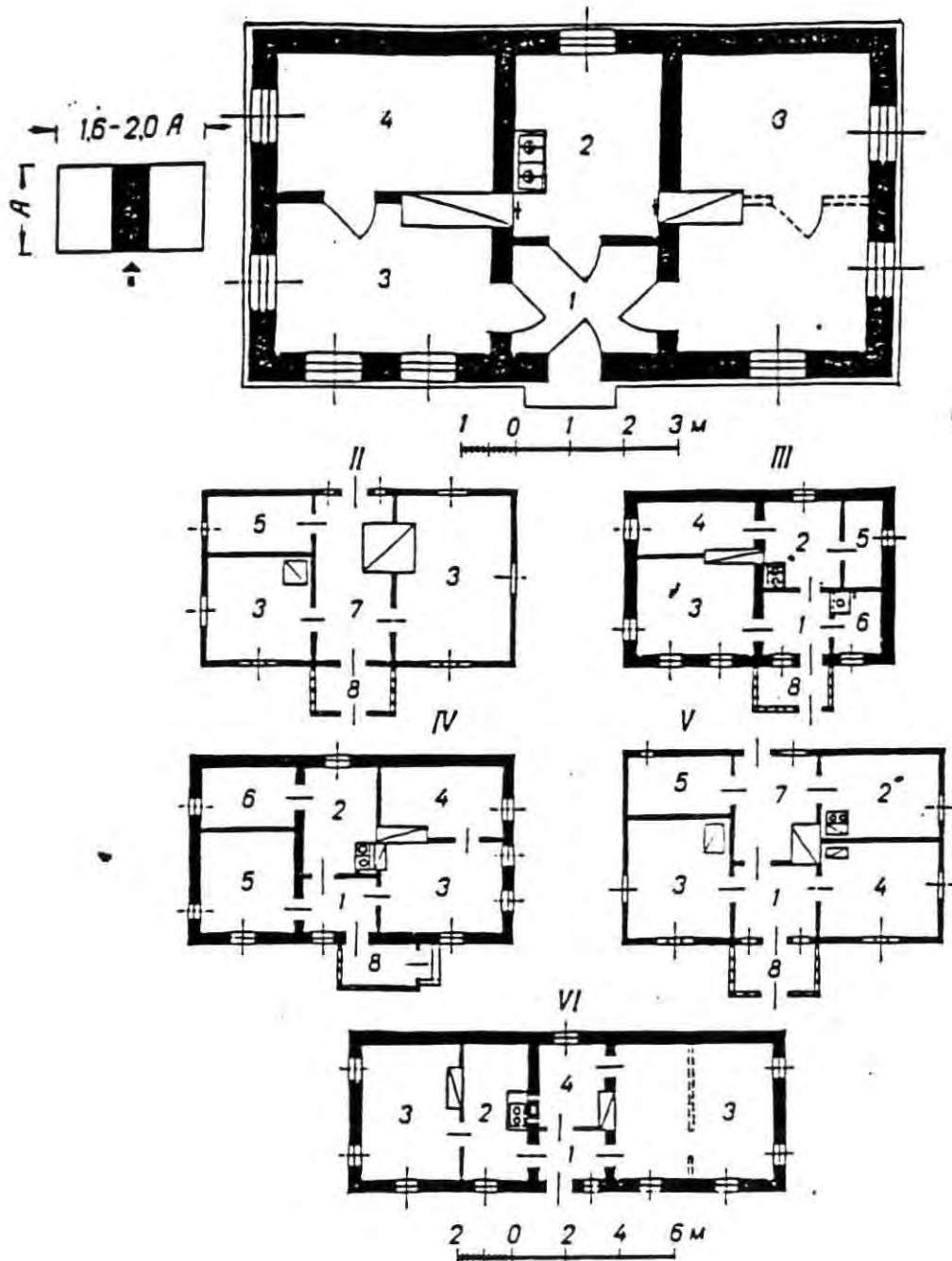
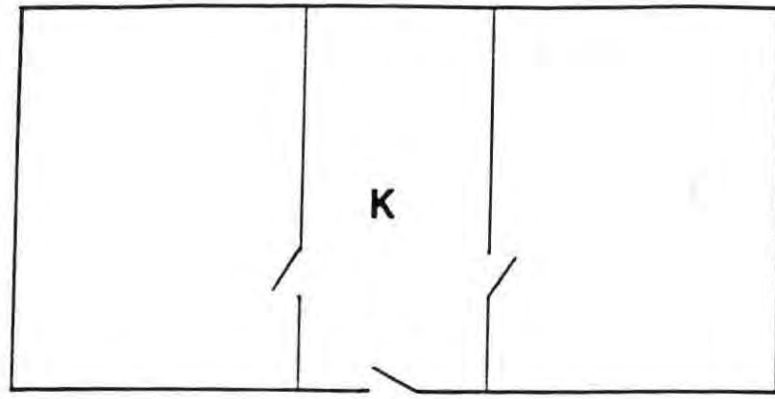
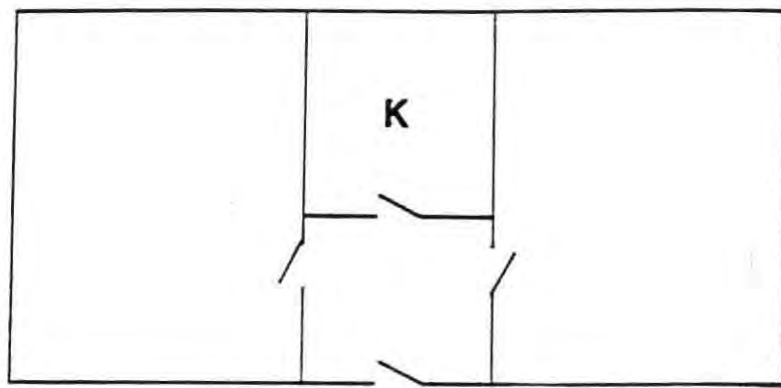


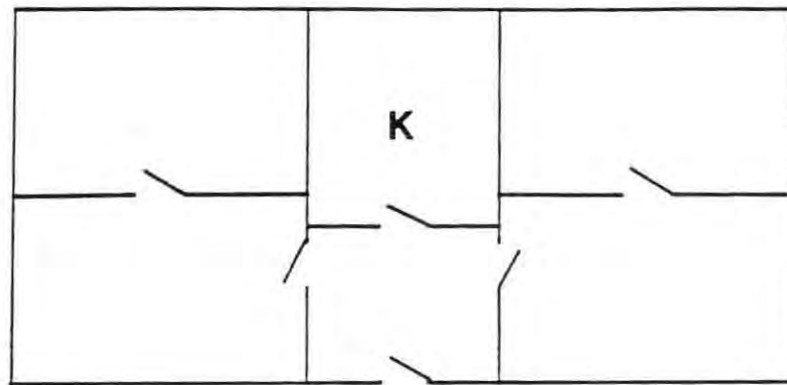
Figure 8. Plans of six types of tripartite house from the Ukrainian-Russian border area. Taken from: Samojłowych (n.d.)



1



2



3

Figure 9. Three-stage development of a German-Russian house from the Heimatbuch. Taken from: Schnurr (1967).



The final German-Russian house type, the kolonistenhaus or einheitshaus, later displaced the semelanka as the permanent steppe dwelling. Like the semelanka, this "colonist house" also seems to have been derived from architectural plans promulgated by local administrative agencies. In 1830 the government created an "Association for the Improvement of Agriculture and Industry (later called the "Agricultural Association"), which was influential in the agricultural, economic, and educational development of the colonies. The Agricultural Association also supervised the construction of houses and the planning of villages, especially among the Mennonites.<sup>93</sup> Another organization, known as the "Guardian's Committee," was concerned with the colonists' affairs and published a treatise entitled "Conversation Paper for German Settlers in Southern Russia." In October 1846 they addressed the topic of "Rural Architecture," providing directives to settlers for siting and arranging farm buildings, use of building and roofing materials, and placement of windows and rooms in the house relative to the location of the kitchen and bakeovens. While not issuing exact dimensions for proposed rooms or houses, the article essentially outlined reasons for constructing a building in such a manner that would leave little doubt for a colonist eager to build his dwelling.<sup>94</sup>

This type of house was long and rectangular-shaped with a gable roof and entrance on the axial wall; it was basically an enlarged model of the semelanka. Oriented with its gable toward the street as in central Europe, the kolonistenhaus was characteristically two rooms deep with four to six rooms dispersed around a central hearth. The Joh Loran House in Stark County (32 SK 186) represents a kolonistenhaus with its central kitchen and two end bays partitioned laterally to create five interior rooms. The length of the house varied and frequently appeared longer than usual due to the continuous roof ridge connecting dwelling and barn. In his description of the Black Sea region, Stumpp referred to German-Russian houses as:

'Einheitshauser' . . . that is to say, the house, barn and shed were all under one roof . . . Almost everywhere the colonist house had a somewhat similar floor plan. From the entrance one came into a hallway which led to the kitchen. On either side were living quarters; on the street side were located the living room (staatstube) and the master bedroom; on the corresponding left side were the front and rear bedrooms. The floors were of wood and the walls were covered with patterned wallpaper painted. The yards were all laid out according to the plan approved by the administrative authorities: 90 to 120 feet wide and 240 to 360 feet long.<sup>95</sup>

In both the Ernhaus and tripartite Black Sea German-Russian houses, the room to the left of the hall/kitchen (facing the street and called the "front" room) was known as the stube. Like its western European counterpart, the stube typically functioned as a combined living and dining area for the family. In other houses it was more like a formal parlor room reserved for special occasions such as weddings, funerals, and receiving important guests. The significance of this space is shown by one colonist who, in recalling his younger years, said that only certain individuals were allowed in the room:

We children had no business in the front room. Not until later, when father bought a small harmonium, which was placed in the front room, and we children, one after the other, learned to play it, were we allowed to go to that room.<sup>96</sup>

Since it was considered the most important room in the house, interior decoration of the stube was consistent with its use. The best furniture was displayed here, including a dining table and bench for family members. Walls were commonly decorated with paint in a variety of colors and patterns, and sometimes partially covered with wainscot.<sup>97</sup> The walls and ceilings of Mennonite houses "were painted and several paintings such as of the grandparents or of the Russian Emperor and Empress adorned the plain interior."<sup>98</sup> In the corner closest to the dining table one frequently found a religious object, usually a small statue or cross placed on a shelf. In northern Switzerland this sacred corner is known as the herrgottswinkel; the use of such religious or privileged corners are prevalent throughout eastern and western Europe.<sup>99</sup> Larger and better-appointed houses also contained a tall built-in cupboard within the stube, consistently located to the right of the doorway leading to the room. Typically a large piece of furniture, the recessed cupboard extended from the floor to near the ceiling with several lower drawers and two glazed doors. Inside were kept some of the family's most important possessions, which were often displayed in the upper section. The use of a recessed cupboard was a common characteristic in German-Russian Mennonite dwellings in northern Europe, particularly in the Vistula Delta area.<sup>100</sup>

In smaller houses the stube was undivided; wider and two-room deep dwellings utilized a lateral partition that created either two equally-sized rooms or a slightly smaller back room (kammer) than the stube. The kammer had a variety of uses including serving as a small bedroom, storage area, or utility space for domestic activities. The term itself implies an unheated room although, depending on the heating oven's location within the house, the kammer could have been warmed. The middle room of the tripartite house may have had multiple functions as an entrance room (vorhaus or hausflur), central passage, or combination hall/kitchen. In tripartite houses the vorhaus sometimes contained the stairs to the loft. The third room likely served as a bedroom (hinterstube) and, when partitioned laterally, had a smaller hinterkammer at the back. Alternatives to this generalized room arrangement were common, however, depending on the desires of the owner/builder. For example, the first and third rooms apparently were reversed in some houses showing that room function could be flexible. Similarly, the number and location of heating ovens varied. Nevertheless, patterns of room use and building form were repeated with regularity, strongly suggesting that "almost everywhere the colonist house had a somewhat similar floor plan."<sup>101</sup>

The fact that German-Russian houses incorporated the same generalized floor plan is noteworthy, but the practice was common among other homogeneous ethnic groups that settled together.<sup>102</sup> More significantly, these settlers rejected any thought of duplicating indigenous Russian house forms in favor of their familiar western European three- or four-room Ernhaus and tripartite plan.

The increased size of the Kolonistenhaus house type allowed for greater specialization of interior space. The German-Russian house thus had a combination hallway/kitchen (sometimes subdivided laterally), with separate rooms for sleeping, entertaining guests, and conducting household chores. As in western Europe, the central part of the house was an important area of the building; here the major source of heat was fired and all kitchen-related functions took place.

#### 2.4.1.4. Norwegian Architecture

Since Medieval times, wood has played a major role in the construction of buildings throughout much of Scandinavia. Its use corresponds with a coniferous forest area above 55 degrees north latitude where timber structures are common.<sup>103</sup>

In Norway, the earliest wood dwelling was the arestue, a simple, one-room log structure which used a chimneyless, centrally-placed stone hearth and ljore, or opening near the ridge to let out smoke. Since there were no windows in the arestue, the interior was poorly lit and frequently filled with smoke. In form and plan, this dwelling consisted of a single room with a door in the gable end covered by an extended roof.

Later, a major innovation occurred when the fireplace was moved into the corner adjacent to the door and enclosed on three sides by stone walls. This new type of fuel-saving, efficient fireplace was called a rokovn or smoke-stove and the house in which it was found, a rokovnstue. The typical rokovnstue of the early 1600s still lacked windows, but sometimes they were added later.<sup>104</sup>

In eastern Norway, where wood was more plentiful than along the western coastal districts, the energy-efficient rokovn was unnecessary, thereby prompting the development of a modified hearth known as a peis or corner fireplace. Introduced in the seventeenth century, the peis consisted of a low hearth with stone sides at the back and stone hood and chimney (skorsten) to carry the smoke directly outside. It was usually placed in the corner opposite the door, a slight distance from the walls to facilitate drying clothes, wood, and grain.<sup>105</sup>

Several changes in dwelling design occurred with the introduction of the chimney. The biggest advantage was that interior air became more purified, leading to the use of upper spaces for rooms. At the same time, a wood frame enclosure was built over the entrance resulting in a two-room house, and the door was moved from the gable end to the axial wall. The fireplace next to the old entrance was replaced by the peis in the opposite corner. Some houses had full or half stories added on top of the main structure, and others had to be completely rebuilt, to achieve the same result -- an opportunity to utilize the loft area for storage or living spaces.<sup>106</sup>

In the one-and-one-half and two-story houses that developed with the introduction of the chimney, the staircase to the loft was frequently located within the sval, an enclosed hall or anteroom (forestue) that was used as a storeroom, and also served as a shelter from inclement weather and provided protection from enemies. The sval was used at one or both levels of the house, and sometimes extended along three sides, ending in a privy. It was actually built of vertical boards and enclosed within a log frame with the inside stairs running parallel to the long side of the house.<sup>107</sup>

The two-room house, a traditional and common Norwegian form, was either constructed initially as a single building or it represented the natural progression of the one-room dwelling into an expanded building.<sup>108</sup> The main room, or stue, was often nearly square in size and accessible directly from the entrance or from the adjoining room. Writing about Norwegian-American houses in Wisconsin, architectural historian Richard W.E. Perrin suggests that ". . . a much favored arrangement was to adjoin two rooms on the first floor as kjokken (kitchen) and stue (parlor) and repeat the plan on the second floor as soverum (bedroom) and bod (loft)."<sup>109</sup> This bod was often used as a sleeping area for children during the winter or as a dry-storage facility.<sup>110</sup>

Most early folk houses in Norway were built using a type of construction known as laftverk laft or simply laft in which horizontal timbers were hewn and dovetailed together at the corners, with their ends protruding; the cut log ends extending at each corner were called noy.<sup>111</sup> The saddle notch was used with regularity in joining the corners, and chinking with clay or mud served to fill the interstices between logs.

A method of wall construction was later developed that resulted in the distinctive technique of fitting logs together so as to render obsolete the use of chinking. Known as the North European log construction technique, the procedure created airtight buildings that kept the cold out and the warmth in, and the resulting structures were distinguished by the tight fit of their scribed timbers. The builder used a double-pointed scribe to trace the contour from the top of one log to the bottom of the log that was to rest atop it. He then hewed the scribed log so that it would fit snugly against its mate.<sup>112</sup> The method assisted in "tightening the joint when the upper log sank into the notch, and could act as a check against displacement and sliding . . ." <sup>113</sup> Frequently the builder carved a longitudinal groove (langdraget) in the underside of each log and filled this furrow with moss to achieve extra insulation. Using a broadax, he then planed the interior and exterior sides of the timbers.

With regard to outbuildings and siting characteristics, in Norway five basic types of farmstead arrangements have been distinguished: 1) the cluster-farm, 2) the row-farm, 3) the double-farm, 4) the open square, and 5) the closed square. Clusters are common in western Norway where the topography does not allow for more regular forms. The row is used in border zones between east and west, such as Setosdal and Telemark, where the space between houses often has the character of a street. The double farm is found in Gudbrandsdal, and consists of grouping the buildings for domestic and storage use around a courtyard separate from the outbuildings that are placed around a cattle yard. The open square is found in eastern Norway, while the closed square is common in Trondelag.<sup>114</sup>

#### 2.4.1.5. German-Russian Architecture in South Dakota<sup>115</sup>

The fundamental house form brought from the Russian Steppe to South Dakota was a rectangular central chimney building constructed of indigenous materials. Built first from various combinations of clay and stone, the houses were later constructed with commercially available lumber. A turn-of-the-century reporter made the following comments about the German-Russian dwellings in northern South Dakota:

Low-roofed and broad are the houses of these peasants, veritable homes of earth. They are not the sod shanties of the Western boomer by any means, for these foreigners have a way of building for the future. They construct their homes in a curious fashion, and build them so substantially they will last half a century if necessary . . . <sup>116</sup>

South Dakota's German-Russians used clay in a variety of ways to construct load-bearing walls for their permanent houses. The most basic method of construction, puddled clay, involved heaping the mixture to a width of about 24 inches and a height of about 13 to 18 inches. Builders used a variety of tools to pile the clay, which solidified in wooden forms or similar molding devices. After the first layer of clay dried, successive tiers were added until the desired wall height was achieved.

A second construction technique, puddled clay with stone, is similar to the first except stones of varying dimensions are incorporated into the clay wall. Stones served as an infill and thus reduced the amount of time and work required to build the wall.

Another type of clay construction, called rammed earth, involves compacting the clay mixture between board forms. Precisely how the mixture was tamped is unclear, but cultures throughout the world typically used a sturdy ramming device or people standing on boards. Because the clay was held firmly in place by a form, the finished walls are relatively smooth and square.

Two additional types of construction resulted from forming clay by hand or with the aid of a mold. For the first the earthen mixture is shaped into a large biscuit-like oval; these biscuits are then laid up in a bed of clay mortar to form a wall. Large clay bricks, resembling adobe but known locally as Batsa, constitute the second method. These were fashioned by hand or more frequently with a wooden mold. One resident of Leola, South Dakota stated that bricks were made by putting a clay, straw, and water "batter" into a 14" by 6" by 6" frame and allowed to dry.<sup>117</sup> According to German-Russian historian Karl Stumpp, these sun-dried clay blocks were called Kohlstein in southern Russia, while Joseph Height refers to them as Kohlstaan.<sup>118</sup> A detailed description of a Batsa house in northern South Dakota is given in Harper's Weekly from 1896:

[The farmer] has been making bricks for days, huge clay and straw bricks, perhaps twelve inches thick by eighteen inches long. After the bricks are sun-dried they are laid up for his walls, the joints being properly broken.

The interstices between the bricks are filled in with clay in a soft mass, making the wall solid and about two feet in thickness. The color of one of these walls as you see it on the prairie is a dark soft gray; or when, as in some cases, it is plastered upon the outside, it is lighter in color. The walls are probably not more than seven feet high.<sup>119</sup>

Some builders in South Dakota constructed masonry houses, using large stones to form load-bearing walls. These were either randomly placed in the wall or evenly coursed, and always laid up in clay mortar. Most walls are made with fieldstones that have not been dressed, although occasionally the stones are chiseled and used as quoins.

Other dwellings were built utilizing a simple balloon frame of milled lumber and conventional weatherboards on the exterior. It is important to note that even when builders employed wood frame systems, traditional house forms and floor plans prevailed. A related form of construction combined Batsa brick with a balloon frame building. In these dwellings Batsa was neatly stacked between 2" by 4" vertical studs from the sill to the plate and covered with sheathing.

A few houses in southeastern South Dakota were also constructed with a locally manufactured kiln-fired brick. One Turner County resident, John Gering, is reported to have made bricks that were used by some of his fellow Mennonite settlers.<sup>120</sup>

Another common construction feature in South Dakota German-Russian houses is the use of thick clay loft floors. Their thickness varies from six to nine inches, but all are constructed in the same fashion. Attached to both sides of each ceiling joist are small one-inch wide nailing strips that support hand-split wooden staves. Earthen material is packed between the staves. A thin veneer of clay is spread on the entire surface, over which whitewash is applied for the finished ceiling. In the loft, the clay is sometimes covered with wooden floor boards. This technique is adapted from western Europe, where builders carved channels into the sides of the joists to receive staves wrapped with straw and clay to form the floor. Other German immigrants in America relied on the same system and apparently brought it directly from their homeland.<sup>121</sup> Only one example [32 SK 173] of a clay loft floor was identified in Stark County, and this at the only house constructed of mud brick.

Builders in South Dakota also used clay as a veneer on interior walls, even if they were of balloon frame construction. Functioning as a preservative and insulator, the clay was often whitewashed, decoratively painted, or covered with some kind of paper. A rich, ethnic decorative tradition is still evident in some houses. The 1896 Harper's Weekly article described the interior of one dwelling:

The walls are plastered with clay on the inside, and are then painted or kalsomined, the ceilings in almost all instances being tinted a pronounced blue. The walls are plain white or decorated. In this decoration much

ingenuity is shown. The body of the wall will first be painted white. Then with long corn-cobs and different-colored kalsomines the walls are done in different-colored stripes the width of the cob's length, which is dipped in the coloring matter and rolled up and down the walls making a queer but not inartistic graining effect.<sup>122</sup>

While South Dakota's German-Russians used clay in numerous ways both structurally and decoratively, they relied on only a few basic floor plans in constructing their houses. The division of interior space seems to be derived from the central chimney Ernhaus and tripartite dwelling common in western Europe and perpetuated in southwestern Russia. Like those buildings, the South Dakota houses are rectangular in shape with a central chimney around which the rooms are arranged. Numbering from two to five, the rooms are clustered by function much like in the Old World. All houses are organized with either two or three bays, in both single- and two-room deep plans. The first bay, on the left, functions as the parlor, or stube, and often the sleeping quarters for different family members. The second or middle bay, when present, contains the entrance leading into the kitchen, or kuche. In tripartite dwellings the third bay, on the right, serves as either a sleeping room or a storage area. If the structure is a housebarn, the barn is connected to the gable end of the third bay.

A unique aspect of these dwellings is a second, interior kitchen, called a black kitchen, or schwarze Kuche. This partitioned area was used primarily for cooking and food preparation. On the opposite side of the chimney and located in the first bay, is a combined furnace and bake oven for heating the house and baking goods. The oven forms part of the wall partition that divides the bay into two unequally-sized rooms. The larger front room is the primary living space, or stube, and the smaller back room, or kammer, is often used for sleeping or some utility function. In the second bay, the partition creates a smaller space toward the front of the building which serves as a vestibule, or vorhaus and storage room.

In his history of the Mennonite settlements around Freeman in southeastern South Dakota, Jacob Mendel suggests that area houses shared a tripartite floor plan. "One end had two rooms, a large and a small, in the center a hall and the kitchen, and the other end had a room, then a three foot walk out in the barn, then the pantry room."<sup>123</sup>

Unlike those who emigrated to the Dakotas, most of the German-Russians who settled in Kansas and Nebraska came from the Volga region north of the Black Sea. Beginning in 1876, hundreds of Volga German-Russians took up land in western Kansas, but rather than homestead large tracts of land on individual farms, they established six agrarian villages.<sup>124</sup> Like their neighbors to the north, however, the settlers in Kansas used indigenous materials to construct houses as well as a variety of agricultural buildings.



## 2.5. SUMMARY OF ETHNIC ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY IN STARK COUNTY

### 2.5.1 FIRST HOUSES

Descriptions of the first houses constructed by immigrants to Stark County are found in local family histories. Many early arrivals in Stark County first constructed sod houses or dugouts. In his discussion of a Czech settlement northwest of Dickinson, Theodore Pedeliski notes that "While some had time enough only to make dugouts before winter, others occupied primitive rock and sod dwellings left by the previous wave of settlers."<sup>125</sup> The daughter of Adam Lefor, Sr. recalled that upon the family's arrival in 1893 her parents were "bewildered by the lack of building materials, they hardly knew what to do. Someone suggested that they dig a hole in the hillside, cover it with brush and trees and crawl in. They did just that . . ." <sup>126</sup> Although dugouts and sod houses appear to have been common in Stark County, the "Ethnic Architecture in Stark County" survey located no surviving examples of these first "dwellings."

Local oral tradition varies as to the next step homesteaders took in constructing a more permanent house. Gilman Peterson's father and two brothers spent their first winter gathering stone for the house.<sup>127</sup> Jacob Frank's grandfather gathered stones from the plowed fields in piles and eventually hauled them to the building site.<sup>128</sup> The Lefors' obtained stone from shallow sandstone quarries on their property.<sup>129</sup>

### 2.5.2. BUILDING MATERIALS

Settlers in Stark County took advantage of two sources of stone. The most easily accessible was the stone plowed up in fields and identified locally by a variety of names such as "prairie rock," "flint rock," and "petrified wood." Geologically, it is chert, a cryptocrystalline quartz. The other less readily available stone is sometimes locally called "sandrock;" it is a medium-grained sandstone which was quarried from outcroppings and just below the ground surface. German-Russians in Emmons and other North Dakota counties also utilized local sandstone to construct both random stone slab and cut stone walls.<sup>130</sup> However, the almost exclusive use of stone as found in Stark County is not typical of other counties where a variety of earthen wall systems were used.

Typically, the sandstone was used for the construction of houses and the chert was used for outbuildings. A presumption can be made that, although more labor intensive to obtain, the quarried sandstone provided a "tighter" building material. Once quarried, the stone was easily shaped into rough blocks. The stones were then laid-up with a mortar of clay, straw, and manure.<sup>131</sup> This same mixture was then used to coat both the exterior stone and applied over lath on the interior walls.

The more readily available chert was most often used for outbuildings that did not need to be weatherproof. The chert was laid up with the same clay, straw, and manure mortar as the sandstone walls. Its conchoidal fractures produced sharp edges and deep set joints which did not lend themselves easily to plastering.



Figure 10. A sandstone outcropping on the Thomas Lefor Homestead [32 SK 191] from which stones were quarried for the house.



Figure 11. A shallow sandstone quarry on the Thomas Lefor Homestead [32 SK 191]

When asked about the difference in the use of these two stones, Harold Kasberg said that "sandrock" was more suitable for houses because it absorbed moisture making it cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter than the "flintrock" which tended to freeze.

The clay used for mortar was found in deposits throughout the county, and according to Bill Schmidt, was available to all residents. Farmers hauled the clay from its source to their farms where it was placed in a pile. Water was poured on the clay to which were added straw or hay and manure.<sup>132</sup> The mixture was then blended together by walking a horse over it for 15 minutes.<sup>133</sup> The manure was the essential ingredient in the mixture because it provided the consistency necessary for easy spreading when plastering interior and exterior walls.<sup>134</sup> After placement on exterior walls, the plaster was whitewashed to keep the rain from washing it away. Reportedly, the whitewash would harden the exterior surface.<sup>135</sup> A mixture of mortar was made annually to replaster those areas which had deteriorated.<sup>136</sup> The exterior plaster was later replaced with commercial stucco on many houses in the county.

### 2.5.3. FARMSTEADS

#### 2.5.3.1. Farmstead Layout



Figure 12. Courtyard arrangement of buildings at the Mathias Link Farmstead [32 SK 155].

Ethnic farmsteads in Stark County were historically characterized by a number of buildings, each serving a specialized function.<sup>137</sup> Besides the house and barn, a typical farmstead was likely to include one or more granaries, a smoke house, a chicken house, a privy, and possibly a machine shed, summer kitchen, and underground cellar.

Although ethnic farmsteads are most readily identified by the presence of stone buildings, existing farmsteads often encompass a combination of stone and wood frame buildings. These buildings represent the evolution of a working farm over several decades -- expanding with growing families, increased prosperity, and changes in agricultural technology. Unfortunately, the lack of construction dates for the majority of buildings makes it difficult to trace the evolution of building types and changes in construction materials on ethnic farmsteads, and the loss of buildings limits the identification of complete farmstead layouts. It is not a safe supposition, however, to presume that the stone buildings are the oldest. Oral interviews documented several instances of major stone buildings constructed through the 1920s and into the 1930s [see NDCRS site forms for 32 SK 185 and 32 SK 168] and as late as the modified-rainbow roof barn at the Jacob Johnson Farmstead [32 SK 193] constructed in the late 1940s.

The farmsteads in Stark County presented little discernible pattern in the overall placement of buildings and structures (other than the orientation of the house) or in their relationship to one another. An irregular or scattered placement of buildings and structures was by far the most commonly recorded farmstead layout. These varied from some attempts at linear arrangements to buildings placed with no apparent relationship to each other at all. Despite the scattered building arrangements, clearly defined courtyard arrangements were discerned at five farmsteads in the survey area [32 SK 156, 32 SK 155, 32 SK 159, 32 SK 162, 32 SK 173]. Multiple buildings and structures at these farmsteads were grouped in rows on three or four sides of an open rectangular area.

#### 2.5.3.2. Farmstead Houses

##### 2.5.3.2.1. Design and Plan

The houses located on ethnic farmsteads in Stark County share a consistency in building materials and design characteristics not found among any of the other farmstead buildings. The typical house is constructed of locally quarried sandstone coated with stucco. Usually one story high and built close to the ground on a low foundation, it is rectangular in plan with side facing gables and has a moderately steep roof. A centrally located door is placed near the center of the axial wall of the house and faces east or south. Windows are generally two-over-two double-hung sash.

In their simplest form, ethnic farmstead houses consist of a single room. No free standing examples of one-room houses were located in the county, but one-room houses with later additions were identified at four farmsteads [32 SK 154, 32 SK 158, 32 SK 166, 32 SK 174]. The vast majority of dwellings have two or three rooms, with each plan



Figure 13. Two-room house at Joseph Kuhn Farmstead [32 SK 187]. Wall on left is partially collapsed exposing stone.

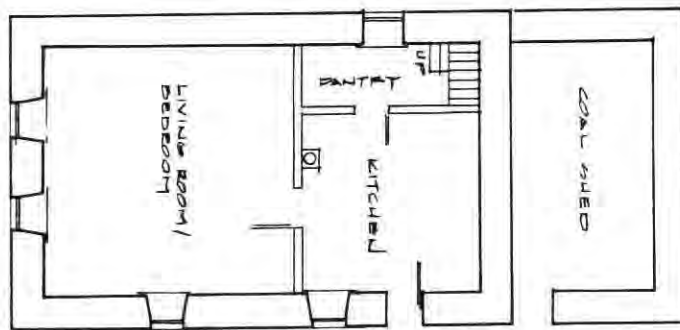


Figure 14. Plan of Joseph Kuhn House [32 SK 187]



Figure 15. Three-room house at Wilhelm Heudeker Farmstead [32 SK 176].

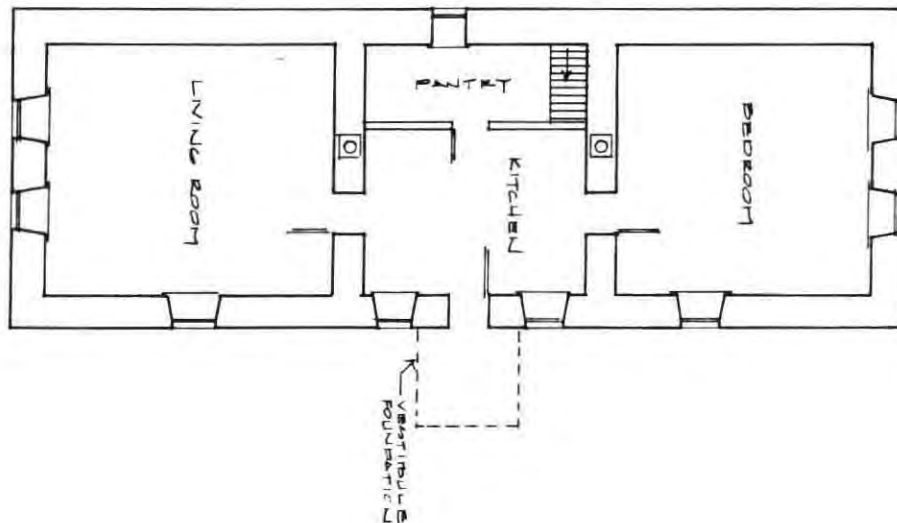


Figure 16. Plan of Wilhelm Heudeker House [32 SK 176].

almost equally represented in the survey. Rooms are about 16 feet square and placed end to end in a linear fashion. Some multiple room houses are the result of additions while others were originally constructed with that floor plan. Similar one-story, gable roofed, two- and-three room dwellings were traditionally built by German-Russians in Emmons County, with identical room arrangements and functions.<sup>138</sup> These two- and three-room houses are essentially based on the Ernhaus or tripartite plans described in Section 2.4 of this report.

Additions to one- and two-room houses appear to have been much more common than previously believed.<sup>139</sup> While exterior stucco and interior plaster make it impossible to determine with full certainty the frequency of additions, at least nine examples were documented in the survey. The presence of interior stone walls is often the most visible evidence of an addition, but whether every house with interior stone walls has had an addition is unknown. Moreover, the absence of interior stone walls does not necessarily provide evidence that an addition does not exist. The survey found two examples of end stone walls that were removed when an addition was constructed.



Figure 17. Evidence of addition to the Mathias Link House [32 SK 155].

Several houses in Stark County also have a coal shed addition. Located either on one end of the house or on the rear, they were most often constructed of stone and had a shed roof. If placed on the end, the coal shed was accessed by an exterior door with no direct opening to the interior of the house from the shed; if placed on the rear, a door often entered from the house.

Just as the Stark County ethnic settlers utilized a limited number of materials to construct their houses, they also relied on only a few basic floor plans to design their dwellings. The division of interior space seems to be derived from the central chimney Ernhaus (illustrated in Figures 4 and 5) and tripartite house common in western Europe and perpetuated by German-Hungarians and German-Russians in North Dakota. Like those buildings, the Stark County houses are rectangular in shape with a central chimney around which the rooms are arranged. The primary difference between the Old World house plans and those in Stark County is that the North Dakota builders seem to have been more conservative in the scale of their houses--nearly all appear to have originally been constructed as single pile buildings resulting in fewer interior rooms. Although the overall size of the Stark County houses may be smaller than in Europe, it is clear that traditional forms persisted in Stark County and were based on floor plans common to the settlement regions from which the German-Hungarians and German-Russians emigrated.

#### 2.5.3.2.2. Roofs

The roofs of most ethnic farmstead houses are constructed of sawn rafters, sheathed with lumber and covered with wood shingles. The gable end is normally studded and covered with clapboard siding. A single two-over-two or small, square four-light window is located in each gable end to provide light to the attic. A slight flare at the bottom of the siding sometimes provides protection to the stone wall below. Eaves are minimal.

A few examples of ridgepole (and ridgebeam) supported roofs are found in Stark County houses [32 SK 154, 32 SK 170, 32 SK 174 (removed), 32 SK 188, 32 SK 198]. In these examples, the pitch of the roof is low, with no, or only partial, interior ceilings. These houses also have stone gable ends and exposed rafter tails. The low pitch and ridge pole may have been constructed to support a roof of "sod, dirt, and branches"<sup>140</sup> although no physical or photographic evidence or oral histories were found to support this theory. The paucity of ridgepoles in houses is consistent with the results of a survey of German-Russian houses in Emmons County, where only one dwelling had a ridgepole.<sup>141</sup> Two instances of thatching on outbuildings were documented through oral histories.





Figure 18. Exposed ridgebeam is visible at left. Jacob Brittner Farmstead [SK 32 188].



Figure 19. Detail of wood frame "vorhausl" on the Philip Loran house [32 SK 190].

#### 2.5.3.2.3. Vestibules

Although vestibules or "vorhausls" have been characterized as an identifying feature of at least German-Russian houses, they are by no means universal.<sup>142</sup> Vestibules, or evidence of vestibules, appeared on about one-half of the houses surveyed and without any distinct difference among the two major ethnic groups -- the German-Russians and German-Hungarians. Vestibules are also present on one Norwegian house, one Bohemian house, and one Estonian house surveyed. Some vestibules are clearly later additions to the house, as with the Henry Schneider house where a historic photograph shows the family seated in front of the house without the vestibule. Vestibules were constructed of a variety of materials including wood frame, stone, and a combination of brick and stone.

#### 2.5.3.2.4. Windows

The windows in most ethnic farmstead houses in Stark County are machine-produced, two-over-two double-hung wood sash. Characteristically, each room is provided with one window on the front of the house, and each end room is provided with two windows on the gable end of the house. Openings are usually spanned with lintels of small diameter logs. The sash are placed close to the exterior wall plane, creating a deep set, interior window recess. The interior sidewalls are flared and often covered with beaded wainscotting.

Windows are not common on the back of the house. If they exist, they are usually limited to the kitchen and are small, rectangular wood sash units. These windows may be a compromise between conserving heat during the winter by protecting the back of the house from the prevailing northwesterly winds and the need to provide cross-ventilation to remove heat from the kitchen during the hot summers. In her study of Emmons County German-Russian houses, Sluss also noted that the only window on the north (or back) wall was to illuminate the kitchen, while the south elevation had two or three windows.<sup>143</sup>

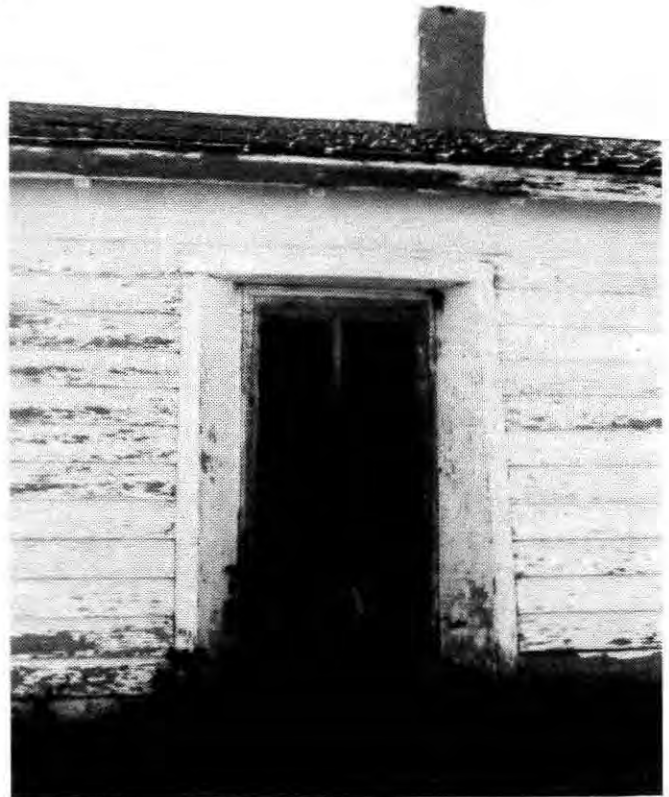
The use of two-over-two double-hung windows is not universal. Three houses [32 SK 158, 32 SK 182 (removed), 32 SK 186] have wood casement windows. Two houses [32 SK 187, 32 SK 180] have four-over-four double-hung wood sash windows. The latter is also unusual for the placement of only one window in the gable ends of the house and the flare of the interior window recess toward the ceiling as well as the sides.

One clear distinction in ethnic diversity can be made in the placement of the window sash in the wall between the houses constructed by the Norwegians in Stark County and those of eastern-European influence. Instead of placing the sash near the exterior wall plane, the Norwegians recessed the sash closer to the middle of the wall (see Figure 21). Like their brethren to the west, German-Russians in Emmons County also installed their windows at the outside of the wall, thereby creating a deep interior window seat.<sup>144</sup>

Figure 20. Detail of casement window at the John Loran House [32 SK 186].



Figure 21. Detail of recessed window at the Anton Burwick House [32 SK 163].



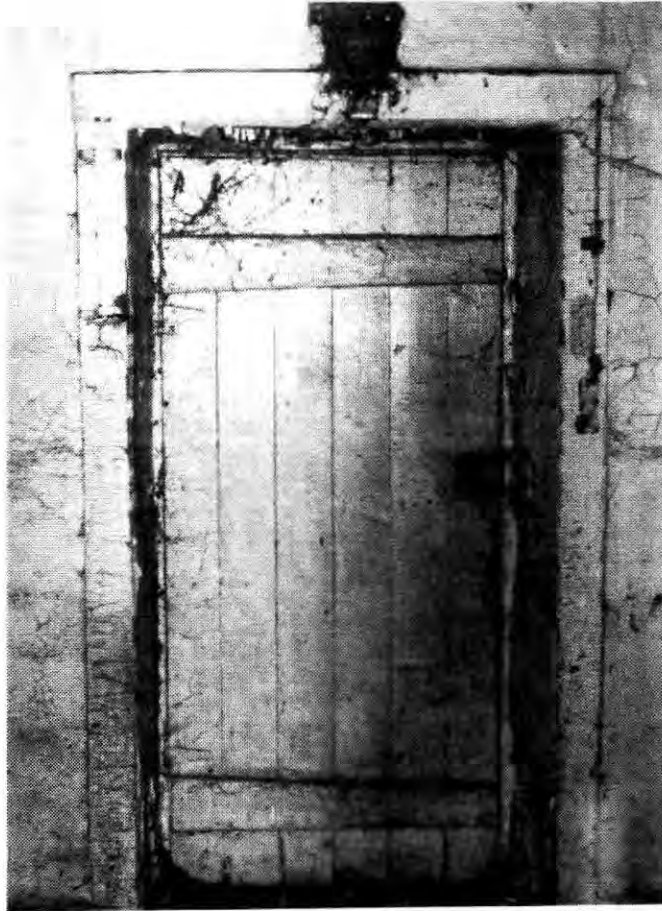


Figure 22. Detail of door at the Joseph Dukart House [32 SK 154]. Note tapered battens.

#### 2.5.3.2.5 Doors

The single exterior door and the interior doors found at most ethnic farmstead houses are stock units which would have been available from local lumber yards or mail order catalogs. They exist in a range of contemporary styles, although exterior doors usually contain a half-light window (as do some interior doors). A few houses have handmade, vertical one-inch lumber doors.

Of particular note in the latter category is a door at the Joseph Dukart House [32 SK 154]. This door, providing entry to the original one-room house, is constructed of vertical boards with surface mounted, tapered battens. Paul B. Touart describes this construction technique in reference to German-American building practices in North Carolina:

Each batten was cut in a tapered shape and driven into a dovetailed trench to give the board door rigidity. The batten was then pinned or nailed in place. In post-Civil War houses in Davidson County [North Carolina], craftsmen discontinued the practice of cutting a dovetailed trench. Instead, the tapered battens were simply screwed or nailed onto the boards. This modification defeated the purpose of shaping the battens in the first place.<sup>145</sup>

#### 2.5.3.2.6. Exterior Decorative Treatments

Exterior decorative treatments were documented on only four houses in Stark County. It is impossible to determine the frequency of exterior decorative treatments because of later painting and stuccoing. It is also unknown whether the three examples found represent individual expression of the owner, a common ethnic decorative tradition, or whether they have some symbolic or religious associations.

A hand-tinted photograph of the Raymond Frank house [32 SK 156] shows the body of the house painted white with vertical light blue bands at the corners. The window sash are black. The photograph is not clear enough to determine the exact patterns of the decorative treatment, however, beneath the gable end window is a stenciled circular panel. Four radiating, what appear to be, pointed ovals alternate with more lightly painted similar ornamentation. The circumference of the circle is defined by an alternating lighter and darker band. To the corners of the house are stenciled a similar circular panel of smaller diameter.<sup>146</sup>



Figure 23. Detail of raised stucco ornamentation at the John Reiner House [32 SK 159].

The Philip and Catherine Bleile Loran house [32 SK 190] was the only other house identified in Stark County with exterior decorative treatments. Similar to the Raymond Frank house, the ends of the house displayed evidence of having been white with light blue vertical bands at the corners on the ends. A light blue "keystone" (10 inches high x 4 inches wide at the bottom and 9 inches wide at the top) was painted above each window on the front and ends of the house.

The John and Katharina Scitter Reiner, Sr. house [32 SK 159] has raised elongated, horizontal diamonds in the stucco above the east windows. The diamonds are solidly filled. Between the two windows on the south side is a similar diamond. The center portion of the diamond, however, is recessed and contains a raised circle.<sup>147</sup>

Likewise, the Adam and Marian Kungel Lefor, Sr. house [32 SK 192] has a raised decorative treatment in the stucco. At this house, a stucco molding enframes the windows. A square block with a radiating encised ornament is located at each corner of the molding.

One other house in Stark County which was previously recorded (and is now in ruins) also exhibited raised decorative treatment in the exterior stucco. The Anton and Anna Lefor house had window moldings similar to those found at the Adam and Marian Kungel Lefor, Sr. house. It also had vertical, fluted "pilasters" at the corners and to each side of the front porch and a beam over the front door and flanking windows carrying the names of the owners, the date, and other decorative symbols.

#### 2.5.3.2.6. Interiors

The plan of the typical extant ethnic farmstead house in Stark County is two or three rooms placed end-to-end. In two-room houses, one room is the kitchen and the other served as a combination living room/bedroom. In three-room houses the center room is always the kitchen. To one side of the kitchen is the living room and to the other side is the bedroom. One local informant stated that the parents and daughters slept in the living room and the sons slept in the bedroom. A single chimney usually rises between the kitchen and living room, although a few houses had another chimney between the kitchen and bedroom.

Typically, interior walls are lath covered with clay/straw/manure or commercial plaster. They appear to have originally been painted -- most commonly a light blue color. Ceilings are about eight feet high and are either flat or sloped near the exterior walls to follow the pitch of the rafters. Ceilings are finished with beaded wainscotting. Floors are tongue-and-groove boards with a variety of plain and milled baseboards.

Interior stairs to the attic are generally located in the kitchen. The steep, almost ladder-like stairs are enclosed with walls of beaded wainscoting. A few houses have a lateral partition at the back of the kitchen creating a long, narrow pantry. In these examples, the stairs are located in the pantry and are usually open, reaching the attic through a trap door. Excavated cellars are often located beneath the kitchen, again accessed by a trap door.

The attics are rarely finished. Bedsprings and frames still located in many attics provide evidence that they were frequently used for additional sleeping room. In two houses [32 SK 173, 32 SK 175], longitudinal beams strengthen the attic floor (the first floor ceiling joists) -- apparently to support the weight of stored grain. In a study of German-Russian houses in Emmons County, Sluss recorded numerous houses with such beams. She theorized that the timbers served to help secure the roof to the floor joists as well as to prevent the gable end walls from buckling outward.<sup>148</sup> A few houses had exterior stairs accessing gable end doors.



Figure 24. Clay/straw/manure plaster on interior lath. George Weiler House [32 SK 157].

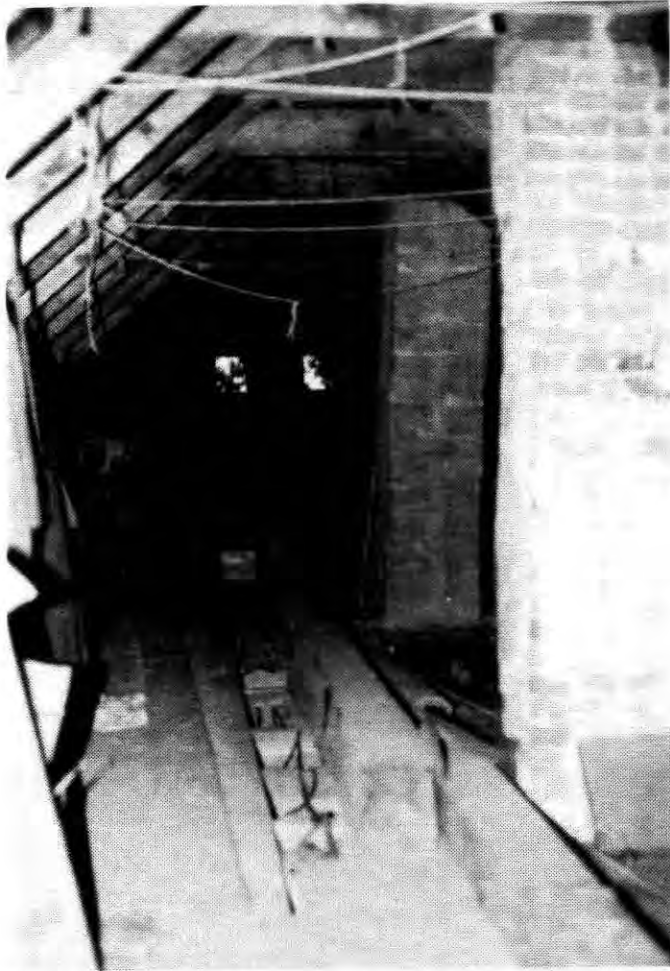


Figure 25. Longitudinal beams supporting the ceiling joists in the Henry Schneider House [32 SK 173].



### 2.5.3.2.7. Farmstead House Anomalies

While a remarkable consistency in the materials and design characteristics of ethnic farmstead houses was found in Stark County, anomalies do exist. The following text will discuss the more distinct examples.

Only three of the 42 farmstead houses surveyed in Stark County deviated from the south or east orientation of the door. The Johannes Schmitt [32 SK 171] and Thomas Lefor [32 SK 191] houses are oriented in a west-southwesterly direction and the Bernhart Martin House [32 SK 189] is oriented to the northwest. In the case of the Lefor House, it is possible that the building was oriented toward Thomas' brother's house, which stands just to the west. Apparently, in a weak attempt to hold to tradition, however, the door to the vestibule was located on the south side rather than on the front as found at all other farmsteads.

The Joseph and Rosie Dukart House [32 SK 154] varies from the traditional rectangular plan with its "T"-shape. It is clearly the culmination of a three phase building project. The original house was one room to which a single room addition was added in the traditional manner -- butted against the west wall. The second addition, however, which more than doubled the size of the house, was constructed perpendicular to the other two rooms creating a "T" plan. The addition included a living room with two bedrooms behind it.

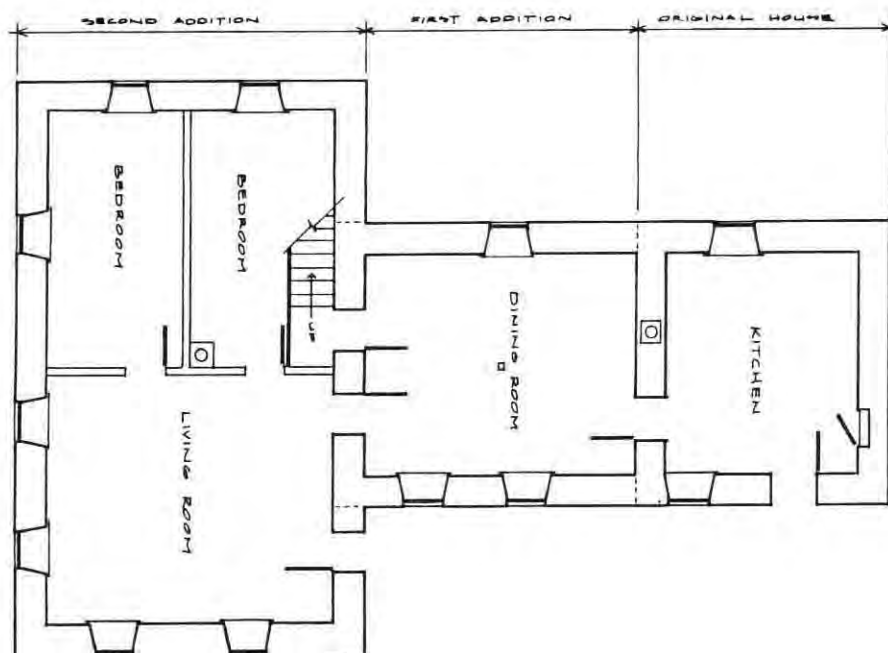


Figure 26. Plan of Dukart House [32 SK 154].



Figure 27. Berger House [32 SK 164] showing large kitchen addition to the facade.



Figure 28. Froehlich House [32 SK 181] showing large kitchen addition to the facade.

The Frank and Rose Heidt Berger House [32 SK 164] and the Joseph and Franciska Steiner Froehlich House [32 SK 181] also vary from the typical rectangular plan. Both dwellings have stone kitchen additions placed on the front facade rather than butted to a gable end. While the Berger addition appears almost as an oversized vestibule, the Froehlich addition actually changed the orientation of the entrance from the south to the east. The cross-gabled addition with a full-length front porch gives the house an appearance similar to standard second generation houses across the northern Great Plains.

The Michael and Anna Krug Scharick House [32 SK 184] is unusual for its room arrangement, which consists of a plan two rooms deep rather than the typical one-room deep plan. The Sharick House has an interior stone wall separating a kitchen and bedroom on one side and a living room and bedroom on the other. The presence of an excavated cellar beneath the north bedroom (cellars were universally found beneath the kitchen) and the interior stone wall provide evidence that the house may have originally been two rooms with the two rooms to the south added later. The roof of the house is also one of only two found in the survey area with clipped gables.

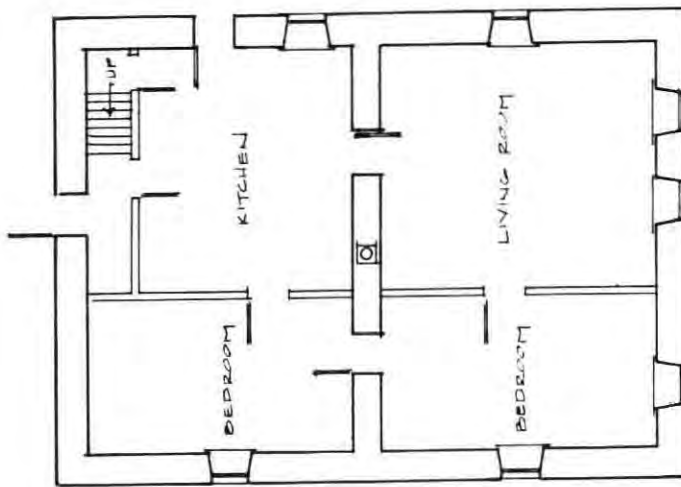
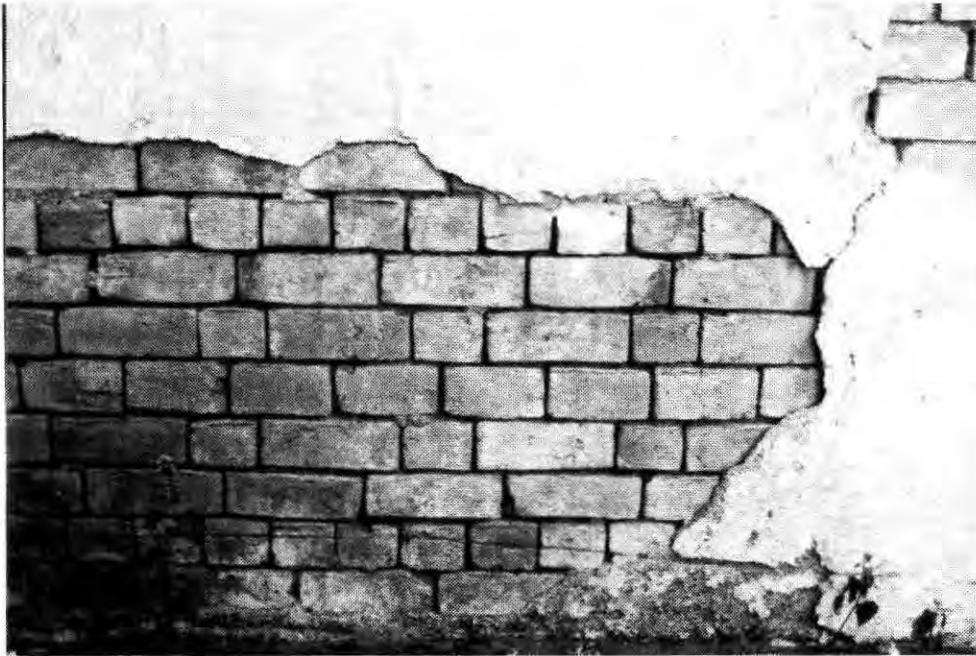


Figure 29. Plan of the Scharick House [32 SK 184]



Feature 30. Detail of brick on north wall of Emerich Martin House [32 SK 174].

The Emerich Martin House [32 SK 174] was the only dwelling identified in Stark County constructed of handmade clay bricks. It is unknown whether these were fired, although they are denser than the mud bricks. The bricks were reportedly made on the farm and are laid in an unusual bond pattern. The house displays several other variations from the typical ethnic vernacular design found in the area. The house is one and one-half stories high with a front dormer, and the interior plan is two rooms deep but retains the traditional steep staircase to the second floor.

The Henry Schneider House [32 SK 173] exhibits the common design characteristics of ethnic vernacular architecture in the county except for its structural system. It was the only house identified in Stark County constructed of mud bricks. The bricks are very friable with the chopped straw clearly evident. They are laid in an English bond (alternating header and stretcher courses) pattern and covered with drop siding. The Schneider House also has clay between the attic floor joists. This construction was commonly employed by German-Russians in Emmons County and in South Dakota, but apparently less frequently in Stark County. By contrast, colonists in South Russia seem to have preferred building with some form of clay, whether puddled, hand-made brick, or compacted into wooden forms.

The Karl Huth House [32 SK 172] is also unique for its structural system which consists of exterior walls constructed of spaced, vertical railroad ties covered with clapboard siding. The approximate two-inch space between the ties is filled with a clay/straw/manure mortar. (Two urban examples [32 SK 195 & 32 SK 199] of this structural system were also identified). The roof of the house is also one of only two found in the survey area with clipped gables.



Figure 31. Historic photograph of Schneider House [32 SK 173]. (Paul Schiwal, owner)



Figure 32. Detail of mud brick wall. Schneider House [32 SK 173].

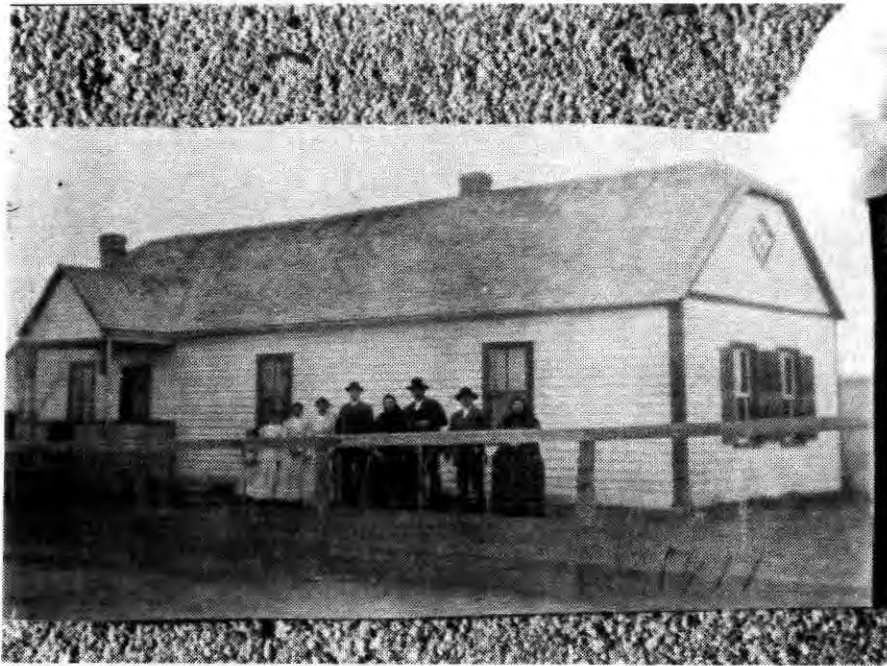


Figure 33. Historic photograph of Huth House [32 SK 172]. (Paul Schiwal, owner)



Figure 34. Detail of railroad tie construction. Huth House [32 SK 172].

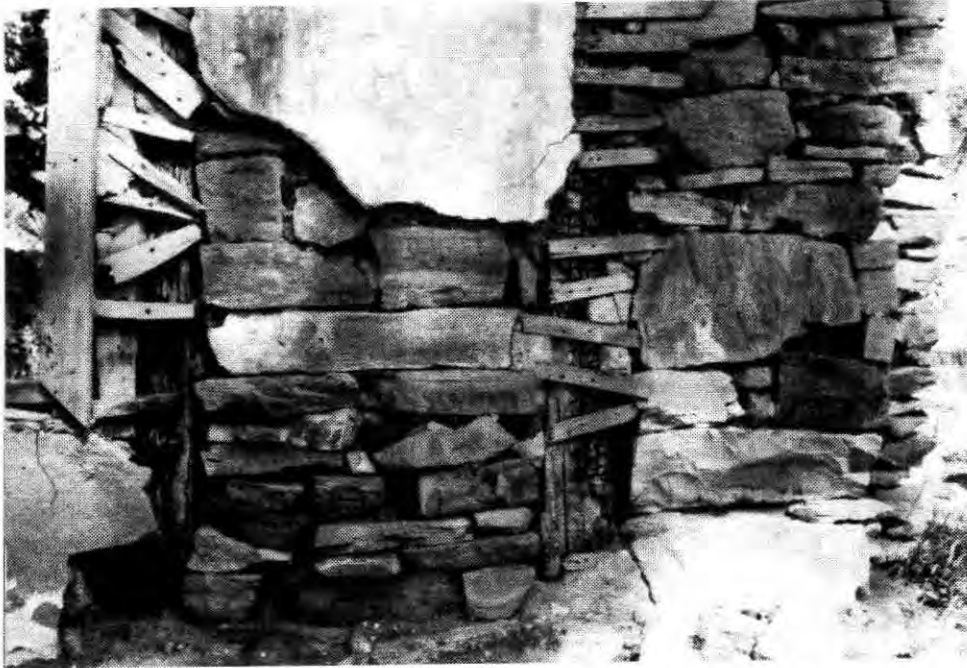


Figure 35. Detail of spaced railroad tie/log construction. T. Lefor House [32 SK 191].

The Thomas Lefor [32 SK 191] House also displays a unique combination of typical ethnic vernacular design with an unusual structural system. Paired railroad ties and logs are spaced vertically at about three feet on center along the exterior walls; the spaces between the ties and logs are infilled with stone. The purpose of the ties is unknown since they do not appear to serve any structural function -- they are not tied together. The house also has segmental arches of mud brick over the windows in the southeast gable of the building. The gable end also appears to have been constructed of mud bricks.

The Petterson Brothers [32 SK 162] and the Jacob Johnson [32 SK 193] houses both reflect vernacular Norwegian building traditions while incorporating the neighboring eastern European's use of locally available stone.<sup>149</sup> Both houses are one and one-half stories high with a characteristically Scandinavian central dormer over the front door (now covered over by an addition at the Johnson House). The Petterson House retains two finished second floor rooms which were reached by a central staircase, rather than a crude ladder stair more common to the county's other ethnic houses. The interior of the Johnson House has been extensively remodeled, but also has a staircase in the northwest corner accessing a second floor hall room and a bedroom.



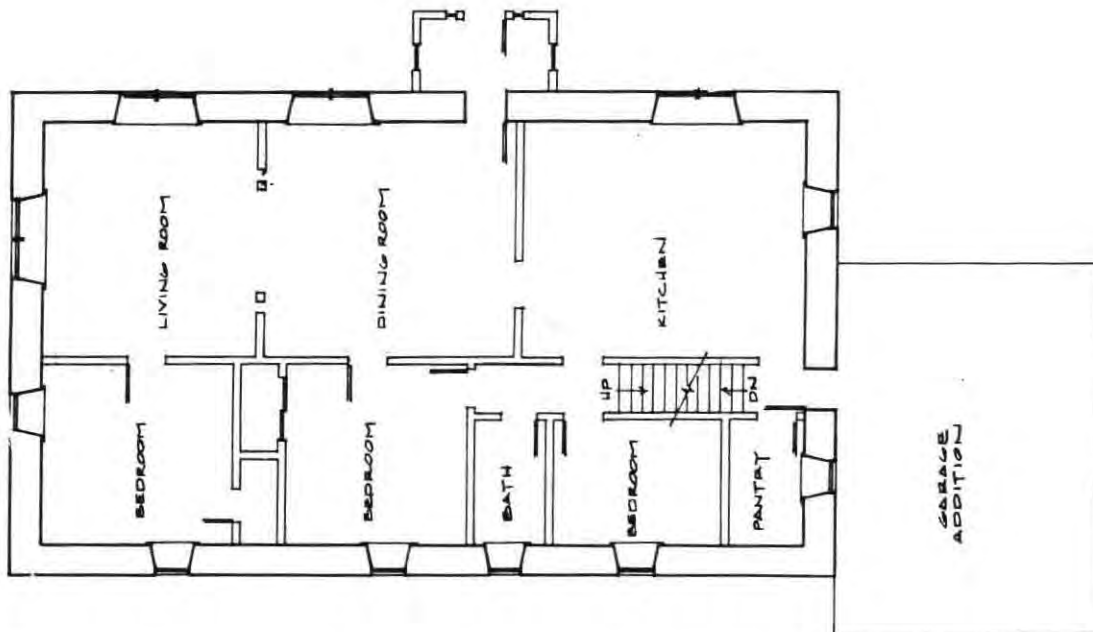
Figure 36. Petterson Brothers House [32 SK 162].

The Raphael Berger House [32 SK 168] is probably the greatest anomaly among all of the ethnic vernacular houses surveyed in Stark County. The stone exterior walls and the south-facing door exemplify typical eastern European design features. Beyond these characteristics, however, the house is more representative of the American Craftsman style popular at the time of its construction (1927-1929). Rather than the long, narrow single row of multipurpose rooms, the plan features a double row of rooms serving individual functions (living room, dining room, and kitchen across the front; three bedrooms, a bathroom, and a pantry across the back). The second floor includes four additional finished bedrooms accessed by a full-sized staircase. The house also has a full basement with a central heating system.





Feature 37. R. Berger House [32 SK 168].



Feature 38. Plan of R. Berger House [32 SK 168].

### 2.5.3.3. Housebarns

Five housebarns [32 SK 158, 32 SK 166, 32 SK 170, 32 SK 180 32 SK 188] were identified in Stark County. Despite its widespread use as a building tradition in Europe, few housebarns were constructed in the New World. Of the twenty or so housebarns known to have been built in the United States, all are located in the Upper Midwest and Great Plains states of Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota, Texas, and Wisconsin. Interestingly, nearly all of these buildings were constructed by German or Czech-Bohemian immigrants (three Finnish housebarns have been identified in Michigan and Minnesota). Housebarns have also been located in Manitoba constructed by Russian-Mennonites.<sup>150</sup>

In all cases in Stark County, the barn appears to be an addition to the house. The rectangular additions vary in length from about 15 feet to over 50 feet. It is not known whether the barns were constructed to house livestock or whether they were used only as granaries. John Kasberg recalled that when he moved into the two-room stone house constructed by his uncle, he converted the "granary" on the west end of the house into a living room, installing an interior door.<sup>151</sup>



Figure 39. Original one-room house (right) and barn addition (left) at the Frank/Vogel Farmstead [32 SK 158].

#### 2.5.3.4. Barns

Barns on ethnic farmsteads in Stark County do not share the same consistencies in design characteristics as do the houses, nor do they appear to have an identifiable link to the ethnicity of their builders. Barns were identified on 29 of the rural farmsteads surveyed as part of this project. On the whole, they appear to have been built to house only domestic livestock. Bill Schmidt recounted that most farmers maintained a few milking cows, from which cream and butter were sold to provide a small, but steady cash income.

Of the 29 barns identified, 24 had stone walls and five were of frame construction. Only 20 of the barns retained roofs or enough evidence to identify the roof type. Of those 20, seven had gable roofs, six had gambrel roofs, six had western roofs (a gable with sheds), and one had a rainbow roof. The diversity of roof types appears to support a study undertaken in Oregon where the author concluded that "The choice of a barn type may have had little to do with the cultural background of the farmer and a lot to do with the illustrations of actual and of theoretical barns published in books and magazines."<sup>152</sup>

The lack of documentation as to the dates of construction of buildings and structures on farmsteads in Stark County makes it difficult to establish the evolution of barn types. Also, where it is clear when a house exists or is missing from a farmstead, the same is not always the case with barns. It is feasible that immigrants first constructed barns of a similar design that were replaced or put to new uses as the farm prospered or functions changed. Original barns may exist on some farmsteads today, but are not identified as such because of changes in use. Moreover, barns have suffered a much greater attrition rate than houses, suggesting their earlier abandonment due to changing farm technology.

Oral interviews documented two instances where the original barns had been replaced. Gilman Peterson said that the Petterson brothers originally constructed a stone barn on their homestead which was replaced with a typical wood frame, Western style barn in 1915.<sup>153</sup> A historic photograph of the Raymond Frank Farmstead shows a gable roofed rectangular building with a centrally located, axial wall entry. Jacob Frank identified the building as the original barn. This barn was later demolished. The existing barn was constructed in two phases: the first floor stone walls were constructed in 1924 and covered with a thatched roof, and in 1928, the thatch roof was replaced with a wood shingled gambrel roof.<sup>154</sup>



Figure 40. Gambrel roofed barn at Philip Loran Farmstead [32 SK 190].



Figure 41. Historic photograph of Raymond Frank Homestead [32 SK 156]. Building in back (with vents rising from the roof) was identified as original barn. (Jacob Frank, photograph owner)

### 2.5.3.5. Smokehouses

Smokehouses appear to have been common features on most ethnic farmsteads in Stark County, as they are on German-Russian farmsteads in other parts of the state. In the days before refrigeration, the smokehouse provided a means of meat preservation which also enhanced its flavor.<sup>155</sup> Smokehouses with stone walls are found in three forms: square with a pyramidal roof, rectangular with a gable roof, and rectangular with a gable roof and attached butchering room.

The most common plan measures approximately 10 feet on each side. The structure is topped with a wood shingled, pyramidal roof, and a wood flue rises from the center of the roof. The smokehouse is accessed by a single door and often has a small window located near the eaves that provides natural light and ventilation. Evidence on the dirt floors shows that the fire was sometimes built in the center of the room and sometimes against the walls. Metal poles or tree limbs were located at different levels from the rafters from which meat was hung. Two smokehouses, slightly more rectangular in plan, with gable roofs were also recorded.



Figure 42. Smokehouse at the Wandler/Binstock Farmstead [32 SK 185].

The third type of smokehouse consists of a single room as described above with an attached butchering room. These buildings were gable roofed and had a stone wall between each room. The two-room smokehouse at the Link Farmstead [32 SK 155] was the only example that contained a hearth; the remnants of a circular stone stove were located in a corner with a brick chimney above.

The most unusual smokehouse located in the survey is at the Bernhart Martin Farmstead [32 SK 189]. Constructed within a larger building, the smoke chamber was created by an interior stone wall. The fourth side of the chamber is open. Above the first floor, a flue of mud bricks was constructed. One wall of the flue is vertical with the other three walls rising at angles to constrict the opening. Logs were placed at three levels within the flue from which to hang the meat. A vent is located in the stone wall, opening from within the larger room, near the center of the wall, and exiting at the top of the stone wall.



Figure 43. Detail of mud brick flue. Smokehouse at Martin Farmstead [32 SK 189].

### 2.5.3.6. Granaries

The most prevalent stone outbuildings remaining on ethnic farmsteads in Stark County are granaries. Generally, they are not large enough to have stored cash grain crops, but instead probably held just enough grain to feed the domestic livestock. The granaries in Stark County are usually rectangular buildings with gable roofs and paired doors centered on one axial side of the structure. Small openings are sometimes located near the eaves through which grain could be delivered by elevator from the outside.

Although it is known from other surveys of German-Russian architecture in the upper Midwest that the attics of houses were sometimes used for grain storage,<sup>156</sup> this does not appear to have been a common practice in Stark County. Two houses [32 SK 173 & 32 SK 175] were identified with beams running longitudinally through the center of the attic from which the ceiling joists were hung [Fig. 23]; this strengthening of the floor suggests the attics may have been used to store grain or other goods. Exterior stairs and gable end doors at a few other houses provided easy access to the attics, but it is not known if they served other practical functions. Exterior stairs and longitudinal beams have been documented in houses where the attics were reportedly always used for sleeping quarters. It has been suggested that the exterior stairs may have been used to conserve interior space; the use of longitudinal beams in these examples is unexplained.<sup>157</sup>

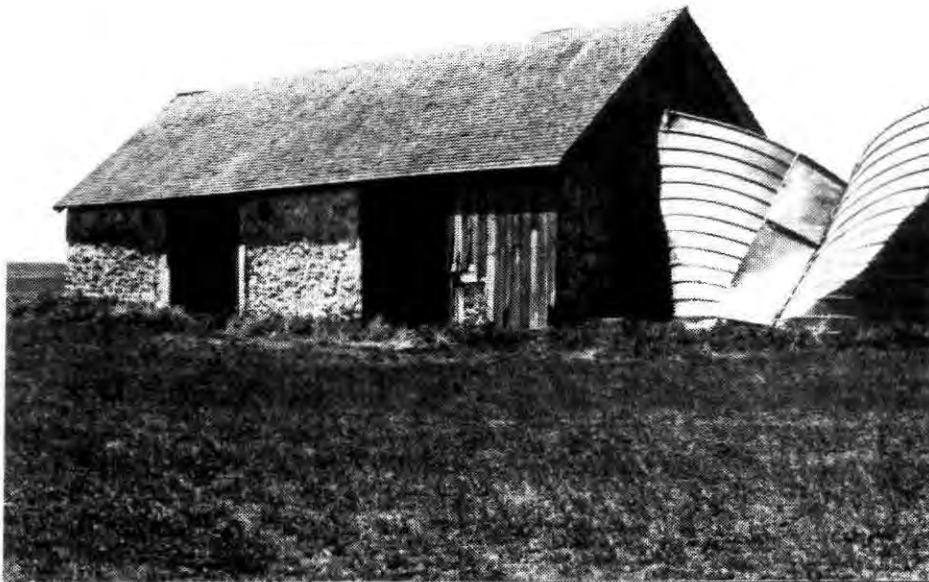


Figure 44. Granary at the G. Weiler Farmstead [32 SK 157]. This structure reportedly had a thatched roof until 1948.

### 2.5.3.7. Other Stone Outbuildings

A variety of other stone outbuildings are present on farmsteads in Stark County. These include root cellars, chicken houses, summer kitchens, machine sheds, a pig sty, and a blacksmith shop. These buildings, like the barns, do not share the same consistencies in design characteristics as do the houses, nor do they appear to have an identifiable link to the ethnicity of their builders.

Besides the cellars beneath the houses, some farmsteads have separate root cellars excavated beneath the ground. These cellars are accessed by shed-roofed entrances enclosing steep steps. Two of the cellars had stone arched interior ceilings [32 SK 156 & 32 SK 161]. Jacob Frank recalled his father using wagon wheels for centering to create the arch.



Figure 45. Detail of root cellar at R. Frank Homestead [32 SK 156].





Figure 46. Chicken house at H. Schneider Farmstead [32 SK 173].

Chicken houses are found freestanding and connected to buildings serving other functions. These structures are usually rectangular in plan with gable or shed roofs. They are easily identified by the presence of a band of windows on the south elevation to take advantage of solar heat during the winter months. Many of these structures also still contain roosting frames.

Machine sheds constructed of stone are also found relatively frequently on Stark County farmsteads. These gable-roofed, rectangular structures varied greatly in size and design, but were identified by multiple doors, the lack of interior divisions (for grain bins or livestock), or because they still contained work benches or other evidence of functional use. Some of these buildings may have served an earlier function and were modified to accommodate changes in farm technology when gasoline powered machinery came into use. For example, the machine shed at the Feimer Farmstead [32 SK 175] may have originally been a granary before conversion of the house to that function. Likewise, the garage attached to the smokehouse at the Link Farmstead [32 SK 155] was originally used for butchering -- the garage doors were added later.

Summer kitchens were identified at four ethnic Stark County farmsteads [32 SK 156, 32 SK 169, 32 SK 177, 32 SK 185]. The summer kitchen provided several advantages for the farm wife, the most important of which was the removal of cooking heat from the house during the hot summer months. They also provided space to serve harvest hands and removed the disorder of butchering from the house's kitchen.<sup>158</sup>



Figure 47. Summer kitchen at the R. Frank Homestead [32 SK 156].

The four summer kitchens are all rectangular, stone buildings with gabled roofs -- basically following the construction characteristics of the main house. Two of the summer kitchens were single rooms, one had a pantry or storage area partitioned in one end, and one had a central wall with a room of equal size to one end -- possibly used as a granary. The summer kitchens varied in their distance from the house, but were always the nearest outbuilding.

#### 2.5.3.8. Wood Frame Outbuildings

Besides the stone buildings, many ethnic farmsteads in Stark County have a number of wood frame outbuildings. They were frequently constructed as granaries, machine sheds, garages, privies, and small storage buildings. Since dating of these buildings is often not possible, it cannot be determined when they commonly entered onto the farmstead scene. As with the barns, there appears to be no identifiable ethnic link in their design or construction methods.

#### 2.5.4. URBAN HOUSES



Figure 48. The Urlacher House [32 SK 198] in south Dickinson. This is a stone house with a wood frame addition.

Although most of Stark County's ethnically-influenced buildings are rural, many houses in south Dickinson share ethnic design characteristics with the farmstead houses. Interestingly, no examples of ethnically-influenced houses were located in any of the other small towns in the county. The only discernible difference between rural and urban house design is the more frequent use of materials other than stone. Wood frame and vertical railroad tie construction appear in greater percentages than on farmsteads.

The use of railroad ties to construct the Ziraick Schoch [32 SK 195] and Joseph Lauffer [32 SK 199] houses<sup>159</sup> is an especially intriguing adaptation of inexpensive, locally available materials. (Two rural farmstead houses [32 SK 172 & 32 SK 191] also displayed vertical railroad tie construction.) Presumably these ties were obtained from the Northern Pacific when it upgraded its trackage with newer ties. The only mention of this method of construction was found in a 1906 article on immigration in Collections of the State Historical Society of North Dakota. The author writes:

Those [German-Russians] who are near the railroads often built their houses of old ties, setting the ties upright in the ground to form a wall and filling the cracks between them with mud. [This text has a footnote, as follows]: A few years ago there were so many of these houses, both built

of mud and those built of ties, in some of the villages of our state, that they gave the village a decidedly foreign aspect. This was true of Richardton between 1895-1900, and it is still true of the part of Dickinson south of the railroad.<sup>160</sup>



Figure 49. The Schoch House in south Dickinson. This house is constructed of vertical railroad ties, covered with drop siding.

The builders of urban houses in South Dickinson often continued to face the front of the house to the south or east despite the orientation of the lot or its location in the block. The backs and sides of the houses are placed near or on the lot lines. This orientation and placement create some unusual characteristics not normally found in other urban neighborhoods from the same period. This placement, however, does reflect a traditional European prototype [Fig. 7].

The most visually obvious of these characteristics is that the narrow, gable end of the house often faces the street. Unlike houses in a typical neighborhood where the front door faces the street, in these examples the door is toward the center of the house reached by a sidewalk leading to the interior of the lot. The large front yard runs the full depth of the lot from the street to the alley. Houses placed on corner lots often have the backs facing one street and the gable end facing the other street.

Using house plan and location on the lot, the 1927 Sanborn Insurance Maps for south Dickinson show as many as 100 houses that may have been constructed with ethnic architectural characteristics. Today, however, probably only about five remain with near complete architectural integrity. Another 40 or so have been remodeled to varying degrees, but are at least identifiable through their massing and placement.

## 3.0 PROPERTY TYPES

### 3.1. Associated PROPERTY TYPES

#### 3.1.1. NAME OF PROPERTY TYPE:

Ethnic Farmsteads in Stark County

#### 3.1.2. DESCRIPTION:

Ethnic farmsteads in Stark County display distinct commonalities of construction methods and house design form. Ethnic farmsteads are most readily identified by the presence of stone buildings. Immigrant groups -- mainly German-Russians and German-Hungarians, but also Norwegians, Bohemians, and Estonians -- used locally available stone for the construction of houses, barns, and ancillary buildings. The house form also differs significantly from other contemporary immigrant groups in Stark County. The farmstead house on an ethnic farmstead is typically constructed of stone and is a low, narrow, one-story rectangular building with a gabled roof.

Most ethnic farmsteads are historically characterized by several buildings, each serving a specialized function. The expanded farmsteads, evolving with growing families, prosperity, and increased production, usually have a combination of stone and wood frame buildings. Other than the south or east orientation of the house, ethnic groups in Stark County appear to follow no discernible pattern in the location of buildings and structures. Some farmsteads present a clear farmyard appearance with buildings and structures lined in rows along three sides, while at other farmsteads the buildings and structures are scattered.

Following are descriptions of the more common buildings and structures found on ethnic farmsteads in Stark County:

#### Houses

Ethnic farmstead houses in Stark County are generally constructed of stone covered with plaster or stucco. They are rectangular in plan with side-facing gables. A few houses have a low roof pitch, but most are moderately steep. The floor level is close to the level of the ground, resulting in a low appearance. Floor plans generally consist of two or three rooms. These plans, by far the most common surviving today, are sometimes the result of additions placed on the end of an original one- or two-room house. Each room is about 16 feet square.

The front and only door is located on the long side and generally faces east or south. A vestibule or vorhaus sometimes protects the door. Windows are two-over-two double-hung wood sash, although on the back of the house they are usually absent or reduced in size.

### Barns

The barns on ethnic farmsteads in Stark County do not exhibit the same consistency in form as the houses. Gable, gambrel, and Western style roofs appeared in the survey in almost equal numbers. A pair of outswinging or rolling doors is usually located in both ends with bands of small rectangular windows along the sides. These buildings would be indistinguishable from contemporary counterparts constructed on other farms if it were not for the common use of stone walls.

### Granaries

The granaries on ethnic farmsteads in Stark County are usually rectangular, stone buildings with gable roofs. A pair of outswinging or rolling doors is centered on the axial side. These buildings usually lack other openings except those into the grain bins near the eaves.

### Smokehouses

The smokehouses on ethnic farmsteads in Stark County are most commonly found in three forms. In its most simple form, the smokehouse is an approximately 10-foot square stone structure topped with a wood shingled, pyramidal roof. One-room smoke houses with gable roofs are also represented in the survey. The third type of stone smokehouse is a rectangular, gable-roofed structure consisting of two rooms. One room served as the smoke chamber; the other was used for butchering.

### Other Stone Outbuildings

A variety of other stone outbuildings are present on farmsteads in Stark County. These include cellars, chicken houses, machine sheds, a pig sty, and a blacksmith shop.

### Wood Frame Outbuildings

Ethnic farmsteads in Stark County often have several frame outbuildings interspersed with the stone buildings. These outbuildings are frequently small in scale and commonly constructed to serve as granaries, machine sheds, garages, privies, and small storage buildings.

### 3.1.3. SIGNIFICANCE

While ideally every ethnic homestead and farmstead should be evaluated as a complete complex, some individual buildings under this property type may be considered eligible for listing in the National Register on their own merits. For example, at any one farmstead, many historic outbuildings may have been demolished. The house or barn, however, may still be intact. Therefore, evaluation should consider not just the complex as a whole, but also individual buildings and structures that comprised the homestead or farmstead.

#### CRITERION A

An ethnic farmstead in Stark County may derive significance under Criterion A for its association with the historical pattern of ethnic settlement in the county. Immigrant groups -- especially German-Russians and German-Hungarians, but also Norwegians, Bohemians, and Estonians -- formed a strong, clearly identifiable ethnic presence in Stark County beginning about 1890. These groups tended to congregate in rural areas centered around a church, school, and at times, a few commercial buildings.

The farmstead buildings associated with these ethnic groups often display distinct commonalities of folk design and construction, and are, therefore, significant representations of patterns of ethnic settlement in Stark County. Those farmsteads which exhibit identifiable ethnic architectural characteristics meet National Register Criterion A for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places.

#### CRITERION B

An ethnic farmstead in Stark County may derive significance under Criterion B if it best illustrates the important contributions of a significant person. At this time, there is insufficient information available to indicate that any ethnic farmstead might be considered significant under National Register Criterion B. Future research, however, may identify individuals who made significant contributions, for example, to the transformation of agricultural practices in Stark County, for organizing immigration to the area, or individuals who may have played important roles in maintaining ethnic traditions or in local businesses or politics.

#### CRITERION C

An ethnic farmstead in Stark County may derive significance under Criterion C if it embodies identifiable architectural characteristics of vernacular design and construction methods not customarily associated with farmstead development on the Northern Great Plains. Farmsteads and individual houses and barns from this cohesive collection of generally eastern European immigrant settlements are significant as representative examples of once common vernacular traditions in the county.



## CRITERION D

It is possible that the archaeological remains of an ethnic farmstead in Stark County may be eligible under Criterion D. As with all archaeological components, however, eligibility under Criterion D must be made within the context of a local or regional research design.

### 3.1.4. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Evidence suggests that between about 1890 and 1930, there were several hundred farmsteads constructed in Stark County with identifiable ethnic origins. Today, however, probably only about 100 examples remain in various states of deterioration. Farmsteads retaining most of their historic buildings and structures are rare; in almost all cases the site is abandoned. Few examples of ethnic farmsteads serving as the center for an active farm exist.

The integrity of each farmstead as a whole, and of its individual buildings and structures, is assessed through examination of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, association, setting and location. These specific components are discussed below.

#### Design, Materials, and Workmanship

An ethnic farmstead as a whole retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship if buildings and structures are present with characteristics of vernacular design and construction methods not customarily associated with farmstead development on the Northern Great Plains. For a farmstead to retain integrity of design, materials, and workmanship at least one of the primary buildings (the house or barn) must be present and retain those characteristics which identify its ethnic associations.

Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship of farmstead buildings and structures is diminished if the roof has been lost, modern additions have been made to the principal facade, the original construction materials are covered with modern materials, and/or windows have been replaced on the principal facade with units significantly larger or smaller than the original. Buildings thus altered may contribute to a National Register eligible farmstead if they still convey a sense of their historic architectural characteristics.

Isolated primary buildings may be individually eligible for the National Register if they retain integrity of scale, massing, materials, and roof shape. If the integrity of an isolated primary building is diminished (as defined above), it may be considered individually eligible for the National Register only if it is a rare example of a construction method or associated with an ethnic group other than the German-Russians or German-Hungarians.

### Feeling and Association

Integrity of feeling and association is retained if a farmstead can readily be identified as displaying ethnically-influenced characteristics of vernacular architecture. If modern construction and alterations are more evident than the historic appearance of the farmstead, integrity of feeling and association is diminished. If neither primary structure remains or both have been so modified to be unidentifiable, integrity of feeling and association is lost.

Outbuildings which are no longer associated with a primary building have lost the important spatial relationship defining their function on a farmstead. They are not considered eligible for listing in the National Register unless they are rare examples of a type or method of construction.

### Setting and Location

If a farmstead or any of its buildings or structures exist, it has integrity of location. Integrity of setting is diminished by the addition of new buildings that are out-of-scale with the original complex, or by changes in the use of adjoining agricultural lands to nonagricultural use. Because most primary buildings were constructed of stone and are virtually immovable, integrity of location is generally not an issue with ethnic farmsteads in Stark County.

However, moved wood frame houses displaying ethnic architectural characteristics may be eligible for individual listing in the National Register. Such houses which have been moved should be evaluated in the context of their new setting. The new setting should maintain a strong agricultural relationship. It was apparently common to move wood frame houses onto farmsteads from the small rural towns. If a farmstead otherwise meets the criteria for listing in the National Register, those houses exhibiting ethnic-influenced design characteristics which have been moved may contribute to the eligible farmstead.

Outbuildings were often moved historically, from, to, and within a farmstead complex. Such a move does not affect their status as contributing structures within a larger National Register eligible farmstead.

## **3.2. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES**

### **3.2.1. NAME OF PROPERTY TYPE**

Urban Ethnic Houses in South Dickinson

### **3.2.2. DESCRIPTION**

Although largely found on farmsteads in Stark County, buildings of vernacular eastern European tradition are also found in south Dickinson. These urban houses display many of the same characteristics as those described on farmsteads. They were commonly one-story rectangular buildings consisting of two or three rooms placed end to end. Construction materials, however, are more varied than the almost universal use of stone found on farmsteads. Urban houses were also constructed of wood frame and of vertical railroad ties.

Builders of urban houses in south Dickinson often oriented the front of the house to the south or east, and placed it near or on the north or west lot lines. This orientation and placement created some unusual characteristics within the neighborhood. The narrow, gable end of the house often faces the street with a sidewalk leading to the interior of the lot and the centrally located front door. Corner houses often have their backs to one street. The large front yard runs the full depth of the lot.

### **3.2.3. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

#### **CRITERION A**

An urban ethnic house in south Dickinson may derive significance under Criterion A for its association with the historical pattern of ethnic settlement in the county. Immigrant groups -- especially German-Russians and German-Hungarians, but also Norwegians, Bohemians, and Estonians -- formed a strong, clearly identifiable ethnic presence in Stark County beginning about 1890. Although these groups tended to congregate in rural areas, a neighborhood of clearly ethnic-influenced houses exists in south Dickinson. The urban houses associated with these ethnic groups often display distinct commonalities of folk design and construction, and are therefore, significant representations of patterns of ethnic settlement in Stark County.

#### **CRITERION B**

An urban ethnic house in south Dickinson may derive significance under Criterion B if it best illustrates the important contributions of a significant person. At this time, there is no information available to indicate that any urban ethnic house might be considered significant under National Register Criterion B. Future research, however,

might identify individuals who made significant contributions, for example, to maintaining ethnic traditions or in local businesses or politics.

### CRITERION C

An urban ethnic house in south Dickinson may derive significance under Criterion C if it embodies identifiable architectural characteristics of vernacular design and construction methods not customarily associated with urban development on the Northern Great Plains.

Urban ethnic houses in south Dickinson display distinct commonalities of vernacular design and construction methods. Houses from this cohesive collection of generally eastern European-influenced origin are significant as representative examples of a once common vernacular tradition in the south Dickinson neighborhood.

### CRITERION D

It is possible that the archaeological remains of an urban ethnic in south Dickinson may be eligible under Criterion D. As with all archaeological components, however, eligibility under Criterion D must be made within the context of a local or regional research design.

### 3.2.4. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Judging by plan form and location within the lot, it appears from the 1927 Sanborn Insurance Map that there were as many as 100 houses in south Dickinson which may have been constructed with ethnic architectural characteristics. Today, however, probably fewer than five remain with near-complete architectural integrity. Another 40 or so have been remodeled to varying degrees over the years.

Because of the paucity of urban ethnic houses retaining a high degree of architectural integrity in south Dickinson, justification can be made for accepting a greater extent of alteration than might otherwise be considered acceptable for more common historic urban houses. The integrity of each house is assessed through examination of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, association, setting and location. These specific components are discussed below.

#### Design, Materials, and Workmanship

An urban ethnic house retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship if the characteristics of vernacular design and construction methods are present.

Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship of an urban ethnic house is diminished if: 1) modern additions have been made to the sides or back; 2) the original

construction materials are covered with modern materials; 3) porches have been added to the principal facade or historic porches have been enclosed; and/or 4) the windows have been replaced. Urban ethnic houses with diminished integrity of design, materials, and workmanship may be eligible for individual listing in the National Register.

Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship of an urban ethnic house is lost if modern additions have been placed on the principal facade and/or windows on the principal facade have been replaced with units significantly larger or smaller than the original. Buildings thus altered are not eligible for listing in the National Register.

#### Feeling and Association

Integrity of feeling and association is retained if an urban ethnic house can readily be identified as of ethnically-influenced vernacular architecture. If modern construction and alterations are more evident than the historic appearance of the house, integrity of feeling and association is diminished. If modern alterations obscure vernacular architectural characteristics to the point that they are unidentifiable, integrity of feeling and association is lost.

#### Setting and Location

If an urban ethnic house has not been moved, it retains integrity of location. Integrity of setting is diminished if the surrounding lots have changed from their historic use (usually residential, but also commercial in some locations in the neighborhood). Integrity of setting is also diminished if buildings have been constructed within the lot that historically served as the front yard for the house. The loss of setting does not in itself disqualify a house for listing in the National Register.

Moved wood frame houses displaying ethnic architectural characteristics may retain integrity of setting if they are still located within the south Dickinson neighborhood and retain integrity of design.

## 4.0 DATA GAPS

### 4.1. PROJECT METHODOLOGY

Work on the "Ethnic Architecture in Stark County" project was initiated on April 19, 1991. On that date, Mark Hufstetler met with Lauren McCroskey and Barbara Honeyman Pierce of the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of North Dakota. The three discussed the project's objectives and reviewed previous ethnic work and research. Following the meeting, Hufstetler examined the Division's site files for relevant materials, and reviewed the holdings of the archives.

Field work for the Ethnic Architecture in Stark County survey was conducted in two sessions with Lon Johnson of Renewable Technologies, Inc. of Butte, Montana as project manager. Mark Hufstetler and Michael Koop assisted during the first field session from May 20 to May 24, 1991. Johnson conducted the second field session from August 5 to 17 with assistance from Michael Koop from August 7 through August 10.

The Ethnic Architecture in Stark County survey was initiated on May 20, 1991 with a windshield survey of the county. Johnson and Hufstetler drove all major county roads. Buildings displaying ethnic design forms were plotted on a county map. This permitted an initial assessment of the type, number, and integrity of the rural ethnic architectural resources. With the arrival of Mike Koop on May 22, 1991, many of these roads were again driven to insure that less obvious resources had not been overlooked.

Besides the rural roads, the streets in all towns in the county were driven. No evidence of ethnically-influenced architecture was identified in Richardton, Gladstone, South Heart, Belfield, Lefor, or Schefield. A reconnaissance survey of 15 blocks in south Dickinson identified approximately 40 houses that exhibited characteristics similar to those found on the farmsteads.

On May 23, 1991, Lauren McCroskey and Lou Hafermehl from the Archeology and Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of North Dakota arrived in Dickinson. Hufstetler and Koop provided them with a tour of portions of the county to introduce them to the types of resources that would be surveyed.

On the evening of May 23, 1991, a public meeting was held in Dickinson to explain the project. Michael Koop presented a slide show of his work on similar projects in South Dakota. The meeting was sparsely attended, but coverage was provided by the local television station. Although it was hoped that those in attendance at the meeting would help in identifying unknown ethnic resources, this did not prove to be the case. The meeting did result in identification of one of the most knowledgeable informants on local ethnic architecture.

The methodology for selecting rural ethnic properties for intensive-level survey was based on several criteria. The overriding criterion was the integrity of the farmstead. Although many examples of isolated farmstead buildings exist in the county, RTI selected those farmsteads that appeared to retain the greatest number of outbuildings. Secondly, geographic diversity was sought, in hopes of locating buildings representing the ethnic populations outside the major German-Russian and German-Hungarian settlements. Finally, RTI made a concerted effort to record properties which evidenced deviations in design and materials from the large number of stone buildings.

Once properties were identified for intensive level survey, telephone contact was made with the owners. Besides requesting permission to enter onto the property, a series of questions was asked to determine the owners' knowledge of the history of the property. With but a few exceptions, RTI obtained permission to record those farmsteads which appeared to meet the methodology established for the survey. A list of the properties surveyed is included in Appendix B. A map showing the location of the properties is included in Appendix C.

The intensive level survey of 42 rural farmsteads was conducted as follows: Each building was described on a form in terms of function, size, construction materials, and architectural features. Site plans showing the location, relationship, and exterior dimensions of all buildings were completed. Measured drawings of the floor plans were made for each house (only three interiors were inaccessible). Both 35mm black-and-white photographs and color slides were taken of each building. When available, copies of historic photographs were made and informants were interviewed.

The windshield survey which initiated the survey project was continued during the field survey. A concerted effort was made to cover as many county roads as possible while traveling to and from sites. In all, approximately 600 miles of county roads were driven at least once.

Site specific archival research for each recorded property was conducted using local sources and informants. The 1914 Standard Atlas of Stark County, North Dakota proved especially valuable. It not only provided the usual ownership information, but also included a brief biographical sketch of most of the county's farmers. For each property owner, this included his arrival date in the county, his country of origin, and the name of his wife and number of children. With the ownership information in hand, the local county history, Stark County Heritage and Destiny, was searched for biographies of each property owner. In the few cases where the 1914 atlas did not seem appropriate for determining the owner, or information was lacking, deed research was conducted at the Stark County Courthouse.

Not surprisingly, local informants proved to be the most valuable source for information on both specific properties and more general ethnic construction methods. As mentioned above, the owner of each property was asked specific questions to determine if he or she was knowledgeable about the history of the buildings. More

extended oral interviews were conducted with those owners who seemed especially knowledgeable. Bill Schmidt, Jacob Frank, Gilman Peterson, Paul Schiwal, and Robert Lefor were particularly cooperative, providing valuable historical information.

In addition to the rural properties, an intensive level inventory was conducted of seven urban houses in the City of Dickinson. The exterior of each house was measured, with a sketch of the floor plan when access was granted to the interior. Site plans were then completed showing the location of the house on the lot and the location and size of outbuildings. Deed research was conducted at the Stark County Courthouse for all urban houses. These properties changed hands quite frequently, and it was difficult to establish with any certainty the original builder. In most cases, an estimated date of construction was made using increased value of the property between sales. The occupants of many of the houses as listed in the 1917-1918 Dickinson City directory do not correspond with the recorded owners, suggesting that they were being rented. Although the family name of many of the recorded owners appears in the county history and atlas, reference to specific owners was rare.

At the end of each field session, the inventory and research information for each property was transferred onto computerized North Dakota Cultural Resources Survey site forms at RTI's offices. Site plans and house floor plans were drafted to accompany each form along with a copy of a portion of the USGS map showing the property location. Representative black-and-white photographs of each building and structure were also included.

To assist in comparative analysis a database was created for the 42 rural farmsteads. The database includes information on 14 design characteristics of each house, including orientation, construction materials, window type, and the number of rooms. Less detailed information is also included for the farmstead as a whole including the number of outbuildings, barn materials, and barn roof type.

Finally, additional archival research was conducted at the State Historical Preservation Center, South Dakota State Historical Society. The Center has conducted several surveys of ethnic architecture in South Dakota and has a large file of secondary source materials.



## 4.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS, TOPICS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The authors of this report have attempted to address the research questions outlined in the request for proposals for the "Ethnic Survey in Stark County." As a whole, however, they largely remain unanswered. The three main reasons for the authors' reluctance to draw explicit conclusions are:

1) The available sources of information regarding traditional European building practices are scarce and limited in information useful for comparative analysis. Gilman Peterson's explanation for the eastern orientation of his father's house demonstrates the dilemma: "That's the way it was back in Norway -- facing the mountain."

This one statement raises the following questions: Did Norwegians traditionally face their houses toward the mountains? Does that suggest then that Anton Burwick and Jacob Johnson, who faced their Stark County houses to the south, were from an area of Norway with a mountain to the south? If Norwegians traditionally faced their houses toward the mountains, did the northwesterly winter winds in Stark County play no role in their decision to follow the same tradition in Stark County?

2) The survey was limited to the geographic boundaries of one county. What is typical of Stark County may not be typical of other North Dakota counties. For example, the widespread use of stone may be a result of geologic formations in the county or it may be based on traditional European building practices. Until additional survey of geographically separated properties within a single ethnic group are conducted in other North Dakota counties, this question must remain unanswered.

3) The building traditions of the two major ethnic groups in Stark County - the German-Russians and German-Hungarians -- are well represented in the survey. However, buildings representing the minority ethnic populations - Bohemians, Estonians, and Norwegians -- were not found in large enough numbers to make informed comparisons or draw specific conclusions about each ethnic group.

The research questions outlined in the request for proposals for the "Ethnic Survey in Stark County" are restated below with the authors' response to each:

1) Do limited sources and availability of building materials account for many similarities in the outward appearance of these structures?

Allen Noble in Wood, Brick & Stone assigned the title of "Baltic three-room house" to the typical ethnic design found in Stark County. In fact, his discussion includes a photograph of a "fieldstone" house near Scheffield. The same article challenges Alvar Carlson's designation of these houses as "German-Russian," saying the term is better suited for a four room, typically hipped roof building. Notwithstanding the arguments of semantics, the important point is that the elongated three room house is found "throughout the Baltic Sea region" including the Scandinavian countries, Finland, Russia, Poland, and Germany.<sup>161</sup> The availability of a particular building material appears to have no effect on the outward appearance of ethnic buildings in Europe or in Stark County (other than the appearance of the building material itself). Kusela found that in the Ukraine, although the plan of houses "is markedly similar throughout the whole of Ukraine," mud was most often used as a building material in the steppe, a framework of wooden posts in-filled with straw, reeds, or willows most often used in the forest-steppe, and logs most often used in the forest areas.<sup>162</sup>

The choice of a particular building material, at least among the German-Russians in North Dakota, seems to be based on the same interaction between the immigrants and their environment. Although the traditional form and plan of the house remains consistent, the building material is frequently determined by the most readily available, naturally occurring, local material -- earth, clay, or stone. This geologic influence can, therefore, be traced more to an economic decision than a decision based on cultural tradition. The almost universal use of stone in Stark County supports this link. These immigrants -- with a legacy of frugality and hard work -- embraced the labor intensive, but virtually free, stone in lieu of the expediency of the wood frame construction most commonly used by other homesteaders of this time period..

2) Because socio-cultural interaction among the various ethnic groups has not been observed in this region, can it be concluded that an exchange of building practices and architectural techniques did not occur between different cultural groups?

Since all of the ethnic buildings found in Stark County originated with immigrants from the Baltic Sea and Scandinavian regions, with similar building traditions, it seems futile to speculate on interactions between the groups that might have influenced design characteristics in North Dakota. Although it has been noted that there is a German-Russian farmstead in Billings County displaying the Ukranian building practice of post-in-hole wall construction, no such diagnostic materials or methods were identified in Stark County (except the position of the window relative to the wall plane in Norwegian houses). The almost universal use of stone and the similarities in plan and form of ethnic farmstead houses in Stark County make it impossible to identify a cultural exchange of building traditions. A much more detailed analysis, contrasting distinct differences and similarities of building practices of these groups in Europe, is required before exchanges of traditions in this country can be documented.

3) Traditional studies of vernacular architecture normally assert that such building attributes are a process of cultural geography. Do the building characteristics in this region reflect a response to environmental/climatic duress, availability of building materials, wind direction, etc.?

The following architectural characteristics of ethnic houses in Stark county *may* be the result of cultural geography: 1) the lack of raised foundations places them low on the terrain presenting the least exposure to the cold winter winds; 2) the orientation of the long side of the building to the south or east provides for solar heat gain during the winter; 3) the lack of or reduced number and size of windows on the rear of the houses presents minimal exposure to the cold northwesterly winter winds; 4) the vestibules protecting the exterior door from winter cold, and; 5) the thick stone walls keep the interior warm in the winter and cool in the summer.

Although these design characteristics *may* be a response to North Dakota's environment, it is unrealistic to draw that conclusion at this time. It must be remembered that these immigrant groups arrived in North Dakota from areas in Europe with similar climates. The design attributes that are now found in Stark County are more likely the product of centuries of design evolution in Europe rather than adaptations that evolved in a short time in North Dakota. In fact, the consistency of design over several decades in Stark County seems to argue more that the design of houses was so much a part of the material culture of these ethnic groups that they actually show no response to the new environment. Additional research in Europe to identify more subtle changes in design is needed before a definite answer can be provided to this question.

4) Can it be concluded that under a process of independent invention, and in spite of close proximity to other ethnic groups, each group produced a distinctive building tradition almost identical to that which was practiced in Europe?

See response to research questions 1 and 2.

5) Did the government homestead prescription, which denied people their traditional communal lifestyle and required homesteaders to live isolated on their own plots of land, cause these groups to abandon their Old World settlement patterns with regard to types, configurations and placement of buildings? Do any of the Old World patterns persist in the community setting?

Some studies of ethnic architecture have suggested theories for the lack of European precedents in farmstead layout among different European immigrant groups. The overriding factor suggested is the federal land policies which required farmers to live on their claims as opposed to the European tradition of farmers gathered into villages.<sup>163</sup> This, however, seems to be a simplistic conclusion which needs further

research. Since large amounts of private land were available throughout North Dakota, and could have been purchased without government restrictions of residency, it is surprising that some attempts were not made by various ethnic groups to recreate their Old World residency patterns -- if they were that important. While there are instances of immigrants in Stark County constructing farmstead buildings near the corners of their property close to other immigrants (most often family members), no greater percentages of this pattern were documented than one would expect to find in most other areas. It might be suggested that the farmers, at least the German-Russians, quickly perceived the wisdom of living near their fields. The village life in Russia required farmers to travel great distances from their homes and farm buildings to the fields. "The Fields often lay as far as 10 miles from the village. The water for man and beast had to be hauled in barrels out to fields, and the farmers often had to camp there overnight during the week."<sup>164</sup>

The urban houses found in south Dickinson offer the opportunity for future research which may display a much closer link with Old World settlement patterns than those found on the farmsteads. A 1944 map of the town of Alexanderhilf, District of Odessa, Russia [Fig. 7] bears a striking resemblance to what one finds when looking at the 1927 Sanborn Insurance maps for south Dickinson. In his description of a typical town in the Black Sea region, Karl Stumpp in The German-Russians: Two Centuries of Pioneering states that "the gable end of the houses faced the straight village street . . . The one-story houses were always built of sandstone, or limestone, or brick; the walls were always stuccoed and whitewashed."<sup>165</sup> The plan for the town shows narrow lots running east and west, with the principal buildings constructed on the north property line -- the main facade apparently facing south.

## 5.0 PRIORITIZED GOALS

The "Ethnic Architecture in Stark County" survey is the first comprehensive survey in North Dakota to examine the building morphology of ethnic property types in both rural and urban settings in North Dakota. The project is also the first effort to systematically survey ethnic architecture in western North Dakota. Because of the paucity of comparative information beyond the borders of Stark County in western North Dakota, the authors of this report have consciously refrained from making sweeping generalizations; any conclusions in the report are specific to Stark County alone. The comprehensiveness of the Ethnic Architecture in Stark County survey, however, can set the basis for future research in other areas of the state. Future research on ethnic architecture, not only in North Dakota, but nationwide, and even to its European roots, will necessitate the modification of the results of this survey.

With that in mind, the following goals are suggested in order to set a foundation for the methodical advancement of the study of ethnic architecture in North Dakota:

### **1. Develop a North Dakota Cultural Resources Survey "Ethnic Architectural Site Form."**

Now is the opportune time to ensure that future studies of ethnic architecture in North Dakota record architectural features in a uniform fashion and provide basic information in a format that can easily be used for comparative analysis. The site form should be accompanied by a dictionary of accepted terminology so that ethnic architectural descriptions are consistent from one survey to the next. For example, should the German term "vorhaus" be used when describing an identical feature on a Norwegian house?

### **2. Develop an ethnic oral history program.**

Recorded oral histories should be a part of all future ethnic architectural surveys. Personal recollections are usually the only source of information on the physical features of ethnic farmsteads. At least in Stark County, the land has not changed hands often and many second generation families are still alive. These people can provide invaluable information on the physical history of ethnic resources and the customs and traditions of ethnic groups as they appertain to the physical features.

The oral historian should be proficient in interviewing for historic sites investigations and should work closely in the field with architectural historians to develop site-specific questions.

### **3. Establish a program for public outreach**

Educational efforts aimed at the public, in the form of feature articles in local publications and newspapers, pamphlets, and television programs should be a part of all future ethnic architectural surveys. Owners of ethnic architectural resources and residents in the surrounding areas are the best protectors of these resources, but few may appreciate these buildings beyond their appearance as ruins on the landscape. These people must be educated to recognize the value and fragility of the resources.

### **4. Establish a program of continued survey of ethnic architectural resources.**

A sustained program of ethnic architectural research is important to document these resources before they are lost. Most ethnic buildings date from the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century; they are disappearing at a rapid rate. A long-term, comprehensive statewide plan to document a representative selection of ethnic architectural resources on a wide geographical basis should be outlined.

### **5. Establish a program of traditional architectural study in Europe.**

The Historical Society of North Dakota, perhaps in conjunction with one of the state universities, should sponsor study in Europe specifically oriented towards recording traditional architectural practices. Although the history of many ethnic groups is examined quite extensively, little is written about the material culture of the same groups. And, what information is available is usually too general to be used in a comparative analysis of traditions among and between ethnic groups. There are many research questions to which answers can be provided only with a clear understanding of European precedents. For example, a clear understanding of the practices which distinguish one ethnic group from another in Europe must be documented to determine whether ethnic groups imported distinctive building traditions.

## 6.0 ENDNOTES

1. Information on the climate, geography, and geology of Stark County can be found in: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, Soil Survey of Stark County, North Dakota, by Kermit E. Larson, et.al. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1968); U.S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey, Geology and Ground-water Hydrology of the Heart River Irrigation Project and the Dickinson Area, North Dakota, by Paul C. Tychsen. (Washington, D.C.: Geological Survey, 1950); North Dakota Geological Survey, Guide to the Geology of Southwestern North Dakota, by John P. Bluemle (n.p., 1975); North Dakota Geological Survey, Geology of North Dakota, by John L. Hainer (Grand Forks: n.p., 1956).
2. Elwyn B. Robinson, History of North Dakota (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 134, 218, 372.
3. More detailed discussions of federal land policies can be found in: Robinson, 148-149; Warren A. Henke, "The Settlement Process: Official State Promotional Activities, in Plains Folk: North Dakota's Ethnic History, ed. William C. Sherman and Playford V. Thorson (Fargo, N.D.: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies at North Dakota State University, 1988), 14.
4. William C. Sherman, "Settlement Process," in Plains Folk, 9.
5. For detailed discussions of railroad construction in North Dakota see: Robinson; Robert P. Wilkins and Wynona H. Wilkins, North Dakota (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1977).
6. Sherman, "Settlement Process," in Plains Folk, 9.
7. Ibid., 10-11.
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130. Jacqueline Sluss, "Icons on the Prairie" (North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office, 1983), 27.

131. This technique and mixture of mortar was described by three Stark County residents: Jacob Frank, Bill Schmidt, and Harold Kasberg.

132. The specific ingredients for making the mortar was described by three Stark County residents. The methods described in this paragraph are individual descriptions provided by those same residents.

133. Bill Schmidt, interview by Lon Johnson and Mike Koop, 24 May 1991.

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135. Bill Schmidt, interview by Lon Johnson and Mike Koop, 24 May 1991.

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137. It should be noted that specialized use buildings are not confined to the ethnic groups within Stark County. They existed elsewhere on rural farms on the European continent. See, for example, Arnold R. Alanen and William H. Tishler, "Finnish Farmstead Organization in Old and New World Settings," Journal of Cultural Geography 1 (Fall/Winter 1980: 66-81; and Thomas C. Hubka, Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1984), 54.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**ETHNIC ARCHITECTURE**  
**in STARK COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA**  
List of Surveyed Properties, Arranged by Ethnicity

**Bohemian**

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32 SK 165                      Jos. & Mary Ridl Hondl

**Estonian**

---

32 SK 170                      Jos. & Minnie Papelpuu Kasberg  
32 SK 180                      Jacob & Lisa Papelpuu Kasberg

**German-Hungarian**

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32 SK 155                      Mathias Link  
32 SK 159                      John & Katherina Schlitter Reiner  
32 SK 172                      Karl Huth  
32 SK 173                      Henry Schneider  
32 SK 174                      Emerich Martin  
32 SK 176                      Mathias & Katie Brockley Feimer  
32 SK 177                      Wilhelm Heudeker  
32 SK 178                      Janni Schneider  
32 SK 183                      Michael & Margaret Brown Theisman  
32 SK 184                      Michael & Anna Krug Scharick  
32 SK 187                      Joseph Kuhn  
32 SK 189                      Bernhart Martin  
32 SK 191                      Thomas & Margaret Lefor Lefor  
32 SK 192                      Adam & Marion Kungel Lefor, Sr.

**German-Russian**

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32 SK 152                      Daniel & Katherine Jahner Decker  
32 SK 153                      Ambres & Mathilda Jutt Sticka  
32 SK 154                      Joseph & Rosie Weiler Dukart  
32 SK 156                      Raymond Frank  
32 SK 157                      George Weiler  
32 SK 158                      Rudolph Frank/Phillip Vogel  
32 SK 160                      Valentine & Anna Huschka Dolecheck  
32 SK 161                      Ludwig & Monica Jordan Sticka  
32 SK 164                      Frank & Rosie Heidt Berger

32 SK 166	Mathias & Katherine Ell Schwindt
32 SK 167	Philip & Barbara Schoch Emmel
32 SK 168	Raphael Berger
32 SK 169	Frank & Katherine Ulecker Weiler
32 SK 171	Johannes & E. Michel Schmitt
32 SK 175	Andreas & Appalonia Gartner Fischer
32 SK 179	Frank & Francis Ehrnantraut Krank
32 SK 181	Joseph & Franciska Steiner Froehlich
32 SK 185	Jacob & Hellen Froehlich Wandler/Joseph & Regina Roller Binstock
32 SK 186	John Loran
32 SK 188	Jacob Brittner
32 SK 190	Philip & Catherine Bleile Loran

### Norwegian

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32 SK 162	Petterson Brothers
32 SK 163	Anton & Lena Husby Burwick
32 SK 193	Jacob & Bertha Hendrickson Johnson

### unknown

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32 SK 182	Fannie Peterly
32 SK 194	Adam Weber
32 SK 195	Ziraick Schoch
32 SK 196	Sebastian & Rosalia Mischel
32 SK 197	Rafael Kuntz
32 SK 198	Anton & Eva Urlacher
32 SK 199	Joseph Lauffer
32 SK 200	Andrew Hushka

## APPENDIX B

### ETHNIC ARCHITECTURE in STARK COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA List of Surveyed Properties, Arranged by Site Number

Site Number	Historic Name	Ethnic Affiliation	Location
32 SK 152	Daniel & Katherine Jahner Decker	German-Russian	S2 T138N R96W
32 SK 153	Ambres & Mathilda Jutt Sticka	German-Russian	S20 T137N R96W
32 SK 154	Joseph & Rosie Weiler Dukart	German-Russian	S10 T137N R96W
32 SK 155	Mathias Link	German-Hungarian	S18 T137N R92W
32 SK 156	Raymond Frank	German-Russian	S26 T137N R96W
32 SK 157	George Weiler	German-Russian	S28 T137N R96W
32 SK 158	Rudolph Frank/Phillip Vogel	German-Russian	S34 T139N R96W
32 SK 159	John & Katherina Schlitter Reiner	German-Hungarian	S12 T137N R94W
32 SK 160	Valentine & Anna Huschka Dolecheck	German-Russian	S35 T138N R96W
32 SK 161	Ludwig & Monica Jordan Sticka	German-Russian	S20 T137N R96W
32 SK 162	Petterson Brothers	Norwegian	S22 T137N R98W
32 SK 163	Anton & Lena Husby Burwick	Norwegian	S26 T137N R98W
32 SK 164	Frank & Rosie Heidt Berger	German-Russian	S24 T138N R97W
32 SK 165	Jos. & Mary Ridl Hondl	Bohemian	S24 T140N R97W
32 SK 166	Mathias & Katherine Ell Schwindt	German-Russian	S12 T137N R96W
32 SK 167	Philip & Barbara Schoch Emmel	German-Russian	S28 T137N R97W
32 SK 168	Raphael Berger	German-Russian	S20 T138N R96W
32 SK 169	Frank & Katherine Ulecker Weiler	German-Russian	S28 T137N R96W
32 SK 170	Jos. & Minnie Papelpuu Kasberg	Estonian	S18 T137N R97W
32 SK 171	Johannes & E. Michel Schmitt	German-Russian	S8 T138N R91W
32 SK 172	Karl Huth	German-Hungarian	S17 T138N R94W
32 SK 173	Henry Schneider	German-Hungarian	S18 T137N R93W
32 SK 174	Emerich Martin	German-Hungarian	S18 T137N R91W
32 SK 175	Andreas & Appalonia Gartner Fischer	German-Russian	S2 T137N R98W
32 SK 176	Mathias & Katie Brockley Feimer	German-Hungarian	S22 T137N R95W
32 SK 177	Wilhelm Heudeker	German-Hungarian	S6 T137N R93W



Site Number	Historic Name	Ethnic Affiliation	Location
32 SK 178	Janni Schneider	German-Hungarian	S18 T137N R93W
32 SK 179	Frank & Francis Ehrnantraut Krank	German-Russian	S34 T139N R96W
32 SK 180	Jacob & Lisa Papelpuu Kasberg	Estonian	S20 T137N R97W
32 SK 181	Joseph & Franciska Steiner Froehlich	German-Russian	S22 T138N R97W
32 SK 182	Fannie Peterly	unknown	S2 T140N R97W
32 SK 183	Michael & Margaret Brown Theisman	German-Hungarian	S8 T137N R93W
32 SK 184	Michael & Anna Krug Scharick	German-Hungarian	S18 T137N R92W
32 SK 185	Jacob & Hellen Froehlich Wandler/Joseph & Regina Roller Binstock	German-Russian	S14 T137N R97W
32 SK 186	John Loran	German-Russian	S14 138N R92W
32 SK 187	Joseph Kuhn	German-Hungarian	S14 T137N R93W
32 SK 188	Jacob Brittner	German-Russian	S20 T137N R97W
32 SK 192	Adam & Marion Kungel Lefor, Sr.	German-Hungarian	S4 T137N R94W
32 SK 189	Bernhart Martin	German-Hungarian	S12 T137N R95W
32 SK 190	Philip & Catherine Bleile Loran	German-Russian	S2 T138N R92W
32 SK 191	Thomas & Margaret Lefor Lefor	German-Hungarian	S4 T137N R94W
32 SK 193	Jacob & Bertha Hendrickson Johnson	Norwegian	S24 T137N R98W
32 SK 194	Adam Weber	unknown	405 Broadway
32 SK 195	Ziraick Schoch	unknown	235 S. Main
32 SK 196	Sebastian & Rosalia Mischel	unknown	145 Third Street
32 SK 197	Rafael Kuntz	unknown	346 Second Street
32 SK 198	Anton & Eva Urlacher	unknown	146 First Avenue
32 SK 199	Joseph Lauffer	unknown	127 First Street
32 SK 200	Andrew Hushka	unknown	106 First Avenue