

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Greene County Almshouse other names/site number

2. Location

street & number Township Road TR156A not for publication city, town Carrollton vicinity state Illinois code IL county Greene code 061 zip code 62016

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes sub-rows for Contributing and Noncontributing resources.

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: William L. Wheeler, SHPO, Date: 3-28-91

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official Date State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register. determined eligible for the National Register. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ Institutional housing
AGRICULTURE/ SUBSISTENCE/ agricultural outbuilding
AGRICULTURE/ SUBSISTENCE/ animal facility
AGRICULTURE/ SUBSISTENCE/ storage

Vacant/Not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

foundation stone
walls brick
wood
roof asphalt
other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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Greene County Almshouse

SITE DESCRIPTION

Greene County is located in west-central Illinois. Carrollton, the county seat of Greene County, is in the center of the county. The Greene County Almshouse is located 3 miles northeast of Carrollton. The almshouse complex is about 150 feet east of township road TR156A. The land surrounding the almshouse complex is presently being farmed, and the outbuildings associated with the complex are utilized as part of this operation.

The almshouse complex is organized with the main building facing the road and various outbuildings standing in the rear. A fenced barnyard exists about 60 feet to the rear of the main building. This area is separated from the house by a wooden fence; all other fence lines are modern electric wiring. The farmstead includes the outbuildings listed below, as well as at least three wooden hog troughs. Four outbuildings stand outside the fenced barnyard: the block house, two sheds and the well house. A maple tree in front of the main building was planted in 1902.¹

In recent years, at least five outbuildings east of the almshouse have been demolished by the County, and one barn has burned. Buildings no longer extant include two frame buildings, 14 feet square, each containing one room. In 1878, these buildings were used by "idiotic, imbecile, or filthy patients--one building for each sex".² These buildings were again referenced in 1908 but usage, aside from the separation of sexes, remains unclear.³ Also extant in 1908 were a bath house and an isolated hospital. Constructed in 1908 was a two-room cottage for housing elderly women.⁴

THE GREENE COUNTY ALMSHOUSE

The Greene County Almshouse, constructed in 1870, is an asymmetrical, L-shaped, brick Italianate building, with a low pitched hip roof. It has two stories, and features a square, hipped roof, three-story tower at the rear. Other notable exterior features are overhanging eaves with modillions, quoin detailing at the corners, and segmental arched windows.

The front of the house faces west, and contains a two-level open porch on the front-facing gabled northern block. The south side of the house has a wooden two-story enclosed porch addition and a one-story modern greenhouse. A second porch is on the east side of the house, on the rear of the northern block. The three story tower is on the eastern end of the southern block. There are windows on all sides of the house, except on the north side of the house on the northern block.

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Greene County Almshouse

The basement level contains approximately nine rooms, historically used as kitchen and dining, and storage areas. Male and female paupers were not provided separate dining facilities; in 1878 they ate in the same room, at different times.⁵ By 1908 they ate at the same time, but at different tables.⁶

The first level contains nine rooms and two open porches. The front door opens into a foyer, which accesses three sitting rooms. Four dormitories are towards the back of the house. The sitting rooms were historically occupied by the supervisor and his family, and the four dormitories were used by male paupers.⁷ In 1890, partitions were removed from the large dormitory in the south, as well as the small dormitory directly east of the main room.⁸ Two baths have been added, which makes a total of nine rooms.

The second level foyer opens into four rooms historically used as dormitories for male paupers.⁹ In the center of the second level are two large rooms. One of these rooms was originally constructed for religious services; instead it was used as a general work area.¹⁰ The second large room and two smaller rooms in the back of the house were also used as dormitories for male paupers.¹¹ There are two baths on the second level, which makes a total of ten rooms.

The third level is presently one large room. In 1878, this level was partitioned into three rooms and used by insane patients.¹² By 1885, these rooms were converted into sleeping quarters for female inmates.¹³

LIST OF EXTANT RESOURCES

The following resources have been determined to be contributing because they add to the historic architectural qualities and historic associations for which the property is significant. These resources were present during the period of significance and possess historic integrity reflecting its character at that time.

1. The Almshouse; see earlier description
2. Block House
Concrete building, rectangular, one story, gable roof, 2 rooms;
ca. 1914
3. Shed
Frame, rectangular, concrete foundation, one story, gable roof, modern
plastic garage doors; early twentieth century

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4. Shed
Frame, rectangular, concrete foundation, one story, gable roof; early twentieth century
5. Pole shed
Frame, metal siding, rectangular, two story, gable roof; early twentieth century
6. Barn
Post and beam, board and batten wooden siding, rectangular, one and one half story, gable roof; late nineteenth century. Shed rear addition
7. Silo - structure
Concrete, round, flat roof, 3 story; early twentieth century
8. Scale house
Frame, rectangular, one and one half story, gable roof; early twentieth century. Fairbanks company scale on site. Wooden animal ramp immediately to the east.
9. Granary
Cribbed, rectangular, one and one half story, gable roof; early twentieth century

The following resources have been determined to be non-contributing because they do not add to the historic architectural qualities and historic associations for which the property is significant. These resources were not present during the period of significance.

10. Pump house - structure
Frame, rectangular, one half story, gable roof; ca. 1940
11. Shed
Frame, rectangular, one story, gable roof; mid-twentieth century
12. Hog house
Frame, rectangular, one half story, half-gabled roof; mid-twentieth century
- 13-15 Granaries - structures
Metal, circular; modern

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Greene County Almshouse

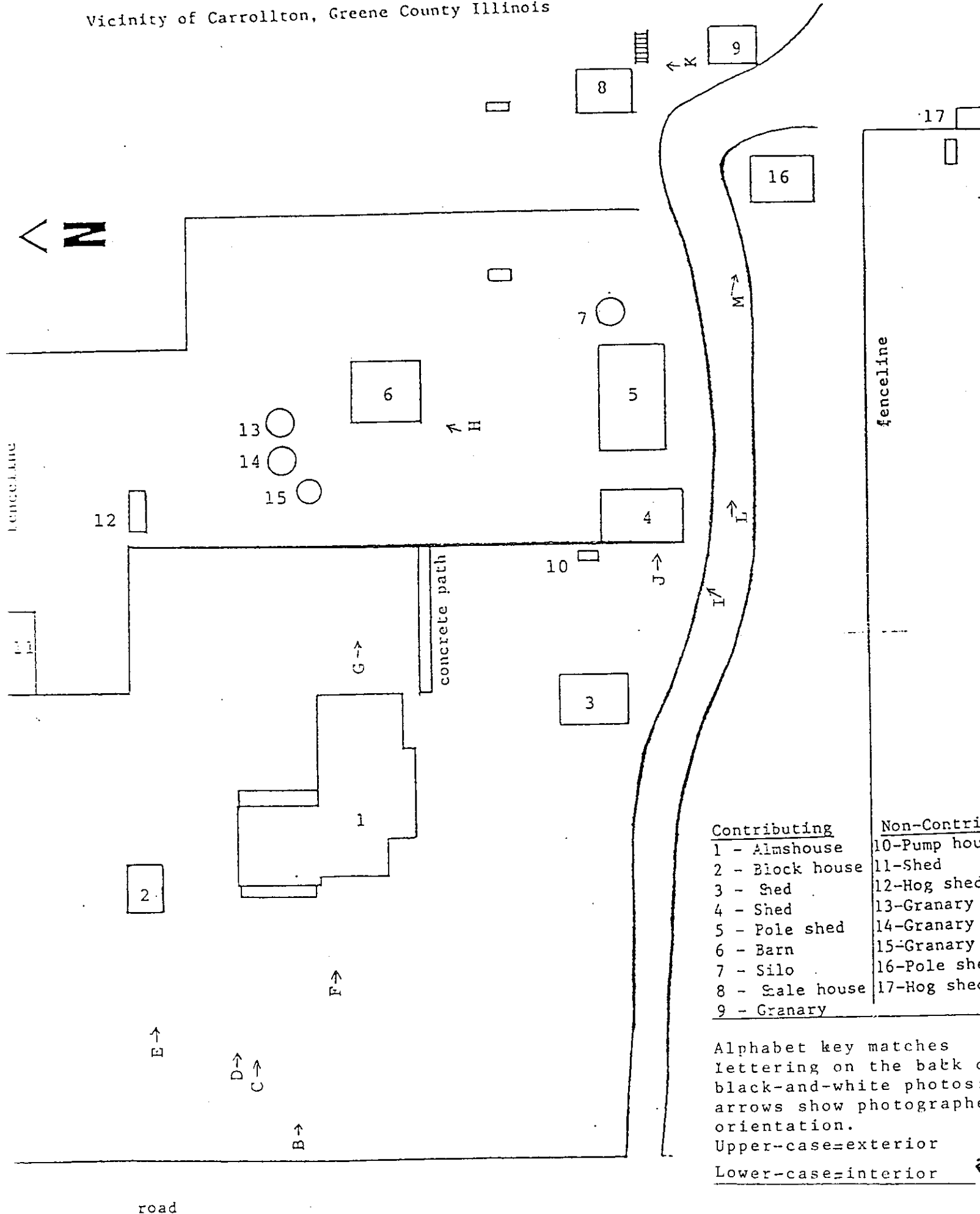
16. Pole shed; modern

17. Hog shed; modern

- 1 Greene County Almshouse Register, 1874-1928
2 Report of the State Board of Public Charities, Illinois (Springfield), 1878,
p.234
3 Report of the State Board of Public Charities, Illinois (Springfield), 1908,
p.101
4 Ibid., p.101
5 Report of the State Board of Public Charities, Illinois (Springfield), 1878,
p.234
6 Report of the State Board of Public Charities, Illinois (Springfield), 1908,
p.101
7 History of Greene and Jersey County, 1885; p.942
8 Report of the State Board of Public Charities, Illinois (Springfield), 1890,
p.129
9 History of Greene and Jersey County, 1885; p.942
10 Ibid., p.942
11 Ibid., p.942
12 Report of the State Board of Public Charities, Illinois (Springfield), 1878,
p.234
13 History of Greene and Jersey County, 1885, p.942

Greene County Almshouse

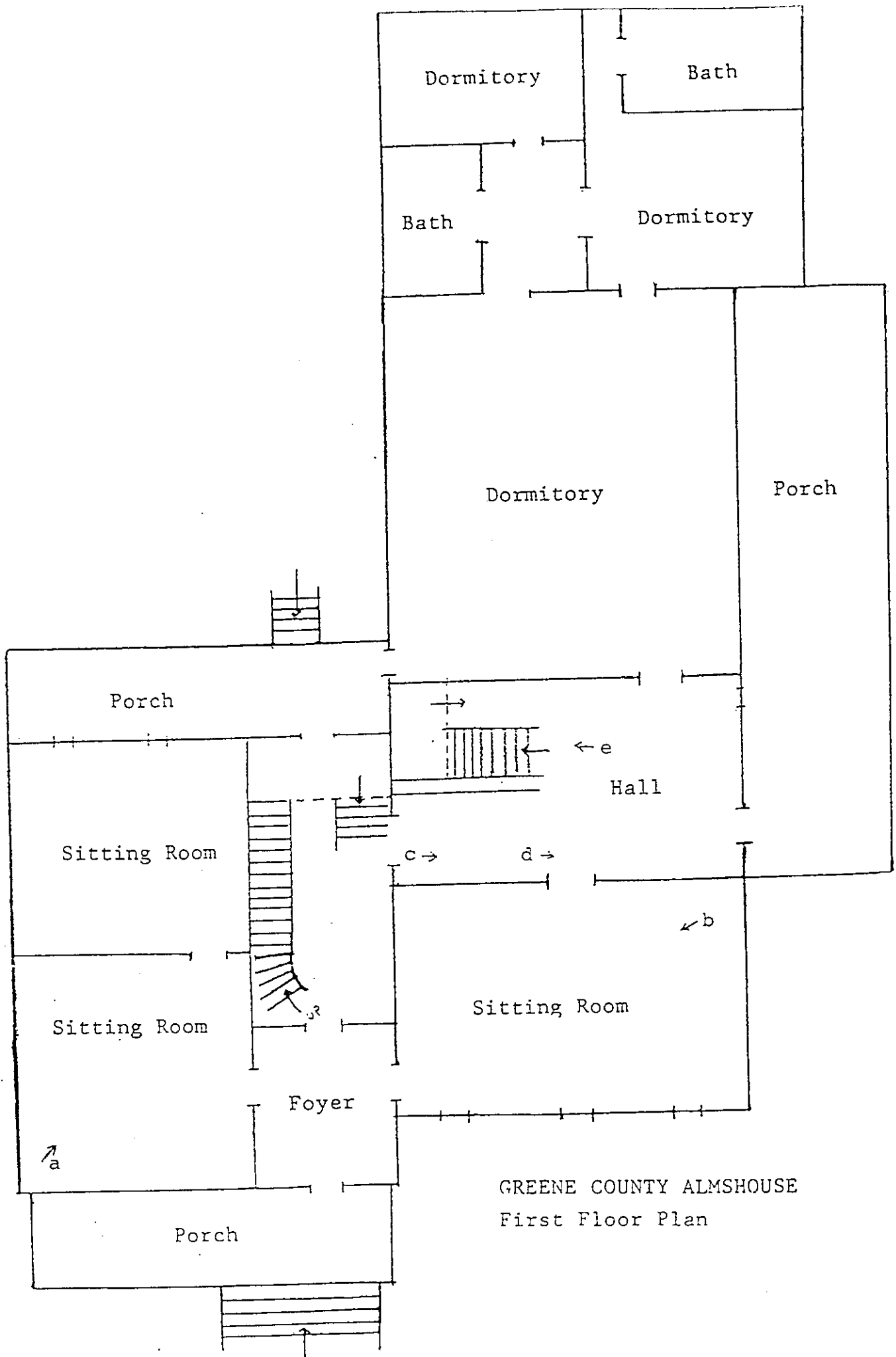
Vicinity of Carrollton, Greene County Illinois



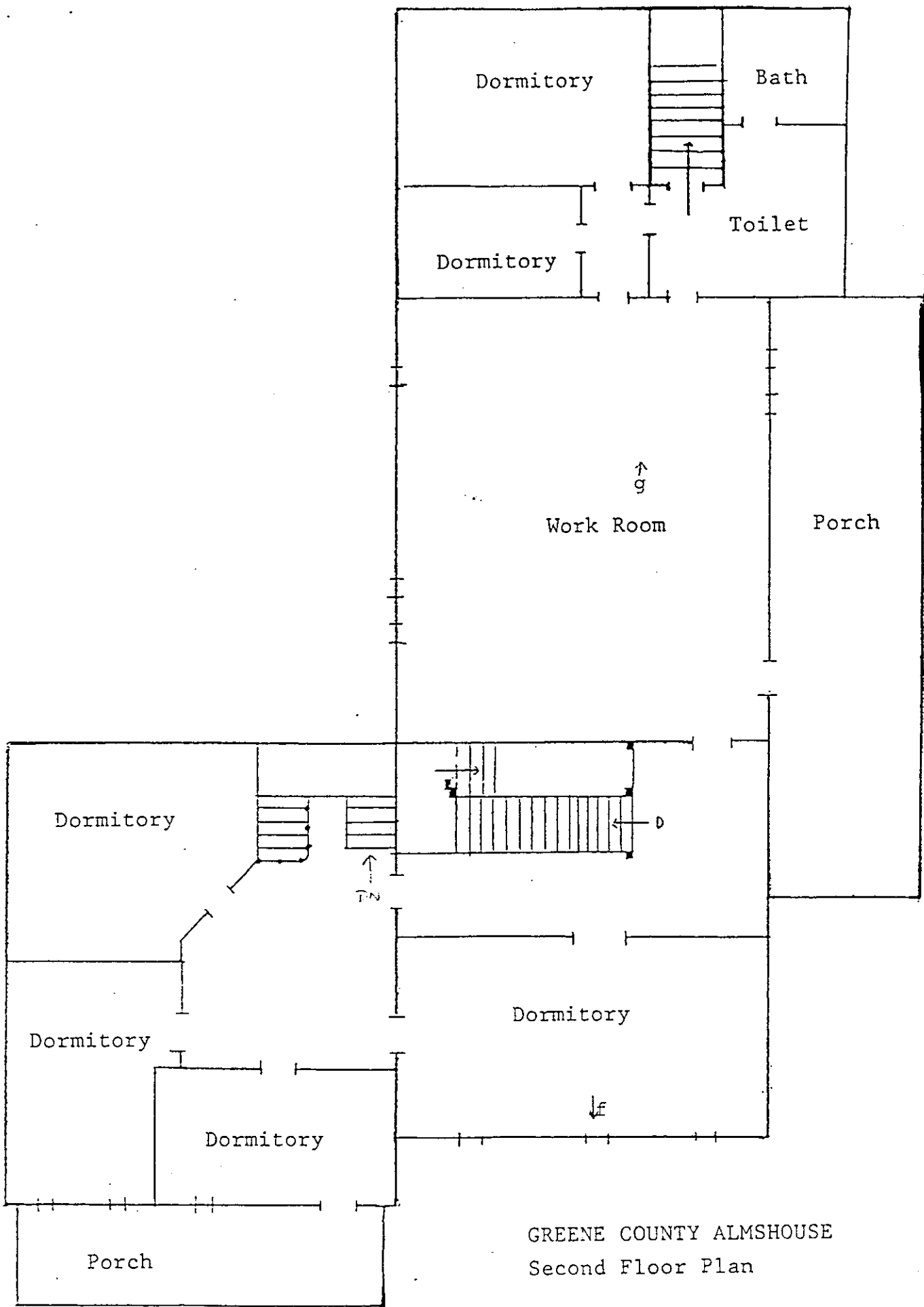
Contributing	Non-Contributing
1 - Almshouse	10 - Pump house
2 - Block house	11 - Shed
3 - Shed	12 - Hog shed
4 - Shed	13 - Granary
5 - Pole shed	14 - Granary
6 - Barn	15 - Granary
7 - Silo	16 - Pole shed
8 - Scale house	17 - Hog shed
9 - Granary	

Alphabet key matches lettering on the back of black-and-white photos; arrows show photographer orientation.
 Upper-case=exterior
 Lower-case=interior

road



GREENE COUNTY ALMSHOUSE
 First Floor Plan



GREENE COUNTY ALMSHOUSE
Second Floor Plan

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Social history

Period of Significance

1870-1932

Significant Dates

1907

1913

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

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Greene County Almshouse

The Greene County Almshouse is significant for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with county government efforts to promote the welfare of the local poor from 1870 to 1932. The almshouse-based system of relief was the predominate system of public welfare in the United States until the emergence of federal relief programs, which stemmed from the Great Depression.

NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Prior to the American Revolution, welfare recipients were provided the necessities of life through "outdoor relief"--relief that took place outside an institutional setting. This type of assistance was locally funded, and could take the form of donated food, fuel or other necessary items. More commonly, indigent adults were indentured, and orphaned children were apprenticed until maturity.

By the onset of the Civil War, "indoor relief"--aid given to individuals residing inside an institutional setting--was the predominate relief system. This type of assistance was first channeled through locally administered almshouses. Almshouse care "became the primary provider of relief throughout the nation".¹

The functions of almshouses varied from community to community, as well as over time. Ideally, the function of an almshouse was to provide relief to the local poor; in reality it was frequently used as a jail for tramps and vagrants, a work-house for able-bodied poor, an old people's home, an insane asylum and an orphanage. The almshouse "performed multiple functions for a mixture of social categories".²

As public assistance became specialized, state-supported institutions played an increasingly significant role. The role of state-supported institutions was to relieve the county almshouse of people who could be described as other than the local poor. People who could be described as other than the local poor were grouped into categories and considered "special classes". For example, these people could be insane, feeble-minded (retarded) or orphans.

As "special classes" were removed from county facilities for professional attention, the functions of the county almshouse diminished. The elderly, one class not provided for by state-supported institutions, played an increasingly significant role. "Viewed historically, by 1923 the community-based almshouse had been transformed from a multifunction institution to a relatively specialized age facility."³

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Greene County Almshouse

STATEWIDE TRENDS

The Illinois system of public welfare began, as in the rest of the nation, with locally administered outdoor relief. Welfare recipients were provided the necessities of life in exchange for their labor. This practice was called "farming out" instead of "indentured service" because paupers were generally used as field hands. The exceptions were the mentally ill, who worked to the best of their ability, the physically ill, who were not expected to work, and children, who were apprenticed until maturity. Farming out was displaced by the almshouse system of indoor relief.

The almshouse system of public welfare was introduced to Illinois in 1839 through state legislation. The almshouse was a locally administered facility, and the decision to develop this type of relief system was left to the county. In 1840, Morgan County became the first to adopt the almshouse system. By 1880, all but eight counties had established an almshouse (Boone, Clark, Crawford, Edwards, Ford, Gallatin, Jasper and Pope). By 1903, only two counties had not developed the almshouse system of indoor relief (Boone and Pope).

Counties which elected to develop an almshouse-based relief system allocated the necessary funds and either constructed a building to be used specifically as an almshouse or purchased an existing building and converted it to an almshouse. Most counties located their almshouse (or poor house) in a rural setting and purchased land to be farmed by pauper labor. Thus, the poor house became regionally known as the poor farm, or county farm.

For the most part, the county farm house was comparable to a typical area farm house, but "...a little below the average, in respect of convenience and comfort."⁴ Other variations included facilities which resembled hospitals (for example St. Clair county) or state-supported asylums (for example Knox county).⁵ County farms throughout Illinois included buildings of all types, from rude log cabins to large, well-planned institutions.⁶

Outbuildings were constructed near the main structure. These buildings sometimes included separate housing for female inmates, male inmates and the insane.⁷ Other structures commonly built were buildings considered necessary for efficient farming operations and a "pest house", which functioned as an infirmary. County officials were encouraged to keep the size of the county farms small and manageable. The size of county farm varied between 4 and 400 acres, average size being 151 acres in 1870.

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Greene County Almshouse

Illinois pauper populations, much as in other states, included tramps and vagrants, able-bodied poor, the elderly, the insane, the feeble-minded, the epileptic, the sick, orphans and other dependents. These individuals were cared for by a supervisor, who lived on and managed the county farm. Illinois paupers were expected to work the farm, under the guidance of the supervisor, to the best of their ability. Often the insane were the most dependable laborers, due to the variety of physical afflictions which affected the sane.⁸ Pauper labor was unreliable, and the supervisor's main responsibility was to the paupers themselves, not farm management.

In 1870, the Illinois State Board of Public Charities was organized to monitor all forms of indoor relief. Although county almshouses were locally administered, they were subjected to an annual review. The condition of the "special classes" was an immediate concern of the State Board of Public Charities. As early as 1870, the Board suggested the insane "be transferred from the county farms to state institutions".⁹

In 1892, the insane population of county farms, excluding Cook county, was 875. This total continued to grow until 1900, when the insane population peaked at 1600. The opening of two new state-supported institutions reduced the insane population of county facilities to 365 by 1908.¹⁰

As the insane and other special classes were removed from county facilities, some county farms developed into a hospital or infirmary, "intended only for the care of those who are permanently infirm and helpless or those who may be temporarily disabled."¹¹ As special classes within county facilities were removed, the elderly remained and influenced changes in the role of such facilities.

Architectural changes in county farms reflected their changing roles. The Illinois Historic Landmarks Survey, conducted in the early 1970's, included several former county farms which were still working facilities. One example was Hillcrest Home in Henry County, once the site of the Henry County Poor Farm.¹²

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Greene County Almshouse

THE GREENE COUNTY ALMSHOUSE

The first county farm of Greene County was located west of Carrollton. The deed to the property was recorded in 1842; the farm was just over 92 acres in size. By 1969, Greene County decided to build a larger facility, sold the old poor farm, and purchased 160 acres of land three miles northeast of Carrollton. The existing almshouse was constructed in 1870.

The extant County Almshouse was first described by the State Board of Charities as a "model building".¹³ As built, the Almshouse was a brick, two story Italianate with a high tower and a total of 30 rooms. The associated 160 acres of land made it an average-sized poor farm. In 1908, 200 acres were added to the site. In 1907, new stairwells were added to the house, and in 1913, further renovation took place.

Representatives from the State Board of Public Charities were expected to visit indoor relief facilities annually. These facilities were often mentioned in their biannual reports. The reports of the State Board of Charities allows us a unique "inside" look at the operation of a typical almshouse.

In 1880, the State Board of Public Charities reported that the Greene County Farm "premises [were] in excellent condition, the rooms, beds and bedding in good order".¹⁴ Children were allowed to attend the district school, and the insane were not kept in seclusion.¹⁵ The Greene County Farm continued to receive similar good reviews until the turn of the century. Positive statements were made concerning inmate appearance and health, fare on the table, and religious instruction.

The county paid for all necessities for the support of paupers, however, produce raised on the farm helped sustain them as well. In 1898 the County Farm planted an orchard. Plantings included apple, cherry, plum, pear and peach trees, and currant shrubs.¹⁶ In 1901, grapevines, blackberry bushes and raspberry bushes were "the first ever" to be planted at the County facility.¹⁷ In 1902, the State Board of Public Charities commended the productive gardens and orchards of the farm: "The farm is in good condition and an abundance of fruit and vegetables are raised. The land is well worked."¹⁸ Garden produce supplemented the pauper's diet, and helped make the farm self-sustaining.

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Greene County Almshouse

Farming operations also included raising crops and livestock. Crops grown on the County Farm in 1914 included hay, corn and oats. The County Farm also raised livestock. Livestock raised on the County Farm in 1914 included ten horses, ten cattle, sixty-one pigs and two-hundred and fifty chickens.¹⁹

The Greene County Farm typically housed less than 30 pauper residents at one time.²⁰ Classes of paupers varied through time, but generally followed statewide trends. Typical pre-1900 era paupers included vagrants, the physically and mentally ill, the elderly, orphans and other dependents. The turn of the century witnessed the highest influx of insane and feeble-minded patients.²¹ As state-supported institutions relieved the county facility of the insane and other special classes, the elderly remained.

Elderly populations at the Greene County Farm became predominate shortly after the turn of the century. This fact became visible when a special facility was constructed to assist in the care of the elderly: in 1906, a two-room cottage was built "for the elderly women".²² In 1910, over 50% of Greene County Farm inmates were over the age of 61.²³

In 1928, 90% of the residents were over the age of 61.²⁴ Almshouse residents could no longer be classified as paupers due to physical or mental illness. These individuals were destitute because, in their old age, they were unable to look after themselves. In short, the County Farm had become a repository for the elderly. The Greene County Almshouse continued to operate, but its role had changed. Previously a relief facility which delivered general care, the county farm became a specialized care facility.

In 1932, Greene county became eligible to participate in the Illinois Emergency Relief Aid program. County board members estimated cash amounts needed by their respective townships, and aid was distributed directly to welfare recipients. Outdoor relief again became the dominate system of public welfare. Illinois Emergency Aid grants revolutionized the public welfare process by greatly minimizing the need for indoor relief, and subsequently for almshouse care.

1 Paul Lerman, *Deinstitutionalization and the Welfare State* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1982), p.19

2 Ibid., p.20

3 Ibid., p.36

4 Report of the State Board of Public Charities, Illinois (Springfield), 1872, p.186 (hereafter cited as Charities Report, followed by the year of the report)

5 Ibid., p.186

6 Charities Report, (1876), p.96

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- 7 Charities Report, (1872), p.186
- 8 The Ogle County Almshouse, 1880-1900, in Illinois Libraries, Vol. 67,
No. 6, p.512
- 9 Charities Report, (1870), p.196
- 10 Charities Report, (1908), p.46
- 11 Sophonisba P. Breckinridge, The IL Poor Law and Its Administration
(Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939) p.83
- 12 Illinois Department of Conservation, Illinois Historic Landmark Survey,
early 1970's
- 13 Charities Report, (1870), p.134
- 14 Charities Report, (1880), p.238
- 15 Ibid., p.238
- 16 Board of Supervisors, Minutes, Greene County Illinois, 1898
- 17 Almshouse Register, Greene County Illinois, 1874-1928
- 18 Charities Report, (1902), p.76
- 19 Board of Supervisors, Minutes, Greene County Illinois, 1914
- 20 Almshouse Register, Greene County Illinois, 1874-1928
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Charities Report, (1906), p101
- 23 Almshouse Register, Greene County Illinois, 1874-1928
- 24 Almshouse Register, Greene County Illinois, 1874-1928

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- Bailey, Robert., "The Ogle County Almshouse, 1880-1900," Illinois Libraries, Vol. 67, No. 6.
- Breckinridge, Sophonisba P., The Illinois Poor Law and Its Administration, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1939.
- Cantrall, Dan., "The Illinois State Board of Public Charities and the County Poorhouses, 1870-1900: Institutional Ideals vs. County Realities," Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society, Selected Papers from the Fifth and Sixth Illinois History Symposium of the Illinois State Historical Society, 1988.
- Greene County Almshouse Register, 1874-1928
- Greene County Board of Supervisors Minutes, 1896-1956
- History of Greene and Jersey Counties, Illinois, Continental Historical Company, 1885.
- Illinois Department of Conservation, Illinois Historic Landmark Survey, early 1970's.
- Lerman, Paul., Deinstitutionalization and the Welfare State, Rutgers Univ. Press, 1982.
- McAllister, Virginia and Lee, A Field Guide to American Houses, Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.
- Report of the State Board of Public Charities, Illinois, Illinois Journal Printing Office, 1871-1909.
- Southwestern Historical Quarterly, "The County Poor Farm System in Texas"

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: Illinois Regional Archives Depository -- Sangamon State University, Springfield, IL

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Approximately 5 acres

UTM References

A	1,5	72,700,00	4,356,530
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1,5	72,730,00	4,356,450

B	1,5	72,730,00	4,356,530
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1,5	72,700,00	4,356,450

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Starting at a point on the east side of the township road and parallel to the south wall of Building 17 (modern hog shed), proceed east to a point parallel to the east wall of Building 9 (granary), then north to a point parallel to the north wall of Building 11 (hog shed), then west to the east side of the township road, and then south to the point of beginning.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated area, which includes the almshouse and the associated outbuildings and farmstead incorporates all significant resources. It cannot be ascertained whether the associated farmland acreage has sufficient historical integrity, and therefore it is not being included in the nominated area. The pauper cemetery, located 1/4 northeast of the almshouse, is also not included in the nominated area because it is physically separated from the farmstead.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Eliana Cooklis, Intern date February 14, 1991
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 street & number Old State Capitol state Illinois zip code 62701
 city or town Springfield,

